CITY OF MELBOURNE

Flare
Access

# Festivals and Events Accessibility Checklist

# Introduction

Welcome to the Accessibility Checklist and Solutions Guide for Festivals and Events, a valuable resource developed for the City of Melbourne by Flare Access. Our shared goal is to promote and enhance accessibility within the city, making it an inclusive, welcoming, and accommodating place for all residents, visitors, and patrons.

This toolkit serves as the starting point for achieving greater access, ensuring that everyone can fully participate in and enjoy the diverse offerings our vibrant city has to offer.

## About the toolkit:

The toolkit consists of two components: the Accessibility Checklist and the Solutions Guide.

▶ **Accessibility Checklist:**
- The checklist is a practical, step-by-step tool that provides you with a systematic approach to assessing, improving, and maintaining accessibility within your spaces, services, and events. It covers a wide range of aspects, including physical access, sensory considerations, communication, and more. By using the checklist, you can identify areas that you are doing well, areas for improvement and a way to track your progress toward achieving accessibility goals.

▶ **Solutions Guide:**
- The Solutions Guide is your companion resource, offering actionable solutions and guidance for items marked with an asterisk on the Accessibility Checklist. It provides guiding information, insights, best practices, and practical tips to help you make informed decisions and take the necessary steps to enhance accessibility. Use the identifying number next to the asterick to locate the corresponding solution.

✳
See Solutions Guide

## Join the movement to greater inclusion

Whether you are a business owner, event organiser, or simply a concerned citizen, this toolkit empowers you to initiate positive change. As you navigate through the Accessibility Checklist and refer to the Solutions Guide, you'll find the guidance you need to address specific accessibility challenges. By taking action and making improvements in your own sphere of influence, you'll play a crucial role in shaping the future of Melbourne as a city where everyone is valued and welcomed.

Creating an accessible city is an ongoing journey and every small step matters. We encourage you to embrace the Checklist and the Solutions Guide as powerful tools to guide your commitment to inclusivity and accessibility in the City of Melbourne.

# Festivals and Events Checklist

## ✅ Access to buildings / premises

- ☐ Choose a venue in a location that can be easily accessed by accessible public transport. * (1.0)
- ☐ Ensure accessible parking and accessible drop-off is available on-site or nearby. * (1.1)
- ☐ Ensure there is a step-free entrance with a minimum width of 850 mm when the door is open. * (1.2)
- ☐ Check the corridors and walkways have a width of at least 1000 mm.
- ☐ Ensure that there is step-free access and a continuous path of travel to all areas of the venue. * (1.3)
- ☐ Ensure automatic or easy-to-open doors at the entrance are available and functioning. * (1.4)
- ☐ Ensure accessible bathrooms are available and clear of clutter. * (1.5)

## ✅ Throughout the venue

- ☐ Provide a minimum width of 1000 mm between furniture, stalls, exhibits or in busy areas.
- ☐ Slip-resistant floor and ground surfaces including non-slip nosing on steps or stairs.* (2.0)
- ☐ Remove all trip hazards including covers over cables or wires.* (2.1)
- ☐ Tactile tiles prior to steps, ramps, jetties, piers and other hazards.* (2.2)
- ☐ Ensure consistent and even lighting along pathways and throughout the venue. * (2.3)
- ☐ For lower-lit venues consider task lighting in functional areas. * (2.4)
- ☐ Offer accessible tables with foot and knee clearance under the table. * (2.5)
- ☐ Offer accessible refreshment tables and buffets with a height between 830 mm to 870 mm.
- ☐ For standing events, provide options of chairs with armrests with a seat height of 440 mm - 460 mm.
- ☐ Identify space for storing mobility aids and baggage.

