

NEA Internal Event Accessibility Checklist

Venue Accessibility

- Is the venue accessible for both audience and presenters using mobility devices, such as wheelchairs, canes, or scooters?
 - ground-level/no-step entry, ramped access, and/or elevators
 - wheelchair-accessible stage/backstage
 - If using a lectern, is it accessible to presenters of various heights or wheelchair users?
 - Is there an option for presenters to choose to stand or sit?
 - integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in assembly areas
 - wheelchair-accessible restrooms, water fountains, and parking spaces
 - directional signage for accessible entrances, restrooms, and other facilities
 - Walkways, doors, elevators, and ramps are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or two people walking next to each other comfortably. Tip: Be mindful of placing additional furniture in narrow spaces.
- Is signage available onsite to communicate accessibility?
 - Accessible/inaccessible routes, entrances, exits, etc.
 - Assistive listening device assistance locations labeled
 - Accessible seating clearly marked
 - Signage includes Braille
 - Tip: Use downloadable accessibility symbols for signage, programs, etc.

Accessibility Requests

- Is public contact information for accessibility requests available in event communications?
 - Including promotional materials, programs, webpages, et cetera
 - Text example: “For accessibility requests, please contact [email and phone].” Provide a deadline for requests [e.g., 1 week, 10 days before event], but make every effort to accommodate requests that come in after the deadline.

Communication

- Are American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or real-time captioners available upon request?
 - For people requesting services, please designate seating and make sure the ASL interpreter is in view.
 - Make sure there is a clear way to request ASL interpreters.
 - For CART, make sure screens with captions are close enough to those who need it.
- Are assistive listening devices (ALDs) available?
 - Portable ALD systems can be rented or borrowed from local vendors or community partners (e.g. theaters, libraries, etc.) if the venue does not own one.
 - Tip! Communicate potential access service requests to the event coordinator and host site as early as possible. Costs for renting assistive devices are allowable expenses within the POL budget but should be planned for in the budgeting process.
- Can any printed materials be made available in alternate formats, such as large print, Braille, or electronic?
 - Communicate with your designer about contrast and font sizes. If possible, provide a plain text, large font version.
 - Ask anyone requesting services for their preferences and accommodate as best as possible.
 - Identify potential Braille vendors ahead of time.
- Are presenters making their material as accessible as possible?

- Describe all images used in presentation
- Use microphone whenever possible
- Text in slides should be high-contrast, large, and in a legible font
- Tip: Avoid saying “Can everyone hear me without the microphone?” Answering this question may require audience members to disclose their disability when they are not comfortable to, and if someone cannot hear the presenter, they would not hear the question.

Food

- Does your catering consider people with disabilities?
 - If you are offering refreshments, are the platters set up so they are accessible to individuals of different heights or who use mobility devices?
 - Have you considered food allergies and made sure items are properly separated? If you are working with a caterer, remind them of the different needs of your attendees
 - Label all food items with what they are and the common allergens they contain

Language

- Is the language used in event materials and signage in line with the preferences of the disability community?
 - Avoid euphemisms such as “handicapped” “handi-capable” or “differently abled.” The use of “special” to refer to disabilities should be avoided as well, except when part of a term, like special education.
 - Use person-first or identity-first language. Some people in the disability community prefer person-first (person with a disability), while others prefer identity-first (disabled person). Do not correct members of the disability community on how they choose to self-identify.
 - Do not use terms that medicalize disability or refer to it negatively. For example, use “wheelchair user” or “person using a wheelchair” rather than “wheelchair bound.”
 - Label things as accessible rather than handicapped. For more specific disabilities, language such as “wheelchair accessible” or “seating reserved for audience members using ASL interpreter” is preferred.

Additional resources

<https://www.ada.gov/business/accessiblemtg.htm>