



AUSTRALIAN
DISABILITY
NETWORK



The
Observership
Program™

**Disability Confident Boards
Supporting Observers with disability**



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NETWORK
ON DISABILITY



Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of
Australia and their continuing connection to land,
sea and community.

We pay our respects to the people, the cultures
and the elders past and present.



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Acknowledgement of People with Disability

We acknowledge people with disability and thank you for
joining us.

Accessible Digital Meeting Tips

- One person speaking at a time
- State name before speaking, be patient and allow people to finish their sentences
- For people who may be speech reading, make sure your camera is on and that your face is well-lit and you are not covering your face
- Visual content – read all visual content displayed

Agenda

1. Partnership overview
2. Overview of disability
3. Barriers to access and inclusion
4. Tips and hints for NFP Boards supporting Observers with disability

Our partnership

Australian Disability Network and The Observership Program have entered into a strategic partnership to deliver the Disability Observership Pilot in 2023. The pilot program aims to:

- Increase the number of Observers with disability on the Program. This year 14 Observers with disability have been successfully matched with NFP Boards.
- Offer practical assistance and training to The Observership Program team, Observers with disability and participating NFP boards to build their disability confidence.

Australian Disability Network

ADN's purpose is to advance inclusion of people with disability in private, public and not-for-profit business;

- For-purpose member network representing over 400 organisations.
- Support organisations to advance the inclusion of people with disability.
- People with disability should have the same life choices and economic opportunities as others.
- We help our members to welcome people with disability as employees, customers and stakeholders.



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What is disability confidence?

Why this matters

What are the benefits of creating positive Observership experiences?

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Reputation
- Rights
- Risk



What is disability?

Disability Discrimination Act (Cth) 1992

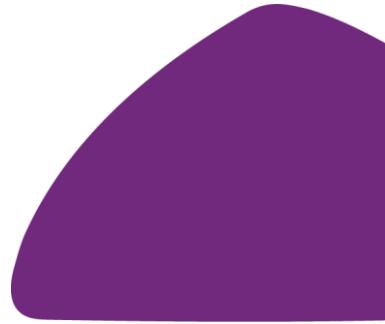
Disability is any impairment, abnormality, or loss of function of any part of the body or mind. Including:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Mental Illness
- Sensory
- Neurological
- Learning Disability
- Physical disfigurement
- Immunological

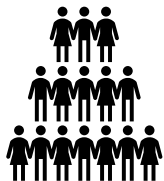
What is disability?

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) signed in 2006

“Persons with disabilities include those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”



Profile of the Australian population



17.7%
of the
population
has disability



4.4 million
people with
disability in
Australia



2.3
million
carers in
Australia



Most
disability is
non-physical
and non-
visible



45% of
Australians
experience
mental
illness

Prevalence of disability increases with age



Sourced from: ABS SDAC (2018)



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Barriers to Access and Inclusion

How can we overcome barriers?

Disability Confident Boards are:

- Flexible
- Solutions focused
- Do things differently when needed



Knowing the *how* not the *what*

We don't need to be experts because:

- There are many types of disability
- Every person with disability has their own specific experiences, requirements, and needs
- It would be impossible to have such a detailed understanding



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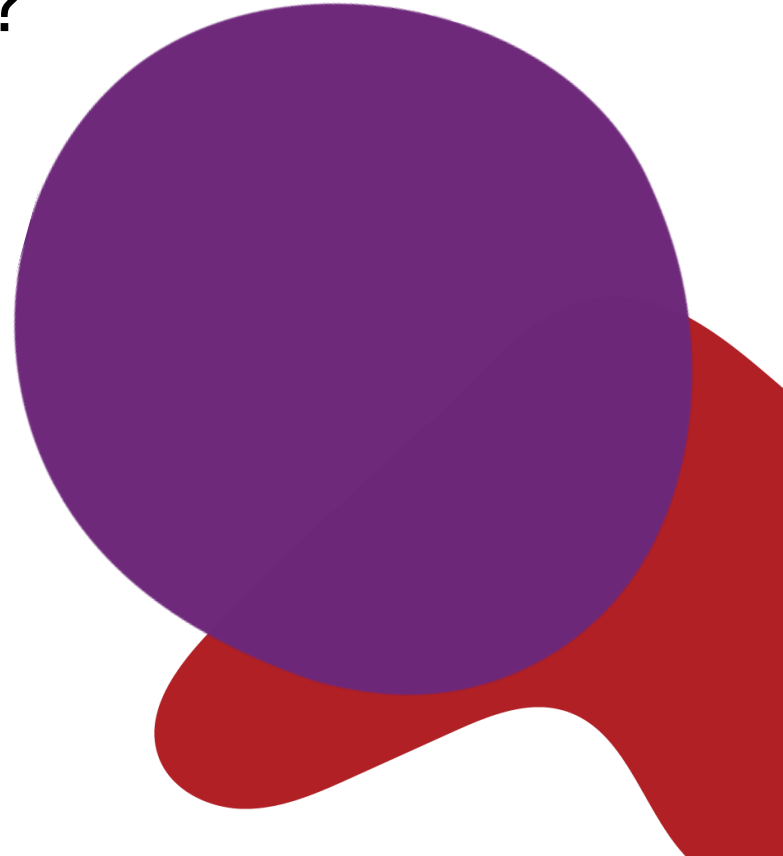


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Practical tips for inclusion

What is Disability Confidence?

Anticipating
Positive
Adjustments



What should you say?

Language and terminology should be neutral and free from emotion.

Instead of

Disabled person / the disabled

Wheelchair bound / confined

Suffering from mental illness

Blind person / Deaf person

Special needs

Say

Person with disability, living with disability

Person using a wheelchair / wheelchair user

Experiencing mental illness

Person who is blind or has low vision /
person who is d/Deaf or hard of hearing

Workplace Adjustments,
Accessibility requirements

Making board meetings accessible

Feature	Accessibility tip
Physical Access	Ensure the building / meeting room is accessible
Meeting invites	<i>Example: If you have any accessibility requirements for this meeting, please contact me on 03 8584 0203 or peta.magick@and.org.au to arrange.</i>
Hybrid Meetings	One person speaking at once, check technology ahead of meetings, say your name before speaking and set up your tables in a U-Shape.
Meeting breaks	Build flexibility into meetings to allow for breaks and stretching.
Documentation	Ensure board documents are accessible and sent in advance
Communication	Ask what everyone's preferred method of communication is and be patient.
Naming conventions	Use people's names and avoid "my colleague, who has disability"



Supporting Observers with disability

- The Board Liaison needs to ask if the Observer requires a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for in-person Board meetings.
- If the person shares disability information with you, do not ask questions about the disability and do not on-share this information. Keep this information private and confidential. Instead, ask what adjustments you can implement, if any.

What is a Workplace Adjustment?

A workplace adjustment is a change to a work process, practice, procedure or environment that enables a candidate or employee with disability to perform the inherent requirement of the job

Common adjustment examples:

- Accessible board papers (MS Word)
- Papers sent in advance
- Captioners / Auslan interpreters
- Breaks every hour for 5 mins

Guiding principles

Australian Network on Disability's three guiding principles

- Never make any assumptions
- Always ask the person
- A person's disability, and their experience of disability, is as unique as their fingerprint





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Ongoing program support

For any questions or additional assistance throughout the program, please contact:

For Sydney and Brisbane Programs: Belinda Da Silva,
Program Manager at Belinda.dasilva@observership.com.au

For Victorian Program: Jeena Fernando, Operations Lead,
Victoria at jeena.fernando@observership.com.au

Further Disability Confidence resources will be offered for Boards that select an Observer with disability.



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