



Arts and Disability Plan

2024-2026



Acknowledgments

Traditional Owners and Custodians

The Queensland Government respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land. We extend our respect to Elders past and present, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as First Peoples of this country.

We acknowledge the continuation of diverse cultural practices and knowledge systems of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and that self-determination is a human right as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 also recognises the particular significance of the right to self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Published images

No images published in connection with this Plan shall be construed as indicating a preference for any particular type of applicant or initiative. The use of such images is purely artistic in nature and should not be interpreted as an endorsement or preferential treatment of any of the depicted organisations. All images have been published with the express consent of the respective organisations, and in accordance with moral rights obligations, proper attribution has been given to the individual responsible for capturing the image.

Front page photo caption Lauren Watson. Lauren is a Yugambeh (Gold Coast) based adaptive performing artist and aerial instructor specialising in aerial, circus, physical theatre and improvised movement. Photo: Bradford Whelan

People with disability

The Queensland Government acknowledges the rights of people with disability to participate equally in the state's cultural life and to have the opportunity to develop and use their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, as recognised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability.

We recognise people's experiences with disability are also shaped by their age, gender identities, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, First Nations identities and cultural background. The disability community is broad and diverse, and not all disability is visible to others.

The Queensland Government is committed through *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31* and the *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27* to ensure that everyone has opportunity to reach their potential.

Language in this Plan

We acknowledge that language around disability is evolving and reflects differing preferences to describe disability. Person-first language (people with disability) and identity-first language (d/Deaf and disabled people) are used in Queensland. This Plan uses both approaches and does not intend to reflect a particular preference.

Consultation participants

Arts Queensland would like to thank the many people who participated in the consultation process to inform the development of the Plan.



“Arts and Disability is about people with disabilities being included in the planning and process, and for work to be disability-led”

Disabled independent artist

Photo caption *Be Iconic*, Fashion Collab, Brisbane Festival 2024. Fashion Collab is a collective of creatives who have diverse lived experiences and a broad array of artistic practices.
Photo: Morgan Roberts

Introduction

The *Arts and Disability Plan 2024-2026* aims to harness the diversity of Queensland's arts and culture. It will do this by enabling the stories, expertise and experiences of people with disability to be profiled, shared and celebrated.

The Plan is a deliverable of *Creative Together 2020-2030: A 10-year Roadmap for arts, culture and creativity in Queensland*, and its second action plan *Grow 2022-2026*. It seeks to accelerate key actions that will develop creative careers, celebrate disabled-led work and grow inclusive arts and cultural experiences across the State.

Over the next two years, the Plan will deliver actions and initiatives across three priority areas driven by the principles of access, equity, inclusion and co-design.

The Plan will also support *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27* and the delivery of legacy outcomes in the *Elevate 2042 Legacy Strategy*.

The Plan was informed by insights shared through consultation. It will evolve and respond to sector need and reforms within the disability services sector at state and national levels.



Photo caption *Breathe In*, Crossroad Arts (Mackay). *Breathe In* is a multimedia performance work developed by Crossroad Arts exploring themes of isolation, connection and survival as experienced by people with disability. Photo: Leah McLean Photography

Consultation

In partnership with the **Department** of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services, Arts Queensland consulted with more than 200 people of diverse cultural backgrounds and disabilities. This included representatives from arts organisations, disability service providers, peak bodies, education providers, Local Government authorities and independent arts practice.

Consultation included:

- roundtable sessions in Cairns, Brisbane, Townsville, Mackay and Toowoomba
- structured interviews with individuals and organisations working in arts and disability
- engagement with the Queensland Disability Advisory Council (QDAC).

Themes identified through consultation included:

- co-designed and evidence informed approaches
- awareness raising and challenging misperceptions about arts and disability
- regional-specific approaches that build on strengths and acknowledge unique needs and opportunities
- accessibility of funding programs and processes for artists and arts workers
- access to inclusive workplaces, events and performances for artists, arts workers and audiences
- professional skills, career development and leadership opportunities for people with disability
- support for d/Deaf and disabled artists and arts workers to lead and present new works of scale
- profile-raising opportunities for artists with disability, including the need for national and international opportunities
- unique and additional costs experienced by artists and arts workers with disability due to specialised equipment, travel or support workers.

