

Checklist for accessible events

This checklist offers suggestions and tips on what to consider when organising your event so that everyone can participate with as few barriers as possible. Our suggestion: discuss this checklist with your event organiser and caterer, or use it for your internal planning.



Illustration: Dr. Petra Zadel-Sodtke

Who benefits from an accessible event?

Accessibility is relevant to people of all ages, with and without disabilities or other impairments. Everyone benefits from an accessible event: older people, younger people, and people with impairments, including deaf and hard-of-hearing people, blind and partially sighted people, wheelchair users, people with rare or chronic conditions such as allergies, and people with cognitive impairments or mental health conditions.

Choosing the venue

Getting to the venue

- ☒ Central location (good public transport links and short distances)
- ☒ Accessible travel by public transport
- ☒ Step-free route / access from the nearest public transport stop or car park to the venue
- ☒ Sufficient accessible parking spaces

The venue

- ☒ Step-free access to the premises
- ☒ Lifts at least 1.10 m wide and 1.40 m long
- ☒ Sufficient space for wheelchairs and walking frames (aisles at least 1.20 m wide; manoeuvring radius of at least 1.50 m in all areas)
- ☒ Doorways at least 0.90 m wide; thresholds no higher than 2 cm
- ☒ Where possible, premises with accessible escape routes and tactile, visual and audible wayfinding systems, with safe, clearly identifiable stair treads and handrails
- ☒ Sufficient accessible toilets (provide signs)
- ☒ High-contrast markings on obstacles such as glass doors

Book and brief interpreters well in advance

- ☐ Sign language interpreters, e.g. through the professional association of interpreters and translators in Germany: www.bdue.de
- ☐ Speech-to-text interpreters, e.g. through the German Federal Association of Speech-to-Text Interpreters: www.bsd-ev.org

We recommend booking sign language and speech-to-text interpreters before sending out invitations. Observe cancellation deadlines!

Invitation

- ☐ Make invitations accessible: sans-serif fonts, at least 12 pt, and sufficient colour contrast (www.leserlich.info). Digital invitations must be readable by screen readers (Word or accessible PDF).
- ☒ Explain the accessibility features of the building (accessible toilets, parking spaces, etc.) and include this information with the invitation
- ☒ Offer at least two ways to respond (two-senses principle: telephone and email, fax or letter, etc.)
- ☐ Specify the deadline for replies (important for cancellation deadlines for hotels, the venue, and sign language or speech-to-text interpreters)
- ☒ Include directions, particularly for accessible travel (see Choosing the venue above)
- ☐ Also publish accessible event information on your website / social media (in accordance with BITV 2.0 and WCAG 2.1)

Include with the invitation: What do guests need?

Ask about support needs:

- ☐ Speech-to-text interpreters (often need to be booked months in advance)
- ☐ Sign language interpreters (often need to be booked months in advance)
- ☐ Other assistive aids

Ask what aids or accompanying people guests will bring:

- ☐ Wheelchair / walking frame
- ☐ Support person
- ☐ Guide dog

Organisation and event proceedings

- ☐ Make materials accessible (attendance list, name badges, table signs, programme, information in Easy Read where needed, brochures and, if applicable, feedback forms): sans-serif font, at least 12 pt; large print, Braille or Easy Read where needed. Consider sending documents electronically in advance.
- ☒ Before presentations, ask whether blind or partially sighted guests are present so that illustrations, photos and tables can be described verbally in greater detail where needed
- ☐ Position sign language interpreters within sight of the people using their services (introduce the interpreters and these participants to each other before the event)
- ☒ Sufficient lighting
- ☒ Accessible stage
- ☐ Height-adjustable lectern
- ☐ Tables with clearance underneath for wheelchairs

Equipment / accessories:

- ☐ For speech-to-text interpreters: an additional computer with a display, or a projector and screen (ask the interpreters about their technical requirements)
- ☒ Connections for laptops brought by participants
- ☒ Microphones (including clip-on microphones), headsets and speakers
- ☐ Induction hearing loop
- ☐ Consider providing a livestream or chat

Note: Sign language and speech-to-text interpreters usually need the presentation content in advance to prepare (unfamiliar terminology, foreign languages and specialist subject matter).

Catering

- ☒ Make the buffet accessible (readable signs with larger text), reachable by wheelchair (turning space), and with clearance underneath for wheelchairs
- ☐ If using standing-height tables, also provide lower tables for wheelchair users in the same room
- ☒ Avoid wooden skewers (risk of injury to blind and partially sighted people)
- ☒ Stable glasses; always provide cutlery (including for finger food); drinking straws if needed
- ☒ Options for people with allergies / vegetarians / vegans (ask about these in the invitation)
- ☒ Water for guide dogs

Contact:

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