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| Key Recommendations for improving access and inclusion at MoombaA Future Focus Group project 2018-2019Everyone’s Moomba 2018 |
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# Our vision for Everyone’s Moomba

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| The City of Melbourne facilitates the Moomba Festival with a responsibility to provide a visitor experience that is safe and enjoyable for all members of the community. Moomba is promoted as the ‘largest free to attend community festival in Australia’ and continues to be much loved by Melburnians with an annual attendance of over one million. Moomba may appeal to the masses but it was identified by the Everyone’s Moomba project team that people with disability in our community were not provided equal opportunity for participation in both on and off water activities. The focus therefore of the Everyone’s Moomba project was to research and provide recommendations for how Moomba could evolve to become a more welcoming and inclusive event for people in the community experiencing disability.Access vs inclusionIt is important to recognise that being accessible doesn’t equate to being ‘inclusive’ when designing an enjoyable visitor experience for people with disability.Providing only a ramp and an accessible toilet is not enough to allow people with disability to enjoy an experience. Disabilities are broad and fall into several categories including mobility, physical disabilities, hearing or vision disabilities, cognitive and learning disabilities. People living with disability have diverse needs, and whilst it may not be feasible for the City of Melbourne to cater to all these needs, it is important to have greater awareness and design and facilitate an inclusive experience for as many people as possible.An inclusive visitor experience places the person with disability at the centre of the experience design. There are many stages of the visitor journey (pre, during, post event) and all stages are mapped out with the person with disability in mind. Sense of welcome, transport, communication and technology are all important factors to consider in creating inclusive experiences. This report aims to equip the City of Melbourne with evidence-based recommendations on how to design the Moomba visitor experience with community inclusivity at its core.What are the current issues with access and inclusion at Moomba?To identify the current access and inclusion barriers of the Moomba Festival, we engaged the expert consultation of Travability to conduct an accessibility audit of the Moomba visitor experience. Research was also obtained through face to face surveys at Moomba 2019 with people experiencing disability to find out about their experience of the festival. We also had consultations with disability organisations such as Scope and the Association for Children with a Disability who also attended the festival to assist us with our research. All findings have been used to inform our key recommendations.How to use our recommendationsCommunity needs are constantly changing and innovations and global benchmarks in accessibility are being developed all the time. To keep up with it all and ensure that accessibility and inclusion remain entrenched in the City of Melbourne ethos, it is important to have ongoing consultation and/or partnership with the disability community or disability consultant that can guide a best practice inclusion framework and decision making. As part of our recommendations we have provided details of the organisations that City of Melbourne could partner with to assist with meeting council accessibility goals for this event and others.The key recommendations can be integrated into the Moomba Festival all at once provided they are adequately prioritised, budgeted and planned for. The ideal outcome would be to imbed these recommendations into a revised Event Accessibility and Inclusion Policy that provides strict guidelines into the way City of Melbourne events and festivals must be designed and managed to create greater inclusion every time. |
| *“There is no information on the journey from Flinders Street to Moomba or an accessibility map.”**Feedback from a parent of a child with disability at 2019 Moomba festival*  |
| KEY RECOMMENDATIONS 1. Create a collaborative culture of inclusion within the City of Melbourne;
2. Develop tools to help people with a disability to plan their Moomba journey;
3. Provide specific services and facilities for people with a disability;
4. Encourage active participation for people with a disability;
5. Facilitate a Moomba Quiet Hour;
6. Engage key accessibility partners for the purpose of sponsorship and inclusion development.

