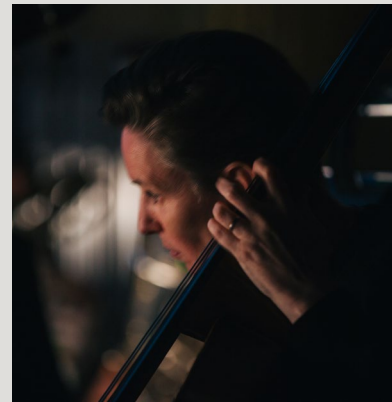


APRIL 2025

ORCHESTRA
VICTORIA

ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLAN 2025 — 2028



ORCHESTRA VICTORIA ACKNOWLEDGES
THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LANDS ON WHICH
WE WORK, THE WURUNDJERI WOI WURRUNG PEOPLE
OF THE EASTERN KULIN NATIONS.

WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THEIR ELDERS PAST
AND PRESENT, AND TO ALL FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE
ACROSS AUSTRALIA, WHOSE TRADITIONS OF MUSIC
MAKING AND STORYTELLING HAVE CONTINUED
ON THE LAND FOR MILLENIA.

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Introduction

As one of Victoria's two professional orchestras, Orchestra Victoria prides itself on its ability to collaborate and connect. We do this not only alongside our partner companies in The Australian Ballet, Opera Australia, and Victorian Opera, but also with all the communities that hold an important place in the cultural landscape of our state.

Orchestra Victoria acknowledges that there are inherent barriers that come when trying to access our artform of live orchestral performance, from the venues we perform in, to the repertoire we program and plenty in between. It is time for us to address these barriers and help make the art we create equitably accessible for all our audiences.

We look forward to seeing the goals within this plan grow and develop in the coming years, and we strive to build greater connections with people who are Deaf, Disabled and / or neurodivergent.



This plan is a living document, which will be evaluated annually as part of our policy review process, and Orchestra Victoria is excited to learn, grow, and create a more equitable organisation into the future.

This plan has six focus areas:

- Communications & Marketing
- Community Engagement
- Digital
- Season Programming & Production
- Staffing
- Venue & Partner Liaison

Who we are

Orchestra Victoria is an expert pit orchestra specialising in the opera and ballet artforms. With a rich history of artistic excellence, the orchestra performs music that adds life and emotion to the stories told by our partners and collaborators on the stage. Requiring exceptional teamwork and communication skills, each performance is a unique expression of art and brings depth and emotion beyond words for our partners and audiences.

Committed to telling stories through music, Orchestra Victoria is also proud to work with our state's leading venues, festivals, and artists to curate and develop unique concert and outreach experiences for all Victorians.



Values

INSPIRATION & QUALITY

We are passionately committed to our work, to excellence and to offering inspirational performances to our fellow artists, the companies who are our performance partners and to our audiences.

CUSTODIANSHIP & INNOVATION

We are expert custodians of our centuries old crafts, whilst being committed to fostering exciting future developments in our artforms.

COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP

Our work epitomises true collaboration and partnership. We are supportive, reliable, collegiate, empathetic, versatile, responsive and creative.

TEAMWORK & RESPECT

We value each other's contributions and support each other's success. We work respectfully as a team, as performance partners and as a Company. We encourage inclusion and diversity.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

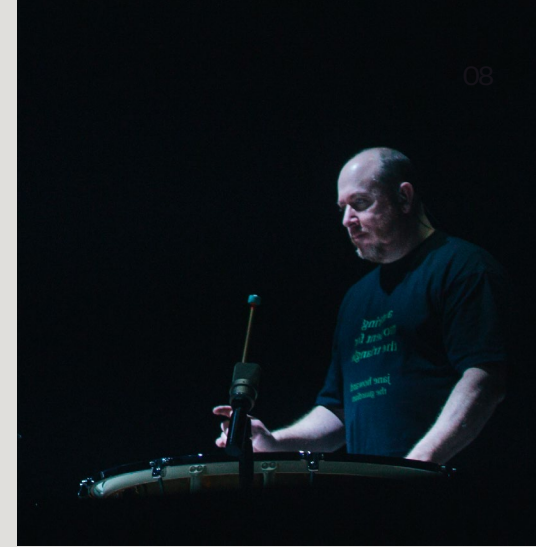
We are accountable to our communities and each other, both now and in the long term. We engage with and serve our communities diligently and responsively.

Language

This plan uses the term Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Disabled people. We acknowledge and respect that people use different language to identify themselves and their communities in different contexts.

Orchestra Victoria is guided by the Social Model of Disability, where the barriers to access are caused by society, which need to be changed and adapted to provide an equitable opportunity for all to participate in our community.

