

SHAUN PARKER & COMPANY

DISABILITY, ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY

Effective: 2025–2028 Strategic Cycle

Review Cycle: Biennial (or as required by legislation or strategic updates)

1. PURPOSE

“Dance belongs to all bodies!”

Shaun Parker

Shaun Parker & Company Limited (SP&Co) is committed to advancing an equitable, accessible and inclusive dance sector in New South Wales and beyond.

As articulated in our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan, SP&Co envisions “a vibrant and equitable future for the dance sector: where opportunities abound, barriers are dismantled, artists thrive, and audiences are thrilled to engage with the transformative power of dance”.

This Disability, Access and Inclusion Policy sets out SP&Co’s commitment and framework for ensuring our dance practice, performances, programs, venues and workplaces are accessible, inclusive and welcoming of people of all abilities. SP&Co is committed to:

- Removing the systemic and physical barriers to participation.
 - Champion artists living with disabilities.
 - Co-design and consulting with people with disabilities.
 - Ensure equitable access to our programs, employment and leadership pathways.
 - Embedding inclusive practice across governance, operations, programming and community engagement.
 - Recognise that disability inclusion is a core organisational value, and not an add-on.
 - Uphold best practice under Australian legislation and arts sector standards.
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2. SCOPE & DEFINITIONS

This policy applies to:

- Board Directors.
- Executive and administrative staff.
- Dancers and artistic contractors.
- Production and technical teams.
- Interns and volunteers.
- Independent artists accessing SP&Co programs.
- Audiences and workshop participants.

DEFINITIONS

- **Access/ accessible:** a person with disability can independently approach, enter, move through, participate in, and make full use of all areas, activities, and facilities without encountering physical, digital, systemic, economic, sensory, or attitudinal barriers.
- **Access action plan (Access Plan):** A Plan detailing strategies for action, for an organisation to adequately address access issues, particularly for older adults and people with disabilities in line with the Australian Human Rights Commission guidelines.
- **Assistive devices:** Compensatory equipment used to overcome a physical or sensory disability including handheld, electronic and prosthetic aids as well as digital and adaptive technologies relevant to dance.
- **Barriers:** Any law, system, building, attitude, program, or policy that prevents a person's full participation in the community.
- **Disability:** a long-term limiting condition of the body and mind that restricts a person from fully participating and interacting with the world. Under the Commonwealth legislation disability refers to physical, sensory, neurological, intellectual, psychiatric, learning, physical disfigurement or chronic health conditions that may be visible or invisible, temporary or permanent.
- **Inclusion:** creating an environment where people of all abilities, identities, and backgrounds can fully and meaningfully participate in training, creative processes, performances, employment, leadership, and audience experiences.
- **Universal Design:** refer to the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. "Universal design" shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

3. VALUES & STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This policy directly supports SP&Co's Strategic Plan 2025–2028 priorities, including:

- Providing sustainable employment and wellbeing support to dancers.
- Championing inclusion for First Nations, LGBTQIA+, CaLD artists and artists living with disabilities.
- Ensuring accessibility and equity through digital education resources, regional touring and inclusive audience engagement.
- Maintaining a Disability Inclusion Action Plan as part of modern workplace protections.

SP&Co recognises disability inclusion not as compliance, but as artistic, cultural and structural leadership.

4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

SP&Co complies with the following legislation, standards and industry instruments:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW).
- Fair Work Act 2009.
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW).
- Australian Human Rights Commission Disability Action Plan Guide 2021 and related guidelines.
- Live Performance Award 2010.
- Relevant touring and venue compliance standards under the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

In line with our Modern Workplace Conditions framework, SP&Co ensure that all operations align with applicable state and federal equality, workplace and accessibility legislation, where possible, and with SP&Co's control.

5. POLICY COMMITMENTS

5.1 Inclusive Artistic Programming

SP&Co commits to:

- Commissioning and developing work led by artists living with disability.
- Providing choreographic and leadership pathways for disabled artists.
- Ensuring disability representation across programming where appropriate.
- Embedding inclusive dramaturgy and consultation in new work development.
- Host workshops and programs in accessible venues.

Strategic Example:

The development of *NO LONGER HANGING AROUND*, led by dancer and choreographer Joel Fenton, who lives with Cleidocranial Dysplasia, a genetic condition affecting bones and teeth development) - positions disability not as a limitation but as a form of artistic leadership.

