



## Access and Inclusion – What we need to Understand

### Background Information and Context

#### General Demographics

- Around 15 per cent of the world's population, or estimated 1 billion people, live with disabilities. Disabled People are the world's largest minority.
- Disability should be the one factor that unites humanity as its effects knows no boundaries to race, gender, social class, geographical location, sexuality, gender yet it is a subject that refuses to be discussed or acknowledged
- Comparative studies on disability legislation shows that only 45 countries have anti-discrimination and other disability-specific laws.

#### Discrimination

- Disabled people are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than non-disabled people.
- Around a third of disabled people experience difficulties related to their impairment in accessing public, commercial and leisure goods and services

#### Leisure, Social and Cultural Activities

- Disabled people remain significantly less likely to participate in cultural, leisure and sporting activities than non-disabled people.

#### Communications

- Disabled people are significantly less likely to live in households with access to the internet than non-disabled people.

#### Transport

- Around a fifth of disabled people report having difficulties related to their impairment or disability in accessing transport

#### Social Model of Disability

- The second half of twentieth century saw the creation of the Disabled People's Movement which drew attention to the ways in which dominant and non-disabled values and practises defined vast areas of physical, social and economic spaces as no-go areas for disabled people. When disabled people do access these 'areas' there inclusion is portrayed as 'special'
- Out of this movement grew the Social Model of Disability which is the foundation of the UK Disability Discrimination Act.
- The social model of disability places the onus of responsibility on society and the environments it creates rather than the disabled person themselves.
- The social model says that it is society that disable people when barriers are created such as no ramps, lack of accessible information and people's attitudes and assumptions.

- The social model moves away from medical definition and says you do not need to know someone's medical history in order to give them support. You just need to know what their access requirements are.
- The social model states that problems arise when a disabled person is confronted by a society which refuses to remove barriers to access.
- The social model can be characterised as being about **Stairs** (our physical environment) and **Stares** (our attitudinal environment). Either or both can create barriers to inclusion.

## What We Need To Understand

### Myths

- Myths and misconceptions about disabled people become a very real way in which society see disabled people.
- Therefore disabled people need to be able to feel that we understand those myths exist but that we won't view disabled people in such ways

### The Arts Experience

- Positive experiences we may experience as arts attendees, such as spontaneous decisions, comfortable seats, transport and so on) are those that may be difficult for disabled people to achieve.
- Negative experience we may experience as art attendees, such as bad sight lines, difficult parking and finding a venue, bad acoustics and so on) are those that disabled people find all too common when attending arts events.
- Good access and customer service for disabled people is also good for all. Clear and simple signage is good for those who English may not be a first language, information about parking and step free access is also useful for parents and families.

### Language and Terminology

- Language we use affects the way we view disabled people
- There is a fear around language in relation to disability. As long as we are clear and open creating an environment of shared responsibility, (where disabled people feel they can correct or advice on language and non-disabled people feel free to ask questions) the fear factor will continue and people will not gain confidence and be comfortable when talking about disability.

### Disabled People in the Arts and Media

- Disabled people do not often see themselves reflected in the media or the arts in way that's reflects the reality of their lives.
- Disabled people therefore need to be assured that their lives and stories will be represented in a thoughtful way.
- Disabled people have an experience they can express through the arts and this should be a valued part of our artistic life.

To ask any inclusion related questions contact [daryl@kazzum.org](mailto:daryl@kazzum.org)