

Making events and team activities more inclusive

We originally put together this guide to support those within LCP to organize and host more inclusive events as part of our own Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) journey. We have created this document to share our own internal tips, informed by research, feedback from across the firm and input from our four DEI Networks.

We do not intend to present ourselves as experts; rather, we hope that some of our own experiences and research will be useful for others. We are still learning and are in the process of working to implement these principles within our own events and activities as much as possible.

We would encourage you to engage with this guide in whatever way works best for you – many of us have found it easiest to start with the key principles on the “getting started” page, diving into the detail when you are ready.

We recognise that it won't be possible to implement every suggestion for every event - this document is intended to highlight a range of considerations that you might make, and whilst many of them should be quick and easy to incorporate others may not always be feasible.

Importantly, you should engage with attendees and seek feedback on the accessibility of your events. If there are any additional tips or suggestions that you consider key to an inclusive event, then we'd love to hear of them.

What we don't cover in this guide is DEI considerations when choosing suppliers – as consumers, our money has influence and we try to ensure that we are using this for good. We have had great experiences working with charities to provide catering and support inclusive and diverse businesses (particularly small businesses) where possible. You may wish to build these considerations into your planning, too.

We would like to thank everyone who shared their own personal experiences and reflections on this guide, and hope that together we can work to build more inclusive and welcoming spaces for all.

Zoë Burdo, on behalf LCP's DEI Group

At LCP, we strive to create an inclusive and equitable environment where everyone feels welcome, respected and empowered to participate fully in our activities. A key part of this is making sure that our events and activities are as inclusive as possible.

Getting started

The most important thing in planning an event is to take a moment before you get started to think about who might be attending and what their experience might be like.

For those just getting started, we have found it helpful to focus on the following five key areas. The rest of this guide then explores each of these themes in more detail.



Choose a **venue with disabled access, inclusive facilities**, and that is appropriate for a **range of individual sensory needs**.



Choose **inclusive activities**, offering **multiple ways for attendees to participate**, and strive to have **diverse representation** among speakers, panelists and participants.



Plan your event to **accommodate diverse schedules** and **avoid clashes with religious or cultural holidays**.



Cater for a **full range of dietary requirements** in an inclusive manner and **ensure sufficient quantity and quality of non-alcoholic options**.



Provide **clear and comprehensive event details** to enable individuals to understand what is expected. Include a **point of contact for attendees**.

We recognise that it won't be possible to implement every suggestion for every event - this document is intended to highlight a range of considerations that you might make, and whilst many of them should be quick and easy to incorporate others may not always be feasible.

Importantly, you should engage with attendees and seek feedback on the accessibility of your events.



Choose the right venue

Aim to select venues that are accessible for all attendees, including those with mobility impairments, neurodivergent people and those with other access requirements. Where venues are not accessible, consider what adaptations can be made to accommodate individuals.

1. Make sure entrances, restrooms, and event spaces are **accessible for wheelchair users and those with mobility aids**
2. There should be **accessible parking spaces** near the entrance of the venue.
3. **Ensure clear signage and directions to facilities** using large, easy-to-read font.
4. **Ensure the staff can assist and accommodate attendees with diverse needs.**

Accessible and well-signposted facilities

1. **Individual, accessible gender-neutral toilet facilities** are ideal and ensure that restrooms are accessible for all genders and accommodate sensory sensitivities.
2. Where not available, **designate gender-neutral toilets.**
3. **Consider sensory stimuli** (eg noisy hand driers can be an issue for some people).
4. **Make sure that accessible toilets have enough space** for a wheelchair to manoeuvre, as well as appropriate handrails.
5. Provide a private, lockable, non-bathroom **lactation space.**

Choose a layout to accommodate diverse needs

1. **Provide a variety of seating options** (bean bags, chairs, standing tables, seated tables)
2. **Leave ample space and wide aisles** to enable attendees to move around without feeling crowded and make the space accessible for those with mobility aids.
3. **Ensure there is the option to eat sitting at a table** if food is to be served.

