

BUSINESS ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM – 2024/25 PILOT REPORT

September 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Adelaide acknowledges that we are located on the traditional Country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. We also extend that respect to visitors of other Aboriginal Language Groups and other First Nations.

DOCUMENT PROPERTIES

Contact for enquiries and proposed changes

If you have any questions regarding this document or if you have a suggestion for improvements, please contact:

Contact Officer: Kelly Barns
Title: Senior Social Planner
Program: Park Lands, Policy and Sustainability
Phone: (08) 8203 7212
Email: k.barns@cityofadelaide.com.au

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1. INTRODUCTION

As South Australia's capital city, the City of Adelaide (CoA) is dedicated to creating an accessible and inclusive environment where people of all abilities can fully participate in community and economic life. We recognise that businesses play a vital role in this goal by making Adelaide a more welcoming place for everyone, including people with a disability.

In 2025, the CoA launched the Business Accessibility Support Program (BASP) Pilot as a key commitment under the [Disability Action and Inclusion Plan 2024-2028](#) to support a limited number of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to implement improvements aimed at ensuring their businesses are welcoming to customers with a disability.

The BASP Pilot incorporated access to accessibility tools, resources and tailored support to inform an applied learning approach for participants. Businesses were eligible to apply for small grants of up to \$10,000 from a dedicated BASP Fund to implement improvements identified in the program. The program's overarching goal was to empower businesses to go beyond compliance by integrating inclusive practices that embrace diversity and create welcoming environments.

Nine businesses were offered a program place, with eight accepting the offer and seven participating in the full program:

1. Adelaide Fringe
2. Ancient World
3. Feast Festival
4. Flamboyance Tours
5. Hutt Street General Practice
6. Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre
7. Our Wellness Collective.

An additional business, Hut and Soul, commenced the program and participated in the initial workshop and a consultation with the Access Consultant, however the business chose not to proceed further.

This report provides an overview of the program from design and implementation to evaluation and will inform the design of the ongoing BASP.

2. PILOT PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The BASP Pilot aimed to assist participants to improve accessibility across their physical, digital and service areas through the design and implementation of tailored improvements.

Objectives of the Pilot included:

1. **Launch and trial of the program:** Test program design and resources, refine by incorporating feedback and evaluate.
2. **Enhance accessibility practices:** Increase knowledge, capability and confidence of businesses to identify and address accessibility barriers.
3. **Personalised expert support:** Support businesses to understand accessibility opportunities, develop plans and apply for BASP funds.
4. **Foster business collaboration:** Encourage knowledge-sharing and peer-to-peer learning.
5. **Recognition and promotion:** Motivate participation and completion and showcase accessible businesses.
6. **Empower the disability community:** Ensure lived experience is used to inform the program and support knowledge growth for businesses.

3. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The BASP aligns to the CoA Strategic Plan 2024-2024 aspiration 'Our Places':

- Outcome: Create safe, inclusive and healthy places for our community.
- Key Action: Maintain and improve disability, LGBTQIA+ and vulnerable or minority group access and inclusion.

Establishment of the BASP is a four year focus area in the CoA's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024-2028 Goal 4 'Businesses that are welcoming to more customers'.

4. RESOURCING

Council's 2024/25 Business Plan and Budget allocated \$202,000 (ex GST) for a Strategic Project focused on scoping and trialling a BASP.

This resourcing was allocated to the following initiatives:

- Engagement of an expert Accessibility Consultant to support program delivery \$79,500 (ex GST)
- BASP Fund \$80,000 (Ex GST)
- Other program supports and contingency, up to \$42,500.

5. PROGRAM DESIGN AND FUND OPERATING GUIDELINES

5.1 Program Design

The BASP Pilot design was informed by research into effective programs used by other leading local governments, including the City of Melbourne, to support and incentivise city businesses to make accessibility improvements. This was complemented by lived-experience advice provided by people with a disability who participated in a workshop facilitated by the Centre for Social Impact, Flinders University and the CoA.

