

Stories of success

- SQuAD has successfully initiated conversations around access and inclusion. They reached out to and had a meeting with Queer Screen – a non-profit organisation that holds two large film festivals a year. As a result, Queer Screen will provide improved signage, warnings for films that feature strobe lighting, and more closed/open captioned movies.
- SQuAD has independently organised its first general meeting, with the Bankstown-Canterbury Council providing a meeting space in Bankstown Library for free.
- SQuAD has established a code of conduct, and discussed future events and festivals to become a part of
- SQuAD also organised its first social outing – an open captioned screening of the film Antman and The Wasp, at The Ritz in Randwick.
- Ability Links NSW facilitated a connection for SQuAD with the City of Sydney Council, and the organisers of Wear It Purple – a national day for queer youth awareness. SQuAD planned to attend independently – and promote SQuAD to the community.



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Lessons and Tips

A lot was learned along the way, from the development of the Rainbow Working party, through the community engagement and the establishment of the network, and following the network's official launch. Some of the standout lessons, and our tips, include:

- Research your community to establish what services, key organisations and groups already exist that you can involve, consult and learn from, in both sectors - disability and LGBTIQA. This may include Social Media, social groups including MeetUp, LGBTIQA+ specific organisations, disability service providers, and community organisations that provide services to LGBTIQA+ people and/or people with disabilities
- When involving stakeholders for the group, consider involving local community members with lived experience and identified community leaders
- Have an understanding of the intersection of sexuality and disability
- Establish protocols to help create a 'safe space' before any event - protocol might involve an agreement outlining the rules of the group's engagement possibly emphasising the respectful, non-judgemental treatment of each other, or laying down some etiquette during housekeeping. It may also include the use of Rainbow signage, or access inclusion stickers.
- Development of a working party in the early stages is beneficial
- As a group, develop an aim to help stay on track - continually check back to ensure the actions the group are taking are in line with the group's aims. Your aim should be short and memorable



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- In determining outcomes, perhaps ask: “In 2 years what do you hope the group will have achieved?”
- You may want to develop an action plan to map out what you will do to achieve your aims. This can provide clarity around priorities and deadlines. In this project, the group chose not to develop an action plan, and instead identified a number of actions during each meeting. For ease of tracking, it is recommended to utilise an action plan
- Stakeholder Involvement: Whenever you contact someone new and they have proved helpful, and could potentially become a partner to support the working partner or the community group, list them here and let that list grow. Start by writing down any relevant organisations/groups you are already aware of.
- Community centres are low cost to hire. Always check accessibility of a venue in person - accessibility of a venue can be open to interpretation.

Auslan Interpreter Hiring Tips

- Auslan Interpreters are in high demand and low supply
- Book them a minimum 2 weeks in advance - the sooner the better. They are often an afterthought for a lot of event organisers.
- If they are needed for more than one hour, you will have to have a second interpreter for WHS reasons
- They typically cost \$60-\$120 p/h, these rates change depending on time of day and day of the week
- Send them as much detail about the work as possible, including any notes used for speeches, slides etc. This gives them time to prepare and give the highest quality interpreting



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- If hiring through an agency, specify that you would like a LGBTIQQA+ friendly interpreter
- Always ask the interpreter what they need to provide the best interpreting. Ensure the space is adequately set up – set aside space for the interpreter and people who will need to see the interpreter. If workshop situation, ensure that everyone can see one another's faces.
- Ensure all videos shown have captions and are on regardless of who is in the room.

Risk Management Plan

- Ensure a risk management plan is in place prior to any event
- Have information available on mental health services, where needed.
- Ensure privacy of members e.g. BCC any emails to the community group members
- Establish a code of conduct or group agreement to help create a positive group culture
- Where possible, have someone in attendance that has accidental counselling skills and who understands trauma informed approaches and mental health first aid. There are times that this is needed.

Event Planning

- Lock in a date and event/meeting space asap- it relieves stress and gives you a place and date to work toward
- Ensure you have your project plan complete well before the first meeting and/or event
- Map out priorities and set deadlines



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- Venue accessibility – Ensure clear directions are obtained from staff at the site on any access requirements
- Geographic location – try to hold meetings at a centralised location with the option to move around if the geographical area for the group is large
- Consider a back-up plan for catering
- Plan extra activities as a back-up if needed when an activity that is planned doesn't pan out
- Be flexible with the running format and activities

Promotion

- Ensure promotion in culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and different languages – ensure there is some thought put into how you can engage communities that are often marginalised
- Create a Facebook Page in addition to the Facebook Group – this can be used to further promote the group and its achievements to the public, without people requiring to join the group
- Contacting Facebook groups and pages directly proved to be the most successful strategy to get the word out about the group.
- Posters can be made using the free website CANVA.
- The access symbols shown on the bottom of the “meeting poster” were developed by St Vincent de Paul Society- Ability Links NSW. If you would like to have your business or organisation mapped for access give us a call or drop an email and we can provide you with further information.
- Resources to be shared on Facebook group page, for example: posters, other community groups.



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Partnerships

- Where there are partnerships formed ensure there is clear communication and transparency about budgets, financial contributions, and member involvement/responsibilities.
- Create your own stakeholder engagement strategy outlining the roles of each stakeholder
- Enter into formal partnership arrangements with existing organisations for on-going support, e.g. ACON, Twenty10, Northcott, CID, Family Planning
- Identify natural leaders within the community group, support and build their capacity to take on a leadership role in the group.
- Partner with Council for Intellectual Disability or similar organisation in your area to deliver group facilitation training for the community group members.
- Share project information and resources with a broader audience to support the development of peer led LGBTIQ+ /Disability networks in other regions.



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A big thanks and acknowledgement to the Rainbow Working Party who in the beginning took the initiative to explore access and inclusion issues across the LGBTIQ+/Disability communities which resulted in the formation of the SQUAD Community Group.

Community Representatives: Charlie Zada, Charitha De Silva, Mary McMahon

SSI Ability Links NSW Representatives: Nicole Watkins, Amanda Aldermann, Noor Al-Sahir, Aiyub Torin

St Vincent de Paul Society Ability Links NSW Representatives: Troy Byrnes, Bonnie Pocock, Charlotte Vann, Sally Menzies

Canterbury & Bankstown Council: Jacob Andrew

For further information on designing or delivering community-based inclusion projects with people with disability see the Ability Links NSW Community Development Resource Package -

https://www.abilitylinksnsw.org.au/documents/ability_links_CD_RP_accessible.pdf



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Linking people and communities with opportunities

Table 2 – Action Plan for working group

Action i.e. meetings, consultation opportunities, engagement strategies, planning opportunities.	Who is Responsible?	Due Date	Status / Date Completed

Table 3 – Stakeholder List

Name	Organisation	Contact Details	When & Why to Contact



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Table 4 - Resources/Budget Template

Resource	Estimated Cost	Who is Responsible?

Table 5 - Promotional Strategies

Where	Mode / Media	Who is Responsible
interagency, local cafes, specific publications	media, web post, press release / face to face, poster, etc HOW	



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