

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION: Accessible Events

By Catherine Beck

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

- The equality act (2010) places a legal obligation on all businesses and organisations to make
- “reasonable adjustments” for their services to become accessible.
- What’s considered ‘reasonable’ is to be determined by the communities in which the decisions affect.



BACKGROUND



- The Ops Nest: membership community for venues, organisers, suppliers, and contractors in the event industry to come together to learn, network, and collaborate.
- Developed a platform to engage with communities with accessible needs.
- List of recommendations submitted, and rated by the relevant communities on how to make events more accessible.
- Recommendations pulled into a list soon to be published by the AEO, AEV, & ESSA's Cross Association Diversity Equity and Inclusion working group.





**“A progressive approach to customers
and our people shapes our business.
We believe being progressive will keep
us ahead of the times.”**

OVERVIEW

1. SET THE SCENE
2. BRANDING
3. WEBSITE & MANUALS
4. COMMUNICATION
5. REGISTRATION
6. STAND PLANS
7. FURNITURE
8. BRIEF SPEAKERS
9. BRIEF EVENT STAFF
10. EVENT TIMELINE

**ACCESSIBLE
RECOMMENDATIONS
TO IMPLEMENT...**

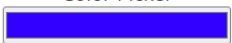
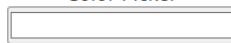
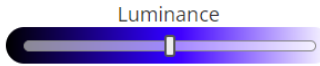
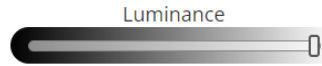
FOR FREE!

1. SET THE SCENE

- i. Create an 'Accessibility Advisory Forum'. If possible, use our existing audience/clients.
- ii. Create or Review a Code of Conduct for the event, to include unacceptable behaviours towards people with accessible needs, and consequences.
- iii. Review our current level of delivery, and budget for improvements where needed.

Contrast Checker

[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > Contrast Checker

Foreground	Background
Hex Value #0000FF	Hex Value #FFFFFF
Color Picker 	Color Picker 
Alpha 1	
Luminance 	Luminance 

Contrast Ratio
8.59:1

[permalink](#)

Normal Text

WCAG AA: **Pass**

WCAG AAA: **Pass**

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

Large Text


WCAG AA: **Pass**

WCAG AAA: **Pass**

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

Graphical Objects and User Interface Components

WCAG AA: **Pass**

Text Input 

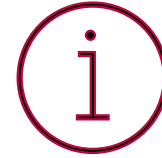
2. BRANDING

- **MARKETING:** Consider those with colour blindness and low vision when creating the brand colours and guidelines.
- **OPERATIONS:** Consider those with colour blindness and low vision when designing graphics and signage.

3. WEBSITE & MANUALS



Have an Accessibility page and outline any accessibility measures at the event.



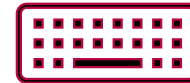
Position accessibility information at the top of the page for those who use screen readers or other assistive technology.



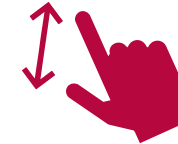
Use and check alt text for images, and other non-text content.



Check the colour contrasts to assist those with low vision.



Ensure the site is keyboard-friendly, rather than relying on people using a mouse.



Ensure the site can be zoomed in to up to 200% without loss of content or functionality.

4. COMMUNICATION

MARKETING	OPERATIONS
Use inclusive language in email campaigns, webpages, etc. E.g. remove gender and references to age.	Use inclusive language in emails, manuals, etc. E.g. remove gender and references to age.
Use simple/basic words and terms	
Keep text to a minimum.	

Collate and communicate information to help those with accessible needs plan their attendance in advance, including:

1. Car parking location(s), shuttle bus service(s), and drop off/pick up area(s).
2. Changing facility location(s).
3. Designate a dedicated quiet time to visit for your neuro diverse audience.
4. Hearing loops.
5. Photos and videos of areas inside the event. [The British Museum website](#) has some good examples.
6. Priority access points for those with accessible needs.
7. Step free access.
8. Sensory rooms.
9. Venue videos of accessible access routes.
10. Wheelchair hire (if venue provides).



