

Organizing an inclusive event for persons with disabilities

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What is this module about?

This module explains the various ways in which we can make our events inclusive for persons with disabilities. This means that a person with any disability should be able to attend an event with minimal discomfort and be able to participate to the extent at which they feel comfortable, just like everyone else does. There are some things we can do to make sure that our event is accessible for anyone with a disability who comes in. There may be other things we have to do in specific cases to make an event a little more comfortable for a particular person. We also have to remember that including people with disabilities costs more than conducting events that don't include people with disabilities. This module will discuss the budgetary aspect as well.

This module will provide guidelines for planning and budgeting for an event that follows the principles of Universal Design, is accessible for everyone including persons with disabilities, and also allows for reasonable accommodation of participants where required. All of the above concepts will be explained in this module.

Whom is this module designed for?

This module is designed for people or organizations that want to host structured events for a wide range of participants including persons with disabilities. It can also be used by persons with disabilities to bring some issues to the attention of organizers of events that they may want to attend.

Why is this module important?

It is important to make our events accessible for a wide range of people to attend. It is important to think about inclusion right from the time you are planning your event so you can incorporate accessibility and inclusion at every step of your event design. People with disabilities generally do not like attending events open to the public if they feel like their accessibility needs will be ignored. This leads to a lack of diversity among participants.

Budgeting

One of the first things we do when we plan for events is to estimate how much we can spend. Inclusion of persons with disabilities is something that must be considered right from the time you start planning the event so you know exactly how much money to raise. It's hard to 'retrofit' accessibility into an already planned event and make it fully inclusive. Each of the aspects discussed in this module needs to be incorporated into the budget.

Universal Design

Universal Design is design of products, environments, programmes and services so that they are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design¹. This is different from creating 'special' or specific options only for persons with disabilities. The options given in this module should not only be made available to persons with disabilities, because these are the kind of accommodations that even people without disabilities could use. Though the definition of universal design specifically excludes assistive aids and devices for persons with disabilities, it does not necessarily mean that facilities such as sign language interpretation and Braille text handouts are not needed at a universally designed event.

Accessibility

Accessibility implies that persons with disabilities can have access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, information and communications, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public. One needs to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility. There are specific areas where accessibility needs to be considered.

Choosing a venue

Physical accessibility of a venue is crucial for inclusion of persons with disabilities. Establishments in India are obliged to make their premises accessible in accordance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016)². When we say a venue has 'barrier-free'

¹ Article 2, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-2-definitions.html> last visited on 12 November 2018.

² Section 40, Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016

<http://www.prsindia.org/uploads/media/Person%20with%20Disabilities/Rights%20of%20Persons%20with%20Disabilities%20Act.%202016.pdf> [PDF] last visited on 10 November 2018

entry, what we mean is that there are no obstacles such as steps, debris and uneven surfaces that come in the way of a person accessing a particular space. In the experience of many people who have organized inclusive events, asking someone whether a venue is accessible and actually visiting it and seeing it for yourself may be two very different experiences. The question for evaluating accessibility should not be, “Can we get someone with a wheelchair inside the venue?” because many wheelchair users do not feel comfortable being physically lifted or carried by other people. The question to pose is, “Can a wheelchair user enter the area with minimum effort and assistance?” The best way to verify accessibility of a place is through the engagement of an access auditor or accessibility consultant. The Government of India has recently approved of a list of auditors as part of their Accessible India Campaign that you can find [here](#)³.

Do: Make a visit and examine all the areas of the venue that you think will be accessed by participants to your event, possibly with a person who has a locomotor impairment.

Don't: Rely on the opinion of an unknown person or the management of a venue about its accessibility.

Budget for: costs for an accessibility audit, including travel to and from the venues.

When an entrance is slightly elevated, a temporary ramp does a good job of making the premises barrier-free. Note, however, that all ramps are not created equal. The Americans with Disabilities Act recommends a 1:12 slope, which means that every 1 inch of vertical rise requires at least 1 foot (12 inches) of ramp length, or in other words, 5 degrees of incline⁴. This is necessary in order to keep the ramp from being excessively steep and thus laborious to navigate. The owners of the venue should be able to do this for you, failing which you can look for options to rent a temporary ramp.

Budget for: renting an accessible ramp⁵.

