

Increasing disability awareness

Refer to this resource:

- ▶ to create inclusive and accessible recruitment and selection processes
- ▶ to promote awareness of disability with practical ideas to help your staff consider the needs or interests of people with disability, and their carers, when interacting with colleagues, clients and stakeholders.

Everyone benefits when communities are inclusive and accessible. The more awareness is raised and information is available, the more we can do to create truly inclusive communities.

Improving disability awareness

Some ways to improve disability awareness in your organisation can include:

- ▶ encouraging colleagues to view the online disability awareness training available at www.disabilityawareness.com.au
- ▶ raising your awareness and understanding of key legislation that protects the rights of people with disability (see Resource 5)
- ▶ developing a disability action plan, sometimes known as an accessibility and inclusion plan or accessibility charter, for your organisation by consulting with people with disability, and/or their representative organisations, reviewing policies and practices, identifying barriers for people with disability in accessing services, and implementing strategies to remove these barriers (see Resource 5)
- ▶ considering organisational membership with the Australian Network on Disability (AND). AND is a not-for-profit organisation resourced by its members to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of business. AND helps its members and clients to welcome people with disability as employees, customers and suppliers. Visit: www.and.org.au
- ▶ including positive, empowered images of people with disability in your organisation's internal and external-facing documents, such

as workforce plans, annual reports, websites and sales catalogues

- ▶ increasing awareness about the accessibility features of your organisation, such as accessible parking and toilets, ramp/lift access, and reasonable adjustments that can be made
- ▶ engaging third-party disability awareness training providers. Many not-for-profit organisations can be engaged to present disability awareness training. Where possible, people with disability should deliver the training.

Annual awareness events

International Day of People with Disability

There are a number of annual events that organisations can recognise to raise awareness of disability and promote an inclusive and accessible Queensland. Some of the events are listed below.

International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) is held on 3 December each year. IDPwD is a United Nations-sanctioned day that is celebrated internationally. It aims to increase public awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability and celebrate their achievements and contributions. The Australian Government has been supporting IDPwD since 1996 and provides funds to promote and raise awareness of the day around Australia.

Visit: www.idpwd.com.au

AccessAbility Day

AccessAbility Day takes place in the last week of November, leading up to International Day of People with Disability. The initiative provides an opportunity for jobseekers with disability to spend a day in a workplace. It allows employers to experience employing a jobseeker with disability and learn about the available support services. It also provides an opportunity for people with disability to gain an insight into a particular workplace, job or type of work.

Visit: www.jobaccess.gov.au

Disability Action Week

Disability Action Week is held annually in September and raises awareness of Queenslanders playing a role in creating an inclusive, all abilities Queensland.

Visit: www.qld.gov.au/disability/community/awards-events/disability-action-week

National Carers Week

National Carers Week is held in October each year and recognises and celebrates the contribution that carers make to our nation.

Visit: carersqld.com.au/news-and-events/carers-week/

Paralympics and other major sporting events

The Paralympics and other major sporting events, such as the Commonwealth Games, Special Olympics World Games, Deaflympics, Australian Open, French Open/Roland-Garros, Invictus Games and INAS Games, provide an opportunity to showcase the abilities of competitors and raise awareness of disability.

Other awareness events

Remember to be inclusive of people with disability at other awareness events such as Multicultural Month, Seniors Week, NAIDOC Week, Disability Action Week and Child Protection Week. People from these groups are also impacted by disability and people with disability may also be LGBTIQ+, seniors, from diverse cultural and language backgrounds, and/or have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Becoming a disability champion

We all have a role to play to ensure people with disability have the same opportunities as others to reach their full potential. For any of awareness day, such as the ones listed above, you could hold an event in your organisation using some of the activity ideas listed here.

Activity	Description
Awareness in action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Put up event posters. ▶ Email to staff a link to online disability awareness training such as www.disabilityawareness.com.au. ▶ Bring in an organisation to run face-to-face disability awareness sessions. ▶ Advertise vacant roles through Disability Employment Service providers. ▶ Visit All Abilities Queensland for practical recruitment information for employers, and hear from people with disability about their career journeys and employment.
Staff events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Host a breakfast, morning tea or lunch. ▶ Organise the catering through a social enterprise that trains and/or employs people with disability. ▶ Invite staff to share their experiences with disability. ▶ Start a conversation about disability, which can challenge perceptions, educate others and normalise disability in everyday life.
Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Identify a not-for-profit organisation doing innovative work with people with disability. Or ask staff if there is an organisation their family or friends have accessed. Consider raising funds or identifying a volunteering opportunity for that organisation.
Guest speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Organise a guest speaker to talk about disability or share their story. ▶ Invite a person with disability and/or your local member of parliament to speak.
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Take a group photo of your event or your promotional material, such as posters, for social media. ▶ Show your support through social media posts, writing an article for your organisation's newsletter or sending an opinion piece to your local newspaper. ▶ Include the relevant event hashtag, a link to the event website, or to www.allabilities.qld.gov.au.

Based on the event planning kit at: www.idpwd.com.au/get-involved/workplaces

For further information

All Abilities Queensland: Opportunities for all, is the state disability plan for a welcoming and inclusive Queensland. A state where people with disability are respected for their abilities and have equal access to opportunities and to contribute and participate in all that Queensland has to offer.

For more information and resources, visit: www.allabilities.qld.gov.au

Resources in this series include:

1. Creating inclusive and accessible events
2. Accessible and inclusive communication
3. Employing people with disability
4. Increasing disability awareness
5. Disability action plans and legislation
6. Increasing participation of people with disability on boards and committees
7. Accessible places and spaces