



Creating  
an inclusive  
community  
together

# Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability





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# Executive summary

# Executive summary

This section outlines the background information, purpose, audience, and process of the Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability.

These guidelines are part of [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031](#). They are informed by the:

- » [The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Commonwealth\)](#)
- » [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

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## Context

### ***Why are these guidelines important?***

Many people in Australia identify as people with disability. However, people with disability are often excluded from or have poor experiences when taking part in developing processes, products, services, and policies. Their participation would benefit everyone.

Improving the ways in which these activities are designed, planned and delivered, allows more people with disability to have their say on topics that impact them. This improvement will result in people with disability having better, more accessible, and more inclusive experiences.

### ***Who should use these guidelines?***

The guidelines are designed to help people working in the government, private and not-for-profit sectors. They provide practical guidance for people who run activities to design, plan, and deliver processes, products, services, and policies. These activities include:

- research
- testing
- development
- decision making.

## ***How were these guidelines made?***

These guidelines are driven by the insight and expertise of people with disability.

They were made by speaking to people with disability, to disability peak and representative bodies, and to disability service providers across the country.

Research and testing were carried out with people who will use the guidelines from the government, business and not-for-profit sectors.

As well as this extensive engagement with people with disability, these guidelines were written by a team that included people with disability.

## ***Addressing access barriers***

These guidelines are designed based on the social model of disability. They address attitudinal, physical, communication and social barriers that people with disability may experience during an inaccessible engagement.

The guidelines will help users to make sure their activities work for people who may experience challenges with:

- hearing
- immunity
- interacting socially
- moving (upper body and/or lower body)
- regulating emotions
- remembering and/or concentrating
- seeing
- sensing
- speaking
- understanding information.



## ***Follow good practice engagement principles***

These guidelines are based on five key principles that were developed in consultation with people with disability and disability representative organisations.

- **Build mutual respect.** Every person with disability is unique. Their experience of disability is one part of their interesting and complex life. Engage people with disability early, intentionally, respectfully, and continuously, and use their contributions effectively.
- **Take responsibility.** Create and maintain experiences, activities, spaces, and processes that are inclusive of people with disability. We all have different privilege(s), advantages, biases and challenges. Make changes as needed. If you get things wrong, show how you will do better in the future. Keep learning so that people with disability are safe, respected, and valued, and their needs are met.
- **Meet people where they are at.** Be flexible, be prepared, and be willing to adapt your activities to meet the accessibility needs of the people with disability you are engaging.
- **Prioritise safety and trust.** Ask and act in consideration of people's best interests. Be transparent, take concerns seriously, and be an ally.

- **Close the loop.** Tell people with disability the outcome or impact that their contributions made and what happens next. If none of their input will be implemented, explain why.

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## **Design**

This section helps you outline all the design decisions you need to make to run your engagement activity. Think about what kind of activity will suit what you hope to achieve, how you will make it accessible, and how you will find participants, promote your work, pay people with disability, and more.

### ***Start by thinking about accessible design***

Think about the different elements that help make your activity accessible. Consider where and when the activity or activities happen, the costs to people with disability to participate, how many people participate, and the format in which the activity is delivered.

## ***Identify activity characteristics***

How you design your activity changes the role and experience of people with disability. Identify the following features:

- your overarching goal
- if people with disability are to contribute independently, in a group, or are informed only
- how much the contribution of people with disability impacts the outcome of your activity
- if you know the people participating
- how rigid or loose the agenda will be.

## ***Make participant experiences positive***

Make your activity unique and consider how similar or different your activity is to other activities that have been delivered in the past. You should:

- Include this research in how you run your activity.
- Prioritise inclusivity.
- Provide people with disability benefits for participating in the activity.
- Identify and reduce potential harms of your activity to make sure people with disability have positive experiences.

## ***Follow ethical standards***

Ethics involves working out what the right thing to do could be. You must follow strong ethical standards.

- Consider both the intended and unintended impact on people with disability.
- Make sure people remain safe – physically, mentally, culturally, and psychologically.
- Collect, use, and keep information or data correctly.

## ***Partner with disability specialists***

Disability specialists and disability organisations can help in many ways. They are important if you are completing a consultation with or about people with disability. Consider what services you need, find the right person or group to partner with, and be prepared to work together.

## ***Consider time and costs***

Think about, plan, and budget for the time, money, and other resources your activity will need to be fully accessible to people with disability. This will be unique each time you plan and run an activity.

## ***Pay participants***

Pay people with disability for their participation in your activity. You need to decide what people with disability are paid for, who else is paid, and how they will be paid.

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## Plan

This section outlines all the steps and considerations you should make to plan and prepare for your activity. Think about how you will invite participants to join you, when the activity will happen, how you will make the activity accessible to people with disability, what you will tell participants, and how you will make sure everything you use will be accessible.

### ***Identify and attract participants***

Provide people with clear information about who you would like to participate in your activity and what they can expect from their involvement. Promote your activity through broad or targeted channels to reach more and diverse people with disability.

### ***Meet people's accessibility needs***

Make sure everyone can participate fully by asking people what they need. Be clear about what they can expect and what you can provide. Provide accessibility support and tell the people with disability you are engaging how they can use it or where to find it.

### ***Schedule activities***

Allow enough time to plan, schedule, and arrange your activity. This means that you:

- Allow time during and after your activity for questions and debriefing.
- Consider who is present so that people with disability are comfortable and can easily access their accommodations.
- Offer alternative participation methods.

### ***Give participants clear information in advance***

Give clear guidance on how to use and share accessible workshop materials. Make sure participants know what to expect in advance so that they can plan and prepare.

### ***Plan accessible in-person activities***

Make sure to choose a venue that provides an accessible whole-of-journey experience for people with disability. This includes considering the location, participants' transport options, and the venue's features and facilities. Set up the venue, activity spaces, and technology so that people with disability can move freely, take breaks, contribute fully, concentrate, and access audio, visual, and text-based information. Remember to prioritise physical, mental, emotional, and cultural safety.

## ***Create accessible activity materials***

Make sure all materials given, shared, used, and displayed during your activity are accessible to all participants. Plan and check accessibility using relevant platforms, tools, and technology or by consulting experts.

### **Audio and video**

Use audio and video where it supports or is the best way to deliver information. Increase accessibility through clear and easy-to-follow content that has, for example, synchronised captions, transcripts, and signposting.

### **Forms and surveys**

When designing inclusive forms and surveys, incorporate accessibility into both structure and questions and offer multiple ways for people to respond. For example, accept audio, video, drawn, or handwritten responses and provide a phone number so you can type responses on participants' behalf.

Check your questions are clear, readable, and unbiased. At the end of the activity, tell people how they can stay updated and thank them for completing your form or survey.

## **Images and diagrams**

Using images and diagrams can make content simple, clear, and visually engaging. Make sure images are clear and that they contain descriptions and alternative text to help more people benefit from them.

### **Presentations**

When designing presentations, consider how your presentation will be shown to people with disability. Make information clear, simple, and easy to follow. Give people accessible copies in advance.

### **Print and digital documents**

Make sure all participants can access the documents you provide them. Check the accessibility of every document format you use, as well as the format people with disability will use. This supports more people to better use, navigate, and understand your document.

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## **Deliver**

This section helps you to think about what you need to deliver your accessible and inclusive activity as it happens. Arrive early and take the time to check that everything is ready to go.

### ***Check your readiness***

Make sure you are well-prepared to deliver a positive and accessible experience for participants. Arrive early and ensure your team and everything you will use is ready.

### ***Check remote tools***

Make sure all remote platforms and tools you use in your activity meet participants' accessibility needs and work with their support tools. Choose accessible platforms and tools that work for what you are trying to do. Plan and test sound, audio, camera, video, presentations, assistive technology integration, and other accessibility features.

### ***Manage changing responsibility between team members***

Make sure participants always know who is responsible for the activity or project, and who to contact if needed. Make sure you have all the information you need to deliver a positive and accessible activity for people with disability.

## ***Deliver an inclusive activity***

Think about how you are meeting accessibility needs throughout your activity. Begin with clear and inclusive introductions, pay people with disability for their participation, set clear expectations, remind participants what to do during the activity, check-in with people to see if you are meeting their accessibility needs, thank participants, and provide participants with information that closes the loop after the activity is complete.

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## **Follow up**

This section tells you what you should do and think about once your activity is complete – what you will do with the information you have collected, how you understand that information, how you reference what people have told you, how to ensure that participants can tell you how they felt the activity went, and how you can use all of this to improve how you do your work in the future.

### ***Analyse and reflect with people with disability***

When analysing or reflecting on information you learned during the activity, invite people with disability to enrich your findings. Consider how you included people with disability in the activity and how you might increase participation or inclusion in future activities. This respects the autonomy of participants and may maintain the trust of the people with disability you engaged.

### ***Quote participants accurately***

Once you have completed the activity, if they have agreed, you may wish to use the information provided by participants in quotations. Use participants' exact words and respect how they are identified.

### ***Promote effective follow up***

Tell participants what will happen next. Provide an update, and let participants know that their commitment and effort was effective using clear follow-up communication.

### ***Use feedback to evaluate your activity***

Take the time to reflect on the activities based on the experiences of both participants and your team members. This will improve both your future activities and your work practice.

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## **Tools**

We have created tools to support implementation of the guidelines. The tools include examples and templates that offers practical support for users at different stages in their engagement processes.

### ***Examples***

Examples are materials based on real events and advice that people can use to guide the development of materials for their activity. These are longer examples than those included in the guidelines. Examples include a housekeeping discussion guide and a quick guide for facilitating for people with disability.

### ***Templates***

Templates are partially completed materials that users can complete with information about their engagement. Templates include an expression of interest form and a consent form.

# Context

# Context and audience for these guidelines

This section outlines the context behind, purpose of, and audience for the Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability.

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## Context behind these guidelines

Many people in Australia identify as people with disability. However, people with disability are often excluded from or have poor experiences when taking part in activities and processes that develop products, services, and policies. Their participation would benefit everyone.

Improving the ways in which these activities are designed, planned, and delivered allows more people with disability to have their say on topics that impact them. This will result in people with disability having better, more accessible, and more inclusive experiences.

These guidelines are a commitment under [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031](#), and their development has been funded by the Australian government. The aim is that people with disability will play a central and active role in the strategy over its life.

People with disability who provided advice on developing the strategy told the Australian government that a good practice engagement guide would be a valuable resource. These guidelines will help remove barriers to participation for people with disability and uphold the rights of people with disability to access the same opportunities in the community as everyone else.

The guidelines are informed by:

- » [The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Commonwealth\)](#)
- » [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

The Disability Gateway has more information on [the strategy and supporting documents](#).



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## Purpose of these guidelines

These guidelines are intended to inform the development of inclusive, accessible, and meaningful consultation and engagement processes for government, business and not-for-profit organisations.

The guidelines aim to:

- Support the inclusion of people with disability in engagement processes.
- Provide good practice recommendations for practitioners to encourage accessible and inclusive participation in public activities.
- Suggest standard practice across the public engagement sector when engaging with people with disability.
- Promote principles that contribute to and encourage meaningful engagement with people with disability.

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## Audience for these guidelines

The primary audience for these guidelines is people working in the government, private and not-for-profit sectors. In particular, these guidelines are for people from those sectors who need practical guidance for engaging with people with disability during discovery, research, testing, policy development and decision-making processes that affect people living in Australia.

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## Thank you!

These guidelines are driven by the insight and expertise of people with disability.

They were developed by speaking with people with disability and the disability sector, including peak and representative bodies, and disability service providers across the country.

The frameworks and good engagement principles outlined were used to research, develop, test, and improve the guidelines.

These guidelines would not have been possible without the expertise of representatives from the following organisations:

- Australian Network on Disability
- Autism Asperger's Advocacy Australia
- Blind Citizens Australia
- Children and Young People with Disability Australia
- Deaf Australia
- Diversity Council Australia
- Down Syndrome Australia
- First Peoples Disability Network Australia
- Inclusion Australia
- National Ethnic Disability Alliance
- People with Disability Australia

- Physical Disability Australia
- Self-Advocacy Resource Unit
- University of New South Wales Disability Innovation Institute
- University of Technology Sydney Disability Research Network.

User research and usability testing were carried out with people who design, plan, and deliver activities with people with disability.

As well as this extensive engagement with people with disability, these guidelines were also written by a team that included people with disability.

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## Structure of the guidelines

The Good Practice Guidelines for Engaging with People with Disability are organised in the following sections:

- **Context:** purpose, audience, principles, and models of disability.
- **Design:** engagement types, partnerships, ethics, and participant experiences.
- **Plan:** logistics and recruitment of participants.
- **Deliver:** inclusive delivery of engagements.
- **Follow up:** assessment of information from participants, best practice follow up.
- **Tools:** templates.

There are many ways and scenarios in which we need to engage with people with disability.

To use these guidelines, either move through the material sequentially or pick an area that is most relevant to you at a given time.

# Follow good practice engagement principles

These guidelines are based on five key principles for engaging with people with disability. These principles were developed in consultation with people with disability and disability representative organisations.

The principles are:

- Build mutual respect.
- Take responsibility.
- Meet people where they are at.
- Prioritise safety and trust.
- Close the loop.

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## Build mutual respect

People with disability live interesting, fun, complicated, and complex lives. Every person's experience of disability is different and unique. People with disability are experts on their individual experiences of disability but are not defined by their disability.

Many people with disability have had negative experiences with engagements that felt tokenistic. They got a sense that there were predetermined outcomes, and that the engagement was only run to tick a box.

However, everyone deserves to be treated with respect and to feel that their time and energy is valued.

It is important to engage with people with disability as equals by building reciprocal relationships based on mutual respect. To build mutual respect:

- Include people with disability from the beginning of consultations on all topics, not only those specifically related to disability.
- Follow the principle of 'nothing about us without us'. Decisions about disability-related topics shouldn't be made without people with lived experience of disability.
- Value lived experience of disability by empowering people with disability.
- Ensure all people with disability are heard and their input is acknowledged.

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## Take responsibility

Many people with disability have experienced engagements that made them feel unsafe or disrespected. Often, the voices of people with disability are ignored, dismissed, undervalued, or interrupted. Those voices can be the difference between an inclusive engagement and one that does not meet the needs of the people you're engaging.

Practising inclusive engagement means perpetually learning and growing, as you will learn regularly new ways to prevent exclusion. Make sure to learn from your mistakes and experiences and share your knowledge with others. Taking the time to learn about disability from existing resources before engaging can prevent people with disability from experiencing discrimination.

To take responsibility for providing an inclusive experience:

- Acknowledge the privileges or advantages you may benefit from, but others may not.
- Recognise your biases and how they affect the way you interact with others.
- Draw on existing information, research, and resources to make sure you are asking the right questions about the right topics during your engagements. Don't depend on people with disability to educate you on topics that are already well-documented.
- Take responsibility for your actions, decisions, and the limitations you have.

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## Meet people where they are

What makes an engagement accessible depends on who is being engaged. Complying with accessibility standards is a minimum requirement; however, making sure everyone can participate shouldn't stop there.

Design engagements that can adapt to people with disability, rather than asking people with disability to adapt to your engagement.

To design and deliver effective engagements:

- Consider how you can maximise accessibility in your engagement from the start.
- Make sure your engagement is flexible – be prepared to modify, adapt, or change your engagement if needed.
- Ask people with disability what you can do to make your engagement accessible to them. Don't assume you know a person's needs.
- Be prepared to provide the support people with disability ask for without judgement. People with disability shouldn't need to over-explain their requirements or prove a disability to receive the support they need to participate in your engagement.

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## Prioritise safety and trust

Make sure you are keeping people with disability and their contributions safe. Ensure people with disability can trust you to act in their best interests.

To be trusted to prioritise participant safety:

- Be transparent about all your decisions during every stage of the engagement.
- Be clear about any limitations your engagement has and the options you're able to provide people with disability.
- Take the concerns and needs of people with disability seriously.
- Take ownership of your mistakes and preventing them from happening again.
- Show allyship: support people with disability if they experience discrimination while participating in your engagement.

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## Close the loop

People with disability are often not told about the outcome or impact of engagements they contributed to. This makes people with disability feel that their time was wasted or that what they shared wasn't valued.

Informing people about the outcomes of your work demonstrates the value of the time and effort they invested when participating. Once your engagement or project is complete, follow-up with people with disability and tell them about the impact their contributions made.

To close the loop:

- Inform people with disability of the next steps in your project during and directly after the engagement.
- Follow-up with people with disability to share the outcomes of the engagement and the product of their contribution where possible.
- Keep people with disability updated about the progress of your work if it's a longer-term project.
- Inform people with disability even if the engagement leads to no outcome or change, and explain why this may have happened.

# Understand what disability means

This section offers an insight into models of disability and the language of disability.

Disability is diverse, and everyone has unique experiences.

People's experiences of their disability are intersectional. That is, they are influenced by other aspects of their identity and demography, such as age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, religion, location, living arrangements, and marital status.

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## Models of disability

There are different ways of thinking about disability. The models of disability presented here are not representative of all the models. These guidelines use the social model of disability.

### ***Human rights model of disability***

The human rights model of disability describes disability as a natural part of human diversity and prioritises freedom and dignity as fundamental for all people. It acknowledges that human rights do not rely on the absence of impairments. Once barriers are addressed, people with disability have a right to the support they require to enable their equitable access.

### ***Medical model of disability***

The medical model of disability describes disability as a health condition, dealt with by medical professionals. Under the medical model, disability is an abnormal state of being, and a person with disability needs to be fixed or cured to achieve a 'normal state of being'. The medical model focuses on a person's impairment.

## ***Social model of disability***

The social model of disability describes disability as a state caused by a mismatch between a person and the barriers that exist in their environment that put them at a disadvantage. These include attitudinal, communication, physical, and social barriers. This model does not deny the lived experience of the person, but frames the barriers the person experiences, not their impairment/s, as the issue that needs to be overcome.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Models of disability \(People with Disability Australia\)](#)
- » [Shifting models of thinking \(Disability Advocacy Resource Unit\)](#)

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## **Language of disability**

The language people use to refer to disability is personal. We acknowledge and respect the rights of people in choosing how they refer to their lived experience of disability. We encourage everyone to be guided by the preferred terms of each individual you're engaging with.

There are ongoing conversations about how we talk about disability. This is important. While we have used person-first language throughout these guidelines, we do not wish to exclude anyone who prefers a different style. We will update the language used in these guidelines according to best practice.

### ***Person-first language***

Person-first language is used to put the focus on the individual, not their disability. It aims to recognise an individual as a person before describing their disability. Person-first language is predominantly used to refer to people with disability, unless the individual or group described prefers otherwise.

Examples include:

- people with disability
- women with disability
- participants with disability.

## ***Identity-first language***

Identify-first language is used to frame a person's disability as part of their identity. It aims to emphasise disability as a neutral identifier, and signal membership of a wider cultural group. Some individuals and communities, such as the Autistic and Deaf communities, prefer identity-first language.

Examples include:

- disabled person
- disabled people
- "I am a/Autistic"
- d/Deaf person.

Relevant pages

- » [PWDA language guide \(People with Disability Australia\)](#)
- » [People with disability \(Australian Government Style Manual\)](#)
- » [Terminology \(Disabled People's Organisations Australia\)](#)
- » [Language guide \(Australian Federation of Disability Organisations\)](#)
- » [Talking about autism \(Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia\)](#)
- » [Communication \(Listen Include Respect\)](#)
- » [Communicating with patrons who are blind or have low vision \(Vision Australia\)](#)
- » [Communication and language fact sheet \(Down Syndrome Australia\)](#)



# Address access barriers

These guidelines are designed with the social model of disability in mind. In these guidelines, we address any attitudinal, physical, communication, and social barriers people with disability may experience during an inaccessible engagement, rather than focusing on a medical grouping of participants' conditions.

Disability is a part of human difference. We know that disability can be situational, temporary, or permanent, and provide unique experiences for everyone. By considering permanent and temporary disability, people who are situationally disabled or in an environment where they cannot use all their senses often also benefit.

We have created 11 categories to describe the needs you should cater for. These categories expand on those laid out by the Washington Group Conceptual Framework. Each category contains prompts to test the accessibility of your proposed activity and to help you think of ways to improve accessibility.

Ensure your activities work for people who may experience the following challenges:

- hearing
- immunity
- interacting socially
- moving (upper body)
- moving (lower body)
- regulating emotions
- remembering and/or concentrating
- seeing
- sensing
- speaking
- understanding information.

By catering for these needs, more people can effectively engage in your activities.

## Relevant pages

- » [Washington Group Conceptual Framework](#)

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## Hearing

People can experience functional barriers because activities are not catered to hearing challenges. They may:

- have temporary, permanent or situational hearing loss
- have a sensory condition that affects their hearing
- be triggered by aural stimuli
- experience impacted or delayed auditory processing.

This could include people:

- who are D/deaf or hard-of-hearing
- who are deafblind
- who are autistic
- with learning disability
- with sensory disability
- with sound sensitivity.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with hearing challenges***

- Does your activity require participants to hear?
- Does your activity require or encourage participants to speak quickly or at low volumes?
- Will your activity create lots of background noise?
- Do you require people to listen for long periods of time?
- Do you expect people to interpret or translate information quickly?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with hearing challenges***

- How might you present your activity or information a different way? For example, using sight or touch?
- In what ways can participants contribute without needing to hear audio material or other people?
- How might you encourage and ensure participants speak slowly and clearly?
- In what other ways can participants contribute instead of speaking?
- Can you provide materials before the session to reduce time-based barriers?
- How might you ensure mask-wearing does not obstruct communication?

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## Immunity

People can experience a weakened or reduced immune system that limits their ability to fight infections and other diseases, or sensitivities to certain substances, including but not limited to:

- allergies
- autoimmune conditions
- chronic disease or illness
- damaged tissue or organs
- underlying conditions
- suppressed immune response due to medication or medical treatment.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with immunity challenges***

- Does your activity require participants to be physically close to each other?
- Does your activity require participants to share or be in close contact with objects?
- Will your activity require participants to have contact with common allergens?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with immunity challenges***

- How might you design the activity to reduce immunity risks based on food, physical distance, or other immunity-based considerations?
- How might you remind participants to be considerate of immunity throughout the activity?
- Could your activity be carried out online or through another medium/platform?
- Can people wear masks?
- Can you make sure people in attendance are not sick or infectious?

