ORGANISING INCLUSIVE EVENTS: A PRACTICAL TOOLKIT TO BUILD SOCIAL INCLUSION

Content Page

A Publication by NCSS and NYP

Please address all queries regarding this publication to:
NCSS_Webmaster@ncss.gov.sg

A Final-Year Project by Nanyang Polytechnic, School of Health and Social Sciences, Diploma in Social Sciences

We are a 9-member team consisting of Hani Bisyri Binte Edwan Nizar, Justin Lau Yi Guang, Lee Wen Cui Glynis, Mohammed Nurshahid B Mohammed, Nur Shahidah Bte Mohd Fauzi, Nurul Mahirah Bte Mohammad S, Syauqina Amalyn Bte Murad, Titiek Nur Aqeela Bte Amer and Wang Nanyan. Our team put together a series of recommendations and good practices in the hope to reduce barriers faced by persons with disabilities in community events. As we worked on this project, the world was battling with the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope these suggestions and recommendations can be put to use when the world opens up again.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background Information

As our society progresses, there is a growing interest in supporting persons with disabilities and an increasing commitment to build inclusion in our community. With this in mind, we seek to understand the needs and address the challenges faced by persons with disabilities.

In a recent study on Quality of Life, people with disabilities reported relatively lower rates of social participation (NCSS, 2016). This insightful finding prompted several key concerns.

Questions

How can we make events accessible for persons with and without disabilities?

What are the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in this area?

What are the ways to reduce or overcome these barriers?

This toolkit, "Organising Inclusive Events: A Practical Toolkit To Build Social Inclusion" is created with these concerns in mind. Addressing issues with accessibility is key to promote social participation and inclusion in our community.
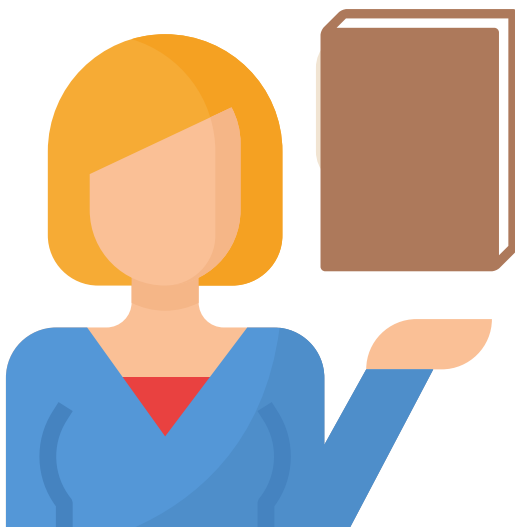
Our toolkit offers information on the barriers faced by persons with disabilities and recommendations on inclusive practices. We hope to inspire readers to make events inclusive, accessible and welcoming to all.

Our Approach

This toolkit is developed based on the following key principles.

1. Social Model of Disability

According to the Social Model of Disability, the impairment is not the disability, rather the barriers within our society lead to the disabling of the individual (French & Swain, 2008).
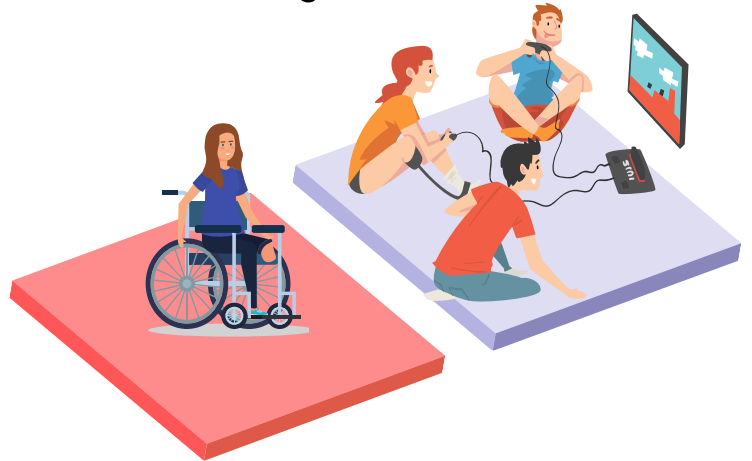
Such barriers can potentially obstruct an individual's inclusion and advancement in the different areas of life, namely employment, education and leisure (Oliver, 1996). Therefore, this model advocates "eliminating barriers to full participation" (Zhuang & Lee, 2017).

This perspective underscores the role of society in creating an inclusive environment to provide an equal chance at participation as the rest of society.

2. United Nation Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
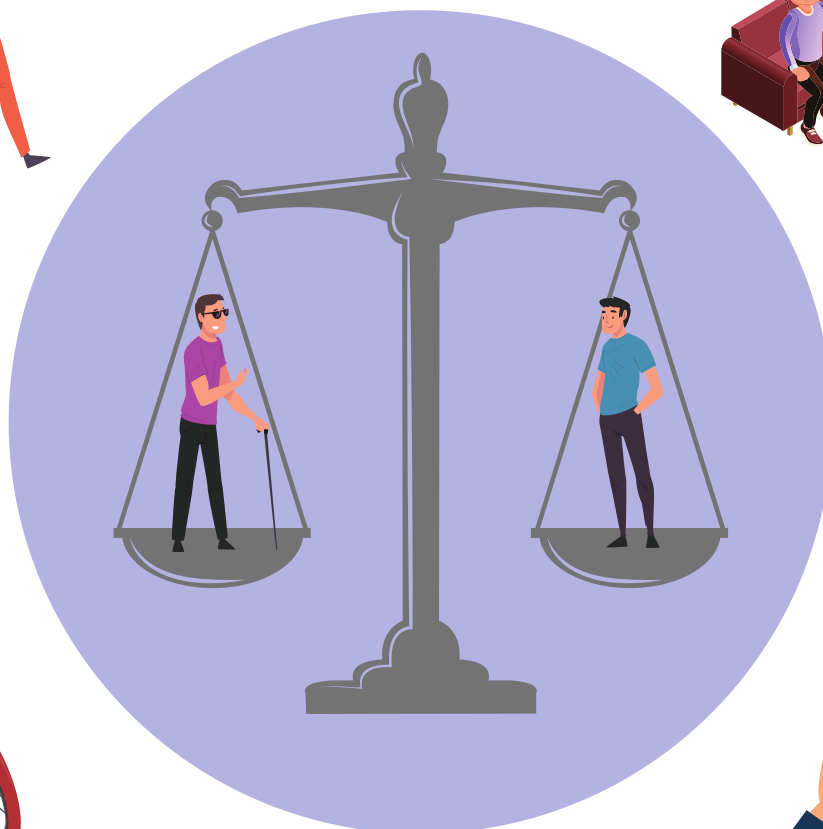
The United Nation Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is a comprehensive convention to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity (Ministry of Social and Family Development [MSF], n.d).

UNCRPD serves to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal rights as others. UNCRPD examples include - persons with disabilities "have rights to take part and be included in the community as everybody else" (NCSS, 2013).

Goals:

1 To outline barriers faced by persons with disabilities pertaining to social events.

2 To share a selection of recommendations pertaining to the accessibility of social events.

3 To connect readers with resources relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Suitable for:

Be it a formal or casual event, this toolkit provides suggestions on how to **build inclusion** in an event.

How to use this toolkit
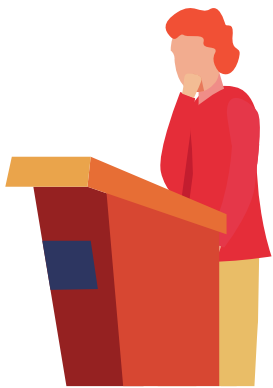
I am organising an event and wish to make it more inclusive.
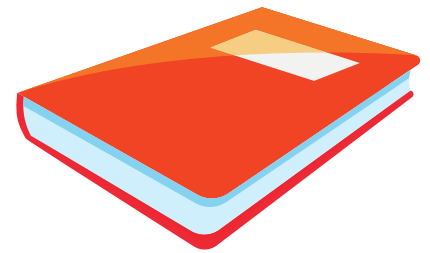
I am curious about the support for persons with disabilities.

What are the barriers faced by persons with disabilities?

If I am organising a physical event, what can I do?

If I am organising an online event, what can I do?

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Glossary

Persons with disability

People with significantly reduced prospects of obtaining, retaining places and advancing in education and training institutions, employment and recreation, due to physical, intellectual, and sensory impairments, as well as developmental needs (MSF, 2019).

Sensory disability

A term to describe one's loss of distance senses such as their vision and hearing (NHS Education for Scotland, 2014).

Physical disability

Total or partial loss of bodily function (e.g. walking, motor skills) or a part of the body (e.g. amputation) (SG Enable, 2016).

Developmental disability

A diverse group of conditions that occur in the developmental period of a child, resulting in difficulties in personal, social, academic or occupational functioning (American Psychiatric Association[APA], 2013).
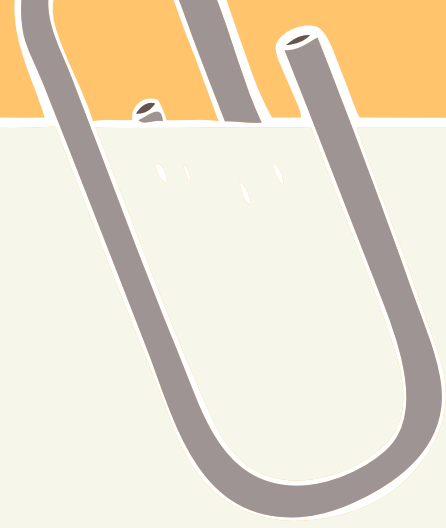
Accessibilty

The precondition for an inclusive society can be defined as providing flexibility in services or arrangements to meet the needs and preferences of all members of the society, including persons with disabilities ([United Nations, n.d.](#)).

Barrier

Anything that gets in the way of persons with disabilities participating in daily activities, or having equal access to opportunities that are available to the public ([NCSS, 2015](#)).

Inclusion

Concept of ensuring that all persons, including those with disabilities, are given opportunities to realise their potential in the same environment ([Tai, 2016](#)).

Physical disability

Total or partial loss of bodily function (e.g. walking, motor skills) or a part of the body (e.g. amputation) and may have limited mobility (SG Enable, 2016).

