Art Works

Employment In The Arts For People With Disability: Current Status, Barriers And Strategies

A RESEARCH REPORT
Art Works

Employment In The Arts For People With Disability: Current Status, Barriers And Strategies

A RESEARCH REPORT
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

2 Literature review: policies, strategies and evidence

2.1 General employment for people with disability in Australia

2.1.1 Policy and strategy: key government papers
2.1.2 Current evidence: labour participation for people with disability
2.1.3 Barriers and issues

2.2 Arts sector employment for people with disability in Australia

2.2.1 Policy and strategy: key government papers
2.2.2 Current evidence: labour participation in the arts sector for people with disability
2.2.3 Barriers and issues

3 About the surveys

3.1 Development of surveys
3.2 Distribution and communication strategy
3.3 Response rates

4 Key findings

5 Recommendations and policy implications

5.1 National mental health and disability employment strategy
5.2 National arts and disability strategy

6 Full survey results

6.1 Arts and cultural organisations
6.1.1 Barriers and strategies

6.2 People with disability
6.2.1 Barriers and strategies

6.3 Disability employment services
6.3.1 Barriers and strategies

References
A lack of inclusive and accessible employment and leadership opportunities are some of the most significant barriers remaining for people with disability to be able to engage fully and equally in Australian society.

We believe, however, that the arts and cultural sector has the potential to lead the way in the area of inclusive employment practices for people with disability. This is why Arts Access Australia was thrilled to partner with DADAA Inc on this ground-breaking research into the current status, barriers and strategies for employment in the arts for people with disability.

Employment was identified as one of the key priority areas of the National Arts and Disability Strategy (2009), as well as through a number of national consultations run by Arts Access Australia over the past five years.

The research aimed to set the benchmark for arts sector employment for people with disability so that we can continue to map our progress in this area for years to come, as well as provide practical data, recommendations and case studies in order to be able to act as a resource for the Australian arts and cultural sector.

We’re not surprised by the results that demonstrate that people with disability still face barriers to employment. Nor are we surprised that many arts and cultural organisations already seem to be demonstrating good practice in this area. But there’s a lot of work that still needs to be done to harness the creative and professional capacity of our entire workforce.

Arts Access Australia looks forward to working with colleagues and partners across Australia to continue to demonstrate and grow the sector’s commitment to access and inclusion at all levels. We will collaborate with both disability employment services and with arts and cultural organisations to promote the arts as a viable career path for artists with disability.

We also hope to seek additional funding to enable ongoing benchmarking of the levels of, and attitudes towards, employment of people with disability in the arts and cultural sector.

Emma Bennison
CEO, Arts Access Australia
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report captures the results from national research into employment levels, barriers and strategies around employment in the arts for people with disability.

Produced in response to a key focus area of the National Arts and Disability Strategy, the research was funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport, managed by Arts Access Australia and undertaken by DADAA Inc.

A review of existing literature looked at research and reports into general employment and arts-specific employment for people with disability. The review showed low employment levels for people with disability, including in the arts.

Online surveys were then developed and sent to three key groups: arts and cultural organisations (238 responses); artists and arts workers with disability (141 responses); and disability employment services (51 responses).

Key findings

Arts and cultural organisations are well-placed to be inclusive employers.

However, despite significant interest from people with disability wanting to work in the arts, and despite significant levels of unpaid or volunteer activity, actual employment levels are low.

Nearly 60% of all arts and cultural organisations do not currently employ (or do not know if they employ) a person with disability.

More people with disability participate on committees and boards of arts organisations than as employees or artists.

Less than 40% of arts and cultural organisations have a current Disability Action Plan in place.

Just over 50% of people with disability working in the arts are self-employed.

Just over 50% of people with disability working in the arts work part-time.

Significant barriers remain for people with disability, including employer concerns around additional resourcing and widespread discrimination against people with disability.

The biggest barriers for people with disability working in the arts are:

- Limited job opportunities in the arts for people with and without disability
- Disability support services not promoting a career in the arts for people with disability
- Discrimination.
Key strategies suggested to improve employment opportunities include:

- Increased graduate traineeships
- Mentorship programs
- Sector-wide disability awareness training.

It is important to note that the sample is likely to have been distorted in favour of respondents with a prior interest in this area, and that the real statistics are probably much lower.
1 INTRODUCTION

In the lead-up to and following the introduction of the National Arts and Disability Strategy (NADS), Arts Access Australia conducted a number of national consultations to determine key concerns. The issue of employment was high on the list across the sector, which was reflected in the NADS itself when it was released in 2009.

With the support of the Australian Government, Arts Access Australia and DADAA Inc set out to establish baseline data in this area as a starting point for measuring its future growth.

The researched aimed to obtain a current snapshot of the status of arts-related employment for people with disability in Australia by finding out more about the practices and experiences of arts and cultural organisations, of artists and arts workers with disability, and of disability services organisations. An important part of this research was determining the most prevalent barriers to gaining employment and the most viable strategies for increasing employment opportunities.

A small collection of case studies accompanies this report as a separate publication. The case studies aim to capture in more detail, personal stories behind the findings of this work – in particular, the barriers and strategies encountered by artists with disability in the development of their careers.

The research that forms the basis of this report was made possible by the Australian Government through the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport and managed by Arts Access Australia. DADAA Inc undertook the research itself and published this report.

The findings have been made widely available to artists, NGOs and government bodies, with the hope that key findings will be addressed.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW: POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND EVIDENCE

This is an overview of existing research and reports on the policies, strategies and evidence around employment for people with disability.

The review aims to provide a snapshot of the most current and relevant information available. We used it to inform the direction of further research and to help focus the survey questions for this study.

The literature review is divided into two sections: the first is a general section on national employment and disability literature; the second is a more focused section looking at employment and disability in the arts and cultural sector.

2.1 General Employment for People With Disability in Australia

2.1.1 Policy and Strategy: Key Government Papers

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognises the right of people with disability to work on an equal basis with others, stating that:

> This includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and by a work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. (United Nations General Assembly, 2007)

The vision of the Australian Government’s 2010–2020 National Disability Strategy (NDS) is for an inclusive Australian society that enables people with disability to fulfill their potential as equal citizens. It notes that:

> Work is essential to an individual’s economic security and is important to achieving social inclusion. Employment contributes to physical and mental health, personal wellbeing and a sense of identity. Income from employment increases financial independence and raises living standards. (COAG, 2011, p. 42)

The NDS is structured around six outcome areas, which include an ‘economic security’ provision to ‘increase access to employment opportunities as a key to improving economic security and personal wellbeing for people with disability’ (p. 42).

It also links to the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy objective to ‘increase the employment of people with disability, promote social inclusion and improve national economic productivity’ (DEEWR, 2009, p. 5).
In both of these strategies, future actions and strategies include:

- Improving employer awareness of the benefits of employing people with disability
- Supporting and encouraging employers
- Improving employment, recruitment and retention of people with disability in all levels of public sector employment, and in funded organisations
- Improving disability employment services
- Reducing barriers and disincentives for the employment of people with disability
- Encouraging innovative approaches to employment of people with disability such as social enterprises, or initiatives to assist people with disability to establish their own small business.
2.1.2 Current Evidence: Labour Participation for People With Disability

During the development of the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy, the following observations were made:

The message that came through loud and clear from the consultations was that people with disability want to work and participate in society. People expressed a sense of frustration about the general unwillingness of employers to engage people with disability. The overwhelming view was that a serious effort must be made to change employer attitudes and provide employers with greater encouragement and support to employ people with disability. There was a strong feeling also that Australia’s disability employment services need to be significantly improved. (DEEWR, 2009, p. 3)

The National Disability Strategy agreed that ‘the vast majority of people with disability can and do want to work and be as financially independent as possible, but employment is one critical area where Australia is lagging behind other countries’ (COAG, 2011, p. 43).

For example, in the recent report, Disability Expectations: Investing in a Better Life, a Stronger Australia, Australia ranks 21st out of 29 OECD countries in employment participation rates for those with a disability.

The report finds that: ‘People with a disability in Australia are only half (50%) as likely to be employed compared with people without a disability. In comparison, the OECD relativity is 60% and when considering the top eight OECD countries, the relativity is closer to 70%’ (PWC, 2011, p. 26).

Four million people in Australia (18.5%) reported having a disability in 2009, where disability is defined as any limitation, restriction or impairment that restricts everyday activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least six months (ABS, 2009a).