*See Solutions Guide*

## ✅ Accessible facilities, amenities and features

- ☐ Provide guests with access to a separate, quiet area or sensory room. * (3.0)
- ☐ Offer Sensory Bags. * (3.1)
- ☐ Provide an accessible baby change area. * (3.2)
- ☐ Access to platforms and stages with definition of boundaries or limits at the edges of stages. * (3.3)
- ☐ Reserve seats in front to enable a clear view for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.* (3.4)
- ☐ Arrange Auslan interpreters as needed. * (3.5)
- ☐ Accessible seating in various locations with companion seating and a clear sight-line to stages. * (3.6)
- ☐ Seating with a backrest, armrests, contrasting colours with surroundings, a height of 440 mm - 460 mm.
- ☐ Accessible counters/service areas of a height between 830 mm to 870 mm and a chair positioned nearby.
- ☐ Consider the control of sound reflections, echoes, and background noise. * (3.7)
- ☐ Use of microphones, and speakers to ensure sound is evenly distributed throughout the space.
- ☐ Offer adjustable height, lapel microphones or roving microphones.
- ☐ Use QR Codes to deliver key information around the venue or event. * (3.8)
- ☐ Use of Assisted Listening Systems such as Hearing Loops.
- ☐ Appoint an Accessibility Liaison or point of contact who can assist attendees with requests.
- ☐ Consider delivering multi-sensory experiences. * (3.9)

# ✅ Customer service

- ☐ Provide disability inclusion training for all staff.
- ☐ Provide access support personnel to assist where necessary. * (4.0)
- ☐ Offer wheelchairs available for loan. * (4.1)
- ☐ Ensure that your venue is knowledgeable about the regulations governing service animals in Australia.
- ☐ Ensure that attendees with service animals have access to relief areas for their animals.

# ✅ Accessible communication

**Marketing & Comms**

- ☐ All printed materials must be accessible and provided in alternative formats. * (5.0)
- ☐ Provide attendees with material in their preferred format prior to the event.
- ☐ Ensure presentations and written material have sufficient contrast levels, and suitably sized font.
- ☐ Offer written material in Easy Read alternatives. * (5.1)
- ☐ Ensure the website is accessible.
- ☐ Establish a feedback mechanism to collect input from attendees. * (5.2)
- ☐ Ask attendees to advise of any accessibility requirements when registering.

*See Solutions Guide

**Invitations**

- ☐ Provide information on the accessibility features of the venue and event in advance.
- ☐ Offer digital invitations that are accessible. * (5.3)
- ☐ Offer various options for event registration and questions, such as telephone, email, or online platforms.
- ☐ Ensure all booking platforms are accessible, even if engaging a third-party booking service.
- ☐ Welcome Companion cards for ticketed events.

**Audiovisuals**

- ☐ Avoid strobe lighting or flashing lights and inform attendees in advance if this cannot be avoided.
- ☐ Provide live captioning.
- ☐ All videos must be captioned and videos should be audio-described where appropriate.
- ☐ Advise presenters to describe any visual information in their presentations.
- ☐ Offer communication boards or tablet devices with communication apps. * (5.4)

# ✅ Wayfinding

- ☐ Wayfinding through the venue to key destinations to aid direction and movement of attendees. * (6.0)
- ☐ Easy to read signage that is positioned at a height between 1200 mm - 1600 mm.
- ☐ Include words and graphics with high contrast. * (6.1)

# ✅ Responsive evacuation procedures

- ☐ Visible and audible fire alarms.
- ☐ Accessible emergency exits.

# ✅ Catering

- ☐ Provide a variety of meal options and include items do not require utensils or intricacy.
- ☐ Ensure catering staff are available to assist attendees with serving items where required.
- ☐ Ensure special meals (e.g. vegetarian, gluten free, etc.) are clearly labelled and accessible.

Consult with accessibility experts or professionals who specialise in accessibility modifications to ensure that your chosen solution meets all necessary standards and regulations.

# 1. Access to buildings / premises

## 1.0 Choose a venue in a location that can be easily accessed by accessible public transport

- ☐ Determine who your target audience is and where they are likely to be coming from.
- ☐ Research the public transport options available in the area where your target audience resides. This may include buses, trains, trams, and car sharing.
- ☐ Consider the distance between the transportation hubs and the potential event venues. A shorter distance from the transportation hub to the venue is generally preferred, as it reduces the effort and time attendees need to reach the event.
- ☐ Ensure there is a continuous and safe path of travel from the transportation hubs to the venue. Attendees should not encounter obstacles like construction zones, closed sidewalks, steps or kerbs.
- ☐ Assess the accessibility of the transportation hubs themselves. Look for features such as ramps, elevators, and clear signage for people with reduced mobility.
- ☐ Make sure the transportation services align with the event start and end times.

## 1.1 Ensure accessible parking and accessible drop-off is available on-site or nearby

**Accessible Parking:**

- ☐ Ensure that accessible parking spaces are clearly marked with appropriate signage and symbols.
- ☐ Accessible parking spaces should be located as close as possible to building entrances or key destinations within the premises. Ensure that there is a clear, accessible path from these spaces to the building entrance.

**Key characteristics of an accessible drop-off zone:**

► An accessible drop-off zone is located as close as possible to the main entrance of a building or facility. This minimises the distance individuals with disabilities need to travel from the drop-off point to the entrance.

► There should be a clear and accessible path from the drop-off zone to the building's entrance, which may include accessible sidewalks and crosswalks.

► A curb cut or ramp should be present to allow wheelchair users to transition smoothly between the drop-off area and the sidewalk or entrance area.

► The drop-off zone should have a level and flat surface to facilitate easy movement for people using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids.

## 1.2 Ensure step-free entrance with a minimum width of 850 mm when the door is open

- [ ] Consider installing a ramp that complies with accessibility standards. The ramp should have handrails and meet slope specifications.
- [ ] If permanent ramp installation is not feasible, you can use portable or temporary ramps. These can be set up and removed as needed, making the entrance accessible when required. Your local equipment supplier may be able to advise on the suitable ramp length.
- [ ] If it is not feasible to provide step-free access at the main entrance, consider creating an alternative accessible entrance that is well-marked and provides equal access to the building.

## 1.3 Ensure that there is step-free access and a continuous path of travel to all areas

- [ ] Install ramps in areas where steps cannot be removed. Ensure that the ramps meet the required slope and width standards.
- [ ] Maintain adequate pathway width of at least 1000 mm throughout the venue.
- [ ] Make sure door thresholds are flush with the floor to prevent tripping hazards. Threshold ramps can be added where necessary.
- [ ] Choose flooring materials that are slip-resistant and provide a smooth, even surface for easy navigation.

## 1.4 Ensure automatic or easy-to-open doors at the entrance are available and functioning

- [ ] Install automatic or power-assisted doors at entrances to ensure ease of access. These doors can be activated by a push button, sensor, or remote control.
- [ ] If automatic or easy-access doors cannot be installed, consider installing a doorbell to allow customers to request assistance or position staff nearby to assist as required.

## 1.5 Ensure accessible bathrooms are available and clear of clutter

- [ ] Place accessible bathrooms in proximity to public areas to make them easily accessible to all visitors.
- [ ] Use clear and visible signage to indicate the location of accessible bathrooms. Include tactile signage and Braille.
- [ ] Maintain a clear and unobstructed path of travel to the accessible bathroom. Remove any clutter, signage, or furniture that may block the path.
- [ ] In the information provided to guests, indicate what side the rails are in the toilets e.g. LHS or RHS.

# 2. Throughout the venue

## 2.0 Slip-resistant floor and ground surfaces including non-slip nosing on steps or stairs

☐ Vinyl Flooring: Vinyl flooring with slip-resistant properties is commonly used in commercial kitchens, healthcare facilities, and public restrooms.

☐ Rubber Flooring: Rubber flooring, often found in gyms and sports facilities, has natural slip-resistant properties due to its texture.

☐ Carpet Tiles: Some carpet tiles are designed with slip-resistant backing to improve stability.

☐ Examples of solutions for non-slip nosing on steps or stairs:

▶ Rubber or vinyl stair treads are designed to fit over existing steps or stairs.

▶ Adhesive non-slip tapes or strips: Self-adhesive non-slip tapes or strips can be applied directly to stair treads for added traction.

