

‘A platform, not a program’: Community Voices Evaluation Report SUMMARY SHEET

What is Community Voices?

The Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA) has a program called Community Voices (CV). CV teaches people with disability, their families, and carers, and builds skills in communication, listening, and public speaking. When people with disability, their families, and carers finish the CV training, they present to individuals and organisations about disability and diversity.

What did MDAA want to know?

- What works in the program?
- What can be improved?
- Where do people present and to whom?
- Do individuals and organisations need more information so people can be invited to present about disability and diversity?

How did we get answers to what MDAA wanted to know?

We spoke to program facilitators and people with disability, family members, and carers who had finished the CV program (graduates) to help us find answers to what MDAA wanted to know.

What did we find?

Here is what the graduates and the facilitators told us.

1. Graduates gained a lot from doing the program.

They made friends and learned from others. Now they are not shy to speak and speak to decision-makers. They also learned important skills and information that they use when presenting, every day, and to help others.

2. The program is important to CV graduates and the community.

In the training sessions, graduates felt supported, and graduates continued to feel supported by MDAA staff when presenting. The program helped with their mental health because the training sessions provided them with a safe space to express themselves and learn how to talk about their feelings with others. The program means they talk to lots of people and organisations. The use of personal stories in presentations helps audiences understand disability and

diversity. Audiences see what people with disability can do and how they are part of the community.

3. Graduates help to change attitudes.

Audiences like the presentations and learn a lot. When they tell the presenter this, it makes them feel good.

4. It is hard to get presentation bookings.

How can the CV program be better?

We have some suggestions to make it even better and to help MDAA and the CV program expand. We also have some suggestions about how everyone can help to change discriminatory attitudes.

What can MDAA do?	How can the CV program and MDAA grow?	How can everyone help to change attitudes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Run (optional) training that recaps what was learned. - Run training that extends what was learned. - Have interpreters for training participants and graduates when presenting. - Have training booklets. - Get graduates to evaluate training sessions with the option to redesign the sessions, thinking about what works and what needs improvement. - Get presenters to use human rights language and frameworks. - Offer graduates debriefing and peer networks following a presentation. - Look at how people who do the training feel afterward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Run training in regional and rural areas. - Create resources for schools and other organisations to help raise awareness using the stories of CV graduates. - Connect with individuals and organisations for more bookings. - Create a similar program for service providers. - Use surveys before and after presentations to look at whether audience attitudes have changed after a presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have different ways of changing attitudes at lots of different levels (e.g., individual, organisational, government, etc). - Encourage everyone to educate and inform themselves. - Measure attitude change over time. - Continue to fund MDAA and the CV program.