

Facilitating Community Spaces for Inclusion

Some Key Principles:

- 1. Inclusion is supported when the agency is based in an inclusive context rather than an isolated or stigmatised context – the building, the office, the signage all have a part to play.*
- 2. Inclusion is supported when staff and volunteers are selected and trained in skills and models which support inclusion – not just on issues of compliance and formalization.*
- 3. Inclusion is a way of thinking, working, living and being that is best supported when this ‘life practice’ permeates all aspects and levels of an agency’s work – when the policies, practices, plans and procedures are flexible and prioritised around people’s needs for belonging and connectedness.*
- 4. Inclusion is supported when staff and volunteers are encouraged to reflect on their own experience of marginalisation – our work is a human work, not just a dispassionate professional exercise.*

5. *Inclusion is supported when all agency meetings model community engagement – involving a mix of people rather than streaming people into various separated meetings.*

6. *Inclusion is supported when one of the knowledge bases of the work is centred around honouring and learning from people’s stories and lived experiences.*

7. *Because of the exclusion and isolation that people experience, often the first critical step towards inclusion is in our imaginations – we need to imagine together for something better.*

8. *Inclusion work is best supported when due consideration is given to building capacity of communities in tandem with working to support isolated individuals.*

www.aplacetobelong.org.au