



# How to Successfully Advocate for Hearing Loops

## A Step-by-Step Guide



**Let's Get Started!**

Hearing Loss Association of America

# How to Successfully Advocate for Hearing Loops

## A Step-by-Step Guide

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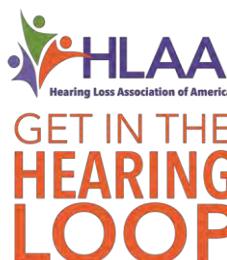
### Updates to the Guide

The information contained in this Handbook is for informational purposes only. Significant effort has been made to present information that is comprehensive and accurate. Changes can occur during the lifetime of an edition.

Please send any suggestions to: [GITHInfo@hearingloss.org](mailto:GITHInfo@hearingloss.org)

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## Dedication

This guide is dedicated to Richard McKinley for his untiring efforts promoting hearing loops in North America, motivated by helping those with hearing loss **HEAR** and **UNDERSTAND**.

## Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the David and Carol Myers Foundation for their ongoing and enthusiastic support of the Hearing Loss Association of America Get in the Hearing Loop (HLAA GITHL) program and their steadfast advocacy for people with hearing loss.

The HLAA GITHL committee would like to thank Barbara Kelley, executive director; Lise Hamlin, director of public policy; Brenda Battat, former executive director; and previous members of the GITHL committee Anne Pope, former chair; Jerry Bergman; Richard Einhorn; Peggy Ellertsen; Stephen Frazier; Carol Lomicky; Ed Ogiba; JoAnne DeVries; and Heather Patrick for her patience, wisdom, expertise, and guidance in helping us produce this guide.

We would also like to thank the many hearing loop advocates who have worked tirelessly for communication access via hearing loops for people with hearing loss in the United States.

# Welcome to the how to Advocacy Guide!

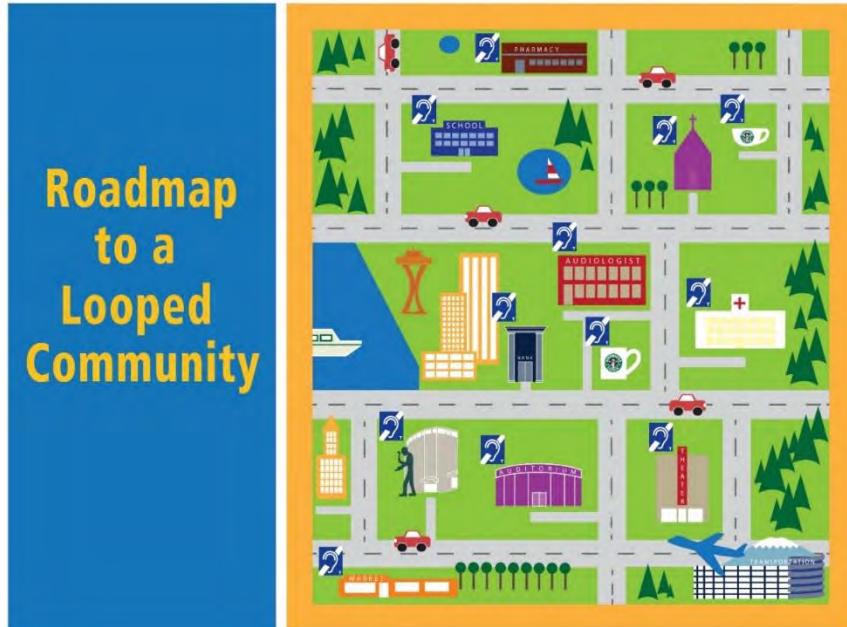
The how-to advocacy guide has been created to help you get hearing loops installed in your community, at your place of worship, your workplace, your favorite arts venue, or even your doctor's office. Whether you're advocating for yourself, or a loved one, or because you understand that every person with a hearing loss has a right to communication access, your efforts will have a lasting impact. With every hearing loop, you get installed, you raise awareness and make, your community more hearing-friendly and inclusive. This is a noble effort, and we are here to help!

We know it can seem overwhelming to create an advocacy plan from the ground up.

- How do you get started?
- Who do you talk to?
- What information will be the most impactful?
- How do you help ensure a successful installation?

Don't worry; the answers to these questions, and many more, are in this step-by-step guide. We have also included when and how to use the documents in the Get in the Hearing Loop (GITHL) Toolkit; these documents have many uses, from self-education to presentations and leave-behinds.

Think of this advocacy guide as your roadmap to a looped community.



"When you help people hear that much better with the hearing instruments they already have in their ears, it's incredible. Everybody deserves to hear like that."

Juliëtte Sterkens, HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate

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# Getting Started—A Noble Endeavor

Advocating for communication access is a classic hero's journey: you and your band of fellow advocates are called to the adventure, you will face many hurdles, you will be changed, and ultimately, you will improve your community and help others. It's not easy, but our shared motivation is in the importance of the work.

## Why communication access is important

Communication Access means that hearing loss is no longer a barrier to equal participation. But because hearing loss is invisible, most people with normal hearing have no idea why they would spend money on an invisible solution to an invisible problem. We need to educate the hearing world and make it easy for venues to choose hearing loops.

**Did you know** hearing loops can directly meet the ADA requirement that assistive listening systems be hearing aid compatible?

You have the right to hear. Numerous federal and state civil rights laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), include mandates specific to communication access. The ADA and other laws give us a powerful tool to wield for advocacy purposes.

## Why hearing loops are important

It is no exaggeration to say that hearing loops change lives. These simple, superstar assistive listening systems (ALS)<sup>1</sup> keep people engaged and support greater mental and physical health by providing easy communication access. They are also the only ALS that can easily be used in rail cars, Taxis, elevators and transit information counters to name a few. Hearing loops are internationally recognized and are preferred by many people with hearing aids and cochlear implant<sup>2</sup>. Why? Because hearing loops are simple to use, inconspicuous, and optimize hearing via one's hearing instrument (hearing aid, cochlear implant, or bone conductive device). Imagine life for people with hearing loss if every location had a hearing loop!

And from a venue perspective, hearing loops can serve more people with greater satisfaction, and are easier to administer and maintain than FM and IR systems—this is an important selling point.

## Why advocating for hearing loops is important

It may be challenging for some people with hearing loss to ask for hearing assistance. Your advocacy will help others with hearing loss participate equally and safely — maybe it is your dad, sister, friend, or many folks you will never meet.

You will be raising awareness and increasing knowledge in your community at large. This can profoundly affect society's understanding and inclusion of people with hearing loss. With every "Hearing Loop" available here sign you get posted, you reduce the stigma of hearing loss, help build a robust infrastructure, and strengthen your community.



<sup>1</sup> Hearing Loop, FM, or Infrared systems

<sup>2</sup> Communication Access New Mexico Survey, 2018

# Being Strategic

The value of developing a plan for your hearing loop advocacy cannot be overstated. Getting decision-makers to take the necessary steps for a successful loop installation is complex. The more prepared you are, the better your chances of success. This section will help you get started, prepare you to meet with venue decision-makers, and develop your pitch.

**"I dream of a world where hearing loops are everywhere I go."**

Cheri Perazzoli  
Hearing Loop Advocate

## Planning for hearing loops in your community

This is the Why, What, Who, Where, and When part of your strategic plan. It provides the structure for the steps you will take to successfully increase hearing loops in your community.

### Define your mission statement — why

This describes your intention, informs the steps you'll take, and creates goals to gauge success. Think about why you advocate for hearing loops and the impact you want to make.

### Define your goal — what

Your goal should be important to you. It's okay if a hearing loop benefits you. Remember, if a hearing loop helps you, it will also help others. You can go big—getting theaters in your community looped, or more uncomplicated — getting a loop installed at one theater, auditorium, or place of worship. What's important is that the goal feels achievable.

### Define your target venue(s) — who and where

Whether you have a venue in mind or need to identify potential venues that meet your goal, it is essential to research and prioritize where you can have the most impact.

#### Low hanging fruit

- Venues where you have a personal connection — perhaps your hearing health provider, or your place of worship
- Government venues — city council chambers, information desks at City Hall
- Publicly funded local venues — libraries, senior or community centers, theaters

#### Bang for the buck

- Highly visible venues — performing arts centers, sports arenas, transportation hubs
- Venues that have a designated accessibility director

#### Determine need

- Where do hearing loops exist in your community, and where are they needed?
- Are there venues with outdated assistive listening systems (ALS) that would improve accessibility with new hearing loops?
- Are accessibility options listed on the venue websites?

### Define the timeline — when

Setting a timeline will keep you focused and motivated. It's okay to adjust your timeline but schedule your steps to stay on track. Also, look for opportunities that might support a venue installing hearing loops: a remodel or new construction, a grant, or naming of an accessibility director.

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# Examples of Targeted Advocacy Efforts

## Place of Worship

Mission Statement	Goal	Target venue (s)	Timeline, Decision Maker
Ensure older members and others with hearing loss can participate fully in worship activities.	Hearing loops in the main gathering spaces, meeting rooms, and offices.	My place of worship	2022 Leadership Council Suggest a special fundraiser or grant application.

## Arts Venue

Mission Statement	Goal	Target venue (s)	Timeline, Decision Maker
To help people with hearing loss easily attend arts performances on par with other attendees.	To get hearing loops installed throughout the theater where I have season tickets.	Local Theater	2023 Managing Director Suggest cultural arts funding.

## Medical Facility

Mission Statement	Goal	Target venue (s)	Timeline, Decision Maker
To ease the fear people with hearing loss, feel in medical situations when they cannot clearly understand questions, directions, and information.	Large area hearing loop system, counter, and portable hearing loops in my hospital's auditorium, info and pharmacy counters, and designated exam rooms.	Local Hospital	2022 thru 2024 VP of Patient Experience and Foundation President Suggest building hearing loops into remodel or new wing opportunity.

## Place of Work

Mission Statement	Goal	Target venue (s)	Timeline, Decision Maker
I want to increase my productivity, easily engage with colleagues, and reduce the stigma of hearing loss in my workplace.	A hearing loop in our conference room, a counter loop in my office, and a portable hearing loop to carry.	My office, but company-wide.	2022 ADA Coordinator Recommend employers use federal tax credits for providing access to disabled employees.

## **Build Relationships, Develop Partnerships**

Successful advocacy relies on solid and consistent relationships with people who can help make things happen. Being strategic in these relationships means choosing wisely who you invest time with and maintaining the relationship. For example:

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator** — Title II of the ADA requires that state and local governments have an ADA coordinator. This position ensures that the government entity complies with the ADA and investigates complaints. These folks often cut through the red tape and influence decision-makers to get things done.

