

Accessible Arts

Equity and excellence in arts, culture and disability



2025

Annual Report

Contents

- 3. Chairperson's Message
- 4. CEO's Message
- 5. About Us
- 7. Our Team
- 8. Key Statistics 2025
- 9. Career Advancement
- 10. Audience Development
- 12. Community Engagement
- 13. Testimonials



We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work across NSW and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



We acknowledge the support of our principal funding body, the NSW Government, through Create NSW.



Chairperson's Message

On behalf of the Board of Accessible Arts NSW, I am pleased to present this snapshot of the impact and growth achieved throughout 2025 under the guidance and stewardship of an exceptional team, led by our CEO.

As we all recognise, the past year has been a challenging one for the arts sector. Funding constraints have affected many organisations, while public discourse around artistic freedom, alongside scrutiny of the value of creative practice, has underscored the ongoing need to advocate for the essential contribution of the arts in our society.

Despite this landscape, this Annual Report reflects a year of resilience, progress and meaningful achievement. These achievements have enabled us to create even more opportunities for artists with disability and those who are D/deaf to develop and share their talents, pursue career pathways, and access high-quality training and professional development.

These artist and outcome-focused results are made possible through the continued confidence of both artists and funders in our organisation's leadership, productivity and vision for sector development.

Our program delivery remains robust and impactful. Initiatives such as Access Ideas and Insights – Accessible Podcasts, supported by the City of Sydney, Create NSW and Macro Impact Consulting, marked an important step forward in accessible content creation.

We are fortunate to work alongside an extraordinary network of partners who share our commitment to access and inclusion. These collaborations continue to strengthen our impact and extend opportunities across the sector.

As we look ahead to 2026, we mark an extraordinary milestone - our 40th year of operation. This anniversary is a testament to the vision, dedication and resilience of all who have contributed to our journey. It is also a moment to recognise that we enter this new chapter stronger than ever.

I extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Board members, the Finance and Risk Subcommittee, and most especially our dedicated operations team, led by our indomitable CEO, Liz Martin. Your commitment, expertise and passion have driven outstanding achievements.

In reflecting on 2025, I am both proud of what we have accomplished and confident in our future. Together, we will continue to champion accessibility, empower artists, and shape a more inclusive arts sector in the years ahead.

Jaci Armstrong
Chairperson



CEO's Message

Over the past 12 months, Accessible Arts has continued to expand our reach and deepen our impact across the arts and culture, screen and games sectors. This year, 3,752 people attended our events, with a further 1,459 participants attending our 69 training sessions. We built partnerships with 231 organisations, including 40 new collaborations, and supported more than 400 artists with disability and those who are d/Deaf.

This work is only possible through strong collaboration. Thanks to the ongoing support of our valued partners, donors, allies and supporters, who have continued to champion and elevate the creative, cultural and social contributions of artists with disability or who are d/Deaf, across NSW.

During 2025, our Access Ideas and Insights series reached more than 2,500 people across five events, both online and in person. Delivered in partnership with leading cultural institutions, the series explored topics such as Wellbeing Through Art, The Emerging Artist's Toolkit and Disability Leadership.

Alongside this, we developed the pilot, Access Ideas and Insights Podcast, supported by City of Sydney, Create NSW and Macro Impact Consulting. This new platform has enabled us to explore key issues in greater depth while ensuring content remains engagingly accessible, particularly for d/Deaf audiences.

We provided meaningful professional development opportunities to over 400 artists through initiatives including the Bundanon Residency, Next Level

Creative Mentorships, Createability Internship Program, Ripple Disability and Culturally Diverse Internship Program, the comedy tour Are You Pulling My Leg?, and our Advance Your Career series.

Our consultancy services continued to deliver strong impact, including the development of comprehensive Disability Inclusion Action Plans and the delivery of Walk and Talk Access Audits. We partnered with a wide range of arts and screen organisations to strengthen accessibility across programs, processes and audience engagement, with demand for our training continuing to grow.

Collaboration remains at the heart of all we do. We believe that meaningful, lasting change is achieved by working together. Access and inclusion are shared responsibilities, and through working together, we can work to ensure the arts are truly for everyone.

We sincerely thank our partners, whose collaboration is instrumental in bringing our work to life. Finally, my deep thanks to the Accessible Arts team and our community of trainers, consultants, advisors and board members. Your leadership, vision and commitment are not only shaping our work today, but helping to define a more inclusive and equitable future for the arts and screen.

Liz Martin
CEO



About Us

Proudly disability-led, Accessible Arts is the peak organisation for arts, culture and disability in NSW.