Bathrooms

It is really important that bathrooms are accessible for persons with disabilities. Many persons with disabilities have conditions that cause them to use the bathroom frequently and they are unable to ‘hold it in’ for long periods of time, say, until they reach home. Inaccessibility of bathrooms leads to a host of other health issues such as urinary tract infections. It is important that the bathrooms are clean and dry as many persons with disabilities may find a slippery floor inaccessible. An accessibility consultant should be able to verify the accessibility of the bathroom.

³ <http://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Empanelment%20of%20Access%20Auditors.pdf> [PDF] last visited on 16 November 2018

⁴ For example, see <http://www.ramps.org/terms-to-know.htm> last visited on 14 November 2018

⁵ See, for example, <https://www.handiramp.com/product/pvi-portable-singlefold-ramps> last visited on 10 November 2018. Please note that the URLs provided in this module are for illustrative purposes only and should not be construed as an endorsement of the specific products.

Even if the bathroom is not fully accessible, have a talk with the management of the venue about attaching a grab bar in at least one toilet stall in each bathroom and ensure a relatively slip-free environment⁶. This is also useful for the elderly who may be attending the event.

Do: Many venues are not averse to making their premises accessible, but they have no idea how to do it. Providing the venue management with accessibility standards and guidance may result in positive changes. If you have a sufficient amount of time before your event takes place, then the management can affect these changes in time to benefit your participants.

Don't: Encourage the venue management to start construction work towards accessibility if your event is coming up soon. In the event of incomplete work, the debris and construction material will pose a greater barrier for persons with disabilities who may attend your event.

[Editor's note: *There is usually a step constructed at the entrance of most Indian bathrooms, which makes it impossible for wheelchair users to enter them. This small but crucial detail makes a big difference in their lives. Some are unable to take up employment, some avoid going to events altogether. Considering the state of sanitation facilities and practices in India, this is often an overlooked aspect.]*

Travel to and from the venue

Apart from evaluating the accessibility of the venue itself, we have to consider how people can reach the venue. The most accessible events are close to areas where public transport is available. This ensures that a large number of people from all walks of life can attend it. If the event has to be held outside public transport limits, try to arrange for shuttle services, such as a minibus, from the nearest public transport point to pick up and drop off participants at designated times. A confirmation sheet (See section entitled "Confirmation sheet" below) will help you plan this optimally.

In many cities, taxi aggregator services such as Uber™ and Ola Cabs™ make it feasible for persons with disabilities for whom public transport is not accessible, to get around. Even if they can reach a venue with these services, some areas may be quite deserted at the time the event ends. Therefore it may be difficult for participants to get a taxi back home, or the surge charges will be very high. Keep the timings of the event in mind while deciding on the suitability of a venue.

Parking

If there are limited parking spots at a venue, keep those reserved for persons with limited mobility who have confirmed their attendance in advance. You can also hire local valet services to for the benefit of all participants at the event. Ensure that the valets are briefed in advance about the use of adapted vehicles.

Budget for: valet services.

⁶ See, for example, <https://www.consumerreports.org/cro/news/2015/01/why-you-need-grab-bars-in-your-bathroom/index.htm> last visited on 10 November 2018.

Catering (or not)

For daylong events, food becomes a question. Some organizers will opt to arrange for food for participants. Some organizers expect participants to head outside the venue during the lunch break to eat at a nearby restaurant or the canteen facility at the venue.

Non-catered events

If you expect your participants to make their own arrangements for lunch, ensure that:

1. Participants have sufficient advance notice of this.
2. The canteen facility is affordable and accessible.
3. If there is no canteen facility, the nearby restaurant options that are accessible for persons with disabilities are affordable.
4. If there are no affordable and accessible restaurants nearby, all participants with disabilities should be given the option of ordering takeout lunch (at their own cost, if that is how everyone else is doing it) from a nearby restaurant that can be picked up and delivered during the lunch break. If possible, provide them with the menus of all the nearby restaurants that may provide this service.
5. There is a clean and accessible space for people to eat their packed lunches.

Don't: make a separate eating arrangement only for persons with disabilities as this may make them feel segregated or cut off from the rest of the participants.

Do: Keep options of ordering food and eating it at the venue available to anyone who might want such a facility.