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## Interacting socially

People may experience anxiety or other difficulties navigating social interactions, including but not limited to:

- interacting with other people
- understanding non-verbal communication
- communicating non-verbally
- identifying and respecting social boundaries
- providing appropriate amounts and detail of information
- identifying and interpreting non-literal statements.

This could include people who have:

- autism
- intellectual disability
- learning disability
- psychosocial disability
- neurological conditions.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with social interaction challenges***

- Does your activity require participants to engage in rapid, one-on-one, or small-group discussions?
- Does your activity require participants to speak in front of or share their thoughts or work with a large group?
- Does your activity require participants to touch each other? For example, shaking hands or hugging?
- Could your activity make participants feel pressured to answer 'correctly'?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with social interaction challenges***

- In what ways can participants contribute without rapid, one-on-one, or small-group discussions?
- How might you support participants during rapid, one-on-one, or small-group discussions? How might you make them feel more comfortable?
- What alternative methods can participants use to share with the group?
- How might you design the activity so participants don't need to touch each other?
- How might you encourage participants to feel safe to make mistakes?
- Could you enable participants to contribute to the event anonymously?

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## Moving (upper body)

People who experience barriers to moving their upper body may have challenges with:

- generalised upper body movement
- gross or fine upper body motor skills
- upper body strength or fatigue
- otherwise impacted upper body movement.

This could include people with:

- temporary injuries
- acquired brain injury
- physical disability
- neurological conditions
- a need for medications that may affect their movement.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with moving (upper body) challenges***

- Does your activity require participants to move their upper body or use upper body motor skills?
- Does your activity require participants to handwrite?
- Does your activity require participants to move rapidly?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with moving (upper body) challenges***

- How might you support participants during activities where they need to move their upper body or use upper body motor skills?
- In what alternative ways can participants contribute without needing to move their upper body or use specific upper body motor skills?
- What alternatives to handwriting can you provide?
- How might you slow the activity down?
- How might you help participants prepare for the activity?

---

## Moving (lower body)

People who experience barriers to moving their lower body may have challenges with:

- generalised lower body movement
- gross or fine lower body motor skills
- lower body strength or fatigue
- otherwise impacted lower body movement.

This could include people with:

- temporary injuries
- acquired brain injury
- physical disability
- neurological conditions
- a need for medications that may affect their movement.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with moving (lower body) challenges***

- Does your activity require participants to move their lower body or use lower body motor skills?
- Does your activity require participants to move around a venue or location?
- Does your activity require participants to move rapidly?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with moving (lower body) challenges***

- How might you support participants during activities where they need to move their lower body or use lower body motor skills?
- In what alternative ways can participants contribute without needing to move their lower body or use specific lower body motor skills?
- How might you make the space easy to move around in?
- How might you make sure everyone has equal, barrier-free movement?
- How might you help participants prepare for the activity?

---

## Regulating emotions

People who experience a functional barrier to emotional regulation may have challenges regulating their emotions or emotional responses.

This could include people who have:

- acquired brain injury
- autism
- experienced trauma
- intellectual disability
- learning disability
- psychosocial disability
- neurological conditions.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people who have challenges regulating their emotions***

- Does your activity require participants to share something that may be sensitive or make them feel vulnerable?
- Could your activity touch on topics that may be sensitive or traumatic for participants?

### ***Increase accessibility for people who have challenges regulating their emotions***

- How might you encourage participants to know it is safe to share sensitive information that may make them feel vulnerable?
- How might you ensure participants feel supported when they do share sensitive information that may make them feel vulnerable?
- How might you offer participants a choice not to participate or to opt-out of activities that could include sensitive or traumatic topics?
- How might you offer participants a choice not to participate or to opt-out when they feel overwhelmed?
- How might you support participants when the event includes sensitive or traumatic topics?

---

## Remembering and/or concentrating

People who experience barriers to remembering and/or concentrating may have challenges:

- remembering information in general
- remembering specific kinds of information, such as recent information, long-term information, names, faces, or time
- concentrating for periods of time
- concentrating on a particular activity
- staying awake.

This could include people with:

- acquired brain injury
- intellectual disability
- learning disability
- neurological conditions
- psychosocial disability
- a need for medications that may cause memory loss
- other memory impairment.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people who have challenges remembering and/or concentrating***

- Does your activity require people to remember information shared before or during the session?
- Does your activity require participants to recall events, facts, experiences, or other information from the past?
- Does your activity require participants to concentrate on one thing for a long period of time?
- Does your activity require participants to focus on complex information?

### ***Increase accessibility for people who have challenges remembering and/or concentrating***

- How might you help participants remember information shared before or during the session?
- How might you help participants prepare for the session?
- How might you shorten or break-up topics/activities?
- How might you allow for participants leaving and coming back to the event as they need to?
- What opportunities can you offer participants to take breaks or rest during the session?
- How much variety is in your activities?
- Are all participants able to actively participate?



---

## Seeing

People who experience functional barriers because activities are not catered to seeing challenges may:

- have permanent, temporary or situational blindness or low vision
- have a sensory condition that affects their sight
- be triggered by visual stimuli.

This could include people who:

- are blind or have low vision
- are deafblind
- are autistic
- experience light sensitivity
- experience photosensitive epilepsy
- experience sensory disability.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with seeing challenges***

- Does your activity require participants to read text?
- Does your activity require participants to look at images or video?
- Will your participants need to navigate an unfamiliar area or location?
- Does your activity use flashing lights or images that change quickly?
- Will your activity require participants to be in a dark or overly bright space?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with seeing challenges***

- How might you present your activity or information a different way? For example, through sound or touch?
- How might you make sure everyone has equal, barrier-free movement?
- In what ways can participants contribute without needing to see or interact with visual material?

---

## Sensing

People may process sensory stimuli (such as a smell, taste, or the way something feels to touch) with greater or lesser strength than others or may have reactions to certain stimuli. Sensitivities may cause people to experience pain, discomfort, strong emotional responses, or other negative reactions. This could include people with:

- autism
- learning disability
- experience of trauma
- intellectual disability
- neurological conditions
- psychosocial disability.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with sensing challenges***

- Will your activity require participants to touch, taste, or smell something?
- Will there be strong smells in the venue for your activity?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with sensing challenges***

- How might you reduce the chance participants will encounter strong or uncomfortable textures, tastes, or scents?

---

## Speaking

People who experience speaking challenges may:

- have hearing loss
- have disrupted speech
- be slow-speaking or non-speaking
- currently be non-verbal or have trouble speaking
- have difficulties regulating tone or volume of speech
- prefer not to communicate verbally.

This could include people:

- who are autistic
- who are D/deaf or hard-of-hearing
- who are deafblind
- with complex communication needs
- with psychosocial disability
- with speech disability.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people with speaking challenges***

- Does your activity require participants to speak or vocalise?
- Does your activity require or encourage participants to speak quickly or for long periods of time?

### ***Increase accessibility for people with speaking challenges***

- In what ways can participants contribute instead of speaking?
- How will you ensure non-spoken contributions are given the same amount of attention as spoken contributions?
- How can you give enough time and space for people to think about the questions or topic and respond at their own pace?
- How can you give participants more time to consume/analyse information before or during your session?

---

## Understanding information

People who experience barriers to understanding information may have challenges with:

- information in general
- specific types of information
- specific formats of information, such as written or verbally presented information.

This could include people:

- who are autistic
- with intellectual disability
- with learning disability
- with neurological conditions
- with print disability
- with psychosocial disability.

### ***Ask yourself how your activity works for people who have challenges understanding information***

- Does your activity require participants to take in information?
- Does your activity give people enough time and a variety of ways to understand the information?

### ***Increase accessibility for people who have challenges understanding information***

- How might you present information so it is quick and easy to access, read, or understand?
- How might you present information in different ways? For example, through images, icons, words, or non-verbal cues?
- How and when will you check-in with participants?
- Have you asked for questions?
- In what ways can you support participants to analyse information during the session?
- How can you give participants more time to consume/analyse information before or during your session?

# Define the level of participation

The IAP2 Spectrum for Public Participation defines the roles you might want participants with or without disability to fulfil along a spectrum of impact on the final outcome. You can engage people with disability at any level of the IAP2 Spectrum and you may not be aware that people with disability are even participating.

## Choose the appropriate level of participation

The IAP2 Spectrum for Public Participation places engagement activities on a spectrum from having the least to most impact on the output or outcome of an engagement. You will have different responsibilities depending on the level of activity, noting that your project may include multiple activities across the different IAP2 Spectrum levels shown in Figure 1: Levels of the IAP2 spectrum.

Relevant pages

- » [Design: Identify activity characteristics](#)
- » [IAP2 Spectrum \(IAP2\)](#)

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum © International Association for Public Participation [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org).



Figure 1: Levels of the IAP2 spectrum

---

## Inform

The goal of an *inform* activity is to provide an audience with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.

If your project includes an *inform* activity, people will receive one-way communication that keeps them informed about the project and/or its output.

In an *inform* activity, you promise to:

- Keep people informed about the project.

Examples of *inform* activities:

- email
- newsletter (digital or print)
- pamphlet
- poster
- social media post.

---

## Consult

The goal of a *consult* activity is to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions. If your project includes a *consult* activity, people with disability will be sources of information for the project.

In a *consult* activity, you promise to:

- Keep people with disability informed about the project and/or its outputs.
- Listen to and acknowledge the concerns and aspirations of people with disability.
- Provide feedback on how people with disability influenced project decisions.

Examples of *consult* activities:

- interview
- focus group discussion
- survey.

---

## Involve

The goal of an *involve* activity is to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

If your project includes an *involve* activity, people with disability will be sought for information, advice, or opinions about the project's output.

In an *involve* activity, you promise to:

- Work with people with disability to ensure their concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the outputs developed.
- Provide feedback on how people with disability influenced project decisions.

Examples of *involve* activities:

- an advisory committee
- a co-design workshop
- a symposium.

---

## Collaborate

The goal of a *collaborate* activity is to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

If your project includes a *collaborate* activity, people with disability will be working jointly with others in the project.

In a *collaborate* activity, you promise to:

- Look to people with disability for advice and innovation in formulating outputs.
- Incorporate the advice and recommendations from people with disability into the decisions made to the maximum extent possible.

Examples of *collaborate* activities:

- an advisory committee
- co-design and co-facilitation of workshops
- when a member of the project team is a person with disability.

---

## Empower

The goal of an empower activity is to place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

If your project includes an empower activity, people with disability will be owners of the project and its outcomes.

In an empower activity, you promise to:

- Implement what people with disability decide.

Examples of empower activities:

- co-creation
- deliberative democracy
- when the project lead is a person with disability.

---

## Other Considerations

You can engage people with disability at any level of the IAP2 Spectrum and you may not be aware that people with disability are even participating in your activity.

- Consider what type of role you want participants to take in your event/project. How will they experience and participate in the event? How many participants (including people with disability) will be involved?
- Include individuals and groups who are impacted by the decision. People with disability should have decision-making power in decisions that affect them.
- Include a representative mix of individuals at the highest level of involvement that is appropriate for your project. Remember, people with disability are individuals and not a homogenous cohort. A person with disability is only able to speak to their experiences and the experiences of any people they officially represent.
- Select your target cohort by considering the insights or experiences that will provide the most relevant input to your project. You may have multiple activities that engage different cohorts. People's unique life experiences give you diverse perspectives.



- Consider the biases and limitations that may exist at any level of involvement of participants so that your decision to include people with disability is informed and deliberate. Biases and limitations could be present in any stage or part of your project, including participant recruitment, decision-making, design, data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- Balance the amount of time and effort you would like each participant to contribute with what is necessary to achieve a high-quality outcome and what is feasible for people to commit to.
- Ask participants what you can provide them to help them meet your expectations. For example, when you want a person with disability to join you at a testing session for two hours, they can let you know they are willing and need a break every 30 minutes. You can now plan your day with this in mind.
- Ensure that you communicate your expectations of the commitment when you prepare participants, both ahead of time and when you deliver.

#### *Related pages*

- » [Context: Understand what disability means](#)
- » [Context: Address access barriers](#)
- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum](#)

# Language and definitions

These guidelines aim to use language that is simple and clear. Throughout these guidelines, the following terminology is used:

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## Access

Access is when people have permission, choice, and the ability to enter, get to, interact with, or use a thing, place, or person.

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## Accessibility

Accessibility is whether a product, service, process, or design can be used and/or understood by everyone who interacts with it.

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## Accommodation

Accommodation is a change that removes the barrier to participation for a person. The person may have the same expectations and do the same activity, but how they participate is different.

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## Advocates

Advocates are people who act on behalf of someone with a specific issue. They may give information, write submissions, offer advice, and more. They may work for disability advocacy organisations.

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## Alternative text (Alt text)

Alternative text (or alt text) is a short description of an image's meaning or content. This information is not usually visible on the page, but accessible to users as an HTML attribute or when they are using an accessibility tool. Alt text is not usually a literal description of the image; however, complex images like charts or diagrams may have longer descriptions.

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## Audio description (AD)

Audio description (AD) is the auditory narration of visual media, such as art, theatre, film, and television. It describes important visual elements, such as the settings, backgrounds, props between pauses, or lines of dialogue.

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## Auslan

Auslan (Australian Sign Language) is the language of the Australian d/Deaf community. Auslan is a visual-spatial language. It uses hand gestures, facial expressions, and body language to convey meaning. It has its own vocabulary and grammar.

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## Braille

Braille is a tactile (touchable) way of reading text, consisting of a series of raised dots embossed onto special paper. Someone reading braille will pass their finger over the dots to feel what is written. It is an alternative written form of a standard language – it is not a separate language.

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## Cascading style sheets (CSS)

Cascading style sheets (CSS) is a simple mechanism for adding style (such as fonts, colours, and spacing) to web documents.

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## Closed captions (CC)

Closed captions (CC) are a text description of sound, including background noises, speaker differentiation, and other relevant information. Closed captions can be turned on and off by the viewer.

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## Co-design

Co-design (or collaborative design) is a practice where designers involve users in their research and create solutions, processes or products that meet their users' specific needs and challenges.

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## Consent

Consent (described as informed or active) is when a person gives permission or agrees to something. Their decision is clear and explicit, and it is given voluntarily. It is important that clear information is provided in multiple formats and that participants are reminded that they can say no.

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## Deliberative democracy

Deliberative democracy is a political process where decisions are made through fair, robust debates with citizens. Instead of counting or compiling perspectives, citizens hear from one another and choose what they believe serves the public the best.

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## Easy Read

Easy Read (or Easy English) is an accessible and alternative form of communication. It uses short, simple, and clear sentences with images to support each point. The layout contains lots of white space and uses a large text size.

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## Facilitated activity

A facilitated activity is an activity when a project team member is present to provide support. This support may include being the presenter, guiding the conversation, explaining things, asking questions, or writing notes.

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## Facilitator

A facilitator is a person or several people that lead or support the activity. They may do things such as be the presenter, guide the conversation, explain things, ask questions, and write notes.

---

## Inclusion

Inclusion is when everyone in a group is involved and respected. Diversity is celebrated and things can be changed to suit the needs and preferences of the individual.

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## Large print

Large print (or large font) is a font size and style that requires no special skills or equipment to access it. It uses sans-serif fonts (for example Arial and Helvetica) that are 18pt or larger. Other characteristics are generous spaces between margins and bullet points, and minimal underlining, italics, and hyphens. Bold is only used for headings.

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## Organisations

Organisations are any group of people that are part of a business, government department or the non-profit sector.

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## Plain language

Plain language (or plain English) is communication where the wording, structure, and design are clear enough that the intended reader can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use the information.

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## Readability

Readability is how easy a piece of text is to read and understand. Readability can be improved by using clear language and structure in your text. Readability is usually judged by a reading level, which is the level of education someone needs to be able to understand the text.

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## Signpost

Signpost is a type of communication model during which, when you write or speak, you show or tell the audience where you are, what your key points are and outline what's coming next. This makes it easier for people reading or listening to you to follow along.

# Useful resources

Many organisations have published engagement guidelines or other supporting information for delivering inclusive engagements. You may find these existing resources useful.

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## Specific resources by disability organisations

- » [Resource hub \(Down Syndrome Australia\)](#)
- » [First Peoples Disability Network Australia resources \(First Peoples Disability Network Australia\)](#)
- » [Engagement and consultation with people with an intellectual disability \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)
- » [Towards inclusive practice \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)
- » [Listen Include Respect guidelines \(Inclusion International & Down Syndrome International\)](#)
- » [Connect with me co-design guide & toolkit \(People with Disabilities Western Australia\)](#)
- » [People with Disability Australia resources \(People with Disability Australia\)](#)
- » [Creating access for young people with disability \(People with Disability Australia\)](#)
- » [Resources on domestic and family violence and disability \(People with Disability Australia\)](#)
- » [Useful resources \(Physical Disability Council of NSW\)](#)
- » [First Nations engagement principles \(Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disability\)](#)
- » [Helpful resources for business \(Vision Australia\)](#)
- » [Self-advocacy resources \(Voices Together\)](#)
- » [Human rights toolkit for women and girls with disability \(Women with Disabilities Australia\)](#)
- » [Australian Federation of Disability Organisations resources \(Australian Federation of Disability Organisations\)](#)
- » [Autism fact sheets \(Autism Spectrum Australia\)](#)
- » [ASAN accessibility resources \(Autistic Self Advocacy Network\)](#)
- » [Your support toolkits \(Blind Citizens Australia\)](#)
- » [Fact sheets \(Children and Young People with Disability Australia\)](#)
- » [Supported decision-making hub \(Council for Intellectual Disability\)](#)
- » [User testing with First Nations – a design guide \(Centre for Inclusive Design\)](#)
- » [Accessibility and inclusion toolkit \(Deaf Australia\)](#)

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## General resources

- » [IncludeAbility \(Australian Human Rights Commission\)](#)
- » [Resources \(Australian Network on Disability\)](#)
- » [Introduction to psychosocial support community toolkit \(Australian Red Cross\)](#)
- » [Research and usability testing \(Australian Web Accessibility Initiative\)](#)
- » [Inclusive research workshops \(Australian Web Accessibility Initiative\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for trauma informed practice: supporting people with disability who have experienced complex trauma \(Blue Knot\)](#)
- » [DACSSA resources and fact sheets \(Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia\)](#)
- » [Accessibility and inclusivity toolkit \(Digital.NSW\)](#)
- » [Inclusive design for Australian organisations \(Design for Dignity\)](#)
- » [The creative equity toolkit \(Diversity Arts Australia\)](#)
- » [Latest DCA research and guides on disability and accessibility \(Diversity Council Australia\)](#)
- » [Latest DCA research and guides on mental health \(Diversity Council Australia\)](#)
- » [Better together \(Government of South Australia\)](#)
- » [Online accessibility toolkit \(Government of South Australia\)](#)
- » [Best practice consultation \(Office of Impact Analysis\)](#)
- » [Co-producing research with people with disability \(UNSW Disability Innovation Institute\)](#)
- » [Disability research network resources \(University of Technology Sydney\)](#)

# Design



# Start by thinking about accessible design

Think about the different elements that make your activity accessible to the people with disability you want to engage. By thinking critically, planning early, and being creative about how you engage people with disability, the contributions you receive will help everyone make better processes, products, services, and policies.

Depending on how you run them, activities and projects can be a positive or stressful experience for people with disability. As you design your activities, you should:

- Design accessibly by default, as you may not know if or when people with disability are interested in or already participating in your engagement activities.
- Identify any assumptions you make about people's ability.
- Consider the elements of your activity that impact accessibility.
- Think creatively to address, reduce, or minimise the barriers to participation for different people.

## *Relevant pages*

- » [Accessibility and inclusion strategy \(Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability\)](#)
- » [Towards inclusive practice \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)
- » [Testing for accessibility \(Gov.UK Service Manual\)](#)
- » [Deaftopia: Imagining a perfect world \(SBS: Our Deaf Ways\)](#)

---

## Define your activity's purpose

Be clear about the purpose of your activity. You should:

- Prioritise accessibility throughout.
- Consider the project aim, products, and output.
- Identify how the activity supports your aim.
- Identify specific questions that you need this activity to answer.
- Identify and attract a diverse group of people to participate.
- Be flexible to include what you learn from people with disability.

---

## Consider the timing and duration

Consider when your activity will happen and how long it will take. You should:

- Identify convenient times for participants. Consider travel times, time zones, or other obligations that may impact people's ability to participate.
- Choose a duration that suits the people with disability who are participating. The length of the activity may impact who is interested, who is available, and whether there is enough time for people to contribute what you need.

- Give yourself enough time to plan for and organise accessibility needs.

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)

### Example

You want to interview primary and secondary school teachers with disability at your local school. You usually work from 9am to 5pm on weekdays, but you know the teachers are at school from 8am to 4pm. You also know that if you schedule interviews during school hours, participants may not be able to contribute. You decide to communicate with teachers individually, giving them options for interview times during their break times, at lunch time, and after school. There also happens to be a pupil-free day coming up, so you offer interviews on that day, too.

You assure the teachers that you will take no longer than 30 minutes unless they would like their interview to go for longer.

You give all interested teachers the questions in advance. This way they know what to expect and can prepare their answers, which also helps you stay on time. For those who are interested but cannot make the time, you invite them to respond through audio or text message.

---

## Consider the location

Consider how participants will contribute to your activity or project. This could be at different locations at different times.

### ***In-person (face-to-face)***

In-person activities are those where you and your participants meet in one location. Consider the whole-of-journey experience of a participant attending your activity. This includes getting to and leaving the location.

### ***Remote***

Remote activities may be online, a phone call, through the mail, or via a chat platform.