## 2.1 Remove all trip hazards including covers over cables or wires

☐ For cables and wires, secure them to walls, ceilings, or floors using cable clips, hooks, or cable channels to keep them out of walkways. If possible, reroute cables to less frequented areas or beneath the flooring.

## 2.2 Tactile tiles prior to steps, ramps, jetties, piers and other hazards

☐ Also known as tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs), are a vital feature used to enhance safety and accessibility in various environments, especially in areas with steps, ramps, jetties and other hazards.

☐ Within transit stations, TGSI can guide passengers to key points like ticket machines, service counters, and platform entrances.

☐ Transition Zones: In locations where there is a change in the type of surface (e.g., from a sidewalk to a street), TGSI can signal this transition.

## 2.3 Ensure consistent and even lighting along pathways and throughout the venue

☐ Consider arranging adjustable lighting with a minimum of 160 Lux. Light meters can be installed on smartphones to assist with measuring lighting.

## 2.4 For lower-lit venues consider task lighting in functional areas

☐ Identify specific functional areas within the venue where task lighting is needed, such as service counters, workstations, or food preparation areas.

☐ Install task lighting fixtures, such as desk lamps, under-cabinet lighting, or pendant lights, in these areas to provide focused and adjustable illumination.

### 2.5 Offer accessible tables with foot and knee clearance under the table

- [ ] In the case where only a single height table is available the recommended specifications are:
  Height of table 850 +/- 20 mm; Height of clearance beneath unit 820 +/- 20 mm.
- [ ] In the instance where two table heights can be provided the recommended specifications are:
  Height of table: 1st table: 750 +/- 20 mm; 2nd table 850 +/- 20 mm.
  Height of clearance beneath the table: 1st table 730 +/- 20 mm; 2nd table 820 +/- 20 mm.

# 3. Accessible facilities, amenities and features

### 3.0 Provide guests with access to a separate, quiet area or sensory room

- [ ] Designate a quiet area: Choose a dedicated and easily accessible location within the festival or event grounds to serve as the quiet area or sensory room.
- [ ] Design and furnish the space: Design the area to be calming and sensory-friendly. Consider using comfortable seating, soft lighting, and soothing colours. Provide a variety of sensory tools and equipment, such as noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, weighted blankets, and sensory mats.

### 3.1 Offer sensory bags

- [ ] Select sensory items and tools that cater to different sensory needs, including tactile, visual, auditory, and proprioceptive stimuli. Common items may include stress balls, fidget toys, textured objects, noise-cancelling headphones, visual stim toys, and scented items.

### 3.2 Provide an accessible baby change area

- [ ] Location and accessibility: Choose a location that is easily accessible, preferably on the ground floor and near other amenities like restrooms.
- [ ] Accessible entry: Ensure that the entry to the baby change area is wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs or mobility aids, typically a minimum of 850 mm clear width.
- [ ] Clear floor space: Maintain clear floor space in front of the change table to allow easy approach for wheelchair users.

### 3.3 Access to platforms and stages with definition of boundaries or limits at edges of stages

- [ ] Where possible, provide step-free access to the stage or platform to accommodate performers who use mobility aids or have difficulty with stairs.
- [ ] Edge definitions: Clearly define the boundaries or limits at the edges of the stage using visual markers, such as painted lines, tape, or edge lighting. These markers help performers and crew members identify the stage's edges and avoid accidental falls.
- [ ] Accessible dressing rooms: Make sure that dressing rooms and preparation areas are accessible to performers with disabilities. This includes features like accessible toilets and dressing areas.

### 3.4 Reserve seats in front to enable a clear view for people who are deaf or hard of hearing

- [ ] Reserve a section of front-row seats specifically for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. These seats should have an unobstructed view of the stage or event.
- [ ] Clearly mark or designate these reserved seats with visible signage indicating their purpose.
- [ ] Offer the option to book these reserved seats when purchasing tickets, either through your website, box office, or customer service.