Of these, 2.2 million people were of ‘prime working age’, between 15 and 64 years with disability. Of this group, 54% were participating in the labour force, compared to 83% of people without disability. Women with disabilities were particularly affected, with a participation rate of 49%, below the 60% participation rate of males with disabilities and the 77% participation rate of females without disabilities (ABS, 2009a; ABS, 2012a).

Over the 16 years from 1993 to 2009, the unemployment rate for 15–64 year olds with disability decreased from 17.8% to 7.8%, in line with the similar decline in unemployment for those without disability (from 12.0% in 1993 to 5.1% in 2009). However, there has been a lack of progress during this time with employment participation rates staying still for all people with disability (ABS, 2009b; ABS, 2012a).

Also, people with disability who are employed are more likely to be working part-time (38%) than those without disability (31%); more likely to receive a pension
or an allowance (42.9%) and less likely to receive a wage or salary (35.2%) than a person without disability (13.6% and 62.5%, respectively) (DEEWR, 2009).
2.1.3 Barriers and Issues

In 2011, the Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) surveyed 20,000 organisations to look into employer attitudes towards people with disability.

Recruiting People with a Disability: An Employer Perspective (2011) reports that over two-thirds (68.73%) of the total respondents had recruited a candidate with disability. However, it did comment that 'it is likely that the sample is somewhat distorted in favour of respondents with a prior interest' (AHRI, 2011, p. 2).

Of the group that had not employed a person with disability:

- A little less than half (46.46%) said the issue was not on their radar
- Nearly a quarter (22.97%) believe there is a perception in their organisation that a person with disability would not perform as well as a person without disability; around a third (35.89%) were not sure on that question
- More than one in five (22.49%), believe there is a perception in their organisation that a person with disability would be high risk and potentially expensive
- Around half (49.74%) were either unsure or believed those perceptions would have some negative influence or be a main barrier in preventing the employment of a person with disability.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1993), employers are required to make reasonable adjustments to make employment opportunities accessible.

In the report Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia, more than 33% of submissions identified problems with employment.

The biggest barrier identified was employer attitudes, which ranged from discrimination to misconceptions about the cost of workplace adjustments and occupational health and safety requirements (National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009).

These findings match conclusions made in the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy that one of the greatest barriers to employment is ‘lack of awareness by employers together with the persistence of myths about the supposed costs and legal problems involved in employing people with disability’ (DEEWR, 2009, p. 8).

This is despite the evidence that workers with disability have, on average, a lower number of occupational health and safety incidents and lower workers’ compensation costs, compared with other employees. They also have lower absenteeism and higher retention rates than employees without disability (ASCC, 2007).
Other employment barriers that exist for people with disability include:

- Financial disincentives, such as earned income that can impact negatively on disability benefits and loss of health care benefits (National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009)
- Cost and/or limited access to: information in appropriate formats, training and education, equipment, interpreters, support workers, accessible transport, physical access of buildings and lack of flexibility (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009)
- Time restraints due to other pressures and responsibilities, such as childcare, household duties or ill health (ABS, 2012b)
- Discrimination due to disability (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; ABS, 2011c; ABS 2012b)
- Not enough government incentives or initiatives for employers to employ people with disability (DPCD, 2010)
- Lack of employer knowledge about disability or not ‘being on their agenda’. This includes information about the Disability Discrimination Act, knowing about or using Disability Employment Services and recruitment processes for people with disability (AHRI, 2011).
2.2 Arts Sector Employment for People With Disability in Australia

2.2.1 Policy and Strategy: Key Government Papers

In October 2009, the Cultural Ministers Council released the National Arts and Disability Strategy (NADS) to support, encourage and promote access to and participation in arts and cultural activities.

NADS addresses the rights of people with a disability to have access to, and full participation in, arts and cultural activities and acknowledges that arts and cultural participation rates for Australians with disability are lower than for the general population.

One of the focus areas of the NADS strategy is arts and cultural practice, which identified the following goals:

- To provide artists and arts and cultural workers with disability with greater access to mentoring and professional development opportunities through arts and cultural organisations and training employment, health, disability and community service networks
- To strengthen pathways into the creative sector and employment opportunities for artists and arts/cultural workers with disability by:
  - Reviewing recruitment guidelines to encourage employment and/or volunteering by people with disability as artists or arts workers
  - Providing of traineeships, including leadership and management programs
  - Identifying best practice models in employment including the provision of reasonable adjustment
  - Increasing representation in arts and cultural agencies as expert advisors on peer assessment panels and boards.

Other strategies identified to assist people with disability to find employment in the arts sector and support their professional development include (from Gill and Sandahl, 2009; DPCD, 2010):

- Mentoring programs
- Role models and case studies
- Employment quotas or benchmarks in mainstream arts organisations
- Internships, work experience, residencies and apprenticeships
- Financial assistance to develop arts practice, such as getting a grant, grant writing services or accessing training
- Resources for artists, such as guides to careers, to earning income and to receiving support
- Collaborations between disability arts and mainstream arts companies, with incentives to encourage these partnerships
- Training at senior management and board levels to develop disability access and equity.
2.2.2 Current Evidence: Labour Participation in the Arts Sector for People With Disability

The report, Picture This: Increasing the Cultural Participation of People with a Disability in Victoria talks about a ‘creative continuum’, which divides arts for people with disability into three levels and types of participation (DPCD, 2010, p. 51):

- Recreational or therapeutic participation, where the involvement in the arts is treated as a pastime, hobby or therapy and where improvement in social engagement skills and wellbeing outcomes is seen as a high priority
- Community cultural development, where skill acquisition for participation through training by paid or volunteer professional artists is a priority but where the programs have community strengthening and social inclusion outcomes as a higher or equal priority
- Career development participation, where participants undergo training and professional development in order to pursue and sustain employment in the arts at a professional level.

Recent reports from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) also include different levels of participation in the arts when looking at employment rates in cultural activities. They note that people who are employed in the cultural sector also participate in the arts for leisure, are more likely to hold multiple jobs and to go unpaid for their creative pursuits.

For example, the Survey of Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities found that, of the 3.5 million people in Australia who reported that they had worked in a culture or leisure activity in the last 12 months, only one-fifth (20%) stated that their involvement was part of their main job (ABS, 2007).

More recent data from the ABS shows that (ABS, 2012c):

- More than a quarter (27% or 4.7 million people) of the 17.7 million Australians aged 15 years and over participated in at least one cultural activity during the last 12 months
- Of the 11.5 million people who were employed, 3.1 million people (27%) participated in a cultural activity
- People employed part-time had a higher participation rate in cultural activities (32%) than those employed full-time (25%)
- Approximately 682,500 (15%) who participated in a cultural activity received some form of payment for their participation.

The Don’t Give Up your Day Job report suggested that about 10% of practicing professional artists are people with disability.

Artists with disability are more likely than non-disabled artists to have experienced some unemployment in the period between 1996 and 2001. They are also more likely to have longer periods out of work. More than half of artists with disability who have been unemployed at some time in that period have been out of work for longer than one year (Throsby and Hollister, 2003).
Responses from the Picture This consultation showed that the lack of reliable and current data on employment in the arts is a barrier itself. The report said that: ‘more reliable, current and comparable data would give a more complete picture of arts employment for people with a disability and would strengthen advocacy efforts for more government support for disability and the arts’ (DPCD, 2010, p. 6).
2.2.3 Barriers and Issues

The National Arts and Disability Strategy looks at the barriers which stop emerging and professional artists and arts workers with disability realising their ambitions (CMC, 2009, p. 7). These are identified as:

- Low incomes and additional costs for specialised equipment, accessible transport, support workers or interpreters
- Access to training and professional development opportunities
- Attitudes or lack of awareness in the arts and cultural sector, and employment, community services and disability service organisations.

