

Accommodating Invisible Disabilities

A practical guide
for the event industry.

January 2023



THE BULB

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One in seven people in the world live with a disability.¹

That's **1.2 billion** people worldwide.
15% of the global population.

70% of those disabilities are classed as invisible.²

79% of people with a disability have not attended an event due to lack of access.

81% said they would not attend a venue/event again if they had a bad experience.

¹ NPR, 2011/WHO, 2011

² WHO (2021): Disability and Health ([Learn More](#))

Introduction



Meg Strahle
Sustainability Manager
at The Bulb.

The global pandemic brought our industry to standstill, giving us space to think about areas that were often neglected. Topics such as sustainability, mental health and diversity and inclusion. Honest and open conversations took place, helping us return to business stronger and better than ever.

Unfortunately, many discussions didn't extend to the disabled community. During the pandemic, the accessibility gap closed in some instances due to the ability to work from home and attend virtual events. For others the gap widened, creating a new set of barriers particularly for those with an invisible disability.

70% of the UK's disabilities are classed as invisible and often, people's needs are excluded or overlooked within the event industry. As event organisers, we have the ability to create experiences that have a memorable and positive impact for everybody.

This guide is intended to help you understand invisible disabilities and the steps you can take to be more inclusive in your event design and delivery. This is not an exhaustive guide as every person has different needs, not every disability is exactly the same. The best practice will always be to ask - with the flexibility and understanding to accommodate.

Meg

PRESS PAUSE

Many times people don't take the time to pause and consider why another person may not be behaving in a way they expect, and first jump to critical judgement and responses.

There have been many times over the years when I meet people at work or events, and don't immediately disclose my hearing loss. I later find out that people thought I was incredibly rude or not that bright as I didn't respond to them trying to speak to me or was unable to keep up with the conversation.

There often is embarrassment when they later find out that I just didn't hear them. Instead of taking the time to pause and wonder why I wasn't responding or following the conversation, then tap me on my shoulder to get my attention, they formed an opinion of me that was negative.

What is an Invisible Disability?



‘Invisible disability’ is an umbrella term to cover disabilities that are not immediately apparent and significantly impair normal activities of daily living.³

³ Disabled World (2020): Invisible Disabilities

Definitions

Visual Impairments

Visual impairment is the decreased ability to see, and to be adjusted by the usual means, such as glasses. The full range of visual impairments can vary from individuals who are fully blind and may utilise support such as screen readers⁴, service animals or canes, to individuals who are partially sighted and require adjustments such as special glasses, larger fonts and audio descriptions.

For some individuals, visual impairment may depend on their environment or the condition of lighting that day (sunny, cloudy or night-time), and for others, they can only see shapes or particular colours.

⁴ Screen Readers: Assistive technology that renders text and image content as speech or Braille output. Allows people with visual loss or dyslexia to interact with digital content as it will read aloud what is on the screen - [Learn more](#)

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Hearing impairment is officially defined as the wide range of hearing loss. Hearing loss ranges from Deaf (no hearing), to hard of hearing, which is not being able to hear well or deaf in one ear. A popular misconception is that every person who has hearing loss wants it to be 'fixed'. There is a wide range of hearing loss, and some individuals will choose to utilise technology such as hearing aids or Cochlear Implant⁵, whilst others may choose to lip read or use sign language.

⁵ Cochlear Implant: a type of hearing support put in via surgery

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is the natural variations in the human brain in relation to the way we think, process, learn, and behave. Please keep in mind that there are a wide range of neurodiversities and the following is not an exhaustive list.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is a condition that affects people's behaviour. People with ADHD can seem restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act on impulse.

Autism

Autism is a broad range of conditions characterised by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviours, speech, and non-verbal communication. Each person has a distinctive set of strengths and challenges that is unique to them.

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that is marked by sudden recurrent episodes of sensory disturbance, loss of consciousness, or convulsions that are associated with abnormal electrical activity in the brain.

Mobility

Mobility issues can also be invisible. There is a rise in chronic illnesses which impacts on mobility, and likewise a visible mobility issue can commonly go hand-in-hand with an invisible disability.

Anxiety

Anxiety is your body's response to stress which can range from mild to severe. With mental health conversations becoming more open and on the rise, it is important to recognize that some anxiety and burn-out can be catastrophic for some individuals.

