Open Access:
Keys to creating accessible venues and events.

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Foreword

Open access

Culture is transversal and inherent to all human beings. It represents a crucial element of humanity for it is a way of transmitting knowledge, a binder of people and their ability to signify the world, a channel of participation and expression; furthermore, culture harbors expectations, experiences, longings and diversity; this makes each of its manifestations valuable and necessary. Therefore, cultural rights are fundamental, they seek to assure the participation of everyone in the countries' cultural offering, considering the creation, production and consumption in terms of equality, dignity and nondiscrimination.

In March 2020, the Covid-19 crisis had a strong impact on the cultural sector in Mexico. With the physical participation of cultural expressions totally cancelled, the cultural production migrated to digital channels, bending toward users that were technologically savvy with access to connectivity and limiting the experiences

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to the screen. Although the pronounced development of a varied digital cultural offer has been seen, it must be said that some groups may be marginalized from the new channels, specifically artists and disabled people for whom the use of these media may also imply certain barriers for the fulfilment of their cultural rights.

Hoping for the reopening of the face-to-face cultural overture, we have designed this handbook to create accessible spaces that leave no one out. Covid-19 has given us the pause we need to evaluate and rethink our cultural venues: their infrastructure, programming and experiences, and thus ensure that there are no barriers nor impediments to the enjoyment and participation without discrimination for everyone.

The British Council is an organization committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in the arts. As part of our Arts and Disability program, we developed this guide in collaboration with Goss Consultancy LTD (specialized in the promotion of diversity) so that cultural agents, promoters, venues and independent creators can pursue practical solutions to create accessible spaces.

In addition, this publication presents the paradigms of disability, examples of outstanding cultural practices and a glossary of positive terms, with the aim of opening the conversation to overthrow taboos and to build a language that does not exclude anyone.

We hope that this tool is a solid step towards building an inclusive cultural ecosystem in which more people have an open access to culture.

— **María García Holley**
   Director of Arts
   British Council

   Mexico City, July 2020

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Introduction Culture and Entertainment without Barriers

It is estimated that more than a billion people in the world identify as disabled or having a disability. This corresponds to approximately 15% of the total global population, making it the largest minority group on the planet. This data underscores the importance of accessibility when considering our current prohibitive structures around access to goods, services, and facilities - including access to arts and culture.

The British Council is an organization committed to promoting diversity in the arts. To encourage and support organizations towards access in their cultural spaces and programs, we present this handbook written by Nick Goss, Goss Consultancy LTD, which will be useful to venues, cultural promoters, and individuals in creating accessible events and venues that work for all.

This publication aims to provide an agile and practical resource that broadens the perspective on the term Disability Arts, its context, good practices, and a general accessibility criteria. *Open Access* consists of two main

sections. First, the publication develops a theoretical framework that paves the way to a practical guide that can serve as an aid in the creation and development of accessible venues and events. The second part of the handbook addresses the recommended steps that should be taken (changes to physical environment, design, signage, user feedback, etc.) to guarantee that a significant percentage of the audience has a safe and enriching cultural experience. In addition, it allows readers to detect strengths and areas of opportunity in terms of access. These requirements go beyond the physical environment and include aspects such as design, signage and user feedback.

It is important to point out that this guide does not represent the entire Disability Arts ecosystem and in no way suggests the relevance that some practices have over others. Instead, we present a brief selection of organizations and artists who, through their work and practices, have actively contributed to the creation of more accessible venues and events. This is only a very small sample of the Arts and Disability

movement, and again, it should not be taken as a document that exhaustively describes each country's ecosystem or the work that has been developed by the British Council.

The benefits of creating more accessible spaces and events are many and varied. Although it is true that important steps have been taken in the matter in recent decades, the reality is that there is still much to do. We hope this publication helps build better conditions for everyone.

If you are interested in learning more about the Disability Arts movements, we invite you to access the following links:

CAN
http://bit.ly/NACCNA
http://bit.ly/CUPCAN
http://bit.ly/DDMAAC

US
http://bit.ly/NPSDISA
http://bit.ly/ADLUSA
http://bit.ly/NADCUSA

UK
http://bit.ly/DAIBCUSA
http://bit.ly/DRIUSA

In Context: Arts and Disability

Defining Disability[1]

How to define disability? Words and concepts have varied enormously over time and across different cultures, making it difficult to find a single consensus when it comes to a definition.

As a UK-based organization, the British Council adheres to the definition of disability outlined in the Equality Act 2010[2]:

"A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

[1] The original version of this article is part of *Promoting Inclusion. A British Council Guide to Disability Equality*, published by the British Council, n.d.

[2] Parliament of the United Kingdom, *Equality Act 2010*, 2010.

"...the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers.[3]"

Therefore disabled people are not "people with impairments" but:

"...people with impairments who are additionally 'disabled' by socially constructed barriers."[4]

For its part, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) states:

"Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."[5]

[3] Disabled Peoples' International. *Constitution of Disabled People's International*, 1981.

[4] Colin Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain*, 1991.

[5] United Nations. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2006.

These differences between disability, disabled people[6] and impairment underline how the physical, mental or sensory impairments —which can limit someone's abilities— are different from the external conditions (social organization, attitudes, physical environment, etc.) which can also limit them.

It's also important to realize that impairments aren't always obvious or physical: many are hidden or invisible. These might include mental impairments (like bipolar disorder or chronic depression); learning disabilities (like dyslexia), or physical ones (like anemia, diabetes, cancer or HIV/AIDS).

In short, there is no one correct definition of disability, the context is always changing and expanding. When in doubt, remember that each individual person with a lived experience of disability will have a different way of relating to their disability. Understanding the subtleties and context in definitions like these are necessary in beginning open and honest conversations around accessibility.

[6] In the English version of this publication the term 'disabled people' will be used, since it is widely accepted in the UK and is in line with the Social Model of Disability. It is important to note that this term is not recognized as a positive one in Mexico (therefore, its use has been omitted from the Spanish edition of this publication). In this version, the term "people with disabilities" (whose usage is preferred in Mexico) will also appear.
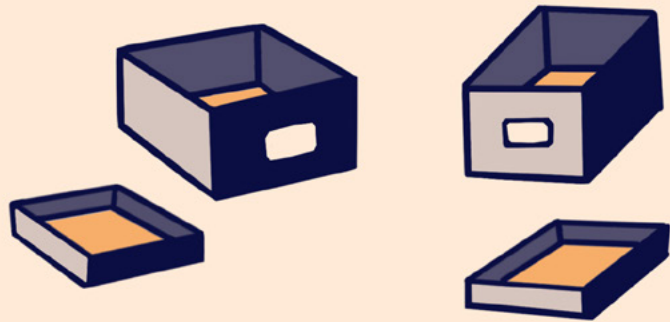
3.2
The Models of Disability[7]

What are the Models of Disability?

Over the last 30 years, the view on disability has shifted radically, thanks to the different models and paradigms used to explain disability. During this time, a greater understanding has been generated,

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[7] The original version of this article is part of *Promoting Inclusion. A British Council Guide to Disability Equality*, published by the British Council, n.d.

which has led to a transition from the "Medical Model," which sees disability in terms of body deficit, to the "Social Model," which looks at disability as a construct created by society.

The Social Model of Disability

The Social Model of Disability defines disability as a social construction. It asks "where's the problem?" and locates the answer in the social organization, the attitudes, and the environment, not in the differences of the individual, as previously stated by the Medical Model of Disability.
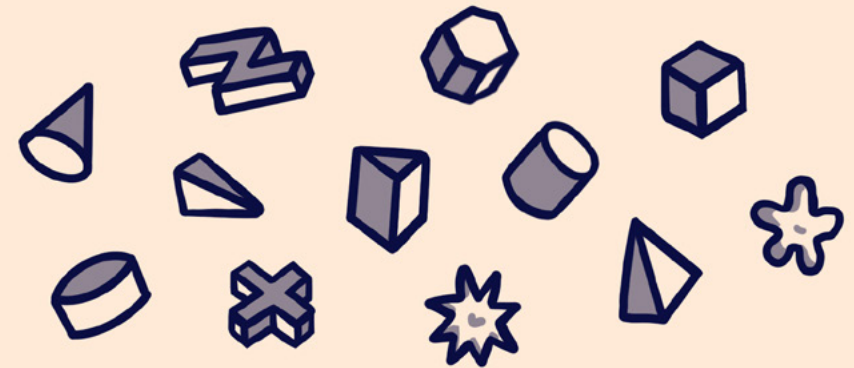
The Social Model was conceived and developed by disabled people and shows that people with different disabilities, far from having separate problems and interests, face common problems, such as the lack of access to information and communication, exclusion from the physical environment, and discrimination in employment. Understanding the Social Model of Disability allows us to find common solutions to eliminate these barriers, and allows us to find expressions of equality and equity, thus challenging the Traditional Model, which is based on the principles of care, cure and well-being.