Our Mission

We advance the rights of, and opportunities for, people with disability and/or who are Deaf to develop and sustain professional careers in the arts and have equitable access to arts and culture across NSW through a multitude of disability-led programs, services and partnerships.

Our Vision

Equity and excellence in arts, culture and disability.

Our Values

Equity



Excellence



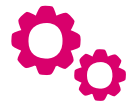
Diversity



Creativity



Partnership



Our Stakeholders



We provide a range of programs and services focusing on sector development and engagement, career advancement and authentic sector leadership.

- Creative Initiatives
- Internships & Mentorships
- Artist Residencies
- Professional Development Workshops
- Leadership Development Programs
- Industry Education & Advocacy
- Community & Industry Forums
- Networking Events
- Advisory Services

Our Team

Management

Liz Martin	Chief Executive Officer
Libby Forsythe	Operations Manager
Amy Claire Mills	Arts Development Manager
Rachel Musgrove	Marketing & Communications Manager
Daniel Jaramillo	Office Administrator
Dale Hollingsworth	Financial Consultant
Michelle Tear	Training & Project Coordinator
Bedelia Lowrenčev	Project Coordinator - Ripple Program (Jan - Dec)
Ava Lagoon	Project Coordinator - Ripple Program (Dec)

Board

Jaci Armstrong	Chairperson
Kate Lidbetter	Deputy Chairperson (Jan - May)
David Kay	Deputy Chairperson (May - Dec)
Vishwas Singh CA	Treasurer
Alex Jones	Director
David Kay	Director (Jan - May)
Emily Dash	Director (Jan - April)
Fiona Winning	Director (Jan - August)
Alice Anderson	Director
Ursula King	Director (Jan - Sept)
Jeremy Vine	Director (Aug - Dec)
Johanna Garvin	Director (Aug - Dec)

Trainers

Bridie McKim, Anthea Williams, Morwenna Collett, Madeline Stewart, Michelle Tear, Dan Pash, Bernadette Smith, Natalie Thomas, Bedelia Lowrenčev, Cobie Moore, Sarah Korte, Bec Hogan, Amy Mills and Eugenie Lee.

Advisors

Alex Craig, Emily Dash, Christine Johnson, Rebecca McCormack, Laura Osweiler, Marisa Pasicznik Ross, Karen Peacock, Allison Reynolds, Keith Rutherford, Casey Grey, M. Sunflower, Rebecca Scrioli, Narelle Whitham, Kyle Goldfinch, Aimee Huxley, Taskeen Rahman, Elizabeth Page, Shelley Clarke, Lindy Hou and Georgia Chalmers.

Key Statistics 2025

401

individual arts practitioners with disability employed, supported or mentored



3752

event participants



31

events produced or supported



21

arts organisations provided with consulting services



45K

website visitors



69

training sessions delivered



21.5K

social media followers



1459

training participants



632K

social media reach



4.2

Accessible Arts Core Staff (Full-time equivalent)



Career Advancement

Accessible Arts empowers the creativity and careers of artists and arts workers with disability across NSW through a range of professional development opportunities.

Artist Residencies

In partnership with Bundanon, we supported five artists, musicians and writers with disability through valuable week-long residencies. The Bundanon Artist-in-Residence program is the largest of its kind in Australia, and our annual residency initiative is an incredibly valuable creative and career development opportunity for artists with disability.

RIPPLE: Disability and Culturally Diverse Internship Program

Eight people with disability who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse were supported with internships at leading arts organisations. We partnered with Diversity Arts Australia and the Art Gallery of NSW, UTP, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, APRA AMCOS, Powerhouse Museum, Campbelltown Arts Centre and National Portrait Gallery.

Next Level Creative Mentorships

Ten artists received 1:1 support with leading organisations including PYT Fairfield, Windmill Theatre Company, Merrigong Theatre Company, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Gravity & Other Myths, Bell Shakespeare, Penrith Performing and Visual Arts, State Theatre Company of SA, Australian Dance Theatre and Belvoir St Theatre. We expanded this program to include artists from NSW and SA, partnering with Access2Arts (SA) to deliver this program.

Createability Internship Program

We partnered with Create NSW to support this program to upskill screen practitioners with disability and develop strong career pathways. This was delivered in partnership with SBS, ABC, Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, Drama Queen, Erth Visual & Physical Theatre Inc, Milk Crate Theatre, Musica Viva Australia, Performance Space, Sprung Dance Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company and The House That Dan Built.

Comedy Show Tour

We partnered with Arts on Tour and Crips & Creeps to produce a NSW tour of 'Are You Pulling My Leg?' showcasing 13 comedians with disability. This show toured to four venues that were upskilled through disability-led training, upskilling the sector to better understand how to implement access and more confidently employ artists with disability.