Based on the information gathered through these processes, the Pilot design included the following features:

- **Initial self-assessment toolkit**
Completed by participant businesses at the commencement of the program to identify existing accessibility capabilities and attributes and identify opportunities for improvement.
- **Expert knowledge building and tailored support**
 - A series of short workshops delivered to participant businesses by an expert Access Consultant to build knowledge on core accessibility topics: Why accessibility matters and building an accessible culture; Accessible premises; Accessible communications.
 - Workshops were delivered in a hybrid model to support participation/completion (in-person, online attendance, or viewing of the workshop recording at a later time).
 - An individual consultation for each business with an Access Consultant to develop a tailored Accessibility Improvement Plan informed by the self-assessment outcomes and learnings from the workshops. Plans include both short-term initiatives aligned with the BASP Fund criteria and other opportunities.

- **BASP funding applications**
Access to a dedicated funding pool for eligible low-cost initiatives detailed in Accessibility Action Plans, for expenditure within the Pilot funding timeframe.
- **Resources**
A range of accessibility resources and tools were developed and provided to participant businesses to enhance the program.
- **Recognition and promotion**
The efforts of participant businesses will be recognised and promoted across CoA and relevant subsidiary channels.

Access Consultant

An expert Access Consultant, Flare Access, was engaged to support the Pilot through:

- Participating in the business selection assessment panel
- Developing and refining program resources
- Developing and delivering workshops for the pilot cohort
- Providing individual business consultations and coaching for businesses
- Facilitating collaboration between pilot businesses
- Supporting evaluation using a developmental approach.

Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel (AIAP)

Involvement of the AIAP was sought in the following ways:

- Several AIAP members were invited to participate in the program design workshop
- Updates on the BASP Pilot planning were provided to the AIAP at its meetings in November 2024 and February 2025
- Invitation to participate in the program workshops by sharing their experiences and providing expert insights
- Seeking feedback on the draft customer journey mapping resource developed for the program.

5.2 Program Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria were advertised on the CoA website, with the full criteria set out in the [BASP Fund Operating Guidelines](#) noted by Council on 11 February 2025. Criteria included:

1. Business must operate in the CoA
2. Have fewer than 200 employees
3. Provide services in the visitor economy, including but not limited to:
 - a. Food and beverage establishment
 - b. Retailer
 - c. Tourism
 - d. Art and recreation
4. Genuine interest in improving accessibility for customers and employees with disability
5. Available to commit around two hours per week from February to June 2025 for workshops, consultations and implementing improvements
6. Participate in short term program evaluation, including post-program survey
7. Commit to ongoing improvements in accessibility beyond the program

8. Not have received CoA funding or grants in 2023 or 2024 for access-related improvements.

5.3 BASP Fund and Operating Guidelines

The BASP Pilot included the establishment of a dedicated funding pool of \$80,000 in 2024/25 intended to provide each business with up to \$10,000 for eligible accessibility improvements, as set out in the BASP Fund Operating Guidelines. Eligible improvement categories included:

- Creating inclusive venues for neurodivergent customers
- Minor physical access upgrades
- Accessible information and inclusive communication schedules
- Employee training.

During the pilot, based on the cost of the improvements proposed, and that there was more than \$80,000 remaining within the overall BASP Pilot budget, a total funding pool of \$91,381 was provided to participating businesses. Individual grant amounts offered to the businesses varied from \$9,189 to \$16,026.

6. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Dates and activities

The table below outlines the key dates and activities for implementing the Pilot.

Date	Activity
Dec 2024 – Jan 2025	Program design and procurement • Research and stakeholder engagement. • Engagement of Access Consultant.
Dec 2024 – Jan 2025	Application and selection process • Expression of Interest and program applications via CoA website. • 21 applications received with 14 deemed eligible for consideration by the BASP Assessment Panel. • 9 businesses offered a program place, with 8 accepting the offer.
Feb 2025	Initial self-assessment • All 8 businesses completed the Self-Assessment Toolkit.
Feb – Apr 2025	Workshops • 6 workshops delivered by the Access Consultant. • 7 businesses completed all workshops, with moderate to low levels of participation at the 'live' workshops, with participant businesses that did not attend viewing recordings at a later time.
Mar – Apr 2025	Individual consultations and development of Accessibility Action Plans • All 8 businesses undertook an individual consultation. • 7 businesses developed an Accessibility Action Plan.
Mar – May 2025	Funding applications • 7 businesses submitted and were approved for Pilot funding, covering 25 individual initiatives.