Arts and Disability in Queensland at a glance

People with disability are involved with arts and culture in Queensland as professional artists, arts and cultural workers, community participants and audience members.

- There are almost 1.2 million Queenslanders with disability, making up 23% of the state's population.¹
- d/Deaf and disabled artists and arts workers are underrepresented in the arts and cultural sector, representing less than 9% of Australia's professional arts worker population and 3% of arts and cultural leadership roles.²
- 56% of Queenslanders with disability attended the arts in person (compared to 68% of all Queenslanders) during 2022 and 42% believed there were plenty of opportunities for them to get involved in cultural and creative experiences.³
- Arts Queensland provides support towards the core operational and programming costs of three arts and disability-focused organisations. It also provides awards and project funding to create, present and tour new work.
- There is opportunity to increase the 7% representation (since 2022) of successful applicants who identify as having disability.
- Peer assessment panels, which provide expert assessment of Arts Queensland funding applications, have diverse representation, with 14% of peers identifying as having disability.
- In recent years, the State's leading cultural and collecting institutions and companies have increased their delivery of disabled-led and accessible programs and works.
- More arts companies are partnering with disability service providers and peak bodies to provide opportunities for Queenslanders with Parkinson's, brain trauma, vision impairment, dementia, autism and sensory needs to participate in arts experiences.
- Disabled-led work by Queensland artists and organisations is gaining national recognition, receiving awards and changing how arts and cultural work is being created and presented.



Photo caption Chloe Wigg, *Tangalooma*, acrylic on wooden panel. Chloe Wigg is a fluid impressionist Queensland-based artist. Her works celebrate the joy and beauty in everyday life, as seen through the lens of someone with an invisible disability. Image courtesy Chloe Wigg

The opportunity

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games present Queensland with an extraordinary opportunity to showcase our unique stories, arts and culture to a global audience. The lead up period provides time to supercharge careers, lift the profile of Queensland's arts and cultural experiences and create cultural leadership opportunities for Queensland artists and arts workers with disability.

Unlimited, a commissioning and producing company in the United Kingdom, is a widely-recognised legacy of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. It continues to support and promote ambitious new work by d/Deaf and disabled artists for local and international audiences.

As we prepare for Brisbane 2032, this Plan will build on existing actions in *Grow 2022-2026*. It will support a core pillar of the *Elevate 2042 Legacy Strategy*, advancing accessibility and empowering people with disability, building a society where people with disability can realise their ambitions and participate fully in the community.

