

The
**TRANS
DIMENSION**

**Guide to
Inclusive
Events**

This zine is an act of care. It is the result of deliberate and enduring collaboration rooted in the idea that there is no single answer to the question ‘how can we improve access to our spaces?’

It was produced by and for trans/non-binary and disabled people.

The project was led by Geeks for Social Change in collaboration with Sarah Joynt-Bowe from Prosocial Strat and was deeply informed by the generous and thoughtful contributions of volunteers and supporters of Gendered Intelligence and members of Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People.

When we asked our collaborators for affirming or positive experiences they’ve had at events we heard “*The best I’ve had is mediocre.*” We want to believe that this is not because of a lack of understanding and responsibility, but for a lack of guidance and resources. Hopefully this zine will help.

What this zine is for

We originally thought we would be able to boil down accessibility to a few yes/no key questions about things like toilets and hearing loops.

The more we talked to fellow trans and disabled people, the more we found that this wasn't really a thing that could be simplified. And most of the time, these things were out of the reach of event organizers, (who are often trans and disabled themselves), to do anything about.

For example: gender neutral toilets are no help if they're not also accessible, the door staff are transphobic, or the event doesn't have long enough breaks for wheelchair users to actually use them.

All we can really do is try to make things better. We want this to be a care oriented process — that means people shouldn't feel bad for not being able to accommodate everyone, because universal accessibility is a myth anyway.

This zine therefore aims to help you do two things:

1. Have a conversation with your group about what accessibility looks like for you — some talking points for your next meeting.
2. Create an accessibility statement to share with the world — this is the starting point from which we can try and create a more inclusive world, together.



What people have said

Describe an affirming or positive experience you had at an event.

“The best I’ve had is mediocre. As an NB trans woman that is basically the best I can hope for — not being thrown out because I happen to have a penis and being allowed to be the only f****r there.”

“Gender neutral toilets! Everyone tells you their pronouns.”

“People just accepting what I say my identity is. That’s all.”

“When organisers volunteer as much information as they can so that people are able to make good choices.”

If you feel comfortable, describe a bad experience you’ve had at an event.

“Anywhere I go where my name is questioned is enough to tell me whether it’s inclusive.”

“Stood at a bar with a friend, and a person comes up to ask if I’m tv or cd [transvestite or cross dresser], then he asks if I’m pre or post op. I’m literally just having a drink with a friend.”

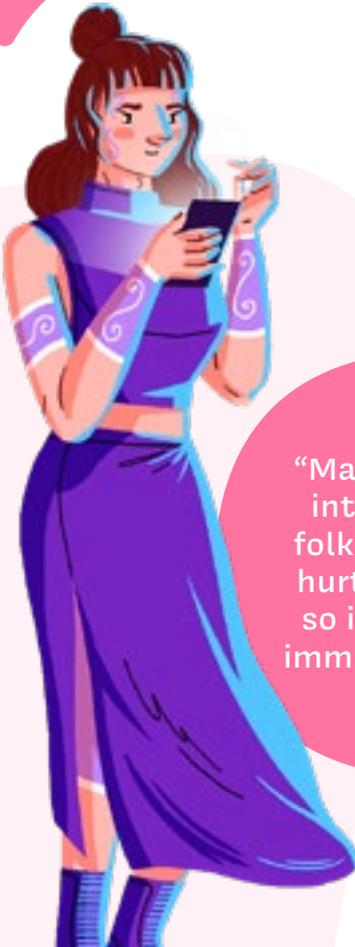
What else do we need to know about making events trans inclusive?

“There has to be safe access to toilets for trans people and the guests at said event have to be able to be respectful to each other, including calling people the correct name/pronouns they actually want to be called.”

“Accessibility isn’t just about the physical environment. Sometimes it’s about the attitude of the people inside.”

“It’s cool when we have event ground rules that include accepting what people say their gender is. And that they remember some of us are disabled”

“Make bold choices with integrity that protect folks. Don’t let folks get hurt just because doing so is *nice* to the people immediately around you.”

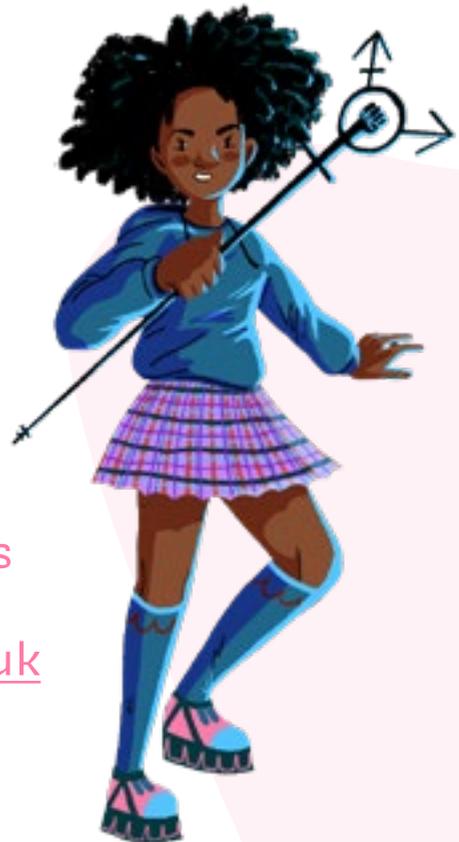


Part 1: Accessibility Guide

“I can join in”

Access is personal. There are no hard and fast rules. It's important to remember that what makes an event accessible to one person may make it impossible for another.

All we can do is approach this with transparency and care for our communities. This document is a working and evolving guide to what makes events accessible for our community. We welcome any additions or feedback via info@transdimension.uk



What is accessibility?

Accessibility is about sharing the labour. People in our communities are already making extra effort to access spaces every day. Our job is to lower barriers to participation for our groups and events.

We want our community to be able to participate fully. And for everyone who wishes to participate to bring themselves authentically and safely.

What should I be thinking about?

- Don't assume you know what access or inclusivity looks like. Remember there's no such thing as 'fully accessible'.
- Make it clear who the space/event is for and how you will prioritise them — transparency is the key to getting it right more often.
- Check back in with your community, often, and see if what you're doing is working.

[when thinking about toilets] “Most importantly a disabled access toilet is one that is in use and not filled with storage, and hasn't got its assistance pull-cord tied up out of reach”

“Don't just say a venue is accessible — instead, say if it has or does not have different things, and then I can determine if it is accessible for me!”

Before the event

- Produce **plain English/easy read** versions of event information
- **Clearly outline** your access accommodations (don't hide limitations)
- Clarify your **gender inclusion** policy
- Give **multiple ways for people to communicate** their needs (including email, form, text, and a person at the event)
- If possible, offer **funding** (both for the attendee and their PA)
- Consider varying the **timing** of your events (some in the day, some in the evening)
- Make **transport** options clear (getting to and from)
- Offer **wayfinding** support in advance (consider a video tour)
- Make it very clear if there will be **alcohol** at the event
- Encourage your venue to invest in **staff accessibility training** to avoid common miscommunications and oppressive treatment
- Discuss what you would do in a **medical emergency**. Some things to consider: is anyone first aid trained? Do you have a first aid kit, epi-pen, narcan, or other emergency meds on hand?
- Consider what **mental health** scenarios might arise at your event, and what your response would be. Be aware of how some structurally disadvantaged groups' MH crises can be mishandled by police and NHS
- Not all transphobia is the same! **Consider the ways you might be excluding** trans men/transmasculine people, trans women/transfeminine people, and non binary people.
- Make it clear what **COVID precautions** will be taken at the event, if any. Be aware a lack of COVID precautions will make your event inaccessible to many disabled people.
- Ask the venue if they have **detailed wheelchair accessibility guidance** — for e.g. can they accommodate any chair, or only smaller manual ones?

At the event

- Think about the **welcome** your guests experience — how can you make the event structure and its access accommodations clear?
- Know and understand the **physical access** accommodations and limitations of the space (both getting around and participating)
- Offer **remote participation** where possible
- Make sure there are **captions** on all videos and live streamed elements of your event
- Be mindful of **stimulation** (sound, temperature, large groups) and offer quiet spaces
- Make sure that you offer a variety of **seating** options including strong chairs without armrests
- Have clear **wayfinding** (signage with a strong colour contrast) and consider sending a video tour ahead of time
- Be ready to change **lighting**, if possible
- Test and understand the **acoustics** of the space — can you offer a quiet space?
- Offer **printed copies** of all presentations and materials
- Encourage **name tags** (including an option to share if you can't read them)
- Offer comfort **breaks** and make sure they're long enough for someone to access the toilet and/or refreshments
- Clearly signpost the **toilets** (we highly recommend gender neutral changing places toilets as standard)
- Know and communicate the space's **emergency protocols**

Some thoughts on accessibility for those who are D/deaf and hard of hearing

Inclusion and accessibility for the D/deaf community can be one of the most daunting aspects of event accessibility for organisers.

This is because, unlike some other aspects of accessibility planning (e.g. venue access), making an event accessible for D/deaf and hard of hearing people is entirely within the hands of the event organiser.

If you can manage it, **BSL interpretation** is the gold-standard of event accessibility for many in the D/deaf community. If it is possible for you to provide this within your budget, you should absolutely strive for it.

However, offering (and paying for) BSL interpretation can be one of the biggest ticket expenses that any event organiser will face (remember that for events longer than 60 minutes you will need at least two interpreters). Often these costs can add up to more than everything else in the event combined, so it is understandable that this may

feel out of reach for many promoters.

There are some alternatives which still provide a good level of support, but may be more within the reach of smaller event hosts.

If your event is online, many of the biggest online streaming providers offer AI-captioning. It may not be perfect, but it's better than nothing!

For live events, or online events with a bigger budget, human-typed live captions are still cheaper than BSL interpretation, but more reliable than AI captioning. Captioning of any kind has the added bonus of supporting those who may be lightly hard of hearing, or struggle to focus on voices in crowded spaces, but don't necessarily know BSL.

Ultimately, you should consult directly with the D/deaf community who are likely to be coming to your event, in order to ensure that you're supporting them to the best of your abilities.

After the event

- Welcome **active feedback** from attendees via multiple channels
- Give opportunities to **make connections** via contact lists or groups to join
- Have a **key follow up contact** for outstanding questions or comments



Part 2:

Venue and group audit

The following are the specific questions we ask all venues or groups who wish to be listed on The Trans Dimension site.

Given our non-carceral approach to inclusion (which is often out of promoters hands), we will only flag things if an answer has not been provided — the goal is to get people to engage in the process.

We share these questions here as provocations and thinking/talking points for venues and groups who are seeking to improve their accessibility.

Fill them out, and use them as the starting point for your accessibility statement.

Getting around

Q1. Please describe the venue's toilets and clarify if your venue has:

- Gender neutral toilets Yes No
- Wheelchair accessible toilets Yes No
- Changing Places toilets (See changing-places.org for more detail) Yes No

Q2. Please describe the venue's general physical accessibility. Consider getting into the space, moving around, and getting to toilets or other essential areas.

Q3. What is the best way to get to the venue? Please be specific about public transportation options and the route from the nearest stop to the venue.

Q4. Does your venue offer other spaces to decompress if guests or participants are overwhelmed (quiet spaces)?

- Yes No

Proactive inclusion

- Q5. Do you have a named, dedicated point of contact for access needs at the event?** Yes No
- Q6. Do you have a named, dedicated point of contact that people can email after the event to send feedback?** Yes No
- Q7. What training have your staff or volunteers had?** Please confirm if they will be briefed on the accessibility features and limitations of the space and your event.

- Q8. Does the event or organisation have a code of conduct or 'safe spaces' policy? (Feel free to link it!)**
 Yes No

- Q9. What situations, if any, would you involve the police at the event?**

Trans liberation

Q10. How does your work/group support trans people?



Q11. How is your group including trans and disabled people in decision making?



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