Catered events

For events where catering is provided, it is a good idea to include questions about the dietary preferences and restrictions of participants in the confirmation sheet (See section entitled "Confirmation sheet" below). Budget constraints may not allow you to cater to every individual's needs, but you can at least be advised of the options and do what you can within your limitations. One good practice is to label each meal item with common dietary preferences and intolerances/ allergies – vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free or contains gluten, fish, eggs, lactose-free, dairy product, *et cetera*. If any participant has a food allergy, discuss with your caterer the possibility of preparing an allergen-free meal only for them. Confirm with the participant if this is acceptable to them. In general, ensure the meal has enough options for protein, fat and complex carbohydrates.

As far as possible, opt for reusable sturdy tableware for participants. Also, organize for tables and chairs to sit and eat food for those participants who may want to do so.

Some participants with disabilities may require support to pick up food from a buffet. This can be offered in two ways.

- A support person accompanies the participant to the buffet, tells them what items are available, asks them the items and the quantity that they would like, and serves the meal to them.

- A support person informs the participant, who is seated at a table, of the items on offer in the buffet. The participant responds with the names of the items and quantities they would like. The support person then fills the plate accordingly and places it in front of the participant. In case of a visually impaired participant, with their permission, hold their hand and place it above each different item of food to explain where each item is. Ensure that a support person is available to get refills of whatever the participant would like more of.

Some participants may need feeding support. Usually this is provided by a support person or a friend, but in case they come alone and request this support, it should be given to them in a dignified manner.

Beverages

We are all trying to reduce the use of plastics and so may opt for renting glasses to be refilled from a bubble top canister or water cooler by the participants themselves. Please be mindful of participants who may need support for this. In the information document (See section entitled “Information sheet” below) you may inform participants to bring their own bottles or cups to drink from. In case of tea and coffee, ensure that dairy-free and sugar-free options are available.

Budget for: drinking water and straws, glasses where necessary

Planning the room

Layout

It is important to plan the layout of the room to facilitate full participation. An auditorium-like setting of chairs is not very accessible for wheelchair users, or people who may need to move around during sessions. For most events, arranging several tables and chairs around them are the best way to ensure accessibility and comfort of participants. There should be enough space around the tables to manoeuvre wheelchairs. Ensure that there are electrical extension points or outlets or spike-busters placed under each table so that people can plug in their electronic devices; power cords and wires on the floor could cause people to trip over them.

The projection screen, monitors, *et cetera* should be placed in such a way that all participants can see them. If necessary and possible, use two or more screens or monitors.

Use microphones. If there are one or two lead trainers, let them use lapel mics, and keep cordless mics for the participants. Ensure that audio equipment is checked and tuned in advance in order to avoid disturbance (screeching sounds) from the equipment that can trigger or cause discomfort to people with sensitivity to loud and high-pitched noises.

If you have a visually impaired participant, offer to help orient them with the room layout so they know where everything is.

Budget for: table and chair rental, electrical extension points or spike-busters.

Sign language interpreters

Speakers should be in the line of sight of participants at all times. Some participants may have to be seated closer to the speakers if they rely on lip reading.

Sign language interpreters are meant to stand close to the speakers so that the audience can see them both together. If a session requires a speaker to deliver the lecture from a different part of the room, the interpreter must also have space to stand next to them there. The arrangement of the room should be such that people entering or exiting the room during the session should not obstruct the participants' view of the interpreter while leaving the room in the middle of the session.

Hire two sign language interpreters as interpretation is a very intense job. They can take turns among themselves to do the interpretation. If you have invited a Deaf⁷ participant, or if you have received a confirmation from a Deaf participant, ask them who they would prefer as a sign language interpreter and try your best to engage those persons.

Do: Anyone who wants to speak with the Deaf participant should directly address the participant in the second person (e.g., "Have you understood this concept?"), so that the interpreter can convey it.

Don't: Address questions meant for the participant to the interpreter. (e.g., "Has she understood the concept?")

Budget for: sign language interpreters

Quiet corner

Some participants, especially those with mental illness, psychosocial disabilities or autism, may get triggered or overstimulated at the event. They might need to take a break and go to a quiet place that is outside the event spaces or fenced off from them where can stay until they feel ready to go back to the event. If the event venue is within the premises of a hotel, it may entitle one to reserve a free room, which can be designated for this purpose. Else, you can arrange for some comfortable seating in a corner at the back of the room for quiet time.