**Disability Organizations and Committees** — People often don't think about communication access when they think about disability access, so your participation can help these groups meet their goals for inclusion while meeting your goals for hearing loop installations.

**Membership on an organization's board of directors** — Being on an organization's board of directors provides opportunities to raise awareness about communication access and the benefits of hearing loops.

**Nurture the relationship** — Once you have identified opportunities, nurture those relationships. Keeping in touch, even if it's every so often, does wonders; you never know when someone may need your expertise and they may have an opportunity to help you. Remember, partnership means "We help each other, sometimes you get what you want, but next time I will get what I want, and sometimes we both get what we want."

## **Build a Coalition**

Remember, there is strength in numbers. Creating a coalition of like-minded people and subject matter experts can help you confidently talk to venues about hearing loops. Ideally, your team will include:

- Other communication access and hearing loop advocates
- People with hearing loss who can add their firsthand experiences to your presentation
- Local hearing loop installer(s) and Audio Visual (AV) companies committed to meeting hearing loop International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) installation standards
- Agencies for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Area Agencies on Aging, Disability Action Groups
- State and local government ADA coordinators, city councilors, and state legislators
- Local audiologists and hearing instrument specialists who support hearing loops
- Potential funding sources, philanthropists, community funding organizations, other disability allies, coalitions, nonprofits, community service organizations, and independent learning centers.

Your funding sources may also provide grant funding for your advocacy and outreach materials like printing materials, web hosting and development, buying a counter loop for demonstration, postage, and mailing.

You can approach people individually but consider inviting potential coalition participants to a meeting. Pick a facility with a hearing loop if possible. This will provide an excellent opportunity for "show and tell." Demonstrating the benefits of hearing loops can be especially useful in garnering the support of audiologists, legislators, ADA coordinators, etc. You might even convince some people to loop their offices!

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# What to Know Before You Go

## An informed advocate is an effective advocate.

Before actively advocating for hearing loops, check out the materials in the GITHL Toolkit Handbook, and educate yourself on key features that will help you succeed.

## Understand how different hearing loops work

Sharing your personal experience with hearing loops is a powerful way to explain their impact. It is important to understand what hearing loop type(s) to pitch to a given venue.

- Hearing loop systems, large areas with microphones like lecture halls, city council chambers, airports, etc.
- Installed counter loops are effective at information and pharmacy counters, etc.
- Portable hearing loops are an excellent choice for small meetings with up to 4 people. If you have a portable loop, use it to open doors and model benefits in your venue meetings.

## Understand why hearing loops are the preferred ALS

You may need to make a case for hearing loops over other systems. Hearing loops are preferred because people with telecoil-enabled hearing instruments can connect directly to the hearing loop audio system without added equipment. FM and IR systems require everyone to check out receivers and headphones or neckloops that the venue must maintain. Moreover, people hear better from the customized sound of their hearing instruments.

## Bluetooth

Today's classic Bluetooth technology cannot be used as a wide area assistive listening system. Currently, there are many unknowns about how new Bluetooth technology will fit into the assistive listening ecosystem. A new version of Bluetooth technology, Auracast (Bluetooth LE Audio Sharing), has been developed to support multi-stream audio for mainstream as well as hearing instruments. Before it becomes available, hearing instrument manufacturers will need to include the new protocols in their products.

## Understand how telecoils provide direct communication access

A telecoil (t-coil) is available in most hearing instruments. People can directly access the sound signal from a hearing loop by simply switching to the t-coil program. People who do not wear hearing instruments or whose hearing instruments do not have a t-coil can still receive help from a hearing loop by using a receiver and headphones.

## Familiarize yourself with the laws that support your case

Federal, state, and local laws require or support disability access for people with hearing loss. The HLAA GITHL Handbook includes information about the ADA and other laws. We also suggest researching your state laws, city ordinances, and HLAA's [Know Your Rights](#).

## GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [Are You Hearing Everything You Could](#) — learn about hearing assistive technologies
- ✓ [A Guide to Understanding Hearing Loops](#) — learn how hearing loops work
- ✓ [GITHL Hearing Loop Brochure for Venues](#) — learn how hearing loops benefit venues
- ✓ [Providing ADA Mandated Communication Access](#) — learn ADA details about ALS
- ✓ [Hearing Loop Toolkit Checklist](#) — ensure you review all the available toolkit assets

## Working with Influencers and Venues

Advocacy is exciting work. You get the pleasure of fighting the good fight and sometimes the thrill of victory. With every hearing loop, you help get installed and promoted; you create a ripple effect, more people understand the need for communication access and become aware of hearing loops as the preferred solution.

### Your Audiences

There are two primary audiences for hearing loop advocacy, influencers and venue decision-makers.

#### Influencers

Influencers are interested in inclusion and accessibility and can help push venue decision-makers to provide communication access and choose hearing loops. The goal is to get influencers to bring and support the idea of installing hearing loops in their respective group or organization. Some examples of influencers include:

- ✓ People at your place of worship
- ✓ ADA coordinators and city council members
- ✓ Board members of arts organizations, disability alliances, senior-focused agencies
- ✓ Accessibility committee members often volunteer at community-focused venues like libraries, public transportation, community centers, senior resident communities, etc.
- ✓ Large donors of public organizations like hospitals, arts venues, nonprofits, etc.

You can meet with influencers individually, but also consider making presentations to large groups of accessibility influencers. You may find other opportunities by collaborating with accessibility-focused nonprofits or government organizations that host conferences and conventions.

#### Venue Decision Makers

This audience varies depending on the venue and organizational structure and is often tiered. You may start with a general or operations manager and help that manager present to an executive director or board of directors. The goal is to engage as many decision-makers as possible early on, saving time. Some examples of venue decision-makers include:

- ✓ Place of worship: leadership council, clergy, prominent donor
- ✓ Arts organizations: managing or executive director, board of directors
- ✓ Community venues: accessibility committee, executive director, business manager
- ✓ Government offices: state legislators, city council members, operations manager
- ✓ Hospitals: accessibility committee, VP of Patient Experience, or board of directors

Two for One: An influencer can sometimes be a decision-maker. For example, audiologists and hearing health providers are essential allies in hearing loop advocacy; AND they can install hearing loops at their offices to help patients hear better and learn about the benefits of t-coils.

For more information contact:

Juliëtte Sterkens, Aud, HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate

[JSterkens@hearinggloss.org](mailto:JSterkens@hearinggloss.org).

# The Advocacy Process

Remember, this is a marathon, not a sprint. If this process looks daunting, fear not; we are here to support you and answer your questions. If you need help not included in this advocacy guide, consider joining the [HLAA GITHL online forum at Groups.io](#). You can post questions, initiate discussions, and be part of a larger looping community.

## The Advocacy Process Checklist

### Start

### Steps

### Goals

<b>Stage 1: Opening Doors</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Research	<b>Goal:</b> audience knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Pitch Development	<b>Goal:</b> audience-specific
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Elevator Speech	<b>Goal:</b> spark interest
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Presentation	<b>Goal:</b> further conversation
<b>Stage 2: Guiding Installations</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 More Meetings	<b>Goal:</b> decision to install
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Logistics and Planning	<b>Goal:</b> provide guidance
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Installation Testing	<b>Goal:</b> PWHL test all equipment
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Staff Training and Signage	<b>Goal:</b> seamless use of loops
<b>Stage 3: Maximizing Impact</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Promotion	<b>Goal:</b> raise awareness
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Appreciation and Networking	<b>Goal:</b> ongoing relationship and ripple effect
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Celebration and Evaluation	<b>Goal:</b> rewards and lessons learned

**Finish & Start Again**

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## Stage 1: Opening Doors

### Research

#### Goal: audience knowledge



Research is important because the best way to be successful is to know your audience and customize your pitch to their interests. The more you know, the stronger your pitch will be.

### IDENTIFY WHAT TO RESEARCH

Think about hearing loops from your audience's perspective.

**How would hearing loops help your audience achieve their purpose and success?**

If your audience is interested in inclusion, providing hearing loops will help them achieve their mission. Think about places of worship, libraries, community centers, arts venues, etc.

If your audience is interested in helping employees and volunteers achieve their full potential, hearing loops will help people with hearing loss participate fully. This could be a compelling argument for businesses, local governments, education venues, etc.

**Who is the venue's audience?** How does hearing loss impact people's ability to engage with the venue? For example, if a venue wants to appeal to older patrons, hearing loops could keep older people engaged with the venue. This is likely true for places of worship, arts venues, etc.

**Is the venue planning construction?** Remodel projects, and new construction can provide an excellent and cost-effective opportunity to add hearing loops, saving money.

**Does the venue have an assistive listening system?** Is it working? Visit the venue, use the system and evaluate how well it works. Is it hearing instrument compatible? If it doesn't work well, would it benefit from a new hearing loop?

**Does the venue have a competition that has installed hearing loops?** Or is there an opportunity to be the first and lead the way? For help identifying hearing loops in your area, contact [GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org](mailto:GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org).

**Who are the decision-makers?** Learning this will save you much time. If it is unclear who could be responsible for accessibility, start with the general or operations manager

### GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [Hearing Loss Facts and Statistics](#) — learn about hearing loss demographics
- ✓ [GITHL Hearing Loop Brochure for Venues](#) — learn the benefits of hearing loops for venues
- ✓ [Providing ADA Mandated Communication Access](#) — learn how to use the law to your advantage
- ✓ [Assistive Listening System Checklist](#) — when visiting venues with assistive listening systems

## Pitch Development

**Goal:** audience-specific



Pitch development is important because it helps you make the pitch personal and audience specific. It also enables you to prepare your elevator pitch and be ready for your presentation.

There are different methods for making a pitch. You might use a PowerPoint presentation or lead an informal discussion. You might join a board to start a conversation about communication access. You might develop an online presentation, given the rise of video conference calls due to COVID-19. Regardless of your method, use the following guidelines.

### PITCH DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

**Make it personal.** Share your story and the stories of others living with hearing loss. If you're pitching a venue, include experiences at that venue or a similar venue. This creates awareness and garners empathy and understanding. Personal stories can be the most powerful tool you have.

**Customize information for the audience.** Making hearing loops important to your audience is critical to your success. Include:

- ✓ The value hearing loops will provide — increased customers, better service, etc.
- ✓ How the ADA and local laws apply — if the venue is not in compliance, they risk legal action
- ✓ The differences between hearing loop types — large area, installed counter, or portable hearing loops.

**Be succinct.** Your first presentation should be about twenty minutes, no more than half an hour. Hone your elements so that you are presenting the most relevant information. Make sure to leave room for questions and conversation.

