



Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)

Development of an Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia

Final Report to the Office for Women (FaCS)

May 2005

The development of the Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia was made possible through a funding grant from the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) Office for Women. Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) gratefully acknowledges the Commonwealth Government for this support.



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1. Introduction

In September 2004, Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) received funding from the then Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women (OSW), now known as the Office for Women (OFW), to develop internal information systems which will enable WWDA to provide effective information, advice and referral to women with disabilities, their associates and the broader community. Part of this work would see the development of an accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women with Disabilities in Australia.

The Project commenced on October 1, 2004 and was due to be completed by the end of May 2005.

This Report is the Final Report on the Project to the Office for Women (formerly the Office of the Status of Women). This Report details the achievements of the Project, and is constructed in line with WWDA's Project Plan. The Report also details the highlights of the Project, as well as the difficulties encountered during the course of the implementation. The Report also encompasses conclusions, recommendations and key learnings from the Project process.

2. *Project Background*

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) is the major coordinating point for the provision of information to, and about, women with disabilities in Australia. In recent years, WWDA has witnessed a major increase in requests to the organization for individual advocacy, particularly from people in crisis. This explosion in the number of specific enquiries had stretched WWDA's capacity to respond, particularly given the fact that WWDA is an organization with only 1.5 paid staff. However, WWDA considered it imperative that the organization respond because a significant number of the enquiries for assistance came from women in crisis from all over the country. WWDA acknowledged that as an organization, it needed capacity building resources to develop a quick, reliable way to access services (and information about services) Australia-wide. The significant increase in enquiries to WWDA was not altogether surprising, given WWDA's high profile and reputation as an organization of excellence. However, as a still relatively young organization, WWDA recognized the need to further develop its infrastructure so as to best serve its members and its aims and objectives. WWDA had therefore identified an urgent need to develop internal information systems which would enable WWDA to provide information, advice and referral to women with disabilities, their associates and the broader community, in an efficient and effective manner.

In mid 2004, Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) applied for project funding under the Commonwealth Government's Women's Development Programme (administered by the then Office for the Status of Women). In September 2004, WWDA was notified that its submission for funding had been successful. In October 2004, WWDA received a Capacity Building Project grant of \$25,000 to develop an Information and Referral Portal for Women with Disabilities in Australia.

2.1. *The Project Aims*

The Project sought to enhance WWDA's capacity to better respond to meeting the needs and concerns of women with disabilities. It was to do this by developing internal information systems which would enable WWDA to provide effective information, advice and referral to women with disabilities, their associates and the broader community. Specifically, WWDA would research and develop an accessible Information and Referral Portal of relevant services, agencies, and organizations at national, State/Territory, regional and local levels. WWDA would also develop a Data Collection System to record incoming requests for information from women with disabilities. This data would be used to inform WWDA's systemic advocacy work and enhance WWDA's capacity to act as a two way conduit between the Government and the community on social policy issues as they affect women with disabilities. Once developed, the Information and Referral Portal would be made available on WWDA's website, and would be developed in line with international Standards of Web accessibility for people with disabilities. The Information and Referral Portal would also be linked to the Women.gov.au website, developed by the then Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women.

2.2. *The Project Outcomes*

The anticipated Project Outcomes were detailed in WWDA's original Application for Funding, and also in WWDA's detailed Project Plan, which was developed in the early stages of the Project. The anticipated Project Outcomes included:

- **Information and Referral Portal** – this accessible portal will provide detailed information on services, agencies and organizations at national, State/Territory, regional and local levels. Information will be provided on services, agencies and organizations across a wide range of sectors, including: disability; women's; housing; welfare; health; legal; and so on. The portal content will reflect the identified service information needs of women with disabilities in Australia, including for eg: attendant care; reproductive health (including sterilisation); assisted reproduction; mothering &

parenting; sexuality; women's health; housing; violence; citizenship & human rights; education; employment; income support; advocacy; disability discrimination; legal issues; leadership; transport; and more.

- **Data Collection System** – this data collection system will be developed within the Excel Program and will be utilised to collect statistics on incoming requests to WWDA from those seeking assistance, including individual advocacy; information and referral. The data collected will be collated from a range of data fields, including: Issue; State/Territory/region; Method (email, phone, fax); Length of Time Spent on Inquiry; Person Making the Inquiry (ie: advocate; woman with a disability); Action Taken; Referrals Made; and so on.
- **WWDA Website Enhancement** – the Information and Referral Portal will be made available on WWDA's website and will enable users to not only access information on services and organisations, but also to access a wide range of other resource materials on issues of concern.
- **Promotion of the Women.gov.au website** – once developed, the accessible Information and Referral Portal will be linked to the Commonwealth Government's Women.gov.au website. This website provides women of Australia with easy to find information about government services of specific relevance to women.

3. Report of the Project Activities, Achievements & Milestones

In the early stages of the Project and in keeping with the requirements of the funding contract, WWDA developed a detailed Project Plan which was submitted to the Office of the Status for Women for consideration. The Project Plan provided information on the planned activities of the Project, along with detailed strategies, milestones for achievement, project timelines, and key personnel responsible for the project activities.

This section of the Report provides an in-depth analysis of the Project, and is structured in line with the Project Plan (A copy of the Project Plan is attached in Appendix 1). Each key project activity as detailed in the Project Plan, is reported on here.

3.1. Obtain the services of a woman with a disability as the Project Officer to implement the Project.

A Position Description for the Project Officer was written. The primary tasks in the Position Description were consistent with and reflected the objectives in the Project Plan. (A copy of the Project Officer Position Description is included in Appendix 2). The WWDA Management Committee ratified the appointment of Angela Court as the Project Officer. Angela Court was employed 2.5 days for 8 months as the Project Officer for the Project. The Project Officer was based in the National WWDA Office located in Hobart, Tasmania. An accessible work station was organized including computer and email facilities. The Project Officer was appointed and commenced work on October 1, 2004.

3.2. Establish a Project Reference Group made up of women with disabilities.

An Expression of Interest for the Project Reference Group was developed and circulated to WWDA membership via email and also posted out to those WWDA members who do not have access to email. The

Project Reference Group members were selected by WWDA Executive Director and Project Officer and ratified by the WWDA Management Committee. All members of the Project Reference Group are women with disabilities. The Project Reference Group was established by 11th October 2004. The Project Reference Group members were briefed on the Project and provided with copies of the Project Proposal and the OSW Funding Contract. Key responsibilities and primary tasks of Project Reference Group were agreed upon. Mechanisms for meetings of the Project Reference Group were established in consultation with Reference Group members. It was agreed that the Reference Group would communicate using email and that Teleconferences would be used only if required. It was acknowledged that, given the type of project being conducted, the Reference Group would not be required to carry out aspects of the Project. The main role of the Reference Group would be to act in an advisory capacity to the Project Manager and Project Officer, should the need arise.

3.3. Develop the Project Plan.

The Project Plan was developed by the Project Officer and Project Manager in consultation with Project Reference Group and the WWDA Management Committee. The Project Reference Group was provided with a draft of the Project Plan. The Plan was revised after consultation with, and feedback from the Project Reference Group members. The Draft Project Plan was then ratified by the WWDA Management Committee. The Draft Project Plan was forwarded to the Office for the Status of Women (OSW) on 13th October 2004 for consideration and ratification. In consultation with OSW, an amended Project Plan (which contained Budget timelines) was submitted to OSW on November 1, 2004.