5. REGISTRATION

Introduce Priority Access passes for those with accessible needs, so they can access key areas without delay
(e.g. Theatres, Registration, etc.)

Add questions into the Registration platform to give those with accessible needs the opportunity to inform us:
“Accessibility: what can we do to make the event more comfortable for you?”.
“Do you need a Sign Language interpreter?”

Ensure carers can register free of charge.



6. Stand Plans

- Update the stand plan regulations for the event to include:
 1. Best Stand Awards: consider accessibility in criteria
 2. Enforce that all platforms should have angled/curved edges.
 3. If keeping right angled platforms (e.g. safety requirements, platform too high), check there's enough space for wheelchair users to access and manoeuvre on the stand.



- i. Account for wheelchair users when setting seating capacities in theatres and drawing furniture plans, and communicate to supplier.
- ii. Avoid using only poseur tables in communal areas.
- iii. Food tables should be high enough for wheelchair users to access.
- iv. Avoid positioning chairs around all sides of every table in communal areas, so that wheelchair users can access tables with ease.
- v. Use high back padded chairs in theatres, rather than benches and hard seats, to support those with spinal support needs.

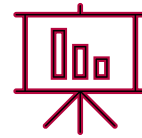


8. BRIEF SPEAKERS



CONTRAST CHECKER

Brief speakers to consider those with colour blindness and low vision when designing their presentation.



ACCESSIBLE POWERPOINT TEMPLATES

PowerPoint has a range of Accessible templates to choose from, and 'Check Accessibility' function.



MICROPHONES

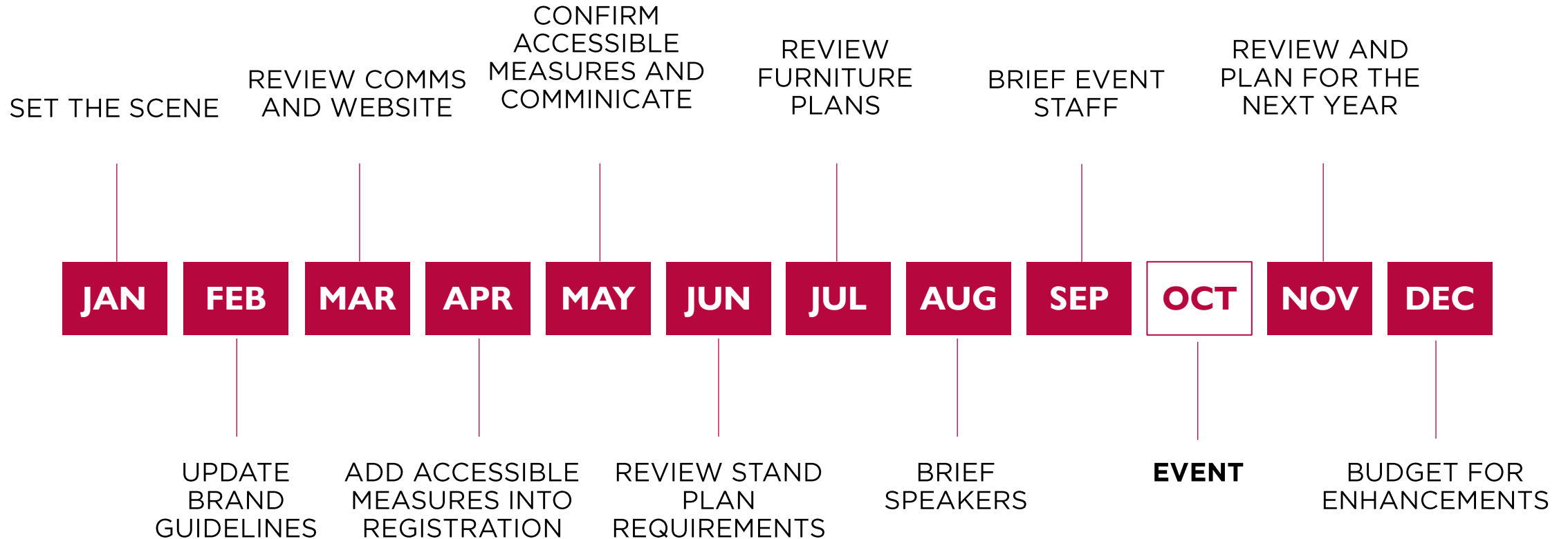
Ensure speakers and Audience know the importance of speaking into a microphone (especially for Q&As), and to wait for one rather than shouting



