**Lucy Guerin Inc’s Disability Action Plan 2020-2024**

**Introduction:**

Lucy Guerin Inc (LGI) is an Australian dance company established in Melbourne in 2002 to create and tour new dance works. Over the last 17 years the company has evolved from a structure that enables Guerin’s choreographic projects, to an organisation that also supports the development of independent dance artists in Melbourne. Through a program of residencies, classes, workshops, presentations and mentoring opportunities, it is responsive to the shifting ideas and contexts generated by dance and choreography in the world today.

Key goals for the company include valuing risk, integrity and relevance, challenging artists, audiences and the form of dance, as well as building the Company’s profile and legacy through deeper relationships and broader access. The commitments that LGI makes below and through this document aligns with these core goals.

In addressing access and inclusion, ongoing improvements will include actively:

- addressing barriers to access and participation, and

- supporting the development of artistic practice for Deaf and Disabled artists

to enable their access to and inclusion in LGI’s professional development programs and studio resources with the same degree of opportunity, ease and freedom as any artist could, wherever possible to do so.

**Definitions:**

In response to the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons with Disabilities, LGI particularly recognises that ‘disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others’ (UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons with Disabilities, 2006, p.1) as well as ‘recognising further the diversity of persons with disabilities’ (p.2).

LGI adopts the social model of disability, whereby individuals are disabled by the environment rather than any physical or intellectual difference, and disability is a social issue, not an individual one\*. This document is a commitment to championing access and inclusion through relevant LGI programs and to ensure that the Company operates as a disability-confident dance company and an ally to the disability community.

\* For more information, please refer to:

Social model of disability: <https://pwd.org.au/resources/disability-info/social-model-of-disability/>

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convention_accessible_pdf.pdf>

**Purpose:**

Lucy Guerin Inc engages in an inspiring and innovative exploration of contemporary dance that resonates within our culture and the global community. We value the need for risk, integrity and relevance in order to stimulate audiences to experience uncommon perceptions of their world and themselves.

**Goals:**

1) To create and present new contemporary dance works that challenge artists, audiences and the form of dance.

2) To develop and nurture the Australian contemporary dance sector at WXYZ Studios.

3) To make sustained connections with global contemporary dance networks though presentation of the Company’s works, dialogue, exchange and education.

4) To build the Company’s profile and legacy through deeper relationships and broader access.

5) To ensure the long-term sustainability org the Company through socially, financially and environmentally responsible management and governance.

**Commitment / Action for DAP:**

In response to the four key pillars outlined in this action plan, LGI commits to:

**Access:**

- making opportunities available that support the development of professional Australian contemporary dance artists, inclusive of those identifying as Deaf and / or Disabled. (Goals 1, 2, 4, 5)

**Attitudes:**

- advocating for access and inclusion to be viewed both as a human right and as a mode of artistic provocation and innovation that challenges artists, audiences and the form of dance. (Goals 1, 2, 3, 5)

- playing a positive role in shifting attitudes to disability in the dance sector through positive action, sector advocacy and facilitating the development of awareness within the wider dance community. (Goals 2, 3)

**Employment:**

- supporting the professional development of Deaf and Disabled dance artists and arts workers through relevant opportunities. (Goals 2, 5)

**Inclusion and participation:**

- deepening relationships with both artists and arts organisations invested in working with Deaf and Disabled dance artists to support the delivery of key resources / opportunities. (Goals 2, 3, 4)

- endeavouring to deliver consistent inclusive experiences at WXYZ Studios and with LGI for all. (Goal 4)

**Access and Inclusion - Value Statements:**

We value the need for artistic risk, integrity and relevance in order to stimulate audiences to experience uncommon perceptions of their world and themselves.

We seek to make LGI's works, programs and studio spaces available, welcoming and accessible to all persons who wish to watch, engage and utilise them.

We endorse access, equality and diversity as keys to the success and vitality of LGI and WXYZ Studios and as ways in which we seek to expand and challenge existing notions of the art form and, through it, wider society.

We aspire to be a disability-confident organisation, with allies and advocates for access and inclusion throughout the organisation.

We commit to consult with artists with a lived experience of disability when creating opportunities for the Deaf and Disabled communities and, where possible, actively co-designing such opportunities.

We endeavour to create positive actions specifically curated for Deaf and Disabled artists within and in addition to our core programs until such a time that there is genuine equality of access to opportunities for these artists.

