

Summary Report

Ensuring Occupations are Responsive to People with Disability

The Full Report, Plain English, Easy Read and Auslan Translation
are available at www.acola.org

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social
Services. Go to www.dss.gov.au for more information.



Creating
an inclusive
community
together



Combining the strengths of
Australia's Learned Academies

EXPERT WORKING GROUP

Professor Iva Strnadová (Co-Chair)

Professor Karen Fisher FASSA (Co-Chair)

Professor Gerard Goggin FAHA

Professor Cathie Sherrington FAHMS

Dr Erol Harvey FTSE

ACOLA RESEARCH/PROJECT TEAM

Mr Ryan Winn

Dr Lauren Palmer

Mr Tim Wotton

Dr Jade McEwen

Dr Scott Avery

Dr Laura Davy

Dr Damian Mellifont

ACOLA gratefully acknowledges the contributions of The Social Deck and the work of Professor Bree Hadley, the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, the Australian Academy of the Humanities, the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering in developing this report. We also appreciate the assistance of Kristal Priestly from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

© Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) 2022

ISBN (digital) 978-0-6452054-8-0

(print) 978-0-6452054-9-7

This work is copyright. All material published or otherwise created by the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) is licensed under a Creative Commons – Attribution – Non-Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) licence.

DATE OF PUBLICATION

October 2022

PUBLISHER

Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA)

9 Gordon Street, Acton ACT 2601 Australia

www.acola.org

SUGGESTED CITATION

ACOLA (2022), Ensuring Occupations are Responsive to People with Disability, www.acola.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

ACOLA acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Custodians of Country and recognises their continuing connection to land, sea, culture and community. We pay our respect to the Elders both past and present.

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people on which ACOLA's office in Canberra is based, and the lands of the Gadigal (Sydney), Whadjuk (Perth) and Wurundjeri (Melbourne) Peoples where ACOLA staff for this project were based.

What is the problem?

Governments have received a strong message that people with disability experience poor interactions with various occupations and services. This evidence is visible in processes such as *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031* (Disability Strategy) and submissions to the *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability* (Disability Royal Commission). Arising from the Disability Strategy, in early 2022, ACOLA was engaged to determine how to enhance the training outcomes of occupations to better respond to the needs of people with disability [Outcome Area – Community Attitudes, Policy Priority 2]. The Disability Strategy noted:

People with disability report the greatest barriers they face are not communication or physical, rather they are created through stigma, unconscious bias and lack of understanding of disability. This can include ableism, where people with disability can be seen as being less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute, and not valued as much as people without disability

(Department of Social Services, (DSS) 2021)

This paper is a summary of the full ACOLA report, with a focus on the Guide for Good Practice and the Action Plan.

Occupations in Australia can do better in responding to people with disability.

Disability responsiveness is more than being “aware”.

Disability responsiveness should be incorporated in all education and training courses or programs, not just those occupations who traditionally work with people with disability – and should enhance a person’s skills, knowledge and attitudes.

People with disability must be involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of training.

Many opportunities exist to use current groups and processes to promote and standardise training about disability responsiveness.

All levels of governments, professional bodies, employers and training bodies have a role in elevating disability responsiveness.





About the Project

As an independent, interdisciplinary research body, ACOLA took an evidence-based approach to this project to explore the context and adequacy of training about disability in Australia. Reflecting concerns of people with disability, we paid particular attention to occupations within education, healthcare, justice and social services sectors. A review of international efforts on improving disability responsiveness exist, but evaluations on the effectiveness are few and far between.

In line with disability rights-based frameworks, which underpin this project, the voices of people with disability were prioritised in the evidence and analysis considered. This informed a conceptual framework for understanding disability, how many Australians live with disability, and what intersectional factors can make life harder for people with disability, to inform what should be considered in training that enhances occupations' disability responsiveness.



Setting the context

All people have a right to fair and equitable access to services including education, healthcare, justice and social services.

While many people with disability successfully navigate these service areas without impact, others experience exclusion, discrimination and marginalisation.

Not being able to access services in a timely and responsive fashion can lead to poorer quality of life and wellbeing, and increased need for services and support. It is immoral, unethical and unlawful for employers or occupations to discriminate against people with disability, and it is poor business practice to do so.

The Disability Royal Commission notes that at a societal level, people with disability experience negative attitudes towards them that result in their needs and views not being responded to appropriately. These attitudes, entrenched in ableism and discrimination, are compounded by intersections with gender, cultural diversity and class.

The importance of rights, inclusivity, diversity and representation need to be accepted and enacted in order to address the lived experience of people with disability, and ensure their rights are realised.

To achieve this, effort must be made to understand how to change the attitudes and issues of occupations that underpin the negative experiences of people with disability and move towards responsiveness. Achieving this goal requires multi-faceted change through policy, regulation, education and practice.

What we found

There is broad variability across occupations in awareness of disability and education on disability responsiveness. Some work is occurring to improve disability inclusion in terms of revising and developing new disability-focused education and health care standards. Learning support resources exist and continue to be developed, including by Disability Representative and Disabled Persons Organisations (DROs & DPOs). Some public-facing service teams are aware of and are working to address their disability responsiveness.

The education and training sector is playing a key role, both in leading the conversation about how change could be realised, and in preparing current and future workers.

Accredited training (VET and higher education) can provide a critical foundation for disability responsiveness. However, it must be appropriate, high quality and inclusive, complemented by continued professional development and monitoring of practice.

This project identified many examples of “better practice” towards disability responsiveness being undertaken by universities, VET and professional bodies. However, improvement is needed in the way in which a range of occupations understand and respond to the needs of people with disability. Consequently, this project presents an opportunity to learn from identified better practice approaches, especially across Australia’s education, healthcare, justice and social services sectors.

Good practice is underpinned by six key principles:

- ‘Nothing about us without us’
- Capability areas
- Experiential learning
- Addressing bias and discrimination
- Fit for purpose, and
- Quantum.

Five broad categories were identified to take these principles and the Guide into reality by governments, training providers and professional bodies.