Language and Communication



In My Experience

There have been many times over the years when I've met people in social settings and haven't disclosed my disability. I later find out that people thought I was rude or not that bright as I didn't respond when they were trying to speak to me, or was unable to keep up with the conversation. Instead of pausing and considering why I wasn't responding, or tapping me on my shoulder to get my attention, they formed an opinion of me that was negative.

I am fully deaf, but call myself 'hard of hearing' as I feel that due to my Cochlear Implant aiding my hearing and being raised in the hearing world, I'm not considered 'Deaf enough'. I also feel that the terminology 'hearing impairment' has a negative connotation to it, and I do not think that my hearing loss is negative.

A person with a similar lived experience might feel a different way and prefer different language to describe themselves. If you're not sure of what language someone prefers, always ask. Communication is an crucial pathway to understanding and creating inclusive environments.

Language

Language is often overlooked in accessibility and inclusion conversations. Research has found that many people are uncomfortable with talking about disabilities. Over half of people with disabilities try to hide the challenges they face due to the fear of being judged or excluded by their peers. Without a safe space to have transparent conversations, it may lead to misunderstandings and misconceptions.

Many people are uncertain of the appropriate terminology and have a fear of making a mistake or using the wrong word that may offend someone. We are only human, mistakes will be made and we need to learn from them. The first thing you can do is listen to how the individual is speaking about their disability as each person will have different preferences. If you are not sure, the best thing to do is just ask.

Communication

- Avoid negative language that implies that the individual is ‘trapped’ or ‘unlucky’ to have a disability. Many of us do not feel that way, and need society to step up and be an ally by understanding and acknowledging our barriers and helping us break them down.

- Avoid asking your disabled team member or acquaintance to teach all individuals in the organisation everything about accessibility and inclusion, especially without compensation for their time and emotional labour should always be avoided. ⁶

⁶ At the end of this document are resources you can utilise to learn more. There are many professionals, charities and tools qualified to lead you, and your team to a better understanding.

Virtual Meetings and Events



In My Experience

Before 2020, I never had to think about what my digital needs were. All of my work meetings and events were in person where I could rely on lip reading if it was too noisy, or choose not to attend an event if I felt that it would be too stressful.

It wasn't until the pandemic and society pivoted to virtual platforms, that I realised how inaccessible the digital world was for me. In order for me to participate I required captioning to follow conversations. Unfortunately this option was not automatically available on most platforms, and this meant I was constantly struggling to understand the content and felt incredibly excluded. Every evening I was exhausted from trying to keep up and would need to take out my Cochlear Implant for a period of time to rest.

I began to speak up about my experience, hoping that I could influence change for myself and others who were also struggling. It was surprising to me that

technology leaders were excluding something as simple as captioning from their platforms.

In early 2021, an audio-only app, Clubhouse, became a trend. Clubhouse did not have captioning and failed to be accessible to anyone with requirements. Overnight I watched my online network join 'Clubhouse rooms' which I was not invited to. This happened at the same time as the UK's harshest lockdown, and I became so depressed from the exclusion and loneliness that I had to delete all social media. I was cutting myself off from the world to protect my mental health, even though it meant I had to isolate myself from my peers.

Case Study: TedX London 2021

In 2021, I attended the TedX London Women's event, and it was one of the most engaging virtual events I've ever attended. Besides an incredibly diverse and thought provoking speaker line-up, the organisers ensured that captioning was available to be turned on at the viewers discretion. This allows people from the d/Deaf and hard of hearing community to feel as their needs were considered from the start instead of an afterthought.

It also benefits attendees whose first language is not English, and viewers who have a noisy background where they find it difficult to focus and engage. I left that event with a buzzing feeling, and two years later I'm still talking about it as an example of an inclusive virtual event done well.

Choosing a Virtual Platform

- Does it have captioning options that can be turned on or off at a viewer's discretion?
- Does it have compatibility with short-cuts and hotkeys that a visually impaired person may use? Reach out to RNIB or The Vision Foundation for more information.
- Assess the ease of finding the agenda, help desk, and switching between sessions if there are more than one 'stage'.
- Inquire if the platform has a step-by-step user guide that you can share at registration.

