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Disability Inclusion and Access Planning Guide for LGBTI+ Organisations

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Organisation:

Date Created:

Review Date:

"To create an action plan for an organisation is one thing, to create an action plan that lives, breathes, is respected and embedded in the culture and practices of an organisation is another. In the former, you can download a template, put some organisation specifics in and send to employees. In the latter, it takes more investment of our time and our hearts. A disability action plan keeps organisations safe and on track for providing access, which is what the law requires."

WHAT IS A DISABILITY ACTION PLAN?

A Disability Action Plan (DAP) or Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) sets out the goals for an organisation to better support inclusion and access for people with disability.

Organisations use a plan to highlight focus areas they want to work on. Within these focus areas are clear actions aimed at increasing access and inclusion. Businesses have the option to lodge their plan with the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Why Should Our Organisation Have A Plan Around Disability Inclusion?

There are many benefits to having a Disability Action Plan in your organisation, some of these benefits include:

- Organisations are inherently set up to meet the needs of people who are able-bodied and neuro-typical. Given this is the case, LGBTI+ organisations need to proactively work to identify ways to reduce these barriers.
- LGBTI+ people already face increased barriers when it comes to accessing safe and secure workplaces. Taking action to reduce barriers within LGBTI+ and disability communities is an important part of the work we do to improve health outcomes.
- A plan that supports people with disability to shape how access and inclusion initiatives are actioned.
- A plan starts the conversation around what the organisation needs to do to improve access and inclusion.
- A plan provides measurable actions that are allocated across different levels of the organisation leading to joint responsibility for the plan.
- A plan provides accountability and turns good intentions into tangible actions.
- A plan sends a message that the organisation is serious about access and inclusion.
- A plan provides a point of reference to reflect on and celebrates progress.
- A plan starts an ongoing discussion on disability inclusion in the organisation.
- A plan engages staff and external stakeholders to think about disability and inclusion as a priority area.
- When access requirements are considered and then met, everyone in the workplace benefits.

"It's one thing to say our organisation has a culture of goodwill around disability access and inclusion, but that often does not mean much if it isn't followed up by real measurable actions"

What Does A Successful Plan Look Like?

There are many ways you can approach the creation of a disability inclusion plan. To create a plan that makes a difference it is important to ensure that the responsibility of the plan is not left to one individual to champion its implementation. Successful plans are those which include responsibility across the organisation, especially at the upper management level.

"I think that the success of a disability inclusion plan is so reliant on a champion, and champions either burn out or move on. Champions may not be connected to the right power levels within an organisation, so as much as they might really care, they just might not be able to influence it enough."

Another driver of success is dependent on the level of consultation organisations have with their staff and service users. When organisations map out the time to do thoughtful, considered consultation, the plan is more likely to create change in the areas that matter most.

We recommend that organisations consider using a co-design method of working. Information on co-design has been included in this resource.

Finally, a successful plan is one that does not fall off the radar. The importance of being accountable and transparent around your plan can make a huge difference in it being something that holds weight and feels meaningful. This means considering publishing your plan on your website and ensuring that all reviews take place. Consider adding the plan as a standing agenda item at management meetings and organisational wide meetings.

"In my experience, going through the process of doing a plan is great...It's a living document that changes as the organisation changes"

DISABILITY INCLUSION PLAN OVERVIEW

To create a successful accessibility plan, we recommend that these key areas are addressed at the beginning of your plan.

Vision Statement

Map out your organisation's vision statement specific to the plan. Think about why your organisation wants to do this work. What do you want to achieve through approaching disability inclusion in a strategic and planned way?



What do you want to achieve through approaching disability inclusion in a strategic and planned way?

Information About Disability

Most plans provide an overview on disability and how disability is understood and defined. Discussion around the social model of disability as well as a discussion around the intersection of being LGBTI+ and having disability would be recommended. Outline the issues and experiences of this intersection and why it is important to create inclusive LGBTI+ organisations. You can refer to our **Bringing Your Full Self to Work** document to help guide you.

Legislative Framework

What legislation is relevant to the work you are doing to increase access and inclusion? It is important to note that actions outlined in your plan may fall under legislation relating to discrimination and human rights and are not examples of opt-in best practice but things that you are obliged to do as an employer. You can refer to our **Pathway to Access Recruitment** document for more information.

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Bringing your full self to work template

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The Pathway to Accessible Recruitment

What legislation is relevant to the work you are doing to increase access and inclusion?