1. **CREATE A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE OF INCLUSION WITHIN THE CITY OF MELBOURNE THAT EXTENDS TO ALL THIRD PARTY CONTRACTORS INVOLVED IN THE DELIVERY OF COUNCIL EVENTS** Inclusion needs to be a core organisational value that is lived and breathed by everyone at council to ensure that inclusion is imbedded into all decision making. The executive team play a significant part in providing an inclusive organisation for their customers, stakeholders and people. The City of Melbourne Executive team could better facilitate and integrate collaboration between departments to communicate and design more inclusive events. Vickie’s accessibility team and the Disability Advisory Committee could be utilised a lot more for their expertise and connections to the disability community. The Smart City team has great connections with innovative start-ups that are designing tech to enhance the lives of people with disability. Rather than rolling out the same processes for Moomba each year, we would like to see a collaborative design thinking approach that considers the needs of people with disability, takes an asset based community development approach and incorporates the latest in tech to enhance their experience.As part of this culture of inclusion, all staff (including contractors) and volunteers should complete disability awareness training (ongoing) and there should be clear accessibility guidelines and policies to make it easy for staff to imbed access and inclusion into all aspects of their work. By creating this culture of inclusion, it will generate positive and sustainable benefits to people in the community living with a disability and will have flow on effects to all contractors who work with the City of Melbourne – ensuring they are also inclusive in their product and service delivery. Anyone working or engaging with City of Melbourne events should be adequately equipped and ready to welcome and service people with disability.**Possible partners:** Travellers Aid, Association for Children with Disability, **2. DEVELOP TOOLS TO HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY PLAN THEIR MOOMBA JOURNEY** For people with disability, tools to assist them in planning their journey are as important as the experience itself. At a minimum, **detailed accessibility information** on the website to inform them about services and facilities is crucial. Our research shows that people with disability need this information much longer in advance than the current ‘go live’ date for the Moomba website. A **detailed accessibility map** that outlines accessible bathrooms, change facilities, ramps, curb cut access points, accessible tram stops, nearest Travellers Aid services, parking and pedestrian information etc is also crucial. An **Access Key** developed by Access Ability Australia is a great way to document all relevant accessibility information. This can be housed on the website too and will make planning so much easier for people with disability and their carers/ families, especially those who come from interstate and from rural and regional areas. **Social scripts** can be developed to assist children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), ADHD (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), ODD (oppositional defiant disorder) and PDA (Pathological Demand Avoidance) how to engage socially and improve their understanding and enjoyment of the event. These could be uploaded onto the accessibility pages of the Moomba website. **Transport** is a key component in the planning phase. Ensure you work with Transport for Victoria to identify suitable accessible transport options for people travelling to/from the Moomba site and list these on your website. Areas for vehicle drop offs and pick ups should be clearly identified on the website too. **Possible partners:** Access Ability Australia, Transport for Victoria, Association for Children with a Disability **For best practice** see example of an [access key](https://www.penguins.org.au/assets/Attractions/Visit-Us/Nobbies-and-Antarctic-Journey-Access-Key.pdf), www.uk.gov.au and Website [accessibility information](https://www.vividsydney.com/accessibility) on Vivid Sydney website**3. PROVIDE SPECIFIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY** There is a huge responsibility on event organisers to plan an event that is as inclusive to as many members of the community as possible. In most cases, this leads to organisations aiming to and meeting the minimum compliance outlined within the Disability Discrimination Act but failing to deliver a truly inclusive event that enables a person with disability to have an experience that is equal to what others get to enjoy.One accessible toilet is not adequate for an event that caters to over 1 million people over 4 days. There need to be **at least 2 accessible toilets** per location with both left and right hand transfer units, clearly labelled as accessible toilets and also a **Marveloo** (a portable toilet facility with change table and hoists for adults with severe disability) on location.More **ramps** across the entire site would assist people and children in wheelchairs to be able to access the rides and entertainment areas. As most people with disability would have arrived via Swan Street Bridge (accessible parking at Collingwood training ground), there needed to be more ramps to create a smooth journey to that end of the Moomba site.**Adequate wayfinding** is important. Please refer to the TravAbility Audit of the Moomba Festival for detailed information for improving wayfinding at Moomba for people with disability (and for all attendees). Signage needs to clearly show the direction to accessible facilities and should show distances. To be effective signage should be at all major intersections and be backed up with major location signage, e.g. Palm Lawn, South Carnival etc., as indicated on the event map.**Tactile signage or maps** would improve the experience for people who are blind or vision impaired. More **temporary sealed pathways** on the lawn areas would allow easy access for people in wheelchairs. **Technology** could be deployed to aid the visitor experience. The 5 finalists of the City of Melbourne Open Innovation Challenge for accessibility could be integrated into the event in 2020: Melba, ClearPath, Eatability, Walk This Way and Audio Access Map all provide excellent products that would enhance access and inclusion. **Food trucks** and other commercial suppliers should be selected for their accessibility compliance. A food truck that has the serving window too high for a person in a wheelchair, or a step preventing them from entering, should not be used. In designing an inclusive event, consideration needs to be given to picnic tables, water fountains and food trucks that are inclusive. All services at the festival should **accept companion cards** to allow carers discounts.The current accessible viewing areas are not effective as they create isolation and seclusion of people with disability and they are currently not located in suitable positions as, for example, low hanging trees block the river view. It would be better to have ‘**accessible viewing spots’** dotted right along the river frontage and street (for the Parade) to give people with disability the opportunity to choose where they would like to be positioned, rather than pigeon holing them into one make shift spot only. Ensure your security/staff assist people with disability to have priority access to these areas. Jason Sleep has also suggested having a dedicated accessible viewing area right on the fence, near Swan St Bridge and close to where they film the waterski event – this is a convenient area for them to meet the athletes and have clear and unobstructed view. Please make sure accessible toilets and change rooms are located near here too. Jason had nowhere to get changed during the Festival – this will need to be rectified for 2020, especially if more athletes with disability are competing. Mobility is often a struggle for not only people with disability but the elderly too. Travellers Aid can be commissioned to **provide buggy transfers** around the site and ensure that visitors can get from their mode of transport to the Moomba site seamlessly. Travellers Aid can also have a marquee set up within the site to provide mobility aid hire, electric wheelchair charging station and general accessibility information for anyone that requires it during the 4 days. **Possible partners:** Travellers Aid, Travability, [Changing Places](https://changingplaces.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Changing-Places-Toilet-Listing-140119.pdf), Association for Children with Disability **For best practice** see [Marveloo](https://www.facebook.com/marveloo) and Dream Night at the Zoo **4.** **ENCOURAGE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY** Creating an inclusive event means embracing and encouraging people with disability to participate in as many activities as possible. This year Jason Sleep and Sam Bell (both athletes with disability) participated in the waterski events at Moomba in a demonstration event which was popular with audiences. A competition **Moomba Masters** water ski event for people with disability can easily be included in the program to allow the opportunity for some of our finest water ski athletes with disability to take part. Jason Sleep can coordinate and recruit athletes through the guidance of Darren Robertson of Victoria Water Ski Association. **Chairskating** and **wheelchair basketball** are popular and growing sports globally and it would be possible to incorporate this at Moomba. For a more **inclusive Moomba Parade**, a deliberate attempt to recruit organisations such as Vision Australia, Guide Dogs Australia, Scope, Dementia Australia etc should be considered to invite people with disability to be involved with the Moomba parade. The Birdman rally can also be promoted to people with disability through the above mentioned groups, again encouraging people with disability to consider taking part in the event. Disability Sports Australia promotes wheelchair dance sports as a competitive sport in Australia and with the purpose made star lawn dance floor set up at Moomba, there is no reason why this couldn’t be arranged. **Possible partners**: Jason Sleep, Victorian Water Ski Association, Disability Sports Australia, YMCA, Parks Victoria **5.** **FACILITATE THE MOOMBA QUIET HOUR** Everyone loves the excitement of a festival but for some people with an intellectual disability and their families, it can be challenging to navigate the crowds, queues and rides. We suggest that on the Friday before the festival officially opens to the public, the event site could provide exclusive access to people with disability and their families. This could be a quiet, safe and enjoyable space free from crowds and noise and with entertainment to cater to their needs. The music could be kept down, crowds kept to a minimum, sensory activities could be incorporated and for those that don’t want to attend the Moomba festival during peak times, they can still have their own fun Moomba experience. We suggest liaising with Association for Children with Disability who facilitated Dream Night at The Zoo. **Possible partners**: Association for Children with Disability, Independence Australia, Scope **6. ENGAGE ACCESSIBILITY PARTNERS FOR SPONSORSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF GREATER INCLUSION** For access and inclusion to be integrated into workplace culture and all City of Melbourne events, we recommend partnering with an organisation that can deliver the workplace disability awareness training as well as consult on the latest best practice access and inclusion provisions for Moomba and other events. They would consult with the City of Melbourne to develop a Disability and Accessibility Inclusion Plan that educates existing staff about working with people with disability and supports the creation of innovative products and services that are accessible, to meet the needs of a diverse customer base and empower staff to improve customer experience.A key sponsor (for example Cushman & Wakefield are the official Access and Inclusion partner of Sydney Vivid Festival) such as NDIS or TAC could provide the financial support needed to improve facilities and services for people with disability at the event.Please find below a list of the key contacts we have engaged with during the Everyone’s Moomba project to assist you with implementing our key recommendations**Key contacts**

