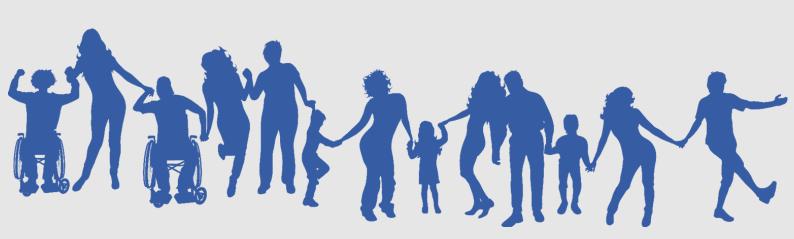# CITY OF BALLARAT

Making your project more inclusive

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Have you considered how you might plan for and deliver your project so that you can broaden the range of people who can be involved?
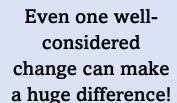
This guide will help you to consider some ways to make your project more accessible, equitable and inclusive for people regardless of gender, age, cultural background, financial status or ability.

Not every item relates to every project. Your project will have a target group and that may be focused on people of a certain age, for example. These ideas will help you to identify other factors that you should consider to ensure as many people as possible in your target group can be involved. We encourage you to read through these suggestions and identify which ones you could consider.

Council encourages all community groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQA+ and cultural groups to apply for community grants.

Even one well-considered change can make a huge difference!

What do we mean by access, equity and inclusion?

Access: Means that people can enter a venue, communicate with others and participate. Numerous barriers such as physical structures, limited communication options, perceptions of safety, discrimination or cost can impact on how easy it is for someone to access a venue or join in.

Equity: Is about treating people fairly so that they each have what they need to participate. This might involve providing different supports, as not all people start from an equal place.

Inclusion: Involves providing fair access to opportunities and resources. This means taking steps to make sure that marginalised groups and individuals feel they belong and are welcome.

Why make your project inclusive?

When a project is inclusive more people can participate. This means that a broader range of community members who are interested in your project feel welcome and have the supports that they need to join in.

What should I consider?

There are many things to consider when trying to make your project more inclusive. Here is a quick checklist that might be helpful. Please remember that this is not a comprehensive list of considerations, and they will not all be relevant to your project.

Have you considered gender?

Female, male, non-binary, gender diverse

☐ **Participation:** Will all genders have an equal opportunity to participate?

☐ **Time:** Will the time of the day or length of your project make it more difficult for people of different genders to participate? E.g. Have you considered school pick up times, work hours, perceptions of safety at night time etc.?

☐ **Roles and responsibilities:** Have you considered caring roles that people may have? This includes caring for children, grandchildren, elderly parents and people with disability. Would providing a childcare option be helpful?

☐ **Facilities:** Considerations may include baby change facilities, a room for feeding or expressing milk for babies, different bathroom/ changing facilities including having a gender neutral bathroom.

Have you considered age?

Children, young people, families, seniors

☐ **Planning:** Have you considered how your target group could support you with planning your project? This could help you to make sure that it meets their needs.

☐ **Suitability:** Is the project suitable for a range of ages and/ or for your target group? Think about times, days, location selected, planned activities etc.

☐ **Roles and responsibilities:** Considerations may include caring responsibilities (for children, parents, people with disability, young carers), work and volunteer roles, or the needs of students of varying ages.

Have you considered accessibility?

People with disability, carers, people with prams, people using wheelchairs/ walkers/ scooters

☐ **Physical access:** Does the venue suit people with mobility equipment (e.g. wheelchairs, walkers, scooters) or prams? Do you have clear signage, appropriate bathroom facilities and a variety of seating options available?

- ☐ **Transport:** Are there public transport options nearby, walking paths and/ or car parking options available including [accessible parking](#) spaces?

- ☐ **Communication needs:** Could you provide one or more of the following options if requested: [captioning](#), [Easy English books](#), [hearing loop access](#), [Auslan interpreters](#), different languages, large text documents, phone booking options, written or audio options etc.?

- ☐ **Suitability:** Will people with disability (mobility, vision, hearing, chronic disease etc.) be able to fully participate? Have you considered how you could accommodate the needs of guide or assistance dogs if participants have them?

Have you considered cost?

Particularly for people who are experiencing financial hardship

- ☐ **Cost of activity:** Is it affordable or free? Could you provide different payment options if needed? Are there different prices according to financial situation? Will there be any other out of pocket costs for participants?

