



**ACCESSIBLE ARTS AND CULTURE
FOR EVERYONE**

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE ARTS



WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Lowell Fuchs – Arts InCommunity
Kylie Moore – Disability Advocate



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ARTS | InCommunity

Founded in 1974, Arts InCommunity and partners work together to create inclusive communities where arts and culture is accessible for all individuals in the Southeast.



WHY WE'RE HERE



"Working with ARTS InCommunity has given our youth an opportunity to experience things in life they would otherwise not have the opportunity to participate in or experience. We've been to the ballet, art galleries, botanical gardens, the zoo, sporting events, and more."

– Inner Harbour Youth Villages

ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT



Accessible Site Evaluations

Includes assessment, survey, report with findings and suggestions, and a seal of greater access rating. Virtual option available!

Inclusive Exhibition Design

Inclusive exhibition design consultation for diverse audiences of people with a broad range of abilities and ages, from all societal groups.

Accessibility 101 Training

Arts InCommunity offers staff training for arts and cultural organizations.



**ACCESSIBLE ARTS AND CULTURE
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ACCESSIBILITY IN THE ARTS

01

Importance of Access

Importance of accessible arts and culture

02

Accessibility 101

Basic understanding of disability models, barriers to access, and universal design.

03

Barriers in Arts and Culture – Practical & Affordable Solutions

Accessibility challenges and how to navigate them with limited time and resources.

04

Q&A

Questions and Answers



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ACCESSIBILITY IN THE ARTS

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE ARTS

My name is Kylie Moore. I am a special projects coordinator at the Bobby Dodd Institute. I've work in the disability community for over ten years. I teach advocacy and life skills to young adults with disabilities. I also do various research projects for Bobby Dodd. I am very excited to speak with you today on accessibility for all individuals with disabilities.

Why is it important for arts & culture to be accessible?

People with disabilities have the same interests as people without disabilities. They want to be included in all aspects of their communities. This includes the arts and culture. I myself love going to concerts and sports events. Even though our population may not be the main audience, we should be included in the arts.

Believe it or not, the disability community is much larger than you might think.

Some numbers...

61 Million adults in the United States have a disability. This is equal to 26% or 1 in 4 adults.

The percentage of people living with disabilities is highest in the South.

Over 25% of individuals with developmental disabilities receive federal and state funded services. This percentage is rapidly growing every year.

Beyond access for the disability community, it is important for arts organizations to be inclusive of low-income communities.

Some numbers...

The Southeast region of the U.S. have some of the highest poverty levels in all 50 states.

Poverty is defined by having income below the federal poverty level (\$22,314 for a family of four).

Of the top ten states with the highest poverty levels in the U.S., eight are southern states.

Another important reason for being accessible is that it expands the reach of your programming to new and diverse audiences. This can lead to new grant funding sources and build a larger support base around your mission.

How can improving accessibility can help your organization?

- Broadening the organization's reach to diverse audiences increases interest and support for the arts
- Prioritizing accessibility can motivate stakeholders and staff to understand and care about accessibility in the museum
- Prioritizing accessibility can unlock new grant funding opportunities and support accessibility checklists and audits

Finally, it is federal law to be accessible.

Americans with Disabilities Act

- **ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act** was passed in 1990. The ADA forms standard requirements and guidelines for accessibility in the U.S..
- In 2008, there was an amendment to the ADA known as **ADA Amendment Acts of 2008** which focuses on accessibility with evolving technology and communication.
- In the photograph on this slide, President George H. W. Bush signs the Americans with the Disabilities Act during a ceremony in the Rose Garden on July 26, 1990.



ADA Titles II & III

The two titles of the ADA that pertain to nonprofit organizations and state agencies are Title II and Title III.

- **ADA Title II:** Public Entities – ensures access by people with disabilities to buildings, facilities, programs, services, and activities.
- **ADA Title III:** Public Accommodations – prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the activities of places of public accommodations.

