



## What does **ACCESSIBILITY** mean to your organization?

### »» **What does it mean to be accessible?**

Accessibility is often thought of in terms of physical access; however, there are many additional considerations to explore when working on increasing accessibility within your organization and your events.

Physical accessibility is a great place to start – as discussed in Andrew Gurza’s talk for ConneQT (see *Resource Portal*), physically disabled individuals are often excluded from 2SLGBTQ+ spaces and events. To begin creating a more inclusive and accessible organization, start by taking stock of your existing structures and considering your target audience. What does accessibility look like within your organization at present – and what could it look like in the future?

While the Guide is divided into several sections, you may notice that a lot of the ideas and recommendations found in one section may be applicable elsewhere. To condense the Guide, many of these strategies and ideas may not be repeated in other sections but could increase accessibility for additional individuals and groups. This Guide is meant to be read in its entirety. It is important to reflect on the pervasive nature of ableism and the interconnected nature of accessibility in working to create the most accessible and inclusive programming and events possible!

### »» **Existing Structures**

There is a long history of 2SLGBTQ+ organizations creating inaccessible programming and events that cater to non-disabled individuals, leading to exclusion and erasure. A great first step towards addressing ableism in your organization is doing an audit of your past events and current policies and practices.

Does your organization have an accessibility policy or a checklist for planning events?  
Does the structure of your organization allow for disabled board/committee

members and volunteers to participate fully? Are there disabled 2SLGBTQ+ individuals on your board and in positions of power?

## »» **Communication**

Communication is key to creating more accessible organizations, programming, and events. Consider what information is available on your website and/or social media. Consider what accessibility information is included in advertising (event writeups, registration forms, ticket links, etc.).

Key Questions:

1. How can individuals contact your organization? Are there different methods of contact available? Ensure you have both written (email) and phone options.
2. Do prospective attendees have a way to communicate their accessibility needs for specific events to the organizers in advance? Are they *invited* to share this? Are they required to do all the labour of communicating their needs or do you include a list of potential accommodations (in addition to space to add additional information or requests)?
3. Do you include information regarding accessibility along with a contact method in your advertising, and a space to share accessibility needs on registration forms/ticket purchase links?
4. Is all necessary information communicated in written form (as opposed to relying on an image or graphic to relay key information)?

## »» **Target Audience**

Consider your organization's mandate and mission. Who do you serve? What intersections can you identify when you think about your target audience and local community? Consider the following individuals, each may require unique accessibility considerations:

- Disabled community members
- Deaf and hard of hearing community members
- Blind community members
- Chronically ill community members
- Autistic and neurodivergent community members
- Epileptic community members
- Community members with service animals
- Community members with severe allergies
- Community members living in assisted living facilities or shelters

- Underwaged community members
- Youth
- Youth in care
- Parents/guardians
- Older Adults
- Community members with active addictions
- Community members in recovery / living sober
- Community members with religious trauma
- Community members without personal vehicles or reliable transportation
- Community members for whom English is a second or additional language