Wheelchair user: A person who has difficulty in walking and uses a wheelchair to improve their movement for mobility issues to do with their lower limb (Xiang et al., 2016).

Examples of mobility issues include:

Spinal Chord injury

Injuries to the spinal cord that result often in weakness in both lower limbs (paraplegia) or in all four limbs (tetraplegia) with potentially life-threatening complications (National University Hospital, 2020).

Amputation

Surgical removal of all or part of a limb, an organ, or projecting part or process of the body (Pickett, 1998, p.22).

Muscular Dystrophy

An umbrella term for a group of muscular disorders characterised by muscle weakness, wasting and contractures, which are usually progressive in nature and sometimes even life-threatening. These disorders result from inherited gene abnormalities (Muscular Dystrophy Association Singapore, 2018).

Sensory disability
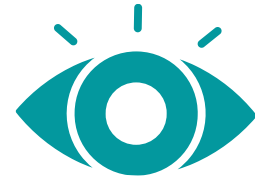
A term to describe one's loss of distance senses such as their vision and hearing ([NHS Education for Scotland, 2014](#)).

Examples of sensory disabilities include:
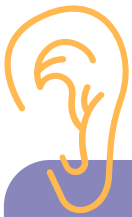
Deaf or Hard of Hearing

The partial or complete loss of hearing in one or both ears. Ranges from moderate hearing loss, in which conversations may be hard to hear, to profound hearing loss where no sound is audible ([Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2018](#)).

Blind or partially sighted

Moderate to severe visual loss that cannot be corrected to a normal level by medication, operation or the use of optical lenses (e.g. spectacles).

Did you know?

Persons with visual loss may read using braille, large print, a magnifier or text-to-speech software.

Developmental disability

Diverse group of conditions that occur in the developmental period of a child, resulting in difficulties in personal, social, academic or occupational functioning (APA, 2013).

Examples of developmental disabilities include:

Cerebral Palsy

A group of non-progressive disorders occurring in young children in which injury to the brain causes impairment of motor function (Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore, 2020).

Autism Spectrum Disorder

A range of developmental disorders characterised by difficulties in social interaction, language and social communication as well as flexibility of thought and behaviour. Some examples on the spectrum are Autism, Asperger syndrome and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (Institute of Mental Health, 2012).

Down Syndrome

A genetic condition caused by the presence of an extra chromosome, it is associated with a range of physical impairments and developmental delays, including delayed motor and cognitive skills (Down Syndrome Association Singapore, 2020).

Chapter 2

Support for persons with disabilities
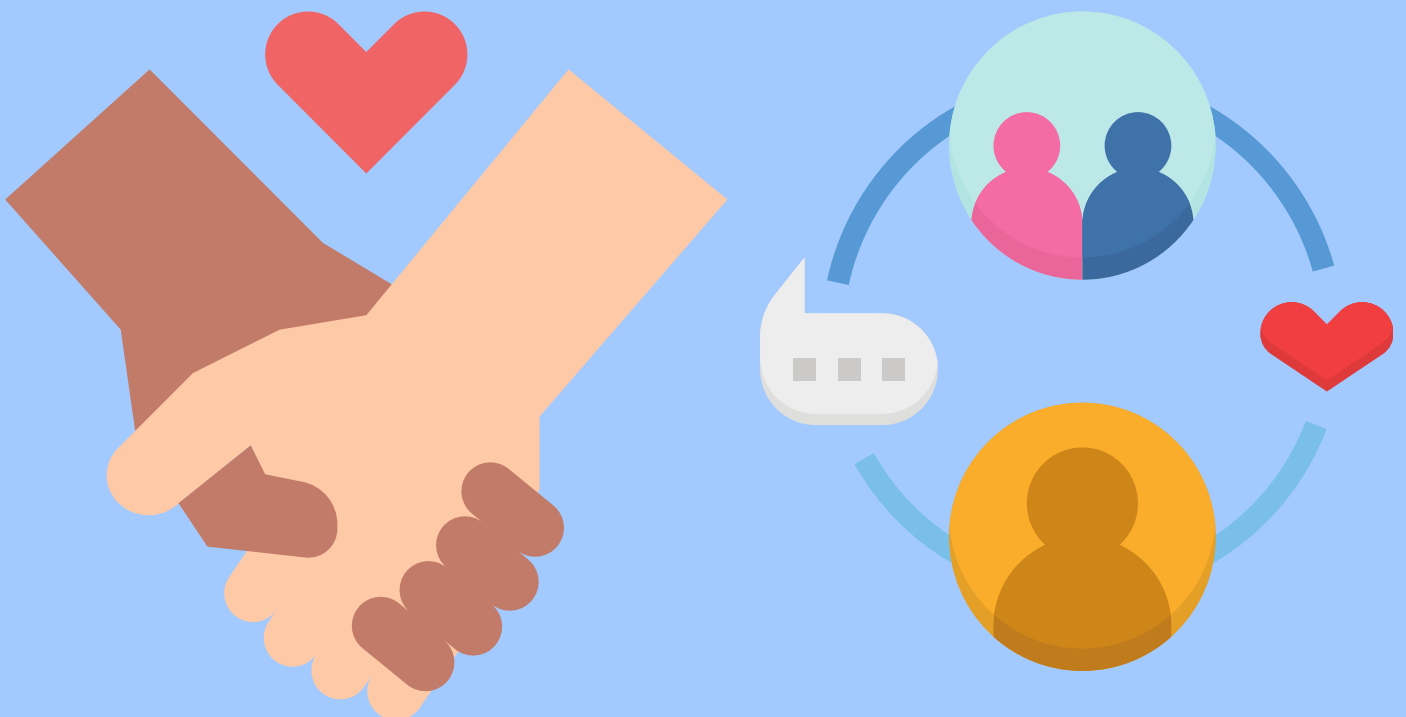
Chapter 2
Support for persons with disabilities

Disability Around the World

According to the World Report on Disability by the World Health Organisation (2011),

- 785 million persons aged 15 years and older have a disability (around 15% of the population).
- Notably, the number of people with disabilities is increasing. Possible reasons include the **ageing population** and a global **increase in chronic health conditions** associated with disabilities.
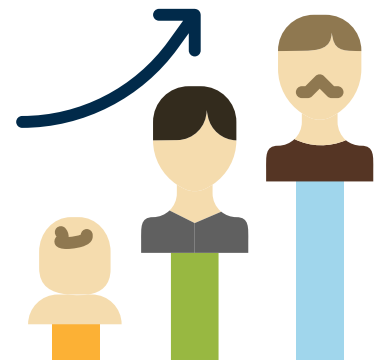
Singapore

In Singapore, the prevalence rate of persons with disabilities in Singapore is as follows (NCSS, 2015).

Population Group	Approximate Prevalence Rates
Student Population	2.1%
18-49 years	3.4%
50 years and above	13.3%

- In 2015, the number of children diagnosed with developmental conditions increased by 60% from 2010. This increment was attributed to the increase in awareness on such developmental conditions as well as a rise in the screenings conducted (Tan, 2016).
- By 2030, one in five residents will be aged 65 and above, making Singapore one of the fastest ageing populations in Asia (MSF, 2017). Living longer leads to an increased risk of disability, as 1 in 2 healthy Singaporeans aged 65 could become severely disabled in their lifetime (Ministry of Health, 2020).

These findings emphasise that long-term support for persons with disability has become increasingly crucial in Singapore.

Did you know?

1 in 150 children in Singapore has autism, reportedly higher than the global figure of 1 in 160 children (SingHealth, n.d.).
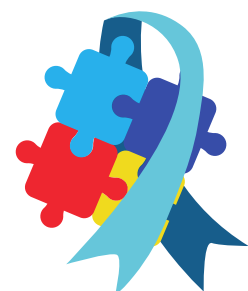
Support for persons with disabilities in Singapore: Milestones

Since Singapore gained independence, there have been several significant milestones in our effort to develop progress concerning people with disabilities in recent years (Lim, 2009).

1986

Disabled Peoples' Association (DPA) was set up to represent the disability community and work towards building a society where everyone is able to participate in all areas of life and have access to social integration (Disabled People's Association, 2013).
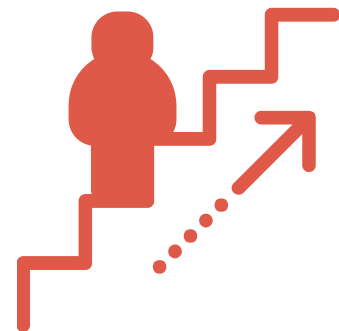
1988

The Advisory Council for the Disabled was formed to make recommendations, including a building code to set the foundations for a more barrier-free environment (Zhuang, 2019).
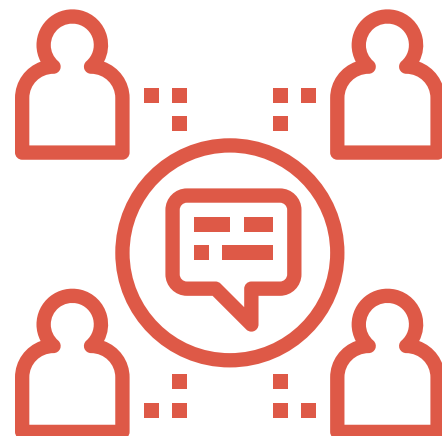
2004

From Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's swearing-in speech in 2004

"Let us be a dynamic city that is open and inclusive, a meritocratic society that is compassionate and caring, and confident people with clear minds and warm hearts."

2006

All MRT stations have **barrier-free** facilities (e.g. lifts, tactile guidance system and wheelchair-accessible toilets), and all newly registered public buses are required to be wheelchair-accessible (Ministry of Transport, n.d.).

Do you know that there are many disability-friendly amenities in our environment?

2007
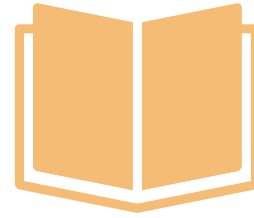
MSF published the **1st Enabling Masterplan** (2007-2011) outlining specific recommendations pertaining to the educational and employment of children with special needs. The Enabling Masterplan set the direction and unify efforts to build an inclusive nation.

2011

Completion of **Barrier Free Accessibility Programme** which made public transport facilities including pedestrian walkways, access to MRT and LRT stations as well as taxi and bus shelters more accessible to persons with disabilities (Building and Construction Authority, 2019).