**Be helpful.** Most venues have no idea what it takes to make hearing loops available. Let them know you may be able to help with ideas for funding, criteria for installers, defining the scope, testing the installation, staff training, and promoting the new hearing loop. By assisting them in understanding the process and providing helpful information, you help ensure their success.

**Practice, practice, practice.** The importance of practicing cannot be overstated. This will give you confidence and help your presentation sound natural. It will also help you talk spontaneously, referencing but not reading your notes or key information from the HLAA GITHL Toolkit Handbook. Practice with coalition members before you're in front of the venue decision-makers.

### GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [Basic Hearing Loop PowerPoint Presentation Sample](#) — use as a starting point
  - ✓ [Presentation Notes for Basic Hearing Loop Presentation Slides](#) — use for language
  - ✓ [Comparison of Large Area Assistive Listening Systems](#) — learn pros and cons of ALS
- Handbook sections: Disability Laws, ADA Communication Access — speak to the law

## **Elevator Speech**

**Goal: spark interest**



Your elevator speech is crucial because it allows you to introduce your idea and get people interested in hearing more.

After you've developed your pitch, create an "elevator speech" for your first outreach to a target audience. The goal is to get more time with the person to whom you introduce your idea. This brief, personal, and persuasive speech should be short and compelling. If you reach out via the phone or email, suggest a meeting or Zoom call; you will be most impactful face to face.

**Regardless of the delivery method, make it sound natural, not rehearsed.**

**Key elements:** who you are, a personal reason for talking to the person, what you want them to consider, and the value of getting more information about hearing loops.

**Use this opportunity to ask to continue the conversation** — regardless of the response that you get. Sweeten the deal with an offer to help the person achieve their known or presumed goal.

### **Example to a venue decision-maker:**

"Hi, my name is Archie Stewart. My partner and I are subscribers to this theater. I love seeing the plays, but I have hearing loss and it's become difficult to understand what is being said. Do you know there is a technology called hearing loops that you can install that will help people like me continue to come to the theater?"

#### **brief conversation**

Could we set up a time to talk about this in more detail? I would really like to help you make the theater more inclusive of people with hearing loss."

Note: Including a link to a one-minute video simulation of a hearing loop can do wonders for people's understanding of clarity.

### **Example to an influencer:**

"Hello X,  
My name is Archie Stewart. I voted for you in the last city council election because of your statements about wanting to be inclusive. I have hearing loss and cannot participate in council meetings because there is not an assistive listening system and I do not know American Sign Language.

I would really like to help you make our city government inclusive of people with hearing loss AND bring the city council into compliance with disability laws. The good news is that there is a technology that can achieve both goals. Will you help me bring this issue to the city council and other local government offices?

#### **brief conversation**

Could we set up a time to talk about this in more detail?

## Presentation

### Goal: further conversation



Your presentation is important because it is an opportunity to provide enough compelling information about hearing loops to inspire continued conversation.

One presentation rarely leads to a "Yes, we'll install hearing loops immediately." Remember that, unless they know someone with hearing loss, most people with normal hearing have no idea what it feels like to navigate life when you can't hear well. Use this as an opportunity to build empathy and educate influencers and venue decision-makers.

## PRESENTATION TIPS

**Make hearing loss statistics relatable:** Over 48 million Americans, one in five, have a hearing loss. This means one in five people in the local grocery, bank, and venue you are pitching.

**Use Visuals:** Take a hearing loop sign and ask if they have seen the signage or symbol. Videos are a terrific way to demonstrate the difference hearing loops can make. Here are a few examples:

- ✓ [NYC subway demonstration](#) (YouTube)
- ✓ [What is a hearing loop, and how does it work?](#) (OTOfY)
- ✓ [Hearing Loop Comparison — The Purpose of Assistive Listening](#) (Ampetronic)

**Review the FAQs:** This will help you be prepared to answer as many questions as possible. It is okay not to have all the answers — finding out and then coming back with the solutions is a terrific way to keep the conversation going. [Link](#)

**Ask questions:** It's always a good idea to be prepared with questions to get your audience engaged and keep the conversation going.

- ✓ During COVID, did you notice it was hard to understand people through their masks? That's a similar experience to living with hearing loss. How did it feel?
- ✓ What do you think the experience at this venue is like for people with hearing loss?
- ✓ Because hearing loss is invisible, it can be challenging to recognize. Do you know people who have hearing loss personally or at work?

**Leverage the Law:** ADA, Rehabilitation Act, local building codes, and ordinances.

**Next steps:** It is beneficial to suggest the next steps, most importantly, the next meeting. Suggest another meeting where you can answer more questions, discuss details and build the venue's confidence in the value of hearing loops and the installation process.

## GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [Basic Hearing Loop PowerPoint Presentation Sample](#)
- ✓ [Hearing Loss Facts and Statistics](#) — leverage hearing loss demographics
- ✓ [GITHL Hearing Loop Brochure for Venues](#) — use to present benefits, leave with the venue
- ✓ [Providing ADA Mandated Communication Access](#)
- ✓ [GITHL FAQ](#) — be prepared to answer questions

## Stage 2: Guiding Installations

### More Meetings

**Goal:** decision to install



It is important to remember that there will likely be many, many meetings between your first presentation and someone's decision to install hearing loops.

Typically, people acknowledge the problem after a presentation and voice their intent to make changes. But the distance between intent and installation can be long. By regularly checking in and providing useful information, you can build a relationship and reinforce your role as a partner. **This is critical because the process stops if you don't keep the conversation going.** For venues, the key is creating meetings where decision-makers can air their concerns, and you can allay their fears.

### IDEAS TO KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

**Leverage existing hearing loops:** Encourage venue decision-makers to visit high-performing hearing loops in your community and encourage them to seek information from their peers.

**Ask specific questions:** Getting information can help you move the process forward.

- ✓ What hurdles are you facing to make this happen and how can I help?
- ✓ Would it be helpful to get a site-specific bid and an estimated cost evaluation?
- ✓ What questions still need to be answered?

**Call on your allies:** Collect names and statements from people who would benefit from a hearing loop in the venue you are targeting and present them to the decision-makers. Knowing that a hearing loop would help many people engage with the venue could help sway the decision.

**Call on your coalition:** Set up meetings with venue decision-makers and team members who can speak to different benefits and aspects of hearing loop installations.

**Recognize and address roadblocks:** When presented with why a venue cannot provide hearing loops, find out if the roadblock given is the actual reason or an excuse. For example, if told, "We can't afford it." Ask, "Have you gotten a bid or a second bid to find if that is true? It may be less expensive than you think."

**Outline a plan:** Help venues envision a hearing loop solution. Discuss how patrons use the space and where several types of hearing loops could provide a holistic hearing experience.

**Inquire about the venue's AV vendor:** AV providers may not be experienced with hearing loops. There are specific hearing loop installers who could work with your current AV provider. Emphasize the user experience, provide resources about hearing loop installations, and possibly provide a list of qualified installers.

### GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [Best Practices for Hearing Loop Installation](#)
- ✓ [Best Practices to Install a Hearing Loop System that Meets the IEC Standard](#)
- ✓ [Why Meet the IEC Standard for Hearing Loop System Installation?](#)

Use all documents for discussion, then leave the information with the influencer or venue.

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## Logistics and Planning

**Goal:** provide guidance



It is important to stay involved during the logistics and planning step because these guidelines are critical to ensuring a successful installation. Venues are not likely to have the expertise.

Figuring out the logistics can happen after a venue has committed to making hearing loops available or as part of the decision-making process. As a hearing loop advocate, your role in this step is to serve as an advisor helping the venue develop a plan that ensures success. Rest assured, there is no expectation that you have hearing loop installers' expertise; your role is to identify criteria the venue can use in defining their hearing loop program.

### GUIDELINES

**Define the scope of work:** A scope of work is used to outline parameters and expectations for the hearing loop installation. Hearing loop installers can help develop the scope of work and will use it to guide their site evaluation, recommendation, and cost estimate.

**Note:** Venues may opt to approach installing hearing loops in stages. For example, a performing arts venue may start by looping the theater space and adding the box office and concessions later. If this approach is being considered, recommend that the venue include every room within the scope of work and ask the installer to break out the costs per area. If different loops are close to each other, the installation technique may vary to avoid spillover issues.

**Funding options:** Suggest potential funding resources that may help offset costs. Special funding may be available for a place of worship via faith-based or community-based foundations. Arts venues may receive funding from community arts organizations; libraries can apply for a Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) grant; public venues may be able to use special federal infrastructure funding or community grants that focus on diversity, equality, and inclusion.

**Vendor selection:** Talk to the venue about the importance of having a professional installation done by an experienced hearing loop installer committed to meeting International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standards for installation. These criteria will go a long way to ensuring a successful installation. The vendor may provide signage. Make sure the signage you use meets the ADA sign requirements.

**Provide referrals:** By referring and bringing in local hearing loop installers, you can have confidence that the hearing loop will be installed correctly, and you help make the process for venues easier.

### GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [Best Practices for Hearing Loop Installation](#)
- ✓ [Sample Request for Proposal for Hearing Loop System](#)
- ✓ [Best Practices to Install a Hearing Loop System that Meets the IEC Standard](#)
- ✓ [Why Meet the IEC Standard for Hearing Loop System Installation?](#)
- ✓ [Summary 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, Assistive Listening Systems](#)

Use all documents for discussion, then leave the information with the venue

## Installation Testing

**Goal: PWHL test all equipment**



It is important to ensure the venue and installer have the hearing loop system tested by a person with a hearing instrument to ensure the system works optimally.

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Hearing loop system installation should only be completed by a specially trained and experienced hearing loop installer. For users to benefit from the system's full potential, several factors must be considered.

Before a hearing loop installation is complete, the installer must verify it meets the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) hearing loop standard 60118-4. Per IEC standards, this last step requires that the hearing loop installer — while still on the premises — works with a hearing aid user familiar with hearing loops to verify that the loop signal is even, sounds clear, there is minimal magnetic background noise, and subjective results are consistent with the IEC standard.

**Advise the venue that this step is essential to ensure they have a high-functioning hearing loop and the highest return on their investment. Let them know that someone with normal hearing will have a different listening experience than people with hearing loss.**

## Staff Training and Signage

**Goal: seamless use of hearing loops**



Appropriate signage and staff training are important to ensure the venue's investment in a hearing loop system provides optimum returns.

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Make sure staff training is part of the scope of the work. Training must be sufficient to enable staff to explain the use of each hearing loop type, answer questions and troubleshoot any issues. Due to staff turnover, it could be helpful to create a one-page laminated hearing loop how to guide available for staff. We also recommend sharing the impact hearing loops have on people with hearing loss with venue staff. Personal stories get people invested in making sure hearing loops are available and high functioning.