3.4. Publicise the Project widely.

The Project '*Development of an Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia*' was widely publicized by WWDA using a wide range of mechanisms. Introductory information about the Project, including the context, the background, and the need, was circulated to:

- Relevant email discussion lists, including for example: 'wwda-discuss', Pamela's List, OzAdvocacy, Australian Women's Health Network List; Disabled Women's Network List; Young Women's Christian Association List; Business & Professional Women's List; Rural Women's Network List; Australian Women's Coalition List; Physical Disability Council List; Attendant Care Users List; Australian Federation of Disability Organisations List;
- Relevant non-government organizations across a wide range of sectors;
- Relevant industry bodies, educational and research institutions, government departments and agencies, and corporate bodies;
- Every politician in Australia via email;
- All WWDA members (individual and organizations).

The October edition of the WWDA Monthly Update Bulletin (circulated on October 29, 2004) contained information about the Project and provided contact information for people wishing to receive a copy of the Project Plan. As a result of the October edition of the WWDA Monthly Update Bulletin, WWDA received 38 requests for copies of the Project Plan, which was then either emailed or posted to those requesting copies. WWDA also received 24 requests (from individuals and organizations) who wished to be kept regularly updated on the Project.

The response to the initial introductory information about the project demonstrated that there was widespread interest in the Project from a range of sectors. Feedback from those who responded to this introductory information indicated that the Project would address the information needs of a number of organizations and agencies, and not just those in the disability sector.

During the course of the Project, each edition of WWDA's Monthly Update Bulletins contained information about the Project, including a report on the Project progress. Information about the Project was also made available on the WWDA website in early October 2004.

3.5. Develop promotional fliers for the Project, including a Plain English version.

A Draft Promotional Flier for the Project was developed. The Flier encouraged participation in the Project by inviting people to contribute their ideas and any information on services and organisations they wished to see included in the Information and Referral Portal.

WWDA contracted Leanne Dowse (recognised national expert in Easy English) to convert the Draft Promotional Flier into an Easy English version. It was decided that it was sufficient to distribute only the Easy English version of the flier to promote the Project (A copy of the Easy English Promotional Flier is included in Appendix 3).

The Easy English Promotional Flier was distributed widely via email to

- Relevant email discussion lists;
- Relevant non-government organizations across a wide range of sectors;
- Relevant industry bodies, educational and research institutions, government departments and agencies, and corporate bodies;
- Every politician in Australia via email;
- All WWDA members (individual and organizations).

The Easy English Promotional Flier was also posted out to all current financial members of WWDA. WWDA requested that all recipients of the flier pass it on through their own networks.

As a result of the flier (and subsequent information dissemination about the Project), WWDA received 79 responses from organizations contributing information to the Project. These organizations provided information about the services and programs they provide, including contact information for inclusion in WWDA's Information and Referral Portal. The organizations contributing information to the project were diverse and came from a range of sectors. There were a number of 'small' organizations (particularly those in regional areas) who were keen to ensure that information about their service/organization was included into WWDA's Information and Referral Portal. Examples of the types of organizations and services requesting that their information be included in the Portal included:

- Disability Information and Advocacy Services
- Disability Discrimination Legal Services
- Breastscreen Services
- Area Health Services
- Papscreen Services
- Disability Specific Organisations and Groups (eg: Paraquad; MS Societies; Deafness; Blind etc)
- Respite Care Services
- Rape Crisis Centres
- Women's Centres, Services, and organisations
- Crisis Services, including women's refuges

The process of organizations submitting their information to WWDA (as a result of WWDA's promotional work for the Project) enabled WWDA to learn about the existence of organizations that previously we had not been aware of. WWDA learned of a number of small organizations which offer services and programs specifically for women with disabilities. This new knowledge will be of great value to WWDA and will enable referral of disabled women to specific support networks.

There were other unexpected outcomes for WWDA stemming from the promotional aspect of the Project. Some of these included:

- An increase in networks and collaborative relationships with services and organizations;
- The establishment of reciprocal memberships with a number of organizations;
- An increase in the uptake of WWDA membership (from individuals and organizations);
- An increase in WWDA's profile;
- An increase in the numbers of people accessing the WWDA website (which subsequently led to congratulatory feedback to WWDA on the standard of the WWDA website).

During the course of the Project, WWDA also witnessed an increase in the number of organizations, services etc seeking to use WWDA as a co-ordinating point for distribution of information.

3.6. Develop a Framework structure for the Information and Referral Portal in consultation with women with disabilities and other key stakeholders.

During the early stages of the Project, an audit of all incoming requests to WWDA for information/advocacy was undertaken. This audit included incoming requests from not just individual women with disabilities, but also government departments and agencies, and other organizations and services. The audit concentrated on the last 12 months of incoming requests. The analysis of the audit indicated that there were a number of gaps in service information for women with disabilities and others. A number of themes emerged which highlighted where further work was needed in provision of service information. Some of these themes included areas such as:

- Fertility
- Parenting/mothering
- Surrogacy
- Abortion
- Child Care
- Human Rights
- Sterilisation
- Violence and Abuse
- Companionship
- Housing

The themes emerging from the audit analysis were used to form the basis of the categories for the Information and Referral Portal Framework.

Background research was conducted into existing web based information portals. Examples included: enable.net.au; disability.vic.gov.au; community.gov.au; infoxchange; nwjc.org.au; Lifeline; disability.com.au). Analysis of existing disability and related web based information portals demonstrated that these portals tend to provide service information within a traditional bio-medical model of disability. For example, WWDA's analysis of existing disability and related information portals highlighted the lack of information provided on areas of concern to women with disabilities, such as: sterilization; sexuality; loneliness; mothering/parenting; reproductive rights; child care; abuse and violence, and so on.

It was also WWDA's experience that many of the existing web based information portals are difficult and time consuming to navigate and are often 'graphic heavy' meaning that download and access time is increased. This can be difficult for those users who have limited or restricted ISP download times, and also difficult for those users who have 'old' computer hardware and software. This experience further emphasized to WWDA the importance of ensuring that the WWDA Information and Referral Portal be developed in a way that is simple, easy to navigate, and text based.

A Draft Framework Structure was developed for the WWDA Information and Referral Portal. This Draft Framework was developed in line with the findings of WWDA's background research and in line with feedback from WWDA members. The process of developing the Draft Framework identified the need for several categories to have sub-categories and to be cross-referenced where necessary. It was considered important that each 'category' be simply structured, so that users did not have to navigate their way through a mass of sub-categories and pages in order to access information. WWDA's background research of many existing portals found that the user can become 'disoriented' by following a large number of links and sub-links, meaning that returning to the initial point of access can be difficult.

Once developed, the Draft Framework was provided to the Project Reference Group members for consideration. Based on consultation with, and feedback from the Project Reference Group members, the Draft Framework was amended. It was recognized at that time, that the Framework may require further changes/amendments as the Project evolved.

In consultation with the Project Reference Group members, it was agreed that the WWDA Information and Referral Portal would not include and/or promote commercial business services, unless there was an acceptable reason for doing so. For example, an area where WWDA has received many requests for information, referral and support has been in the area of 'assisted reproduction'. It was therefore decided that, although fertility clinics and programs (such as donor sperm programs) may be considered a commercial 'business' and charge fees, the need for access to information for women with disabilities about such services justified their inclusion in the Portal.