5.2 Employment & Career Pathways

SP&Co will:

- Provide equitable employment pathways for dancers and creatives living with disabilities.
- Offer progressive leadership development opportunities (e.g., Joel Fenton's trajectory from dancer to Associate Artistic Director, and Felicity Nicol's trajectory as mentee to Dramaturge).
- Ensure flexible rehearsal and touring arrangements.

- Provide reasonable workplace adjustments without prejudice.
- Provide disability awareness and inclusion training for all staff and volunteers.

This aligns with SP&Co's commitment to sustainable long-term dancer employment and wellbeing.

5.3 Physical Accessibility

SP&Co will:

- Select rehearsal and performance venues that meet relevant accessibility standards wherever possible.
 - Advocate for accessible infrastructure and facilities in all touring and venue negotiations.
 - Ensure dressing rooms, sanitary facilities, rehearsal floors and performance spaces can be access and used safely, equitably, and with dignity.
 - Conduct risk assessments inclusive of mobility, sensory and neurological considerations.
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5.4 Digital Accessibility

Aligned with the Strategic Plan's digital advancement priorities

SP&Co will:

- Upgrade digital platforms to enhance accessibility.
 - Ensure website content meets WCAG accessibility standards where feasible.
 - Provide captioning and transcripts for digital video materials where possible.
 - Develop accessible digital education resource packs for regional and remote NSW schools.
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5.5 Inclusive Education & Community Engagement

SP&Co will:

- Deliver inclusive workshops designed to be adaptable for varying physical, sensory and cognitive needs.
 - Provide clear access information for schools and community partners.
 - Offer digital alternatives where travel or physical attendance presents barriers.
 - Work with First Nations tertiary institutions and community partners to ensure intersectional inclusion.
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5.6 Workplace Culture & Psychological Safety

SP&Co maintains:

- A Disability Inclusion Action Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Cultural Safety Policy

The Board's **People, Culture & Technology Subcommittee** oversees inclusion, staff development and burnout mitigation.

SP&Co recognises that invisible disabilities, mental health conditions and chronic illnesses require compassionate, confidential and flexible responses.

5.7 Touring & Regional Equity

Given SP&Co's extensive regional touring footprint the company will:

- Work with presenters to communicate access information clearly.
 - Advocate for accessible options where feasible.
 - Ensure regional schools and communities have equitable digital access.
 - Provide free and low-cost workshops to reduce economic barriers.
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5.8 Intersectionality

SP&Co recognises that disability intersects with:

- First Nations identity
- LGBTQIA+ identity
- CaLD communities
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Regional and remote access barriers

Inclusion strategies are therefore intersectional, not siloed.

6. GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITY

The Company's Executive & Management team, Board of Directors, including the First Nations Cultural Advisor and relevant subcommittees, will:

- Oversee implementation of this policy.
- Monitor compliance with legal obligations.
- Review accessibility KPIs annually.

- Ensure disability representation is considered in Board recruitment, and/or Board Observership Program.
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7. REPORTING & REVIEW

- This policy will be reviewed every two years.
 - Staff and artists may raise access concerns confidentially, directly with the CEO, to ensure a mechanism of comfortability in raising concerns safely, rather than raising concerns directly with the Producer or Project Manager.
 - Accessibility feedback mechanisms will be embedded into workshop and touring evaluations.
 - Annual reporting will be aligned with Create NSW and Creative Australia accountability frameworks.
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8. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

SP&Co recognises that accessibility is an evolving practice. We commit to:

- Consulting with artists living with disabilities.
 - Undertaking professional development in inclusive choreography and production.
 - Engaging disability advocacy organisations and individuals where appropriate.
 - Allocate budget for accessibility measures where possible.
 - Build inclusion into project funding proposals.
 - Ensuring that equality and diversity awareness are an integral part of induction and ongoing training for our people.
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9. PUBLIC STATEMENT

Shaun Parker & Company believes that disability is not a deficit of capacity but a dimension of human diversity that enriches artistic expression.

We affirm that:

- Dance belongs to all bodies.
- Access is a creative responsibility.
- Inclusion strengthens artistic excellence.
- Equity requires structural action, not symbolic gestures.

Through our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan, SP&Co is committed to dismantling barriers and building a sustainable, inclusive and visionary dance ecology for New South Wales and beyond.

"This policy has been developed in collaboration with people with disabilities, specifically - Hiten Bawa (Access Consultant, deaf person with cochlear implants, 2026 Board Observer), Joel Fenton (Dancer and Project Co-Ordinator living with Cleidocranial Dysplasia, and Felicity Nicol, Director, Writer & Theatre-maker, a person with ADHD and chronic illness"