Orchestra Victoria respects the varying ways d/Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing people may wish to self-identify. For the purpose of this Accessibility Action Plan we use 'Deaf' to respect the rights of the Deaf community that identify as part of a cultural and linguistic minority.



Definitions

These definitions have been provided by Arts Access Victoria in 2024

Ableism: The barriers, beliefs and discrimination against Disabled people. It is systemic and individual, direct and indirect, intentional and unintentional.

Complex mental health: Includes diverse experiences of mental, emotional, psychological, physiological and environmental stress. Complex mental health includes trauma, neurological differences, psychiatric diagnoses and situational distress. It may also include brain injury, disease or reaction to medication

Deaf: People who are proudly and culturally Deaf. They may or may not identify as Disabled. The Deaf community is recognised as a distinct cultural and linguistic group.

deaf: refers to people who are medically diagnosed as deaf, but might not identify as culturally Deaf.

Disability: Disability results from an interaction between a non-inclusive society and an individual.

Disabled People: Refers to people who experience structural and social barriers because of their physical and cognitive differences. Identity first language uses a capital letter as a mark of Disability pride.

Easy English: A way of delivering visual documents for people with high barriers to reading written English. These barriers may be sensory, intellectual or language based. Easy English uses images to illustrate key instructions with a short sentence of 5 words. Easy English uses a large font and a lot of space. Easy English documents need to be prepared by an accredited translator.

Hard of Hearing: Refers to people who have a hearing loss and use speech as a primary means of communication.

Lived Experience: Refers to the experiences that people have of Disability/Deafness and Ableism.

Lived Experience Consultant/ Advisor: People with lived experience of ableism and disabling barriers who give advice or feedback on how to address access barriers. Lived Experience consultants have worked in Disability advocacy and have connections with a variety of Deaf and Disabled communities.

Neurodivergent: People who think or feel in ways that are different from social norms. Some Neurodivergent people may have a diagnosis of Autism, ADHD, or other medical conditions.

People with Disabilities: Person centred language to refer to people who experience disabling barriers.

Plain English: Suitable English for people with reasonable literacy skills (Year 7 Australian Education). Uses simple, everyday language that is free of jargon and technical terms.

Social Model of Disability: The social model of disability is an important way of perceiving inequality because it views disability as stemming from communities, services and spaces that are not accessible or inclusive. In the social model of disability, it is society that places limits on a person, not their disability

Universal design: Making spaces, policies and programs that are inclusive, accessible and can be used independently by all people.

Accessibility Working Group

This plan has been developed through a co-design process with Lived Experience Consultants with co-facilitated sessions led by Arts Access Victoria and employees of Orchestra Victoria.

Members of Orchestra Victoria's Accessibility Working Group have made a commitment to help build, roll out and evaluate key actions of the plan. Group members are from both Orchestra Victoria's administration and artistic teams.

Orchestra Victoria Accessibility Working Group Members:

Jacinta Ewers (she/her) - Chair
Chief Executive Officer

Binny Baik (he/him)
Tutti Violin

Kylie Davies (she/her)
Associate Principal Bass

Rebecca Shirley (she/her)
Tutti Violin

Sharon Hatton (she/her)
Freelance French Horn musician

Alexandra Lovejoy (she/her)
Orchestra Personnel Manager

Nikki Bassani (she/her)
Director of Orchestra Management

Arts Access Victoria Co-Facilitators:

Dr. Margaret Mayhew (she/her/they/them) is a queer visual artist and performer who has lived with ableism and chronic pain for over 35 years. They have taught in design and diversity studies, and work in consultancy and training with Arts Access Victoria.

Janice Florence (she/her) Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Weave Movement Theatre, Janice has been a pioneering force in the field of inclusive dance and physical theatre for the past 30 years. They work at Arts Access Victoria as Manager Consultation and Training and have 20 years of Disability advocacy experience.

Feedback

Orchestra Victoria acknowledges that this process will take time, and whilst we will strive to meet our goals and actions outlined in this plan, we encourage community feedback, to share their thoughts, feedback, and experiences to help guide our continued improvement.

Feedback can be shared in the following ways:

Providing feedback over the phone (03) 9694 3600. Feedback can be provided directly to Sheryl Leong (Orchestra & Administration Officer) or Jacinta Ewers (Chief Executive Officer – may need to return your call at a later time).

Emailing us at orchinfo@orchestravictoria.com.au

Contacting us to request a meeting with an Accessibility Working Group member to receive feedback face to face or another option that suits the individual. An Auslan interpreter can be provided.

