

Cultural Accessibility for People with Disabilities

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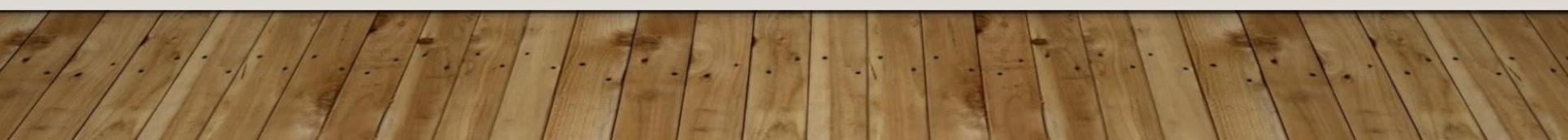
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Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium (CCAC)

- Volunteer-run nonprofit
- **Mission:** Empower Chicago's cultural spaces to become more accessible to visitors with disabilities
- CCAC achieves this mission by providing:
 1. Professional development workshops,
 2. Free accessible equipment loans,
 3. An Access Calendar.
- Email me to join our list-serv and to learn about future professional development workshops!

What is disability?

From The Nora Project:

- A disability is a difference in the way a person moves, communicates, feels, and/or processes information.
 - It's a difference in the way they complete the tasks of daily life.
 - There's nothing good or bad about disability. It's a form of human diversity.
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**Disability is a normal part
of the human experience.**



What is disability? Cont'd

- The World Health Organization (WHO) defines **disability as a contextual variable**, dynamic over time and in relation to circumstances.
- One is **more or less disabled** based on the interaction between the person and the individual, institutional and social environments.
- Based on the Social Model of Disability

Disability Fast Facts

- Nearly **1 in 4 American adults** has some type of disability.
- This percentage is expected to grow as we age and live longer.
- African Americans are more likely than Non-Hispanic Whites to have a disability in every age group.*
- Anyone may join the disability community at any time - temporarily or permanently.
- Many disabilities are not apparent.
- People may have multiple disabilities, especially through aging.
- All disabilities exist on a spectrum.

What is Ableism?

“Ableism is a system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, excellence, and productivity.”

-- Talila Lewis and Dustin Gibson

What values and ideas about what’s “normal” do you hold that may unconsciously perpetuate ableist attitudes?



Museum and theatre staff * will likely encounter disabled people at every event, performance or tour each day.

* who may be disabled, too!



Getting Started or Moving Forward

- Establish priorities with a self-evaluation and track future priorities.
- Determine Access Point Person (it might be you!)
- Include Statement of Welcome for all events and programs
- Describe your accessibility for guests
- Incorporate accessibility talking points into ongoing training for staff and volunteers
- Find internal and external allies
- Model accessibility (e.g., visual description of yourself when introducing yourself, enable captions in Zoom meetings)

Taking The Next Step

- Be thoughtful and intentional. But **DO SOMETHING**.
- Accessibility does not need to be a big initiative. Start small and scale up.
- Identify 1-2 goals for improving accessibility in the next year.
- If you meet those goals, then add more.
- Cultural accessibility colleagues are open and want to share resources with you. Ask for help!

Accessibility is a **journey** and
not a **destination**.



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