

Guidance for designing accessible events

Organising events so that everyone can participate as much as possible and attendees' diverse needs are accommodated requires early planning and considered thought.

Consider factors that will ensure your event is accessible to all disabled people, older people, and young people. What can you do to include people with physical and mobility challenges, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments?

This includes wheelchair and mobility scooter users, people on crutches, people with young children in buggies, and people not steady on their feet. It also includes people who are Deaf or hearing impaired, blind people or those with low vision, people who have difficulty understanding and communicating in the same ways as others, people who require the assistance of a support person, and those who may need a quiet space away from a bustling crowd.

There are many details to consider when planning an event where disabled people will or may be attending.

How to include disabled people

- Find a suitable venue that is accessible to all people, including the journey to get to the venue as well as the venue itself.
- Create an accessible invite, promotion materials and all communications about the event.
- Include accessible ablutions if your venue requires temporary ablution blocks (porta loos).
- Have accessible parking spaces and attendants/volunteers to direct people to and around your event.
- Provide spaces for people to sit who are unable to stand for long periods of time.
- Have accessible signage, in plain English, large font, high colour contrast, New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) translations, audio description, Braille, translation into te reo Māori as well as other languages relevant to your audience.
- Use microphones, loud speakers, NZSL interpreters for your announcements, speeches, presentations.

- Some disabled people may need a support person to accompany them to ensure that they are able to participate in the event. Consider the needs of support people as well as the person requiring support.
- Be respectful and kind, demonstrate to all participants/attendees at the event that their needs and views are equally important to those of everyone else.
- Everyone's needs are unique. Do not make assumptions, ask people what they require.
- Engage an accessibility advisor to help ensure your event is a success and every person wanting to attend the event can do so with dignity and ease.
- Follow up with disabled people who attended the event to ask how they found the experience. Also ask if there is anything that could be done differently to make the event more accessible in future.

Additional information and resources

Leading the way in accessible information:

<https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/accessibility-guide/index.html>

Guide to running accessible meetings:

<https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/running-accessible-meetings/>

Guide to making your digital content accessible:

<https://www.digital.govt.nz/digital-government/digital-transformation/digital-inclusion/>

Guide to reasonable accommodation:

<http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources-and-publications/documents/reasonable-accommodation-guide-focussing-on-persons-with-disabilities>