

New Annual Accessibility Guide

1. Quick Access Overview

A snapshot of the key accessibility services and features available at this year's festival:

Accessible Parking & Drop-Off Zones: Yes (Varies by venue; check individual venue pages)

Accessible Toilets & Changing Places: Yes (Temporary accessible toilets provided at Laman St Precinct; individual venue amenities vary)

Sensory / Low-Sensory Sessions: Yes (Dedicated Low Sensory Sundays at *Fast Fashun / Curtain Call*, plus Relaxed Performances for *Triceratop* and *Press Play*)

Auslan-Interpreted Performances: Yes (Selected sessions including *First Night Art Party Welcome*, *AUTO-TUNE*, *Triceratop*, *Fast Fashun*, and *Press Play*)

Audio Description: Yes (Available for *Fast Fashun / Curtain Call* - live descriptions)

2. Planning Your Visit & Booking Tickets

How to Book Accessible Tickets

We are committed to making our booking process as accessible as possible. Because New Annual takes place across both permanent civic venues and temporary outdoor spaces, physical accessibility parameters vary by site. If you are a wheelchair user, require specific mobility seating (such as aisle seats or flat access), or need to secure seats within sightline of the Auslan interpreter or Audio Description headsets:

Online: Review show accessibility information and jump to show pages at the New Annual Show Directory.

Phone: Call our dedicated ticketing team on **(02) 4929 1977**. We happily welcome calls via the National Relay Service (NRS).

Email: Send your requested event name, date, time, and specific access requirements to newannual@ncc.nsw.gov.au.

Companion Cards

Policy: New Annual proudly accepts the NSW Companion Card. Holders of a valid Companion Card are eligible for a second, complimentary ticket for their companion to all ticketed festival events.

How to Apply: Companion Card bookings must be made directly through our ticketing team to ensure your seats are allocated together. Please call **(02) 4929 1977** or email newannual@ncc.nsw.gov.au with your Companion Card number ready.

3. Getting to Events

Accessible Parking

Car Parking: Many of our venues have car parkings or specific parking areas and/or drop-off/pick-up zones. Please check individual venue websites (e.g., Civic Theatre, Newcastle Museum, City Hall) for site-specific parking maps.

Accessible Parking: Many parking locations at our venues have accessible parking bays. Valid accessible parking permits must be displayed to use accessible car parking spaces.

Public Transport & Shuttle Services

Train/Bus/Light Rail: Newcastle Transport light rail and bus services connect major festival precincts (including Civic Zone and Newcastle Museum). Individual venue profiles list specific public transit drop-offs.

4. Site & Venue Information

Festival Site Layout & Pathways

Terrain: New Annual features a vibrant mix of historic indoor theatres (paved/carpeted step-free areas), contemporary galleries, concrete outdoor precincts (e.g., Laman St flat concrete pathways), foreshore parklands, and beach spaces (e.g., Dixon Park Beach, Newcastle Ocean Baths).

Step-Free Access: Step-free or mobility-aid access is available at most venues displaying the wheelchair symbol. Please note exceptions: *Petite Suite* at The Oriental Hotel is not wheelchair accessible (stair access only).

Accessible Viewports/Viewing Platforms: Priority viewing areas provided at major outdoor installations (e.g., wheelchair viewing areas at *SOAK: Live at the Baths*).

Visual Stories

Visual stories are being created for x 6 venues and will be available soon and hosted here.

There will also be x 2 virtual tours available, to be hosted here.

5. Facilities & Amenities

Accessible Toilets

Locations: Available across all permanent venue sites (e.g., Newcastle City Hall, Civic Theatre, Newcastle Museum). Temporary accessible toilets are provided at outdoor activation zones like the Laman St Precinct.

Adult Change Facilities

Location: Newcastle Museum features a dedicated Changing Places facility located near the McIntyre Theatre.

Hours of Operation: Accessible during standard museum opening hours and during show-specific performance times held at the venue.

Equipment Provided: Equipped with a dedicated Lift and Change facility (Changing Places standard), including an adjustable-height change table and a ceiling-mounted hoist system.

Low-Sensory Space / Quiet Zone

Availability: Please note that there is no dedicated low-sensory space or quiet zone available across the festival precinct.

Low-Sensory Sessions: Selected events offer dedicated low-sensory or relaxed performance sessions (e.g., Low Sensory Sundays at *Fast Fashun / Curtain Call*, *Triceratop*, and *Press Play*). Please check individual show listings on our website for specific session timings and booking information.

Sensory Tools & Preparation: If you or a family member require the use of noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, or specific sensory items, please bring these with you when attending the festival.

Leaving During a Show: You are always welcome to step out if you need a break. Please feel free to speak with our Front of House staff upon arrival or during your visit if you need to exit the performance at any point.

6. Access Services

Auslan-Interpreted Shows

Live Australian Sign Language interpretation provided by trained interpreters for dedicated sessions. To secure sightline block seats, contact ticketing on (02) 4929 1977.

First Night Art Party (Official Welcome ceremony only): Friday 25 Sept – *Laman St outdoor precinct*

Fast Fashun / Curtain Call: Strut Your Stuff: Saturday 26 Sept, 10:00am–2:00pm & Saturday 3 Oct, 10:00am–2:00pm (TBC) – *Museum Park*

AUTO-TUNE: Friday 2 Oct, 7:00pm – *The Playhouse*

Press Play: Saturday 3 October, 1:00pm – *The Playhouse*

Triceratop: Saturday 3 Oct, 4:00pm – *University House*

Audio Description (AD)

Live verbal commentary describing visual stage.

Fast Fashun / Curtain Call: Strut Your Stuff: Saturday 26 Sept, 10:00am–2:00pm – Audio Description provided (*Museum Park*).

Sensory / Relaxed Performances

Structurally adjusted sessions where house lights remain dimly lit, high-frequency sound/lighting triggers are softened, and patrons may move or exit as needed. See more detail on the event listing.

Fast Fashun / Curtain Call: Strut Your Stuff: Sunday 27 Sept & Sunday 4 Oct, 10:00am–2:00pm (Dedicated Low Sensory Sundays) – *Museum Park*

Triceratop: Sunday 4 Oct, 4:00pm – Dedicated Relaxed Performance – *University House*

7. On-Site Support & Assistance

Assistance Animals

Certified guide dogs, hearing dogs, and registered assistance animals are welcome across all New Annual indoor theatres, galleries, and outdoor festival precincts.

Please notify our team ahead of time if you require specific aisle seating to comfortably accommodate your animal.

Individual venues will be able to direct you to an appropriate animal relief area.

Staff & On-Site Aid

Support Person Available: Dedicated support person present to assist participants at *Fast Fashun Weekday Workshops* (Tue 29 Sept – Thu 1 Oct) at *McIntyre Theatre*, *Newcastle Museum*.

8. Continuous Improvement & Feedback

We recognise that creating an accessible event is an ongoing journey. We update our site layout, training, and services annually based directly on customer feedback.

If you have suggestions, experienced a barrier, or want to highlight an outstanding accessibility service, please email us at newannual@ncc.nsw.gov.au or call (02) 4929 1977.