2012

The **2nd Enabling Masterplan** (2012-2016) sought to further strengthen the existing foundation of inclusive initiatives including empowering and recognising persons with disabilities as integral members of society.

2013

Singapore ratified the agreement on **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**, signifying our continual effort and commitment to improve the rights and protection of persons with disabilities (Singapore UNCRPD, 2016).

Launch of the first **Purple Parade**, Singapore's largest annual inclusion event to celebrate the abilities and talents of persons with disabilities. This movement, which symbolises solidarity and support for persons with disabilities, has grown from 3000 in 2013 to 10,000 participants in 2019 (Tay, 2019).

2013

Image taken from Autism Resource Centre Singapore

2019

Image taken from Purple Parade SG

Fun Fact!

Do you know that The Purple Parade logo symbolises solidarity for persons with special needs?

The square symbolises strong building blocks towards an inclusive Singapore.

2014

The pilot **School-To-Work (S2W) Transition Programme** was jointly-launched by the Ministry of Education (MOE), MSF and SG Enable. It offers job training pathways such as supported employment, internships and further training to graduating students from SPED schools (MOE, 2017). This programme focuses on streamlining students' transition from SPED schools to the workplace.

The **Open Door Programme (ODP) Grant** was launched to support both persons with disabilities and organisations through the provision of services and resources, with the goal of increasing employability (SG Enable, 2016).

Special Education Needs Offices were set up in all Institutes of Higher Learning to provide direct support and on-campus services for students with disabilities. These offices support students who require additional needs by providing counselling, making accessible arrangements and administering funding support for Assistive Technology if needed (MSF, 2018).

Accessible features in our smartphone such as text reader and screen magnifier can support persons with disabilities.

2017
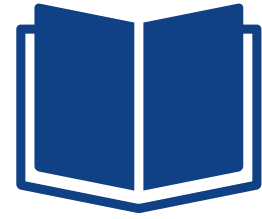
The **3rd Enabling Masterplan** (2017-2021) places emphasis on a person-centred approach to enable persons with disabilities through various life stages, support caregivers and build an inclusive community.

National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) published a comprehensive local report on the challenges faced by persons with disabilities in education, employment, social inclusion, physical environment and caregiving (NVPC, 2017).

2018

The first **Play Inclusive Competition** was organised by Special Olympics Singapore and SportCares, where persons with intellectual disabilities teamed up with students from mainstream schools to compete together. (SportCares, 2020).

2019

Amendments were made to the **Compulsory Education Act**; children with special needs (ages 7 to 14) should have access to education in a suitable school based on their needs (Teng, 2016).

To encourage and support the inclusion of persons with disabilities at workplaces, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and SG Enable shared the Job Redesign Guide for Inclusive Employers, which contains information on workplace modifications and assistive technology (Baker, 2019).
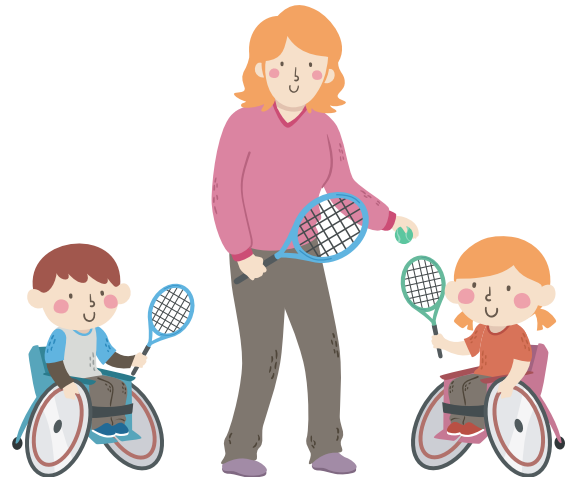
2020

During the fight against the COVID-19 outbreak, President Halimah Yacob stressed the need to provide training and employment for persons with disabilities (Goh, 2020).

Chapter 3

Barriers faced by persons with disabilities

Chapter 3

Barriers faced by persons with disabilities

What Are Barriers?

World Health Organisation (2001) defines barriers as factors in a person's environment that create disability either through their presence, such as discrimination towards persons with disabilities, or their absence, such as a lack of ramps for wheelchair users.

According to the United Nations report on Promoting Inclusion through Social Protection (2018), barriers impede persons with disabilities from enjoying their rights to services and participation. If society does not put in enough effort to remove such barriers, "the relationship between disadvantage and disability often becomes a vicious cycle" (United Nations, 2018, p.66).
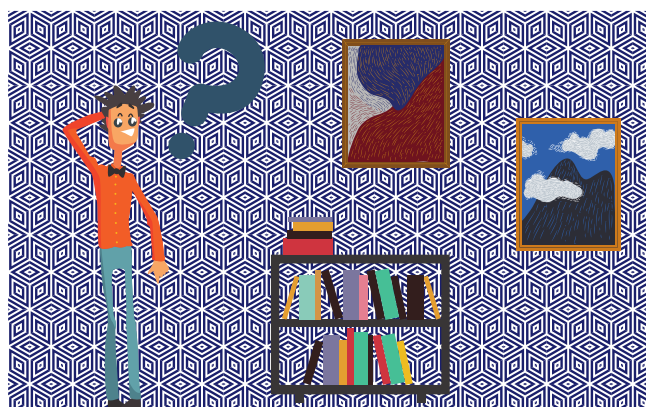
Types of Barriers

Physical barriers are found in buildings and spaces and prevents people accessing certain places (NCSS, 2015).

A person with limited vision may not be able to find his way around a poorly-lit building.

"There was a job I really wanted, it paid well and was good for me. But then, the toilet was so narrow, I can't even turn into the toilet with my wheelchair."

Participant with mobility issues
(NCSS, 2018, p.57)
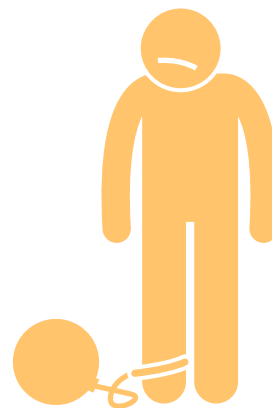
"Every social invitation tends to require calling or emailing the venue to find out about accessibility and then usually having to explain to the host why I can't come."

Nina Grant, who has Ehlers-Danlos syndrome
(Ryan, 2017, para. 15)

"I don't go to town most often, because of difficulties in moving on gravel side-road foot paths, up high curbs and corridors along shop buildings, including banks."

Participant
(Banda-Chalwe, 2014)

These experiences reveal that physical inaccessibility can affect social participation for persons with disabilities.

"There's so many places in the city that aren't accessible. I used to go to them...and haven't since cause I can't count on being able to get in the door."

Participant with spinal chord injury
(Hammel et al., 2015, p.585)

Attitudinal barriers occur when people have an inaccurate understanding about disability (NCSS, 2015).

For instance, people may voluntarily offer to help a wheelchair user and may be surprised to know that she is able to travel independently. In addition to that, one may assume a person with visual disability may not be able to shop online.

"...they think (I) cannot contribute to society...when they talk to me, they won't talk directly to me but to my sister or parents...but I'm only physically challenged, not mentally challenged."
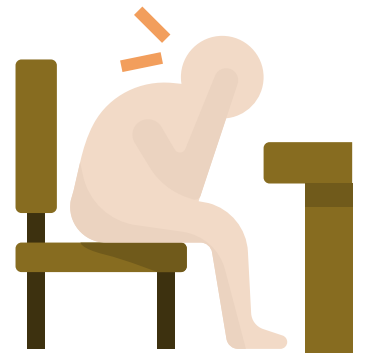
Participant with mobility issues (NCSS, 2018, p.45)

"I couldn't sit normally on the chair—my waist started to ache, and I had to put my head on the desk to rest, but the teachers thought that I was lazy."

Participant who had polio as a child (Gossman et al., 2020)

"When we take her somewhere with ourselves, she gets harassed by neighbors... They say, 'you don't have to bring it out'..."

Caregiver for Mina (a student with a developmental condition)
(Gossman et al., 2020)

"When I was in school they would tease me, sometimes insult me. Truth be told, I had a bit of a hard time in school."

Participant with visual loss
(Pérez-Garín et al., 2018, p.5)

64% Singaporeans surveyed are willing to share public spaces with children with special needs, but are not willing to interact with these children.

(Lien Foundation, 2016)

As seen in these examples, persons with disabilities may have difficulty socialising due to the negative attitudes of others towards them.

Systemic barriers occur when there are policies or practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities.

"We can explain 101 things as to why we cannot hire you...[and] you can't fine me." She added, "There are no policies on how to help someone [with disability]... The policy is 'Let's get rid of them'... for both private and public companies."

Respondent
(DPA & Institute of Policy Studies[IPS], 2018, p.37)

An organisation may not consider interviewing an applicant with disability who have met the qualification for the position applied.

"There was a "pay difference; hearing colleagues get higher, according to market rate. But deaf colleagues, enter work start low(er)."

Respondent who is deaf
(DPA & IPS, 2018, p. 22)

"The [company] said, 'well, this is how our system works'. So if they are not able to think of ways in which to redesign his job scope to help him to be more productive, what can I do?"

Respondent with mobility issues
([DPA & IPS, 2018, p.23](#))

"Respondent 13, who has physical disability, needed a longer time to walk from the bus stop to the company premises. When he tried to ask for a slightly later starting time, which he would make up for by ending work later, his request was rejected. He was eventually terminated after coming in late for work multiple times."

Researcher
([DPA & IPS, 2018, p.23](#))

From these real-life experiences of persons with disabilities, we learn of existing gaps and barriers that can hinder social participation. In recent years, there are observably more diversity hiring initiatives. Hopefully, there can be more employment opportunities in the near future.

Information and Communication barriers prevent persons with disabilities from acquiring information.

For instance, a person who uses a screen-reader function cannot access materials that are presented in another format.

"...they expect me to hear. To practice hearing. I told them I deaf. Cannot practice hearing. They still don't listen to me."