The Portal Framework consisted of a number of major categories, and these categories would guide the research component of the Project. The major categories were:

Access Auditors	Mentoring & Leadership
Advocacy	Mothering, Parenting & Parenthood
Aids & Equipment	Multicultural Organisations
Alcohol & Drug Services	Pets (Guides & Companions)
Arts	Relationships
Carers	Reproduction, Pregnancy & Birth
Data & Statistics	Sport, Leisure & Recreation
Disability & Related Organisations and Agencies	Sterilisation
Discrimination & Human Rights	Suicide Prevention
Education & Training	Telecommunications
Employment	Transport & Motor Vehicles
Euthanasia	Travel, Tourism & Accommodation
Government & Politics	Violence & Abuse
Health	Volunteering
Housing Options	Women's Organisations & Agencies
Legal Services	Women's Health Centres/Services and Organisations
Media	

3.7. Undertake research component of the Project. Research information on relevant services, organisations and agencies at national, State/Territory, regional and local levels.

In late 2004, as part of the background research for the Project, WWDA wrote formally to each State/Territory Premier to request a copy of their State/Territory Service Directory for People With Disabilities (A copy of the letter is included in Appendix 4). A written response to WWDA's letter was received from each State/Territory Premier. From these responses, it became clear that the majority of

States/Territories do not have a formally recognized Service Directory for People With Disabilities. It became apparent that the State and Territory Governments seem to rely on the existence of web based information to meet the information needs of people with disabilities. Of those State and Territory Governments who did have some disability service information in a directory format (usually on line), it was apparent that the information provided did not encompass many of the issues of concern to women with disabilities. It was also WWDA's experience that government 'on-line' disability service information is often outdated and not always updated or maintained. It also became clear that the amount and quality of web-based service information differed from State to State. Some States/Territories were clearly more 'advanced' in terms of the web based information for people with disabilities and other users. For example, in some States (for example, Western Australia), the State Library provides, co-ordinates, and maintains, service directories for people accessing information on both community and government services and organizations. In other States (such as the ACT), the Citizens Advice Bureau is one coordinating point for such information. The Northern Territory, for example, contains surprisingly little web based information on services and organizations (of any description). Very few community based organizations appear to have their own websites (compared to other States), and the Government websites tend to provide only contact phone numbers for some services, rather than a descriptor of the service etc.

The service research phase of the Project included a number of processes, including:

- Undertaking website searches using keywords into the Google search facility;
- Initiating direct contact with relevant national organizations to obtain information on their State/Territory branches and affiliates;
- Using links provided on websites;
- Subscribing to a number of new email lists, particularly those that were information based, such as Newsletters etc;
- Collecting and analyzing hard copy Service Directories, examples include: The Australian Consumers Handbook; Centrelink Directories; Making Connections; State/Territory ACOSS directories; etc;
- Assessing Community Help and Emergency Services sections of telephone directories;
- Assessment of Federal, State/Territory Government Departments and agencies websites and following up with emails and phone calls where required;
- Assessment of women.gov.au website and the type of information provided;
- Research and assessment of existing information portals across a number of sectors;
- Initiating direct contact with relevant State/Territory based organizations and services to elicit information on services and organizations of relevance to the Project.

As discussed earlier in this report, introductory information about the Project, including the context and the need, was widely disseminated using a range of mechanisms. The Promotional flier which was developed (and subsequent information dissemination about the Project), resulted in 79 responses from organizations contributing information to the Project. Peak bodies across a wide range of sectors were invited to contribute information to the Project.

Research was undertaken into the various services and programs offered by Federal Government Departments and agencies across a range of portfolio areas (consistent with the Portal Framework categories). This process raised a number of issues, including:

- Some Federal Government Departments and agencies' websites are difficult to access and navigate;
- It is not easy to understand the delineation between services and programs offered by Federal and/or State/Territory Governments (some examples would include: employment, education, housing);
- In many cases, it is difficult to ascertain exactly what services and programs are provided by Government Departments;
- There is little consistency between Government Department websites in relation to Website Accessibility Standards. Many Department and agency websites only provide information in PDF formats;

- There were a number of changes in Government Departments and agencies and the programs they offered, making it difficult to ascertain exactly which agency is responsible for what – for example, during the course of this project, the Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women (OSW) was renamed the Office for Women (OFW) and relocated to the Department of Family & Community Services (FaCS); a new Department was created (Human Services Department); and a number of Federal Government Departments underwent changes. This has made it difficult to get accurate information on services and programs. WWDA experienced similar problems with some State & Territory Government department changes, although to a much lesser extent.

It was WWDA's experience that Centrelink's web based information for people with disabilities is confusing and difficult to comprehend. For example, Centrelink provides a range of services and programs for people with disabilities, but these programs and services appear to be located in a number of 'sections' of Centrelink, and the relationship between the various programs is not clear. The Centrelink website provides an information directory entitled '*Are you someone who is ill, injured or has a disability?*'. This Directory is over 44 pages long and contains information across a range of 'sub-services'. It is difficult to ascertain from this Directory exactly what is available for people with disabilities and how to access what is available.

In conducting the service research component of the Project, it also became apparent that there is little 'co-ordinated information' at a national level on a wide range of services and organizations. For example, WWDA could find no national information point for women's health centres in Australia. Some States/Territories (although not all) do have some contact information for women's health centres in their particular State, but there appears to be no single access point for women's health centres in Australia. For example, a search of the women.gov.au website using the search terms 'women's health centre's'; 'women's health services'; 'women's health', yield a "no search result found" in each particular case.

3.8. Research relevant Data Collection Systems for adaptation to WWDA's requirements.

In identifying the need for this Project, WWDA recognized that the organization needed to develop a simple but efficient system for recording and analyzing the incoming requests to WWDA. WWDA also recognized the need to be able to use the data it collected in a meaningful way – by linking the information to the organizations planning and review processes, and by using the data to inform WWDA's systemic advocacy work.

As part of the research component of the Project, WWDA undertook to research the existence of data collection systems which might be able to be adapted to WWDA's needs. It became clear that there was no 'uniform' or 'model' system which could be easily adapted. Where WWDA was able to locate systems, it soon became apparent that they would not meet the needs of WWDA. For example, many services and organizations in the women's sector (such as crisis services, and women's health services) do have data collection systems and processes in place. It was WWDA's experience however, that due to the nature of the services, the type of information collected and analysed was related more to 'direct service provision' and elements of administration. Given that WWDA did not have a lot of time to spend on this component of the Project, it was decided that we would need to develop our own data collection system.

3.9. Develop internal Data Collection System to collect statistics on incoming requests to WWDA from those seeking assistance.

As part of the Data Collection System development phase, WWDA undertook an assessment and analysis of the types of incoming requests to the organization for assistance and information. In doing so, WWDA was able to identify a changing pattern over the past six or so years. For example, in the first few years of WWDA's existence, the organization received most incoming requests for assistance via telephone and fax,

with very few coming in via email. However, the past three years have seen a reversal – with most requests now coming into the organization via email. The requests for individual advocacy which come into the office via telephone are often those which are either ‘crisis’ calls, or those that require a more ‘immediate’ response.

It was decided that the most simple and efficient way to develop the Data Collection System would be to do so using the Excel program. This was done for a number of reasons, including the fact that the Excel program was widely used and the members of WWDA’s Management Committee all had access to the Excel program, meaning that reports could be provided by WWDA staff to the Committee members in an accessible format.