These areas are:

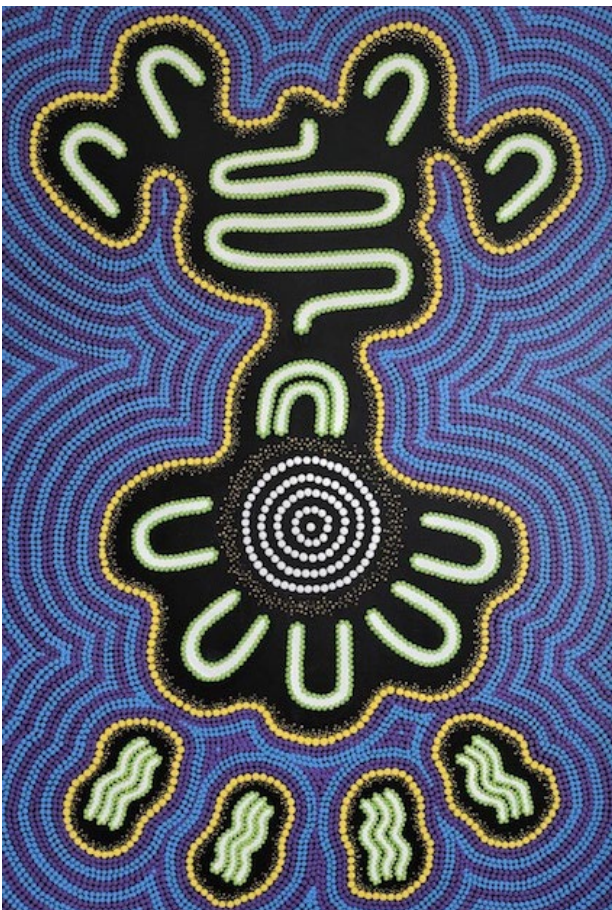
- 1 Active participation 
- 2 Sector planning and actions 
- 3 Training packages 
- 4 Knowledge collection 
- 5 Government leadership 

In order for training and professional development to improve responsiveness towards people with disability, it should be co-designed and facilitated by people with disability, with lived experience of the relevant subject matter or sector. Co-designed and co-facilitated learning has a substantially greater impact on learners' attitudes, which leads to a greater impact on responsiveness to people with disability. Conversely, simulated disability learning activities can entrench problematic bias or stereotypical views of disability.

The 'system' in which occupations are working also needs an overhaul, particularly in the health and education domains. Disability responsive workplaces need structures, processes and resources that address outmoded methods,

unsustainable workloads, unrealistic expectations on staff and higher societal demands for quality service. While largely out of scope for this project, there will also be an ongoing role for a range of activities like employers' policies for inclusion and responsiveness, cultural change, design of technologies and wider regulatory frameworks.

Many allies exist within the occupations, governments and training bodies and this bodes well for further efforts to improve the inclusion of and responsiveness to people with disability. The key component to successfully improving disability responsiveness is partnering with people with disability in the co-design and co-delivery of the learning activities.



Where to from here?

The project has developed a Good Practice Guide and Action Plan that sets out an approach that, if implemented, will see all occupations becoming more responsive to the needs of people with disability.

The Guide outlines objectives and principles for good practice in training development, delivery and evaluation. It also provides a practical tool for assessing whether a course will likely improve participants' disability responsiveness. The Action Plan identifies actions for all stakeholders to adopt and implement the Guide and move the training system forward for a more equitable Australia.

Results from the consultation with people with disability conducted by The Social Deck, and outlined in detail in the full ACOLA report, note that respondents are positive about the importance of ACOLA's identified action areas, the actions themselves and the likelihood that the actions will lead to desired outcomes.

The Action Plan developed under this project describes actions that should be done both in the short-medium term and also into the 4–10 year horizon. Establishing new standards and revising existing ones, making disability responsiveness a requirement for course development by universities and VET providers, is achievable. Implementation should be well planned and coordinated across sectors and governments.

However, some of the suggested actions will take time to establish. For example, a set of standards may be on a multi-year cycle for renewal and will not be able to be changed earlier, or it may take a longer time to organise the governance, planning and funding to execute some actions.

In some areas there are already existing structures and processes to codify disability responsiveness education and training and establish standards that mandate learning. Others can be explored, for example jurisdictional police meetings where co-operative action can be endorsed and followed through. Cross jurisdictional collaboration in education, healthcare and justice domains is possible using existing forums – it just needs the will to 'make it so'.

A range of sectors and occupations are committed to making improvements. However, there are challenges to improving occupation-specific training, including resourcing, content development and prioritisation. There are clear areas for growth and greater focus. Through this project, ACOLA has identified what is needed to help sectors and occupations better respond to people with disability.

“

I'll know [the actions to improve disability responsiveness are] working when I can walk into a room, and I can see that the level of awareness has significantly risen.

Male Aboriginal interview participant with psychosocial disability and carer for his brother with a disability, regional QLD.



The Guide to Good Practice

The Good Practice Guide and Action Plan that set out an approach that, if implemented, will see all occupations becoming more responsive to the needs of people with disability. In achieving this plan, the education and training sector will play a key role, both in leading the conversation about how change could be realised, and preparing current and future workers. The recommendations are relevant for all service sectors, including NDIS providers and trainers.

Guide to good practice

This guide – comprising objectives, principles, and an Education and Training Assessment Tool – is based on evidence and consultation with stakeholders, including people with disability, training providers and occupations, about what constitutes optimum training for specific occupations and in general. It outlines training package standards and competencies associated with better disability responsiveness and describes key principles for the design and accreditation of education and courses. It also provides an assessment tool to guide education/training/course designers, trainers, convenors, accreditors and assessors on whether the education or training is likely to advance a learner’s responsiveness to people with disability.

Disability responsiveness, in the context of an occupation, is broadly defined as the state of a worker’s attitudes and behaviours to people with disability, and how they adequately and appropriately respond to their needs and human rights.

Developing disability responsiveness through training and resources is a process that should follow the theory of change, supported by organisational and sector policies, regulatory expectations and culture. The result will be occupations who are responsive to people with disability and contributors to wider societal change. Figure 6, adapted from Lindsey et al. (2019), outlines this logic and resulting changes in people’s attitudes and behaviours.