Respondent who is deaf (DPA & IPS, 2018, p.24)

"I get lost easily trying to follow a group conversation in spoken English without an interpreter, and I have never been able to comfortably participate in a conference call without interpreting support or access to text captioning"

Soukop, deaf with residual hearing and some speaking ability (Mack, 2016, para. 13)

"We need to develop accessible written information products by using appropriate document formats...for people who are deaf, blind or visually impaired. ...the current level of SafeEntry QR codes tends to be a bit too high. A consideration could be to place it at varying, easy-to-reach heights, as we have done with many lift buttons."

Yip Pin Xiu, a Nominated Member of Parliament and a three-time Paralympic gold swimmer
(Toh, 2020, para. 7)

Based on their experiences, it can be seen that communication barriers are often overlooked and there can be more concerted efforts to consider the needs of persons with disabilities.
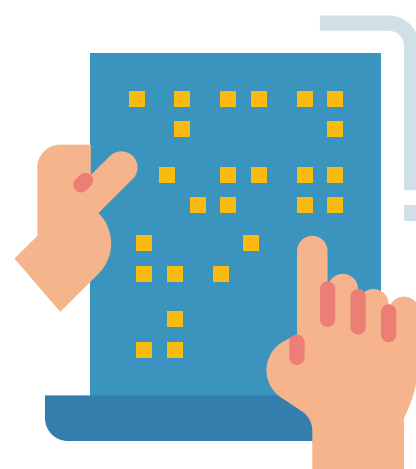
Chapter 4

Inclusive practices for events

Chapter 4

Inclusive practices for events

This chapter describes inclusive practices for anyone who is interested to make their event accessible for persons with disabilities and welcoming to all. These inclusive practices can apply to a myriad of events ranging from conferences, carnivals to award ceremonies and many more.

Pre-event

Persons with mobility issues

Persons with visual loss

Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

Persons with developmental conditions

Inclusive practices: Invitation

For: All disability types

To reach out to the widest possible range of audience, provide all event publicity materials in a variety of formats:

- Broadcast media (e.g. radio or television advertisements)
- Print media (e.g. newspapers or flyers)
- Social media (e.g. Instagram or Facebook)

- Depict appropriate icons in all publicity materials.

  - For example, a symbol of access for persons with disabilities is available at Building & Construction Authority.

Example of an accessible publicity material

EVENT NAME

Key Highlights

1.
2.
3.

Location: Sims Avenue 2, Blk 123, #04-567

Date: 15 June 2020,
Time: 9am – 12pm

List accessible services that will be available e.g. Sign Language Interpreter available

For: Persons with visual loss

Whenever possible, ensure that registration forms or publicity materials provided are:

- In accessible electronic format (e.g. PDF) for text-to-speech screen readers
- In format compatible with alternative text (e.g. allow for increase font size or change font colour).

Inclusive practices: Registration

For: All disability types

- Assign a colleague to be in-charge of ensuring accessibility for participants with disabilities. Contact information of this colleague should be made available.

- State the contact details of staff-in-charge on the registration form:
    - e.g. Should you need assistance, please contact (staff-in-charge) at ____(contact no./e-mail) by _____ (date).

- Ensure there are multiple ways to contact the staff-in-charge including
    - Phone
    - E-mail

- On the registration form, include a field for participants to indicate any accommodations they require.
    - Field selection could include:
        - Sign Language Interpretation
        - Water for guide dogs
        - Wheelchair accessibility
        - Please indicate any other accommodations: _____

- Whenever possible, provide a schedule of the event so participants to know what to expect.

For: Persons with developmental conditions

- Whenever possible, provide sensory maps, which can allow caregivers/persons on the Autism Spectrum to identify high sensory and low sensory areas.

- An example of a sensory map can be found here.

- In the event that a sensory map is not available, event organisers can consider having a designated calm room.

Inclusive practices: Venue

For: Wheelchair users

- For an event which is held above ground level, check that there are wheelchair-accessible lifts.

- Look out for automatic doors such as sliding or swinging doors as they are most ideal for the movement of persons with disabilities. If there are no automatic doors, a temporary solution is to use a door stopper. Please offer assistance accordingly.

- Look out for wheelchair-friendly restrooms. Staff can be familiar with the locations and give directions whenever necessary.

- Check that the height of furniture (registration table, dining table, etc) is suitable for wheelchair users and also allows for social interactions with fellow participants at eye-level.

- Please ensure a minimum of 1.2m width for walkways. For more information, refer to the Code on Accessibility 2019 (page 35).

Note: Soft loose surfaces such as deep pile carpet or gravel may pose as a challenge for manual wheelchair users. Please provide assistance accordingly.

- Check that seats allocated for wheelchair users have ample space for movement.
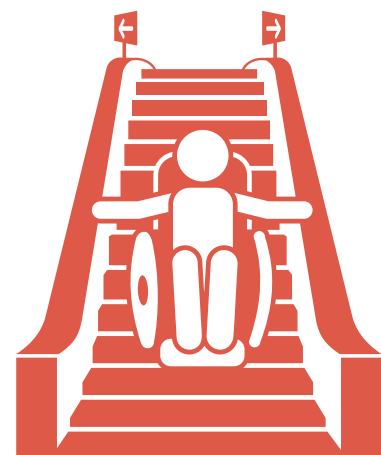
Example of seating arrangement
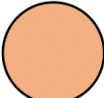
1 Theatre-Style (suitable for concerts, speeches etc.)

FRONT

Leave at least 1.2m of space for wheelchair to move
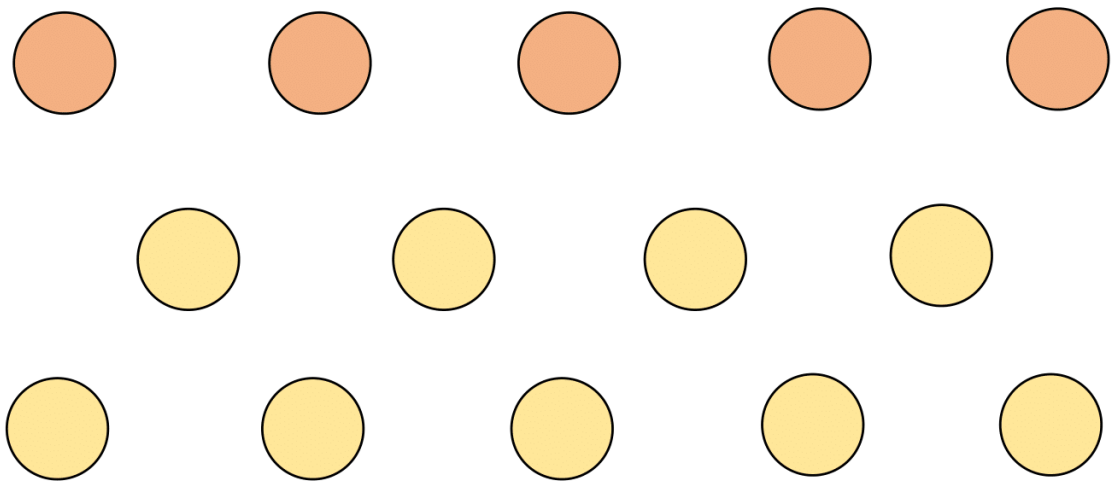
Legend:

🟠 Reserved seats anyone who needs to sit near the front

🟡 Participants who do not require special seating arrangements (Mix of wheelchair users and non-wheelchair users)

Note: Ensure to leave 1.2m of space between seats and rows if you are expecting wheelchair users

- Wheelchair reserved areas should be free from tripping wires, which otherwise should be taped down.

Extracted from: https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/room-setup

Example of seating arrangement

2

U-Shape (suitable for large group discussions)

FRONT

TABLE
(If Needed)

Extracted from: https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/room-setup
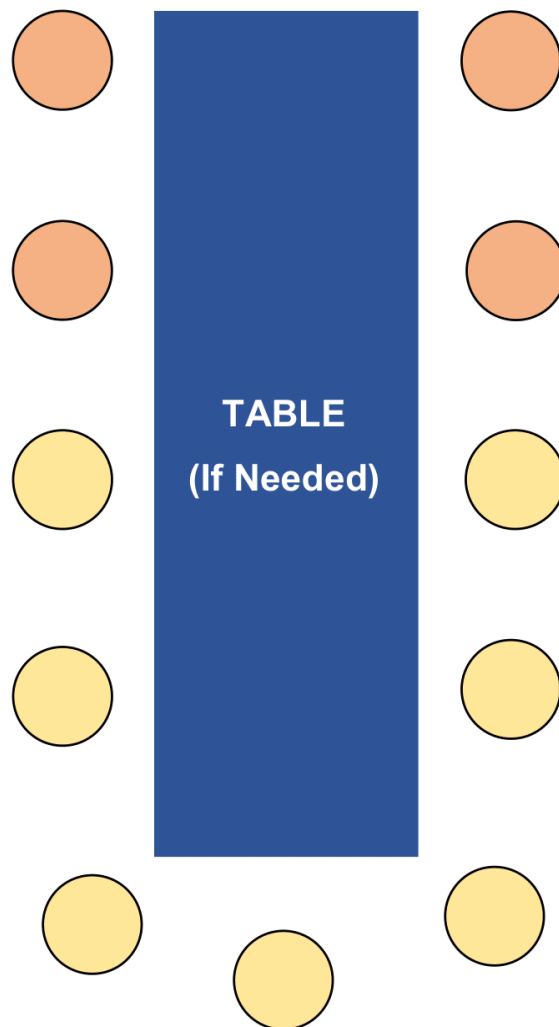
Example of seating arrangement

3

Classroom Style (suitable for activities/lessons)

