Arts for all

Ngā toi mō te katoa

arts access aotearoa
Whakahauhau Katoa O Hanga

Increasing access to the arts for disabled people

Te whakatipu i te huarahi ki ngā mahi toi mō te hunga hauā

Cover: Duncan Armstrong and Sumara Fraser of WIDance participate in a tutor training workshop with Marc Brew and Touch Compass Dance Trust

Photo: Catherine Chappell

A touch tour before New Zealand Opera's audio described performance of *The Bartered Bride*

Photo: Samantha Milner

What's new in this edition

Building on *Arts For All* (2009), this second edition provides updated information and ideas, along with snapshots of organisations, venues and projects from New Zealand. There are also mini profiles of disabled artists and arts enthusiasts at the beginning of each chapter.

Also in this edition, there's a chapter written specifically for galleries and museums. The chapter on live performance includes information about touring, venues and festivals.

Reflecting the opportunities offered by digital media to make the arts more accessible, there is a chapter on digital media. This includes a section on e-publishing.

Online resources

You can download copies of *Arts For All* from the Arts Access Aotearoa website. Additional resources such as information sheets, checklists and news, are available online.

W This symbol refers to Arts Access Aotearoa's website: www.artsaccess.org.nz

i This symbol refers to additional information in chapter 8, pages 79 to 85.

You can download an accessible Word document from the Arts Access Aotearoa website.

Contact Arts Access Aotearoa if you don't have internet access and would like to be sent a copy of *Arts For All* and the additional resources.

Acknowledgements

This is the second edition of *Arts For All*, building on the first edition published in 2009. Arts Access Aotearoa would like to thank Creative New Zealand for its support of this publication and its Arts For All programme. It would particularly like to thank Helen Bartle, Senior Advisor Audience Development and Capability Building at Creative New Zealand for her ongoing commitment to this work.

Arts Access Aotearoa would also like to thank Wellington City Council for its support of this publication and the Arts For All Wellington Network.

Thank you to Deaf Aotearoa for its advice on the use of New Zealand Sign Language, and to the many individuals and organisations that provided valuable advice and suggestions.

Finally, Arts Access Aotearoa would also like to acknowledge permission from the Australia Council to use information from its publication, *Access All Areas*.

Writers: Iona McNaughton, Robyn Hunt, Nicola Owen, Teresa Heinz Housel.

Reference group: Trisha Ventom, IHC; Lyn Cotton, Jolt Dance; Meta Assink, Vincents Art Workshop; Lorraine McQuigg, Arts Access Aotearoa Making A Difference arts advocate; Charlie Grimsdale, Giant Leap Foundation; Lisette Wesseling, the Blind Foundation; Philip Patston, DiversityNZ.com; Victoria Dadd, Chamber Music New Zealand; Jessica Lightfoot, Chamber Music New Zealand; Mary Schnackenberg, Accessible Information and Communications; Alexandra Granville, New Zealand Opera; Rachel Ingram, Museums Wellington; Rachel Noble, Disabled Persons Assembly; Cindy Johns, People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi; Bruce Roberts, Te Papa; Nicola Clements, Odd Socks Productions.

Disclaimer

For more information

Arts Access Aotearoa
Level 3, Toi Pōneke
61–63 Abel Smith St
PO Box 9828
Wellington 6141

T: +64 4 802 4349
E: info@artsaccess.org.nz
W: artsaccess.org.nz
ArtsAccessAotearoa
@ArtsAccessNZ
youtube.com/user/artsaccess

Design: Graphic Solutions
Print: Out of the Box
Date: 11 April 2014
ISBN: 978-0-9582135-4-7

Foreword I Wāhinga kōrero

Since the publication of *Arts For All: opening doors to disabled audiences* in 2009, this guide has been used by champions of accessibility who want to make their venues, live productions, events, exhibitions and festivals accessible to Deaf and disabled people.

Along with updated information and recommended steps for making the arts accessible, this second edition includes reflections from disabled artists and arts enthusiasts about what it means to have access to the arts and culture.

An essential first step towards greater accessibility and inclusion is listening to disabled people who want access to the arts, and acting on their recommendations.

Since *Arts For All* was first published, we have seen significant progress and increased opportunities for disabled people to engage in arts and cultural activities and events.

Arts For All, along with the programme and activities that have grown from it, has driven much of this change. So too have committed individuals, arts and cultural organisations and venues around the country.

In 2011, Arts Access Aotearoa conducted research for Creative New Zealand to find out more about the accessibility of arts organisations and venues. We found that although there is a high level of compliance in providing physical access to audiences and visitors, this is not being communicated effectively to the one in six New Zealanders who identify as having a disability or impairment.

Most of the survey respondents said they wanted to develop confidence among all their staff to support people with access needs but didn't know what steps to take. The research also showed that marketing to people who have unique access needs requires strategic use of communication tools.

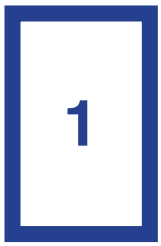
Thank you to the writers, consultants, mentors and contributors who have generously provided their expertise and perspectives in the writing of this second edition of *Arts For All*. You have all helped to increase accessibility to the arts for all people in New Zealand.

Kia hora te mārino, kia whakapapa pounamu te moana, kia tere te kārohirohi.

Richard Benge
Executive Director
Arts Access Aotearoa

Stephen Wainwright
Chief Executive
Creative New Zealand

Contents I Rārangi upoko



Setting the scene
Whakatakoto kaupapa 5

Who this guide is for 7
How to use this guide 7
Understanding disability 8
Being accessible 8
Universal design 9
The words we use 10
Publication research 11

Getting started
Te tīmatanga 13

Why start 14
Where to start 16
Engaging with the disabled community 16
Developing an accessibility policy 17
Developing an accessibility action plan 17
Understanding the law 18
International examples 19
The barriers 20
For disabled people 20
For arts organisations and venues 20
Removing the barriers 21
People: looking after them 21
Staff disability responsiveness training 21
Interacting with people 22
Relaxed performances 22
Disruptions policy 23
Venue access 23
Getting there 23
Getting in, moving around 24
Service dogs 25
Signage 25
Programming: reflecting diversity 26
Processes: enhancing the arts experience 27
Audio description and touch tours 27
Sign Language interpretation 28
Captioning 30
Seating 32
Timing 32
Booking tickets 32
Pricing 33
Data capture 35

Communications
Te whakawhitiwhiti kōrero 37

An online world 39
Marketing and promotion 39
A marketing strategy 39
Promoting your event 40
A guide to language 41
Information options 41
Insider information 41
Accessible formats 42
Accessible websites and emails 42
Large print 42
Plain English and Easy Read 42
Working with the media 43

Galleries and museums
Ngā whare whakairi toi me ngā whare pupuri taonga 45

Getting started 47
Easy access 47
Accessing the exhibits 48
Guided tours 48
Touch tours 49
Exhibition spaces 50
Visual information 50
Sound information 51
Museums without walls 51

Live performance
Ngā whakatūranga 53

Getting started 55
Planning an accessible show 55
Being creative about access 55
Loyal new audiences 56
Touring your show 56
Disability networks 56
Performance venues 57
Is the venue accessible? 57
Ticketing and seating 57
Trained staff 57
Promoting accessibility 58
An accessible festival 59
Multiple venues 59
Transport and parking 59
Accommodation 59
Eating 60
Seating 60
Informal support 61
Including disabled performers and participants 61

Digital media
Pūnaha rorohiko 63

A definition 65
Digital media in the Deaf and disability world 66
Creating digital arts 66
Which media for which audience? 66
E-books and e-publishing 67
New markets and readers 67
Ideas for publishers 67
Films and videos 68
Online media 68
There's an app for that 69

Looking ahead
Te titiro whakamua 71

First steps 73
Ten things you can do now 73
Next steps 73
Ten things you can do over the next five years 73
Case studies: increasing accessibility 74
Music opportunities for people with learning disability 74
Audio description at Fortune Theatre 74
Tribes and the Deaf world 74
Auckland Art Gallery and disability responsiveness 75
SIGNAL programme at THE EDGE 75
New technologies and the future 75
Affordable options 75
Publishing revolution 76
Three challenges 76
Festivals to reflect the experience of disabled people 76
Sharing resources on touring shows 76
More opportunities for people with learning disability to come to your event 77
A final word 77

Additional information
Kōrero tāpiri 79

One: What words to use 80
Two: Where to go for advice and information 81
Three: Useful checklists and information sheets 85
Four: Where to go for funding 85
Five: Useful resources and publications 85

Index
Kupu tohu 86

Actors talk to blind and vision impaired patrons before the audio described performance of *Gifted* at Fortune Theatre

Photo: Alan Dove

1

Setting the scene
Whakatakoto kaupapa

This chapter sets the scene by explaining who the key audiences for this guide are and how to make the best use of its contents. It also provides some information about disability and what it means to be accessible.

Duncan Armstrong in the role of Robert in *Nothing Trivial*

PROFILE

Songs about my life

By Duncan Armstrong

I'm the drummer in a rock band. I love to go to gigs and get on the dance floor. I'm also a dancer with Wellington Integrated Dance and Touch Compass Youth. I love to act, especially on the screen, and I was in the first season of *Nothing Trivial*.

As an artist, the hardest thing is getting training if you have a disability. I was lucky enough to study music at the Whitireia School of Music. For drama and dance, I do workshops whenever I can find them. I love to work with Touch Compass and with Philip Channells in Australia. In 2012, I went to a filmmaking workshop at the Other Film Festival in Melbourne. I hope to go again this year.

I've done some performance workshops that were just for people with disabilities but I think it's much better to have a mix because everyone learns a lot more.

At the Other Film Festival it was great to see performers with disabilities on the big screen. I especially liked a Finnish film about a punk rock band. It's important for me to see people with disabilities on stage and screen because we are part of the world. I think characters who have disabilities should be played by actors who have the disability.

I write songs about my life. When I feel angry or sad I just do a song. It helps me let my feelings out. You never know. Someone else might have the same feelings.

Duncan Armstrong lives in Wellington. He received Arts Access Aotearoa's Big 'A' Winton and Margaret Bear Young Artist Award in 2010.

Who this guide is for

Arts For All is based on Arts Access Aotearoa's core belief that everyone in New Zealand should be able to take part in the arts as both creators and audiences, whatever their circumstances.

Although disabled people are the focus of this guide, it's aimed at artists and arts marketers, arts organisations, touring companies, festivals, venues, galleries and museums – in fact, anyone in the arts and cultural sectors wanting to reach a wider and more diverse section of New Zealand society.

It outlines the benefits of marketing the arts to disabled people, and includes both practical and longer-term steps you can take to provide access.

Reaching a wider, more diverse audience makes plain good sense. There's an untapped audience among disabled people and their families, whānau and friends; and even small, inexpensive actions can bring new, diverse audiences to theatres, galleries, museums, cinemas, book events, concerts, dance performances and festivals.

An estimated 660,300 adults and children (17% of the population) reported that they experienced disability in the 2006 Statistics New Zealand Census – the most recent statistics available when this edition of *Arts For All* was published. That's one in six people in New Zealand.

Based on New Zealand's population of 4.5 million in January 2014 and using the one in six ratio from the 2006 data, this indicates that approximately 765,000 people in New Zealand will experience disability in 2014.

2013 Census statistics show that 20,000 people in New Zealand use New Zealand Sign Language.

W **Resources:** Figures from the 2013 Census will be published online in June 2014.

How to use this guide

Arts For All provides a framework to guide and inspire its readers. Online resources such as checklists, information sheets and case studies complement the publication.

Arts For All includes many ideas and practical suggestions about removing barriers to the arts for disabled people. However, there will be many more suggestions, organisations and creative collaborations that can help you improve your accessibility – not only physically but also in your staff's customer service ethic, your marketing strategies and your programming.

Since the first edition of *Arts For All* was published, Arts Access Aotearoa has worked with local communities to develop Arts For All networks in various cities and regions, including Otago, Christchurch, Wellington, Taranaki and Auckland.

These networks are made up of representatives from the disability sector, arts and cultural organisations, artists, venues and festivals. They meet several times a year, working in partnership to share information, expertise and solutions to particular challenges.

We encourage you to join a local Arts For All network, if possible, and share your experiences, suggestions and knowledge with others. We also suggest you check out the online resources to this guide.

W **There are three official languages in New Zealand:** English, te reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language. A Sign Language video introducing *Arts For All* is on Arts Access Aotearoa's website.

Understanding disability

In understanding disability, it's important to recognise that disabled people speak for themselves as individuals or through their representative organisations, which are governed and run by disabled people. Being guided by the principle of "Nothing about us without us" will always serve you best.

Disabled people support a rights-based approach where access to the arts is a human right, not a privilege or a favour. The New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001) presents a long-term plan to change New Zealand from a disabling society to an inclusive society (see *The words we use*, page 10, for more information).

In addition, New Zealand ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008. The Government is required to report annually on its progress towards implementing the convention.

Arts For All examines the physical and attitudinal barriers that can prevent access to the arts for people who have lived experience of mental illness, or of physical, sensory, neurological or learning disability.

Most people at some point in their lives will experience disability, whether through illness, accident or age. Results from the 2013 Census show that New Zealand's population is ageing: for example, there were fewer children (under 15 years) than in 2006 while the number of people aged between 50 and 69 years showed a large increase.

This means that improving access to your arts events and activities will also benefit a large and growing portion of the population – and, in turn, will increase audience engagement for your organisation or event.

Some people may have multiple impairments, some of which may be hidden. You cannot tell what someone's experience of disability is just by looking at the person and they may not wish to disclose their impairment to you.

Additional information: *Where to go for advice and information* (page 81) includes disabled people's organisations and their contact details.

Being accessible

There are many ways that artists, arts organisations and venues can be accessible to disabled people. This includes providing access to employment; ensuring representation in governance and decision-making; programming work by disabled artists; programming arts activities involving disabled people as participants; providing physical access to art spaces; and marketing arts events to disabled audiences and gallery/museum visitors. This approach is about involving all sections of the community on an equitable basis at all levels of an organisation.

Arts For All does not cover all of these subjects. It focuses on access to arts and cultural events and activities. Here, therefore, access means making sure your services and arts activities – your venue, theatre, community hall, bookshop, gallery, museum – can be used by disabled people. Physical access (e.g. ramps, toilets, parking, hearing loops) is the most obvious way of improving access but it's also about people's attitudes and actions, ticketing processes, marketing practice and cost.

Above all, it's about ensuring everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from the full scope and experience of an arts event or activity.

Being accessible is a long-term commitment and an ongoing process of improvement. It's much more than meeting legal standards or providing one-off events: you can always be more accessible.

It's also about embedding accessibility into your organisation's philosophy. Developing an accessibility policy with buy-in from the whole organisation is a good place to start. Make accessibility something you value and improve over the lifespan of your organisation.

Universal design

Universal design is about designing products and services that can be used by everyone without needing to be adapted.

It was originally developed by architects and applied to buildings, streets and outdoor spaces. Sometimes called “inclusive design”, it’s now being applied more widely to the design of technology, as well as other products and services.

Most people are familiar with ramps and accessible toilets. But universal design goes much further. Take, for instance, traffic lights and controlled pedestrian crossings. Here, everyone can cross the road at the same time and in the same place. They can perceive the signal by sight, sound or touch. Well-graded curb-cuts and textured, colour-contrast pavements indicate the location of the crossing. Everyone’s needs take equal precedent.

Universal design is also applied to websites and other electronic communications, which offer a range of integrated channels and formats to communicate the same information.

In the arts, universal design features include accessible parking and venues; touch tours; audio description; Sign Language tours and interpretation; information in a range of alternative formats; and captioning.

Members of the Arts For All Wellington Network talk to David Waller, Museums Wellington, about accessible design

SNAPSHOT

Network benefits

Belonging to the Arts For All Wellington Network is about sharing information and experiences, and finding solutions, says Rachel Ingram, network member and Learning and Programmes Manager for Museums Wellington.

“There’s a great generosity among the network members. The collective desire to be accessible and inclusive is inspiring. I always go away from meetings feeling invigorated.

“Working with this network of like-minded people, it feels like we can do so much more than just meet legal requirements.”

Arts Access Aotearoa, in partnership with the Wellington City Council, set up the Arts For All Wellington Network in 2010. It meets twice a year, along with additional lunchtime sessions if members have issues or projects they wish to discuss.

Last year, *The Times* newspaper listed the Museum of Wellington City & Sea as one of the top 50 museums in the world. Currently undergoing a major development, the museum will open the first stage in 2015 with a permanent exhibition in the museum attic space.

“We held a network forum at the museum last year and at the end, the group met the exhibition designer to discuss his ideas for the permanent exhibition,” Rachel says.

“Members provided our designer with invaluable feedback that’s informed the development of his design. For example, blind members said it was important to provide maquettes or scale models of the exhibits that they could touch.

“Wheelchair users talked about height and access to the exhibition space while Deaf members talked about appropriate interpretation. All this was vital information to know at the outset of the project, and much better than relying only on standards.”

Kia pai te whakatere a te waka kei pariparia e te tai te monenehu o te kura. Caution as you launch the canoe least the tide buffet it about, spoiling the plumage on the prow.

"I heartily endorse this guide and its aims. As the whakatauaki infers, we all have talents attained from the moment of conception. As we grow, these talents will flourish if they are nurtured. To be recognised and accepted, they must be presented to the world with love, respect and dignity."

Bill Kaua, Kaumātua, Arts Access Aotearoa

The words we use

How we refer to people is incredibly important. Language, and what's appropriate, is constantly evolving and so it's important to be aware of current terms. Notice the words that Deaf and disabled people use to describe themselves and their communities. You may not always get it right but your desire to be respectful and responsive will go a long way.

Avoid euphemisms and don't be afraid to ask questions about someone's preferences. Just remember that every person is an individual.

There are two ways of referring to the experience of disability that are common in New Zealand and internationally.

The first is known as the "person-first" approach, where it's important to refer to the person before their disability (e.g. person with a disability, a person who is Deaf).

The second, known as the "social model", asserts that society disables people through the physical and social barriers it presents — for example, a person using a wheelchair is disabled by a flight of steps preventing access to a building. The wheelchair itself is liberating and provides mobility. Using the term "disabled people", therefore, is stating that a person is disabled by society's barriers, not by their condition or impairment.

Some people prefer person-first terminology, while others see it as devaluing an important part of their identity. Many disabled people see their disability as an important and positive part of their identity. "Disabled person", therefore, can be a political statement.

For Deaf people, the term "Deaf" (with a capital D) refers to the Deaf culture and community to which people belong, rather than to their hearing status. Their preferred form of communication is New Zealand Sign Language.

In line with the Office for Disability Issues and the New Zealand Disability Strategy, *Arts For All* tends to use the term "disabled people" – people who have been disabled by society.

Arts For All also uses the following terms:

- "companion" to include family, whānau, friend or support worker
- people with "learning disability", a term preferred by the disabled people's organisation People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.

However, there's no consensus on terms. Just try and be flexible, respectful and transparent about the language you use and why you use it.

In fact, think about whether it's relevant or necessary to label the person as "disabled". Calling someone a person, patron or visitor, without the label, is okay.

Additional information: *What words to use* (page 80) has a list of words and phrases that are good to use, and words you should never use.

Publication research

In 2011, Creative New Zealand provided one-off grants totalling $30,000 to 11 organisations for projects that would improve their accessibility. Arts Access Aotearoa administered the grants and monitored the projects.

Presentations of the completed projects were held in Dunedin, Wellington and Auckland, and four case studies of these projects were written. Available online, these case studies are:

- Fortune Theatre and its audio described performances
- Auckland Art Gallery and disability responsiveness training for staff
- Chamber Music New Zealand and its performance with youth with learning disability
- Silo Theatre's sign-interpreted performances of *Tribes.*

In addition, Creative New Zealand commissioned Arts Access Aotearoa to conduct an online survey and site visits to find out how accessible New Zealand's key arts organisations and venues were. An online survey was completed by 41 arts organisations and Arts Access Aotearoa held in-depth interviews with 16 organisations around the country.

Findings show that most of the arts organisations and venues surveyed have physical access in their public spaces while some of the theatres surveyed are also accessible backstage. However, they are not marketing their accessibility to disabled people.

Ensuring communication tools, including websites, meet accessible guidelines is a key area of development for arts organisations and venues.

Resources: Read the full report of the survey on Arts Access Aotearoa's website.

This guide also uses findings from a small quantitative survey of disabled people that Arts Access Aotearoa conducted in 2009 for the first edition of *Arts For All.*

Other areas where the surveyed organisations could improve their access include:

- accessibility/disability policies and action plans
- disability responsiveness training
- engaging and building relationships with the disability sector
- ticket pricing that supports disabled people to attend events
- programming works by and about disabled people.

Some key findings:

- **58%** of arts organisations visited employ a disabled person.
- **81.8%** of arts organisations visited have an accessible evacuation plan and 77.8% have staff trained in evacuating disabled patrons.
- **48.8%** of online survey respondents include information about access in their publicity material.
- **61.5%** of arts organisations visited have developed relationships with disability groups.
- **73.9%** of online survey respondents who do not currently provide discounted ticket prices would consider providing discounted tickets to disabled patrons.
- **100%** of theatres and venues visited have hearing augmentation systems, primarily hearing loops.
- **5%** of online survey respondents have an accessibility policy while 10% are in the process of developing one.
- **60%** of arts organisations visited have programmed work by disabled artists or mixed-ability/integrated companies.

Kimi Ora School students performed with the Enso String Quartet in a performance for young people with learning disability, presented by Chamber Music New Zealand

2

Getting started

Te tīmatanga

This chapter looks at ways of tapping into a whole new audience for your arts events and activities. It encourages you to think about the benefits of making your organisation or venue more inclusive – ideas that will not just benefit audience members but also your organisation as a whole.

It includes a lot of simple, practical steps you can take immediately to enrich everyone's experience and set you on the path towards accessibility.

