



ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCE GUIDE

2.0

July 2019

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OVERALL GUIDELINES

Compiled from local and international arts festivals (listed below)

1. Consult groups and organizations working with people with disabilities on festival accessibility initiatives and programming (see lists below).
2. Have staff members, programming team members and volunteers with lived experience.
3. Provide relaxed and sensory friendly screenings.
4. Use wheelchair/mobility device accessible venues for screenings, events, parties, restaurants, etc.
5. Provide accessible parking spaces and/or information on accessible parking spaces nearby.
6. Open captions
 - a. Request open captions from distributors for programmers and/or audience members who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing;
 - b. Apply for grants for funding of open captions;
 - c. Use an open caption service: Cinesend (<https://cinesend.com/>); or Rev.com (<https://rev.com>)
 - d. A less ideal, more expensive alternative is closed captioning services which can be provided to the individual through the use of CaptiView (<https://www.dolby.com/us/en/professional/cinema/products/captiview.html>).
7. Audio Description
 - a. Request audio description from distributors for programmers and /or audience members with vision loss;
 - b. Apply for grants for funding of audio description;
 - c. Learn how to provide audio description yourself in-house;
 - d. Make sure venues have functional audio description system.



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8. Hearing assistive devices

- a. Make sure that the venue has hearing assistive devices on site, ready for use, and that the venue staff is trained to use them.

9. Financial Accessibility

- a. Provide community tickets (complimentary tickets distributed to local groups for people facing financial barriers to attend the festival);
- b. Accessible Ticketing (discounted rates for individuals on fixed income, students, seniors, etc., and/or PWYC option);
- c. Provide funding to support accessible travel and cover other costs related to disability.

10. Scent Sensitivity

- a. Establish a scent-free policy for people with scent sensitivities and allergies.

11. Accessibility Requests

- a. With all ticket or registration processes, provide a field for accessibility requests and contact information to request further accessibility information.
- b. Create a special access form (e.g. [Greenbelt Access Bookings Form](#)) so people with disabilities can make special requests and pre-book access devices, parking spaces, etc.
- c. Create the position of Accessibility Advisor within your organization and ensure that your accessibility policy is prominent (and accessible!) in your publicity materials.

12. Surveys

- a. Include accessibility related questions in surveys;
- b. Make surveys accessible (e.g. large font, plain language, contrasting colours, etc.)



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13. Access Team

- a. Provide trauma-informed and disability awareness training for all festival staff members and volunteers;
- b. Ensure that festival/venue staff and volunteers are trained to assist and accommodate people with disabilities on-site;
- c. Offer to meet blind and low-vision people at the nearest public transport to provide a guide to the venue.

14. Venue Access

- a. Provide alternatives to guests who are unable to wait in the standard queue due to visible and nonvisible disabilities (e.g. early entrance to the cinema, an alternative place to wait, etc.)
- b. Promote awareness about this option so able-bodied attendees are understanding.

15. Communications

- a. Indicate all accessibility features (e.g. open captions, subtitles, ASL, wheelchair access, etc.) in all print materials and online;
- b. Use plain language or *Easy English* (communicating in a very clear and easy-to-understand way using a combination of simple words and images) in festival materials;
- c. Provide information in alternate formats upon request (e.g. electronic Word or PDF documents, Braille versions, etc.).
- d. Let people know that they can make such requests;
- e. Provide printed and digital copies of text-only program book;
- f. Provide phone numbers and directions for nearby hospitals, clinics, and veterinarians (for service animals);
- g. Provide an audio version of the program book and/or prepare staff and volunteers to read parts of the program to those who request it.

16. Accessible Signage

- a. Provide clear, visible and thorough signage on-site (e.g. Quiet areas, accessible washrooms, alternative seating areas, etc.)

17. Service Animals

- a. Allow service animals full access to venues, events, etc.
- b. Provide relief areas for service animals nearby or on-site.

18. Seek Funding Support

Possible sources include:

- a. The Government of Ontario;
- b. The Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation;
- c. J.P. Bickell Foundation.

19. Family/Parent Inclusion (if applicable)

- a. Create a breastfeeding friendly environment;
- b. Provide accessible baby changing facilities;
- c. Host daycare facilities;
- d. Provide childcare subsidies.

20. Gender Inclusivity

- a. Provide gender inclusive training for staff and volunteers;
- b. Create and enforce a gender-inclusive washroom policy for all venues and events.

21. Marketing

- a. Ensure marketing and publicity materials (catalogue, website, brochures, e-newsletters) are provided in accessible formats;
- b. Include the (dis)abilities/Deaf/mad-identifying community in outreach and promotion;
- c. Provide Vlogs with open captions or ASL interpretation;
- d. Provide transcripts for podcasts;
- e. Partner with local organizations that serve people with disabilities (see lists below);
- f. Provide sufficient advance notice to community/s (e.g. up to six (6) months prior to the actual event) even if programming is not final.