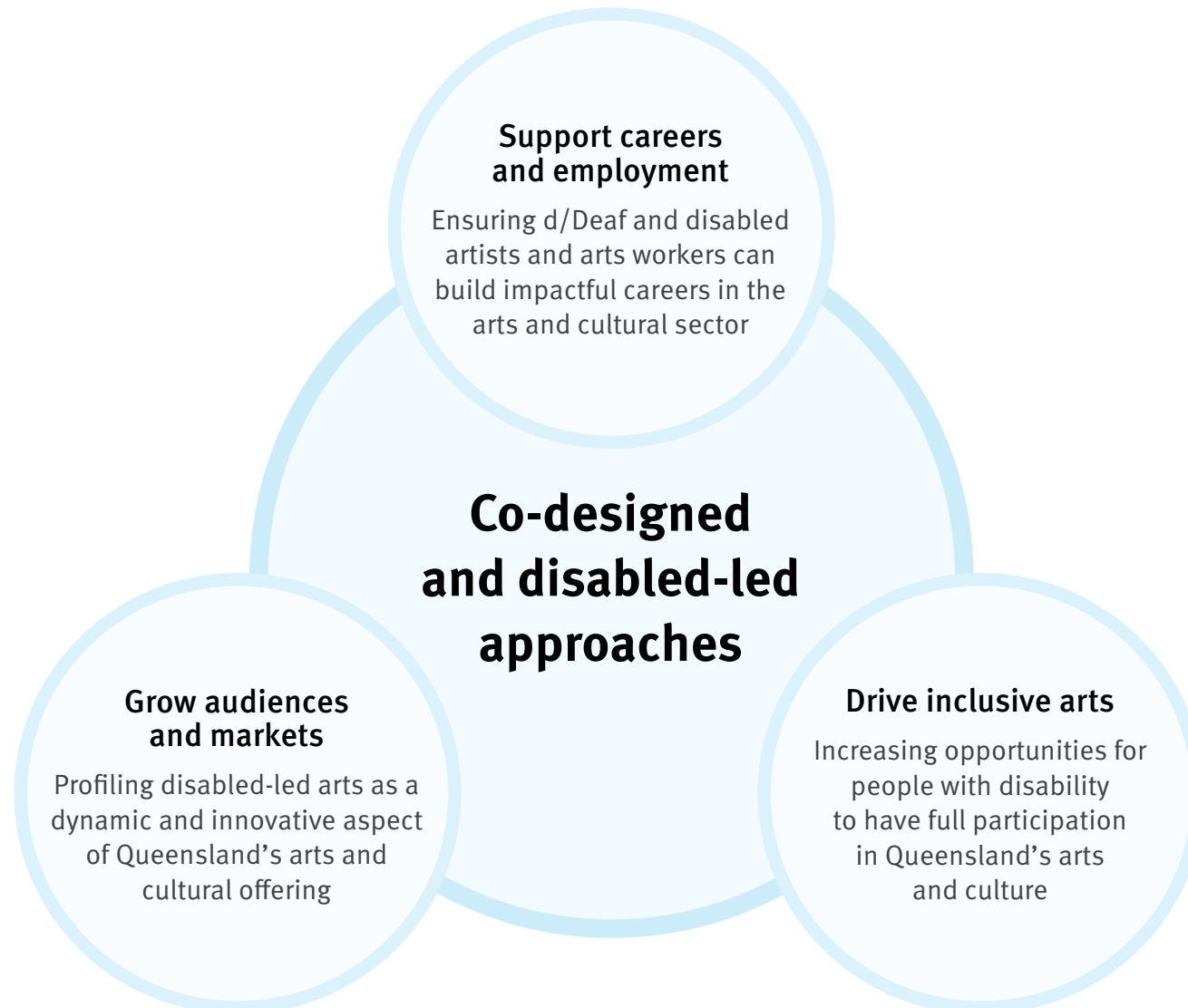
This Plan takes inspiration from these initiatives. It works to unlock a shared ambition for change within and through arts and cultural work that reflects the stories, talents and leadership of people with disability.



Photo caption Chris Dyke and the Dancenorth Australia ensemble in *Lighting the Dark* (2024). Photo: Amber Haines

Arts and Disability Plan 2024-2026 priorities

The Plan focuses on strengthening Queensland arts and culture through the leadership of people with disability. With co-designed and disabled-led approaches at the core, the following three priorities respond to consultation and deliver on *Creative Together* priorities.



Support careers and employment

d/Deaf and disabled artists and arts workers face distinct challenges in securing support to develop new work and access career development and employment opportunities in the arts, cultural and creative sector. To ensure the creative workforce in Queensland represents diverse perspectives, skills and talent, it is crucial that people with disability are represented across the breadth of roles in the sector.

Actions in this priority area are focused on increasing disabled artists' and arts workers' professional participation in the broader sector along with fostering a stronger arts and disability sector in Queensland.

Actions

- 1** Establish a new fund for d/Deaf and disabled artists to create ambitious new work and collaborations
- 2** Partner with the arts and cultural sector and government to grow skills and employment opportunities for artists and arts workers, including in leadership and governance roles
- 3** Raise awareness of the enhancements and improvement required to make workplaces more inclusive

Drive inclusive arts

All Queenslanders have the right to creative and cultural expression and engagement. Accessible and inclusive programming occurs in the Queensland arts and cultural sector, however more work is required to strengthen and integrate these approaches across programming, funding, policy, infrastructure and workplaces.

