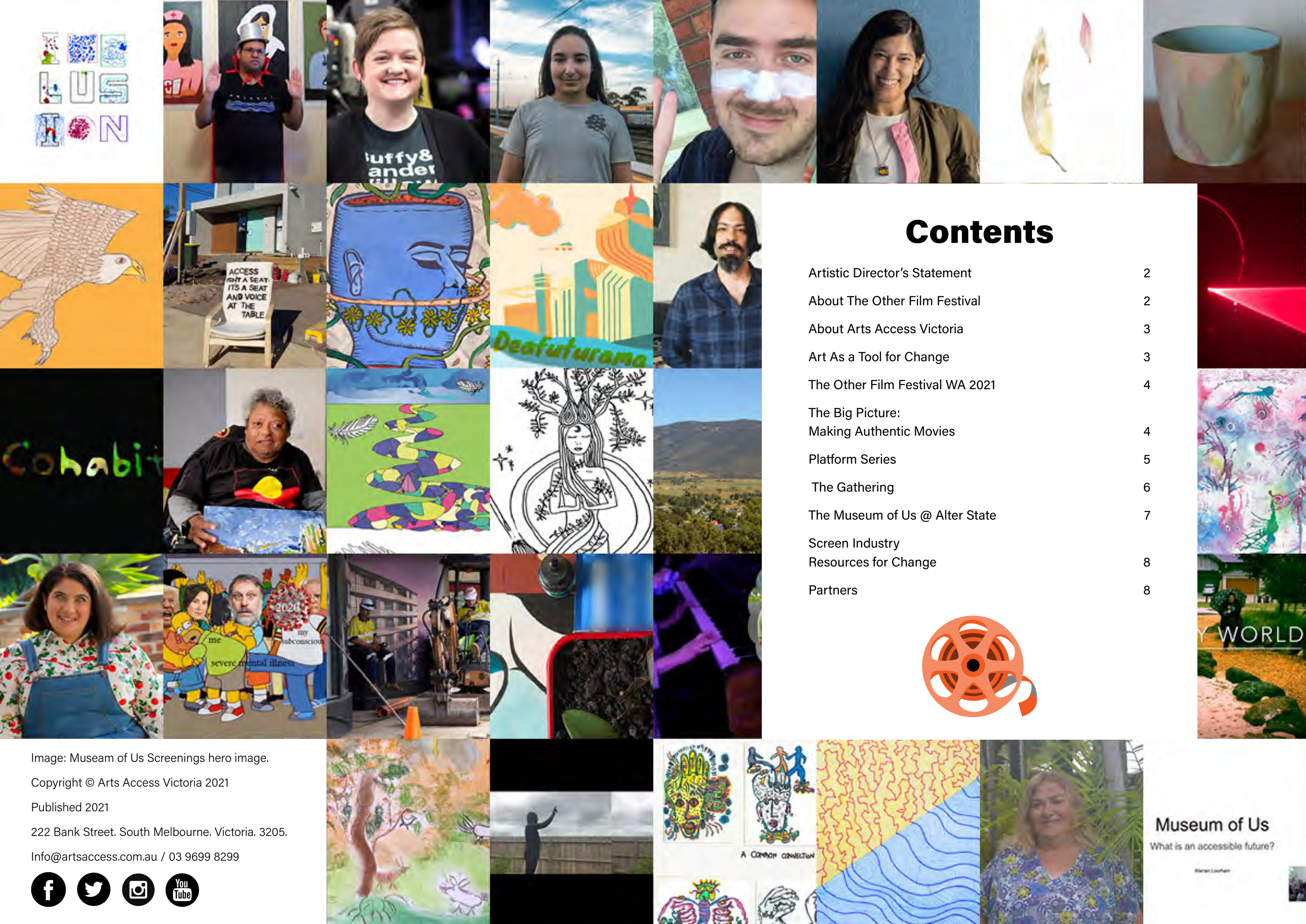


THE OTHER FILM FESTIVAL

2021 Revisited



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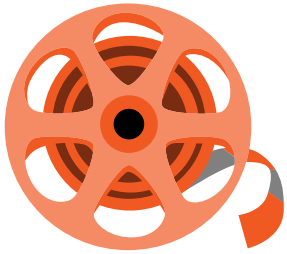


Image: Museum of Us Screenings hero image.
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Museum of Us
What is an accessible future?
Warren Lockhart

Artistic Director's Statement

Welcome to The Other Film Festival 2021! We invite you to revisit and explore our proudly disability-led Artistic Program. Please join us in celebrating all we have achieved!

