



Responses to the Draft Cultural Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft strategy. The following comments are collated out of discussion with Access Advisory Committee members, Access and Inclusion staff, additional submissions made by AAC members and included are extracted comments from a transcript of the meeting of 19 August where the strategy was considered.

Attendance:

Clr McKenna	Clr Porteous	Cle Hesse
Hannah Solomons	Charlie Murray	Jamie De Paulo
Queenie Tran	Emily Dash	Kerrie Lorimer
Angelo Arulanandam	Meg Alwyn	Wendy Banfield
Glenn Redmayne	Julia Phillips	Johanne Gallagher
Naomi Bower		

Overall elements to consider:

- Adopt a nominal approach across all actions to "not leave anyone behind". This will be particularly important in the wake of the pandemic and efforts to recover and re-establish participation, social and economic wellbeing.
- UK Disability Arts Alliance fashioned the "# we will not be removed" and #InclusiveRecovery campaign and a part of that set out 7 principles aimed at ensuring inclusion as recovery measures were designed. The principles outline a framework for arts and cultural organisations to follow that will support artists with disability, audiences, and employees to enjoy a COVID safe and discrimination free recovery.
- These practical steps are underpinned by existing UK law and regulation however it would be a simple exercise to substitute relevant Australian and or NSW ones. Without diminishing the draft Cultural Strategy priorities these steps could inform and give clarity to how they can be advanced in an inclusive way. Here is a link to the principles: <https://www.weshallnotberemoved.com/7-principles/>
- The action to mentor artists with disability is welcomed and would be strengthened through adding connection to broader art/culture commitments such as the National Arts and Disability Strategy. This is the appropriate mechanism to reference on established needs related to disability in an arts context and align its aims locally and regionally, noting the significance of IWC in the creative sector of Sydney and NSW.
- Feedback from the AAC highlighted the lack of specific reference to 'people with disability' and the need to make that explicit throughout. This stems from a cumulative experience of being left out or forgotten in most planning and delivery systems. To combat this a stronger and clearer recognition that pwd are a distinct part of and within diverse communities is needed. Adoption of an inclusion framework such as those referenced above would assist to ensure that recognition translates to better outcomes.
- In regard to these Draft Strategic Priorities: #2 clarify and expand intent and reach to ensure everyone is included. #3 possible co-design opportunity to ask how we can support these priorities so they embrace and advance inclusion along with and into economic outcomes.

Consider/acknowledge the yellow (disability) \$ as an untapped and growing resource/market. #5 add support the creative sector to model inclusive practice

- Recognise that there is strong connection between both Healthy Ageing and Cultural Strategies regarding participation outcomes. This focus is also a key IAP focus so attention is needed on harmonising effectively, again without leaving anyone behind.
- On that point consider where there are potential conflicts that need careful policy implementation. An example is where there is both proposals to relax regulation and there is a clear need for greater access options. To ensure we can enjoy both may require any conflict in application to be mitigated. Recommend that the expectation for both (objectives) is explicitly included to guide passage for complimentary outcomes. Participation will not be improved for those currently disadvantaged through shortcuts where they overlook the increased isolation and associated costs.
- Encourage and support increased inclusion through creative venues and industry, this is needed for all but also to ensure the training/mentoring of artists with disability is meaningful. It is also important that opportunities are available for learning from artists with disability/being mentored by artist with disability about expression and interpretation through different modes and varying forms of communication including those who do not use spoken language.
- Express the fair reflection of the diversity of people with disability within public art/spaces – this acknowledges the 'making the invisible visible' rallying phrase of local disability pride and the importance public art has in defining identity and belonging within that space/place. This is especially so for those with a history of institutional and systemic exclusion from public space and public consciousness. One example would be to use 'photovoice' as a form of expression in public artist spaces. By including and learning from people who do not use spoken language, we encourage engagement of different senses such as visual senses and imagination.
- A reoccurring message from people with disability and older people is they want a culture of inclusion as much as a culture of environmental sustainability. To achieve this, we must attend to it directly rather than reliance on its delivery as a happy but unintended outcome of planning. While disability is often not regarded as a 'now' or woke topic it is at the edge and intersection point of every human related issue. Let's embrace that – it's what the Inner West prides itself on!

Submission from Wendy Banfield:

The Creative Inner West action plan is a perfect opportunity to help educate people about the need to include people with disability as creators and people experience public art be it visual or performing. Visual and performing arts are an optimal way to break down barriers and I would love it if we could create an educational aspect when encouraging and providing authorisation for creating spaces for visual or performing arts. The inner west is a hub of Sydney live music and arts.

We have suburbs that are close to Sydney city, that still have plenty of open spaces, warehouses, industrial land and town centres. We could show the rest of Sydney what creative inclusion looks like. We can encourage participants to learn and develop strategies that vary from what we are used to experiencing. I know this sounds huge, but we need to have something that inspires and helps people want to start making change and help people want to be part of something big. Something important and something that should already exist.

