



STARTER KIT FOR DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

Building An Inclusive Workplace For Persons With Disabilities

Developed by:

SG ENABLE
Inclusive society. Enabled lives.

Supported by:

wsg Workforce
Singapore

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01

Understanding Persons with Disabilities

1. UNDERSTANDING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, more efforts have been made to push for a more inclusive and caring nation. Based on the Enabling Masterplan 3, the prevalence rates of persons with disabilities in Singapore are as follows:

Population Group	Approximate Prevalence Rate
Student Population	2.1% of Student Population ¹
18 to 49 years	3.4% of Resident Population ²
50 years & above	13.3% of Resident Population ³

¹ Source: Ministry of Education. This is based on the number of reported cases of students with sensory impairment, physical impairment, autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disability. The total student population is put at approximately 460,000.

² Source: National Council of Social Service. Based on a random sampling of 2,000 Singapore residents and permanent residents aged 18 and above done by NCSS in 2015, the self-reported disability prevalence rate was 3.4% for those aged 18 – 49 years old. This includes those who acquired disabilities due to accidents and illness.

³ Source: National Council of Social Service. Based on a random sampling of 2,000 Singapore residents and permanent residents aged 18 and above done by NCSS in 2015, the self-reported disability prevalence rate was 13.3% for those aged 50 years and above. This includes those who acquired disabilities due to accidents, illness and older age.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES THAT SG ENABLE SUPPORTS

SG Enable supports Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents with the following disability types:



Physical Disabilities



Sensory Impairments
(Visual and Hearing Impairment)



Intellectual Disabilities
(IQ of 70 and below)



Autism Spectrum Disorder



Physical Disabilities

Physical disabilities refer to limitations on a person's physical functioning or mobility. These could arise from conditions such as muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, amputations or complications from a stroke.

Sensory Impairments

There are two types of sensory impairment: visual and hearing.



Visual impairment refers to significant visual loss that cannot be corrected with optical lenses, medication or operation. It ranges from low vision, in which a person is unable to discern objects a short distance away, to tunnel vision, in which part of their peripheral vision may be affected, to complete blindness.

Hearing impairment refers to the partial or complete inability to hear sounds in one or both ears. Some persons with hearing impairment may benefit from using hearing aids while others may not. Each case of hearing loss is unique and the table below shows an example of the range of hearing abilities:

	 Soft Sounds	 Speech	 Loud Noises	 Very Loud Noises
Mild				
Moderate				
Severe				
Profound				

The range of hearing ability for persons with hearing impairment.



Intellectual Disabilities

Intellectual disabilities are characterised by a measure of low intelligence quotient (IQ) score of 70 or less, as well as limitations in skills such as language, math, reasoning and social functioning.

Persons with intellectual disabilities may have difficulties such as:

- Communicating with others
- Making and retaining friends
- Practising everyday living skills such as personal care, self management and financial management

Persons with Down Syndrome typically have physical growth delays, characteristic facial features and mild to moderate intellectual disabilities.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD is defined by DSM-5 as a persistent deficit in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts. People with ASD may also display restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, or activities.

Some common characteristics could include the following:

- Lack of eye contact when communicating
- Understanding verbal and non-verbal communication cues
- Prefers a routine, tends to have difficulty adapting to sudden changes



The following table provides some quick tips on how we can better interact with persons with disabilities and their common strengths in the workplace.

Identifying the Right Job Tasks/Roles

	PHYSICAL DISABILITY	HEARING IMPAIRMENT	VISUAL IMPAIRMENT	AUTISM, INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical exertion • Frequent travelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontline interaction • Usage of phone calls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent travelling • Review of hardcopy materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast-paced work with multiple changes • Interaction and liaison work
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible working environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage of computer with assistive technology devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured and repetitive work • Requires attention to details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • App Development • Accounting & Finance • Customer Service • Graphic Design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud Ops Engineering • Graphic Design • IT Analyst 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service • Human Resource • Sensory Panel • UX Design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data & QA Analyst • Digitisation and scanning • Retail • Urban farming

02

Benefits of Diversity & Inclusion In The Workplace

2. BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

A DIVERSE WORKPLACE

A workplace where employees are from different cultures and backgrounds. Employment opportunities are not influenced by factors such as ethnicity, religion, age, gender makeup and disabilities.

AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

A workplace where all employees are equally valued and treated with the same respect and dignity.

