



Arts Access Australia

# Annual Report 2017



## **Cover Image Description**

**Image title:** Aus- Berlin Arts Exchange 2017

**Location:** Australian Embassy in Berlin

**Description:** A landscape colour group photo of the 11 Australian tour group members with the Australian Ambassador and Berlin consultants and partners. Standing in the Back row from left to right is: Rohan Brooks, Ms Lynette Wood (Ambassador), Meagan Shand (CEO), Jackie Homer (Tour Manager), Sarah Houbolt, Sam Beke. Seated in the front row is Ana Seymour, Jovana Komnenic (Berlin Consultant), Imke Buamann (Berlin Partner), Kate Brehme (Berlin Consultant) + baby Charlie, Belinda Locke, Chelle Destefano, Rory Burnside, Andrew Hewitt, Josh Hogan.

## 1.0 About us

Arts Access Australia (AAA) is the national peak body for arts and disability in Australia. We work to increase national and international opportunities and access to the arts for people with disability as artists, arts-workers, participants and audiences.

Established in 1992, AAA is a disability-led company limited by guarantee. Our CEO and at least 50% of our board members identify as a person with disability.

AAA provides three main services:

- Information and Advice
- Research and Advocacy
- Leadership and Development

AAA adopts an inclusive approach and works across all disability types, all age groups, all art forms and across all states and territories of Australia.

Our members include state-based arts and disability organisations, individual artists, arts-workers and arts leaders with disability; and others within the wider arts and cultural sector who share our vision of full and equal opportunity for cultural participation and contribution by all Australians.

Arts Access Australia is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



## 2.0 From the Chairperson

When working at a rapid pace, time seems to race past, 2017 was not only a year of multiple exciting projects but also a year of change for AAA. Commencing with the recruitment of our new CEO Meagan Shand and three new Board members, the year culminated with the presentation of our first international Meeting Place forum in Berlin.

The magnitude of work achieved in 2017 was remarkable, and I would like to pass on my sincere thanks to the Board and our new CEO for managing this period of transformation with integrity and enthusiasm.

This will be my last official year with AAA and I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on why I support the work of AAA and what I would like to see happen in the future.

My hope is that AAA continues to flourish and at full capacity, providing new opportunities for new team members to take up interesting projects and work in diverse communities. I hope the Board remains an incubator of passionate and aspiring leaders with creative vision. I hope that together we can create a place where artists with disability and the work they produce is valued equally.

We are at a pivotal time in the history of disability in Australia. The NDIS is creating the biggest policy shift of our time, and if done right, if we all work together, we can set our expectations high and support our Australian artists with disability to reach a level of excellence beyond their dreams.

AAA is in the business of making dreams come true, and I thank the people and partners who support the work we do. I see an exciting future ahead for AAA and look forward to supporting the transition to the new leadership in 2018.

Yours Sincerely

**Mallika Macleod**

Arts Access Australia Chairperson

### **3.0 Program Highlights**

#### **3.1 National & International Presentations and Opportunities**

##### **3.1.1 Meeting Place 2017, Perth, Western Australia**

This year our national forum Meeting Place was held in Perth, Western Australia, in partnership with DADAA and Perth International Arts Festival (PIAF). A total of 88 people attended (up 28, from the previous Meeting Place forum); 18 arts and cultural leaders presented or participated in panel discussions; 17 Artists featured in digital presentations; and a support crew of team of 5x AV technicians, 3 x Auslan Interpreters, 2xAudio Describers; helped make the day successful. The event was also live streamed, with 109 viewers on the day. Feedback from participants told us that the international keynote speaker Jenny Sealey, MBE, Artistic Director Graeae Theatre Company UK, was the highlight of the day; Artistic Director of PIAF Wendy Martin also presented.

##### **3.1.2 Meeting Place International 2017, Berlin, Germany**

AAA held its first international Meeting Place forum this year. The Forum was hosted by Kulturprojekt Berlin, a department of the Berlin Senate, at Podewil. An estimated 120 people attended (up 32 on the Perth based Meeting Place); 16 arts and cultural leaders presented or participated in panel discussions; 6 provided live performances; and a support crew of team of 3x AV technicians, 2 x Auslan Interpreters, 2x German Sign Language; 2x English to German translators helped make the day successful. The event was not live streamed due to funding constraints, however it was fully documented through photo and video.