Photography and videography

In events specifically for persons with disabilities, especially psychosocial disabilities, many persons may not want to be photographed or identified as persons with a mental illness. This may be because of their concerns over being stigmatised, judged or discriminated against in different aspects of their lives. It is important to seek the permission of persons in events before the event is photographed or videographed. Even if people have consented to be

⁷ Deaf (with a capital D) is used to denote those persons who have hearing impairments and who identify as culturally deaf - they use sign language, believe in deaf culture, do not speak et cetera. When used without the capital D, deaf denotes those persons who are hearing impaired but prefer to use more 'mainstream' forms of communication such as lip-reading, and they can also often speak.

photographed, do consider that many persons with conditions such as autism and photosensitive epilepsy may be triggered by the use of the camera's flash on them. Speakers or trainers with such impairments may be also be distracted by the sound of clicking cameras.

[Editor's note: Wikimedia events usually have their own protocol about photographing and videographing participants. Colour-coded lanyards, badges or similar markers are distributed to those who do not wish to have their photos or videos taken or those who would prefer being explicitly asked for permission before they are photographed or videographed. Information about colour-codes and their meaning is usually indicated at the Registration Desk or wherever lanyards or other markers are distributed to participants, in the Welcome/Registration Kit and included in the Friendly Space Policy for the event.]

Some events have demarcated no-photography areas within spaces such as auditoriums and seminar halls. This seating arrangement allows for cameras to be used inside the room without certain sections of the audience coming into the frame.]

Planned seating

Other kinds of interpreters (e.g., for those with learning disabilities), scribes and some personal assistants will need to sit next to the participant. Some participants may be comfortable only in a certain part of the room and would like to keep that seating even after breaks. Facilitators may ensure that this need or preference is respected.

Event materials

Confirmation sheet

Unless it is a 'walk-in' event, it is ideal to provide a confirmation sheet to all participants who are invited or have expressed an interest to attend it. The sheet can ask for details such as:

1. Dietary intolerances/ allergies
2. Reasonable accommodation requirements (See section entitled "Reasonable accommodation" below.)
3. Will they attend on their own or come with a support person, or would they require a support person to be provided by the organizers?
4. What is their preferred means of being contacted with regards to the event and the information provided in the form?
5. What is their preferred format for materials to be given at the event (if applicable)?

You can host this form online, even via Google Forms. However, you should keep in mind how best to ensure that the form is accessible⁸.

⁸ "Google Forms" <https://accessibility.umn.edu/surveys-forms/google-forms> last visited on 12 November 2018.

Pre–event materials

For some events, such as conferences or trainings, facilitators prefer that participants read or view some materials in advance. The most practical way to do this is to email all materials to all participants. Make sure that the materials are accessible to someone using a screen reader. Scanned copies or photos of printed materials may not be readable. Verify whether your documents are accessible through a colleague who uses a screen reader. If you do not know anyone who uses a screen reader, you can try verifying this yourself⁹.

On request, materials should be made available in Braille. There are several Braille printing presses in India¹⁰. Organizations such as the National Association for the Blind¹¹ and the All India Confederation of the Blind¹² run Braille printing presses. Rehabilitation and Vocational centres such as Worth Trust located in Chennai¹³ also provide these services.

Budget for: materials in Braille.

Information sheet

An information sheet regarding the logistics of the event should be circulated well in advance of the event to all confirmed participants. The document should contain details on:

1. Date and time of the event
2. How to reach the event venue - address, directions, Google Map location etc.
3. Catering arrangements
4. Draft Schedule, if available, with duration of breaks
5. What materials will be provided to participants during the event
6. Accessibility measures and availability of reasonable accommodations and contact person in this regard
7. Specific instructions to participants, if any

During the event

Display the schedule on a soft board/ noticeboard with the use of different colours to differentiate the sessions. The placard/ sheet of paper bearing information about each session can be pinned or pasted on a sheet alongside another sheet that displays only the time slots. This makes it easy to reschedule sessions, if necessary.

⁹ San Jose State University, “Is my document accessible?”

http://www.sjsu.edu/cfd/docs/Is_My_Document_Accessible.pdf [PDF] last visited on 12 November, 2018. Adobe’s procedure for making PDFs accessible:

<https://helpx.adobe.com/in/acrobat/using/create-verify-pdf-accessibility.html> last visited on 12 November 2018.

¹⁰ Braille Presses in India <https://enabled.in/wp/braille-presses-in-india> last visited on 12 November 2018.

