

Theatres and cultural venues

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With almost 20 per cent of people living with disability in Australia – a country with an aging population – businesses that lack access are missing out on potential customers.

Use this checklist to review how accessible and inclusive your business is. If you identify some gaps, consider making improvements to welcome customers of all ages and abilities.

You can also use this checklist as a guide when selecting premises to establish a theatre or cultural venue. Relevant legislation must be adhered to in any building upgrade or development works.

General access issues to consider

Does your theatre or cultural venue have:

Access to premises	Yes	No
Accessible parking for people with disabilities nearby		
Accessible public transport nearby		
Clear external and internal directional signs, including symbols		
Clear path of travel from outdoor to indoor areas		
Protection from wind, rain and noise in outdoor areas		
Step-free access		
Wide self-opening or easy-to-open doors		
D-style lever door handles at an accessible height		

Ease of access when moving around the premises	Yes	No
Colour contrasting door frames/trims		
A handrail from the entrance to the ticket counters		
Consistent and even lighting throughout		
Appropriate safety markings on glass doors and adjacent panels		
Wide, clear internal and external walkways		
Clear space between furniture and exhibits for a person to manoeuvre a mobility aid (e.g. wheelchair, walking frame, stick, crutches)		
Slip-resistant flooring and/or low-pile carpet		
Ramp or a lift access to all levels		
Access to the stage and change room areas		
Limited use of roped barriers		
Wheelchair-accessible seating at various locations in the venue, with space to sit with companions		

Ease of access when moving around the premises	Yes	No
Enough space between theatre seating for easy access		
Wide, clear aisles		
Handrails and contrasting nosings on any steps		
Tactile tiles before steps and ramps		
Lighting on stair edges in theatre areas		
Definition of stages in performance areas		

Accessible amenities	Yes	No
Low-height, clutter-free ticket counters with a seat		
An accessible buzzer on ticket counters		
Seating with backs and armrests		
Seating in a contrasting colour to walls and floors		
Accessible water/tea/coffee facilities		
Access to any bar/kiosk area		
Accessible storage area for mobility aids		
An accessible toilet		
An accessible baby change area		
An accessible baby feeding area		
An ambulant toilet for men and an ambulant toilet for women		
A gender-neutral toilet		

Accessible provision of information	Yes	No
Information about services for people with disabilities e.g.		
Lift		
Accessible toilet		
Emergency procedures		
A phone message about services and facilities		
An accessible website with information about services and facilities		
Large print, tactile, braille and audio signage		
An assistance animals welcome sticker at entry (e.g. guide dog, hearing dog)		
Information in large print and braille		

Accessible provision of information	Yes	No
Clear, large print name tags for staff		
Audio descriptions of performances and displays		
Audio guides for exhibits and displays		
Tactile depictions of artist displays e.g. paintings		
Tactile and braille markings on lift buttons		
Audible information in lifts		
Large print seat numbers in contrasting colours to seats in theatre areas		
Captions on any digital screens		

Staff who can communicate appropriately with people with disability	Yes	No
Friendly, helpful staff who are trained in access awareness, including speaking clearly for easy lip reading		
Staff available to read information to patrons, if required		
Staff with basic sign language skills		
Access to AUSLAN interpreters if required		
Staff who speak clearly and look at the patrons when talking (for easy lip reading)		
Glare-free lighting at ticket counters		
Pen and paper for exchanging information		
Appropriate acoustic environments to reduce background noise		
Hearing loops at ticket counters and in presentation/performance areas		
SMS communication service		
Service areas in quiet zones		
Alternatives to any visual information e.g. audio announcement		
Alternatives to any audio announcements e.g. visual information		

Responsive evacuation procedures	Yes	No
Visible and audible fire alarms		
Accessible emergency exits		
Emergency evacuation procedures suited to people with different abilities		

Other issues to consider	Yes	No
An internet booking system		
A phone booking system		
Accessible payment options		
Discounts for concession card holders		
Companion Card acceptance		
Accessible guided tours		
Wheelchairs for loan		

Accessibility improvement plan

Now you have completed the access checklist, you will have identified areas where you are providing good access. You might have also identified areas that need improvement.

Use the last page of this checklist to develop an accessibility improvement plan for your theatre or cultural venue, based on your no answers in the checklist.

Start by grouping the access action you need to take, into the following areas:

- Action you can take now for little or no cost
- Action you can take in the medium term that doesn't require renovation to your premises
- Action you will need to take during a refurbishment or redevelopment of your premises to provide access for all.

Under the **National Construction Code**, you are required to provide access for people with disabilities in any renovation or redevelopment project.

If you don't own your premises, you can talk to your landlord about the legal requirements of providing access for all, as they are also responsible under the **Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992**.

Access consultants

There are qualified and accredited access consultants who can conduct an access audit of your premises and provide you with specialist advice and assistance for developing an access plan. Visit the **City of Swan website** for more information.

Disclaimer

The information published in this checklist is provided by the City of Swan as a community service. It shares information about how individual businesses can review and improve their accessibility for people with disabilities.

While due care has been taken in preparing this checklist, the City and the authors do not guarantee its accuracy or currency.

The City and the authors are not responsible to you or anyone else for any loss, damage or injury incurred or sustained by any person because of the use or reliance on this checklist.

The information generated from the use of this assessment checklist is intended to be used as a guide for your business only. It should not be relied on for future marketing considerations. You should seek your own independent advice regarding accessibility for people with disability.

The City of Swan does not warrant or guarantee any particular outcome in respect of your business's self-assessment.

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Accessibility improvement plan

Short term actions:

Medium term actions:

Long term actions: