

30 important accessibility considerations for an event venue




It is important to visit an event venue before shortlisting it. The following basic physical accessibility considerations will help you with your decision. An Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) may be consulted for a broader accessibility assessment.



Unfortunately, fully accessible venues are still hard to find. Try to go through the points below and make sure to address as many as possible.




Accessing the venue

1. A guide is prepared that includes directions, access and transport to the venue to inform participants not familiar with the location.
2. Preferably there should be accessible (public) transport available to reach the venue.
3. The pedestrian pathway from the gate to the building should be obstruction-free, separate from the carriageway, and step-free. Curb ramps should be present where there is a level difference between the pathway and the road. Preferably tactile way guidance tile may be present from the compound gate to the venue building.
4. Clear signage indicating the route to the main entrance. Preferable tactile way guidance should be provided till the entrance.
5. The alighting area should be present close to the building entrance. The alighting area must allow vehicles to halt for a longer time to allow persons with disabilities to get off.
6. For persons arriving by their personal vehicle, reserved accessible parking bays should be available close to the accessible entrance and clearly signposted.

	<p>Entrance and wayfinding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The main entrance to the venue building should preferably be the same for all participants. If the accessible parking is different, then it should be well signed. The entrance should be at least 90 cm wide and be step-free. If there are steps, then a ramp should be provided as an additional route. 8. The receptionist should be able to guide all participants to the meeting room. Information on disability-sensitive language and interaction is shared with the person beforehand. Preferably the receptionist should be able to communicate in Sign Language. 9. Clear signage directing to the meeting room should be available. Signage should be present directing to all other areas in the building where the participants are expected to go (restroom, cafeteria, breakout area etc). Signage with simple icons is preferred for persons with intellectual disabilities. Support staff to guide participants to the venue can be useful. 10. The venue must allow service animals. There should be open spaces that can be used by the service animals to relieve.
	<p>Circulation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. There should be wide circulation corridors that are minimally 1.5 m wide to allow wheelchair users to move around easily. Corridors should be obstruction free and not have planters or furniture etc. that can get in the way. The route should be uncomplicated and straightforward. 12. All entrance doors should ideally be at least 90 cm wide. 13. There should be an elevator minimally 1.1 m wide and 1.4 m deep (or an eight-person elevator) available to access higher floors. It should have an audio and visual floor announcement system. Call buttons and the control panel buttons should be accessible to wheelchair users and have Braille or be tactile.
	<p>Meeting Room</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. The main meeting room should be as accessible as possible. The room should not be complicated to find or behind many heavy doors.

	<p>15. There should be quiet areas and breakout rooms, try to have them on the same floor as the meeting room.</p> <p>16. The main meeting room should be large enough to accommodate all participants and allow adequate circulation for wheelchair users.</p> <p>17. The room preferably should not have fixed seating however in case it does then remove some seats for wheelchair users. The chairs should be comfortable. If the chairs are revolving with wheels, ensure there are some without wheels that do not rotate. Have a choice of chairs with and without armrests.</p> <p>18. Worktables should have sufficient knee space for a wheelchair user. If available, use tables of adaptable height.</p> <p>19. The room should have good acoustics without an echo as that would be difficult for persons with hearing impairments.</p> <p>20. The room should be well and evenly lit without casting shadows or glare.</p> <p>21. In case there is a podium ensure there is a ramp (even if it is a temporary ramp) to allow wheelchair users to get on. The ramp must preferably have tactile edges for the safety of persons with visual impairments.</p> <p>22. Participants with disabilities must be able to easily access the building's internet to allow them to use their assistive devices. Additionally, there are adequate plug points for participants to charge their devices.</p>
	<p>Accessible toilet</p> <p>23. There should be a minimum of one, preferably more, fully accessible toilets available for participants with disabilities on the same floor close to the meeting room. Such accessible toilets should comply with the accessibility standards of the country.</p>
	<p>Catering facility</p> <p>24. The dining area should preferably be on the same floor or be accessible by an elevator.</p> <p>25. It should be clear what kind of food is going to be served, e.g. with clear signage, menu or by communicating before the break.</p>

	<p>26. The dining area should be large enough to accommodate all participants and allow circulation space for wheelchair users.</p> <p>27. Service staff should be sensitised and available to support persons with disabilities if required.</p>
	<p>Emergency procedures</p> <p>28. Check whether the venue has an evacuation procedure in place for evacuating persons with disabilities, including wheelchair users. This would include staff training in evacuating them.</p> <p>29. Emergency alarms should be both visual and audible.</p> <p>30. Participants should be explained the evacuation procedure at the beginning of the meeting by the venue management.</p>