Both nonprofits and state and local agencies have responsibility to ensure **effective communication** to:


- Provide auxiliary aids and services
- Reasonably modify, policies, practices, or procedures
- Provide staff training for effective communication

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

ADA law is a foundation for accessibility practices but is often considered bare minimum. We look to Universal Design as a guide for best accessibility practices.

Universal design goes beyond minimum access standards to the design of products and environments usable by the broadest public to the greatest extent possible.

Universal Design



The intent of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications and the built environment usable by as many people as possible.

Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities because what is an accommodation for one person may be a convenience for many. There are seven principles to universal design.

Seven Principles of Universal Design

Equitable Use

Flexibility in Use

Simple and Intuitive Use

Perceptible Information

Tolerance for Error

Low Physical Effort

Size and Space for Approach and Use

MODELS FOR DISABILITY

What are models of disabilities?

Let's take a look at different models of disability.

Outdated Models

Charity Model – The charity model of disability views individuals with disabilities through a false lens where individuals are to be pitied and need the help and charity of others.

Medical Model – The medical model of disability views disability as a medical issue or condition that can be "cured" or treated so an individual may live a "normal" life.

Social Model of Disability

This model suggests that disability is defined by the attitudes, environments, and structures in our society, not an individual's medical condition. The belief is that if our society was designed in a way that it is accessible, individuals with disabilities would not be excluded or restricted.

This model is often practiced in the arts and cultural sectors.

Interdependence

Arts InCommunity's approach to disability is focused on the concept of "interdependence" and the social model. The Oxford Dictionary's definition of interdependence is "the dependence of two or more people or things on each other." No one is truly 100% independent. Not a small child, a CEO of an arts organization, or the President of the United States. We all depend on others to help us in life.

A child relies on their parents for food, clothes, love and more.

The president has an entire team of staff to support them.

Individuals with disabilities are dependent on leadership and staff at museums, performing arts venues, and other venues to make environments and programming inclusive and accessible.

Everyone is dependent on others in one way or another which means we are interdependent!

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Barriers to access are conditions or obstacles that prevent individuals with diverse abilities from using or accessing knowledge, resources, and opportunities as effectively as others.
Let's take a look at different barriers.

Attitudinal Barriers

Attitudinal barriers are behaviors, perceptions, and assumptions that discriminate against persons with disabilities. They often occur due to a lack of understanding that creates misconceptions and judgements about an individual with a disability.

Examples include:

- Assuming a person with a disability is inferior.
- Assuming someone with a disability cannot understand you or speaking to an adult with a disability like they are a child.
- Writing that does not use person-first language, especially when the topic is focused on disability.

Organizational or Systemic Barriers

Organizational or Systemic Barriers are policies, procedures, or practices that unfairly discriminate and can prevent individuals from participating fully in a situation. Organizational or systemic barriers are often put into place unintentionally.

Examples include:

- A ticketing system that requires all guests to use a smart phone app to access a building or event but offers no alternative means for accessing tickets or entry.

Architectural or Physical Barriers

Architectural or Physical Barriers are elements of buildings or outdoor spaces that create barriers to persons with disabilities. These barriers relate to elements such as the design of a building's stairs or doorways, the layout of rooms, or the width of halls and sidewalks.

Examples include:

- Museum exhibitions with pathways that are too narrow for a wheelchair, scooter, or walker.
- Poor lighting in venue that makes it difficult to see for a person with low vision or mobility impairment to navigate area with ease.
- Buildings with limited or no accessible parking spaces and poorly designed wayfinding systems.

Information or Communications Barriers

Information or Communications Barriers occur when sensory disabilities, such as hearing, seeing, or learning disabilities, have not been considered. These barriers relate to both the sending and receiving of information.

Examples include:

- Alternative formats are unavailable for media, performances, meetings, exhibits (closed captioning, ASL Interpreter, audio descriptions, etc.).
- Art description or opera subtitle print that is too small or in a font that is difficult to read.
- Language that is not clear.

