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Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Position Description

Disability Inclusion Advocate

Reporting to:	Director – Priorities, Focus and Advocacy (eLM)
Unit:	Equipping Leadership for Mission (eLM)
Location:	CTM – 29 College Crescent, Parkville and Wesley Place – 130 Lonsdale St, Melbourne
Tenure:	Full time Continuing
Hours per week:	37.5
Cost centre:	C024
Date:	November 2024

Employee

Signature

Date

Manager

Signature

Date

Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

The Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania is the Council of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) responsible for the general oversight, direction and administration of the Church's worship, witness and service in the region allotted to it. It exercises pastoral, executive, administrative and disciplinary responsibilities in relation to the presbyteries within its bounds. In particular, it promotes and encourages the work of the Church, assisting congregations and presbyteries within its bounds in their faithful participation in the mission of God.

Equipping Leadership for Mission (eLM) Unit

Equipping Leadership for Mission (eLM) is one of three units within the Synod Ministries and Operations of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, along with the Secretariat and the Mission Resourcing Unit (MRU).

eLM staff are responsible for:

- Educating and forming lay and ordained people for ministry and leadership in a range of contexts
- Providing a range of services to support ministers and lay leaders during their time of ministry within the life of the Church
- Supporting, promoting, and informing the strategic priorities and areas of focus as resolved by the Synod
- Advancing justice, advocacy and research to support well-informed and effective contextual expressions of ministry and service in the communities in which we live and the publics we provoke and serve
- Resourcing congregations through the administration of the Church's grants program
- Developing networks and building deep partnerships across Synod Ministries and Operations staff teams, together with all presbyteries and their congregations
- Maintaining strong engaged relationships with the presbyteries through regionally based participation and support
- Fostering the intercultural capacity of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania.

Priorities, Focus & Advocacy Team

The Priorities, Focus & Advocacy Team leads, resources, encourages and promotes the strategic priorities, areas of focus and justice work of the Synod. It undertakes research into the changed and changing contexts across the Synod to develop and implement resources including policies, guidelines, discussion papers and resource and training materials for the key priorities.

The team resources presbyteries and congregations in a) intergenerational ministry which includes the ministry to children and families, youth and young adults; b) the strengthening of CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) communities to actively engage in the wider Church; and c) development of new and renewing expressions of faith within their congregations and communities.

The team provides expert advice and contemporary information related to social justice. It advocates and leads campaigns for social justice outcomes and provides advice and representation at the Synod and relevant sector forums.

Culture of Safety Team

The Culture of Safety Team works to support and foster a culture attuned to the safety of all people involved with the Church. The Culture of Safety team develops protocols and practices to resource the Church to build and maintain safe places and ways of being.

The team ensures that resources comply with ethical and legislative requirements and that continuous improvement to the services, resources and initiatives designed for congregations, presbyteries and the Synod Ministries and Operations are delivered.

The team ensure best practice is applied to document management, maintains a Safe Church database, communicates with and supports Safe Church workers in Congregations, coordinates safe church training, and works to ensure that updates to the working with children register are accurate and timely. This team also assists the Church to manage a range of incidents and complaints that relate to safety.

Role purpose

The Disability Inclusion Advocate champions and supports the full inclusion of people with disabilities in the mission and ministry of Uniting Church congregations in Victoria and Tasmania. The role works half time with the Culture of Safety Unit at Wesley Place and half time with the eLM Unit at Parkville. The role reports to the Director - Priorities, Focus and Advocacy (eLM)

An initial priority for the role is to work with the Culture of Safety team to finalise the “Compliments, Concerns and Complaints policy” (3 C’s), to create supporting 3C’s educational and implementation material for the range of people who will implement the policy and procedures, and to disseminate and support the implementation of the process across the Church in Victoria and Tasmania. (The Culture of Safety team is responsible for leading any complaints processes, and the Disability Inclusion Advocate provides input if access supports are required).

The second priority is updating and implementing the Disability Action Plan, working with the eLM team (based at the CTM in Parkville) and the wider church in Victoria and Tasmania

Key selection criteria

Qualifications and experience

This position requires the following knowledge and experience:

- Tertiary qualifications related to theology, education or community development.
- A working knowledge of disability studies, disability support in the community, and / or disability studies in theology is preferred.
- Minimum five years proven experience in a related role. Specific experience working in disability or advocacy settings is essential.
- Demonstrated ability to write educational material, develop and implement a complaints process and present this in a range of contexts in person and online around Victoria and Tasmania.
- Lived experience of disability, or as an immediate support person of someone with lived experience of disability is preferred.