Transforming education, training and development programs so that they embed disability responsiveness requires action by leaders, education and training designers and deliverers. Additionally, good practice involves ongoing training and professional development.

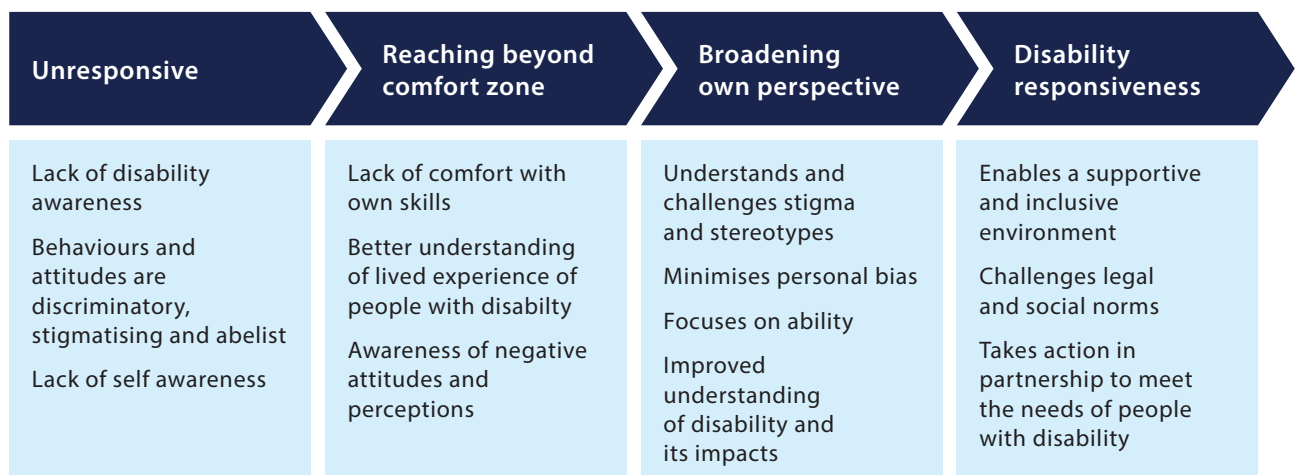


Figure 6: Individual changes towards disability responsiveness

Objectives for the training system

While every occupation has different requirements, many are informed or mandated by professional bodies and regulatory standards and there is some discretion by training bodies in the design and delivery of education and training. Drawing from the research and the views of people with disability, a successful training system focused on enabling occupations to be disability responsive must:

1. Ensure that people with disability have a clear voice and role in the training
2. Develop confidence, skills and capabilities among occupations towards being responsive to the needs of people with disability
3. Sustain the skills and capabilities through ongoing training and professional development

Key principles for training to support disability responsiveness

Through this project, ACOLA has identified six key principles to enhance the training for all occupations (Figure 7). These principles are associated with more positive interactions with people with disability:

1. **'Nothing about us without us'**: Education and training about disability must be developed and delivered with, or by, people with disability
2. **Capability areas**: Training must develop skills, knowledge and attitudes

3. **Experiential learning**: Training must include "on the job" learning
4. **Addressing bias**: Training should enhance a learner's ability to critically reflect on their attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability
5. **Fit for purpose**: Training must enhance a learner's ability to critically reflect on their personal attitudes towards and perceptions of people with disability
6. **Quantum**: Disability responsiveness will not be achieved through a single training event or course. Ultimately, outcomes will require an ongoing commitment.

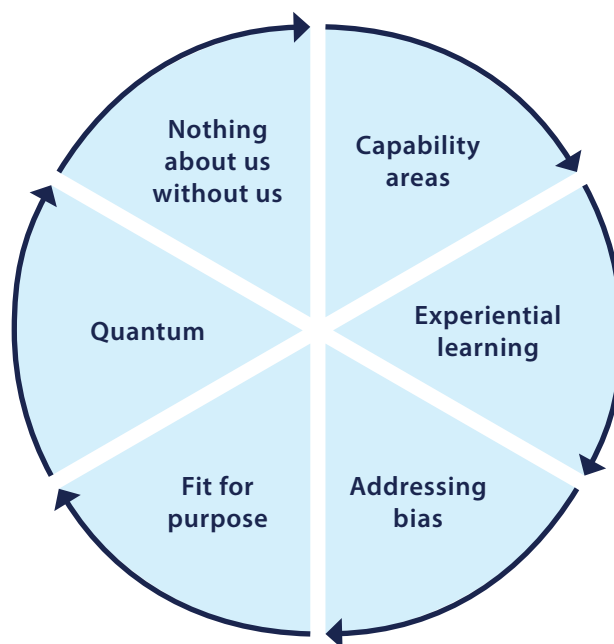


Figure 7: Six Key Principles for Disability Responsiveness Training

Assessing the focus on disability within education and training packages

All training varies, and each education and training situation has pressures and priorities on content and competencies, many of which are set by professional or industry bodies. In order to ensure that training is delivered in line with better disability responsiveness, there are some universal indicators about what should be included. These indicators allow disability responsiveness to be considered in the context of any course topic, with a focus on how it can be integrated into course structures, content and delivery. Resources, frequency and opportunities for experiential learning may also be relevant.

An Education and Training Analysis Tool (Table 8) has been developed from the principles and evidence gathered during this project. The tool is not designed to be used by employers or educators for individual assessment of participants.

Table 8 is a guide for the development and review of education and training to ensure they align with the knowledge and practice associated with better responsiveness towards people with disability.

ACOLA encourages the use of this tool in its entirety. It is recognised that for some education and training, such as those outside of the focal sectors (e.g. engineering, computer science, business management), convenors may feel it necessary to adopt only some of the recommended content.

However, consideration should be given to the benefits for all education and training implementing the Tool in its entirety given the impact all occupations can have on people with disability. For example, occupations within the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) sectors develop ideas, inventions, designs and solutions that will impact people with disability in a myriad of intended and unintended ways.

