

Institute for  
Public Policy  
and Governance



# How local governments can increase the social and economic participation of people with disability

A place-based framework  
for success



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Visit [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au) for information

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# Introduction

## Overview

Australia's disability sector is undergoing significant reform with the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The NDIS is a new model of providing information, support and services to people with disability, their families and carers and upholds the fundamental right of all Australians to fully participate in the social and economic life of the community.

Local governments currently plan and implement strategies for community well-being and economic outcomes and this sector reform provides an opportunity for local governments to examine their role in increasing the social and economic participation of people with disability. Currently, a wide range of positive outcomes are being achieved but there are different levels of understanding, capability and capacity across the local government sector about how to increase participation and how the NDIS can support this. In addition, there are limited opportunities to share sector experiences to increase knowledge about social and economic participation of people with disability.

As such, this resource provides a national framework for local governments across Australia which recognises that responses need to be local, needs-based and fit for purpose. The key aim of the resource is to build awareness, understanding and knowledge about how to plan and implement strategies and programs to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability.

## The legislative context

Australian and state government legislation and the National Disability Strategy (NDS) aim to ensure that people with disability can access and participate in all aspects of community life. Local government, as the level of government closest to the community, has a significant role in program and policy development, service and infrastructure delivery, and ensuring inclusion and access for people with disability.

There is a growing trend in state and territory legislation to improve the social and economic participation of people with disability. Existing legislation in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia requires local governments to develop plans and implement actions for inclusion and access. In other jurisdictions, some local governments have developed these plans independently.

## What local governments currently do

Local governments play an important role to ensure local infrastructure, services and programs are accessible and inclusive and that their workforces reflect the diversity in their communities. The initiatives and activities which local governments undertake to support people with disability include:

- Providing services directly to people with disability, their families and carers

Local governments play a critical role in providing services and often work in partnership with other organisations to deliver these services

- Enabling or facilitating services and access to services and facilities

Local governments enable and facilitate services or access to services and facilities in a range of ways including through the provision of financial assistance and referrals to appropriate services

- Advocating for services or support

Local governments play a key role as advocates, including raising awareness across communities and lobbying other levels of government or non-government organisations to establish specific policies, programs or grants

- Employing people with disability

Local governments can be a key source of employment for local communities, particularly in regional, rural and remote Australia

- Providing accessible services and infrastructure

Local government integrates and embeds inclusiveness and accessibility into planning and development to ensure essential services, footpaths and facilities are accessible and can be used by people with disability.

However, different local government operating contexts, including legislation, their level of remoteness and fiscal environment impact on their role to support people with disability. Critically, local governments in rural and remote Australia face significant issues with funding, low population density, reduced staff capacity and a lack of local service providers. In addition, people living in different communities have different levels of reliance on local

government to provide assistance in everyday activities and support them in times of need.

These various contexts mean that local governments need to tailor their planning, resources and actions to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability.

## The impact of the NDIS

Over time, the implementation of the NDIS should deliver important benefits. In particular, greater social and economic participation may lead to improved health, employment, education, income, and life satisfaction outcomes for people with disability, their families and carers.

Throughout the NDIS trial period, people with disability consistently identified community participation as one of the top three support needs and a significant proportion of NDIS expenditure is being spent on services which enable and enhance this outcome. Critically, the NDIS COAG Disability Reform Council Quarterly Report June 2015 identified that in the two years prior to June 2015, people with disability spent most of their package on daily tasks and shared living (\$110.2 million), and community participation (\$74.0 million or 18.7% of total expenditure). This highlights that involvement in the community is very important for people with disability.

Community service providers assist people with disability to engage in everyday community and social activities. This includes going to the shops or seeing friends and family, as well as participating in recreational and leisure experiences such as travel, attendance at events and outings. Greater access to these types of services will enable more people with disability to participate in the community, which may deliver social and economic benefits for localities. This means that local

government services and infrastructure, as well as services provided by other organisations and businesses, are vital to support people with disability, their families and carers.

The NDIS is estimated to have a significant positive impact on the Australian economy. It will increase social and economic participation as well as employment opportunities in the disability sector. Economic modelling commissioned by the National Disability Service in 2016 shows that once the NDIS is fully implemented, 25,000 to 40,000 more people with disability will be able to work and 34,000 new jobs for carers (in full-time equivalents) will be supported. Both will increase GDP by between \$18bn and \$23bn (approximately 1.2% of total GDP). In addition to the benefits associated with employment outcomes for people with disability and their carers, there will be an estimated 85,000 more disability sector jobs created once the NDIS is fully implemented.

evenly across Australia but local government, as an enabler and advocate for services for the community, has a key and critical role to create local and regional strategies to ensure that communities and businesses harness the benefits of the NDIS.

## What local governments do and can do

The NDIS has the potential to increase income for people with disability and their carers and also increase community expenditure due to their increased participation. It will also generate employment opportunities in the community and disability sectors. All of these outcomes may create local economic growth and social inclusion. These outcomes will not be spread

# About this resource

## What is this resource about?

This resource aims to build the capacity of local governments to identify and plan for strategies and actions to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability.

It includes a framework for action based on the current experiences of local governments in Australia. It does not propose a one-size-fits-all approach, as local governments operate in different geographical, legislative, economic and cultural contexts, all of which influence how they meet the needs of their communities. As such, some elements of the framework will be more relevant and applicable than others.

The resource is intended to support local governments to make their communities as accessible and inclusive as possible whilst taking into account the challenges they face.

## Who is it for?

This resource is for all local governments across Australia. It is for small rural local governments and large metropolitan ones; it is for local governments which are in growth areas and ones with ageing populations.

The resource can be used by elected members,

executives and staff as a framework to guide thinking and decision-making about how to deliver, enable or advocate for services to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability.

The resource can also be used by local government partners (including other levels of government), businesses and community organisations.

## How was it developed?

This resource was developed by the University of Technology Sydney Institute for Public Policy and Governance and grant funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). It was developed using an evidence-based approach with six phases:

- A review of legislation to understand the legislative basis for access and inclusion in Australia
- A review of national and international academic and grey literature to understand the enablers and barriers to local governments planning for inclusion
- Short form interviews with nearly 50 local governments to understand existing practice

- Interviews with local government associations, state and territory government disability and local government departments, and peak disability organisations
- Site visits to local governments across Australia (details in Appendix A). The local governments represent a range of contexts, sizes and localities. Participants included elected members; local government staff; people with disability, their families and carers; service providers, representatives from community organisations and disability advisory committees
- An online, national survey of local governments to test the nature and extent of responses to the social and economic participation of people with disability. The survey is representative by State/Territory but there is an over-representation of metropolitan councils and an under-representation of rural and remote councils.

Each phase contributed to a comprehensive national view of local government strategies, policies and programs, what an effective response looks like in different contexts and the opportunities to increase social and economic participation.

In addition, a cross-sector Reference Group reviewed key documents and provided input into the methodology. This group included representatives from local government associations, disability advocates, local governments and the NDIA to ensure that this resource reflects the current need in the sector and is responsive to different contexts, as well as the national disability reform agenda.

## What are the examples used?

Examples of what local governments are currently doing are based on information collected during and following the site visits. The aim is to provide inspiration to other local governments from a range of contexts and locations. The examples are signposted in the document by a lightbulb and the geographic context provided for perspective. Further information about the site visits is at Appendix A.

The scope of this research project did not include Western Australia or the Northern Territory so there are no examples from these jurisdictions.

## Key terms and definitions

Access means that all community members have equal opportunity to use every community area, facility and service.

This includes:

- Ensuring public places have an entrance and interior that people with disability can enter and move around
- Providing facilities for people with disability in public places such as wheelchair-accessible toilets, lift buttons within reach and tactile and audible signals for people with vision impairment
- Ensuring that people with disability can enter and use all public areas of a premises and not just a segregated area with a facility
- Providing any information available to users of premises or service in a format that people with disability



can engage with and understand, for example signage, labels, directions, instructions and public documents.

These requirements are outlined in the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 and the Building Code of Australia.

Social and economic participation means that people with disability, their families and carers have equal opportunity to engage in all aspects of civic and economic life.

Inclusion means that people with disability, their families and carers can access and participate fully in all aspects of social, political and economic life with the same opportunity and in the same way as any other member of the community. This means that people with disability are not put in a situation where they participate in mainstream and community settings, for example, in facilities or work groups, as an identifiable group of people. People with disability may choose to act together publicly, for example, in disability advisory committees and campaigns but these are strategic rather than programmatic groupings.

This resource mainly uses the term ‘social and economic participation’ as this was the focus of the research.

## Further reading

The other key documents from the research project are available can be found at [ippg.uts.edu.au](http://ippg.uts.edu.au):

- Local Government Interface Project Desktop Review
- Findings from the National Survey of Local Governments.

A discussion of the legislative and policy context is also provided in the Australian Local Government Association report, Disability inclusion Planning – A Guide for Local Government.

Available at: [alga.asn.au/?ID=14814](http://alga.asn.au/?ID=14814)

# A place-based framework for local government

## Overview

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability because local governments are influenced by specific, place-based contexts, which include:

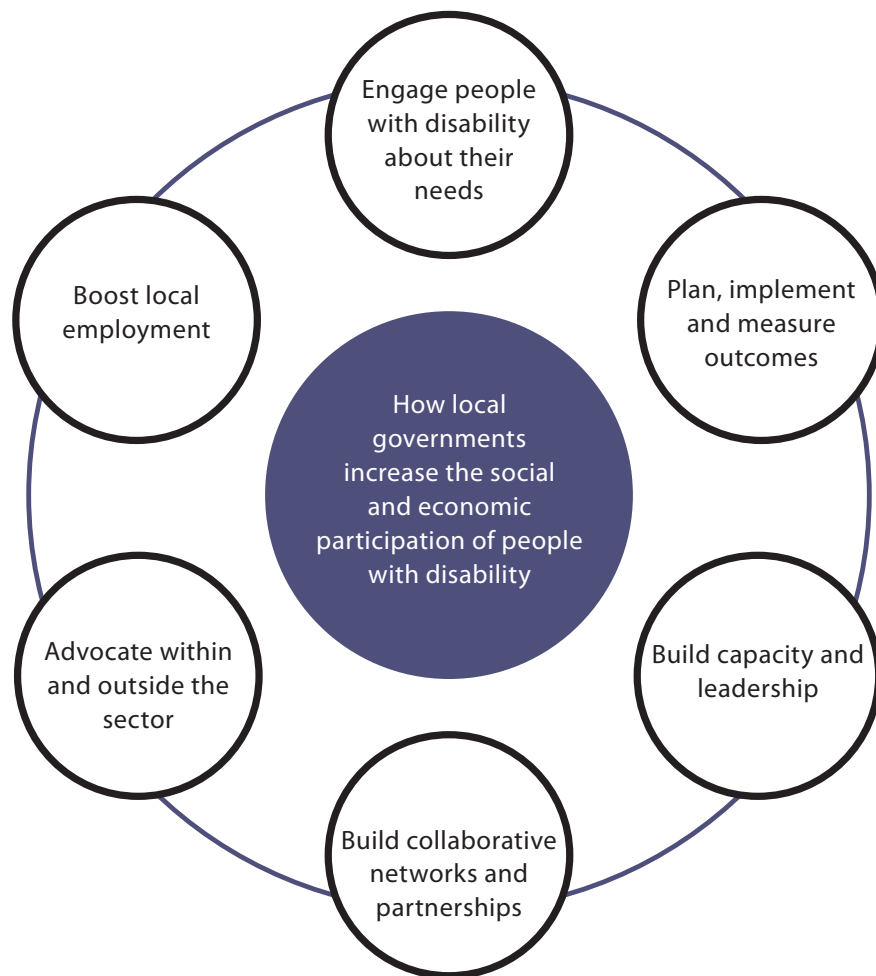
- Location (metropolitan, regional, rural or remote)
- Legislative and regulatory frameworks
- Community needs and whether those needs are met by other levels of government or other organisations
- Organisational capacity and the capacity of key delivery partners
- The availability of resources (people, time, allocation of revenue and availability of funding)
- Geographical factors, such as community dispersion and the distance from mainstream and disability specific services.

However, this project identified key elements which exist to varying degrees across different local governments to support social and economic participation.

## The place-based framework

The research findings support a place-based framework for local governments to increase social and economic participation. It consists of six elements, but within each element there is a range of different responses, all of which depend on the place-based context of the local government. The research showed that most local governments deliver actions for some elements, although there is wide variation in the nature and intensity of these actions.

The place-based framework for what local government does and can do to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability is shown in the figure below.



