

Anywhere

Disability Access and Inclusion

Accessibility is Good for Everyone

Factsheet

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Employees are the bedrock of all organisations, regardless of their size or scale, and this is particularly true for the tourism sector. Whether it be hospitality, accommodation, retail, tour operators or events and festivals, good staff are an essential component to a positive customer experience and repeat business. Ensuring that your staff are a reflection of society and include people with a disability has many positive business impacts.

In Australia, 1 in 6 (or 4.4 million) people live with a disability¹, and 113,000 are currently unemployed and looking for work.² Australia currently has one of the lowest employment rates for people with disability in the OECD, sitting at 21 out of 29 countries.³ JobAccess indicates that Australia's disability employment gap sits at around 30%.⁴

What the research shows:

- Companies that improved their disability employment levels were 4 times more likely to have shareholder returns that outperformed peers.⁵
- Employees with a disability may be as, if not more, productive than their fellow work colleagues⁶, and have lower rates of absenteeism and workplace accidents.⁷
- Accommodating employees with disability has a similar cost to those without a disability, and those adjustments are cost effective.⁸

¹ Business Council of Australia, Improving employment outcomes for people with disability, 15/08/2023 https://www.bca.com.au/improving_employment_outcomes_for_people_with_disability

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2020, People with disability in Australia, Cat. No DIS 77, Canberra, p. 20.

³ Keynote Address - President and Acting Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Rosalind Croucher, 30/11/2023 <https://humanrights.gov.au/about/news/speeches/good-access-good-business>

⁴ "The compelling case for disability employment in Australia – the unrivalled benefits of an underutilised labour market, Jobs Access, 2023

⁵ Accenture, Getting to Equal 2020 Disability Inclusion

⁶ Kantar Public, February 2017, Building Employer Demand, Literature review, Market and Social Research ISO 20252

⁷ Business Council of Australia, Improving employment outcomes for people with disability, 15/08/2023 https://www.bca.com.au/improving_employment_outcomes_for_people_with_disability

⁸ Keynote Address - President and Acting Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Rosalind Croucher, 30/11/2023 <https://humanrights.gov.au/about/news/speeches/good-access-good-business>

Why embracing disability inclusion is good for business:

1. **Access to wider talent pool:** attract a broader range of potential employees.
2. **Employee retention:** improve moral and loyalty by creating a workplace that reflects the community in which we live, and by making physical spaces disability compliant, improving work conditions for all.
3. **Improved products and services:** diverse workplaces breed a culture of innovation, productivity and problem solving.
4. **Increased customer base:** improved customer service due to a workplace which reflects community diversity, products and services that appeal to a wider, more diverse audience.
5. **Improved brand reputation and loyalty:** brands that understand customers and provide products that meet their needs create strong brand reputations and increase customer loyalty.
6. **Compliance and mitigation:** by making a workplace accessible, organisations not only comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, but mitigate potential legal risks and reputational damage associated with non compliance.
7. **Access to grants and financial assistance:** these funding opportunities are available to businesses who seek to recruit and employ people with a disability.

How employment improves the lives of people with disability:⁹

- Contribute to a sense of identity.
- Increased income, and through this, higher living standards and increased financial independence.
- In some instances, have positive impact on health.
- Create a sense of belong and build community.

⁹ Department of Social Services, Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia (2012).
At <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/publications-articles/policy-research/shut-out-the-experience-of-people-with-disabilities-and-their-families-in-australia?HTML> (viewed 27 May 2015).