ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE EVENT
PRACTICE GUIDE

Cessnock City Council 2019

Accessible & Inclusive Event
Practice Guide

WHAT IS THE GUIDE?

The guide and checklist is designed to assist organisers plan accessible and inclusive events and activities for people with disability.

A disability is any condition that impacts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible.

This document provides an overview of the measures that can be implemented when planning an accessible, inclusive event.

It is important to acknowledge that people have unique requirements and that the measures listed won't be appropriate for all people with disability, but they are a good starting point. The best way to ensure your event and activity can be enjoyed by everyone in the community is by providing an opportunity for attendees to communicate their requirements prior to the event.

Why make your event or activity inclusive?

Over 4 million people in Australia have some form of disability, which is 1 in 5 people.

By planning accessible and inclusive events you will bring benefit to everyone attending, not just people with disability. Planning and promoting an inclusive activity can broaden your event's appeal and increase community participation.

Under Australia's *Disability Discrimination Act* (1992), it is unlawful to discriminate against people with disability. The Act makes disability discrimination unlawful and promotes equal rights, equal opportunity and equal access for people with disability.

Accessible & Inclusive Event Practice Guide
Things to consider

PLANNING YOUR EVENT

When planning an event or activity you cannot plan with an 'average person with disability' in mind. The most important point is organisers are willing to provide workable options and solutions to ensure everyone in the community is able to participate.

Specific measures should be carried out in response to an individual's expressed need. Embedding access and inclusive practices into the early planning stages of events will help organisers to consider potential measures and how they can be achieved.

Individuals with disability may be accompanied by family members, carers, assistance animals or other supporters when attending community events and activities. These supporters help facilitate the participation of people with disability in accessing various aspects of public life. As an event organiser it is important to recognise the role supporters play and consider how they can be accommodated alongside the individual with disability.

Promotion

Before promoting events or distributing invitations it is important to recognise that access is not just about physical access to buildings, but can also include access to media channels for people with reading difficulties or a vision or hearing impairment.

Include information about accessible facilities or accessibility measures at the event venue in your promotional material. Use universal accessibility symbols to make it easy for people to identify facilities that accommodate their requirements.

For example:

International Symbol of Access (ISA) indicates access for people with limited mobility, including wheelchair users.

The Assistive Listening Systems symbol indicates the presence of a system such as a hearing loop that transmits amplified sound via hearing aids or other devices.

The Audio Description symbol indicates live commentary or narration of visual elements provided by a trained Audio Describer.

Encourage participants to contact the event organiser directly with any accessibility requirements. Provide participants with alternative options for communication, for example email and telephone contact.

When event organisers are informed about individual's requirements they can arrange measures or functions including:

- Auslan sign language interpreters for Deaf Auslan users

- Captioning of films for people who are Deaf or hearing impaired

- Providing written material with large print for people with vision impairment

- Ensuring a Hearing Loop is available to enable hearing aid users to receive information directly into their hearing device.

Consider accessibility provisions for presenters and performers with disability as well as participants and attendees of the event.

For larger outdoor events, providing access maps (or incorporating accessibility provisions into site maps) are a good way of showing people in the lead-up to the event how they may be able to participate.

When developing promotional material aim to use simple sans serif fonts such as Arial or Helvetica, in size 12 or larger and use a good contrast between text and background. Once completed, make sure to save any promotional material in an editable document so that additional formats can be easily produced if requested.

The Venue

Whenever possible community activities and events should be held in accessible venues or on accessible sites. It is recognised that standards for access have changed over time and many older buildings will not comply with current standards. Organisers should select the most accessible venues available when planning for an inclusive event.

As a starting point, venues should be investigated that allow people with limited mobility to enter, exit and move around the building with ease and offer accessible toilet facilities.

It is recommended that event organisers visit venues to check accessibility provisions in person before making a booking. This will assist when speaking to potential attendees about their requirements.

Parking/Getting there

People with mobility concerns require a continuous, even path of travel from their mode of transport to the event site. An accessible path of travel should have no obstructions, for example: kerbs, steps, turnstiles, low hanging branches.

A key consideration for inclusive events should be the number of accessible car parks and their vicinity to the event site. If parking is limited, an alternative option is to set up a safe drop-off zone close to the venue.

If public transport is available close to the event it is helpful to provide the details of the nearest bus stop or train station on promotional material or invitations.

Event staff and volunteers

It is important that event staff and volunteers are briefed on any accessibility measures at the event site as well as any specific requirements of individuals that will be attending. There are also rules and regulations for assistance animals and public spaces which event staff and volunteers should be aware of.

If event staff and volunteers are wearing some sort of uniform, individuals attending the event can easily identify them to ask about accessibility provisions.

Event staff will also need to know if there are any alternative evacuation plans or procedures for people with disability in the case of an emergency.

Ticketed Events

Providing alternative contact methods for ticketing enquiries (online system, phone number, and email) can improve access for people with disability.

