



Down Syndrome  
Victoria



Diversity  
& Inclusion  
Action Plan  
2022-2024

An abstract painting featuring several faces rendered in a bold, expressive style. The faces are composed of thick, visible brushstrokes in a variety of colors including orange, yellow, brown, black, pink, and purple. The eyes are large and dark, and the overall composition is dynamic and colorful.

# Down Syndrome Victoria

We work alongside people with Down syndrome and their families to reach their potential and live the life they choose.

Down Syndrome Victoria acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pays respect to their cultures and Elders past, present and emerging.

This document is available in Easy English [here](#)

If you need help reading or accessing this document please call us on 9486 9600 or email [info@dsav.asn.au](mailto:info@dsav.asn.au).

Thank you to artists Katherine Mansour, Connor McGurk and Ned Middleton for contributing the original artwork elements included throughout this document.

# Contents

- 
- 03** STATEMENT FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
- 
- 04** ABOUT DOWN SYNDROME VICTORIA
- 
- 05** ABOUT THIS DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN
- 
- 07** DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN ACTIONS AND DELIVERABLES



# Statement from Chief Executive Officer



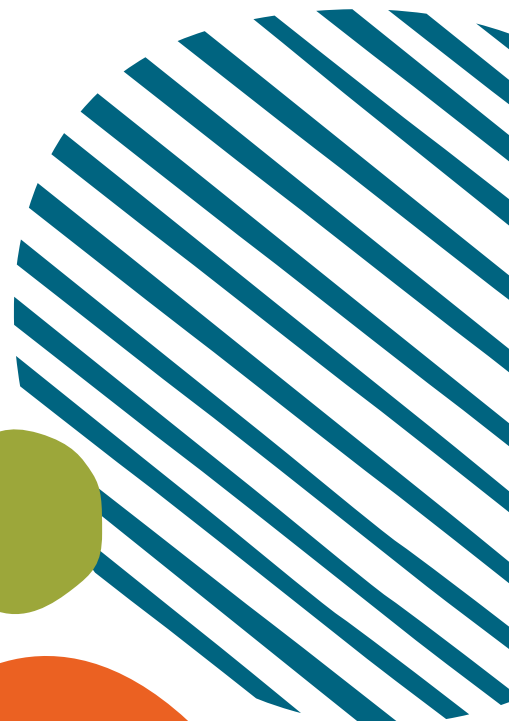
As a disability organisation we know how important human rights, diversity and inclusion are in creating a connected and welcoming world. At Down Syndrome Victoria we strive to foster communities that are empathetic and strong, resilient and innovative. We want to live in a society where people with Down syndrome are valued and enjoy social and economic inclusion. But beyond this we want to live in a society that values inherent human dignity and diversity and has achieved the social transformation that is required for this to occur.

In the development of this Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), we want to extend this organisational vision to ensure no one is left behind. We want to ensure everyone knows they can access the supports and services DSV provides, practically, comfortably and safely, and if for some reason they can't, that it is addressed in a timely manner within the outcomes of this plan.

**This DIAP outlines the measures being taken by DSV to ensure everyone is welcomed and supported within our organisation, and informs our community and partners on our approach to diversity and inclusion.**

DSV, along with our board of management and team, are committed to the implementation, maintenance and success of this action plan for the benefit of the Victorian community. This DIAP is our tool to ensure we continually strive for excellence and innovation, not only for people with Down syndrome and disability, but for every Victorian. By developing and implementing this DIAP we aim to lead by example and become an exemplar organisation in our work towards a truly inclusive society.

