

AFTRS Accessibility Action Plan 2018-2020

I am proud to present the AFTRS first Accessibility Action Plan 2018-2020 and I would like to thank everyone who has had input into this plan, in particular Ade Djajamihardja, Kate Stephens and Samuel Martin.

This plan outlines our strategy for improving access and inclusion for staff and students at the School. It also fulfils our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and Disability Inclusion Act (2014).

This plan is critical to the School's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, in ensuring that AFTRS is a safe, equitable, accessible place for staff and students with a disability.

As an organisation, our goal is to provide barrier-free, equitable and dignified access to students, visitors and staff, making the building and the experiences we offer accessible to all people. This plan establishes three main pillars of focus:

Building: Identifying and addressing physical barriers to ensure safe, equitable and dignified access for all.

Classroom: Identifying and addressing barriers to ensure safe, equitable and dignified access to learning experiences, amenities and support at AFTRS.

Workplace: We will continue to build an inclusive workplace culture and provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Responsibility for the implementation of this plan and our guiding principles lies with all of us. We all have an obligation to ensure that AFTRS is a safe and welcoming place for all, and I look forward to working with you to meet this goal.

Neil Peplow
AFTRS CEO

Guiding Principles

We are committed to the following accessibility guiding principles:

- Access solutions promote the principles of social equity & inclusion, while reinforcing positive attitudes about people with disability.
- Access issues are addressed early in the planning stage of building projects.
- Preference is given to access solutions that achieve integrated & independent access (e.g. people with disability use the same access routes as people without disability).
- Access audits to determine access requirements for all areas & projects.
- Projects comply with relevant disability access standards & legislation.
- Consultation with people with disability for all building projects.
- Flexible, multisensory access solutions considered where possible and appropriate.

What is Disability?

The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) defines disability as ‘any impairment, abnormality, or loss of function, of any part of the body or mind’. This includes:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological
- Learning disability
- Physical disfigurement
- Immunological (the presence of organisms causing disease in the body).

Key Statistics

- 1 in 5 Australians (more than 4 million people) has some form of disability.
- 43% of people over the age of 55 have one or more disabilities.
- 2.2 million Australians of working age (15– 64) have a disability.
- People with disability are twice as likely to be in the bottom 20% of gross household incomes.
- 3.4 million (15%) of Australians have a physical disability.
- 1 in 6 Australians experiences hearing loss. There are about 30,000 Deaf Auslan users.
- Vision Australia estimates there are 357,000 people in Australia who are blind or have low vision.
- 45% of the population will experience a mental health disorder at some point.
- 20% of the population will experience a mental health disorder this year.
- People aged between 15 & 64 years with disability have both lower participation (53%) & higher unemployment rates (9.4%) than people without disability (83% & 4.9% respectively).
- Graduates with disability take longer to gain fulltime employment than other graduates.
- The likelihood of living with disability increases with age; 31% of 55 to 64-year old’s live with disability.
- Almost nine in ten people aged 90 & over (88%) have a disability.
- More than a third (39%) of complaints lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission are against businesses & are related to disability.

Making Reasonable Adjustments

STUDENTS

AFTRS is committed to the provision of reasonable adjustments, in consultation with the student, within a reasonable time after notification of the need for adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments are measures taken to enable students to participate fully and equally in areas of the School’s operations on the same basis as a student without a disability. These include:

- Admission and enrolment
- Academic activities
- Curriculum development, assessment and certification requirements
- Physical access to buildings and facilities
- Information access
- A safe learning environment

STAFF

AFTRS will provide staff with reasonable workplace adjustments, to ensure that all staff have equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of workplace life, especially in regard to the following:

- Recruitment processes
- Performance of duties
- Employment benefits and conditions
- Professional and career development
- Physical access to buildings and facilities
- Information access
- A safe working environment

AFTRS will implement all necessary measures and reasonable adjustments to enable equal access and opportunities for students and staff with disabilities except where provision of adjustments or measures would impose unjustifiable hardship on AFTRS or where, even with the provision of all reasonable adjustments, the student remains unable to fulfil the inherent requirements of a course of study or the staff member remains unable to fulfil the inherent requirements of the position.