Audience Development

In 2025, we expanded our engaging offering of live events while continuing to support critical, equitable online access which champions best-practise digital accessibility. This hybrid approach enabled us to reach diverse and far-reaching audiences, including those from regional areas, who would otherwise be unable to engage with our programs. We also continued facilitating in-person and online training in response to sector demand.

Access Ideas and Insights - Quarterly Panel Discussions

This series was supported by the City of Sydney, Create NSW and Women NSW.

- **Wellbeing Through Art 2025**

Presented in partnership with Art Gallery of NSW

We explored the myriad benefits of art in an engaging exploration of health, wellbeing and diverse creative expression. Through engaging a celebrity keynote speaker, Em Rusciano, we reached new and broader audiences.

- **The Neurodiversity Paradigm in Theatre**

Presented in partnership with Bell Shakespeare

This thought-provoking conversation about how neurodivergent perspectives are reshaping theatre practices, processes and storytelling.

- **The Emerging Artists Toolkit**

Presented in partnership with Chau Chak Wing Museum

Emerging and established artists joined industry specialists to share tips, resources and lived experience on navigating the arts sector.

- **Reclaiming Words**

Presented in partnership with Campbelltown Arts Centre

This event explored how artists with disability, d/Deaf artists, and community leaders are creating new vocabularies that reflect pride, identity, and lived experience.

- **Disability Leadership**

Presented in partnership with the Sydney Opera House

In celebration of International Day of People with Disability, we explored Disability Leadership – a vital transformative force shaping the future of the arts.



Audience Development

In 2025, we also extended our popular Access Ideas and Insights hybrid event series with an accompanying, accessible podcast. Developed in consultation with Macro Impact Consulting and experienced d/Deaf advisors, each episode is Auslan interpreted, captioned, accompanied by audio-described visuals, and released with a full transcript.

Guest speakers included leading experts including artists with disability or who are d/Deaf, alongside cultural sector influencers from across Australia.

Access Ideas and Insights - Accessible Podcasts

This pilot series was supported by the City of Sydney, Create NSW and Macro Impact Consulting. All episodes were recorded in 2025 and the first 3 were released late 2025.

- **Episode 1: Accessible Curation**

Discover how artists and curators are embedding creative access into exhibitions and festivals and how these approaches are cultivating new, diverse audiences.

- **Episode 2: The Future of Disability Storytelling**

We explore how narrative, agency and identity are shaping new possibilities across art forms and genres. Guest speakers share bold ideas and creative insights into how disability storytelling is evolving and where it's headed next.

- **Episode 3: The Neurodiversity Paradigm in Theatre**

This episode is all about reshaping creative processes, storytelling, and rehearsal rooms to celebrate neurodivergent perspectives. We explore what that shift means with three theatre-makers sharing their insights, knowledge and experience.

- **Episodes 4 - 6 to be released 2026**

Episode 4 - Disability Leadership

Episode 5 - Creative Partnerships and Pathways

Episode 6 - Reclaiming Words



Community Engagement

Accessible Arts is proud to provide a vital focal point for community to collaborate, communicate and advocate for advancing arts and disability in NSW. In particular, our free Advance Your Career series explores practical topics and provide insights for artists and arts workers with disability to develop professional knowledge, skills and networks.

Exploring Self-Employment Workshop

We partnered with Ignite Ability to present a workshop which guided participants through practical steps on how to turn creativity into a successful business. This workshop was designed to be accessible and inclusive for artists with disability or who are d/Deaf.

Access Rider Workshop

This workshop provided a practical overview of what an Access Rider is, how to write one, what to ask for and the kind of language to use. The session covered the models of disability, the rights of people with disability or who are d/Deaf, self-advocacy and reasonable adjustments.

Bundanon Residency Information Session

This online information session provided insight into this competitive residency program and the application process, outlining how to prepare a strong application and what people can expect from this unique and accessible opportunity.

Masterclass for Music Practitioners with Disability or who are d/Deaf

This course has been expertly designed to boost confidence through gaining practical knowledge about navigating the music industry. Participants learnt about their rights and responsibilities and how to effectively communicate access requirements.

Comedy & Storytelling Workshop

We partnered with the City of Sydney and Crips and Creeps to present an engaging workshop teaching the basics of storytelling, comedic skills and improvisation.



Testimonials

Access Ideas and Insights

98.7% of Hybrid Event audiences improved knowledge about access and inclusion

"I always learn something from your workshops, and try to apply as much as possible in our workplace. Thank you!"

"Thank you for a great and welcoming event! It was very educational and enjoyable and I really appreciated that something like this was facilitated."