Planning

- If there is no user guide for the platform, create a step-by-step guide to be shared well in advance of the event or meeting to help attendees navigate the platform. Allow early access to give them time to get comfortable.

- Have a designated team member or accessibility expert assess the platform for digital accessibility run-throughs to spot-check any potential barriers for attendees.

Registration

- Ensure the registration platform can be used with a screen reader, which is technology that reads text out loud for the user and Siri.
- Have a clear and easy-to-find submission section for accessibility requirements.
- Avoid drop down options on registration pages as a screen reader is unable to access them.
- Registration pages should have high text and background contrast, in a plain font such as Arial and is at least a 14 to 16 font size.
- When sending out invites or event reminders, place the event name, time and date in the email header to make it easier for the attendee to find.
- Share what accessibility features are available on the platform.

Pre-Event

- Well in advance of the event, provide a guide in both large and regular print outlining how to use the platform, what accessibility features are available and contact details.
- Thirty minutes ahead of the event, play audio and visual content on a loop to allow people to get comfortable with the screen. The chat should be kept off during this time.
- Have run-throughs with speakers to check background noise and internet connection and check the captioning to ensure the clarity and accuracy of text.
- If there is a panel, brief moderators on accessibility requirements, and ask them to repeat any audience questions out loud.

Event

- Request speakers to avoid wearing clunky jewellery as the microphone will pick up the sound and it will be distracting for some listeners.
- For presentations, use still images. Remove moving gifs or memes and flashing graphics.
- Consider text against a presentation's background contracts. There should always be a high contrast between colours (ie: Black and white).
- For presentations, use simple fonts such as Arial, Verdana, or Times New Roman and ensure size is no lower than 14 to 16.

Resources

[AbilityNet](#) is a Disability Confident Employer and UK based charity that has a global perspective and believes technology should be accessible to all. Their online resource and 300+ volunteers are available to all for free to help people with disabilities access and use technology, and they offer consultancy services to businesses to become more inclusive, and build accessible digital products and services.

[Kudo](#) is a multilingual interpretation platform created by a team of language and conferencing platforms that brings users communication and cultural expertise from 21 countries and 31 languages including Sign Language. The platform can be integrated with Teams, Zoom...

Live Meetings and Events



In My Experience

Events are organised spaces where people converge to connect by enjoying the experience created, hold discussions around shared interests, and networking. The key to a good event is the ability to communicate with fellow attendees, but for some, without inclusion designed in from the beginning it can be difficult.

Navigating attending live events and meetings was a new experience once I graduated. Growing up, it was required by law that an interpreter needed to be provided for my classes and I used one until I completed my undergraduate degree. I then started requesting interpreters for events with speakers in auditoriums as I find it challenging to hear, but was often refused budget. I am able to network by lip reading, observing body language, being open about what isn't working in an event setting and directing how the person(s) I am speaking with can do to improve.

As someone who grew up with American Sign Language, I'm unable to understand other types of Sign Language as not only are the words different, even the alphabet is different! See [here](#) for a video comparison of American Sign Language vs. British Sign Language. For another d/Deaf attendee, the needs for their experience will vary from mine.

Case Study: Coldplay - Music of the Spheres Tour

Coldplay has led the way in sustainable touring for some time, and they are now looking at how they can be accessible too. In their recent 2022 tour they made the following provisions for attendees, setting a new standard for live music:

- Providing Subpac Vests, a gilet jacket which includes technology that vibrates with the music
- At least two sign language interpreters at every live show for the d/Deaf and hard of hearing guests.
- Sensory bags and a mobile sensory refuge station for attendees with sensory sensitivities.

- Pre-concert touch tours for blind/low vision attendees
- Providing a clear process for sharing accessibility requirements that is visible and easy to use

This led to thousands of positive responses across their social media channels, driving engagement, creating a feeling of 'belonging' and being welcome at their shows.