FRONT

Leave at least 1.2m

Leave at least 1.2m

Leave at least 1.2m of space for wheelchair to move

Leave at least 1.2m

Leave at least 1.2m

Leave at least 1.2m

Leave at least 1.2m

Extracted from: https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/room-setup
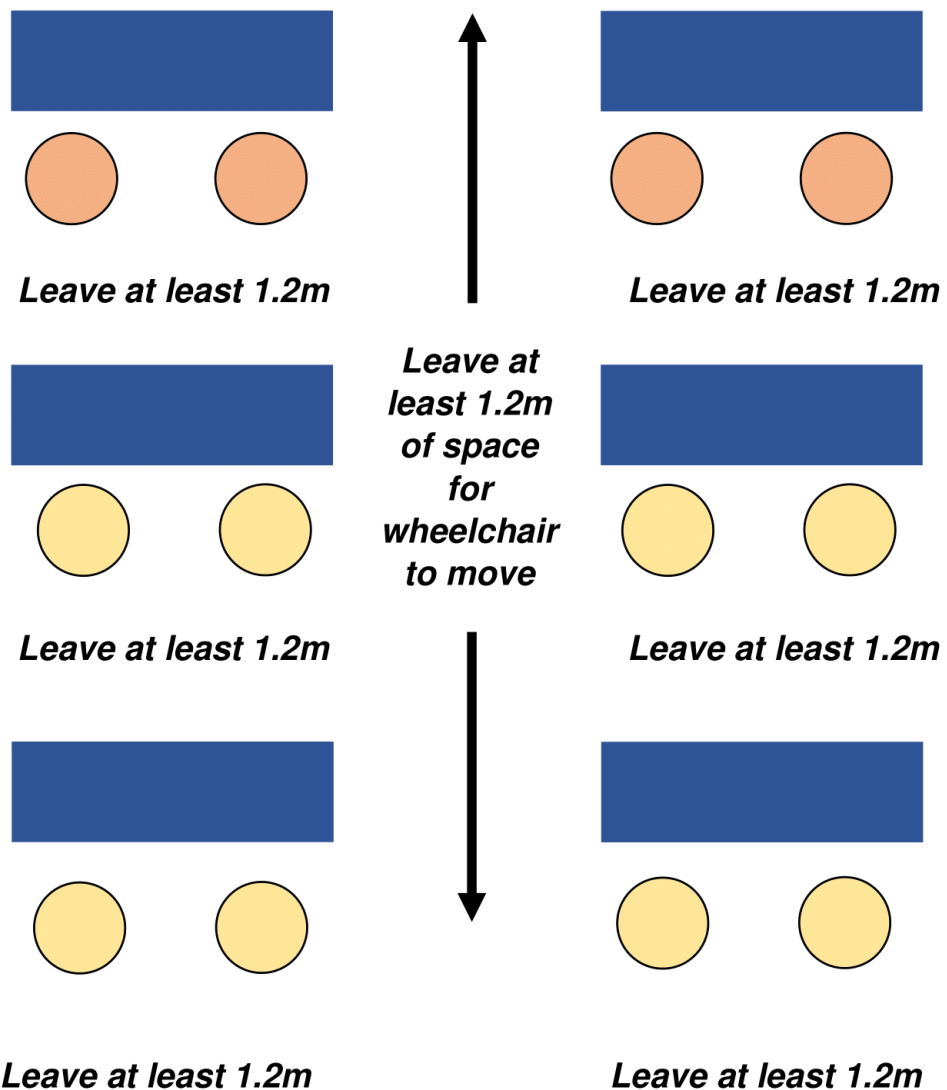
Example of seating arrangement

4 Half-rounds (suitable for small group discussions and presentations)

FRONT

Leave at least 1.2m of space for wheelchair to move

Leave at least 1.2m of space for wheelchair to move

Extracted from: https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/room-setup
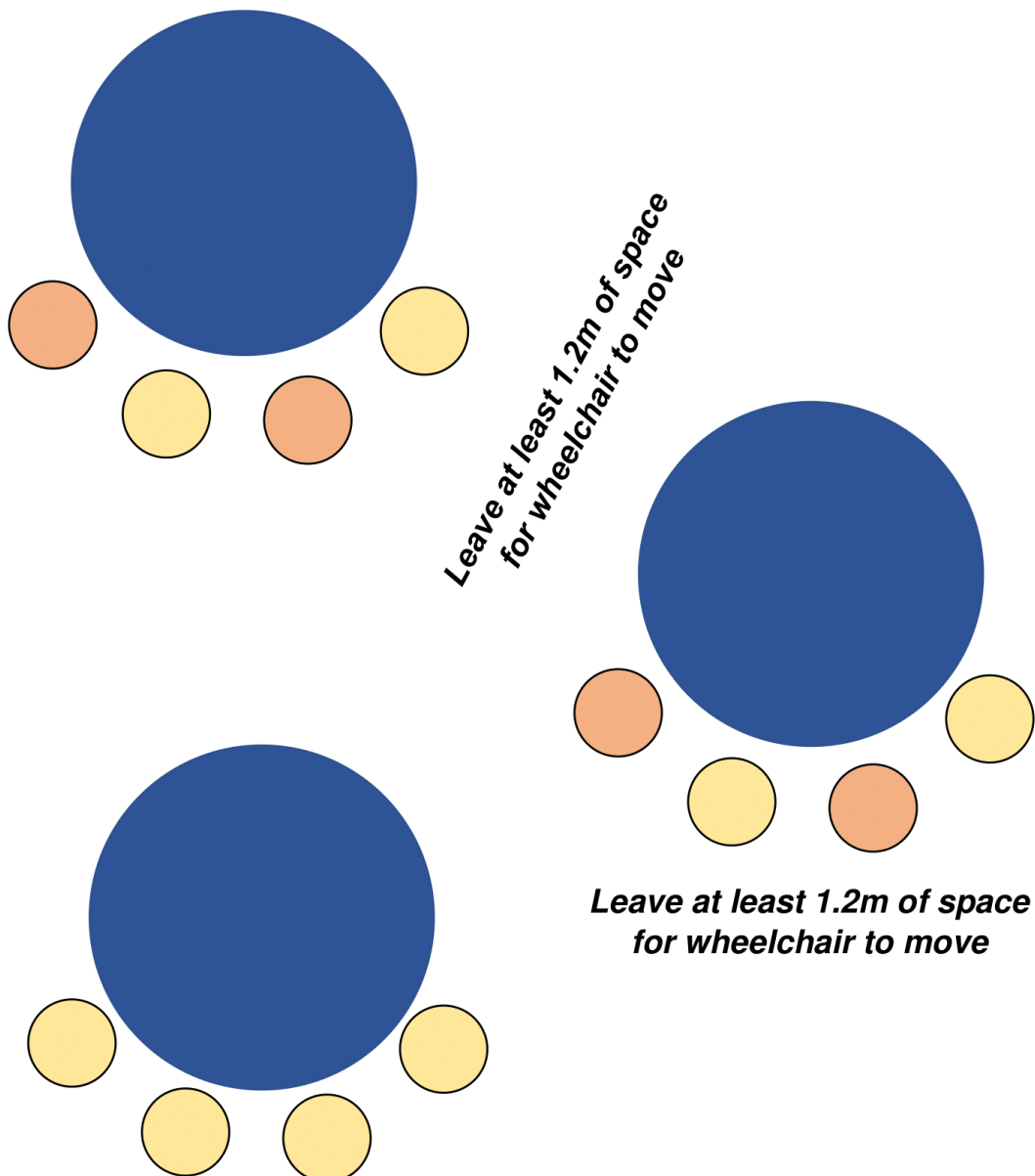
Example of seating arrangement

5

Clusters/Teams (suitable for small group discussions)

FRONT

Leave at least 1.2m of space for wheelchair to move

Leave at least 1.2m of space for wheelchair to move

Extracted from: https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/room-setup
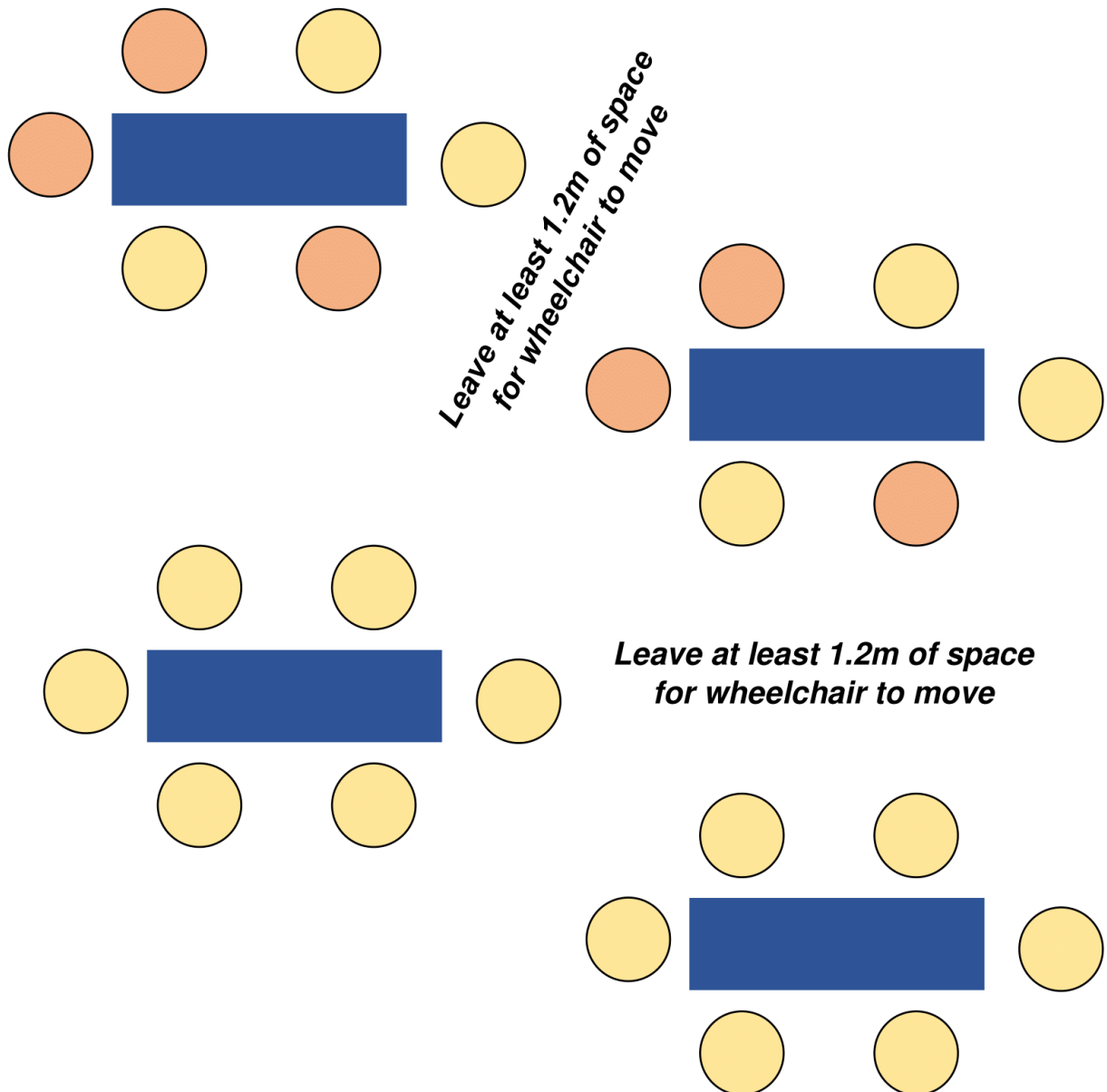
- Whenever possible, ensure the venue has

  - Ramp designs that are safe for wheelchair users to use. Based on the Code on Accessibility 2019, ramps are at least 1.2m wide and have a cross fall gradient of 1:40 or gentler. Ideally, the ramps and landing surface are also slip-resistant.