Living through the second year of the pandemic has been incredibly challenging for all of us. At The Other Film Festival (TOFF) we have strived to offer a 'live' digital program providing valuable and direct community-building opportunities for Deaf and Disabled people. Building on our premise that since TOFF first started in 2004, the screen landscape has transformed and that storytellers play a vital role in shaping and developing new ways to create work and connect with audiences. Underpinning this approach has been a focus on developing cultural equity and targeted outreach opportunities for Deaf and Disabled screen creatives. At AAV and TOFF, we know equity doesn't come from treating people equally. It comes from doing whatever individuals or groups need to achieve equality. The days of it being acceptable for Deaf and Disabled people to go unseen, misrepresented, and under-employed are gone.

We are honoured to be part of the global disability-led screen advocacy movement. A few highlights this year include [FWD-Doc](#) (Documentary Filmmakers with Disability) launch of [A Toolkit for Inclusion & Accessibility: Changing the Narrative of Disability in Documentary Film](#) supported by Netflix and [The FWD-Doc Engagement](#)

[Pack](#) developed in association with the BFI Doc Society Fund. Jack Thorne's powerful [MacTaggart Lecture](#) at Edinburgh TV Festival which directly addresses disability as the forgotten diversity in the TV and wider screen landscape and a prelude to the launch of the landmark [UK TV Disability report](#) in December 2021.

We genuinely thank our Principal Partner - City of Melbourne and Major Government partner - Screen Australia who have both been long term supporters of TOFF. Along with all our valued partners and supporters in front and behind the scenes, including Emerging Writers Festival, MIFF and ACMI. An extra special thank-you to Caroline Bowditch - CEO, AAV (Arts Access Victoria) and Nikki Zerella - General Manager and to all the AAV management team and staff including Adolfo Aranjuez, Sabina Knox, Fury, Ayse Ayranci and Kayla Ibrahim.

We are excited for the future and how The Other Film Festival can play a vital role in the platform and advocacy of disability-led authentic storytelling and representation for Deaf and Disabled screen creatives and audiences.

Fiona Tuomy
Artistic Director, The Other Film Festival



Image: The Other Film Festival at The Malthouse. Photography by Paul Dunn.

About The Other Film Festival

The Other Film Festival (TOFF) is a groundbreaking disability-led program that has put Deaf and Disabled people at the centre of the Australian screen industry for almost 20 years.

Founded in 2004, it is Australia's first international disability film festival and has provided a platform for Deaf and Disabled people to be at the centre of storytelling – not marginalised, imitated or spoken about.

TOFF also advocates for the mainstream screen sector to embrace inclusive production structures and processes, including paid employment opportunities and career pathways for Deaf and Disabled screen practitioners and performers.

TOFF is a major artistic project of Arts Access Victoria.



About Arts Access Victoria

Established in 1974, Arts Access Victoria (AAV) is the state's peak body for arts and disability. As an organisation that is disability-led and which centres Deaf and Disabled people in all of its activities, AAV is at the forefront of innovative disability arts practice, access and inclusion.

AAV seeks to lead transformational and systemic change that benefits all Deaf and Disabled people. The organisation's goals are to:

- Define and build cultural equity for Deaf and Disabled people
- Target and shift the barriers and conditions that maintain cultural inequity
- Position AAV as a resilient and dynamic powerhouse to extend its role and impact.

For AAV, cultural equity means more than just the absence of discrimination or inaccessibility – it will be achieved when everyone is represented within all areas of the arts, screen, cultural and creative industries. The organisation also believes that art is a tool for change, leading an important human-rights-based artistic movement that celebrates the aesthetic potential of disability and access, diversifies the bodies, ideas and ways of being usually found in arts and cultural spaces, and shares authentic stories that are only ours to tell.



Art As a Tool for Change

Deaf and Disabled artists are more than just artists. We are provocateurs. We are changemakers. The skills we've developed navigating inaccessible systems have made us lateral, creative thinkers and problem solvers.

Our work is more than just art and content. It's evidence. It's advocacy. It disrupts assumptions and re-sets stereotypes. It creates solidarity and community. It addresses cultural inequities and the deep pain of not seeing ourselves reflected back in the world.

For many Deaf and Disabled people, arts, screen and cultural participation and practice can be a vehicle for expression, resilience, transformation or even survival. Creativity can be an act of reclaiming power, sharing experiences and shifting ideologies. A way to engender a sense of pride and belonging, or to reduce isolation and loneliness for people and communities who have been doubly-marginalised through the impact of COVID-19.