Venue

Choose venues that are compliant and already have accessibility initiatives in place. When doing a walk through, ensure the layout of your event has the following:

- Wheelchair access to enter the venue. Avoid service lifts, dark back of house areas and unsteady ramps.
- Suitable emergency exit routes.
- Service animal relief areas.
- Carpeting to reduce echo of sound.
- Hearing loops.
- Automated opening doors with buttons on both sides.
- Accessible toilets - take the time to walk the route and check that a wheelchair can get into the toilets. Ideally, it should also have enough space for an aide if needed.
- Accessible lifts.
- Accessible routes to seats and event areas.
- During site visits, walk through the guest experience with accessibility requirements in mind taking into account any other activity and the impact it could have on guests.
- Review accessible transportation to the venue, particularly public transport and availability of wheelchair accessible taxis.

Design and Planning

- Ensure all staging design can be built to legislation and compliance requirements. Please check your country/state regulations, including the width of routes through the event and ramps.
- Avoid flashing lights, fog and strobes, including flashing wristbands. If these are necessary in the design, include a warning in pre-event communications.
- Consider the positioning of signage in and near the venue. Assess how it's viewed from various eye levels and have plain text as well as high contrast between text and backgrounds.
- All screen content should have captioning.
- When planning the marketing content before and during the event, coordinate with the marketing team to ensure relevant AltText and hashtags are used. Hashtags should be uppercase for every word used. An example would be: #WelcomeToOurEvent.

Registration

The same rules apply from the virtual online registration checklist so please refer to page 19. We've added some additional thoughts on what could be added for a live situation

- If there is catering, provide a section to inquire about food sensitivities and allergies.
- Allow for seat reservations, some attendees with hearing loss prefer to sit near the front to allow them to hear better, and some that have anxiety or a neurological disability prefer to sit near exits to leave discreetly.
- Share what accessibility features are available at the event.

Pre-Event for visitors

Share an accessibility guide ahead of the event which includes:

- Clear instructions and maps for how to find the venue, transportation links and include any landmarks on the route that will clarify attendees are on the right path.
- Images of the entrance and exit of the venue.
- An overview of the venue facilities including a map where possible, that clearly identifies the location of registration, help desks, accessible routes to seating, accessible toilets, drinking fountains, and accessible entry and exit points.
- Event agenda including information on content, background music, loud noises and flashing lights.

Pre-Event

for employees
and service providers

- Brief all employees, suppliers and speakers on accessibility requirements and emergency procedures including any accessible routes.
- Brief speakers to describe screen content in more detail for example, instead of pointing to a chart on screen, say “as displayed in this chart here which are the statistics of x and y that show the findings to be z.”

Pre-Event

when hiring a
sign language interpreter

- Hire the correct language for the user. For example, British Sign Language (BSL) is different to American Sign Language (ASL).
- Check interpreter's credentials. For the UK please refer to NRCPD and for the US, please see RID. Both organisations maintain a register of accredited interpreters.
- Check their expertise suits your event, for example, a concert interpreter will study the sheet music beforehand while a conference interpreter might brush up on the topic being presented to ensure they have an understanding of terminology and spelling.
- Ensure all interpreters are in an easy to see and well lit area.

Event

final walk-through

If you did all of your pre-planning correctly, all you will need to do is do a final walkthrough to check the following:

- Floors are clear from any trip hazards.
- All accessible routes pre-planned are suitable.
- A/V is at a suitable sound level with little echo.
- Powerpoints are complied with requirements.
- Captionings are added to all video content.
- A team member is on hand for any assistance

Tips and Resources

AccessAble UK

[AccessAble UK](#) is a website where both event organisers and employers can search for accessible venues based on location and required needs. This allows you to select venues that are accessible for outings and events of all sizes.

WelcoMe

[WelcoMe](#) is an online tool and app that gives disabled users the ability to share their personal needs in advance of arriving at a venue. This gives organisers the ability to understand and assist attendees ahead of the event, and helps ensure an inclusive and positive experience for all.

Tactile design

Tactile design is where designers not only think about the visual aspect, but also how it feels when you touch it. There are some Broadway shows and events that design with tactile design as it allows the attendee to feel the different textures and create an image in their head of what the show or event looks like. This creates a more inclusive experience for those who are visually impaired.

The Office



In My Experience

Every business has working practices and values which shape its culture and behaviours within the office environment. It's vital that a business culture is an open and inclusive environment, attracting rather than alienating disabled employees. This has been a tricky minefield I've had to navigate in my career journey. From my lived experience, I know what works best for me and have had the privilege to be able to leave my place of employment if my needs aren't met.