The Social Model assigns the responsibility to identify and implement changes that eliminate barriers and increase accessibility within organizations, companies and individuals. It argues that these barriers are socially imposed and prevent disabled people from equal and full participation in society.

These barriers can be:

- **Physical:** Structured obstacles in natural or human-made environments that prevent or block mobility or access. Some examples of these barriers include: theater with stairs and without ramps, door handles placed at a high height or poorly legible signs.

- **Structural:** They refer to the norms, customs and ideologies of organizations and institutions that are based on 'normal' judgments and upheld by hierarchies of power. For example, a show that excludes different types of learning.

- **Social:** Beliefs that generate stigma, shame or discomfort towards people with disabilities. For example, difficulty accessing quality employment or education.

- **Economic:** Not acknowledging the financial costs implied by disability. For example, in entertainment the purchase of an additional ticket for a professional caregiver.

• **Attitudinal:** Behaviors, perceptions and assumptions that discriminate against people with disabilities. They usually result from a lack of understanding, judgment, or ideas. For example, believing that a person with a disability could not lead a project.

The Social Model focuses on identifying and trying to remove barriers, rather than trying to 'mend' the disabled person. It is based on critical analysis and principles of empowerment and promotion of human rights.

In the *International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2006), the UN stated that:

"The Social Model sees people with disabilities as "subjects" with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives

based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society."

The Medical Model

The Medical Model views disability as an individual *problem*: this means its focus is on impairments, medical interventions, and possible cures. Disabled people are thus seen as passive, dependent on the expertise of medical specialists to 'fix' them, and, as a result, excluded from a holistic consideration of their needs as unique individuals.
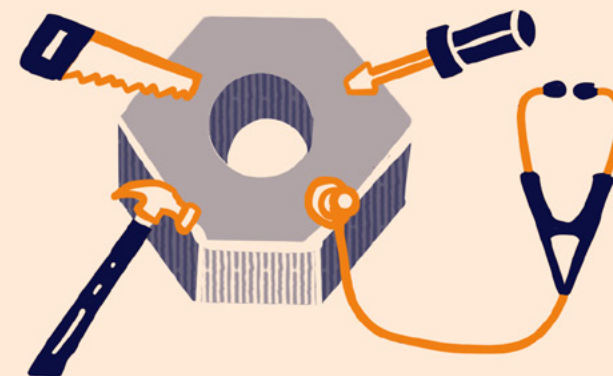
The Charity Model

The Charity Model views disability as unfortunate and disabled people as being in need of pity and charitable giving, including financial contributions. Benevolence and helplessness are seen as major aspects of the Charity Model undermining the rights and abilities of disabled people to make their own decisions.
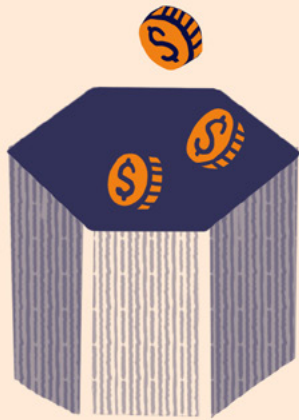
The Traditional Model

The Traditional Model stems from some cultural and/or religious teaching and holds disability is caused by what has gone before, typically the actions of parents, the wider community or the person themselves. Disability is often seen as a punishment and therefore something that is justified. There is no acceptance, empowerment or a desire to promote the rights of disabled people.
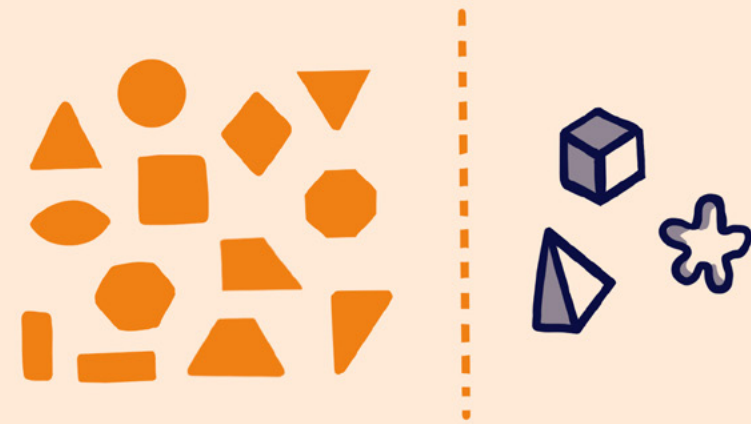
3.3

Disability in Numbers

In the world[8]

- The World Health Organization estimates that 15% of the world population (around 1 billion people) are disabled.

- 80% of disabled people become disabled during their working lives (18 – 64 years).

- 80% of disabled people live in developing countries.

- In Latin America, disabled people represent 12.4% of the population.
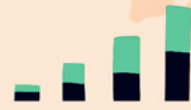
- The 2011 UK Census showed that 18% of its population (11.4 million) reported having a long-term health or disability problem. This proportion has remained unchanged since 2001.

- In the UK, 6% of people working in the arts identify themselves as disabled.

- The spending power of people with a disability in the UK is estimated at £212 billion. Globally it is estimated at £8 trillion.

- One in five people in Europe and the US are disabled.

- While 75% of people without disabilities have formal employment, only 44% of disabled people are employed.

- 40% of disabled people do not have their needs met for assistance with everyday activities.

[8] Figures taken from World Health Organization; Arts Council England; Ernst & Young Global Limited.

In Mexico[9]

- In Mexico, 6% of the population is disabled (7.7 million), which is approximately equivalent to the combined population of Quintana Roo, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, Tlaxcala and Nayarit.

- 5.6% of the population of Mexico City is disabled (500,000 people).

- 52.1% of the total of disabled people (3.98 million people) are 60 years or older.

- 14.6% are of economically active age (between 30 and 59 years old).

[9] Figures taken from Consejo Nacional Para Prevenir la Discriminación (CONAPRED), Encuesta Nacional sobre Discriminación (ENADIS) 2010; Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI); Instituto para la Integración al Desarrollo de las Personas con Discapacidad de la Ciudad de México; Secretaría de Desarrollo Social.

- 19.2% are under 30 years old.

- 14.1% of disabled people are of school age (between 6 and 24 years old).

- In 2014, practically half of the country's population with disabilities (49.5%) was concentrated in seven states: Estado de México (14.6%), Jalisco (8.1%), Veracruz (7.5%), Mexico City (5.8%), Guanajuato (4.6%), Puebla (4.5%) and Michoacán (4.4%).

• In 2018, the National Demographic Dynamics Survey, registered that among the total population of disabled people, 54.2% are women and 45.8% men.

• In Mexico, the main type of disability is mobility (37.3% of the population). This is followed by: visual (14%), intellectual (9.5%), auditory (5.3%) and psychosocial (4.6%).

• 30% of disabled people have two or more disabilities.

• 50% of disabled women are 60 years or older; and among the total of older disabled adults in the country, 60% are women.

• The main triggers of disability among the population were: disease (41.3%) and advanced age (33.1%). Among the two, they are the cause of practically three out of four registered disabilities.

• While 60.2% of people without disabilities participate in economic activities, only 39.1% of disabled people exercise this participation and earn 33.5% less than the rest.

• The main mentions of problems faced by disabled people are:
  - Unemployment (27.5%)
  - Discrimination (20.4%)
  - Self-sufficiency (15.7%)

• In 19% of the households in the country (6.14 million households) lives at least one disabled person." Reword to read, "19% of households in the country (6.14 million) have at least one disabled person.

3.4
Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Throughout recent history, the fight for human rights has achieved important victories. One such example is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948. Another crucial milestone in the field of human rights was the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), an international treaty that recognized and manifested what rights mean specifically for disabled people. The CRPD was adopted on December 13, 2006, and ratified by Mexico two years later, on January 17, 2008. Different organizations of disabled people were involved in the negotiation of the CRPD.

CRPD integrated disability into a human rights vision. It indicated that its member states have a duty to respect, protect and guarantee the human rights of

disabled people. Since CRPD was adopted, its 170 members and more have modified -or are modifying- their laws and policies to comply with the provisions it sets. Its adoption has promoted the rights of people with disabilities internationally and has motivated disabled people to ensure that their rights are exercised and respected.

