

Disability Arts History Australia Archival Website Tour

as at 15 October 2025

Home Page

The Disability Arts History Australia website begins with a homepage, with a site logo header in blue, and links to

- Information about this website
- Acknowledgement of Country
- Acknowledgement of Disability Community
- Upsetting Content
- and Access

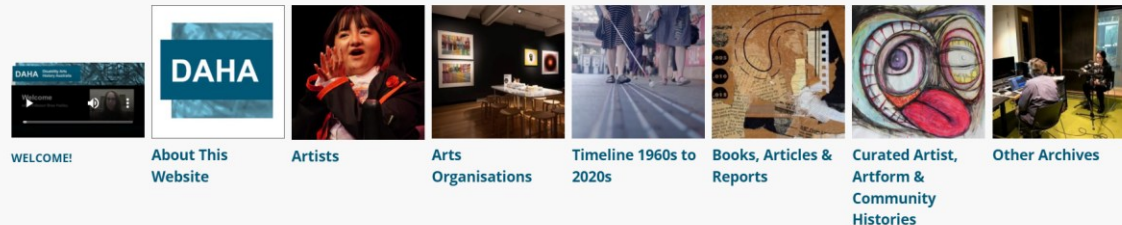
which participants in the co-design wanted, but, for accessibility reasons, not as automatic pop ups, or automatically playing videos.



There is text indicating the website documents the transformative impact of artists, arts organisations, and allies working in Disability Arts in Australia from the 1970s to the present.

This website documents the transformative impact of artists, arts organisations, and allies working in Disability Arts in Australia from the 1970s to the present.

It includes interviews, organisational records, a timeline of important moments in policy, practice, and advocacy, and a list of books, articles, and reports.



Then, there is a series of images of icons and artworks linking to –

- a Welcome video
- information About This Website
- Artists
- Arts Organisations
- a Timeline 1960s to 2020s
- books, articles, and reports
- curated artist, artform, and community histories, and other archives

At the bottom of the page we have the logos of the website's funders and producing partners – the Australian Research Council, Queensland University of Technology, Creative Australia, Curtin University, University of Melbourne, and Arts Access Victoria.

About This Website Page

If the viewer clicks on information About this Website, there is text indicating the website shares the stories of d/Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodivergent artists in Australia.

There is another series of images of icons and artworks to link to information about

- this Project
- the Project Team
- Access
- Upsetting Content
- Terminology, Scope, and Future Development
- Credits and Acknowledgements,
- And, again, a link to Contact Us

[About This Project](#) [Project Team](#) [Terminology, Scope & Future Development](#) [Credits & Acknowledgements](#)

This website shares the stories of d/Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodivergent artists in Australia.

It hopes, by celebrating the groundbreaking contribution of these artists, to provide a resource for artists, arts organisations, researchers, and policy makers committed to making the arts industry more inclusive.



[About This Project](#)



[Project Team](#)



[Access](#)



[Upsetting Content](#)



[Terminology, Scope
& Future](#)



[Credits &
Acknowledgements](#)



[Contact Us](#)

Artists Page

If the viewer clicks back to the homepage, they can choose to visit the Artist page

This page shares the stories of artists and arts workers who identify as d/Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodivergent and their allies.