**Daniel Payne**  
CEO Down Syndrome Victoria



# About DSV

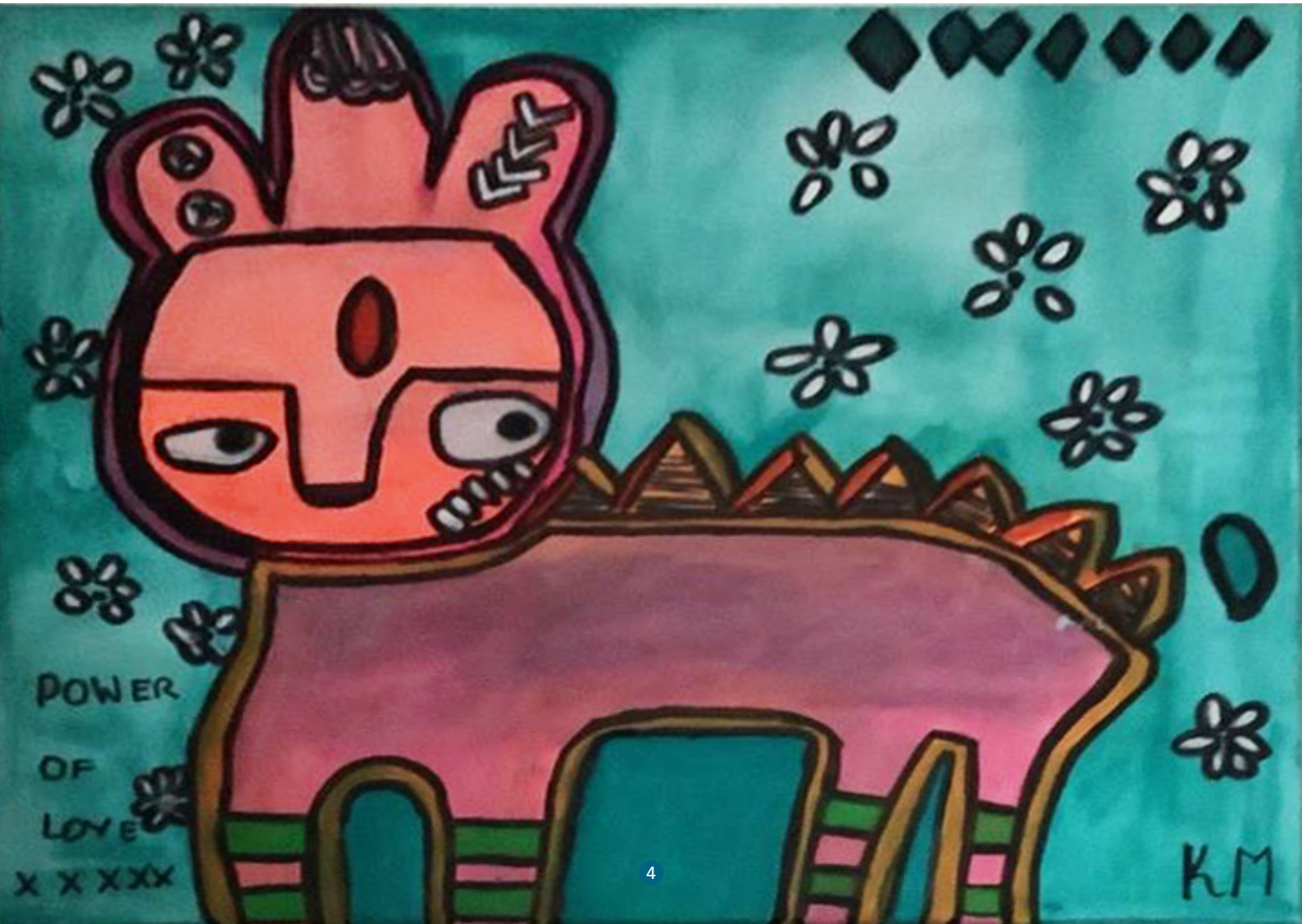
Down Syndrome Victoria (DSV) is Victoria's state-wide peak association representing people with Down syndrome and their families. We are a community-based, not-for-profit membership association who has a proud history of supporting individuals, families and the community since our grassroots beginnings in 1978.

DSV provides information, training, general support, education support and services with and for people with Down syndrome, their families, professionals, and the wider community. This includes prenatal support and information to expectant parents and health professionals.

Down Syndrome Victoria (DSV) advocates with and for people with Down syndrome to have access to the same opportunities, supports and community activities as other Victorians. We work within a human rights framework, consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.

We want to live in a society where people with Down syndrome are valued, reach their potential and are equal in every aspect of life.

[DSV's Strategic Plan 2021-2023](#) outlines this vision in more detail.



# About our DIAP

DSV's DIAP demonstrates the organisation's commitment to inclusion and diversity, outlining the roadmap to ensuring our organisation continually progresses and evolves to meet the needs of the community.

For the purposes of this document, we are defining inclusion and diversity as:



## Inclusion

The 'cultural and environmental feeling of belonging'<sup>1</sup>. Inclusion is the creation of a more connected world where every person who wishes to can access and participate fully in all aspects of life. Inclusion incorporates the social model of disability in that it is the inaccessibility of cultural and built environments that creates a person's disability. According to our Advisory Network, 'to be included means everyone feels safe and welcomed to do things.'

## Diversity

The 'full spectrum of human differences'<sup>2</sup>. This includes not only disability but also gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family status, religion, socioeconomic backgrounds and other characteristics. Diversity is not just about creating an organisation and community that provides equal rights and opportunities to all but values the fact that diverse abilities bring unique skills, benefits, innovation and insights to us as an organisation and community. According to our Advisory Network, 'diversity means everyone is different'.