## How is this resource structured?

This resource is divided into six sections which represent the elements in the placed-based framework:

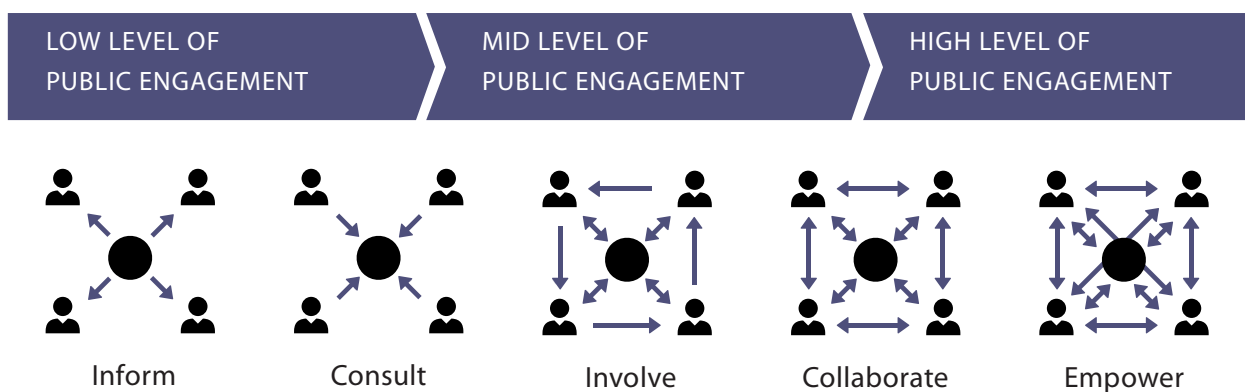
- Engage people with disability about their needs
- Plan, implement and measure outcomes
- Build capacity and leadership
- Build collaborative networks and partnerships
- Advocate within and outside the sector
- Boost local employment.

There is a checklist at the end of each section which summarises the spectrum of potential actions for the element, and the checklists are collated together in Appendix B. The aim of the checklist is to support local governments in identifying where they can take action to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability.

# Engage people with disability about their needs

## Overview

Many local governments effectively engage with their communities, including people with disability, their families and carers, on a wide range of strategic and operational issues. They generally operate on a spectrum from providing information to consulting to collaborating. This is shown in the figure below.



Source: What is community engagement ([www.bangthetable.com/what-is-community-engagement/](http://www.bangthetable.com/what-is-community-engagement/))

At the left-hand side of the spectrum, local governments provide information to people with disability and many are doing this. At the right-hand side, some local governments empower people with disability to make decisions on planning or budgeting which affect them.

This section provides information about how local governments engage with people, what they engage on and how engagement leads to better outcomes for people with disability.

## Enable access to information

Local governments provide their communities with a wide range of information and reporting about services and operations but not all is provided in a way which is accessible to people with disability. When local government websites comply with Australian web accessibility standards

and online and hard copy documents are available in accessible formats, people with disability may:

- Read hard copy documents in Braille or easy-to-read versions
- Listen to website content
- Watch videos with instructions about issues such as emergency management or public transport
- Access website documents in specific formats and in easy-to-read versions
- View websites via easy navigation and without large amounts of text
- Use specialist screen reader software.

Some local governments also build staff capacity, outside of the communications team, to develop

accessible material and information. Increasingly, information for people with disability is also translated into key community languages and into Auslan, the Deaf community's language.



### CITY OF WHITTLESEA, VICTORIA – ENSURING WEBSITES ARE ACCESSIBLE (Urban Fringe)

The Council is committed to the provision of information which is accessible for the whole community, including people with disability. Its website was recently upgraded to be compliant with the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and the homepage has large print, clear contrasting colours with most of the text replaced by symbols. Documents and information are provided in a range of formats, including basic word documents, accessible PDFs and, where possible, audio.

The Communication and Marketing Team developed a manual for staff to help them develop accessible documents. This also involves training a 'champion' in each division to implement the manual and ensure that content produced by that division is accessible.

The City has also invested in CommonLook software which creates accessible PDF documents.

See: [www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

Many local governments have developed access maps which details the location of accessible bathrooms, scooter recharge points and accessible buildings and infrastructure. Some local governments also provide guides which highlight accessible businesses. These maps and guides can generally be downloaded from websites as accessible PDFs.

## Identify and engage with people

Local governments identify and engage with people with disability, their families and carers (as they do with other community members) about their current and future needs. This is usually undertaken periodically in a strategic planning context and more frequently in an operational sense. The survey undertaken as part of this research showed that about half of the local governments in Australia have disability advisory committees, access committees or similar groups to drive this engagement and support people with disability, their families and carers to provide input into a range of issues such as how to:

- Design and implement public infrastructure, facilities and services
- Promote and build social and economic participation
- Monitor and measure outcomes
- Build local government staff capacity
- Promote accessibility in private land and building developments
- Advocate to other levels of government.

As a vital starting point, local governments make sure that community engagement strategies include people with disability

and that information about community engagement is in an accessible format.



### GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL, TASMANIA – MAKING THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUSIVE

(Urban Fringe)

Council has a long history of engagement with its community, including people with disability. The local population is becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse and this is highlighted in Council's new community engagement strategy. An important part of this new strategy will be to improve engagement with people with disability.

Council's Access Advisory Committee provided input into the framework which underpins the new strategy and provides ongoing advice as each element is developed. Council has also redeveloped its website and engaged the Access Advisory Committee about layout and language.

Local governments often engage people with disability in strategic planning by liaising with their advisory committee to help develop, monitor and report on disability access and inclusion plans. Where local governments do not have a disability advisory committee or want to engage more broadly, they use other ways to collaborate with people with disability, their families and carers.



## BREAK O'DAY COUNCIL, TASMANIA – WORKING GROUPS FOR DISABILITY ACTION PLANNING (Urban Fringe)

Council's relatively small population is spread across several small towns and rural properties. A high proportion of residents need some form of assistance with everyday activities and this is increasing as the community ages. There is currently only one provider of disability services and no day or longer-stay respite facilities in the area.

To identify gaps and support future planning for disability, Council convened a working group which included residents with a lived experience of disability, community organisations, elected members, and council staff to develop Council's first Disability Action Plan. The plan was endorsed by Council and the working group has now become a standing Disability Advisory Committee.

# Setting up advisory committees

The membership of disability advisory committees varies across local governments. They can include people with disability, their families and carers, service providers and disability advocates, elected members, and key local government staff.

Elected members are important to strategically position the committee within council and ensure that disability is considered in all decision-making. Over three quarters of councils with these committees include at least one elected member which strengthens the influence of the committee. The Access and Inclusion Committee in the Campbelltown City Council in South Australia and the Disability Network at the City of Whittlesea in Victoria are both chaired by the mayor and include one other elected member.

In many local governments, disability advisory committees are established under state or territory local government acts. This means that minutes are tabled at council meetings.

Disability advisory committees need to represent the interests of people with a wide range of disability. This is often formalised in their Terms of Reference but can be difficult to achieve where membership is generally by expression of interest. In particular, many local governments find it difficult to recruit people with intellectual disability. The Access Committees at Penrith City Council and Glenorchy City Council recruited community members with intellectual disability by engaging local organisations providing services for these people to identify suitable representatives.



Whilst advisory committees can assist with engagement on a regular basis, they are not a substitute for broader participation. Some local governments have been able to engage a representative sample of people with disability, their families and carers and this creates a richer source of baseline data to use for monitoring the impact of future initiatives and actions.



### WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – BROAD ENGAGEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY (Urban Regional)

As part of the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Council engaged broadly with people with disability and their carers. This engagement involved:

- A community survey which rated the importance of 21 Council facilities and services
- Two 'community conversations' with 26 people with disability and their carers and 34 Council staff
- A workshop with 17 young people from a Transition to Work program and seven local high school students.

Feedback included where to prioritise actions to increase social and economic participation (i.e. actions that have high importance but low satisfaction with current services), general community attitudes and issues around access to meaningful employment. The

engagement also provided baseline measures to monitor the impact of changes implemented by Council.

See: Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020 ([www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/publicdocuments/Documents/Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020 Engagement Summary.pdf](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/publicdocuments/Documents/Disability%20Inclusion%20Action%20Plan%202016-2020%20Engagement%20Summary.pdf))

See also: Increasing civic participation and improving consultation with people with a disability ([www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/ageing-disability/disability/relateddocuments/Increasing civic participation and improving consultation with people with a disability.doc](http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/ageing-disability/disability/relateddocuments/Increasing%20civic%20participation%20and%20improving%20consultation%20with%20people%20with%20a%20disability.doc))

## Empower people in decision-making

Some local governments go beyond engagement and actively empower people with disability in decision-making and priority setting. Generally, this means that the outcomes for people with disability are generally stronger as they have been actively involved in planning or considering the best way to allocate scarce resources.



## CITY OF ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – AUDITING ACCESS AND INCLUSION (Urban Fringe)

The City's infrastructure and facilities are used by residents from across Greater Adelaide and visitors, including people with disability. Each year, the City's Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel selects four projects or initiatives as case studies. The Panel contributes to the Case Study project over a period of a year or longer to add specialist and strategic advice regarding access and inclusion. This can include project briefings, site visits, audits, and design reviews. The Panel provides insight into the user's experience of the service, facility or place.

The case studies are published on Council's website and illustrate how specialist advice during the development and delivery stage of projects can lead to better results for people with disability. For example, engagement during the re-development of the Adelaide Aquatic Centre helped improve accessibility and services for people with disability. The panel is also currently advising Council on redevelopments such as the Riverbank to Central Markets master plan to ensure the small linking laneways in this area are accessible.

Case studies are not limited to public spaces and Council facilities, but can apply an access and inclusion lens to policy and strategy initiatives as well.

See: City of Adelaide Action Inclusion (<http://bit.ly/2sSQaWW>)



## PENRITH CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – REFERRAL OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS TO THE ACCESS COMMITTEE (Urban Fringe)

Penrith has grown rapidly which has led to the design and delivery of significant new infrastructure. Council aims to be a leader in planning for accessibility and is committed to establish and advocate for design principles which go beyond compliance levels in the Building Code of Australia.

To achieve this goal, Council's Access Committee formulated a Development Referrals Policy to guide the development applications it should consider, prior to approval by Council. This ensures that development applications for group homes and hostels (Class 3), department stores and shopping centres (Class 6), public buildings (Class 9) and non-habitable buildings or structures (Class 10) are reviewed by the Access Committee during the assessment process.



DISTRICT COUNCIL OF  
THE COPPER COAST,  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND  
GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL,  
TASMANIA – EMPOWERING  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY  
IN DECISIONS ABOUT  
INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

(Rural and Remote  
and Urban Fringe)

Both councils allocate significant funding for access upgrades of ageing council infrastructure. Both also work with their disability advisory committees to develop annual work plans using prioritisation matrices. These matrices place weightings on the number of people impacted, the risk of injury if an upgrade is not addressed, cost and the length of time projects have been in the pipeline.



## The checklist to increase social and economic participation

ELEMENT	Engage people with disability about their needs	
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Enable access to information	Make websites comply with accessibility standards Create online and hard copy document in accessible formats Train staff to develop accessible material Provide access maps and guides (web based or app based)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Identify and engage with people	Identify people with disability in the community and their needs Establish a disability advisory committee Create other ways to engage more broadly with the community	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Empower people in decision-making	Actively empower people with disability to make decisions about specific issues which affect them and issues more broadly in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Plan, implement and measure outcomes

## Overview

Local governments increase the social and economic participation of people with disability by using strategic planning processes which identify and respond to community needs. Local governments in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia are required by state legislation to develop specific disability action plans. In other states and territories without this legislation, many local governments still develop disability access and inclusion plans, whilst others use a range of different approaches.

Some local governments have had specific plans for accessibility for a number of years and are up to their third or more plan. Others have only recently developed their first plan. However, almost all who develop plan consult widely with people with disability their families and carers and with disability service providers.

This section provides information about how local governments set targets and develop plans to increase social and economic participation, how actions are implemented, and how outcomes for people with disability are measured.

## Set targets

Most local governments set targets and timelines for actions to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability as part of strategic planning; for example, during disability action planning, often in conjunction with people with disability. Some local governments have developed plans with their advisory committees and some engage people with disability and the community more broadly. Local governments recognise the need to establish targets and performance measures in order to establish a benchmark from which to monitor outputs as well as outcomes, i.e., whether the strategies, policies and programs they implement have increased the social and economic participation of people with disability.



## WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – SETTING TARGETS WITH THE COMMUNITY AND MEASURING OUTCOMES

(Urban Regional)

About 5.8% of the community in Wollongong live with a profound or severe disability. As part of the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Council engaged a range of people with disability and their carers to understand what was most important to them in community life and what to improve.

The principal actions in the plan will become part of Council's four-year Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plan. Council will report progress as part of the Annual Report and provide updates on the website. An evaluation framework has been developed, which includes performance indicators to measure change and the effectiveness of the plan for:

- Creating liveable communities for people with disability
- Access to employment for people with disability
- Access to Council information and consultation processes
- Community attitudes and behaviours.

Changes in these performance indicators are measured using Council data, a disability access and inclusion survey, and accessibility

audits of Council publications.