You can always contact Arts Access Aotearoa for information, advice or support.

Additional information: *Where to go for advice and information* (page 81).

Why start

Imagine finding a new and relatively untapped audience for your arts organisation. An audience of people who like to plan activities in advance; book ahead out of necessity; bring family and friends; and become repeat attendees and enthusiastic participants if the facilities are accessible and staff are welcoming.

Here are some key reasons to provide great access to your arts and cultural events.

- Everyone benefits, including your organisation or venue, and disabled arts enthusiasts, their family, whānau and friends.
- Including disabled people and artists in your arts activities enhances New Zealand's cultural diversity.
- More diverse, and therefore larger, audiences and visitor numbers are good for your box office and bank balance.
- Everyone likes friendly and accommodating staff.
- Everyone likes better designed services, different ways of getting information, flexible booking practices and more comfortable facilities.
- Building a reputation as an inclusive and socially responsible arts organisation is good for business.
- Freedom from discrimination for a disabled person is a legal human right under the New Zealand Human Rights Act. This is echoed in the New Zealand Disability Strategy and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Findings from a survey conducted by Arts Access Aotearoa in 2009 show evidence that providing access and marketing arts activities and events to disabled people will build audiences and visitors.

Findings include:

- **88%** of respondents said that if barriers were removed they would be "likely" or "very likely" to attend more arts events. The most common barriers identified are: cost of tickets for themselves and their companion; transport and/or parking; inaccessible marketing and advertising; inaccessible venue; venue staff attitudes; and inaccessible events or programmes (e.g. not being able to read labels in a museum or hear a book reading).
- **74%** of respondents said that attending arts activities and events is "very important" or "important" to them, with only 4% indicating that attending arts activities and events is "not important".

Fostering loyalty among your audiences and museum or gallery visitors is far more efficient and effective than constantly seeking out new ones. This is an essential principle of arts marketing and countless marketing studies stress the importance of repeat business.

Engage the disabled community in your organisation and events, provide an accessible venue and you will build a loyal audience.

Many people lose mobility and other function as part of the ageing process. Providing good access for everyone creates a welcoming space for older people, who often have more time to engage in the arts and want to become or continue to be loyal audience members.

"This is long-term stuff. One-off things don't really change people's lives. Changes have to become the norm rather than the exception."

Lyn Cotton, Jolt Dance

Rachel Mullins and Diane Dailey are regulars at The Court Theatre

PROFILE

Front-row seats

By Rachel Mullins

I love almost anything to do with entertainment … movies, music and especially theatre. I have a season subscription to The Court Theatre in Christchurch so along with my friend, who always comes with me, I'm one of their regulars.

As a wheelchair user, access is really important to me. Before I go to any arts event – a concert, festival event or movie – I always need to check out the access. If I don't know the venue, this usually involves a phone call or going online. One of the really helpful things is when the information about access is easy to find – like on the homepage of a website or in the brochure or programme.

The Court Theatre moved into new premises in Addington in late 2011. They've thought well about their accessibility. The accessible car parks are close to the main entrance, which is level with no steps or lips to negotiate.

The wheelchair spaces are in the front row, which is fantastic if you're like me and have a vision impairment, or just like to see the action up close.

The downside of this is that often there's nobody else sitting in the front row with us.

But for me, the most important thing that adds to my great experience at The Court Theatre is the customer service. It's never a problem to change tickets or get assistance if needed at any time. But mostly, I'm just another valued patron and that's how it should be.

Rachel Mullins is the Inclusive Communities Co-ordinator at Christchurch City Council.

Where to start

Engaging with the disabled community

The best place to start is talking with disabled people.

Engaging effectively with disabled people will give you insights into the experiences they've had; what events they would like to attend; and some of the issues they face in accessing your venue or event.

People still may not come to your event even though you've decided to be accessible. They may have had bad experiences in the past or they may never have had the opportunity to participate in the arts. Perhaps there are other barriers for them such as cost, lack of transport or someone to go with.

A key barrier to attracting this untapped audience to arts events is a lack of knowledge about the needs of disabled people, and how to reach and market to them. For example, a venue may have a hearing loop installed but if you don't let anyone except your key subscribers know about it, you could well be missing out on arts enthusiasts with a hearing impairment who would love to attend.

Similarly, you may miss out on vision impaired audiences or gallery/museum visitors if you display ticketing options only on a poster or small flyer.

On the other hand, showing in your marketing materials and information that you're keen to engage with disabled people is a positive way to start.

Disabled people's organisations and groups will be keen to help if you engage with them. A good way to connect with disabled communities is by joining one of Arts Access Aotearoa's Arts For All networks. Otherwise, find out what groups are active in your area.

In the end, however, people are individuals: some don't belong to a particular community. Engaging with a group of blind people, for example, doesn't mean you have reached everyone who is blind or has low vision. Use various communication tools and formats to reach diverse audiences.

Here are some of the things disabled people's organisations and groups might help you with:

- finding out what their members are interested in
- understanding the issues and offering expertise to help address them
- providing suggestions about how to improve access: for example, some groups might provide training for your staff or invite you to meetings with members to talk about what you hope to achieve
- providing or training volunteers for events
- making joint submissions or funding applications
- marketing your events to their members
- helping you gather feedback.

How can you get the most from your engagement? Here are some ideas.

- Build an enduring relationship rather than doing a one-off survey or having one meeting.
- Be willing to listen and to learn from your mistakes.
- Ask what you can do differently.
- Invite disabled people into your venue so you can explore ways to improve your access.
- Welcome honest feedback.
- Don't expect people to give their time and expertise for free – and be grateful when they do.

Additional information: *Where to go for advice and information* (page 81) has a list of useful organisations you can approach for advice and support.

Guidelines and infomation sheets: *Getting started* – questions you may be asked about your venue or work.

Developing an accessibility policy

Once you've made a commitment to becoming more accessible, the next step is to develop an accessibility policy with disabled people.

It might be tempting just to get on with it and put in place interpreters or audio describers for a one-off event. However, it's not an approach that will develop your audience. You may find there is little uptake from the disabled community if you invest in only one-off accessibility events without building genuine relationships with the community.

An accessibility policy is a public statement of your organisation's commitment to accessibility. It will also help your whole organisation and the disabled community see that your commitment is long term. It should be endorsed by your board and senior management. Think about publicising it internally and externally so that everyone knows what you hope to achieve.

Getting buy-in to the policy from the whole organisation is crucial. Having one staff member with a passion for accessibility is great but one person cannot change a whole organisation without support and a plan to involve others. This includes budgeting for access, building accessibility into your programmes and providing ongoing staff training.

You don't have to develop your accessibility policy all on your own. Arts Access Aotearoa has accessibility policy guidelines on its website and there are other organisations with accessibility policies you could use as the basis of yours.

There are also plenty of disabled people experienced in helping organisations develop policies and linking in with their local disabled community. This is a great time to seek out allies.

Your policy on accessibility could specify a commitment to providing:

- staff training on disability responsiveness
- physical access to your venue
- inclusive ticketing practices
- a website that conforms with the priorities set out by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
- accessible formats (e.g. websites, emails, social media, large print, Easy Read)
- a way for audiences and visitors to give feedback or evaluation.

Guidelines and information sheets: *Developing an accessibility policy.*

Case studies: how Taki Rua Productions developed its accessibility policy.

Developing an accessibility action plan

Now you have your accessibility policy in place, it's time to write your action plan. The best action plans are the ones that involve all team members in identifying and removing access barriers.

Your plans also need to be clear and achievable. You may feel both excited and daunted when you're trying to make significant changes. A good idea is to divide it into manageable pieces and be realistic about what you can achieve.

Some ideas:

- Talk to other organisations and to disabled people about their experiences and ideas.
- Start with some disability responsiveness training, led by experienced disabled people. This can help your organisation understand the issues you need to address, and also begin your journey towards building a relationship with your local disabled community.
- Think about all the different ways that disabled people might engage with your organisation: as audiences, advocates, staff members, volunteers, trustees, artists or participants.
- Include details of the planned action, when it will happen and who is responsible for getting it done.
- Maintain good internal communications, and support each other as you develop and implement the action plan.
- Review the plan regularly and report back on progress.

Your action plan details the practical ways you can implement each of the objectives outlined in your accessibility policy. For example:

Policy objective: providing staff training on disability responsiveness.

In 2014, we will:

- ask all staff and volunteers to read *Arts For All* and then seek their feedback on its contents
- provide disability responsiveness training for all staff and volunteers
- provide and publicise a range of ways for audiences and visitors to give feedback to staff on their experience of our events
- respond to audience feedback and take positive action, where possible.

Guidelines and information sheets: *Developing an accessibility action plan.*

Understanding the law

Making your arts events and activities more accessible shouldn't be about legal compliance. However, the law can be helpful in providing guidance on how to approach certain aspects of accessibility.

Building Act 2004: This Act and the New Zealand Standard NZS 4121:2001, *Design for Access and Mobility – Buildings and Associated Facilities*, sets out current requirements for physical access in New Zealand. Under the Act, access to facilities must be provided without exception in all new public buildings and, where reasonably practical, in any alterations to existing public buildings.

Its specifications include width of doorways, height and shape of handrails, space to manoeuvre in bathrooms, gradient of ramps and provision of accessible car parking.

Human Rights Act 1993: Physical access is only one part of the story. The Human Rights Act 1993 protects disabled people from discrimination in many areas of life, including access to goods and services, and requires organisations to make reasonable accommodations. It is, therefore, not only helpful to provide access to disabled people; often it's a legal requirement.

For people working in the creative industries, providing access to an arts event is an opportunity to think creatively and laterally to solve problems. For example, you're using an older venue with poor wheelchair access. How can you find a solution?

New Zealand is party to other non-legislative and international documents that promote inclusion. In particular, the New Zealand Disability Strategy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities both set out a positive vision of how disabled people can participate in the arts.

New Zealand Disability Strategy: This strategy was developed in 2001 by the Government in consultation with disabled people and the wider disability sector. Underpinning the strategy is a vision of an inclusive society. One of the action points is to "provide opportunities for disabled people to create, perform and develop their own arts, and to access arts activities".

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: In 2008, New Zealand ratified this convention and is required to report annually to the United Nations on its progress. Article 30 includes the rights of disabled people to:

- take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life
- enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities in accessible formats
- enjoy access to places for cultural performances such as theatre, museums, cinemas and libraries
- have the opportunity to develop and utilise their creative, artistic and intellectual potential not only for their own benefit but for the enrichment of society.

"One in six people in New Zealand has an impairment. Combine that with an ageing population and the knowledge that disability increases with age, and we're talking about a lot of people – and an opportunity for organisations to attract new audiences by making their venues and information accessible."

Office for Disability Issues

Disabled people played a pivotal role in the development of the convention. New Zealand diplomats and the delegation, including disabled people, also played an important part. Adopting the text of Article 30 might be a good way of demonstrating your commitment to access.

New Zealand's obligations under this convention mean that being an accessible organisation or venue is becoming increasingly important. By improving your organisation's access now, you'll be well ahead of the game when the requirements of the UN Convention become more integrated into everyday legislation.

Additional Information: *Where to go for advice and information* (page 81).

Resources: for links to a range of useful resources.

International examples

Australia, Britain and the United States – like New Zealand – have legislation protecting disabled people from discrimination. These countries also have building regulations that require all new buildings with public access to be accessible to everyone. Existing buildings undergoing renovations or alterations are required to provide accessible facilities, where feasible.

Although New Zealand law is different, it can be useful to look overseas at examples of accessibility to see what might work here.

Australia has the national Companion Card Scheme, which enables eligible disabled people to participate at venues and activities without incurring the cost of a second ticket for their companion.

In Britain, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 gives people the right to access everyday services, including arts and culture. In addition to physical access, many theatres and cinemas offer audio described services, captioned or signed performances, or have hearing loops available. The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card gives a free ticket to someone accompanying a qualifying disabled person.

In the United States, state agencies and cultural organisations receiving federal funds are required to conduct a self-evaluation to identify barriers to accessibility under Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act regulations. This can be undertaken with support from the National Endowment for the Arts' Office for Accessibility. It aims to make the arts accessible for people with disabilities, older adults, war veterans and people living in institutions.

The barriers

How do we know what's preventing disabled people from filling theatre seats, visiting galleries and going to festivals?

Arts Access Aotearoa and Creative New Zealand's survey of arts organisations and venues, conducted in 2012, shows that most have accessible public spaces or venues for their work.

Lack of physical access to a performance venue (ramps, toilets and so on) are obvious barriers, particularly for people with reduced mobility. However, other factors such as cost and transport can be much greater issues.

For disabled people

Arts Access Aotearoa's quantitative survey of disabled people (2009) provides a snapshot of general barriers preventing people from accessing the arts.

The most common barriers for people interested in the arts (i.e. those who attend regularly once or twice a month, and those who would like to attend more but attend irregularly) are:

- cost of tickets, including for companions (73%)
- transport to venue and/or parking (63%)
- inaccessible marketing and advertising (24%)
- inability to access the venue (18%)
- inaccessible programme or event: for example, not being able to see or hear the arts event (15%)
- venue staff attitudes (14%).

For arts organisations and venues

Many New Zealand arts organisations and venues are exploring ways to improve access. A growing number are providing services such as signed and audio described performances, accessible websites and music workshops for people with learning disability.

But for many smaller arts companies and organisations, the cost of using high-grade venues, paying for a New Zealand Sign Language interpreter or installing services such as hearing loops can appear prohibitive.

The next section includes a range of practical ways you can remove many of these barriers. Making your venue physically accessible can be a longer-term project. However, you will make an immediate difference if staff are open and helpful, and do their best to find accessible options.

Members of the Arts Access Aotearoa Making A Difference Arts Advocacy Programme in Auckland at a workshop held in Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

"We've welcomed the opportunity to work with arts advocates from the disabled community in Auckland. As a result of this work, the gallery is setting up an advisory group to assist us to be more inclusive and reach a more diverse range of people."

Roger Taberner, Learning Programme Manager,
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Removing the barriers

This section looks at ways to improve access to your arts events. Putting some of these suggestions into practice will benefit not only disabled people but also other audience members and, ultimately, your organisation.

These suggestions are not intended to be an alternative to building relationships with disabled people's organisations and developing an accessibility policy. They are ideas to help you make some simple improvements while you put your long-term policies and plans in place.

These ideas are outlined under four topics:

- People: looking after them
- Venue access
- Programming: reflecting diversity
- Processes: enhancing the arts experience.

People: looking after them

Whether it's the public or your organisation (i.e. staff, board, sponsors, partners, artists, supporters), people bring your facility to life. Without them you're lost. So look after them.

Disabled people often comment that attitude makes a huge difference. It can also be the most inexpensive way your organisation can provide access. If your staff welcome and respect disabled people, then you've already made a great start.

The Arts Access Aotearoa and Creative New Zealand survey, conducted in 2012, shows that 27% of the online survey respondents said that staff in their organisation had received disability responsiveness training. 61% said that staff training would help them better assist disabled patrons.

Staff disability responsiveness training

Box office staff, volunteers, ushers, telephone sales, hosts and even performers may need training to help them be more responsive to disabled audience members, gallery and museum visitors, and performers.

However, most people working with the public actually like people and want to get it right. Training, therefore, will simply build on their common sense, positive attitude, and respect for audience members and visitors.

Involve all staff, including managers, in disability responsiveness training to ensure that inclusion is a culture – not just an add-on.

Here are some ideas about staff training. It should:

- be led by experienced disabled people
- increase understanding of the issues facing disabled people
- present disabled people as customers and not as a problem
- guide staff on how to communicate well and clearly
- ensure staff ask people what they need instead of assuming (e.g. the front row may be the best place for some vision impaired people, while others might be happy with a seat with restricted viewing)
- ensure staff are aware of hidden impairments and focus on providing access rather than asking about a person's impairment: "What do you require?" rather than "What's wrong with you?"
- encourage discussion to address misconceptions and prejudices about disabled people
- help staff understand how to offer assistance without being patronising
- increase knowledge of the different assistance that might be required so staff can offer practical support (e.g. how to guide a vision impaired person by offering an elbow and giving clear directions)
- include discussions about evacuation and emergency procedures, and how best to alert and assist disabled people
- ensure staff know about all the facilities at all venues or locations used by the organisation: how to use them, where they are, and possible alternatives in difficult venues
- encourage staff to engage in creative approaches to improving access.

Case studies: Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki and its disability responsiveness training for staff.

Interacting with people

Relax and be your usual friendly self. In conversation and body language, talk and act as you would with all audience members or visitors. In other words, talk directly to the person and use eye contact. This still applies if the person is using an interpreter.

If Deaf people are with a hearing companion, including a hearing child, always ask the Deaf person directly how they would like to communicate.

Other ideas:

- Be honest: if you are unsure what to do, it's okay to ask.
- Treat people with respect. Getting to your venue or event may have required a lot of effort.
- Words like "see", "walk" or "hear" are everyday words: they are okay to use around disabled people. Don't freeze and get embarrassed if you use them and realise the person has an impairment that may make these actions difficult.
- Make a list of various ways you might overcome a communication issue: for example, writing things down, speaking clearly, rephrasing what you said if you're asked to repeat something, being visually expressive in your communication and learning New Zealand Sign Language. Make a note of what has worked in the past.
- Be considerate: taking extra time might be all that's needed for disabled people to enjoy your arts event.
- Be flexible: requests to take drinks or food into a performance might be linked to having to take medication or needing regular hydration.

Additional information: *What words to use* (page 80).

Relaxed performances

Some people who may feel excluded from attending arts events (e.g. people with chronic anxiety, autism or learning disability) could benefit from the introduction of initiatives such as relaxed performances, either provided as a free event or at reduced ticket prices.

In these performances, the sound and lighting could be toned down. More crucially, however, there's a relaxed approach to noise and movement, and a supportive environment. You could provide short breaks in the performance so people could talk to each other about it.

Relaxed performances can be a great way to welcome disabled people and their families.

Chamber Music New Zealand, for example, has presented concerts where young people with learning disability have either performed alongside professional quartets or have been audience members. The performances were about participating, enjoying music and having fun.

You could also invite people with access needs to live performances – a dress rehearsal, matinee performance, children's show – or a behind-the-scenes tour. These are things The Court Theatre does. In late 2013, for example, drama students from SkillWise, an organisation for people with learning disability, attended a behind-the-scenes tour at The Court Theatre. They visited the wardrobe, set-building workshop, props and lighting department. The students also got to stand on the stage and move around the set for *The Mikado*.

Another way to support people concerned about not being able to move, speak or leave during a performance is to provide seating near to an aisle or door and allow people to leave and return, if necessary.

Case studies: Chamber Music New Zealand and its performances with youth with learning disability.

Disruptions policy

Having a disruptions policy and good staff training will help staff distinguish between people who make noises or have to move around because of impairment issues and people who are distracting other audience members because they are inconsiderate.

The policy should include how to respond to audience complaints and how to talk to the person causing a disturbance in a non-confrontational, respectful way.

Be consistent in carrying out your disruptions policy.

Drama students from SkillWise attend a behind-the-scenes tour at The Court Theatre

Venue access

Getting there

Everyone has to consider how they're going to get to the venue or arts event. For disabled people, they need to think about access before, when and after they arrive. If they're driving, there's an additional concern about where to park.

Some organisations have their own venue where work is presented on a regular basis (e.g. Aratoi Wairarapa Museum of Art and History, Masterton; The Court Theatre, Christchurch). Others use a range of venues and spaces (e.g. Atamira Dance Company, Auckland; Footnote Dance and Smokefreerockquest – both national and working in schools).

Many arts organisations in New Zealand can't afford established venues. Or some prefer to create a unique experience for each event. There are, therefore, a lot of arts events occurring in found spaces. These can present access issues. However, you can make life easier by thinking about access before you decide on a venue and providing accurate information to your audiences before the event.

Think about the accessible route to your arts venue: consider parking, the drop-off points, getting from transport to the venue and, finally, getting into the venue.

Take a good look at what you're already providing in terms of access. You may be offering various access options but people need to know about them. Promote your access on the homepage of your website, in your brochures, on your answer phone and on your tickets.

WOMAD New Zealand, for example, has an "accessibility info" page on its website that describes its accessible facilities and has a signed video clip about services for its Deaf and hard of hearing patrons.

Providing a concise, easy-to-follow fact sheet that details where your event is, how to get there and where its entry points are is a valuable resource for everyone. It could also provide great word-of-mouth marketing about the accessibility of your organisation and, in the long term, save time for front-of-house staff.

Some ideas:

- Ensure the drop-off points for taxis (especially accessible taxis) are as close as possible to the main entrance.
- Think about accessible car parks: are there enough and are they close to the main entrance? Contact your local council and discuss ways to improve parking if you have concerns.
- Make sure there's a handrail to help people get into the main building.
- Do an audit of your signage. Refer to the Blind Foundation for information and international best practice.
- Minimise the impact of small steps and ledges by constructing small ramps or, at the very least, ensuring they are well-lit, colour-contrasted and easy to see.
- Think about how people get inside and how you can improve access. Are there steps? How many? Is there a steep hill and a proper footpath? Can you get a wheelchair or stroller along it?
- Ensure, if possible, that all visitors can access the main entrance. If the accessible entrance is elsewhere, make sure it's unlocked and unobscured. Provide good signage and ensure staff assist people who need it.
- If possible, provide a safe, sheltered place for people to wait outside until a taxi arrives. Or see if you can provide a waiting space inside the venue.
- Ensure staff can tell people about public transport routes and timetables, if they are asked, and put links to this information on your website.
- Some arts events may be of particular interest to disabled audiences and visitors. To make your inaccessible venue temporarily accessible for a particular season or event, you could hire a ramp or have a temporary ramp built for a reasonable cost (contact your local Disability Information Centre).
- Making even small improvements to your accessibility is worth telling people about so they can see you are making progress.
- Always be honest and clear in your description of facilities. If access is limited and you can't do much about it, you should also provide this information.