  - Amenities such as water coolers which are positioned at a height that is accessible for wheelchair users. If not, provide assistance whenever necessary.

- Inform participants on location of facilities clearly (toilets, lift etc). Please offer assistance accordingly.

- Position signages perpendicular to their path of travel. They can generally distinguish signs with an angle of 30° to either side of the centre line of their faces without moving their heads. For more information, refer to the Code on Accessibility 2019 (Page 172).

- Conduct a site recce to identify stairs, ramps, lift access and wide aisles.

For: Persons with visual loss

- Inform participants on location of facilities clearly (toilets, lift etc).

  - Incorporate both braille and tactile on signages, as not all persons with visual loss are trained in braille.

  - Ensure that the centre line of signages is 1.5m above floor level for persons with visual loss or partial sight, to touch and read the tactile information on the sign.

  - Signages suspended from the ceiling should be avoided as they are not within the field of vision of some persons with visual loss or partial sight. For more information, refer to the Code on Accessibility 2019 (Page 179).

- If possible, conduct a site recce to identify if there are any undetectable objects or obstructions attached on the walls. Persons with visual loss or partial sight may not be able to detect these obstructions when walking alongside these objects. For more information, refer to the Code on Accessibility 2019 (Page 51).
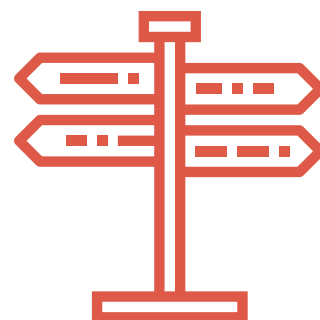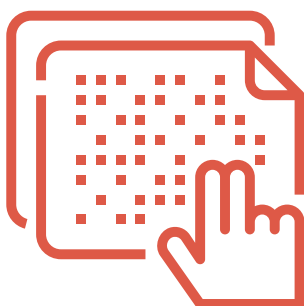
For: Persons with developmental conditions

- Whenever possible, set up a calm room (with quiet, warm lighting) for persons on the Autism Spectrum. If the event is held outdoors, set up a close-sided tentage as the calm room.

- Inform participants on location of facilities clearly (toilets, lifts etc) and provide a map of the venue if possible.

- To give directions, use visuals such as arrows on signages.
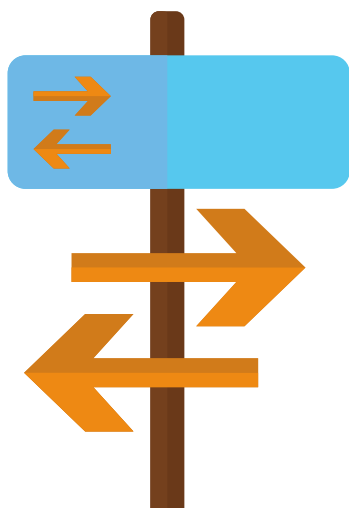
Inclusive practices: Developing programme
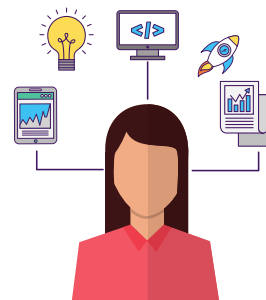
For: All disability types

Preparation for event staff

- Whenever possible, conduct a pre-event briefing for staff on how to interact with persons with disabilities.

Examples:

- When conversing with a wheelchair user, always ensure that we are at their eye level.

- When conversing with a person with hearing disability, remember to face him/her. This will allow for lip reading and receiving visual cues.

- Useful resources on how to interact with persons with disabilities is available here.

- Encourage event staff to attend workshops on disability awareness.

Breaks and buffer time

- In general, a 30-minute break is recommended for every 90 minutes. This will allow for ample rest for all participants with and without disabilities.

- With determining the duration and interval of breaks, please consider these needs:
    - Rest
    - Bathroom use
    - Mobility
    - Water and bathroom breaks for guide dogs

Safety

- Organisers can brief all participants on safety and emergency measures prior to the start of the event.

- Plan for an obstacle-free route in case of emergency.

- Be prepared to provide direct support in case of emergency.

Event

Inclusive practices: Participant travel

For: All disability types

- As much as possible, select a venue that is accessible via public transport.

- If a physically accessible location is not possible, conduct a recce of the route leading to the venue to look out for barriers which may arise.

- Advise participants on where the recommended drop-off points for cars/taxis are located, and provide general directions from there.

For: Wheelchair users

- Identify stairs, ramps, lift access and wide aisles. Please offer assistance whenever necessary.

For: Persons with visual loss

- Identify any obstructions or objects attached on the walls which may be barriers for persons with visual loss when navigating. Please offer assistance whenever necessary. For more information, refer to the Code on Accessibility 2019 (Page 51).

- Provide contact details of staff-in-charge should further assistance be required (see invitation section).

- List accessible transport options for participants' reference.

- If public transport services are not accessible, consider providing transport options for participants.
    - e.g. Shuttle service

Inclusive practices: Materials

For: All disability types

- For posters, keep designs simple. Avoid background graphics which are distracting and may make text harder to read. An example of an accessible poster is available [here](#).

- Whenever possible, share reading materials with participants in advance. This allows for participants to provide feedback should they require access using a different format.

- Use a big font that is easy to read and has a high contrast print, be succinct.
    - Font type: Sans-serif (e.g. Century Gothic, Arial, Verdana)
    - Font size: 16 or larger

Example of an inaccessible reading material

Point #1

Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form.

Point #2

Font size is too small. Font size is too small.

Point #3

Font type is not readable. Font type is not readable.

Point #4

There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons.

Example of an accessible handout

Make use of titles and headers

Font Style

- Make use of Sans-Serif font types (e.g. Arial, Century Gothic, Verdana etc.)
- Font size should be 16pts or larger

Content

- Avoid having chunks of information. Use bullet points or numberings instead.
- Colours should be of accessible contrast. Try not to use light font colours against a light background, or dark font colours against a dark background.

Visuals

Do make use of pictures or icons whenever possible.

And don't forget to add Alternative Text to the pictures!

Did you know?

Alternative text can also be done on social media platforms such as Instagram.

For: Persons with visual loss

- Consider preparing materials in alternative communication formats such as audio descriptions, braille and easy-to-read versions.

- Example of braille services (for participants who read braille):
    - [Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped](#)

For: Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Consider preparing materials in sign language, Speech-to-text reporter (STTR), subtitles and live captioning.

- Examples of closed-captioning / subtitle services:
    - [Lingua Technologies](#)
    - [Asian Absolute](#)

- For Deaf access and Sign Language Interpretation services:
    - [The Singapore Association for the Deaf](#)

- For events of longer duration, consider hiring more than one Sign Language Interpreter and rotate among them as they need regular rests.

- Whenever permitted, allow participants to record or take photos of information for replay purposes.

Inclusive practices: Equipment

For: Persons with visual loss and persons with developmental conditions

- Check with participants if they will need adjusted lighting levels.

    - e.g. Persons with visual loss and persons with autism may be sensitive to bright or strobing lights. It is best to check with the participants if there are such concerns directly.

For: Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons with developmental conditions

- If possible, provide wireless microphones for speakers and participants as well as lapel microphones for Sign Language Interpreters.

- Consider using an induction loop facility to support persons with hearing aids.

- Consider placement of loudspeakers. Participants who are sensitive to loud sounds (hearing-aid users, persons with autism and guide dog users) should be seated away from these equipment.

Inclusive practices: Actual day

For: All disability types

- Assign volunteers at key locations of the room to render help.

- Do a verbal announcement on where the wheelchair-friendly facilities (eg. toilets, lifts etc.) are located.

- Gently remind speakers/presenters to speak at an audible volume and pace.

For: Persons with mobility issues

- Assign staff or volunteers to offer support and assistance (e.g. meal time, activity, etc) whenever necessary.

For: Persons with visual loss and persons with developmental conditions
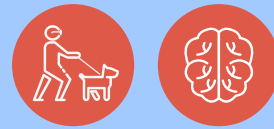
- Ensure that there are signages to give directions (see venue section). When designing signages, use:

  1. Simple words
  2. Contrasting colours (e.g. black and white)
  3. Icons

Example of an accessible signage
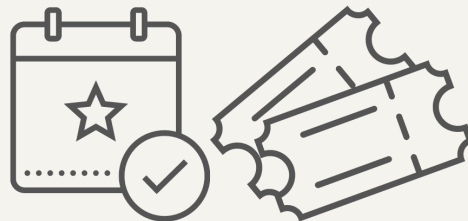
This way to the ABC event →

If you require additional assistance, please contact (staff name) at (contact number).

- Reserve seats for persons with disabilities (upon request).

- Examples include:

  - Designate front row seats for participants who need to be in near proximity to services (e.g. Sign Language Interpreters).

  - Prepare extra seats for participants with caregivers.

Post-event

Inclusive practices: Feedback
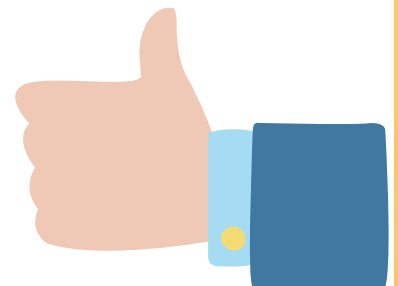
- It is important to gather feedback. This can be done through conversations or feedback forms with specific questions on accessibility. If you already have a feedback form, you may wish to add additional questions to the feedback form. For example:

  1. Were you able to fully participate in the event?
  2. Were there any barriers to participation?
  3. In what ways can we improve accessibility?