When conducting an online or unfacilitated activity, consider which medium/media or platform/s will be most convenient for participants and create the highest quality experience.

### ***Hybrid***

Hybrid activities involve some people participating in-person and others participating remotely at the same time.

Plan ahead to support an accessible and positive experience for participants in both locations. You may need more time to organise project team members, accessible materials in multiple formats, different technologies, and more to best support participants in both locations.

### *Example*

*You are creating an advisory group of people who live in rural and remote areas. Other advisory groups in the city meet in-person once a month, and this is the company norm. However, a team member points out that if travel is difficult and/or expensive, it may prevent people from participating.*

*In the advertisement for the advisory group, you provide hybrid options for meetings. You receive feedback that this approach allowed someone with disability and caring responsibilities to attend from home.*

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)
- » [Whole journey guide \(Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, and the Arts\)](#)

---

## Consider the format

People may prefer some formats for engagement to others. Consider if the format of your engagement will:

- deliver a quality experience for people with disability
- enable you to engage participants as much as you would like
- support the access needs of people with disability.

Engagement formats include:

- interviews
- interactive displays
- project member(s) with disability
- surveys.

### Example

*You are researching the impact and experience of people with disability who have unpaid parking fines. You would normally conduct user research with focus groups. However, you know that participants may not want to participate in a group activity as they could be embarrassed about their parking fines. Instead, you conduct research using an anonymous survey and one-on-one interviews.*

---

## Consider the participation costs

Participating in engagement activities often costs people with disability. You should consider how:

- participants may need to pay to attend an activity
- you could reduce these costs.

Costs may include:

- transport and accommodation
- food and drink
- time off from work or study
- the use of technology, such as smartphones or computers
- the use of the internet or phone
- the effort and energy to attend and participate in the activity
- accessibility support, such as people, animals, tools, and technology.

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Design: Pay participants](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)

---

## Consider the group size

The size of the group can impact how you make your activity a positive experience for people. You should:

- Design your project or activity considering the number of people who can comfortably and safely participate in the given time.
- Consider the people, time, and costs needed to give participants a comfortable, safe, and positive experience

Some considerations include:

- offering additional accommodations, such as audio description, captioning, translators, or interpreters
- how long the activity will take
- how many team members you need
- how you include disability specialists
- if and/or how people contribute
- noise levels
- the space to move
- the air quality
- the number of rooms needed (including a low-sensory space).

### Relevant pages

- » [Context: Address access barriers](#)
- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)
- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)

### Example

*You are running a series of collaborative workshops engaging 15 people. You find out that there is a participant who prefers to share in smaller groups, and another who is sensitive to many people speaking at once. You re-design the activities so that participants are in groups of two to five people.*

# Identify activity characteristics

These guidelines are informed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum framework. Activities have different goals, levels of public participation, participant contribution, staff involvement, audiences, and structures.

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## What to consider when planning an activity or project

When planning any activity or project, several different aspects need to be considered to fully include any potential participants with disability. These include your intended:

- overarching goal
- depth of public participation
- level of participant contribution
- level of staff involvement
- audience
- structure.

“Figure 1: Levels of the IAP2 spectrum” is a summary of how these aspects may be categorised for a range of activities; however, it is not designed to be prescriptive nor exhaustive. More details on these categorisations can be found below.

---

## Overarching goal

When you work with people with disability, you will aim for your engagement activity to meet one or a combination of these goals:

- Informative: to give people information about something.
- Discovery: to get information or find something out.
- Testing: to identify participants' reactions to something.

### Relevant pages

- » [Context: Define the level of participation](#)
- » [IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum](#)

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum © International Association for Public Participation [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)

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## Depth of public participation

The IAP2 Spectrum is designed to identify the depth of participation by the public in any public participation process. These guidelines use the IAP2 Spectrum to define how deeply the decision-making for your project or activity will be guided by public participation.

The IAP2 Spectrum places activities on a five-level spectrum as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Levels of the IAP2 spectrum

---

## Level of participant contribution

Consider how participants will contribute to your activity or project and to what level. This could involve multiple different ways.

### ***No contribution***

Your activity does not ask for participant contributions. An example of this could be a poster or a social media post as outlined in the inform section of the IAP2 Spectrum.

### ***Individual contribution***

The aim of the activity is to learn about individuals' perspectives, experiences, or knowledge. You are not asking participants to generate ideas together as a group, nor watching how participants work together. Many activities that fall within IAP2 Consult and Involve may need individual contribution. Examples of this could include a survey, an interview, or membership of an advisory group.

### ***Collaborative contribution***

The aim of this activity is for participants to generate ideas together or otherwise work as a group. Some activities in IAP2 Collaborate and Empower may have collaborative contribution. Examples of this could include a focus group, a co-design workshop, or including people with disability on your project team.

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## Level of staff involvement

While all projects or activities will require facilitation, not all will need a staff member to be present at the activity.

Activities or projects can be classed as either:

- **Facilitated:** a staff member is present. Examples include a presentation, an interview or a town hall meeting.
- **Unfacilitated:** no staff member is needed. Examples include a survey, a newsletter or a co-design of the project.



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## Audience

It is preferable to know who the potential or confirmed participants are for your activity. There are times where your activity will be with a specific group of people – an identified audience. At other times your activity is available to a broader, more general, unidentified audience. You may not know if people with disability are participating.

### *Identified audience*

When working with an identified audience of a select group or number of people, you have some control or understanding of who will participate. You may do one or more of the following:

- Invite certain people to participate in the activity.
- Recruit specific participants.
- Contact participants before the activity to ask about their accessibility needs.

Examples of activities with an identified audience include:

- a ticketed activity
- a focus group
- an interview.

### *Unidentified audience*

In an activity with no official invitees, anyone could potentially participate. You will not have an opportunity to contact participants before the activity to ask about their accessibility needs.

Examples of activities with an unidentified audience include:

- publishing a poster
- holding an information stall
- deliberative democracy
- an open access activity.

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## Structure

How a project or activity is structured is also important. While this can be flexible, and is often on a spectrum rather than being definitive, there are two main categories:

- **Fixed:** these activities are rigid in their design, and the plan and agenda are usually confirmed before the activity starts. Examples include a presentation, a conference, a deliberative democracy, or a workshop.
- **Flexible:** these activities may follow a loose plan, but their agendas are flexible and can change during the activity. Examples include an interview, a co-design workshop, or when co-creating a project.

**Table 1: Examples of how an activity could be characterised**

Format	Overarching goal	IAP2 spectrum category of participation	Level of participant contribution	Level of staff involvement	Audience	Structure
Poster or pamphlet	Informative	Inform	No contribution	Unfacilitated	Unidentified	Fixed
Social media post	Informative	Inform	No contribution	Unfacilitated	Unidentified	Fixed
Email	Informative	Inform	No contribution	Facilitated or Unfacilitated	Identified or Unidentified	Fixed
Newsletter	Informative	Inform	No contribution	Unfacilitated	Identified or Unidentified	Fixed
Public information stall	Informative	Inform	No contribution	Facilitated	Unidentified	Fixed
Presentation	Informative	Inform	No contribution	Facilitated	Identified	Fixed
Conference	Informative or Discovery	Inform or Consult	Individual or Collaborative	Facilitated	Identified or Unidentified	Fixed
Town hall	Informative or Discovery	Inform or Consult	Individual	Facilitated	Identified or Unidentified	Fixed

Format	Overarching goal	IAP2 spectrum category of participation	Level of participant contribution	Level of staff involvement	Audience	Structure
Pop up shop or gallery event	Informative or Discovery	Inform or Consult or Involve	Individual	Facilitated	Unidentified	Flexible
Symposium	Informative or Discovery	Inform or Consult or Involve	Individual or Collaborative	Facilitated	Identified or Unidentified	Fixed or Flexible
Interview	Discovery	Consult	Individual	Facilitated	Identified	Fixed or Flexible
Survey or public submissions process	Discovery or Testing	Consult	Individual	Unfacilitated	Identified or Unidentified	Fixed
Focus group	Testing	Consult	Individual or Collaborative	Facilitated	Identified	Fixed
Workshop	Discovery	Consult	Collaborative	Facilitated	Identified	Fixed or Flexible
Interactive display	Discovery or Testing	Consult	Individual or Collaborative	Unfacilitated	Unidentified	Fixed
Co-design workshop	Discovery or Testing	Involve or Collaborate	Collaborative	Facilitated	Identified	Fixed or Flexible
Advisory group	Discovery or Testing	Involve or Collaborate	Individual or Collaborative	Facilitated	Identified	Fixed or Flexible
Project member with disability	Discovery	Collaborate	Collaborative	Facilitated or Unfacilitated	Identified	Flexible

<b>Format</b>	<b>Overarching goal</b>	<b>IAP2 spectrum category of participation</b>	<b>Level of participant contribution</b>	<b>Level of staff involvement</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Structure</b>
Project lead/ project member with decision making powers with disability	Discovery	Empower	Collaborative	Unfacilitated	Identified	Flexible
Deliberative democracy	Testing	Empower	Individual	Facilitated	Identified or Unidentified	Fixed or Flexible
Co-creation	Discovery	Empower	Collaborative	Unfacilitated	Identified	Flexible

# Make participant experiences positive

To ensure positive experiences for people with disability, it is important to consider not only the relevance and benefits of your event or project, but also any potential harm.

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## Consider consultation fatigue and the project's relevance

Before consulting with people with disability or the disability community, conduct desktop research into the topic area – projects, insights, and recommendations – to understand if there are any existing recommendations or insights you can draw on. Even if your project and another are not related, a participant may still feel like they are repeating themselves to non-specific researchers. This experience can be tiring and tedious for participants and lead to consultation fatigue. Show your participants you respect their time by doing prior research.

- Try to find out if there are any upcoming, current, or recent projects that focus on your target cohort.
- Consider recommendations or insights from related research or projects (such as non-Australian projects or activity that isn't focused on people with disability), even if they are not identical to your activity. Testing and validating existing recommendations and insights with people with disability can show you value their unique and specific experiences.
- Try to differentiate your research from similar projects by varying the research questions and/or the participant cohort.
- Remember that the experience of participating in multiple similar events may feel duplicative to participants.
- Use a variety of channels to recruit participants from a wide pool. Informal channels of communication can help reach people who may not be connected to formal disability representative organisations.

## ***Provide benefits for participating***

- Provide tangible benefits to participants to show them you value their participation. Participants want to know that the time, energy and expertise they have given to you was respected.
- Benefits could include payment, but could also include communicating to participants how their participation has helped to create benefit for them or their community.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Pay participants](#)
- » [Plan: Identify and attract participants](#)
- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Follow up: Promote effective follow up](#)

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## **Acknowledge potential harm**

Poor participant experiences may not only affect your current project. They can also affect future projects your organisation (or any organisation) wants to conduct with individuals or communities of people with disability.

Potential harm can occur when individuals or communities:

- are prevented from participating in the project, in full or in part
- feel there is no reciprocal benefit of their participation
- are in spaces where they feel unequal to others participating in the activity. For example, participants might be paired with members of a group with a history of discrimination, participants who are recipients of services might be grouped with providers of those services, or other participants might dominate discussions
- experience physical, psychological, or social harm, either during or after the engagement. For example, people might feel they have been disrespected or their time has been wasted, or people might experience retribution due to improper handling of information they disclosed
- are financially worse off after participating in your activity
- are asked to provide input to topics with existing, publicly available recommendations
- are repeatedly consulted on the same or similar topic areas, with no visible or tangible changes/ outcomes
- feel the activity is not accessible to them
- feel the topic or content is sensitive or potentially triggering.

# Follow ethical standards

Ethics is deciding what the right thing to do could be. You will need to consider both the intended and unintended impact of your activity on participants with disability with ethics in mind. Your activity should follow strong ethical standards to make sure participants are treated well and their information is collected, used, and kept correctly.

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## Determining the need for ethics approval

Ethics approval processes are designed to protect both participants and researchers. You should:

- Always follow your organisation's research and ethics policy. If unsure, seek legal advice.
- Consider the privacy and the ethical concerns around your planned activity or project. Refer to the Australian Privacy Principles and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

- Determine whether you need formal ethical approval for the type of research you are conducting and the data you collect.
- Plan for the additional time and cost of a formal ethics approval process. For example, for compiling all required project documents.
- Give participants information about their rights and providing consent early.
- Provide ethics, consent, privacy, and data collection and storage information in accessible, alternative formats, such as Easy Read.

### Relevant pages

- » [Australian privacy principles \(Office of the Australian Information Commissioner \[OIAC\]\)](#)
- » [Australian code for the responsible conduct of research \(National Health and Medical Research Council \[NHMRC\]\)](#)

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## Types of ethics approval

Human research in Australia is subject to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. You should:

- Read the sections about engaging with people with disability, particularly chapters 4.4 and 4.5 of the National Statement.
- Develop an application using the Human Research Ethics Application for submission to a human research ethics committee if you are conducting health and medical research.
- Consult the *Guidelines Under Section 95 of the Privacy Act 1988* (s95 guidelines) if you are conducting medical research for a Commonwealth agency or the *Guidelines Approved Under Section 95A of the Privacy Act 1988* (s95A guidelines) if you are conducting medical research for a private sector organisation to ensure your handling of personal information does not breach the Privacy Act 1988. (States and territories may also have their own privacy legislation or administrative codes of practice.)

### Relevant pages

- » [Australian code for the responsible conduct of research \(NHMRC\)](#)
- » [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(NHMRC\)](#)
  - Chapter 4.4: People highly dependent on medical care who may be unable to give consent
  - Chapter 4.5: People with a cognitive impairment, an intellectual disability, or a mental illness
- » [Human Research Ethics Application \(HREA\)](#)
- » [Applying for ethical \(HREC\) review \(Australian Institute of Health and Welfare\)](#)
- » [Guidelines approved under Section 95 of the Privacy Act 1988 \(NHMRC\)](#)
- » [Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research \(The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies\)](#)



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## Consent

All participants must give you their informed consent. When you ask people with disability to participate in your activity, you should:

- Provide participants clear consent information early to give them time to understand:
  - the purpose of the research or activity
  - information about the researcher
  - what you want from them
  - what you will do or are authorised to do with the information
  - how you are minimising harm
  - how you prioritise their safety
  - what may happen during the research or activity
  - where they can get help
  - that participation is voluntary and how they can withdraw from the research or activity
  - how you will protect the information they provide.
- Offer people with disability ways to get support to understand the information.
- Offer other ways for people with disability to get this information, such as through videos, Easy Read, Auslan, or translated into other languages.
- Offer different ways for people with disability to ask you questions, such as via a phone number or email address.

### Relevant pages

- » [Context: Follow good practice engagement principles](#)
- » [Design: Make participant experiences positive](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Tool: Consent form template](#)
- » [Chapter 2.2 General requirements for consent \(National Statement\)](#)
- » [NHMRC standardised participant information and consent forms \(NHMRC\)](#)
- » [Consent form builder tool \(ResearchOps Community\)](#)

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## Data storage

Ensure your organisation is protecting the privacy and rights of people with disability by storing information safely. You must:

- Check if you are allowed to store data at all. For example, some ethics approvals mean you cannot keep people's information.
- Follow best practice for data storage in your industry or your organisation's process. This includes deleting data once the project is complete.
- Make sure you treat people's information and data appropriately.
- Be clear and communicate with people with disability about:
  - what information will be kept
  - where that information will be kept
  - who will have access it
  - how long you will keep it.
- Give people the option to change their minds or have their information deleted.

### Relevant pages

- » [Follow up: Quote participants accurately](#)
- » [5 principles of data ethics for businesses \(Harvard Business School Online\)](#)
- » [Guide to data analytics and the Australian Privacy Principles \(OAIC\)](#)
- » [Privacy in the Australian Public Service \(OAIC\)](#)

# Partner with disability specialists

Disability specialists and disability organisations can help in many ways. They are important if you are consulting with or about people with disability. Consider what services you need, find the right person or group, and be prepared to work together.

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## Potential benefits

Disability specialists and disability organisations can help in many ways, including:

- improving accessibility within the design or delivery of your activity
- supporting the recruitment of other participants with disability or their allies
- facilitating sessions with people with disability
- providing advice and additional insight to the project team
- building trusted relationships with participants.

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## Who to contact

When making the decision to partner with disability specialists, consider:

- whether the project could create trauma or cause participants to re-experience past trauma
- how you intend to support trauma-informed practice
- the level of skill, experience, and cultural understanding within the project team. Is your team equipped to create culturally appropriate, trauma-informed, safe spaces for the cohort you are seeking to engage?
- the purpose of the project
- the activities you intend to run
- the impact on the disability (and broader) community
- the benefit for the disability community
- the duration of the activity
- the recruitment of participants
- the approach to facilitation
- other logistics of running the activity.

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## Types of organisations

Based on the services you need, you may need to determine what type of disability specialists you require. There are several different types of organisations offering their expertise.

- **Accessibility auditors** check that your products, systems, and locations work for people with different accessibility needs. These are commonly digital, but may include physical spaces, such as building accessibility assessments. Find organisations led by people with disability or that test with people with disability.
- **Accessibility service providers** can provide equipment or services to increase the accessibility of your engagement. They could include interpreters, Easy Read translators or assistive technology providers. Many disability representative organisations and disability advocacy organisations publish lists of preferred accessibility service providers.
- **Disability advisory groups** act on behalf of specific disability groups. All states and territories have disability advisory groups. These groups provide advice and insight on government policy and programs that affect people with disability.
- **Disability advocates** may support a particular cause or change for themselves, for other people, or for a group of people with disability. Advocates may give you information or write submissions, advice and more.
- **National disability representative organisations** are select groups that communicate to the government for systemic advocacy and representation for people with disability in Australia.
- **Peer support groups** are led by people with disability and can be tailored to specific groups. There are a range of peer-led groups and organisations in Australia that are equipped to engage their members.
- **Professional facilitators or co-facilitators with disability** work with you to lead or support the activity. They may act as the presenter, guide the conversation, explain things, ask questions, and/or write notes. You would then Collaborate with or Empower them as part of your IAP2 Spectrum project.
- **Sensitivity readers** are people with disability who work with you before publishing to read and check your content for bias, offence, or harm.

### Relevant pages

- » [Context: Define the level of participation](#)
- » [Advocacy groups \(Disability Gateway\)](#)
- » [Key actions under the strategy \(Disability Gateway\)](#)
- » [National disability representative organisations \(Department of Social Services \[DSS\]\)](#)
- » [List of agencies funded under the National Disability Advocacy Program \(DSS\)](#)
- » [Disability advocacy organisations \(Australian Federation of Disability Organisations\)](#)
- » [Manual and checklist \(Act Inclusion Council\)](#)
- » [Access and inclusion for businesses \(Eurobodalla Shire Council\)](#)
- » [Accessibility auditing \(Government of South Australia\)](#)
- » [Accessibility audit \(Vision Australia\)](#)

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## How to seek partnership

Please keep in mind that many disability organisations receive more requests for assistance than they have the capacity to accept. You should:

- Search for the relevant disability representative organisation. What kind of expertise do you need? Which group of people do you have in mind?
- Contact potential specialists early, but respect that a partnership may not be possible.
- Ask and give partners what they need from you.
- Discuss what services or expertise you require and the cost.
- Ask for suggestions of other organisations or individuals with similar expertise.

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Pay participants](#)
- » [Plan: Identify and attract participants](#)

# Consider time and cost

Ensure you allocate appropriate time and resources to successfully design and execute your project or event.

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## Time

### *Planning or designing*

Allow time to plan or design a fully accessible activity. You should give yourself enough time to:

- Obtain ethics approval if your activity needs it.
- Recruit a representative sample of participants across your target cohort.
- Give people with disability enough information and notice about your activity so they can prepare.
- Find appropriate and accessible venues.
- Arrange services to assist with accessibility.
- Create accessible materials.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)
- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)
- » [Inclusion: Take the time, make the time \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)

## Delivering

Allow time to run or deliver a fully accessible activity. You may need to:

- Think about how your activity meets the diverse needs of your participants, especially people with disability.
- Include more breaks throughout the activity and allow for the costs and resources required to support more breaks.
- Communicate in different ways.
- Allow time and offer different ways for participants to give feedback. You will also need time to respond to different methods of feedback.
- Give yourself and your team time to create and respond to follow-up communication.

### Relevant pages:

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Schedule activities](#)
- » [Follow up: Promote effective follow up](#)
- » [Follow up: Use feedback to evaluate](#)

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## Costs

Allow budget to facilitate activity that is appropriate for and accessible to people with disability. You may need to:

- Pay participants for their insight and expertise as people with disability, and pay their support people.
- Employ additional team members, partners, or disability experts, including trauma-informed facilitators, disability advocates, or facilitators with disability.
- Arrange accessibility services from outside your team, such as live transcription, captioning, and Auslan interpreting.
- Contract services (such as auditors or recruiters) through disability or other specialist organisations.
- Provide additional equipment, such as hearing loops and specialty keyboards or software.
- Provide accessible materials, such as resources in Easy Read or braille.
- Consider the accessibility of physical locations.

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Pay participants](#)
- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)
- » [Plan: Identify and attract participants](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)

# Pay participants

Always aim to pay people with disability for their participation, particularly if your activity is defined as **involve**, **collaborate** or **empower** on the IAP2 Spectrum.

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## Importance of paying participants

It is important to acknowledge the value of your participant's time and expertise by paying them.

It is particularly important to remunerate people with disability who are not participating in the engagement or project as part of their regular professional duties.

Paying or reimbursing participants with disability will also increase access to participation in your activity. Often people with disability require longer travel time to attend, and may experience more inconvenience and risk during their participation than other members of the community.

### Example

It can take longer for a person with disability to travel to a location because of inaccessible transport options. It can also cost that person more to secure the support they need at the time of the session. It is important to recognise and remunerate people with disability appropriately.

