

Better Policies Better Lives™



# GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSIVE EVENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

2019





# Guidelines for Inclusive Events

With a little bit of planning, it is easy to make sure that events are accessible for everyone. Here are some things to consider when you are planning your next event.

## Selecting a venue and preparation

- Identify a central location close to public transport to reduce travel time and increase access to the venue for participants who are dependent on public transport.
- Provide a clear address, directions, and information on public transport routes. Include the details of a contact person who can provide assistance to participants who are having trouble finding the venue.

- Ensure that the entry to the venue and all meeting room(s) are accessible, including ramps, hand rails and doorways that are wide enough for a wheelchair.
- Make sure there are accessible toilets close to the meeting rooms.
- Meeting rooms should be large enough to allow enough space for people to move freely, including wheelchair users.
- Be aware of obstacles such as thick carpet, columns or sudden changes in the level of the flooring.
- Walk through the venue with a person with a disability in advance to check accessibility.
- When using sign language interpreters, remember to:
  - Book sign language interpreters well in advance.
  - Provide materials in advance so they can familiarise themselves with the content and topics; and
  - Position sign language interpreters so that Deaf participants have a clear view.

## Promoting the event

- Promote your event using print, audio and video to enable everyone - including persons with disabilities - to access information.
- Identify on promotional information that persons with disabilities are encouraged to attend to ensure that everyone feels invited and welcomed.
- Reach out to disabled people's organisations and other representative organisations of marginalised groups to raise awareness about your event.

## Registration

- Ask participants to specify any accessibility needs when they RSVP or register for the event and emphasise that organisers will work with them to accommodate those requests. Requests can include:
  - Wheelchair access.
  - Accompanying assistant.<sup>1</sup>
  - Sign language interpreter

<sup>1</sup> Two assistants — one male and one female — might be required if participants do not bring their own. It is considered best practice to provide free entry and meals to an assistant accompanying a participant.

- Fast-typist/real-time captioning.
- Note-taker.
- Video captioning.
- Materials in large print.
- Materials in soft-copy.
- Orientation to the venue.
- Diet restrictions.
- Provide more than one option for participants to RSVP or register, for example, by telephone instead of only via email or online.
- Online registration forms should be accessible (see Guidelines for Inclusive Communication).



## Budgeting

- Incorporate costs for reasonable accommodation into the event budget from the beginning, such as costs for sign language interpreters or assistants.<sup>2</sup>
- Note that sign language interpreters work in pairs and alternate. Budget accordingly for a minimum of two sign language interpreters.

## At the event

- Have a designated person on hand to welcome participants and handle any requests that might arise. This person could also be responsible for liaising with sign language interpreters and assistants.
- Ensure that there is adequate space for people to move or provide a designated person or desk to assist persons with disabilities to register as registration desks can quickly become crowded.
- The stage area should be accessible, including ramp access and an adjustable lectern or microphone. Ramps should not be too steep. Be aware of any obstacles on the stage.
- Provide the option of front row seating for participants with disabilities to ensure participants using sign interpreters have unobstructed viewing and allow for participants with low vision to have access to visual content.
- Ensure there are wide walkways between and around chairs to enable ease of mobility for people using wheelchairs and other mobility devices.
- Ensure there is adequate lighting on presenters. This is useful for lip reading for participants who are Deaf or hard of hearing and improves visual identification of location of presenters for participants with vision impairment.
- Ensure all speakers who use visual aids are prepared to describe any pictures, photographs or diagrams so as not to exclude people who have difficulty seeing. Ensure speakers have planned the timing of their presentation accordingly.
- Be considerate of the extra time it might take some persons with disabilities to complete a task or move between conference sessions.
- Allow sufficient break time between sessions. This will allow additional time for persons with disabilities to complete support needs.
- Think about the routes people will have to take to get to breakout groups and meals and ensure they are straightforward and barrier-free.
- Provide a quiet room and/or a sofa or comfortable chair at the back of the room to enable persons to rest and relax.
- Develop a schedule, including breaks, for any professionals you are employing, such as sign-language interpreters or note-takers.
- Printed materials should be in a sans-serif font (such as Arial, Verdana, Calibri or DIN 1451), in black on white or high colour contrast, non-gloss paper, and no less than 12 point font. It is good practice to have a few extra copies in large print (18 point font) available.