BENEFITS

Leverage on an untapped talent pool

Persons with disabilities can bring the needed skills and contribute meaningfully when companies focus on their abilities and the job match is done right. They have done well in companies from a variety of industries, in both the public and private sectors.

Hiring them could also lead to increased productivity and lower turnover. Accenture's market research in 2018 revealed that companies leading in disability inclusion had, on average, higher revenue and profit margins.

Gain new perspectives

Many persons with disabilities have had to adapt and make adjustments to overcome various challenges in their lives. They could bring innovative thinking, offer unique perspectives, and also propose ideas on how to make the business more inclusive for its customers.

Improve the work culture and facilities

As employees interact with colleagues with disabilities, they become more accepting of one another's differences and strengths, develop more empathy and have a deeper appreciation of how everyone can contribute to the organisation's success.

Co-workers also stand to benefit when reasonable accommodations such as flexi-work schemes and workplace modifications (e.g. ramps and automatic sliding doors) are introduced for persons with disabilities.

Enhance company image

As socially-responsible consumption gains traction, disability-inclusive employment practices can enhance a company's brand image. Existing employees may also feel more proud and committed to companies with strong corporate social responsibility efforts.

Empower and enable lives

Not only does employment provide persons with disabilities a stable income and more financial independence, it boosts their confidence and contributes to their sense of self-worth. Employment can give people, including persons with disabilities, a sense of identity, purpose and social connectedness.

CASE STUDY

UNITED OVERSEAS BANK SINGAPORE

Partnership to hire persons with disabilities

Organisations are moving towards paperless operations and United Overseas Bank (UOB) is no exception. UOB Scan Hub is the bank's nerve centre for checking, digitising and archiving of customer documents. Employees are required to be meticulous and be able to handle routine work. In 2013, UOB partnered Autism Resource Centre (Singapore) (ARC) to hire suitable employees and persons with autism made up about 30% of the team of 50 staff.

Right job match yields greater productivity

Although the initial training phase took time, having a structured job development process yielded positive results and these employees from ARC were able to contribute productively to UOB.

Better managerial development

This project also led to the professional development of the managers. The managers were trained to give clear and specific instructions, allocate work in an organised manner, and plan better schedules, which improved their managerial and communication skills.



03

**How Ready Is Your
Organisation In Hiring
Persons With Disabilities?**

3. HOW READY IS YOUR ORGANISATION IN HIRING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES?

Find out using the Workplace Disability Inclusive Index at (<http://Singapore.benchmarkability.org/>)



Workplace Disability Inclusive Index

The Inclusive Index is an online self-diagnostic tool for you to identify key focus areas for inclusive hiring, and to find out how inclusive your company is.

How Workplace Disability Inclusive Index can be administered by organisations

- Each organisation would only need to create a single account, allowing access for multiple users to complete various categories of the Inclusive Index
- After each category is completed, the user gets a report with recommendations and resource links for that category
- This complimentary handy report also serves as a self-paced learning tool for users
- Alternatively, email us at capabilitydevelopment@sgenable.sg for advisory support



HOW SG ENABLE CAN SUPPORT

With the results from the Inclusive Index, organisations will be able to identify areas for improvement in hiring and integrating persons with disabilities in the workplace. Organisations can also sign up for SG Enable's High Impact Retention and Employment (HIRE) Workshops.

The series of 5 workshop covers:

1. Introduction to Disability Management
2. Recruitment & Hiring of Persons with Disabilities
3. Job Accommodation & Workplace Accessibility
4. Enhancing Employment through Assistive Technology and e-Accessibility
5. Career Advancement and Retention of Employees with Disabilities

**For enquiries, please email
capabilitydevelopment@sgenable.sg or call
1800 8585 885**



04

**Building A Diverse & Inclusive
Culture In Your Workplace**

4. BUILDING A DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE CULTURE IN YOUR WORKPLACE

A Diverse & Inclusive Culture

Every organisation has a unique culture. It influences how employees behave in the organisation and everyone has a role in shaping it.

Here are some examples of good practices:

- Be mindful of your own beliefs and behaviours and how these might influence the way you treat others
- Have an open mind to listen and understand different viewpoints

TRAINING CO-WORKERS ON DISABILITY MANAGEMENT

Some co-workers may lack the confidence to interact with persons with disabilities out of fear of doing or saying 'the wrong thing'. To help your employees gain confidence, you can equip them with basic understanding of different types of disabilities and disability etiquette through support offered by SG Enable.



