

Arts Accessibility: The Brief Accessibility Checklist

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**National Endowment for the Arts
Office of Accessibility**

About the NEA

- [Established by Congress in 1965](#), the National Endowment for the Arts is an independent federal agency that is the largest funder of the arts and arts education in communities nationwide and a catalyst of public and private support for the arts.

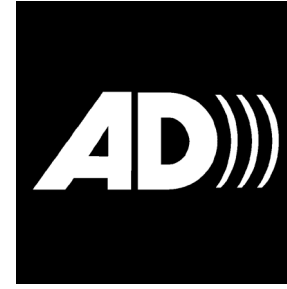
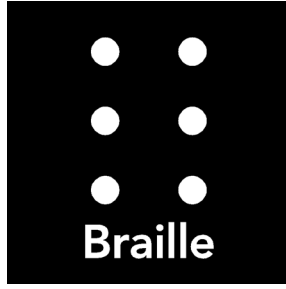
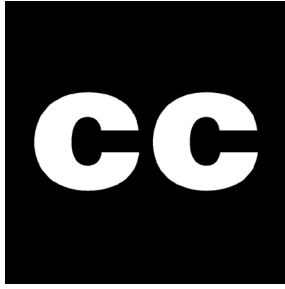
NEA Office of Accessibility

We provide:

- **Resources** to help make the arts accessible for people with disabilities, veterans, older adults, and those living in institutional settings
- **Technical assistance & training** to:
 - applicants, grantees, artists with disabilities
 - NEA staff
 - State Arts Agency & Regional Arts Org staff

Agenda

- Accessibility Laws and Regulations
- NEA Brief Accessibility Checklist and best practices
- Resources



Accessibility Laws and Regulations

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs:

- **Conducted by** federal agencies
(e.g. NEA events)
- **Receiving** federal financial assistance
(e.g. NEA grantees, **some state arts agency grantees**, etc.)

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

Prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities (amended in 2008)

- **Title II** – State and local government services (State Arts Agencies, Local Arts Agencies)
- **Title III** – Public accommodations & services, private organizations, commercial facilities, transportation (e.g., museums, performing arts centers, theaters, galleries, classrooms, outdoor spaces, etc.)

NEA Brief Accessibility Checklist

- Brief Accessibility Checklist – a user-friendly tool to assist you in making your organization and project inclusive and available to everyone.
- If you are a NEA or SAA grantee, this checklist is not a substitute for completing the agency's Section 504 Self-evaluation Workbook.

NEA Brief Accessibility Checklist

Physical Accessibility

Brief Accessibility Checklist

Federally funded projects must be accessible to people with disabilities. The National Endowment for the Arts requires applicants to consider physical and programmatic accessibility as an integral part of each project's planning and budgeting process. Applicants may include the cost of access accommodations as part of their project's budget, including sign language interpreters and audio describers. Applicants may also consider conducting programs in accessible venues other than their own organization in order to meet accessibility requirements.

The information below is a user-friendly tool for your confidential use to assist you in making your organization and project inclusive and available to everyone. The checklist includes links to a wide variety of resources. If you are a grantee of the National Endowment for the Arts, this checklist is not a substitute for completing the agency's [Section 504 Self-evaluation Workbook](#).

We recommend you first review the NEA's the [Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook](#).

Project's Physical Access

- Ground-level entry, ramped access, and/or elevators to the venue
- Signage at inaccessible entrances with directions to accessible entrances
- Integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in assembly areas
- Wheelchair-accessible box office, stage, and dressing rooms
- Wheelchair-accessible display cases, exhibit areas, and counters
- Wheelchair-accessible restrooms, including accessible sinks, water fountains, and soap & paper dispensers
- Wheelchair-accessible toilet stall, including a 60" diameter or T-turn clear floor space, free of the door swing
- Accessible emergency exits and audio/visual emergency alarms
- Designated accessible parking spaces with adjoining curb cuts, and an accessible route from parking to the venue entrance

Physical Accessibility

- Ground-level/no-step entry, ramped access, and/or elevators to project facilities and outdoor spaces
- Directional signage for accessible entrances, paths, etc.
- Integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in meeting/assembly areas
- Wheelchair accessible box office, stage/backstage, meeting, and dressing rooms