Skills and abilities

The successful applicant will have the following skills and abilities:

1. **Disability Sector leadership and understanding:** Understands a wide range of issues and experiences of people living with disability; Identifies and articulates complexity and nuance in a range of Disability settings; builds commitment to wisdom and learning in self and others; assists others to articulate the needs of persons living with disability; leads others to navigate cultural complexity. Has knowledge and understanding of the outcomes of the Disability Royal Commission.
2. **Generating education materials and training programs:** is experienced in the design and production of educational programs and materials and the development and delivery of training regarding the use and implementation to a range of target audiences.
3. **Knowledge of the Uniting Church in Australia** its polity, systems and practices and the ability to work within the Ethos and Values of the Uniting Church is essential. Experience and engagement with the life of local and regional faith communities is desirable.
4. **Relationship development:** identifies issues in common and seeks knowledge to build mutually beneficial partnerships; identifies and responds to other people's underlying needs and can use the understanding of the context to achieve goals and resolve issues.
5. **Communication skills:** excellent verbal and written communication skills; excellent interpersonal skills, and ability to effectively interact with a diverse range of individuals, groups and committees. This includes group presentations and the use of PowerPoint, Easy and Plain English.
6. **Strategic planning:** thinks at the big picture level; entertains wide-ranging possibilities in developing a financially sustainable future; works across a number of time frames; translates strategic direction into day-to-day activities; sets clearly defined objectives and priorities and operates accordingly, reviewing and adjusting as required; links strategies and actions to goals and outcomes;
7. **Leadership:** promotes the Church's strategic direction with high integrity and models its workplace values and characteristics; leads change, remains flexible, and challenges others to explore alternatives and seek the best outcome.
8. **Teamwork and coaching:** cooperates and works well with others in pursuit of team goals; collaborates and shares information; shows consideration, concern and respect for others' feelings and ideas; accommodates and thrives in the context of others' different working styles; demonstrated capacity to work in and with a team to deliver shared goals

Personal competencies and qualities

The successful applicant will also have these personal competencies and qualities:

9. **Personal awareness:** reflects on one's own life and can demonstrate an understanding of faith and the importance of community.
10. **Initiative and accountability:** Proactive and self-starting; seizes opportunities and acts

upon them; takes responsibility for own actions; demonstrates capacity for sustained effort and hard work; sets high standards of performance for self and others; enjoys a vigorous and dynamic work environment.

11. **Awareness of culture and diversity:** awareness of issues related to inclusion and fairness; understanding of diversity in culture (importance of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse – CALD – communities), ability, age, gender and sexuality (issues related to Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex – LGBTI – communities); capacity to embrace the values and benefits of diverse communities, including in faith-based gatherings and workplaces.

Other requirements

Applicants will be required to obtain a Working with Children’s Check, and their employment will be subject to satisfactory completion of a National Criminal History Check.

Flexibility is required in terms of working hours, with work on weekends and/or in evenings necessary from time to time. Annual leave may not be taken immediately prior to or during the Synod meeting. Travel within Victoria and Tasmania, and interstate is anticipated. A current driver’s licence, or easily accessible means of transport, is desirable.

All staff are responsible for maintaining records and data related to their role responsibilities and work area in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures.

Applicants must be willing to work within the UCA’s Workplace Values and Characteristics (see below). They must support the direction outlines in the Synod’s document ‘Our Vision Statement, Mission Principles, Statements of Intent, Strategic Priorities and Areas of Focus’.

Placement notes (Pastor or Ordained):

If the successful applicant is an ordained person, or is identified as suitable for a pastor in placement, the following will apply:

- Membership of and engagement in the life of a local faith community.
- Accountability to the Presbytery where the applicant’s membership resides.
- Ensure attendance and participation in regular professional supervision with an appropriately accredited supervisor.
- Provide ministry in accordance with the Code of Ethics, and attend required ethical ministry training sessions.

- People in pastor roles:
 - are required to have undertaken core competency training within three months of the appointment.
 - will continue to develop general competencies for pastors in the UCA. The Synod’s Coordinator for Lay leadership Development, who can be contacted through eLM, will help the pastor and the employing body to understand what ongoing education is required, and how that can be fulfilled. The Presbytery has oversight of the pastor’s progress in this process.

- Will partake in the development of general competencies for pastors, as coordinated through the eLM Lay Leadership Development Coordinator.