HOW SG ENABLE CAN SUPPORT

Disability Awareness (DA) Talks

To help co-workers gain a better understanding of persons with different types of disabilities, SG Enable conducts DA talks at employers' workplaces. This can help increase co-workers' confidence when interacting and communicating with colleagues with disabilities. The inaugural 2-hour talk is complimentary.

Online Human Resource Management (HRM) series

A series of online self-help guides that include topics such as recruitment and hiring, job accommodation and workplace accessibility, assistive technology and e-accessibility, retain and develop persons with disabilities in your workplace.

Disability Etiquette Guides

Employers will learn about good practices for each stage of hiring:

- Before Hiring
- Hiring Process
- Pre-Employment Preparation
- Starting Work

Job Redesign Guide

Developed by SG Enable with the Ministry of Manpower, the guide explains how employers can redesign jobs to better support and integrate employees with disabilities in the workplace.

It features case studies on how job redesign has helped companies to lower the barriers of inclusive hiring. Assistive technology and other workplace modifications, are examples to help increase productivity of employees with disabilities.

You can download the guides from [here](#).

Enabling Work App

Gain awareness for inclusive employment through the Enabling Work app, which provides simple, fun interactive learning for companies and co-workers to interact with and support colleagues with disabilities.

Learn how to:

- Enable employees with disabilities at work
- Make the workplace accessible and inclusive
- Be inclusive in interviewing job candidates
- Be supported through funding for workplace modifications

Scan the QR Code to download the Enabling Work App. The app is supported by the Singapore Business Network on Disability (SBNOD).



SG ENABLE HIGH IMPACT RETENTION AND EMPLOYMENT (HIRE) WORKSHOP SERIES

A series of 5 workshops for employers to gain in-depth knowledge on policies and practices for hiring, integrating and retaining persons with disabilities in the workplace.

1. Introduction to Disability Management

You will learn to:

- Understand and be able to present the business case for the inclusion of persons with disabilities to your colleagues
- Get an overview of the different disability types, and common misperceptions
- Learn disability etiquette and gain confidence when you engage with persons with disabilities

2. Recruitment & Hiring of Persons with Disabilities

You will learn to:

- Develop recruitment strategies and procedures to better hire persons with disabilities
- Factor in disability considerations in your company's onboarding process
- Identify potential community partners in your recruitment process

3. Job Accommodation & Workplace Accessibility

You will learn to:

- Make your workplace more accessible and incorporate universal design features
- Remove physical, technological or communication barriers to maximise the potential of your employees with disabilities
- Tap available grants to defray costs of making reasonable accommodations

4. Enhancing Employment through Assistive Technology and e-Accessibility

You will learn to:

- Leverage on the wide variety of assistive technology devices and software which can support employees with disabilities
- Make digital content (e.g. emails, audio clips) accessible for people who are blind or deaf
- Develop a framework to identify and adopt suitable devices/software to accommodate to different needs

5. Career Advancement & Retention of Employees with Disabilities

You will learn to:

- Review policies and processes to facilitate career development and retention strategies for employees with disabilities
- Develop return-to-work policies for employees with newly acquired disabilities
- Develop competitive and fair compensation and benefits for your employees

Refer to training calendar [here](#)

**For enquiries, please email
capabilitydevelopment@sgenable.sg or call
1800 8585 885**

PROCURING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



For The Office

You can help build an inclusive culture by procuring the products and services offered by persons with disabilities. You may consider supporting the following organisations and their offerings:

ORGANISATION	PRODUCTS & SERVICES	CONTACT
Caption Cube	captioning services to convert speech into text, increasing clarity and accessibility of the content that is being communicated in online/educational videos.	captioncube.com
Refruit	digital design studio services to support small and medium size businesses.	refruit.com
MINDS	bottled water for events and corporate needs.	minds.org.sg

The above is presented for public information and organisations' products and services are not endorsed by SG Enable.



For Corporate Gifts



Consider gifts that give back to the community. The **i'mable Collective** is a group of organisations dedicated to training and engaging persons with disabilities to create brilliant artworks, handicrafts and other products that are as unique, creative and diverse as the persons behind them:

Arts@Metta | Down Syndrome Association (Singapore) | Glacy Soh Art | JT Muses | Movement for the Intellectually Disabled Singapore (MINDS) | Singapore Fashion Runway | SPD | Tinkle Arts | TOUCH Community Services

Email imablecollective@sgenable.sg for a copy of the catalogue.