Specific points:

What's missing & co-design - People with disability really don't seem to be considered in this at all.

2.2.2 – needs to be more explicit about the inclusion of people with disability. At the moment the focus is on young and older people. I think they need to also include the words 'people with disability'. It cannot and should not be assumed.

3.3.3 – again needs to explicitly say that people with disability must be included in co-design and implementation.

3.4 – re 24 hour economy – needs a line in there to say 'ensure music venues are following best practice to ensure the inclusion of people with disability. This then needs to be accompanied by a best practice guideline that needs to be followed with the understanding that some music venues are small, however simple things like ensuring not all tables are tall with stools and ensuring furniture layout allows clear access to the bathroom. People will be in the way. We always are at music venues and we have to asked to get around to get to the bathroom, but if the furniture layout hasn't been considered this becomes more of a barrier. Sorry. That is a long answer to the '24 economy' point, but I think it needs to keep being said and hopefully one day heard.

4.1.1 – the Art in Public Places Policy needs to be co-designed with people with varying types of disability.

4.1.2 – the process guidelines again need to include process to ensure the full inclusion of people with disability.

4.2.1 – ensure planning policies include best practice guidelines for the inclusion of people with disability. Different spaces will have some limitation in terms of space; however, we need to ensure this doesn't just become an excuse to not bother at all.

4.2.2 – industrial land, with all the space it allows provide optimal opportunities to improve physical access.

4.3 – let's make sure some of the affordable housing is accessible for people with disability.

4.3.1 – ensure the Development contribution planning and voluntary planning agreement framework has specific information about minimum standards and best practice guidelines for the inclusion of people with disability.

4.3.3 – in reviewing the affordable housing policy, I can see it is inclusive of people with disability. Let's make sure this is carried through.

4.3.4 – would council have a database of artist in residence? It'd be great if where possible, people with disability being some of the artist that would visit schools would ensure they are seen, heard and considered. This is a perfect social learning opportunity for children and young people.

4.4.4 – can we assume this point covers all of the above or does what I have mentioned above need to be pointed out?

5 – Imaging our future – is a great opportunity to ensure our future includes the involvement, collaboration with and inclusion of people with disability. Again, it needs to be explicit.

5.2.1 – can we ensure in identifying opportunities, that the cultural staff are also thinking broader and identify the opportunities to be inclusive of people with disability.

5.3. – one of the original 'Information Linkages & Capacity building' (ILC) outcomes of the NDIS was to ensure people with disability are contributing to leading shaping and influencing community. ILC is very much about ensuring the integration and inclusion of people with disability and whilst I definitely do not want to take away from creating opportunities for children and young people, can we ensure the children and young people include children and young people with disability.

Submission from Charlie Murray:

- more in-depth consultation with Gadigal & Wangal ppl on the development of sites, especially around sacred sites but to be honest all over, to maintain cultural and environmental sustainability.
- what is agenda 21? – *(answered by Glenn)*
- re: cultural entertainment day & night, make sure do it yourself entertainment is supported too, it's a huge part of the area.
- what does "Trial container spaces in parks" mean? – *(answered by Glenn)*
- are there multiple public open graffiti walls anywhere (other than St Peters?) – *(answered by Glenn)*
- I'd also like to make sure that in the resources for COVID support in the inner west, that the local First Nations COVID response group arranges for home deliveries for mob in need. Link to the group here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/215152996360005/?ref=share>

Discussion taken from AAC meeting transcript:

Note that some parts of the transcript were not clear, words were not recognisable or recorded correctly. Where these do not add to the feedback they have been left out.

Hannah Solomons

Maybe I missed something, but I didn't notice that there was anything about the accessibility of art spaces. You know they're like, oh, we want affordable art spaces. I'm like that's awesome, but yeah, nothing about making art accessible and generally, a lack of recognition of disability culture.

Glenn Redmayne

The cultural strategy looks at opportunities for artists with disability in terms of training and mentoring. I know that that's a specific one in the priority areas. But I think the rest is reasonably kind of global, so I think that's a fair comment to just inquire as to if any of the other more umbrella actions have that intent that it would be accessible as well. Then perhaps the suggestion is that needs to be fleshed out a little.

Clr Lucille McKenna

I actually have given comments because we met with Simon in relation to this sometime back, so I'm more interested in hearing what the (committee say).

Meg Alwyn

We, uh, affordable places for art. It does say later seems concerned with affordability issues of living and making art in the Inner West and concerns around gentrification, which seems to be going towards where are we going to make art and where is it going to be accessible?

Hannah Solomons

I saw that too and that was my concern was like we would see accessibility as part of where we make art and affordability, but other people don't. Like making it accessible is vital to where we make art absolutely. But I don't think that they have, that people necessarily associate affordability with accessibility. That's why I think it needs to be included. And similarly, when these point there, enabling people with disability to participate and become leaders. Like that seems more about makers rather than users. Uh, so I've got both of those points I thought, but I feel like we have to be careful when we expect other people to see disability and stuff 'cause they don't.