Online ticketing systems can be problematic for some people with disability. CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart) is regularly used in on-line booking systems but cannot be read by screen reading programs often used by people with vision impairment.

Event organisers should consider accepting Companion Cards at their events. Companion Cards provide free entry to a carer who is supporting a person with significant and permanent disability to access an event or activity.

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Key Points
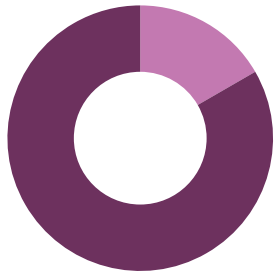
1 in 5 people in Australia have a disability

Accessible and inclusive events bring benefit to everyone attending, not just those with disability

Include information about access in your promotional material

Encourage participants to make contact with organisers directly to discuss their requirements before the event

Provide participants with alternative methods of contact (phone, email, booking form)

Brief event staff and volunteers about onsite accessibility measures and any specific requirements of people who will be attending

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Checklist

When planning an inclusive community event, organisers should consider the points below and whether they are relevant for the activity they are delivering.

MOVEMENT	COMMUNICATION	FACILITIES/PROVISIONS
Is there public transport near the event venue? Has this information been included in promotions?	Is the reception desk at an accessible height for wheelchair users?	Are there accessible unisex toilets?
Is there accessible parking on site?	Is there clear signage to direct people around the venue?	For standing events, are there seats available for people who may not be able to stand for extended periods?
Are the accessible parking bays clearly marked?	Is there clear signage identifying first aid, information area and toilets?	In designated spaces for wheelchair users, are seats/spaces provided for supporters or carers?
Is there a drop-off zone close to the event entrance?	Can event staff and volunteers be easily identified by attendees?	Is there a quiet break out room or space provided?
Is there a clear, level path of travel from the carpark/drop-off zone to the event entrance?	Can the event MC run through accessibility functions as part of their welcome/housekeeping?	Are there power points available (standard 10amp) for people to charge motorised wheelchairs and scooters?
Is there a ramp for wheelchair users?	Do you need an Auslan interpreter?	Are refreshment and catering tables at an accessible height for wheelchair users?
Do steps have handrails on both sides?	Do you need captions for video?	Are seats and tables available in food service areas for people who may have difficulties eating while standing up?
Is there a clear, level path of travel around the event site or venue?	Do you need audio description for any visual information or video?	Are there provisions for assistance animals (water, shade, and toileting)?
Are the doorways wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair (850mm)?	Is written information available in different formats?	
For outdoor venues, can temporary flooring/mats be used to improve accessibility around the site?	Is there a designated space for wheelchair users, people who lip read or others who need to be able to view the stage?	
Is any of the event infrastructure blocking access to kerb ramps or paths of travel?	Is there a height adjustable microphone or wireless microphone available for speakers?	
	If a PA is being used, does the venue have a hearing loop?	

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Resources

There are many resources that can provide event organisers with more information about accessibility and inclusion.

Law

A brief guide to the Disability Discrimination Act - Australian Human Rights Commission
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/guides/brief-guide-disability-discrimination-act

Assistance Animals – Office of Local Government
https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/dogs-and-cats/information-for-the-community/assistance-animals

Training & Education

Disability Inclusion and Equality Workshops – Accessible Arts
http://www.aarts.net.au/access/disability-inclusion-training/

Disability Confidence Training – Australian Network on Disability
https://www.and.org.au/pages/disability-confidence-training.html

e-Learning - An Introduction to Disability Awareness
https://disabilityawareness.com.au/

The Access Institute https://accessinstitute.com.au/

Access Resources & Contacts

Inclusive Language - Australian Network on Disability https://www.and.org.au/pages/inclusive-language.html

What's Hot and What's Not Guide – Don't DIS my ABILITY
https://resource.dse.theeducationinstitute.edu.au/sites/default/files/3375_facs_whats-hot-and-whats-not_web.pdf

Audio Description, Auslan Interpretation, Deaf Blind Interpreting, Captioning Service Providers –

Accessible Arts
http://www.aarts.net.au/resources/access-service-providers/

Media Access Australia https://mediaaccess.org.au/

Transport Infoline Trip Planner – Transport NSW
https://transportnsw.info/

Ability Links (St Vincent de Paul Society Cessnock)
https://www.abilitylinksnsw.org.au/index.html

Peak Organisations

Accessible Arts (NSW) http://www.aarts.net.au/

Australian Human Rights Commission
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/

Australian Network on Disability
https://www.and.org.au/

Disability Advocacy NSW (DA) http://da.org.au/

Cessnock City Council

If you have any questions about this guide or require another format please contact Council

Phone: 02 4993 4100

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In Person: 62 -78 Vincent St, Cessnock

National Relay Service available

62-78 Vincent Street
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Australia

Contact:
tel:0249934300
tel:0249934100

Online help:
council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au
http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.
au