Development Of The Plan

It is important to outline how your organisation's plan was developed. Who was involved in the creation of the plan? What consultation process took place? Consider using a co-design method from the very start of the planning process. You can find out more about co-design and what it involves in this resource.

Resources

What resources will you need to ensure that the action items in the plan are met? How might these resources be found? Who is responsible for coordinating the needed resources? What contingencies could be put into place of these resources are not available?

Accountability

How is the organisation going to stay accountable to the work? Whose responsibility will it be to raise issues of accountability? How can the review of the plan be embedded in current work practices e.g. meetings, and supervision? How will the plan be communicated to employees and the communities the organisation serves? What is going to be done to ensure the plan is accessible for people with disability?

Reporting

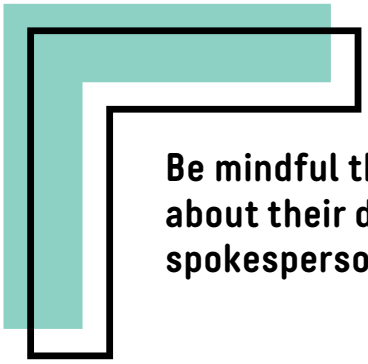
How does the organisation plan to report outcomes from the plan? Where will this information be available? How can we build in transparency around how we are tracking with the plan to those people we service in the community? Do you plan on formally lodging the plan with the Australian Human Rights Commission? You can refer to the **Recommended Resources** at the bottom of this page for more information on this option.

Measuring Outcomes

How will you determine if the actions have resulted in real change? How do you plan to measure outcomes of the actions stated in the plan?

Welcome Note

You may want to add a section welcoming your audience to the plan, providing context, and updating on your progress to date or progress since your last review. Including a short introduction from the CEO is something which can personalise the plan further.



Be mindful that people who have been open about their disability may not want to be the spokesperson for the plan.

Real Stories

Where possible, we recommend including real stories of people in your workplace who have been part of the development of the plan or who have benefited from the implementation of the actions in previous plans. If you are early on in your inclusion journey, you could share some stories from staff around why they think having a plan is important. Be mindful that people who have been open about their disability may not want to be the spokesperson for the plan.

CO-DESIGNING A DISABILITY INCLUSION PLAN

Co-designing your Disability and Inclusion Action Plan is a key step in creating a plan that has the most impact for your organisation and your employees. Co-design reaches beyond the idea of having one-off consultations and moves towards a method of putting people with lived experience at the centre of the planning and design process.

"An external survey of a wide range of stakeholders will allow for more effective feedback and guide the formation of the DIAP"



Four Pillars Of Inclusion: Framework for the Employable Q Toolkit



Four Pillars Survey Questions

It is important to ensure that there is representation in this team from all levels of management.

There are many ways you can approach co-design when creating a DIAP. We recommend that you find out where your organisation sits across the **Four Pillars of Inclusion**. You can use the questions in the **Four Pillars of Inclusion Survey** attached to give you an idea on what you need to work on in your organisation. Alternatively, you could develop a survey of your own to monitor your progress across the four pillars of inclusion.

Once this information has been gathered, we would recommend establishing a co-design team of employees across the organisation. It is important to ensure that there is representation in this team from all levels of management. It is also important not to assume that people in your organisation who have lived experience of disability will want to drive this initiative. Be inclusive and respectful when you invite people to engage in this work.

The table on page 12 will give you some ideas around what co-design is and the key steps that lead to a positive co-design experience.

What Is Co-Design?

- Co-design is a process used to create, develop and evaluate products, systems and services.
- Co-design is not a linear process, instead it is a process of continually revising, reviewing and refining the work.
- Co-design takes time. When you take the time to really listen and respond to the people in your organisation you will have a much greater chance of the work being meaningful.
- Co-design Involves on-going evaluation of the content being created.
- Co-design is data driven and involves consultation with professionals, people with lived experience and their support networks.
- Co-design must take place in an environment where people feel safe to share their ideas. Creating a safe space that supports constructive conversations is vital for all involved.
- We recommend engaging in disability inclusion training before any co-design process is commenced to ensure that people with disability are not having to overcompensate for low levels of knowledge in this space.



For every staff member to buy into a DIAP, internal consultations, which double up as capacity building, is a great way to start socialising accessibility and inclusion at all levels and formulate internal priorities according to capacity. From front line workers to executive."

CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR CO-DESIGN

Talking about disability inclusion in the workplace can bring up different feelings for different people. LGBTI+ people with disability may have had difficult experiences navigating ableist, homophobic, and/or transphobic environments over their careers. The conversation can be understandably personal and can be emotionally charged. There is often an expectation that people with disability should drive the implementation of any disability inclusion projects, or that LGBTI+ people should champion LGBTI+ inclusion initiatives.

Therefore, it is important to ensure that before you engage in a co-design process, there should have been recent disability and LGBTI+ awareness and inclusion training provided to all staff members, including upper management and HR staff. You can refer to our **Training as a Tool for LGBTI+ and Disability Inclusion** document for recommended training providers.

This is the best way to ensure that people in your organisation have a foundational level of disability and LGBTI+ awareness before engaging in organisational change and actions to increase inclusion. The following steps could also be undertaken to ensure that the DIAP is done in a way that is safe, supportive, and inclusive.



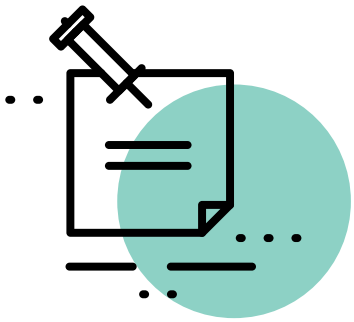
LGBTI+ people with disability may have had difficult experiences navigating ableist, homophobic, and/or transphobic environments over their careers.

Tips For A Safe Co-Design Experience

Once you have invited people to work in a co-design team you may want to consider these ideas to help ensure that people feel safe when sharing their ideas and opinions in a group setting.

Ensure that you have considered everyone's access requirements the group and have spoken to each person to determine what they need to be able to contribute in a meaningful way. You can refer to the **Index of Access Requirements** to learn more about access requirements.

1. Schedule an initial meeting to establish clear communication around expectations, roles, and responsibilities.
2. Spend time developing a group agreement that identifies the values of the group and the expected behaviours.
3. Review this group agreement and update it throughout the co-design process.
4. Have a plan around what steps would be taken if the group agreement is not respected by group members.
5. Have a clear understanding around each person's role in the group. Ensure that everyone is aware of their role and responsibilities throughout the co-design process. Sometimes it may help to review this every few meetings.
6. Have a clear plan around decision-making. How are decisions made? Who makes the final decisions around the DIAP content?
7. Offer staff members with psychological support throughout the co-design process. This may be through debriefing, supervision or an EAP service.
8. If people want to provide their feedback in another way, talk to them about how they want to go about this.



TIP: For more information on co-design please refer to the resources page at the end of this document.

IDENTIFY YOUR COMMITMENTS

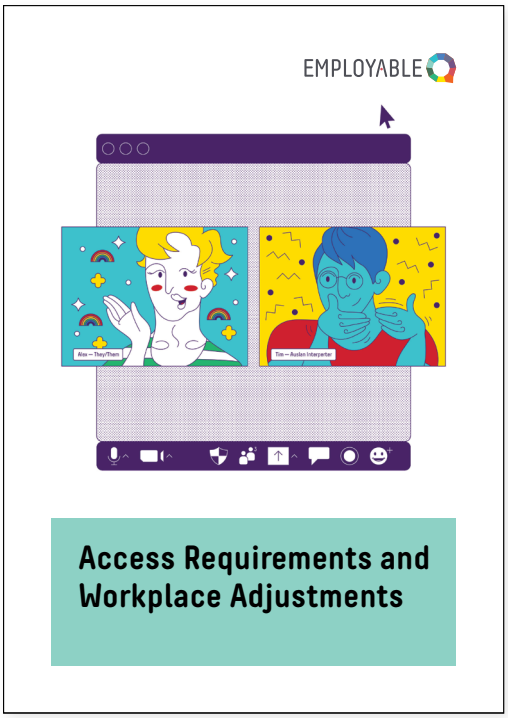
There are a variety of ways to capture your priority areas. Explore the range of examples in this resource, identify your priority areas, and use the Disability Inclusion Plan Template to document the actions you will take.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL ACCESSIBILITY – THE WORKPLACE, EVENTS AND FACILITIES

"Open offices are sometimes okay, but are often not accessible from a sensory perspective. I really like having a wall behind me – because I feel safe, I don't want to be hit like I was once at a railway station. So, being able to talk about that and say, I really don't like people being able to walk behind me, because when you scare me it's going to take me a long time to calm down....It takes me a lot of energy to not appear as anxious as I feel all the time."

