



Internal Accessibility Guide for Meetings and Events

Developed by the Inclusivity Community of Practice

Purpose

People with disabilities are disproportionately affected by violence and disasters and often excluded from peacebuilding processes. Disability is also intersectional to other marginalized identities and is a key consideration in an inclusive agenda. Including people with disabilities is an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals' "Leave No One Behind" framework. The Network's Internal Accessibility Guide is a resource in our inclusion strategy and implementation plan. Many disabilities are invisible and by following these practices in our work, we will be more welcoming to everyone involved and set an example for inclusive practice.

Language To Use When Writing and Speaking About Disability

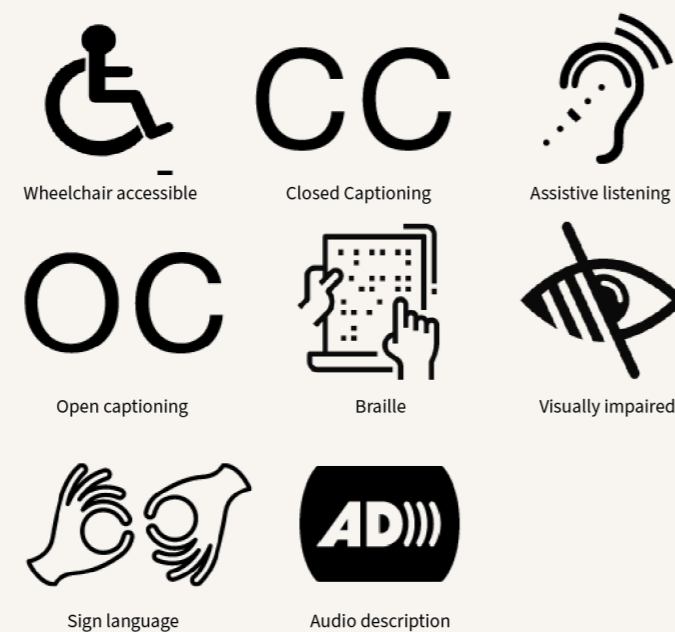
Use a **person-first approach**. For example, rather than say "visually disabled person," it is better to say "person with a visual disability." Rather than say "developmentally disabled people," it is better to say "people with developmental disabilities." It's often best to reflect the language a person uses to describe themselves.

Meeting Invitations and Accessibility

In all meeting invitations, include **accessibility language**. "We strive to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully. To request an accommodation or if you have questions about accessibility, please contact ... at least 72 hours in advance." You can adapt the amount of time you need to your context. Generally, laws around accessibility dictate that requests must be made within a "reasonable" amount of time before the event.

There are universal symbols you can use that depict accessibility, signaling to people with disabilities that an event will make its best effort to accommodate them.

*While sometimes accommodation and accessibility requests can cost money, often they are as simple as enlarging print on materials, shifting seating arrangements, or providing digitally accessible copies of materials that work with screen readers.



Meeting Agendas

When possible, provide meeting agendas ahead of all meetings with clear notes on the type of participation expected. For example, if you are hoping for feedback on something, some people with disabilities may need to provide their feedback in an alternative format or may need time to prepare. If there are multiple ways you can receive feedback, provide those methods along with the agenda.

Meeting Presentations

Create an "access check" slide at the beginning of your presentation. You should briefly describe images on your slides as you present for people who may have visual disabilities in the audience. It is also helpful to send an email to participants before the presentation asking them to let you know if they would like a hard copy of the slides.

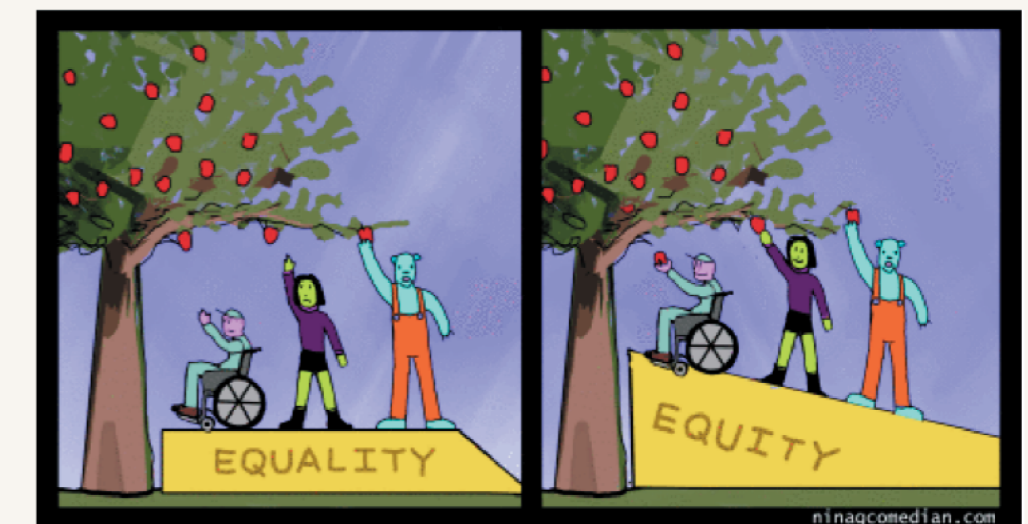
— For example:

Access Check

- Volume / Can you hear me?
- Speed / Am I speaking too quickly?
- Accessible bathrooms and elevator locations
- Mention accessibility features such as audio systems or document formats (braille, large text, digital copy)

Digital Accessibility

Images shared on social media platforms should either be embedded with descriptive language or should have a descriptive caption. Screen readers are often used by people with visual disabilities and, for images to be accessible, screen readers need to be able to describe the images.



*This image depicts the difference between equality and equity. Three people with different heights are trying to reach apples on a tree. In the image with the concept of equality, the tallest person gets easiest access to the apple because all three stand on an even platform. The image depicting equality shows everyone on a slanted ramp with the shortest person at the top now able to reach the apples. The tallest person is at the bottom of the ramp but can still reach the apples.

Social Media Image Instructions and Tips

Twitter: <https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/picture-descriptions>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/help/214124458607871>

Instagram: <https://help.instagram.com/503708446705527>

To note

- PDF documents are often not accessible to screen readers. Adobe has several features you can use to make these documents more accessible. To learn more, visit this link <https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/accessibility-features-pdfs.html>
- Videos should always have captions and when possible, audio descriptions. To learn more, visit this link <https://digital.gov/2014/06/30/508-accessible-videos-how-to-make-audio-descriptions/>

*Disclaimer

Please note that this guide is an overview and does not include all the best practices with accessibility. Please reach out to the Network's Senior Advisor on Inclusive Peace if you have questions or need additional support.