Getting in, moving around

Making your venue or the venue you're using accessible means thinking about the layout, obstacles and facilities in a different way. It's sometimes impossible to move bolted-down seats but you can control how you allocate those seats; where you display your signs; and how you escort people inside.

New Zealand artists often present project-driven artworks in found spaces. There is, therefore, a lot of scope to be creative within your festival or venue layout.

Here are some low-cost things you can do to improve access in the venue:

- Position your box office/reception so it's easy to find and as close to the main entrance as possible. It also needs to be well-lit, clearly signposted and at an accessible (i.e. dining table) height.
- Think about your floors. Uneven floors, thick carpets, mats and rugs are hazards. A floor cluttered with things like boxes and props is also hazardous.
- Ensure your doorways and handles comply with accessible standards. If they don't, have staff available to assist.
- Have seating available in all your spaces. Don't let people sit on the stairs or in doorways as it blocks the way for others.
- Rather than just using a bell, you could announce the doors are opening and also use movement or something visual (e.g. waving hands) to alert audiences.
- Before your event, provide information about any strong lighting effects or loud sound effects (e.g. strobe, flashing mirrors, flickers, sudden changes in light, loud bangs or gunshots) as these can affect people with epilepsy, autism, neurological conditions or anxiety.
- Offer a pre-tour of your arts event, where possible. Giving people additional information about an exhibition, and the opportunity to touch and hear more about it, might be the difference between an okay and a great arts experience.
- If necessary, hire a ramp for accessing your venue.

"My goal was to play one song standing upright" … Goal achieved, Pati Umaga played seated with his band Kabasa for the rest of the gig

Photo: Spacific PR

"Some venues think they're accessible but you arrive and there are still obstacles in the way. The good thing though is when staff are helpful without being patronising. It helps reassure me and makes me feel more confident about going out to events."

Pati Umaga, musician, chairperson of the Wellington Pasifika Disability Network and Whānau Ora champion

Service dogs

Welcome service dogs (i.e. guide, hearing, mobility and companion dogs) to your venue. These dogs are legally allowed in any public place except for zoos and funeral parlours.

If your event is on a marae, talk to the kaiwhakahaere (manager) of the marae about its policy regarding dogs as many will allow service dogs. Here are some of the ways you can assist people bringing service dogs:

- Provide water and offer assistance (e.g. take it outside, if necessary, during the interval).
- Never pet or command a service dog, and only lead it if instructed by the owner.
- Check if the person with the dog would prefer to be seated at the end of the row so there is a bit more room.
- If your performance involves loud noises, consider offering to accommodate the dog outside the auditorium with a staff member to look after it. This will enable the person to travel safely to the venue with their dog but avoids the dog being exposed to noises that may startle it during the performance.

Signage

Clear, prominent and well-lit signs with good colour contrast let disabled audiences and gallery or museum visitors know what facilities are available for them. It's not just about toilets and ramps. It's also about things like parking, entrances, the booking office, galleries, lifts, audio guides, seating and service dogs.

If you use symbols, make sure they are easily recognisable, and at an accessible height for everyone. Could you provide a tactile version of your signs? Include braille signs and audible lift signals to indicate the lift's position (e.g. its arrival at a floor level).

Talk to your local council about signage to your venue, in the car park and on the outside of the building. Council staff may be able to help.

SNAPSHOT

An excellent host

Closed since the Christchurch earthquakes, the rebuilt Isaac Theatre Royal will re-open in October 2014 with state-of-the-art accessibility features.

The $40 million project will reinstate the 106-year-old heritage building's auditorium, foyer spaces, façade, ornate plaster work, historic windows, dome and roof.

Neil Cox, Chief Executive, Isaac Theatre Royal, says the rebuild presented a clean canvas for upgrading the theatre's accessibility. "We want to create an environment that will make movement around the theatre a lot simpler and a lot more accessible."

Neil says his team wanted to go beyond installing required accessibility features for rebuilds. In consultation with Arts Access Aotearoa and local disability groups, they've included accessible toilets on every floor, a lift between all floors, automatic doors throughout the auditorium, and a hydraulic stage lift that extends the stage and can be used to raise disabled patrons or performers to the stage.

The new floor plan offers accessible seating on the ground floor and dress circle level. There are eight wheelchair seats and ten adjustable seats with armrests, which can be raised for patrons who wish to leave their wheelchair. The seating also allows disabled patrons to sit next to friends and family.

The team is consulting with local Deaf and hearing impaired groups to ensure the latest technologies such as new Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are installed, along with an extensive hearing loop.

Isaac Theatre Royal's accessibility also includes a redeveloped website with clear, detailed and easy-to-find accessibility information.

Having an accessible venue has many mutual outcomes. Neil says that more people are living longer, and will require equipment and technologies to enable them to enjoy their experience at the theatre.

Being accessible and providing ease of movement around the venue also helps create a welcoming place for all patrons.

"If you want your venue to be an excellent host, people who come to your shows need to enjoy the experience of being there."

Guidelines and infomation sheets: *International access symbols.*

Programming: reflecting diversity

Most artists and arts organisations generate and present art that's based on artistic merit. And that's how it should be.

There are many accomplished performers and artists in New Zealand and around the world who are disabled people. Reflecting and including their diverse perspectives and experience of disability in your programming will enhance New Zealand's arts scene.

By challenging stereotyped portrayals, you can generate healthy debate and change attitudes. This can also lead to new projects and collaborations.

Disability-related art can be work by disabled artists and disability companies. Or it can be work by mixed-ability, integrated or inclusive companies such as Touch Compass Dance Company.

It can also be work about disability: for example, the play *Tribes* by Nina Raine is about communication, belonging, families – and being Deaf. Productions at Silo Theatre (Auckland), Circa Theatre (Wellington) and Fortune Theatre (Dunedin) enjoyed sell-out seasons and included sign-interpreted performances.

Think about ways your organisation can make your production or arts event relevant to a wider audience: for example, actors (Deaf or hearing) fluent in Sign Language could integrate signing into a performance.

Touch Compass dancers Alisha McLennan and Georgie Goater perform *Rogue*, one of the works in the company's new Hotbox series

Processes: enhancing the arts experience

This section is about procedures and systems that will affect an audience member's experience of your arts event: for example, your seating policy; the response people get when they phone you; your systems for making bookings; and processes for receiving audience feedback.

It also outlines audio description, sign interpretation and captioning at art events.

Audio description and touch tours

Audio description is a narrated commentary for blind and vision impaired patrons that provides descriptions of the visual elements.

Audio described museum or gallery tours might include opportunities to handle artefacts, or touch replicas to get a sense of the items being described. There is more information about this in chapter four (pages 45 to 51).

In a theatrical performance, audio description narrates what's happening on stage in between the dialogue or songs: for example, new scenes, settings, costume, body language, facial expression, movements across the stage and sight gags. An audio describer talks into a microphone to provide the commentary. This is transmitted to wireless receivers and headsets worn by the audience members.

An audio described performance usually includes a touch tour before the performance. Here are some ideas:

- For theatre, opera and musicals, patrons can explore the set and costumes, and possibly meet the director and cast to help them match the characters' voices with their names.
- For performances incorporating dance or circus, patrons can gain an appreciation of the different props, moves or poses.
- For music performances, patrons can feel and hear the various instruments, and get a sense of how the performers are arranged on the stage.

It's usually the role of the audio describer to liaise with the stage manager to select the most important props and set pieces to be on stage, and to determine how the touch tour will be arranged (for example, where the patrons will stand, whether they will walk around or have items brought to them).

Each patron will need a guide (no more than two patrons per guide) and the stage will fill up quickly. Plan the simplest possible route on to and off the stage, and have ushers or volunteers on hand to assist with guiding.

"Congratulations to the 2014 New Zealand Festival for including NZSL interpretation for some of its events. NZSL is a visual and highly expressive mode of communication. A hearing friend of mine says that watching an interpreter is like watching a ballet of the hands."

Mojo Mathers, New Zealand's first Deaf MP

A touch tour is always most effective when enthusiastic performers and crew engage with the patrons. And in fact, they usually enjoy the opportunity. Schedule the tour early enough so that your cast and crew can participate and still get away in time to prepare before curtain up.

Julie Woods (aka That Blind Woman), a member of the Arts For All Otago Network, says: "Usually when we go to a play, my husband has all the power. He's read the programme and he can see the set and the actors. With audio described performances, I'm the one with the power. Ron wants his own headset because he feels excluded from the information I have. I get to meet the actors and do a touch tour before the show. I've read the braille programme and then the audio describers tell me what's happening on stage."

After you've engaged with the local blindness community, here are some other key things to consider:

- Read the case study about Fortune Theatre and its audio described performances on Arts Access Aotearoa's website.
- Book trained audio describers for the event. It's good practice to use two audio describers for a performance and give them plenty of time to develop and rehearse their descriptions before the performance.
- Make sure you have the equipment you need and a soundproof space for the audio describers to work in.
- For galleries and museums, think about whether you want to use your audio describers for a single tour, or develop recorded descriptive audio files that can be made available to all visitors through headsets or using smartphone apps.
- Ask blind and vision impaired patrons to book in advance so you know how many headsets and sighted guides you will need.
- Provide information (e.g. the programme or catalogue) in accessible formats before the event.
- Train your staff on how to assist blind and vision impaired patrons, and make sure everyone is well-informed about how people will access and get around your venue.

Sign Language interpretation

Sign interpretation of live performance (e.g. plays, musicals, operas, book readings, concerts), and tours in galleries and museums require qualified Sign Language interpreters to interpret what is being said for Deaf people who use New Zealand Sign Language to communicate.

There are various approaches and styles, depending on the artform, the actual work and the venue. For theatre performance, consider whether it's best to use the conventional approach with the interpreter at the side of the stage, or to integrate the interpreter into the action on the stage.

Lorraine McQuigg, a member of the Arts Access Aotearoa Making A Difference Arts Advocacy Programme, says: "I've recently attended some fabulous New Zealand Sign Language interpreted shows and events at THE EDGE in Auckland. In the past, I avoided live events. My hearing family also tends to avoid events if I can't be included too. These interpreted performances have opened up a whole new opportunity for us to do something special together."

From left: Saran Goldie-Anderson and Bridgette Strid sign interpret Eleanor Catton's New Zealand Book Council lecture at Writers Week 2014

Photo: New Zealand Festival, Pauline Lévêque

After you've engaged with the local Deaf community, here are some other key things to consider:

- Read the case study on Silo Theatre and its sign interpreted performance on Arts Access Aotearoa's website.
- Book your sign interpreter/s well in advance – at least one month ahead. Make sure they have access to the scripts and plenty of opportunity to watch final rehearsals and practise.
- Just before the signed performance, some Deaf people may find it helpful to attend a short meeting in a separate room with the interpreters. This would provide an overview of the story and any tips to make the signed performance easier to follow.
- For galleries and museums, think about whether you want to use live interpreters for a single tour, or develop video clips in Sign Language using smartphone technology or displayed on screens in your exhibition.
- Plan with your interpreters where they will stand and which seats to reserve so Deaf audience members can see them. Make sure there's sufficient lighting on the interpreter at all times.
- Some Deaf people may appreciate a copy of the script and a synopsis of the information in advance. This could be offered at the time of booking to ensure there is sufficient time to read it before the performance.
- Make sure your staff are trained to communicate with Deaf people. It might be a good opportunity to offer your staff some training in New Zealand Sign Language so they can give a friendly greeting when your patrons arrive.

MilkMilkLemonade, New Zealand's first captioned theatre performance at the Dunedin Fringe Festival 2014

Photo: Alan Dove

Captioning

Captioning is designed for Deaf and hearing impaired people to access all significant audio content as text. This includes spoken dialogue, along with information such as who is speaking, sound effects (e.g. door knocks, footsteps, noises offstage), laughter and a description of the music.

A trained captioner prepares the captions in advance so they mirror the rhythm and flow of the actors' dialogue. The captioner then cues the captions live at the performance as the action unfolds on stage.

Captioning is available on television and DVDs but was used for the first time on the New Zealand stage in 2014 in *MilkMilkLemonade*, a play directed by Anna Henare for Hurdy Dur Productions.

It's a great way of improving access to Deaf and hearing impaired people, anyone who has difficulty following strong accents, and people whose first language is not English.

Captioning can also be used for lectures or book readings although in these situations, the captioner will often be working live and may use specialist predictive text software. This is used in some tertiary institutions to provide access to lectures and so the disability service at your local tertiary institution might be able to offer you support with this.

The surtitles for opera productions use equipment that could also be used for captioning. Smartphone apps are another option, enabling captions to be delivered to patrons' personal devices. However, as with any technology, it's important to remember that some people don't have smartphones or access to the internet.

"People make assumptions about the kind of access people need. Everyone's different and it's essential to ask the individual what their accessibility needs are."

Caitlin Smith, blind singer, songwriter, poet and teacher

Before embarking on the provision of captioning, it's a good idea to talk to your local Deaf community to find out whether signing or captioning would be more appropriate for your event. Some Deaf people will prefer Sign Language while others will prefer captioning. The nature of the performance might also dictate which format will work best.

After you have engaged with the local Deaf community, here are some other key things to consider:

- Book your captioner and make sure they have access to the scripts and equipment, and have plenty of opportunity to rehearse.
- Make the most of your captioned event by letting all of the groups that might benefit know about it.
- Plan where the best place in the auditorium is to put the screens showing the captioning. Audience members need to be able to follow the action onstage as well as read the captions.
- If the captioning will only be visible from certain areas of the auditorium, reserve seating for patrons who require it in that area, and encourage people to book early.
- If you require people to use smartphones, provide them with all the necessary information in advance, especially if they will need to download apps.

Once you have the equipment and the processes in place, you can use them for all sorts of ideas: for example, providing subtitles in other languages for non-English speaking audiences; or offering English subtitles for performances delivered entirely in Sign Language by Deaf performers.

SNAPSHOT

Access in Dunedin

Driven by her passion for theatre and sense of social justice, Dunedin actor Anna Henare established Experience Access Trust in December 2011 to provide accessibility services such as captioning and audio description for arts patrons.

"I believe that theatre connects us like no other artform can and it makes the world a better place," Anna says. "It's wrong and unjust when it's not accessible to everyone."

Rather than pursue many ideas simultaneously, Anna has learned that it's best to develop and implement one initiative before moving on to the next. In 2012, Experience Access Trust honed its skills in audio description by audio describing each of the seven plays in the Fortune Theatre season.

Its latest initiative is captioning. In March 2014, Anna delivered New Zealand's first captioning of a live theatre production with the play *MilkMilkLemonade*, which she directed and produced at the Dunedin Fringe Festival.

Deaf and hearing impaired patrons sat near to the stage and close to a television screen, which projected the captions from a laptop as the actors spoke.

Following the success of this captioning trial, Anna will investigate and invest in better captioning technology. This could include the ability to transmit the captions to patrons' smartphones and iPads, as some theatres and cinemas in Britain, Australia and the United States are now doing.

"I'd like to see more theatres and venues in New Zealand offering captioning as an option for hearing impaired people and those who don't use Sign Language."

The trust's community participation focus appeals to many potential funders. However, Anna says it can be difficult to convince funders that the impact of providing accessibility services extends beyond the people who use them.

"Accessibility benefits theatres, our communities and the wider society. We're all strengthened by our diversity."

Seating

Some ideas:

- Where possible, make aisle seats available to people who ask for them even if you can't see why: for example, a person who has anxiety or panic attacks.
- Have processes and trained staff in place so that people using wheelchairs can transfer to a venue seat if they want to.
- Find out about the most suitable seating for Deaf audience members so they can watch the Sign Language interpreter and the performance.
- Be as flexible as you can about where people using wheelchairs can sit. In many venues, allocated spaces for wheelchair users are at the side or the back of a venue. This can restrict the person's view and create a sense of isolation. Where possible, offer a range of options and locations.
- Some people with low vision might want to sit near the front to see as much of the action as they can. Others might not care if they have a restricted-view seat. If you have an audio described performance, make sure a range of seats are available and think about whether you can offer them all at a discounted price.

Timing

The timing of an event can be very important for disabled people. The Court Theatre, for example, finds that the matinees and early evening performances are often more popular for people with physical or vision impairments because they feel more comfortable going out when it's light.

Some ideas:

- If you're scheduling a programme of events, check with someone from a disability organisation about what times work best for their members. Day-time events will not suit everyone due to work commitments or the availability of companions, so it's good to have a couple of times that suit accessibility requirements: during the day and in the evening. This also helps prevent segregating disabled people.
- Different times of the year may affect access to your events. Think about this when you are planning your programmes. For example, crowds of school children may be stressful for some people. Or a winter event in the evening may not be a good time for wheelchair users.

Additional information: *Where to go for advice and information* (page 81).

Booking tickets

Ticketing offices can be difficult places to access. The counters are often too high for wheelchair users to see over, and staff may be locked behind desks and unable to offer easy assistance. Sometimes, booking by phone can also be a frustrating process if the person taking the booking can't answer your questions.

Can people book by email? Can they book online and, if they can, is it easy and accessible? Or are there complicated forms to fill out before they get to the purchase page? Do you insist on phone or in-person bookings for disabled people, then charge them more for not booking online?

If your arts organisation uses a ticketing agency, find out its processes for ensuring all people have access to your arts events.

Some ideas:

- Try to ensure everyone taking bookings for your event knows how to assist disabled people so their booking experience is positive.
- Ensure people taking bookings know what performances have Sign Language interpreters or audio description and that they take down the appropriate information from the person making the booking.
- Be flexible about ticketing and your ticket exchange policy. If there's a medical emergency, your patron has a panic attack or the accessible taxi simply fails to turn up, offer refunds or tickets to another performance or a different arts event.
- Relaxing your ticket exchange policy may help people opt into season or subscription offers.

Jo Neilson, box office staff member, gives Jan MacLeod her tickets to Fortune Theatre's audio described performance of *Gifted*

Photo: Alan Dove

- Provide a facility in your box office for disabled audience members to book an accessible car park.
- Consider where accessible seats are in your venue. Are they in the premium blocks, or somewhere to the side or at the back?
- Do you charge more for booking tickets by phone or in person? If you require disabled people to book in these ways, consider waiving the additional booking fee.

Guidelines and infomation sheets: *Ticketing and seating.*

Pricing

Arts Access Aotearoa's 2009 survey suggests that cost is the biggest issue for disabled people (74% of the respondents) wanting to attend more arts events.

Should disabled people receive discounted tickets? It's worth considering different perspectives before developing a clear policy and ticketing strategy.

Here are some arguments for and against discounted tickets.

For:

- Disabled people often have low incomes and high living costs.
- Disabled people often need to bring a companion to an arts event and pay for that person's ticket as well as their own ticket.
- Offering discounts to companions benefits staff because the companion can assist with access.
- Seats at the front are often more expensive but sometimes the front is the only option for wheelchair users or people with low vision who want to see the stage.
- Disabled people will probably have had to pay additional costs to get to the venue, such as using a mobility taxi.
- If you haven't made your performance accessible by offering information in alternative formats, Sign Language interpreters or audio description then the disabled person might be paying the same price for a lesser service.

Against:

- Offering discounted tickets for disabled people means they are not being treated equally. If disabled people are unwaged or senior citizens, they can claim these discounts. If they are in fulltime or permanent employment, they should pay the same price as anyone else.
- Offering discounted tickets shouldn't be used as an alternative to providing good access.
- It may cause issues deciding who qualifies for a discount.

Renee Ryan, Nylla Tamati and Tah Kwah Kwang in *Rain*

Photo: Derek McCullough

SNAPSHOT

Direct support

Christchurch integrated company Jolt Dance often has to deal with ticketing issues when it performs at festivals because ticketing agencies can be inflexible when it comes to disability support.

Artistic Director Lyn Cotton says there has to be a way for people booking tickets to communicate directly with venues and performance companies,

“Online sales should never be the only way to book tickets. We need to establish a relationship with disabled patrons and let them know they’ll be supported when they arrive.

“If we’re committed to encouraging disabled people to our arts events, we have to let them know they will have support in the space before, during and after the performance.”

Knowing people’s access needs in advance is important, Lyn says, so she can plan the necessary support: for example, leaving the correct spaces for wheelchair seating; making sure props are placed safely; adapting light and sound levels for groups with a large number of autistic people; and offering visually impaired people an opportunity to explore the space.

“Or maybe an audience member needs to be able to leave the space easily if they get upset or anxious. These are things you find out when you talk directly to people.”

Jolt Dance performed *Rain* at the Dunedin Fringe Festival in March 2014. “We had to get special permission to handle our own tickets but once we explained why we needed to do this, they were really supportive.”

Jolt Dance was set up in 2001 to provide ongoing training and performance opportunities. Its classes include people with a wide range of impairments. In 2009, Jolt Dance received Arts Access Aotearoa’s Big ‘A’ Creative Space Award.

Arts organisations need to cover their costs and the idea of reducing the price of tickets or providing a free ticket for companions may have little appeal. But think about ticket pricing and discounts as a marketing tool – a way to reduce barriers, attract disabled people, and build a loyal audience not only of disabled people but also of their family, whānau and friends.

Disabled people often have to do a lot of planning before attending an arts event. To make it easier, they may need:

- a companion to go to the arts event with them (and therefore an additional ticket)
- accessible transport and parking
- a choice of seating to enhance the arts experience.

How can you appeal to those people in the survey (88%) who said they would be "very likely" or "likely" to attend more arts events if barriers were removed?