Specific arts and cultural sector barriers for people with disability found during our literature review include:

- That the experience of people with disability making a living in the arts is ‘not monolithic’ (Gill and Sandahl, 2009, p. 2). This ‘universality’ of arts employment is well described in in the Picture This report:

  One of the facts that must be faced when considering how to improve employment opportunities in the arts for people with a disability is the cold, harsh reality that finding paid employment in the arts can also be very difficult for artists and arts workers without a disability. So, the issue is, to what degree are the limited arts employment opportunities for people with a disability due to the fact that a person has a disability or to the fact that the person is seeking employment in a notoriously difficult industry in which to gain paid employment. (DPCD, 2010, p. 55)

- People with disability still encounter low expectations, lack of access, and discrimination. These stereotypes about disability can pervade expectations and discourage personal disclosure of disability (Gill and Sandahl, 2009).
- Artists feeling that their work is not at a professional standard due to lack of talent, insufficient skills, education or work experience (Throsby and Hollister, 2003).
- Expectations to volunteer their work or to accept low pay. This leads to earning an insufficient income from creative work and needing to earn income elsewhere (Gill and Sandahl, 2009; ABS, 2011a).
- Systemic barriers, such as government agencies, can limit the potential for careers in the arts for people with disability (Gill and Sandahl, 2009). During the Picture This community consultation, researchers found that within Centrelink, there is a prevailing attitude that ‘the arts do not present a viable career option’ and that ‘the stereotype of art not being a viable career on the part of the employment counselors can become a significant barrier to artists gaining crucial support in establishing and continuing a creative career’ (DPCD, 2010, p. 32).
3 ABOUT THE SURVEYS

3.1 Development of Surveys

Informed by the literature review, three surveys were developed to find out the perspectives and experience of our three target groups:

- Arts and Cultural Organisations
- Artists and Arts Workers with Disability
- Disability Employment Services.

The survey was created and distributed using the online Survey Monkey tool, in order to reach the largest number of organisations and individuals across Australia.

Different ways of completing the survey in print form were provided, with contact details provided for people with disability who wished to complete the survey by telephone.

3.2 Distribution and Communication Strategy

Surveys were distributed through the peak organisations in each of our groups.

Arts and Cultural Organisations: surveys were distributed to key organisations on the Australia Council for the Arts electronic mailing list (154 contacts) and the Arts Access Australia e-news list (6,800 contacts). Recipients were asked to forward the survey link to any other arts and cultural organisations in their networks.

Artists and Arts Workers With Disability: surveys were distributed to the Arts Access Australia e-news list (6,800 contacts), of whom a large number are artists and arts workers with disability. Again, recipients were asked to forward the survey link to their networks.

Disability Employment Services (DES): surveys were distributed through the Disability Employment Australia electronic mailing list (1,300 contacts, of which 730 are from DES organisations).

Social Media: all partners and recipients were asked to post the announcement and survey links on their websites and social media pages.

3.3 Response Rates

Response rates to each of the three surveys were as follows:

- 238 Arts and Cultural Organisations
- 141 Artists and Arts Workers with Disability
- 51 Disability Employment Services.
4 KEY FINDINGS

Recruitment

- Overall, arts and cultural organisations are ‘well placed to be inclusive employers’.
- Just over 55% of arts and cultural organisations report that they actively encourage people with disability to apply for employment.
- Approximately 60% of arts and cultural organisations report that they have interviewed and appointed a person with disability for a job.

Employment of people with disability in arts and cultural organisations

- 69 out of the 202 arts and cultural organisation respondents did not employ a person with disability (34.2%).
- 48 out of the 202 arts and cultural organisation did not know if they employed a person with disability (23.8%).
- Of those organisations who were aware they employed a person with disability:
  - 34 currently employed one person with disability (16.8%)
  - 21 employed two people with disability (10.4%)
  - 8 employed three people with disability (4%).
- Some organisations chose to list unpaid volunteers and/or workshop/studio participants as ‘currently employed’.

Representation on boards, committees or peer assessment panels

- Almost one-third of the arts and cultural organisations had a person with disability on their board, committee or peer assessment panel. The remaining two-thirds did not or didn’t know.
- 15.2% of respondents with disability are on a board or committee of an arts organisation.

Access requirements

- Organisations surveyed said that the most common access requests for employees with disability are job design or workplace modifications.
- Approximately two-fifths of people with disability have no access requirements to work.
- People with disability said that their most common access requirements are job design, workplace modifications and transport.
- Just less than 40% of cultural organisations had a Disability Action Plan (DAP) or Disability Access Inclusion Plan (DAIP).
Declaring disability

- Half of the arts and cultural organisations said that they do not expect someone to declare their disability – with results showing that they prefer to know if it affects the person’s ability to do the job.
- However, people with disability reported an unwillingness to disclose their disability to potential employers.
- Some responses showed employers’ intent to ask for access requirements for potential employees, which is in line with the Australian Human Rights Commission guidelines.

Arts employment for people with disability

- Arts employment for people with disability involves a combination of working for an employer or being self-employed:
  - 55% are working for themselves and have an Australian Business Number.
  - One-third receives a wage or salary for their arts involvement or work for an employer.
- Respondents receive various forms of income or payment for their arts involvement (41.2%) and/or going unpaid (40.5%).
- Just over half work part-time.
- There is a wide range of roles that people with disability occupy in arts and cultural organisations and independently.
- Most of the arts-related work that people with disability do is a combination of ‘creative and support roles’.

Commitment to the arts and creative practice

- Most respondents have been working or volunteering in the arts on a long-term basis, reflecting the commitment to working in the arts in various forms of employment as well as in unpaid creative practice.
- Approximately one-third participate in the arts as a hobby or for recreation, and/or identify as a professional or an emerging artist.

Strategies for people with disability looking for arts employment

Overall, the preferred strategies to find arts employment by all three groups are:
- Graduate recruitment programs, internships, residencies and apprenticeships for artists with disability.
- Mentors, role models and case studies about artists with disability/people with an arts career.
- Financial assistance to develop arts practice, such as grants, accessing arts education.
- Disability awareness training and education for arts employers.
- Government incentives to promote arts employment for people with disability.
People with disability find arts employment in three main ways:

- Most look for jobs through self-promotion or get help with self-promotion from an agent, friends or support people who ‘understand the arts’.
- The second most used method is through friends or relatives.
- Networking with other artists and being visible is another important strategy used.

Volunteering can be a double-edged issue, for the following reasons:

- The second most common way of recruiting a person with disability is through a volunteer program (15.1%).
- Results indicate that 18.1–28.6% of respondents with disability volunteer for an arts organisation or arts-related work.
- As a strategy to gain paid arts employment, artists or arts workers with disability often go unpaid or volunteer to gain experience and demonstrate their abilities to potential employers.
- Disability Employment Services (DES) responses show that although it is difficult finding people with disability paid employment in the arts, some volunteer positions are available. However, there is an expectation by some potential employers that people with disability should accept employment in an unpaid capacity.

Barriers for people with disability looking for arts employment

Overall, the three groups ranked these barriers as:

- Limited job opportunities in the arts for people with and without disability.
- Disability support services not promoting a career in the arts for people with disability.
- Discrimination.
- People with disability not always recognised as having artistic talent.

Feedback that support these barriers include:

- Arts and cultural organisations feeling under-resourced to employ people with disability.
- The unwillingness to disclose disability to potential employers for fear of negative attitudes or missing out on work. Others feel that they are stereotyped or need to overcompensate because of disability.
- Although some arts and cultural organisations use DES to recruit a person with disability (11.6%), it is the lowest ranked strategy used by people with disability to find a job.
- People with disability report a lack of success finding arts employment using Disability Employment Networks (DEN) or DES. Some feel that these services do not understand or consider a job in the arts for people with disability and, in some cases, are discriminatory.
- Only 6% of respondents with disability are registered with government employment services, including a DEN.
- DES staff identified limited job opportunities, competitiveness and systemic barriers, such as benchmarks and work-hour restrictions, to finding people with disability arts employment.
Disability Employment Services (DES)

- One of the limitations of our research is the small sample of respondents from DES.
- Of the 50 DES organisations that responded to our survey:
  - Only 8 were able to give feedback about their experience working with arts and cultural organisations.
  - Only 6 could confirm that they did assist in finding a job for a person with disability in an arts and cultural sector job.
5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy (2009)

Results from our research suggest that the following strategies identified in the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy are also relevant in generating more arts employment opportunities for people with disability. These include:

**Action 2: Improving disability employment services**

- Establishing and strengthening relationships between disability employment services and other services, including arts and cultural organisations
- Developing the skills of disability employment staff, to be able to encourage people with disability to have a career in the arts
- Ensuring people with disability have access to the right service and have choices to find arts employment
- Address systemic barriers, such as benchmarks and work hour restrictions.

**Action 4: Supporting and encouraging employers**

- Ensuring that arts and cultural employers are aware of the services, support and incentives available to them, so that they feel they have the capacity to pay and employ people with disability
- Building greater confidence and leadership among employers about disability issues, particularly in the areas of recruitment, disclosure of disability and discrimination. This can be achieved by disability awareness training and education to arts employers
- Encouraging mentoring and training for employees and employers including the promotion of Disability Action Plans.