<sup>2</sup> 'Reasonable accommodation' means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Countries that have ratified the CRPD are committed to providing reasonable accommodation in all areas of public life, including education, health and employment.



## Meals and social activities

- Ensure that all participants can dine in the same area. People who use mobility aids or wheelchairs should have a selection of seating choices, and not be confined to the fringes of the dining area or at a 'special' table.
- Make sure there is an accessible route for moving between tables and aisles.
- If your event has a buffet, try to have staff available to assist as buffets can be particularly difficult for people who use mobility aids and people with low vision.

- Remember to include personal assistants and interpreters when estimating how much food is required.
- Tables are more accessible if they are less than one metre high. If long tablecloths are being used, tape or tie down the corners, so they do not pose a tripping hazard or get tangled in a wheelchair.
- Accessible bathrooms should be near the dining area.

Volunteers from BRAVO for Disabilities can provide support for persons with disabilities at events. They can also provide disability awareness training for staff prior to events.





# Guidelines for Inclusive Communication

Inclusive communication helps ensure messages are delivered in the most appropriate way and reach the widest possible audience.

## Printed materials

- Ensure materials and publications positively depict and promote diversity in terms of age, gender, disability, and ethnicity.
- Use a minimum type size of 12 font and plain fonts, such as Arial, Verdana, Calibri or DIN 1451. These are often described as 'sans serif' (without small curls or decorative features).
- Avoid using blocks of text written in capital letters. Information is easier to read for people with low vision or limited literacy if it is written using a mix of upper and lower case.
- Use lots of white space and a simple layout.

- Use bold text for emphasis rather than underlining or italics.
- Justify margins on the left-hand side and leave the right-hand margin unjustified.
- Use contrasting colours to increase readability such as black text on a white background.
- Do not place text over pictures, photos or other images, as this makes the text hard to read.
- Avoid using tables, charts, graphics, or images. If you do use these, include a caption explaining the information.

## Accessible document formats

The following links include step-by-step guides to creating accessible Word and PDF documents:

- Accessible Word documents: [support.office.com/en-gb/article/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d](https://support.office.com/en-gb/article/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d)
- Accessible PDF documents: [office.microsoft.com/en-au/word-help/create-accessible-pdfsHA102478227.aspx](https://office.microsoft.com/en-au/word-help/create-accessible-pdfsHA102478227.aspx)

Make sure that you have either Adobe Acrobat Professional X or Adobe Reader X- installed to convert MS Word files to PDF.

## Websites and social media

In addition to the above guidelines on printed materials, keep in mind the following points when designing your website and social media posts:

- Make sure that the website can be navigated using a variety of input methods (mouse, keyboard or accessibility aid).
- Include transcripts or subtitles for audio and video material posted to your website or social media channels.
- Make sure that photos and images on your website and social media channels have descriptive captions.

CBM's Digital Accessibility Toolkit provides comprehensive guidelines on making online content accessible: [https://www.cbm.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publications/CBM-Digital-Accessibility-Toolkit.pdf](https://www.cbm.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/CBM-Digital-Accessibility-Toolkit.pdf)

Media Access Australia has developed guidelines on social media for persons with disabilities which include some useful tips: <https://mediaaccess.org.au/web/social-media-for-people-with-a-disability>

Technical guidelines for web content accessibility are available through the following link <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>

