Accessibility and Festival Programming

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Massachusetts Cultural Council

UNIVERSAL PLACES   UP   UNIVERSAL PROGRAMS

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**Please remember for audio to call in!**

866.740.1260

Access Code: 7273668

Mission

- The Massachusetts Cultural Council promotes excellence, access, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences to improve the quality of life for Massachusetts residents and contribute to the vitality of our communities.

- The UP Inclusive Design Initiative stewards cultural change and promotes equity through inclusive policy development and community engagement under the practices of Universal Design.

- The ADA addresses civil rights, but compliance often becomes an architectural issue. The principles of Universal Design address physical, social, digital, attitudinal, communication, and information environments to intentionally anticipate human variety.

- From toddler to elder, ability is on a spectrum. In recognizing these human variables as regular, **it is not the person who is disabled, but rather the environment that is disabling.**
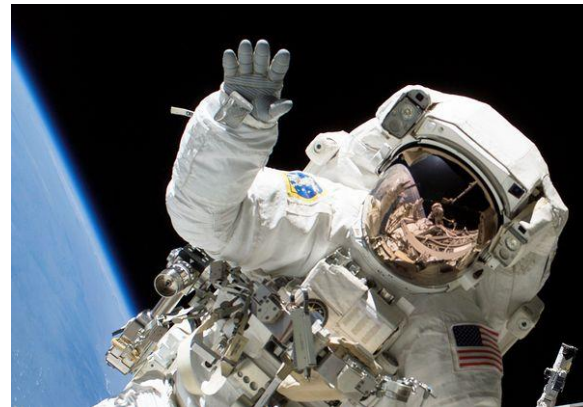
Americans with Disabilities Act

Prohibits discrimination based on disability

- Disability: physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity
- Re: full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation.

Legal responsibilities

- Ensure Effective Communication
- Create Program Access

Why make your festival accessible?

- To be meaningful and intentionally civic is to be distinctly democratic and connecting to all people.

- Broadens granting opportunities.

- Because you want everyone to be able to participate.

- Risk management; and it's the law.

Getting Started: Planning and Budgeting

- ADA Regulations and Priorities
- Coordination of staff & volunteers
- Programming; Who Takes Stage?
- Marketing & Website Information
- Site and Venue
- Responding to requests
- Risk Management: medical considerations

ADA Regulations and Priorities

- Integrated Settings
- Effective Communication
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Policies: Personal Care Attendant, Service Animals, Mobility Devices, Sound Amplification, Reserved Seating, HP Parking
- Undue Burden

Coordination of Staff & Volunteers

- Top to bottom buy-in
- Recruit from potential populations
- Clear roles and responsibilities w/everybody on the same page
- Awareness and language
- FAQ's
- Easily identifiable
- Information sharing on site/day of
- Designate an Access Coordinator

Programming; Who Takes Stage?

- Diversification of Programming
    - Artists, performers, and special events reflect commitment
- Understanding the barriers to participation:
    - Time & Transport
    - Communication strategies: profiles, blogs, videos, PR

Marketing and Website Information

- Visitor info: highlight what you have and what you can do
- Develop strategic partnerships for ambassadors, user/expert reviews, and audience development
- Global PR: include access information
- Target PR: multi-sensory specifics, descriptive language, and multiple format consistency
- Know before you go info: directions to and on-site, maps and wayfinding, special effects and quiet zones,
- Include images w/alt-text, videos w/captions, logos
- Contacts

Site and Venue

- Site Awareness: Landscape. Shade. Water. Surfaces. Slope. Terrain.

- Routes: to and from and onsite

- Stage, backstage, quiet zones

- Restrooms, info centers, viewing platforms, ramps

- Parking, drop-off

- Transportation, distances

Responding to requests

- Ease of use, finding who to contact
- Clarity of information, services offered
- Enhancements and deadlines
- Messaging platforms

Risk Management:
medical considerations

- First Aid/EMT services

- Power to charge devices

- Policies for food/beverage/medications/syringes

- Refrigeration for medication/ice

- Waste disposal; medical, service animal, sharps

- Oxygen tanks

- Staff training

- Alerts: multiple formats

Massachusetts Cultural Council

Accessibilty

- Information & Services
  - Vision
    - Staff training
    - Audio-description
    - Tactile environments
    - Large formats and Braille
    - Enhanced night lighting
  - Mobility: wheelchairs, scooters, bicycles, segways
    - Entrances and training for entrance workers
    - Routes: ramps, distances, and terrain
    - Signage: facilities, services, security, seating, & programs
    - Concessions and vendors

Accessibilty

- Information & Services
  - Audio/Communication
    - Interpreters? ASL
    - Open and closed captioning
    - Assistive Listening Devices (ALD's)
    - Auxiliary aids: text, email, tablet notes, pen and paper
  - Social/Sensory
    - Staff training
    - Signage: simple and intuitive
    - Quiet place of refuge

Who are we talking about, anyway?

- Spectrum of ability in all humans from toddler to elder
  - Physical and visual disabilities
  - Deaf, HOH, and communication disabilities
  - Cognitive and brain-based disabilities
  - Trauma
  - Age

Statistics

- 58 million Americans with disabilities…..1 in 5 (20% of the population)

- 8 percent of children under 15 have disabilities.

- 21 percent of people 15 and older have disabilities.

- 17 percent of people 21 to 64 have disabilities.

- 50 percent of adults 65 and older have disabilities.

- 10,000 people in America are turning 65… everyday!

- In the last 10 minutes, 498 Americans became a person with a disability

In 2002 the United Nation's World Health Organization (WHO) published the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health. Based on data that human beings live longer and survive more, WHO developed a broad definition of disability as an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions – making disability *a universal human experience*.

Human functional limitation becomes disabling at the intersection of the individual and her environment.

Accessibility laws and codes recognize that design is a civil and human right for people with disabilities.

Don't get swept up in STEREOTYPES

People with disabilities:

- All ages

- From diverse cultures and diverse financial backgrounds

- Work

- Have families

- Have goals and dreams

- Don't necessarily want or need assistance

- Don't always identify as a person with a disability

- Something we all have in common!

Don't get swept up in STEREOTYPES
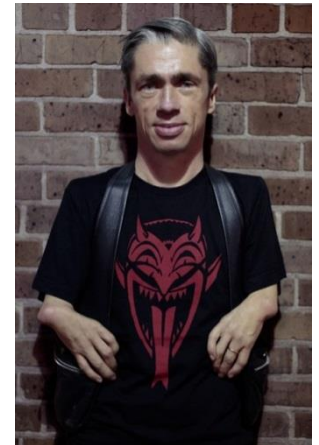
Resources

- National Autism Association http://nationalautismassociation.org/
- New England ADA Center www.newenglandADA.org
- Cultural Access New England – CANE
  www.CA-NE.org
- WAVE online tools to evaluate your website www.Webaim.org
- National Center for Accessible Media
  www.ncam.org
- Partners for Youth with Disabilities www.pyd.org
- Easter Seals www.easterseals.org
- Aspergers/Autsim Network http://www.aane.org/

Resources

- Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing
http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/mcdhh/
- Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/mcb/
- Massachusetts Cultural Council UP Initiative
  www.massculturalcouncil.org
- VSA Massachusetts
  www.vsamass.org
- Independent Living Council
  http://www.masilc.org/
- AARP Massachusetts
  http://www.aarp.org/

Thank you.

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