**Action 5: Improving public sector employment of people with disability to address the limited job opportunities available in the arts and cultural sector**

- A formal government commitment to increasing the employment and retention rate of people with disability in the public service, with a preference for government incentives, rather than quotas
- Developing consistent and fair recruitment practices, that address access requirements and discrimination
- Continuing improvement to the accessibility of work premises and facilities
- Improving awareness of the services and support available to existing employees with disability.
Action 6: Pursuing innovative strategies

- Encouraging innovative approaches to employment of people with disability such as social enterprises, or initiatives to assist people with disability to establish their own small business. (Results from this research demonstrate that over half of our respondents are self-employed and have an Australian Business Number).
5.2 National Arts and Disability Strategy (2010)

The strategies in the National Arts and Disability Strategy (NADS) align with the principles and action areas identified in the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy. Results from our research are highly relevant to two goals from the focus area ‘arts and cultural practice’, as described below:

**Goal 3: Artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability have greater access to mentoring and professional development opportunities**

- This goal is in line with our research revealing that mentorships, internships, residencies and financial assistance to develop arts practice were identified as the top three strategies in creating opportunities for arts employment.

**Goal 4: Strengthen pathways into the creative sector and employment opportunities for artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability**

We recommend greater emphasis be placed on effective pathways for creating arts employment opportunities, in the following ways:

- For arts and cultural organisations, consistent recruitment processes and a greater commitment to Disability Action Plans
- For Disability Employment Services, learning how to promote a career in the arts and to restore the confidence of artists with disability to use the support available
- Addressing the notion by some employers that people with disability volunteering or working in an unpaid capacity are ‘employed’
- Supporting the methods that artists with disability suggested to finding arts employment: getting help with self-promotion, networking and volunteering.

Results from our research are also highly relevant to two priority projects areas from the NADS, listed below.

**Priority Project 2: Disability Action Plans**

We recommend that arts and cultural organisations are educated and supported to develop a Disability Action Plan (DAP) or Disability Action Inclusion Plan (DAIP) tailored to where the organisation is at and aimed at improving arts employment opportunities for people with disability. For example, reviewing recruitment processes, increasing their knowledge of the support available for organisations employing people with disability or increasing disability awareness training for staff.

**Priority Project 4: National research and data**

Our literature review illustrates the work that the Australian Bureau of Statistics has done so far to improve data collection of arts and cultural employment in the general population. Our survey results demonstrate that the complexity of
collecting data about employment in the arts is no different for people with
disability. This report offers more complete data about arts employment for
people with disability and contributes to developing more reliable and
comparable data collection in the future.
6 FULL SURVEY RESULTS

Because we sent out three different surveys, with about 16 questions each, we received a long list of results.

In this section, we will present the full data for each individual question for each group: arts and cultural organisations; artists and arts workers with disability; and disability employment services.

Analysis of qualitative data from the open questions and comments throughout the survey involved open coding to identify concepts and then axial coding to create categories. Selected quotes have been used to illustrate themes and results.

It is important to note that the sample is likely to have been distorted in favour of respondents with a prior interest in this area, and that the real statistics are probably much lower.
6.1 ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

Almost two-thirds (64.2%) of the arts and cultural organisations that took part in our survey are from not-for-profit organisations (149), followed by just under one-third (30.6%) in the public sector (71) and only 5.2% in the private sector (12).

What is your organisation type?

- Public sector 30.6% (71)
- Private sector 5.2% (12)
- Not-for-profit 64.2% (149)
236 organisations that answered the question: What is the best description of the cultural industry you work in?

- Almost three-quarters work in the core arts, such as music, performing arts, literature and visual arts for education, collections or performances (72%)
- Over two-thirds work in community and cultural development, where arts development, community strengthening and social inclusion are key outcomes (35%)
- Some organisations work in more than one of the four areas, which also included creative industries (such as film, TV and design) and heritage (such as Indigenous culture).
The surveyed arts and cultural organisations are involved in and across a broad range of art sectors and art forms.

The largest group was involved in theatre (41.9%), followed by visual arts (39.8%), music (30%) and/or festivals and events (27.5%).
Three-fifths of organisations (61.3%) are aware that they have interviewed people with disability for a job and/or have appointed a person with disability (60.8%)

Up to one-fifth of organisations ‘Don’t know’ if they interviewed (21.2%) or appointed (16.7%) a person with disability.

As far as you are aware, has your organisation ever interviewed a person with disability for a job?

- Yes 61.3% (136)
- No 17.6% (39)
- Don’t know 21.2% (47)
As far as you are aware, has your organisation ever appointed a person with disability?

- Yes 55.4% (123)
- No 29.3% (65)
- Don't know 15.3% (34)
Over half (55.4%) of the arts and cultural organisations surveyed actively encourage people with disability to apply for employment.

As far as you are aware, does your organisation actively encourage people with disability to apply?

- Yes 55.4% (123)
- No 29.3% (65)
- Don't know 15.3% (34)
204 organisations responded to the question: Do you expect an applicant/potential employee with a hidden impairment to declare their disability?

- One-third answered ‘Yes’ to this question
- Half the respondents answered ‘No’
- Almost one-fifth was undecided.

**Do you expect an applicant / potential employee with a hidden impairment to declare their disability?**

- Yes 33.3% (68)
- No 50% (102)
- Don’t know 16.7% (34)

Most comments came from this survey question, suggesting that employers prefer to know whether the person has an impairment and if it affects their ability to do the tasks required for the job:

As long as it doesn’t affect their work performance.
Only if it affects their ability to perform their work.
If it were to have some impact on the ability to perform the tasks required.
If the hidden impairment is likely to significantly compromise the applicant’s capacity to carry out the role, I would expect to be alerted to this.
It would depend on whether it was likely to affect their job performance.
As it may impact upon their ability to perform in the role, but they do not have to by law declare. So much depends on the level to which a person's disability undermines their capacity to carry out the role.

Other comments were related to employers being able to provide support and access for their employees:

Only if they require specific support to do the job. After being appointed but before commencing, and only if we would need to make changes to their work environment prior to them commencing employment. Expect it declared when they start work, but not in the selection process. We actively ask if people have requirements to attend the interview(s) and also ask in inductions if they have requirements for their workspace. Support mechanisms are offered to all applicants/potential employees regardless of declaration of disability. Unless they want to tell us about access needs.

These comments are in line with recommendations from the Australian Human Rights Commission that an employer may ask questions about a person's disability but within the legitimate guidelines to determine whether a person can perform inherent job requirements and identify any reasonable adjustments required, in selection for employment or in the performance of work (AHRC, 2012).

Some responses to this question showed that arts and cultural organisations don’t feel they have the capacity to employ (and pay) people with disability due to being under resourced, not being adequately compensated or having incentives. Many of the responses seem to assume that people with disability would not be capable of fully undertaking the requirements of a role:

As a small organisation, we need all hands on deck all the time. Without subsidy, we would not have the resources to carry any team member who was not able to fully meet the demands of the job.

I feel the poor arts industry fears access and inclusion as everyone has too much work to do and may have concerns about extra workload.

By financial necessity, our focus with recruitment is upon finding the most capable person for the job.
Of the 204 cultural organisations who responded to whether they had a Disability Action Plan (DAP) or Disability Access Inclusion Plan (DAIP), only two-fifths were aware that they did have one.

**Does your organisation have a Disability Action Plan (DAP) or a Disability Access Inclusion Plan (DAIP)?**

- **Yes 39.7% (81)**
- **No 43.1% (88)**
- **Don’t know 14.7% (30)**
- **What is a DAP or DAIP? 2.5% (5)**

However, many organisations had DAIPs/DAPS in draft or in progress:

- This is in the process of being drafted.
- In draft at the moment.
- Aiming to have one in place during 2012.
- Currently in development.
- We are currently in the process of developing one.
- But we are working on a DAP.
- We are in the process of trying to develop this.
Almost one-third of the arts and cultural organisations respondents (31.4%) are aware that they have people with disability on their boards, committees or peer assessment panels. The remaining two-thirds do not (48%) or 'Don't know' (20.6%).

**Does your organisation have a person/s with disability on your Board, Committees or Peer Assessment Panel?**

Of the arts and cultural organisations that respondents answered the question: How many people with disability (that you are aware of) does your organisation currently employ?