## Interpersonal communication

- Address the person with a disability and not their support person or guide:
  - If you want to talk to someone who is blind or has low vision, you can identify yourself by saying the person's name and then your name, so they know you are addressing them. You can also tap the back of their hand with the back of your hand, so that they know where you are.
  - If you want to talk to a person who is Deaf or hard of hearing, and the person is not facing you, greet them by gently tapping their shoulder.
- Communicate as you normally would, bearing in mind the following:
  - When talking one on one with a person in a wheelchair, position yourself at eye level by going down on one knee or sitting on a chair if available. This will prevent the person from straining their neck.
  - When you have finished talking to someone who is blind or has low vision, let them know that you are moving away.
  - There are three ways of communicating with a person who is Deaf or hard of hearing: lip reading, using a pen and paper, and sign language.
    - If the person is lip reading, make sure nothing is covering your mouth and you are facing the person. Articulate clearly (do not mumble), but don't exaggerate. There is no need to shout or talk too loudly.
    - If you are having difficulty communicating through lip-reading, and there is no sign language interpreter or you don't know sign language, then you can use a pen and paper, laptop or phone to write or type to each other.
- If you are using sign language, make sure you are using a language the person understands. If you are communicating through a sign interpreter, make sure you face the person you are talking to, not the interpreter.
- Feel free to politely ask a person with a speech difficulty to repeat themselves if you did not understand what he or she said. If you are still having difficulties, you can use a pen and paper, or a laptop or mobile phone to communicate.
- Do not touch mobility aids such as wheelchairs or canes (unless the person using them gives you permission or asks you to do so, such as pushing a wheelchair). Mobility aids are an extension of the individual and are a part of their personal space.
- Always ask the person if they would like assistance.
  - If they would like assistance, explain the options to them, e.g seating arrangements or food and beverage choices, and ask them for their preference.
- When providing assistance, bear in mind the following:
  - When guiding a person who is blind or has low vision, place the person's hand on or slightly above your right elbow to guide them. Walk normally and not too quickly. Communicate verbally about any obstacles, such as stairs or changes in the floor level.
  - If you are guiding the person to a seat, gently place the person's palm on the back of the seat and allow them to seat themselves.
  - Always ask a wheelchair user if they would like you to push their chair. Don't push the chair too quickly, and if in doubt, ask the person if they are comfortable with the speed.
- To tell people where objects are or to orient them to a room or space, you can use the clock face e.g. 'Your cup is at 12 o'clock'.



# Guidelines for Inclusive Language

Many common terms and expressions create and reinforce bias against individuals and groups of people. Even when used unconsciously, using these terms can demean, offend, or alienate people and reinforce negative stereotypes.

Using inclusive and dignified language helps nurture an environment in which diversity is recognised and valued. This means not using terms and expressions that:

- Are sexist, racist or discriminatory;
- Stereotype people or groups of people;
- Are patronising, or represent people as dependent, powerless, or less valued than others.

Preferred terms change as language evolves. There may also be differences between the terms and expressions that individuals and groups of people prefer to use. Where possible, check with the individual or group if you are unsure.

The following are some general guidelines:

- Use the term ‘persons with disabilities’ or *penyandang disabilitas* instead of ‘disabled’ or *penyandang cacat*, which has negative connotations. The term *disabilitas* is the official Indonesian translation of ‘disability’ used in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and in Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities.
- Do not use terms such as *pengidap* (sufferer of), *cacat* (which has connotations of defectiveness or deformity), or derogatory terms such as *gila*, *edan* or *sinting* (crazy).
- Avoid gender specific words and gendered pronouns. For example, *ketua* should be translated as ‘chairperson’, not ‘chairman’; *tenaga kerja* should be translated as ‘labour’, not ‘manpower’.
- Women’s rights activists prefer the term *perempuan* over *wanita*.
- Do not use derogatory terms for women or terms with negative connotations such as *perawan tua* (old maid), *janda kembang* (young divorcee).
- The term LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, intersex) is used in both English and Indonesian. Use *transeksual* or *waria*, but not *banci* (which has negative connotations).



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