Advise venues, "If you sign it, they will come." This means venues must display the International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss with a T for hearing loop systems. This international symbol lets people with hearing loss know a hearing loop is available; see 2010 ADA Standards below.

### GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [Summary 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, Assistive Listening Systems](#)
- ✓ [Best Practices for Hearing Loop Installation—includes information on proper use](#)
- ✓ [Assistive Listening System Checklist—includes tips on training and maintenance](#)
- ✓ [Hear Here Card](#)

## Stage 3: Maximizing Impact

### Promotion

**Goal:** raise awareness for new hearing loop(s)



It is important that the venue reaches its members, customers, subscribers, while you reach out to your local hearing loss community.

Work with venues to create a marketing and PR strategy to announce their new hearing loop offering. This is an opportunity to raise awareness for the venue's new offering, hearing loss, and the need for communication access in your community.

### IDEAS

**Work with the venue to create a press release and pitch story ideas.** Provide quotes from the perspective of communication access, your firsthand experiences with hearing loops, and your appreciation for the venue making hearing loops available.

**Use social media to create buzz and awareness:** Create your own posts, tag the venue, and share the venue's posts on your social media channels — Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

**Help the venue draft accessibility language for their website:** Encourage the venue to announce the hearing loop on their home page and include an Accessibility link under Plan your Visit. If a venue's website does not have accessibility information, encourage them to create a page that includes all available accommodations.

#### **Example website copy for an arts venue's accessibility page:**

We have installed a hearing loop system throughout our theatre to provide communication access for people with hearing loss. Hearing loops enable guests with telecoil-enabled hearing devices with the push of a button to hear audio directly in their instrument. Hearing loops reduce the distance from the audio and minimize background noise, thus providing clear sound. For patrons who do not have hearing instruments or t-coil enabled hearing instruments but would like to experience using an assistive listening system, headphones and receivers are available free of charge. Please ask a staff member before the event begins.

**Create an inaugural event:** Invite people who will benefit from and help promote the venue's hearing loop. This includes hearing health providers, the press, government officials and ADA coordinators, disability rights organizations, municipal planners and architects, etc. The event should include an announcement about the hearing loop installation, its benefits for people with hearing loss, how the hearing loops work with telecoils, and appreciation for funding sources. Have a special event for donors, especially if there are multiple donors.

**For civic venues:** Theaters, town halls, places of worship — consider an event that promotes awareness about hearing loss, the inclusion of people living with this condition, and the need for community-wide communication access. Consider:

- Presenting **Lost in Sound**, a one-woman show created and performed by playwright and hearing loss advocate Kimberly Parker. [Link](#)
- Hosting a discussion about **We Hear You / Now Hear Us**, an award-winning documentary short, shining a light on the experience of living with hearing loss. [Link](#)
- Hosting a panel discussion with people from the venue, the disability advocacy community, and people with hearing loss.

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## **Appreciation and Networking**

**Goal: ongoing relationship and ripple effect**



It is important to express appreciation for hearing loop installations and to build on the relationship you have created.

Following the successful launch of the venue's hearing loop(s), be sure to thank everyone involved in a personal and public way — influencers and venue decision-makers. Handwritten thank-you notes are always appreciated. Also, thank the venue on your social media, in newsletters about hearing loss, and in the press. Get a photo with the venue leadership and staff featuring the hearing loop sign — this will be a great asset for a post or story.

As time goes on, use your social media to remind people about the communication access at the venue. Continue to patronize the venue and always express appreciation for the hearing loop.

**It is easy to assume that your working relationship with the venue is complete but consider the opportunity to continue working together to promote hearing loops.**

- Perhaps the leader of your place of worship will invite you to speak to a council of faith leaders.
- Or a managing director at a theater or museum will help get a hearing loop story published in an industry newsletter.
- Ask for an introduction to peers who would be open to hearing more about hearing loops.
- Ask for an introduction to librarians who value hearing loops in their libraries and ask them to spread the word and teach others how to apply for grants to cover the costs.
- Send them newly published articles and blog posts of interest.

Successful hearing loop installations lead to more hearing loops. That said, **you will likely need to ask your contacts to help you create this ripple effect**. Ask for a final meeting to brainstorm ideas for getting hearing loops introduced to more venues—and then ask them to help.

## **Celebration and Evaluation**

**Goal: reward and lessons learned**



It is important to celebrate your success — you've worked long and hard. It is also important to assess the process and determine what you did well and what you can do better next time.

At the beginning of this guide, we said that advocating for communication access is like a hero's journey: you are called to the adventure, you will face many hurdles, you will be changed, and ultimately, you will improve your community and help others. Congratulations! You have been successful, and this calls for celebration. Choose something that feels like a reward and will make you happy — you deserve it.

We sincerely hope this guide and your experience will encourage you to continue advocating for hearing loops. Like anything in life, the more you do, the more skilled you become. And we need an army of skilled advocates to achieve our goal of looped communities worldwide. Use this guide to help you evaluate your experience, and if you have any suggestions that you think would help others, please send us your thoughts at [GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org](mailto:GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org).

# Advocacy Cheat Sheet

## Advocacy tips to remember

- Set goals and timelines
- Be knowledgeable about hearing loops
- Build a coalition
- Know your audience and customize your presentation to their mission
- Make it personal—tell your story and the stories of others
- Prepare and practice your presentation
- Keep the conversation going
- Ask questions
- Be prepared to answer questions; see our Frequently Asked Questions section
- Guide venues to successful installations
- Build upon the relationships you create

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## Hearing loop installation best practices

- ✓ Installation should be site-specific
- ✓ Use a professional and experienced hearing loop installer committed to meeting international IEC standards for installation
- ✓ Installation testing by hearing aid users experienced with high-functioning hearing loops
- ✓ Staff training in use and benefits of hearing loops

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## Roadblocks and barriers

Recognize when your access requests are being deflected and consider them positive challenges.

### **Hearing loops are not specifically required by law.**

That's true, but assistive listening systems are required by law. Hearing loops are preferred by hearing instrument users and are the easiest system for venues to manage.

### **The venue is not interested in providing hearing loops.**

What do you think the experience of this venue is like for people with hearing loss?

What is the obstacle holding you back? I'm here to help.

### **Our AV techs prefer other systems and have no hearing loop training.**

Many mainstream AV companies are not experienced with hearing loops. There are specially trained and experienced hearing loop installers. You can contact them for a bid to make a fully informed decision.

In deciding which system to go with, it's very important to consider the user. As a person with hearing loss, I'm here to tell you that hearing loops offer the best experience.

### **It is too expensive.**

A hearing loop installation does cost more than an FM or infrared (IR) installation. But typically, thanks to its ease of use, it gets used by many more people making for a lower cost per user.

# Frequently Asked Question (FAQs)

These FAQs have questions venue decision-makers often ask when learning about communication access and hearing loops. The answers provided are written for people without much knowledge about these topics and are meant as guidelines to help you in conversations with venues.

**"There is no such thing as a dumb question"**

Carl Sagan

Astronomer, Astrophysicist, Author

## Communication Access

### Q: What is communication access for people with hearing loss?

**A:** Communication access ensures that all people have equal access to information. For people with hearing loss, it means going to school or work, into a shop or bank, attending the theater or their place of worship, visiting a service provider, and knowing that they will easily understand what is being communicated.

If you think about how wheelchair access helps people with mobility challenges, communication access helps people with communication challenges.

### Q: Why is communication access critical?

**A:** Communication access is vital to building inclusive communities. It means that hearing loss is no longer a barrier to equal participation; that people with hearing loss are not left behind. Communication access also helps keep people with hearing loss engaged in life, supporting greater mental and physical health.

### Q: Don't hearing aids enable hearing?

**A:** Yes, however despite significant advances in hearing aids and cochlear implants, these devices are often not enough to enable users to hear and understand what is being communicated in public settings. Many environmental factors can impact hearing clearly: room acoustics, background noise, distance from the sound source, etc.

### Q: Why should I make my business or service accessible?

**A:** It's the right thing to do for your community and your business.

In the US, one in five people have hearing loss. That means twenty percent of your community struggles to hear and understand in public places. These people are your potential customers, so financially, it makes sense to be accessible. Assistive listening systems, like hearing loops, can attract people with hearing loss to your service.

Also, it's the law. The Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal and state laws include mandates specific to communication access. This includes the provision of assistive listening systems that are hearing aid compatible. If you don't provide communication access, you may be discriminating against disabled people, and you could face legal action.

### Q: What is assistive listening?

**A:** Assistive listening systems (ALS) are technologies that can make it easier to hear in places where hearing aids aren't enough. There are three types of ALS Hearing loops, Infrared, and FM systems.

### Q: Why should I choose hearing loops?

**A:** From a venue perspective, hearing loops provide access to more people, offer greater satisfaction, and are easier to administer and maintain than FM and IR systems. These simple

assistive listening systems are internationally recognized, loved, and easy to use. Hearing loops are the only ALS that can be easily used in transient situations like airports and railcars. They also easily work for kiosks, information booths, pharmacies, taxis, libraries, places of worship, doctor's appointments, etc.

### **Q: Why does audio latency negatively impact a person with hearing loss (WiFi)?**

**A:** Latency impacts understanding because it feels like one is hearing double. The delayed audio inhibits lipreading synchronization.

## **About Hearing Loops**

### **Q: How do hearing loops work?**

**A:** An induction loop system transmits an audio signal directly into a hearing aid via a magnetic field, significantly reducing background noise, competing sounds, reverberation, and other acoustic distortions that reduce sound clarity.

### **Q: Who can use a hearing loop system?**

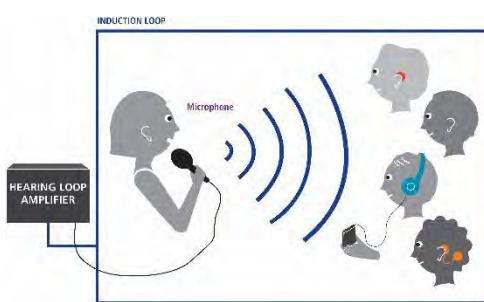
**A:** Hearing loop systems serve everyone with hearing loss who would like to hear better. As with FM and infrared (IR) systems, hearing loops also offer accessibility to people who do not have hearing instruments or hearing instruments without a telecoil via portable receivers and headphones. People without hearing instruments can also use earbuds. The receiver must be vertical, either hung around the neck or held vertically.

### **Q: What are the different types of hearing loops?**

**A:** There are three types of hearing loops: hearing loops systems, permanently installed counter loops, portable loops.