Related Toolkit Items

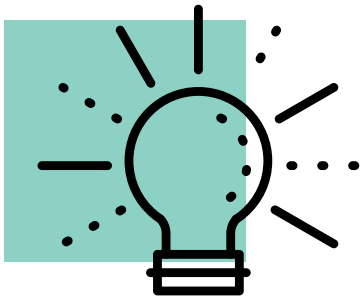
- Index of Access Requirements
- Access and Adjustment Request Form
- Guide to Accessible Workplace Events



Access Requirements and Workplace Adjustments

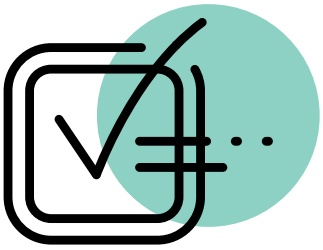
Documenting your commitment - examples to review

Commitment	Benefit	Action Required	Who is Responsible	Timeframe
A workplace which is accessible for people with disability from a physical and sensory perspective.	More people with disability will work with our organisation. We can have guests with disability come to the workplace for meetings. We are demonstrating the importance of providing access to the community. We can reach more people in the community.	Conduct audit of premises around accessibility of building – This will include thinking about physical access and the sensory environment. Get 3 quotes Select quote and organise audit Review recommendations and reflect these actions in this plan.	Business Manager	Completed by 31st of March 2021
To implement gender neutral and accessible bathroom facilities	Employees and people who visit our workplace feel safe and welcome.	Review current bathroom set-up Brainstorm changes in consultation with staff Determine best next steps Create Action Plan	Program Manager	Completed by 15th July 2021



BENEFIT: Employees and people who visit our workplace feel safe and welcome.

Commitment	Benefit	Action Required	Who is Responsible	Timeframe
	Barrier: We don't have a process in place for staff to highlight their access requirements. Benefit: If we create a process then staff will feel more supported around requesting supports. There will also be more clarity around this rather than putting the onus on the staff member to have to raise it.	Send all staff members the Access and Adjustment Request Form. Re-send the Access and Adjustment Request Form to staff members at least every 6 months to see if there have been any changes to their access requirements or workplace adjustments.		



BENEFIT: If we create a process then staff will feel more supported around requesting supports. There will also be more clarity around this rather than putting the onus on the staff member to have to raise it.

2. ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

"Without access and inclusion, we can't reach our full potential. Having access requirements means we cannot contribute without removing the barriers that are in our way to contribute. This Is the social model of disability. You will never see our full selves; you will never know us and our offerings. There is no inclusion without access. We cannot talk about inclusion in any meaningful way without securing access, it is not possible. So for example, if I don't get the meeting agenda in an electronic format my access requirements are not met, I am not included in the meeting and even worse, symbolically I am not valued as an equal human, and subsequently, I am not given the opportunity to participate equally."

Related Toolkit Items

- Index of Access Requirements

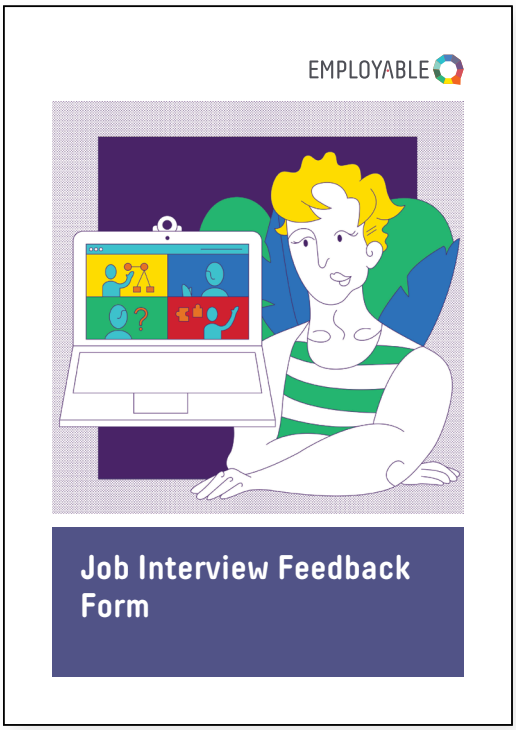
Barrier and Benefit	Action Required	Who is Responsible	Timeframe
Barrier: Our social media posts have not been inclusive to people with disabilities, but we don't know where to start. **Benefit**: By being inclusive in our communication we reach more people of the LGBTI community. We can offer more support and engage different perspectives in our work.	Set time in the calendar to learn and practice accessible communication strategies. Use the **Index of Access Requirements** to find out where to go to find out more about accessible communication. Make a list of things that the organisation can implement now and into the future	Communications officer	Completed by April 2021

3. SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

"Organisations need to show a genuine enthusiasm around creating a work environment that prioritises wellbeing for all employees. A safe workplace culture is one where you feel comfortable to ask for what you need. This may look like flexible working hours or working from home. In most cases this leads to increased performance and employees who feel respected and valued for who they are."

Related Toolkit Items

- Accessible Job Advertisement Template
- Pathway to Accessible Recruitment
- Index of Access Requirements
- Job Interview Feedback Form
- Access and Adjustment Request Form
- Engaging with Disability Employment Services



Barrier and Benefit	Action Required	Who is Responsible	Timeframe
Barrier: We had some feedback that our job interview process was not accessible and we want to do something to improve this. **Benefit:** More people applying for our jobs and more representation within the organisation from people with disability.	Look at the **Pathway to Accessible Recruitment** to explore what recruitment strategies we may be able to implement to encourage people with disability to apply for up-coming positions. Look at the **Accessible Job Advertisement Template** to create accessible job advertisements for upcoming vacancies. Send candidates the **Access and Adjustment Request Form** prior to their interview. Send candidates the **Job Interview Feedback Form** after they have participated in a job interview. Follow the guide to **Engaging with Disability Employment Services** to help develop relationship with DES providers in our area.	HR Manager	Completed April 2020

Recommendation:

Increasing employment of people with disability should be included in this section as an on-going action. If the number of employees with disability have not changed or have reduced, this should prompt a discussion around why this has been the case at the time of review.

4. ACCESS TO THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY

"If people don't have people with disabilities, or LGBTIQ+ people at their services, it's not because they don't want to engage. It is because there are barriers that organisations are not aware of. Because often people are like, "we don't need that because there's no one like that here."

Related Toolkit Items

- EQ Event Resource Guide
- Guide to Accessible Workplace Events

Barrier and Benefit	Action Required	Who is Responsible	Timeframe
Barrier: We are about to put on a virtual launch for a few new products / projects but don't know how to make sure it is inclusive. **Benefit:** We will be able to reach more of our LGBTI+ community members. People who have disability will feel included in the work we are doing.	Review the **Guide to Accessible Workplace Events** Talk about how we will go about including these learnings in the design of the Launch. Create a Plan for the Launch which is inclusive	Project Coordinator and Program Manager	By June 2021

5. PROMOTING INCLUSION IN FUNDING AGREEMENTS / FUNDED PROJECTS

"Resources are a big issue for small organisations and part of the problem is that this gets used as an excuse for not taking action...things like having Auslan interpreters, we have to build those into a funding grants, because small organisations will struggle to find extra money. And yet, it is absolutely critical that we do those things. A lot of accessibility methods are often seen still seen as additional extras rather than essential requirements"

Related Toolkit Items

- Index of Access Requirements

Barrier and Benefit	Action Required	Who is Responsible	Timeframe
Barrier: We are about to apply for a new grant, but we are unsure what to do to make it more inclusive. **Benefit:** Consideration of inclusion at the design phase of a project will ensure that there are sufficient funds allocated. This will result in being able to reach more of the LGBTI+ community and will increase engagement with our services.	Think about each activity in the project plan and the costs that may be involved to increase access and inclusion. Refer to the EmployableQ Toolkit when project planning and writing the grant proposal.	Project Officer	June 2021

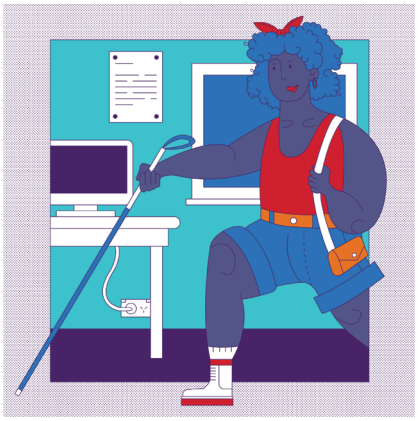
6. INCREASE CULTURAL SAFETY OF THE ORGANISATION AROUND THE LGBTI/ DISABLITY INTERSECTION FOR EMPLOYEES AND SERVICE USERS

"This time around, I'm doing a diligence that I haven't done before, I'm asking people "what do you know of this team? What do you know about the workplace culture? I am checking it for the safety of me, rather than checking if it is a good mission and if they get stuff done. Whereas before, the priority was that I wanted to work somewhere where we're going to get cool stuff done and where we're going to make an impact."

