

Galleries and museums

Art and culture are an important part of Australia's social fabric. Here are some simple ways to create a more inclusive experience for visitors who are blind or have low vision.

Communication

- Be vigilant. If you notice a visitor needs support, approach them and check. Identify yourself when approaching.
- Navigating museums and galleries can be tricky. Check if the visitor needs assistance, rather than assuming they do.
- Never channel conversation through a third person.
- When speaking, be yourself and act naturally.
- Don't avoid words like "see" or "look" or talking about everyday activities such as watching TV or videos. Use everyday language.



Guidance

- Always ask someone before offering assistance and never grab anyone without checking with them first. You're most likely going to startle the visitor causing risk to your safety and theirs.
- If you're describing where the visitor can find key spots in the venue, such as the restroom, cafeteria and cloakroom, be descriptive as possible. For example, the escalator is around 10 meters in front of you and goes to level two. The restroom room is on the left about three meters away from the elevator. If you reach the end of the corridor, you have gone too far.



When describing a location, note it in relation to a 'dead end' of a room. For example, the restroom is about three meters from the end of the corridor. This helps the visitor orient themselves and decipher if they've reached the right spot or gone too far.

Guided tours and information devices

- Be across any resources that are accessible and suitable for the visitor.
- Offer to provide support with using the device such as how to view the gallery content, volume buttons etc.



Dog guides



- Refrain from touching dog guides without seeking permission from the owner. A dog guide needs focus to do their job. Distractions affect their ability to work.
- If you see other patrons trying to distract the dog guide, check if the owner requires any assistance.

Guiding around the venue

Some visitors may prefer support with guidance around the venue, while others will just seek some advice.

- Check what type of support the visitor is after, such as orientation to know where the elevator is to go up the levels, rest rooms etc.
- Offer your elbow - this is a simple and safe way to guide the visitor.

Body language



Keep using body language. This will affect the tone of your voice and provide extra information to someone who is blind or has low vision.

When you follow these steps, you create a far more inclusive experience for patrons who are blind or have low vision.