Emily Dash

Disability often the last thing people say. Or think about in terms of access.

Hannah Solomons

Exactly so when it says affordability that they're not thinking, oh gee, you know somebody might need to pay a taxi \$100 to get here that doesn't, that might factor into our concept of affordability, but not there.

Emily Dash

In general. Yeah. Either way, that accessibility and affordability is two completely different things? Affordability can come under the umbrella of accessibility, but it doesn't go both ways. Anyone wants it, even when they do go under that umbrella, not complete.

Glenn Redmayne

Don't leave anybody behind approach. And I thought that perhaps if people have ideas and I think what you just said is a good example of if we were looking towards that kind of an approach, what might that mean? What sorts of things would we have to just be clear on so that we didn't leave people behind?

The drafts there and you don't have to be, you know 100% familiar with them, but just those broader comments of if we're trying not to leave people behind, what could we need to ensure is in the documents?

Angelo Arulanandam

The one we're not talking about the cultural strategy or the next. After that, we'll talk about the aging strategy, but I'm too, I was given the understanding there's a separate document called studies or disable of disabled people or people with special needs.

Clr Lucille McKenna

Could I just say something Julia, I'm aware there is a very large action plan that goes with this strategy, which I think some of those issues are covered in that because it's very large and obviously you haven't had access to that because the actual document itself is quite high level and these many of the actions, so things accessibility and some of those issues are certainly covered, but maybe not at the correct depth, so maybe somehow that these could be, I don't know whether these are available, but they were certainly given to counsellors.

Julia Phillips

Glenn can answer that. Did you give the action plan as well as the strategy to everyone?

Glenn Redmayne

No, (*only YourSay link and summaries*) that wasn't sent because we were trying to not overwhelm people with information, but to start this discussion knowing that we're only going to have about an

hour so keeping it broad and giving people the opportunity just to catch anything that they think might be missing. Anything that sticks out to them as an issue that they either thought yeah, that's great, I really support that, or I was hoping to find something that explains this to me and I'm not sure that it did, or it wasn't very clear. Then we can look at the more detailed actions and see whether they actually picked that up in sufficient detail for it to be implemented.

Clr Rochelle Porteous

What I thought was missing is a bit more acknowledgement and it talks about the amount of factors when it talks at the beginning about the profile of creative sector. I think it's unfortunate that the first paragraph immediately talks about the financial contribution of the creative sector. It seems to me that that could be positioned in a less prominent place. I mean, I don't think that that is the most important element of the culture in the Inner West. It's an element, but it's not the most important, so I would like to see that positioned further down, but picking up on if you like the financial element that doesn't seem to be a lot of assessment in acknowledgement of the precarious nature of the creative sector, despite the fact that it generates significant (jobs?) for the people that live in the Inner West. It also is highly precarious, and that's been highlighted through the pandemic. It's relied on a large and diverse...funding models and Council actually has played a significant role in trying to pick up some of where that funding has been lost for a lot of people involved in the sector. Again, that hasn't been picked up at all. I just think that in terms of having a document which is useful from a policy perspective and a strategic development perspective, you need to have more of that information to pay the proper picture about. This is where the sector is actually at. This is the risks that it's facing and this is the role that Council takes currently. These are the sort of roles that Council could consider taking into the future and just highlighting, you know, where does that sector is essentially being currently funded?

Hannah Solomons

So, you know a lot of people have kind of bounced back that were being global when we're not mentioning disability, but I feel like one of the things that isn't mentioned is intersectionality. That is a global concept that could be included in our discussion of diversity. Generally, like I don't even see intersectionality with gender let alone intersectionality with disability, which again needs to be explicit. The other thing that I wanted is some safety. No one's really thought about safety of cultural activities for people with disabilities, but that sort of dovetails into what I already said about accessibility so that's one...uh, COVID arrangements.

Glenn Redmayne

In any of the strategies moving forward, and by that, I don't mean that you need to dwell on it particularly, but I mean COVID it's a reality. And I think sometimes there's implications to that that are going to hang around for clearly some years, and potentially the life of the document or the strategy and I'll just invite your suggestion or input on that.

Kerrie Lorimer

And the one cultural impact that's happened since Covid happened was that I did an Aboriginal jewellery making course at home. That's the only way that there's been any kind of connection for me with culture being limited to being at home, so I think it's a huge issue and I think it's really important, especially because where the Inner West that we modify everything on the basis of thinking of the impact that's happening now, I think that I was really shocked that wasn't, you know, being mentioned. But I mean one of the ways that the cultural aspect for me was that there was an actual Aboriginal jewellery making course during covid, and that was the way that the Council was able to, I was able to contact with my culture.