Technology Barriers

Technology Barriers occur when a device or technological platform is not accessible to its intended audience and cannot be used with an assistive device. Technology can enhance the user experience, but it can also create unintentional barriers for some users. Technology barriers are often related to information and communications barriers.

Examples include:

- Electronic documents without accessibility features, such as alternative text (Alt Text), that screen readers read to describe an image.
- Tickets that are only available online.
- Museum websites that do not meet accessibility standards.
- Virtual programs without closed captioning.

This concludes the accessibility 101 portion of the presentation. Now I am going to give the presentation back to Lowell so he can discuss improving accessibility in the arts and cultural sector.



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ACCESSIBILITY IN THE ARTS

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Common barriers to access found in the arts & cultural sector that prevent participation from diverse communities.

Environmental Barriers

Inaccessible environments create disability by creating barriers to participation and inclusion

Financial Barriers

Admissions and entry fees create financial barriers to museums, performing arts events, concerts, festivals, and more.

Lack of participation

Lack of consultation and involvement of individuals with diverse abilities is a barrier

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Common barriers to access found in the arts & cultural sector that prevent participation from diverse communities.

Communication Barriers

Limited information available through an organization's website regarding accessibility.

Technology Barriers

Virtual programming, digital tickets, websites, and social media.

Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers such as museum staff or docent approaching individuals differently than others or not approaching at all.

CHALLENGES FOR ARTS & CULTURAL ORGS



CHALLENGES



Limited Funding

Limited grant funding for accessibility improvements

Short Staffed, Depleted Volunteers

Short staffed, depleted volunteers leaving departments with 1/3 staff capacity while still maintaining same programming

Unified Vision?

The organization doesn't recognize and prioritize the importance of accessibility at all levels of leadership and staff

CHALLENGES



Preservation vs Modification

Historical sites dealing with limitations for architectural modifications

Building Relationships

Building relationships in the community and overcoming lack of participation

"If you build it, they will come."

CONSULT & INCLUDE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

#1

Build relationships with your greater community by consulting and including individuals with disabilities and disability organizations.

- Accessible Site Evaluations
- Guest Experience Surveys
- Access Advisory Groups
- Accessibility Coordinator Position
- Group tours for disability groups

Don't build on top of a weak foundation. Prioritize and address current accessibility shortcomings before seeking new opportunities to include individuals with disabilities.

Example: Implementing secondary educational programs designed for neurodiverse audiences while your main programming is not inclusive or fully accessible.

COMMUNICATION

VISIT ART PROGRAMS

PLAN YOUR VISIT

CALENDAR

ACCESSIBILITY

DINING



Transparency is Key!

What accessibility information should your organization include on the website for prospective guests?

- Accessibility Information - easy to locate
 - Know Before You Go
- Ticket Prices and Free Events
- Sharing how DEAI is incorporated in the mission/vision/core values of the organization
- Wheelchair reservations
- Inaccessible areas of the venue
- A list of accessibility accommodations available to guests
- Sharing accessibility info through social accounts, newsletters, and partnering orgs

COMMUNICATION



- P Parking Spaces
- P* Accessible Parking Spaces
- 📍 Accessible Drop-Off
- ★ General Admission Entrance/Check-In
- Ticketed Exhibition Entrance/Check-in

Directions & Transportation

- Directions / Transportation
 - ADA Parking (# of spaces)
 - Public Transportation options (if applicable)
 - Directions from bus stop -> venue
 - Cost of parking
 - No parking onsite (nearby options)
 - Group drop off – ADA drop off
 - Barriers in between parking and the building (train tracks, busy street traffic, crosswalks, bad sidewalks, etc.)

Just like going back to a restaurant because you like the food and overall experience - individuals attend museums and performances multiple times when they are accommodated and have a positive initial experience.