Cultural rights

Article 30 of CRPD is dedicated to the participation in cultural life, recreational activities, leisure, and sport. It recognizes the right of disabled people to participate, under equal conditions, in cultural life. member states shall take all relevant measures to ensure that disabled people:

a.
Enjoy access to cultural materials in accessible formats;

b.
Enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats;

c.
Enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far as possible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.

Resources such as tactile models can generate more accessible exhibitions.

In Mexico

At a national level, the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States is the main reference point for the rights and obligations of Mexicans.

Its first article establishes that all people will enjoy the human rights recognized in it and in the international treaties to which the Mexican State is a party. Regarding access to culture and

Only a minority of disabled people are employed.

entertainment, the fourth article of the Constitution states that:

"Every person has cultural rights, has the right of access to culture and the right to enjoy state cultural services. The State shall provide the means to spread and develop culture, taking into account the cultural diversity of our country and respecting creative freedom. The law shall provide instruments that guarantee access and participation of any cultural expression."

In Mexico, the Ley General para la Inclusión de las Personas con Discapacidad (General Law for the Inclusion of Disabled People), instituted in 2011, is the instrument that establishes the conditions in which the State must promote, protect and ensure the full exercise of the human rights and freedoms of disabled people. In this law, the Secretaría de Cultura also recognizes the right to culture of people with disabilities.

Examples of some Organizations, Artists and Venues

The term "Arts and Disability" refers to the practices developed by disabled artists, which may or may

In his performances, the actor Nye Russell-Thompson, explores the viewpoint of a person who stammers.

not address the experience of living with a disability. Countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States have an important legacy of good practices that is worth reviewing. Mexico has also initiated important initiatives. These have taken paradigmatic steps towards the construction of a more inclusive cultural sector.

In the handbook created by Goss Consultancy LTD, that is presented in the following pages, the reader will find valuable comments, advice, and checklists that facilitate the access of disabled people to entertainment and culture. It is a tool that promotes that more initiatives and projects reach a greater number of people. At an international level, there are also venues that have designed their own tools, methodologies and programs, designed to motivate the creation of shows that are accessible to all. Here are some examples:

United Kingdom

The Disability Arts Movement in the United Kingdom (UK) began in the 1970s and culminated in the introduction of disability rights legislation in 1995 *(Disability Discrimination Act 1995)*.

Historically, the UK has been at the forefront in the field of disability-led artistic organizations, and has cemented thriving communities within the cultural sphere.

The use of technological devices will improve the entertainment experience for blind people.

Organizations such as **Shape Arts** (founded in 1976) emerged from the Disability Arts Movement and currently operates under the direction of people with disabilities. Its objective is to develop opportunities for disabled artists and to train cultural institutions to offer artistic development programs, as well as to encourage more diverse audiences.

Another outstanding initiative in the UK is **Unlimited,** a program run by Shape Arts and **Arts Admin**, which commissions new work from disabled artists. Since 2013, it has provided over four million pounds (the equivalent of 98 million Mexican pesos) to 280 artists.

Arts Council England is the public organization entrusted with supporting and promoting the arts in England. Its strategy for 2020-2030 is based on "the need to recognize and celebrate the creative lives of all people." One tenent of this document (available on ACE's website) advocates for diversity and equality in the arts. One of its initiatives is the **Creative Case for Diversity**, launched in 2011, which places diversity

as an integral part of the artistic process, a catalyst for innovation and a thrust for culture and change. Its policies address inclusion and diversity in the arts in their broadest sense, including notions of disability, race, and gender. Its website features success stories, research, critical theory, and other resources that promote an inclusive conversation with the arts sector in general.

Artists

It is also worth highlighting some efforts created by artistic collectives. London-based theater company **Graeae** has championed disability arts aesthetics and notions of disability since its creation in 1979. It is chaired by Jenny Sealey MBE, who also served as Artistic Director for the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

On their website they describe themselves as:

"A force for change in world-class theatre, boldly placing D/deaf[10] and disabled actors centre stage and challenging preconceptions."

Another leader in the field of Arts and Disability in the UK is **Candoco Dance Company**, a group of physically-integrated dancers who, for over two decades, have generated work broadening the public's perceptions towards art and talent.

In individual practice, the work of ceramist **Paul Cummins MBE** stands out. Cummins is a dyslexic artist known for his series of large-scale installations that display ceramic flower gardens in historic homes. His work makes no reference to disability.

[10] "Deaf" with a capital 'D' refers to Deaf identity and culture. "deaf" with a lower-case 'd' refers to the experience of not hearing or being hard-of-hearing.

The 111 performance, deals with the interactions between the body and physical structures.

Venues

In recent years, the concept of "relaxed performances" has gained strength within the cultural and entertainment programs of several organizations. One of them is the National Theatre which, season after season, integrates this type of show into their program.

Relaxed performances provide an opportunity for theater audiences who do not feel welcomed with the traditional theater etiquette and atmosphere, such as people with autism, Down syndrome, or sensory or communication disorders, to benefit from a more friendly environment. The basis of the relaxed performances is to provide a structure and methodology to adapt existing staging's or generate new proposals with inclusion values.

One of the champions of this type of performances is Jess Thom, a UK theater artist and comedian known mainly for her stage alter ego: Touretteshero, a character who seeks to raise awareness about Tourette Syndrome, the neurological condition with which she was diagnosed.

The Touretteshero project uses humour to explore the Tourette syndrome.

Mexico

Secretaría de Cultura is responsible for promoting the rights of disabled people to access culture, the development of their artistic abilities and the protection of their intellectual property rights. The efforts made by organizations and individuals also nurture the cultural field and have been examples of excellence. Beyond the figure of **Frida Kahlo** (undoubtedly a reference when talking about Arts and Disability), there are dozens of organizations and individuals in the country that have built a diverse and plural cultural and artistic panorama.

Theater

Seña y Verbo: Teatro de Sordos, Teatro Ciego and the **Festival Oxímoron** are examples of arts organizations whose work can be framed within the concept of Arts and Disability.

Founded in 1993 by Alberto Lomnitz, **Seña y Verbo: Teatro de Sordos** is an artistic and educational association made up of deaf and hearing actors. Throughout the year, the company presents plays for adults and children, in which Mexican Sign Language is combined on stage with spoken Spanish, to create shows for Deaf and hearing people alike. It is currently directed by Eduardo Domínguez, a deaf actor, which also makes this company an example of a disability-led organization in Mexico.

Teatro Ciego is a company created in 2007 that promotes the inclusion of people with visual impairments in the performing arts and fosters an inclusive theatre culture based on respect and equality of opportunities. Although one of the main features of Teatro Ciego's work is to produce shows in the dark, they constantly explore new ways of presenting theater and telling stories; which has led them to create stage experiences aimed at broader audiences. Every year the company also holds the **Encuentro de Teatro de Discapacidad: Teatro para todos y todas,** whose program features shows and discussions about Arts and Disability.

Music

One of the main challenges that the field of Arts and Disability faces Mexico is the barrier imposed by some artistic training centres, many of which do not consider disabled people in their admission requirements. For example, in some music education centers, one of the admission tests consists of sight-reading a score (performing music without studying it ahead of time), something that excludes blind people. However, there has been some progress to consider inclusion in the programs of various institutions.

In the field of music education, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México offers music training and education to disabled people through initiatives such as **Proyecto permanente para apoyar la formación musical profesional de alumnos ciegos y/o débiles visuales**, y **Todos somos uno** (of music education for disabled people).

In the field of classical music, the work of the blind cellist **Maricarmen Graue** is notable. She studied at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música, and in schools of the former Soviet Union, before becoming the co-principal cellist at the Carlos Chávez Symphony Orchestra and recording three solo albums.

Dance

Currently, there are a number of choreographers who have work in dance and disability. In 2000, **Gabriela Medina,** co-director of **La Manga Video y Danza** company, presented a version of *La fabula de Hilario* (a work that won her the National Dance Prize in 1995) that included wheelchair users. **Fuga Danza**, is another company which integrates dancers with and without disabilities and is directed by the teacher and pedagogue **Leticia Peñaloza.**

Another notable group is **Angeles de Luz,** an Oaxaca-based organization that has worked for nearly two decades teaching folk dance to people with Down

syndrome. Their work has been seen on platforms as important as La Guelaguetza.

For its part, the **Centro Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información de la Danza José Limón** has a focus of study on dance and disability. In October 2019, they held the first **Encuentro Arte y Discapacidad: Territorios explorados,** a forum around Arts and Disability.