- 69 out of the 202 arts and cultural organisation respondents did not employ a person with disability (34.2%)
- 48 out of the 202 arts and cultural organisation did not know if they employed a person with disability (23.8%).
- Of those organisations who were aware they employed a person with disability:
34 currently employed one person with disability (16.8%)
21 employed two people with disability (10.4%)
Eight employed three people with disability (4%).

How many people with disability (that you are aware of) does your organisation currently employ?
It was clear from the comments that some organisations chose to include unpaid volunteers and/or workshop/studio participants:

We have volunteers with disabilities.
We are all volunteers but working none the less.
Ours are volunteers not employees.
Additionally, we have 31 people who attend workshops and sell their artwork or receive payment for work performed.
12–15 in the art studio.
We have several volunteers with disabilities and two have moved from volunteering to employment.
Of the 86 arts and cultural organisations that have recruited a person with disability, most people were recruited through an open application, that is, where the person applied independently (72.1%).

The next most common ways of recruiting a person with disability are through volunteer programs (15.1%) and/or an open disability employment service (11.6%).

Through which mechanism did your organisation recruit the person/s with disability?
Access requirements for people with disability working for respondent organisations were varied, with job design (41.8%), workplace modifications (38%) and equipment (22.8%) the most common.

**Which access requirements have you provided for people with disability working for your organisation?**

- Training and support for manager 17.7% (14)
- Training and support for other staff 21.5% (17)
- No access requirements 24.1% (19)
- Transport 16.5% (13)
- Job redesign (such as flexibility, working at home, modifying job tasks or job sharing) 41.8% (33)
- Specific training and support for self 22.8% (18)
- Workplace modifications (such as physical access, lighting, computer / desk set up, noise reduction) 38% (30)
- Equipment (such TTY, modified computer / keyboards, hoist, ramp) 22.8% (18)
- Information in alternative formats 16.5% (13)
- Interpreters / communication support 21.5% (17)
- Support worker (to get ready for work / to get to work / at work) 13.9% (11)
Most of the work that people with disability do within the arts and cultural organisations are:

- A combination of ‘creative and support roles’ (39.3%) or a ‘support role in arts-related work’ that may include teaching, arts administration, policy, marketing, advocacy, management, writing about the arts or working as an arts worker (31%)
- In addition to ‘creative practice’ itself, related activities may include rehearsals, practice, preparation and research (15.5%).

In general, which statement best describes the activities that people with disability do in your organisation?

- Most of the work is ‘creative practice’ that may include creating art, rehearsals, practice, preparation and research 15.5% (13)
- Most of the work is a ‘support role in arts-related work’ that may include teaching, arts administration, policy, marketing, advocacy and management, writing about the arts or arts workers. 31% (26)
- Combination of creative and support roles 39.3% (33)
- Other (please specify) 14.3% (12)
There are a wide range of roles that people with disability do in art and cultural organisations, determined from responses to the question: What is your current job? They are listed below within the two activity categories of ‘Creative practice’ and ‘Support role in arts related activities’.

**Creative practice**

- Artist
- Craftsperson, Photographer, Visual Artist
- Actors, Performing Artist, Ensemble Member, Performers
- Musician, Composer
- Theatre Director, Director, Senior Producer
- Theatre Technician
- Web Designer, Digital Artists
- Editor, Creative Writer, Poet, Playwright
- Designer, Graphic Designer
- Curator, Exhibition Manager
- Artistic Director

**Support role in arts related activities**

- Mentor, Teacher, Visual Arts Teacher
- Dance Tutor, Tutor Assistant, Arts Teacher Assistant, Arts Facilitator
- Arts Worker, Community Arts Worker, Community Arts and Cultural Workshop Leaders
- Workshop Support Worker, Workshop Facilitator/Assistant
- CEO, Operations manager, Manager, Executive officer, Human Resources, Finance Officer, Policy Executive, Project Manager, Director, Senior Management
- Archivist, Records, Bookkeeper
- Administration assistant, General Administration, Arts Administrator, Arts Administration, Administration Researcher, Administration Support
- Cleaning and maintenance supervisor, Cleaner
- Gallery Officer, Front of House, Usher, Visitor Service Officer, Customer service, Reception Worker
- Marketing, Digital Marketing, Public Relations
- Information and Marketing Professional
- Volunteer, Internships
- Board Member, Advisor, Advisory Panel
- Arts Access Officer
- Workshop Support Worker, Respite Worker, Advocacy Worker, Residential Support Worker
6.1.1 BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES

To determine priority barriers and strategies around arts employment for people with disability, we used a five-point rating scale to calculate an average importance rating out of five for each statement.

Our survey asked arts and cultural organisations to: Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with several statements about barriers for people with disability looking for arts employment.

The responses show the average agreement rating ranked from the highest (5) to lowest (1):

- Arts and cultural organisations are well placed to be inclusive employers (3.9)
- There are limited job opportunities in the arts for people with and without disability (3.67)
- Disability support services do not promote a career in the arts for people with disability (3.18)
- Lack of access in the workplace is the greatest barrier for people with disability working in the arts (3.16)
- Discrimination is the greatest barrier for people with disability working in the arts (3.13)
- People with disability are not always recognised as having artistic talent (3.03)
- Employing a person with disability is not on arts organisations’ agenda (2.77)
- It is too expensive to employ a person with disability due to the additional costs, such as insurance and workplace modifications (2.41).

It was clear that arts and cultural organisations feel under resourced to employ people with disability:

I think most arts organisations would happily engage a disabled person…where any additional time and costs involved are recognised and compensated.

Once again small and under resourced arts companies have little financial or human resources as it is – any additional quotas, benchmarks or requirements imposed on them would need to be carefully resourced.

Arts organisations are already under considerable pressure to address disability and other government priorities.

Most arts organisations are from a ‘grass roots’ model by people volunteering their time…funding is extremely limited and scarce…they simply can not afford to do this on their own. There needs to be funding to assist with the employee’s needs.
The survey asked arts and cultural organisations to tell us how important they thought different strategies were to helping people with disability find arts employment.

The responses show the average agreement rating ranked from the highest to lowest:

- Mentors, role models and case studies about artists with disability/people with an arts career (4.14)
- Graduate recruitment programs, internships, residencies and apprenticeships for artists with disability (4.14)
- Disability awareness training and education for arts employers (4.10)
- Government incentives to promote arts employment for people with disability (4.07)
- Information and resources, such as arts career guides (3.78)
- Using Disability Employment Services (3.64)
- Setting arts employment targets or quotas/benchmarks for people with disability (3.06).
6.2 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Of the people with disability who took part in our survey (n = 141), we found that:

- Most respondents are in the 45–54 year (27.2%), 25–34 year (25.2%) and 35–44 year (20%) age groups
- Almost two-thirds are female (63.7%), with this number followed by male (35.1%) and transgender respondents (1.8%)
- Less than one-tenth (6.3%) of respondents are of Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander origin
- Most respondents’ first language is English (90.4%)
- Almost three-quarters attended university (71.1%) as their highest level of schooling, followed by TAFE (19.1%) and high school (10.4%)
- Over half receive the Disability Support Pension (56.8%)
- Most people were born in Australia (81.4%) followed by the United Kingdom (13.3%)
- Two-thirds live in a metropolitan region (67.3%) with regional (29.8%) and remote (3.5%)
- Over two-thirds of the respondents live in Victoria (36.5%), followed by New South Wales (26.1%), Western Australia (11.3%), Queensland (8.7%), ACT and South Australia (both 7.8%), Tasmania and Northern Territory (both 0.9%).
Almost two-fifths of the respondents (38.8%) reported that they have no access requirements to work.

Access requirements varied, with job design (28.1%), workplace modifications (20.7%) and transport (19.8%) the most common requirements.

**What are your access requirements for work?**

- Information in alternative formats **8.3%** (10)
- Interpreters / communication support **9.1%** (11)
- Support worker (to get ready for work / to get to work / at work) **11.6%** (14)
- Transport **19.8%** (24)
- Job redesign (such as flexibility, working at home, modifying job tasks or job sharing) **28.1%** (34)
- Specific training and support for self **11.6%** (14)
- Workplace modifications (such as physical access, lighting, computer / desk set up, noise reduction) **20.7%** (25)
- Equipment (such TTY, modified computer / keyboards, hoist, ramp) **15.7%** (19)
- Training and support for manager **5.8%** (7)
- Training and support for other staff **6.6%** (8)
- No access requirements **38%** (46)
- Other (please specify) **18.2%** (22)
138 people with disability responded to the question: Which statement/s describe your involvement in arts and culture?

