

***PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ACT***  
**SUBMISSION TO THE AUSTRALIA 2020 SUMMIT**

By 2020, Australia will embrace the rich diversity of its population which will include people with disabilities. People with disability will be included in all aspects of society as part of the diversity of society and will be given the same access to opportunity that is considered appropriate to all citizens.

To encourage the development of this society that is able to take advantage of the skills and abilities of all its population, education of the population needs to be Australia's greatest goal. Only by providing the best possibilities for people to increase their knowledge and skills can the government equip the population to assist with Australia's social, economic and innovative development. This education must be totally accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities.

By an improvement of educational opportunities to people with disabilities, they will have equal access to work and the ability to be recognised for their contribution to the workforce and be promoted and rewarded accordingly. As part of the workforce they may need to be provided with appropriate support and understanding to perform tasks.

The recognition that 20% of the population has a disability and the possibility of this percentage increasing with an ageing population, will enhance Australia's prospects if planning of social, business, recreational, service provision and institutions includes the provisions for people's needs in relation to disability. Eg. Hearing loops, accessible information, accessible toilets. The complication of ethnicity, indigenous people and gender could be resolved if people were identified first rather than their disability predominating.

To encourage this inclusive process of planning in budgets of governments, institutions, business and the community the ratification of the UN Convention of Rights of People with Disabilities needs to occur as soon as possible.

It will become evident when planning budgets are costed that the individual person with a disability has a huge expenditure to equip him/herself to contribute to the community. A cost of disability allowance which is means tested and has been proposed many times could be funded from a combination of business/humanitarian/government sources. If disability was accepted as a normal occurrence of life, it would be simpler to have better community and family support rather than a reliance on governmental and non-government organisational support.

Disability, whether it is physical, mental or sensory, will be seen as a part of life, something that will occur in everyone as they age or possibly as a temporary condition, but not as a disease/problem to be cured. There could be greater use of resources in health and other scientific areas if a cure approach was ameliorated.

Under the present Discrimination legislation all public transport will be accessible to people with disabilities, parents with strollers and the aged by the year 2020 and the Access to Premises Standards which are part of this legislation will be enacted into law. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity legislation's values could underline a greater percentage of Australian Government legislation than has occurred recently.