### Related pages

- » [Context: Define the level of participation](#)
- » [Design: Make participant experiences positive](#)
- » [Payment of participants in research \(National Health and Medical Research Council\)](#)



## ***Paying support workers***

Disability support workers assist people with disability in their daily lives. The role of a support worker is varied and depends on their relationship with and the needs of the person with disability. Support workers may participate in your activity as part of their role. For example, they may help a participant with communication, manage their support tools, or attend the activity alongside the participant.

The support that people with disability receive can be:

- **Formal:** where a support worker is paid as a service provider. Attendance at an activity forms part of their normal work. Support workers can be funded through schemes such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the National Injury Insurance Scheme, or through those run by the Department of Veterans' Affairs or the Department of Health and Aged Care.
- **Informal:** where a support worker provides care freely based on their relationship, such as a family member or friend. Support workers are usually not paid for this, but there are exceptions.

Formal support workers' time would normally already be paid for. However, if a participant chooses not to use their funding package to pay for their support worker's time during the activity, consider paying for the support worker's time to support the participant.

Informal support workers should be paid the same as other participants.

If you are reimbursing participants' expenses, you should also reimburse support workers' expenses.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Pricing arrangements \(NDIS\)](#)
- » [Including specific types of supports in plans operational guideline – sustaining informal supports \(NDIS\)](#)

## ***Paying organisations***

You may pay for a participant's time through an agreement with the organisation they work for. This may be relevant if their job aligns with the nature of the activity and you are engaging them in an activity once, contracting their services, or partnering with them.

Disability representative organisations and advocacy providers are funded by the government for certain activities. Check if participation in your activity is included under those government funding agreements.

You should discuss payment arrangements with your participants, service providers, and partners. For example, they may offer you their service rates or give you a quote.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)
- » [National disability advocacy providers \(Department of Social Services\)](#)

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## Types of payment

You can pay participants in several ways. Each payment type has legal, administrative, financial, and other considerations. You should:

- Research whether your payment type has tax or financial support implications. This may affect whether or in what form participants can accept it.
- Invite participants to discuss payment arrangements with you if they have concerns about the types of payment they can receive or that you can offer.
- Discuss whether participants have support workers whom you should also pay. This differs based on the circumstances of the person with disability.
- Follow your organisation's procedures when paying participants through the method that works for you and for them.

Some participants in your engagement may inform you they receive a disability support pension and wish to discuss the ramifications of payment with you. They may request documentation that indicates the payment is a one-off so it does not impact their pension.

### Relevant pages

- » [Disability support pension \(DSP\) \(Services Australia\)](#)
- » [Other payments if you can't get DSP \(Services Australia\)](#)

## Remuneration

Remuneration is payment for services rendered. Many people engaged as subject matter experts, including people with disability, prefer to be remunerated. You can remunerate a participant with physical currency, including banknotes, money transfers, and cheques. You can also remunerate people by a wage, particularly for longer projects or those where people with disability are fulfilling duties and obligations. This is especially relevant when the level of participation on the IAP2 Spectrum is involve and beyond.

When participants are from your own organisation, make arrangements so they can participate without adding additional load to their everyday work.

### Relevant pages

- » [Context: Define the level of participation – Involve](#)

## ***Incentive payments***

Incentive payments are often framed as a thank-you gift for participation rather than payment for services rendered. These can be physical gifts or gift cards. It is important to:

- Always follow your organisation's gifting guidelines in relation to what, when, and how much can be given and received.
- Try to provide options for gift card providers and explain the different ways to use them so participants receive a gift card they can use.

Be aware that framing the payment as a gift may have negative connotations, especially if the labour and expertise of participants is deemed not to have been appropriately recognised. Similarly, incentive payments do not carry connotations of income and may therefore not need to be reported for tax purposes.

### ***Relevant pages***

- » [Income from gifts, legacies, royalties & native title claims \(Social Security Guide\)](#)

## ***Expense reimbursement***

Expense reimbursement payments cover the expenses of participants during their involvement in your activity, such as travel, food, and accommodation. Committing to reimbursing expenses may help recruit a diverse cohort of participants.

To participate on an equal basis with others, people with disability may incur additional costs. These may be related to different or additional accessibility needs, such as transport or accommodation.

If you are reimbursing participants' expenses, you should also reimburse support workers' expenses.

### ***Relevant pages***

- » [Design: Start by thinking about accessible design](#)
- » [Income received to cover specific expenses \(Social Security Guide\)](#)

# Plan

# Identify and attract participants

Provide potential participants with clear recruitment information. Promote your activity through broad or targeted channels to reach more and diverse people with disability.

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## Provide clear recruitment information

Provide clear information to help potential participants make an informed decision about whether to participate in your activity. Communicate using plain language so that the information is easy to understand.

Recruitment information should include:

- who you are seeking to engage and why
- what participation involves
- where and when the activity is expected to happen
- how participants will be compensated
- what support is available to help people participate
- how to request alternative formats for materials
- who to contact for answers to questions

- how to express an interest to participate
- the ethics approval number and the name of the approving body.

People with disability are a diverse group. Some people may require Easy Read documents, while others may need information in another accessible format. Depending on your target audience, you may need to make your information available in braille, Auslan, Easy Read, large print, different languages, audio described, and/or compatible with assistive technology.

Consider how you might recruit and communicate with participants who perhaps do not have ready access to the internet.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Context: Understand what disability means](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Tool: Expression of interest form](#)
- » [Plain language and word choice \(Australian Government Style Manual\)](#)
- » [Broadcast and social media communication in emergencies \(Centre for Inclusive Design\)](#)

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## Promote your activity

Make sure to allocate enough time to promote your activity, as attracting participants with disability may require a significant investment of time. This is because it may take longer to reach potential participants, organise necessary supports, provide accessibility accommodations, or adjust the activity.

To reach more people with disability, you can try:

- partnering with disability organisations with extended networks
- communicating through relevant government social media channels
- communicating through disability organisation social media channels and other relevant social media groups
- advertising in newsletters targeted at people with disability.

When partnering with other organisations:

- Discuss how the organisation can support your activity.
- Refine your communication so it is accessible for the people the organisation will contact.
- Agree on suitable promotion periods.
- Include remuneration for recruitment efforts in your project budget.

Relationships take time to nurture. Take care to establish trust between your organisation and the organisation you are contacting.

### *Related pages*

- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)
- » [Design: Pay participants](#)
- » [eNewsletters \(NDIS\)](#)
- » [News \(Services Australia\)](#)
- » [Advocacy groups \(Disability Gateway\)](#)

# Give participants clear information in advance

Make sure participants know what to expect in advance so they can plan and prepare before the event. Give clear guidance on how to use tools and share accessible materials.

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## Share planning information in advance

Let participants know the details of the activities before the event, so they have enough time to arrange logistics and any accommodations or alternatives they may require. Provide information about what to expect when they get to the session days before the activity.

Helpful logistical information could include:

- details of the location and physical set up, including transport options
- details of the technical set up
- details about emergency protocols and safety
- accommodations you will or could provide
- who will be at the session, including who will be facilitating.

Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)
- » [Factsheet: inclusive consultations – talking accessibly about your project \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)
- » [Readability guidelines \(Content Design London\)](#)

## *Physical set up*

Some of the physical places, people and aspects participants will need to know about include:

- the location of the activity
- how to get to the location and how to navigate to and within the building
- nearby and accessible parking or public transport options, taxi ranks or websites/phone numbers for booking accessible taxis
- the names of the people to contact before the event and on arrival
- availability of accessible restrooms and changing places, including if toilets need a master locksmiths access key (MLAK)
- the expected dress code
- emergency and evacuation plans and procedures

- facilities available, including accessible options
- the type/s of food or refreshments available, if any
- other food options nearby with accessible routes.

You should also let participants know about any assumptions you have made when planning the activities. These could include assumptions that participants will be able to:

- talk or work in small groups
- handwrite
- move around the room
- move between locations
- speak aloud
- use technology, for example computers or phones
- not use technology, for example turning off their phones.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)
- » [Master Locksmiths Access Key \(Masters Locksmiths\)](#)
- » [Find a changing places toilet \(Changing Places\)](#)

### **Technical set up**

Tell participants about the technology you will use during the activity, and any technology you will expect them to use. When incorporating technology into activities:

- Think about how participants will interact with the technology.
- Make sure the technology works with participants' accommodations or assistive technology.
- Test the technology beforehand.
- Be prepared to support people with disability to use the technology.
- Consider offering an optional pre-activity workshop, where participants can get technical advice and test tools, equipment, logging in, and other features.



Send participants information about the technical set up, such as guidance or information on:

- finding, getting to, or logging into the activity if it is remote
- integrating with popular assistive technology, such as JAWS, Dragon, ZoomText, switches, and inbuilt screen readers
- setting up any programs you and they will use
- understanding the features of any technology you and they will use
- accessing any online links
- setting up any accessibility features they may use
- getting help for any technology you and they will use, for example, troubleshooting common issues.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)

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## Share preparation information and materials in advance

Consider how you will send preparation information to participants accessibly and what you should include. This helps participants understand what will happen during the activity and how to prepare for it.

Helpful information to provide participants beforehand includes:

- an agenda, so people know what to expect
- consent or other legal documents they will be asked to sign
- information about your organisation, your project, and the facilitator(s)
- who to contact and how to contact them if they have questions
- details of a formal complaints process participants can use if required that is outside of the project or activity – for example, managed at the facilitation team's organisational level
- copies of any documents or slides that will be discussed during the activity
- links to the virtual meeting space or remote tools that may be used, such as online collaboration spaces
- audio or visual instructions for the activity
- materials in other formats and languages, including Easy Read, Auslan and languages other than English.

You should:

- Provide materials in the most accessible format possible for your participants. This may require having multiple options for different people.
- Use plain language, and only use jargon if you explain it. When required, provide materials in Easy Read and other accessible formats, such as a summary version.
- Give people accessible copies of all materials you will show, talk about, or create during the activity. Make sure each presenter gives you their material in advance so you can share it with participants in an accessible format.
- Give people access to any remote or online tools you will use so they can practise using them. For example, add instructions in an area that is used only for testing, or start the activity with a warmup that encourages participants to use the tool.

Ensure participants are made aware of:

- information about the activity and project
- information about you and your organisation
- how their data will be collected and what it will be used for
- who to contact and how to contact them if they have questions
- how to participate
- how to consent to the activity.

## Example

*Guest speakers at your conference will be presenting a report. You share the report with participants in advance so that participants who are blind and have low vision can use assistive technology ahead of the session to run through the report. On the day of the conference, participants follow along with the presentation and can quickly navigate through the report because they are familiar with it.*

*The best time to send pre-activity information depends on the needs of the participants and the nature of the information. You send mandatory pre-reading to participants 1-2 weeks before the activity, depending on the length of the materials. You send the agenda and all non-mandatory materials 3 business days before the activity.*

*You also re-send all materials 2 business days before the activity to remind participants of the content and ensure it is fresh in their minds on the day.*

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – print and digital documents](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – audio and video content](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)
- » [Deliver: Manage changing responsibility between team members](#)
- » [Tool: Consent form template](#)
- » [Tool: Expression of interest form template](#)

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## Prepare participants for an unfacilitated engagement

For some unfacilitated activities, you cannot send pre-activity information to participants. You should:

- Consider the assumptions you are making about potential participants' digital capacity and access to digital resources. Think about how you might attract participants and deliver the activity without using the internet.
- Make sure people can access key information before they participate.
- Include information about the activity in your communication. This could include on the tools you use to identify and attract participants, or on a homepage, information pages, or landing pages.
- Provide guiding information that is clear and understandable. Use plain language, explain complex or uncommon words, and/or add images with alternative text.
- Provide multiple ways for people to ask for help to understand the information. These could include accessible videos, documents, CSS tooltips, and/or a helpline.
- Provide multiple ways for participants to complete activities. For example, via text, audio, file uploads, by mail, and/or a facilitated option.

Ensure participants are made aware of:

- information about the activity and project
- information about you and your organisation
- how their data will be collected what it is used for
- who to contact and how to contact them if they have questions
- how to participate
- how to consent to the activity.

### Example

*You are running a consultation process where you are collecting experiences and case studies from participants. You provide detailed information about the objectives of the consultation and how you will use the information you gather. You provide guidance on how participants should approach their responses, and the various ways they can submit them to the consultation.*

*You make sure to introduce yourself and your organisation. You also explain how participants can contact you if they have questions, would like additional support, or want to retract their submission.*

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – forms and surveys](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – images and diagrams](#)
- » [Deliver: Manage changing responsibility between team members](#)
- » [Tool: Consent form template](#)
- » [Tool: Expression of interest form template](#)

# Plan accessible in-person activities

Choose venues that provide an accessible, whole-of-journey experience for people with disability. This includes considering the location, participants' transport options, and the venue's features and facilities. Set up the venue, activity spaces, and technology so people with disability can move freely; take breaks; contribute fully; access audio, visual, and text-based information; and concentrate. Remember to prioritise physical, mental, emotional, and cultural safety.

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## Select accessible venue(s)

The location, features, and layout of the engagement venue can have a huge impact on accessibility. Consider the whole-of-journey experience when selecting a physical location. You should aim to:

- Choose locations that are accessible and meet the national *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010*. Examples include having accessible bathrooms, ramps, handrails, even flooring, clear signage, hearing loops, and different types of seating.
- Reflect on how you will use the space. Think about what you want or expect participants to do in the venue.
- Examine physical accessibility beyond compliance with building accessibility legislation. For example, ask about the type of seating available, the levels of ventilation and noise, the availability of technical support (such as microphones), whether there is a guided entry to required spaces, and whether the venue has Changing Places facilities.
- Identify available transport options.

- Visit the space and confirm its suitability before you book it. When in doubt, check with participants about what they need. Inspect potential venues with these three considerations in mind:
  - how to get to and from the venue
  - where the venue is located
  - the venue's features and facilities.
- Engage a disability access consultant or accessibility auditor if you need additional advice or expertise.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Whole journey guide \(Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, and the Arts\)](#)
- » [Changing Places website \(Changing Places\)](#)
- » [Frequently asked questions: access to premises \(Australian Human Rights Commission \[AHRC\]\)](#)

### *The venue's space*

When choosing a venue, consider how its space will affect the experience of your participants. Are you expecting participants to:

- move around a single space, like a room?
- move between spaces, such as between exhibition rooms or around a campus?
- present to others?
- view visual content, such as posters, presentation slides, or videos?
- listen to presentations or announcements?
- talk to other participants?
- write or draw?
- stay in one spot for a long time?
- concentrate deeply?
- speak at once? (Will it get loud?)
- be in one room for a long period? (Will the sound and air quality be appropriate?)

## ***The venue's transport options***

Think about how participants will get to and from the venue. Consider:

- **Transport options:** which options are nearby and are they accessible? Can participants safely and comfortably arrive and leave at times that suit them and match the public transport schedule?
- **Parking:** is there parking nearby? Is there enough accessible parking? How far away is parking from the venue? How likely are participants to get a car park? How much does parking cost?
- **Drop off zones:** can participants be dropped off by a car close to the venue?
- **Paths leading to the entrance:** are paths bumpy, blocked, uphill, or easily accessible? Are there paths near public transport, parking, and drop-off areas?

## ***The venue's location***

Where is the venue located? What else is in the surrounding area? Consider:

- Will participants feel comfortable and safe attending an engagement here? Is this location culturally appropriate?
- Is there a park or space nearby for participants with support animals to use?
- Is there a variety of food options nearby if your activity is half a day or longer and you are not providing catering?

## ***The venue's features and facilities***

When you inspect the venue and its facilities to ensure it is a good fit for your engagement, consider:

- Are participants able to enter the venue easily? Are there any barriers to entry? These could include stairs, slopes, heavy or narrow doors, unstable or sloped ground, and high thresholds.
- Are participants able to access all areas that will be used? This includes rooms, corridors, doorways, and stages.
- Will participants be able to comfortably move around the venue? This includes features like wide corridors; brightly lit areas; stable, flat and even ground; open spaces; and handrails on stairs.
- Are there accessible toilets? Can participants get to them easily and independently? If a participant must navigate stairs or other barriers to access the toilets, they are not accessible. Consider hosting your activity at a venue with a Changing Places bathroom or hiring a portable Changing Places toilet for your event.
- Is there lots of noise at the venue? Will participants be disturbed by noise?

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Hosting accessible and inclusive in-person meetings and events \(IncludeAbility, AHRC\)](#)
- » [Creating an accessible and inclusive workplace \(IncludeAbility, AHRC\)](#)
- » [Event accessibility guidelines \(Brisbane City Council\)](#)
- » [Find a Changing Places toilet \(Changing Places\)](#)

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## Ensure participant safety

Prioritise the physical, mental, and cultural safety of participants.

- Follow your organisation's and the venue's safety procedures.
- Provide safety information in multiple formats suited to the accessibility needs of participants.
- Follow cultural protocols and processes.
- Prepare emergency evacuation plans for the number of people and the people with disability participating.
- Provide information about and options for accessible food and catering.
- Consider setting up a low-sensory space.

### ***The venue's emergency evacuation protocols***

To prepare for an emergency or evacuation situation:

- Make sure you can evacuate everyone. This is particularly important for people who use mobility devices.
- Examine your chosen venue's existing emergency evacuation procedures. In particular, identify the procedures they have in place to support people with disability.
- Plan how you will provide support to everyone.

- Ensure facilitators and venue staff are aware of what support they may need to provide in case of emergency, and how they can provide it. This includes the operation of any evacuation devices or equipment.
- Find out if participants have personal emergency evacuation plans.
- Determine how many people would require assistance in an emergency.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Give clear information in advance](#)
- » [What matters to customers with disability? Emergency evacuation \(Australia's Network on Disability\)](#)
- » [Emergency plans fact sheet \(Safe Work Australia\)](#)
- » [Evacuation plans for employees with disability \(Job Access\)](#)
- » [Planning for evacuation \(Disability Access Consultants\)](#)
- » [Guide for assisting individuals with disabilities in an emergency \(Stanford University Diversity\)](#)



## ***Food and catering***

Food helps people ensure they have enough energy to concentrate and participate fully in your activity. When meeting in-person, you should tell people about the catering or their food options if you are not providing catering. This helps people make informed decisions about the options they have available. To make sure people can get food easily and safely you should:

- Tell people whether you will provide food.
- Ensure breaks provide enough time for all participants to get and consume food and drinks.
- Identify nearby food options and their accessible routes.
- Have team members available to support anyone who asks for help getting food.
- Ask people to share their dietary requirements before the activity.
- If possible, provide a variety of food that can be eaten by people on restricted diets and without cutlery.
- Provide individual portions so people can access their food without using shared utensils.
- Clearly mark food that may contain gluten, nuts, meat products, dairy, sugar, and other restrictions people tell you about.
- Prevent cross-contamination of allergens. This could include providing serving utensils for each dish, placing allergen-free options away from items they could be mistaken for, and providing separate appliances for allergen-free options, such as toasters for gluten-free bread.
- Make it easy to get to and from the food area. Participants should be able to move between furniture, through the room, and across the catering area easily.
- Provide easily reachable foods, drinks, snack options, and cutlery (including drinking straws). Some considerations include placing tables at accessible heights, leaving snacks on tables, or bringing food to people. Take special care to place hot food or drinks at accessible heights to prevent harmful spills.
- Provide clear and accessible information about catering options in similar formats to other event information and materials you provide.

## ***Low-sensory spaces***

Low-sensory spaces, also known as quiet rooms or sensory spaces, are rooms designed to provide minimal sensory input and to help people reduce sensory overload.

People use low-sensory spaces when their senses are overwhelmed by the sights, sounds, smells, sensations, or people around them. Being in a calming environment can help a participant to relax, take a break, and return to the activity when they're ready.

You can tailor your low-sensory space to the activity and needs of participants.

Low-sensory spaces should have:

- signage directing participants to them
- minimal noise. Quiet is preferred where possible, without background sounds like humming or loud traffic
- dim lighting
- muted colours
- comfortable places to sit, such as cushions, chairs, or sofas
- a comfortable temperature or the ability to adjust the temperature easily
- access to water.

In your low-sensory space, you may also want to include other features like:

- a counsellor, facilitator, or support staff member to assist participants
- activities or distractions for participants
- noise-cancelling headphones
- soft furnishings, such as blankets.

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## Setting up your venue(s)

After choosing your venue, set it up to maximise accessibility.

- Make sure the physical set up, technical set up, and all accessibility supports are available, working, safe, and ready for use.
- Make sure you show, explain, and have safety information such as emergency evacuation plans available in multiple accessible formats.
- Create plans and strategies to manage issues. Enacting these plans may require additional team members or team members with specialist skills.
- Make required changes to ensure safety and usability.
- Remove items that may be distracting or impact accessibility.
- Identify and address barriers for people with disability throughout the venue.

### Relevant pages

- » [Inclusive meetings \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)
- » [Guidance on premises \(Design for Dignity\)](#)
- » [Inclusive co-design workshop techniques \(Northcott Innovation\)](#)

## Physical set up

Consider the accessibility of physical places and resources. In particular, consider:

- access to the reception or information desks
- audio and noise levels
- readiness of hearing loops (available and working)
- ramps, lifts, hallways, and transitory spaces
- technology that you or participants will need to use or operate
- layouts and floorplans
- light sources, such as projectors, the sun, or blinking lights
- physical obstructions
- scents and smells
- text, such as signage or communications.

### Example

*You have prepared a physical space for presentations at an all-day symposium on native plant species. The team arranged a seating plan and installed a ramp for speakers at the front. In the afternoon, there will be interactive sessions with all participants collaborating. You and your team spend 15 minutes during the lunch break rearranging the space so everyone has easy access to the group sessions.*

## ***Technical set up at the venue***

You will also need to consider any technology, assistive technology, and digital platform requirements. These may include:

- audio quality, volume, and noise (such as crackling speakers or projector humming)
- captions
- transcription
- hearing loops
- sign up, log in, or viewing settings
- screensharing
- navigation of the tools, technology, or platform
- light sources
- video settings
- camera and display settings
- hosting rights
- breakout rooms

## **Example**

You are running a hybrid event. Some participants are attending in person, while others will attend online via a virtual meeting room.