In this, AAV has a leading role in an important human rights based artistic movement that celebrates the aesthetic potential of disability and access, diversifies the bodies, ideas and ways of being usually found in arts, screen and cultural spaces, and shares authentic stories that are only ours to tell.

Our work creates a space where Deaf and Disabled people can be found at the centre of creative practice and are recognised and valued for our work and contribution to screen and artistic cultural landscapes.



THE OTHER FILM FESTIVAL WA

The Other Film Festival WA 2021

The Other Film Festival WA was a Perth-based celebration of disability-led arts practice. Placing Deaf and disabled creatives at the centre of storytelling and filmmaking, this week-long series was comprised of six artist spotlights and six film screenings.

The artist spotlights – accessible online and for free – illuminated the practices and unique working processes of key artists in the arts and Deaf and disabled space(s). The talks responded to three central themes: authenticity and disability leadership, audience engagement, and disability-led creative process.

The screenings, which were organised into three sessions and held at DADAA Fremantle's Cinema, highlighted the voices, stories and skills of Deaf and disabled filmmakers from Australia and abroad.

Featuring Sarah Houbolt, Caroline Bowditch, Gaelle Mellis, Jenny Sealey, Matt Shilcock and Anna Seymour (artist spotlights) as well as Tony Sarre, Lincoln MacKinnon and Mat Fraser (post-screening Q&As)

Tuesday 16 February – Sunday 21 February

Presented in partnership with the Perth Festival, in association with DADAA



The Big Picture: Making Authentic Movies

This Deaf-led industry panel discussion explored the inclusive production process behind powerful new Australian short film 'Dry Fire', which was included in the 2021 St Kilda Film Festival's Top 100. Moving beyond consultation, 'Dry Fire' features members of the local Deaf community – with Catherine Lillian in a lead role – and was co-directed by Ramas McRae. Hosted at JMC Academy in South Melbourne, the event was held in Auslan and translated into English. Catherine Lillian went on to win 2021 St Kilda Film Festival Award for Best Young Actor.

The panel discussion was followed by networking opportunities and drinks.

Hosted by Walter Kadiki and Mija Gwyn

Saturday 22 May, 3–5pm AEST

Presented in partnership with the St Kilda Film Festival

Image: On the set of Dry Fire. Catherine Lillian is on the left with Adam McConvell on the right.



Image: Lily
Hodgson's TikTok
in on the Left. Tori
Hobbs's TikiTok is
on the Right.

Platform Series

Platform is a three-part development series focusing on disability-led storytelling and short form content for the screen. As part of the Platform project explore how Deaf and Disabled storytellers can use TikTok and other social media platforms to shape and develop new ways to create work and connect with audiences. In 2021, Platform series comprised of a panel event and 'Whatcha Waiting 4?' TikTok commissions in partnership with Emerging Writers Festival and in parallel with Platform Development Lab.



Platform @ Emerging Writers' Festival

How do social media platforms make storytelling and story sharing more accessible to both creators and audiences? In this panel discussion, writer/director Imogen McCluskey ('Love Bug', 'Love Songs') and Screen Australia investment manager Alyce Adams virtually sat down with critic and 'Scattered' co-writer Adolfo Aranjuez to discuss the strengths and setbacks of platforms built for viral video success – and gave tips on how they can be put to good use.

Featuring: Imogen McCluskey and Alyce Adams

Hosted by Adolfo Aranjuez

Monday 21 June, 3.30–4.30pm AEST

Presented in partnership with the Emerging Writers' Festival

[Watch the panel](#)



Platform: Whatcha Waiting 4?

Thanks to the 'Platform' panel discussion, audiences learnt about how to harness social media platforms to tell a story. 'Whatcha Waiting 4?' invited them to give it a go themselves – with inspiration from short narrative videos by Tori Hobbs and Lily Hodgson, which were commissioned as part of the Platform Development Lab.

Featuring work by [Tori Hobbs](#) and [Lily Hodgson](#)

Presented in partnership with the Emerging Writers' Festival

Platform Development Lab

Major creative development project - PLATFORM included a series of commissions for Deaf and Disabled artists to seed new work. Importantly linking in opportunities to engage with a wider screen industry and digital engagement development framework.

Image: Emerging Writers Festival 2021 Festival Artwork.





Image: Still from
Museum of Us
Deafuturama by
Elvin Lam

The Gathering

The Gathering is AAV's free monthly disability-led online forum for Deaf and Disabled artists. Hosted by AAV CEO Caroline Bowditch, the series features a diverse range of Deaf and Disabled artists and industry representatives as well as guest speakers.