Minimise sensory stimuli

1. **Include quiet rooms** and areas where attendees can relax, take a break from sensory stimuli or use for **prayer or religious reflection.**
2. **Consider the noise volume** and acoustics of the venue and avoid noisy venues if possible.
3. **Avoid fluorescent lighting** with a preference for natural light and soft lamps. Where not possible, aim for areas with **adjustable lighting or different lighting volumes.**
4. **Avoid venues with heavy fragrances** and consider a fragrance-free policy for guests.



Keep attendees informed to allow them to plan appropriately and feel more at ease.

- **Provide a map** along with the invite.
- **Display schedules** at the venue to help attendees focus on the event (don't rely on people remembering from the invite).

See page 7 for an example invite.



Inclusive content and diverse representation

1. Strive to have diverse representation among speakers, panellists, participants and performers to ensure different perspectives and voices are heard – this includes resources and reference material. Consider intersectional elements of diversity including social background, disability, faith, sexuality, age, race, culture, gender and academic background.
2. Consider live captioning, captioning on videos and sharing content, like slides, in advance. This can assist those with difficulty hearing or with auditory processing challenges. Consider organising live BSL interpreters if needed.

Offer multiple ways for attendees to participate

1. **Consider hybrid attendance or recordings**, to be inclusive of those who cannot attend in person or that would find it more comfortable to attend remotely.
2. However, be aware that **hybrid or virtual set ups may not be appropriate for everyone** - for example, people with sight or hearing loss may require additional adaptations for these types of events.
3. Also consider using **multiple methods of submitting questions**, such as using online polls or questions submissions to provide alternatives to speaking up at the event and to ensure that everyone can contribute in a manner that suits them best.
4. Consider using a **range of formats** to convey content e.g.
 - Q&A sessions,
 - panels and discussion,
 - smaller breakout sessions,
 - pre-recorded videos,
 - printed content.

Make sure your content is inclusive

1. **Use plain language** in all verbal and written communication.
2. **Consider accessibility when drafting presentations** (for example, consider guidance in the BDA style guide)
3. **Include images** to widen explanation (although avoiding multiple colours, which can be confusing)
4. **Don't solely rely upon on-screen information** for key information. Some individuals may be listening and not following on screen.



Plan to accommodate a diverse audience when scheduling.

1. Avoid scheduling conflicts with **major religious or cultural holidays**, and it is generally best to avoid Fridays.
2. **Vary the time, days of the week and time of year** for recurring events and plan your event at a time that accommodates diverse schedules.
3. **Request accessibility and dietary requirements in advance** and treat these sensitively. Consider also asking for people's pronouns and name pronunciation to include on name badges (on an opt in basis).



Catering

Many people have different requirements about food and drink - whether due to allergies, religious reasons, or personal preference. It is important that these are all respected and taken seriously - this can be done by providing as many **inclusive options** as possible and taking an **intersectional approach to catering** (for example, the rate of allergies, especially food allergies, are much higher for neurodivergent individuals).

Here are some other specific points to consider:

1. **Request additional dietary requirements in advance** and ensure that menu options adequately allow for these - for example, just because there are vegetables on the menu does not mean that there is sufficient food available for vegetarian attendees. Where meals are being served, everyone should have access to a full and balanced meal.
2. Where there is a limited standard menu choice, **communicate the options with people with dietary restrictions in advance**. If feasible, give people with restrictions the option of either having the standard limited choice or something bespoke.
3. **Focus on inclusive options**, accessible to as many attendees as possible, reducing the segregation in the menu.
4. **Cater for common dietary requirements by default**, including vegetarian, vegan, halal and gluten-free.
5. **Ensure that foods are clearly labelled with ingredients and allergen-free / free-from foods are served on separate plates using separate utensils** being very careful to avoid cross contamination. Foods should only be labelled where there is absolute certainty about ingredients - with risks of cross contamination clearly identified (eg. ingredients: milk, eggs, sugar, cocoa powder; may contain gluten or other allergens due to preparation methods)
6. **Ensure that non-alcoholic drink options are as accessible and available as alcoholic options.** This should mean both a range of options as well as a sufficient quantity.
7. If staff are circulating to serve or top up drinks, ensure that this caters for both alcoholic and non-alcoholic options.
8. **Be aware of general food safety.**
9. Special care should be taken when hosting events where the hosts are responsible for organising food and drinks or people are bringing in home-made items.