At The Bulb, I have been able to communicate what works well for me with our Founder and we've put in place the working practices which allow me to thrive. We only utilise Microsoft Teams and Google Meet as these are accessible platforms which allow for easy captioning to be turned on and off.

My experience with Zoom has been negative to date, due to the inability to turn on captioning at the viewer's

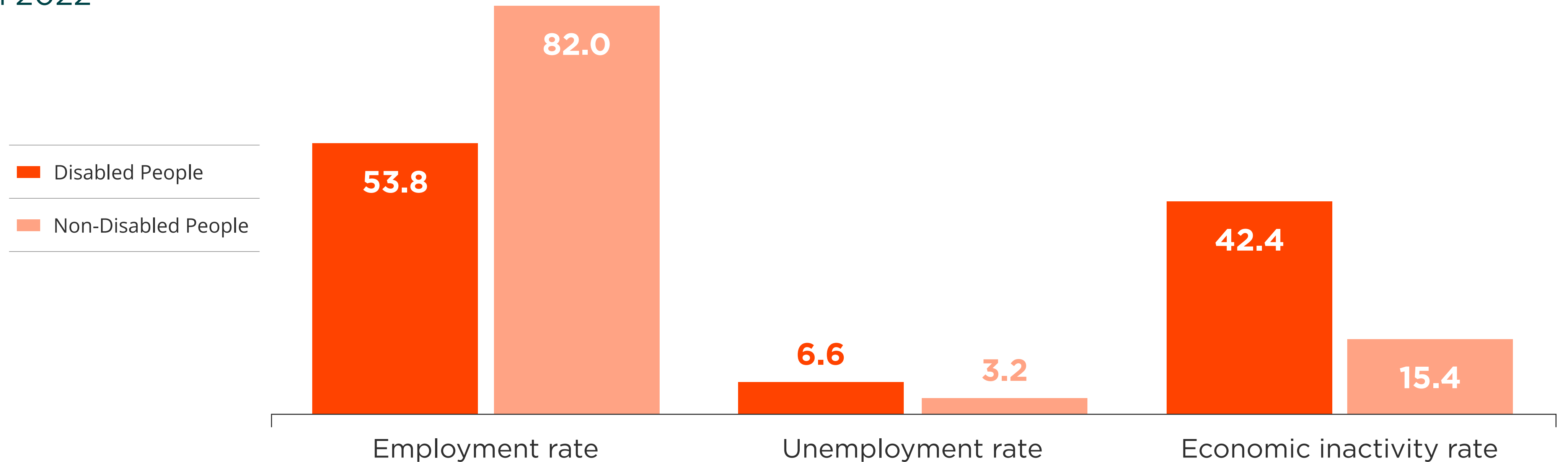
discretion. I have to ask the meeting organiser before they create the event to enable captioning at their end as they are unable to add this function at a later date. Meeting platforms should be accessible from the start to avoid people having to ask for their needs to be met every time there is an event or meeting, this becomes exhausting.

Besides using accessible meeting platforms, I also benefit positively from remote work due to knowing I will always have a quiet room to take meetings and work in. This allows me to focus on tasks and avoid missing what is said in meetings. If I worked in a shared office, the background noise would make it more challenging for me to hear what is being said and I would potentially disrupt co-workers with the volume of my laptop, even with headphones in.

Small changes make a big difference for allowing the disabled community to feel comfortable in a work setting, without fear of judgement or regular misunderstandings.

Key labour market statistics by disability status

% of people age 16-64:
January-March 2022



Note: The unemployment rate is the proportion of the economically active population (those in work plus those seeking and available to work) who are unemployed.

Source: ONS, Dataset A08: Labour market status of disabled people, 17 May 2022, GSS standard rates

This is important for your organisation.

By building in inclusion and accessibility into your business from the start, you avoid the time and cost incurred when you need to build it in down the line, and you also reach an underrepresented talent pool and potential audience members.

Your organisation and/or event will benefit from incredible people with different perspectives on the world. Some of the best projects I've had the privilege to work on in the last decade have been with teams that were diverse. They all encouraged me to pause, listen, learn, grow, and think about the world differently.