"This was an excellent panel discussion and I really enjoyed the variety of questions and the diversity of the panel guests."

Training feedback:

"The collaborative and knowledgeable advice from Accessible Arts was highly valuable. The trainers created a relaxed, safe space for listening and learning. They were clearly knowledgeable about the creative arts sector and how to build disability confidence and knowledge amongst diverse teams.

Jane Pochon, Corporate Services Manager, Bundanon

Next Level Creative Mentorship Feedback:

"These kinds of partnerships/residencies/mentorships are the life blood of emerging makers and they're not always accessible. And often if they're disability centric they aren't to a professional standard. This partnership was incredibly valuable and yielded immediate professional opportunities."

- Dean Nash, Next Level Creative Mentorship participant

"The mentorship has been incredibly valuable for my professional and creative growth. I was invited into a writer's room for a Stan Original feature film, which was an amazing experience that expanded my understanding of collaboration and story development."

- Lily Drummond, Next Level Creative Mentorship participant

Bundanon Residencies:

"Having time and space for creative development is exceedingly rare and hard to access. It is so important that artists, specifically Deaf/disabled artists, are afforded the right access and contexts to undertake creative development in flexible, collaborative and innovative ways. Thank you for the opportunity."

- Sam McPherson, Artist in Residence

"The residency gave me the opportunity to focus exclusively on my practice as a writer, and to immerse myself in a group with other artists. As an emerging artist, this was an opportunity I hadn't had before, and it was indescribably validating."

- Az Cosgrove, Artist in Residence

Cover: Artist Sam McPherson during Bundanon Artist Residency (photo by Paul Jones); Audience photo from Access Ideas and Insights: The Emerging Artist's Toolkit (photo by Rob Studdert); Comedian Bec Charlwood performing on stage (photo by Rob Studdert).

Page 2: Group photo from Access Ideas and Insights: Disability Leadership. From left to right: Janelle Ryan, Alex Jones, Liz Martin, Sarah-Mace Dennis, Eliza Hull, Uncle Paul Calcott and Daniel McDonald (photo by Rob Studdert).

Page 3: Headshot of Accessible Arts Chairperson, Jaci Armstrong.

Page 4: Headshot of Accessible Arts CEO, Liz Martin. Photo by Megan O'Brien.

Page 5: Collage of photos, top left to bottom right: Alex Jones addressing an audience in Auslan (photo by Rob Studdert); Speakers from Wellbeing Through Art 2025: Beatrice Gralton, Bec Charlwood, Hiromi Tango, Em Rusciano and Jane Miskovic-Wheatley (photo by Dieter Knierim); Artist Matti during Bundanon Artist Residency (photo by Paul Jones); Daniel McDonald facilitating Welcome to Country (photo by Rob Studdert); Artist Larah Nicholls during Bundanon Artist Residency (photo by Paul Jones); Comedian Sam Wade performing (photo by Rob Studdert); Artist Cassandra Li during Bundanon Artist Residency (photo by Paul Jones); people smiling during an Access Ideas and Insights audience Q&A session.

Page 8: A photo taken from the back of a room of an audience watching an Auslan interpreted and captioned panel discussion. On stage from left to right: MC Liz Martin, panellists Eliza Hull, Sarah-Mace Dennis and Uncle Paul Calcott, and an Auslan interpreter. Photo by Rob Studdert.

Page 9: A group photo of 12 Createability Interns and hosts. (Photo supplied by Create NSW); Bundanon Artists in Residence Sam McPherson, Matti, Az Cosgrove, Larah Nicholls and Cassandra Li (photo by Paul Jones); Comedian Tom Elphick performing on stage (photo by Rob Studdert).

Page 10: Group photo featuring Accessible Arts CEO Liz Martin alongside Access Ideas and Insights panellists Hannah Diviney, Dr Ayah Wehbe and Robin M Eames, and MC Maeve Marsden (photo by Rob Studdert); Audience photo taken from the back of an auditorium (photo by Rob Studdert). Access Ideas and Insights panellists and MC Joanna Erskine, Ryan Enniss, Kylie Heart and Jules Orcullo (photo by Dieter Knierim).

Page 11: Three photos of Access Ideas and Insights Accessible Podcast recordings, featuring Bedelia Lowrenčev, Bria McCarthy, Joanna Erskine and Jules Orcullo. Photos by Amy Mills.

Page 12: Comedian Madeleine Stewart performing alongside an Auslan interpreter (photo by Rob Studdert); Artist Larah Nicholls during Bundanon Artist Residency (photo by Paul Jones); Artist Az Cosgrove during Bundanon Artist Residency (photo by Paul Jones).

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