If your event uses professional caterers or suppliers

1. Provide them with all the relevant information
2. Check they can accommodate different requirements in a clear and safe way.
3. Hosts should help ensure that attendees are not disrupting the food service or presentation - for example, helping to avoid cross contamination.



Communication

It is important to provide clear and comprehensive information in good time ahead of an event. This can help attendees know what is expected of them and what to expect and also ensure that if individuals require adjustments that have not been allowed for that they can get in touch.

1. Offer information (such as invitations, agendas, and seating plans) in a **range of formats**. This could include large print options, or **screen-reader friendly versions** (.docx files are generally the best - here are some [tips](#)).
2. Signpost to a **point of contact with a photo** and contact details for attendees to request additional accommodations or to ask questions (both before the event and on the day).
3. Provide **clear and detailed information about the venue**.
4. Specify what **dietary requirements** will be catered for as standard (and signpost option to request others)
5. Provide **detailed arrival and travel / parking instructions** and (for work events) whether people be travelling from the office together.
6. **Include visuals**, or links to sites with visuals, within the event schedule to help attendees prepare for the event.
7. Clearly communicate any fragrance-free policy.
8. **Provide information about the environment** (sensory, accessibility, gender-neutral facilities, etc.) to set expectations.
9. Provide a **detailed agenda with clear timings**. If the event has multiple activities, provide timings for each, including break times and when food is going to be served (if applicable). In addition, signpost which elements are optional and when people are expecting to arrive or depart and consider including information on what to do if arriving late or after the start.
10. Choose **appropriate images to visually identify elements** (eg coffee breaks, presentations or workshops) and incorporate these into the timetable.
11. **Explain the format of each session** (presentation, panel discussion, Q&A, workshop, etc) to help attendees know what to expect. Clearly communicate and expectations of attendees, including:
 - What the **dress code** is
 - Details about the **expected levels of participation** within different activities.
12. If there will be networking or group activities, share this information in advance so attendees can prepare. In addition, **be mindful of, and identify, group activities that may be challenging for some** (eg larger sized group or activities requiring balance or physical participation).



Example invitation

Please find details for the <EVENT> on <DATE> at <TIME>.

Getting there

- The venue is <VENUE> [Link to a map with directions, including walking timings].
- On arrival at the venue, please follow the signs to the <ROOM>. [Link to the VENUE website]

What to expect & accessibility

- The auditorium and refreshment area are on the ground floor and access is step-free
- Toilets and unisex accessible toilets are on the ground floor.
- The auditorium is windowless but well lit. Seats are cinema style. If you require an end of row seat, please let us know.
- There are 300 wide seats and we have 200 registered to attend.
- The presentation starts at 5pm and will last approximately 1 hour, during which you will be invited to ask questions.
- You can ask a question either via a mic that will be passed around, or you can fill in a questionnaire on the evening, which you can access on any smart phone or tablet.
- Following the presentation, for those who wish to stay, there will be refreshments in the atrium directly outside the auditorium, where you can socialise with attendees.
- We expect the atrium to be busy and it may be quite loud with the number of attendees. The attaching lounge is a quieter area [Link to Venue map] and has good natural lighting.

Food and drink - served from 6:30pm

Food

- Mixed roasted peppers with red pesto on Ficelle (VE)
- Spicy chicken lollipop with sweet chilli sauce... etc

Drinks

Alcoholic:

- Red wine - Merlot... etc

Non-Alcoholic:

- Elderflower bubbly
- Juice... etc

Although the menu is nut free and the kitchen does not handle nuts in their food, supplies may come from a place where nuts are handled for anyone with a trace allergy.

If you have any queries prior to the evening, please contact <NAME>.

If you require any assistance on the evening, please ask any of the hosts, who can be identified by their host badges.

Don't know where to start or is your planning already underway? Here are four simple changes you can incorporate today.

1. Identify a quiet room/area at the event venue to accommodate sensory sensitivities.
2. Where possible, signpost appropriate unisex toilet facilities.
3. Include full event details, including accessibility information, what to expect and dietary information in the invite.
4. Designate a specific point of contact for accessibility queries.

This generic document should not be relied upon for detailed advice or taken as an authoritative statement of the law.

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