In the arts and creative industries, 'excellence' is often defined by non-disabled-based thinking. A self-determination model and the concept of Disability Pride underpin the design of The Gathering as an accessible online event program, whose aims are to:

Learn more about each other and our artistic practices

- Get a clearer picture of who is out there
- Identify new talent and connect with people we haven't met before
- Find out how artists want to connect with AAV.

In 2021 sessions of The Gathering included:

- A grant-writing workshop with Avril McQueen (City of Melbourne)
- A seminar on Disability Pride with Larissa MacFarlane (independent disability activist)
- A behind-the-scenes discussion with Ruby-Rose Pivet-Marsh and Millie Baylis (Emerging Writers' Festival)
- A seminar on the Own Voices movement and the legacy of Stella Young with Amy Marks, Fiona Tuomy, Kayla Ibrahim and Ayse Ayranci.
- An information session on the disability-focused initiative 'The Warehouse Residency' with Emily Sexton, Sarah Rowbottam and Samira Farah (Arts House)
- Reflections on the disability- and youth-focused screen arts project 'Capturing the City' at Signal Studio engaging Deaf and Disabled young people from schools across Melbourne.
- Information sessions on Thrive Festival and the Stella Young Award with Sarah Houbolt and Eva Sifis (AAV)
- An invitation to respond to the creative provocation 'Different Stories, Different Bodies, Different Spaces' with Caroline Bowditch and Fiona Tuomy.

The Museum of Us @ Alter State

Alter State is a groundbreaking new disability arts festival presented by Arts Centre Melbourne and AAV. The inaugural festival will be held in late 2022; however, to lay out a solid foundation for this major event, the Arts Centre unveiled a week-long digital launch event celebrating creativity, disability and storytelling.

As part of Alter State's digital launch, AAV hosted three free events showcasing The Museum of Us, a cohort of 50 Deaf and disabled artists creating digital works that ask: what could an accessible future be for Victoria, and what sort of future do we want to emerge?

The Museum of Us: Telling It Like It Is – Using Text for Change

In this panel event, three artists unpacked the choices they made in devising their Museum of Us commissions. Following the discussion, the artists led audience members in breakout workshops considering what an accessible future is from their own perspectives.

Featuring CB Mako, Ferris Knight and Woz

Hosted by Caroline Bowditch

Wednesday 10 November, 4–6pm AEDT

The Museum of Us: Deafuturama

Three Deaf artists discussed their contributions for The Museum of Us, why they felt these works were important to make at this point in time and what the ideal cultural

landscape is from a Deaf perspective. The event was primarily in Auslan, with English interpretation provided.

Featuring Chelle Destefano, Elvin Lam and Ramas McRae

Hosted by Caroline Bowditch

Friday 12 November, 2–3pm AEDT

The Museum of Us: Embodiment Workshop

Drawing on their practice as a yoga and dance teacher, and inspired by their contribution to The Museum of Us, dancer Raina Peterson led participants on a journey back to their bodies, the ground and the world around them after months of feeling untethered by digital overload and the stress of a global pandemic. Participants learned playful techniques to release tension and express emotion, incorporating breath, mindfulness and movement.

Hosted by Raina Peterson

Saturday 13 November, 4–5pm AEDT

Presented in partnership with Arts Centre Melbourne

Image: Museum of Us: Embodiment Workshop hero image.



Screen Industry Resources for Change

An impact project to target and shift the barriers and conditions that maintain cultural inequity for Deaf and Disabled people in the screen industry. A ‘live’ project on AAV website, the initial focus of [Screen Industry Resources for Change](#) is on TOFF’s rich archive of disability-led panel events. Featuring artists of diverse backgrounds generously sharing their experiences and advice, all with a purpose of providing support and sparking change. Overall, the events focus on current issues and barriers in the screen industry as experienced by Deaf and Disabled screen practitioners and from other marginalised communities. The panel events are solution driven, providing advice on how crucial systemic change can be made. Including practical tips on creating authentic storytelling and representation, career pathway suggestions etc. Screen Industry Resources for Change provides an invaluable gateway on how to inclusively navigate the Australian screen industry.



Partners

The Other Film Festival is Presented by Arts Access Victoria.



ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA

Our Principal Partner is The City of Melbourne



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Our Major Government Partners are Screen Australia and The Australia Council for the Arts and The Victorian Government.



Australian Government



Australian Government



Our 2021 program was made possible with support and partnerships from: Arts Centre Melbourne, DADAA, Emerging Writers’ Festival, The Perth Festival and The St Kilda Film Festival.