See: Disability Inclusion Action Plan ([www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/publicdocuments/Documents/Disability Inclusion Action Plan.pdf](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/publicdocuments/Documents/Disability%20Inclusion%20Action%20Plan.pdf))

## Develop and integrate action plans

Disability action plans are most effectively implemented and monitored when integrated into other strategic planning and reporting processes, for example, the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework in New South Wales. This is because the actions for social and economic participation appear in the operational or corporate plans, which then inform division or departmental annual work plans. Accountability is critical and according to the national survey most local governments assign responsibility and timeframes for actions and report on progress annually.



### COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – DEVELOPING ACTION PLANS FOR INCLUSION (Rural and Remote)

In 2016, the Shire developed its first disability inclusion action plan in response to the New South Wales Disability Inclusion Act 2014 which requires all local governments to adopt such a plan by 30 June 2017. A number of improvements to the accessibility of Council facilities and services were identified through engagement with the community and staff, to be delivered over a three-year period.

These included:

- Improving access to information on the Council website
- Delivering disability awareness training for all staff
- Raising awareness of disability in the community
- Ensuring access to key Council infrastructure and facilities.

These actions are integrated into Council's Annual Plan to ensure that responsibility is assigned and progress is monitored and reported annually.



### GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL, TASMANIA – ASSIGNING ACCOUNTABILITY (Urban Fringe)

Council recently consulted the community about their long-term vision and adopted a 25-year Community Plan (2015-2040). The plan includes five community goals promoting the feel of inclusiveness for all.

Tasmania's legislated ten-year Strategic Plan (2016-2025) then outlines the strategies to meet the community goals and the four-year Annual Plan identifies the actions to deliver these strategies. One action includes the implementation of Council's Access Action Plan. Responsibility for this is assigned to the Community, Economic Development and Business Directorate.

Regional planning can also be important where the needs of communities and/or where the issues around service provision are similar and nearly half of Australia local governments consult with their neighbours when planning for social and economic participation.



## WUJAL WUJAL ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – REGIONAL PLANNING FOR DISABILITY (Rural and Remote)

Wujal Wujal is a small council bordering Hopevale Aboriginal Shire and Cook Shire Councils. As Aboriginal Councils, Wujal Wujal and Hopevale deliver the majority of disability and aged care services in their communities with significant Australian and State government funding. Cook Shire Council covers most of the eastern and central parts of Cape York. The majority of other service providers are based in Cairns, at least five hours away, and provide limited outreach services to the region.

Given their close proximity and service challenges, the three councils have historically shared assets and infrastructure and jointly made representations to the Australian and State governments for better services. For example, the councils currently share accessible buses and are advocating for an increase in accessible social housing stock in the region to avoid the extensive modification of existing stock.

With the implementation of the NDIS in the region from 1 July 2018, the three councils have undertaken a regional service review and capacity assessment to determine what services to register to provide under the NDIS. This has led to high levels of consultation and alignment of strategic and operational plans to create complementary strategies, actions and resourcing to support people with disability in the region.

Disability action plans should be reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the local community and adjusted accordingly. Where these plans are legislated, the review period is fixed, for example, every four years in New South Wales.



## PENRITH CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – CHANGING EMPHASIS OVER TIME (Urban Fringe)

Council is about to adopt its third four-year disability inclusion action plan. The strategies and actions have changed with each plan to reflect the previous plan's achievements and changes in making Penrith an accessible and inclusive community. The first plan mainly focused on creating accessible infrastructure and facilities. The second focused on five themes to build the capacity of people with disability through inclusion:

- Leadership and partnerships – working with City partners to promote access and inclusion
- Environmental, local and transport planning – planning for accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods and improved transport and recreation options
- Development, design and built environment – improving the



way the built environment facilitates access and interaction

- Equality in employment and training
- Improving access to Council information.

In undertaking disability inclusion action planning for the third time, rather than creating a separate document, disability inclusion action planning has been incorporated into Council's four year delivery program. The Disability Inclusion Action priorities that were developed for the Delivery Program align with the key outcome areas outlined in the New South Wales Government Disability Inclusion Action Plan Planning Guidelines. These latest actions reflect the need to continue to build staff capacity to create inclusive services and communities.

standards for infrastructure and facilities.

Council recently adopted its first Access and Equity Plan (2016-2021). The plan aims to guide decision-making to provide services and facilities to make the Toowoomba region an inclusive and accessible community. The plan contains a range of actions across six focus areas identified by their community:

- Pedestrians, parking and transport
- Community facilities, amenities and open space
- Planning and services
- Training and employment
- Communication and community engagement
- Programs and events.

Each action is allocated an indicative budget, timeframe and responsibility. The plan is heavily focused on reviewing and auditing the accessibility of Council infrastructure and services which will help inform plans for upgrading, consolidating and rebuilding infrastructure and facilities across the region.



## TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – SETTING TIMEFRAMES AND BUDGETS (Urban Regional)

Toowoomba has high population growth, in particular from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and an ageing population. Council was formed in 2008 as an amalgamation of eight councils, each with varying accessibility

In some local governments, disability planning is embedded across related community sectors such as ageing, youth and health. Collaboration across different departments within local government is one of the key enablers of this much more holistic 'whole-of-person' approach.



## MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – COMMITMENT ACROSS PORTFOLIOS OF RESPONSIBILITY (Urban Developed)

Council has a long history of disability planning. It has an ageing population and recently adopted the Maroondah Housing Strategy 2016 to plan for future growth and increases in population density.

One focus of this strategy is to increase accessible housing in areas close to transport, employment clusters and community services. Another is to investigate how to incorporate universal design principles into design and development to ensure accessibility and safety for all ages and abilities.

A key enabler for the Housing Strategy is the Greening the Greyfields project. This is a federally backed project, together with Swinburne University, to promote sustainable housing regeneration in the 'middle suburbs' by landowners working with local government to develop more intense and liveable housing precincts. Council's involvement in this project is setting the foundations to help meet the accessible housing targets and outcomes for people with all abilities. It is anticipated that on the ground precincts will start to roll out within the next 5 years.

The Maroondah City Youth Plan (2012-2016) also delivered cross-departmental outcomes by developing and delivering mental health and disability programs for young people aged 12-25.

## Deliver accessible infrastructure

Access allows people with disability to participate in everyday activities and local governments are aware of and aim to comply with all relevant standards and codes, such as those under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Building Code of Australia. The national survey showed that almost all local governments consider that the provision of accessible infrastructure and public facilities is one of their key roles.

The Building Code of Australia outlines the minimum standards when designing and delivering new, or upgrading existing, infrastructure. In addition, local governments are responsible for approving Disability Discrimination Act assessments for private developments.

However, most local governments feel that the current Building Code of Australia standards need to be updated because they frequently do not:

- Accommodate all dimensions of disability, i.e., the minimum standards primarily support access for people with mobility issues rather than intellectual, vision or hearing impairments
- Keep up to date with assistive technology developments, i.e., latest motorised scooters can be wider and have different turning circles to traditional motorised wheelchairs
- Reflect leading practice in designing and planning infrastructure, i.e., universal design principles.

In response to these issues, some Local governments go beyond compliance and develop locally tailored standards and processes to:

- Identify access issues from the perspectives of people with disability and/or through universal design frameworks
- Ensure resources are dedicated for enabling higher standards of access and inclusion
- Lobby private developer and businesses to consider disability perspectives and/or consider a universal design framework.

## Universal design

Universal design places human diversity as the focus of the design process so buildings and environments can be designed to meet the needs of all users.

It therefore considers all people, regardless of their age, size, and physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability. It is about achieving good design so that everyone can access, use and understand the environment to the greatest extent and in the most independent and natural manner possible, without the need for adaptations or specialised solutions.

See: [Building for everyone: a universal design approach universaldesign.ie/Built-Environment/Building-for-Everyone/1-External-Environment.pdf](https://universaldesign.ie/Built-Environment/Building-for-Everyone/1-External-Environment.pdf)

Some local governments conduct audits to identify and address access issues. Access audits, when combined with community consultation and usage statistics can also help determine priorities for change. Actions can then be integrated into infrastructure delivery plans.

current usage and demand patterns.



### TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL COUNCIL – CONDUCTING ACCESS AUDITS TO IDENTIFY ISSUES

(Urban Regional)

Council has a significant number of heritage listed buildings and older facilities. Many of these require major upgrades to make them accessible, safe and financially sustainable to maintain. Council has committed to audit all existing infrastructure and facilities against the Building Code of Australia in its first Access and Equity Plan (2016-2021).

The audit will inform Council's Asset Management Plan and help decide whether to upgrade, sell or demolish existing facilities or build new facilities in a number of towns. These decisions will take into account the current use of facilities, where the community could share multipurpose facilities and where there are gaps in the suitability of existing facilities for some community groups.

As part of the audit, Community Liaison Officers are working with a number of community groups, including those which deliver services and programs for people with disability, to understand



### DISTRICT COUNCIL OF THE COPPER COAST, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – INTEGRATING PERSPECTIVES TO ENABLE ACCESS

(Rural and Remote)

Council is about to embark on the redevelopment of the Kadina town centre. During the concept phase, the Disability Discrimination Act Committee organised an experiential disability awareness excursion for elected members and senior executives. This provided significant insights into the perspectives and experiences for people with disability and their carers to safely navigate the CBD.

The visit led to a significant change from a vehicle-focused to a pedestrian-focused design. Plans were amended to incorporate additional cut-ins for shorter street crossings and vehicle

diversion measures. The design will also influence plans for redevelopments in the other two major district centres.

and tactile signage throughout.

The centre is also now used by community groups to deliver sports and aquatic programs for people with disability.

Many local governments aim to exceed the Building Code of Australia by incorporating universal design principles in major redevelopments of infrastructure.

The lack of availability and incorrect use of disabled parking the source of many community complaints. Some local governments have responded by undertaking research and providing additional access permits to both residents and visitors to their respective local government areas.



### CAMPBELLTOWN CITY COUNCIL, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – INCORPORATING UNIVERSAL DESIGN INTO THE AQUATIC AND RECREATION CENTRE

(Urban Developed)

Council recently built a new aquatic and recreation centre to replace its ageing recreation centre and consolidate the centre with the Council swimming pool.

Led by the Mayor, plus member of Council and staff, who are strong advocates for people with disability, the tender specified that universal design principles needed to be incorporated across the whole facility. The centre is now fully accessible for people with disability, including ramps into the swimming pool, disabled change facilities which exceed the Building Code of Australia, viewing areas which are all accessible for people with low mobility and braille



### CITY OF MELBOURNE, VICTORIA – CITY ACCESS PERMITS

(Capital City)

A City Access Permit provides extra parking time for holders of a valid Parking Permit for People with Disabilities to regularly attend work, study or specialist medical appointments in the City of Melbourne.

#### ELIGIBILITY:

To be eligible for a City Access Permit, applicants must hold a valid Parking Permit

for People with Disabilities issued in their name.

Applicants must also provide a letter on company letterhead from one of the following:

- Their workplace confirming their employment
- Their educational institution confirming their enrolment
- A medical specialist confirming their ongoing requirement for medical treatment within the municipality.

The workplace, educational institution or specialist medical appointments must be within the City of Melbourne.

Applicants may nominate up to three vehicle registration numbers on the permit.

Local governments often form partnerships with key stakeholders and community members, for example local businesses and people with disability, to develop local standards to improve access.



### WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – PROMOTING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION (Urban Regional)

Council recognises the importance of enabling city centre accessibility

for people with disability to increase social and economic participation.

As such, Council engaged local businesses through the implementation of the Welcoming Business Program. To receive Welcoming Business endorsement, businesses must satisfy a set of minimum standards relating to physical access, communication and customer service. The physical access requirements are consistent with the Australian Standards for access and mobility, and relate to features such as the accessibility of the front entrance, aisle width, provision of accessible toilet facilities, and signage. Staff awareness of the needs of people with disability is vital.

Businesses which meet these standards are issued with a Welcoming Business sticker to display prominently at the point of entry to advise people with disability their premises are accessible.

Over 250 businesses in the Warrnambool city centre are Welcoming Businesses and participation in the program continues to grow. The Welcoming Business Program has also been introduced in the surrounding Corangamite and Moyne Shires, and it can be easily replicated in other local government areas.

In addition, those local governments which enable access to infrastructure or purpose build facilities attract residents and visitors with disability, which contributes to the vibrancy of their communities.



### WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – THE IMPACT OF DELIVERING PLAYGROUND ACCESSIBILITY (Urban Regional)

Council identified the Wollongong Botanic Gardens as a priority site to increase recreation, in particular visitation by people with disability, their families and carers. In 2008, Council installed a large accessible playground and over 70% of visitors now go to this part of the gardens. The playground has been the main driver for a huge increase in visitation, from 200,000 to 520,000 per annum, and these numbers are the largest for any botanical gardens in Australia outside Brisbane.

