

# **Australian Code of Conduct for Access in the Arts**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### What is a Code of Conduct?

A Code of Conduct is a set of community standards that assists everyone in Australia to understand the acceptable ways in which Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent people want to be treated, and what they need in order to access the arts at all levels. Signing the Code is voluntary. The Code also has an element of compliance to it – which means there is a way that artists, arts workers and audience who are Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent can get their grievances heard and resolutions found. The Code will have an impartial and transparent way of collectively solving issues, which means there is accountability and help in addressing discrimination, capacity for change, and learning about how to address social justice in the arts. The Code is disability-led and arises from community need. Alongside the Code of Conduct there is a glossary of terms that are important to understand in the arts and disability community, and a reference guide to current global and national standards that already exist.

The Code is for all artforms and activities within the arts in Australia. It is intended to be a living document. This means it will be updated over time, as new ways of working in the future means there could be new barriers and new access provisions to consider as a community standard.

### Why is Arts Access Australia doing this project?

As the national arts and disability peak body in Australia, our aims and objectives are to provide information and advice, research and development, and leadership and advocacy. We are working on the Code of Conduct national consultations as a result of community need, previous research and statistical evidence that suggests many barriers to seeing Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent artists on stage, screen and in galleries, audiences attending events and programs, and an absence of arts workers in employment at all levels. Through the Australian Code of Conduct for Access in the Arts, we aim to increase the agency of Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent people, and decrease ableism in the arts. The code of conduct is another national resource in the arts industry to build capacity around access, inclusion and equity.

### Who is the Code of Conduct for and how does it work?

Our vision is that arts organisations and arts projects sign up to the Code of Conduct to demonstrate their agreement with community standards of access, inclusion and equity in the arts. After signing, one option is for organisations to ask staff members to also sign the Code of Conduct as part of employment procedure. Another option is for arts organisations to use the Code as a resource alongside community consultations in creating disability access and inclusion plans, and as a troubleshooting resource when needed. For independent arts projects and programs, the Code also offers guidance and a resolution process to increase the agency of Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent artists, arts workers, and audience. The Code will sit alongside other industry standards and practice documents, and we are currently consulting on how this will work. The consultations will also include how a Trustmark will work, for people to use who have signed the Code, and if this is a good idea or not.

For Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent artists, arts workers and audience, the Code is a reference to use in conversations in order to encourage a culturally safe workplace, access provisions for an opportunity, or the ability to attend a performance or exhibition as audience. The Code will have a resolution mechanism that can be used as a supportive way to address situations where access is not met. We are currently consulting on what this resolution process looks like and how it would work, so that we can design a complaints and resolution process that is accessible, supportive and fair for everyone.

### What are the details of the consultations?

The first public consultation is in September 2021. After that, there will be a series of online focus groups, one -on – one interviews and a feedback form. The consultations include creating accessible formats and using various ways to engage with the Code content and consultation process. The consultations run until the end of the first quarter of 2022.

### Contact

For more information contact National Program Manager, Sarah Houbolt

Email: projects@artsaccessaustralia.org

Call / SMS / voice text: 0426 012 776

Follow: @ArtsAccessAust

Visit: [www.artsaccessaustralia.org](http://www.artsaccessaustralia.org)

Sign up: <https://artsaccessaustralia.org/membership/>