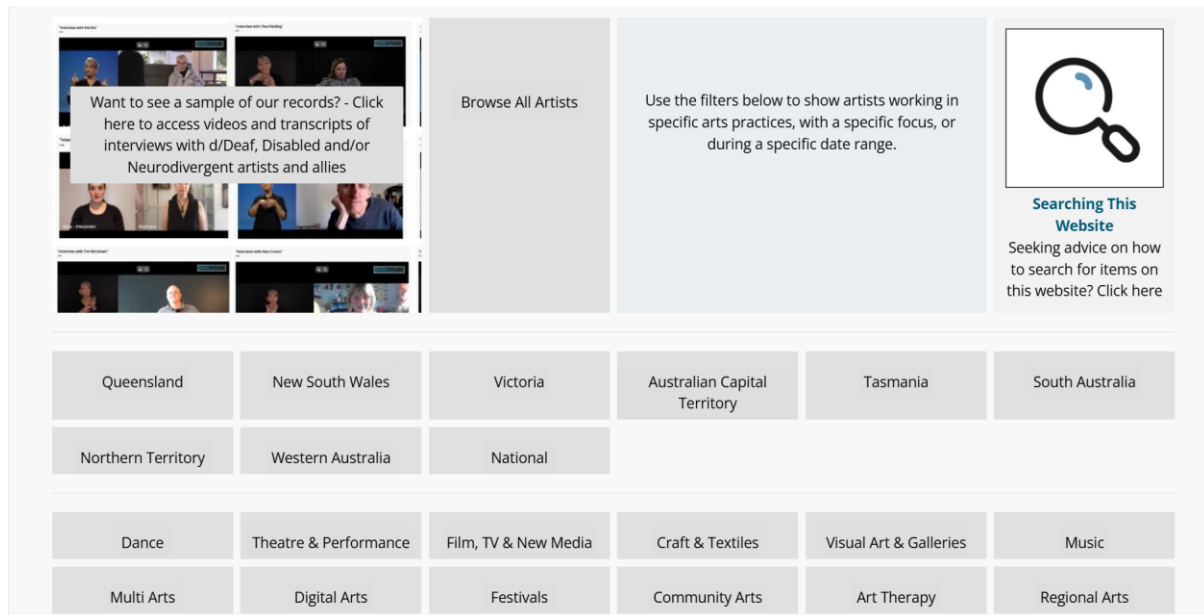
The stories are as diverse as the artists themselves.

Some artists speak about their personal identification and pride. Some artists speak about the barriers they have encountered in schools, universities, and the arts, media, and culture industries. Some speak about their arts practice, experiments, and innovation. Some speak about how they have worked to create change. Many speak about employment, and their commitment to breaking down barriers to full education, economic, and career opportunities for Disabled artists.

Image of artwork 'Figures (Berlin 1)' by Jeremy Hawkes

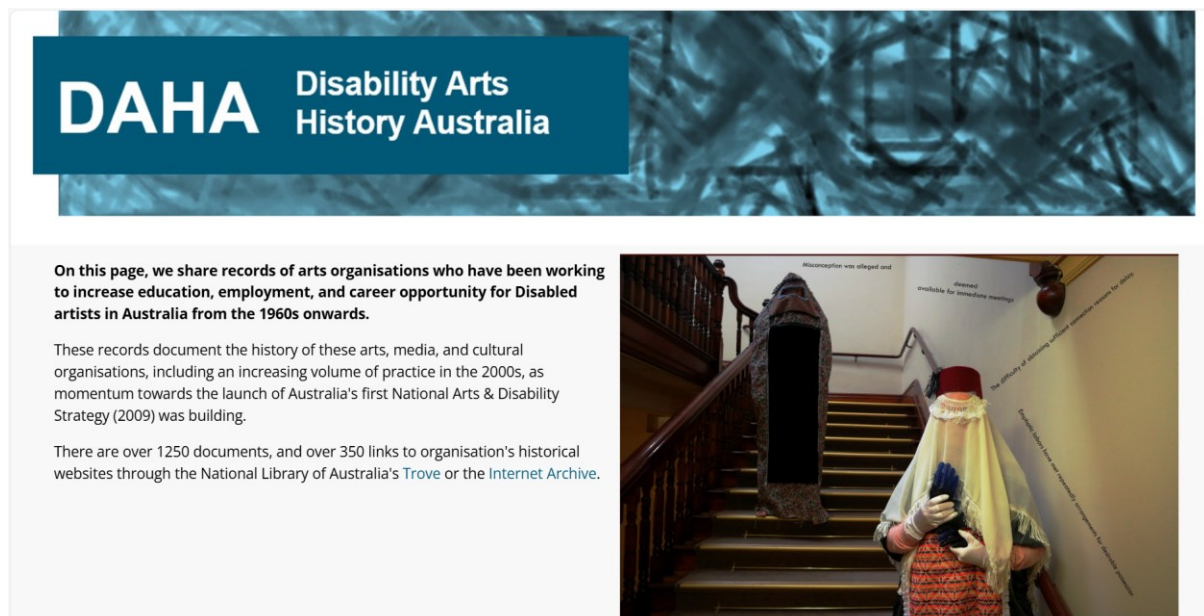


This page has a link to a sample of our records – videos and transcripts of interviews with d/Deaf, Disabled, and/or Neurodivergent artists – a series of filters, to look at what comes up by State, by artform, or by artist cohort, and a link with information about more advanced searches.