EXAMPLES OF ACCESSIBLE FILM FESTIVALS

DISABILITY-LED FILM FESTIVALS

[Ankara Accessible Film Festival](#) (Turkey)

- Audio description, sign language and detailed subtitles for selected screenings
- Post-screening Q&As are translated into Turkish Sign Language
- Venues are accessible for individuals with physical disabilities
- Special screenings for the individuals on the autism spectrum in a half-dark venue, with low voice. No trailers or commercials are screened before the film. Audience can bring food and drinks and are able to move around the cinema
- Hosts accessible screenings in other cities in Turkey
- All programmed films are collected in the Accessible Film Library, which aims to be an accessible film archive

[SuperFest](#) (San Francisco, USA)

- Open/closed [audio description](#) with open captions and ASL interpretation for all live dialogue
- Audience-integrated wheelchair seating
- Close-up seating for people with low vision
- Seating for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing in close proximity to an ASL interpreter and captioning
- A chemical free / scent free area set back from rest of audience (the venue uses no chemicals to clean the facilities and stocks the restrooms with unscented soap)
- A quiet space
- Gender neutral restrooms
- Easy access to public transportation including BART and MUNI
- Ramp access to stage
- Separate screening room without audio description



[Together! Disability Film Festival](#) (London, UK)

- Access fund available to support travel and other costs
- A hearing-aid loop available on request
- BSL interpretation at all performances, together with [Palantype](#) subtitles where possible. Endeavours to source volunteer interpreters for Deaf people wishing to take part in Club activities.
- With notice, will meet blind and visually impaired people from the nearest public transport and provide a guide to the venue.
- Provide live audio-description on demand.
- Welcomes enquiries from people with disabilities who have particular individual needs and strives to meet these.

OTHER EXAMPLES

[Look and Roll](#)

[Klappe Auf!](#)

[Oska Bright Films](#)

[Picture This: International Disability Film Festival](#)



ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE FILM FESTIVALS (DOMESTIC)

[Reel Abilities Film Festival](#)

- A showcase of Canadian and International shorts, features, and documentaries about Deaf and disability cultures and by filmmakers and actors with disabilities and/or who are Deaf.
- Produced the [Reel Access: A Guide to Accessible Film Festivals and Screenings](#)
- Established the CBC-ReelAbilities Breaking Barriers Film Fund
- Delivers ReelEducation program that brings films and lessons about equity and inclusion into classrooms across the province, in 28 schoolboards.

[Human Rights Film Festival](#) (presented by JAYU)

- All feature films & shorts have either open captions or are fully subtitled
- ASL interpretation for every Q&A and performance
- Fully accessible venue
- Held space with an active listener on-site
- Relaxed screening (dim lights, slightly lower sound, audience members are free to come and go)

[Rendezvous with Madness Festival](#) (presented by Workman Arts)

- Held space with active listeners at every screening and performance
- Physical access at selected locations
- Service animal friendly
- Personal support workers available
- Relaxed performances
- ASL Interpreted programs
- Open captioning for selected programs



[Vancouver Queer Film Festival](#) (Vancouver)

- Discounted tickets for students, seniors and underemployed patrons
- Physically accessible washrooms and gender-destabilizing signs on washroom doors at all venues
- Accessibility volunteers
- Courtesy ticketing
- Community ticketing (over 500 complimentary tickets and memberships to community groups for individuals who face financial and other barriers to attending the Festival)
- Free companion seating
- ASL interpretation for select programs
- Childcare subsidies (Parents or guardians can receive \$10 per screening at the venue to assist with childcare costs; Generously supported by The Law Offices of Barbara Findlay Q.C.)
- Scent sensitive policy
- Transit information

[Hot Docs](#) (Toronto)

- Open or Closed Captions provided on select screenings; equipment requests (Captiview) are facilitated at the venue box office, subject to availability.
- Audio Description for select screenings; equipment requests are facilitated at the venue box office, subject to availability.
- Open Captions, Closed Captions and Audio Description availability are indicated by symbols in the program guide and online.
- Hearing Assist Devices are available at Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, Innis Town Hall, Scotiabank Theatre and TIFF Bell Lightbox; guests are encouraged to bring their own headphones. Equipment requests are facilitated at the venue box office, subject to availability.
- For patrons accompanied by an ASL interpreter and in need of light accommodation at a screening, reserved seating and discrete lighting will be made available in a designated area upon 72 hours advance notice. This accommodation is for films not fully subtitled or not offered with captioning.