The Data Collection System was developed to enable the collection of statistics on incoming requests to WWDA from those seeking assistance, including individual advocacy; information and referral. The following fields were incorporated into the system:

- Issue
- State/Territory/region (including postcode)
- Method (email, phone, fax, in person)
- Length of Time Spent on Inquiry
- Person Making the Inquiry (ie: advocate; woman with a disability)
- Action Taken
- Referrals Made

3.10. Develop Information and Referral Portal; test with women with disabilities and other key stakeholders; assess accessibility; identify gaps and address gaps identified.

The development of the Information and Referral Portal was a mammoth task, and ended up to be a much bigger job than first anticipated. The research phase of the Project was time consuming and required careful coordination and analysis of information.

The research phase of the Project yielded much more information than was initially anticipated. An example can be used to highlight. One of the categories of the Portal is ‘Disability & Related Organisations and Agencies’. This category includes: Federal, State/Territory Government Disability Departments & Disability Advisory Councils; National Disability & Related Organisations; and State/Territory Disability & Related Organisations. In researching the information for this category, WWDA ascribed to the broadest definition of ‘disability’ which meant that the section ended up encompassing many organizations which sit outside ‘traditional’ understandings of disability. The section therefore included everything from well recognized national peak disability organizations, through to small support organizations for people with rare ‘conditions’.

As the information was gathered during the research phase of the Project, the data was entered into a ‘master’ document in Word format. It was necessary to develop a ‘hard copy’ version of the Information and Referral Portal prior to the document being translated into HTML format for the Web. All information was organized using the Portal Framework categories. A standard format was developed and implemented for the master document. All information within each category was listed alphabetically. Every entry included: title of the organization/service; brief description; address; phone, fax, TTY; email address; website address.

The ‘master document’ in Word format provided an enormous amount of information on services and organizations across a wide range of sectors, at national, State/Territory, regional (and in some cases local) levels. The enormity of the project is evident in the sheer volume of information collected and entered in the ‘master’ word version document, which ended up more than 540 typed A4 pages, and over 3.5 megabytes in size. (A copy of the word version ‘*Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities In Australia*’ is provided with this Final Report to the Office for Women).

Due to the shortening of the Project by OSW (from 12 months to 8 months), the task was much more difficult than first envisaged. The service research component took much longer than expected. It was decided from the outset that the HTML conversion of the data would be done by the Project Manager, who has HTML expertise, particularly as it relates to accessibility for disabled users. It was also recognized at the funding application stage, that the cost of a commercial web author would be prohibitive. It was also WWDA's experience that many commercial web designers and authors do not understand HTML standards for accessibility.

Because the research component of the Project took longer than anticipated, the process of HTML conversion was delayed. A template for the web based version of the Information and Referral Portal was designed and work commenced on the HTML conversion in April 2005. However, the actual process of HTML conversion caused some unforeseen problems. As discussed earlier, there were over 540 A4 pages of text to be manually converted to HTML. The process of conversion to HTML had to be done manually, page by page, because current 'converter' software does not convert into a format that meets international accessibility standards. Along with this, it was considered imperative that the web based version of the Portal be simple, easily accessed, quick to transfer data down phone lines, and importantly, have the same format and appearance on the screen regardless of the browser and/or software that the user had on the computer. Many current programs that convert 'Word' documents to 'HTML' require that the user has the same software as the conversion tool. For many users, this is not necessarily the case. Although a time consuming and laborious task, manually converting the Word version to HTML means that anyone, anywhere in the world, regardless of the age of their computer system or the currency of their software, can access the WWDA Information and Referral Portal.

Due to the fact that the research component of the Project took longer than anticipated, the Project Manager was having difficulty manually converting 540 pages of text into accessible HTML format by the end of the Project deadline (May 2005). In attempting to get the conversion done by the end of the Project, the Project Manager also began to experience some physical consequences of long hours at a computer keyboard. WWDA was therefore required to re-negotiate this aspect of the Project with OSW, and it was agreed that the Word version of the Information and Referral Portal be provided to OSW with the Final Project Report by end May 2005, and that the web based HTML version be completed by end June 2005.

Although the HTML conversion had not been completed in its entirety by the end of May 2005, considerable progress had been made on this aspect of the Project. Several sections of the Portal had been completed. The template for each of the Portal sections had been developed, with each page having a standard lay out and format (An example of a page from the web based Information and Referral Portal is provided in Appendix 5). As part of the standard template for every page of the Portal, an acknowledgment of the funding body is provided, along with the Office for Women (OFW) logo. The acknowledgment appearing on every page is as follows:

The development of the Information and Referral Directory for Women With Disabilities in Australia was made possible through a funding grant from the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) Office for Women (Women's Development Programme). Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) gratefully acknowledges the Commonwealth Government for this support.

3.11. Advertise and promote availability of Information and Referral Portal, using a wide range of mechanisms.

The Project 'Development of an Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia' was widely publicized by WWDA at the commencement of the Project, and continued throughout the term of the Project. A wide range of mechanisms was used to promote the Project, and WWDA made considerable effort to keep not only WWDA members, but the broader community updated on the Project. For example,

the October edition of the WWDA Monthly Update Bulletin (circulated on October 29, 2004) contained information about the Project and encouraged people to obtain a copy of the Project Plan. As a result of the October edition of the WWDA Monthly Update Bulletin, WWDA received 38 requests for copies of the Project Plan, which was then either emailed or posted to those requesting copies.

During the course of the Project, each edition of WWDA's Monthly Update Bulletins contained information about the Project, including a report on the Project progress. These monthly reports were circulated to:

- Relevant email discussion lists, including for example: 'wwda-discuss', Pamela's List, OzAdvocacy, Australian Women's Health Network List; Disabled Women's Network List; Young Women's Christian Association List; Business & Professional Women's List; Rural Women's Network List; Australian Women's Coalition List; Physical Disability Council List; Attendant Care Users List; Australian Federation of Disability Organisations List;
- Relevant non-government organizations across a wide range of sectors;
- Relevant industry bodies, educational and research institutions, government departments and agencies, and corporate bodies;
- Every politician in Australia via email;
- All WWDA members (individual and organizations);
- Relevant international organizations;
- Philanthropic organizations, trusts and foundations across Australia.

WWDA will continue to widely promote the availability of the Information and Referral Portal, and once the Portal is available on the WWDA website (end June 2005), WWDA will actively disseminate information about its availability. WWDA has developed a promotional flier which will be disseminated via email (where possible) to every organization, service, Department and agency listed in the Information and Referral Portal (several thousand). (A copy of the Promotional flier is attached in Appendix 6). WWDA will also utilize its extensive existing networks to further promote the portal's availability.

3.12. Evaluate the Project using a range of evaluation processes including Process, Impact and Outcome Evaluation.

Process Evaluation:

As detailed in this report, the project activities as set out in the Project Plan were met. Within the Project Plan, specific milestones for each project activity were developed. For the most part, all milestones were achieved. The only milestone which was not achieved at the end of the Project (May 2005) was the completion and uploading of the Portal onto the WWDA website. However, this milestone will be met by end June 2005. The project reach was significant, and the use of electronic mail as a mechanism for distributing information contributed to the success of promoting the Project. As outlined in this Report, WWDA received a great response to the Project publicity. This positive response was evidenced by the fact that more than 75 organisations/services requested that their service information be included in the Portal. During the course of the Project, WWDA also received more than 24 separate requests for copies of the Project Progress Report.