**Contact details:**

Lucy Guerin Inc

WXYZ Studios, 130 Dryburgh St, North Melbourne 3051

03 9329 4213

admin@lucyguerininc.com

**Summary of Disability Action Plan**

LGI’s Disability Action Plan (DAP) lays out a five-year plan to improve the provision of access and inclusion for Deaf and Disabled artists at WXYZ Studios and in the Company’s studio programs.

The DAP makes a commitment to taking positive actions to embed access and inclusion into the Company’s programs, deepen relationships with the Deaf and Disabled communities, and increase knowledge in the wider dance community.

Below is a summary of proposed key activities year-by-year. Ongoing activities across all years include an access-specific budget line for provision of access support (ie. Auslan interpreters or video captioning), quotas for relevant programs, an annual review of the DAP, and community awareness building activities.

**Year 1: 2020**

**Focus:** Relationship building, Disability Action Plan implementation, and improvement of online and resource access.

**Key Pillar:** Access

**Key Actions:**

* Complete and implement Disability Action Plan following access consultation with Arts Access Victoria.
* Improve key access resources, including application and onboarding processes, website, studio welcome protocols and marketing collateral.
* Develop a new partnership to undertake an inclusive teacher training program during 2021/2022 at WXYZ Studios, offering a professional development opportunity to Deaf and Disabled artists and increasing the pool of professional teachers available.
* Deliver an access-themed Dance Dialogue event.
* Identify access skills among LGI’s existing volunteer group and recruit new volunteers to improve available access skills to support future events.
* Confirm ongoing partnership with Arts Access Victoria who’ll deliver a range of inclusive activities (i.e. annual residency week, forums and masterclass programs).
* Provide live captioning during online Classes for Small Spaces.

**Year 2: 2021**

**Focus:** Program engagement, community awareness building and partnerships.

**Key Pillars:** Attitudes; Inclusion and Participation

**Key Actions:**

* Partner with local organisations to deliver community engagement workshop (project proposed to be led by partner organisation).
* Deliver trial of inclusive teacher development program, led by partner organisation.
* Invite experienced Deaf / Disabled practitioner(s) to teach LGI Morning Classes.
* Trial LGI staff Auslan training (basic communication skills).
* Request access information from presenters as a standard part of dialogue and negotiation, to increase our knowledge of access initiatives and gaps in provision.

**Year 3: 2022**

**Focus:** Improve physical access, employment skills and build on Year 2 activities

**Key Pillars:** Inclusion and Participation; Employment; Access

**Key Actions:**

* Improve access infrastructure (scope TBC with funding).
* Create audio described video guide of WXYZ Studios with Description Victoria.
* Complete second consultation with Arts Access Victoria (or similar) on progress of DAP.
* Delivery of inclusive teacher development program with partner.
* Seed an inclusive creative collaboration through LGI Residency program.
* Invite experienced Deaf / Disabled practitioner(s) to teach LGI Morning Classes.
* Build on Year 2 community engagement and participation activities.

**Year 4: 2023**

**Focus:** Provide employment opportunities and build on Year 3 activities

**Key Pillars:** Employment

**Key Actions:**

* Carry out a community access consultation with disabled and non-disabled artists into LGI activities.
* Invite Deaf / Disabled practitioners to teach LGI Morning Class (min 2% of program), ideally at least one teacher from 2022 development program.
* Build on Year 3 community engagement and participation activities.

**Year 5: 2024**

**Focus:** Build on Year 4 activities, Review DAP, develop ongoing sustainability plan

**Key Pillar:** TBD

**Key Actions:**

* Complete third consultation with Arts Access Victoria (or similar) and develop sustainability plan for access and inclusion from 2025.
* Make commitment to appoint a Deaf / Disabled Board member.
* Build on Year 4 community engagement and participation activities.

**Evaluation and Reporting:**

Each of the actions listed above will be evaluated with participants and other key stakeholders at regular intervals or the conclusion of an event, as is most appropriate.

The DAP will also be reviewed, improved and updated annually. This allows it a fluidity to better respond to the needs of the communities involved with the resources available to the Company at that time.

Significant actions, projects and achievements will be publicly reported through the LGI annual report and other avenues, as appropriate. A more detailed report will also be created for Company use through the annual DAP review process.