The Enabling Village is host to a number of social organisations that support persons with disabilities. For more on corporate gifts:

Autism Resource Centre
<https://www.theartfaculty.sg/>

Junior Art Lab
<https://www.juniorartlab.sg/>



For Corporate Events

Consider working with these organisations for your F&B needs at corporate events and team-bonding venues:

Enabling Village
<https://enablingvillage.sg/>

Samsui Kitchen
<https://samsui.com.sg/>

Professor Brawn Café
<https://www.profbrawn.com.sg/>

Soul Food
<https://enablingvillage.sg/tenants-all/soul-food/>



05

Job Accommodation & Workplace Accessibility

5. JOB ACCOMMODATION & WORKPLACE ACCESSIBILITY

JOB ACCOMMODATION

To enable persons with disabilities maximise their potential in employment, it is necessary for employers to provide reasonable job accommodation. A simplified definition of reasonable job accommodation is to make changes to existing work processes or job tasks without undue difficulties or cost, thereby enabling persons with disabilities to be gainfully employed and be an equal contributing member of the workforce.

In determining whether to provide accommodation, employers would need to consider the required job tasks, the functional limitations of the person doing the job, and the ease in providing accommodation.

Job accommodation can be done not only for persons with disabilities but also for other employees. A common example is allowing employees the flexibility to work from home in the event of unhealthy air pollution levels due to haze.



The following are some other examples of job accommodation:

- **Career Trial** - Allows employers to assess a job seeker's suitability through a short-term trial of up to 6 months before offering employment for jobs paying \$1,500 per month for full time position, and \$750 per month for part-time position or more, to eligible Singapore Citizens
- **Contract Employment** - If employers would like to have a longer assessment period for employees with disabilities, they may also choose to offer contract positions that will allow them to monitor performance of persons with disabilities over a longer duration
- **Job Carving** - To identify and select tasks which can be done by persons with disabilities according to their abilities, e.g. identifying routine tasks for persons with autism
- **Job Sharing** - To have two employees share duties that would typically belong to an employee. The details can be determined by the employers, when considering the tasks involved
- **Flexible Working Hours** - Allow employees with disabilities to have staggered working hours if they face difficulty taking public transport during peak hours or face other forms of challenges

JOB REDESIGN

Job Redesign is an effort to review job responsibilities and work environments, simplify processes and develop solutions that improve an employee's performance and safety.

Job Redesign often leads to certain job functions being eliminated, re-arranged or re-allocated to others and this creates opportunities for individual or group hiring.

Employers could discuss with their employees with disabilities on the types of accommodation they may require and assess whether these can be reasonably accommodated for, or alternative arrangements can be catered for.

WORKPLACE ACCESSIBILITY

One of the first steps towards integrating persons with disabilities in your workplace is to ensure accessibility. An accessible workplace should be universal, as it will benefit the entire staff and the general public.

Workplace accessibility involves eliminating physical, transportation, information and communications, technological and systems barriers that may prevent persons with disabilities from fully engaging and performing well in their job.

Workplace accessibility comprises the following categories:

- i) **Physical accessibility** includes the main facilities and built environment leading to and around the workplace such as paths and routes from public transport modes to the office, lighting and workplace safety measures etc. Employers should work with property owners or facility management offices to identify and improve physical accessibility for all visitors and staff.
- ii) **e-Accessibility** is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as 'the ease-of-use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as the Internet, by people with disabilities.' For example:
 - a. People who are blind should have access to PDF documents that can be read using Adobe's in-built text-to-speech function.
 - b. People with low vision see better with white words on black background. Websites can embed colour contrasting options between text and background or create content with simple layout to enhance the user experience.
 - c. Communication with people who are deaf can be done through Skype, or sign interpreters can be engaged for face-to-face communication.

Here are some examples to enhance workplace accessibility:



Text-to-speech software



Instant messengers



**Tables with
adjustable heights**



**Screen magnifying
software**



**Handwritten
messsges**

By applying the concepts of universal design and accessibility, employers can address the needs of employees with disabilities and also maximise its benefits and value to other staff.





HOW SG ENABLE CAN SUPPORT

Creating an accessible workplace and making reasonable job accommodations require advice and funding. Our multi-disciplinary team is able to provide valuable recommendations to your queries. The cost of accommodations can be covered under the Open Door Programme, which is funding support for employers to hire, train and integrate persons with disabilities.

Open Door Programme (ODP)

The programme covers the following areas:

1

Job Redesign Grant

- Purchase of equipment
- Workplace modifications
- Redesign of job scopes or work process

2

Training Grant

Funding support for employers when:

1. Employees with disabilities attend skills upgrading courses
2. Employees without disabilities attend disability-related trainings (e.g. Disability Management, SGE HIRE Workshop Series)

3

Recruitment, Job Placement and Job Support Services

Employers who register on the Job Portal will receive recruitment assistance from SG Enable and its appointed partners. For every person with disabilities placed, up to one year of job support will be provided

Accessibility Checks

Our occupational therapists and job coaches can provide advice and conduct workplace accessibility checks for your offices.