9. BRIEF EVENT STAFF

- Educate onsite staff (especially Front of House) on barriers faced by those with accessible needs, and how the event is set up to support. Such as:
 - RambleTags (if available).
 - What hidden disability lanyards look like, and mean.
 - Hearing loop locations.
 - Who onsite can speak British Sign Language (or local equivalent), and how to contact any interpreters onsite.
 - Staff and Event badges to show flags of languages that the person speaks.

10. EVENT TIMELINE



OVERVIEW

1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS
2. BLIND AND LOW VISION COMMUNITY
3. DEAF & HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY
4. NEURODIVERSE COMMUNITY
5. WHEELCHAIR USER COMMUNITY

ACCESSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPLEMENT AT A COST

1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS



Hire a consultant to advise on how to make your event(s) more accessible.



Add an accessible widget to the website (e.g. EqualWeb).



Record each theatre/conference session, transcribe, and make available post event.



Provide Mental Health First Aid training for key members of onsite staff.

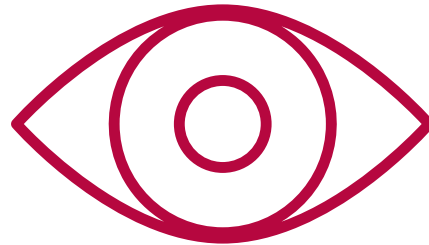


Use the WelcoMe app (UK Events).

2. BLIND & LOW VISION COMMUNITY



Bring Ramble Tag
guidance aids



Widen aisles (min. 3m),
especially if event is
forecasted to be busy.

AEO : ASSOCIATION
: OF EVENT
: ORGANISERS



DEAF COMMUNITY

- Add a Video Relay Service to websites, to enable the deaf community to talk with you, and visa versa (e.g. Sorenson).
N.B. Sign language is their first language, English is their second.
- Provide Deaf Awareness training for key members of onsite staff, including Front of House staff.
- Where interpreters are requested, it is your legal obligation to provide them. Interpreters should also be provided for the whole time the person(s) is/are onsite, not just for certain times or areas of the event.

HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY

- Add Hearing loops at information points, theatres, workshops etc.
- Add Captioning into theatres, with relay screens where appropriate (N.B. This is not an appropriate solution for the Deaf community, as Sign Language is their first language).
- Use and check closed captions and transcripts in all published

4. NEURODIVERSE COMMUNITY



Add Sensory rooms.



Widen aisles (min. 3m), especially if event is forecasted to be busy.

5. WHEELCHAIR USERS, COMMUNITY



1. Add ramps to all theatres with stages, and check weight loading (i.e. to make sure the weight of an electric wheelchair is supported)
2. Widen aisles, especially if event is forecasted to be busy.
3. Wheelchair charging point in the event hall, especially if the venue does not have a dedicated charging point.
4. Lower sections of registration and badge collection points.

Key takeaways



PLAN



BUDGET



COMMUNICATE



REVIEW

AEO : ASSOCIATION
OF EVENT
ORGANISERS





Catherine Beck

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Former Cross association DEI group chair