Events and festivals

At the end of 2019, the Trazando Posibilidades festival was held in Guadalajara, a British Council project created in collaboration with the Secretaría de Cultura de Jalisco. The objective was to strengthen the development of artists with disabilities through the presentation of performances, workshops and exhibitions.

This same interest in promoting Arts and Disability is shared by the **Festival Oxímoron,** a pioneering event
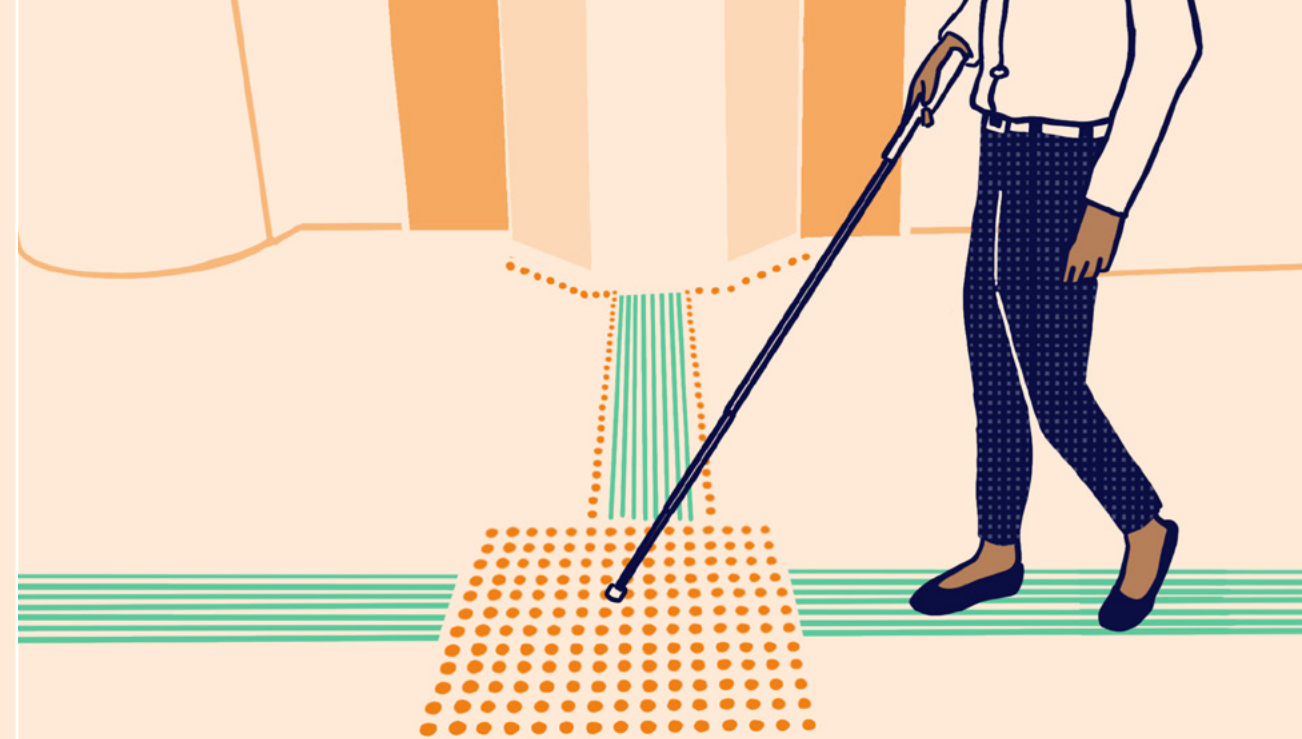
The white cane allows blind people to move independently.

in Latin America that, with six editions to date, has been a meeting point for reflection, analysis, and the display of artistic and cultural projects centered on disability.

Museums and cultural venues

In 2013, the **Red de Museos y Espacios Culturales para la Atención de Personas con Discapacidad** (Network of Museums and Cultural Spaces for the Attention of Disabled People) was founded. This network is composed of more than 45 venues in Mexico City, Guanajuato, Querétaro, Oaxaca and Sonora. Its aim is to create a culture of accessibility and inclusion. As in other countries in the world, many of these institutions are located in heritage buildings, which represents a challenge when it comes to incorporating modifications to the architecture. However, it is also an opportunity to provide creative solutions that promote accessibility and inclusion. The use of reasonable adjustments is an alternative that has been used by various organizations.

A notable example is the **Centro Cultural España** whose building has undergone some adjustments to improve access. In addition, the institution has an area focused on Performing Arts and Disability, and the #discapacidadES program, that promotes cultural activities done by and for disabled people. Some of these initiatives are the workshop Taller de radio por internet para ciegos, the availability of Braille material at their exhibitions and the participation of Mexican Sign Language interpreters during the Noche de Museos[11] and children's activities.

Relaxed Performances: First Act

At the end of the year 2019, the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura (National Institute of Fine Arts and Literature) created the Social Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Program. One of the program's main activities has been Relaxed Performances which addresses the needs of neurodiverse people. The initiative seeks to include a sector of the population that has been disconnected from the country's cultural programs.

[11] In Mexico City, the last Wednesday of every month, dozens of museums and cultural centres extend their hours as part of the Noche de Museos. Many offer free admission and special events.
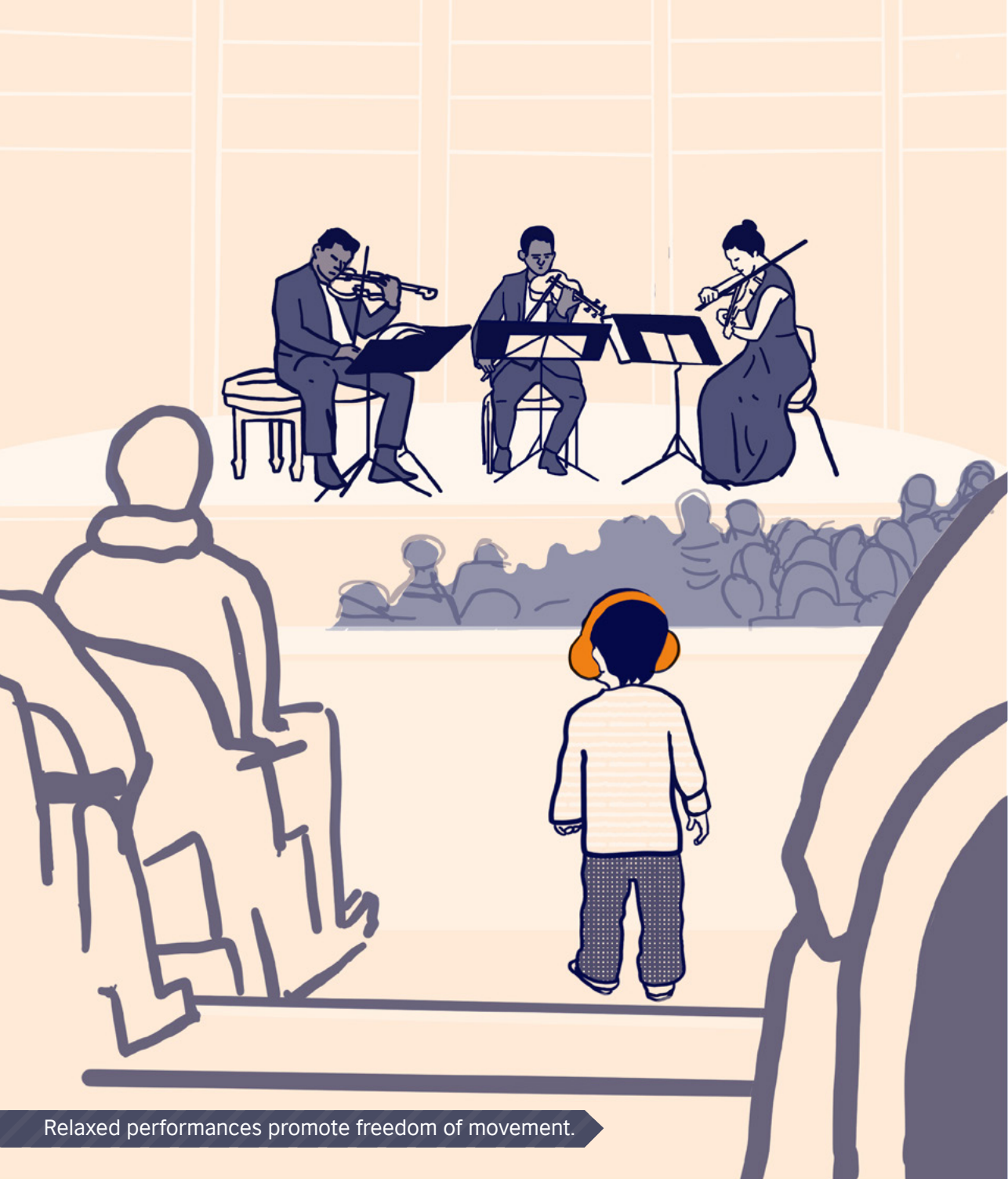
Relaxed performances promote freedom of movement.

