# 3. Accessibility

#### Accessibility is top priority

Here at AFDO we take a lot of pride in making sure things are accessible to lots of people in lots of different ways.

Accessibility is all about making sure everyone can access information and the environment fairly and without disadvantage.

Today we’re going to help you understand what you can do to make your presentations accessible. We’ll do that by going through a great little resource we found. It is written by the Victorian Government and it is called *Accessible events guidelines and checklist for organisers, chairs, speakers and MCs.* It will give us a broad overview of some of the things we should consider if we want to make sure people with all types of disabilities can join in equally.

After that, we’ll tell you about some of the things we do to make sure the information we provide is accessible – whether it’s online or in person.

And finally, we will tell you how you can find more detailed information on some of the ideas we’ve talked about.

Roll call

Before we start, we always start with a roll call, like we did this morning. The presenter introduces themself and says where they are in the room, and then invites everyone else to do the same. Generally we go clockwise around the room, making sure to include support workers, interpreters, and everyone else who is here. This is called the roll call, and we do this to help people with vision impairments understand who is in the room, and where they are. And just like lots of other good accessibility practices, it is also helpful for lots of other people too.

Accessible events - guides and checklists

We’re going to have a look at the booklet we mentioned earlier called *Accessible events guidelines and checklist for organisers, chairs, speakers and MCs.* There is a copy in your binder, and a PDF and Microsoft Word versions of it are on your USB stick (which is also in your binder).

If you want to know more, there is another accessible events guide in on the USB stick in your binder, which is more detailed. It is called *Accessible Events: A Guide For Meeting and Event Organisers.* It has a great list of resources at the end and some more checklists to help you.

Our approach to accessibility

Here is a list of some of the things AFDO does to make sure our NDIS workshops are accessible:

* We make sure the venues are accessible.
* We think about the accessibility of the room we’ll be presenting in too. There must be enough space for attendees, support workers, interpreters, captioners, guide dogs, wheelchair users and people who use mobility aids to get around safely and easily. There must not be any trip hazards. For example tape any electrical cables to the ground, and make sure there’s nothing else on the floor in the way.
* When a person with vision impairment enters the room we will introduce ourselves, describe to them the layout of the room, and give audible directions to assist them in finding the nearest or most appropriate seat.
* We save space at the front of the room so that people who are Deaf or hard of hearing can be close enough to the presenter so that they can lip read or see the Auslan interpreter or captioning screen clearly.
* We use microphones and speakers to make sure our voices are easy to hear, and we find spaces that don’t have distracting background noise.
* We always start workshops with a roll call.
* We use plain language in our writing and speaking. Plain language keeps the message clear. It avoids unnecessary words and jargon. It should make the message easy to read and understand right away. It includes specific information, presented in a logical order. It is easier to translate into other languages, so it is helpful for people from non-English speaking backgrounds too.
* For some people, it is very helpful to get copies of the materials that will be presented in advance.
* Our PowerPoint presentations always have alt text for any images that are included. Alt text is invisible to the viewer when watching a slideshow, but if a person with a vision impairment is reading something on a computer while using screen reader software (like JAWS), the computer will read a description of the image out. We write a short description of the image for that purpose in the image properties – this is what alt-text is. We also use alt text everywhere else we can, like in Word documents, on our website and eNews, and on social media.
* Our training includes breaks so people can get some rest and take time to think about all of the information.
* We make sure information about timing, breaks, accessing captioning on your device, wifi passwords, etc is written up on the whiteboard at workshops.

Is there anything else you think we should add to our list? Have we missed anything that would make our events more accessible to you or someone you know?

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