Date	Activity
	- Improvements were spread across the Fund categories as follows: - Creating inclusive venues for neurodivergent people - 9 - Minor physical access improvements - 9 - Accessible information and inclusive communication - 4 - Employee training - 3
Mar – Jun 2025	Improvement initiatives and funding expenditure - Businesses undertook purchases and procurement for funded initiatives, with BASP Funds issued as a reimbursement following provision of evidence. - Initiative implementation commenced.
Sept 2025	Completion of developmental evaluation for pilot activities
July – Dec 2025	Completion of implementation and recognition of improvements - Businesses are continuing to implement funded improvements with anticipated completion in December 2025, as agreed with each participant. - Planning for the promotion of businesses and accessibility improvements is underway, and participation certificates will be issued. - Final acquittal and outcomes reporting by participants.

6.2 Participant businesses and improvement initiatives

The seven businesses that completed the BASP Pilot identified a combined total of 61 accessibility improvements. Of these, 25 initiatives were submitted and approved for funding support from the BASP Fund. During the process of receiving applications from the seven businesses it was identified that the \$10,000 offered fell short of the cost to deliver effective solutions relevant to the individual business and the decision was made to fully allocate the funding available rather than constrain it to the limit of \$10,000.

As of September 2025, participant businesses reported 34 initiatives as complete, with the remaining 27 planned for future implementation. The table below provides an overview of the status of the 25 initiatives approved for support from the BASP Fund.

Business	Category	Approved Initiatives	Approved Funding (ex GST)	Status
Adelaide Fringe	Art and recreation / Tourism	Website accessibility improvements to achieve compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA standard	\$15,000	Amendments to website complete, external compliance audit underway. Updated website will go-live 5 December 2025
Ancient World	Food and beverage/ Art and recreation	Resurfacing of stairs, installation of tactile ground surface indicators, nosing and non-slip surface and handrails	\$10,518	Complete
Feast Festival	Art and recreation	- Access guide, social narrative and site map - Accessibility signage and wayfinding - Establishment of a quiet zone	\$9,189	In progress and on track for completion in time for Feast Festival in November 2025
Flamboyance Tours	Tourism	- Hearing augmentation system purchase and installation - Access and Inclusion Consultation – designing an Inclusive Adelaide Central Market tour	\$16,026	Equipment purchased and consultation with Access Consultant complete. Implementation planning underway, with expected completion in December 2025

Business	Category	Approved Initiatives	Approved Funding (ex GST)	Status
Hutt Street General Practice	Other service	• Installation of accessible signage • Installation and fit out of a Quiet Zone and sensory kits • Accessible seating alternatives • Implementation of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative	\$9,406	Complete
Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre	Art and recreation	• Installation of tactile ground surface indicators • Internal stair resurfacing and installation of compliant stair nosing and non-slip surface • Installation of visual eyeline guides and resurfacing venue flooring with non-slip surface • Enhance website accessibility • Sensory bags	\$15,810	Complete
Our Wellness Collective	Other service	• Signage for wayfinding - Unisex accessible toilets signs and room signs • Sound transfer and acoustic works • Installation of dimmer function in clinic rooms • Implementation of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower • Development of "Sensory Bar" • Development of Social Narrative • Development of Easy Read Resources • Disability Inclusion Training & Onboarding Resource • Updating website accessibility	\$15,432	Complete
TOTAL ALLOCATED FUNDS			\$91,381 (ex GST)	

7. FUND EXPENDITURE

In 2024/25, a total of \$90,341 was expended from the BASP Fund, provided as reimbursements to businesses for expenses incurred in line with their approved funding.

8. OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

A developmental evaluation of the Pilot was conducted, with feedback collected from businesses throughout the program.

The evaluation highlights that the pilot created tangible outcomes for participants. In the post-program evaluation survey, all seven businesses that completed the program reported either agreement or strong agreement across the following measures:

- Better understanding of accessibility barriers.
- More confidence in delivering inclusive experiences.
- Better understanding of the myths/misconceptions about people with disability.
- Knowledge in implementing accessible communications.

Knowledge about best practices and tools to support accessibility. Strengths of the program included:

- Seven out of eight businesses engaging with and completing all program requirements.
- Seven businesses developed Accessibility Improvement Plans which included practical, low-cost accessibility improvements that were supported by the BASP Fund, as well as additional improvements resourced independently by the businesses. The improvements spanned a wide range of accessibility categories demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the breadth of accessibility issues.
- Businesses have reported an intention to continue implementing incremental accessibility improvements beyond the life of the program.
- The individualised support provided by the Access Consultant was reported by businesses as a key enabler to identifying improvements, increasing knowledge and taking action.
- Businesses reported highly valuing hearing from people with disability as another key component integral to the program.
- Resources were considered useful enablers to support businesses.