A Quick Checklist for Inclusive Events

Stage of Event	Inclusive practices	Check:
Pre-event		
Invitations	Publicise event across different media platforms (e.g. broadcast media, print media, social media).	
	Use appropriate icons.	
Registration	Assign a staff-in-charge to ensure accessibility for participants with disabilities.	
	Send out registrations forms with contact details of staff-in-charge.	
	Provide multiple ways to contact staff-in-charge (e.g phone and email).	
	Distribute registration forms/publicity materials that are in accessible electronic format (e.g. PDFs).	
	Distribute registration forms/publicity materials with accessible features (e.g. text-to-speech and alternate text descriptions).	

	Distribute sensory maps to persons with developmental disability and/or caregivers (if needed).	
	Add a section in the registration form for participants to indicate any accommodation(s) needed.	
Venue	Locate wheelchair-accessible lifts (if event is not held on ground level).	
	Locate for automatic or sliding doors.	
	Locate wheelchair-accessible toilets.	
	Use furniture, fixtures and equipment that are of appropriate height (e.g. registration tables, dining tables).	
	Identify narrow walkways.	
	Check that walkways have a minimum width of 1.2m.	
	Assign seats with ample space for wheelchair users.	
	Locate ramps that are safe for wheelchair users.	
	Check that amenities are at a low height (e.g. water coolers).	

Venue	Set up resting areas for guide dogs (if possible).	
	Inform participants on location of facilities clearly.	
	Position signages perpendicular to path of travel.	
	Create directory signages which are readable, visible and include visuals (e.g. arrows).	
	Create directory signages that include braille and are contrast and colour accessible.	
	Check that directory signages are not suspended from the ceiling (if possible).	
	Identify any objects or obstructions that may be undetectable to persons with visual disability.	
	Set-up a calming space for rest and relaxation (if possible).	
	Deploy ushers around the venue to provide orienteering information.	

	Provide a map of the venue with the locations of facilities to caregivers.	
	During site recce, identify if there are: 1. Stairs 2. Ramps for wheelchair users 3. Lift access 4. Wide aisles 5. Objects attached on walls that may be of hindrance	
Developing programme	Conduct a pre-event briefing for staff on how to interact with persons with disabilities.	
	Confirm the event details in advance.	
	Schedule a 30-minute break for every 90 minutes.	
	Check that the emergency escape route is obstacle-free.	
	Check that emergency holding areas are accessible for persons with disabilities.	
	Conduct briefing on emergency/safety information to participants prior to the event (if possible).	

	Assign a group of staff to provide support for persons with disabilities during emergencies.	
Event day		
Participant travel	Provide contact details of staff-in-charge should further assistance be required in getting to the event.	
	Provide accessible transport options for participants' reference.	
	Select a venue that is accessible via public transport (if possible).	
	Identify any objects or obstructions that may be undetectable to persons with visual impairment on the route to the venue.	
	Provide transport options should public transport be unavailable (e.g. shuttle service).	
Materials	Keep design of materials simple, without distracting graphics background.	
	Send schedule and event materials to participants in advance.	

	Use a big font that is easy to read and have a high contrast print for materials (e.g. font type: Sans-serif, font size: 16 or larger).	
	Allow participants to record/take photos during the event for replay purposes (if possible).	
	Prepare materials in alternative communication formats (e.g. audio descriptions, braille).	
	Include subtitles for video inputs.	
	Engage close-captioning services (if needed).	
	Engage Sign Language Interpreters (if needed).	
	Engage more than one Sign Language Interpreter for events of longer duration.	
	Rotate Sign Language Interpreters for regular rests.	
Equipment	Place loudspeakers at appropriate parts of the venue.	
	Take note of any special accommodation for lighting levels required by participants during registration.	

Equipment	Assign participants who are sensitive to loud sounds to be seated away from loudspeakers (e.g. hearing-aid users, persons with autism and guide dog users).	
	Provide wireless microphones for speakers and if necessary, for participants.	
	Provide lapel microphones for Sign Language Interpreters.	
	Use projectors with appropriate lighting.	
	Consider installing an induction loop facility for hearing aid users (if possible).	
Actual day	Assign staff/volunteers at key locations of the venue to render help.	
	Allocate staff or volunteers to assist wheelchair users to obtain goods from inaccessible areas (if needed).	
	Prepare presenters for the event. (e.g. properly attired, articulations of the presenter are clear and speech pace is at an appropriate rate).	

	Reserve seats for persons with disabilities (if requested).	
	Reserve extra seats for participants with caregivers.	
Post-event		
Feedback	Provide feedback forms with alternative formats to cater to all participants (e.g. physical forms & PDF forms).	
	Encourage participants to share their thoughts in the feedback form. Some questions that can be asked are: 1. Were you able to fully participate in the event? 2. Were there any barriers to participation? 3. In what ways can we improve accessibility?	

Chapter 5

Inclusive practices for online events

Chapter 5

Inclusive practices for online events

With the COVID-19 pandemic putting events to a complete standstill, organisations are congregating to virtual platforms. Online events are expected to grow in demand over the coming period (Grand View Research, 2020).

This chapter covers some inclusive practices that event organisers can incorporate into their online events. Virtual events can range from presentations, ceremonies, activities to virtual concerts and any other new ideas. Commonly used online platforms are:

- Zoom
- Skype
- Google
- MeetHopin

Pre-event

Persons with mobility issues

Persons with visual loss

Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

Persons with developmental conditions

Inclusive practices: Invitation

For: All disability types

To reach out to the widest possible range of audience, provide all event publicity materials in a variety of formats.

- Broadcast media (e.g. radio or television advertisements)
- Print media (e.g. newspapers or flyers)
- Social media (e.g. Instagram or Facebook)

- Depict appropriate icons in all publicity materials.

  - For example, a symbol of access for persons with disabilities is available at Building & Construction Authority.

Example of an accessible publicity material

EVENT NAME

Key Highlights

1.
2.
3.

Location: Sims Avenue 2, Blk 123, #04–567

Date: 15 June 2020,
Time: 9am – 12pm

List accessible services that will be available e.g. Sign Language Interpreter available

Inclusive practices: Registration

For: All disability types

- Assign a colleague to be in-charge of ensuring accessibility for participants with disabilities. Contact information of this colleague should be made available.

- Send out a registration form with contact details of staff-in-charge.
  - e.g. Should you need assistance, please contact (staff-in-charge) at _____(contact no./e-mail) by _____ (date).

- Ensure there are multiple ways to contact the staff-in-charge including:
  - Phone
  - E-mail

- On the registration form, include a field for participants to indicate any accommodations they require.
  - Field selection could include:
    - Sign Language Interpretation
    - Please indicate any other accommodations: _____

For: Persons with visual loss

- Registration forms or publicity materials should be provided:

  - In accessible electronic format (e.g. PDF) for text-to-speech screen readers.
  - In format compatible with alternative text (e.g. allow for increase font size or change font colour, etc).

Inclusive practices: Venue

For: All disability types

- Test the online platform to ensure that it is easy to use and user-friendly.
- Select a quiet location to conduct the event.
  - Minimise exposure to background noise (e.g. traffic)
  - [Use a plain, dark background](#).

For: Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Ensure that the online platform has closed captioning and automatic transcript.

For: Persons with visual loss

- Ensure that the online platform allow to sync external microphones for better audio.

Inclusive practices: Developing programme
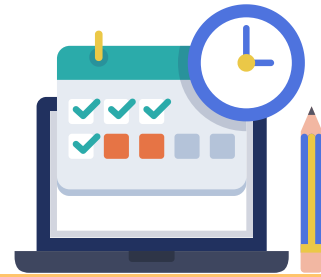
For: All disability types

Preparation for event staff

- Whenever possible, conduct a pre-event briefing for staff online on how to interact with persons with disabilities.

  - e.g. When interacting with a person with intellectual disability online, please use easy to understand words and be patient. Please check if further clarification is required whenever appropriate.

- Useful resources on how to interact with persons with disabilities is available [here](#).

- Encourage event staff to attend [workshops on disability awareness](#).

Breaks and buffer time

- In general, a 30-minute break is recommended for every 90 minutes. This will allow for ample rest for all participants with and without disabilities.

- With determining the duration and interval of breaks, please consider these needs:
  - Rest
  - Bathroom use

Inclusive practices: Materials

For: All disability types

- For posters, keep designs simple. Avoid background graphics which are distracting and may make text harder to read. An example of an accessible poster is available [here](#).

- Whenever possible, share reading materials with participants in advance. This allows for participants to feedback should they require access using a different format.

- Whenever permitted, allow participants to record or take photos of information for replay purposes.

- Use a big font that is easy to read and has a high contrast print, be succinct.
    - Font type: Sans-serif (e.g. Century Gothic, Arial, Verdana)
    - Font size: 16 or larger

Example of an inaccessible reading material

Point #1

Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form. It is very wordy. Information presented in paragraph form.

Point #2

Font size is too small. Font size is too small.

Point #3

Font type is not readable. Font type is not readable.

Point #4

There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons. There are no pictures/icons.

Example of an accessible handout

Make use of titles and headers

Font Style

- Make use of Sans-Serif font types (e.g. Arial, Century Gothic, Verdana etc.)
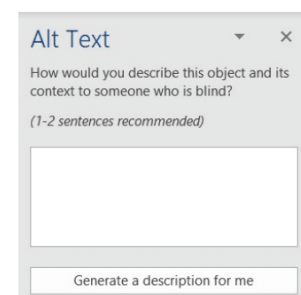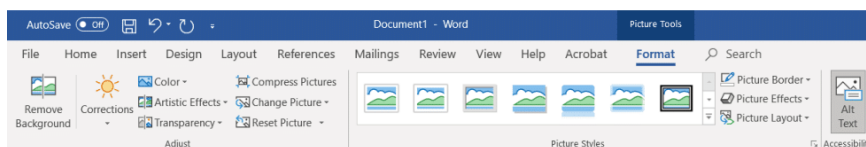- Font size should be 16pts or larger

Content

- Avoid having chunks of information. Use bullet points or numberings instead.
- Colours should be of accessible contrast. Try not to use light font colours against a light background, or dark font colours against a dark background.
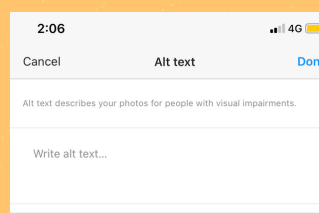
Visuals

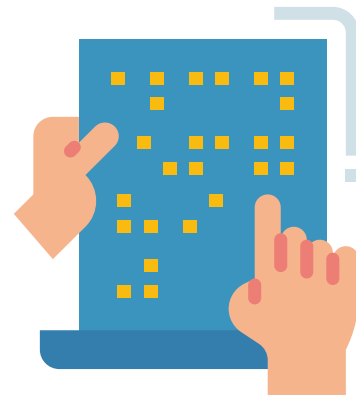Do make use of pictures or icons whenever possible.