Enhancing learning competencies

Whilst the Tool's primary purpose is to guide the review and development of education and training content, it can also be used by professional bodies and employers to set competency standards for occupations, which they must demonstrate alignment with in order to meet the inherent requirements of their position. Competency standards derived from the Tool have the potential to set clear expectations for occupations about what is expected in their day to day practice, and assist professional bodies and employers to identify good and poor responsiveness towards people with disability in the workplace. In this way, competency standards extend knowledge outcomes achieved through the Tool beyond the learning environment, and into each occupation's unique workplace context.

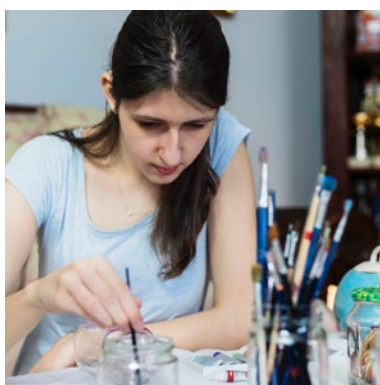


Table 8: Components of good practice for disability responsiveness in education and training development and delivery

Structure	Delivery
<p>Education and training accreditors and professional/industry bodies will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure training in disability responsiveness is compulsory • require genuine partnerships with people with disability in the design of training packages • design and deliver training from a strengths-based perspective, emphasising ability, not disability • ensure the content builds from learners' identity and relationships, challenges their biases and is relevant to their workplaces and context • ensure the education and training content involves both theory and practice • consider the overall quantum and regularity of training and assessment through education and training and throughout careers. 	<p>Education and training convenors and deliverers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure people with disability and lived experience of disability (e.g. paid carer, family member or partner) are included in the delivery of content, including core and guest presentations • ensure individual case studies and storytelling are part of delivery • ensure delivery involves both theory and practice.
Content	
<p>Upon completion, participants will be able to demonstrate, aligned with their role:</p> <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of human rights, discrimination, and reasonable accommodations • an understanding of the social model of disability, including the interaction between social barriers and impairments (physical, sensory, cognitive and neurodivergence) • an understanding of the legislative, policy and regulatory frameworks on the rights of people with disability. These include the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and how this instrument is central to respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of people with disabilities • an understanding of the compounding effects of discrimination and biases, including with personal identities, e.g. gender, sexuality, location and other social, cultural and economic factors • an understanding of trauma-informed practice and how to use it, including as it relates to inter-generational trauma or past negative experiences with occupations • an understanding of the impact of organisation-based approaches and context, including workplace culture, policies, management practices and rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of the responsibilities of occupations to identify and respond to issues of safety (e.g. mandatory reporting). <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an ability to identify practical ways to promote the rights, dignity and participation of people with disability and to respect and uphold their rights • an ability to adapt and respond to the needs and choices of people with disability within a range of contexts and situations, applying reasonable adjustments, including adapting communication methods. <p>Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an opportunity to interact with, and learn from, people with a range of disabilities • a focus on what will lead to positive change, e.g. recognition of the importance of working within a social (and biopsychosocial) model of disability • willingness to apply knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to real-life scenarios and identify violations of the rights of people with disability • awareness of one's own biases, behaviours and values, and the importance of different knowledge and ableism • acknowledgement of the impact of the historical and ongoing application of the medical model of disability on a person.

Action Plan – Taking words to action

The Action Plan identifies how stakeholders across sectors can build disability responsiveness consistent with the Good Practice Guide. The plan includes broad and sector-specific opportunities for governments, training providers, professional and industry bodies. The plan should not constrain action. Occupations and places are unique, with different approaches to best respond to the needs of people with disability.

In developing this Action Plan, ACOLA has considered people with disability from rural, remote and urban communities, and diverse cohorts such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse peoples, and LGBTIQ+ Australians.

Higher education, VET training providers and professional and industry bodies can be significant agents of change for occupational responsiveness. Their actions, both short- and long-term, will play a key role in realising the defined goals within Australia's Disability Strategy, especially on improving community and societal attitudes.

Table 9: Five key areas for action to drive improvements in occupational training

Five key areas for action to drive improvements in training

1

Active participation



People with disability play a clear, visible and valued role in the leadership of the training

2

Sector planning and actions



The training of occupations is tailored, timely and focused on the needs of workers and the community they serve, especially people with disability

Actions needed to improve occupational training

More people with disability employed, especially in leadership positions

Organisations implement mechanisms to promote, respect and realise the rights of people with disability

Standards and expectations are explicit for disability inclusion

Professional bodies and employers engage with people with disability to co-develop minimum knowledge expectations to guide and support training

A broad range of sector-specific resources about disability and inclusion are co-designed with people with disability

Monitoring mechanisms are created to understand progress towards improved disability responsiveness

Areas for action

The evidence, both academic and experiential, highlights that any improvements in the training and professional development that occupations receive need to be multi-faceted. Improvements are needed across all levels of the system, from education and training content through to embedding evaluation and systemic measures to refine actions outlined below. There are five key areas for action to drive improvements in the training occupations receive to improve outcomes for people with disability.

These can be translated into the high-level actions presented in Table 9. Associated with each action are clear responsibilities for government, training providers, professional and industry bodies and employers. The subsequent Action Plan sets out steps that should be undertaken over the next four years.

3 Training packages



People with disability have confidence in the skills and capabilities of all professionals to support them

All education and disability responsiveness training are regularly reviewed against the Good Practice Guide

All training provider staff to undertake disability responsiveness training

Key occupations undertake regular refresher training

4 Knowledge collection



Australia has the knowledge to better include people with disability, monitor developments and progress to address disability responsiveness

Collect regular data on training and disability responsiveness outcomes

Survey graduates on their confidence in working with people with disability

5 Government leadership



Australian governments share a collaborative approach to progressing an inclusive society

Enhance cross-government commitments to improve disability responsiveness

Improved evaluation and self-assurance of quality training outcomes

Taking words to actions – progressing the difficult but critical work to ensure disability responsiveness

1

Active participation



Outcomes sought and description of potential activity

Broad areas for action

People with disability play a clear, visible and valued role in the leadership of the training system.