As discussed earlier in this Report, the Project did encounter a number of un-anticipated difficulties, including:

- Shortening of the Project duration from 12 months to 8 months;
- More labour intensive than expected, particularly in the research phase;
- The project was a national project, yet information collection was made more difficult due to the varying availability and standard of, information at a State/Territory level;
- Service research was hampered due to the different 'language' used between States for similar programs. For example, trying to locate emergency and crisis information relating to 'violence' was

made difficult due to the fact that in some jurisdictions the terminology used is 'family violence' whereas in others, the terminology is 'domestic violence';

- The translating of the data into HTML format was complicated by the fact that no conversion software exists which accommodates not only disabled users, but also those with 'old' operating systems.

Impact Evaluation:

There were a number of immediate outcomes from the Project, which substantiated the project aims of enhancing WWDA's capacity to better respond to meeting the needs and concerns of women with disabilities. Examples include:

- The hard copy of the Information and Referral Portal was provided to WWDA Management Committee members for their immediate use. This was considered a valuable tool for the Committee members as they can use the resource to better support, and respond to their networks of disabled women.
- WWDA national office staff have noticed an immediate effect of having the Information and Referral Portal to use as a resource, and are able to deal much more effectively and efficiently with incoming requests for assistance and information. For example, a disabled woman from Victoria contacted WWDA for help with a problem relating to housing. In the past, WWDA staff would have spent time researching the necessary information in order to meet the request. However, with the availability of the Portal, WWDA staff were able to quickly provide the woman with the referral information for the appropriate organisations. WWDA received a written response of thanks from the woman concerned, who stated that she had not even know a number of the organisations existed. Another example was when a disabled woman from Tasmania contacted WWDA for help with a specific problem, which warranted immediate and ongoing individual advocacy. As the Information and Referral Portal contained a specific section on 'Individual Advocacy Services' at State/Territory levels, WWDA was able to quickly locate the appropriate service and refer the woman on to that service.

Outcome Evaluation:

A number of specific and tangible Project Outcomes were detailed in the original funding application, and again in the Project Plan. These Outcomes have been met, and in some cases exceeded:

- **Information and Referral Portal** – the portal is much larger and covers much more information than was originally anticipated. It has been developed in such a way that it is not only a resource for disabled women, but is a valuable resource for anyone wanting information on a very wide range of issues. It is a resource which will assist service providers, bureaucrats, voluntary workers, researchers, as well as the broader community.
- **Data Collection System** – the data collection system was successfully developed as part of the Project and will be implemented by WWDA from July 1, 2005. It will provide a valuable tool for WWDA in terms of organisational planning and informing the systemic work of the organisation.
- **WWDA Website Enhancement** – the Information and Referral Portal will be made available on WWDA's website by end June 2005. It will replace a number of outdated 'links' pages and will enable access to current and regularly updated information.
- **Promotion of the Women.gov.au website** – the Information and Referral Portal contains a direct link on every page to the Office for Women website, along with a statement of acknowledgment. Detailed information about the Commonwealth Government's women.gov.au website (along with direct links) is provided in a number of sections of the Portal, including the sections: 'Women's

Organisations & Agencies'; 'Women's Health Centres/Services and Organisations'; 'Government and Politics' and more.

- **Empowerment of Women With Disabilities** – As detailed in WWDA's Funding Application and again reflected in the Project Plan, a woman with a disability was contracted as Project Officer to implement the Project. This is consistent with WWDA's commitment to providing employment and training opportunities for women with disabilities, and fostering mentoring and leadership opportunities for women with disabilities in Australia. The Progress Report to OSW (February 2005) reported on the empowerment of the Project Officer in the process of undertaking this Project. As outlined in the Project Plan, WWDA is the major coordinating point for the provision of information to, and about, women with disabilities in Australia. Information can build resilience and self-help capacity enabling women with disabilities to access the system to ensure their needs are met. Information is a key way of linking the experiences of women with disabilities, creating positive social identity and reducing social isolation. In this context, the availability of the Information and Referral Portal will facilitate the self-help capacity of disabled women.

WWDA will continue to assess the longer term outcomes of the Project as part of its ongoing processes of organisational review. For example, over the longer term, WWDA will assess changes in data related to the number of individuals and organisations accessing WWDA for information; types of incoming requests; numbers of referrals made; usage statistics of the Information and Referral Portal; assessing access frequency to the national WWDA website by women with disabilities and other stakeholders. The combined feedback will be used to ensure that the WWDA Information and Referral Portal continues to enable women with disabilities to access appropriate information and services so as to enhance their life outcomes.

Appendix 1: The Project Plan



Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)

Development of an Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia

Project Plan



*Winner Australian Human Rights Award 2001
Winner National Violence Prevention Award 1999
Nominee, French Republics Human Rights Prize 2003
Nominee, UN Millennium Peace Prize for Women 2000*

PO Box 605, Rosny Park 7018 TAS
Ph: 03 62448288 Fax: 03 62448255
Email: wwda@wwda.org.au
Web: <http://www.wwda.org.au>

Project Title

Development of an Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women with Disabilities in Australia.

Project Aims

This project will seek to enhance WWDA's capacity to better respond to meeting the needs and concerns of women with disabilities. It will do this by developing internal information systems which enable WWDA to provide effective information, advice and referral to women with disabilities, their associates and the broader community. Specifically, WWDA will research and develop an accessible Information and Referral Portal of relevant services, agencies, and organizations at national, State/Territory, regional and local levels. WWDA will also develop a Data Collection System which records incoming requests for information from women with disabilities. This data will inform WWDA's systemic advocacy work and will enhance WWDA's capacity to act as a two way conduit between the Government and the community on social policy issues as they affect women with disabilities. Once developed, the Information and Referral Portal will be made available on WWDA's website, and will be developed in line with international Standards of Web accessibility for people with disabilities. The Information and Referral Portal will also be linked to the Women.gov.au website, developed by the Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women.

Project Rationale

WWDA is the major coordinating point for the provision of information to, and about, women with disabilities in Australia. Over the past 12 months, WWDA has witnessed a major increase in requests to the organization for individual advocacy, particularly from people in crisis. This explosion in the number of specific enquiries stretches WWDA's capacity to respond. However, it is imperative that we do respond because a significant number of the enquiries are from women in crisis. Emails and calls come from all over Australia. In many instances, a solution pathway exists but WWDA needs capacity building resources to develop a quick reliable way to access services, and information about services Australia-wide. The increase in enquiries to WWDA is not altogether surprising, given WWDA's high profile and reputation as an organization of excellence. However, as a still relatively young organization, WWDA needs to further develop its infrastructure so as to best serve its members and its aims and

objectives. WWDA has identified an urgent need to develop internal information systems which enable WWDA to provide information, advice and referral to women with disabilities, their associates and the broader community, in an efficient and effective manner.

Project Outcomes

The Project Outcomes include:

- **Information and Referral Portal** - this accessible portal will provide detailed information on services, agencies and organizations at national, State/Territory, regional and local levels. Information will be provided on services, agencies and organizations across a wide range of sectors, including: disability; women's; housing; welfare; health; legal; and so on. The portal content will reflect the identified service information needs of women with disabilities in Australia, including for eg: attendant care; reproductive health (including sterilisation); assisted reproduction; mothering & parenting; sexuality; women's health; housing; violence; citizenship & human rights; education; employment; income support; advocacy; disability discrimination; legal issues; leadership; transport; and more.
- **Data Collection System** - this data collection system will be developed within the Excel Program and will be utilised to collect statistics on incoming requests to WWDA from those seeking assistance, including individual advocacy; information and referral. The data collected will be collated from a range of data fields, including: Issue; State/Territory/region; Method (email, phone, fax); Length of Time Spent on Inquiry; Person Making the Inquiry (ie: advocate; woman with a disability); Action Taken; Referrals Made; and so on.
- **WWDA Website Enhancement** - the Information and Referral Portal will be made available on WWDA's website and will enable users to not only access information on services and organisations, but also to access a wide range of other resource materials on issues of concern.
- **Promotion of the Women.gov.au website** - once developed, the accessible Information and Referral Portal will be linked to the Commonwealth Government's Women.gov.au website. This website provides women of Australia with easy to find information about government services of specific relevance to women.