- Almost two-thirds of respondents attend arts and cultural events (57.2%)
- Over one-third participate in arts as a hobby or for recreation (34.8%), identify as a professional (35.5%) or an emerging artist (34.8%)
- Just over one-quarter work for an arts organisation (26.1%)
- Less than one-fifth volunteer (18.1%) and/or are on a board or committee of an arts organisation (15.2%)
- Some people involved in more than one activity.

Which statement/s describe your involvement in arts and culture?

- I attend arts and cultural events 57.2% (79)
- I am involved in the arts as a hobby / for recreation 34.8% (48)
- I am involved in the arts for therapy 13% (18)
- I am involved in arts education / I am an arts student 21% (29)
- I am involved in community and cultural development program 18.8% (26)
- I am an emerging artist 34.8% (48)
- I am a professional artist 35.5% (49)
- I work for an arts organisation 26.1% (36)
- I volunteer for an arts organisation 18.2% (25)
- I am on a Board or committee member of an arts organisation 15.2% (21)
- None of the above 3.6% (5)
As shown in the table below, people with disability are involved in and across a broad range of art sectors and art forms:

- The largest group are involved in visual arts (48.1%)
- Next, over one-quarter are involved in theatre (30.1%), music (27.8%), festivals and events (27.8%) and/or education (27.1%).
Less than one-third of respondents receive a wage or salary (32.1%) for their arts involvement, in combination with other forms of income (41.2%), such as being self-employed and/or being unpaid (40.5%).

What type of income, if any, do you get from your arts involvement?

- Receive a wage or salary 32.1% (42)
- Receive other forms of income / payment (from being self-employed, commissions for art work) 41.2% (54)
- Unpaid 40.5% (53)
Over half of the respondents are self-employed (54.9%), with one-third working for an employer (33.8%) and/or volunteering (28.6%).

How would you describe your arts employment arrangement?

Comments made on the above two questions show the reality of the various forms of income that people with disability receive for arts employment:

- Different payments for different work – sometimes hourly wage, sometimes paid for pieces, sometimes paid royalties.
- Have sold 2 paintings.
- Earn less than unemployment on most occasions.
- Some ‘in-kind’ payment eg. free tickets.
- Day per week paid and one day volunteer.
- Contract work for projects.
- Please note it varies due to being a freelancer.
I have one paid (part-time) job as a drama workshop facilitator, one job as a theatre producer (profit-share arrangement). I am volunteering at a community organisation...and on an event committee. I am planning future creative work. I am job seeking.

Over half of the respondents have an Australian Business Number (54.1%).

Do you have an Australian Business Number (ABN)?

- Yes 54.1% (73)
- No 40% (54)
- Unsure 5.9% (8)
Respondents who described their job seeking status are actively looking for part-time work (29.5%), followed by casual work (21.3%) and full-time work (13.1%).

In general, how would you describe your job seeking status?

- I am actively looking for full-time work 33% (16)
- I am actively looking for part-time work 29.3% (36)
- I am actively looking for casual work 21.1% (26)
- I am waiting to start a new job 3.3% (4)
- I am not available to start work 4.9% (6)
- I am unable to work 13% (16)
- I do not want a paid job 2.4% (3)
- I am not looking for work at the moment 17.1% (21)
- I already have a job 36.6% (45)
The main method of looking for work is in the newspaper or on the Internet (45.7%). The next most used method of looking for work is through friends or relatives (31%).

A small number of respondents are registered with government employment services, including a Disability Employment Network for open (4.3%) or supported (1.7%) employment.

**What is your main method/s of looking for work?**

- Job ads in the newspaper / internet **45.7%** (53)
- Through friends or relatives **31%** (36)
- Through disability service organisation **19.8%** (23)
- Registered with Job Services Australia provider or Centrelink **5.2%** (6)
- Registered with Disability Employment Network (DEN) services for open employment **4.3%** (5)
- Registered with Disability Employment Network (DEN) services for supported employment **1.7%** (2)
- Registered with another employment agency **3.4%** (4)
- Not applicable (I am not looking for work at the moment) **37.1%** (43)
Over three-quarters of respondents have been working in the arts for over one year (76.7%).

**How long have you been working in the arts?**

- Short-term (I have been working or volunteering for under one year) 8.3% (11)
- Long-term (I have been working or volunteering for over one year) 76.7% (102)
- I am not employed or volunteering in any arts-related work at the moment 17.3% (23)
Almost two-fifths of the respondents have been working or volunteering in their current job for 3–5 years (39.4%).

**How long have you been doing your current job?**

- Red bar: Less than 3 months **6.4% (7)**
- Light blue bar: 3–6 months **5.5% (6)**
- Green bar: 6–12 months **4.6% (5)**
- Pink bar: Over 1 year **14.7% (16)**
- Green bar: Over 2 years **13.8% (15)**
- Brown bar: 3–5 years **39.4% (43)**
- Blue bar: Not applicable (I am not employed or volunteering in any arts-related work at the moment) **15.6% (17)**

Comments made on the above two questions show that some respondents have been working in the arts for well over five years, reflecting the commitment people have to the arts through various forms of employment, as a student or volunteer, and participating in unpaid creative practice:

Over 30 years!
Over 25 years.
All my adult life – I am 61.
Over 45 years.
20 years professional practice.
Making images for 26 years.
Long-term volunteering.
I have been in the arts industry for well over 5 years.
I have been professionally involved for most of my life.
Casually involved for over 10 years.
When I say ‘working’ I mean as a student in TAFE in Diploma of Fine Arts’.
Have not done any voluntary work for a few years now, concentrating on my further study to gain qualifications in Graphic Design.

Just over half of the respondents work part-time, defined as fewer than 35 hours per week (51.7%).

How many hours do you currently work per week?

- Full-time (more than 35 hours per week) 29.2% (35)
- Part-time (less than 35 hours per week) 51.7% (62)
- Not applicable (I am not employed or volunteering in any arts-related work at the moment) 19.2% (23)
Of the 129 people with disability who answered the question: Which areas of the arts do you work in?

- Almost two-thirds work in the core arts (62%), such as music, performing arts, literature and visual arts for education, collections or performances)
- Almost two-fifths (38%) work in community and cultural development (where arts development, community strengthening and social inclusion are key outcomes)
- Some organisations work in more than one of the four areas, which also included creative industries (such as film, TV and design) and heritage (such as Indigenous culture).

**Which area/s of the arts do you work in?**

- Core arts (such as music, performing arts, literature and visual arts for education, collections or performances) 62% (80)
- Creative industries (such as film, TV and design) 17.8% (23)
- Heritage (such as Indigenous culture) 5.4% (7)
- Community and cultural development (where arts development, community strengthening and social inclusion are key outcomes) 38% (49)
- Not applicable (I am not employed or volunteering in the arts at the moment) 14% (18)
Most of the work activities that people with disability do in their current job are:

- A combination of ‘creative and support roles’ (41.1%)
- This is followed by ‘creative practice’ that may include creating art, rehearsals, practice, preparation and research (24%)
- Fewer occupy a ‘support role in arts-related work’ that may include teaching, arts administration, policy, marketing, advocacy and management, writing about the arts or working as an arts worker (18.6%).

Which statement best describes your current activities in your current job?

- Most of the work is 'creative practice' that may include creating art, rehearsals, practice, preparation and research 24% (31)
- Most of the work is a 'support role in arts-related work' that may include teaching, arts administration, policy, marketing, advocacy and management, writing about the arts or working as an arts worker 18.6% (24)
- Combination of creative and support roles 41.1% (53)
- Not applicable (I am not employed or volunteering in any arts-related work at the moment) 16.3% (21)
There is a wide range of roles that people with disability do within the arts, determined from responses to the question: What is your current job? Responses are listed below within the two activity categories of ‘Creative practice’ and ‘Support role in arts related activities’.