- Workplaces, education and training providers hire, retain and advance more people with disability, especially in leadership positions.
- Involve people with disability, Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) and Disability Representative Organisations (DROs) in curriculum design and delivery in university and VET programs (e.g. parent/carer/client tutors, including co-marking assessments and lived experience-led and co-produced research).

- More people with disability employed, especially in senior roles.
- Organisations promote and enable inclusive workplaces.
- Standards and expectations set for the inclusion of people with disability.

Short-term (1–3 years)

Training bodies, including professional bodies

- Organisations develop and implement plans to employ, retain and advance people with disability, especially in leadership positions.
- Champion the message that ‘investing in inclusion is good business sense’ to be societal leaders and change agents.
- Ensure people with disability are visible at all levels, across VET and universities, especially in leadership positions and in roles responsible for accreditation and review of education and training.
- Develop policies and initiatives that encourage people with disability in occupations to feel respected and safe to identify themselves.

Governments and employers

- To ensure visibility and high-level leadership, government establishes a compact with the training sector that sets out key expectations to improve disability responsiveness.
- Government and industry commit to engaging people with disability, especially in senior positions and foster an environment where people are comfortable with disclosing disability. (This includes people with disability who may have experienced intersectional discrimination and disadvantage.)
- Enhance organisations’ understanding of their obligations under the DDA and of the penalties for failing to meet these obligations.
- Establish public reporting annually on the number of people with disability across all employers, accommodations received and their different roles and levels.

Longer-term (4–10 years)

- Government and industry report on people with disability in senior positions, potentially as an enhancement of the State of the Disability Sector report.

2

Sector planning and actions



Outcomes sought and description of potential activity

The training of occupations is tailored, timely and focused on the needs of workers and the community they serve, especially people with disability.

- Every occupation is unique, with a diversity of roles and training available within them. Equally the experience of people with disability varies by occupation and place.
- Occupations, professional bodies, government and disability representative organisations should help training providers identify strengths and skill gaps for professionals that could improve responsiveness. Following this, targeted actions can be implemented in initial/foundational training for professions (whether VET or universities) and/or through continued professional development or specialised training. This process may also identify complementary changes in employment conditions, code of conduct and training and professional development requirements.
- This project has identified some key areas in the four focus workforces: education, healthcare, justice and social services.

Broad areas for action

- Professional and industry bodies, in partnership with employers, engage with people with disability in their communities, or customer and client groups to develop minimum training expectations.
- Ensure a broad range of co-designed sector-specific resources about disability and inclusion are freely available, regularly updated and designed with adaptation in mind to support training and employer use.
- Monitoring mechanisms to understand industry progress.
- Education and training providers and professional bodies track technology advances relevant to disability and update their learner support appropriately.

Short-term (1–3 years)

Training bodies, including professional bodies

- Professional bodies revise and set requisite learning standards, to clarify and provide expectations on inclusivity and disability responsiveness within education and training, as many standards are too generic, e.g. 'understands disability inclusiveness'.
- Education for providers and academics in universal learning design will ensure that they develop and deliver curriculum that is accessible to people with different levels of ability.

Governments and employers

- Government and industry commit to developing and implementing industry- and occupation-specific action plans, which include initial data collection to understand the baselines and employ, retain and advance more people with disability.
- Government identifies those professions that require specific or enhanced disability responsiveness competencies, building on work on intellectual disability.
- Employers consider mandating staff receive disability training, including specific training on intersectionality, such as provided by the National Ethnic Disability Alliance.
- Government implements the recommendations of the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education.
- To overcome hierarchical gradients and unjust, outmoded models of workplace training, undertake the following:
 - Commencing with the health sector, ensure safe, just and supported pathways for whistle-blowers to identify professionals who are not disability responsive.
 - Ensure existing complaint management pathways are accessible and responsive to people with disability.

Longer-term (4–10 years)

- Change is best effected from within sectors – within four years, key professions (aligned with specific occupations identified by Government) review their own practice, informed by the expectation of their clients with disability, and develop a sector-specific action plan, including employment conditions, code of conduct and recommended changes to training and professional development requirements.
- The Australian Government supports the call from the Australian Human Rights Commission to create an expert body to lead the development and delivery of education, training, accreditation and capacity building for accessible technology for people with disability.

3

Training packages



Outcomes sought and description of potential activity

People with disability have confidence in the skills and capabilities of all professionals to support them.

- Universities and VET providers have a fundamental role in raising disability confidence.
- There is a need to review and improve formal training. This requires training providers, professional bodies, accrediting authorities and employers working in concert to a common goal. This comprises reviewing education and training courses and programs, ensuring teaching staff are appropriately skilled and systems are in place to monitor the delivery of quality and appropriate training.

Broad areas for action

- All education and training are regularly reviewed against ACOLA's Good Practice Guide for disability responsiveness training.
- All training provider staff must undertake disability responsiveness training, to develop their skills in understanding the needs of people with disability and how to build this into education and training they deliver.
- Disability responsiveness training is reviewed in partnership with people with disability.
- Key occupations undertake regularly refreshers.
- Training packages, especially those non-disability specific, are reviewed in partnership with people with disability.
- Key occupations to undertake regular refreshers.

Short-term (1–3 years)

Training bodies, including professional bodies

- Training providers assess their curricula and training provisions against the principles and assessment tool in the Good Practice Guide, at each accreditation cycle.
- Training providers to revise graduate attributes, education and training learning outcomes, and curriculum content to reflect knowledge and awareness of disability, diversity, and intersectionality.
- Professional bodies to review their compulsory professional development and ensure that disability responsiveness is an explicit part of content included as a regular requirement, with the regularity and quantum considered in consultation with people with disability.
- Noting and planning for the extra cost of co-design and delivery, ensure education and training developers and convenors have sufficient resources and funding to ensure people with disability are involved in the design and review of education and training courses and programs and delivery.
- Training providers partner with disability representative organisations to develop occupation and education and training specific content, or employ curriculum experts with lived experience of disability.
- Training providers to implement disability responsiveness training for all staff, especially teaching staff:
 - Training is compulsory alongside occupational health and safety and Indigenous cultural competency training.
 - Develop role-specific extensions training, e.g. modules on inclusive teaching practice and integrating disability content in curriculum.
 - Modules are co-designed and delivered with people with disability.
- Professional bodies to require disability-specific disciplinary knowledge and inclusion strategies in curriculum for accreditation approval and renewal.
- Graduates to be surveyed on whether their learning experience gave them more confidence in working with and responding appropriately to people with disability.

