

Inclusive Events Communication Checklist

Inclusive greeting:

“Dear colleagues, students, friends. [delete as appropriate]

Please join us for/ We would like to invite you to...”

Description of event/attendees:

Communicate whether it is a:

Structured event with a fixed topic? Meeting and its topic? Discussion and its topic?

Lecture and its topic? Workshop and its topic? Host/presenter? Itinerary. “No prior knowledge or experience of [the topic] is necessary, as we are all learning as we go.”

“Microphones will be in use during the presentation.” Ensure that microphones are used if they are available. Especially for presentations/lectures. Don’t do the “Can everyone hear me?” thing to get out of using a microphone. Those who can’t hear you won’t respond. Some who are struggling but can infer may not feel comfortable to let you know.

Informal event? Drinks? Alcoholic or tea/coffee/soft drinks. Food? Snacking or sit down meal. Dietary provisions inc. vegan, gluten free, allergens. Rough pricing? Pot luck, what to bring, “If your food is unpackaged or homemade and being shared, attendees may wish to know if there are certain ingredients used which they are

unable to eat.” “Please advise us of any dietary requirements.” “This is a dry event so please attend sober and do not consume alcohol at the event.”

Ensure that a reasonable proportion of out of work events are held in non-alcoholic venues. Alcoholic venues can exclude people for a number of reasons, not limited to their own struggles with alcohol; struggles with being around drunk people for various reasons; sensory issues with loud and/or complex sounds. Ignoring these requirements leads to exclusion of a range of demographics from opportunities to be part of communities, getting to know their peers and feeling comfortable to provide their thoughts, experience and expertise. Some may be more comfortable to provide feedback informally rather than in a session with everyone listening, but this is less possible if informal gatherings are inaccessible.

Communicate dress code. Formal? Smart casual? Comfortable? Party gear?

Sentient rainbow?

“This event is open to staff and/or students from all departments, schools and business areas, whether academic, cleaning, administrative, catering.”

“We welcome allies/partners/friends/family” or “This event is intended for [fixed demographic] [however allies are welcome to attend in support of this session’s aims]”? “Feel free to bring your children as this is a family friendly event”?

“Assistance/guide dogs/pet dogs are also/are not welcome”? If assistance dogs are not welcome, choose a different venue, unless the event is specific to what the

venue has available e.g. a specific exhibition. “Please advise us if you will be attending with a dog, so we can advise anyone with allergies ahead of time.”

Content warning for difficult topics ahead of time.

“If you are struggling with the topics presented, please do not hesitate to do what you need for your own wellbeing, and approach one of the event organisers if you need assistance.”

Information/accessibility:

Building address. Date formatted as Day, number, month, year e.g. Wednesday 20th March 2019. Start and end time either as 24 hour or with am/pm. Confirm whether there is a fixed attendance time with arrival and start/end time or free to come and go between these hours?

Ensure start time is no earlier than 10am as earlier than this is impossible for people who require home assistance to come to their home to help them to get ready.

Ensure that public transportation is available at the times your event starts and ends.

If starting in the afternoon, ensure time for people to travel and eat their lunch. A quick lunch on the bus is not possible for everyone.

Confirm whether there are steps or an accessible ramp and whether this is at the main entrance or how to reach it. If no accessible access, find an alternative venue.

Room number; floor number, access to that floor via lift and location of nearest accessible toilets. Whether there are gender neutral/single person toilets. Ensure

and communicate if room layout is navigable for disabled people e.g. wheelchair/crutch users; blind/visually impaired people. If it is able to be made accessible, do so. Restate whether animals are welcome, whether for assistance or general company. If any of these are not possible, find an alternative venue. Adjustable height table for wheelchair users? Ensure chairs with backs for those who need it.

Travel advice.

Advise which buses serve this area from each campus and the centre of town, their regularity e.g. “every 15 minutes starting 3 minutes past the hour,” “every half hour from 10 past the hour, starting at 8pm;” advise which stop to disembark at.

Car parking nearby, paid or free after certain time?

Where to go from here to reach the venue. How much walking/pushing from bus stop/car parking to venue and whether uphill travel is needed/if there is an alternative downhill method advise of the appropriate stop/parking for this. Downhill bus stop from the venue? If only access either way is uphill, find an alternative venue.

If an event relates to, or is celebrating, a particular occasion or topic, provide suggested conversation starter topics, things to think about, articles to read for information, or things which people can look up to feel prepared and calm e.g.