Key Project Activities, Milestones for Achievements, Key Dates & Responsibilities

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Obtain the services of a woman with a disability as the Project Officer to implement the Project.</p>	<p>Project Officer Position Description has been written.</p> <p>WWDA Management Committee has ratified Project Officer appointment.</p> <p>Project Officer is employed for 2 days per week for 10 months (or 2.5 days for 8 months).</p> <p>Office workstation is organised, including computer and email facilities.</p> <p>Orientation to WWDA is completed (if necessary) utilising WWDA Orientation Manual.</p>	<p>Project Officer to be appointed by October 1 2004.</p> <p>Project Manager (WWDA Executive Director) to manage and implement appointment process and associated processes.</p>
<p>Establish a Project Reference Group made up of women with disabilities.</p>	<p>Expressions of interest for potential Reference Group members is developed.</p> <p>Potential Reference Group members are given a briefing on the Project, including a copy of the Project Proposal.</p> <p>Mechanisms for meetings of the Project Reference Group are established.</p> <p>Meeting schedule of Project Reference Group is organised.</p> <p>First meeting of Reference Group has occurred within three weeks of Project commencing. Reference Group is made up of women with disabilities.</p>	<p>Project Reference Group has been established by mid October 2004.</p> <p>First meeting of the Project Reference Group has occurred within three weeks of commencement of the Project.</p> <p>Project Manager (WWDA Executive Director) and Project Officer to manage and implement establishment of Project Reference Group.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
Develop Project Plan.	<p>Project Plan is developed by Project Officer and Project Manager in consultation with Project Reference Group and WWDA Management Committee.</p> <p>Draft Project Plan is ratified by Project Reference Group and WWDA Management Committee.</p> <p>Draft Project Plan is forwarded to Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women (OSW) two weeks after the signing of the Funding Contract.</p>	<p>Project Manager (WWDA Executive Director) and Project Officer to develop Draft Project Plan by mid October 2004.</p> <p>Draft Project Plan has been forwarded to OSW by mid October 2004.</p> <p>OSW has ratified Project Plan by mid-late October 2004.</p>
Publicise the Project widely.	<p>Project is publicised and promoted widely through a range of mechanisms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-mail and electronic discussion forums (including 'wwda-discuss', Pamela's List, OzAdvocacy, Australian Women's Health Network List; Disabled Women's Network List; Young Women's Christian Association List; Business & Professional Women's List; Rural Women's Network List; Australian Women's Coalition List; Physical Disability Council List; Attendant Care Users List etc); • existing networks already established by WWDA (including: State/Territory Premiers; Federal/State politicians; national & state/territory peak bodies across a range of sectors; relevant government departments and agencies; relevant research institutions etc); • articles and inserts in relevant newsletters and journals (incl Link Magazine); • development of fliers and other promotional materials; • phone calls, word of mouth; • regular inserts into WWDA Monthly Update Bulletins; • information on WWDA website and inclusion of information on other relevant websites. 	<p>Project Officer, Project Manager and Project Reference Group have publicised and promoted the Project by end October 2004 (and ongoing throughout the term of the Project).</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Develop promotional fliers for the Project, including a Plain English version.</p>	<p>Promotional fliers (including 1 Plain English version) are developed and widely disseminated. Flyers available in alternative formats as needed.</p> <p>Plain English version of flier is ratified by Leanne Dowse (recognised national expert in Easy English).</p> <p>Plain English version of promotional flier is distributed to the National Council on Intellectual Disability (NCID) and their State/Territory affiliates.</p>	<p>Project Officer has developed Draft Plain English version of the flier by end October 2004.</p> <p>Leanne Dowse has ratified Plain English version by early November 2004.</p> <p>Project Officer has distributed Plain English version of flier to NCID by early November 2004.</p>
<p>Develop a Framework structure for the Information and Referral Portal in consultation with women with disabilities and other key stakeholders.</p>	<p>An analysis of the requests for individual advocacy and information request coming into Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) is undertaken.</p> <p>A list of categories to inform the framework for the Portal is developed.</p> <p>Background research into other existing portals to identify and assess frameworks used, is conducted (eg: disability.com.au).</p> <p>Framework categories are consistent with WWDA website issues structure and the WWDA Strategic Plan priority areas.</p> <p>Categories which require sub-categories and cross-referencing are identified.</p> <p>Consultation with Project Reference Group, WWDA members and other key stakeholders on the draft framework structure is undertaken. Any gaps are identified and framework is finalised.</p>	<p>Project Officer and Project Manager have undertaken analysis of requests to WWDA for individual advocacy and information, by early November 2004.</p> <p>Framework structure has been developed by early November 2004.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Develop First Progress Report to OSW.</p>	<p>First Progress Report to OSW has been written.</p> <p>Project Reference Group and WWDA Management Committee have ratified the First Progress Report.</p> <p>First Progress Report has been forwarded to OSW.</p>	<p>First Progress Report to OSW has been written and forwarded to OSW by November 15, 2004.</p>
<p>Undertake research component of the Project. Research information on relevant services, organisations and agencies at national, State/Territory, regional and local levels as appropriate.</p>	<p>Background research has collected information from a wide range of sources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • available and relevant State/Territory service directories; • State/Territory and regional telephone directories; • Websites of services and organisations across a range of sectors including: disability, health, human rights, women, welfare, housing, legal, access consultancy etc; • Federal, State/Territory and local Government Department websites; • WWDA organisational membership database; • Relevant national, State/Territory peak bodies and professional associations; • Relevant listservs and email discussion groups; <p>Project Reference Group and WWDA members have been provided the opportunity to contribute information on relevant services, organisations and agencies.</p> <p>Project Officer has utilised existing WWDA networks to research information on relevant services, organisations and agencies.</p>	<p>Project Officer, Project Manager and Project Reference Group have undertaken background research component of the Project by end February 2005.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Develop Second Progress Report to OSW.</p>	<p>Second Progress Report to OSW has been written.</p> <p>Project Reference Group and WWDA Management Committee have ratified the Second Progress Report.</p> <p>Second Progress Report has been forwarded to OSW.</p>	<p>Second Progress Report to OSW has been written and forwarded to OSW by February 15, 2005.</p>
<p>Research relevant Data Collection Systems for adaptation to WWDA's requirements.</p>	<p>Research has identified and collected information on data collection systems from a range of sources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State/Territory Government Disability Departments; • Relevant disability and women's services and organisations; • Other key organisations and services including: Kid's Help Line; Lifeline and other crisis services; women's health centres, etc. <p>An assessment of data collection systems used by other services and organisations is undertaken.</p>	<p>Project Officer, in consultation with Project Manager and Project Reference Group has researched data collection systems by March 2005.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Develop internal Data Collection System to collect statistics on incoming requests to WWDA from those seeking assistance.</p>	<p>Data Collection System is developed using the Excel program.</p> <p>Data Collection System is developed in a way which enables the collection of statistics on incoming requests to WWDA from those seeking assistance, including individual advocacy; information and referral.</p> <p>Data Collection System is developed to enable collection of data across the following fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue; • State/Territory/region (including postcode); • Method (email, phone, fax, in person); • Length of Time Spent on Inquiry; • Person Making the Inquiry (ie: advocate; woman with a disability); • Action Taken; • Referrals Made <p>Data Collection System makes provision for statistics to be collated on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Data Collection Proforma is developed in consultation with Project Reference Group, and other key stakeholders as required.</p>	<p>Project Officer, in consultation with Project Manager and Project Reference Group has developed WWDA internal Data Collection System by April 2005.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Develop Information and Referral Portal, test with women with disabilities and other key stakeholders, assess accessibility. Identify any gaps and address gaps identified.</p>	<p>Stage 1: All material is collated using the Framework categories structure, and cross referenced as necessary. Data is entered into a document using table format. Document in draft form is provided to the Project Reference Group for feedback.</p> <p>Stage 2: Any necessary changes as a result of Reference Group feedback are made. Data is exported into Excel Program database.</p> <p>Stage 3: The HTML version of the Information and Referral Portal is developed and uploaded onto WWDA website. Information and Referral Portal is accessible from the WWDA website Contents Page. Information and Referral Portal is consistent with Web accessibility for people with disabilities, developed by the World Wide Web Consortium.</p> <p>HTML version of the Information and Referral Portal makes provision for users to provide update information to WWDA.</p> <p>Project Reference Group and selection of WWDA members have trialled the HTML version of the Information and Referral Portal and provided feedback. Necessary changes have been made.</p>	<p>Project Officer, in consultation with Project Manager and Project Reference Group has developed the Information and Referral Portal by end May 2005.</p>
<p>Advertise and promote availability of Information and Referral Portal, using a wide range of mechanisms.</p>	<p>Availability of Information and Referral Portal is publicised and promoted widely through a range of mechanisms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-mail and electronic discussion forums (including 'wwda-discuss', Pamela's List, OzAdvocacy, Australian Women's Health Network List; Disabled Women's Network List; etc); • existing networks already established by WWDA (including: State/Territory Premiers; Federal/State politicians; national & state/territory peak bodies across a range of sectors; relevant government departments and agencies; relevant research institutions etc); 	<p>Project Officer, Project Manager and Project Reference Group have publicised and promoted the availability of Information and Referral Portal by end May 2005.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Advertise and promote availability of Information and Referral Portal, using a wide range of mechanisms (cont'd).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • articles and inserts in relevant newsletters and journals (incl Link magazine); • development of fliers and other promotional materials; • phone calls, word of mouth; • regular inserts into WWDA Monthly Update Bulletins; • inclusion of information on other relevant websites. <p>All organisations, services, agencies entered into the Information and Referral Portal have been notified of the availability of the portal, including details on how they can update their entry if required.</p> <p>HTML version of the Information and Referral Portal provides a link to the Women.gov.au website.</p> <p>HTML version of the Information and Referral Portal acknowledges the financial support of the Commonwealth and includes the OSW logo.</p>	<p>Project Officer, Project Manager and Project Reference Group have publicised and promoted the availability of Information and Referral Portal by end May 2005.</p>
<p>Evaluate the Project using a range of evaluation processes including Process, Impact and Outcome Evaluation.</p>	<p>Project Evaluation is consistent with the funding contract (Annexure A1).</p> <p>Project Evaluation undertaken by WWDA includes addressing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the Project has met the objectives in the funding contract; • Number of participants involved in the Project; • Responses from the participants/users; • How the Project outcomes have been promoted and disseminated; • The key learnings for WWDA as a result of the Project; • How WWDA will sustain the Project outcomes beyond the contract period. 	<p>Project Officer, in consultation with Project Manager and Project Reference Group has undertaken Project Evaluation in line with the funding contract (Annexure A1) by end May 2005.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
<p>Evaluate the Project using a range of evaluation processes including Process, Impact and Outcome Evaluation (cont'd).</p>	<p>Six project participants have completed the Evaluation by OSW, and have addressed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involvement with the Project; • understanding of the aims of the Project; • what outcomes were achieved from the Project; • any outcomes that were not achieved and why; • aspects of the Project that worked well and why; • aspects of the Project that did not work well; • any possible improvements; • who will benefit from the Project and how; • the most valuable component of the Project; • personal gains from the Project. 	<p>Six project participants have completed the Evaluation by OSW by end May 2005.</p>
<p>Develop Final Report for the funding body (OSW).</p>	<p>A Final Report is written and contains the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summary; • Background to the Project; • The Project Methodology; • Project Activities; • Project Outcomes; • Project Evaluation. <p>Project Reference Group and WWDA Management Committee have ratified the Final Report.</p> <p>Final Report has been forwarded to OSW.</p>	<p>Project Officer, in consultation with Project Manager and Project Reference Group has completed Final Report of the Project by 29 May 2005. Final Report has been forwarded to OSW by May 31, 2005.</p>