Council is currently in the process of constructing an accessible rainforest pathway around the rainforest collection and has plans to complete a raised walkway up through the canopy in the future. The Garden also has a 12-person electric vehicle for guided tours and two free mobility scooters for use by visitors.

facilitating and delivering universally accessible activities, programs and events. The national survey showed that around two thirds of local governments deliver all of their community programs with universal access, often in response to feedback from the community.



### CITY OF WHITTLESEA, VICTORIA –ACCESSIBLE ART EXHIBITION (Urban Fringe)

The City has a strong arts and culture program and holds a number of annual art exhibitions at the Council chambers. Rather than hold exhibitions specifically for artists with disability, the City now makes all exhibitions universally inclusive.

For example, the annual Accessible Art exhibition began as an exhibition specifically for artists with disability. Due to low participation and feedback from local artists that the exhibition discriminated against artists without disability, the exhibition is now open to all local artists irrespective of their abilities. This has seen a rise in participation by artists, including those with disability, and there are no references about the artists' abilities in the exhibition.

## Deliver programs and facilitate access to programs

All local governments view the provision of accessible programs and activities as core business. Generally, they support social participation for people with disability by

About one third of local governments also deliver programs and activities specifically for people with disability, their families and carers.



## MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – DELIVERING DISABILITY-SPECIFIC AND UNIVERSAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS (Urban Developed)

Council supports a range of programs for people with disability, their families and carers.

The Stroke-a-Chord Choir was formed in 2010, with the assistance of Maroondah City Council, and provides an opportunity for stroke victims with speech impediments to meet weekly and express themselves through song.

The Pathways to Carers program offers carers of people with disabilities or mental health issues an opportunity to walk together in the municipalities of Manningham, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges. Walks are held in each municipality once a month with guest walkers from the Australian and state governments and non-government organisations. Representatives from the Department of Social Services and Transport Victoria have joined walks to discuss policy and infrastructure plans. This has been so successful that other organisations have approached Council to participate as guest walkers.

The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD Teen Social Group provides an opportunity for teenagers with autism spectrum disorders to socialise in a sensory-safe environment each month. The Disability Access Officer initiates the program and then builds the capacity of champions to take ownership of the groups. Council supports the program by providing facilities, producing promotional materials and providing administrative support.

Council also delivers a range of youth programs and made a commitment in their latest youth program to deliver an action focused on disability. This resulted in the Youth Services Team working with the Disability Access Officer and a disability service provider to produce Different but Same, a video highlighting the social experiences of children aged 8-10 with disability. The video has had more than 12,000 views on social media and has led to the Maroondah Council Youth Centre being used for program delivery by a disability service provider.

Council also delivers a range of other social programs through the HACC Social Inclusion and Wellbeing Program and ensures these are universally inclusive, including for people with disability.





## CITY OF PLAYFORD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – DELIVERING DISABILITY- SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

(Urban Fringe)

The City partly funds a Disability Community Programs Coordinator to deliver a recreation and day options program for adults with disability. This includes the Friends group program, a three day a week recreation and skills programs for adults with disability designed to encourage independence and self-growth through group interaction. Members pay a small fee to participate in community centre-based activities, including craft, cooking, music and various workshops as well as regular community outings. The cost includes transport and lunch. The City partners with other services providers and businesses, such as Lolly Jar Circus, Centacare and Department of Education, Disability Services SA, to deliver a broad program which meets the needs of participants.

There is also a Friends after-hours program one night per week and on Saturdays.

Council also partnered with the Northern Carers Network to deliver the Saturday Kids program for children with disability and runs a monthly disco for young people with disability aged 16 and over, including free entry for carers.

The Disability Community Programs Coordinator also delivers the Reach Out Mums program which is a free,

weekly information and support group for mothers with disabilities whose families may be at risk.

Where local governments do not directly deliver particular programs and activities, they encourage and support community organisations to deliver inclusive programs and activities, especially via accessibility checklists for event organisers.



## TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE SPORTS AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES

(Urban Regional)

Council specifically upgrades facilities used by local sports and recreation clubs who provide participation opportunities for people with disability.

After the 2016 Paralympic Games, members of the community with disabilities expressed an interest in participating in sailing and cycling. The Sailing Club researched the Sailability program, an international not-for-profit program to facilitate opportunities for people with disability to sail. Sailability Queensland provide assistance in all aspects of setting up, training, insurance, web listing, publicity, volunteer recruitment and funding but require clubs to erect accessible

wharfs. To enable wharf access, Council installed a hoist for people with mobility issues to access the boats.

The Darling Downs Cycling Club purchased a number of tandem bicycles so that people with vision impairments could participate in cycling. However, these bicycles did not fit inside the existing storage facility. Council funded the building of a new, larger storage facility.



### CITY OF SALISBURY, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – EVALUATING ACCESS AND INCLUSION PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS (Urban Fringe)

The City worked with a social profit agency, JFA Purple Orange, to design a tool to enable local governments to quantify the current status of access and inclusion and develop capacity to deliver infrastructure, programs and services to the community which are accessible by, and inclusive of, people living with disability. The tool was trialled across various divisions within Council which provided a benchmark for Council to see how accessible and inclusive their facilities and services are. Further trialling is required to further develop this evaluation instrument so that it is robust and adaptable to different contexts.

## Measure outcomes

Most local governments with disability action plans provide progress reports at least annually to their Councils. However, there is little evidence that local governments measure how and whether their actions increase the social and economic participation of people with disability. Actions are often reported but outcomes and impacts are often seen as being too hard to assess because the success of policies and programs is dependent on a range of factors (some of which are beyond the control of local government) and it is often hard to attribute outcomes to specific local government actions.

# Measuring outcomes

Based on this resource, local governments could use an evaluation framework approach to measure outcomes based on:

Engagement – did we engage the right people about the right things at the right time and did our engagement with them make an impact on what we were trying to plan or implement?

- ◆ Plan, implement and measure outcomes – did we use the right processes to plan for change and are we seeing increased social and economic participation as a result of our actions?
- ◆ Build capability and capacity – have we built the right capabilities within our own local government and with others in terms of leadership and skills to ensure our thinking has social and economic participation as part of decision-making? Have we allocated sufficient resources to our policies and programs and were they used efficiently and effectively?
- ◆ Build networks and partnerships – how have our networks and partnerships contribute to strong outcomes for our community?
- ◆ Advocacy – how were we able to advocate increasing social and economic participation within the local government sector, with other levels of government and with other non-government organisations?
- ◆ Boost local employment – what has been the impact of our actions on local employment and what has been the impact on our local community as a whole?



## The checklist to increase social and economic participation

ELEMENT - Plan, implement and measure outcomes		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Set targets	Establish baseline measures for social and economic participation and set targets based on community need	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Develop data collection methods to evaluate the actions delivered and outcomes for the community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop and integrate action plans	Develop robust, implementable plans with priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consider regional action planning if appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Set review periods for the action plan to monitor progress and consider changes required	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Plan for disability inclusion more broadly as part of ageing, health, housing and infrastructure development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deliver accessible infrastructure	Develop local standards and codes which go beyond compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Plan for universal access infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Conduct regular infrastructure and building audits with people with disability to identify areas for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Conduct site visits with decision-makers to provide a lived experience of the issue	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver sufficient accessible disabled parking	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Attract visitors and residents by creating specific attractions with universal access	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deliver programs and facilitate actions to programs	Deliver universal access programs and events	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver specific programs for people with disability, their families and carers	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Support other organisations to deliver programs, for example, with accessibility checklists for events	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measure outcomes	Develop a framework to critically assess and evaluate activities, outputs and outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Report on outcomes to the community	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Build capability and capacity

## Overview

Many local governments struggle to resource actions to increase social and economic participation of people with disability. This is both in terms of the capacity of local government (money, time, and people) and also the capability of the workforce. There are always competing priorities and, especially for rural and remote local governments, budget constraints and few resources. Making social and economic inclusion a priority requires leadership at all levels within local government to recognise the benefits to not only people with disability but also the whole community.

This section provides information about how local governments increase social and economic participation by investing in people and in sourcing appropriate resources.

## Drive strong leadership

Strong leadership ensures that access and inclusion are embedded across local government strategies, plans and programs. The starting point for many local governments is often strong advocacy from elected members with either a lived or personal experience of disability. This is then supported by executive and senior staff. Senior planning and infrastructure staff often drive universal

access but this needs to be supported at an executive level to ensure a broader commitment to social and economic participation is embedded across the whole organisation.

Strong leadership from executive staff and elected members promotes a culture where access and inclusion are prominent in decision-making. This can mean having one or more elected member and senior council staff on disability advisory committees (the national survey showed that over three-quarters of disability advisory committees include one or more elected member) or creating more formal civic structures which recognise disability in decision-making.



### CITY OF WHITTLESEA, VICTORIA – LEADING FROM THE TOP (Urban Fringe)

The Whittlesea Disability Network is a forum of community members with disability, carers, local service providers and others that have an interest in disability, that meet monthly to discuss local, regional, state, national and

international issues that are relevant for people with disability. Council convenes the network and importantly the terms of reference state that the Mayor and at least one other elected member are involved in the group. The participation of elected officials in the network ensures that outcomes from discussions are considered and/or followed through by Council. It provides a regular, informal platform where disability related issues in the community can be raised and followed up. In addition, elected member participation demonstrates Council's commitment to addressing disability related issues and increases awareness and engagement from Council staff and the community.

The network is consistently used by the community to raise concerns or propose ideas and used by all Council departments (from engineering to marketing) to consult people with disability, their families and carers and local service providers on projects, plans and policies.



## BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – CREATING CIVIC STRUCTURES WHICH SUPPORT DISABILITY

(Capital City)

Council has focused on access and inclusion for more than a decade. Over this time, disability has been a dedicated portfolio in the civic cabinet structure, ensuring access and inclusion issues are always considered at highest levels of Council. In 2015, the Mayor was elected on a policy platform which continued Council's strengths in disability. Longstanding and strong political leadership in access and inclusion has spread throughout the organisation and there is strong alignment on access and inclusion between Council's elected representatives, executive team and staff.

## Build staff capacity

Sufficient staff awareness, understanding and knowledge are essential to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability. At the compliance level, this means ensuring that staff understands their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and the relevant access provisions in the Building Code of Australia and the Disability Discrimination Act. Many local governments go beyond compliance to provide disability awareness training and other resources for staff.



## MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – GUIDE FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY (Urban Developed)

Maroondah City Council in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne has a guide for communicating with people with disability. The Guide was originally developed for employees, including customer service and community liaison staff. There are specific guidelines for communicating with people who have:

- A hearing impairment or are deaf
- Low vision or are blind
- A physical disability
- A cognitive impairment
- An Autism Spectrum Disorder
- A mental health issue.

The Guide also includes case studies and where to go for additional resources. The guide is available on Council's website and in customer service centres to help build the capacity of other organisations in the community. See: Communicating with People with Disabilities ([www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/common/files/CommunityHealthServices/Communicating\\_with\\_People\\_with\\_Disabilities.pdf](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/common/files/CommunityHealthServices/Communicating_with_People_with_Disabilities.pdf))



## GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL, TASMANIA – BUILDING STAFF CAPACITY (Urban Fringe)

Council's Access Officer has created a set of procedures to build the capacity of staff to create accessible documents. This includes guidelines about formatting, using colours and contrasts, creating PDFs, writing in plain English, and using alternative formats such as Easy English, Braille and captioning.

The Access Officer has also developed a process to make Council meetings inclusive, including specific communication methods, the timing of meetings and ensuring venues have an accessible bathroom.

One effective method to build capacity is to provide elected members and staff with a real-life experience of what it is like to have a disability. The national survey showed that many disability advisory committees help design and deliver such training. This allows others to experience the barriers people with disability face in social and economic participation and can significantly influence operational and strategic decision-making.



## GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL, TASMANIA AND TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – BUILDING STAFF CAPACITY USING EXPERIENTIAL DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

(Urban Fringe and Urban Regional)

The Glenorchy City Council Access Committee offers annual, one-day disability awareness training for all new staff. Participants are led through a discussion about what disability is, attitudes and assumptions about people with disability and what constitutes discrimination against people with disability. Participants are then given props to understand a particular disability and then undergo a series of everyday tasks in the community.

This training is compulsory for all staff. The training creates a culture of embedded thinking about how to respond to the needs of people with disability. The Access Committee has provided this training to other organisations.

Toowoomba Regional Council offers staff and/or elected members experiential disability training to build their capacity to understand and meet the needs of people with disability.

A member of Council's Regional Access and Disability Advisory Committee offers annual disability awareness training for customer service and community development staff which includes

replicating the experience of accessing Council services for people with disability.

In addition to organisation-wide capacity building, some local governments provide targeted training to some of their staff; for example, National Relay Service course for customer service staff. Other local governments provide tailored training to some of their staff around specific identified needs.



## BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – TRAINING FOR ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE PLANNING

(Capital City)

Staff from the Planning Team wanted increase their existing capacity to plan for accessible and inclusive precincts and communities and asked Council's Access and Inclusion Team to develop a survey to test their knowledge of what accessible and inclusive planning requires.

The survey confirmed what the Planning Team believed 'they didn't know' and has been used to develop tailored training to build the capacity of the team for the future.





## BASS COAST SHIRE COUNCIL, VICTORIA – BUILDING STAFF CAPACITY THROUGH DISABILITY AWARENESS AND TECHNICAL ACCESS TRAINING (Rural and Remote)

Council provides the opportunity for new and existing staff to participate in disability awareness training. Council supported staff from a range of teams to undertake specialist access training around the built environment. These staff members are now accredited to carry out access audits and have a greater understanding of the importance of access in all forms.

Council partners with neighbouring South Gippsland Shire Council to procure specialist access training in-house. This allows a greater number of staff in both councils to receive the training without having to travel to Melbourne.

Overall, staff credit disability awareness training with increasing their understanding of how their work intersects and impacts on the lives of people with disability. The training also linked the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Team with the Community Development Team who, with their level of expertise around disability access, now provide advice on planning and infrastructure projects.

# Universal design training

The Institute for Access Training Australia runs the following courses:

- ◆ Diploma and Certificate IV in access consulting
- ◆ How to conduct a building access audit
- ◆ Understanding access legislation and universal design in buildings
- ◆ Understanding access and universal design in parks and outdoor spaces
- ◆ Addressing access in transport infrastructure and conveyances
- ◆ It also offers a range of access awareness handbooks, for example to:
  - ◆ Make businesses and tourist services more accessible
  - ◆ Make leisure and entertainment activities more accessible
  - ◆ Provide better access to community facilities
  - ◆ Understand access obligations for councillors, CEOs, managers and committees
  - ◆ Make outdoor spaces more accessible.

See: Access Audit Australia ([www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au](http://www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au))



## CITY OF MELBOURNE, VICTORIA – DEAF AND DEAF-BLIND ACCESS TRAINING

(Capital City)

The City identified the need to better understand the access needs of people with sensory disabilities. It partnered with Vicdeaf, Deaf Blind Victorians and Blind Citizens Australia to commission Studio Thick to undertake qualitative research to identify unmet needs and opportunities for improving the experience and accessibility for people who are blind, deaf, and deaf-blind.

City walkthroughs and two-hour filmed workshops were undertaken with deaf, deaf-blind and blind community members to identify and understand the 'pain and delight' points and the processes, strategies and barriers they face while trying to navigate the city. The videos have been used with staff to highlight planning considerations for people with a sensory disability and have been used for specific deaf and deaf-blind awareness training for City Ambassadors and customer service staff.

## Allocate resources

Many local governments have relatively low levels of discretionary spending available to allocate for non-mandatory services. However, outcomes for social and economic participation appear to be most effective where local governments can prioritise resources to:

- Drive disability access and inclusion plans
- Convene disability advisory groups
- Enable staff to work together across departments
- Advocate for greater disability access and inclusion.

The disability access and inclusion 'role' in most local governments sits within the community services/development team. In metropolitan and larger regional local governments, these teams often have several staff, with one or more at least partially dedicated to disability. In smaller regional, rural and remote local governments, there is often only one staff member who covers disability, ageing, multiculturalism, diversity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and sometimes also youth.

Where dedicated resources exist, local governments are able to provide a stronger response to access and inclusion. Since 2006, local governments in Victoria have received state funding to employ full-time or part-time Disability Access Officers under the Building Inclusive Communities program. Overall, this has meant that local governments in Victoria are generally able to deliver a broader range of activities to support disability inclusion than local governments in other states.



### CITY OF PLAYFORD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – ALLOCATING RESOURCES TO DRIVE ACCESS AND INCLUSION (Urban Fringe)

The City is a very large, growing council with a higher than average percentage of residents who need assistance with core activities, despite having a younger age profile than the rest of Greater Adelaide. The area also has a lower SEIFA Index of Disadvantage compared to Greater Adelaide.

The City has a vision to becoming the 'second CBD' in Greater Adelaide and has developed a strategic directions plan for disability access and inclusion which aims to create a socially and economically accessible and inclusive community. To drive this, the City has funded a full-time Disability Access and Inclusion Coordinator to increase awareness of disability in the community and ensure access and inclusion are planned and integrated into projects and services. The City also funds a part-time Community Programs Officer to coordinate a program of activities for people with disability and their carers.



### CITY OF WHITTLESEA, VICTORIA – BUILDING UP THE SIZE OF THE ACCESS TEAM

(Urban Fringe)

The City has a rapidly growing population and a higher proportion of people with disability (compared to the Victorian average). Council is committed to being a leader in disability access and inclusion and has established a larger Access Team (one Team Leader with four staff) which has built on the current state government funding of the Building Inclusive Communities (MetroAccess) program.

The team plays an important role in driving Council's Disability Action Plan and provides support and advice to staff in other divisions. The size of the team enables the City to engage the community and disability sector through the Whittlesea Community Futures Disability Network and Whittlesea Disability Clusters.



### CITY OF WAGGA WAGGA, NEW SOUTH WALES – ALLOCATING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PLANNING

(Urban Regional)

The City of Wagga Wagga does not have a dedicated Disability Access Officer, but a Social Planning Team that includes two Regional Support Officers. The team is responsible for addressing social justice and community wellbeing issues in the community and has previously been responsible for developing Social Plans for Council which identify the wellbeing needs and priorities of the community, including people with disability.

With the introduction of the New South Wales Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Council committed temporary additional resources to expand the Social Planning Team to ensure sufficient capacity exists to engage people with disability, the local disability sector and staff. This ensures Council better understands the needs and priorities of people with disability and that the disability access and inclusion plan responds accordingly.

Despite resource constraints, other smaller rural and remote local governments have also dedicated staff to drive access and inclusion.



## BREAK O'DAY COUNCIL, TASMANIA AND COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – RESOURCING IN RURAL AND REMOTE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

(Rural and Remote)

Both councils have small Community Services Divisions and staff share responsibility for multiple areas, including access and inclusion. Whilst this does not provide for a continuous focus on access and inclusion, it has provided sufficient resourcing to recently drive the development of their first disability access and inclusion plans.

## Source grant funding

Local governments often lack sufficient discretionary funding to establish new facilities, activities, projects and programs which promote the inclusion of people with all abilities and increase the social and economic participation of people with disability. This means they need to proactively source funds from grants either on their own or in partnership with others. However, where disability action plans are mandatory, local governments are more likely to allocate funds and proactively source grants to ensure the actions are implemented.

# Sources of grant funding

## NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) funding

Some actions to support the elements of the place-based framework may be eligible for the NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) funding. This grant program funds activities which deliver clear benefits for people with disability their families and carers.

ILC funding is available through an open competitive grants process and is being progressively rolled out across all States and Territories.

See: Information, linkages and capacity building ([www.ndis.gov.au/communities/ilc-home.html](http://www.ndis.gov.au/communities/ilc-home.html))

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## Australian Government Employment Assistance Fund

This provides employers with funding to cover the cost of modifying workplaces to support employees with disability.

See Funding Workplace Changes ([www.jobaccess.gov.au/employers/funding-workplace-changes](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/employers/funding-workplace-changes))

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## The Australia Council Artists with Disability Funding

This provides support for individual and groups of artists with disability.

See: Arts and Disability Funding ([www.australiacouncil.gov.au/funding/arts-and-disability-funding](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/funding/arts-and-disability-funding))

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Grants not specifically targeting improved services or opportunities for people with disability can help improve access and inclusion. For example, the Australian Government Building Better Regions Fund provides grants for rural and remote areas in two funding streams:

- The Infrastructure Projects Stream for the construction of new infrastructure or the upgrade or extension of existing infrastructure
- The Community Investments Stream for community building activities including, but not limited to, new or expanded local events, strategic regional plans and leadership and capability building activities.

See: Building Better Regions Fund ([www.business.gov.au/assistance/building-better-regions-fund](http://www.business.gov.au/assistance/building-better-regions-fund))



### PENRITH CITY COUNCIL, NSW- ILC FUNDING TO SUPPORT ACTIONS FOR INCLUSION (Urban Fringe)

These two local governments were awarded grants in the first round of ILC funding.

Penrith City Council was funded to implement the Nepean Jobs for All project which aims to raise awareness and support for local businesses to employ people with disability. This initiative is described in more detail in section 6.

Each State and Territory government also has infrastructure and facilities grants to improve the accessibility of public facilities and infrastructure and many offer a range of sports and recreation grants for programs and facilities upgrades. Although not disability specific, these grants often target projects to grow sports and recreation activities in communities and also address barriers to inclusion.



### THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF THE COPPER COAST, SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND CAMPBELLTOWN CITY COUNCIL, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – FUNDING TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY OF SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILITIES (Rural and Remote and Urban Developed)

The sports and recreation centre at the District Council of the Copper Coast is used by more than 1,300 members, local schools and for vacation care. Recent increases in use led to the development of a Master Plan for a replacement centre. The plan responds to specific actions in Council's Disability Discrimination Act Action Plan, including incorporating access and equity needs for people with disability.

Council did not have the sufficient budget to fully fund the redevelopment and successfully applied for a number of Australian and South Australian Government grants to meet the shortfall. These included:

- A grant from the National Stronger Regions Fund (now superseded by the Building Better Regions Fund)
- State government grants from the Office for Recreation and Sport Community Recreation and Sports Facilities Program and the Department of Education and Child Development.

These grants are almost 75% of the total cost and will allow Council to proceed with the redevelopment.

Similarly, Campbelltown City Council secured \$3m in New South Wales government funding and \$7.5m in Australian Government funding to upgrade the Sports and Recreation Centre to universal design principles.



### **PENRITH CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – FUNDING TO PROMOTE DISABILITY INCLUSION (Urban Fringe)**

Council's Toy Library specialises in toys for children with disability and high support needs and features adapted, sensory and educational toys to build problem-solving, coordination, reasoning, numeracy, literacy and fine motor skills. The Toy Library is coordinated by a Library Children's Inclusion Officer, funded by the New South Wales Department of Education.



### **COONAMBLE SHIRE COUNCIL – FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND MOBILITY PLANS (Rural and Remote)**

The Shire and the NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) jointly funded the development of Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans (PAMPs) for the Town of Coonamble and the Village of Gulargambone and engaged an Access Consultant to assist.

The ultimate aim of the PAMPs is to deliver safe, equitable, connected and dignified paths of travel for pedestrians of all ages and abilities. As part of the PAMP development, Council and the RMS conducted an Access Audit Report which identified issues with paths of pedestrian travel and other facilities. Council then committed to upgrade infrastructure in line with the Australian Government Access to Premises and Accessible Public Transport Standards.

Coonamble residents with disability and their carers feel the upgrades have positively impacted on their every-day activities and those in the pedestrian areas now allow them to access the whole town centre.





### MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE COUNCIL, VICTORIA – IMPROVING PEDESTRIAN ACCESS (Rural and Remote)

Mount Alexander Shire Council has submitted a federal funding application for 'Building Better Regions Fund' for almost one million dollars' to improve pedestrian access and useability across Mount Alexander Shire.

Council has collated feedback from the community, and the key message that came through this consultation process was the requirement for improved pedestrian pathways and crossings in the Shire to address access for young families, older people and people with disability living in the community.

One component of the Building Better Regions funding application focused on addressing documented problematic hot spots considered by the Mount Alexander Shire Disability Advocacy Group. The proposed solutions presented will ensure disability access compliance in key locations across the Shire.



### BASS COAST SHIRE COUNCIL, VICTORIA – ENSURING INCLUSION IN ALL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS (Rural and Remote)

Council operates on a limited budget and often does not have funding to invest in major, new or upgraded infrastructure to improve accessibility. When any infrastructure grant is received, staff ensure that the project meets the latest access standards.

Council received funding from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to undertake major repairs to damaged coastal infrastructure and took this opportunity to improve access at the same time. The coastal management team worked with the community development team in the planning process and as a result of the upgrade, this coastal region became the site of an accessible event which would not have been possible otherwise.



## The checklist to increase social and economic participation

ELEMENT - Build capability and capacity		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Drive strong leadership	Identify champions at the elected member level	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Include elected members and senior staff on disability advisory committees	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Build leadership for accessibility and inclusion into performance management	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Assess how and whether a culture for inclusion exists within council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Build staff capacity	Ensure staff understand their legal obligations under the Building Code of Australia and the Disability Discrimination Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Develop a range of induction and ongoing training programs for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocate resources	Prioritise essential change to increase social and economic participation and resource the change needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Identify the 'owner' for disability access and inclusion within council	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide resources for teams of dedicated staff and/or work across council/council portfolios to deliver outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Source grant funding	Proactively identify relevant sources of funding (for disability specific or universal projects) from Australian, state, and territory governments and other organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Work as a council or with other organisations and people with disability to develop grant applications based on need	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Build collaborative networks and partnerships

## Overview

Many local governments do not directly provide disability services to people with disability so, to increase social and economic participation, they need to develop ongoing collaborative networks and partnerships with other organisations. These organisations may be at a local, regional or national level and the relationships benefit from local government knowledge about community needs and wants.