Some ideas:

- Offer a free or discounted ticket for companions. Market research by Companion Card Victoria shows this is a crucial factor in attendance for disabled people.
- Ask an appropriate organisation or individual to sponsor discounted or free tickets for disabled people and/or companions.
- Develop a ticketing strategy that includes concessions and discounts for disabled people and mental health consumers. One way to cater for people who don't wish to disclose their impairment might be to offer the discount to Community Service Card holders.
- Offer discounts for disabled people and/or their companions on less busy days or in the first week of an exhibition or performance.
- Apply to a philanthropic trust for funding to implement a ticketing strategy for disabled audiences or visitors, and then evaluate the outcome.
- People's physical, hearing or vision impairment may mean they need front-row seats to experience the event fully. If these seats are in the premium price range, offer these seats at the cheaper rate if they're required.

Data capture

Someone who has been to an arts event and has enjoyed the experience is a potential audience member or gallery/museum visitor for another time. Make sure people's details are captured on your database, along with their access requirements (e.g. use of wheelchair, person with visual impairment). Building up your attendees' list with relevant information will enhance your ability to reach audience segments and develop your audience.

If you categorise a person on your computer system as using a "disabled concession", you won't know what information would be relevant to that person. Have a "preference" column where you can record your visitors' access requirements. This means they don't have to repeat information every time they book.

Under the New Zealand Privacy Act, you need to ensure people are aware:

- that you're collecting information about them
- that they don't have to provide you with this information
- why you're collecting the information and what you're going to use it for
- whether you'll be giving the information to anyone else
- that they can access the information you hold about them and can correct it if it's wrong.

Fortune Theatre patron Raeleen Smith reads the braille programme for *Gifted*

Photo: Alan Dove

3

Communications
Te whakawhitiwhiti kōrero

This chapter looks at both traditional and online ways to communicate and market your arts events and activities to everyone, including disabled people. Providing a range of communication channels – the media, social media, brochures, websites, emails – is important so you reach all your audiences.

Martine Abel enjoys a touch tour before Tauranga Musical Theatre's audio described performance of the musical *Grease*

Photo: Bay of Plenty Times

PROFILE

Drawing my own pictures

By Martine Abel

I love reading, which I've always been able to access via reading braille or listening to an audio book. But people love the power of visuals (A picture can paint a thousand words, right?), and so going to the theatre and movies was often a frustrating experience for me. As a blind person, I missed so much.

Now, with the increased availability of audio described theatre performances and television programmes, I finally feel more included. I simply loved being able to watch recent audio described performances such as *Grease*, *Calendar Girls* and *Madame Butterfly*.

In New York last year, I went to the Broadway show of *The Lion King*, and was offered a headset to listen to the pre-recorded audio described track. I was amazed at how specific and precise the description was. It's something worth exploring in New Zealand although it doesn't allow for any margins of error or poetic licence.

Touch tours before the shows let me draw my own pictures of the stage and actors. Some people think it's simply dark in a blind person's world or that they should avoid using words that have connotations with sight: for example, "Have you seen … Do you watch … Come and look at … " But these are ordinary words. It's more than okay to use them when you're talking with blind people. It's preferred and normal.

Things like e-newsletters or mobile phone app notices of upcoming events, programmes in braille, staff who tell me where the merchandise outlet café is and then offer to assist me to these places are all part of the inclusive experience.

Martine Abel is Strategic Advisor Disability, Auckland Council

An online world

So much communication today is online and brings with it opportunities for cost-effective and powerful communications. It's a great way to promote your arts event or activities and your accessibility.

However, it's important to use a variety of channels to reach all your audiences because not every channel will suit every audience.

Online channels should never be used at the expense of more traditional methods. Some people, including mental health consumers on benefits, and disabled and older people, don't have access to appropriate technology, or may not feel comfortable using the internet or social media.

Promote your arts event or activity, plus your access, on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Pinterest and Vibe. Facebook pages, for example, can attract a large following and encourage interaction. This can provide valuable feedback and add to your knowledge about access.

Disabled bloggers are increasing in number and popularity. Their posts can create an immediate response to good and bad experiences. Their posts can also help you publicise your event. They may also be willing to guest blog for you.

Posting a video clip on YouTube (with captions) is another way to attract audiences and it lets viewers sample what you have to offer. It can be posted to your website and Facebook pages and shared even more widely. Include subtitles or accompanying text so it's accessible to Deaf and hard of hearing audiences. Transcripts may also help blind and vision impaired visitors with access to the same information. YouTube provides auto-captioning but you need to check the captions for accuracy.

The accessibility of online social marketing platforms cannot be guaranteed but where you do have control – websites, email newsletters and other electronic media – pay attention to accessibility.

Marketing and promotion

Word of mouth has always been one of the most effective marketing tools there is. Including the text "Please spread the word" on posters and brochures, in your email messages and social media posts is a good way to remind people about passing on the information.

Friends and family of disabled people will want to know about a venue or an arts event's accessibility. For example, an article in a mainstream newspaper about an audio described performance may be read by friends and family, and communicated to a blind or vision impaired person. The article will probably also be posted on the newspaper's website, then linked and shared on social media.

Disability organisations have newsletters, websites and email mailing lists. They will be happy to promote an accessible event or one about disability.

For example, Deaf Aotearoa will promote any sign interpreted events through its weekly electronic e-newsletter, website and Facebook page. Similarly, the Blind Foundation or Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand will promote your audio described events through their communication tools.

Does your venue have a café? You could offer it to your target audience as a meeting place and treat them to subsidised coffees. You will build a relationship with the group, be able to talk to them about your event, hand out flyers, and make it easy for them to buy tickets with a box office at their fingertips.

A marketing strategy

Your marketing strategy should include:

- what you want your event to achieve (the purpose and goals)
- who you want to reach
- how you will reach them, including the various communications tools you propose to use (e.g. specific media, websites, social media, texting, posters, mail outs and email newsletters)
- how you will measure the event's success.

"It's easy to be pigeonholed as 'disability arts' and sometimes, the mainstream media will direct us to One in Five or Attitude TV. That's great but we also want our stories on the Kim Hill show and the TV news."

Karen Fraser Payne, General Manager, Touch Compass Dance Company

Let's say you're preparing a marketing strategy for your next exhibition, a solo show featuring the work of a talented emerging artist. The purpose of the exhibition is to expose her work to as wide an audience as possible.

One of your goals is to market your event to Deaf people. Your first action point should be engaging with the local Deaf community to find out the best ways to make your event accessible to them.

You may need to book New Zealand Sign Language interpreters for an exhibition tour or artist talk. Consider working with a Deaf person who can lead the tour in Sign Language and will also promote the event to the Deaf community. This has already been done successfully in various venues around the country.

You will then need to use your strategic communication channels to let Deaf people know the details of the signed tour.

Another goal might be to ensure that disabled and older people know the venue is accessible and they will feel welcomed.

As part of your commitment to reaching disabled people and building new audiences, always factor disabled audiences into your marketing strategy. In defining the purpose of your event, include at least one measurable goal relating to accessibility.

When you're including disability organisations in your communications, remember that many disabled people are not connected to these organisations. That's why providing accessibility information through other channels is also important.

Allow plenty of time to market your event. Many disabled people have to make arrangements ahead of the event. You also need to book Sign Language interpreters in plenty of time.

Promoting your event

Here are some ideas for promoting your event:

- Use symbols such as the universal symbol for access as an effective visual device on posters, flyers and newspaper advertisements. Use them also on the internet and in other electronic communications. In electronic media, the symbols should have alternative text (known as "alt tags") for blind and vision impaired readers.
- Integrating access information into all promotional material for your event is cost-effective and will promote inclusion. Importantly, it will also reach older people and the many disabled people who are not connected to a disability organisation.
- Include accessibility information in a generic flyer, which can be included with the tickets whether you're posting them out or they're being collected at the box office. Post the same accessibility information online.
- Use disability organisation networks, both organisations of and for disabled people, to publicise your arts event. A longer time frame may be necessary for this to be effective.
- Include disabled tourists in your marketing by ensuring information about your accessible options and events are available in hotels and tourist brochures.

Word of mouth is powerful in disability networks, and works negatively and positively. Providing easy ways for disabled people to provide feedback about your organisation's accessibility is important. You will build trust and a stronger relationship if you respond to their feedback and use it to improve your access.

Guidelines and information sheets: *Marketing to the disabled community.*

A guide to language

Language – what you say and how you say it – can make or break your communications. It is central to your marketing strategy. It can engage and inspire people, or leave them indifferent. It can turn them on or off your arts event – and, ultimately, your organisation or venue.

Test your communication on others, preferably disabled people. Check that your messages don't imply that "We don't know how to treat you"; "You're a problem"; "We don't understand"; or "We are just going through the motions".

The key is to use plain language that says what you mean, details what you can offer and how to access it. Compare these two examples:

- "We welcome everyone. Our venue has level access, lifts and accessible toilets."
- "Access requirements are catered for. Call this number for special requirements."

The first example is informative and welcoming, instilling a sense of confidence that you know what you're talking about. The second example may come across as unfriendly and unhelpful. It means that disabled people have to do something else that others don't, and may not cater for a range of access needs (e.g. wheelchair users).

Additional information:
What words to use (page 80).

Robyn Hunt and Nicola Owen, trainers for the audio describer course in 2014 presented by Arts Access Aotearoa, with support from Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School and Wellington City Council

Information options

Having accurate, adequate and meaningful information is critical in providing access for disabled people. They need the correct information so they can make decisions about attending and/or participating in particular arts events. For example, be specific if the only wheelchair access is through a side door.

Make sure the information on your website is current and that you do actually offer the services or access options your website describes as available. It should provide clear and easy-to-find information about your venue's accessibility, along with more general information about the venue.

Printed material doesn't always have to be in full colour. A simple fact sheet, along with existing material, might be enough. However, information for disabled audiences should meet the same quality standards as for other audiences.

Insider information

Providing insider information is a great marketing tool and makes people feel that they are a part of your organisation or event.

Some ideas:

- Provide a script or images before the event in a variety of formats, depending on the audience you want to reach. For example, send well-structured Word files electronically to blind or vision impaired people. Providing them electronically as well as in hard copy gives people the option of resizing text or reformatting it to suit their individual needs. It's a good idea to avoid pdfs unless you're confident your pdf creation software has the latest accessibility features.
- Deaf and hearing impaired people may also appreciate the opportunity to obtain a script in advance.
- Put your programme or brochure on your website so patrons can read or download it before the arts event.
- A written version of an audio tour is one way to welcome some Deaf and hearing impaired people to your event.
- Partner with a disability organisation and involve members in a specific event: for example, artists, writers, actors and musicians could talk to members about their arts event before it opens.

Accessible formats

This section is about the various ways you can provide information to your audiences to meet their different communication needs, including:

- accessible websites
- accessible emails (text-only options as well as accessible HTML)
- social media
- texting
- brochures and posters (including large print and Easy Read)
- signed and captioned videos
- podcasts
- telephone calls and services such as a menu option on your telephone menu.

Blind and vision impaired people use screen readers – software that "speaks" the text on a computer screen (e.g. documents, emails, websites and smartphone devices). This means that accessible websites and e-newsletters are great ways to communicate with them.

The Telephone Information Service run by the Blind Foundation is a cost-effective way of reaching this group, nationally or in a particular region.

Standard print material is of no use to blind and vision impaired people. However, large print may work for some people with low vision.

Think about seeking sponsorship to produce a programme in braille. For example, Dave Allen and his Dunedin company, Blind-Sight Ltd, sponsors the braille programmes for Fortune Theatre's audio described performances.

Here are some other things to think about when you're considering different formats:

- Decide on the information you want to produce in other formats: e.g. general information, accessibility, safety, the programme.
- What is the budget and do you have the expertise to do it in-house?
- How will you ensure the quality of the various formats?
- How will people know these formats are available?
- How will you monitor the take-up of the various formats?

Technology is constantly changing. Arts Access Aotearoa's website has information on standards and best practice in producing accessible formats.

Accessible websites and emails

Websites and emails are critically important communication tools. But they are a missed opportunity if they are inaccessible or hard to use.

People with a range of disabilities can understand accessible websites and emails by using various assistive technologies. Among those who need particular accessibility features are people who are blind or have low vision; people who can't use a mouse or who can't use a keyboard; people who are Deaf or hard of hearing; or people who have dyslexia or learning disability.

Everyone benefits from accessibility and its near relation, usability. This includes people who have lost, broken or forgotten their glasses; older people; and anyone using mobile technology, especially in noisy or bright environments.

The *New Zealand Government Web Toolkit* details the Government's Web Accessibility Standard 1.0 and Web Usability Standard 1.1. This is a good place to start to ensure your website is accessible.

Large print

Large print is sometimes described as clear print. Large print is used in books, online and other published material for people who are vision impaired. It uses larger fonts or typefaces, and may be presented in a larger format in the case of books.

Enlarging print on a photocopier and printing on A3 size paper is not adequate for large print. Large print standards include sans serif font type for easy reading and usually 16pt or 18pt.

Plain English and Easy Read

Plain English and Easy Read are different. Plain English benefits everyone. It uses everyday language; short, straightforward sentences and paragraphs; and avoids jargon.

Jeff Harford, Otago Access Radio, interviews Claire Noble, Arts Access Aotearoa, about the Arts For All Otago Network

Easy Read is a specific way of communicating often quite complex information in a style that is easy to understand by adults and young people with learning disability. Easy Read uses the principles of Plain English and builds on them. It can enable some people to read and understand the information independently. Others will require facilitation of the information.

With Easy Read, information is reduced to essential elements expressed in everyday words with pictures, symbols and graphics to assist meaning. It's useful for other people as well: for example, people who have low literacy or for whom English is a second language. It is different from writing for children.

People First New Zealand has guidelines to writing in Easy Read and offers an Easy Read translation service.

Case studies: Kylee Maloney, a blind consultant, talks about accessible documentation.

Guidelines and information sheets: *Print and publication guidelines.*

Working with the media

Let's say you're presenting an exhibition or performance that looks at disability and involves artists with a learning disability. How do you get media coverage?

Prepare a media strategy as you would with any event you want to promote in the media. Find a fresh and different angle to your story. Think about inviting the media to a preview or a rehearsal.

Stories can run in newspapers, on television and radio, and on various online channels. Disability media outlets and access radio stations are always receptive to stories about their communities.

Bloggers, social media and news websites such as Scoop are also valuable.

Some ideas:

- Make sure your story has a strong hook. Know the angle of the story, what makes it different and why the reporter should cover it.
- Use appropriate language about disability when representing your artists to the media. Be guided by the artists.
- Reporters are busy. Give them useful, accurate and concise information.
- Check out the general focus of the interview so the person being interviewed can be prepared. Make sure the people being interviewed are articulate, and you have whatever support they need, such as Sign Language interpreters.
- Have a clear idea how the interview might work best and convey this politely to the interviewer.
- Be positive and thank reporters for taking an interest in your event.

Guidelines and information sheets: *Useful media and promotional opportunities.*

Paula Waby participates in the Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tour for blind and vision impaired people of the Seung Yul Oh exhibition

Photo: Max Bellamy

4

Galleries and museums

Ngā whare whakairi toi me ngā whare pupuri taonga

This chapter looks at ways that galleries and museums can enhance their accessibility through the use of technology. But it's not all about technology: it's about making connections with the disabled community, inviting people to your space and thinking outside the box.

SNAPSHOT

Safe and welcoming

By Meta Assink

Mental illness is often hidden and really isolating, and yet it's a common experience for many of us. I've had terrible depression from the age of 15 and it got to the point where I couldn't leave the house.

I started going to Vincents Art Workshop because it's a free and accessible art space. Its safe and welcoming environment played a key role in my recovery. I was able to do my teacher training and then I became an art tutor at Vincents. It's a stimulating place to be, with lots of autonomy and great people.

My experience of depression has definitely given me insights and empathy for people's life experiences. For me, and maybe other people, the biggest barrier was the fear of being judged – or thinking I was being judged even if I wasn't. That fear stopped me from going to galleries and museums – and especially theatres because they tend to be crowded places.

I used to weigh up all the benefits of going to arts events or other places versus the discomfort I often experienced. Eventually, the benefits tipped the balance.

Going to something with a companion was useful because it helped me feel safe. I've come to really enjoy sharing in an experience with other people and being a part of the community.

"Safe" has been a key word in my recovery. It's something we talk about a lot at Vincents. If theatres, galleries and museums can create an environment that's non-judgemental, non-threatening and welcoming, they will go a long way towards making the arts a positive experience for everyone.

Meta Assink, art tutor at Vincents Art Workshop

Getting started

In chapter two, you will find information about the main barriers that disabled people can face when they want to attend an arts event or exhibition. You can also read about ways to break down some of these barriers and welcome disabled people to your event or venue.

Reaching the disabled community and communicating what you have to offer is vital. Chapter three gives practical information about accessible communication and marketing to the disabled community.

Many disabled people in New Zealand don't visit galleries and museums for various reasons – often related to access. Even when they do attend, they may not feel welcomed and included.

Here's an opportunity for you to build new and diverse audiences. You can do this by engaging with disabled people, encouraging them to visit, and using the different accessibility options to provide access and enhance their arts experience.

One size will not fit all when it comes to your different audiences. Present your exhibitions in the most meaningful way for each audience.

Working with local communities of disabled people and their organisations will help you meet these different needs and bring more people through your doors.

W **Case studies:** Auckland Art Gallery and disability responsiveness training for staff.

Easy access

Think about access before planning, designing and implementing exhibitions.

Make sure it's easy for people to find out about accessibility features. Access begins before entering the building. It may include the availability of accessible public transport and accessible parking. Some external aspects of accessibility are beyond the control of galleries and museums but providing helpful information is not.

Once inside the doors, people will need clear signage and accessible routes. Attention should be paid to exhibit flow, lighting and sound, as well as the way labels and text components are presented.

A range of seating in various parts of the building should be offered because walking around exhibition spaces can be very tiring for some older and disabled people. In a large building, a separate and quiet rest area may be useful for people who experience sensory overload.

Seating should be at a height suitable for older people to get in and out of.

Your staff will always be your best assets. Disabled people say that awareness is not enough. Well-trained staff who are helpful, responsive, competent and disability-confident can make a real difference to the visitor experience, even when other things are less than perfect.

Most major New Zealand galleries and museums are physically accessible. That is essential. But physical access is only part of the picture. Nor is it simply about braille labels or one-off events, important as these things are. It's about cultural change, ongoing accessibility and attention to detail.

W **Case studies:** Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tours for blind and vision impaired visitors.

Accessing the exhibits

Access to the exhibits includes the archives, electronic information, printed materials, multimedia, lectures, film series, excursions and any public space in the gallery or museum.

Staff who interact with the public should be knowledgeable about access options: for example, is there a hearing loop or other hearing assistive technology in the auditorium? Can they help a visitor use it?

Access to galleries and museums can be greatly enhanced by the use of technology. But not everything accessible has to be high-tech. For example, vision impaired visitors to Te Papa can:

- get a sense of the size of a baby blue whale suspended above their heads simply by pacing out the length on the floor below with direction and description from their guide
- wear gloves and explore the shape and texture of a sculpture
- experience the giant squid through the shape of a toy
- experience the size of exhibits by placing their hands on the display case while their guide describes the contents.

Guided tours

Guided tours can add real value to a disabled person's experience of your gallery or museum – just as they can for non-disabled people. You can make your guided tour more accessible by including Sign Language interpretation, touch experience and Easy Read material.

Advertising and letting people know about the availability of specialist guided tours is important. You will be more successful if you engage with the communities you're aiming to reach. Tour leaders may also feel more confident taking these tours because the gallery or museum staff will already have learned about the requirements of their audiences.

Some ideas:

- Visitors will want to know in advance about cost and any discounts, as well as booking information.
- People need detailed knowledge about the accessibility of the tour: for example, are there any areas where people using wheelchairs can't go? Is there any seating along the way?
- Information about audio or audio-visual guides should say what they include. Is the technology and content designed for a general audience or for blind and vision impaired people?

Andrea Gaskin of Auckland Art Gallery leads a relaxed conversation about art with a group from Alzheimer's Auckland Charitable Trust as part of its Art Connections programme

- Offering to send background information before the tour can be helpful so visitors who may have different impairments can come prepared.
- Check out visitors' communication preferences and interests in advance, if possible, or at the start of the tour. This will help ensure everyone is included.
- Involve all the senses wherever you can. The sense of smell can be very evocative.
- Think about how people will access the written elements on a tour. You might have Easy Read, large-print or braille copies available. There might be a Sign Language translation on an iPad, or a spoken English or te reo Māori version.
- Self-guided tours can provide easily accessible information in different formats to include a variety of visitors. The tour guide could be available accessibly as an app for iPhone, iPad, android or tablet, and other mobile devices. A well-described audio guide with two headsets might be useful for a blind person with a sighted companion.
- Allow time for disabled visitors to explore and ask questions.
- Audio described tours may also be useful for others who can't read printed information easily.
- A tactile braille map gives blind people an independent way of deciding what they want to explore and gives them more control over their visit.

Touch tours

Touch experience is important for blind and vision impaired people. It may also be helpful for other disabled people. In galleries and museums, a touch tour interprets the exhibit as well as simply describing it.

Some ideas:

- Indicate clearly to people what can and can't be touched.
- Describe what people can't access. For blind and vision impaired people, describe what you see. Context and meaning are also important.
- Have examples: this could be replicas or models, samples of cloth or paper, samples of thick oil paint on paper, textured surfaces, or other material similar to those exhibits unavailable to touch. If a real costume can't be touched, you could make a replica doll wearing a replica costume that can be passed around the blind patrons to feel.
- For blind and vision impaired people you will need to think about what to include. Leave out things that cannot be touched, or are in cases or too distant to be viewed closely.
- Think about attributes such as size, colour, shape and texture, so items can be compared and contrasted, and differentiated from each other in various ways.
- Tour leaders should have good knowledge of the things they are describing and understand how different people might engage with that information.
- Include a practical exercise in your touch tour so visitors can feel the paint, clay or other materials used by artists.

Megan Turnbull and Paula Waby participate in the Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tour for blind and vision impaired people of the Seung Yul Oh exhibition
Photo: Max Bellamy

Exhibition spaces

Designing accessible spaces needs careful thought and planning. The circulation route, furniture, colour and lighting all make a difference to accessibility.