Qualitative feedback from participating artists and partner organisations, rated the exchange 4.5 stars from a possible 5; with one participating organisation saying “the project was a big success. Professionalism, creativity and flexibility in management and planning, uncompromising access requirements and communication are the key. It was a great pleasure to collaborate with AAA”. Sophie Travers, the Australia Council’s International Development Manager in Europe was impressed by the standard, and said “she had never learnt so much in the first few hours of a forum before”; All the artists said that they would recommend other artists to be involved.

### 3.1.3 Aus-Berlin Arts Exchange October 9-20, Berlin, Germany

The Meeting Place forum in Berlin, was the main event for the Aus-Berlin Arts Exchange. Funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Communication and the Arts' Catalyst—Australian Arts and Culture Fund and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia now Germany 2017 program. The Exchange set the stage to showcase eight Australian artists with disability and innovative learning opportunities between Australia and Germany.

A vibrant mix of arts workshops, music, dance and performances, were presented over a ten-day period.

#### Aus-Berlin Exchange Artists

**Belinda Locke** – Theatre director, performer and arts leader – Keynote presentation at Meeting Place, Podewil.

**Sarah Houbolt** – Circus/Physical Theatre Performer – Keynote presentation at Meeting Place; Opening and closing performance at the Embassy and Alte Kantine Wedding

**Rudely Interrupted** – Indie rock band – performance at Meeting Place, Podewil; and Just Music

**Chelle Destefano** – International Mixed Media and Watercolour Artist – Workshop and exhibition at Stephanus Stiftung and Brotfabrik Gallery

**Andrew Hewitt** – Drummer, Teacher, Advocate – Drum Workshop at Podewil and performance at Just Music

**Anna Seymour** – Contemporary Dancer – Workshop at Ufer Studios and co-lab at the Aquarium

The program was prepared through intense cooperation with Berlin partners Berlinklusion – Network for Accessibility in Arts and Culture and Förderband e.V. - Kulturinitiative Berlin. AAA would like to acknowledge the amazing work of our Berlin based Arts Consultant / Curators Ms. Jovana Komnenic and Ms. Kate Brehme

More details about the project can be found on our website

<https://artsaccessaustralia.org/project/berlin-exchange-project-october-2017>

## 3.2 Sector Leadership & Development

### 3.2.1 National CEO Leadership Group

AAA held its first National CEO Leadership Forum in Adelaide, May 23-24. The Forum was attended by leaders from seven state-based arts access organisations and signalled the beginning of a stronger and more representative national voice for arts and disability. At this meeting leaders discussed strategic directions and began work on a partnership model, a follow-up meeting was held in November. AAA would like to acknowledge the work of the state-based arts access organisations and their commitment and investment in working together to build a strong arts and disability sector in Australia. A short video of the Forum was made, and can be viewed here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVQrqzQAmU4>



Image Title: National CEO Leadership Group; Location: Access2Arts Adelaide. Standing in back row from left to right: Jenine Mackay (CEO, Incite Arts, NT); Amina McConvell (Manager, Darwin Community Arts); Pat Swell (CEO, Access Arts, Qld); David Doyle (CEO, DADAA, WA); Veronica Pardo (CEO, Arts Access Victoria); Morwenna Collett (transitional CEO, Accessible Arts, NSW). Seated in front row from left to right: Martin Sawtell (Manager Operations, Access2Arts, SA); Megan Shand (CEO, AAA); Gaelle Mellis (Arts Program Manager, Access2Arts, SA).

### **3.2.2 The NDIS Working Group**

The NDIS continues to be the main focus of AAA's advocacy work. Recognised as the biggest social reform since Medicare, the changes to funding and policy structures is having a major impact on arts and disability organisations that have relied on disability-based government funding. The NDIS Working Group includes representatives from arts and disability sector across Australia, creative companies and individual artists with a disability. AAA facilitated six meetings over 2017, with the aim to create a forum to examine and responds to emerging issues and opportunities relevant to the NDIS and the Arts, and advocate for change where appropriate.

In, September 2017, the group published an Emerging Issues and Concerns paper. One of the key concerns identified was the lack of progress and clear across government strategy for Arts in the NDIS. In November, AAA started to work collaboratively with the Department of Communications and the Arts (DCA) to address issues of concern regarding the NDIS and the Arts and Disability Sector. AAA supported the DCA to gather information by facilitating linkages to state agencies and artists with disability.