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| Organisation  | Key contact  | Email  | Phone  |
| Association for Children with a Disability  | Karen Dimmock | karend@acd.org.au | 0448 912 786 |
| Access Ability Australia  | Maxine Parker  | maxine@accessabilityaustralia.com | 0403 670 942 |
| Changing Places & Marveloo  | Jack Mulholland  | jack.mulholland@maroondah.vic.gov.au | 0418 381 154 |
| Disability Sport & Recreation | Ayden Shaw | adyen.Shaw@dsr.org.au | 0411 788 315 |
| Lonely Planet Access Manager  | Martin Heng  | martin.heng@lonelyplanet.com.au | 0412 759 322 |
| NDIS  | Parnee Cherubini | parnee.cherubini@ndis.gov.au |  |
| Parks Victoria – Accessibility  | Campbell Message  | campbell.message@parks.vic.gov.au | 0499 331 466  |
| Scope  | Erin Ford | eford@scopeaust.org.au | 0419 871 575 |
| Travability | Bill Forrester  | bill@travability.info | 0417 690 533 |
| Travellers Aid  | Elias Lebbos  | elias.lebbos@travellersaid.org.au | 0411 721 744 |
| Waterski athlete  | Jason Sleep  | samandjasons@optusnet.com | 0411 550 117 |

**Everyone’s Moomba project team**

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**Further information & resources** [Moomba Accessibility audit](https://spaces.hightail.com/space/ADRqp8RbxK) report by Travability |