Feedback can be kept anonymous if requested. All feedback is fed through the Chief Executive Officer.

Disability legislation and policy frameworks

Orchestra Victoria complies with the following disability related legislation and frameworks:

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Federal)

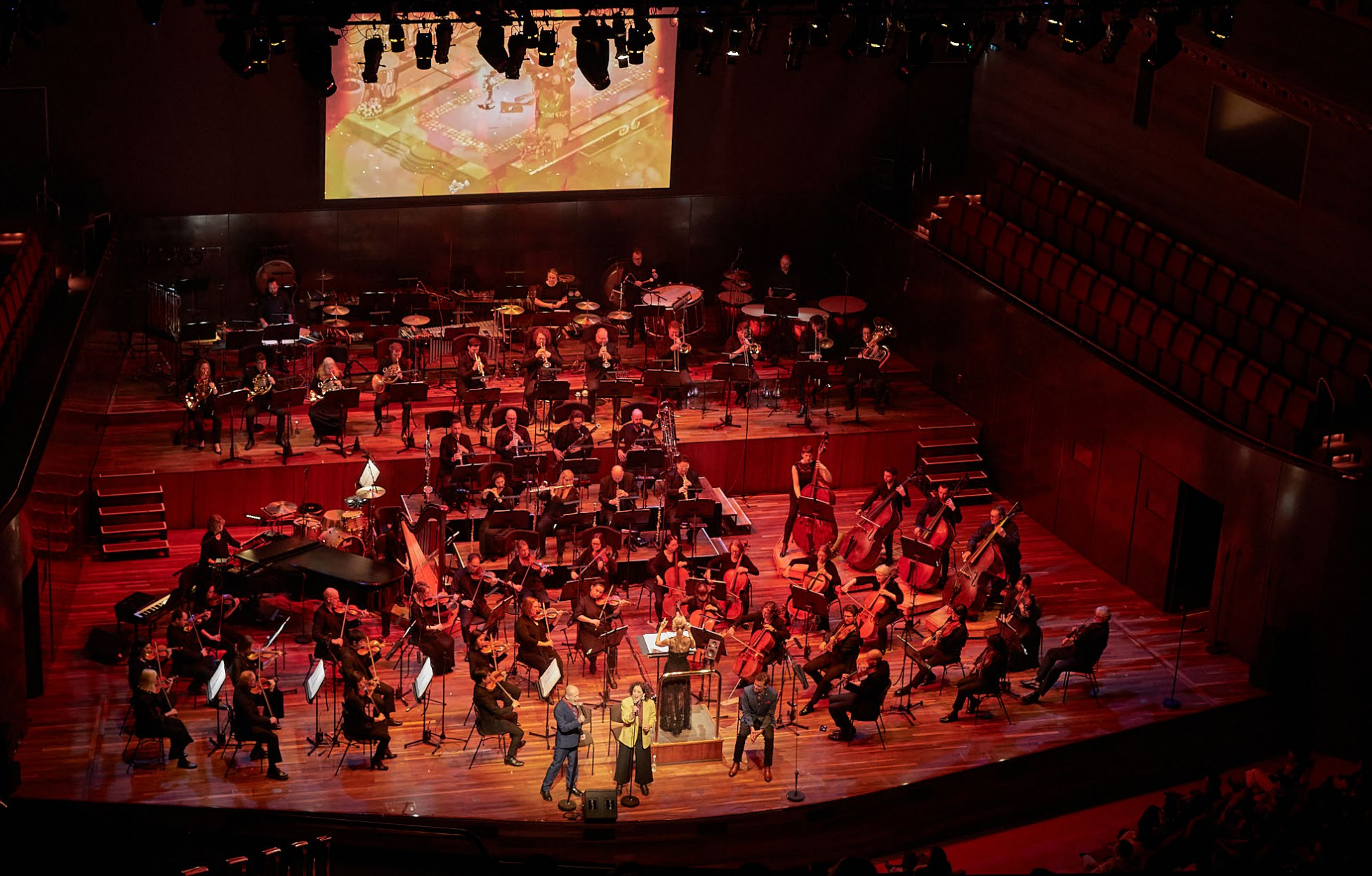
Victorian Disability Act 2006 (State)

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (State)

National Arts & Disability Strategy (Federal)

National Disability Strategy 2021 – 2031 (Federal)

Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan 2022 – 2026 (State)



FOCUS AREAS

Evaluation Measures

The actions in this plan address barriers in our industry that have been identified. Our 2025 – 2028 actions will be evaluated annually as part of a regular review process to log progress and track accomplishments and challenges facing the organisation. Feedback from audiences, employees, partners and disability organisations will be sought throughout the life of the plan, as the views of people with lived experience will help determine the success of the plan’s actions. The success of this plan will be assessed against both qualitative and quantitative measures that are outlined in the action items below. This plan will be published on the Orchestra Victoria website and Orchestra Victoria’s Chief Executive Officer will ensure that progress is reviewed and reported.