- Service animals are welcome in all areas of screening venues that are open to the public. Information on designated animal relief areas is provided on the Festival venues page.
- A personal support worker may accompany a patron free of charge to all Hot Docs Festival screenings and events.
- All patrons asked to be considerate of allergies/chemical sensitivities by avoiding perfume, cologne and other scented products.
- In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services for customers with disabilities, Hot Docs will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative venues or services, if available. The notice will be placed at the venues, as well as on our Festival venues page.

ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE FILM FESTIVALS (INT'L)

[Sundance](#) (Park City, Utah)

- All official festival venues are wheelchair accessible
- Assistive listening devices
- Audio description
- Closed Captioning
- Service Animals

[South by Southwest](#) (Austin, Texas)

- Accessibility Designated Badge & Companion Wristband
- Guests can request an accessible hotel room
- Service animals are welcome
- Accessible washroom facilities at outdoor events (e.g. port-o-potties)
- ASL Interpreters for Deaf presenters
- Selected films are closed captioned and subtitled

OTHER ACCESSIBLE ARTS FESTIVALS & EVENTS

[PuSh Festival](#) (Performing Arts Festival, Vancouver, CA)

- VocalEye Live Described Audio
- Specially trained volunteers available to assist patrons who are blind or have low vision get to venues and attend shows. Sighted guides meet patrons at nearby public transit stops and guide them to and from the theatre upon request.
- Print materials:
 - i. Accessible Show Information Sheets
 - ii. Sighted Guides for shows with descriptions
- Vlogs with general information in ASL as well as info on events and performances that are accessible
- ASL interpretation at select performances and specific events (ASL interpretation can be requested for non-performance events)
- Captions or surtitles for select performances
- Contextual descriptions are provided in advance for visual performances that use little or no spoken language; paper copies are also provided at the box office.
- Training in basic ASL interpretation for accessibility volunteers
- Relaxed performances
- Complimentary tickets for support persons
- Accessibility venue audits
- Community ticketing (complimentary or reduced-price tickets provided to social services organizations and community groups for distribution to people who may experience barriers to attendance)
- Gender inclusivity
 - i. Gender inclusive training for volunteers
 - ii. Gender inclusive washroom policy for all Festival venues and events



[Crippling the Arts 2019](#) (Symposium, Conference & Performances, Toronto)

- Wheelchair accessible location
- Community (for persons on fixed income) and companion tickets
- Crip time (recognition that some people orient to time differently)
- Live captioning/transcription
- Visual recorder
- Audio Description
- ASL interpreters and Deaf interpreters
- Attendant care
- Access Team (a team that assists anyone with access needs and answers questions during the symposium)
- Alternative food options with people with food sensitivities
- Accessible and gender-neutral washrooms
- Relaxed room

[Just So Festival](#) (Outdoor festival, UK)

- Alternative Format Information
- Virtual Tour
- Accessible Parking
- Free Personal Assistant Tickets
- Access team trained in equality and access awareness
- Information tent on-site; fitted with a hearing loop, for those using hearing aids
- Accessible washrooms
- Charging points for power wheelchair batteries and other access equipment
- Quiet Space
 - i. Autism Inclusive tent on-site (provides peer-based support for people with Autism Spectrum Conditions and their families)
 - ii. “Quiet Corner” labels
- Service Animals
 - i. Water bowls at several points on-site
 - ii. Accessible relieving areas



- Refrigeration points
- Provides festival site descriptions in advance
 - i. Where possible, will bring characters or performers to other areas to perform for patrons without access to performance area.

[Glastonbury Festival](#) (Performing Arts Festival, UK)

- Accessibility information: <https://cdn.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ACCESS-INFORMATION-PDF-2019.pdf>

[Greenbelt Festival](#) (Festival of Arts, Faith and Justice, UK)

- Special access form to pre-book accessible camping site & accessible parking
- Free personal assistant tickets
- Access team
- Disability parking

[Liberty Festival](#) (Multidisciplinary Arts Festival, UK)

- Audio description headsets
- BSL interpretation, induction loops and speech-to-text services
- BSL and audio-described tours
- Rest area
- Mobility equipment
- Blue Badge temporary parking
- Free shuttle and bus service

[Anime North](#) (Anime Convention, Toronto)

Accessibility Info:

https://www.animenorth.com/live/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=764:access-policy&catid=42:convention-policies&Itemid=68



DISABILITY ARTS ORGANIZATIONS, TORONTO

1. [Reel Abilities Film Festival](#)
2. [Creative Users Projects](#)
3. [Tangled Art + Disability](#)
4. [Workman Arts](#)



