

# ECOLOGIST IN SILICO: FACILITATING ACCESS FOR CHRONICALLY ILL/DISABLED ECOLOGISTS

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## BACKGROUND

Members of under-represented groups face unconscious and conscious biases which create societal barriers to doing science. Chronically ill/disabled scientists in particular often face physical as well as societal barriers.

DISABILITIES CAN BE VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL, PRESENT WITH CONSTANT SEVERITY, GET WORSE OVER TIME, OR FLUCTUATE FROM BAD TO LESS BAD.

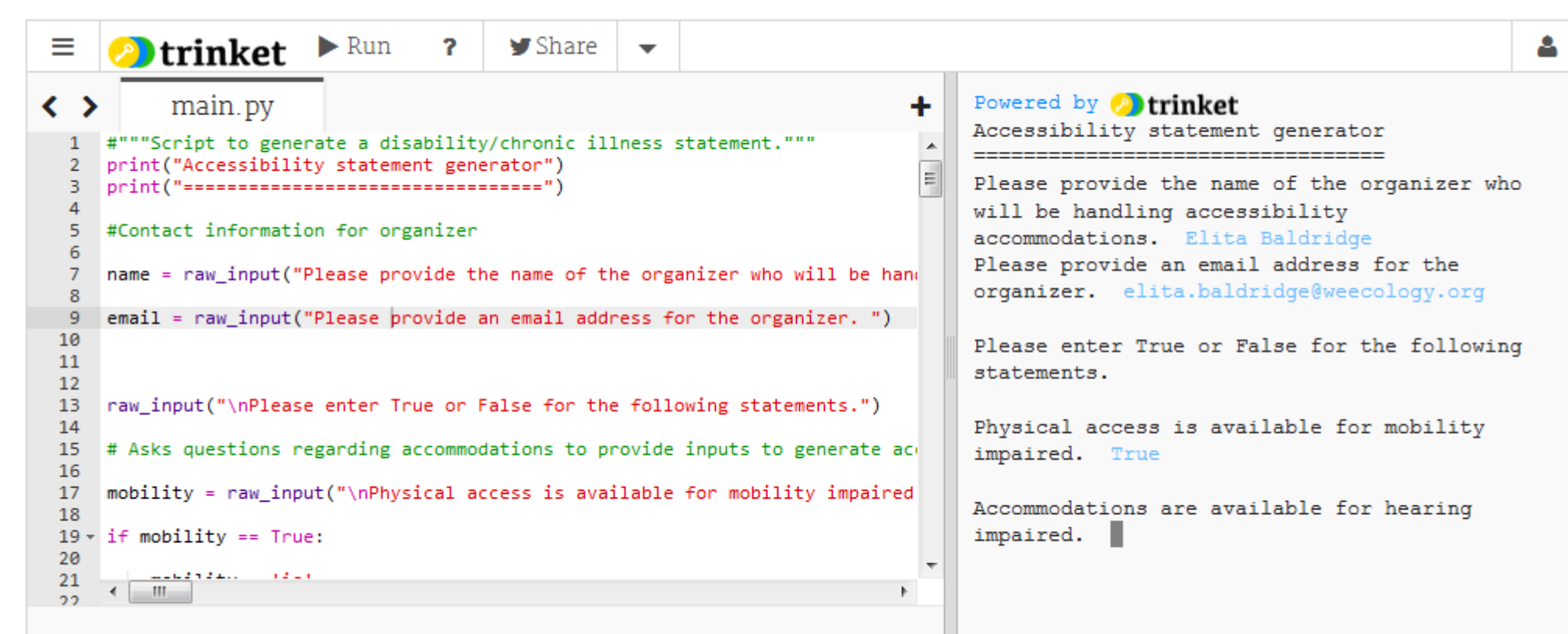
I present recommendations to encourage ecology to become a more accessible discipline to those with chronic illness/disability, from a general perspective and on the scale of individual collaborations.

## THE DEFAULT

### INACCESSIBILITY.

## THE MINIMUM

Provide accessibility information WITHOUT request.



<https://trinket.io/python>

<https://github.com/embaldridge/accessibility-statement-generator>

What accessibility accommodations are AND are not available? It takes little time on the part of an organizer, but it helps let fellow chronically ill/disabled scientists know that their presence is not an afterthought, and it saves a lot of time and heartache trying (and often failing) to get accommodations after the fact.

## SOLUTIONS CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

Mobility accessibility- provide signs, maps, reduce conference sprawl.

Consider making remote access available.

Have sign-language interpreters.

Provide trained sighted guides.

Consider special dietary requirements.

Try to confine events/activities from between 8 am to 5 pm.

## WEB-ACCESSIBILITY TALKS

Livestream or record talk

Close caption video of talk

Consider color-blindness in slide design.

Provide handouts of slides, transcripts (both large and small format).

Verbally describe graphs and illustrations.

## EDUCATION

Set up accommodations to not require disclosure of condition from students.

Make available accommodations part of syllabus.

Assume students are telling the truth.

Record/livestream lectures. Plan alternate lab exercises for students who need accommodation. Provide handouts for lectures in advance.

## RESEARCH

Many people with disabilities can do field/lab work with proper accommodations.

Computational ecology, theory, and macroecological approaches are possible for those who can't do field work or other kinds of lab work.

Allow for remote working/flexible work schedule.

Use tools like GitHub to make remote work easier.

Open science facilitates research for unaffiliated researchers.

## INCLUSIVE ECOLOGY

Self-advocacy takes up a lot of energy, and chronically ill/disabled researchers end up fighting the same battles repeatedly. Many chronically ill/disabled researchers also fall into other under-represented categories. Inclusive Ecology is a proposed ESA section that hopes to work from the bottom-up to make ecology more inclusive for all under-represented groups. Having allies as part of an Inclusive Ecology section would help relieve some of the burden of self-advocacy faced by chronically-ill/disabled ecologists.

PETITION: [https://docs.google.com/a/weecology.org/forms/d/1z6ALXl1g788mf8hQxUhBmCN\\_YUQqKMt00j24kpjUrIQ/viewform?c=0&w=1](https://docs.google.com/a/weecology.org/forms/d/1z6ALXl1g788mf8hQxUhBmCN_YUQqKMt00j24kpjUrIQ/viewform?c=0&w=1)

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide resources and support for all ecologists, regardless of race, sex, physical or mental ability or difference, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, culture or subculture, national origin, parental status, politics, religion, or age.

## PROPOSED BYLAWS:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NLj12HJuFLX3zBCeoEy0fgK8rA2CHzuuo2zBQYNen1s/edit?usp=sharing>

## ADDITIONAL READING/RESOURCES

Conditionally Accepted blog:

<http://conditionallyaccepted.com/>

PhDisabled blog:

<http://phdisabled.wordpress.com/>

Color Blindness Simulator:

<http://www.color-blindness.com/coblis-color-blindness-simulator/>

Sighted Guide Technique:

<http://www.sightconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/sighted-guide.pdf>

Accessibility at Conferences:

[https://storify.com/Enceladosaurus/accessibility-at-conferences?awesm=sfy.co\\_h0g87&utm\\_content=storify-pingback&utm\\_medium=sfy.co-twitter&utm\\_campaign=&utm\\_source=t.co](https://storify.com/Enceladosaurus/accessibility-at-conferences?awesm=sfy.co_h0g87&utm_content=storify-pingback&utm_medium=sfy.co-twitter&utm_campaign=&utm_source=t.co)