- **Hearing loop systems** are designed to provide communication access in larger spaces like courtrooms, city council chambers, conference rooms, entertainment venues, auditoriums and lecture halls, places of worship, airports, etc.
- **Installed counter hearing loops** are specifically designed to provide communication access at retail and customer service locations like information, pharmacy, and checkout counters, point of sale desks in stores, bank and post office counters, and transport and entertainment ticket-booking offices.
- **Portable hearing loop** A portable hearing loop is a smart choice for one-to-one conversation and small group meetings with up to 4 people.

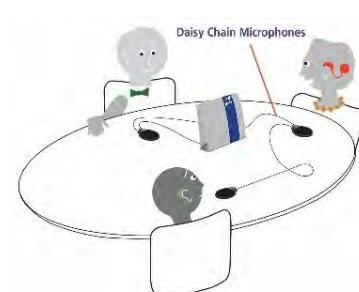
### **Hearing loops can be installed in almost any room or at information counters.**



**Hearing Loop System**



**Installed Counter Hearing Loop**



**Portable Hearing Loop**

## Hearing Loop Installation

### Q: Where should I put hearing loops?

**A:** The best way to answer this question is to have a hearing loop installer complete a site survey and provide you with a recommendation based on your goals. Remember that people take their hearing loss everywhere they go. To provide a complete communication access solution, you may need several types of hearing loops for different areas.

For example, a theater could have installed counter loops at the box office, a portable counter loop at the pop-up concession or gift shops, and hearing loop systems in the theaters. Within an office environment, we recommend hearing loops at information counters, meeting rooms, and in the office of any individual with hearing loss. The location of loops should be clearly signposted.

### Q: What should I look for in a hearing loop installer?

**A:** The most key factors are training, experience, and a commitment to meeting International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) installation standards. Make sure that the installer will base their recommendations on a site survey.

### Q: Do I have to do everything at the same time?

**A:** You can opt for a staggered approach to making hearing loops available throughout your space. A performing arts venue may start by looping the theater space first and adding the box office and concessions later. If you're considering this approach, include every room within the scope of work, and ask the installer to break out the costs per area. This is important because if different loops are close to each other, the installation technique may vary to avoid spillover issues.

### Q: Are hearing loops and induction loops the same thing?

**A:** Yes, hearing loops and induction loops refer to the same assistive listening system technology. For most people, hearing loops or hearing loop systems are more consumer-friendly terms because the names convey the purpose of the technology.

### Q: Can hearing loops be used in adjacent rooms?

**A:** Yes, systems can be designed to control sound spillover between adjacent rooms.

### Q: How much do hearing loops cost to install?

**A:** Hearing loop installations are site-specific. The costs vary according to the types and number of hearing loops needed, the supplier, and the installation cost. Your installers should provide you with estimated costs following their site survey. Large area and counter hearing loops need to be installed, which incurs costs, but portable loops are ready to go out of the box and can be purchased for a few hundred dollars.

### Q: Who makes hearing loops, and where can they be purchased?

**A:** A variety of manufacturers design and market hearing loop amplifiers for a wide variety of installations. For a list of manufacturers, visit the International Hearing Loop Manufacturers Association (IHLMA) website <https://ihlma.org/members/>

## Staff Training and Maintenance

### Q: Why does staff training matter?

**A:** Great question! Training your staff about your hearing loop system ensures that you and your customers receive the full benefits. All frontline staff should know how to use the hearing loop and microphone and how it can benefit customers. Ideally, staff should try out the hearing loop for themselves using a hearing loop receiver and headphones.

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Your installer should provide training on how the hearing loop works and basic maintenance. Make sure that if you have portable hearing loops, they are always stored in the same place and remain charged. Ensure that inexperienced staff is equally trained and remind staff about maintaining and using the hearing loops every few months. Share personal stories of how patrons are enjoying the hearing loop.

## Promotion

### Q: How do people know hearing loops are available at a venue?

**A:** The 2010 ADA Standards have specific requirements for signage. The venue must use the International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss. This symbol has been internationally modified with the addition of a T to signify that a hearing loop is installed. This international symbol lets people with hearing loss know a hearing loop is available; see 2010 ADA Standards Summary for signage requirements.



### Q: What else can I do to promote the hearing loops?

**A:** There is much you can do to promote your venue's new hearing loops. Enlist your marketing and communication departments to help.

- Create an inaugural event and invite people who will benefit from and help promote the hearing loop(s). This includes senior living facility residents, audiologists, state and city officials and ADA coordinators, the press, disability rights organizations, etc. The event should include an announcement about the hearing loop installation, its benefits for people with hearing loss, how the hearing loops work (consider using video), and, if appropriate, appreciation for funding sources.
- Create a press release and pitch story ideas. Help promote the importance of community-wide communication access.
- Use social media to create buzz and awareness. Create posts sharing news and patrons' stories about enjoying the hearing loop on your social media channels.
- Use your website to announce the hearing loop on your home page and include a link to get more information on a Plan your Visit or Accessibility page.
- List the place on Google Maps, contact: [loop.locations@hearingloss.org](mailto:loop.locations@hearingloss.org)

## Locations

### Q: How do I find hearing loops?

**A:** Google Maps — At the request of the HLAA GITHL committee, Google Maps has added a hearing loop accessibility attribute called Assistive Hearing Loop. It is in About under Accessibility.

## More information

### Q: Where can I find out more?

**A:** [HLAA website](#) and the [GITHL Toolkit](#)

### GITHL Toolkit Handbook Resources

- ✓ [5 Actions to Promote Hearing Loops on Google Maps](#)
- ✓ [GITHL Toolkit](#)

## What Other Hearing Loop Advocates Have to Say

I'm one of the many thousands of people who know from firsthand experience how essential hearing loops are. Ten years ago, after experiencing Sudden Hearing Loss, I found it impossible to enjoy concerts, movies, or plays despite having state-of-the-art hearing aids. As a musician and avid theatergoer, this was a devastating loss. Then I heard a musical in a theater with a hearing loop installed. I followed the instructions in the program and flipped my hearing aids to telecoil. To my amazement, I could hear all the music and voices so clearly that it felt like I was listening to a CD. Since then, I've been a committed supporter of loops and telecoil technology. I even have my home TV looped and use it nightly. Presently, no other assistive listening technology is as easy to use or delivers such clear sound.

Richard Einhorn, NY

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It's an exciting time to be a hearing loop advocate. There is a growing awareness of the need for and benefits of hearing loops. In March 2021, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey announced new accessibility requirements that mandate the installation of hearing loops at all departure gates and information counters in new or significantly upgraded terminals at ALL airports, train, bus, and ferry terminals managed by that agency. Before this mandate, Delta Airlines looped the gates at their new Terminal C at LaGuardia. This is huge.

Steve Frazier, NM

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When we looped The Shedd theatre, ticket office, board/classrooms, and put portable loops at concessions, everyone said, "Huh? Why did you do that?" Virtually no patrons knew if they had telecoils or how to use them. That certainly didn't happen when we retrofitted our 1926 former church complex with an elevator!

So, four years ago, we began educating about hearing loops, using the portables to physically demonstrate the four components of any loop system. People borrowed them to practice turning on their t-coil programs. And they got creative about how to use these small, portable loops in everyday life. A growing army of empowered advocates has looped our community's airport, library; museums; churches; senior centers; YMCA, car dealer; pharmacy; doctors, lawyers, CPA offices, and more. Loops are a life-changing addition to your toolkit for auditory accessibility. Loop your life and then lead the charge to loop your places!!

Ginevra Ralph, The Shedd Institute, OR

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There's nothing funny about not being able to hear onstage. But hearing loops change all of that for me. When the stage has a hearing loop, I can hear questions from the audience, cues from the sound booth, and my fellow performers.

Gael Hannan  
Comedienne and Hearing Loss Advocate  
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, former board of directors

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Consumer surveys and informal feedback consistently confirm that people prefer hearing loop listening to all other currently available types of assistive listening systems. Hearing loops deliver unmatched sound quality to hearing aids and cochlear implants with built-in telecoils. They are essential to those with severe-profound hearing loss. For years, they have been the only assistive listening option that enables users to remain anonymous, thus avoiding the inconvenience and embarrassment of having to check out and wear external equipment that identifies them as being "different" or having "a disability."

Jerry Bergman, NY

I've been a voracious reader all my life, so I approached my library system and let them know I couldn't understand the librarians at the information counter. I said, "I have hearing loss, and did you know there's technology available to help people like me hear better?" I was invited to join the library's new disability access committee in the nick of time because they were getting ready to buy Pocketalkers rather than hearing loops!

First, a couple of libraries got permanently installed counter loops. Over time, all 27 libraries in the county system have hearing loops at the information counters. When I go to my library, I walk in, and the hearing loop is there, and I can hear. It works every single time!

Ann Thomas, CA

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I'm most proud of doing a presentation to a bunch of architects. I was trying to convince them that they had the opportunity while designing and building new facilities to help their clients do the right thing and be way ahead of the curve by adding communication access and hearing loops into their designs.

Finally, two years later, we're doing a site visit to a large senior living facility in Maryland, designed by one of the 12 or 13 architects I convinced to present hearing loops to their clients! A great installer in Maryland is lined up to do the job.

Peggy Bell, FL

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In 2012, we had an inaugural event to launch Let's Loop Seattle. Our program included an audiologist, three hearing loop installers, a hearing resource specialist, and our special guest was Dr. David Myers. We invited everyone we could think of and held the program in a newly looped hospital auditorium. Guests included an architect, arts, civic and senior community leaders, audiology students, and Eric Raff, Director of ODHH. Meetings, speaking engagements and installations began soon after. For the next few years, it was all I could do to follow up with the connections made at that event.

Cheri Perazzoli, WA

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The University of Wisconsin was going to spend \$40 million on a new academic building. I went to a community meeting, and I raised my hand and said, "What are you doing for people who are hard of hearing?" The room got very quiet.

There are now several large auditoriums looped at UW Oshkosh, including the Culver Family Welcome Center. It was only one meeting; right! Sometimes, one person can make a significant difference.

Juliëtte Sterkens, WI

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Telecoils and hearing loop technology have been a lifesaver to me. I get a **pristine sound without any room echo**. In places of worship and auditoriums that are looped, I turn on my telecoils, and the speakers are not those sitting around the room; they are right in my hearing aids! The result is a direct and pristine sound with little or no background noise. I can sit in the back row and feel like I am in the front row!