You send the virtual meeting link to a team member who will have the same view and editing rights as your participants. You join the meeting early with your team member and your accessibility service providers. You check and enable accessibility features, such as the live transcription, hosting rights, and volume.

Your team member and Auslan interpreters are in the same physical location. You notice their background lighting makes the interpreter's hands harder to see. You let them know and they find a different area that has a solid background and is well lit.

As participants join, you copy images into the chat with instructions on how to enable the accessibility features of the platform. You check-in with participants using the chat and other communication channels.

### Relevant pages

- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)

# Meet people's accessibility needs

Make sure everyone can participate fully by asking people what they need. Be clear about what they can expect, what you can provide, and where to find accessibility supports.

Each activity is distinct and each activity should be accessible. To make sure people can participate easily:

- Don't assume you know how your activity may be inaccessible for participants.
- Think about accessibility early and ask participants how you can ensure your activity is accessible for them.
- Be prepared to offer alternative formats.
- Be transparent about your decisions and limitations. Let participants make informed decisions about their participation.
- Take responsibility when you cannot provide an accessible activity.

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## How to ask about accessibility needs

To help you prepare, make sure you communicate with participants early and clearly regarding the type/s of accessibility needs they may have. This is important, as some accommodations may require additional planning, booking, and/or accessing external supports.

When you ask participants about their accessibility needs, make sure you:

- Do not ask participants to disclose personal or medical information.
- Introduce and explain the activity.
- Explain what will happen on the day.
- Provide a list of accommodations that will be available, as well as accommodations that can be available on request.
- Ask if there is anything they need that has not been included on your list of accommodations.
- Ask if they have any support requirements, such as people, tools, or technology that they would like you to integrate into the activity.

- Ask how you can support each person in the event of an emergency. For example, determine whether they have or could complete a personal emergency evacuation plan.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Tool: Expression of interest form template](#)

### ***If you cannot ask participants about their accessibility needs***

You may not have the opportunity to ask participants about their needs or they may not be comfortable giving you this information. If this happens, you should:

- Think about design decisions that may make your activity more universally accessible to more people.
- Make all physical and digital material accessible by default.
- Provide information in multiple formats.
- Include many and flexible ways for people to take part in your event.
- Think about the different ways people can communicate with you and with each other during your activity.
- Choose accessible platforms and tools.
- Choose accessible venues.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Start by thinking about accessible design](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)

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## How to include requested accommodations

You should always try to include requested accommodations. If your activity is specifically seeking the views or experience of people with disability, you must meet all participant needs.

### *How to source accessibility services*

Accommodating some requests may require you to source accessibility services. Secure any required accessibility services as soon as possible. When looking for service providers, you should:

- Check for providers preferred by your organisation.
- Consult reputable sources for service providers, such as directories or newsletters, before using online search results. Use reviews and recommendations from people with disability who have used that service to guide your decisions.
- Ask participants if they have preferred or recommended providers.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)

## *Incorporating the accessibility service*

To ensure participants can effectively use the service, you must support the service provider and participant as required. When using an accessibility service, you should:

- Secure the accessibility service(s) as soon as possible, which may incur a service charge.
- Tell participants that the service has been secured.
- Provide the service provider with information they require as it becomes available, such as the agenda and the location of your event.
- Connect the service provider with your team.
- If required, ask participants if they are comfortable sharing additional information with the service provider.
- If required, put the participant and service provider in touch with each other before the event.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)

### ***If you cannot provide a requested accommodation***

Communicate early if you cannot provide a requested accommodation. You should:

- Contact the participant as soon as possible using their preferred communication method.
- Explain why you could not provide what the participant requested.
- Suggest alternatives you know you can provide.
- Ask if there are alternative accommodations that would suit them.
- Ask if they would still like to attend, even if no accommodations can be provided.
- Offer the option to participate in future opportunities where you will be able to accommodate their needs.
- Ask if they would still like to be informed about the outcome of this activity.

### ***If no alternatives are appropriate***

Meeting all requests can be challenging for many reasons. If you cannot meet participants' needs, you should:

- Thank them for their time and interest.
- Apologise and acknowledge the shortcomings of the activity.
- Offer future opportunities to participate in relevant activities (if available) when you can accommodate their needs.
- Ask if they would like to be kept informed and updated on future developments in the project.
- Consider how you can meet this accessibility need in the future.
- Reflect on this experience and change your work practice.



Relevant pages

» [Follow up: Use feedback to evaluate](#)

### Example

You are running an in-person focus group. You are going to send an email to all participants that describes the activity, lists accommodations you are prepared to provide, and asks them if there are any accommodations they would like you to provide.

The co-facilitator for your activity uses a wheelchair. Before booking a venue, you ask them if they have any preferred venues that are centrally located. During one of your planning meetings, you ask them what you should do to ensure the focus group is accessible for them on the day. They tell you to think about the floor plan and keeping aisles and walkways clear. You talk with the venue staff to ensure the furniture set up is wheelchair friendly. You prepare signs to remind participants to keep their bags and loose items out of aisles and walkways. You remind your team to put these signs up on the day of the activity.

You know you will have people who are deaf or hard of hearing attending your focus group, so you look up accommodations they may need. In your search, you discover that captions and transcription will work for some people, and other people may need an interpreter. You search for an interpreter service and make a provisional booking for the date of the focus group in case it's

needed. When you test the captioning, you see the automated captions are inaccurately transcribing the technical language. You know you will use these words in the focus group, so you make a booking for a live-transcription service instead. You talk to your technology support team about this and test the service. Your technology support team also tells you that the space has a hearing loop, so you ask them to show you how it works in the lead-up to the focus group.

You include all these options in the initial email you send to participants.

# Schedule activities

Allow enough time to plan, schedule, and arrange your activity.

Allow time during and after your activity for questions and debriefing. Put participants into groups carefully – consider who is present so that people with disability are comfortable and can access their accommodations easily. If participants are unable to physically attend for any reason, offer alternative participation formats like phone calls, surveys, or focus groups, as well as alternative submission options like text, video, drawings, and audio recordings.

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## Allow time to schedule your activity

Schedule activities well in advance. Scheduling 2-6 weeks ahead usually allows adequate time for participants to plan to attend, and for you to arrange accessibility accommodations.

Consider that different stakeholders will have different needs.

### ***For participants:***

- Ensure any scheduling tools used are accessible and useable by participants.
- Give ample notice so you or people with disability can arrange their transport and supports.
- Provide options, where possible, so participants can choose activities that best suit them. Try to offer participants a range of dates, times, and methods of activity.
- Allocate enough time for breaks for all participants to eat and manage the physical, mental, and emotional effort to participate.

### **For team members:**

- Allow time for reflection and debrief for facilitators and participants. This will help everyone involved to consider the delivery of the activity and allow for change if required.

#### **Example**

When designing a schedule for usability testing of a new toilet map application, your project team has 4 sessions every day for 2 weeks. They offer participants one-hour to 2-hour sessions with a 10-minute break every hour.

Your project team includes people with disability, and you facilitate in pairs. The facilitators use the break time to stretch, remove their hearing aids, and self-soothe. They then spend 15 minutes after each session reflecting on how it went.

In the first week, your team receives comments about the language you are using being confusing. You make small changes to their instructions to clarify the language of the task. You then start sending participants a copy of the instructions 3 days before and give them time to ask questions during the testing.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)
- » [Follow up: Use feedback to evaluate](#)

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## **Allow time for questions and debriefing**

Allow time for reflection and debriefing for participants and for the organisers or facilitators of the activity. This will help all people involved to manage the physical, mental, and emotional effort required for the activity.

While the aim of an activity is not to trigger issues, it's important to take a trauma-informed approach and provide time for both facilitators and participants to debrief with a person they trust. It is also important to ensure that people (both participants and facilitators) can access programs such as employee assistance programs and services and Mental Health First Aid training.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Make participant experiences positive](#)
- » [Mental health and wellbeing \(Disability Gateway\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for Trauma Informed Practice: Supporting People with Disability who have experienced Complex Trauma \(Blue Knot\)](#)

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## Group participants carefully – consider who is in the room

For activities that involve coordinating a common time for a group of people to come together, such as a focus group, you should:

- Prioritise the needs of diverse people with disability.
- Decide whether it is appropriate to group people with similar or different experiences together.
- Make sure any grouping does not prevent or hinder full participation from all participants.

### Example

*Content warning: police, women's safety*

*You are planning an online workshop about the safety of young women on campus. You do not want to separate people with and without disability. Instead, you consider whether there is greater benefit in having a mixed group or a similar group. At the beginning of the day, you want participants to discuss their concerns freely, so you make sure none of the on-campus police officers are present during those activities. For the main presentations, you group everyone together. For the smaller group activities, you make sure the two participants who need to be able to see the Auslan interpreter are in the same group.*

You also need to consider the power dynamics in the group. Some participants may not feel comfortable providing open and honest feedback depending on who else is present. For example, if there is someone from or representing:

- government organisations, such as Services Australia, child protection agencies, the NDIS and NDIS Local Area Coordinators
- a disability service provider on whom the participant relies for any type of support
- an advocacy group who does not share the same viewpoint or experience as the participant
- an intelligence or enforcement officer or organisation such as the police
- an authority figure.

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## Offer alternative participation methods

It is good practice to offer participants a range of ways to participate. Be gracious in the way you respond to participants' situations and offer help.

Only offer participants alternative participation methods that you have the resources to facilitate.

There are many reasons a participant may be unable to participate in the planned activity; however, they may still want to provide input. Difficulties may include:

- attending the scheduled activity due to time or location restraints
- attending the scheduled activity due to unforeseen barriers, such as illness, emergencies, transport problems, or internet connectivity
- affording the additional supports required to attend, from carers to transport
- accessing the activity format
- having to provide some or all input during the session, but preferring to provide it afterwards, perhaps in an alternative format or after checking it.

Some alternative participation methods include:

- offering alternative participation formats like phone calls, surveys, or focus groups, as well as alternative submission options like text, video, drawing, and audio recordings
- rescheduling the activity
- scheduling an additional activity for the individual or a group; this could follow the same agenda or be adapted to the new setting/format/group
- providing your contact information to participants so they can send input to you directly
- creating a survey or submissions process to receive additional input
- inviting participants to other scheduled events in the activity
- providing financial assistance so the person is not left out-of-pocket after participating in the activity.

Ensure participants are aware of any alternative modes of submission that you can provide to them. Do this in your initial communication, during the activity, and in the activity follow up.

*Relevant pages:*

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – forms and surveys](#)
- » [Deliver: Deliver an inclusive activity](#)
- » [Follow up: Promote effective follow up](#)

# Create accessible materials

Make sure all materials provided, shared, used, and displayed are accessible to all participants. Plan and check accessibility using the relevant platforms, tools, and technology or by consulting experts.

Detailed advice for producing accessible formats can be found at:

- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – audio and video content](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – forms and surveys](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – images and diagrams](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – presentations](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – print and digital documents](#)

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## Make sure all materials are accessible to all participants

Plan ahead. Think about how you can run an accessible project right from the start. Consider:

- the type of activity – for example, facilitated, unfacilitated
- who will be participating, their accessibility needs and the accommodations they require
- the location of the activity – for example, in-person, online, hybrid
- how content will be delivered – for example, printed, audio broadcast, displayed on a screen, hand-written, spoken, or a mix of many formats
- how participants will contribute – for example, in writing, speaking, typing, drawing, or a mix of many methods
- in what other accessible formats you should present the information – for example, in braille, Auslan, Easy Read, large print, audio description, and in different languages.

Work with others to ensure your materials are accessible. You should:

- Discuss accessibility with participants, including people with disability.
- Get advice from disability organisations.
- Talk to and pay specialists.

When editing existing materials, you should:

- Make sure your edits keep original accessibility features.
- Make changes so the materials work with your participants' accessibility needs.
- Check the changes using the latest accessibility tools and technology for different accessibility needs. Examples could be in-built program accessibility checkers and browser extensions.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Accessibility and the Digital Service Standard \(Digital Transformation Agency\)](#)
- » [How to make social media accessible: Our top three tips \(Vision Australia\)](#)
- » [Accessible communication toolkit \(Inclusive SA\)](#)
- » [Online accessibility toolkit \(Government of South Australia\)](#)

- » [Accessibility testing toolkit \(Digital.NSW\)](#)
- » [Easy Checks – A First Review of Web Accessibility \(W3C\)](#)
- » [Screen Reader Testing \(University of Melbourne\)](#)

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## The use of colour in materials

When you use colour, you should:

- Make sure any information communicated in colour is also communicated using symbols, patterns and/or text.
- Use online colour checker tools to ensure the colours you use meet the latest and highest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines contrast ratio.
- Use colours that are colour-blind safe.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Contrast \(W3C\)](#)
- » [Colour contrast analyser \(Vision Australia\)](#)
- » [Communicating data with colour \(Department of Transport and Planning, Victoria\)](#)

# Create accessible materials – Audio and video content

Use audio and video where it supports or is the best way to deliver information. Increase accessibility through clear and easy-to-follow content that has synchronised captions, transcripts, and signposting.

Audio and/or video can help make information more digestible, comprehensible, engaging and approachable. You should:

- Make sure the audio is understandable. Audio information should be at an appropriate 'readability' or grade level for your audience.
- Make audio content easy to follow. If it's long, break it up into chunks.
- Include closed captions and transcripts.
- Make sure the audio matches the captions (check they are synchronised).
- Offer transcripts so that people with disability can freely engage in the best way for them.
- Include audio description of video content that is only available through visual cues.
- Provide Auslan translations to support your materials.

## Relevant pages

- » [Requirements and standards for video and audio \(Australian Government Style Manual\)](#)
- » [Description of Visual Information | Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\) | W3C](#)
- » [Audio description for videos: digital accessibility \(Harvard University\)](#)
- » [Quick reference to audio and video requirements under WCAG \(Media Access Australia\)](#)
- » [Sign language – Auslan \(Better Health Channel\)](#)
- » [Making audio and video media accessible \(W3C\)](#)
- » [Guidance on using captions, transcripts and audio descriptions \(WebAIM\)](#)
- » [Captioning, audio description and transcription contacts \(Centre for Inclusive Design\)](#)
- » [Broadcast and social media communication in emergencies \(Centre for Inclusive Design\)](#)



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## Audio content

Provide information in an audio format if audio enhances the user experience, or the document would be very long in text. You should:

- Make sure your audio is clear and easy to hear.
- Remove background noise.
- Ensure consistent volume, also known as normalising.
- Consider producing long documents in the DAISY format: these are enhanced audiobooks that can synchronise visual content with the audio file, providing more flexibility for your audience.

Audio information can:

- be more comfortable and engaging for your audience than using software like screen readers, especially for long text
- enhance the experience of people who prefer audio content
- be more convenient or easier to focus on than visual information.

### Relevant pages

- » [DAISY Technology Guides and Training \(Vision Australia\)](#)

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## Video content

Make sure all video content is clear and easy to understand. To do this, you should:

- Use audio description to explain the visual elements of the video in between dialogue.
- Avoid bright, flashing, or rapidly flickering colour in your video. Flickering colours and fast flashes can cause issues for audience members.
- If bright or flashing lights are unavoidable, include a warning for your audience before playing the video and redirect them to other ways in which they might engage with the content.
- Ensure all text in videos follows good practice.

People who experience barriers remembering/ concentrating, hearing, or understanding information may like receiving video information as it can:

- illustrate or explain information more clearly than other media
- be more engaging than other media
- present important information quickly.

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – images and diagrams](#)
- » [Audio description of visual information \(W3C\)](#)
- » [Creating accessible videos \(Education NSW\)](#)

# Create accessible materials – Forms and surveys

When designing inclusive forms and surveys, you should incorporate accessibility into the structure and questions and offer many ways for people to respond.

Check your questions are clear, readable, and unbiased. Tell people how they can stay updated and thank people for completing your form or survey.

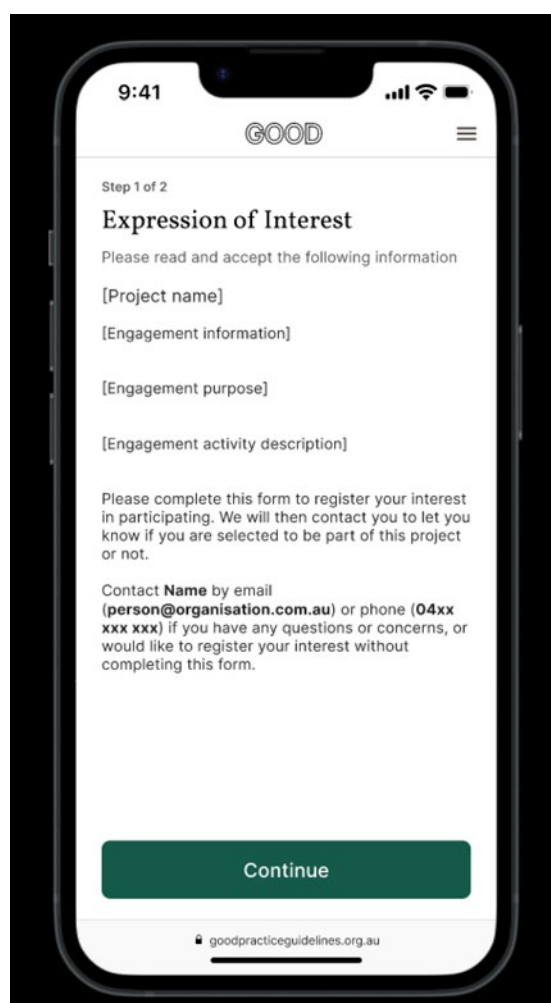
Create one version of your form or survey that is accessible in all different formats. This means you can compare responses from all participants equitably.

Give participants the option to submit their responses using a variety of methods. This could include:

- a paper submission (accepted via email, file upload on a website, or post)
- an email response
- an interactive chat platform
- a team member reading out the questions, explaining them, and recording a participant's answers in person or over the phone
- an audio or video recording.

See Figure 1 for an example of how to offer participants multiple options to submit their responses.

*Figure 1: Example offering other ways to register your interest*



The image shows a smartphone screen with a mobile form titled "Expression of Interest" from "GOOD". The form is "Step 1 of 2" and asks for the following information: [Project name], [Engagement information], [Engagement purpose], and [Engagement activity description]. Below this, it says "Please complete this form to register your interest in participating. We will then contact you to let you know if you are selected to be part of this project or not." It also provides contact information: "Contact **Name** by email (**person@organisation.com.au**) or phone (**04xx xxx xxx**) if you have any questions or concerns, or would like to register your interest without completing this form." At the bottom of the form is a green "Continue" button. The phone's status bar at the top shows the time as 9:41 and the website URL "goodpracticeguidelines.org.au" at the bottom.

### Relevant pages

- » [Forms \(Australian Government Style Manual\)](#)
- » [How to make more inclusive surveys \(SurveyMonkey\)](#)
- » [Surveys \(Listen Include Respect\)](#)
- » [A case study of an accessible submissions process: Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability](#)
  - » [Practice guideline 1 – General guidance](#)
  - » [Practice guideline 5 – Private sessions](#)

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## Follow a simple structure

### *Minimise length and duration*

- It is important that you:
  - Keep your forms and surveys as short as possible. Split long forms and surveys into shorter sections.
  - Tell participants how many sections or questions are included instead of an estimated or average time to complete. There is variety in the time it takes participants to complete a form or survey.
  - Allow participants to take breaks, save their responses, and come back to the form or survey.
  - Give participants enough time to answer questions. Keep the form and survey open and accept responses for as long as possible and be open to extending the deadline. For example, leaving a survey open for at least a month means respondents have time to get the support they might need to complete it and can complete it in their own time.

## Example

You are preparing a survey about your local community's transport needs and priorities. You know people take different lengths of time to complete surveys and may need help from others. You do not assume how long it will take someone to complete the survey. Instead, you outline that the survey has two sections, with two key questions and an optional question in each section. Each question has a brief explanation of its meaning and some examples. The survey saves participant responses in progress or offers an option to download their responses as they go to minimise having to repeat themselves. At the end of each section, there is a large, high contrast 'next' button. Your survey has a clear progress bar.

## ***Include a clear introduction***

Explain the context and use of the form or survey on the first page. Inform participants about the:

- context and reason for the form or survey
- ways they can complete the form or survey, including how to use any accessibility functions
- information, documents, or other materials participants will need to complete the form or survey
- researchers and organisation running the form or survey
- ways to contact the researchers with questions or comments
- ways the form or survey data will be stored and analysed, including how participants can revoke their consent (if possible)
- deadline to submit responses
- potentially sensitive or traumatic topics the form or survey will cover, and support services available for participants.

You should also share this information in another format, like in a briefing meeting or an accessible briefing pack. However, you also need to make sure participants can complete the form or survey without using these other materials or attending these sessions.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)

## ***Write accessible form or survey questions***

It is important that you:

- Create simple, clear and distinctive questions for participants that present information in an unbiased manner.
- Use clear and plain language. Check the readability of your questions to meet your audience's reading level. For example, using words at a year 7 reading level will mean more respondents can understand the questions you are asking.
- If you use complex words, acronyms, or uncommon terminology, include a clear, concise, and visible description.
- Try to make all your questions as distinct as possible. Repetitive questions can be confusing or boring for survey respondents.
- Pay a specialist to complete a sensitivity read of your questions. Consider your unconscious bias. This helps you understand what you are assuming or implying to make sure you do not cause harm.

## ***Make it easy to answer the questions***

Make the questions as easy as possible to answer:

- Use clear and simple language.
- Give participants all the information they need to answer the question on the same page.
- Give participants a variety of ways they can answer questions, such as submitting text, drawings, photos, audio, or video.
- Explain how to answer each question, such as how many options the respondent should choose, or the criteria for each rating on a scale.
- Provide example answers, where relevant, so participants know what kind of answers you are looking for.

