

# Accessible Events Checklist

Taking care to create an accessible event benefits not only individuals with visible or known disabilities, but also helps to ensure that all participants/ attendees, including individuals with non-obvious disabilities and/or chronic health conditions, and people of all ages and body types, are able to fully engage in the program

Name of Event

Date and Time

Event Location

Number of Attendees

## 1. Invitations and Promotion

- Welcome messages to let invitees know they can contact the planner regarding accommodations\*
- Due dates and contact information for accessibility requests included

- Checklist in the meeting RSVP\*
- A variety of communication methods used
- A minimum of 12 points fonts for printed materials
- Reminder about refraining from wearing strong fragrances

## 2. Venue

### 2.1. Visibility

- Clear and easy to read signage
- Well-lit meeting space and adjacent areas
- Adjustable lighting
- Projection screen visible from all seating

### 2.2. Acoustics

- Public address (PA) system
- Roving microphone
- Limit unnecessary background music
- Seating available near presenter for lip reading
- Availability of assistive listening devices
- Well-lit space for an interpreter
- Minimal echo

### 2.3. Mobility

- Accessible parking/passenger drop-off area
- Located near public transportation
- Outdoor and indoor pathways free of barriers

\* Examples, as an extended version, at the end of the document.

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- Doors easy to open and wide to accommodate wheelchairs/ scooters
- Ramp and/or elevator access. See if the size of the lift is enough to accommodate wheelchairs
- No loose cables across walking areas
- Accessible washrooms
- Chair provided and volunteer stand-ins near registration or ticket sales tables
- Reserved seating available

### 2.4. Technology

- Electrical outlets in accessible seating areas to accommodate devices
- Extra space or work surface
- Careful instructions for Zoom accessibility options

### 2.5. Service Animals

- Comfortable space for service animals to rest during event
- Accessible toileting and watering facilities nearby

## 3. At Event

### 3.1. Volunteers

- Designate someone to be responsible for accommodations
- Designate someone to help with seating
- Designate someone to ensure captioning and other technology is working

- Designate someone to maintain clear pathways
- Volunteers reminded to ask guests, "How may I help you?"

### 3.2. Presentations

- Provide presenters with a checklist requesting they submit accessible materials\*
- Provide presenters with a dedicated AV producer to run their presentation
- Have someone onsite who helps to ensure follow-through on all accessible materials requested
- Pay attention not to double-book (avoid parallel meetings at the same time)
- Maybe not all meetings can be hybrid (especially those outside of working hours; consider working meetings from 10AM-3PM)

### 3.3. Q&A

- Repeat questions posted by audience before responding (especially if there is not a roving microphone available)
- Ask presenters or audience members to always speak into the microphone (in case there is one)

### 3.4. Food

- Clearly indicate allergens and gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian, or other options
- Food, drinks, and utensils easy to reach for people using wheelchairs

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- Bendable straws and cups with handles available
- Food buffet assistance available

## **4. Online Event Considerations**

- Include various small breaks (considering it may be difficult for people in the office to devote 100% of their time)
- Include a facilitator to see that everyone can participate
- Facilitate hybrid events during working hours
- Ensure that the acoustic in online settings is adequate
- Let attendees submit anonymous questions to chat monitors
- Implement virtual hand raises to diversity Q&As
- If possible, ask presenters to turn on their cameras to facilitate lip reading
- Encourage all attendees to identify themselves by name before speaking
- Read aloud links posted in Chat
- Checklist to ensure that the event is accessible\*

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# Examples

## \* Welcome Message example:

“We strive to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully. To be respectful of those with allergies and environmental sensitivities, we ask that you please refrain from wearing strong fragrances. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact (name, email, phone).”

## \*Checklist in meeting RSVP example:

- Assistive listening device
- Captioning
- Reserved front row seat
- Large print
- Advance copy of slides to be projected
- Wheelchair access
- Wheelchair access to working tablet
- Scent-free room
- Lactation room
- Gender neutral bathroom
- Diet Restrictions. List: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## \*Presenters’ accessible material checklist example:

- Submit materials in advance so that they can be forwarded to individuals who may not be able to view screens or flip charts
- Verbally describe visual materials (e.g., slides, charts, etc.)
- Have printed copies available (in large font)
- Avoid using small print on presentations that can’t be seen from a distance
- Activate captions on any video used in the presentation
- Encourage hourly breaks
- Organize breakout group activities to maximize distance between groups

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#### **\*Online Event Checklist example:**

- Is the platform accessible for disabled persons?
- Has the platform been tested by users with different types of disabilities?
- Is the platform compatible with assistive technologies used by disabled persons (e.g., screen readers for blind persons, screen enlargement applications, closed-captioning, cognitive aids including computer devices, etc.)?
- Does the platform have real-time automated captioning, or does it support manual captioning by a third-party vendor? Is the real-time captioning available in the platform or will users have to interact with a separate window?
- Does the platform allow for ASL Interpreters to stay visible throughout your event?
- Does the platform have simple keyboard shortcuts for users who may not use a mouse?
- Does the platform have a chat, note, Q&A, or other features for participation? If so, are they accessible?
- Does the platform allow for computer-based and phone-based audio listening/speaking?
- Does the platform have customizable interfaces, so anyone using screen readers or screen magnification can adjust the video windows as needed?
- Does the platform provide good video quality, including the ability to show two screens at once?
- Are there barriers/steps to joining the event? For example, is the event password-protected or require a user to input information to join?

#### **Sources**

- Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (2016). Planning Accessible Events, So everyone feels welcome. <https://accessibilitycanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Planning-Accessible-Events-May-2016.pdf>
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- Unite! Network for inclusion (2022). Compiling guidance for future (accessible) hybrid events.