Similar to the relaxed presentations that take place in the United Kingdom, some adjustments are implemented in order to avoid excessive stimuli. The public is free to leave and return to the room, move, make sounds and express their moods. In addition, there is an adapted space with background music (that allows people to rest before, during, and after the performance), as well as a Sensorama, a chill-out space where people can manipulate objects and carry out activities that help them relax.

These performances are carried out during the first weekend of each month. In the short term, it is expected to open this offer to "deaf performances" (with LSM interpreters and description) and "blind performances", with audio description and a tactile visit prior to the presentation, so that attendees can get familiarized with the scenery and the dressing room.

Another organization that is making laudable efforts in terms of accessibility, given its scale and the diversity of its offer, is **Corporación Interamericana de Entretenimiento (CIE)**, which presents concerts, theater productions, sporting events, and

family-focused offerings, among others. One of its subsidiary companies, **OCESA** is dedicated to the promotion of shows. One of OCESA's objectives is to become an inclusive business, where the disabled public adds value to the business model and seeks to build better access to culture and entertainment. In this sense, access is seen from a sustainable approach, one that allows them to think about more ambitious and long-lasting goals.

One of the company's actions for inclusion has been the implementation of "Anfitriones Incluyentes" (Inclusive Hosts): personnel trained for providing attention to disabled people, and who are also responsible for adapting the user experience.

In their content, OCESA has also sought to change paradigms and provide greater exposure to the practices created by disabled artists. For example, in the 2020 edition of the Vive Latino Festival, the Mexican band Rock DI (made up of disabled musicians) was part of the program. In theater, they presented a relaxed performance of *The Lion King* musical at

the Telcel Theatre, in Mexico City. As part of the responsibility for labour inclusion, disabled people are hired at events and programs, to provide customer support.

CIE also has a **Diversity and Inclusion Committee** that seeks a responsibility with the equity of their audience and provides directions for new and better practices in their venues, events and shows.
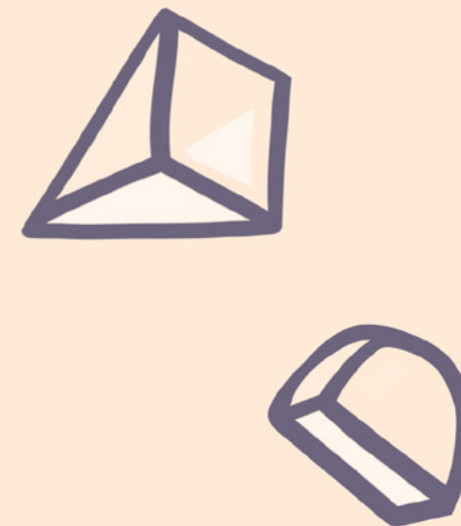
Canada

According to the 2017 Canada Census 22% of the Canadian population over 15 years old (approximately 6.2 million people) identifies as having at least one disability.

For decades, disabled activists have advocated for their rights, and the government has committed to the development of aggressive inclusion policies. In the arts and cultural sector, one of the most visible examples of how the government has addressed these needs emerged more than a decade ago. Ontario was the first province in the country, and one of the first jurisdictions in the world, to enact legislation that established an accessibility objective within a defined time frame. *The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* seeks to improve the accessibility standards in areas that range from transportation and design of public spaces, to healthcare and education. The goals are set to be reached by 2025.

More recently in 2019, the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-81, the *Accessible Canada Act*. This

act was developed following the most inclusive and accessible consultations with the disability community in Canada's history. More than 6,000 Canadians and 100 accessibility organizations shared their views and ideas about an accessible Canada.

During the last 18 years, the gallery **Tangled Art + Disability** has been a catalyst for disability art in Canada, bringing together people and practices to explore art, culture and disability. Their exhibitions are free of charge and offer access features such as audio description, sign language interpretation, wheelchair access, the entry of service animals, and works of art are always placed at an accessible height.

Indefinite Arts Centre offers artistic training and exhibition opportunities for artists with developmental, physical and acquired disabilities while advocating for their inclusion in the global contemporary art sector. Every week, more than 300 artists flock to their 12,000 square-foot multimedia studio and gallery space in Calgary to advance their artistic practice through classes, residencies, public art projects, art book publications, and more.

In Winnipeg, **Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba** brings together a network of artists and stakeholders to promote the inclusion of all artists and audiences with disabilities into the cultural sector.

In 2019 the **Canada Council for the Arts,** the public organization that fosters and promotes the study, enjoyment, and production of the arts in Canada, created *Expanding the Arts II: Deaf and Disability Expression and Engagement Strategy*. This policy is governed by the belief that the artistic practices of disabled people and the Deaf community are a crucial part of the Canadian arts landscape. Through programs, initiatives, and collaborations with other key organizations, the Canada Council promotes the inclusion of disabled artists and audiences across Canada.

Inside Out Theatre are a Deaf and disability theatre company in Calgary Alberta. They produce and present plays created by artists with disabilities and their allies and offer community-based drama programs. Inside Out also hosts the Good Host Program, which provides

accessibility training and consultation to theater companies.

Stage Left Productions, an interdisciplinary performing arts company, was founded in 1999 as an independent collective (in 2003 it was established as a public non-profit organization). It includes various artists who exist both inside and outside the professional arts sector and contributes significantly to the movements of Deaf and disabled artists in Alberta.

Founded in 2007**, Propeller Dance** creates and presents contemporary dance shows. Its programs promote a disability integrated approach to dance and artistic creation as well as education and community development.

Vancouver is home to **Realwheels Theatre**, a professional theatre company whose mission is to create and produce shows that deepen the understanding of the disability experience.

United States

Enacted in 1990, the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is one of the main legal instruments to fight discrimination against disabled people. Its statutes cover areas such as employment, education, transportation, and public and private spaces that are open to the general public.

In terms of access, it has a series of basic standards (known as the ADA Accessibility Guidelines "ADAAG", which seeks to protect the rights of disabled people. For example, its third chapter establishes that private places of public sports venues and cinemas, as well as commercial and public facilities built after 1992, must comply with its guidelines. It requires public buildings and businesses to remove physical barriers to make reasonable adjustments within their facilities. It also indicates the necessary measures that should be taken in order to communicate effectively with clients with visual, hearing and language disabilities.

This law was a watershed in the promotion of accessibility. Beyond physical spaces, there are also organizations and efforts that stimulate the work of disabled artists. One of them is **VSA** (originally Very Special Arts), a pioneering organization in the field of Arts and Disability, based at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in Washington, D.C. Annually seven million people of all ages participate in its programs.

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and VSA are also affiliated with **LEAD** (Leadership for the Exchange in Arts and Disability) which is a professional network of American organizations dedicated to improving access to culture for disabled people.

The **National Endowment for the Arts** (NEA) is an independent federal agency that funds, promotes, and strengthens the creative capacity of communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation. The NEA's Office of Accessibility provides guidance on making arts programs compliant with the ADA, assists applicants and grantees in developing projects that engage with disabled people, and organizes educational offerings to promote greater understanding of the issues within the field and the benefits of arts programming for disabled people.

In the dance sector, several physically-integrated companies have been recognized in the United States. One of them is **Axis,** created in 1987, a group of artists with and without disabilities in the country.

Other notable companies are **Full Radius Dance Company** of Atlanta (created in 1990), **Deaf West Theatre** (founded in Los Angeles in 1991) and **Heidi Latsky Dance** from New York (founded in 2001). These are not disability-led organizations, but they integrate this talent into their productions and have been recognized for it.