## **Consider how to request demographic information**

Be considerate when you ask for demographic information. You should:

- Only ask for demographic information if it is necessary.
- Explain why you are asking respondents for their demographic information, as this can be very sensitive or personal. As much as possible, allow participants to skip or choose not to answer these questions.
- Explain how you are handling sensitive information: how you will use sensitive information once it is submitted, including how you will manage privacy, confidentiality, retribution, ethics, and storage.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)
- » [Follow up: Quote participants accurately](#)

## **Consider how to request disability information**

Think about why and the way you will ask for demographic information about disability. Similar to other demographic information, you should:

- Only ask questions that are specific to the output of your project and the experience of participants.
- When requesting information about people's disability status or type, allow participants to select multiple options and to add detail in a description box if they choose.
- Include a way for people with disability who don't identify with the options provided to tell you how they identify to provide detail on their lived experience.
- Only use the medical model of disability if it is most appropriate – for example, if you will compare the survey results with medical statistics.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Context: Understand what disability means](#)
- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)
- » [Follow up: Quote participant accurately](#)

## Example

You are usability testing a new website design and collecting information on user experiences through an exit survey. You ask participants if they used a screen reader or the website's text-size adjustment function to navigate the website.

Participants respond with detailed information about their experience with screen readers or the text-size adjustment feature. By asking specific questions about the user experience, you receive responses that are more relevant to the output of your project.

You did not receive this level of detail in previous usability tests when you used the medical model of disability and asked participants if they were blind or vision impaired.

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## Finish with a clear statement of completion

At the end of the form or survey, you should give people information about:

- how they can provide any other information they would like you to have. For example, ask “What else would you like to tell us?” and providing an open-text field
- opportunities for people to give feedback about the form or survey process and experience, including accessibility and inclusion. Offer different channels for providing feedback, such as email, phone, and anonymous submission options
- how they may stay updated on the project.

Take the time to thank participants:

- Create a customised submission notification message using clear and simple language.
- Clarify the value you received from participants' contributions.
- Show appreciation of the time, effort, energy, and resources participants invested in the activity.
- Share how participants may expect compensation or remuneration. This may include telling people what other information you may need from them to complete a payment.
- Give participants a clear method and timeframe for when you will provide payment such as cash, gifts, gift cards, compensation, or expense reimbursement.

The following images show three examples of submission notifications, the content improving with each one.

These are three examples of submission notifications, getting better with each one.

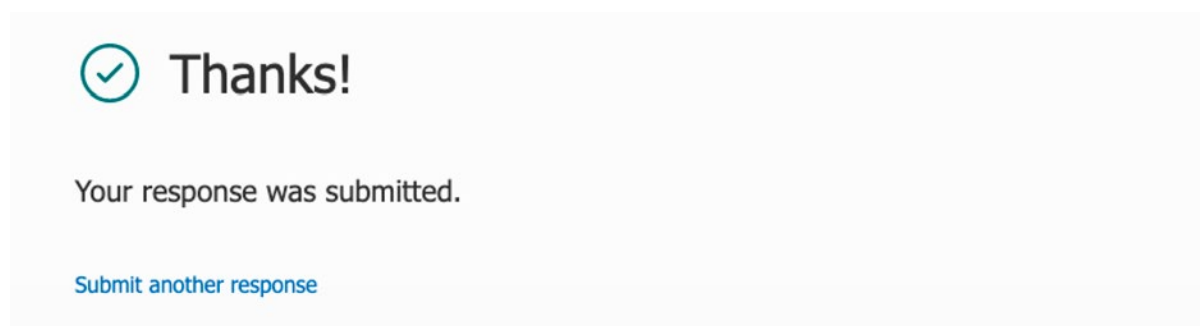


Figure 2: An automated survey response submission notice

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Your response has been recorded.

Figure 3: An effective automated survey response submission notification

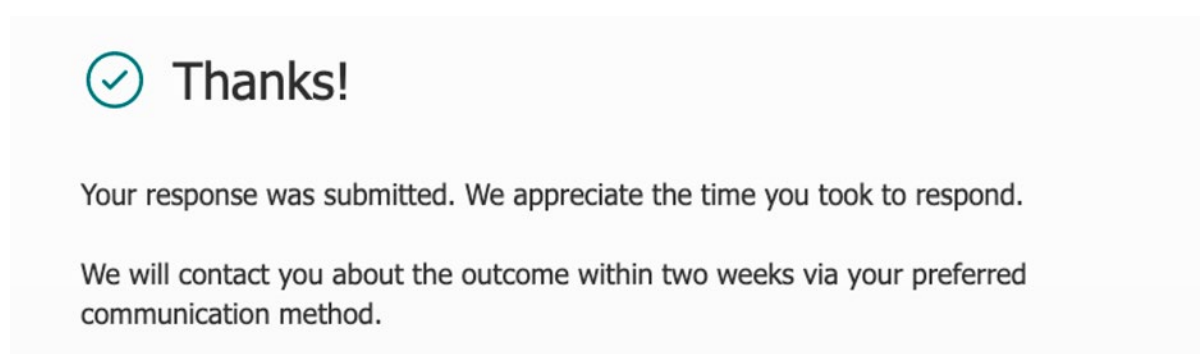


Figure 4: An effective customised survey response submission notice



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## Provide alternative formats

You should also aim to deliver your form or survey in several different formats to make sure it is accessible for all respondents.

### *Digital forms or surveys*

- Make sure your form or survey is designed with the same principles as digital documents.
- Use an accessible form or survey platform. The platform should be compliant with the latest WCAG rating and be easy to navigate. Read your chosen platform's accessibility documentation to take advantage of any accessibility features it may have.
- Use accessible form or survey questions. Not all question types are easy to understand or work with a screen reader. Consult your platform's accessibility documentation.
- Provide alternate submission methods for digital forms or surveys, such as print versions or receiving facilitator assistance to complete the survey.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – print and digital documents](#)

### *Printed forms or surveys*

- Design printed forms or surveys using the same principles as print and digital documents.
- Make it clear where the form or survey needs to be returned to, and by what date. If you are mailing a form or survey to participants, provide pre-paid return postage.
- Think about how your print form or survey may create barriers, particularly upper body mobility barriers. Provide alternate submission methods for print forms or surveys, such as digital versions or receiving facilitator assistance to complete it.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – Print and digital documents](#)

### *Facilitated forms or surveys*

You may collect form or survey information with a facilitator present, such as in an interview or through street polls.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Deliver: Deliver an inclusive activity](#)

# Create accessible materials – Images and diagrams

Using relevant images and diagrams can make content simple, clear and visually engaging. Making sure images are clear and have descriptions, alternative text and good colour contrast can help more people experience their benefits. Only use images that add additional information or provide clarity to the text content.

Relevant pages

- » [Images \(Australian Government Style Manual\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for producing accessible graphics \(2022\) \(Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities\)](#)

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## People who benefit from accessible images

Images and diagrams can be either digital or printed. They can help people understand and navigate information. It's not a good idea to remove all images, as that can make information less accessible. Instead provide alternative text (alt text) for your images.

Making images accessible can benefit people:

- Using screen readers, as the alt text can be read aloud or displayed in braille.
- Using speech input software, as they can focus on the image with a single voice command.
- When images are turned off or don't load, such as mobile users or those with poor internet connection.

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## Digital images

When you choose and include digital images, you should:

- Make sure all images are clear on different devices such as phones, tablets, computers and more.
- Have meaningful text descriptions and alternative text (alt text). To determine what type of alternative text an image should have, use W3C's alt decision tree.
- Use images that have more than just text.

Consider if your image:

- Is an appropriate file size (not too big or small).
- Has the subject in focus (not blurry or pixelated).
- Has an appropriate contrast ratio (users are easily able to see the subject of the image or read the alt text).
- Isn't flashing or moving very quickly (if it's an animated image like a .gif).

### Relevant pages

- » [Alt decision tree \(W3C\)](#)
- » [Alternative Text \(WebAIM\)](#)
- » [How to make social media accessible: Our top three tips \(Vision Australia\)](#)

## Informative images

Informative images are pictures, diagrams or graphs that convey a simple concept or information to users.

Informative images should be made using tools that include alt text. For example, avoid using cascading style sheets (CSS) as alt text cannot be applied to them.

### Relevant pages

- » [Informative image tutorial \(W3C\)](#)

## Decorative images

Decorative images do not add extra information to the content. This might be because the image is:

- content that is identified and described in the text
- visual styling
- a picture version of the text

The alt text of decorative images should be either described as *null* or you should use a tool to mark as decorative.

### Relevant pages

- » [Decorative images \(W3C\)](#)

## Complex images

Complex images contain more content than can be described in a short phrase or sentence. These include charts, graphs and diagrams.

For most complex images, write a short description of the image as alt text on the image, and link to a longer description of the image.

Complex images should never be created using CSS, as alt text cannot be applied to them.

### Relevant pages

» [Complex Images \(W3C\)](#)

## Captions

Add captions below images. Start with the word 'caption' and then add a description of the image.

Vary the words in the alt text and in the caption. Users using the alt text can then have a richer, more equal experience. However, if the caption clearly explains the image, write *null* in the alt text.

### Relevant pages

» [Images \(W3C\)](#)

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## Printed images

All print images should be clear. This means that access is still possible if the image is enlarged, for example by using software or magnifiers.

Clear images have:

- simple styling, without unnecessary detail
- important details sufficiently visible (such as the thickness of important lines)
- the subject of the image in focus (not blurry or pixelated)
- high contrast (especially between foreground, subject and background)
- labels that are short, clear and close to the item they are labelling.

## Print colour and contrast

Colours will look different depending on the printer. If you are printing the images, you should:

- Make sure printed images are clear and have good contrast ratio.
- Print test pages to test the clarity of the images.
- Consider using standard colours to make sure they are consistent. For example, the Pantone matching system.
- Edit images or simplify them to increase their clarity when printed, if needed.

## ***Image alternatives for print***

Consider providing images in alternative formats, especially if materials are long or have many images. You should:

- Provide participants with digital copies that contain images with alt text.
- Use captions alongside images.
- Use enlarged, clear images in large-print copies.
- If images will be described to participants more than once during the activity(s), you may want to provide the image description alongside the image. This will mean image descriptions are consistent for all participants.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Images \(Australian Government Style Manual\)](#)
- » [Alternate format production \(Vision Australia\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for producing accessible graphics \(2022\) \(Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities\)](#)

# Create accessible materials – Presentations

When designing presentations, both in-person and online, consider how they will be shown to people with disability. Make information clear, simple and large. Give people copies ahead of time.

When creating and delivering presentations, either in-person or online, you should:

- Give people accessible copies in advance.
- Use accessible templates and in-built accessibility checkers.
- Familiarise yourself with accessibility advice for the presentation slide software you use.
- Make sure information is clear, simple and has good colour contrast.

Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – Print and digital documents](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – Images and diagrams](#)
- » [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible \(Microsoft\)](#)
- » [PowerPoint Accessibility \(WebAIM\)](#)
- » [Create slides with an accessible reading order video tutorial \(Microsoft\)](#)
- » [Present inclusively with PowerPoint \(Microsoft\)](#)
- » [Make your presentations more accessible \(Google\)](#)
- » [Develop accessible PowerPoint documents \(Queensland Government\)](#)
- » [Accessible presentations and other verbal communication \(New Zealand Government Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora\)](#)

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## In-person presentations

Things to consider with in-person presentations include:

- the presentation projector, screen or other display
- the levels of lighting in the room
- the size of the room
- participant seating arrangements.

When you present to people with disability in-person, you should:

- Provide accessible copies of the presentation before the activity.
- Check that your presentation is visible in the lighting that will be used in the activity. Lighting can affect the visibility of projections or digital screens.
- Simplify your presentation slides and make content large so more participants, including people with disability, can see it, for example, people who have low vision and those sitting in the back of the room.
- Make sure that any people with disability that require it can sit close by. For example, you should reserve some seats that are near the front directly facing the projector for people who need to be able to read closed captioning.

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Plan: Plan accessible in-person activities](#)
- » [Deliver: Deliver an inclusive activity](#)
- » [Accessible presentations and other verbal communication \(New Zealand Government Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora\)](#)
- » [Making events accessible: checklist for meetings, conferences, training and presentations that are remote/virtual, in-person or hybrid \(W3C\)](#)

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## Online presentations

When you present to people with disability online, you should:

- Provide accessible copies of the presentation before the activity.
- Consider how participants will view your online presentation.
- Make sure your presentation or screen is clear on different devices such as phones, tablets and computers and how it presents with assistive technology.
- Make sure that your content meets the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
- Switch on and explain any accessibility features such as live captioning, using frames on virtual whiteboards and more.

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Deliver: Deliver an inclusive activity](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)
- » [How to Make Your Virtual Meetings and Events Accessible to the Disability Community \(Rooted in Rights\)](#)
- » [Making events accessible: checklist for meetings, conferences, training and presentations that are remote/virtual, in-person or hybrid \(W3C\)](#)
- » [Learning@home: Inclusion \(Queensland Government Department of Education\)](#)



# Create accessible materials – Print and digital documents

Make sure all participants can access the documents you provide them. Checking document accessibility in every format supports more people to better use, navigate, and understand your document.

Documents you could provide participants in either print and/or digital format include:

- consultation papers
- images
- reports
- posters
- presentations
- worksheets or forms.

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## Check your document's accessibility

With all documents, make sure you:

- Use the in-built accessibility checker in your system, such as the word processor.
- Use plain and legible sans serif fonts in appropriate sizes.
- Use at least 12-point or larger text size.
- Left-align text.
- Break information up into levels using true heading styles.
- Use an uncluttered layout.
- Use colour in a way that meets the latest WCAG AAA rating.
- Use a plain background, with no background images, graphics, print, or watermarks.
- Create wide margins if printing documents.
- Provide alternative text (alt text) for images.
- Print only on plain, matte, or satin-finish, non-reflective paper.
- Provide the same text in other accessible formats.

### Relevant pages on general print and digital document accessibility

- » [Online and print inclusive design and legibility considerations \(Vision Australia\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for producing accessible e-text \(2018\) \(Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for producing clear print \(2022\) \(Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities\)](#)
- » [Accessible print publications \(Government of South Australia\)](#)
- » [Accessibility guidelines for government communications \(VIC Government\)](#)
- » [Screen reader testing \(University of Melbourne\)](#)

### Relevant pages on content and graphic design

- » [Plan: Create accessible activity materials](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – Images and diagrams](#)
- » [Readability Guidelines \(Content Design London\)](#)
- » [Inclusive communication tips \(Council for Intellectual Disability\)](#)
- » [AccessAbility 2: A practical handbook on accessible graphic design \(RGD in Partnership with the Government of Ontario\)](#)
- » [A Guide to Understanding What Makes a Typeface Accessible \(The Readability Group\)](#)

### Relevant pages on Word documents

- » [Microsoft Word documents \(Digital.NSW\)](#)
- » [Microsoft Word accessibility \(WebAIM\)](#)
- » [Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities \(Microsoft\)](#)
- » [Create accessible Word documents video tutorials \(Microsoft\)](#)
- » [Make your Google Doc more accessible \(Google\)](#)

### Relevant pages on PDF documents

- » [PAC 2021 – Free PDF accessibility checker \(PDF/UA\)](#)
- » [PDF documents \(Digital.NSW\)](#)
- » [PDFs and common accessibility misconception \(Vision Australia\)](#)
- » [PDF accessibility principles \(AccessibilityOz\)](#)
- » [Accessible PDF Tutorials for Acrobat, InDesign and Word \(Accessible-PDF.info\)](#)
- » [PDF Techniques for WCAG 2.0 \(W3C\)](#)
- » [PDF Accessibility \(WebAIM\)](#)
- » [Converting documents to PDFs \(WebAIM\)](#)
- » [Create and verify PDF accessibility \(Adobe\)](#)
- » [Create accessible PDFs \(Microsoft\)](#)

### Relevant pages on Excel documents

- » [Microsoft Excel \(WebAIM\)](#)
- » [Make your Excel documents accessible to people with disabilities \(Microsoft\)](#)

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## Alternative formats for accessible documents

You should also consider providing print and digital documents in alternative formats to increase accessibility. These could include:

- large print, typically 18-point font size (but can be customised)
- braille
- audio, such as podcasts, audiobooks, or DAISY format
- video
- Auslan translations
- Easy Read – see below for more information
- printable formats
- web-native (HTML-first) content. This can be the most versatile and accessible way to share information. If you use a web format, use [The A11Y Project checklist](#) to quickly check your WCAG compliance.

Printable documents should be provided in Microsoft Word format where possible. Make sure PDFs are accessible, if used.

Longer documents, such as reports or books, may be better presented in EPUB or DAISY format. EPUBs are enhanced documents that provide greater functionality and structure than PDF documents. There is a free accessibility checker for EPUBs available at [Ace by DAISY](#).

### Relevant pages

- » [How will people with disability engage with my content? \(Centre for Accessibility Australia\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for producing accessible e-text \(2018\) \(Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities\)](#)
- » [Guidelines for producing clear print \(2022\) \(Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities\)](#)
- » [Braille Resources \(Australian Braille Authority\)](#)
- » [Braille Formatting in Australia \(Australian Braille Authority\)](#)
- » [EPUBs \(DAISY.org\)](#)
- » [Inclusive publishing in Australia \(Australian Inclusive Publishing Initiative\)](#)
- » [DAISY format \(DAISY.org\)](#)
- » [DAISY devices \(Vision Australia\)](#)

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## Easy Read

Easy Read is a way to increase access to information. It simplifies complex information by breaking it up into consumable chunks, and often combines text and images.

You should:

- Pay specialists to translate documents to Easy Read for you.
- Follow the Easy Read advice in the Australian Government Style Manual.

Many people can benefit from Easy Read. This includes people who experience barriers with concentrating/remembering or understanding information, who have low literacy, or who are not familiar with the language of the information.

### Relevant pages

- » [Easy Read \(Australian Government Style Manual\)](#)
- » [Accessible information \(Towards Inclusive Practice\)](#)
- » [Easy read guide \(Government of South Australia\)](#)
- » [Easy English checklist \(VisAbility\)](#)

# Deliver

# Check your readiness

Make sure you are well prepared to deliver a positive and accessible experience for participants. Take the time to get the location, your team and everything you will use ready.

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## Before the activity starts

Arrive early. During this time, you should:

- Prepare yourself, team members, location and technology to ensure you can provide support for participants to engage fully.
- Remind yourself and your team of the preparations you need to make for the activity to be accessible, effective, and safe and to minimise the load on participants.
- Test the accommodations and accessibility support you have prepared, ideally with people with disability.

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## Preparing yourself and others

Remind yourself what tasks you will be doing and what tasks your team members will need to do. Identify any potential barriers and triggers.

Helpful preparations could be:

- **Clearly identifying yourself, your team members, and your organisation with nametags.** Display names and organisations and designate a place where a team member can be located. For example, in a room or via phone and email.
- **Assessing and reminding yourself of potential barriers you may introduce,** such as bias and discriminatory language, using unclear language, and the pacing of speech.
- **Reassessing task allocations** to ensure they are fit for the activity and participants.
- **Communicating changes with team members** if you need to be flexible with the delivery of the activity. For example, making back-up plans if things do not work as intended.

- **Reminding yourself of physical, mental, and emotional health and safety protocols** required by the participants and your team, including trauma-informed practice, cultural protocols, emergency and evacuation procedures, and physical and Mental Health First Aid plans.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Tool: Quick guide for facilitating with people with disability example](#)
- » [Tool: Housekeeping discussion guide example](#)
- » [How to Make Accessible, Inclusive Self-Introductions \(Disability & Philanthropy Forum\)](#)

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## Preparing the location and technology

Take the time to ensure the physical or digital locations, and any technology you may use, are ready for participant use. You should:

- Find out where tools, controls, and support options are.
- Check the settings and arrangements.
- Put up accessible signs and images for people with disability.
- Check technology and plans are working.
- Find out who to talk to for help.
- Contact specialists to fix anything that is not working as it should.

#### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Plan in-person activities](#)
- » [Deliver: Check remote tools](#)

# Check remote tools

Make sure all remote or online platforms and tools you use in your activity meet participants' accessibility needs and work with their support tools. Plan and test audio, camera, video, presentations, assistive technology integration, and other accessibility features.

Both online activities and digital tools are popular. When used well, they are convenient and more accessible than some physical tools.

- Make sure your activity meets the accessibility needs of people with disability. People's accessibility supports may work better with online or digital platforms and tools.

## Relevant pages

- » [Hosting accessible online meetings and events \(IncludeAbility\)](#)
- » [How to Make Your Virtual Meetings and Events Accessible to the Disability Community \(Rooted in Rights\)](#)
- » [Guide: Running inclusive online meetings \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)
- » [Online meetings checklist \(Council for Intellectual Disability\)](#)



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## Choosing remote platforms and tools

Pick platforms, tools and features that help people participate fully and equally.

- Think about the outcome you want to achieve from your activity.
  - Brainstorm ways you could get this outcome with different remote or online tools. These could include virtual whiteboards, chat and text message platforms, videoconferencing, polls and content management systems.
  - Choose online platforms and digital tools that meet the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
  - Conduct an accessibility audit using the government's Digital Service Standard. You could also hire a digital accessibility auditor to work with you through the process.
  - Search for and read tools' accessibility documentation. Check for the accessibility features that the people with disability who are participating in your activity might need.
  - Consider how the tools work and look on different devices that people may be using for the activity, such as phones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers. Think about how people on all devices can have a high-quality and accessible experience.
- Create a guide or share instructions on how to use your selected tool and its features. Identify and highlight the general and accessibility features that you and other people will use. Share how the tool works with assistive technology like screen readers.
  - Trial the accessibility features you will use in your engagement so you are comfortable with them.

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Make participant experiences positive](#)
- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Digital Service Standard \(Digital Transformation Agency\)](#)
- » [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(W3C\)](#)

## Setting up your tools

Establish ways for you and your team members to support both the activity and the participants with the technology. To do this you should:

- Consult relevant accessibility documentation, where available.
- Meet the latest WCAG standards for elements such as text, images, audio, and video.
- Make sure you know how to use the tool's accessibility features.
- Adjust settings to ensure relevant accessibility features are turned on.
- Test the functionality and accessibility of your chosen technology.
- Be clear on how you will manage any technology issues. Know who has the expertise and availability to support you if anything goes wrong.
- Hire additional service providers to increase the accessibility of your engagement, such as a live captioner or an Auslan interpreter.