Governments and employers

- Explores how to best set national expectations for all professions and society members, that disability-specific knowledge and inclusion strategies are integral to curriculum review and renewal processes.
- Require accreditation authorities (especially self-accrediting authorities) to use ACOLA's Good Practice Guide to assesses training packages at each accreditation cycle.
- Create or support an online clearing house library to better store and disseminate disability responsiveness training resources for the wider education and training sector.
- Noting work underway, continue to strengthen the knowledge and capability of educators and providers, from early childhood through to tertiary level.
- Australian Government ensures that the 2021 Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability is implemented.
- State and territory governments ensure all primary and secondary teachers and leaders receive appropriate training on education standards before they start work and biannually. State and territory governments immediately explore options to enhance their workforce capabilities by employing people with disability. This to apply especially in education, correctional staff, policing and health, where they are major employers.

Longer-term (4–10 years)

- Mandate disability responsiveness training.
- Require universities to report on which and how many education and training courses and programs have been assessed for disability responsiveness, and actions taken.

4

Knowledge collection



Outcomes sought and description of potential activity

Broad areas for action

Australia has the knowledge to better include people with disability, monitor developments and progress to address disability responsiveness.

- There remain significant gaps in Australian-specific resources, knowledge and tools for professionals, occupations, and government to understand the ‘what, the how and when to training’ and the progress being made.
- Addressing these will be crucial to better understanding our baseline and how well we succeed in our aspiration for a more responsive society.
- Establish a cyclical audit of university training programs and professional association accreditation requirements and development programs by considering content and the involvement of consumers in training design and delivery.
- Conduct a cyclical national survey of undergraduate students and workers on knowledge, attitudes and skills.
- Routinely explore the experiences of people with disability including those completing training programs.

- Collect better and regular data on training outcomes, e.g. community attitudes.
- Graduates to be surveyed on their confidence in working with people with disability.

Short-term (1–3 years)

Training bodies, including professional bodies

- Encourage training providers to develop strategies for monitoring the nature and quality of training.
- Encourage professions and sectors to develop strategies that monitor:
 - the delivery of professional development training
 - the number of people with disability employed within the sector (in general and leadership positions)
 - the extent to which people with disability are welcomed, retained and supported, and their career development
 - client satisfaction with responsiveness and inclusion, with consideration of clients with other personal identifiers, such as remoteness, culture and race.
- Universities and research funders to support lived experience-led and co-produced research to understand and assess emerging privacy risks and impacts of technology, as well as identifying potential options to assess these issues.

Governments and employers

- Measure any change over time of the experiences of people with disability as consumers.
- Measure the responsiveness from the perspective of workers in the occupations.
- Leveraging work by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research and graduate surveys, survey new graduates on whether their learning experience gave them more confidence to work with, and respond appropriately to, people with disability.

Longer-term (4–10 years)

- Continue to collect data on community attitudes and the experiences of people with disability, building on the community attitudes survey, including on specific professions, conducted tri-annually to measure long-term change and to improve future initiatives.
- Investment and attention are needed to evaluate the success of disability-responsiveness education, training and initiatives, including any cultural, attitudinal, behavioural or systemic barriers to their success.

5

Government leadership



Outcomes sought and description of potential activity

Broad areas for action

Australian governments share a collaborative approach to progressing an inclusive society.

- Governance and monitoring of this Action Plan's progress will need national (cross-jurisdictional) government-level agreement on the need for improved disability responsiveness and will succeed with adequate resourcing.
- At both Department and Ministerial levels, governments engage in jurisdictional co-operative action to mandate and align disability responsiveness training in education, healthcare, justice and social services domains.

- Improved the evaluation of disability responsiveness training.
- Ensure training enables technologies and services to be informed by principles of human rights by design.

Short-term (1–3 years)

Training bodies, including professional bodies

- Education providers collaborate with DROs, resource developers and government to determine how best to coordinate approaches to funding support for the development of disability responsiveness teaching, training, resources and accommodating measures.

Governments and employers

- Governments to agree to provide sufficient resourcing for the implementation and monitoring of this training.
- Government to require monitoring and evaluation of training be co-designed and co-conducted with people with disability.
- Government establishes an expert body to lead the development and delivery of education, training, accreditation, and capacity building for accessible technology for people with disability (recommendation of the Australian Human Rights Commission).
- Government considers the state of training of STEM professionals and ensures that there is greater understanding of human rights by design.
- Governments agree and codify that any government service sector must ensure that the introduction of a technology does not adversely affect people with disability.

Longer-term (4–10 years)

- Governments require that any technologies to be implemented across government services follow a human rights by design approach.

Voices of people with disability

In testing and refining the Good Practice Guide and Action Plan, people with disability were asked their views about the broad areas for action – a selection are below. The entire summary is available as an input paper on the ACOLA website.

Active participation



“ Nothing says disability confidence in an organisation more than seeing people with disability actually employed in leadership positions. So that messaging is really important.

Male interview participant with a psychosocial and sensory disability, metropolitan QLD.

“ Yes, having voices heard is important, but disabled people should also be on the leadership end to make sure they don't make mistakes or brush things off.

Female youth focus group participant with intellectual, cognitive or neurological disability, regional QLD.



Sector planning



“ If they are working with someone with disability, how will they know to support them if they don't know about disabilities? They should learn how to understand the different ways that people communicate. Some people can't talk, but they can still communicate. Listen to us; take the time. Don't pretend to understand when you don't.

Focus group participant with an intellectual disability, SA.

“ Get people with disability into workplaces to talk to employees about the challenges and barriers.