Actions in this priority area aim to reduce barriers to access and grow opportunities for people with disability to engage fully in Queensland's arts and cultural life. Key to this change is ensuring cultural practices in the State are informed, developed and implemented considering the needs of and by d/Deaf and disabled audiences, participants and creative workers.

Actions

- 4** Establish a Queensland Arts and Disability Panel to inform and strengthen an inclusive future for arts, culture and creativity in Queensland
- 5** Make Arts Queensland funding programs and processes more accessible, ensuring disabled-led expertise in design and assessment
- 6** Partner with all levels of government and the arts sector to increase accessibility of cultural infrastructure
- 7** Grow opportunities for people with disability to engage with arts and cultural programming in partnership with government, industry and philanthropists



*“It’s mind-blowing –
when you do something
that really works – it
changes perceptions –
not just audiences, but
producers and artists,
backstage crew”*

Disabled independent artist

Photo caption Deaf Indigenous Dance Group, Club Undercover, Undercover Artist Festival 2023. The Festival is a biennial disability-led performing arts festival. Photo: Masimba Sasa

Grow audiences and markets

The representation of people with disability on our screens, stages and in gallery spaces raises awareness of the creative work produced by d/Deaf and disabled artists and artswomen. It reflects the diversity of Queensland communities and helps challenge misunderstanding around disability.

Raising the profile of quality disabled-led work, including ensuring its presence in key marketplaces, will support the careers of artists with disability and grow new audiences and markets for their work.

Actions in this priority area focus on increasing the profile and demand for professional arts work by d/Deaf and disabled Queensland artists and arts workers.

Actions

- 8** Partner with Queensland's leading arts and cultural institutions and companies to elevate disabled-led work and programming
- 9** Grow touring opportunities that connect schools, communities and audiences in regional Queensland with the work and stories of d/Deaf and disabled professional artists and companies
- 10** Celebrate and promote Queensland disabled-led work that can grow audiences and markets nationally and internationally



“When inclusion is at the forefront, everyone is a winner. When one group is included, others benefit too”

Community arts organisation

Photo caption Karen Lee Roberts, Joel Lago and Leanne Beer (Auslan Interpreter) *Wilbur the Optical Whale*. Indelabilityarts. *Wilbur the Optical Whale* is an interactive and accessible performance for children, celebrating difference and exploring themes of bullying and acceptance. Photo: Nick Morrissey

Next steps

Implementation of the Plan will be led by Arts Queensland and overseen by an Arts and Disability Panel, which will be established as a priority.

The Panel will play a central role in informing the development of Arts Queensland programs and initiatives. It will also identify opportunities that build positive outcomes for artists, arts and cultural workers, participants and audiences with disability.

Implementation of the Plan will be monitored, and learnings and outcomes shared on the Arts Queensland website (arts.qld.gov.au).



Photo caption Martin Edge, *Two City Cats* 2024, acrylic on canvas, 30x60cm. Image courtesy of the artist and Anthea Polson Art

Endnotes

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024), *Disability, Ageing and Carers Australia: Summary of Findings* Retrieved from Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2022 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)

² Hadley, Bree (2022), *Disability and the Arts, Creative, and Cultural Industries in Australia*. Australian Academy of the Humanities. Report for the Australian Council of Learned Academies retrieved from https://acola.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/AAH-ACOLA-DSS-Final-220502_updated.pdf

³ Creative Australia (2023), *Creating Value: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey*. Queensland Data tables. Table 1 Live Attendance and Table 6 Creative Participation. Retrieved from https://creative.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/NAPS-2022-Data-Table_QLD.xlsx



Photo caption Aspy Jones is a songwriter from regional Queensland. He writes tunes about his unique perspective on life, good mental health and the difficulties he has faced while learning to live with autism and anxiety. Photo: Chris C Imagery



The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

If you have difficulty understanding this publication and need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS National) on telephone 131 450 and ask them to contact the department on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

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