This is also important as it has been found that brand representation amongst the disability community is low. People want to see themselves reflected in the brands they support, and are likely to align themselves with ones that share their values. I have been ardent towards people and brands that have gone above and beyond to be inclusive and accessible to all.

Recruitment

- Explore recruitment sites aimed directly at employing people with disabilities such as EvenBreak in the UK, or AbilityJobs in the US
- Ensure your website is accessible and easy to navigate throughout. Hire an experienced accessibility web designer or refer to AbilityNet for support.
- LinkedIn have worked to become web compliant and are continuing to improve their user experience. They have shared a step-by-step process for applicants to apply via the platform.
- Ensure job advertisements are easy to read (font size 14 to 16); available in Word and accessible with a screen reader or Siri.
- Provide space for accessibility requirements and provide the option for a virtual interview as well as in person.
- The decision to disclose a disability can be difficult. Ensure you have trained personnel to deal with accommodations and requirements for the interview and beyond. accommodate a person's needs for the interview and beyond.

The Office Environment

- Install fire alarms and emergency alarms which have lights as well as sound in every room. This will allow d/Deaf individuals to see that there is a need to evacuate.
- Ensure there is step-free access to all areas of the building with safe ramps and elevators available. Carry out a walkthrough while imagining that you are the person who needs step-free access to get through the building, use the kitchen, go to the toilets, attend meetings, enter offices, and use desks.
- Make all rooms accessible by having automatic buttons inside and outside of the room for automated doors. This allows people to enter and exit the room without needing to ask for assistance.
- Ensure all flooring has carpeting to reduce echo of sound.
- Be mindful of background noise at work and during calls, it can be distracting and make it hard to understand the context of conversations.
- Have adjustable desks and chairs available for use.
- Keep all spaces clutter free, with all bags, packages, and more are kept put away and out of shared spaces.

Working Practices

- Consider having a flexible working approach where people can work from home.
- Avoid over-scheduling meetings and allow time blocks between meetings if requested.
- Have a budget in place for any potential accessibility tools and training needed and requested.
- Provide training opportunities for your team that include workshops with leading organisations such as National Autistic Society, Celebrating Disability, The Vision Foundation, Diversity Alliance, and Disability Rights UK.
- Have headphones, particularly ones that cover the entire ear and a quiet space available for the employee to work without background noise or utilise screen readers.
- In work chats if you use images or memes, make sure you are adding relevant AltText.
- Avoid walking up quietly behind someone with hearing or visual loss, make your presence known by raising your voice to let them know you are there to avoid startling them.
- Microsoft Teams and Google Meet are accessible platforms. If Zoom is your only option, please request captioning from the organiser ahead of the meeting or request attendees to put their camera on.

Resources

Disability Confident Employer Scheme

In the UK, businesses can become a Disability Confident Employer. This is a government scheme that supports employers to make the most of the talents that disabled employees can bring to the workplace. It's done by helping to challenge the attitudes and understandings towards disability, removing barriers for disabled people and giving them the support and opportunities to fulfil their potential.

It has three levels that are designed to support you as a business every step of the Disability Confident journey. You must complete and be awarded each level before moving onto the next. At the completion of each one, you receive a certificate in recognition of your achievement and a badge that you can use on your business stationary, special media and communications for three years. This tells potential applicants, clients, and the general public that you took the extra step to be inclusive.

Assistive Technology

Microsoft and Apple have a wide range of accessible tools that are compatible with many work set-ups that can help people thrive in their day-to-day life including:

- FaceTime calls from Apple that are captioned.
- VoiceOver on iPads for the visually impaired.
- Microsoft recently introduced Sign Language View in Microsoft Teams that helps users prioritise interpreter view in a way that benefits them.

Moving Forward



Normalising Accessibility

We cannot be truly sustainable, diverse, inclusive, or accessible unless we take the time to listen, consider and include people with disabilities in our conversations. Ignorance still exists, and it's important to always look past the disability.

By taking what you have learned here and applying it to your office, meeting and event environment, it takes weight off the disabled community. I appreciate these gestures when they happen to me. An example is my boss always checks incoming meeting links to ensure they are on an accessible platform. This takes the pressure off me to request changes, which can get tiring and cumbersome.

