

- Tips for Increasing Accessibility in the Workplace

### **Listen and Learn.**

- The needs, input, and wisdom of disabled, chronically ill, and neurodivergent people should always guide access. There is no one size fits all!

### **Choose and set up accessible venues and meeting space.**

- Ask if there's an accessible entrance, if bathrooms meet ADA compliance, where ramps and elevators are.
- Request room set ups that allow space for wheelchairs to navigate easily.
- Assign someone to be present to help navigate the space. Reserve seating to support people's access needs.
- Encourage people to keep spaces scent free and work with venues to swap scented bathroom products for unscented ones.

### **Be Upfront about Access.**

- Openly communicate your commitment to accessibility in work practices. This can be done by a formal or informal accessibility statement. Follow through with practices that make the commitment real.
- Provide information upfront about how to make an access request and include ways to do so confidentially. Designate a specific person to receive, respond to, and fill these requests.
- Share what forms of access will be available and expected in advance: ASL, CART, audio description, choose quiet location for virtual meetings, etc.
- Share details such as an agenda, presentation text, a heads up if people will be breaking out into small groups, COVID practices and expectations, a layout of spaces, etc.

## **Diversify Ways to Engage**

- Present info verbally as well as in text
- Provide alternate ways of communicating visual content, such as image descriptions, alt text, audio description, identifying one’s self when speaking
- Ensure your website and documents have adequate contrast and font size.
- Make documents and forms available as a large print, screen reader formatted documents
- Provide contact info on forms and documents for requesting alternate formats or submission methods
- Accurately caption videos and/or provide access documents
- Use format settings for documents (Ex: headings, subheadings, etc) and use accessibility checker where that’s possible.

## **Meeting Practices**

- Make it a norm for meeting facilitators and leaders to share expected access practices upfront and interrupt when they are not being adhered to so course corrections can be made.
- Move at the pace of access with patience.
- One speaker at a time.
- Pay attention to how much is happening at once and recalibrate when necessary.
- Consider making it acceptable to stim, sit, stand, eat, drink, be on screen or off screen, and even lie down

## **Meeting Practices for Virtual Meetings**

- Make auto-captioning available as standard practice in the absence of a captioner. Notice how well it works.
- Make it acceptable to be on or off screen or communicate verbally or via chat
- Have someone read chat messages sent to everyone out loud.
- Have people identify themselves when speaking when that’s supportive.

## Work Pace

- Encourage and provide breaks.
- Make it acceptable and encouraged for people to take time off, especially when sick.
- Interrogate and interrupt celebrations of “push through” culture.
- Where you have agency, provide flexibility and consult with those doing the work when setting timelines, due dates, and goals.

## Prioritize Health Needs

- Consider creating a quiet room or space where people can decompress.
- Take food allergies into consideration when catering and determining protocol for shared refrigerator use.
- Clearly label food
- Let people know if certain foods are off limits for safety’s sake.
- Stay tuned in to COVID surges and be transparent about COVID practices. **Refer to People’s CDC’s recommendations.**

## General Ways To Include Disability

- Include a line item for accessibility in your budget to cover supports such as hiring ASL interpreters and CART writers (captioning), ramp rental, Braille versions of documents, video captioning, KN95 masks, and HEPA air purifiers.
- Seek out and include people from within the disability community for planning committees, leadership roles, special guest presentations, etc.
- Take time to learn about disability history, significant people, what disabled content creators have to say about current events related to your work, and issues of concern to the disability community. Focus on content directly from disabled people.
- Ask about accessibility on surveys.
- Include accessibility and disability-related issues in your training schedule.

## RESOURCES

### People’s CDC Safer In-Person Gatherings Toolkit

- One Pager: <https://peoplescdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/PCDC-Safer-in-Person-One-Pager.pdf>
- Full Toolkit: <https://peoplescdc.org/2022/11/17/safer-in-person-gatherings/>

### Disability Justice Audit Tool:

<https://www.northwesthealth.org/djaudittool>

### Website Resources

- Free Audit tool: <https://wave.webaim.org/>
- Overview of Website Accessibility Issues: <https://archive.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap5toolkit.htm>

### How to Enable Captioning on Zoom

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/4409683389709>

### How to Write Alt Text and Image Descriptions

<https://www.perkins.org/resource/how-write-alt-text-and-image-descriptions-visually-impaired/>

### Creating Accessible Documents (grid at bottom has tips & resources for different types of documents)

<https://it.wisc.edu/learn/make-it-accessible/create-accessible-documents/#word-documents>

### Wheelchair Accessibility

<https://www.ada-compliance.com/space-allowance-reach-ranges>

### How to Caption YouTube Videos

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734796?hl=en#zippy=%2Cupload-a-file%2Cauto-sync%2Ctype-manually>

