



Creating Accessible & Inclusive Arts Events

Accessibility is a way to build diverse audiences and organizations. The following are some suggested guidelines to consider when organizing your accessible arts event. Please note resources are provided for informational purposes only and do not denote an endorsement by the NADC.

ACCESSIBILITY BENEFITS ALL

- Make accessibility part of your long-term plan
- Involve individuals with disabilities in your planning process
- Conduct an access survey of your venue or space to make sure it is accessible
- Build partnerships in your community

THINK ABOUT INCLUSION FROM THE START

Planning ahead for inclusion can help to create an event that will feel welcoming to all.

- Include people with disabilities in all stages of the event planning
- When you select the date and time make sure to think about how long each session is and to allow for multiple breaks throughout the event
- When selecting the location make sure there is local transportation to get to and from the event
- The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) developed standards for the design requirements for the construction and alteration of facilities subject to the law. For the California requirements go to http://ada.ashdownarch.com/?page_id=428
- Find an accessible venue and make sure to conduct a site visit to make sure that:
 - Entrances and elevators are accessible
 - Restrooms are accessible and all-gender
 - Space is large enough
 - Room for wheelchair accessible seating and paths to fit wheelchairs
 - Confirm emergency protocols and requests that would be needed for disabled guests
 - Use an Accessibility Checklist to ensure you have thought of all access needs for your guest. Accessibility Checklist <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/BriefChecklist-Oct2014.pdf>

DESIGNATE AN ACCESS COORDINATOR FOR YOUR EVENT

- The Access Coordinator will:
 - Receive, confirm and track all access requests

- Manage and implement the accommodations
- Communicate accommodation arrangements with participants and staff
- Ensure all materials for the event are accessible
- Arrange for interpreters and captioners
- Include the Access Coordinators contact information on all materials and deadline for accommodation requests (usually 2 weeks in advance)

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE YOUR ARTS EVENT ACCESSIBLE

Accommodations can make your event more accessible for individuals with disabilities and bring new audiences. Some requests that can be made by individuals with disabilities are:

- assistive listening devices
- audio description
- Braille
- captioning
- large print materials
- sign language Interpreters

DESCRIPTIONS OF ACCESS SERVICES

Accessible Online Ticketing (part of 2010 Amendments to the ADA) enables individuals with disabilities who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices to purchase tickets for accessible seats. Other individuals with disabilities are eligible to purchase tickets for accessible seats if they require the use of the features of accessible seating. For more information go to

http://adagreatlakes.com/Publications/Factsheets/National_ADA_Center_Fact_Sheet_6_TICKETING.pdf



American Sign Language is a visual language. Sign language is not a universal language, each country has its own sign language, and regions have dialects much like many languages spoken all over the world. For a registry of interpreters go to <https://rid.org/about-rid/about-interpreting/hiring-an-interpreter/>

Assistive Technology amplifies and clarifies sound by cutting down or eliminating ambient noise. Infrared assistive listening systems are installed in all theaters and headsets may be used at any seat go to <https://bit.ly/2toW3db>



Audio Description (AD) is technology that enables patrons who are blind or have low vision to enjoy movies and performances by providing the spoken narration of a movie's key visual elements, such as the action, settings, facial expressions and scene changes. For resources on Audio Description go to <https://bit.ly/2tlpeQ0>

Braille is a system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers by people who are blind or who have low vision.



Closed Captioning (CC) is written displays of dialogue and non-speech information such as the music and other sounds or sound effects. For more information on CC go to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JywIjGb6Jc&feature=youtu.be>

Large Print materials use **18 point** (or more), bold, sans serif font with at least 1.5 spacing.

Sensory Accommodations offer ways to provide accommodations to individuals who may be overwhelmed by stimuli, have trouble focusing or staying alert when they don't have the right kind of tactile input.

<https://www.masters-in-special-education.com/tools-and-adaptations-for-sensory-processing-issues/>

Tactile Tours provide patrons with low vision or are blind an opportunity to touch items such as props and costumes in a performance or art exhibits.

<http://www.artbeyondsight.org/handbook/acs-touchtools.shtml>

MARKETING YOUR ARTS EVENT

- All event materials should be accessible
- Use plain language and avoid jargon on all written materials
- There are two brochures produced by Lighthouse International that give guidance on accessible publication design:
 - “Making Text Legible: Designing for People with Partial Sight”
 - “Effective Color Contrast: Designing for People with Partial Sight and Color Deficiencies”.

Copies are available for a small fee from: [Lighthouse International](#)

- Use Disability Access Symbols <https://bit.ly/2RYBn5T>

Example of a disability access symbol



Wheelchair access symbol

- When using visuals make sure to include Alt Text for all pictures. For information on Alt Text go to <https://bit.ly/2DBg5Gf>

Example:



Lucy creating jewelry

- Market your event to targeted groups. For California specific disability groups search <https://www.semel.ucla.edu/nadc/resources>
- Ensure that you online registration is accessible to screen readers and make sure to insert the Access Coordinators contact information for guests to get assistance when registering for more information go to <https://webaim.org/techniques/forms/>
- On the event materials invite accommodation requests.
For example:
“To make disability-related accommodations or dietary requests please notify INSERT NAME of Access Coordinator at least 2 weeks in advance.”
- Indicate that access is being provided if requested 2 weeks in advance (ASL interpreters, assisted listening devices)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES and EXAMPLES of ACCESSIBILITY

- The **Accessibility Office at the Kennedy Center** strives to make cultural arts accessible for people with disabilities <http://www.kennedy-center.org/Pages/accessibility>
- The **Department of Justice** provides informational resources on the ADA and offers consultation on their ADA information line <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability/ada>
- The **National Endowment for the Arts Office for Accessibility** makes arts accessible to people with disabilities and older adults. They provide consultation to individuals and organizations in this area <https://www.arts.gov/accessibility/accessibility-resources/nea-office-accessibility>
- The **Pacific ADA Disability and Technical Assistance Center** offers information and problem solving assistance and referrals for implementing the ADA <https://www.adapacific.org/index.php>
- The **Tarjan Center at UCLA** developed Accessibility Guidelines to provide detailed information and resources on creating internal and external print and electronic documents <https://www.semel.ucla.edu/tarjan/accessibility-guidelines>