**Telecoils are the most important hearing assistive technology I have, and it is built into my hearing aids. I would not be without it!**

Carolyn Odio, WA

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At every audiologist's office you go to ask if they have a hearing loop you can try. Person-centered care starts at the audiologist's doorstep. Audiologists can open more doors for their patients by activating the telecoils in their hearing aids and showing them how to use them to hear better at the theater, at work, at a religious service, or even at home.

Shari Eberts, NY

As a musician with bilateral hearing loss, music programs in my hearing aid and Bluetooth have addressed many of my tech needs. Now the hearing loop has come along to broaden my options and improve my musical functionality. Performing at a national convention of the Hearing Loss Association of America in Salt Lake City, UT, I accompanied on piano my Canadian colleague, Gael Hannan, in her one-woman show *Life with a Cranky Cochlea*. My task was to hit my cues to match her monologue, yet we were positioned on stage some distance apart. In a huge ballroom with more than 500 in attendance, we could not have been in synch or harmony without the hearing loop - and it and we — performed perfectly.

Stu Nunnery  
Composer, Recording Artist

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When I experienced hearing loops for the first time, seven years after I started using hearing aids, it completely revolutionized my world of hearing. The clarity and proximity of speech is one I never imagined. It significantly improved my understanding of speech and increased my confidence to communicate in challenging settings.

There's truly beauty in hearing sounds well. What's even better than hearing sounds that truly nourishes our faith in places of worship? I certainly hope we can seize this moment and install hearing loops in places of worship.

Ibrahim (Ib) Dabo  
Director of Enterprise Business Systems for Global Ministries,  
the global mission agency of The United Methodist Church

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## **Advocacy Lessons Learned**

Here, in brief, is a little bit of what I've learned from a decade of advocacy for more and better accessibility:

When seeking to get venues to install hearing loops, appeal to decision-makers by explaining the technical superiority of loops and their advantages to both venues and audiences. And do it in person, not by email. While often cited in denials, the cost is usually just a convenient excuse. Remember, where there is a will, there is a way.

Know your rights under the law. They basically boil down to this: Public accommodations are required to provide people with hearing loss an experience *as close as possible* to that enjoyed by the public.

Educate your local and state elected representatives. And do it in person, not by email. Explain that you are among the 20 percent of their constituents who have hearing loss. Propose that they sponsor legislation, such as to require loops in government-funded construction or renovation projects (airports, train stations, schools, libraries, courthouses, etc.).

As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

Jerry Bergman, NY

Note: Jerry Bergman was instrumental in the adoption of ordinances in New York City requiring hearing loop or comparable technology in City-funded construction or renovation projects and open captioning of movies shown in local cinemas and fostering the advent of closed captioning systems for patrons of Broadway theaters.

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# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Juliëtte Sterkens, HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate

**Juliëtte Sterkens**, AuD, Audiologist and HLAA

Hearing Loop Advocate is responsible for hundreds, if not thousands, of hearing loops throughout the US and the world.

Hear the heartfelt story of the first hearing loop she and her husband got installed at a place of worship in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

To watch the video, click on the image or go to:



<https://vimeo.com/500980440>

## Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City

**The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)**, New York City. At MoMA, visitors will find various hearing loop models at the membership, ticket, information, desks, classrooms and creativity labs, and theaters, as well as in various exhibitions with audio components.



Photo courtesy of J6 MediaWorks

MoMA's commitment to accessibility received local and industry news coverage and an award from the HLAA New York City Chapter in recognition of the Museum's Community and Access Programs staff for their outreach to individuals living with hearing loss

### How it happened:

1. Hearing loop advocates in New York City approached and educated MoMA about hearing loops.
2. MoMA then created a task force including external experts and personnel from across MoMA's departments to ensure all possible benefits were gained.
3. A local hearing loop installation company and Contacta Inc., an assistive listening equipment manufacturer and system design consultancy, were chosen to work with the task force.
4. According to Francesca Rosenberg, MoMA's Director of Community Access and School Programs, "MoMA has embraced this technology, so much so that it has become an integral part of our exhibition planning process. We find that many of the artists that we work with are aware of the technology and are excited to incorporate it into their shows."

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Lincoln Center

### Lincoln Center

Lincoln Center Vivian Beaumont, Newhouse and Tow Theaters, as well as the Lincoln Center Box Office, have state-of-the-art hearing loops.

#### How it happened:

HLAA board member Shari Eberts and her husband Ken Eberts funded the installation of the induction hearing loop in the Vivian Beaumont and the Newhouse Theaters.

The induction hearing loop assistive listening system in the Claire Tow Theater was funded by Shari and Ken Eberts, John and Jill Chalsty, and the John Ben Snow Memorial Trust



Photo courtesy of Lincoln Center

## Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, Los Angeles, CA

### Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

Inclusive audio design and accessibility were a priority for every space; hearing loop systems enable sound to be beamed directly into hearing aid devices through a magnetic field within the theaters, public spaces, and the ticket and information booths. Assisted listening systems are integrated into the museum exhibits, enabling sound to be transmitted directly into patrons' hearing aids. Click [HERE](#) for a link to an article about the project.

## hearing loops in theaters

[Return to TOC](#)

# Hearing Loops Success Stories

## Seattle Rep, Seattle, WA

### Seattle Rep

Seattle Rep, a premier theater in Seattle, WA, designed a complete, site-specific hearing loop plan with several types of hearing loops for specific locations — we love it when this happens.

The Rep installed hearing loop systems in their three theater spaces and added built-in counter loops at their box office windows. Portable hearing loops were chosen for the concierge desk, coat check, and pop-up concession counters.

Seattle Rep received local and national news coverage for their efforts and was honored with the Best Practices Award from Northwest Access Fund.

### How it happened:

1. At the invitation of 4 Culture, a countywide arts funder, Hearing Loss Association of America Washington State Association hearing loop advocate Cheri Perazzoli presented at the Cultural Congress, a statewide arts conference. Members of the Seattle Rep Board of Directors saw that presentation.
2. Soon after, Seattle Rep staff asked the Board of Directors for help aiding patrons with hearing loss. Board President, Terri Olson Miller, reached out to Cheri Perazzoli. Perazzoli met with Seattle Rep Managing Director Jeffrey Herrmann, who gave the green light to launch the hearing loop initiative.
3. Perazzoli served as an advisor for the hearing loop installation, encouraging hearing loops throughout the building and helping to plan a public launch event.
4. The hearing loops were funded by 4Culture, Arts Fund, and Seattle Rep.
5. Perazzoli and Seattle Rep also promoted the hearing loop initiative to other arts organizations.



Courtesy of Cheri Perazzoli

## hearing loops in theaters

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# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Transportation

### Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix, AZ

When Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix, AZ, opened the newly modernized Terminal 3 in 2020, travelers found hearing loops at all 25 gate areas and hold rooms to help passengers with telecoil-enabled hearing devices hear announcements.

The systems are connected to the airport's PA system and are arranged in a phased array configuration. This confines each gate's loop signal within its borders and prevents overspill and the confusion that could arise from announcements being overheard.



Sky Harbor Airport

#### How it happened:

1. Representatives from the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (ACDHH) started talking with Sky Harbor Airport stakeholders in 2007!
2. Those conversations continued for several years, and when Terminal 3 was slated for renovation and expansion, ACDHH's great relationship with the airport's ADA Coordinator led to looping at the gates.
3. A deep partnership has evolved with Sky Harbor over the years.
4. "We help Sky Harbor anytime they have an emergency drill by recruiting volunteers with disabilities to assess emergency preparedness during simulated airport evacuations, plane crashes, etc.," said Michele Michaels, the Hearing Healthcare Program Manager for ACDHH. "And beyond hearing loops at all Terminal 3 gates, our partnership led to tablets with Video Relay Systems and CaptionCall at airport customer service counters in 2018. When renovation begins on Terminal 4, we will be watching for more looping of gates to occur!"

#### Additional airports with hearing loops:

Atlanta, GA	Memphis, TN
Austin, TX	Minneapolis, MN
Boston, MA	Muskegon, MI
Detroit, MI	Oshkosh, WI
Eugene, OR	Queens, NY
Ft Wayne, IN	Rochester, NY
Grand Rapids, MI	Santa Barbara, CA
Kalamazoo, MI	Sarasota, FL

Seattle, WA
South Bend, IN
Syracuse, NY

## hearing loops at airports

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Transportation

### The Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

The Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) is believed to be the first public transit agency in the US to install hearing loops **inside** all the new Fleet of the Future train cars. Hearing loops were ordered for all the 775 new BART trains. A pilot project began at its BART Fremont Station in 2017. The station platform level and station agent booths were looped to ensure people with telecoil-enabled hearing devices could access directions and announcements in the noisy environment. Hearing loops continue to be added to agent booths throughout the BART system. By 2022 all station agent booths and customer service centers will have hearing loops installed.

#### How it happened:

1. Janice Armigo Brown experienced hearing loop technology for the first time at the HLAA Convention 2013 in Portland, OR.
2. After learning how hearing loop systems work, Armigo Brown used her BART Accessibility Task Force position to share her knowledge with BART decision-makers.
3. Around the same time, HLAA chapters in the Bay Area and the BART Accessibility Task Force began advocating for hearing loops at BART stations. They enlisted the help of Contacta, Inc., a hearing loop manufacturer, to demonstrate the technology.
4. HLAA chapters in northern California and others in the hearing loss community participated in several hearing loop pilot testing events.

In 2021, HLAA's Get in the Hearing Loop Committee used the BART case study to lobby the US Access Board to include hearing loops in its accessibility guidelines for rail vehicles.



Photo courtesy of Ann Thomas

### New York City

Taxi Cabs, Hearing Access and Innovations  
NY City Transit Authority, 488 subway information booths

## hearing loops in transportation

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Retail

### **Wegmans Food Markets, MA, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA,**

Wegmans Food Markets installed hearing loops at the Service Desk, Pharmacy, and front-end registers.

- **Maryland:** Hunt Valley
- **Massachusetts:** Westwood
- **New Jersey:** Mt. Laurel
- **New York:** Chili-Paul; Mt. Read; Fairport; Calkins Road; John Glenn, Johnson City; Marketplace; Pittsford; and Sheridan Drive
- **Pennsylvania:** Concordville; Downingtown; and Warrington
- **Virginia:** Dulles



#### **How it happened:**

HLAA Rochester Chapter approached Wegmans to educate them about the needs of people with hearing loss and successfully advocated for hearing loops.

"They helped us understand what a difference these systems can make to those with hearing loss. We set up a pilot project, and the HLAA members were our 'test pilots.' They gave us great feedback about what worked well and what didn't. This year, we plan to bring hearing loops to pharmacy counters, service desks, and one or more checkout lanes in every store."

The standard sign indicating the presence of a hearing loop (seen above at left) will appear in areas where loops are active.