- ☐ **Value:** Will you be adding incentives to support the inclusion of people experiencing financial hardship? E.g. Supplying tea and coffee or free fruit, providing transport.

- ☐ **Transport:** Is an affordable transport option available nearby? If so, have you considered the public transport timetables in your planning? Is the venue walkable for your target group?

Have you considered cultural background?

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities

- ☐ [**Cultural safety**](#)**:** Do you have a good understanding of how to make your project culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and for people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities?

- ☐ [**Elders**](#)**:** Have you discussed your project with relevant elders or community representatives?

- ☐ **Days, dates and times:** Are you aware of relevant religious hours and cultural and religious dates?

- ☐ [**Welcome to Country**](#)**:** Will you be inviting a Traditional Owner to perform a Welcome to Country?

- ☐ **Communication needs:** Do you need to provide translated materials in other languages and/ or is an [interpreter](#) required?

☐ **Facilities and settings:** Is a prayer room available? Does the setting demonstrate that you embrace and celebrate cultural diversity (e.g. flags, art, welcome written in different languages, public statement of commitment)?

Have you considered your promotion and marketing?

Sharing your project with others

☐ **Promotion:** Are you promoting your project in a variety of places and using different communication methods? This means more than sharing your information online and in social media. Consider using hard copy documents, adding information to newsletters, displaying it on noticeboards, sharing it at meetings or over the radio, or using the phone or local community centre staff to help with promotion and bookings.

☐ **Language and literacy:** Are you providing at least some of your promotion in a way that is suitable for people with low literacy skills or for those whose first language is not English?

☐ **Images:** Are you using images and words that challenge stereotypes? Ensure your images showcase diversity. This could involve different ages, genders, cultures, abilities and interests. E.g. Challenge gender stereotypes by considering different family compositions rather than automatically using an image of a mum and dad and two children or you could write 'parent' rather than 'mother' or 'father'.

Have you considered the facilitators?

The people running the program

☐ Will the facilitator/s of the program support inclusion? Do they have the skills and knowledge to be able to include all participants?

☐ Does the facilitator know how to conduct an Acknowledgement of Country?

Want more information about how to make your project more inclusive?

Please contact Council if you would like more information about making your project more inclusive. Email bernadetteduffy@ballarat.vic.gov.au or call 5320 5500 to receive links to further helpful resources.

Glossary of Terms

Access: Providing suitable facilities and resources to help people to enter a location, understand information and participate in an activity.

Accessible parking: car parking spaces specifically designed for people with disability to use.

Acknowledgment of Country: An opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country. It can be given by both non-Indigenous people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

There are no set protocols or wording for an Acknowledgement of Country, though often a statement may take the following forms.

General: I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past and present.

Specific: I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the (insert local traditional owners) people and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

An Acknowledgement of Country is generally offered at the beginning of a meeting, speech or formal occasion/event.

Auslan interpreters: Auslan (Australian Sign Language) is the primary language for deaf communities. Auslan interpreters are people who can communicate information to deaf communities or share information from deaf people to others.

Captioning: An expert who types up what is being said so that people who are deaf or hard of hearing can read it on a screen in close to real time.

Cultural safety: Creating environments that are culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This includes respect for culture, an understanding of the culture, listening, being aware of current and historical discrimination and bias and sharing decision making. It also involves respect for individuals, for others and being open to learning more.

Easy English books: Documents using short simple sentences in English and pictures to describe the important information found in a longer or more detailed document.

Elders: Leaders or senior members of a group or community.

Equity: Providing fair opportunities for people to be involved, no matter what their circumstances are.

Gender diverse: A wide term that covers the range of ways that people may see their own gender particularly when it does not match the norms, stereotypes and expectations that others have.

Gender neutral bathroom: Toilet facilities that anyone can use regardless of gender. Bathrooms for people who identify as male, female, transgender, non-binary or gender diverse.

Hearing loop: Permanent or mobile technology that can be used in indoor venues to amplify (increase) sound or make it easier for people who are hard of hearing or who have other processing disorders to hear or listen to information.

Inclusion: Providing opportunities where everyone feels welcome, supported and included.

Interpreter: A person who can explain and share information from one language to another.

Non-binary: An identity that does not align with the thinking that a person can only be male or female.

Welcome to Country: A ceremony performed by Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting, speech or occasion/event is held on. The ceremony is performed by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Elders, who have been given permission to welcome visitors onto their traditional land.