A friend of mine owns a small events agency and has committed their team to a year of learning about accessibility and inclusion and how to implement actions into their work from the outset.

It's time to shift the focus and create more inclusive experiences across the board. It can no longer be an afterthought, it needs to be considered from the beginning. I advocate for accessibility to be a key priority, but it is not what I do for a career. I have a personal stake in influencing change, which can take a toll to the point where I have to limit how much I do. Having peers taking time to learn and advocate alongside me helps lighten the load for me and progresses change at a faster pace.

By normalising accessibility to be a part of our everyday lives, we are opening up space for us all to thrive. People with disabilities want to be a part of events that their peers attend, and do well at work without the fear of being judged or excluded due to misunderstandings. Our next step needs to be to move from 'talking' and begin to take action. You don't need to be perfect, but we just need you to try - progress over perfection matters.

General Resources and Further Support

American With Disabilities Act: A guide for compliant temporary events in the United States.

Demystifying Disability, Emily Ladau

Disability Rights UK: A pan-disability charity which was set up with the aim of representing the needs and expectations of disabled people in the UK.

European Commission: The European Accessibility Act.

Heart N Soul: A creative arts community and charity that provides opportunities for people with learning disabilities to thrive.

Inklusion Guide, Ever Dundas and Julie Farrell- A work that is striving to make the literature sector accessible.

Meryl Evans, Accessibility Digital Marketer and Public Speaker who works with companies to achieve

accessible marketing goals and shares daily accessibility tips and stories via LinkedIn.

Purple Tuesday: A change programme for businesses of all sizes to participate in with the aim of improving the customer experience to be accessible and inclusive for the disabled.

Tourettes Hero: A project to raise awareness of tourettes, create a community, and to share the challenges that people with tourettes often face in society.

The Valuable 500: Works with the most influential businesses globally to improve disability inclusion.

#WeThe15: A global movement launched at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics which strives to influence attitudes and create more opportunities for people with disabilities.

Acknowledgements

This report could not have happened without the help of the #EventProfs and the wider community that connected us to so many voices. A special thank you to every person that took the time to share their experience and work with me. Below is not an exhaustive list as some interviewees asked to be kept anonymous:

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Karen Swindells - Advocate for the Epilepsy Foundation

Kim Creus - Vision Foundation

Kim Kjaerside

Kristianne Drake

www.leesimmons.me

Natasha Russell

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Trish Hodston - Access & Inclusivity Matters.

About The Bulb

The Bulb provides consultancy across the globe, partnering with leading agencies, brands and charities to deliver sustainable solutions for events and campaigns.

We help our clients transition to a more responsible business model, reduce their environmental impacts, consider accessibility and inclusivity and create strategies that work in practice.

Fusing our in-depth sustainability knowledge, with an event production background and creative approach, our clients get great events with a great legacy. They save money, enhance their reputation as a good business and attract brand and employee loyalty at the same time.

It's a powerful combination and it's what we do every day.

About The Author

Megan Strahle, Sustainability Manager, The Bulb

Meg joined The Bulb in 2021 and has worked on a number of projects from creating the sustainability strategy for an interactive experience at COP26, supporting a global ISO certification process and producing the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy to drive social sustainability for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies for the Birmingham Commonwealth Games. Originally from the United States now living in the UK, she has spent the last decade working in events and academia around the world. She recently graduated from University of Exeter with a research degree investigating the use of sustainable events to aid sustainable tourism at destinations.

When the pandemic first hit in 2020, Meg realised that her struggles with lack of accessibility with virtual events due to the lack of captioning and the constant fatigue from working so hard to listen and comprehend was

not normal, and that she wasn't alone. She then started speaking up about her experience to industry peers with the hopes that she can help everyone feel that they are welcomed and belong at events. She now advocates for accessibility to be included in all diversity and inclusion conversations and re-directs people who want to learn to the appropriate resources for maximum influence.

When she's not working, you can often find her with a coffee or a glass of wine and a good book in hand, outside enjoying running on muddy trails and cold ocean swims at sunrise or sunset, exploring new destinations with her film camera in hand, and talking about how much she loves all dogs and her mom's maine coon cats.

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