**To arrange for a consultation,
please email opendoor@sgenable.sg or call
1800 8585 885**



06

**How You Can Begin
Inclusive Hiring**

6. HOW YOU CAN BEGIN INCLUSIVE HIRING

Organisations can recruit through traditional methods such as existing job sites or recruitment agencies. Concurrently, they can approach SG Enable for the following specialised services:

PROGRAMMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Job Shadowing

Showcase your work environment and offer students a glimpse of what your organisation does. Host students for a day, as they gain valuable exposure to the working world.

IHL Internship

SG Enable's Internship programme matches students with disabilities who are currently studying in Institutes of Higher Learning with organisations based on students' course of study, interests and preferences. The internship serves as a gauge to determine the capabilities of the students and it can be a possible avenue where organisations convert interns into full-time staff upon graduation. Discover an untapped talent pool of tertiary students with disabilities. SG Enable is ready to support you on the journey.

RISE Mentorship Programme

Gain new perspectives as you make a difference in the lives of students transitioning into work. The 16-week programme matches tertiary students with disabilities with business professionals as mentors.

**Companies interested to work with SG Enable
for the Internship Programme can email
intern.prog@sgenable.sg**

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Work with SG Enable and our Job Placement and Job Support (JPJS) partners that provide employment services, namely Autism Resource Centre Singapore (ARC), Movement for the Intellectually Disabled Singapore (MINDS), and SPD to hire persons with disabilities. Employers will also receive recruitment assistance in the form of job placement and job support such as job coach services and advisory on assistive technology to support their hiring of persons with disabilities.

Job Portal

SG Enable's Disability Employment Portal is a dedicated online resource and application tool for both employers and persons with disabilities. Employers can access the Job Portal to post job vacancies and search for job candidates through this complimentary tool. Employers who register on the Job Portal will be eligible to benefit from the Open Door Programme to help defray the cost of hiring persons with disabilities.

**For enquiries on hiring persons with disabilities,
please contact SG Enable at
opendoor@sgenable.sg or 1800 8585 885**

GRANTS & SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

Employers can also benefit from advisory and grants to hire and support persons with disabilities.

1. Advisory and Consultancy

Enhance your readiness for hiring

- Disability awareness training
- Workplace accessibility assessments

5. Special Employment Credit*

16%
of an employee's salary capped at
\$240/mth

4. Subsidised Training for Employees

Up to **90%** funding for

- Training for employees with disabilities
- Training for co-workers to build their confidence in working with colleagues with disabilities

2. Job Placement and Job Support Services

up to

1 year
of job support will be provided

3. Job Redesign

Defray costs for

- Purchase of equipment
- Workplace modification
- Support at workplace

Up to **90%** funding capped at
\$20,000

(per employee with disability)

*Special Employment Credit scheme will expire on 31 December 2020 and will be replaced by the new Enabling Employment Credit. More details can be found [here](#).

Open Door Programme

The Open Door Programme (ODP) is a government-funded initiative by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and Workforce Singapore (WSG). It is supported as part of WSG's Adapt and Grow initiative and administered by SG Enable.

For more information on the grants and support available, click [here](#). For further enquiries, please email opendoor@sgenable.sg.

Employers can also approach WSG to tap on the following programmes when hiring persons with disabilities:

Salary Support to Hire Unemployed PMETs

Employers can receive salary support of up to \$42,000 under the Career Support Programme, capped at 18 months when they hire eligible unemployed Singapore Citizen Professionals, Managers, Executives and Technicians (PMETs).

Career Trial to Assess Individuals

The Career Trial allows employers to assess a jobseeker's job fit through a short-term trial of up to 3 months, before offering employment for jobs paying \$1,500 or more, to suitable Singapore Citizens. For employers who hire unemployed Singapore Citizens who have been actively looking for jobs for 6 months or more, companies can receive 30% of monthly salary support for up to 6 months, capped at \$5,400 per hire.

To find out more information about the Career Support Programme and Career Trial Programme, employers can visit www.wsg.gov.sg or contact WSG or NTUC's e2i at:

WSG : 6883 5885, WSG_Programmes@wsg.gov.sg

NTUC's e2i : 6474 0606, followup@e2i.com.sg



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