Female interview participant with psychosocial disability, regional QLD.

“ Police, doctors and allied health and teachers need to have the training so they have the knowledge to support people with disability to have better outcomes in life.

Male interview participant with a physical disability, identifies as LGBTIQ+, metropolitan VIC.

Training



““ If it was designed by people with disability, I would trust it more.

Focus group participant with an intellectual disability, SA.

““ Show professionals how to fit into a community as well. It's hard to be sent out to remote communities straight from Uni. They have no life experience, let alone experience of the unique issues of people with disability in rural and remote communities.

Aboriginal woman who is a carer for a grandchild with a disability, remote QLD.

Knowledge collection



““ Training designed by people with disability, signed off by disability advocacy organisations, where members have had an opportunity to review and endorse it.

Female interview participant with a sensory disability, metropolitan WA.

““ We need to make people feel comfortable to ask questions of people with disability. People with disability need to encourage this so that people aren't hesitant to engage with them. Sometimes being 'politically correct' can create more problems.

Male interview participant with a physical disability from a CALD background, regional VIC.

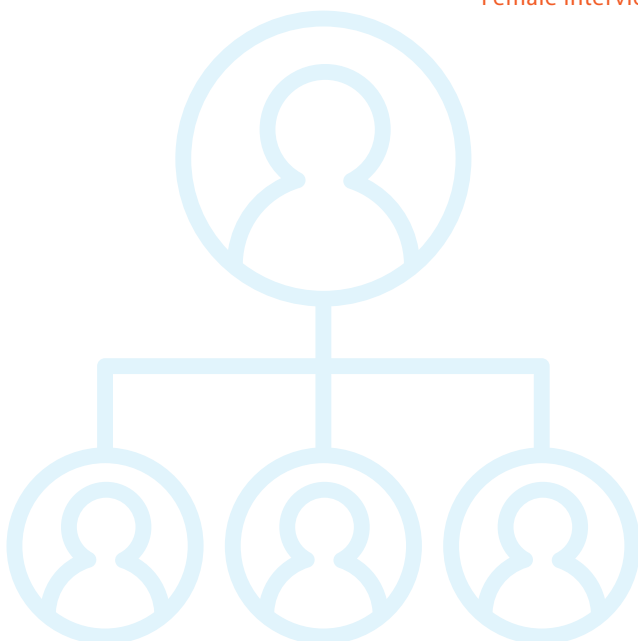


“ Very, very important. Without government push and support, there’s very little compelling a company to apply these practices and training. The government also has the best ability to inform those with disabilities what companies properly include these inclusive and specialised training.

Male youth focus group participant with a physical, sensory, intellectual and psychosocial disability, regional QLD.

“ [The training] should be legislated. Any face-to-face job must have disability-led and designed training’. And have policies to support this, otherwise the Disability Strategy isn’t worth the paper it is written on.

Female interview participant with a sensory disability, metropolitan WA.

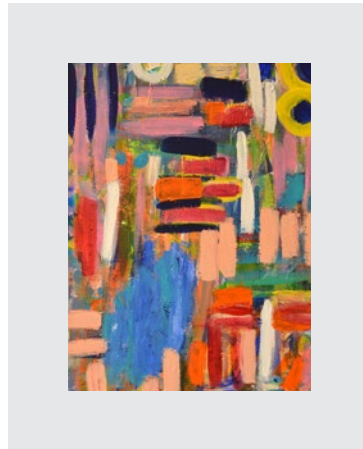


Artwork

Acknowledgements

ACOLA thanks St John of God Accord and Bayley House for assisting in the identification of some of the artists for this report.

- St John of God Accord supports people with a disability and runs a renowned Ceramics and Arts program at Greensborough Community Campus.
- Bayley House runs many programs will support people with disability to find a suitable creative outlet.



Untitled
Darren Hooper

Darren enjoys art in all forms. He often draws his inspiration from music, creating pieces while watching or listening to his favourite artists. Darren likes to vary his use of mediums and likes experimenting by combining techniques and colour. Darren has been a part of the Bayley House art community for many years and enjoys the atmosphere, connection and stimulation that working on his pieces with alongside other artists brings.

This bio was written by supporting staff who have worked in arts programs with Darren on his behalf.



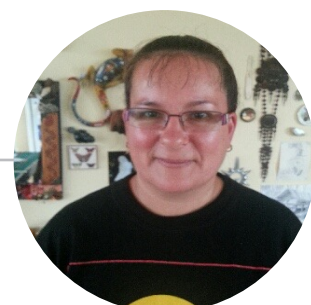
Long Time Healing
Paula Wootton

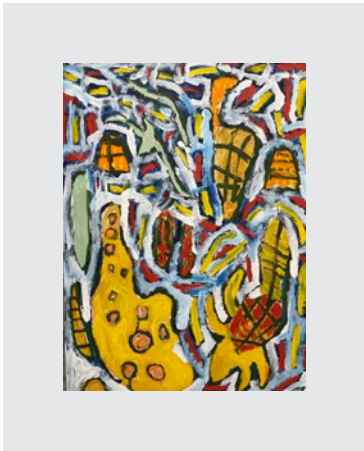
Paula Wootton, of the Tharawal Country of the Ewin nation NSW south coast, is a respected Community Elder on the Sunshine Coast Queensland Gubbi Gubbi country.

Aunty Paula lives with chronic health issues and was carer of her son with disability.

Aunty Paula has artworks in private, corporate and government collections both nationally and internationally and has exhibited in multiple exhibitions including 'Culture Is Inclusion' held at the United Nations in Geneva in 2019.

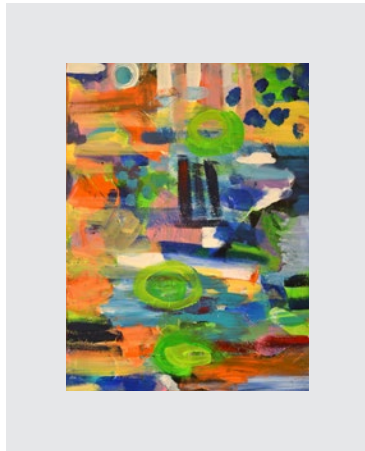
Aunty states that "My art reflects my connection to the ocean and the bush."