Related Toolkit Items

- Training as a Tool for LGBTI+ and Disability Inclusion
- Bringing your Full Self to Work

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Bringing your full self to work template

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Training as a tool for LGBTI+ and disability inclusion

Barrier and Benefit	Action Required	Who is Responsible	Timeframe
Barrier: Our organisation has not had any disability inclusion training for a few years now and we have lots of new staff members who have never had any training at all. **Benefit:** All staff will have up to date knowledge of disability inclusion and will be able to start to incorporate that knowledge into all programs and services.	Refer to **Training as a Tool for LGBTI+ and Disability Inclusion document** to identify training for the organisation around disability inclusion. Review **Training as a Tool for LGBTI+ and Disability Inclusion document** Select 2 training providers Obtain quotes Book in training	Program Manager	By August 2021
Barrier: Some staff members joining our organisation do not have foundational knowledge of the LGBTI+ disability intersection. **Benefit:** We can be confident that all of our staff members have some knowledge about this topic to draw on. It will also increase the likelihood of staff incorporating disability issues / barriers into their workplans, projects and services.	Include the **Bringing Your Full Self to Work document** into all induction processes. Review the **Bringing Your Full Self to Work document** and include it in your organisation's induction resources for new staff as essential reading.	Program Manager	By March 2021

Review the Bringing Your Full Self to Work document and include it in your organisation's induction resources for new staff as essential reading.

REVIEW OF YOUR DISABLIITY ACTION PLAN



"A DIAP is helpful but there needs to be a plan so that it remains on the agenda and is not reliant on particular staff members championing it"

1. What actions were achieved at the time of review?

2. What impact has this work had on the organisation over the past 'X' months?

3. What items are incomplete?

4. What prevented them from being actioned?

5. What worked well over the past ‘X’ months?

6. What could we have done differently to increase the impact of the plan?

DIAP Resources

1. Australian Human Rights Commission: **https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/action-plans-and-action-plan-guides**
1. Australian Network on Disability: **https://www.and.org.au**
1. Job Access Disability Inclusion Plan Template: **https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/sites/default/files/3.2%20JobAccess%20Disability%20Inclusion%20Action%20Plan%20Template.pdf**
1. Local Government NSW DIAP Template and Guide: **https://www.lgnsw.org.au/files/imce-uploads/127/template-standalone-diap.pdf**

DISABILITY INFORMATION BY STATE

NSW

- Disability Inclusion Action Plans (FACS): **https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/advisory-councils/disability/inclusion-plans**
- Instructions and Checklist for submitting a DIAP: **https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/advisory-councils/disability/inclusion-plans/chapters/submitting-diaps**

Victoria

- DSS Disability Action Planning: **https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disability-action-plans**

QUEENSLAND

- **https://www.qld.gov.au/disability**

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- **https://dhs.sa.gov.au/services/disability**

TASMANIA

- **https://www.communities.tas.gov.au/disability-community-services**

NORTHERN TERRITORY

- **https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/disability-services**

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- **http://disability.wa.gov.au/business-and-government1/business-and-government/disability-access-and-inclusion-plans/**

DIAP/ DAP EXAMPLES

- Australian Human Rights Commission Published Plans: **https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/register-disability-discrimination-act-action-plans**

CO-DESIGN RESOURCES

- Co-design for Community Inclusion NDS: **https://www.nds.org.au/images/events/files/huddle_report.pdf**
- Western Australian Council of Social Science (WACOSS) Co-design Toolkit: **https://wacoss.org.au/library/wacoss-co-design-toolkit/**
- SmallFire Co-Design Resources: **http://www.smallfire.co.nz/codesign/**
- People with Disability Western Australia (PWDWA) Training Toolkit: For organisations working with people with disability: **https://www.pwdwa.org/documents/connect_with_me/co-design-toolkit/index.htm**

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