### 3.5 Arrange Auslan interpreters as needed

- [ ] Identify events or performances that may require Auslan interpreters based on audience needs.
- [ ] Coordinate with certified Auslan interpreters or interpreting agencies to schedule their services.

### 3.6 Accessible seating in various locations, companion seating, and clear sight-line to stages

- [ ] Designate accessible seating areas in different parts of the venue to offer individuals with disabilities a choice of locations and viewing experiences. Consider both front and back sections.
- [ ] Ensure that accessible seating areas have an unobstructed and clear line of sight to the stage or performance area, allowing patrons to fully enjoy the event.
- [ ] Provide adjacent companion seats for individuals with disabilities, allowing them to attend events with family members, friends, or personal assistants.
- [ ] Include dedicated wheelchair spaces within accessible seating areas, ensuring enough space for a wheelchair user and their companion.

### 3.7 Consider the control of sound reflections, echoes, and background noise

- [ ] Acoustic design: Consult with acoustic designers or engineers to create an acoustic design plan that addresses the specific needs of your space. This plan may involve the use of sound-absorbing materials, diffusers, and reflectors strategically placed to control sound.
- [ ] Use acoustic wall panels, baffles, or diffusers to absorb or scatter sound waves and minimise sound reflections.
- [ ] Choose sound-absorbing floor coverings, such as carpets or rugs, to reduce sound reflections and footstep noise.
- [ ] Consider using sound masking systems that emit a low-level, non-distracting background noise to mask speech and reduce distractions.

### 3.8 Use QR Codes to deliver key information around the venue or event

- [ ] Create QR Codes for each piece of key information using QR Code generators available online. These QR Codes can link to web pages, PDFs, or other digital resources.
- [ ] Display the QR Codes in easily accessible and visible locations throughout the venue.
- [ ] Ensure that the QR Codes are clearly labelled with their intended purpose.
- [ ] Ensure that the content linked to the QR Codes is accessible and compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies for attendees with disabilities.
- [ ] Ensure that there is technical support available for attendees who may have difficulty using QR Codes or smartphones. Staff or volunteers can assist attendees as needed.

### 3.9 Consider delivering multi-sensory experiences

Delivering multi-sensory experiences is a powerful way to engage and immerse attendees, making the event more memorable and inclusive. Here are some strategies to create multi-sensory experiences:

- [ ] Incorporate visually stimulating elements, such as lighting effects, visual displays, and multimedia presentations.
- [ ] Integrate music, ambient sounds, and live performances to engage the sense of hearing.
- [ ] Provide tactile experiences through touchable exhibits, textured surfaces, or interactive installations.
- [ ] Use scents and aromas to create immersive environments.

# 4. Customer service

### 4.0 Provide access support personnel to assist where necessary

- [ ] Have access support personnel available on-site during operational hours, especially during peak times or events when assistance may be in higher demand.
- [ ] Offer a range of assistance services, including guiding individuals to their destinations, providing information, assisting with boarding and disembarking from transportation, and helping with any accessibility-related inquiries.

### 4.1 Offer wheelchairs available for loan

- [ ] Offer a supply of loaner wheelchairs that are readily available for use by visitors or customers who may need them temporarily.
- [ ] Consider implementing a reservation system to ensure that loaner wheelchairs are available when needed, especially during busy periods.
- [ ] Establish a convenient return process for loaner wheelchairs, ensuring they are properly cleaned and sanitised after each use.

# 5. Accessible communication

## 5.0 All printed materials must be accessible and provided in alternative formats

☐ Use accessible fonts, appropriate font sizes, clear headings, and sufficient contrast for readability.

☐ Provide electronic versions of all printed materials. Ensure these electronic documents are properly tagged for screen readers and other assistive technologies.

☐ Offer large print versions of printed materials (typically 18-point or larger) and appropriate formatting.

☐ Ensure that accessible versions of materials are available and distributed at the same time as standard materials to prevent any delays or inequities.

## 5.1 Offer written material in easy read alternatives

☐ Identify the materials that should be provided in Easy Read format. These may include event schedules, guidelines, announcements, and key information.