Local governments with strong partnerships which endure over time have organisation-based rather than individual-based collaboration. This is especially the case where partnerships involve an exchange of expertise and resources between businesses, NGOs and other levels of government.

This section provides information about how local governments work with a range of government and non-government organisations to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability.

## Build strong networks

Local governments appear to increase social and economic participation when they build effective, collaborative networks with non-government organisations (nationally or locally based). These relationships establish local governments as leaders in their communities and help develop better understandings of and responses to the needs of people with disability. They also increase the reach and impact of local government's strategies, policies and programs and ensure a more joined-up approach to create inclusive communities.

Networks generally start when disability service providers are invited onto a disability advisory committee, and the national survey showed that the majority of these committees include representatives from one or more provider. Having this knowledge on the committee helps staff members engage with the local disability sector during planning processes. It can also provide a direct source of information about the needs of people with disability, identify ways to drive inclusion outside local government and highlight opportunities

to pool resources for collective impact.

Some local governments go further and coordinate local networks of disability service providers for ongoing disability planning or specific issues such as the roll out of the NDIS.



### **GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL, TASMANIA – LINKING AGEING AND DISABILITY NETWORKS (Urban Fringe)**

Due to increasingly overlapping cohorts with similar needs, Council's Access Officer is responsible for both disability access and inclusion and positive ageing. To help facilitate cooperation between the two sectors, the Access Officer convenes an Aged and Disability Service Provider Network, which meets five times per year to discuss service provision, gaps, community programs, upcoming events and opportunities and issues to advocate to Council and other levels of government.

This network has been particularly active in driving more and better accessible parking at the local retail centre and has provided input into the master plan for the Glenorchy Main Street redevelopment.



### **MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE COUNCIL, VICTORIA – PREPARING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NDIS (Rural and Remote)**

Council is a partner in the Mount Alexander Health & Communities Services Alliance together with Castlemaine Health, Castlemaine District Community Health and Windarrang (a disability services and support organisation). The purpose of the Alliance is to work together to provide effective and accessible primary community health and wellbeing services which meet the needs of the community.

The Alliance collaborates on local service planning, service integration, systems change development and implementation. The Central Victorian Primary Care Partnership (CVPCP) facilitates quarterly meetings; and in the context of NDIS, the Alliance has recently asked the CVPCP to investigate potential vulnerable community members, any possible market failure and the opportunities for local services. These findings will be reported back to the Alliance to determine what is needed to support people with disability.

In relation to the NDIS roll out, various officers within the Community Wellbeing unit are providing information to and actively advising people who may be eligible for the NDIS to learn about their options and make their planning experiences as successful as possible.

## Partner with state government

State and territory government partnerships mainly focus on grant funding but some local governments also consult with state and territory governments during the development of disability action plans. Funding is often around capacity building, for example, to assist local governments to develop processes to develop disability action plans, or for infrastructure improvements. Although funding is usually one-off and over a relatively short time frame, it can either kick start or enhance an already established project.



### CITY OF WHITTLESEA, VICTORIA – NETWORKS FOR SPECIFIC ISSUES (Urban Fringe)

Council convenes the Whittlesea Disability Network which has over 700 members from the community and non-government organisations. The network is chaired by the Team Leader-Access but is independent from Council. It advocates on issues such as state government infrastructure projects, Council and state government development plans, and Australian Government initiatives such as the NDIS. Working groups consider specific issues such as the new Mernda Rail extension project, to ensure that access for people with disability is considered in the planning process.

Council also established the Whittlesea Community Futures program which set up networks of organisations around specific social issues. This included a Disability Cluster to focus on the implementation of the NDIS. In addition, Council also established an 18-month NDIS Preparation Project which included a disability expo to connect community members with NDIS providers.



### MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – CHANGING PLACES FUNDING (Urban Developed)

Council's Disability Advisory committee identified that the standard Building Code of Australia compliant accessible facilities did not meet the needs of some adults with disability. Subsequently, research by the Disability Access Officer discovered Changing Places UK and Council developed a relationship with this group.

Council then partnered with a local architect who specialises in accessibility to build and trial the first Changing Places facility in Australia, known as Marveloo. Council committed half the upfront costs with the remainder secured through partnerships with Bendigo Bank, the Wheaton Group (a national business)

and the Mayor's Charitable Foundation.

In 2012, following a successful trial, Council established the Changing Places Victoria Consortium which is now led by the Association for Children with a Disability who have enabled the project to achieve national significance.

There are now more than 30 Changing Places facilities across Australia and the Victorian State Government recently committed \$750,000 to establish six facilities in key tourist locations and regional communities, in addition to the existing 24 facilities in Victoria.

Council won the National Award for Local Government in 2015 for Disability Access and Inclusion for its role in establishing Changing Places.

See: [changingplaces.org.au](http://changingplaces.org.au)



### WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES IN COUNCIL BUILDINGS (Urban Regional)

A local not-for-profit organisation established a catering business staffed entirely by people with disability which has grown significantly and is now widely regarded as one of the best hospitality businesses in the area. The food and wait service is considered high quality and supports large events in Warrnambool, including major civic events and weddings.

Recently, the business became too big for its existing premises. To address this, and ensure the organisation could continue to provide local employment opportunities for people with disability, Council made a larger space in its major community hub building available.

## Collaborate with NGOs

In addition to forming networks, the national survey showed that about two-thirds of local governments directly fund NGOs to deliver programs and services and over half subsidise the use of recreation and aquatic centres, community halls, and libraries.



### DISTRICT COUNCIL OF THE COPPER COAST, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – PROVIDING SECURITY FOR LOCAL CLUBS TO UPGRADE FACILITIES (Rural and Remote)

The local sailing club wanted to upgrade their clubhouse to make it more accessible for older members and other community members with low mobility. The club unsuccessfully tried to secure a loan from several lenders due to the short-term lease on the building (five years) and lack of security. To help secure funding, Council offered the club a 20-year lease and acted as guarantor on the loan.

Some local governments also fund local NGOs to directly deliver services to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability.

a frequent destination for people with disability and their carers from Australia and overseas, the City recognised the need and importance of such a service.

Travellers Aid provides free access to travel-related information and mobility aids which help people move through the city independently and confidently. This includes assistance buggy rides at Southern Cross Station, mobility equipment hire, the supported use of accessible toilets and personal companions who escort people to medical appointments.

Following the undertaking of research and an unmet need, the companion service has been expanded to support people who are blind and deaf and blind navigate through the city.

To ensure the sustainability of the NGO, the City provides annual funding to supplement funding from other government, corporate and philanthropic sources.

See: Travellers Aid ([www.travellersaid.org.au](http://www.travellersaid.org.au))



### CITY OF MELBOURNE, VICTORIA – MOBILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (Capital City)

Traveller's Aid Australia is an NGO which has been in operation for over 100 years and is located at the two major rail hubs in the Melbourne CBD, Flinders Street and Southern Cross Stations. As

In addition, most local governments also promote the services and programs offered by NGOs in their areas, often in an accessible format.



### CAMPBELLTOWN CITY COUNCIL, SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT NGO SERVICES

(Urban Developed)

These councils provide online directories with details of services for people with disability, activities and community groups, and other information.

See: Disability Guide ([www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=2098](http://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=2098) and [www.maroonдах.vic.gov.au/DisabilityGuide.aspx](http://www.maroonдах.vic.gov.au/DisabilityGuide.aspx))

Council offers a free pick-up and delivery service through several disability service providers rather than Council dropping off and picking up the toys directly from each individual family.

Many local governments provide a range of community grants for community groups and NGOs to deliver art and recreation programs. Whilst these are rarely targeted specifically for people with disability, local governments such as the City of Melbourne include provisions for universal inclusion in the weighted evaluation criteria for applications. The City of Melbourne partners with Arts Access Victoria to promote their grants to organisations which support people with disability and to help people with disability complete applications for arts grants. In addition, just over half of local governments in Australia support event organisers to make their events more accessible.

NGOs also often directly support local governments by delivering their services where it is more efficient for the NGO to do so or where the NGO has more direct access to people needing the service.



### PENRITH CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – COLLABORATION WITH NGOS ON THE TOY LIBRARY SERVICE

(Urban Fringe)

Council's Toy Library has some loans which are specifically designed to support the cognitive and motor skill development of children with disability.



### CITY OF HOBART COUNCIL, TASMANIA AND CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – EVENT PLANNING GUIDES

(Capital City and Urban Fringe)

The City of Hobart is a focal point for festivals and major events in the



Hobart Region. This includes events delivered by Council and external event organisers. To ensure that events are properly organised, Council developed an Event Development Guide which includes assistance with:

- Choosing venues which allow for equal access to, from and within the event
- Dedicated seating in strategic areas for people with disability
- Ensuring infrastructure at festivals and events is accessible
- Providing hearing loops if necessary
- Parking provisions for people with disability.

Council distributes the guide to internal and external groups who apply to hold a festival or event.

See: Event Development Guide ([www.hobartcity.com.au/files/88099a58-f516-4088.../event\\_development\\_guide.pdf](http://www.hobartcity.com.au/files/88099a58-f516-4088.../event_development_guide.pdf))

The Central Coast Council (formerly Gosford City Council) has a Planning Accessible Events guide for both internal and external distribution. The online guide provides information on:

- Choosing an appropriate venue
- Accessible parking and drop off/pick-up zones
- Accessible toilets
- Formats of advertising and invitations including providing information about accessibility provisions
- Tips for communication

- Guide, hearing and assistance dogs
- Venue set up.

See: Planning Accessible Events ([www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/docs/default-source/Community/gosford-city-council-planning-accessible-events-2014-rtf-version.rtf?sfvrsn=2](http://www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/docs/default-source/Community/gosford-city-council-planning-accessible-events-2014-rtf-version.rtf?sfvrsn=2))



## The checklist to increase social and economic participation

ELEMENT - Build collaborative networks and partnerships		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Build strong networks	Identify key stakeholders to deliver outcomes for people with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Actively build networks and partnerships around common goals so they are already in existence when required	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Set key aims and goals with collaborators	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partner with state government	Establish and actively maintain key partnerships with state and territory government departments	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Regularly communicate to support capacity building and infrastructure development (state and local government funded)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborate with NGOs	Where a service or program is needed, but cannot be delivered by council, identify providers who can	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Directly fund NGOs where necessary or where it is more efficient to do so	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Promote services and programs offered by NGOs in an accessible format	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide community grants to deliver programs	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Advocate within and outside the sector

## Overview

Local governments cannot increase social and economic participation on their own. They need to advocate for greater awareness and consideration of the needs of people with disability; and they need to promote the economic and social case for greater access and inclusion with other levels of government, developers and local businesses.

Most local governments advocate on behalf of their communities to a range of different government and non-government organisations. They also advocate at different scales, for example, working with local business to improve accessibility into premises or with state governments for resources to establish services and infrastructure. Advocacy is often most powerful where local governments collaborate with each other at a sub-regional or regional basis via existing arrangements or new partnerships for a specific purpose.

This section provides information about how local governments advocate within and outside the local government sector.

## Advocate in planning and development

In many local government areas there are plans for significant road and public transport infrastructure and residential and retail centre development or redevelopment. Many local governments use these opportunities to increase social and economic inclusion via access improvements. Although developers comply with the Building Code of Australia and Disability Discrimination Act Standards, local governments are aware that the standards do not always meet the needs of all people with disability. As such and as the national survey showed, many local governments often try to influence a higher standard for inclusion as part of local government planning and development processes. Furthermore, the survey showed that over half advocate on behalf of people with disability for greater accessibility in the design of public and private infrastructure and more accessible public transport.

Local governments influence different stakeholders differently. With state and territory governments, many local governments make formal submissions, especially regarding large infrastructure projects, to try to influence both the outcomes and the design process.



### CITY OF WHITTLESEA, VICTORIA – ADVOCATING TO STATE GOVERNMENT (Urban Fringe)

The City is experiencing rapid growth with significant rail infrastructure development. The Mernda Rail Extension is the next phase of this expansion. Council worked with the State government to ensure that the extension integrates with Council's land use planning and considers access issues for people with disability, including the provision of information about the project in accessible formats.

Council employs a full-time officer to work on the project with the State government and supports the community to advocate for access provisions for people with disability via the Whittlesea Disability Network. This involved a meeting at Council, facilitated by Council to review the State government's plans. Based on the discussions, Council drafted a formal submission which highlighted access concerns and suggested opportunities for improvement.