Key accountabilities and activities

Key accountabilities	Key activities
<p>Lead the production, delivery and support of the Compliments, Concerns and Complaints (3C's) policy and education materials within the Church</p>	<p>Work with the Culture of Safety team at Wesley Place to finalise the Compliments, Concerns and Complaints policy (3 C's).</p> <p>Develop and implement a complaints process, in collaboration with the Culture of Safety team.</p> <p>Design and produce educational material to support the 3C's Policy and the "Principles for a Disability Inclusive Church" for use by Safe Church Contact persons and Congregational leaders. Educational material will support the building of a culture of safety in the church for all people.</p> <p>Lead the delivery of training in these materials across Victoria and Tasmania in the Synod, Presbyteries and Congregations.</p> <p>(The Culture of Safety team is responsible for leading any specific complaints processes, and the Disability Inclusion Advocate provides input where Access supports may be required)</p>
<p>Lead the coordination, delivery and support of actions related to Disability Inclusion within the Church</p>	<p>Work with the eLM team (based at CTM in Parkville) to update the Synod's Disability Action Plan to include the outcomes of the Disability Royal Commission.</p> <p>Complete the work of the current Disability Action Plan.</p> <p>Support leaders in Synod, Presbyteries and Congregations to implement the Disability Action Plan.</p> <p>Support eLM to provide leadership in developing theologies and practices of disability inclusion for the UCA.</p> <p>Resource congregations to be inclusive of people living with disabilities in their worship, witness and service.</p> <p>Foster connections with other Disability Advocacy groups, especially those in other Synods, Christian churches and other faith groups.</p> <p>Encourage functional networks of people living with disability.</p> <p>Advocate for appropriate structures of support for including people with disabilities in Synod employment and ministry.</p>
<p>Demonstrate accountable ministry leadership</p>	<p>Promote the Synod's Vision and Mission, and communicate the UCA's strategic intentions. Share achievements with others within and outside of the immediate work area.</p> <p>Apply consideration of theological and missional perspectives when providing advice and services.</p> <p>Maintain clarity of purpose relevant to the aims of the team and Unit as a whole.</p>

<p>Work in partnership</p>	<p>Work alongside eLM staff (including Pilgrim Theological College) to discern the place of Disability Inclusion in their work in equipping leadership.</p> <p>Develop and maintain effective relationships across the life of the Church, and apply consideration to a theological and missional perspective when providing advice and services.</p> <p>Pro-actively negotiate and establish effective communication and workflow systems.</p> <p>Maintain a current understanding of life within presbyteries and congregations to ensure effective and wise use of resources for the mission of the Church.</p>
<p>Communicate effectively</p>	<p>Confidently convey ideas and information in a clear and engaging way, understanding the target audience and objectives of any communication. Use feedback to refine communication, and handle difficult and sensitive communications.</p> <p>Write briefs, emails and reports, using clear, concise and grammatically correct language. Edit written communications to ensure they contain the information necessary to achieve their purpose.</p> <p>Use multiple communication channels to tailor communication to relevant audiences.</p> <p>Report to key stakeholders and unit managers on project updates and key deliverables in the Disability Action Plan.</p>
<p>Demonstrate teamwork</p>	<p>Openly share insights with others. Maintain effective and respectful relationships.</p> <p>Participate in team meetings and conversations with peers in a way that encourages collaboration, connection, and lighter and simpler systems.</p> <p>Remain open and flexible to new ideas and the sharing of resources, to ensure the wisest use of the Church's resources.</p> <p>Demonstrate enthusiasm for the strategic direction and the purpose and goals of the team and broader unit.</p> <p>Resolve any conflict that may arise through effective reconciliation methods.</p> <p>Participate in team development activities and exercises to enhance own leadership and foster a culture of teamwork across Synod Ministries and Operations.</p>

Manage self	<p>Prepare own work plan annually with agreed measurable outcomes.</p> <p>Demonstrate a commitment to developing self, learning new skills and gaining new insights into own effectiveness.</p> <p>Actively participate in the annual Performance, Planning and Development Program (PPD).</p> <p>Use corporate credit card in accordance with Synod Ministries and Operations policies and procedures.</p>
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Synod Vision

Following Christ, walking together as First and Second Peoples, seeking community, compassion and justice for all creation.

Synod Ministries and Operations Mission

To inspire, resource and enable presbyteries, congregations and agencies to live Synod's vision.

Values and Characteristics

Trust – a dependable partner - being a dependable partner that builds trust through: respectful, just and honest action; acting with integrity; ensuring the safety of all children and vulnerable people is paramount; aligning policy and practices; and fulfilling promises.

Collaboration – a shared responsibility - taking responsibility and collaborating through; knowledge sharing; inclusive decision making; and walking together as First and Second Peoples.

Growth – an expansive culture - embracing a culture of generosity and growth by: nurturing new ways of doing things; continuous improvement to practices, systems and processes; hearing all voices, contributions; welcoming diversity and consultative leadership.

Sustainability – a healthy ecosystem - maintaining a vibrant environment by: the intentional use of resources and ensuring we have the right skills, development, gifts and talents where we and our work flourish.