

New England Community Showcase - Community Update #1



Thank you to everyone who has shared ideas, attended our planning meetings, or expressed interest in being involved in the New England Community Showcase.

We are delighted to share with you our first community update. It has been wonderful to see so much enthusiasm and support from people with disability, families, carers, support workers, community organisations and local businesses. We can't wait until October, but there is much work to be done before then

Current Stage

- ✓ Planning meeting completed
- ✓ Community feedback underway
- ✓ Grant applications submitted
- ✓ Promotion beginning across the region
 - Community survey now open
 - Call for interest in stalls

Planning Update



We had our first wider community meeting on 13th of July at the Armidale City Bowling Club. Hayley, member of the inclusive planning team, shared a presentation all about the Showcase. Other people shared lots of great ideas about what they would like to see at the Showcase and told us information about what we can do next.

We have also received valuable feedback from many people who were unable to attend the meeting.

Thank you to everyone who has shared their ideas and suggestions.

What Will the Showcase Look Like?

Based on the feedback we have received the Showcase is developing into a strong participant-led community event.

The focus will be market stalls run by people with disability, giving people the opportunity to display or sell things they have made, share their hobbies, interests and talents, and connect with the community. We will also invite local disability services to Showcase their programs, services and the people they support.

Throughout the day there will also be live performances on a stage at the front of the auditorium. These may include music, dance, drama, demonstrations and other performances.



Planning

Every Wednesday from **1.30 pm to 2.30 pm**, our inclusive planning group meets at the Armidale City Bowling Club to help plan the New England Community Showcase.



The group is made up of people with lived experience of disability who are helping shape the event by sharing ideas and making important decisions.

If you, or someone you know, would like to join us, we would love to welcome you. You are welcome to come on your own or bring a family member, support worker or friend.

Additional Space

We have been offered the use of TOPS Function Room as an additional in-kind hire to the Auditorium. We would love your thoughts about how we can best use the space for the Showcase.



We Need Your Help



Please scan the QR code or use the link below to complete our short community survey.

Your feedback will help us decide the best time for the Showcase, shape the program, and make other important planning decisions.

Please complete the survey yourself and share it with your friends, family, workplaces and community groups.

The New England Community Showcase belongs to our community. Every response helps us build an event that reflects the interests, ideas and strengths of the people who will take part.

There has also been lots happening behind the scenes.

- Public liability insurance has now been arranged.
- We are looking into the best insurance options for participant market stalls.
- Grant applications have been submitted to ClubsNSW and Armidale Regional Council to help support the event.
- We are looking at sponsorship opportunities to help make the Showcase even better.
- We are looking at ways volunteers can support participants and help as many people as possible be involved.
- We have had interest from people in Armidale, Tamworth, Glen Innes, Inverell and Gunnedah who would like to take part in the Showcase.
- We have already heard from people who would like to have a stall, perform or present a workshop.

Spreading the Word



We have been offered a free promotional stall at the Disability Links Expo in Tamworth.

This is a fantastic opportunity to introduce the New England Community Showcase to people from across the region and encourage participants, families, organisations and community members to get involved.

You can also help us spread the word! We are slowly growing our Facebook community here [Join The Monthly Mixer on Facebook](#) but our biggest asset is our community and the conversations you have every day. Word of mouth is one of the best ways to help us reach more people. Please share this update with your friends, family, workplaces and community groups. If you know of other opportunities to promote the Showcase, we would love to hear from you.

What Happens Next?

Over the coming weeks we will:

- Use your feedback to finalise the Showcase format, timing and program.
- Open applications for stallholders and performers.
- Put out the call for volunteers—the more people who get involved, the more we can do to make the Showcase welcoming, accessible and enjoyable for everyone.
- Continue building partnerships with participants, organisations and businesses.
- Start sharing the Showcase far and wide across the region.
- Keep working behind the scenes to bring the Showcase to life.

Thank you for helping us build a Showcase that is shaped by the community, for the community. Every idea, conversation and shared post helps bring us one step closer.

Together, we are creating a community event that celebrates the skills, talents and contributions of people with disability across the New England region.