¹¹ <http://www.nabdelhi.in/it-services/braille-and-large-print-unit> last visited on 12 November 2018.

¹² <https://www.aicb.org.in/braillePress.html> last visited on 12 November 2018.

¹³ <http://www.worthtrust.in/contact-us.html> last visited on 12 November 2018.

9:00 am to 9:30 am	Introduction and housekeeping
9:30 am to 10:30 am	An introduction to universal design
10:30 am to 11:00 am	Coffee break

Image: Example of the scheduling method described above.

After the event

Providing materials for participants to take home

Consider environmental concerns and put materials on a USB drive. If that is not feasible, include a question on the confirmation sheet (See section titled “Confirmation sheet” above) asking the participants if they would like to take copies of the event handouts/ materials with them.

Seeking feedback after the event

Include questions asking participants to evaluate the arrangements made for accessibility and reasonable accommodation, how included (or not) they felt in the event, and how you could make future editions of the event better. Ensure that the format of the questionnaire is accessible as explained above.

Budget for: USB drives for take conference materials home.

Event activities

Group exercises

Group exercises should be planned in a universally designed manner. The number of facilitators or trainers should be commensurate with the number of groups so that persons

who have various limitations are not left behind or excluded. When allocating time for the exercises, bear in mind that participants who require interpreters *et cetera* may need more time to complete their tasks/ activities than those do not need someone to help them.

Slide decks

Using a slide deck can be inclusive towards a whole bunch of people while excluding others. Here are some tips for an inclusive presentation:

1. *Don't* fill the slides with text. Use concise sentences to summarize the key points.
2. *Do* use and refer to pictorial representations or illustrations of the topic you are talking about. This also is helpful for people who are not well-acquainted with the English language.
3. *Do* use simple flowcharts and diagrams to show processes.
4. *Do* explain pictorial representations for the benefit of the visually impaired participants before you begin explaining the slide.
5. *Don't* use flashy animation on your slides.
6. *Don't* read aloud the contents of every slide verbatim as a way of explaining it to visually impaired participants, if the contents are a summary of what you will be elaborating on during your presentation.
7. *Do* read aloud the specific content of the slide if it is a quote, an extract of a study, or a law. For example, when referring to it during the course of your presentation/ talk.
8. *Don't* avoid using graphs and other representations of statistics on your slides. You can read out the values of the graph at the start of your explanation.

Audio-visual content

All audio visual content should be subtitled, or preferably, close-captioned¹⁴. If a video contains substantial amounts of visual content that does not get conveyed through its dialogue or sound (think, a movie from the silent era, or a documentary where a voiceover is juxtaposed over scenes from the real world), check if the visual content has been audio-described somewhere¹⁵. If not, you may audio-describe it yourself. Watch the film/ video a few times to know what to expect when so you start preparing and recording the audio-description. If it is not feasible to explain the content of the video over a microphone, you may sit beside the visually impaired person and audio-describe it to them as the video plays.

“Icebreakers”, “energizers” or other activities

Often events have short exercises, which are meant for participants to loosen up, get to know each other better, or recover energy levels after intense sessions of learning. You do not have to avoid these activities because there are persons with disabilities in the room. There are many activities in which people with disabilities can participate. A search on the

¹⁴ Sofia Enormado, “Closed Captioning vs Subtitles: What is the Difference?” <https://www.3playmedia.com/2016/08/14/closed-captioning-vs-subtitles> last visited on 12 November 2018.

¹⁵ See, for example, <https://youdescribe.org> last visited on 12 November 2018.

Internet will yield ideas for several such activities¹⁶, even for groups of persons with visual impairment¹⁷. Do not avoid activities that involve dancing, if there are Deaf people in the room. Just make sure they are included in the synchronized dance moves!

Scheduling

Scheduling is very important in making events more inclusive. Organizers should ensure that days are planned with enough breaks between sessions. Breaks are not meant only for visiting the bathroom or having tea. Interpreters and support persons need time to rest, persons with disabilities may take a little longer than non-disabled people to use the bathroom, and for most people, concentrating beyond 90 minutes at a stretch is not ideal. Plan for sessions lasting 90 minutes followed by a break with refreshments. The breaks may range from 15 to 30 minutes. Allocate at least half an hour for the lunch break, so that participants and their support staff can eat and be refreshed for the next session. If the sessions are long and intense, and if it would facilitate the participation of some persons with disabilities, you may also consider brief 2-3 minute 'sensory breaks' where participants remain in the room but the event is briefly suspended.