Focus Area 1: Communications & Marketing

The aim of this Focus Area is to ensure that Orchestra Victoria’s communications are available in plain English and formatted for screen reader. By instilling this style of language into all the company’s documentation, we will start to generate and cultivate a culture of inclusivity within our communications to our internal and external stakeholders.

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Assess email / document templates & create Plain English versions	January 2026	Orchestra Management Orchestra & Administration Officer Chief Executive Officer	% of documents converted into plain language
Build Plain English documents to support our organisational documentation (e.g. Strategic Plan)	June 2027	Orchestra Management Orchestra & Administration Officer Chief Executive Officer	% of documents that have plain English versions available

Focus Area 2: Community Engagement

By engaging with local communities, organisations with lived experiences and Lived Experience Consultants, we can broaden our knowledge to ensure the artistic output we curate is relevant and engaging for our audiences.

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Undertake consultation with the Deaf/Hard of Hearing communities regarding what they would like to see from Orchestra Victoria's performance outcomes	December 2025	Chief Executive Officer Artistic Advisor	# of consultation processes undertaken Develop an annual report that tracks our consultation processes and measures what we can implement. Future action plans to encompass roll out of actions discovered during this consultation.
Undertake consultation with Disability led organisations specialising in neurodiversion/traumatic brain injuries to better understand how Orchestra Victoria can provide accessible services to their communities	December 2026	Artistic Planning & Engagement Manager Chief Executive Officer	# of consultation processes undertaken Develop an annual report that tracks our consultation processes and measures what we can implement. Future action plans to encompass roll out of actions discovered during this consultation.
Build relationships with Deaf and Disabled communities. We will do this by: • Providing clear access information on the website • Programming accessible performances so the communities can begin and continue to engage with OV • Performing in communities where appropriate e.g. bringing performances to people that are unable to come to us. • Engage and collaborate with artists from these communities • Monitor requests for accommodations through our website and through venue information (where appropriate)	December 2026 Ongoing	Artistic Team Orchestra & Administration Officer Chief Executive Officer	In Year 1, develop process for gathering anecdotal feedback from community. From Year 2 onwards gather anecdotal feedback from community. # of communities we're engaging with on an annual basis

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Provide regular opportunities for OV to work with Deaf/Hard of Hearing artists or artists with disability.	December 2027	Artistic Team Chief Executive Officer	# of programs involving a Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Disabled artists Offer a debrief with Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Disabled artists following each project to check that the experience was culturally safe, and what the organisation could be doing better. Artists will be compensated for their time, the debrief will be written into their contract, but voluntarily and a support person will be offered.
We will do this by:			
Engaging with Disability led Arts Organisations to develop quality programming and make contact with Artists	December 2025		
Identifying opportunities to expand our current programming to encompass artistic works created by or for Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Disabled artists / communities	December 2026		
Engaging guest artists from Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Disabled communities for OV's self-presented projects, where appropriate	December 2027		



Focus Area 3: Digital

By engaging with local communities, organisations with lived experiences and Lived Experience Consultants, by building a suite of online resources, Orchestra Victoria will be able to ensure that our patrons have the information they require at their fingertips to empower them to attend and take part in our performances.

By linking in with our partner companies and venues, we can ensure that audiences can have a well-rounded empowering experience.

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Provide alternative text descriptions on all visual content	March 2025	Artistic Planning & Engagement Manager Orchestra & Administration Officer	% of photos with an alternative text description. Success is < 90%
Publish a commitment to promotion of Deaf and Disabled inclusion	June 2025	Chief Executive Officer Orchestra & Administration Officer	Commitment to inclusion is published on OV website.
Link access information to our event pages on our website: • Venue Access • Show Access	December 2025	Director of Orchestra Management Orchestra Personnel Manager	Seek feedback from Lived Experience Consultants and website users Monitor page hits
Provide an option for employees and audiences to share any access needs	December 2025	Artistic Planning & Engagement Manager Orchestra & Administration Officer	% of staff completing relevant section on Personal Details form Review of how information has been utilised to increase accessibility for impacted staff / audiences
Implement online key system	December 2025	Orchestra & Administration Officer	% of seasons/documents using key system. Anecdotal feedback

Focus Area 4: Season Programming and Production (OV Self-Presents)

Orchestra Victoria works closely for 75% of the year with partner companies, where our autonomy to roll out initiatives is limited. However, for our self-presented seasons we have the opportunity to focus on ways to increase our accessibility for our audiences, whether that's through increasing accessibility through live outcomes in concert halls, or by reimagining the way the orchestra presents performances..