Exhibits must be well-lit (unless light would be damaging) with attention paid to navigation, signage, written materials and labels. Where there are transitions from lighter to darker spaces, careful management is important so everyone can move safely and confidently from one to the other. Good colour contrast is essential.

The route through the exhibition should be easy to find and to follow, and be accessible (meeting or exceeding the New Zealand Standard 4121:2001).

Displays and interactive features should be at a height for easy access by people in wheelchairs.

Seating should be at a height suitable for older people to get in and out of.

The *Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design* provides excellent technical guidance on all aspects of exhibition design. You can download the document from the Smithsonian website.

Case studies: Access and exhibitions at the National Library of New Zealand.

Visual information

Clear label design and text with good colour contrast are important. So is the amount and quality of lighting focused on the visual information. Use a strong sans serif font for text and avoid using bright or “hot” colours. Dark text, not red, on a very light background is best. Print should be as large as possible.

Language should also be straightforward and clear. This will enhance the experience for Sign Language users, older visitors, people with learning disability and tourists who may have difficulty reading English. Maps and promotional material should also be as clear as possible.

Making this information available in alternative formats such as braille, audio and large print will be helpful. Downloadable material will be useful if it has been optimised for accessibility.

People need to know this information is available in alternative formats. Convey this via staff, information sheets and your website.

Film, video and other audio-visual displays can be captioned, and can provide transcripts and audio description. Even silent movies can have audio description provided separately. This will not interfere with other visitors’ experience.

Curator Lynette Townsend, accompanied by Sign Language interpreter Wenda Walton, leads a floortalk on *Aztecs: conquest and glory*, an exhibition at Te Papa

Sound information

The audio information generally available in galleries and museums is not the same as audio description. It may still be useful to blind and vision impaired people but only if the technology devices are accessible for blind people and the content caters for people unable to see the exhibit.

Sound elements and soundscapes enrich the gallery or museum experience for many visitors. This is particularly so for blind and vision impaired people if they are an integral part of an exhibition.

For some people, however, sound can contribute to a sensory overload. Let people know via staff, websites and information sheets that people who might experience sensory overload can come early in the day when the space is quieter and the sound can be turned off.

Sign Language tours provide an opportunity for Deaf visitors to engage more closely with exhibits. This might include interpreting the sound elements and audio commentary.

Museums without walls

A gallery or museum does not have to be tied to a particular place. Internationally, galleries and museums are becoming places from which services flow rather than places where people go. Exhibitions travel to communities or may document a particular community.

Exhibits can travel to other museums, libraries and community centres. Mobile exhibits are also taking to our highways. The Real Art Roadshow, for example, is a collection of New Zealand art that travels around New Zealand schools. It is a free and physically accessible art gallery on wheels. Many of the downloadable education resources are adaptable for different age levels, and could be adapted for children and young people with learning disability, or who are Deaf.

Increasingly, exhibitions are being created online and can be accessible to a large audience.

For disabled people, galleries and museums without walls can increase opportunities for participation if they are accessible. Some disabled people, for a variety of reasons, may never be able to visit a gallery or museum. They may live in a remote area, have no access to transport or be unable to leave their bed or their home.

Online access to culture and heritage can make a huge difference to quality of life and people's ability to feel included in their communities.

Some ideas:

- Make sure travelling exhibitions are housed in accessible venues.
- Information about the exhibition and the accessibility features can be spread through the disability networks in the areas you're visiting.
- Online exhibitions can have the same information presented in different ways: for example, catalogue information that would normally be on labels can be presented online either as accessible downloads or as accessible HTML text for reading online.
- Websites present exciting opportunities for accessibility: for example, quality alternative (alt) text for images, captioned videos, transcripts and detail of larger artworks.


EXIT

Paralympian Rob Matthews and his guide dog at an Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra rehearsal

Photo: Helen Spoelstra

5

Live performance
Ngā whakatūranga

This chapter looks at some of the things you can do to ensure your live performance is accessible to a diverse audience. These ideas incorporate music, theatre, opera, dance and spoken word, and include one-off performances, tours, longer runs in a single venue, or performances that are part of festivals.

There are also suggestions about involving disabled people as performers and cast members, as well as audiences.

Thonia Brooks, artist at Spark Centre of Creative Development in Auckland

PROFILE

When words elude me

By Thonia Brooks

It was a day no different to any other: the day after Labour weekend in 2010. My to-do list was unrealistic and would require yet another sixty-hour week in my management job.

It was the day my life changed. I suffered a stroke, which left me with some impaired brain functioning, a weakened left side and fatigue.

The saying “A picture paints a thousand words” is never more true than for stroke survivors. Making art has enabled me to use imagery to express things that are difficult to verbalise.

Many stroke survivors have difficulty with verbal expression and understanding. “My brain is giving me the silent treatment” makes light of uncomfortable, tricky situations where words elude me. Where once there was a sharp, quick and clear processing facility, now when I’m listening to people their words can disappear unrecognised into an unknown place.

Art, music, theatre, film and visiting art galleries leave me feeling alive, hopeful and inspired. Learning to develop my own art practice and attending an art therapy group for stroke survivors at Spark Centre in Auckland has made a critical difference to my quality of life and hence my recovery.

For me, a major barrier to going to live performance and galleries is the lack of income and the cost of tickets. Reduced mobility, fatigue and the very real pain of facing a “differently abled” way of living are also significant challenges.

Spark Centre offers an unconditional creative space where, through gentle, expert facilitation I have learned art making in an unthreatening, self-affirming way … independent of words.

Getting started

In chapter two, you will find information about the main barriers that disabled people can face when they want to attend an arts event. You can also read about ways to break down some of these barriers and welcome disabled people to your performance.

What happens to us before, during and after a show plays an important part in the total experience. However, getting people to the performance is only part of the picture.

The next question is: How do we engage people in a live performance? Most of us do this through seeing, hearing and feeling. Some of your patrons will need to "see", "hear" and understand the information in different ways.

Reaching the disabled community and communicating what you have to offer is vital. Chapter three gives practical information about accessible communication and marketing to the disabled community.

It's always important to connect with the communities you're wanting to bring to your shows. For example, you're offering a free dress rehearsal of a concert for people with learning disability. Where will you find this audience? A local disabled people's organisation is a good place to start.

Once you've made those connections, you can then research your target audience and find out about their previous experiences of attending performances; their preferred days and times; and any access needs.

Taking these steps means you will get the best results from the time and effort you're taking to be accessible – at the same time building an audience and developing a great marketing tool for the performance.

Planning an accessible show

Factoring access into your budget and planning documents from the outset will enhance your ability to make your show accessible and attractive to the widest possible audience.

Early planning for access means you have time to seek additional funding – either through the traditional method of funding applications or through a crowdfunding site. When Circa Theatre went looking for funding of $1800 to provide an audio described performance of the pantomime *Mother Goose*, it received the amount within five days of posting on the Boosted crowdfunding site.

If you have disabled people in your cast and crew, you need to book accessible venues for interviews, auditions and performances, and have a system for asking about and meeting their access requirements.

If you've already made things accessible for your disabled cast and crew members, you're probably well on the way to making your performances accessible to your audience. You might also have just recruited some good spokespeople to help you market your performance to the disabled community.

Information centre:
Where to go for funding.

Being creative about access

When you meet local groups of disabled people to talk about accessibility, it helps if you can be clear about what your performance entails so they can give you feedback on how they would like to access it.

This is where you get to use your understanding of your artform and your creativity to make accessibility an exciting and dynamic process, and to think about ways of inviting new audiences into your world.

Let's say your show is performed entirely in mime or dance with no spoken language. Here's a perfect opportunity to start building a relationship with the Deaf community and with people who are hard of hearing, and bring them to your show.

What could you do to make this show accessible to blind people?

Loyal new audiences

The work you do to make events accessible has the potential to create loyal new audiences. Mary Schnackenberg, an accessibility consultant who is blind, wrote a blog on Arts Access Aotearoa's website about audio description. She talked about the impact that staff disability responsiveness training has had on blind people's ability to go to performances independently.

"There's been an unexpected bonus for us, in Auckland at least. If we want to go to shows that are not audio described, we can ring THE EDGE ahead of time and let them know we are coming. An usher meets us at the door, guides us to our seats, checks on us at half time and guides us out at the end of the concert so we can catch the bus or taxi home."

W **Case studies:** The SIGNAL programme at THE EDGE, providing access to live performance.

Touring your show

Touring your show will offer some new opportunities as well as additional challenges.

When you're travelling with disabled crew and performers, ask them about their access requirements and then do some planning around providing what they need. Check with venues to ensure they're accessible.

Your disabled crew and performers may be able to access funding to pay for additional disability-related costs such as bringing support people with them. It's a good idea to plan for that at the beginning of your project.

One of the great opportunities of touring a show is that you get to play to audiences in different locations. It also means you can share the cost of accessibility across the whole tour.

For example, it takes around 50 hours of preparation for audio describers to write a script for a show. The cost of doing one audio described performance is relatively high. However, the cost of repeating the same show in different venues will be a lot less.

You will still need to factor in the equipment hire, audio describers' fees for each performance, accommodation and other travel expenses.

Disability networks

The work you've done in building strong relationships with the disability sector will reap benefits when you're touring. Use these existing contacts to help you build relationships and publicise your show.

Many disabled people's organisations have branches around the country and if people in one area have had a good experience they will be keen to spread the word.

Performance venues

In an ideal world, all venues would be accessible. But we're not quite there yet. It's important, therefore, to check with venues about their specific access.

Disabled people know from experience that even places that are described as "accessible" can vary greatly in how usable they are. You may not be able to visit every venue in advance but it's worth doing some research on their accessibility so you know exactly what you're getting.

Is the venue accessible?

The first thing to ask is whether the venue you plan to use has had an accessibility audit done, and if you can have a copy. This will give you a lot of technical information about the access, including things like parking and proximity to public transport.

If there isn't a recent audit report, you could encourage the venue to have one done. Here are some other ideas:

- Contact the New Zealand Federation of Disability Information Centres for information about venues.
- Email other companies asking them to name accessible venues they have used and venues to avoid. Make a list for future reference.
- Find out if there are any local people with the expertise to make an accessibility assessment for you.

If access is limited at certain venues, how might you address the issue? If there's a more accessible alternative, move there and provide feedback to the less accessible venue to encourage them to improve their access.

Some barriers might be dealt with at minimal cost. For example, a small step could be removed and a ramp installed. Even if it's just a temporary ramp, it's worth trying to negotiate access improvements with venues.

A note of caution: make sure the information you provide about venue access is accurate. It's great to be welcoming. However, it's also frustrating for disabled people when they've been told a venue is accessible but when they get there, they find they can't get in or there's no accessible toilet.

Aim to be accessible and encourage feedback but don't promise things you can't deliver.

Ticketing and seating

Getting into a building is only one part of accessing the performance. There are two other main areas that you need to address with each venue when you are touring a show.

The first is ticketing and allocating accessible seating. As discussed in chapter two, wheelchair users may want the choice to sit in a range of areas and to sit with friends and family. In many venues, wheelchair users can only access the front or back rows of seating.

Another example: when you're providing a Sign Language interpreted performance, you will need to seat your patrons in a specific area where they can see the interpreter without an obstructed view.

Work with the venue to ensure accessible seats are reserved and held until an agreed and publicised cut-off date. Negotiate the ticket prices so that people booking the accessible seats are not paying premium ticket prices.

Trained staff

The other major part of venue access is about having enough trained staff available to assist patrons appropriately. Again, this starts from the booking process. You need to be confident that the box office:

- has accurate information about the venue's access
- has accurate information about sign interpreted or audio described performances
- will allocate the agreed seating and give you the information you need (e.g. the number of people attending the touch tour or bringing service dogs).

SNAPSHOT

Seamlessly integrating people

"Everybody dances. We're just providing a platform for it," says Adam Hayward, the founding Artistic Director of the annual Body Festival in Christchurch.

The Body Festival promotes dance as a vehicle for mental wellbeing and to increase physical activity. The Mental Health Foundation and Active Canterbury are among the festival's health sector partnerships.

"From the outset in 2002, I wanted the festival to be about participation as well as presentation. So if you watch some flamenco or salsa, for instance, you can then go to a workshop and give it a go.

"What I love most about the festival is that mix of watching and doing; the idea that it's non-judgemental and non-competitive; that there are no barriers to participation.

"There's nothing to stop us – festivals, events, big organisations – seamlessly integrating people."

In 2012, the Body Festival's pilot programme, "You can see me everywhere," involved disabled people as ushers and programme sellers, film crew, lighting and sound crew. A 10-minute video documentary highlighted the many ways that disabled people contributed to the festival.

The festival extended this accessibility theme in 2013 by giving digital cameras to disabled people and asking them to photograph what they saw when they thought of the word "dance". The 216 photos were combined into a rolling presentation projected on to a wall of the Christchurch City Council's civic offices throughout the festival.

Also in 2013, the festival joined forces with the All Right? social marketing campaign, developed by the Canterbury District Health Board and the Mental Health Foundation to encourage Cantabrians to check in with each about their wellbeing.

Performances by Touch Compass Dance Company, Jolt Dance, Tablo – The Notional Theatre Company of New Zealand and Jen McArthur supported the festival's themes of inclusion and wellness.

Promoting accessibility

Think about promoting accessibility when you're on tour and encourage staff at all the venues to take part in disability responsiveness training.

Let's say you're in Oamaru for two nights with a sign interpreted show featuring six poets reading their work. You could ask your Sign Language interpreters to talk to staff about what they do.

Or if you have disabled crew and performers, they might like to talk to staff about being responsive to the needs of disabled patrons.

Talk to venues about the benefits of providing disability responsiveness training for all staff. Then suggest they get in touch with local disabled people's organisations. They may be interested in running the training but don't expect them to do it for free. They are often underfunded and with limited people resources.

Finally, if you've booked accessible venues, don't forget to publicise the fact. You could also remind the accessible venues to include their accessibility on all their publicity and encourage more disabled people to use their facilities.

Use your networks. Use their networks. Spread the word.

An accessible festival

This section is aimed at festival producers, who are responsible for the overall organisation of the festival. The focus here is on some of the issues particular to festivals and offers some suggestions on how to incorporate accessibility into your planning.

Perhaps you don't have enough funding to make the entire festival accessible. Seek advice from local disabled people's organisations and patrons about what they most want to see and experience.

If you only have funding to pay for Sign Language interpreters for three performances, talk to the Deaf community and find out which ones they are most interested in.

Let people know well in advance which parts you are providing particular access for. If possible, allow some flexibility in case your audience wants something different.

Multiple venues

Whether your festival is in a city, a park or a field, there's a good chance that you will have different venues, rooms or stages that people need to move between to experience all your festival is offering.

When you're putting together your programme, think about the time it might take to move between the locations. Make sure you leave enough time for people who might move slowly to get to the places they need to be.

Your festival information should show accessible routes. Some places provide accessibility maps so you could have copies of these available for your patrons. Otherwise, you could ask local disabled people for advice, especially if you're in a built environment. Locals often know the handy shortcut, or the route through another building that uses a lift rather than a steeply sloping pavement.

Dances With Waves, a photo by Leigh Montford featured in the *You can see me everywhere* photo exhibition in the 2013 Body Festival

If your festival is in the natural environment, think about the location of tents and other facilities. Consider putting down temporary pathways if there's a chance the ground might be too muddy or uneven for wheelchair users.

If there are parts of your festival that simply can't be made accessible, let people know well in advance so they can decide whether or not to buy a ticket.

Try and be flexible. If someone asks about access to a specific performance think about ways you could accommodate them.

If a venue changes at short notice, you need to communicate this information in various ways. It's not unusual for a blind person or a Deaf person to be the only ones left in a room because they couldn't hear or read the announcement that the venue had changed.

Transport and parking

As with all events, transport and parking play a major role in whether disabled people can come to your festival. If it's in the built environment, make sure there's plenty of dedicated accessible parking available close to each venue.

Provide information about public transport and ensure people can access the timetables. Specify drop-off and pick-up points for people wanting to come by taxi.

Accommodation

If your festival takes place over a number of days, you could find out which accommodation in the area is accessible and make the information available to patrons. Start with your local i-site or try your nearest Disability Information Centre for suggestions.

For outdoor festivals, where most people camp, let patrons know if they can reserve spaces on flat land, near to toilets and washing facilities, or if they can bring a campervan or caravan instead of a tent.

Some festivals have limited power supplies available, so let people know how they can access power if they need it for medical equipment.

It's important to ensure people have access to facilities and that these are clearly marked. If you're using portable facilities, make sure you put the accessible facilities on flat land that doesn't get too muddy so wheelchair users can navigate it.

Eating

If you have agreements with caterers or cafes to provide food for your festival, make sure these services are accessible and can cater for a range of dietary requirements.

In particular, ensure staff working from take-away vans are aware of possible barriers for disabled people and how they might overcome them: for example, someone in a wheelchair might have difficulty reaching high counters so staff could provide good customer service by coming out of the van to take and deliver the order.

It's good practice to find out exactly what services people require and then plan how you will provide them.

Seating

Some patrons will have problems sitting on benches without backing or on the ground at an outdoor festival. People in wheelchairs might want to be near the front or elevated if others are standing or sitting in chairs, or they might prefer to be nearer the back if everyone else is sitting on the ground or floor. Deaf people will need to be able to see the Sign Language interpreters; people with low vision might want to be near the front or not care where they sit; and some people might want to avoid being in the centre of a big crowd.

It's ideal if you can make a range of seating options available. Some festivals, like WOMAD New Zealand in New Plymouth, have elevated seating on viewing platforms for people in wheelchairs. They also have temporary tiered seating for senior citizens.

SNAPSHOT

From planning to performance

"WOMAD is all about discovering something new that you love. We're expanding the festival's kaupapa by improving access and enabling a diverse range of people to come along and discover something new."

Lisa McMullan, Marketing and Communications Manager at WOMAD New Zealand, says the festival added Sign Language interpretation for Deaf and hearing impaired patrons for the first time in 2013. Now, she would like to see the festival implement a large-print programme.

"Seeing a steady growth in the number of disabled people coming to the festival tells me they like what we're doing," Lisa says. "But we can always do better. Our challenge is to listen to feedback and ideas and see how we can implement some of their suggestions."

WOMAD is held in New Plymouth's TSB Bowl of Brooklands every March. In 2012, it received Arts Access Aotearoa's Big 'A' Creative New Zealand Arts For All Award for its long-standing commitment to accessibility – from the planning stages through to the performances.

Much of the park is on a steep hill. This could present a challenge to physically disabled patrons or senior citizens. However, there are several options available to remove this potential barrier: golf buggies transport patrons around the festival and the camping site; mobility scooters are available to borrow; and there's accessible car parking near the entrance to the park.

There are also viewing platforms for wheelchair users and tiered seating for senior citizens. Māori wardens are also available to assist disabled people.

"We welcome people's queries if they have any concerns about access," Lisa says. "We always do our best to make the festival a wonderful and happy event for everyone."

WOMAD has elevated seating on viewing platforms for wheelchair users and tiered seating for senior citizens

Photo: Michelle Hoffmans

Informal support

One of the special features of a festival is the opportunity to build a community among patrons and performers in a way that doesn't happen at one-off performances.

You shouldn't rely on that for all your disability access. However, there are certain things that might be possible in a festival setting that can significantly enhance the experience of your patrons.

Some of these might happen without any intervention from you: for example, Deaf people getting together in the interval or someone offering to guide a blind person between venues.

However, there are also some simple things that require your input. For example, family and friends attending with blind people will often provide an informal audio description during a performance. If you have audio description equipment that isn't being used all the time, you could offer it to the group to use and let other people know they can tune into it if they need to.

It's not a substitute for a professional audio describer but it can make a difference. And it will reduce the number of people whispering to their blind friends during the show.

Including disabled performers and participants

In chapter seven, one of the challenges is to include more disability content and disabled performers in your festival. It's a great way to add diversity to your programme and encourage disabled people to come along.

Think about how you engage with your festival patrons. How can you encourage disabled people to get involved if your festival has opportunities for audiences to participate?

Some ideas:

- Remove any structural barriers: for example, if performers have to write their name on a blackboard to be part of an open mic concert, find a way of making sure blind people don't miss out.
- Let everyone know well in advance how to get involved.
- Schedule the participatory events in the most accessible venues.
- Encourage the facilitators to be aware of people's needs: for example, letting people know in plenty of time that it is their turn to perform next so they can manoeuvre their wheelchair up the ramp to the stage.

Anna Henare audio describes *Gifted* at Fortune Theatre

Photo: Alan Dove

6

Digital media
Pūnaha rorohiko

This chapter is about digital media and the opportunities it offers to make the arts more accessible to people who have access to the internet and digital devices. There's a section on e-publishing and ways that publishers can make e-books accessible so more people can read great literature.

Filmmaker
Jared Flitcroft

PROFILE

An evolving world

By Jared Flitcroft

I've been interested in the arts all of my life, especially theatre and film. My main passion is for acting and directing. The arts give everyone, including Deaf people, a means to escape, to be entertained and to have fun.

My current film project, *Tama*, is about a young Deaf boy who has suffered from isolation, bullying and lack of access to arts and culture. *Tama* will encourage equality between the hearing and Deaf cast and crew because we expect the hearing crew members to learn basic New Zealand Sign Language, especially film lingo, so they do not need to rely so heavily on the Sign Language interpreters.

The digital world evolves all the time and now Deaf people are a part of it. Digital media is a very positive experience for us. The use of vlogs (video blogs) on YouTube and Facebook show how Deaf people can keep up with news and events. It also allows people to book NZSL interpreters.

Deaf people, in my opinion, are being treated better these days when it comes to the arts, especially with the use of interpreters, the provision of captions and transcripts online.