The after-party

Events are valuable because of the give and take of knowledge and opportunities for networking with peers. Many events are followed by an informal gathering where participants are encouraged to mingle over food and drink. Check if the after-party space is accessible and navigable for wheelchair-users and other persons with disability. Organizers and the teams should know and imbibe disability etiquette¹⁸.

Budget for: a venue that is accessible for persons with disabilities

Emergency evacuation

Premises can be easily evacuable in case of an emergency. One of the first things you should explain to participants is the exit plan. Wheelchairs and stretchers should be available to help evacuate persons with limited mobility. In case of people who have other impairments that may hinder them from reaching the emergency exit in time, and who do not have personal assistants, create a buddy system where a willing co-participant will help escort the person to safety.

Budget for: printing evacuation routes and renting wheelchairs and stretchers.

¹⁶ See, for example <http://www.funretrospectives.com/category/energizer/> last visited on 15 November 2018

¹⁷ See, for example, <https://www.teachingvisuallyimpaired.com/icebreakers--mixers.html> last visited on 12 November 2018.

¹⁸ Video made by a person with cerebral palsy explaining the concept of disability etiquette: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OeQwJw4sFwA> last visited on 12 November 2018. The #EndTheAwkward campaign by Scope video series <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y90fEid9akg> last visited on 12 November 2018.

Reasonable accommodation

No matter how inclusive an event you plan, some participants may face barriers to their full inclusion. This is especially true of people with psychosocial disabilities, autism or chronic health conditions.

Reasonable accommodation is defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as “...necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms”¹⁹. In other words, reasonable accommodation refers to small adjustments that an organizer can make to the event to ensure that a participant with a disability can participate on an equal basis with others. These adjustments are made notwithstanding the measures already taken for accessibility and design of the event. However, the adjustments should not impose a disproportionate or undue burden on the organizer. Moreover, the provision of reasonable accommodation happens through a dialogue between the organizer and the participant, which considers the measures or adjustments that are feasible within various constraints such as those imposed by monetary budgets. Requests for reasonable accommodation should ideally be made in advance, though some issues may come up on the spur of the moment.

It is not useful to provide a list of possible reasonable accommodations because lists always turn out prescriptive. However, there are examples in the context of education and the Americans with Disabilities Act²⁰:

1. Captions for people who are hard of hearing.
2. Allowing a person with chronic fatigue to lie down on a bed and attend a workshop.
3. Allowing a service animal (such as a guide dog for a person with visual impairment) to enter a premises.
4. Organizing a personal assistant on the request of a person with disability.
5. Providing handouts in large font sizes for people who have low vision.
6. Arranging for a participant to eat lunch earlier than others because of medication they are taking.
7. Allowing a person with anxiety to do individual work instead of a group exercise.
8. Providing warm clothing for a person who feels extremely cold in the venue but the temperature is not a problem for others.
9. Paying a travel allowance for a person with a disability for whom public transport is inaccessible.
10. Allowing people to bring their own accessibility aids to be used on computers belonging to another organization for a hackathon etc.

¹⁹ *Supra* note 1

²⁰ <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-reasonable-accommodation-definition-examples.html> last visited on 12 November 2018

When you provide an option for participants to state their reasonable accommodation needs in advance, you can also designate a member of the organization team to be contacted to discuss various options. Reasonable accommodation is a new term even in the disability sector so many people are still trying to understand what it means in their respective contexts.

Budget for: a reasonable accommodation fund (5 to 10% of the total budget may be kept aside for this.)

Residential events

In the case of events where participants staying at a venue overnight or for a few days, keep the following in mind:

1. The entire premises should be accessible. It is unfortunate when people with disabilities have to order room service because the restaurants or dining hall are not accessible. This prevents them from hanging out with their peers.
2. If the person requires personal assistance, they may need to hire a separate person to provide support for the second half of the day.
3. Plan late evening events sparingly. People may need to rest or change assistive devices and might not be comfortable returning to a work setting in the evenings. Have an honest conversation with your participants before planning an event late in the evening or night.
4. Ensure you have the details of accessible healthcare centres, in the vicinity of the event's venue in case of an emergency.
5. Provide details of nearby pharmacies, supermarkets or restaurants in the information sheet. Indicate whether they are wheelchair accessible or not.