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Following consultation with Deaf / Hard of Hearing communities, provide Auslan interpretation and/or other necessary presentation tools as part of concert performance. We will facilitate cross-promotion with Deaf/ Hard of Hearing communities	June 2025	Artistic Planning & Engagement Manager	# of performances with accessibility measures in place
Allocate Parent's/Carer's Room at all calls	June 2025	Production Department Director of Orchestra Management	# of seasons that have access to a Parent's Room. Success is 75%+
Develop a Concert Series that can travel to people who are unable to leave their homes	December 2025	Artistic Team	# of concerts taken to alternate locations (eg. Aged care homes)
Introduce Accessible Ticketing options	June 2027	Chief Executive Officer	of accessible tickets sold / complimentary / number of Companion Card tickets utilised
Research, develop and implement a Sensory Concert Series	December 2027	Chief Executive Officer Artistic Team	# of Sensory Performance annually
Investigate and develop a timeline to live-stream performances	December 2027	Chief Executive Officer Artistic Team	# of live-streams Monitor the livestream views.

Focus Area 5: Staffing

Orchestra Victoria is committed to creating a safer workspace for employees, musicians, guest artists and audiences. We believe a key measure is to ensure that our people are given the knowledge they need to make empowered decisions in the workplace.

Workplace training will be shared across the company and will cover internal processes and external responsibilities. We will ensure that training encompasses a range of different perspectives from different sections of Deaf and Disabled communities.

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Implement the Sunflower Lanyard Program. This will include explanation of what the program is, and contacts of who to approach with access queries	December 2025	Chief Executive Officer	Anecdotal Feedback from audiences given to staff members
Develop a training / education schedule for all staff and begin to roll it out: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build a training schedule with training provided at regular intervals for all existing staff• Training schedules will encompass different areas of access needs• When new staff are inducted organise initial training and ensure they become part of the regular schedule• One - two new training programs should be rolled out annually	June 2025	Production Department Director of Orchestra Management	% of staff trained annually Collect feedback from staff annually to understand value in training.

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
<p>Build awareness around flexible working policies by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing this information as part of the on-boarding process• Seeking access needs from OV staff (if they wish to disclose) so CEO is aware of who might benefit from being aware flexible working policies• Remind OV staff of these policies at Full Company Meetings throughout the year• Make the policies easily accessible (provided through myDIESE or linked in project information)• Work with TAB HR staff to suggest review of Flexible Working Policies by Lived Experience Consultants / advocates	June 2025	Chief Executive Officer Director of Orchestra Management Orchestra & Administration Officer	<p>Feedback through staff surveys</p> <p>Report developed showing records of where, when and how access information is provided, and the number of requests that have come in from staff.</p>
Implement a targeted recruitment program to ensure diversity in administration staff recruitment	December 2027	Chief Executive Officer	<p>Number of adjustment request</p> <p>Number of access processes embedded into the recruitment process</p>



Focus Area 6: Venue / Partner Liaison

Orchestra Victoria works closely with many different partner companies and venues. Whilst there are items that remain outside of Orchestra Victoria’s control, we commit to advocating for and increasing the focus on accessibility as much as is possible..

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	RESPONSIBLE	EVALUATION MEASURES
<p>Briefing venue staff on any access needs for:</p> <p>OV employees (where permission has been granted to share the information)</p> <p>Audience members (where OV staff have received the information)</p>	December 2025	Artistic Planning & Engagement Manager Director of Orchestra Management Director of Production	Anecdotal Feedback through audience and staff surveys
<p>Build an access checklist to go through with partners / venues. This will include:</p> <p>Linking the checklist to our public statement promoting Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Disabled inclusion and our Access page on our website.</p> <p>Asking companies who undertake the checklist to perform a self-audit on what parts of the checklist they can/cannot meet.</p> <p>Ensure communications are clear for any regular needs that may not be able to be met for any particular season.</p>	December 2026	Chief Executive Officer Director of Production	<p># of seasons where a checklist is utilised in the preparation of a season</p> <p>% of seasons that completed the checklist. Success is where at least 50% of the components are met</p> <p>Anecdotal Feedback through audience and staff surveys about value of checklist</p>
<p>Advocate for live-streaming for performances held in venues that may be inaccessible to people within the community.</p>	December 2027	Chief Executive Officer Director of Production	# of live-streams



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VICTORIA

— We bring the Music

Photo Pierre Toussaint