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Partner with disability specialists](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – audio and video](#)
- » [National Relay Service](#)

## Sound

Audio is one way to communicate with participants during your activity. You should:

- Make sure your audio is clear and doesn't disturb or distract other participants.
- Be in a quiet room or reduce background noise.
- Speak into your microphone (which may be part of your headphones).
- Remember to charge your headphones/earbuds before the engagement starts.
- Turn off your microphone when you are not speaking.
- If participants are registered users, familiarise yourself with the [National Relay Service](#), which can change voice to text/text to voice and Auslan to English/English to Auslan.

### Example

*You tell a participant how you will contact them and when they should expect your call. They don't pick up when you call. You understand there are many reasons why they may have missed your call. You leave a voice message and send them an email (these were their preferred contact methods). You tell them why you called and how they can let you know when they are next available to talk. The email has more information on other things they can do to prepare for the next time you call, such as being in a quiet room. The next day you call them at the agreed time, run the interview, then arrange payment for their involvement.*

## Web camera display

Enabling your camera during video or videoconferencing allows people to see you and your environment. When your camera is on you should:

- Use a plain or solid-coloured background to minimise distractions. Choose backgrounds with good contrast between speaker and the background design and colour.
- Avoid virtual backgrounds if possible or use a virtual background with minimal distractions.
- Make sure you are using the highest image quality available on your device or application while maintaining a high-quality experience.
- Make sure your face is well lit.
- Make sure you are in frame and talk to the camera.

Allow participants to choose to turn their camera on based on their preference or come to a mutual consensus with participants on their expectations of using a video platform.

## Example

*You want a virtual background for your meeting to maintain the privacy of your home environment. You join the meeting early as you will lead it. You know a team member is sensitive to bright lighting and some patterns. You choose a background that has a solid colour, minimal patterns, and clearly shows the difference between your hair and clothing. You move around the room to face the window so your face is better lit and there is no light coming from behind you.*

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – presentations](#)
- » [Deliver: Check your readiness](#)
- » [Deliver: Deliver an inclusive activity](#)

## Presenting and sharing presentations

When presenting you should:

- Decide whether it is helpful or unhelpful to share a presentation or your screen.
- Ensure your text, images, and video are compliant with WCAG standards.
- Ensure your presentation slides have clear titles.
- Consider giving people a copy or access to the content being displayed so they can interact with it using their assistive technology.
- Signpost to say where you are as you present information – for example, set up frames in virtual whiteboards that participants can use to navigate to different parts of the board.

You should make it easy for participants to:

- See interpreters and presenters. If they are in separate locations, manage this. Features such as 'spotlight', 'pin' or setting up as a stream may help.
- Follow along independently. Examples include providing copies or access to what you share, telling participants when you are moving between information, and reading out information such as titles and content as needed.

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Create accessible materials – presentations](#)

## Chat

You may offer text, chat platforms, or chat functionality in videoconferencing.

If using text message and chat platforms, you should:

- Choose platforms that are affordable, secure, and familiar to people.
- Tell people how you are collecting, handling, and storing any personal information like phone numbers and names.
- Follow your organisation and industry best practice processes to manage privacy, encryption, and other security concerns.

If using the chat functionality in videoconferencing, you should:

- Invite participants to use the chat function to contribute to the conversation.
- Make sure you keep track of comments and questions shared in the chat.
- Read out comments and questions before you respond to them. If possible, it can be helpful to read everything shared in the chat.

### Relevant pages

- » [Context: Addressing access barriers](#)
- » [Design: Start by thinking about accessible design](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)

## ***Setting up participant's tools***

Take the time to ensure people can easily and accessibly use the tools and engage in the activity.

You should:

- Prepare your participants for the activity by sending them a guide or tips on how to use the platform or tool as part of your planning and preparation communication.
- Join the meeting early and enable accessibility features, such as captioning, hosting rights, and volume.
- Check participant settings and permissions like sharing screen, video, audio, and captioning.
- Check participant communication channels to make sure people are supported to join.
- Ensure you are not using features of the platform or tool that are inaccessible for your participants.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Deliver: Check your readiness](#)

# Manage changing responsibility between team members

Ensure participants always know who is responsible for the engagement or project, and who to contact if needed. Whether you are handing over or accepting responsibility for the activity, consider how you make sure you have all the information to deliver a positive and accessible experience for people with disability.

Team members may change or change their responsibilities during projects or activities. This may impact participants' experiences. You should:

- Make sure team members have all the information they need to organise the activity and support all participants effectively.
- Communicate changes that are relevant to participants if you have previously set expectations, or if the change may impact their experiences. Participants may form relationships with and develop trust with specific team members.
- Give participants clear guidance on who to contact and how to contact them..

## *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Make participant experiences positive](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)

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## Who is a point of contact?

The point of contact for participants could include the project member who is:

- in contact with participants to organise the activity
- the project or team lead
- listed as the point of contact on the project or activity information.

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## If you are handing over responsibility for an engagement or project to someone else

As the person handing over responsibility, you or the person primarily communicating with participants should:

- Inform participants about the change in project responsibility or point of contact. Being familiar with the communicator makes it easier for participants to follow the changes.

When handing over your project responsibility, make sure you share:

- information in a format that is suitable for the team member(s) receiving it
- your contact information if you are available for clarification in the future

- relevant project notes, documents and deliverables
- documentation and communication you have sent to participants, and any relevant responses
- knowledge about participants, such as information about any agreements, preferences or accessibility needs and accommodations
- information about accessibility service providers who have been hired to support previous or upcoming engagements, including quotes or invoices
- contacts and information relating to organisations involved in the project
- any key or historical information about the project and your decisions.

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## If you are taking on responsibility for an engagement or project from someone else

When taking over responsibility for a project from another team member, make sure to ask them for:

- their contact information, if available
- all relevant project notes, documents and deliverables
- documentation and communication they have sent to participants, and any relevant responses
- lists of participants and their contact information
- accessibility needs or accommodations requested by participants
- agreements made with participants about adjusted or alternative engagement
- information on accessibility services that have been organised to support previous or upcoming engagements
- contacts from and agreements made with organisations involved in the project
- any key or relevant historical information about the project.

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## Informing participants about a change in point of contact

If the point of contact for participants changes, you must:

- Inform participants of the change as soon as possible.
- Use the same channel/s you have used to contact participants previously, where appropriate.
- Provide relevant information about yourself, such as your contact information.
- Contact participants to confirm the details of adjustments or accommodations that were previously organised.
- Clarify if the change impacts any participant's rights to privacy, consent, and more.
- Give participants the opportunity to choose whether they continue with the activity or project.



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## Communicating change in point of contact

When communicating a change in point of contact with participants, include in your messaging:

- a summary of the project or their involvement
- a reminder of the previous point of contact's name, and their role in the project
- notification that their point of contact has changed
- if the department or organisation responsible for the engagement or project has also changed
- the name, role, and contact information of the new point of contact
- any other changes participants should be aware of.

### Example

You are a project lead organising an ongoing public consultation at your local council. You accept a new opportunity at a different organisation and must hand over responsibility for the consultation to a new project lead. You provide the new project lead with access to the folder containing all project documents. You then schedule a meeting to explain the project to the new project lead, to run through the key decisions that have been made during the planning process, and to seek their consent to provide participants with their contact details. In return, the new project

lead asks if you are comfortable if they contact you in future. You give them your phone number.

Before you leave, you send an email to all project partner organisations, including the disability advisory group, and provide them with the new project lead's contact details.

The new project lead will now facilitate the videoconferencing and manage phone calls for the public consultation. They have access to the spreadsheet with the names, schedules, and access needs of all people who have registered for the phone option.

The contact information you had provided to participants was a shared phone number and mailbox, so that does not need to change. Participants can continue to contribute for the duration of the public consultation.

The project team sends a text message about the change in project lead to people who have already contributed. This is so that if they would like to contribute again, they know they will be talking to a different team member.

A week before each scheduled call, the new project lead emails and/or texts participants an event reminder and confirms the accommodations they require.

# Deliver an inclusive activity

Think about how you are meeting participants' accessibility needs throughout your activity. Begin with inclusive introductions, set clear expectations, remind participants of the activity, check-in with people to see if you are meeting their accessibility needs, and thank and pay people with disability for their time. End with information about how to give feedback and what happens next.

Throughout your activity, think about how you are meeting accessibility needs so that all people can participate fully. Make sure to check-in directly with all participants to see their requirements are being met.

Make sure your activities will account for, reflect, and engage people with disability with diverse characteristics and life experiences. Even if your activity is for a specific cohort, a diverse group of people with disability within that cohort will support you to gather valuable information.

Inclusive activities share three features:

- They engage a diverse group of people.
- They provide a safe and supportive environment.
- Key information is made available to participants in advance.

You may need to consider people's intersectional and/or life experiences. Some considerations are:

- age
- education
- ethnicity
- gender
- gender identity
- gender expression
- indigeneity
- language
- living arrangements
- location
- marital status
- race
- religion
- sexuality
- socioeconomic status.

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## At the start of your activity

Starting your activity well is a way to build trust. This is when you introduce the activity, clarify intent, set expectations, and provide additional information.

Follow this advice even if you included similar information in your recruitment communication, shared it when you prepared participants, or covered it in the materials you created.

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Plan: Identify and attract participants](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Tool: Housekeeping discussion guide](#)
- » [Guide: Running inclusive meetings \(Inclusion Australia\)](#)

## Introductions

Introductions are essential for creating relationships and informing people about the activity.

### Introducing your activity

Begin your activity by introducing and/or explaining:

- yourself, your team members, and/or your organisation
- the project and/or client (if applicable)
- the purpose and agenda for the activity
- how information will be used and stored
- any expectations for participation you may have
- how you will manage attribution, confidentiality, and retribution
- where participants may get additional information and help.

You should also:

- Provide similar information in advance.
- Give participants this information in accessible signage, presentations, and documentation during the activity.

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials — print and digital documents](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials — presentations](#)
- » [Deliver: Check your readiness](#)
- » [Tool: Expression of interest form template](#)

## How participants introduce themselves

You may need to collect information about the participants for several purposes, such as taking attendance, collecting relevant data, and contacting them in the future.

When asking for participant introductions, you should:

- Differentiate between required, optional, and excessive information. This varies depending on the project or activity type, its purpose, and the participants.
- Request this information in a way that respects participants' rights, dignity, and agency.
- Ask participants how you and others can help them feel comfortable and work together well.

When asking participants for specific information in introductions, consider:

- What information is essential for this activity?
- How might you collect required and optional information in empowering ways from participants?
- Are you asking for information that is or could be seen as unnecessary?
- How will you save and store this information? Will it be de-identified?
- What will you do with this information at the end of the project? Where will you save it or how will you destroy it?
- How will you not cause harm to participants through this process?

- How are you creating trust with participants and encouraging them to build trust with each other?
- How are you ensuring safety throughout this activity?

## Facilitated engagement example

*To introduce yourselves in an online focus group, you and your team of organisers tell participants your names, your preferred pronouns, and the name of the First Nation or Country you are joining from. You then welcome participants to tell the group their names and any other information they are comfortable sharing.*

*You then run an ice-breaker, where participants describe themselves as their favourite animal or the animal they feel like today.*

## Unfacilitated engagement example

*To obtain feedback from a participant group, you conduct a feedback survey, as if often requires less information than a research survey or census. You focus questions in the feedback survey on participants' experiences, highlights, and any areas they identify for improvement. You ask, "is there anything we could do next time to better support you to participate?" You do not ask for gender identifiers, sex, pronouns, or medical information in the feedback survey.*

After participants have introduced themselves, you should:

- Ensure you are prioritising participants' rights and safety.
- Follow your organisation's consent and privacy protocols.
- Decide what to do with this information – for example, whether to de-identify participants from their information for submissions, publications, and reporting.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Identify activity characteristics](#)
- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials — forms and surveys](#)
- » [Follow up: Quote participants accurately](#)
- » [Follow up: Promote effective follow up](#)

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## Provide the agreed compensation

You should aim to pay people with disability for their time, insight, and expertise.

- Provide participants with accessible information about when and how they can expect to be paid before and during the activity. Let participants know well in advance if you need any documents or information from them to support their payment.
- Once the activity is complete, pay participants promptly.
- If the activity is in person, provide the payment, compensation, or gift at the beginning of the activity.
- If you are unable to keep to the promised schedule, notify participants and follow through with payment as soon as possible.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Participant payment](#)

## ***Set clear expectations***

When you set expectations, people then know what to do and what happens next. Describe what will happen and how you will support people during your activity. You also need to clarify people's different roles and keep the activity focused.

Explain how information in the activity will be used and be clear about the opportunities for people with disability to:

- contribute to the activity
- engage with each other if relevant.

Some questions for you to answer:

- What should participants keep in mind when they contribute?
- How many ways are you accepting contributions? How can you ensure they know their contributions are accepted?
- Are people allowed to share information from this activity afterwards? If there are restrictions, clarify when, how and why. For example, be clear about what type of information will stay confidential.
- How and when will you accept questions?
- Is there any language that you need to explain to participants?

For collaborative activities or those where there is more than one participant, consider explaining:

- when participants can let you know about any changes to their needs
- if there is anything participants can do to ensure the activity is accessible to others
- what simple words participants can use throughout the activity
- what abbreviations and terms participants should be made aware of and can use throughout the activity.

## ***Clearly communicate any changes***

If you have had any updates or changes in the project or activity that may impact participants, make them clear. State how you are managing or rectifying the changes. Give participants the choice and clear pathways to decide whether to continue with the activity after receiving this new information.

Communicate any changes in the activity:

- as part of your introduction
- by updating your participants' pre-engagement communication.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Deliver: Manage changing responsibility between team members](#)

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## Throughout your activity

### ***Ensure participant safety***

Good engagement will aim to do no harm.

You should:

- Inform participants of the ways in which you will make them safe throughout the activity.
- Remind people of the multiple formats of support they can access as often as reasonable.
- Treat people with respect and dignity.
- Follow your organisation's advice on how to prioritise people's safety.

Some questions for you to answer:

- How will you be clear about any potential harm?
- How will you make people's choices clear to them so they can do what is right for them?
- How will you address or minimise potential harm?
- When do you anticipate sensitive or troubling topics to come up? When and in what accessible way might you add content or trigger warnings?
- How are you building trust with participants?
- How are you ensuring safety throughout this activity?
- How are you communicating this to participants?

If possible, ask participants what they need from you to be, feel, and stay safe. To get some ideas from the participants, some questions for you to ask are:

- Will they be comfortable to do [this]?
- How can you help the participant do this safely?
- What can you do to help the participant to be safe?
- How can you make sure the participant feels safe?

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Make participant experiences positive](#)
- » [Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk – What does it mean? \(Interchange WA\)](#)

### ***Be flexible***

You should adapt your activities if and as required and offer other ways for people with disability to contribute and participate fully. You should:

- Tell people you are open and willing to make changes to meet their accessibility requirements, then follow through.
- Give people with disability opportunities to discuss if their accessibility requirements change or if they feel you have met them well.
- Check-in on people throughout the activity to see if there is anything you can change to better suit their accessibility requirements.
- Consider any barriers people with disability may experience during your activity and any mitigations you can put in place.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Design: Start thinking about accessible design](#)



## **Considerations for collaborative activities**

When participants, including people with disability, must work together, you should:

- Respect participant privacy by not disclosing the participant's personal information or detailing their accessibility needs. Focus on how participants can support one another.
- Let each participant choose to self-identify as a person with disability.
- Ask participants to be respectful and understanding of one another.
- Outline how participants may support and accommodate one another while respecting individual privacy.
- Discuss and work out ways to meet any competing accessibility needs.

### **Example**

*A city planner is holding a focus group about how to improve local parks. In their housekeeping and after breaks, they make three requests as reminders. First, that participants say their name before they make a point. Second, to speak slowly and clearly. Finally, they ask every participant to be mindful that other participants may use different actions to manage their behaviour and self-soothe. These may be voluntary or involuntary movements and sounds, such as tics and stimming. As such, everyone should remember to be kind and focus on the activities.*

If there are competing access needs in a group, mention the access needs and ask participants to be understanding. This can be challenging.

### **Example**

*You are running an activity with a translator who is speaking at the same time as the main presenter. Participants who need a quiet room to hear may be distracted or disturbed by the translation. If they do not know why there are people speaking at the same time as the presenter, they may think the translator is a participant who is being disrespectful to the presenter or is disturbing their ability to participate in the session. This may cause the participants who require a translator to feel judged and unwelcome in the session.*

*By ensuring the whole group is aware of each other's access needs, all the participants can be more understanding of each other. All the participants are now working together to support everyone.*



## ***Remind participants of the activity***

To minimise mental strain and to support participants to stay focused on the activity:

- Give clear instructions and reminders.
- Allow participants to ask questions.
- Use various formats to communicate tasks and key instructions.
- Clarify your message by varying how you share instructions and reminders.

This may include presenting information in the following formats:

### **Text:**

- displayed in an accessible presentation
- on a handout or in a participant packet.

### **Images, such as pictures or icons:**

- next to text in an accessible presentation
- next to text on a handout or in a participant packet

### **Spoken:**

- key instructions repeated at a regular intervals for everyone
- key instructions repeated to people or small teams during the activity

## **Facilitated example**

*At a conference on invasive pest surveillance, a presenter completed a brief activity with the group. The instructions for the activity were part of the presenter's speech, displayed on the projector, and were represented with icons on an information pack that participants had received 3 days prior. The presenter brought printed packs for those who preferred but did not bring a hard copy. The instructions remained displayed on the projector until the end of the activity.*

*When the presenter ran a similar activity the next year for a different cohort, they did not want to use digital tools at all. Instead of a full page of instructions, they had the information displayed on image cards on each table and on large posters across the room.*

## **Unfacilitated example**

*In a survey, you provide instructions upfront to guide participants' submission process, again at the start of different sections, and you include specific guidance information before key questions.*

*These reminders and guiding information are available through the online portal as well as in exported formats, such as Word and Excel.*

## ***Check in with participants***

Help participants to communicate their needs, questions, and concerns as they emerge by regularly checking in with them. Be open and non-judgmental in your approach while supporting participants to identify and share any challenges honestly.

### **When to check in**

From the beginning of the activity and throughout, ensure participants are aware of:

- the fact that support or help is available
- the type of support or help that is available
- from where or whom to get help or support.

### **How to offer support**

If you notice a participant experiencing challenges, you may feel compelled to help. Be aware of how you offer support that continues respecting participants' rights and experiences and does not introduce biased thinking.

Ask participants if they need your support before helping them. Find different ways to offer support. Always respect a participant's choice to accept or decline your offer of help.

Only once a participant says yes should you ask them how you can help. Follow through and communicate the support you can provide. Only provide the help they have requested.

This may include asking outright or asking about their experience. There are some suggested phrases below.

### **Asking outright:**

- *“Is there anything I can do to help you?”*
- *“May I offer you help?”*

### **Asking about their experience**

- *“How is [this activity] going for you?”*
- *“How can I help you with [this activity]?”*
- *“How could [this activity] be better for you?”*

You may also want to consider non-verbal methods for participants to ask for support. These could include raising hands or cards, moving to a designated space, using a bell or buzzer, or having a designated support facilitator they can approach.

In unfacilitated engagements, provide participants with methods to access support before and during the activity, such as in pre-engagement information or help boxes on the website.

### **Relevant pages**

- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)

## Offering support in different ways

Inform participants of other support that they can access. It may also be helpful to have information readily available that participants can access without informing you or other project team members.

Some questions for you:

- Are there other people, teams, or professionals who can support them?
- Are there any relevant helplines, phone lines, links, or other resources that can support them?
- Are there ways for participants to let you know they need support privately?

### Relevant pages

- » [Tool: Quick guide for facilitating with people with disability example](#)

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## At the end of the activity

Communicate the results of the activity or project and the way participants contributed. Always thank people, remind them of any remuneration you may be providing, and explain what to expect next.

### *Provide closing remarks*

Depending on the activity, it may be appropriate for you to:

- Summarise the discussion.
- Give people a chance to share their reflections in a way that works for them.
- Tell people what you will do with this information.
- Share any other helpful information.

If possible, offer opportunities to contribute out of session. This may be through a mailbox, interviews, via email and more.

## ***Thank participants***

Take the time to thank participants.

- Clarify the value you received from participants' contributions.
- Show appreciation for the time, effort, energy, and resources participants invested in the activity. You may do this verbally, through text, using Auslan, and more.
- Share how participants may expect compensation or remuneration. This may include telling them what other information you may need from them to complete payment.
- Give participants a clear method and timeframe for when you will provide payment.

For unfacilitated activities, providing advice on forms and surveys page may help.

### ***Relevant pages***

- » [Design: Pay participants](#)
- » [Plan: Forms and surveys](#)

## ***Any more information***

Provide detail on related activities and how participants can stay engaged, if relevant. You may consider:

- Providing opportunities for people to give feedback on the engagement process, including accessibility and inclusion.
- Creating public communication, such as a social media pages and posts or hosting in-person or virtual town halls or information sessions.
- Creating targeted communication, such as a mailing list. Ensure you have participants' permission to be part of any mailing or communication lists.
- Inviting people with disability to analyse the information with you.
- Inviting people with disability to provide feedback through a variety of different channels.

If people with disability are not a part of future activities, clarifying the next steps shows how their contribution and work contributes to the broader project. Be prepared to receive feedback or additional considerations about future activities. This transparency may help you build trust.

### ***Relevant pages***

- » [Follow up: Promote effective follow up](#)
- » [Follow up: Use feedback to evaluate your activity](#)

# Follow up

# Analyse and reflect with people with disability

Once your engagement has concluded, consider how to include people with disability in analysing the information you received and how you might increase participation or inclusion in future activities.