The best thing that arts organisations can do to market to Deaf people is to work with their local Deaf community or through Deaf consultants to create an accessible performance; book NZSL interpreters for events; and use social media such as Twitter, Facebook with vlogs in NZSL and/or captioned to let the community know their organisation is Deaf accessible.

The best thing about the arts is that Deaf people are being entertained and treated equally as everyone else.

Jared Flitcroft is a Deaf filmmaker who lives in Christchurch.

An example of digital multimedia … Michel Tuffery, *First Contact*, Architectural Projection Artwork, New Zealand Festival 2012

Photo: Matt Grace Photography

A definition

Digital media is content such as text, audio, video, animation and still images that is stored or transmitted electronically (e.g. via the internet, smartphones or other digital devices). Digital multimedia combines all or some of this content.

An integral part of the arts scene today, digital media can be an artwork in its own right: for example, an animated movie, a video or an e-book. Or it might be a painting that's been scanned and posted in an online gallery – therefore existing as both digital media and a physical painting.

Digital media can also provide integrated access to the arts, including from different and sometimes remote locations (see chapter four, pages 45 to 51).

"Digital platforms allow people to do things in new ways. For the arts sector, it means new ways of viewing, reading, hearing or otherwise accessing the arts; new ways of responding to, and engaging with, the arts; new ways of distributing, promoting or selling the arts." (*Do my arts look good on this? Media arts and digital platforms*, page 5, Creative New Zealand, 2011)

These "new ways" create huge opportunities to develop global audiences, including disabled people.

In 2012, for example, the Wellington-based New Zealand String Quartet live streamed (or webcasted) its entire Beethoven string quartet concert series over an eight-month period. This meant that anyone with access to the internet could experience the concert online in real time and free of charge.

This online audience could also interact during the concert via Facebook by posting feedback, thus ensuring a problem-free experience.

Rose Campbell, Manager of the New Zealand String Quartet Trust, says:

"Live streaming will never replace the total experience of live music, where an audience can share the intimacy of a performance with their companions and with the musicians. But it does offer another dimension to a concert experience and is a way for us to build new audiences, both in New Zealand and internationally.

"It means we can reach people for whom attending a live concert might be impossible – perhaps because of their location or a disability."

Digital media in the Deaf and disability world

Deaf and disabled people in New Zealand are already consumers of digital media, sometimes for arts activities such as creating or listening to music, watching arts programmes on television and writing blogs.

Video blogs (vlogs) can be a source of Sign Language information and can also be supplemented with captions and transcripts.

Examples of digital media accessibility in New Zealand include captioning and audio description of some television programmes and movies; transcripts and captioning of online video; and auto captioning of videos on YouTube.

Technological advances such as 3D printers mean galleries and museums can print exact copies of precious objects from collections for blind, vision impaired and other disabled people to touch.

As with much of disability access, it also benefits the wider community and is useful for education programmes run by galleries and museums.

Creating digital arts

Deaf and disabled people are already involved in creating digital arts and cultural archives through digital storytelling. For example, the Sign DNA project, launched early in 2014, will document the history of New Zealand Sign Language and the Deaf community in this country.

Another example: Deaf Aotearoa has received funding from NZ On Air for a web-based interactive game, called *Sign Ninja*. Its aim is to help children access and learn New Zealand Sign Language, and illustrates how the digital world is bringing access to arts and culture.

Interactive accessible games are popular among many disabled people who use them on a variety of devices, both mainstream and those with assistive technology.

Disabled bloggers use a variety of media in their blogs, including captioned video and podcasts, as well as text.

Which media for which audience?

The same information can be presented in a variety of ways to different audiences. Digital multimedia, when it includes accessibility features, is ideal for this purpose. Here are some options to consider:

- Sign Language videos, presented where possible by a Deaf person, are ideal for the Deaf community.
- Captions are very helpful to communicate audio elements to people with hearing impairments or Deaf people.
- Audio description works well to describe the visual elements to blind and vision impaired people.
- Where possible, incorporate the various forms of accessibility. Technology means you can have audio description or voice-over, captioning and Sign Language on the same video.
- Transcripts may be valuable for blind and vision impaired people to communicate visual elements of the video. They will also work for others: for example, people who don't have time to watch, or prefer to read their information.
- Podcasts are widely used and are listened to by a variety of audiences, not only blind and vision impaired people.

E-books and e-publishing

Access to literature and the printed word is something that most people take for granted. But for the group of people loosely called "print disabled", access to books is far from an everyday activity.

A wide definition of print-disabled people includes blind and vision impaired people; people with dyslexia and related conditions; people with learning disability; and people who, for usually physical reasons, cannot hold a book, or whose medication makes reading and concentrating difficult. This is a sizeable group of people.

It's estimated that only five to seven per cent of printed information is available to blind and vision impaired people around the world despite e-books, talking books and other accessible electronic technologies. Many other print-disabled people, including a large group of people whose low vision does not entitle them to services, have no access to print.

New markets and readers

Advances in technology mean that publishers can now reach new markets and new readers. Accessible publishing is a realistic option for publishers of both e-books and print books. International best practice guidelines are available online.

Tirohia Mai Look at us now, an exhibition at the National Library of New Zealand, used Sign Language videos

Until the development of e-publishing, special versions such as large print or braille have been required – often at great cost and after considerable delay. These were produced by charities with strict and limited membership criteria.

Now it's increasingly common for a digital device to keep a single copy of a book or other work, from which versions suitable for people with various disabilities can be produced with no delay and with less potential for error in translation.

Libraries have a key role to play here as they make e-books available to borrowers.

Ideas for publishers

Some ideas for publishers:

- Work directly with disabled people's organisations, perhaps through the New Zealand Publishers Association.
- Following freely available practical international guidelines, work towards ensuring all your e-books have easily added features that support accessibility (e.g. enhanced navigation and alternative text for illustrations).
- Make sure your e-books don't have accessibility features unnecessarily disabled unless you have concerns about having the appropriate rights.
- Use ePub3 as your publishing format of choice because it's the most accessible mainstream e-publishing platform.

Until recently, it's been difficult or impossible to convert copyrighted material to other formats because of copyright restrictions. However, in June 2013 the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) finalised terms on a copyright treaty to expand book access for people who are blind or have low vision.

When ratified, the treaty will make it legal to convert copyrighted material to formats such as braille books, audio recordings or large print books without having to obtain permission from copyright holders in each case. Alternative format publications can also be shared with agencies in other countries.

All readers, using whatever assistive technology they may require, should be able to access new books as they are published in e-book form. E-books tend to be cheaper than hard copy books: accessible e-books should be available at no additional cost.

Films and videos

Films and videos can be artworks. They can also provide extra explanation or insight into artists, particular artworks or exhibits; communicate information about an arts event; or tell a related story.

Their value can be enhanced by:

- adding captions for people who are Deaf or hearing impaired, or those for whom English is not their first language
- providing audio description and making it available on smartphones and tablets as well as the more traditional audio guide. It will not interfere with the enjoyment of other patrons
- providing Sign Language interpretation to include people who are Deaf
- adding music, interviews and visual elements to the traditional pre-recorded audio guide.

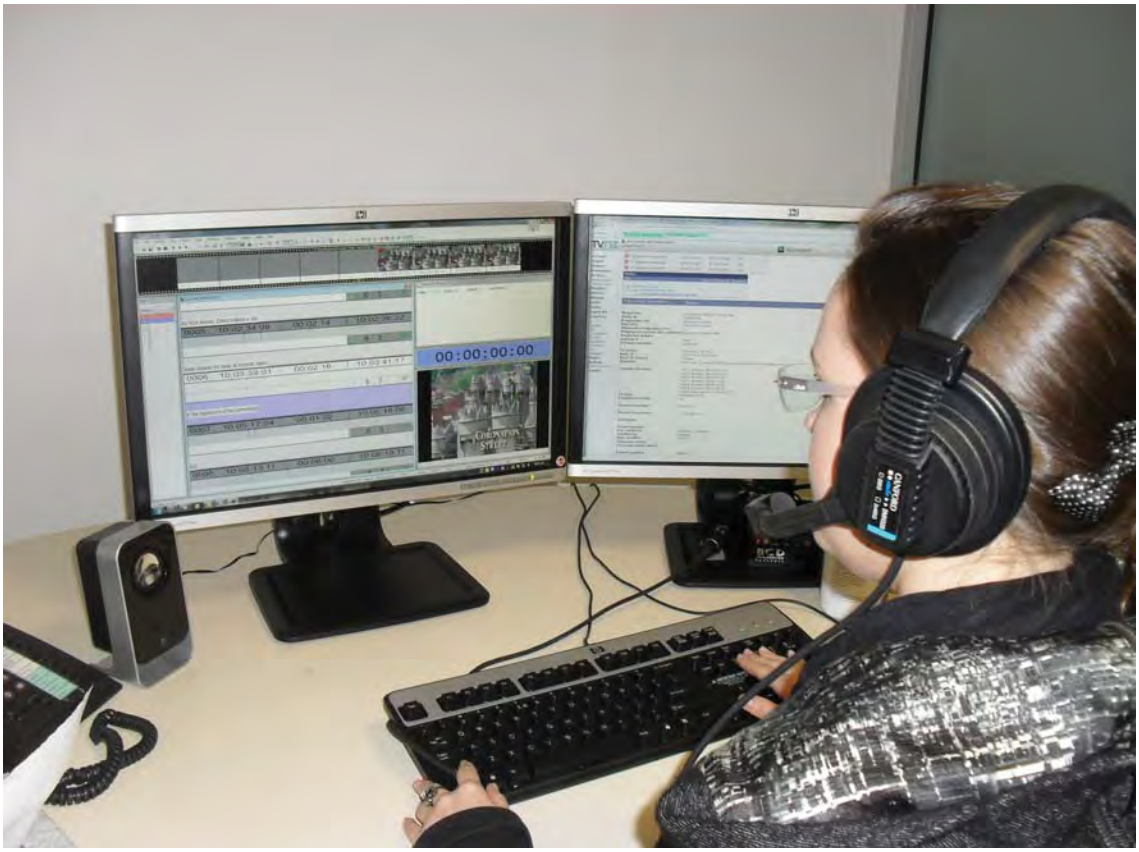
Online media

Online media includes the whole variety of sight, sound and interaction available from the internet. However, accessibility must be included in the web-based platform as well as in the multimedia content.

Websites must be:

- Perceivable – people know the information is there
- Operable – people can find it easily and navigate around the site
- Understandable – people can understand the content
- Robust – the site can be accessed using a range of current and future technologies.

Chapter three (pages 37 to 43) has more information about accessible websites.



Audio describer Virginia Philp prepares audio description for the TV One programme *Coronation Street*, one of the services provided by Able to New Zealand television

There's an app for that

Many arts organisations are developing apps for smartphones and tablets. Relatively inexpensive, accessible and out-of-the-box technologies are available. These bring many new possibilities for presenting all kinds of arts activities, and information about them, to different audiences.

Developers should use Apple's accessibility tools when they are developing an app and have it tested by people with low vision. Consider making an android version too.

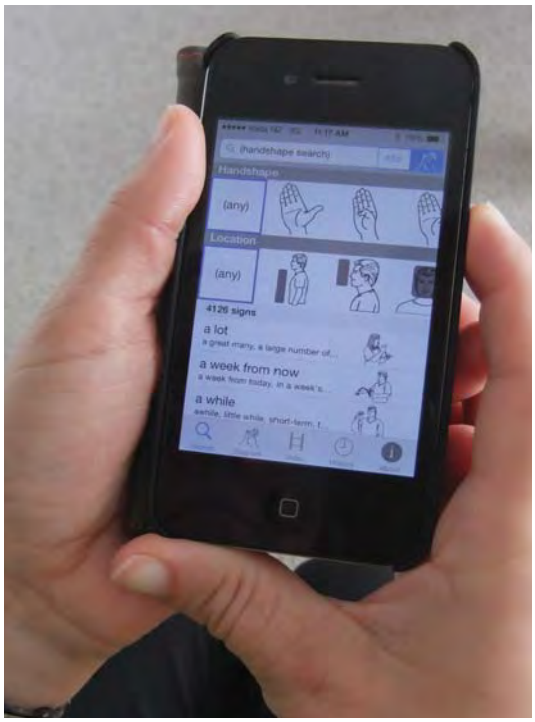
An app might include:

- videos with closed or open captions for audio content
- Sign Language videos
- enlarged text capability and documents that work accessibly
- audio description for visual material
- information in Plain English and/or Easy Read
- compatibility with braille output.

Ideally, it would have elements of all of these.

An app may be a way to:

- provide everyone with a smartphone or tablet with the same access to information about an upcoming arts event, exhibition, performance or festival
- enhance your New Zealand Sign Language skills (the New Zealand Sign Language Dictionary has a free app for iPad and iPhone)
- provide general information about a particular venue, including locations, directions and accessibility features, prices, discounts etc
- provide more in-depth information about an exhibition or show
- provide self-guided or virtual tours
- deliver audio description to a mobile phone or tablet, replacing the portable FM system currently widely used.



The New Zealand Sign Language Dictionary app


MIRRORS
STENCILS/
STAMPS/
LETTERING
OIL PASTELS
CHALK
PASTELS
Spray
ACRYLIC PAINT
PRINTING
ACCESSORIES

"Nothing hurts when I do art," says Pearl Schomburg, diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis more than 20 years ago and an artist at Spark Centre of Creative Development, Auckland

7

Looking ahead

Te titiro whakamua

This chapter is an opportunity to celebrate what's already been achieved in terms of improving accessibility over the past five years, and to think about what you might be able to achieve over the next five years.

For people new to accessibility, there's a list of ten practical and inexpensive things you can do right now to get you started. There's also a list of ten things you can do over the next five years.

Philip Patston, a diversity, leadership and social change expert

PROFILE

Getting to grips with diversity

By Philip Patston

There's a real opportunity to think differently about access and to me, it's a no-brainer for the creative sectors to be leading the way.

Truly getting to grips with diversity is not about being aware of other people's needs. Every individual has particular needs — whether or not they are obviously "disabled". The challenge of diversity is to be self-aware. That means being comfortable in your own skin, knowing what assumptions you may be making, identifying what information you need from each customer and being confident to elicit that information in the most appropriate way.

An important part of this self-awareness is being able to know when you've made a mistake. "Wrongologist" Kathryn Schulz points out that being wrong feels just like being right. It's only when you realise you're wrong that you feel any different.

Diversity has traditionally been defined by categorising and labelling people. I think this way of identifying and responding to people has reached its use-by date. A more sophisticated and accurate way of understanding diversity is to recognise that everyone encounters the world through both unique and common experiences. The challenge then becomes to connect with each other through our commonality and uniqueness.

All that stands in our way is fear. Fear of getting it wrong, fear of feeling awkward, fear of not knowing what to do, fear of not being able to afford it, fear of change. Yet there is nothing to fear because, as humans, we are abundantly able to adapt. We apologise and learn, we gain strength through vulnerability, we ask and get help, we are resourceful and innovative.

Once we are courageous enough to lean into the fear, knowing we will move through it, the change required is much easier to make than we think.

Philip Patston is a diversity, leadership and social change expert at DiversityNZ.com, and former Auckland comedian.

First steps

Now you've read this far, you realise there are a lot of small and inexpensive things you can do to make your organisation and arts events more accessible.

You're also starting to see how you could build new and loyal audiences for your work.

Ten things you can do now

Here are ten things you can do over the next few weeks or months.

1. Walk around your venue or space as if you have never been to it before. How easy is it to get around? Record your findings.
2. Download and complete checklists from Arts Access Aotearoa's website.
3. Get in touch with local disabled people's organisations and start a dialogue. How could you work together?
4. Pass on this book to another staff member to read and set up a meeting to discuss the contents.
5. Talk to a colleague in another arts organisation about access and how you might work together to build a new audience.
6. Print off the list *What words to use* (page 80). Ask all staff to read it, then keep at least one copy handy for all front-of-house staff to refer to.
7. Download and complete the *Getting Started* checklist on Arts Access Aotearoa's website, circulate to staff and get their feedback.
8. Review the language your organisation uses in its print publications, in emails and on its website.
9. Go to the New Zealand Sign Language Teachers Association website and look up New Zealand Sign Language classes. Ask staff if anyone would like to attend. If so, apply for funding to cover the course fees.
10. Buy a book for all front-of-house staff to record audience feedback and anything they notice about access. What worked? What didn't work?

Next steps

So what are the next steps? How can you embrace change and make a commitment to becoming accessible when already you may be feeling stretched, both financially and in terms of time?

Start with a vision of what you want to achieve over the next one to five years and then do some planning on how you're going to get there.

Including disability responsiveness as an integral part of your organisation's culture is a useful way to remember three things:

- It needs to be included in everything you do.
- It will take time, exploration and mistakes along the way to get it right.
- Accessibility is a process, not an outcome. There are, and will always be, ways to improve accessibility – in particular because of the exponential development of technology.

It's important to embed your commitment to access in your whole organisation. Having one passionate staff member is a great start but if you want to make long-term change, the whole organisation has to be involved.

Working with other individuals or organisations is usually the best way to make use of limited resources. Connecting with Arts Access Aotearoa, using its resources and joining a local Arts For All network are valuable – and free – ways you can get support, advice and ideas.

Ten things you can do over the next five years

Here are ten things you can do over the next five years:

1. Work with your staff and board to develop an accessibility policy and action plan.
2. Build partnerships with disabled people's organisations and develop projects that benefit both parties.
3. Make a commitment to ensuring there is at least one disabled member on your board.
4. Ensure staff undergo disability responsiveness training.

5. Have your venue audited for accessibility. Develop a funding plan and budget to make the required modifications.
6. Include disability-related work in your annual programme.
7. Include at least one goal in every marketing strategy about marketing the event to disabled people.
8. Use international accessibility symbols in all your communications and marketing.
9. Ensure your website complies with accessibility standards and make sure you have it properly tested by users for usability.
10. Develop a system to monitor and evaluate the impact of your organisation's improved accessibility.

Alex Jones and Della Goswell, Auslan Stage Left tutors at THE EDGE's theatre interpreting workshop workshop for Sign Language interpreters

Case studies: increasing accessibility

In 2011, Creative New Zealand and Arts Access Aotearoa provided one-off grants to 11 organisations for projects aimed at increasing their accessibility. Other organisations have found funding elsewhere to develop accessibility projects.

Arts Access Aotearoa's website has a number of case studies about projects and programmes that have improved access to the arts. What worked and didn't work? What were the challenges? And what were the benefits?

Here are summaries of case studies about projects completed by four of the grant recipients. Also included is a summary of the case study about the SIGNAL programme.

Music opportunities for people with learning disability

Chamber Music New Zealand has provided two "relaxed performance" concerts (in Wellington and New Plymouth) where young people with learning disability participated as both performers and audience members.

W **Case studies:** Chamber Music New Zealand and its performance with disabled youth

Audio description at Fortune

Three key themes in this case study are the need to build community relationships, seek and respond to feedback, and provide clear communications. Fortune Theatre worked with Experience Access Trust to provide an audio described performance of each of its seven plays in the 2012 season.

W **Case studies:** Fortune Theatre and its audio described performances

Tribes and the Deaf World

Nina Raine's play, *Tribes*, is about being Deaf in a hearing world. It's also a play about the universal themes of love, loss, belonging and families. Silo Theatre's production of *Tribes* enjoyed a sell-out season and included sign interpreted performances and reduced-price tickets. The theatre company also employed Abbie Twiss as

its Deaf culture advisor to ensure authenticity, and developed relationships with local groups to encourage members of the Deaf community to see the play.

Circa Theatre and Fortune Theatre also produced similarly successful seasons that included sign interpreted performances.

Case studies: Silo Theatre's sign interpreted performances of *Tribes*

Auckland Art Gallery and disability responsiveness

Auckland Art Gallery holds New Zealand's largest visual arts collection and access is built into its mission statement. Disability responsive training has given staff a shared language and approach to access. It's also given them an increased confidence to ask questions and come up with solutions to make programmes more accessible.

Case studies: Auckland Art Gallery's disability responsiveness training for staff

SIGNAL programme at THE EDGE

Auckland performing arts centre THE EDGE launched its SIGNAL programme in 2011. This offers Sign Language interpreted and audio described performances in its four venues (Aotea Centre, Herald Theatre, Auckland Town Hall and The Civic). These services are available to companies using its venues.

THE EDGE also invested in training audio describers, and has purchased audio description equipment that other organisations can hire. Its capacity-building project in 2014 provided training in theatre interpreting to Sign Language interpreters from around New Zealand.

Case studies: SIGNAL programme leads way in accessibility

New technologies and the future

In earlier chapters, this guide has looked at developments related to accessible technology and the impact of the digital world on arts access today.

Let's take a look into the future and the potential of fast-moving digital and technological change to make access to arts and culture available to everyone.

The world is going through a period of digital development that is profoundly affecting all aspects of the arts. Much of what will be our accessible digital future in New Zealand is already happening in Europe, North America, the UK and Australia.

The wide adoption of social media, and the relative cheapness of accessible, out-of-the-box technology means that people everywhere will be involved in creating, distributing and experiencing the arts. New ways of using and distributing information in a variety of digital forms have implications across all areas of arts practice.

Affordable options

Technology will continue to provide practical and affordable accessibility options. Disabled and older audiences are becoming more and more competent in using digital technology.

However, we will still need people to make it all work. Champions of accessibility will still be essential at all levels of arts organisations – from boards developing accessibility policies to knowledgeable, pro-active frontline staff implementing them.

Many of these developments are being led by the electronic games industry. Accessible digital gaming is very popular worldwide. Mobile technology using personal devices such as smartphones are already being used in interactive arts experiences. Their use is likely to increase.

Developments such as wearable technology, 3D printing and hologram technology will move beyond the gimmick to become mainstream technology.

Free mobile apps will customise content based on your visit to a museum, gallery or heritage site. An indoor positioning system with 50cm accuracy will enable visitors to use their personal devices to access highly localised content.

