

	<h1>Media Release</h1>		
Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia Inc			Australian Pony Club Council

Project Connect Joint Submission a Success!

We are delighted to announce that Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia (RDAA) and the Australian Pony Club Council (APCC) have been awarded funding for the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and the Australian Paralympic Committee (APC) through Project Connect. Project Connect stands for Creating Opportunities Nationally through Networks in Education, Classification and Training. Funding will be used for both organisations to work together to develop pathways and opportunities for riders with a disability within their sports at all levels.

Gillian Thompson-Rogers CEO RDAA and Clare Lewin APCC Project Connect representative agreed that RDAA and the APCC shared a similar philosophy of welcoming all interested persons to participate. Project Connect presents the perfect opportunity for RDA and APCC to “hold hands” to develop a relevant and simple disability action plan that would allow people with disability to participate in the programme that was best suited to their needs. It was recognised that both organisations provided different services, that some participants may start riding with RDA, move into Pony Club and then back to RDA to compete at a National or International level.

Through Project Connect RDAA and the APCC have jointly developed a Disability Action Plan to enhance pathways for riders with a disability to move from grass roots participation to elite level competition. While RDA and the APCC already work closely together the Disability Action Plan will help to formalise and enhance this relationship at all levels of the organisations. The disability action plan which has been endorsed by the ASC and APC will be the foundation of the framework by which each organisation assesses their needs. The DAP covers four key areas: Disability Education, Accreditation, Classification and Athlete support.

The official launch of Project Connect will be held at Equitana on Sunday the 6th of November and will demonstrate the skills of Pony Club and Riding for the Disabled Association riders.