Physical Accessibility - Examples

- Wheelchair-accessible display cases, exhibit areas, counters
- Wheelchair accessible restrooms and water fountains
- Accessible emergency exits and audio/visual emergency alarms
- Accessible parking

Physical Accessibility – Participants and Artists

- Accessible studios, classrooms, work spaces
- Accessible artist residency studios and living spaces

Organization and Project's Communication Access

- [Organization has a designated staff member who is responsible for overseeing accessibility and Section 504/ADA compliance](#)
- [Organization has a stated policy or mission statement regarding accessibility](#)
- [Organization has an Access Committee that includes people with various disabilities to advise on access issues](#)
- [Sign language interpretation](#)
- Scripts and text of verbal presentations
- [Assistive listening system](#)
- [Open or Closed captioning](#) of audio visuals
- [Audio description](#) of visual art, media, performances, or other presentations
- Print materials in alternate formats, including Braille, computer disk, and large print
- [Large-print labeling with high contrast](#)
- [Accessible Website](#) (including alt tags & captioned audio)
- [Tactile tours](#)
- TDD, telephone/typewriter
- Access information/accommodations with [appropriate disability symbols](#) are included in all publicity about the project (i.e., press release, program, media, e-mail)

NEA Brief Accessibility Checklist Program Accessibility

Organizational Commitment to Accessibility

- Organization has a dedicated staff person to oversee accessibility and Section 504/ADA compliance.
- Organization has an accessibility statement and related policies.
- Organization has an access advisory committee.

Promoting Access Services

- Include in all publicity about the project (i.e., press release, program, media, e-mail) the
 - Access information/accommodations with appropriate disability symbols and
 - Contact information for requests

Communication Access

- Sign language (ASL) interpretation
- Transcription
- Assistive listening devices
- Captioning (open, closed, real time-CART)
- Audio/Visual description
- Alternate formats of print materials (large print, Braille)
- Tactile opportunities

Program Accessibility – More Examples

- Accessible electronic materials and websites
- Plain Language (3rd-5th grade level)
- Sensory-friendly programming (reduced lights and sounds, warnings for strobes, fragrance free)
- Schedule time for breaks
- Quiet hours/spaces
- Pre-visit materials (Social Stories)

Electronic Accessibility

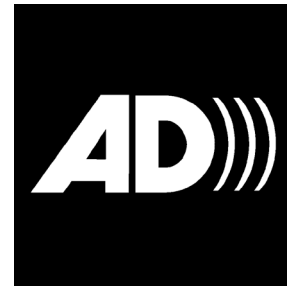
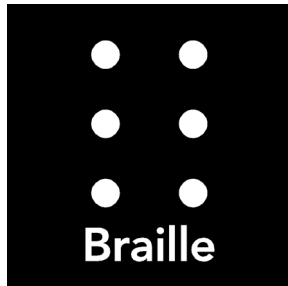
Websites, Meetings, Film, Videos, Podcasts

- Screen reader navigation, tab controlled
- Alternative text for images (“alt tags”)
- Accessible fonts, color contrast
- Captioning (open/closed), transcriptions
- ASL interpretation
- Audio/Visual description

“Nothing About Us Without Us”

Ensure that people with disabilities are represented throughout your organization:

- Boards, staff, volunteers, panels, committees, etc.
- Conduct a community needs assessment
- Partner with organizations serving people with disabilities
- Engage artists with disabilities and disability community



Resources and NEA funding

NEA Accessibility Resources

- [Brief Accessibility Checklist](#)
- [NEA Office of Accessibility Resources](#)
- [Section 504 Self-Evaluation Workbook](#)
- [Webinar – Accessibility Compliance Requirements for NEA Grantees](#)
- [Downloadable Accessibility Symbols](#)

NEA Funding

- **Grants for Arts Projects and Challenge America** grant opportunities www.arts.gov/grants
 - New guidelines for 2023 funding opportunities coming in December 2022
 - Subscribe to our newsletter on our website to be notified (see bottom of main page) www.arts.gov

Reach out to us!

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