### CITY OF HOBART, TASMANIA – ADVOCATING FOR ACCESSIBLE PARKING (Capital City)

Council's local government area includes the main business and event precinct in Greater Hobart. The provision of accessible parking is a major challenge because of the topography which makes it difficult to comply with gradient standards in the Disability Discrimination Act. Council receives a large volume of complaints about the lack of accessible parking in key locations around Hobart.

Council identified the current State government Disability Parking Scheme as one of the main barriers to the availability of accessible parking. The scheme has no review period for eligibility and permits remain with families after the holders are deceased. In addition, there is anecdotal evidence from Council parking officers that accessible parking spaces are used by people without disability.

Based on this, Council met with the State government and requested the introduction of an expiry date for disability permits. To date there has been no change in the scheme so, as an interim measure, Council allows double the parking time for disability permit holders in all on-street parking spaces in the CBD. This is not an ideal solution as many of these spaces are not accessible for people with disability, in particular those with low mobility.

Some local governments also build the capacity of people with disability to advocate for issues which are important to them.



### MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL, VICTORIA – BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY (Urban Developed)

Council is undertaking significant redevelopment of its existing infrastructure. Led by the Disability Access Officer, Council is building the capacity of the members of the Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee to advocate to private developers and the Victorian Government for improved services and infrastructure. Council provides administrative support and small amounts of financial aid for the Committee to prepare submissions and lobby private developers and other tiers of government for greater consideration of access by people with disability.

The Committee formed an action group to work with one developer during the redevelopment of a major retail centre in the area. The centre needed to be a more accessible place for people with a range of disabilities and there were opportunities to exceed the Building Code of Australia standards. The group built the knowledge and understanding of the developer about the issues by showing a video highlighting the inadequacies of Building Code of Australia compliant accessible bathrooms for adults with disability.

A key outcome was the installation of two Changing Places facilities.

The Committee also identified ways to improve access as part of the local Ringwood Train Station upgrade to Public Transport Victoria. Council is now using the station upgrade as an example of the need to strengthen the accessibility requirements under the Building Code of Australia as part of a submission to a Senate enquiry into the delivery of outcomes under the NDS.

Council also formed the Eastern Disability Action Group with the Knox and Yarra Ranges Councils to advocate on a regional basis. The group also organises regular guest speakers on policy and planning matters from government and non-government departments such as Public Transport Victoria, the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and the NDIA.

## Increase local business capacity

Local governments understand that to increase social and economic participation at a local level requires the engagement of local businesses, in particular around accessibility, but also in terms of how businesses respond to people with disability and how they provide information to them.

As such, many local governments advocate to businesses to raise their understanding

about the needs of people with disability, their families and carers and how to make their businesses accessible and inclusive.



### THE FORMER MARRICKVILLE COUNCIL (NOW PART OF INNER WEST COUNCIL), NEW SOUTH WALES – DEVELOPING A MISSED BUSINESS GUIDE (Urban Developed)

Council has a history of strong social advocacy. Following the 1998 ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Council estimated that 12,290 residents, or 16% of the community, identified as having a disability. Critically, Council also calculated that because people with disability are often accompanied outside the home by a family member, friend or carer, up to 25,000 people consider accessibility for people with disability in their day-to-day activities.

This meant that businesses needed to better respond, and Council partnered with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission to develop a Missed Business guide for small businesses.

The guide provides advice about how to attract more customers by providing better access and identifies steps to make it easier for people with disability to:

- Find businesses on the street
- Enter premises
- Move around premises.

The guide also provides advice on how to communicate and provide good customer service to people with disability.

The guide was distributed to small businesses and is available on the current Inner West Council website in a range of languages.

Other local governments including Toowoomba Regional Council make this guide available on their website. A number of other councils across Australia have produced fact sheets for small business based on this guide.

See: Missed business ([www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/en/community/community-services/accessibility/misled-business/](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/en/community/community-services/accessibility/misled-business/))



### CITY OF MELBOURNE, VICTORIA – GOOD ACCESS IS GOOD BUSINESS CAMPAIGN (Capital City)

Melbourne, as a key tourist destination, has a strong economic case for businesses in the CBD to make their businesses accessible, especially as about 20% of Victorians have disabilities. To improve business responses and raise awareness, the City provides free Good Access is Good Business training and resources to the business sector.

Resources include:

- Tips on how different types of businesses can improve their premises for people with disability, including how to provide information, have a welcoming attitude and have an accessible layout
- A variety of customer access checklists for a range of different types of businesses
- Free training seminars.

To support businesses to understand the monetary value of being accessible, the City of Melbourne also commissioned Monash University to investigate the benefit for businesses in dollar terms.

This research found that there was a return of \$13 for every \$1 spent on creating a universally accessible business. In addition, such investment creates up to 25% increase in turnover and \$26 to the community for every \$1 invested by employing a person with disability.

The findings are promoted to businesses.

See: Making business accessible ([www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/business/support-resources/toolkits-and-guides/Pages/making-business-accessible.aspx](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/business/support-resources/toolkits-and-guides/Pages/making-business-accessible.aspx))

Other local governments provide similar information.

See: Good Access is Good Business Guide ([www.moreland.vic.gov.au/globalassets/areas/social-policy/good-access-is-good-business-guide-2013.pdf](http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/globalassets/areas/social-policy/good-access-is-good-business-guide-2013.pdf))



## CITY OF ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – ACCESSIBLE DINING CAMPAIGN (Capital City)

The City contains a number of key dining areas, including the popular multicultural Chinatown precinct. However, feedback from the City's Access and Inclusion Panel showed that people with disability had difficulty accessing many of the restaurants in Chinatown.

Council developed a resource, in conjunction with its Access and Inclusion Panel, which provides ideas to improve the accessibility of restaurants including furniture, menus and cutlery and floor layout. It also provides information about the legal rights of Guide Dogs and Assistance Dogs to enter restaurants and is available in English, Vietnamese, Chinese and Japanese.

In addition, Council provides free advice and on-site visits for businesses who would like to make their premises more accessible for people with disability.

See also: Access for all: Improving accessibility for consumers with disability ([www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/publications/access-all-improving-accessibility-consumers-disability-2016](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/publications/access-all-improving-accessibility-consumers-disability-2016))

As such, many local governments advocate to businesses to raise their understanding about the needs of people with disability, their families and carers and how to make their businesses accessible and inclusive.



## BASS COAST SHIRE COUNCIL, VICTORIA – IMPROVING ACCESS TO PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

(Rural and Remote)

Council received a small, \$5,000 grant from the Victorian Office of Disability to distribute to local businesses to help improve the accessibility of their products and services. Council's Community Development Team allocated ten \$500 grants to small businesses on the basis that they demonstrate improvements to access.

The team worked with successful applicants to develop ideas to make their businesses more accessible and inclusive for people with disability and this led to the installation of hearing loops, handrails, signage and other alterations to improve access.





## The checklist to increase social and economic participation

ELEMENT - Advocate within and outside the sector		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Advocate in planning and development	Work with private developers to influence them to go beyond compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Advocate to state and territory governments during the design and planning processes for large infrastructure projects	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Build the capacity of people with disability to advocate on issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase local business capacity	Develop guidelines for local businesses to help them meet resident and visitor needs and boost their business	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Train local businesses on how to support and respond to people with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Promote accessible businesses to residents and visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide grant funding to make businesses more accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Boost local employment

## Overview

In many communities, local governments are some of the largest, if not the largest, local employers and this provides opportunities to recruit and train people with disability. Many local governments have started to proactively recruit people with disability and develop accessible recruitment practices, create suitable workplaces and build organisational cultures which support all types of people.

Some local governments also assist local businesses to train and employ people with disability in order to further increase local social and economic participation. In addition, a few local governments are developing plans to create local employment in the disability sector to support the implementation of the NDIS.

This section provides information about how local governments recruit and retain people with disability and how they support other organisations to do this.

## Employ people with disability

The national survey showed that most local governments see that they have a clear role to employ people with disability but less than a third actually do. Many local governments feel there are significant barriers to employing people with disability such as:

- Low vacancy rates
- Competing pressures to employ other disadvantaged groups
- Unconscious bias in recruitment processes
- Risk aversion around occupational health and safety (especially in outdoor work)
- Perception that employing people with disability is too difficult
- Lack of knowledge about how to modify workplaces (both in outdoor and indoor work).



## CITY OF WHITTLESEA, VICTORIA – EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY (Urban Regional)

Council has a strong commitment to social and economic participation but recognised the need to employ more people with disability and reflected this as action in its current Disability Action Plan.

Council established an employment program for a young person with cerebral palsy. The trainee spent time in several areas of Council to identify the most mutually suitable role for ongoing employment. The Access Team supported staff to increase their awareness of cerebral palsy and make the necessary workplace modifications to support this employee.

The trainee is now employed permanently in the Records Management Team and is reportedly one of the most productive staff members. Buoyed by this, Council is now investigating expanding this program in its new Disability Action Plan.

See also: [Creating employment opportunities for people with a disability](http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/ageing-disability/disability/relateddocuments/Creating%20employment%20opportunities%20for%20people%20with%20a%20disability.doc) ([www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/ageing-disability/disability/relateddocuments/Creating employment opportunities for people with a disability.doc](http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/ageing-disability/disability/relateddocuments/Creating employment opportunities for people with a disability.doc))



## WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – TARGETED EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES (Urban Regional)

Council embraces workforce diversity as a point of strength and is committed to creating a culture that fosters fair and inclusive behaviours, and promotes a workplace that reflects the diversity of the community. These principles are applied to all their recruitment strategies and programs.

The Learning Pathways program specifically engages schools and community service providers to create opportunities to attract and recruit people with diverse backgrounds, including people with disability. Each year this has resulted in numerous placements beyond targeted opportunities.



## BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – SETTING WORKFORCE TARGETS (Capital City)

Council is the largest local government in Australia and with more than 8,000 employees is one of the largest employers in South-East Queensland.

Council has a strong commitment to workforce diversity and to becoming a disability-aware organisation. Its Access and Inclusion Plan has a disability workforce target of 10% to reflect a similar percentage in the community. The Access and Inclusion Team actively support areas of Council to create a workplace environment which is supportive of people with disability, such as providing advice to other divisions on workplace modifications and how to work productively with colleagues with disability.

To help meet the 10% target, Council has partnered with WorkForce Australia, Vision Australia and the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service to assist with the recruitment of employees with disability. Council also advertises internal Band 2-4 roles to applicants with disability and shortlists at least one candidate with disability if the selection criteria are met. Council also has a Reasonable Adjustments Policy which outlines processes for modifying workplaces to accommodate specific access requirements.

Council has also formed partnerships with South-East Queensland universities to offer work experience placements for students with disability as part

of their degrees. The partnerships provide students with valuable work experience and potential pathways to future employment in Council. Council often takes on the students as full-time employees at the end of their degrees.

The Council disability workforce target is now at 6.5%, and with changes in recruitment policies this is expected to improve over time.



## WUJAL WUJAL ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL, QUEENSLAND – COMMITTING AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO EMPLOY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY (Rural and Remote)

Wujal Wujal has high levels of unemployment and approximately 15% of the community has disability. Council is overwhelmingly the largest local employer and has committed to progressive targets to ensure that its workforce is representative of the community. This includes a 5% initial target for the number of employees with disability employed, with incremental annual increases towards 15%.

To achieve this, Council has assessed the capability requirements of current roles against the capabilities of people with disability in the community to

identify opportunities for employment. This has led to proactively targeting community members with disability for vacant roles. For example, Council targeted a community member with physical disability to fill the vacant community radio presenter position. Council has also committed to diversifying its roles to create new opportunities for people with disability and recently appointed a number of community Elders, including some with disability, as cultural mentors for staff.

## Support local businesses to employ people with disability

Local businesses are often unsure of how to modify their workplaces for people with disability and are also unaware of available support to make their workplaces more accessible. For example, businesses with more than 100 employees can access the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) program funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. NDCO Officers help people with disability access training and subsequent employment at no cost to the employer.

In addition, there are opportunities for more local governments to directly support local businesses and community organisations to employ people with disability to increase their economic participation in the local community.



### CITY OF PLAYFORD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – POSITIVE FUTURES EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING EXPO (Urban Fringe)

The City is growing but has both a high unemployment rate and a higher than average proportion of residents with disabilities and mental health issues. The City delivers an annual Positive Futures Employment, Education and Training Expo to provide information to individuals, families and members of the community about education, training services and resources for people with a mental health issue or disability. The event supports people with disability to:

- Understand career pathways and hear the stories of others
- Discover their strengths and weaknesses
- Connect with local employers, disability employment services and other NGOs to find training and employment opportunities

See: Positive Futures ([www.playford.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=1839](http://www.playford.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=1839))



## PENRITH CITY COUNCIL, NEW SOUTH WALES – NEPEAN JOBS FOR ALL PROJECT (Urban Fringe)

Council formed a partnership with the neighbouring Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury City Councils to collaborate with the Australian Network on Disability, the New South Wales and local Business Chambers, the Penrith CBD Corporation and Disability Employment Service providers. The aim is to deliver a community awareness and capacity building initiative with large employers and small business in the Nepean local area.