Very simply, we want to provide customers with hearing loss a better way to ask questions and get answers, comfortably and easily, when they're in our stores," Wegmans VP of Media Relations Jo Natale.

## **hearing loops at supermarkets**

[Return to TOC](#)

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Retail

### The Grocery Outlet, Springfield, OR

The Grocery Outlet installed hearing loops at all five checkout counters.

#### How it happened:

Grocery Outlet store owner Tracy Hogan began wearing hearing aids. As a hearing aid user, she discovered how difficult it could be to understand in the grocery store. She contacted The Shedd Institute Loop Lane County Initiative and discovered hearing loop technology. They told her about the best way to approach the project; Alan Antilla, a hearing loop installer, even created a special microphone holder to ensure the microphone was always in the correct place.

The Shedd Institute, Loop Lane County Initiative



Photos Courtesy of Alan Antilla

### Kinney Drugs

An advocate filed a complaint against Kinney Drugs (a chain pharmacy store) — about her inability to hear at the counter. Rather than put in run-of-the-mill systems, and tick off the box, the chain sent a person to one of Juliette Sterkens' workshops about hearing loops in Syracuse, NY, and ended up installing sound working systems with clear signage in every one of their pharmacies.

## hearing loops at supermarkets and pharmacies

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# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Places of Worship

### Places of Worship, MI

Places of worship throughout the US recognize that some of their members need help understanding and are installing hearing loops.

#### West Michigan Places of Worship

Two hundred eighty-eight places of worship in west-central Michigan have installed hearing loops to help their people hear the word.

- 93 are in [Holland-Zeeland](#)
- 41 are in [Grand Haven-Muskegon](#)
- 154 are in [Grand Rapids area](#)



Hope Church, Holland, MI

#### How it happened:

This began with a well-publicized 2002 [initiative](#) in the adjoined cities of Holland and Zeeland, Michigan. Worship places and various public and educational institutions were encouraged to make themselves more accessible to their large but largely invisible participants with hearing loss via mailings and a community meeting. With administrative support from the area's community foundation, grants covered up to 40 percent of the installation cost. Local audiologists supported the effort by equipping most of their patients with telecoils.

### Success compounded

Word-of-mouth from delighted people with hearing loss, plus active marketing by a loop provider, then helped spread loops to surrounding cities and public facilities, including Grand Rapids' [airport](#) and convention center, and eastward to North America's most extensive installation—the 12,200 fixed seats of the Michigan State University basketball arena.

See [here](#) for the Holland-Zeeland initiative's goals, strategies, communications, and media publicity.

### Link to hearing loop video in places of worship

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_3XoVrUjfaY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3XoVrUjfaY)

## hearing loops in places of worship

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# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## United Methodist Church Directs Attention to Hearing Loops

### United Methodist Church

Ibrahim (Ib) Dabo authored an article about hearing loss, learning about telecoils and his positive experiences with hearing loops. The article was originally published in United Methodist Congress for the Deaf.

On September 9, 2022, it was republished by [ResourceUMC.org](https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/how-hearing-loops-can-assist-congregants-experiencing-hearing-loss), the online destination for leaders throughout The United Methodist Church, as "How hearing loops can assist congregants experiencing hearing loss.

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/how-hearing-loops-can-assist-congregants-experiencing-hearing-loss>.

### How it happened:

After using hearing aids for 7 years Ib learned about t-coils and hearing loops from Juliëtte Sterkens, HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate. He had them activated in his hearing instruments and used a hearing loop.

"Once I switched my hearing aids to the t-coils program and heard the crisp sound that came through the hearing loop. I lit up with joy and excitement like a kid who had just been handed a bag of candy. I exclaimed: 'Wow! Amazing.'

There's truly beauty in hearing sounds well. For someone who had unknowingly tackled hearing loss for at least 15 years before my diagnosis, I know what it feels like to finally hear sounds clearly.

And what's even better than hearing sounds that truly nourishes our faith in places of worship?"



Ibrahim (Ib) Dabo,  
Director of Enterprise Business Systems for  
Global Ministries, the global mission agency of  
The United Methodist Church

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

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## Audiology Practice and Hearing Aid Centers

### **Kenwood Hearing Centers, CA**

**Kenwood Hearing Centers**, six locations in the San Francisco North Bay, are early pioneers of hearing loops and telecoil-equipped hearing aids. Christine Diles, AuD and Bill Diles, MA began demonstrating hearing loop technology to their patients 20 years ago and launched a program that bundled a home hearing loop in the sale of telecoil equipped hearing aids including installation.

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### **Livingston Hearing Aid Centers, AZ, CO, NM**

Livingston Hearing Aid Centers installed hearing loops in its chain of more than 90 offices and purchased Verifit for telecoil verification and programming.

How it happened:

1. Steve Frazier HLAA Albuquerque, NM advocated for hearing loops in Livingston Hearing Aid Center with owner Richard Davila II.  
[http://www.sofnabq.com/HL\\_Livingston\\_Feature.pdf](http://www.sofnabq.com/HL_Livingston_Feature.pdf)
2. An all-day training session was held to educate the hearing care professionals from the Livingston offices in New Mexico and Arizona. The Session included presentations by consumer advocate Steve Frazier, an installer Romy Pierce, Amanda Edwards Starkey Hearing Technology, and Juliëtte Sterkens, AuD, HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate. Dr. Sterkens discussed the adjustment of telecoils for hearing loop use and then conducted a hands-on session using several Audioscan Verifit devices. These devices employ state-of-the-art technology to verify hearing aid settings, including those for telecoils and Bluetooth.
3. Initiated a telecoil best practices program to ensure telecoils are appropriately programmed to use in a hearing loop.

## **hearing loops in audiology and hearing aid practices**

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## University of Virginia

### The University of Virginia

The University of Virginia has multiple hearing loop installations. They believe, "The installation of a hearing loop should be your first consideration when choosing an assistive listening system (ALS)." Kristin Roush, an audiologist, and Lori Kressin, an administrator both in the Office of Accessibility, are steadfast looping advocates.



### How it happened:

1. Several hearing loop advocates from the HLAA Virginia chapters met with building officials at UVA to advocate for hearing loops in early 2000.
2. Larry Herbert was doing some small area loop installations at the time and was asked to loop the forum room at the Miller Center for Public Affairs, an adjunct UVA facility.
3. Shortly afterward, the most iconic building at the UVA, the Rotunda, was being renovated and university administrators reached out to the contractor about installing hearing loops during the renovation. Larry Herbert put him in touch with an experienced installer and nine rooms in the facility were looped.
4. The Rotunda hearing loop installation was celebrated by having Juliëtte Sterkens, AuD, HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate, give a presentation to the students from the School of Education in the Dome Room.

<https://www.civiltomorrow.org/articles/uva-rotunda-adds-hearing-technology>

## hearing loops in schools

[Return to TOC](#)

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Sample of Schools

<b>Hope College, Holland, MI</b>	<b>HOPE College, Holland</b> Multiple locations <a href="https://davidmyers.org/uploads/HopeLoops.pdf">https://davidmyers.org/uploads/HopeLoops.pdf</a>
<b>The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA</b>	<b>University of Iowa, Iowa City</b> with 19 hearing loop systems installed in 13 different buildings, including Hancher Auditorium, with more on the horizon.
<b>Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI</b>	<b>Michigan State University, East Lansing</b> Jack Breslin Student Event Center, the largest hearing loop installation in North. America, 14,759 seats <a href="https://hearingreview.com/inside-hearing/events/in-the-loop-big-time-michigan-state-universitys-breslin-center">https://hearingreview.com/inside-hearing/events/in-the-loop-big-time-michigan-state-universitys-breslin-center</a>
<b>Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN</b>	<b>Purdue University, West Lafayette</b> Elliot Hall has a large hearing loops installation, with 6005 seats.
<b>The University of Nebraska, Kearney, NB</b>	<b>University of Nebraska, Kearney</b> <a href="https://unknews.unk.edu/2019/07/31/unk-installs-system-serving-those-with-hearing-loss/">https://unknews.unk.edu/2019/07/31/unk-installs-system-serving-those-with-hearing-loss/</a>
<b>University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA</b>	<b>University of Virginia, Charlottesville</b> Multiple locations <a href="https://provost.virginia.edu/subsite/coaa/hearing-loop">https://provost.virginia.edu/subsite/coaa/hearing-loop</a>
<b>The University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, WI</b>	<b>University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh</b> Alumni Welcome Conference Center
<b>Grinnell High School, Grinnell, IA</b>	<b>Grinnell High School, Grinnell</b> Auditorium
<b>Sunnyvale Middle School, Lafayette, IN</b>	<b>Sunnyvale Middle School, Lafayette</b>

## hearing loops in schools

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# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## US Supreme Court

### The US Supreme Court

The US Supreme Court installed a hearing loop in the summer of 2014.

HLAA Saratoga Chapter advocate, retired attorney Richard Williams, who has argued before the US Supreme Court wrote and provided materials to the Supreme Court Marshal and the Architect of the Capitol to loop the Supreme Court Chamber after a visit where, even with hearing aids, he could not understand the words spoken. He requested they install a hearing loop, which they did.



A court spokesperson said, "they received positive feedback and guests feel more comfortable that their hearing loss is not called to the attention of others, our system eliminates distracting sound amplification, and there is less work for Court employees who no longer have to issue Court-provided receivers."

## hearing loops in courts

[Return to TOC](#)

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Government

<b>Federal</b>	
US Supreme Court	<a href="https://www.supremecourt.gov/visiting/accessibility.aspx">https://www.supremecourt.gov/visiting/accessibility.aspx</a>
Capitol	House and Senate Galleries <a href="https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/visitor-resources/accessibility-services">https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/visitor-resources/accessibility-services</a>
US Court of Appeals, 10 <sup>th</sup> Circuit, Denver, CO	Courtrooms I and IV are equipped with an Ampetronic hearing loop system, which streams courtroom audio directly to hearing-loop-compatible cochlear implants or hearing aids. The user needs only enable the T-Coil setting on their device to activate. <a href="https://www.ca10.uscourts.gov/clerk/disability-access">https://www.ca10.uscourts.gov/clerk/disability-access</a>
<b>State Capitols</b>	
Rhode Island	House and Senate chambers and meeting rooms
Arizona	House and Senate Chambers, Visitors Gallery, and all meeting rooms
Massachusetts, Massachusetts State House	Room 428, Hearing Room A1, Hearing Room A2, Hearing Room B1, Hearing Room B2, Gardner Auditorium, House Viewing Gallery
Colorado	Old Supreme Court Chamber

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## An Empowered City — New York City

New York is becoming the model city in the US for providing communication access via hearing loops. They have them in Taxi on Broadway, and a building code mandating them in new construction. The Port Authority of NY and NJ will require airline gates and information counters at airports and bus, rail, and ferry facilities to have hearing loops.