More often than not, individuals don't revisit a place when they weren't accommodated during their first visit.

ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING

Equitable and accessible access to programming is not one person or staff's responsibility – it's everyone's responsibility!

This includes board of directors, leadership, staff, and even volunteers.

Training

- Accessibility 101
- Disability Awareness
- Disability Etiquette
- Inclusive Exhibition & Program Design
- Staff Wayfinding Training
- Accessible Educational Programming

FACILITIES & VENUES



Accessibility Improvements at Facilities and Venues

- Exterior Signage
 - ADA Parking & Drop-off Zones
 - Accessible route from parking to entrance
 - Accessible entrance location
- Common Barriers
 - Lack of signs
 - Narrow or damaged sidewalks
 - Lack of tactile floor indicators
 - Slippery paint on ramps
 - Long distance between parking and entrance
 - Poorly designed traffic flow

FACILITIES & VENUES



Primary / Secondary Entrances

All guests should be able to enter museums through the same doors. Museums in historical buildings and historical sites often run into major challenges with architectural modifications to improve accessibility.

What solutions are there if modifications are not possible due to cost?



WAYFINDING

A clear, comprehensive wayfinding system is essential to enable Museum visitors of all ages and abilities to navigate their way through the museum.

Wayfinding

- Interior/Exterior Maps w/ keys for accessibility
- Staff Wayfinding Training - Know the Flow
- Test your wayfinding system for functional effectiveness
- Wayfinding terminology on signs should be simple, clear, concise, and easy to understand and pronounce

WAYFINDING



Wayfinding - Signs

- Directional signs and arrows
- Bilingual signs layout
- Tactile letters, upper instead of lower case letters
- Braille used is at Grade 1 level
- Degree of color contrast on signs - 90% contrast from text to background
- Consistent location of signs
- Redundant information is helpful

SUPPORT FOR VISITORS



Visitor Supports

- Support Persons
 - Admission is free for one person accompanying a person with a disability.
- Wheelchairs, strollers, cane seats and foldable seats are available
- Accessible seating throughout venue or museum
- Ramps, Elevators, & Suitcase Ramps
- Accessible Restrooms
- Visitor Guides
- Guided Tours & Audio Guides

ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WITH I/DD

Intellectual & Developmental
Disabilities (I/DD)

CDC - Developmental Disabilities
U.S. Census - Children with I/DD

Youth with I/DD

The most common type of disability in children 5 years and older are developmental and cognitive disabilities

1 in 6 children

Recent estimates in the United States show that about one in six, or about 17%, of children aged 3 through 17 years have a one or more developmental disabilities.

ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WITH I/DD

Intellectual & Developmental
Disabilities (I/DD)

CDC - Developmental Disabilities
NCSL - Public Support for I/DD

Adults with I/DD

Over 6 million individuals in the United States have developmental disabilities.

Federal/State Support

Nearly 9.5 million children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) receive government financial support.



Arts and cultural organizations are often less prepared to accommodate individuals with developmental and cognitive disabilities than individuals with physical disabilities.

- Staff training on disability awareness & etiquette
- Sensory Sundays / Sensory Performances
 - Addresses Environmental & Attitudinal Barriers
- Sensory Rooms
 - Convert an unused room or create a multi-purposed room
- Tactile and Sensory Accommodations
 - Interactive artifacts, gloves, replicas, sensory backpacks, tours
- Good wayfinding and traffic flow through the facility

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal Design should be prioritized and applied at all levels of your organization.

Remember! Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities because what is an accommodation for one person may be a convenience for many.

Examples

- Design for upcoming and permanent exhibitions
- Ticketing systems
- Effective Wayfinding
- Facility signage
- Architectural modifications or additions
- Secondary or educational programming
- Business practices

Do the work now rather than fix the problems later



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Contact Us

Email: info@artsincommunity.org

Phone: (470) 357-6748 Ex: 1069

Website: www.artsincommunity.org



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