Publishing revolution

The publishing industry is undergoing a revolution. More print and pictorial publications will be available accessibly, even interactively, if the industry recognises that accessible publishing will increase readership.

Website and related accessibility will also improve to support these new developments as international standards are refined and improved with developments in tools, software and hardware.

We already have people with the skills and knowledge to take up the opportunities. Change will be led by arts practitioners, administrators, policy makers, funders and promoters who see accessibility not only as a creative challenge and a way to grow audiences, but also as a way to include and nurture new voices and perspectives in the arts community.

Visionary cutting-edge champions, working in partnership with disabled people and their organisations, will set the tone for arts access for everyone.

Three challenges

1. Festivals to reflect the experience of disabled people

Many organisations are becoming more accessible but we're still missing out on much of the talent and diverse perspectives of disabled performers and artists in New Zealand and around the world.

Art is a dynamic way of communicating with each other and understanding how different people view the world. The first challenge, therefore, goes out to arts festivals in New Zealand to reflect and include the experience of disabled people in their programming. This is an opportunity to inspire other disabled performers and artists, and enrich the experience of your audiences.

A good place to start is to contact Arts Access Aotearoa and talk to disabled people's organisations. They will know local and international performers and artists. They can help you start on your journey and market your festival to their community.

2. Sharing resources on touring shows and exhibitions

Finding the resources to provide audio description or Sign Language interpretation for a show or exhibition in New Zealand's main centres can be an issue if you haven't built it into your budget.

For small companies and organisations in smaller population centres, finding the extra funding can seem an insurmountable barrier. That means disabled people outside of the main centres are missing out on access.

Finding ways to share the costs gives us the chance to bring accessible arts to a much wider group and therefore build new audiences.

Imagine providing a sign interpreted or audio described show or floortalk at each location of your tour. Think of the opportunities to tap into new audiences in each area and develop your relationships with other arts organisations that share your enthusiasm for access.

Young people with learning disability participated in a concert with Enso String Quartet, presented by Chamber Music New Zealand and led by community musician Julian Raphael

The second challenge is to think about what shows or exhibitions you're touring within the next couple of years, or what shows or exhibitions will be coming to your venue, and start talking with each other now about how you can work together to plan your audio described and signed performances or floortalks.

Remember to talk to local disabled people early in the piece.

3. More opportunities for people with learning disability to come to your events

In chapter three we looked at the barriers that disabled people face in attending a performance, a gallery or museum. There's the cost of paying for tickets, transport and bringing a companion or support person. Added to these barriers is the fact that you don't know if you will enjoy being in an unfamiliar space or will understand what is going on. This means many people with learning disability simply don't attend arts events.

The third challenge to all arts organisations is to provide opportunities for people with learning disability to be part of your audience.

A final word

New Zealand is a small country with a vibrant, committed creative sector able to make things happen within limited resources. Since the publication of *Arts For All* in late 2009, the accessibility landscape has developed and a growing number of artists, companies, venues, galleries and museums are improving their access.

Taking small steps to increase your access has the potential to make a big impact on the lives of disabled people, their family, whānau and social networks.

At the same time, you'll be enhancing access for all your patrons. Everyone likes helpful staff, flexible booking practices, different ways of getting information and more comfortable facilities.

Using the tools discussed in this book and online, along with your own creative ideas, will open up your art to new audiences. Developing a diverse and loyal audience base can only help your organisation's reputation and long-term future.

It's a good idea to tap into the knowledge of experts in your local area. Get to know people in disabled communities. Talk to them and find out what they would like.

And finally, Arts Access Aotearoa is here to support you on your accessibility journey. Join a local Arts For All network, check out the resources on its website and discuss your accessibility plans with staff.

Clive Lansink, audio describer Nicola Owen and an usher meet a bear (tenor Andrew Glover) in the pre-show touch tour of New Zealand Opera's audio described performance of *The Bartered Bride*

Photo: Samantha Milner

8

Additional information

Kōrero tāpiri

One: What words to use

Two views about disability, common in New Zealand and internationally, are the "person-first" approach (e.g. person with a disability) and the "social model" (e.g. disabled person). Both believe that society disables people through the physical and social barriers it presents.

For Deaf people, the term "Deaf" (with a capital D) refers more to a Deaf culture and belonging to a community rather than to their hearing status.

Person-first language

Language that focuses on individuals and not a disability is known as person-first language. It affirms the individual and does not define people by their physical impairments. This is about describing disabled people in a way that values them for who they are, rather than identifying them by what they cannot do.

Okay: person with a disability

Not okay: crippled, handicapped, suffers from/ afflicted with disability, wheelchair bound

Social model

The New Zealand Disability Strategy and the Office for Disability Issues use the term "disabled people" – people who have been disabled by society. Many disabled people see their disability as an important and positive part of their identity. "Disabled person", therefore, can be a political statement.

Okay: disabled people, disabled or disability community, disability sector, disability perspective

Be aware and be flexible

Some people see person-first terminology as devaluing an important part of their identity. There is no consensus on terms and so it's good to be flexible and transparent about the language you use and why. If someone tells you he/she prefers being referred to as "Deaf" and not "person with a hearing impairment", respect this choice but don't assume it's the same for everyone.

Ask for advice if you're not sure what language to use. Asking questions shows that you're prepared to learn and are aware of individual experiences.

The following is a list of currently acceptable language, gathered from a range of resources and organisations.

Okay: disabled person/people/community, disability sector, disability organisation

Not okay: the disabled, handicapped, invalid, abnormal, special/special needs, cripple, deformed, defective

Okay: people without impairments, non-disabled people

Not okay: normal, able-bodied, typical, healthy

Okay: mobility impaired person, physically impaired or physically disabled person

Not okay: cripple, handicapped

Okay: accessible toilet/parking space

Not okay: disabled toilet/parking spaces (the space or toilet can't be disabled)

Okay: the person has … (the impairment)

Not okay: afflicted with, suffers from, victim of

Okay: blind person/people, vision impaired person, partially sighted person, person with low vision

Not okay: the blind

Okay: Deaf person/people, hearing impaired person, person who is hard of hearing

Not okay: the deaf, deaf and dumb, deaf mute

Okay: the person uses a wheelchair, wheelchair user

Not okay: wheelchair confined/bound, quadriplegic

Okay: mental health consumer, mental health service user, person with lived experience of mental illness

Not okay: schizo, crazy, patient, mentally ill, mental case, disturbed, psycho

Okay: impairment

Not okay: disease, birth defect, affliction

Okay: person with learning disability/intellectual disabilities

Not okay: mongol, spastic, retarded, feeble-minded

Okay: person has Down syndrome

Not okay: Mongol, Downs

Two: Where to go for advice and information

This list includes some key organisations that can provide you will advice and information. There are also many organisations that work closely with disabled children, including parent advocacy organisations and schools.

This symbol means the listed organisation is a disabled people's organisation. These are organisations governed and run by disabled people.

This list is also on Arts Access Aotearoa's website and will be updated.

Arts Access Aotearoa

A national organisation that advocates for people in New Zealand who experience barriers to participation in the arts, as both creators and audience members. Its key stakeholders are people with physical, sensory or intellectual impairments; individuals and organisations in the community and professional arts sectors; and people with lived experience of mental illness. It's also the key organisation in New Zealand facilitating the arts as a tool to support the rehabilitative process of prisoners.

T: +64 4 802 4349

E: info@artsaccess.org.nz

W: www.artsaccess.org.nz

AccEase

A disability-led accessible information and communications company. It offers disability consulting, audits and assessment, and disability responsiveness training. Workshops and advice help with accessible communication, engagement with disabled people, and inclusive policy and implementation.

T. +64 4 939 0445

M. +64 27 449 3019

E. informed@accease.com

W. www.accease.com

Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand

This organisation assists government and health agencies, local authorities and other organisations to improve services to blind people. It also provides opportunities for blind people to meet, socialise, and support each other by sharing information and experiences.

Wellington Head Office

T: +64 4 389 0033

E: enquiries@abcnz.org.nz

W: www.abcnz.org.nz

Barrier Free New Zealand Trust

An independent organisation, made up of consumers and individuals with experience and expertise in local government, the building industry and the disability sector. It facilitates and promotes accessible environments, and provides training and education, advocacy, technical advice and useful resources. It also oversees the use of the International Symbol of Access (ISA).

T: +64 4 915 5848

E: office@barrierfreenz.org.nz

W: www.barrierfreenz.org.nz

Be. Accessible

A social change initiative advocating for a more accessible New Zealand. It provides accessibility assessments and training for workplaces, and is working alongside leading businesses to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Its website provides a guide to accessible accommodation, entertainment venues, restaurants and shops in New Zealand.

T: 0800 234 686

E: info@beaccessible.org.nz

W: www.beaccessible.org.nz

Blind Foundation

A national organisation offering awareness training and advice on such things as audio description, accessible formats and building requirements. It may also be able to promote arts events and activities to people who are blind, Deafblind, or have low vision, depending on timing and available resources.

T: 0800 24 33 33 I +64 9 355 6900

E: GeneralEnquiries@blindfoundation.org.nz

W: www.blindfoundation.org.nz/

CCS Disability Action

A national organisation working with disabled individuals and their families. It aims to make communities more inclusive and accessible to disabled people by working with local councils, providing information, advocacy and advice. It has particular expertise in increasing accessibility to buildings, homes, amenities and streets.

T: +64 4 384 5677 I 0800 227 2255

E: info@ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz

W: www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz

DANZ: Dance Aotearoa New Zealand

A national organisation that promotes participation in and access to dance. It provides professional development and advocates for the dance sector. Its website is a useful resource for anyone working in dance or interested in dancing.

T: +64 4 801 9885 I +64 9 370 0482

E: danz@danz.org.nz

W: www.danz.org.nz

Deaf Aotearoa

Deaf Aotearoa works with the Deaf community and can advise you on making your organisation or venue more Deaf-friendly. It has helpful resources, offers Deaf awareness workshops and can advise you on booking interpreters for your arts event. Its website has a list of Deaf clubs and societies throughout New Zealand. Each club offers different services and social activities for Deaf people.

T: +64 9 828 3282

E: national@deaf.co.nz

W: www.deaf.org.nz

Deafradio

This company is a Deaf-led creative hub, combining New Zealand Sign Language expertise with the latest technology to deliver a range of projects and services. These include:

- Seeflow, an online NZSL translation service to/from English
- Infowave, a platform for delivering translations in a variety of languages, including NZSL, via text, video or audio to smart devices. Designed for use in physical spaces such as galleries and museums, it also works well for brochures and posters.

T: 0225 DEAFRADIO (332 372)

E: hello@deafradio.co.nz

W: www.deafradio.co.nz I www.seeflow.co.nz I www.infowave.co.nz

Department of Building and Housing

One of its roles is to administer the Building Act 2004. This includes the New Zealand Standard NZS 4121:2001, the code of practice for providing access to buildings for disabled people. You can download booklets on accessible parking, reception areas, service counters and the International Symbol of Access (ISA) from its website.

T: +64 4 494 0260

E: info@dbh.govt.nz

W: www.dbh.govt.nz

Disabled Persons Assembly

DPA works with other disabled people's organisations, government, local government, the media and wider community to advance the wellbeing of disabled people in New Zealand. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a driver of its work.

T: +64 4 801 9100

E: gen@dpa.org.nz

W: www.dpa.org.nz

Diversity New Zealand

This is the consultancy of former comedian Philip Patston. He is available to work with arts organisations, from operations and management through to governance, to develop policy, make culture change, develop teams and advise on access issues and opportunities.

T: +64 9 376 4830

E: philip@diversitynz.com

W: www.diversitynz.com

Hearing Association New Zealand

This national organisation has 32 separate associations around the country. They raise the profile of hearing issues, and provide information and support to people with a hearing loss, along with their family or whānau.

T: 0800 23 3445

E: enquiries@hearing.org. nz

W: www.hearing.org.nz

IHC New Zealand

A national organisation that advocates for the rights, inclusion and welfare of all people with an intellectual or learning disability, and supports them to live satisfying lives in the community. It presents the annual IHC Art Awards and can help arts organisations connect with its key stakeholders.

T: +64 4 472 2247 I 0800 442 442

F: +64 4 472 0429

W: www.ihc.org.nz

iSign

An online interpreter booking system, it provides connections between Sign Language interpreters, and the Deaf and hearing people who use them.

T: +64 9 820 5176 I 0800 WE INTERPRET

E: info@isign.co.nz

W: www.isign.co.nz

Local government

New Zealand has 73 district and city councils. They all have a significant role to play in enhancing the lives of disabled people, especially in terms of physical access and the right to live in the community. Many of the councils have community, arts or disability advisors. For more information, contact your local council. The Local Government New Zealand website has links to all council websites and boundary maps.

T: +64 4 924 1200

E: info@lgnz.co.nz

W: www.lgnz.co.nz

Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand

A national organisation that advocates for policies and services supporting people with experience of mental illness, their families, whānau and friends. It provides free information and training.

T: +64 9 623 4810

E: info@mentalhealth.org.nz

W: www.mentalhealth.org.nz

National Foundation for the Deaf

This organisation promotes the interests of deaf and hearing impaired New Zealanders. It provides information about deafness, hearing impairment, noise injury, tinnitus, audiologists, hearing tests, hearing aids, grants and scholarships. It also encourages New Zealanders to protect and preserve their hearing.

T: 0800 867 446

E: enquiries@nfd.org.nz

W: www.nfd.org.nz

New Zealand Federation of Disability Information Centres

Do you want to know where to hire a ramp or a wheelchair? How to contact a Sign Language interpreter? Or how to reach your local disabled community? NZFDIC provides an information and referral system through a network of independent, community-based centres throughout New Zealand.

T: 0800 69 33 42 | +64 6 878 9440

E: admin@nzfdic.org.nz

W: www.nzfdic.org.nz

Ngā Hau e Wha

Two consumer representatives from each of the four regions (Central, Midland, Northern and Southern) meet quarterly to learn about each other's activities and collaborate on behalf of people who use mental health and addiction services so that their voices can be heard at a local, regional and national level. Its website has contact details for each region.

W: www.nhew.co.nz

Ngāti Kāpo o Aotearoa

This national Māori health and disability service provider is driven by and for Māori disabled consumers and their whānau. It's a member-based society open to any person (disabled, non-disabled, Māori and Non-Māori) who supports the vision: to improve the quality of life of kāpo (blind) Māori and their whānau.

T: 0800 770 990

E: chrissie_c@me.com

W: www.kapomaori.com

Office for Disability Issues

The Office for Disability Issues provides support for the Minister for Disability Issues. It promotes and monitors implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy and leads policy development across government. It also publicises events and conferences of interest to disabled people, including arts events and artistic achievements. Its website is a useful resource for information on disability issues.

T: +64 4 916 3300

E: odi@msd.govt.nz

W: www.odi.govt.nz

People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi

A national self-advocacy organisation run by and for people with learning disability. There are more than 30 groups throughout New Zealand where members meet monthly to discuss issues. An education arm called Learnwithus provides training and lifelong learning opportunities. It also offers an Easy Read Translation Service. Regional contacts are listed on its website.

National Office

T: 0800 2060 70

E: mail@peoplefirst.org.nz

W: www.peoplefirst.org.nz

Toi Maori Aotearoa

Toi Maori Aotearoa is a key national organisation involved in the development of contemporary Māori arts. It has extensive networks and produces a range of activities, including festivals, exhibitions, performances, publications and workshops. Contact Toi Maori for advice on tikanga Māori (protocol) for your arts events and activities.

T: +64 4 801 7914

E: toimaori@maoriart.org.nz

W: www.maoriart.org.nz

Vaka Tautua

Vaka Tautua provides national services for Pacific peoples with disabilities. Its education programmes, resources and activities are aimed at removing barriers to participation and promoting an inclusive society. It can provide artists and arts organisations with advice, information and networks in Pacific communities. It has offices in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

T: 0800 825 282

W: www.vakatautua.co.nz

Three: Useful checklists and information sheets

Practical information sheets, guidelines and checklists, aimed at helping artists and arts organisations improve access and develop audiences, are available on Arts Access Aotearoa's website. They include:

Getting started: a list of questions about your venue or work that disabled people, and their families, whānau and friends may ask you

Accessibility: a checklist so you can evaluate the accessibility of your space and prioritise changes

Developing an accessibility policy: guidelines to developing an accessibility policy

Developing an accessibility action plan: guidelines providing five steps required to develop your accessibility action plan

Exhibition design: a checklist designed to help galleries, museums and exhibition spaces put on exhibitions that are accessible to disabled people

Marketing to the disabled community: a checklist to help ensure your marketing and publicity material meets the access needs of disabled people

Useful media and promotional opportunities: a list of some key media, organisations and individuals interested in promoting your work

Print and publication: guidelines to providing accessible information in printed material and websites. These can be used in conjunction with the marketing checklist

Ticketing and seating: a checklist to help provide accessible and equitable seating and ticketing

International access symbols: information about internationally recognised symbols that publicise and promote accessibility

Four: Where to go for funding

There is a range of funding sources you can apply to. Each funder is different in terms of where, what, when and how it funds. Visit the information centre on Arts Access Aotearoa's website for a list of possible funders.

Five: Useful resources and publications

Arts Access Aotearoa's website includes additional resources, including information and links to the Building Act 2004 and Human Rights Act 1993. In addition, it contains a list of publications about access and the arts from New Zealand and overseas.

Index I Kupu tohu

Abel, Martine, 38, **38**
AccEase, 81
access radio stations, 43; *see also* Otago Access Radio; radio
accessibility, of the arts, *passim*; *see also* barriers to accessibility; evacuation and emergency plans; furniture, and accessibility; seats and seating; toilets, accessibility and siting of; transport and parking issues; venues and sites, accessibility of
accessibility policies and action plans, 8, 11, 17–18, 21, 73, 81, 83, 84, 85
accommodation, 59–60
Active Canterbury, 58
addiction services, 84
advertising, *see* publicity and publicity material
ageing process, 14, 19, 26; *see also* older people
Allen, Dave, 42
Allright? social marketing campaign, 58
Alzheimer's Auckland Charitable Trust, **48**
Americans with Disabilities Act, 19
animation, 65
anxiety disorders, 22, 24, 32, 34
Aotea Centre, Auckland, 74
apps, *see* smartphones, use of and apps
Aratoi Wairarapa Museum of Art and History, Masterton, 23
Armstrong, Duncan, 6, **6**
art therapy, 54
arthritis, **70**
artist talks, **4**, 40, 41; *see also* floortalks
Arts Access Aotearoa, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, **20**, 26, 28, **41**, **43**, 73, 74, 76, 77, 81; awards, 6, 34, 60; survey by (with Creative New Zealand), 1, 11, 14, 20, 21, 33, 35; website of, 7, 11, 28, 29, 42, 56, 73, 74, 81, 85
Arts Access Aotearoa Making a Difference Arts Advocacy Programme, **20**, 28
Arts For All (publication), 1, 7, 10, 11, 18, 77
Arts For All networks, 7, 8, 16, 73, 77; Otago Network, 28, **43**; Wellington Network, 9, **9**
Assink, Meta, 46, **46**
Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand, 39, 81
Atamira Dance Company, Auckland, 23
Attitude TV, 40
Auckland, 7, 11, 56, 72; *see also* Atamira Dance Company; Alzheimer's Auckland Charitable Trust; Aotea Centre; Herald Theatre; Silo Theatre; Spark Centre of Creative Development; The Civic; THE EDGE
Auckland Art Gallery, 11, **20**, 20, 22, 47, **48**, 75; and Arts Connections programme, **48**
Auckland Council, 38
Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, **52**
Auckland Town Hall, 74
audiences, *see* disabled people as audience, and how to attract them
audio books, 38, 67
audio described performances and programmes, **4**, 9, 11, 19, 20, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, **33**, 38, **38**, 39, 42, 50, 51, 55, 56, 57, 61, **62**, 66, 68, **68**, 69, 74–75, 76–77, **78**; *see also* audio describers; audio describing equipment
audio described tours, 27, 41, 48–49, 56
audio describers, 17, 27, 28, **41**, 56, 61, **62**, **68**, 74, **79**
audio describing equipment, 28, 56, 61, 74
audio guides, 25, 41, 48–49, 50, 51, 68
audio-visual displays, 48, 50
Auslan Stage Left, **74**
Australia: and arts access, 6, 19, 31, 75; and legislation for disabled people, 19; *see also* Companion Card Scheme
autism, 22, 24, 34
awards, *see* Arts Access Aotearoa, awards
Aztecs: conquest and glory, **50–51**

Barrier Free New Zealand Trust, 81
barriers to accessibility, 7, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20–35, 46, 47, 54, 55, 57, 58, 60, 61, 77, 80; *see also* Barrier Free New Zealand Trust; cost, of attending arts events; transport and parking issues
Be. Accessible, 82
behind-the-scenes tour, 22, **22–23**
Blind Foundation, 24, 39, 42, 82
blind people and patrons, **4**, 9, 16, 27, 28, 30, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, **44**, 47, 48, **49**, 49, 51, 55, 56, 59, 61, 66, 67, 80; *see also* Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand; audio described tours; braille, use of; Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tours; Ngāti Kāpo o Aotearoa; touch tours; vision impaired people and patrons
Blind-Sight Ltd, Dunedin, 42
blogging, 39, 43, 56, 66; *see also* vlogs
Bluetooth, 26
Body Festival, Christchurch, 58, **58**
book events, 7, 14, 28, **29**, 30; *see also* literature, access to
booking and box office, 14, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32–33, 34, 35, 39, 48, 57, 77; in-person, 32, 33; online, 32, 34; telephone, 15, 21, 32, 33

booking fees, 33; *see also* cost, of attending arts events; ticket pricing and practices; ticketing agencies
braille, use of, 25, 28, **36**, 38, 42, 47, 49, 50, 67, 69
brochures, catalogues, flyers and posters, 15, 16, 23, 28, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 51; *see also* programmes; publicity and publicity material
Brooks, Thonia, 54, **54**
Building Act 2004, 18, 83, 85
building regulations, 18, 19; *see also* Department of Building and Housing; New Zealand Standard NZS 4121:2001, *Design for Access and Mobility*; venues and sites, accessibility of
buildings, accessibility of, *see* venues and sites, accessibility of