In the field of visual arts, some studios collaborate with disabled people to promote their artistic practices. Some of them are **NIAD Art Center** (Nurturing Independence through Artistic Development) in

Richmond, California; **Creativity Explored** in San Francisco, California; **Creative Growth Art Center** in Oakland, California, and **Art Enables,** in Washington, D.C..
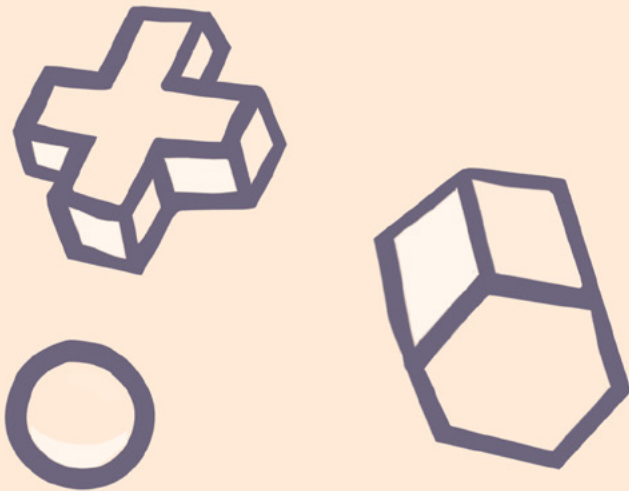
The Cepromusic Ensemble opened the season of Relaxed Performances organized by INBAL.

4

Keys to Create Accessible Venues and Events

A handbook written by Nick Goss, Goss Consultancy LTD for the British Council in Mexico.

4.1
Handbook's introduction

This short guide provides information and advice for venues and events looking to maximize access for disabled people.

It is by no means meant as an exhaustive list of access recommendations, instead it pulls together guidelines, advice, and top tips on access to provide a high-level road map on how to become accessible and inclusive to all.

4.2
Getting the Basics Right

Delivering access for all can seem like a daunting task, full of unknowns and unquantifiable costs. The following can help to assist progress and ensure sustainability.

Access Delivery Plan

It is important that the venue/event has a clear vision on access and then develops an Access Delivery Plan based on this shared vision of what "access-for-all" means. This should be informed by the law, relevant guidance, sector standards, venue aspirations, and by canvassing relevant stakeholders. It is essential that there is shared understanding and buy-in for what access-for-all means for all stakeholders.

The Access Delivery Plan is like a road map setting out what needs to be done, by when, and by whom. It should detail how success will be

measured to make it clear when each step has been achieved. The plan should include short, medium, and long-term goals.

- Short-term goals are things that can be enacted straight away. They may include actions that need to be taken to avoid **reputational risk** or are very easy to complete.

- Medium-term goals are those that can be 'planned in' as the event evolves.

- Long-term goals are those that might be achieved as the event grows and becomes established.

A good example of an Access Action Plan (or Delivery Plan) is provided here from the Australian National Portrait Gallery:
https://bit.ly/NPGAccessPlan
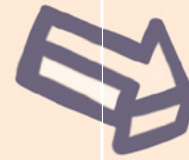
Link to wider business plans and ways of working

The Access Delivery Plan needs to be aligned to how the venue/event is operated. It should, for example, be compatible with (and add value to) the broader business plan and be aligned to similar plans such as an Equality Action Plan. The Equality Action Plan is likely to result from a wider Equality and Diversity Strategy about how, for example, an event will attract the widest range of people from the broadest backgrounds.

More detailed information on Equality Action Plans and how to develop them is outlined here by the Arts Council England:
https://bit.ly/EqualityActionPlanGuidance

- **The Equality Action Plan** needs to detail what is trying to be achieved, how and by whom.

- **The Access Delivery Plan** should include a clear way of reporting progress and who
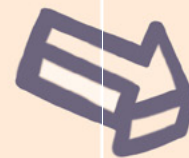
will make those reports. It is important that everybody is kept updated of both achievements and challenges.

Clarify Roles and Responsibilities

It is essential that there is a clear understanding around the roles and responsibilities for delivering access for as many as possible. The Access Delivery Plan requires someone to have overall responsibility for delivering the plan (as it will be the case when executing the "Plan for the Unexpected" step), but it should be made clear that ensuring access is an organization-wide responsibility and everybody has a role to play.

Create the Right Culture

Position access and inclusive design as positive, encouraging novel thinking. It is important that

everybody on the team is encouraged to think about access and inclusion and is empowered to generate new ideas. Public acknowledgement of good ideas can help to position access and inclusive design positively.

Planning in Access

The most effective and efficient way of achieving access for all is to build it into the very DNA of the way the venue/event operates. It should, in effect, be a key business driver and one that is seen by all as critical to the success of the project.

The following might help to achieve this.

Plan Early

Plan accessible features from the start, have access as an overarching theme for every element of the project. Ensure that all stakeholders are aware and understand that access for all is a key success criterion. Have

access built into all relevant policies and practices to ensure that access is considered at the concept stage.

Plan Funding

While many adjustments will be cost-neutral and many expense will be reduced by planning early, it is important to have a budget for access. All possible adjustments that may be required for the event must be calculated in advance. Examples can be: sign language interpretation, printing in different sizes and formats, among others. It will be important that, if not required by the participants, these expenses can be re-analyzed.

Plan for the Unexpected

Be prepared for the unknown and for change. Again, when developing a budget for access, build in a contingency.

Plan Together

As suggested below it is essential that disabled and older stakeholders are included wherever possible and appropriate in the planning process.

Consulting with others

Every project/program will have a broad range of people who are interested and who can suggest and support ways of making it more accessible and inclusive.

Disabled people should be central to this process, the following can help encourage useful and timely feedback.

Ask Everybody about Access

Globally, most disabilities are invisible. In addition to this, many of the people who have a disability under the definition of the social

model do not consider themselves in this group. The more people you ask what access means to them, the richer the feedback.

Ask Early

It is essential that consultation and feedback are sought and undertaken from the planning stage, with the aim of really creating inclusive programs. Leaving it too late means that feedback cannot effectively inform decision-making or project planning and discredits the process.

Ask Open Questions to Start

Open questions on access can lead to broader more dynamic responses. Questions like 'How accessible did you find last year's event?' or 'How accessible did you find the venue?' leave responders with the opportunity to interpret the question how they see fit and cover the issues that they want. Follow-up questions

allow for specific issues and areas to be probed further.

Ask in an Accessible Way

Consultations themselves need to be conducted in an accessible way so, for example:

- Is the focus group/consultation venue accessible?
- Are written materials available in alternative formats?
- Is there the ability to make reasonable adjustments throughout the consultation process?

Feedback

It is very important that those taking part in any consultation are clear on its purpose, how the information is going to be used and what changes have been made as a result.

4.3

Brief Access Checklist

The following is a brief Access Checklist.

To facilitate its use, we have included some boxes that can be checked as each of the tasks has been carried out. Again, this is not intended as an exhaustive list of recommendations but instead as general guidance.

Publicity/Marketing

Status

Have you included information about available access provisions in: print, on your website, at your venue / event (onsite) and in any materials sent to general media / marketing?

Have you made information easily available in alternative formats, for example:
Large print, audio, Braille, plain language, easy read (which may include pictures and icons to illustrate meaning),

A .doc *(Word)* version for emailing / downloading Maps with symbols or create textured maps?

Have you informed staff / public how they can request information in alternative formats if required and communicated this in your marketing materials?

Journey/Travel

Status

Do you have accessible, clearly signposted parking bays?

Are these clearly indicated in your marketing and known to all staff?

Have you publicized nearest public transport links including information on access at stations, bus services, and any road works causing disruptions?

Have you indicated the distances between key points? For example toilets, parking, inside the venue's facilities?
Where are your drop-off / pick-up points? Are they clearly visible to visitors?
Have you indicated any landmarks to guide people to your location?

Signage and Orientation at your Venue

Status

Do you have a staff member acting as the first point of contact for access at your venue?
Is this information clearly publicized to visitors?

Is the signage visible for wheelchair users?

Are there any reflective surfaces that may impact visibility?

Have you ensured all event signage has good color contrast; uses clear font types and a suitable font size?

Is signage written in plain language and / or illustrated?

Have you considered accessible display / exhibition layouts? For example:

- Suitable hanging height of works, labels / interpretation panels, plinths, display cases (eye-level at 1.10m for wheelchair access)

- Turning space for wheelchairs and buggies (i.e. min 1.30m across)

- Adequate lighting

- Interpretation in a range of formats e.g. Audio description, Braille, large print, plain language?

Have you installed signs to highlight all entrances / exits?
Have you ensured footpaths and access routes are level and removed any obstructions?

Have you indicated any stairs, ramps, etc. using high contrast markings?

Have you included any additional assistance / extra services such as:

- Facilities for service dogs (water bowl)

- Use / hire of wheelchair / buggy / scooter

- Induction loops

- Visual announcements for intervals / alarm system?