**Creative practice**

- Artist, Professional Artist
- Visual Artist, Painter, Photographer, Print Maker, Glass Art, Mural Artist, Craftsperson
- Performing Artist, Actor, Extra, Performer
- Writer, Editor, Scriptwriter
- Designer
- Musician, Singer, Composer, Sound Artist
- Filmmaker, Video Producer, Sound Recording
- Theatre Producer, Theatre Director
- Artistic Director
- Arts Student – Musicology, Fine Arts, Diploma of Graphic Design, Visual Arts
- Community Artist

**Support role in arts related activities**

- Teacher – Heritage, Drama, Singing
- Critic
- Cultural Development Officer, Cultural Services Group Leader
- Event Coordinator, Marketing and Media
- Program Manager, Project Manager
- Workshop Facilitator
- Executive Officer, CEO, Assistant Director, President of Community Art Group
- Arts Administration, Administrator, Office Assistant, Administration
- Program Officer, Project Officer
- Research Assistant, Bookkeeper
- Volunteer – Gallery, Fine Arts
- Local Government Arts Officer, Local Government Coordinator Arts and Culture
- Community Arts Worker, Arts Worker
- Art Therapy Practitioner, Art Therapy Facilitator
- Disability Care Worker
6.2.1 BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES

To determine priority barriers and strategies around arts employment for people with disability, we used a five-point rating scale to calculate an average importance rating out of five for each statement.

We used a five-point rating scale to calculate an average agreement rating out of five for each statement.

Our survey asked people with disability to: Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with several statements about barriers for people with disability looking for arts employment.

The responses show the average agreement rating ranked from the highest (5) to lowest (1):

- There are limited job opportunities in the arts for people with and without disability (4.06)
- Disability support services do not promote a career in the arts for people with disability (3.91)
- People with disability are not always recognised as having artistic talent (3.86)
- Arts and cultural organisations are well placed to be inclusive employers (3.76)
- I have enough training, education and skills to have an arts career (3.75)
- Discrimination is the greatest barrier for people with disability working in the arts (3.55)
- Employing a person with disability is not on arts organisations’ agenda (3.45)
- Lack of access in the workplace limits my arts employment opportunities (3.23)
- Financial barriers, such as the impact on my disability benefits and not making enough money discourage me to work in the arts (3.15).

Our survey asked the people to tell us about any barriers they have experienced trying to find arts employment.

The main theme that emerged in the comments is an unwillingness to disclose their disability (if hidden) to potential employers for fear of negative attitudes or missing out on work:

The major barrier is attitudinal – I do not disclose my disability to employers as I have had issues in the past.

Not telling anyone you have a problem and praying they won't notice.

For me, the best thing I could do was pretend I didn't have a disability and keep quiet about it. I have a medical disability so it is something I could hide. I would prefer to be open about it however.
The difficulty in explaining why I started university later, went part-time and took a long time to do my undergraduate degree whilst still keeping some privacy about my health and personal life.

A lot of [people] do have mental health conditions, but are too fearful to let anyone know because they fear they will miss out on the work. People want someone that is not going to slow down their project. A person requiring extra emotional support is often too much, so it is easier to go with the healthier option.

In my experience, there is a 2-way lack of communication about how artists and arts workers with a disability can be supported appropriately in employment. Organisations don't know what support is available and individuals feel they will be treated prejudicially if they disclose their disability.

Other respondents feel they are stereotyped or need to overcompensate because of their disability.

You have to gear yourself up to be over-qualified for any job to have anywhere near a fighting chance.

Being exceptionally good at what you do…so that your skills far outweigh the other issues.

While I am not actively looking for employment the people I work with have experienced attitudes that sadly equates disability with being mentally unable.

No one is interested in my qualifications and experience once they see me as a ‘Down Syndrome person’ unless they [want] a ‘disabled actor’.

I am usually dealt with in a dismissive and derogatory way to the extent that my requests for understanding are ignored or I am considered lazy and unworthy.

I am keen to find a job in the arts area of graphic design…but due to my physical disability, employers struggle with handling an interview applicant who has a disability.

There is so much prejudice in my field of expertise I may as well be unemployed.

The second most common barrier is the lack of success finding arts employment using Disability Employment Networks (DEN) or Disability Employment Services. Some respondents feel that these services do not understand or consider a job in the arts for people with disability and, in some cases, are discriminatory. Below is a sample of comments:
The DEN services have proved to be ineffective when it comes to helping me look for working in the arts industry (whether it’s training, work experience or voluntary).

Disability Employment Services are not generally geared towards arts employment and government funders can make it very difficult to tick the boxes!

I think it should be reinforced with disability employment services that people should always try to get the job they really want, not always in hospitality.

The employment agencies were a waste of time. Because I'm an entertainer they didn't want to know me.

I was once told by a Job Network Provider that – and I quote – 'Arts is not a job' when I stated what field I would like to look for work in.

Employment services do not recognise entertainers as a job. The one job I got was as an entertainer and this was considered as ‘crossing the line’. No one else was bothered to look for anything in the creative industry.

The attitude was that if I didn't take any job I was being too choosy and not wanting to work, which is not true. I get very annoyed when people assume I do not want to work.

Their whole definition of disability is based around lower IQ, education and sheltered jobs, ignoring the greater number who would love to contribute.

Personal experiences with DENs here in this state have been very poor. Found them to be condescending…and expectations on their behalf did not meet mine. Further, [they]…had no idea of social model of disability – it was awful and depressing experience.

I don't use job agencies, especially Centrelink-connected ones as their ignorance about my disability can be downright abusive.

Some respondents reported that managing arts employment and receiving the Disability Support Pension could act as a disincentive to find work:

Haven't really sought out employment because of concerns about how it might impact my pension…

Disability support pension is very restrictive re number of regular hours employment allowed before benefit is withdrawn, so even most job share positions are unavailable.

I was REALLY worried as to whether to take on paid work or not, due to the complexity of managing my income and disability pension correctly.
The survey asked people with disability to tell us how important they thought different strategies were to helping find arts employment.

The responses show the average agreement rating ranked from the highest to lowest:

- Financial assistance to develop arts practice, such as grants and accessing arts education (4.37)
- Graduate recruitment programs, internships, residencies and apprenticeships for artists with disability (4.29)
- Government incentives to promote arts employment for people with disability (4.26)
- Disability awareness training and education for arts employers (4.18)
- Mentors, role models and case studies about artists with disability/people with an arts career (4.15)
- Information and resources, such as arts career guides (3.91)
- Setting arts employment targets or quotas/benchmarks for people with disability (3.75)
- Using Disability Employment Services (3.34).

The survey asked people with disability to tell us about their experiences or strategies about what has helped finding arts employment.

Overwhelmingly, job seeking is done through self-promotion or gaining assistance with self-promotion from an agent, friends or support people who ‘understand the arts’, as demonstrated by the following comments:

To assist me with overcoming the lack of employment opportunities I create them for myself and other emerging artists...

Self made opportunities...Self-promotion. I am developing my own website and profile and am getting someone to help me with that...My agent finds me most of my performing work...Assistance with promotion...Promoting my profile using social media and using new technology.

Putting yourself out there is the way to make it in the arts. Jobs are generally contractual and people need to be able to apply for contracts on a regular basis.

You need support people who get the arts. They need to be like an agent or manager dedicated to getting the word out so people know about you. They need to make sure we are properly paid. They need to make sure we are treated like professionals.

Making friends in the arts and asking for ideas, tips, contacts, help...to be able to really take in assistance and support from others.
Networking with other artists and being visible is another important strategy used by artists and arts workers with disability:

It is more a case of networking…and applying for grants and funding through relevant funding organisations.

Arts jobs are nearly always through word of mouth and networks – the larger your arts network, the more likely you are to find a job.

Arts tends to work on a 'who you know' basis, which can be helpful if people know you, but hard to enter.

Most of my employment in the arts has come through networks and through my work being seen. The moment I was shortlisted for an award, I found more work opened up (but still not enough to live on).

I don’t really see myself as looking for a ‘job’. I want to start my own company and am looking for the right time to make this happen.

Artists or arts workers with disability often go unpaid or volunteer to gain experience and exposure that may provide a ‘pathway’ to paid employment. Below is a sample of comments on this issue:

The most important thing is to keep producing work, even if no one is paying for you to do it. This means you can prove to prospective employers exactly what you are capable of, even if you need to take an unusual route to get there.

Volunteering has been crucial…having [people] who have seen my potential and believed in my ability.

I find that it is much easier for me to gain employment with someone who already knows me, through study, volunteering etc. as they tend to be less worried about my disability than strangers.

A lot of my employment I have had, has come to me via community and disability networks that I have worked with in an unpaid capacity.

Volunteering at local theatres to paint scenery was one of the things I did in the past to develop my skills and network about my skills with other members of the community.

I am lucky in that I was a participant in the program and then got a job offered because the organisation saw that I had the skills and potential to become an employee.