Communication

It is important that all staff and students are aware of the Accessibility Action Plan and understand their rights and responsibilities in making AFTRS a more safe, accessible and inclusive place to work and learn.

The AAP will be made available on the AFTRS website via the Careers Page, policies section for students, Moodle and on the Intranet in the Diversity section, and communicated through:

- Student Handbook
- AFTRS careers portal
- Staff inductions

Implementation

This plan belongs to all staff and students and we all have an obligation to ensure that AFTRS is a more safe, accessible and inclusive place to work and learn. Responsibility for implementation will be shared by many staff including the People & Performance team, Building/Facilities team, managers, teaching staff and Student Services.

Monitoring

Overall responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Accessibility Action Plan will rest with the Diversity Taskforce.

GOAL:
Equitable and dignified access for all users of the building.

Building Strategies

THEATRE ACCESS PROJECT

Recognising that the Theatre is at the heart of the AFTRS community, with all celebrations hosted there. Theatre is currently accessible via a lift which is unreliable, however presenting or sitting on the lower level is not easily accessible. Options and costs to be scoped and presented for discussion.

- Scope and cost additional wheelchair spaces (removable seating)
- Scope and cost an audio loop system to support hearing-impaired people and made available to at least 10% of the total of the enclosed area.

LECTURE/WORK STATION ACCESS

- Access to adjustable height desks and workstations.
- One height adjustable desk in each computer training room.
- Hearing loop in large teaching spaces.
- Wheelchair spaces in areas where there is fixed seating.

SIGNAGE

- Braille signage to be placed in key areas, with particular focus on access points such as reception and bridges on Level 1 and Level 2.

DOORS

- Reduce the number of doors with return close hinges. Ideally, accessible bathrooms to have sliding doors for easier access.
- Add an automatic door to level 2 staff area.

AMENITIES

- *Gender Neutral Toilet Access:* There are currently three gender neutral bathrooms – two on the mezzanine level and one on Level 1. Scope, design and cost possibility of toilet on each level with appropriate signage.
- *Bathrooms:* Easy access to accessible toilets – training and feedback for cleaning and security contractors.
- *Kitchens:* Access review to ensure accessibility and compliance.
- *Library:* Library collection accessible to all. Scope, design and cost.

GOAL:
Equitable and dignified access to learning experiences.

Classroom Strategies

- Learning Access Plans developed with Student Services with implementation monitored by the Teaching & Learning Team/Learning Support Officers.
- Audio books and alternative materials available for all courses. Recordings made available for all lectures and tutorials.
- Access & Inclusion Training for all academic staff to ensure all students feel included in the classroom experience (particular focus on alternative materials; language; pairing for activities; and encouraging shared experiences).
- Invite at least two film makers with disability to lecture per year (per Diversity Plan)
- Screen captioning and audio description skills are embedded in the curriculum to improve accessibility of screen product (per Diversity Plan)

Workplace Strategies

Employment Pathways Developed: Intern Program Implemented: “Stepping Into” Intern hosted December 2018-January 2019. Specific job trials trialed and reviewed in partnership with NOVA Employment.

Candidate Attraction & Recruitment: Focused and targeted recruitment working with specialist recruitment partners. Working towards Disability Confident Recruiter status (AND).

Flexible Working: All roles advertised with possibility to be part time, flexible and job share.

Training/Celebration: Access Awareness sessions with Accessible Arts, Thomas Banks and Ade Djajamihardja twice per year. Celebrate International Day for People with Disability (3 December)

Accessibility Panels: Where AFTRS is hosting or supporting an Accessibility event, ensure that the majority of the panel is made up of people with disability.

GOAL:
An inclusive workplace that advances the skills, experiences & employment of people with disability. 4% of staff total.

GOAL:
Increased staff awareness of accessibility and access needs and how they can best support people with disability during their engagement with the School.