Include people with disability in the analysis phase of your activity. This respects the autonomy of your participants and may help to maintain the trust of the people with disability you engaged. Including people with disability in your analysis phase may mean your findings, analysis, evaluation, and decisions are more representative of participants and possibly of other people within the disability community.

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## How to engage people with disability in analysis

Aim to include people with disability in the analysis of information you collect during your activity. When you *involve, collaborate* with or empower people with disability in your project or activity according to the IAP2 Spectrum, you should include people with disability in your analysis phase.

What you must do:

- Follow general good practice to ensure your activity or project is accessible.
- Provide sufficient time for participants to prepare before the analysis session.
- Allow enough time and budget to ensure you can engage people with disability meaningfully in this phase.

Aim to:

- Structure your team to include people with disability.
- Build analysis activities into your activity design.
- Allow enough time for participants to tell you how they would like to contribute to your analysis.
- In analysis activity, engage people with disability who are participants, specialists, and advocates.

Relevant pages

- » [Context: Define the level of participation](#)
- » [Design: Start by thinking about accessible design](#)
- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)

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## Ways to engage people with disability in analysis

- Present your findings and analysis to participants in a way that suits them, then ask for their feedback. Provide accessible options for people to provide their feedback.
- Hold a showcase of the findings.
- Co-design a session (for example, a workshop) for you to analyse the findings together.
- Analyse the findings with an advisory group and/or some participants.

# Quote participants accurately

Once you have completed your activity, you may wish to use the information participants provided in quotations. Use participants' exact words and respect how they are identified. Make sure to maintain the level of identification participants have consented to. Follow the Australian privacy principles.

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## What to do when quoting participants

You may want to include what participants have told you through direct and indirect quotes.

### ***Stay true to the quote***

When quoting participants, ensure you maintain the original intent of the quotes.

You may be quoting people directly or indirectly. Where you paraphrase, use the participant's language without censoring or correcting the quotations to ensure you are not being patronising or changing the connotation.

### **Example**

*In the discovery phase of a design project, an interview participant describes themselves using a slur. The interviewer asks them why they use this term, and the participant explains they often feel othered and disrespected. The participant uses this term to emphasise the nature of their experience.*

*When reviewing all submissions, another researcher suggests changing the quotation to remove the slur. The interviewer considers the word is derogatory but recalls the participant used the slur to emphasise the ableist attitudes they experience. The interviewer confirms the participant's preference. The participant decides that as the report will not mention their name, they are comfortable for the interviewer to use their exact words. The interviewer includes the quote uncensored in their internal report.*



## ***Respect identity preferences***

Many people with disability have strong preferences for how they like to be referred to. Keep this in mind if quoting how people refer to their disability identity. Use the terms the participant uses.

For example, if a participant refers to themselves as “wheelchair-bound” or “disabled” in a quote, do not change the description to “a wheelchair user” or “a person with disability”, as that is not the participant’s preferred term.

If you are unsure of someone’s preferred language, only include the information they have given consent for you to share, such as their name or organisation.

Read more about different models of disability and language preferences.

### *Relevant pages*

- » [Context: Understand what disability means](#)
- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Deliver: Deliver an inclusive activity](#)
- » [Australian privacy principles \(Office of the Australian Information Commissioner \[OAIC\]\)](#)
- » [Australian code for the responsible conduct of research \(National Health and Medical Research Council\)](#)
- » [Guide to data analytics and the Australian Privacy Principles \(OAIC\)](#)

---

## **How to identify people when quoting them**

Before identifying the people who provided quotes, make sure you have:

- clearly communicated the options for redaction or confidentiality and how you manage retribution and defamation
- communicated the level of identification either explicitly (such as through a consent form) or tacitly (such as saying that quotes will be attributed to a specific level of identification as part of your housekeeping statement).

When you quote people with disability, you should:

- Be aware that participants with disability may be more vulnerable to being identified based on a few identifying factors.
- Maintain the level of identification stated in any ethics, consent, and privacy documentation or to participants in any communication before and during your engagement.
- Be mindful of the level of identification your participant(s) may have agreed to.
- Consider redaction if information might be identifying beyond what participants have agreed to or if content may raise concerns about defamation or retribution.

---

## Levels of identification

There are four levels of identity you can give participants when quoting them.

### **Identified**

Quotations are attributed to participants by name or other individual identifying information, such as an identification number or username.

### **De-identified**

Personal information and direct identifiers like name, age and organisation have been eliminated, but other identifying data may be kept, such as location and medical diagnosis.

### **Using a pseudonym/alias**

Participants' identities are hidden, but their data is still connected to a unique identifier like a number or false name. You have assigned the pseudonym or asked the participant for an alias to use. You or your team hold the key to reverse or expose the data.

This is not the same as identifying a participant by a pseudonym or alias that identifies them elsewhere, such as a username or phone number.

### **Anonymous**

There is no information given about the person being quoted.

### **Example**

*A report is published covering the experience of LGBTQ+ people in the disability community, with a section on wheelchair users. A quote from Wheelchair User X is attributed to someone located in a regional town in Western Australia.*

*Because the number of people who belong to the demographic of LGBTQ+ wheelchair users in that region of Western Australia is relatively small, people in their local community were able to identify the participant based on the content of the quote.*

*If the quote contained sensitive information, Wheelchair User X may experience negative impacts from being identified.*

### Relevant pages

- » [A visual guide to data de-identification \(Future of Privacy Forum\)](#)
- » [5 Principles of Data Ethics for Businesses \(Harvard Business School Online\)](#)
- » [Privacy in the Australian Public Service \(OAIC\)](#)

---

## When participants request attribution

Some participants, especially those representing an organisation, will want to be credited for their participation. How they are credited should be discussed with the participant before their contributions are included in any reports or other output. Make sure your ethics approval allows this.

Relevant pages

- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Design: Follow ethical standards](#)

# Promote effective follow up

Tell participants what happens next. Follow-up communication is important to let participants know their commitment and effort were effective.

---

## Why communicating outcomes is important

Participants appreciate transparency. Where possible, inform participants about the outcome and impact of their participation. Be upfront if no actions or changes could be implemented and explain why.

Provide options for follow-up communication. Some participants may not wish to be contacted further. You can include an option to opt-in or opt-out of follow-up communication within the consent form and/or preparatory materials.

Ensure you have understood and communicated the role of participants as guided by the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum.

### *Related pages*

» [Context: Define the level of participation](#)

---

## When to follow up

You may decide to follow up once or at multiple points during your activity. Follow up as often as possible during your activity. For example:

- immediately after the activity ends
- during or after analysing the information
- after finalisation, submission or decisions have been made
- after implementation, launch, or publishing.

The purpose of the follow up may be to:

- thank participants
- share the next steps for your project
- share the findings of your activity
- provide an update on the outcome of your activity
- provide access to more information and resources
- provide alternative channels for participants to provide further input
- get feedback from participants on the activity.

### *Related pages*

- » [Plan: Schedule activities](#)
- » [Plan: Give participants clear information in advance](#)
- » [Deliver: Deliver an inclusive activity](#)
- » [Follow up: Use feedback to evaluate](#)

---

## What to include in a good follow up

Make sure follow-up communication, information, and materials are in accessible formats. Plan for the time and resources this may require in your schedule, budget, and logistics.

A follow-up typically consists of:

- acknowledging participants' contributions to the activity
- an accessible summary of the findings from the activity and what happened after. For example, the analysis and report writing
- an accessible copy of any report or artefacts
- an overview of the outcomes, impact, and intended next steps
- a reminder of available supports for participants to access if the activity or information covers sensitive, challenging, or potentially triggering topics.

### Relevant pages

- » [Design: Start by thinking about accessible design](#)
- » [Design: Consider time and costs](#)
- » [Plan: Create accessible materials](#)
- » [Follow up: Use feedback to evaluate](#)
- » [Follow up: Analyse and reflect with people with disability](#)
- » [Digital Service Standard assessment reports \(DTA\)](#)

# Use feedback to evaluate

Take the time to reflect on the experiences your participants and your team members had during the project or activity. This will improve your future activities and work practice.

Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Meet people's accessibility needs](#)
- » [Plan: Schedule activities](#)

---

## Why participant feedback is important

Participant feedback will help improve future activities. To make sure the feedback methods you provide are accessible, ask participants what they need or provide different ways to obtain feedback.

Accepting and acting on feedback helps you and people with disability by:

- providing valuable lessons and insights to improve future activities
- demonstrating you are invested in improving the experience of people with disability who interact with your organisation
- supporting you to adopt practices for greater accessibility and inclusivity in your work.

---

## How to ask for feedback

Consider asking a few key questions and providing an option for people to provide general feedback to increase the likelihood of getting responses. Key questions could be about:

- the accessibility of an activity or project
- what to change or do differently to make an activity or project more accessible.

### Examples

- Ask about the accessibility of an activity or project
  - “Could you participate fully in [this activity or these activities or this project]?”
  - “How well were your access needs met?”
- Ask what to change or do differently to make an activity or project more accessible
  - “What else could we have done to better support your participation?”
  - “How could we improve our [activity or project]?”
- Give an option to leave general feedback
  - “What else would you like to tell us?”
  - “What other comments or feedback do you have?”

## Ways you can obtain feedback

Accept feedback throughout and at the end of your project or activity. Provide multiple channels, including discrete or anonymous options and in-person or remote options that allow people to provide feedback through their preferred method. Examples could include:

- Written and/or drawn feedback
  - email
  - survey
  - paper form
  - anonymous submission channel.
- Verbal feedback
  - spoken feedback to someone running or supporting the activity
  - anonymous phone line or audio message
  - organiser’s phone number
  - semi-structured interview.
- Video feedback
  - link with a submission box.

### Relevant pages

- » [Plan: Schedule activities](#)

---

## Respond to feedback

If you have received significant feedback regarding a participant's experience of the activity or topics covered, it may be important to respond either individually or as part of follow-up communication with all participants.

When you have received critical feedback, it is important to own your mistakes and communicate your plans to improve your practice even if you will not engage the same participants in the future. Being honest about errors and omissions is important for building and maintaining good relationships with your participants and a good reputation in the community at large.

It is good practice to provide participants with access to a formal complaints process outside of the project or activity – for example, managed at the facilitation team's organisational level.

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## Reflect with your team

Take the time to reflect on the activity or project with your team. This is a crucial step to improve your practice, regardless of whether you received feedback from participants.

### ***General good practice principles for team reflection***

- Be honest.
- Minimise power imbalances between team members.
- Think about the things you did well and what helped them happen.
- Think about things that could have gone better and what could have helped.
- Consider how you will share lessons across your organisation to improve inclusion and accessibility in your working standards.

If you have people with disability in your project team delivering an IAP2 Spectrum empower role, include them in the team reflection step.

#### *Relevant pages*

- » [Context: Define the level of participation](#)
- » [Agile and user-centred process \(DTA Digital Service Standard\)](#)



# Tools

# Consent form

## [TEMPLATE]

This document is provided as an example of a consent form and users should consider obtaining appropriate professional advice.

---

### Engagement information

#### ***About [Engagement name – organisation]***

##### **About the organisation**

This project is with [organisation]. [Organisation] is...

##### **Purpose of the project**

[Organisation] is looking to...

This project is looking for people to [test/share their experiences/co-design]...

##### **Who can participate?**

[Organisation] are looking for perspectives from people who: [For example]

- Are 18 years or older
- Identify as XYZ
- Have lived experience of XYZ
- Have used XYZ before
- Are interested in XYZ
- Live close to [location]

### **[Example]**

ORG is a government department in New South Wales. The team at ORG are looking to improve the experience of the ORG mobile app. This project is looking for people to test the new designs of the ORG mobile app. The user testing will be facilitated by ORG.

ORG are looking for perspectives from people who:

- Are 18 years or older
- Have used the ORG mobile app before
- Live in NSW

---

## **What to expect as a participant**

### ***What will happen***

During the session, you will be with [#] researchers from [organisation].

The activity planned is [interviews/focus groups/surveys/workshops/user testing].

### **[Example]**

In this session, [For example: usability testing]

- You will be asked some general questions about your experience with [product/service].
- You will then be shown a new design of some parts of the app. It's a draft/work-in-progress, so not all buttons or links on it will be working.
- The facilitator will describe some scenarios for you to use the new design, then ask for your feedback and opinions about the new design.

## ***Where and when?***

The [interviews/focus groups/surveys/workshops/user testing] will be run online / in person at [location].

The sessions will be running from [date] to [date].

## ***Payment***

You will be paid [x] in the form of a gift card for your time and experience.

## ***Expression of interest***

Please complete this expression of interest form to register your interest in participating. We will then contact you about if you have been selected for this project or not.

Please contact [person] by email ([insert email]) or phone ([insert phone]) if you have any questions or concerns, or would like to register your interest without completing the online form.

You can provide your access needs as part of the expression of interest form or contact us directly to discuss them.

---

## Consent statement

### *Participant consent*

Please read the project information and complete this consent statement if you agree to participate.

I (participant) understand that:

- I am volunteering to take part.
- I will receive payment for my time, expertise and lived experience.
- Any personal information I share with [organisation] will be kept private to the project team.
- My name will not be identified in the project reports or outputs.
- Quotes of what I say may be used in the reports.
- No quotes containing identifiable information related to me will be used.
- I can leave at any time by telling the facilitator.
- There is no penalty for leaving.
- I can choose to not answer questions if I do not want to.
- Recordings will be used for notetaking if I give permission.
- Recordings may be shared with the project team if I give permission.
- Recordings, if any, will be deleted at the end of the project.

I give permission for the facilitator to make a video and sound recording of the focus group for notetaking.

- Yes
- No

I give permission for the recording to be shared with the project team.

- Yes
- No

Would you like to receive updates about the findings from this project?

- Yes – selecting 'yes' gives the organisation access to your email address.
- No

If there is anything else that you do not agree to or have any comments, please note them here:

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If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the [organisation's] team by email ([insert email]) or phone ([insert phone]).

***Participant to complete:***

Name:

---

Signature:

---

Date:

---

# Expression of interest form

## [TEMPLATE]

This document is a template to write an expression of interest form. Use it to build an expression of interest form with your survey field of choice.

*Relevant pages*

» [Plan: Create accessible materials – Forms and surveys](#)

---

### [Engagement name]

[Engagement information]

[Engagement purpose]

[Engagement activity description]

Please complete this form to register your interest in participating.

Please contact [person] by email ([insert email]) or phone ([insert phone]) if you have any questions or concerns. You may also reach out if you would like to register your interest without completing this form.

---

## Participant information

**[Engagement activity information  
(detailed, logistics)]**

**What:** [activity and duration of activity]

**When:** [dates of activity]

**Where:** [online or in person location]

**Payment:** [payment, if any]

Please note this form is to register your interest.

We will contact you to let you know if you are selected to be part of this project or not.

---

## About this expression of interest form

Please note this form is to register your interest. We will contact you to let you know if you are selected to be part of this project or not.

Some information in this form is required to select the appropriate participants for our project. Most of the questions are optional. We may also contact you if we need additional information.

This form contains 3 sections with 12 questions in total. Many are multiple choice, with others requiring a short description where necessary. There is an optional 13th question for participants who would like to be invited to participate again in the future.

All questions in this form have been created to reflect human diversity. However, we are aware that it does not cover all forms of human diversity – there is a section at the end if you would like to add more information about yourself.

All the information you give us will be kept in accordance with security protocols and will not be shared.



---

## Contact details

Please provide the following information so that we can contact you about the project.

**1. Name**

---

**2. Email address**

---

**3. Phone number**

---

**4. What is the best way to contact you?**

[Multiple choice answer]

- Email
- Phone call
- SMS

**5. Are you 18 years or older?**

[Multiple choice answer]

- Yes
- No

---

## Demographic information

This information will be used for reporting in an anonymous way. Your name will not be associated with this information. All questions in this section are optional to answer – you can skip them if you do not wish to share.

**6. What year were you born in?**

---

**7. What is your gender?**

---

**8. Where do you live?**

- ACT
- NSW
- NT
- QLD
- SA
- TAS
- VIC
- WA

**9. Do you have a disability?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

---

## Accessibility requirements

The next questions help us understand your preferences and any accessibility requirements we can provide so that you can fully participate in the focus groups.

Some examples of access needs you can request include, but aren't limited to, the following:

- translator
- Auslan interpreter
- closed captioning
- audio description
- break time
- more time to respond
- lift access
- designated parking
- low sensory space.

**10. Please describe your accessibility requirements.**

---

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**11. Would you like a support person to participate with you?**

Support person includes, but is not limited to, a support worker, carer or family member.

- Yes  
 No

**12. Is there any other information about you that you would like to tell us?**

---

***Thank you so much for being interested in being part of our project.***

Please click submit to enter your details.

**13. Would you like to be invited to future projects?**

If you select yes, your data will be kept on [organisation's] database so that we can contact you about future opportunities.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure, ask me again later

# [Engagement title] for [project title]

This discussion guide includes only suggested content for housekeeping information and an introduction activity. This example is for an online focus group via Zoom that is to be sent out to participants in advance.

---

## Discussion guide

This guide will be used by the facilitator to guide the group conversation. The facilitator may ask follow-up questions where appropriate.

### ***Housekeeping (10 minutes)***

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- You don't need to participate in every topic of discussion.
- You can leave at any time.
- Please do what you need to be comfortable. If you need to, take a break, turn off your camera or re-join the call at a later time.
- You can communicate verbally, use the Zoom chat, or take notes and send them to us afterwards.

### ***Consent***

- Anything we share back from this session will be deidentified.
- Confirm consent. After reading all of this, are you still comfortable participating?
- Confirm recording. After reading all of this, are you still comfortable with the session being recorded?

## ***Introductions (10 minutes)***

Let's introduce ourselves:

- What's your name and preferred pronouns?
- Which First Nation or Country are you joining from today?
- If you were an animal, what animal would you be today?

# Quick guide for facilitating with people with disability

The following pages are a mock-up of information provided to facilitators to keep in mind and remember on the day of an activity. While this example is fictitious, it is based on real information provided to facilitators.

In this scenario, 15 facilitators (10 in-person and 5 online) are delivering an all-day hybrid community park design symposium with around 95 participants. This information is for both the online and in-person facilitators. A total of 30 participants are people with disability, while the others are their carers, landscape artists, urban designers, government officials and more. The content for the day is delivered via a mix of large group presentations, speeches and small group activities.

---

## Example facilitation guide

Thank you so much for expressing interest in facilitating small group activities during the Better Parks Symposium next Thursday. See our website for more information.

This symposium will be led by people with disability and will launch a conversation with the community about what the park should have and what it should look like. We will talk about the key principles used to design the park as well as ways to make the park safe and fun.

There will be **over 50 people online** (as well as **around 40 in person**), so we are very grateful for the facilitators' help with the online group activities. The current times for the breakout rooms will be **10:45 and 12:25 (running 20 minutes each)**.

If you are available, it might be best to **be on standby (online with cameras off) from 10:15–13:00**.

We will use a Microsoft Teams channel. For online facilitators, we will use this to notify you if the event is running behind and advise you to hop online when breakout rooms are due to start.

---

## Appropriate and respectful language

Throughout the symposium, it is integral that we use appropriate and respectful language. Keep this handout somewhere where you can easily access it.

- **Introduce yourself and start your contributions with your name.** Speak clearly and ensure that you are standing where the people you are speaking to can see you. Encourage others to start their contributions with their names as well. This will help people in the room be aware of who is speaking, familiarise themselves with the people around them, and follow the conversation in the best way for them.
  - **In-person:** We will have an Auslan interpreter for all main stage speakers and in the group activities where participants have indicated that they require this service. Facilitators of these groups will be individually briefed to ensure they do not begin before the Auslan interpreter is present.
  - **Online:** We will have a live-captioning service for all main stage speakers for the online group to access. For group activities where participants have indicated that they require Auslan, we will have an Auslan interpreter join. Facilitators of these groups will be individually briefed to ensure they do not begin before the Auslan interpreter is present.
- **Do not assume whether someone does or does not have a disability.** Not all disabilities are visible and not all participants here today are people with disability.
- **If you feel compelled to help someone, ask them if they need help first.** If they say no, please respect that.
  - Only once they say yes, ask them how.
  - Follow through and communicate the support you can provide.
  - Avoid doing things that they have not requested.
- **Call people by their name, not their disability.** Only refer to the person's disability if it is relevant for the specific context or activity.
- **People's preferred language for their disability is personal.** Listen to how people refer to themselves, their disability and the community they are a part of.
  - If required to name their disability, use the language they have been using for themselves.
  - If you are unsure, default to their name and ask for their preference. You could say, "How would you like me to refer to you in relation to your disability?" "Do you prefer person-first or identity-first language?"
- **Allow people to contribute in multiple ways and find alternative ways to communicate.** Give people options to use the pens and paper provided for writing or drawing. It may also be helpful to act scenarios out.



---

## Information on disclosures

During the symposium, some people may talk about poor experiences they have had. For more information, read our trauma-informed facilitation resources available on our intranet.

While we do not expect that you are the experts in responding to disclosures, we all have a role to ensure all the participants' safety and to refer them to an appropriate service if they would like.

In the event a participant discloses anything troubling, please engage with the participant from a space of being supportive, compassionate and non-judgmental.

Some key messages for you to please remember and possibly say:

- Thank the participant for sharing and being vulnerable with the group.
- Anyone's experience of abuse or violence is not their own fault.
- Everyone here matters and their contributions matter.
- Include content and trigger warnings to start or when you see that the conversation may include experiences with domestic, physical and sexual violence and image-based abuse.
- Offer reminders of some support services to guide people to as needed.
- Please give everyone the opportunity to take the time and space that they need. In the in-person sessions there is a sensory space. Please allow remote participants to switch off their cameras and mute themselves if they become uncomfortable.

If any participant wants counselling, please ask them for their first name and email or phone number and let the project lead know. We will arrange for the counsellor to contact them.

Any questions please feel free to contact the project lead on [#] and via email at [email].