“This event is the same month as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month, World Refugee Day, Men’s Health Awareness Month, World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought and Stillbirth & Neonatal Death Awareness Month. Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Awareness Month could be a very upsetting subject so I would suggest avoiding this topic.

If want a conversation starter, you could have a think or spend a few minutes googling to think of a refugee whose life and achievements impresses you and why it impresses you, or a Roma, Gypsy or Traveller person/community whose life and achievements impress you. E.g. “I was reading about Amber L. Hollibaugh who has been involved in loads of cool activism. It seems like she’s had a really hard life but she’s done some cool stuff like helping to lead the SAGE (Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders) project in New York.” “I found out that Wyclef Jean and Freddie Mercury were both refugees. In fact there are loads of fairly well known musicians who are refugees, from a bunch of different backgrounds. Rita Ora, too.”

You can google search “Famous Gypsy Travellers”, “famous refugees”, “developments in men’s health”, “trans men pregnancy”, or “projects to prevent drought” to find information on loads of interesting people and interesting world developments. This is not obligatory, feel free to chat about whatever interests you!”

Inclusion of diverse identities, and sign off.

“Please use people’s correct pronouns and be gracious if you are corrected. We all make mistakes but need to do our best to respect people’s identities.”

Encourage people to introduce themselves with their name and pronouns “If you feel comfortable to do so, we encourage you to introduce yourself with your name and pronouns e.g. ‘Hi, I’m Adam. I use they/them pronouns.’ This helps people to feel comfortable to make clear how they identify, especially if their gender is wrongly assumed regularly.”

“If you have not attended one of our events previously, you are more than welcome to attend, but if you would like a friendly face to greet you at a certain time, please contact [name] at [email/phone].”

“Also, please advise us of any dietary requirements and don’t hesitate to let us know if there is anything else we can do or provide to help you to attend by contacting [name] at [email/phone].”

“We hope to see you there, [along with any others you choose to bring. Spread the word!]”

Kind regards,

[Name]

[preferred pronouns]”

Send to:

Email List;

Workplace event;

Tweet, if external;

Accessible formatting:

Arial.

12+ point.

1.5+ line spacing.

High contrast of dark text on a light background colour. Keep text colours consistent.

Left side justified.

Use full stops at the end of everything, including headings.

Screen readers will not pause appropriately without full stops. This can cause unrelated information to be run together when on subsequent lines.

No underlines, use bold instead.

Avoid typing in capitals.

Avoid use of brackets.

Avoid use of symbols where words can explain similarly.

Use reasonably short paragraphs, broken down by relevant information groups e.g. travel, venue accessibility, event topic and any preparation. Separate paragraphs by a clear line break.

Use plain English, where possible, or provide brief explanation of important terms/topics.

If using acronyms, please follow the first use of each with an explanation of it e.g. “GLAAD, formerly known as Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.”

If using hashtags, please capitalise the first letter of each word to clearly show word separation e.g. #ThisIsEasierToRead.

Include dates and times in description, not just drop down details, to minimise navigation for screen reader software.

Describe sites a link takes you to e.g. “This link will take you to the event listings for our upcoming events.” As opposed to “Click here.”

Provide image descriptions which describe the content of the image, identities where relevant, location/context and e.g. “Image shows two adults/children/men/women holding hands. One is in a wheelchair, waving a flag. The other adult is standing. Both are smiling.” Or “Image shows a room of [a certain

kind of people/objects] sat around a table, and one [person of a certain description]. Most of the people are leaning in to the discussion, while the other is shying away from engaging.” You do not need to describe the gender/ethnicity/disability of everyone pictured if this is not relevant to the content.

To get image descriptions on Twitter go to the Twitter app and find ‘settings and privacy’ > ‘accessibility’ and tick ‘compose image descriptions’. You will need to do this on each device you use your account on. There will then be a field when you add an image to a tweet that reads ‘Add description’. You won’t see the description after you’ve added it to an image, but it has become a part of the image information that screen readers use. We will all forget an image description occasionally. A good way to be reminded is to follow the Twitter account @PleaseCaption:

<https://twitter.com/PleaseCaption>. If you haven’t added a description to your image you will be reminded by the account after you post!

Ensure images are high enough resolution to be scaled up and still be clear.

Caption videos or provide key points from videos in text for those with hearing/sensory impairments.

Keep formatting simple. Use of columns, embedded text boxes, different levels of text can be unnecessarily complicated whether for people trying to infer priority/order of information, or for those trying to navigate with screen reader software.

Here is a link to Inclusion Scotland's Accessible Social Media guide which covers some of this information. <https://inclusionscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Accessible-Social-Media-Guide-2018.pdf>