ROOTED in RIGHTS

Disability Rights are Human Rights

How to Make Your Social Justice Events Accessible to the Disability Community: A Checklist
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Website Accessibility

❑ Use high contrast and consider using a tool to allow users to switch from dark-on-light to light-on-dark
❑ Don't use flashing animations
❑ Use alt text
❑ Don't use images to present text information
❑ Use skip navigation
❑ Offer a magnifying tool
❑ Caption and/or transcribe video and audio content
❑ Use descriptive link text ("find pictures of cute animals here" rather than "here"), as screenreader users may jump through links and need to know where they lead
❑ Include a website accessibility statement, like this one from Rooted in Rights' parent organization, Disability Rights Washington
❑ Include event accessibility information prominently, with a clear access plan and contact information

Need help? Start with WebAIM and Section 508.

Creating an Access Plan

❑ Vet your facilities
   - In buildings, look for: Ramps; accessible all gender restrooms; doorways of sufficient width for wheelchairs to enter; ample seating; reconfigurable spaces; bright, even light.
   - On march and parade routes, look for: Even, smooth surfaces; sufficient seating for rest breaks; accessible nearby parking; accessible all gender toilets in easy reach; accessible ground transport; cover in the event of rain.
❑ Designate seating for disabled people in the front of the room or crowd and near the exits, marking space off so nondisabled attendees understand they should not sit there
❑ Provide sign language interpretation for all events

- ❑ Provide Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), as not all people who have hearing loss or who are d/Deaf use sign language to communicate, and it can provide greater access for people with auditory processing disorders
- ❑ Consider providing loaner wheelchairs or scooters, possibly through a third party vendor who can assume liability
- ❑ Consider offering wheelchair-accessible shuttles
- ❑ Designate a service animal relief area
- ❑ Designate an access team who coordinate accessibility issues throughout planning and through to the end of the event, and provide them with readily recognizable markers like shirts, vests, or hats so they're easy to find
- ❑ Develop a scent policy — going scent-free will enhance accessibility
- ❑ Consider designating a quiet space or room
- ❑ Use a public address (PA) system
- ❑ Ensure that anyone who is speaking, including audience members, use microphones
- ❑ Consider audio assistance, like hearing loops, for people who have hearing loss and rely on assistive technologies such as hearing aids

Need help? This ADA checklist can be a great resource, as can this guide on designing ADA-compliant events; the Autistic Self Advocacy Network is a good place to start with more inclusive access policies.

Making Your Event Policies Disability-Friendly

- ❑ Include disabled people in your leadership, organization, scheduled speakers and panelists, imagery, and documentation
- ❑ Include disability in your anti-harassment, anti-discrimination, and diversity policies, recognizing disability as a social and political category
- ❑ Assume disabled people are in the room, even if they aren't evident, and that they are stakeholders in your event
- ❑ Include a disability orientation for all volunteers and staff
- ❑ Include a space on your registration form for people to express access needs
- ❑ Document your accessibility policy and efforts and make them public
- ❑ Have a framework in place for responding to criticism and feedback from the disability community
- ❑ Be mindful of your language:
    - Avoid words that use disability as an insult, like "crazy" or "hysterical"
    - Avoid phrases such as "wheelchair-bound" or "suffers from"
- ❑ Pay disability consultants like you would other professionals who are providing services

Need help? Here are some examples of accessibility policies to draw upon: SXSW; NOLOSE; National Conference of State Legislatures website accessibility policy; and Convergence.