Are your work spaces accessible (e.g. studios / offices / rehearsal or dressing rooms)?
Can you describe these to visitors clearly?

Have you considered the height of tables / counters to accommodate wheelchair users in all the public areas onsite e.g. café, reception area, lobby, box office etc.?

Accessibility Across all Areas   Status

Have you considered seating options for wheelchair users in performance spaces ensuring they are not segregated from non-wheelchair using friends / family?

Have you informed all staff / audience members of the seating options available in your venue (for example the grade/steepness of the floor and type of seating, sufficient legroom, floor surfaces, numbered sections to locate seats easily)?

Do you have reserved seats for deaf audience members with a clear view of the sign language interpreter?
Have you informed all staff / audience members where the sign language interpreter will be placed?

Are your accessible toilets well-maintained?

If toilets are kept locked, is signage clear on how to gain access? Do all staff know where the key is kept and are they aware of any obstructions stored inside?

On the Day

Has access been incorporated into the 'on the day' pre-event briefing? This should include details of access facilities and to whom staff should escalate access-related questions.

Has the immediate area outside the event been reviewed to check that it is obstacle- free? This should include drop curbs, accessible parking spaces and all principal entry routes.

Have all internal access facilities been checked to ensure they are in working order? This should include all doors, lifts, toilets, hearing enhancement equipment, etc.

Post-Event. Evaluation

Status

Have all evaluation forms included the question 'How accessible did you find the event?'

Is the evaluation itself accessible?
E.g, evaluation forms are available in accessible formats.

Does evaluation provide an option for disabled attendees to disclose a disability when providing feedback?

Does evaluation provide an option for disabled attendees to leave details for follow-up?

Post-Event. Monitoring and Reporting

Status

Can feedback from disabled people be identified and reported separately?

Can feedback from disabled people be anonymized and reported back?

To make an event that works for all is easier if you take into account the steps outlined above. In the following pages, we present other aspects that should also be considered in the organization of the event or show.

A good example of an event which has made real efforts to ensure accessibility is the UK Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Visitors are provided with detailed information on accessibility requirements and disabled

visitors are provided with detailed information on accessibility.

It can be accessed here:
https://bit.ly/AccessAtTheFringe

Attitude is Everything provides a Venue Access Profile Form here:
https://bit.ly/AttitudeAccessGuide

Another good example of a venue accessibility information provision is provided here by Motor Point Arena in Wales (UK):
https://bit.ly/MotorPointAccessibility

Meeting Individual Access Needs

Meeting the access requirements of individuals depends very much on two things; the venue/event informing disabled stakeholders of the facilities/ services they can provide and the disabled person informing the venue/event of what is needed. To achieve this the following might help:

Provide as Much Information as Possible

The more information disabled people know about the venue/event, the more disabled people are likely to tell you about what they need. Detailed information on format/timings/ locations will enable many disabled people to identify what (if any) adjustments they need.

Ask Early and Keep Asking

It is important to ask disabled people about their access requirements at every opportunity, not just at the beginning of the process. The sooner the venue/event know about what might be needed the more likely it can be provided.

Give Examples

When asking if someone needs adjustments/requirements, always give examples i.e. Do you require any disability-related adjustments – e.g. Do you require any adjustment related to a disability, for example sign language interpretation or materials in more accessible formats? By providing examples it helps build the confidence of the disabled person that

access needs have been considered and helps to generate effective dialogue between the disabled person and the venue/event.

Manage Expectations and Have an Access Standard

It is important that every organization, venue, and event manage expectations about what can and cannot be done with respect to making access-related adjustments. Having an Access Policy/Standard can help to achieve this. Access Policies/Standards need to be realistic and credible. They must also be kept under review. A good example of an Access Policy is provided here from the UK organization 'Spread the Word': https://bit.ly/STWAccessPolicy

Let Disabled People Tell You

Enabling disabled people to tell you what they need, how they need it and in a format that suits them is very important. A good example of how this works is the UK Access for Artists tool that enables disabled artists to create their own access document detailing what they need in terms of access requirements: https://bit.ly/AccessDocsForArtists
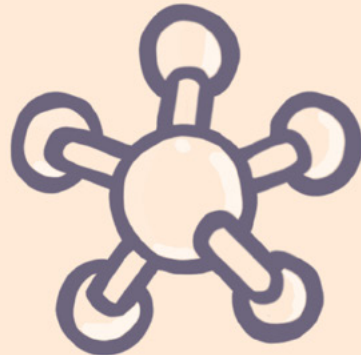
Accessible Information and Marketing

Working with Designers and Web Developers

- Find a way in which design and the readability are compatible, without jeopardizing any of these elements in the execution.

- If your marketing doesn't communicate to everybody, then it's not a good design.

- A good designer will see the creative challenge in making your marketing materials and website both attractive and accessible.

Print

- Use text at 14 point (12 point is the absolute minimum). Avoid italics, serif or 'handwritten' fonts and the use of capitals for long, continuous text.

- Contrast between colors and text should be at least 25%.

- Avoid putting text over images, unless you use a gradient or a semi-transparent layer between the text and the image to 'smooth' the image so the text can be read more clearly.

- Close-set type can be daunting. Leave space between paragraphs and keep your paragraphs short.

- Don't cram the page. Keep it clear and simple.

- Avoid glossy papers (they reflect too much light), low paperweights (because text can show through), and paper folds that obscure text.

Alternative Formats

- Invite people to ask for alternative formats and don't make it sound like a chore. Say "please ask us for this information in alternative formats" rather than "this information is available in alternative formats upon request".

- Know which alternative formats you can supply, and how long it will take. Find suppliers such as printing companies that can produce your brochures or flyers in Braille format and media companies that can convert text into audio or video files. Find out their costs in advance to plan this into your marketing. Keep

some funds available for these alternative formats.

• Don't assume 'alternative formats' always means Braille. A sign language video or an audio format is just as likely.

• Think of the additional benefits of alternative formats. They can help venues reach wider audiences. Audio guides are accessible for people who have a visual impairment, people with learning disabilities, and people with Spanish as a second language, but can also be used to reach a podcast audience.

Web Page

• Write in plain language and keep your paragraphs short: two or three lines are enough.

• Use images of your work. For each image provide a text alternative that describes the picture, which will assist with screen reader software and make your material more accessible to people who have a visual impairment.

Including Subtitles for Online Video Materials

• Use meaningful links. Imagine the link appears on its own at the top of the page, will people know where they'll go / what they'll get if they 'click here'? Make the whole sentence the link by saying: "Click here for more info about accessible marketing" or "Click here for more details of our next exhibition". Check your existing links are descriptive.

• Turn off the sound, and check whether audio content is still available through text equivalent.

- Make sure your web designer knows that you want your site to be accessible and knows about the tools and standards that can help them make it so. WC3's Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) is an accessibility standard for websites, allowing you to achieve an A, AA or AAA rating. For more information, visit their website: https://www.w3.org/WAI/
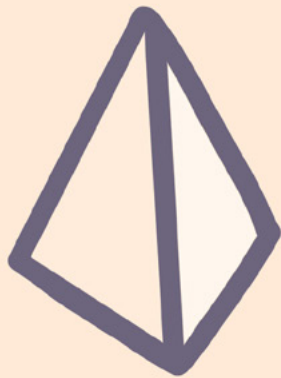
Conclusion

Good events are accessible events and these result from inclusive design, development and delivery. Early and effective consideration of what disabled people might need and how to provide it helps to ensure that accessibility is planned in an economic and efficient way.

A critical part of this is to plan with disabled people to ensure that events are delivered for all, all of the time.

Written by Nick Goss
Goss Consultancy LTD
February 2020

Covid-19 and Maximizing Access & Inclusion

As we manage the impact of Covid-19 and look towards the future, it is important that we focus on a recovery which promotes access and inclusion for all.

Measures to protect against Covid-19 , such as social distancing, must be based on an inclusive recovery strategy that manages health & safety risk, identify impact on differing groups and results in inclusive solutions.

- **Using physical barriers to enforce social distancing that presents barriers for wheelchair users**

- **Using/installing screens in a way that creates glare**

- **Queuing policies that that do not consider the needs of those with additional access needs**

- **Removing facilities / provision (e.g seating) rather than managing them in a Covid-19 secure way (e.g re-positioning or enhanced cleaning regimes**

- **Ensuring hand sanitizers are accessible to all**

5

Other Useful Resources[12]

[12] The Glossary and the Quick Guide to Positive Terms are a compendium of various documents developed by the British Council. For further information please check the sections Bibliography and Other Sources.