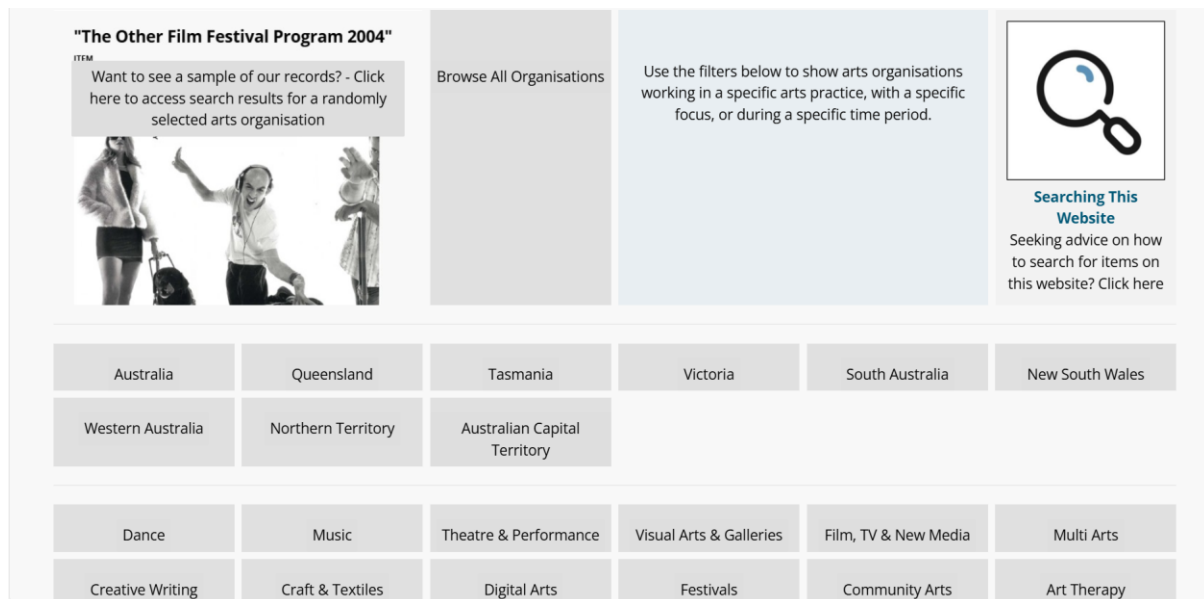


Arts Organisations Page

If the viewer clicks back to the homepage, they can also choose to visit the Arts Organisation page



This page has a link to a sample of our records – at launch, it is about The Other Film Festival – and another series of filters, to look at what comes up by State, by artform, or by artist cohort, or get information about more advanced searches.



the website includes



1,661 Archival Records: Annual Reports, Programs, Promotional Flyers and Cards and more, available via URLs or PDFs.



49 Interviews: With d/Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent artists and allies, with Auslan interpretation, captions, and transcripts for each video



Search Tools: To explore 10,864 people, organisations, and works associated with Australia's peak Disability Arts organisations, and filter for location, artform, or topics such as Access, Education and employment, Participation in public and political life

Access Page

As the historical documents are either links to PDFs, or to websites, we have put a summary describing what is in each item, on the page, and in the alt text tags in the PDFs.

Colour, font, and layout

- Dark colour on light but not bright white background, single colours, single columns - with some differences in preference for light mode and dark mode reading
- Avoid use of red and green which can be difficult for users with colour reading differences
- Larger, less crowded, sans serif font settings, and option to increase font to larger size
- Use of bold, underline, italics or other markers to help follow the flow where there is a long section of text, or there is a hyperlink to another section of text, page, or resource

Accessibility features

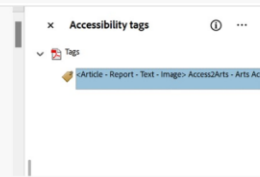
- Use of plain English writing - rather than academic English writing - wherever possible throughout the website
- Image description for pictures, symbols, and other visual content in the website
- Transcripts, captions, and wherever possible Auslan interpretation for video content created for the website

We have built this site using the open source platform [Omeka](#), recommended to us for its capacity to display digital collections - [Omeka provide information about their commitment to making Omeka S an accessible option for building collections and exhibits online at this link](#). The site is hosted via the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) Nectar research cloud,

This has allowed us to create a searchable repository which references over 10,000 persons, organisations, works, places, and events - and do so on a fixed budget.