☐ Use plain language, simplified sentences, and clear visuals to make information more understandable.

## 5.2 Establish a feedback mechanism to collect input from attendees

☐ Select the methods through which attendees can provide feedback. Common methods include online surveys, printed feedback forms, mobile apps, and on-site comment cards. Consider offering a combination of methods for convenience.

☐ Ensure that your feedback mechanisms are accessible to all attendees. This includes offering accessible digital forms and providing alternatives for those who prefer non-digital options.

## 5.3 Offer digital invitations that are accessible

☐ Start by designing your digital invitation with accessibility in mind. Follow web accessibility guidelines, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

☐ If your invitation includes images or graphics, provide alternative text (alt text) for each image. Alt text should describe the content or purpose of the image.

☐ Ensure that text and background colours have sufficient contrast for readability.

## 5.4 Offer communication boards or tablet devices with communication apps

☐ Procure communication boards or tablet devices equipped with communication apps that are user-friendly and accessible to a wide range of guests.

☐ Place the communication boards or tablets in strategic locations within your establishment.

☐ Train your staff to assist guests with the use of these devices.

☐ Choose a range of symbols, images, or words that are commonly associated with event-related requests, such as "directions," "toilets," and "catering".

# 6.  Wayfinding

## 6.0  Wayfinding throughout the venue to key destinations to aid direction and movement

- [ ] Install clear, well-lit signage throughout your venue to guide customers. Ensure that the signs use easily readable fonts, high-contrast colours, and simple, universally recognised symbols.

- [ ] Position signage at a height between 1200 mm - 1600 mm.

- [ ] Install signs at entrances and exits to provide clear direction for customers entering or leaving the venue.

- [ ] Position signs along corridors and hallways to indicate the direction to key areas within the venue, such as restrooms, dining areas, and event spaces.

- [ ] Use signs to lead customers to dining areas and restaurants, including specific dining sections if applicable.

- [ ] Place signs near customer service points to direct customers to these areas, where they can seek guidance and assistance.

## 6.1  Include words and graphics with high contrast

- [ ] Use universally understood symbols for restrooms, exits, elevators, information desks, and other key areas.

- [ ] Incorporate directional arrows on signs to indicate the correct path to reach a destination.

Thank you for your dedication to accessibility and for being a part of our mission to make Melbourne more accessible, vibrant, and diverse for all of its residents and visitors.

# Disclaimer:

Although we have done our best to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information provided, we cannot guarantee that it is suitable for every individual's situation.

This advice is provided for general informational purposes only. Any reliance you place on such information is strictly at your own risk. In no event will the City of Melbourne or Flare Access be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage, or any loss or damage whatsoever arising from loss of data or profits arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this document.

Accessibility requirements and regulations may vary by location and may change over time. To ensure that your chosen solution meets all necessary standards and regulations, we strongly recommend consulting with accessibility experts or professionals who specialise in accessibility modifications. Their expertise can help tailor solutions to your specific needs and ensure full compliance with current accessibility standards.

---

This document was proudly developed by Flare Access. The following documents were referenced in the development of this Checklist:

- Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- AS 1428.1:2001, Design for access and mobility, Part 1: General requirements for access — New building work
- AS 1428.1:2009, Design for access and mobility, Part 1: General requirements for access — New building work
- AS 1428.2:1992, Design for access and mobility, Part 2: Enhanced and additional requirements — Buildings and facilities
- AS/NZS 1428.4.1:2010, Design for access and mobility, Part 4.1: Means to assist the orientation of people with vision impairment — Tactile ground surface indicators
- AS 1428.4.2:2018, Design for access and mobility, Part 4.1: Means to assist the orientation of people with vision impairment — Wayfinding signs
- AS 1428.5:2010, Design for access and mobility, Part 5: Communication for people who are deaf or hearing impaired.
- AS 1735.12-1999, Lifts, escalators and moving walks, Part 12: Facilities for persons with disabilities
- AS/NZS 2890.6:2009: Parking facilities, Part 6: Off-street parking for people with disabilities