

Creating places of belonging for those living with disability: Going beyond diversity and inclusion in post-secondary education

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We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respects to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.



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‘Get my feathers on!’



My Story



1974



2020



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Architectures of exclusion and inclusion

The architecture of the built environment (e.g. buildings, public spaces, kerbside, signage, wayfinding)

The architecture of the digital environment (e.g. websites, email, PDFs, PowerPoints)

The architecture of people's minds (e.g. low or high expectations, intersectionality, strength-based, curiosity, willingness)



Diversity and Inclusion aren't what matter: *Belonging* is what counts

Sanita Ands (2019) succinctly states:

Diversity is a fact (the numbers are what they are);

inclusion is a choice (you decide whether to include someone or not);

BUT...

belonging is a feeling that can be enforced by a culture that you can purposefully create.



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Understanding '*belonging*'

Can I get there?

Can I stay?

Can I play?



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Higher education as places of belonging

Can we get there? (infrastructure such as public transport, accessible parking, handrailing's, wayfinding, signage)

Can we stay? (is there access to grass for my guide dog? can I get into my classrooms or office? can I use the technology and online platforms? can I study what I am passionate about? Can I enjoy my work?)

Can I stay? (Is my employment secure? Are my colleagues inclusive? Are my peers my allies? Do they get my needs? Are they curious? Am I having to use too much physical and/or mental energy to deal with this place?)



Further Reading

Sands, A. 2019, Diversity and Inclusion aren't what matter: Belonging is what counts, <https://medium.com/@AnitaSands/diversity-and-inclusion-arent-what-matter-belonging-is-what-counts-4a75bf6565b5>

Office of Open Space and Parklands, 2019, Everyone can play: A guideline to create inclusive playspaces, Crown Copyright, NSW Government.



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Thank you

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References

Sands, A. 2019, Diversity and Inclusion aren't what matter: Belonging is what counts, <https://medium.com/@AnitaSands/diversity-and-inclusion-arent-what-matter-belonging-is-what-counts-4a75bf6565b5>

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