Cafes, 39, 60; *see also* eating, and dietary requirements
Calendar Girls, 38
Campbell, Rose, 65
Canterbury District Health Board, 58
captioning at art events and in social media, 9, 19, 27, **30**, 30–31, 39, 64, 66; *see also* videos: captioned; vlogs
car parking, *see* transport and parking issues
catalogues, *see* brochures, catalogues, flyers and posters
Catton, Eleanor, **29**
CCS Disability Action, 82
Chamber Music New Zealand, 11, **12**, 22, 74, **76–77**
Channells, Philip, 6
children, and Sign Language, 66; *see also* Sign Ninja
children, disabled, 7, 51, 81
children, writing for, 43
children's shows, 22, 32, 51
Christchurch, 7, 26, 64; *see also* Body Festival; Isaac Theatre Royal; Jolt Dance; The Court Theatre
Christchurch City Council, 15, 58
Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card (UK), 19
cinemas, 7, 18, 19, 31
Circa Theatre, Wellington, 26, 55, 75
colour, use and accessibility of, 9, 24, 25, 41, 49, 50
communications, 1, 9, 11, 16, 17, 22, 28, 37–43, 47, 55, 74
community centres, 51
Community Service Card, 35
Companion Card Scheme (Australia), 19, 35
companions, at arts events, 14, 20, 22, 32, 33, 35, 46, 49, 56, 61, 65, 77; *see also* concession and discounted tickets; cost, of attending arts events; ticket pricing and practices
concession and discounted tickets, 11, 32, 33, 35, 48, 69; *see also* cost, of attending arts events; ticket pricing and practices
cost, of attending arts events, 8, 14, 16, 19, 20, 32, 33, 35, 48, 54, 57, 75, 77; *see also* booking and box office; booking fees; concession and discounted tickets; free performances; ticket pricing and practices
costumes, 27, 49
Cotton, Lyn, 14, 34
Court Theatre, *see* The Court Theatre
Cox, Neil, 26
Creative New Zealand, 11, 20, 21, 60, 65, 74; *see also* Arts Access Aotearoa, survey by (with Creative New Zealand)
crowdfunding sites, 55
crowds, 32, 46, 60; *see also* anxiety disorders

Dailey, Diane, **15**
dance performance, integrated, 6, 56, 58; *see also* Body Festival; Jolt Dance; McArthur, Jen; Tablo – The Notional Theatre Company of New Zealand; Touch Compass Dance Company; Touch Compass Youth; Wellington Integrated Dance
dance training, integrated, 6, 34; *see also* Wellington Integrated Dance
DANZ: Dance Aotearoa New Zealand, 82
Deaf Aotearoa, 39, 66, 82
Deaf people and patrons, 1, 9, 10, 22, 23, 26, 28–29, 30–31, 32, 39, 40, 41, 42, 51, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 68, 75, 80; *see also* captioning at art events and in social media; headsets, use of; Hearing Association of New Zealand; hearing impaired people and patrons; hearing loops; National Foundation for the Deaf; New Zealand Sign Language; sign-interpreted performances; Sign Language interpreters; Sign Language tours
Deaf people as cast and crew, 64
Deafradio, 82
Department of Building and Housing, 83
design, inclusive/universal, 9
digital arts, creation of, 66, 68, 75
digital cameras, 58
digital media, 63–69, 75; *see also* interactive accessible games

disabled artists and performers, 1, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17, 26, 43, 53, **54**, 55, 56, 58, 61, 64, **70**, 74, 76; see also dance performance, integrated; dance training, integrated; Deaf people as cast and crew; drama training, integrated
disabled crew, 55, 56, 58, 61, 64; *see also* Deaf people as cast and crew
disabled people as audience, and how to attract them, 1, 7, 8, 13–35, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 47, 48, 51, 53, 55–56, 59, 61, 65, 66, 69, 73, 74, 75, 76–77, 81, 85
Disabled Persons Assembly, 83
disabled staff members, 58, 73
disabilities, statistics of, 7
disabilities, terminology for, 10, 21, 38, 41, 43, 80–81
Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (UK), 19
Disability Information Centre, 24, 59
disability responsiveness training, *see* staff, and general and disability responsiveness training
discrimination, freedom from, 14, 18, 19
disruptions policy, 23
Diversity New Zealand, 83
dogs, service (guide, hearing, mobility and companion), 25, **52**, 57
drama training, integrated, 6, 22, 64; *see also* SkillWise
dress rehearsals, 22, 55
drop-off points, 23, 24, 59; *see also* transport and parking issues
Dunedin, 11, 31; *see also* Blind-Sight Ltd; Fortune Theatre
Dunedin Fringe Festival 2014, **30**, 31, 34
Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tours, **44**, 47, **49**
dyslexia, 42, 67

Easy Read, 17, 42–43, 48, 49, 69, 84
eating, and dietary requirements, 60; *see also* cafes
e-books and e-publishing, 63, 65, 67, 76
education resources, 51, 66
email, use of, 17, 32, 37, 39, 42, 43, 57, 73; *see also* booking and box office, online; mailing lists
e-newsletters, 38, 39, 42; *see also* newsletters
English as a second language, 43, 50, 68
Enso String Quartet, **12**, **77**
epilepsy, 24
Europe, and arts access, 75; *see also* United Kingdom: and arts access
evacuation and emergency plans, 11, 21, 32
evaluation, *see* feedback and evaluation
exhibition spaces, 9, 47, 50, 51
exhibition tours, 39, 40, **44**, 48–49
exhibitions, 1, 24, 29, 35, 43, **44**, 47, 69; design of, 9, 40, 47, 50, 51, 85; mobile, 51, 76–77; online, 51; *see also Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design*
Experience Access Trust, 31, 74

Facebook, 39, 64, 65
feedback and evaluation: of accessibility and venues, 9, 16, 17, 18, 39, 40, 55, 57, 60 73, 74; of performances and events, 17–18, 27, 39, 40, 65
festivals, 1, 7, 15, 20, 24, 34, 53, 58–61, 69, 76; *see also* Body Festival; New Zealand Festival; WOMAD New Zealand
film, use of, 50, 64, 68
filmmaking, 6, 64; *see also* Other Film Festival
flexibility, during performances, 22
Flitcroft, Jared, 64, **64**
floortalks, **50–51**, 76, 77; *see also* artist talks
flyers, *see* brochures, catalogues, flyers and posters
Footnote Dance, 23
Fortune Theatre, Dunedin, 4, 11, 26, 28, 31, **32**, **36**, 42, **62**, 74
Fraser Payne, Karen, 40
free performances, 19, 35, 55
funding applications and issues, 16, 19, 31, 35, 55, 56, 59, 66, 73, 74, 76, 85; *see also* grants; submissions, joint
furniture, and accessibility, 50; *see also* seats and seating

Galleries, 7, 29, 35, 45–51, 54, 66, 76, 77, 85; online, 65; *see also* Auckland Art Gallery; Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tours
games, *see* interactive accessible games
Gaskin, Andrea, **48**
Gifted, **4**, **32**, **36**, **62**
Glover, Andrew, **78**
Goater, Georgie, 27
Goldie-Anderson, Saran, **29**
Goswell, Della, **74**
grants, 11, 74
Grease, 38, **38**
guided tours, 28, 48–49

Handrails, 18, 24
Harford, Jeff, **43**
Hayward, Adam, 58
headsets, use of, 27, 28, 38, 49

Hearing Association of New Zealand, 83
hearing impaired people and patrons, 16, 26, 30–31, 35, 39, 41, 42, 55, 60, 66, 68, 80, 84; *see also* Deaf people and patrons
hearing loops, 8, 11, 16, 19, 20, 26, 27, 48
Henare, Anna, 30, 31, **62**
Herald Theatre, Auckland, 74
heritage, access to, 51
heritage buildings, 26
heritage sites, 76
Human Rights Act, *see* New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993
Hunt, Robyn, **41**

IHC New Zealand, 83
Ingram, Rachel, 9
institutions, people living in, 19
interactive accessible games, 66, 75
interactive displays and experiences, 50, 75, 76
International Symbol Access (ISA), 81, 83; *see also* symbols, use of
internet, use of, 30, 39, 40, 63, 65, 68; *see also* websites and web development
iPad, 31, 49, 69
iPhone, 49, 69; *see also* smartphones, use of and apps
Isaac Theatre Royal, Christchurch, 26
iSign, 83

Jolt Dance, 14, 34, 58
Jones, Alex, **74**

Kabasa, **25**
Kim Hill radio programme, 40
Kimi Ora School, **12**

Lansink, Clive, **78**
large print, 17, 42, 49, 50, 60, 67
learning disability, 8, 10, 11, **12**, 20, 22, 42, 43, 50, 51, 67, 74, **76–77**, 77, 81, 83, 84
libraries, 18, 51, 67
lifts, 25, 26, 41, 59
lighting, 22, 24, 29, 34, 47, 50, 58
literacy, levels of, 43
literature, access to, 63, 67; *see also* book events; poetry readings
live performance, 1, 22, 28, 30, 31, 53–61, 65
live streaming, *see* webcasts
local government, 83
Local Government New Zealand website, 83

MacLeod, Jan, **32**
Madame Butterfly, 38
mailing lists, 39, 43
Maloney, Kylee, 43
Māori people and communities, 60, 84, 85; *see also* marae; Ngā Hau e Wha; Ngāti Kāpo o Aotearoa; te reo Māori
maps, 49, 50, 59
marae, 25
marketing strategies and practices, 1, 7, 8, 11, 14, 16, 20, 23, 34, 35, 39–40, 41, 47, 55, 58, 64, 67, 74, 76, 85; *see also* communications
Mathers, Mojo, 28
Matthews, Rob, **52**
McArthur, Jen, 58
McLennan, Alisha, **27**
McMullan, Lisa, 60
McQuigg, Lorraine, 28
media coverage, 37, 39, 40, 43, 85; *see also* digital media; newspapers; publicity and publicity material; radio; social media; television
Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, 58, 83
mental health, and arts event accessibility, 8, 35, 39, 46, 58, 80, 81, 83, 84; *see also* anxiety disorders
MilkMilk Lemonade, **30**, 31
mime, 56
mixed-ability productions, 26; *see also* dance performance, integrated
mobile phones, 38, 68, 69
mobility issues, 10, 14, 18, 20, 54, 60, 80
mobility scooters, 60
Montford, Leigh, **58**
Mother Goose, 55
Mullins, Rachel, **15**
multimedia, use of, 48, 65, 65, 66, 68
Museum of Wellington City & Sea, 9
museums, 7, 8, 14,16, 18, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29, 35, 45–51, 65, 66, 76, 77, 85; *see also* Aratoi Wairarapa Museum of Art and History; Museum of Wellington City & Sea; Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand
Museums Wellington, 9, **9**

National Endowment for the Arts' Office for Accessibility (USA), 19
National Foundation for the Deaf, 84
National Library of New Zealand, 50, **66**
Neilson, Jo, **33**
New Plymouth, 60, 74
New York, 38
New Zealand Book Council, **29**

New Zealand Disability Strategy, 8, 10, 14, 18, 80, 84
New Zealand Federation of Disability Information Centres, 57, 84
New Zealand Festival: 2012, **65**; 2014, 28
New Zealand Government Web Toolkit, 42
New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993, 14, 18, 85
New Zealand Opera, **78**
New Zealand Privacy Act, 35
New Zealand Publishers Association, 67
New Zealand Sign Language, 7, 9, 10, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32, 43, 48, 49, 50, 51, **51**, 57, 58, 64, 66, 68, 69, **69**, 73, 82; *see also* sign-interpreted performances; Sign Language interpreters; Sign Language tours; Sign Ninja
New Zealand Standard NZS 4121:2001, *Design for Access and Mobility*, 18, 50, 83
New Zealand String Quartet, 65
newsletters, 39, 43; *see also* e-newsletters
newspapers, 39, 40, 43; *see also The Times* newspaper
Ngā Hau e Wha, 84
Ngāti Kāpo o Aotearoa, 84
Noble, Claire, **43**
Nothing Trivial, 6
NZ On Air, 66

Oamaru, 58
Office for Disability Issues, 10, 19, 80, 84
older people, 14, 19, 33, 39, 40, 42, 47, 50, 60, **61**, 75; *see also* ageing process
One in Five radio programme, 40
online resources and information, 7, 11, 15, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 51, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 77, 81–85; *see also* Arts Access Aotearoa, website of; exhibitions, online; galleries, online; Local Government New Zealand website; websites and web development
opera, 28, 30, 53; *see also* New Zealand Opera
Otago, 7
Otago Access Radio, 43
Other Film Festival, Melbourne, 6
Owen, Nicola, 41, 79

Pacific peoples and communities, see Vaka Tautua; Wellington Pasifika Disability Network
Patston, Phillip, 72, **72**, 83
People First New Zealand, Nga Tāngata Tuatahi, 10, 43, 84
philanthropic trusts, 35
Philp, Virginia, 68
photographic exhibitions, 58, **58–59**
Pinterest, 39
Plain English, 42–43, 69
podcasts, 42, 66
poetry readings, 58
posters, *see* brochures, catalogues, flyers and posters
predictive text, use of, 30
pre-tours, 24
print-disabled people, 67
programmes, 16, 28, 39, 40, 41, 42; *see also* brochures, catalogues, flyers and posters
programming, for diversity, 14, 21, 26, 61, 72
publicity and publicity material, 11, 14, 20, 40, 48, 56, 58, 85; *see also* brochures, catalogues, flyers and posters

Radio, 40, 43; *see also* access radio stations; Kim Hill radio programme; One in Five radio programme; Otago Access Radio
Rain, 34, **34**
Raine, Nina, 26, 75
ramps, use and position of, 8, 9, 18, 20, 24, 25, 57, 61, 84; *see also* stairs and steps
Raphael, Julian, **77**
Real Art Roadshow, 51
relationships, building of, 11, 16, 17, 21–23, 34, 39, 40, 56, 73, 74–75, 77
rest areas, 47
Rogue, **27**
Ryan, Renee, **34**

Schnackenberg, Mary, 56
Schomburg, Pearl, **70**
Schulz, Kathryn, 72
Scoop, 43
screen readers, 42
seats and seating, 15, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 47, 48, 50, 56, 57, 60, **61**, 85
sensory and sound overload, 47, 51
Seung Yul Oh exhibition, **44**, **49**
Sign DNA project, 66
sign-interpreted performances, 11, 19, 20, 26, 27, 28–29, 31, 39, 40, 57, 58, 59, 60, 68, 74, 75, 76–77; *see also* Sign Language interpreters; videos: signed
Sign Language, *see* New Zealand Sign Language
Sign Language interpreters, 20, 28, 29, **29**, 32, 33, 40, 43, 48, 58, 59, 60, 64, 74, **74**, 76, 84; *see also* New Zealand Sign Language
Sign Language tours, 9, 28, 29, 40, 48, 51
Sign Ninja, 66
signage, 24, 25, 26, 47, 50
SIGNAL programme, 56, 74, 75, 81

Silo Theatre, Auckland, 11, 26, 29, 74
SkillWise, 22, **23**
smartphones, use of and apps, 28, 29, 30, 31, 65, 69, 75, 76; *see also* iPhone; mobile phones
Smith, Caitlin, 30
Smith, Raeleen, **36**
Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design, 50
Smokefreerockquest, 23
social media, use of, 17, 37, 39, 42, 43, 64, 75; *see also* Facebook; Pinterest; Tumblr; Twitter; Vibe
Spark Centre of Creative Development, Auckland, 54, **54**, **70**
staff, and general and disability responsiveness training, 10, 11, 16, 17–18, 21–23, 29, 32, 38, 47, 48, 50, 56, 57, 58, 60, 73, 75, 81
staff attitudes, 8, 14, 15, 20, 21, 25, 36, 77
stairs and steps, 10, 15, 24, 57; *see also* ramps
Strid, Bridgette, **29**
stroke survivors, 54
submissions, joint, 16; *see also* funding applications
surveys, one-off, 16; *see also* Arts Access Aotearoa, survey by (with Creative New Zealand)
symbols, use of, 25, 26, 40, 43, 74, 85; *see also* International Symbol Access (ISA)

Taberner, Roger, 20
Tablo – The Notional Theatre Company of New Zealand, 58
Tah Kwah Kwang, **34**
Taki Rua Productions, 17
talking books, *see* audio books
talks, *see* artist talks; floortalks
Tama, 64
Tamati, Nylla, **34**
Taranaki, 7; *see also* New Plymouth
Tauranga Musical Theatre, **38**
taxis, use of, 24, 32, 33, 56, 59
Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand (Te Papa), 48, **51**
te reo Māori, 10, 49
technology, use of for access, 9, 26, 30, 31, 39, 42, 45–51, 66, 67, 68, 69, 73, 75–76; *see also* Bluetooth; digital cameras; digital media; hearing loops; internet, use of; iPad; iPhone; mobile phones; screen readers; software, use of; smartphones; webcasts; websites and web development; Wi-Fi
telephone, use of, 15, 23, 27, 42; *see also* booking and box office, telephone; iPhone; mobile phones; smartphones
television, 40, 43, 66, 68; *see also* Attitude TV; TV One
text, use of, 30, 39, 40, 41, 42, 47, 50, 51, 65, 66, 67, 69; *see also* predictive text, use of; signage; transcripts, availability of
texting, 39, 42
The Bartered Bride, **78**
The Civic, Auckland, 74
The Court Theatre, Christchurch, 15, **15**, 22, 23, **22–23**, 23, 32
THE EDGE, Auckland, 28, 56, 74, **74**
The Lion King, 38
The Times newspaper, 9
theatres, 7, 8, 11, 15, 18, 19, 20, 27, 28, 31, 38, 46, 53, 54, 64
ticket pricing and practices, 8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 32–33, 34, 35, 39, 40, 57, 59, 75, 77, 85; *see also* cost, of attending arts events; concession and discounted tickets; free performances
ticketing agencies, 32, 33, 34; *see also* booking fees
timing of arts events, 32
Tirohia Mai Look at us now exhibition, **66**
Toi Māori Aotearoa, 85
Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School, **41**
toilets, accessibility and siting of, 8, 9, 20, 25, 26, 41, 57, 59–60, 80
Touch Compass Dance Company, 26, **27**, 40, 58
Touch Compass Youth, 6
touch tours, 9, 27–28, 38, **38**, 48–49, **49**, 57, **78**
touring companies and shows, 7, 53, 56–58, 76–77
tourists, disabled, 40, 50; *see also* English as a Second Language
tours, *see* audio described tours; behind-the-scenes tours; Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tours; exhibition tours; guided tours; pre-tours; Sign Language tours; touch tours
tours: self-guided, 49, 69; virtual, 69
Townsend, Lynette, **51**
transcripts, availability of, 39, 50, 51, 64, 66
transport and parking issues, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 23–24, 25, 32, 33, 35, 47, 57, 59, 60, 77; *see also* drop-off points; taxis, use of
Tribes, 11, 26, 74
Tuffery, Michel, **65**
Tumblr, 39
Turnbull, Megan, **49**

TV One, **68**
Twiss, Abbie, 75
Twitter, 39, 64

Umaga, Pati, 25, **25**
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 8, 14, 18–19, 83
United Kingdom: and arts access, 31, 75; and legislation for disabled people, 19; *see also* Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card; Disability Discrimination Act 1995
United States of America: and arts access, 31, 75; and legislation for disabled people, 19; *see also* Americans with Disabilities Act; National Endowment for the Arts' Office for Accessibility; New York

Vaka Tautua, 85
venues and sites, accessibility of, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17–19, 20, 23–25, 40, 41, 47, 55, 56, 57, 59–60, 74, 85; *see also* building regulations; individual site names
Vibe, 39
video, use of, 58, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69; *see also* vlogs
videos: captioned, 39, 42, 50, 51, 64, 66, 68, 69; signed, 23, 29, 42, 66, **66**, 68, 69
Vincents Art Workshop, 46, **46**
vision impaired people and patrons, 4, 9, 16, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, **44**, 49, 51, 60, 66, 67; *see also* audio described tours; blind people and patrons; braille, use of; Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Insightful Tours; Ngāti Kāpo o Aotearoa; touch tours
vlogs, 64, 66
voiceover, 66
volunteers, providing and training of, 16, 18, 21, 27

Waby, Paula, **44**, **49**
Waller, David, **9**
Walton, Wendy, **51**
war veterans, 19
webcasts, 65
websites and web development, 9, 11, 15, 17, 20, 23, 24, 26, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43, 50, 51, 66, 68, 73–74, 76, 77, 85; *see also* Arts Access Aotearoa, website of; internet, use of; Local Government New Zealand website; online resources and information; Scoop
Wellington, 7, 9, 11, 74; *see also* Arts For All networks, Wellington Network; Chamber Music New Zealand; Circa Theatre; Museum of Wellington City & Sea; Museums Wellington; New Zealand String Quartet; Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand
Wellington City Council, 9, **41**
Wellington Integrated Dance, 6
Wellington Pasifika Disability Network, 25
Whānau Ora, 25
wheelchairs, use of, 9, 10, 15, 18, 24, 26, 32, 33, 34, 35, 41, 48, 50, 57, 59–60, 61, **61**, 80, 84
Whitireia School of Music, 6
Wi-Fi , 26
WOMAD New Zealand, 23, 60–61, **61**
Woods, Julie, 28
World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), 67
Writers Week 2014, **29**

YouTube, 39, 64, 66

arts
access
aotearoa
Whakahauhau Katoa O Hanga

creativeNZ
ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND TOI AOTEAROA