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USEFUL LINKS & RESOURCES

ASL Interpretation Services

Canadian Hearing Society Interpreting Services

www.chs.ca/services/interpreting-services

Deaf Spectrum

Produce sign language vlogs to make resources accessible to Deaf communities www.deafspectrum.com

Ontario Association of Sign Language Interpreters

<https://oasli.on.ca/>

Toronto Sign Language Interpreter Service

www.tslis.ca/

Accessible Event Resources

Access Ontario (CAN)

Guide to Accessible Arts Events & Screenings:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/29011/332697.pdf>

Planning Accessible Events, Access Ontario

<https://accessontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Planning-Accessible-Events-May-2016.pdf>

Attitude is Everything (UK)

[DIY and Practical Access Guide](#)

Examples of accessible arts festivals:

<http://www.attitudeiseverything.org.uk/news/just-so-festival-awarded-gold-for-accessibility>

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Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (AUS)

Event Planning and Accessibility: <https://www.adcet.edu.au/disability-practitioner/your-role/inclusive-and-accessible-events/>

Crippling the Arts (CAN)

Access Guide Template for an Arts Event:

<http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/images/festivals/2019/cripping/CTA%20Access%20Guide.pdf>

The CWST Project Consortium (CAN)

Accessible Event Handbook:

http://www.keroul.qc.ca/DATA/PRATIQUEDOCUMENT/243_en.pdf

eLizz, Saint Elizabeth Health Care (CAN)

Event and Venue Accessibility Checklist: <https://elizz.com/caregiver-resources/event-and-venue-accessibility-checklist/>

Event Manager Blog (USA)

Tips on how to organize an accessible event:

<https://www.eventmanagerblog.com/accessible-event>

ReelAccess (CAN)

A Guide to Accessible Film Festivals and Screenings:

http://www.vsao.org/files/pdfs/ReelAccess-Film%20Festivals_E-Guide_Toronto.pdf

Arts & Culture Organizations

Accessible Arts (AUS)

Practical Checklist for Arts and Cultural Organizations to Assist in Improving Access and Developing Audiences:

<https://www.aarts.net.au/resources/>

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Creative Users Project (CAN)

Exploring the intersection of art, accessibility and disability

<http://creativeusers.net/>

Reel Abilities Film Festival (USA & CAN)

Dedicated to promoting awareness and appreciation of the lives, stories and artistic expressions of people with different disabilities

<https://reelabilities.org/>

Tangled Arts (CAN)

Enhancing opportunities for artists with disabilities

<http://tangledarts.org/>

Workman Arts (CAN)

Multi-disciplinary arts organization advancing perspectives on mental health <https://workmanarts.com/>

General Accessibility Resources

Accessibility Services Canada (CAN)

Training (webinars, workshops) and development to meet provincial accessibility legislation

<https://accessontario.com/>

AllAccess (CAN)

Creating Accessible Public Space Toolkit

<http://allaccesspublicspace.ca/>

Carousel (UK)

Resources and training modules for support to people with learning disabilities

<http://www.carousel.org.uk/training-and-resources/>

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Canadian Disability Resources Society (CAN)

Resources for people with physical disabilities to live inclusive and independent lives

<https://disabilityresources.ca/>

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CAN)

<https://cnib.ca>

Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CAN)

Disability-led, community-based resource organization

<https://www.cilt.ca/>

Community Living Toronto, ConnectABILITY (CAN)

<https://connectability.ca/en/>

Humber College (CAN)

Accessibility Toolkit: https://www.humber.ca/research/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Accessibility_Toolkit_Final.pdf

Mobility International (USA)

Disability-led, cross-disability organization advancing disability rights and leadership globally

Resource Library: <https://www.miusa.org/resources>

“Showing Respect by Being Direct”

<https://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/respect>

What to Ask? Sample Accommodation Forms

<https://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/assessmentforms>

Parkinson Canada (CAN)

A Guide to Improving Accessibility in the Workplace and On Route for People with Invisible Disabilities <https://www.parkinson.ca/wp-content/uploads/AtEase.pdf>

<https://www.parkinson.ca/wp-content/uploads/AtEase.pdf>

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Ramp Your Voice: A Self-Advocacy and Empowerment Movement for People with Disabilities (USA)

<http://rampyourvoice.com/>

Website Accessibility

Web Accessibility for Developers (CAN)

Online training textbook for web developers from Ryerson U

<https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/wafd/>

Web Accessibility Initiative (USA)

Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C), Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Strategies, standards and resources for web accessibility

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/>

Reel Access is a year-long initiative supported by funding from the Toronto Arts Council and created in partnership with [Inside Out LGBT Film Festival](#), [ReelAbilities Toronto Film Festival](#), [Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival](#), and [Toronto International Deaf Film & Arts Festival](#).

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