## **Fragrance Free Info**

<https://brownstargirl.org/fragrance-free-femme-of-colour-genius/>

## **Plain Language Guidance**

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewpulrang/2020/10/22/plain-language-writing---an-essential-part-of-accessibility/?sh=466ce1467935>

## **Guidance on Fonts**

- Best Fonts To Use for Website Accessibility:  
<https://www.boia.org/blog/best-fonts-to-use-for-website-accessibility>
- Penn State Font Guidance:  
<https://accessibility.psu.edu/legibility/fontface/>

## **Info on Ableist Language**

<https://www.autistichoya.com/p/ableist-words-and-terms-to-avoid.html>

## **The Revolution Must Be Accessible Guide**

- ASL version: [bit.ly/accessrevolutionASL](https://bit.ly/accessrevolutionASL)
- English version: [bit.ly/heard-access-revolution](https://bit.ly/heard-access-revolution)
- Spanish version: [bit.ly/heard-revolucion-acceso](https://bit.ly/heard-revolucion-acceso)
- Text ONLY English & Spanish with image descriptions version: [bit.ly/accessrevolutionTXT](https://bit.ly/accessrevolutionTXT)

## **Sins Invalid’s 10 Principles of Disability Justice (Short Version)**

<https://www.sinsinvalid.org/blog/10-principles-of-disability-justice>

## **Sins Invalid’s 10 Principles of Disability Justice (Longer Version)**

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bed3674f8370ad8c02efd9a/t/5f1f0783916d8a179c46126d/1595869064521/10 Principles of DJ-2ndEd.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bed3674f8370ad8c02efd9a/t/5f1f0783916d8a179c46126d/1595869064521/10+Principles+of+DJ-2ndEd.pdf)

## **ASL Interpreter Resources**

- Ask organizations that use ASL interpreters regularly for recommendations

- Direct Hire ASL Interpreters (DC/MD/VA) FB page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/392118725037876/?ref=share&mibextid=NSMWBT>
- Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf:  
<https://myaccount.rid.org/Public/Search/Member.aspx>
- Pro Bono ASL Interpreters (DC/MD/VA) FB page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1508146122600458>
- NAOBI (National Alliance of Black Interpreters)
  - National NAOBI FB page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069894712218&mibextid=ZbWKwL>
  - NAOBI DC chapter’s FB page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NAOBIDC/?ref=share&mibextid=NSMWBT>

## Organizational Examples for Program Offerings and Access Statements

- Split This Rock Poetry Festival:  
<https://www.splitthisrock.org/programs/festival-biennial/2020-festival/split-this-rock-festival-accessibility>
- Kinetic Light: <https://kineticlight.org/access>
- “I wanna be with you everywhere” Festival:  
<https://performancespacenewyork.org/i-wanna-be-with-you-everywhere-accessibility-info/>

## A Few Things to Read

- ***Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century***, edited by Alice Wong (2020)
- *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice* by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha
- *The Future Is Disabled: Prophecies, Love Notes and Mourning Songs* by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha
- “Access Intimacy: The Missing Link” by Mia Mingus:  
**<https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2011/05/05/access-intimacy-the-missing-link/>**
- *Fading Scars: My Queer Disability History* by Corbett OToole

## A Few Content Creators

- Imani Barbarin: **<https://crutchesandspice.com/>**
- Tiffany Yu: **<https://www.tiffanyyu.com/>**
- Alice Wong / Disability Visibility Project:  
**<https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/about/>**
- Mia Mingus: **<https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/about-2/>**
- Andrea LaVant / LaVant Consulting:  
**<https://lavantconsultinginc.com/>**

## **A Few Organizational Questions to Ask**

- What accessibility practices can your organization commit to as standard practice?
- How can your organization be more connected to the leadership and wisdom of disabled, chronically ill, neurodivergent, and/or D/deaf people? What groups, organizations, and people in your network could you build a closer relationship with?
- Internally are there unspoken signals that applaud or set an expectation for people to work long hours or over the weekend to “get the job done” by any means necessary?
- What is your organization’s true capacity given its human, financial, and infrastructural resources? In what ways do you push pass this capacity and what is the cost to your staff for those choices?
- How easily can people work from home, call in sick, or otherwise adjust their schedules for personal reasons?
- How does your organization seek and respond to constructive feedback regarding accessibility? [Remember: Feedback is a gift and should be treated as such.]
- Do you have access to expertise on Human Resources policies that should be in place to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act?
- Do people feel safe? Do people feel valued? Do people feel welcomed and included?