Listed below are some of the locations.

[American Museum of Natural History](#)

[Ellis Island](#)

[Frick Collection](#)

[Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum](#)

[Jewish Museum](#)

[Lower East Side Tenement Museum](#)

[MTA Accessible Station Lab Program](#)

[Museum of Modern Art](#)

[New York Botanical Garden](#)

[New York Historical Society](#)

[Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum](#)

[Statue of Liberty](#)

[David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center](#)

[Gershwin Theatre](#)

[Lunt-Fontanne Theatre](#)

[Minskoff Theatre](#)

[Richard Rodgers Theatre](#)

[Lincoln Center](#)

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## Documentaries

[Lost in Sound](#), a one-woman show created and performed by playwright and hearing loss advocate Kimberly Parker. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yv50vgpTUAc>

[We Hear You | Now Hear Us](#), an award-winning documentary short, shines a light on the experience of living with hearing loss. <https://www.we-hearyou.com/>

# Hearing Loop Success Stories

# Let's Loop America

## Success Breeds Success

In many parts of the country, communication access via hearing loops is spreading through word of mouth.

California



Colorado

Eugene, OR



Florida

Indiana

Kearney, NB



Michigan

New Mexico



New York

New York, NY



Ohio

Oklahoma

Rochester, NY

Texas

Washington

Wisconsin



# Hearing Loop Success Stories

## Google Maps Adds Hearing Loops

The HLAA GITHL committee asked Google to add hearing loops to the accessibility attributes in Google Maps so people with hearing loss could know if a hearing loop was available before they visited a place.

They recently added the new accessibility attribute for installed hearing loop systems called **Assistive Hearing Loop**. The new feature can be found in the **ABOUT** section under Accessibility.

**HLAA**  
GET IN THE  
**HEARING  
LOOP**

**5 Actions to Promote Hearing Loops on Google Maps**

**We need your help!**

Hearing loops are the most user-friendly assistive listening option and the first choice for many people. Even in acoustically challenging spaces, a hearing loop lets people participate more fully in daily activities.

Google Maps has launched a new accessibility attribute, Assistive Hearing Loops. When a location provides a hearing loop, it is visible in the Google Maps **About** section. We need your help getting the word out about how life-changing hearing loops are and helping people with hearing loss find and use them. Choose what you would like to do!

**5 Actions You Can Take**

1. **Know B4 You Go.** On your smartphone, learn how to find out if a place has a hearing loop. Then show someone else.
2. **Provide a review.** After using a hearing loop, open Google Maps to:
  - a. Provide a review with a rating and comments about your experience.
  - b. Take and upload a photo that includes the International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss with a T indicating a hearing loop. The symbol is commonly blue in the U.S. Try to identify details about the location in your photo.

Love the hearing loop!

Detroit Metro Airport,  
Detroit, MI

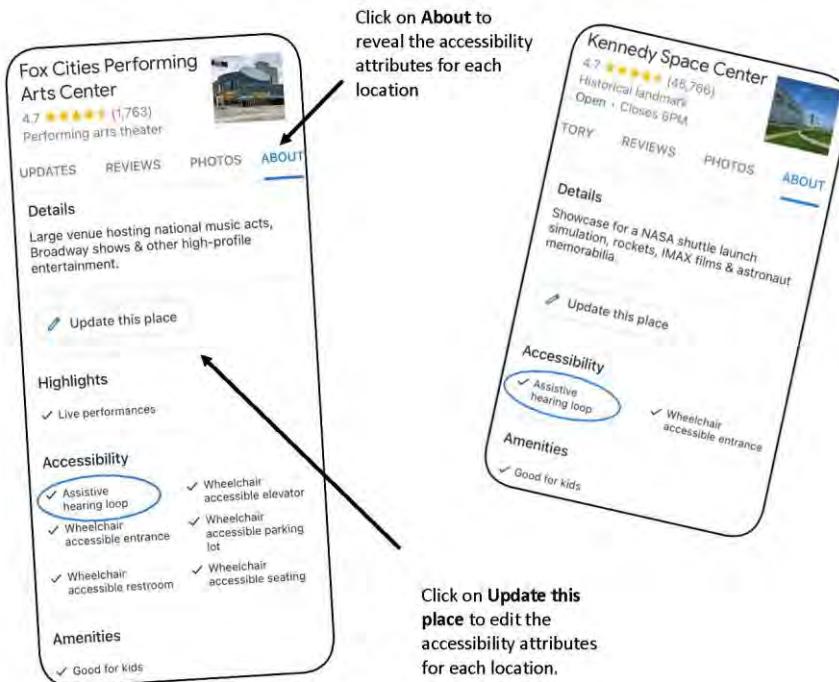
First Congregational  
Church, Boulder, CO

- a. Thank them for having a hearing loop.
- b. Encourage them to put hearing loop information on their website with a brief explanation. Include the image of the International Symbol of Access for Hearing Loss with a T indicating a hearing loop.

301.657.2248 • [hearingloss.org](http://hearingloss.org) • [GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org](mailto:GITHLinfo@hearingloss.org)

[Return to TOC](#)

- Are you aware of a hearing loop that isn't listed in Google Maps? Please let us and Google Maps know!
  - Submit hearing loop location information using our online form, [hearingloss.org/HearingLoopLocations](http://hearingloss.org/HearingLoopLocations).
  - In Google Maps, click on **Update this Place**.
- Spread the word.** Share your positive personal experience story about using Google Maps in your community to help others understand the importance of knowing before you go.



The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is the nation's foremost organization representing people with hearing loss. The mission of HLAA is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support, and advocacy. For more information about HLAA's Get in the Hearing Loop Program, including a free toolkit, visit [hearingloss.org/GITHL](http://hearingloss.org/GITHL).

Photos courtesy of Juliëtte Sterkens and Wynne Whyman.

## hearing loops in Google Maps

# URLs of Important Links

Blue text is hyperlinked

HLAA GITHL groups.io—<https://hlaagroups.hearingloss.org>

## GITHL Toolkit Handbook

- **GITHL Toolkit Checklist**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/githl-toolkit-checklist.pdf>

## Literature

- **Hearing Loss Facts and Statistics**  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wpcontent/uploads/HLAA\\_Hearing\\_Loss\\_Facts\\_and\\_Statistics.pdf](https://www.hearingloss.org/wpcontent/uploads/HLAA_Hearing_Loss_Facts_and_Statistics.pdf)
- **Are You Hearing Everything You Could?**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/are-you-hearing-everything-you-could.pdf>
- **A Guide to Understanding Hearing Loops**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/guide-to-understanding-hearing-loops.pdf>
- **GITHL Brochure for Venues**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/githl-brochure-for-venues.pdf>
- **Providing ADA Mandated Communication Access**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/providing-ada-mandated-communication-access.pdf>
- **How Does a Hearing Loop Work?** — International Hearing Loop Manufacturer's Association (IHLMA)  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/providing-ada-mandated-communication-access.pdf>
- **Best Practices for Hearing Loop Installation**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/best-practices-to-install-a-hearing-loop-system-that-meets-the-iec-standard.pdf>
- **Assistive Listening System Checklist**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/Assistive-Listening-System-Checklist.pdf>
- **Best Practices to Install a Hearing Loop System that Meets the IEC Standard**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/best-practices-to-install-a-hearing-loop-system-that-meets-the-iec-standard.pdf>
- **Why Meet the IEC Standard for Hearing Loop System Installation?**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/why-meet-the-iec-standard-for-hearing-loop-system-installation.pdf>
- **Summary 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/summary-2010-ada-standards-for-accessible-design-final.pdf>

## Logo, Signage, Postcards, Small Cards, and Posters

### GITHL Logo, poster

- **PDF version,**  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_Logo\\_Poster.pdf?pdf=GITHLlogo](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_Logo_Poster.pdf?pdf=GITHLlogo)
- **JPG version,** [https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_Logo\\_Poster.jpg](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_Logo_Poster.jpg)

- **GITHL logo, branding**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/githl-logo-branding.pdf> Signage, need URL
- **Sample Signage**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/sample-signage.pdf>
- **Ask Your Audiologist, postcard**  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_AskYourAudiologist\\_postcard.pdf?pdf=AskAud](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_AskYourAudiologist_postcard.pdf?pdf=AskAud)
- **HEAR HERE, postcard**  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_Hear\\_Here.pdf?pdf=HearHerePostcard](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_Hear_Here.pdf?pdf=HearHerePostcard)
- **Ask for Hearing Loops, a small card**  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_Ask\\_Hearing\\_Loops\\_smallcard.pdf](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_Ask_Hearing_Loops_smallcard.pdf)
  - **Hearing Loop Educational Posters—20” x 30”**  
Note: Do not select enhance color if printing from COSTCO.
    - **PDF version** (includes two pages)  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_Hearing\\_Loop\\_Posters.pdf?pdf=GITHLposters](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_Hearing_Loop_Posters.pdf?pdf=GITHLposters)
    - **JPG version (page 1)**  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_Hearing\\_Loop\\_Posters\\_pg1.jpg](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_Hearing_Loop_Posters_pg1.jpg)
    - **JPG version (page 2)**  
[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL\\_Hearing\\_Loop\\_Posters\\_pg2.jpg](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL_Hearing_Loop_Posters_pg2.jpg)

## Additional Information

- **Sample Request for Communication Access for People with Hearing Loss**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/GITHL-sample-request-for-california-letter.pdf>
- **Comparison of Large Area Assistive Listening Systems**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/comparison-of-large-area-assistive-listening-systems.pdf>
- **Theater or Concert Hall Sound Mixing for People with Hearing Loss**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/theater-or-concert-hall-sound-mixing-for-people-with-hearing-loss.pdf>
- **Sample Request for Proposal for Hearing Loop System**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/sample-request-for-proposal-for-hearing-loop-system.pdf>
- **Basic Hearing Loop PowerPoint Presentation Sample**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HLAA-basic-hearing-loop-presentation.pdf>
- **Presentation Notes for Basic Hearing Loop Presentation Slides**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HLAA-basic-hearing-loop-presentiation-slides-notes.pdf>
- **5 Actions to Promote Hearing Loops on Google Maps**  
<https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/5-actions-to-promote-hearing-loops-on-google-maps.pdf>
- **International Hearing Loop Manufacturers Association, IHLMA**  
<https://ihlma.org>
- **IHLMA Assistive Listening Technologies Guide**  
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