Project Activity	Milestones for Achievement	Key Dates & Responsibility
Distribute Project Report widely.	<p>Project Report is disseminated widely to women with disabilities; the project funding body; relevant organisations, government departments and other key stakeholders.</p> <p>Information about the Project is made available on WWDA's website.</p>	Project Officer, Project Manager, Project Reference Group and WWDA Management Committee have distributed Project Report through WWDA networks by end June 2005.
Undertake Audit of the Project.	Financial audit of the Project is completed and submitted to OSW.	Project Officer and Project Manager have overseen completion of the financial audit of the Project. Audit is submitted to OSW by 30 June 2005.

Project Budget Timeline

Key Dates	Key Tasks
By October 1st st 2004	<p>WWDA Accountant to set up Project Grant financial management system using MYOB Accounting Software.</p> <p>WWDA Accountant to establish mechanisms to manage Project funds.</p>
By October 1st st 2004	Pay Professional Indemnity Insurance - \$2,000
October 1 st 2004 - May 31 st 2005	On a monthly basis, transfer \$2250 from Project Grant (Cost Code 'OSW Info & Ref Portal') into WWDA Operational Account for Project Office salary plus on-costs. WWDA to raise an internal invoice on a monthly basis to the Customer 'OSW Info & Ref Portal'.
By June 30 th 2005	<p>Reimburse WWDA Membership Funds with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4,500 for Project Administration expenses. • \$500 for Project Audit expenses. <p>Project Admin expenses to be reconciled on a monthly basis, coded against the Project Grant (Cost Code 'OSW Info & Ref Portal'), and reimbursed at the completion of the Project.</p>

Appendix 2: Project Officer Position Description



Winner Australian Human Rights Award 2001
Winner National Violence Prevention Award 1999
Nominee, French Republics Human Rights Prize 2003
Nominee, UN Millennium Peace Prize for Women 2000

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) Position Description

Position Title: Project Officer, WWDA Information and Referral Portal
Organisation: Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)
Award: Community Services (Tas) Award
Employment Conditions: 2.5 days per week for 8 months

Function

1. In consultation with the Management Committee (WWDA Management Committee) and in accordance with relevant policies and legal requirements, undertake co-ordination of the OSW funded project 'Development of an Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia' consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the organisation.