The Nepean Jobs For All project aims to promote the employment of people with disability to local business leaders and employers. Businesses will be invited to participate in the Jobs For All network providing access to information, training and resources both online and in events which aim to inspire, persuade and engage participants. Practical ongoing mentoring support and professional networking will be provided throughout the duration of the project.

A communications and marketing strategy will be rolled-out to support the establishment of the Nepean Jobs For All network which will provide local businesses with the resources, policies and practices to support employees with disability.

## Support employment in the disability sector

The implementation of the NDIS may potentially contribute to local or regional economic development through either the creation of employment opportunities in the disability sector or the increase of people with disability, their families and carers accessing local businesses.

Although most local governments do not intend to register as NDIS service providers, they can support the establishment of local disability services.



## CITY OF PLAYFORD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – CAPITALISING ON THE NDIS (Urban Fringe)

The City of Playford is currently regenerating the local economy following a significant decline in the manufacturing industry as Holden prepares to cease manufacturing cars in Australia; the City has an ambitious plan to establish the city centre as Greater Adelaide's second CBD. Council sees the NDIS as central to the economic regeneration of the city.

The NDIS is expected to create more than 6,000 jobs in South Australia, with up to 1,700 of these in the Northern Region of Adelaide. The NDIS will be implemented in Northern Adelaide in July 2017 and Council sees this as an opportunity to grow its own workforce. To enable this, Council has registered as an NDIS provider, one of the few local

governments in Australia to do so.

Council recently endorsed the NDIS part of their economic revitalisation strategy (although the specific actions have not been finalised), recognising the potential the NDIS presents for local economic growth.

built an accessible sea pool, which includes a ramp and portable hoist.

Council has also successfully worked with several hotels to increase the number of accessible rooms available by widening doors and installing fully accessible bathrooms.

Those local governments who deliver more inclusive, accessible communities also activate local and regional economic opportunities outside the disability sector, such as through tourism.



### DISTRICT COUNCIL OF THE COPPER COAST, SOUTH AUSTRALIA – ACCESSIBLE TOURISM (Rural and Remote)

Two of the district's main towns are located on the coast, and the area attracts a significant number of tourists per year, many of whom are retirees with various mobility issues. Tourism is a key and growing industry in the district and delivers much-needed revenue to local economy.

Council has implemented several initiatives to increase access for people with disability, including the provision of beach wheelchairs at both ends of the two main beaches, and has



## The checklist to increase social and economic participation

ELEMENT - Boost local employment		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Employ people with disability	Set targets to employ people with disability which are reflective of the general community	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Plan to employ people with disability as part of workforce planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Proactively look for opportunities to recruit people with disability into the right roles	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Identify and reduce barriers which might exist, such as workplace adjustments, unconscious bias and OHS issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support local businesses to employ people with disability	Connect local businesses, employment agencies and training organisations to support people with disability to find work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support employment in the disability sector	Consider the potential impact of the NDIS on the community and on existing service providers and develop a response to ensure people with disability remain supported	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consider related industry sectors, such as tourism, aged care, ancillary health services and education and how council might respond to people with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Where to from here?

Local governments currently respond to social and economic participation in different ways, influenced by a range of factors, such as community need, legislation, location, capacity and capability. Some local governments undertake many actions to successfully deliver all of the elements in the place-based framework, whilst some undertake a narrower range of actions for one or more of the elements.

The place-based framework (and associated checklist) is built on research about what local governments currently do. It is not meant to be prescriptive but aims to help local governments identify opportunities, based on the experiences of others, to increase social and economic participation of people with disability and create vibrant, inclusive, sustainable local communities.

Some of the elements can be considered foundational, such as engaging people with disability about their needs and planning and setting targets for access and inclusion. Other elements may need incremental change over time to deliver, such as building capability and capacity and boosting local employment.

It is clear that achieving outcomes for the social and economic participation of people with disability is more effective where resources are specifically allocated for this purpose. However, as many local governments have significant resource constraints (in terms of limited discretionary funding or limited revenue bases) there will be challenges dedicating staff, time and money to deliver and maintain momentum. Building collaborative networks and partnerships within and outside local government to share ideas, resources and expertise may help to support and build on existing actions and jointly deliver new initiatives to support inclusion.

Critically, just having a disability action plan is not enough, although it is a vital starting point. The plan needs to be supported, its actions prioritised, enabled and resourced with outcomes for the community measured over time.

## Appendix A: Details of the local governments used as examples

Local government	State	Details and operating context
Penrith City Council	NSW	Penrith City Council is a large urban fringe council in Western Sydney with a rapidly growing population and substantial new development
Wollongong City Council	NSW	Wollongong City Council is a large urban regional council with a growing population and is both a business precinct and a visitor destination
City of Wagga Wagga	NSW	City of Wagga Wagga is a large urban regional council with low population growth and an ageing population. Wagga Wagga has a large health care and social assistance industry and provides health and disability services to residents from neighbouring local government areas
Tweed Shire Council	NSW	Tweed Shire Council is a large remote/rural council with a growing population, including growing youth and work ageing populations. Tweed is also a visitor destination
Coonamble Shire Council	NSW	Coonamble Shire Council is a small remote/rural council with a stable but slightly declining population and ageing population. Residents often have to travel for health and disability supports, with the majority of health and disability services located in the nearest regional centre (Dubbo)
Inner West Council	NSW	Inner West Council is a large urban developed council in the inner west region of Sydney. The Council was formed in 2016 from the amalgamation of the Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils
Central Coast Council	NSW	Central Coast Council is an urban fringe council formed from the amalgamation of Gosford City and Wyong Shire Councils. The area has an established service system and growing population, primarily due to migration from Sydney
City of Melbourne	Vic	Melbourne City Council is an urban capital city council and has the fastest growing population of all urban capital cities in Australia. Melbourne has a large business precinct and is a visitor destination

Local government	State	Details and operating context
City of Whittlesea	Vic	City of Whittlesea is an urban fringe council located in Melbourne's north. The City is experiencing rapid population growth and substantial new development. Whittlesea has a higher proportion of people with disability (compared to the Victorian state average)
Maroondah City Council	Vic	Maroondah City Council is an urban development large/very large council with a high proportion of residents identified as having a disability and has an increasing older population
Warrnambool City Council	Vic	Warrnambool City Council is a small urban regional council with a growing population and a growing number of older residents and residents with disability
Mount Alexander Shire Council	Vic	Mount Alexander Shire Council is a small rural/remote council with residents spread across a number of townships. Mount Alexander has steady population growth and an ageing population
Bass Coast Council	Vic	Bass Coast Shire Council is an urban fringe council with a growing population. Bass Coast has a large coastline and rural areas and is a visitor destination. Bass Coast also has a higher proportion of people with a disability (compared to Victorian state average)
Brisbane City Council	Qld	Brisbane City Council is an urban capital city and has the largest population of any local government area in Australia. Brisbane has a large business precinct and is a visitor destination
Toowoomba Regional Council	Qld	Toowoomba Regional Council is an urban regional council with a growing population and was formed in 2008 as an amalgamation of eight councils. Toowoomba has a high proportion of residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and also has an ageing population
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council	Qld	Wujal Wujal is a small remote Aboriginal Council on Cape York with an estimated population of 650, of which 15% have disability. The Council is the main provider of disability, aged care and community health services to the community
City of Adelaide	SA	City of Adelaide is an urban capital city council with a growing population. Adelaide has a large business precinct and is a visitor destination

Local government	State	Details and operating context
City of Playford	SA	The City of Playford is a large and growing urban fringe council. Playford has a higher than average percentage of residents who need assistance with core activities despite having a younger age profile than the rest of Greater Adelaide
Campbelltown City Council	SA	Campbelltown City Council is an urban development small/medium council located approximately nine km from the Adelaide CBD. Campbelltown has low population growth and an increasingly older population
District Council of the Copper Coast	SA	District Council of the Copper Coast is a rural/remote council with low population growth and is a visitor destination. The area has an increasingly ageing population largely due to an influx of retirees
City of Hobart	Tas	The City of Hobart is an urban capital city with low population growth and has a business precinct and is growing as a visitor destination
Glenorchy City Council	Tas	Glenorchy City Council is an urban fringe council and has an increasing older population
Break O'Day Council	Tas	Break O'Day Council is a small rural/remote council with a small population spread across several small towns and rural properties. A high proportion of residents require some form of assistance with every day activities, and the council has an increasingly older population

# Appendix B: A checklist to increase social and economic participation

ELEMENT - Engage people with disability about their need		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Enable access to information	Make websites comply with accessibility standards	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Create online and hard copy documents in accessible formats	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Train staff to develop accessible material	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide access maps and guides (web based or app based)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify and engage with people	Identify people with disability in the community and their needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Establish a disability advisory committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Create other ways to engage more broadly with the community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Empower people in decision-making	Actively empower people with disability to make decisions about specific issues which affect them and issues more broadly in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>
ELEMENT - Plan, implement and measure outcomes		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Set targets	Establish baseline measures for social and economic participation and set targets based on community need	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Develop data collection methods to evaluate the actions delivered and outcomes for the community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop and integrate action plans	Develop robust, implementable plans with priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consider regional action planning if appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Set review periods for the action plan to monitor progress and consider changes required	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Plan for disability inclusion more broadly as part of ageing, health, housing and infrastructure development	<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Deliver accessible infrastructure	Develop local standards and codes which go beyond compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Plan for universal access infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Conduct regular infrastructure and building audits with people with disability to identify areas for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Conduct site visits with decision-makers to provide a lived experience of the issue	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver sufficient, accessible disabled parking	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Attract visitors and residents by creating specific attractions with universal access	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deliver programs and facilitate actions to programs	Deliver universal access programs and events	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver specific programs for people with disability, their families and carers	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Support other organisations to deliver programs, for example, with accessibility checklists for events	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measure outcomes	Develop a framework to critically assess and evaluate activities, outputs and outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Report on outcomes to the community	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ELEMENT - Build capability and capacity</b>		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Drive strong leadership	Identify champions at the elected member level	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Include elected members and senior staff on disability advisory committees	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Build leadership for accessibility and inclusion into performance management	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Assess how and whether a culture for disability exists within council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Build staff capacity	Ensure staff understand their legal obligations under the Building Code of Australia and the Disability Discrimination Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Develop a range of induction and ongoing training programs for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Allocate resources	Prioritise essential change to increase social and economic participation and resource the change needed Identify the 'owner' for disability access and inclusion within council Provide resources for teams of dedicated staff and/or work across council/council portfolios to deliver outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Source grant funding	Proactively identify relevant sources of funding (for disability specific or universal projects) from Australian, state, and territory governments and other organisations Work as a council or with other organisations and people with disability to develop grant applications based on need	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ELEMENT - Build collaborative networks and partnerships		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Build strong networks	Identify key stakeholders to deliver outcomes for people with disability Actively build networks and partnerships around common goals so they are already in existence when required Set key aims and goals with collaborators	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Partner with state government	Establish and actively maintain key partnerships with state and territory government department Regularly communicate to support capacity building and infrastructure development (state and local government funded)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborate with NGOs	Where a service or program is needed, but cannot be delivered by council, identify providers who can Directly fund NGOs where necessary or where it is more efficient to do so Promote services and programs offered by NGOs in an accessible format Provide community grants to deliver programs	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

ELEMENT - Advocate within and outside the sector		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Advocate in planning and development	Work with private developers to influence them to go beyond compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Advocate to state and territory government during the design and planning processes for large infrastructure projects	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Build the capacity of people with disability to advocate on issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase local business capacity	Develop guidelines for local businesses to help them meet resident and visitor needs and boost their business	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Train local businesses on how to support and respond to people with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Promote accessible businesses to residents and visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide grant funding to make businesses more accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>
ELEMENT - Boost local employment		
ACTION	HOW TO DELIVER	DONE / TO DO
Employ people with disability	Set targets to employ people with disability which are reflective of the general community	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Plan to employ people with disability as part of workforce planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Proactively look for opportunities to recruit people with disability into the right roles	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Identify and reduce barriers which might exist, such as workplace adjustments, unconscious bias and OHS issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support local businesses to employ people with disability	Connect local businesses, employment agencies and training organisations to support people with disability to find work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support employment in the disability sector	Consider the potential impact of the NDIS on the community and on existing service providers and develop a response to ensure people with disability remain supported	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Consider related industry sectors such as tourism, aged care, ancillary health services and education and how council might respond to people with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>





**Institute for Public Policy and Governance**

University of Technology Sydney

15 Broadway, Ultimo

PO Box 123

Broadway NSW 2007

Australia

+61 2 9514 7884

[ippg@uts.edu.au](mailto:ippg@uts.edu.au)

[ippg.uts.edu.au](http://ippg.uts.edu.au)