## DSV's DIAP is guided by the principles of:

- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- NDIS Act 2013 (Cth)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)
- NDIS Practice Standards 2021

<sup>1</sup> Inclusive Employment: A comprehensive guide to creating a culture of inclusion for people with disability in your organisation; 2021 Leap in! Australia

<sup>2</sup> Inclusive Employment: A comprehensive guide to creating a culture of inclusion for people with disability in your organisation; 2021 Leap in! Australia

This DIAP will work towards the following goals.

1

### Valuing diversity

Ensure DSV is an organisation that welcomes and provides equal rights and opportunities to all.

2

### Accessibility of communication

Ensure DSV communications and communication platforms are accessible.

3

### Accessibility of environment

Ensure the physical location of DSV is fully accessible, welcoming and a universally designed location that facilitates access for all people.

4

### Inclusive employment

Ensure DSV promotes inclusion in employment for all.

## Implementation

An Accessibility Working Group has been established to develop, implement and monitor DSV's progress against the DIAP. The working group is made up of volunteer staff members, including a representative from our Advisory Network.

The Accessibility Working Group will ensure the DIAP stays on track, compile annual reports and facilitate progress reports back to DSV's Chief Executive Officer and staff, Board, Advisory Network and members.

We acknowledge we are on a continual learning pathway and as such want this plan to be a fluid document that has the flexibility to be adapted if or when actions arise that we were previously unaware of.

Once a year the DIAP will be reviewed to reconsider actions and timeframes and ensure stipulated actions are achieving goals. It will also be reviewed with respect to National and State disability strategies and DSV's Strategic Plan in order to keep current as well as leverage opportunities that may arise.



# DSV DIAP Actions & Deliverables

GOAL

1

## Valuing diversity

Ensure DSV is an organisation that welcomes and provides equal rights and opportunities to all.

According to our Advisory Network valuing diversity means it is important that:

- We respect all the different types of people.
- All people feel safe.
- We understand that by everyone being different things are better.

BARRIER/AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT/ACTION	DELIVERABLE	ACTION TIMELINE
Improve DSV as a welcoming and equitable organisation for diverse groups ensuring everyone has the opportunity to be included	Develop partnership/mentor relationships with appropriate organisations	2023-2024
	Ensure DIAP incorporates relevant feedback and recommendations from diverse groups	2023
Improve DSV staff capability in valuing diversity and inclusion	Develop a matrix of professional development requirements for staff	2022
	Update staff PD register to reflect requirements of matrix	2022
	Develop a calendar of events for DSV to support that celebrates diversity and inclusion	2023

GOAL

2

## Accessibility of communication

Ensure all DSV communication and communication platforms are accessible, approachable and welcoming.

According to our Advisory Network accessibility of communication means:

- It is important that all the different people can understand and find the information they need on our website and through our organisation.

BARRIER/AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT/ACTION	DELIVERABLE	ACTION TIMELINE
Improve accessibility of DSV communications for people with Down syndrome / intellectual disability / disability	Ensure communications system incorporates the updating and prioritising of resources/ website that need to be translated into easy read	2023
Improve accessibility of DSV communications for all disabilities and diverse groups	Incorporate priority plan to improve communications for diverse groups into Communications Strategy	2024
Ensure there are sustainable processes in place regarding content we produce	Work with federation to update national style guide to ensure it includes the use of plain and accessible language	2023
	Create criteria that determines what is translated into easy read	2023



GOAL

3

### Accessibility of environment

Ensure the physical location of DSV is fully accessible, welcoming and a universally designed location that facilitates access for all people.

According to our Advisory Network accessibility of environment means:

- That all the different people can go to our office and events.

BARRIER/AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT/ACTION	DELIVERABLE	ACTION TIMELINE
Improve accessibility of DSV office and any external spaces utilised	Develop a matrix of accessibility and welcoming requirements	2022
	Implement matrix and identified activities to remove barriers	2022
Improve accessibility of IT for DSV staff	Conduct staff consultation/feedback session around IT accessibility	2023
	Develop implementation and priority plan for IT recommendations	2024

GOAL

4

### Inclusive employment

Ensure employment processes and pathways at DSV are inclusive, accessible and allow for reasonable adjustments.

According to our Advisory Network inclusive employment means:

- It is important that all the different people can get a job at DSV.

BARRIER/AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT/ACTION	DELIVERABLE	ACTION TIMELINE
Improve accessibility of DSV employment process	Develop reasonable adjustment procedure	2023
	Review HR process	2023
Develop career pathways and leadership opportunities in DSV for people with disability	Recruit a person with Down syndrome to the Board	2024
	Map and pilot career pathway models for DSV Advisory Network	2023

If you would like to contact us about our DIAP please phone 9486 9600 or email [info@dsav.asn.au](mailto:info@dsav.asn.au).

We welcome feedback, comments and suggestions.