Primary Tasks

1. In consultation with the WWDA Executive Director, undertake all aspects of the Manage all aspects of the OSW funded project 'Development of an Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia'.
2. Take a leadership role in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Project.
3. Undertake project planning, research and project evaluation in line with the funding contract between WWDA and OSW.
4. Plan, implement and evaluate the Project in line with the expressed needs of WWDA members.
5. Develop ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in accordance with relevant quality improvement programs and principles.
6. Liaise with government, non-government, private and voluntary service providers and organisations in the disability and women's sectors, and other sectors as required.
7. Present monthly reports to the WWDA Management Committee (and the WWDA membership through WWDA's Monthly Update Bulletins)

8. Develop, implement and maintain relevant systems for the distribution of information relating to the Project.

Level of Responsibility

1. Accountable to the WWDA Management Committee through the WWDA Executive Director but with ability to exercise considerable initiative and professional judgement to meet the contractual obligations for the Project.

Selection Criteria/Knowledge and Skills

1. Demonstrated experience in project management, and an understanding of the legal responsibilities of community based groups and organisations.
2. High level written, oral and interpersonal communication skills, including liaison, facilitation, negotiation, consultation, and conflict resolution skills.
3. A comprehensive understanding and demonstrated experience of the community development process, including demonstrated experience in working with disadvantaged groups.
4. High level planning, research, and evaluation skills including a sound understanding of social and feminist research methodologies.
5. Experience in, and a commitment to, continuous quality improvement and achievement of best practice models and strategies appropriate to community based organisations.
6. Experience and proficiency in the application of information technology, including an understanding of computer hardware and software and a working knowledge of the Internet.
7. A sound knowledge of disability and women's issues.
8. A sound knowledge of funding and grants processes for community based organisations.
9. Ability to manage time and resources with limited supervision, to work within tight time frames, and to work in consultation with a management committee.
10. Sound knowledge and understanding of and commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity principles, practices and objectives, along with a sound understanding of Occupational Health and Safety and Industrial Democracy.

Appendix 3: Easy English Promotional Flier



Women
With
Disabilities
Australia
(WWDA)

Helping Women With Disabilities Find Out About Services

What 's New?

WWDA is doing some work to put information about services for women with disabilities on our website.

Why Are We Doing This?

WWDA is doing this Project because women with disabilities often ask us for information about services that can help them.

How Can You Help?

Tell us about services in your area that should be on the website.

Tell us what kind of services you think should be on the website.

Contact Us:

Angela or Carolyn

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)
PO Box 605, ROSNY PARK, TASMANIA 7018
Ph: 03 62448288 Fax: 03 62448255
Email: wwda@wwda.org.au
Web: <http://www.wwda.org.au>

Thanks: Office of the Status of Women gave money for WWDA to do this work



Australian Government
Office of the Status of Women

Appendix 4: Letter to State/Territory Premiers



*Winner Australian Human Rights Award 2001
Winner National Violence Prevention Award 1999
Nominee, French Republics Human Rights Prize 2003
Nominee, UN Millennium Peace Prize for Women 2000*

PO Box 605, Rosny Park 7018 TAS
Ph: 03 62448288 Fax: 03 62448255
ABN: 23 627 650 121
Email: wwda@wwda.org.au
Web: <http://www.wwda.org.au>

Hon Steve Bracks
Premier of VIC
Parliament House
Melbourne VIC 3002

August 26, 2004

Dear Premier Bracks,

I write to you from Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA), the national peak organisation for women with all types of disabilities in Australia. Over the past twelve months, WWDA has witnessed a significant increase in requests to the organisation for individual advocacy from people with disabilities from all parts of Australia. The requests are often from people in crisis situations. WWDA has also witnessed an increase in requests from government departments and other organisations, for information about services and agencies around Australia that provide support and assistance to people with disabilities.

As the national peak organisation for women with all types of disabilities, WWDA is an obvious and major coordinating point for access to information, not only for people with disabilities, but for service providers and other stakeholders. It is therefore vital that WWDA has up to date information on services, agencies and other community supports available to people with disabilities in Australia.

In order to ensure that WWDA can effectively and efficiently deal with incoming requests for assistance, I am writing to request a copy of your State/Territory Service Directory for People With Disabilities. This information will enable WWDA to ensure that people with disabilities contacting the organization for assistance, can be referred to the relevant service/agency in whichever State/Territory they reside.

Please contact me if you require any additional information.

Yours Sincerely

Carolyn P Frohmader
Executive Director

Appendix 5: Sample of Portal Template

Access Auditors

Contents

[Organisations/Auditors](#)

Organisations/Auditors

ACA Australia

ACA Australia is a national membership-based professional association for people working to achieve accessibility of the built environment for people with a disability. It is the peak national body for access consultancy in Australia and a major partner in advancing equity of built environmental accessibility for people with a disability. ACA Australia maintains a register of Accredited Members which gives details of their practice. The register is made available to those wishing to engage or employ an access consultant.

You can also search the register at ACA's website to locate an Accredited Access Auditor in your State/Territory.

326 Autumn Street
HERNE HILL VIC 3218
Ph: (03) 52212820
Fax: (03) 52212820
Email: ACAA.secretary@bigpond.com
Web: www.access.asn.au

If you would like to update the details of a listing, or if you would like to add a new listing, please email [Women With Disabilities Australia \(WWDA\)](#)



The development of the Information and Referral Directory for Women With Disabilities in Australia was made possible through a funding grant from the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) [Office for Women](#) (Women's Development Programme). Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) gratefully acknowledges the Commonwealth Government for this support.

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Appendix 6: Portal Promotional Flyer

WWDA Online Information and Referral Directory

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) has recently developed an online Information and Referral Directory. The Directory has been produced by WWDA to help people find information about services and organisations that are available to assist them. The information has been organised into various groups and sub-groups to enable easy access. The Directory contains an extensive amount of information about services and organizations across a wide range of issue areas. Just some examples of what you can find include:

- All disability and related organizations across Australia, including national organizations;
- Every legal centre and service in Australia;
- Organisations Australia wide that provide individual advocacy services to people with disabilities;
- Information on where to go to get aids and equipment;
- Details of services that can help with assisted reproduction;
- Agencies that deal with violence and abuse, including listings of crisis services, women's shelters and more;
- All women's health centres, services and organizations around Australia;

And much, much more!!!

You can find the WWDA Information and Referral Directory at WWDA's Website. Just go to:

www.wwda.org.au

And let us know what you think!



The development of the Accessible Information and Referral Portal for Women With Disabilities in Australia was made possible through a funding grant from the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) Office for Women. Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) gratefully acknowledges the Commonwealth Government for this support.

Appendix 7: Project Expenditure

Item	OSW Funds \$	Other Resources (eg In Kind) \$	\$ Total
Staff: Project Officer (salary and on-costs)	\$18,000		\$18,000
Staff: Project Management		\$15,000	\$15,000
Administrative costs eg. postage, telephone, email, facsimile & other communications, rent, insurance, stationary, office equipment, computer and software, electricity and heating, photocopying, bookkeeping fees, resource materials, advertising	\$4,618.64	\$5,000	\$9,618.64
Professional Indemnity Insurance*	\$1881.36		\$1881.36
Project Audit*	\$500		500
TOTAL	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$45,000

* Professional Indemnity Insurance was budgeted at \$2,500 in the original Project budget, however final cost was \$1881.36. OSW agreed that the remaining balance of \$618.64 be transferred into the Administration component.

* Project Audit funds of \$500 have been committed. Audit to be completed in June 05.

* Administrative costs have been paid by WWDA and will be reimbursed once the final grant payment is received (on acceptance of the Final Report).