Image of Accessibility Tags in PDF



The use of open source software has impacted the accessibility of the site - for example, this software does not include a feature to flip between light and dark mode. The website does use shorter sections of text, and images, in a recommended font size, style, and colour. The webpages have, upon testing, worked with screen readers, and we have worked to put ALT Text behind every image.

Timeline Page

If the viewer clicks back to the homepage, they can also choose to visit the



Timeline: Important moments in Disability Arts practice, policy, and activism



Reference List: Books, articles, reports and other helpful resources



Curated Histories: Pages focused on specific themes such as Disability Arts Festivals or Government Policy, Strategy, and Funding

This, for example, is the timeline of key moments in Disability Arts, policy, practice and advocacy from the 1960s to the 2020s, developed through a collaborative process, with filters to click on everything from the 1960s and Prior or mainly the policy, practice, or activism from the 1960s and prior – and so on by decades.



This timeline of key moments in disability arts, policy, practice and advocacy from the 1960s to the 2020s shows how Disability Arts in Australia has developed over the decades.

The entries in the timeline have been developed through a collaborative process. They include entries based on research which include references (and links to resources), and entries based on the collective memory of d/Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodiverse arts workers.

Image of artwork 'Care Shed' by Janice Rieger

1960s & Prior Disability Arts Practice	1960s & Prior Disability Arts Policy	1960s & Prior Disability & Social Policy	1960s & Prior Disability Politics & Activism	All 1960s & Prior
1970s Disability Arts Practice	1970s Disability Arts Policy	1970s Disability and Social Policy	1970s Disability Politics & Activism	All 1970s
1980s Disability Arts Practice	1980s Disability Arts Policy	1980s Disability and Social Policy	1980s Disability Politics & Activism	All 1980s

Terminology, Scope, and Future Developments Page

The Disabled artists who have built the site, and tested the features – for example, screen reading – estimate the site is around 70% accessible.

The main access problem is

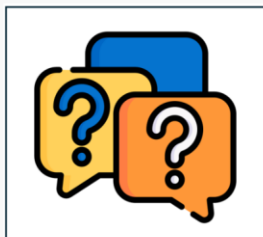
- We are presenting original PDF documents with Courier fonts on coloured paper
- We have – as we say on the Terminology, Scope, and Future Development page the viewer sees here – retained the language in use at the time, which will not necessarily align with how we describe and define Disability and Disability Arts today

In Australia, the Census, and [related research](#), provides some data on how many Disabled artists have worked and are working in Australia's arts, media, and cultural industries.

However, what we consider to be a disability, and what information government and industry organisations collect about Disabled people's participation in education, employment, and the arts has changed over time.

This, combined with the stigma associated with disclosing a disability, makes it difficult to know how representative of our community the historical data actually is.

The resources required to travel, collect, acquire copyright approvals, and digitise records are also a challenge in creating a website like this.



- In some cases, artists have not had time to document work, or retained documents, and mainstream museums, libraries, and archives have not collected documents.
- In other cases, documents exist in boxes in organisations, or libraries, but staff of small organisations or libraries lack time to assist researchers to find, sort, categorise, and digitise materials.
- In other cases, organisations find it difficult to decide if historical content can or should be shared, if it includes the words or images of persons who may not have understood the content to be public at the time, or who may have now passed way.

The project team, in collaboration with the Steering Committee, has decided it is better to start, and share the stories and histories we have collected so far - even if it is not all stories - than let the difficulties stop us sharing anything at all.

Further Development

The website does not - and, given the limitations of researching historical arts practice cannot - share the stories of all the artists and allies who have contributed to the development of Disability Arts in Australia as at its launch date in 2025. It starts the process of documenting the arts practice, advocacy, and progress towards equality. We hope it may continue to develop as funding, resources, and the flow of our own energies as d/Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodivergent people allow.

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Contact Us

 Visit the Disability Arts History Australia website at:
<https://disabilityartshistoryaustralia.net>

 For media inquiries, interviews, or further information, contact: Professor Bree Hadley, bree.hadley@qut.edu.au <https://www.qut.edu.au/about/our-people/academic-profiles/bree.hadley>