I befriended another artist and volunteered to work for free as their assistant on a large community arts project…Once I had proved my abilities, I was able to work as their paid assistant, and then I applied for contracts on my own behalf.
6.3 DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Of the Disability Employment Services (DES) that responded to the survey (n = 50):

- Three-quarters are an open employment service (76%)
- Just over one-third are a supported employment service (38%)
- Almost one-quarter are an Australian Disability Enterprise (22%)
- Some DES provide more than one type of employment service.

What type of employment service/s does your organisation offer?

- Open employment services 76% (38)
- Supported employment services (providing ongoing on-the-job support) 38% (19)
- Australian Disability Enterprises 22% (11)
We found that of the total DES respondents:

- One-quarter have worked with an arts and cultural organisation before (26%)
- Two-fifths of these respondents have not worked with an arts and cultural organisation (40%)
- One-third did not know.

**Has your service ever worked with an arts and cultural organisation?**

- Yes 26% (13)
- No 40% (20)
- Don't know 34% (17)
Only 12 DES respondents answered the question: Which of these arts and cultural industries has your service worked with?

- Eight of the respondents have worked with arts and cultural industries in the core arts, such as music, performing arts, literature and visual arts for education, collections or performances.
- Seven DES have worked with organisations involved with community and cultural development, where arts development, community strengthening and social inclusion are key outcomes.
- Some services have worked in more than one of the three areas, which also included heritage (including indigenous culture).

Which of these arts and cultural industries has your service worked with?

- Core arts (such as music, performing arts, literature and visual arts for education, collections or performances) 66.7% (8)
- Creative industries (such as film, TV and design) (a)
- Heritage (such as Indigenous culture) 41.7% (5)
- Community and cultural development (where arts development, community strengthening and social inclusion are key outcomes) 58.3% (7)
The DES respondents are involved in and across a range of art sectors, with most working with visual arts (50%), education and craft (both 41.7%).

**Which arts sectors has your service worked with?**

- Craft 41.7% (5)
- Dance 8.3% (1)
- Design 8.3% (1)
- Education 41.7% (5)
- Festivals & events 33.3% (4)
- Galleries 25% (3)
- Literature 8.3% (1)
- Museums, Libraries or Heritage (0)
- Multi-art form 8.3% (1)
- Music 25% (3)
- Screen Arts (Film, TV, Radio) 8.3% (1)
- New media (online, digital and electronic arts) (0)
- Theatre 8.3% (1)
- Visual Arts 50% (6)
We asked the DES taking part in the survey to: Please tell us about your any of your experiences working with arts and cultural organisations. Only eight DES respondents were able to give feedback.

Overall, these organisations were unsuccessful in finding employment for people with disability in the arts due to limited opportunities and competitiveness. A sample of comments included:

Despite having participants on my caseload prepared to commit to any opportunity in the arts and cultural sector, in a region known for its predominant 'creative' population and output, there are few opportunities.

Very limiting, the sector is very competitive and sometimes it relies on support and networks within the industry.

As a DES Provider we have not worked specifically with the arts, however have participants with these goals and generally have had little success with placements.

Have had a couple of clients in the arts field. Have had no luck placing them into employment.

Nobody seems interested in discussing disability employment or interviewing interested participants.
Over half the DES organisations surveyed had not placed a person with disability in an arts and cultural sector job (51.2%), with 34.9% saying they 'Don’t know'. Of those that could confirm that they assisted with finding a job for a person with disability:

- Three organisations found one person with disability a job (7%)
- Two organisations found two people with disability a job (4.7%)
- One organisation found eight people with disability a job (2.3%).

In the past year, how many people with disability has your service placed in the arts and cultural sector jobs?

- None 51.2% (22)
- Seven (0)
- One 7% (3)
- Eight 2.3% (1)
- Two 4.7% (2)
- Nine (0)
- Three (0)
- Ten (0)
- Four (0)
- Don’t know 34.9% (15)
- Five (0)
- Other (please specify) 1% (1)
- Six (0)
The types of jobs that people with disability have been placed in by the five DES responding to this question are either:

- ‘Creative practice’ that may include creating art, rehearsals, practice, preparation and research (60%)
- Support role in arts-related work’ that may include teaching, arts administration, policy, marketing, advocacy and management, writing about the arts or arts workers (40%).

In general, which statement best describes the types of jobs that people with disability are placed in by your organisation?
Two of the five respondents reported that no access requirements have been required for people with disability supported in arts employment. The most reported access requirements, with two respondents each, are support workers, information in alternative formats, equipment and/or training and support for manager.

What access requirements have you or the employers provided for people with disability supported in arts employment?

- Information in alternative formats 40% (2)
- Interpreters / communication support 20% (1)
- Support worker (to get ready for work / to get to work / at work) 40% (2)
- Transport (a)
- Job redesign (such as flexibility, working at home, modifying job tasks or job sharing) 20% (1)
- Specific training and support for self 20% (1)
- Workplace modifications (such as physical access, lighting, computer / desk set up, noise reduction) 0
- Equipment (such TTY, modified computer / keyboards, hoist, ramp) 40% (2)
- Training and support for manager 40% (2)
- Training and support for other staff 20% (1)
- No access requirements 20% (1)
We asked the DES taking part in the survey to: Please tell us about any of your experiences finding employment for people with disability in the arts and cultural sector.

Responses show that although DES organisations find it difficult finding people with disability paid employment in the arts, some volunteer positions were available. There appears to be an expectation by some potential employers that people with disability should accept these positions in an unpaid capacity:

My experience working with [arts and cultural organisations] has always been positive. But I have worked only with voluntary organisations.

I made a proposal to the local gallery to employ one of our artist's with a disability on the basis of a fully subsidized wage for a period of 8 hours per week to man the gallery. They refused because all people working in the gallery must be volunteers, have art displayed and be a paid up member of the art group. Our artist jobseeker has art displayed in the gallery, is a member and does also volunteer.

It is too competitive and clients with mental health conditions have always been relegated by cultural entities into volunteer/non paid positions.

Living in a rural area, local arts organisations are almost exclusively made up of volunteers [because] there are no paid positions available to employ anyone.

Quite difficult to get anyone in arts and cultural sector unless it is voluntary work.

I have two clients who looked for positions with various cultural organisations, both had arts degrees in fine arts and were accomplished artists, but were offered volunteering positions instead after it was revealed they had epilepsy and schizophrenia.
6.3.1 BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES

To determine priority barriers and strategies around arts employment for people with disability, we used a five-point rating scale to calculate an average importance rating out of five for each statement.

Our survey asked DES respondents to: Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with several statements about barriers for people with disability looking for arts employment.

The responses show the average agreement rating ranked from the highest (5) to lowest (1):

- There are limited job opportunities in the arts for people with and without disability (4.26)
- Arts and cultural organisations are well placed to be inclusive employers (3.67)
- Disability support services do not promote a career in the arts for people with disability (3.44)
- People with disability are not always recognised as having artistic talent (3.36)
- Discrimination is the greatest barrier for people with disability working in the arts (3.21)
- Employing a person with disability is not on arts organisations’ agenda (3.18)
- Lack of access in the workplace is the greatest barrier for people with disability working in the arts (2.92)
- It is too expensive to employ a person with disability due to the additional costs, such as insurance and workplace modifications (2.08).

Some DES respondents identified systemic barriers, such as benchmarks and work-hour restrictions to finding people with disability employment in the arts:

Very difficult to obtain benchmark hours that allows provider to achieve a financial or performance outcome.

A fine arts practice employment objective is at odds with Federal Government employment services contract requirements for income-based outcomes including income independence within a 26-week time frame.

We are a mental health employment provider, that seeks to assist people gain employment in the open job sector, restrictions on their work hours and penalties for earning make it difficult to secure employment both from the perspective of the employer and job seeker.
Our survey asked DES organisations to tell us how important they thought different strategies are to helping people with disability find arts employment.

The responses show the average agreement rating ranked from the highest to lowest:

- Mentors, role models and case studies about artists with disability/people with an arts career (4.26)
- Graduate recruitment programs, internships, residencies and apprenticeships for artists with disability (4.24)
- Disability awareness training and education for arts employers (4.18)
- Government incentives to promote arts employment for people with disability (4.15)
- Using Disability Employment Services (4.10)
- Information and resources, such as arts career guides (4.08)
- Setting arts employment targets or quotas/benchmarks for people with disability (3.51).
REFERENCES