Limitations of obstacles highlighted in the evaluation:

- Short timeframe for program completion and implementation of initiatives was reported by businesses and the Access Consultant as a challenge for completion of the program. For future programs, providing a longer timeframe for design and implementation of initiatives may lead to improved satisfaction and outcomes.
- Attendance at the live workshops was moderate to low, with many businesses preferring to view the recordings in their own time. An alternative moving forward would be to develop a series of short e-Learning modules for self-paced learning. This would also support sustainability of the program into the future.
- The online community offered to businesses received no uptake. Businesses expressed a preference for receiving direct communication from CoA and the Access Consultant. The online community would not be included in future programs.

In line with the program methodology and grant funding requirements, participant businesses will be surveyed six months post-implementation of their funded initiatives to ascertain impacts in relation to patronage of people with a disability, inclusivity, and feedback received from people with a disability and their carers.

9. FINDINGS

The BASP Pilot was successful in achieving five of its six objectives and has resulted in the delivery of real accessibility improvements by participating businesses, with more in progress.

The Pilot provides a solid foundation with the potential to be refined to support additional businesses to deliver accessibility improvements into the future.

Achievement of objectives:

1. Launch and trial of program: Achieved.

Pilot completed and delivered in accordance with the program design methodology. Evaluation completed and delivered by Flare Access.

2. Enhance accessibility practices: Achieved.

Participant businesses have reported increased knowledge, capability and confidence, and have either fully completed or are in the process of completing the funded accessibility improvements.

3. Personalised expert support: Achieved.

All businesses participated in individual consultations with the Access Expert, which resulted in the identification, planning and progression of practical accessibility improvements for the businesses that completed the full program.

4. Foster business collaboration: Not achieved.

This objective sought to achieve collaboration through inviting businesses to attend a series of 'live' workshops and join an online community. There was moderate to low participation in the live workshops, which provided some limited opportunities for collaboration, however the evaluation highlighted there was no uptake of the online community.

5. Recognition and promotion: In progress, will be achieved.

Planning is underway, and all interested businesses will have their accessibility improvements highlighted and promoted.

6. Empower the disability community: Partially achieved.

Due to the rapid nature of the Pilot, opportunities for involvement of the CoA's Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel and other local experts were provided where possible; however this is identified as an important area to build on in the future. Potential opportunities for increased involvement of people with disability include, for example, expert advice on proposed program enhancements, co-design of videos about key accessibility issues faced by people with disability to complement existing program resources, and participating in future BASP Fund Assessment Panel.

There are a range of opportunities to enhance and refine the program into the future, as CoA continues to deliver its DAIP commitment for a BASP, including:

1. **Scaling access to resources:** Resources developed for the Pilot can be adapted and released on the CoA website, making them freely available to support all businesses in undertaking accessibility and inclusion improvements.
2. **Developing short lived-experience videos:** The existing suite of resources could be complemented by the development of one or two short videos highlighting why accessibility and inclusion matter through a lived-experience lens, benefits that can be achieved for both businesses and people with disability, and key tips for making improvements.
3. **Streamlining future grant program requirements:** With supporting resources published and widely available, there is an opportunity to streamline the design and administration of the future grant program to become an Business Accessibility Incentive Program focussed on the provision of expert individualised advice to businesses (e.g. Access Consultant consultation) to inform Accessibility Improvement Plans and funding of low-cost accessibility initiatives through incentive funding. The funding value to be considered in the context of the costs experienced in the Pilot.
4. **Development of e-Learning Modules:** A future incentive program could incorporate short e-Learning Modules to replace the workshops and allow for self-paced learning. This would reinforce program simplification and sustainability by reducing the resourcing requirements of the program into the future.
5. **Longer timeframe:** A future incentive program could be administered either on an ongoing basis, or on an annual basis opening for applications early in the financial year. This will enable a longer delivery timeframe for participants (e.g. nine to 12 months).

10. NEXT STEPS

Next steps include:

- Developing proposed BASP program enhancements for potential future funding rounds, and seeking advice from the AIAP at its meeting in November 2025 to inform a budget bid as part of the 202/-27 Annual Business Plan and Budget process.