Yellout
Khaled El-Ali

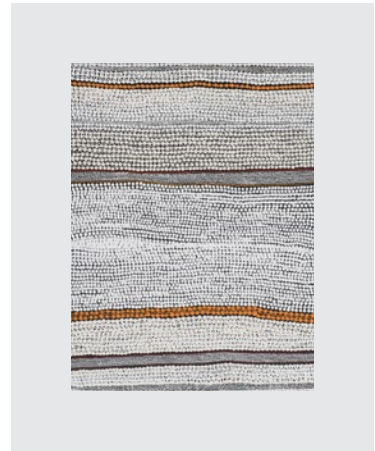
Khaled is a prolific painter. He has a technique of layering spontaneous broad brush strokes in his work. His style combines unstructured, bold and striking colour combinations with strong patterns.



Untitled
Sally Tran

Sally says she likes 'to try new things' when creating art. This is evident in her varied contributions to art projects and exhibitions she has been involved in at Bayley House. Sally has previously drawn inspiration from Frida Kahlo, Yayoi Kusama and Romero Britto when making her artworks. This year Sally has been experimenting with fabric dying and abstract design and colour work.

This bio was written by supporting staff who have worked in arts programs with Sally with some input from Sally directly.

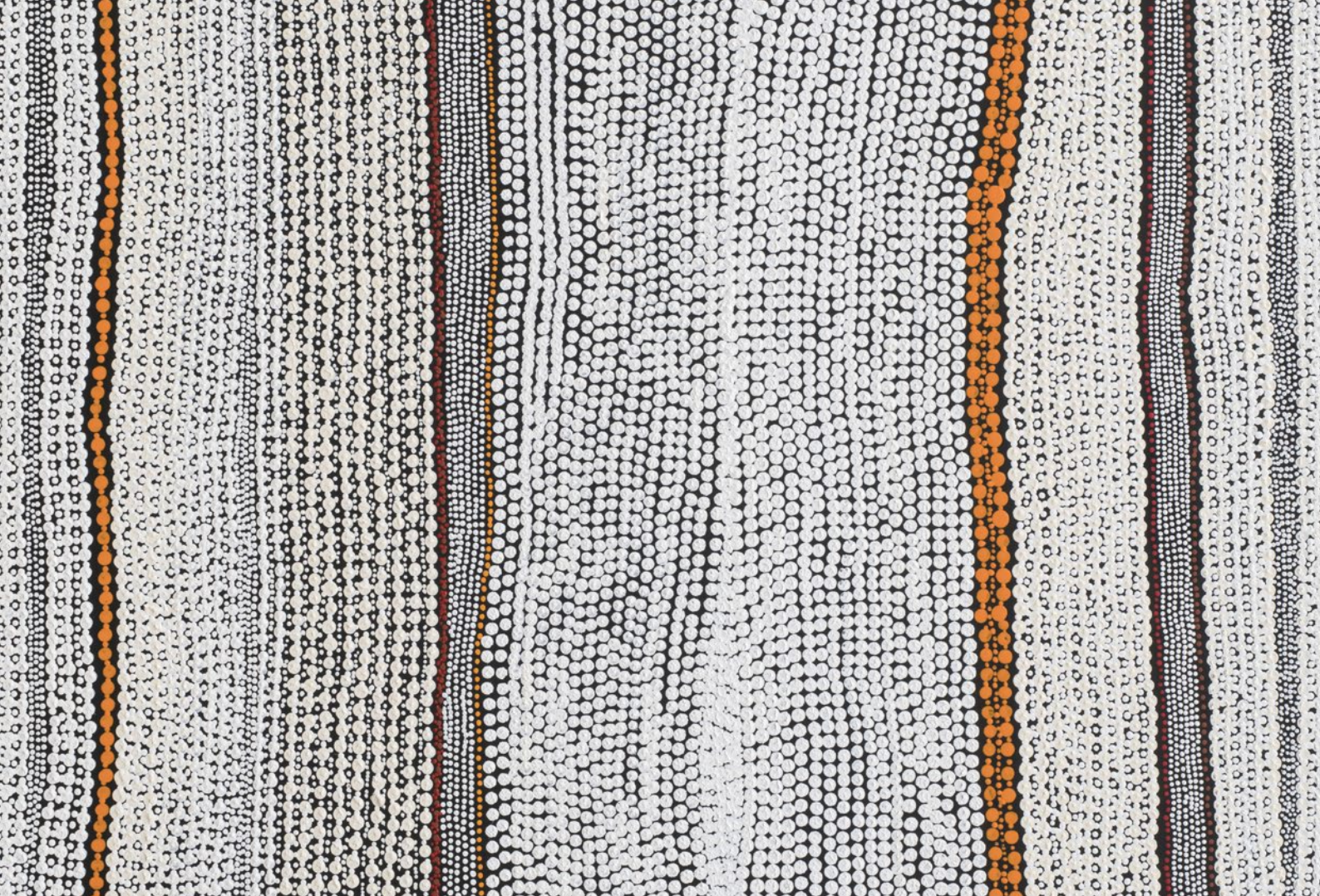


Song lines
Paul Calcott

Uncle Paul Calcott is a Wiradjuri man now living on Gubbi Gubbi country on the Queensland Sunshine Coast. He contracted Polio as a child, leading him to become a strong disability advocate later in life.

Uncle Paul has artworks in government, corporate and private collections here in Australia as well as Geneva, the Middle East, Canada the USA, England, Malaysia, New Zealand, Germany, and Bangkok. Including the Australian Embassy Switzerland, Canadian Ministers office and Queensland Treasury department.





By providing a forum that brings together great minds, broad perspectives and knowledge, ACOLA is the nexus for true interdisciplinary cooperation to develop integrated problem solving and cutting edge thinking on key issues for the benefit of Australia.

www.acola.org

The Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) combines the strengths of the Australian Learned Academies.

LEARNED ACADEMIES

