

Tips for Inclusive and Accessible Meetings

General Guidelines for Inclusive Meetings

- Distribute agenda, slides, and other materials in advance.
- Set the stage for inclusive discussion by sharing “Rules of Engagement.”
- As a meeting host, encourage turn-taking and do not allow participants to speak over each other.
- Capture actions/minutes and share with all participants after the meeting.
- Consider direct email or phone conversations instead of large meetings for topics and discussions where people might prefer to speak privately.

Considerations for Inclusive Global Meetings

- Language:
 - Allow for additional time for questions and comments in meetings where participants may not be speaking their first language.
- Timing:
 - Be aware of holidays, working weeks, and daylight-saving time for availability.
 - Use a global time and date planner to find the best times to accommodate a range of time zones.
 - Use globally understood date formats to avoid confusion (e.g., 9th April instead of 4/9/2023 or 9/4/2023)
 - Remember that time and seasons are not globally universal (e.g., when it is summer in the northern hemisphere it is winter in the southern hemisphere, and vice versa.)

Ensuring Accessibility at Meetings

Prior to a meeting:

- Split the meeting agenda into separate sessions or allow breaks as needed.
- For virtual meetings, prepare participants in advance by identifying which features will be used, such as: Chat, Desktop sharing, Whiteboard, Breakout rooms, etc.

During a meeting:

- As a meeting leader, acknowledge everyone in the room.
- Activate captions on any video used in meetings.
- When demonstrating something, specifically identify what you are clicking on. Don’t just say, “click here.”
- Describe images and charts when presenting.
- Ask meeting participants to state their name each time they speak. This is helpful for people with visual and auditory disabilities to identify who is speaking and also helps sign language interpreters and captioners.
- Create pauses during and between agenda items or activities, so participants using captions or sign language interpreters can catch up.
- Repeat questions spoken by the audience or posted in chat before responding.

Accessibility Resources

- [American Printing House for the Blind](#) offers a ranges of resources including:
 - APH Guidelines for the Development of Documents in Large Print
 - APH Accessible Tools for WFH
 - APH Presentation Resources
 - PowerPoint Accessibility
- Cornell University [Accessible Meeting and Event Checklist](#)
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Technology Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center [Accessibility Tips for a Better Zoom/Virtual Meeting](#) Experience
- How to [Make Your Virtual Meetings and Events Accessible to the Disability Community](#)
- [DisabilityIN](#) is a resource for business disability inclusion worldwide.