And don't forget to add Alternative Text to the pictures!

Did you know?

Alternative text can also be done on social media platforms such as Instagram.

For: Persons with visual loss

- Consider preparing materials in alternative communication formats such as audio descriptions, braille and easy-to-read versions.

- Example of braille services (for participants who read braille):
  - [Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped](#)

For: Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Consider preparing materials in sign language, Speech-to-text reporter (STTR), subtitles and live captioning.

- Examples of closed-captioning / subtitle services:
  - [Lingua Technologies](#)
  - [Asian Absolute](#)

- For Deaf access or Sign Language Interpretation services:
    - [The Singapore Association for the Deaf](#)

- For events of longer duration, consider hiring more than one Sign Language Interpreter and rotate among them as they need regular rests.
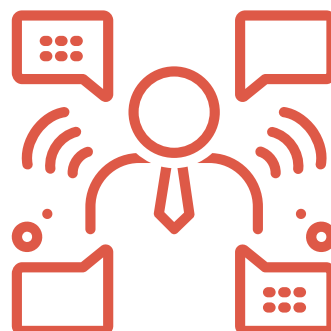
Inclusive practices: Equipment

For: All disability types

- Earpieces with microphones attached for participants and speakers.

- Laptop and phone (webcam/camera is clear)

Event
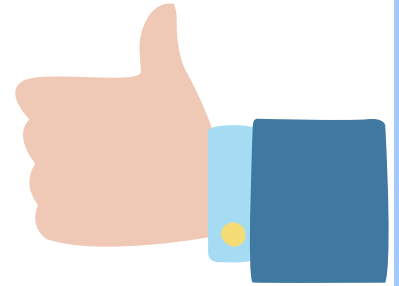
Inclusive practices: Actual day

For: All disability types

- Gently remind speakers/presenters to speak at an audible volume and pace.

- To note: Flashy accessories, hand gestures, face masks can make lip-reading more challenging for a person with hearing disability.

Post-event

Inclusive practices: Feedback

For: All disability types

- It is important to gather feedback. This can be done through conversations or feedback forms with specific questions on accessibility. If you already have a feedback form, you may wish to add additional questions to the form. For example:

    1. Were you able to fully participate in the event?
    2. Were there any barriers to participation?
    3. In what ways can we improve accessibility?

A Quick Checklist for Inclusive Online Events

Stage of Event	Inclusive practices	Check:
Pre-event		
Invitations	Publicise event across different media platforms (e.g. broadcast media, print media, social media).	
	Use appropriate icons.	
Registration	Assign a staff-in-charge to ensure accessibility for participants with disabilities.	
	Send out registrations forms with contact details of staff-in-charge.	
	Provide multiple ways to contact staff-in-charge (e.g phone and email).	
	Distribute registration forms/publicity materials that are in accessible electronic format (e.g. PDFs).	
	Registration forms/publicity materials have accessible features (e.g. text-to-speech and alternate text descriptions).	
	Add a section in the registration form for participants to indicate any accommodation(s) needed.	

Venue	Check that the online platform is easy to use and user-friendly.	
	Check that the online platform has necessary accommodations such as closed-captioning.	
	Conduct the event in a location with minimal background noise.	
	Use a plain and dark background.	
Developing programme	Conduct a pre-event briefing for staff on how to interact with persons with disabilities.	
	Confirm the event details in advance.	
	Schedule a 30-minute break for every 90 minutes.	
Event day		
Materials	Keep design of materials simple, without distracting graphics background.	
	Send schedule and event materials to participants in advance.	

Materials	Use a big font that is easy to read and have a high contrast print for materials (e.g. font type: Sans-serif, font size: 16 or larger).	
	Allow participants to record/take photos during the event for replay purposes (if possible).	
	Include subtitles in video inputs.	
	Engage in close-captioning services (if needed).	
	Engage Sign Language Interpreter (if needed).	
Equipment	The host is using earphones/headphones with a microphone.	
	The host has a clear webcam.	
Actual day	Prepare presenters for the event. (e.g. properly attired, articulations of the presenter are clear and speech pace is at an appropriate rate).	

Post-event		
Feedback	Provide feedback forms with alternative formats to cater to all participants (e.g. physical forms & PDF forms).	
	Encourage participants to share their thoughts in the feedback form. Some questions that can be asked are: 1. Were you able to fully participate in the event? 2. Were there any barriers to participation? 3. In what ways can we improve accessibility?	

Chapter 6

General Disability Resources

General disability resources

STUDIES

- Understanding the Quality Of Life of Adults with Disabilities (Singapore) ([NCSS, 2017](#)).
  This study examines the Quality of Life of adults with disabilities, the public's attitude towards persons with disabilities and suggestions on how to improve lives of persons with disability.

- Understanding Persons with Disabilities (Singapore) ([NCSS, 2015](#)).
  This booklet details the barriers faced by persons with disabilities and shares useful tips to enhance social interactions.

General disability resources

TOOLKITS

- Challenging Behaviors Toolkits (New York) (Autism Speaks, 2018). This toolkit outlines challenging behaviours and provides tips on behavioural management to support persons with autism.

- Lead Toolkit (New Zealand) (Ministry of Social Development, 2016). This toolkit provides a framework to promote employment of persons with disabilities. It also shares accommodation measures to promote inclusiveness of persons with disabilities at workplaces.

- Starters Kit for disability employment (Singapore) (SG Enable, n.d.). To support employers, this toolkit outlines existing resources that employers can tap on to promote an inclusion workplace for persons with disabilities.

General disability resources

GUIDES

- Activities for People with Disabilities (Australia) (I, 2015).
  This website lists suitable activities according to the disability types.

- Adapted Physical Education Activities and Games for individuals with disabilities (Adapted Physical Activity, 2017).
  This "Youtube" video gives event organisers ideas on what they can do to alter activities in order to include persons with disabilities in their events.

- Communicating (United Kingdom) (National Autistic Society, 2017).
  This website provides strategies to interact with persons on the autism spectrum.

- Communicating with People with Disabilities (United States) (National League for Nursing, 2017).
  This website has recommendations for event organisers to take note when communicating with the different types of disabilities.
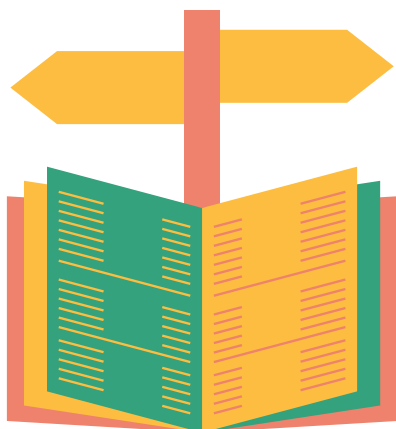
General disability resources

- Creating a Quiet Space (Ireland) (AsIAM.ie, 2018).
  This website provides a guide on how to set up a calming area for persons on the autism spectrum.

- Engaging with disabled people: An event planning guide (United Kingdom) (Equality and Human Rights Commision, 2018).
  This guide highlights what event organisers could take note when planning an event for persons with disabilities.

- Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Service Days and Events (United States) (The Points of Light Foundation, n.d.).
  This guide describes strategies to promote inclusion for events. Tips cover from pre-event stage to post-event stage.

- Let's Play Together (Singapore) (NCSS, 2015).
  This guide contains ideas and recommendations for conducting inclusive games and activities.

General disability resources

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Examples of Wheelchair-friendly Transport Services:

- Care Beyond ([Care Beyond, n.d.](#)).

- Stream Mobility ([Stream Mobility, 2018](#)).

- Handicaps Welfare Association ([Handicaps Welfare Association, 2020](#)).

- Caring Fleet ([Caring Fleet, 2017](#)).

Examples of Subtitling Services:

- Asiatis Translation Interpretation Subtitling Singapore ([Asiatis Translation Interpretation Subtitling Singapore, n.d.](#)).

- Lingua Technologies International ([Lingua Technologies International, n.d.](#)).

- Raffles Translation Services ([Raffles Translation Services, n.d.](#)).

- Asian Absolute ([Asian Absolute, 2020](#)).
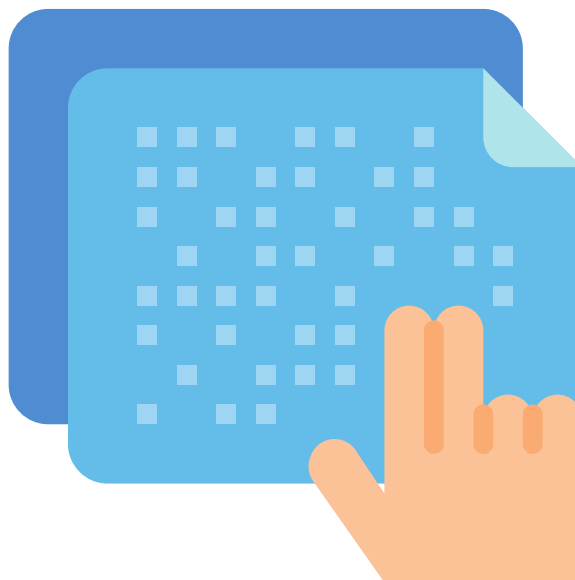
General disability resources

Example of Braille service:

- Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped ([Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped, 2017](#)).

Example of Sign Language Interpreter service:

- The Singapore Association For The Deaf ([The Singapore Association For The Deaf, 2018](#)).

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