AAA also supports the national roll-out of Arts Access Victoria's ArtFinder; and is a key partner on the ARC Linkage Projects scheme, titled The impact of the NDIS on disability arts, culture, and media organisations, led by Associate Professor Bree Hadley at Queensland University of Technology.

### **3.3 Campaigns & Media**

#### **3.3.1 New Website & Communications Focus**

AAA published a new website this year, with the new Arts Space and the opportunities page proving popular with visitors. Acknowledging the important role AAA has in influencing and leading public discussion on arts and disability, AAA employed a dedicated Communications Manager in October. One of the first activities the new COMS manager did was to set up a new blog to follow the Aus-Berlin Project. This role will focus on developing our communications strategies to increase engagement and building on our established social media presence.

### 3.3.2 Publications

AAA published eleven e-newsletters and eleven media releases throughout 2017. Most of the media interest was generated around the Aus-Berlin Arts Exchange and Meeting Place forum in Berlin. Following is a list of some of the major publications that AAA featured in:

1. **“Culture Goes Inclusive”**. Die Taz, Germany.  
<http://www.taz.de>
2. **“Artists with disabilities - Where are they?”**. Leidmedien, Germany <https://leidmedien.de/aktuelles/kuenstlerinnen-mit-behinderung-wo-sind-sie>
3. **“The creative potential of inclusion”**. Ministry of Culture, Germany [http://www.kultur-oeffnet-welten.de/positionen/position\\_5824.html](http://www.kultur-oeffnet-welten.de/positionen/position_5824.html)
4. **“Band members Rory Burnside and Rohan Brooks look back at 10 years with Melbourne band Rudely Interrupted”**.  
The Advertiser, South Australia.
5. **“Make art a priority in your NDIS plan”**. Arts Hub, Australia  
<http://www.artshub.com.au/education/news-article/features/professional-development/andrea-simpson/make-art-a-priority-in-your-ndis-plan-254838>

### 3.4 Resilience, Relevance & Sustainability

AAA is a disability-led organization, which means our activities and decisions are directed by people with disability for people with disability. Building our membership and staying relevant to their needs is key to being disability-led. This year AAA reviewed its membership engagement strategy, creating a new online membership registration facility to make membership application, renewal and payment easier. This will be supported by constitutional changes at the 2018 AGM, to make the registration process and administration easier.

In 2017 AAA put fundraising on the Agenda, launching its first crowd-funding campaign, which raised support for the Berlin Arts Exchange. AAA is committed to income diversification and looks forward to developing new initiatives and new donor partnerships in 2018.

#### **4.0 AAA Board Members and Staff Team**

##### **4.1 AAA Board Members 2017**

Arts Access Australia is a disability-led organisation governed by a national Board of Directors. At least 50% of our Board identify with having a disability.

- **Mallika Macleod**, Chairperson, Manager Participation, Arts and Health at DADAA in Western Australia, Original Member.
- **Belinda Locke**, Deputy Chairperson, Philanthropy Coordinator at Malthouse Theatre, individual member from Victoria.
- **Peter Kearney**, Treasurer, Business Consultant co-opted individual member from Sydney.
- **Guy Morgan**, Visual Artist, individual member from NSW.
- **Christine Johnson**, Writer & Arts Leadership, individual member from NSW
- **Leah Maund**, Project Coordinator at Sensorium Theatre, individual member from WA
- **Jacqueline Hornjik**, Artistic Director at Grass Arts Company, individual member from NSW. (on leave)

##### **4.2 AAA Staff Team 2017**

- **Meagan Shand**, CEO (commenced February)
- **Sarah Briggs**, Financial Officer
- **Kathie Kelly**, Funding and Development Consultant (commenced February 2016, ended August 2017)
- **Angela Jaeschke**, Program Coordinator (commenced July 2016, ended September 2017)
- **Yvette Tulloch**, Communications Manager (commenced October 2017)

## **5.0 Treasurer's Report**

The organisation recorded a loss of \$1,349 (2016: \$1,030 loss) for the year, with revenue of \$383,012 (2016: \$166,893) and expenditure of \$384,362 (2016: \$167,923). The increased revenue and expenditure over the previous year was principally attributable to the Berlin Project, and to the one-off cost of \$12,080 for new website. Cash on hand increased from \$233,119 at the 2016 year end to \$241,822 at the 2017 year as a consequence of increased funding received at the end of 2017 for the 2018 financial year.

**Peter Kearney**  
**Treasurer**