5.1
Glossary

A

Accessibility
Combination of constructive and operational elements that allow anyone with disabilities to enter, move, leave, orient themselves and communicate with the safe, autonomous and comfortable use in built spaces, furniture and equipment, transportation, information and communications.

Accessible formats
Ways of presenting printed, written, or visual material so that people who do not read print can access it. These may include Braille, large prints, audio recordings, sign language interpretation and electronic formats, among others, that comply with international accessibility standards.

Accessible physical environment
An environment that benefits all people. Some measures must be taken to remove the obstacles and barriers that hinder access to internal and external facilities, including schools, medical centers and workplaces.

B

Barriers
Factors in a person's environment that, through their absence or presence, limit functioning and create disability. These include aspects such as a physical environment that is not accessible, lack of relevant assistive technology (assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices), negative attitudes of people towards disability, services, systems and policies that are either nonexistent or that hinder the involvement of all people with a health condition in all areas of life.

Braille system
A system of raised-dot writing for the blind in which each letter is represented as a raised pattern that can be read by touching with the fingers.

C

Communication
Includes languages, text display, Braille writing system, tactile communication, large prints, easily accessible multimedia devices, written language, hearing systems, plain language, digitized voice media, augmentative or alternative modes, media and formats of communication, including information technology, and accessible communications.

D

Disability
A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Discrimination
Any distinction, exclusion, or restriction that has the purpose or the effect of hindering or eliminating the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on equal terms, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres, civil or otherwise. It includes all forms of discrimination against disabled people, including the denial of reasonable adjustments.

E

Easy read: The presentation of text in an accessible, easy to understand format. It is often useful for people with learning disabilities and may also be beneficial

for people with other conditions affecting how they process information.

Ergonomics: Process of designing or arranging workplaces, products, and systems so that they fit the people who use them.

I

Institutional culture
System of values, beliefs and behaviors that are consolidated and shared in the daily life of the institution. These cultural assets promote users' confidence and promote the social image of a respectable organization.

M

Mexican Sign Language
Language of the Deaf community in Mexico. It is the primary language of between 87,000 to 100,000 people.

P

Personal mobility
Effective measures to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy personal mobility with the greatest possible independence.

R

Ramp
A sloping route constructed with a slope greater than 1:20 (one inch of vertical rise for every 20 inches of horizontal length, or run).

Reasonable accommodation
Modifications that will allow disabled people to access the same opportunities and services as non-disabled people. Under the Equality Act 2010, there is a legal duty on employers to make these reasonable adjustments for disabled employees.

Relaxed Performance

A type of theater performance that has been adjusted to be accessible for people with sensitivity to lights, sounds, and unexpected events. Relaxed Performances are also accessible to people who wish to move around or make sound during a performance, or who wish to have flexibility to leave and return to the audience space during the performance.

S

Service animals

Working animals that have been trained to perform tasks that assist disabled people. Service animals may also be referred to as assistance animals, assist animals, or helper animals depending on the country and the animal's function.

Sign languages

Languages that use the visual-manual modality to convey meaning. They are expressed through manual articulations in combination with non-manual elements,

and are full-fledged natural languages with their own grammar and lexicon.

Social Vulnerability

The inability of people, organizations, and societies to withstand adverse impacts from multiple stressors to which they are exposed. These impacts are due in part to characteristics inherent in social interactions, institutions, and systems of cultural values.
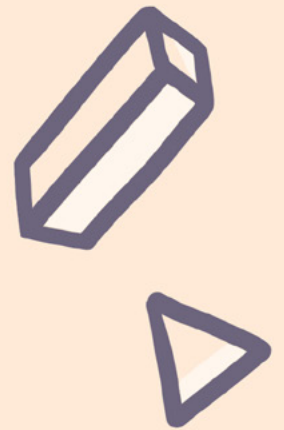
T

Tiflotechnology

A set of theories, knowledge, resources and techniques that enable the practical use of the technological knowledge applied to people who are blind or with low vision.

Transversality

The integration of different areas and disciplines

that should be considered to create access policies and / or programs.

U

Universal Design
Design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.

V

Vulnerability
It is applied to identify those population groups and people that, due to different factors or the combination of them, face situations of risk or discrimination that prevent them from achieving better living standards.

W

White cane
A device used by many people who are blind or visually impaired. A white cane primarily allows its user to scan their surroundings for obstacles or orientation marks, but is also helpful for onlookers in identifying the user as blind or visually impaired and taking appropriate care.
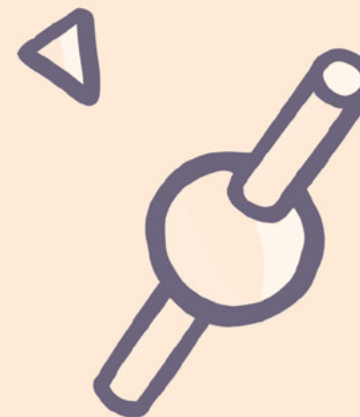
5.2
Quick Guide to Positive Terms

The purpose of this guide is to familiarize the reader with some of the most common terms that he or she might face when referring to disability, whether in a conversation or in the media. It is important not to worry too much about using the correct language and to allow oneself to be corrected. Disabled people appreciate this disposition as much as the use of the right words.

Negative terms	Positive terms
Able-bodied, normal, healthy	Non-disabled
Afflicted by, suffers from, victim of	Has (name of condition or impairment)
Aged, ancient, cougar, fossil, geezer, elderly, old lady, old man, senior, the aged	Older adult, older person
An epileptic, diabetic, depressive, and so on	Person with epilepsy, diabetes, depression or someone who has epilepsy, diabetes, depression
Cripple, invalid	Disabled person
Deaf and dumb; deaf mute	Deaf, user of Sign Language, person with a hearing impairment
Dumb	Mute
Dumb, "One who talks bad"	Person with a speech / communication disability
Dwarf, midget	Someone with restricted growth or short stature
Fits, spells, attacks	Seizures

Has a birth defect	Has a congenital disability
Invalid, Deaf-and-Dumb,	Deaf or Hard-of-hearing,
Deaf-Mute	Person who is deaf or hard of hearing
Mental patient, insane, mad, schizo	Person with a mental health condition
Mentally handicapped	Intellectually disabled
Retarded, slow, idiot, moron	Person with intellectual, cognitive, or developmental disability
Spastic	Person with cerebral palsy
The blind	People with visual impairments; blind people; blind and partially-sighted people

The disabled	People with disabilities or disabled people
Wheelchair-bound; confined to a wheelchair	Wheelchair user
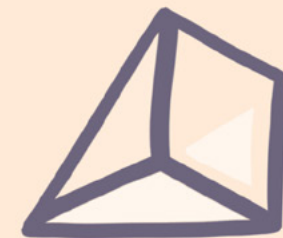
5.3
Additional Websites

Accessible Berlin.
https://bit.ly/AccessibleBerlin

Official London Theatre. Accessibility brochure.
https://bit.ly/Accessbrochure

Accessible Canada. Event Guide
https://bit.ly/AccessibleCanada

Arts Council England. Creative Case.
https://bit.ly/CreativeCaseArtsCouncil

Arts Council England. Action Plan for Equality.
https://bit.ly/EqualityActionPlanGuidance

Shape Arts. An Accessible Marketing Guide.
https://bit.ly/AccessibleMarketingGuide

Visit Scotland. Inclusive and Accessible Events. A guide for event organizers
https://bit.ly/AccessibleEventsScotland
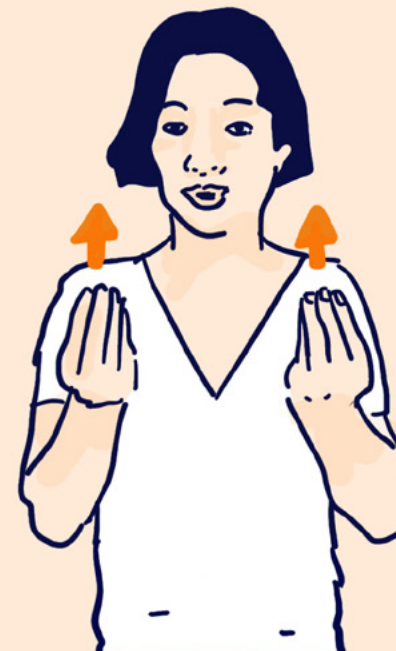
Sign language is the natural language of Deaf.

6

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