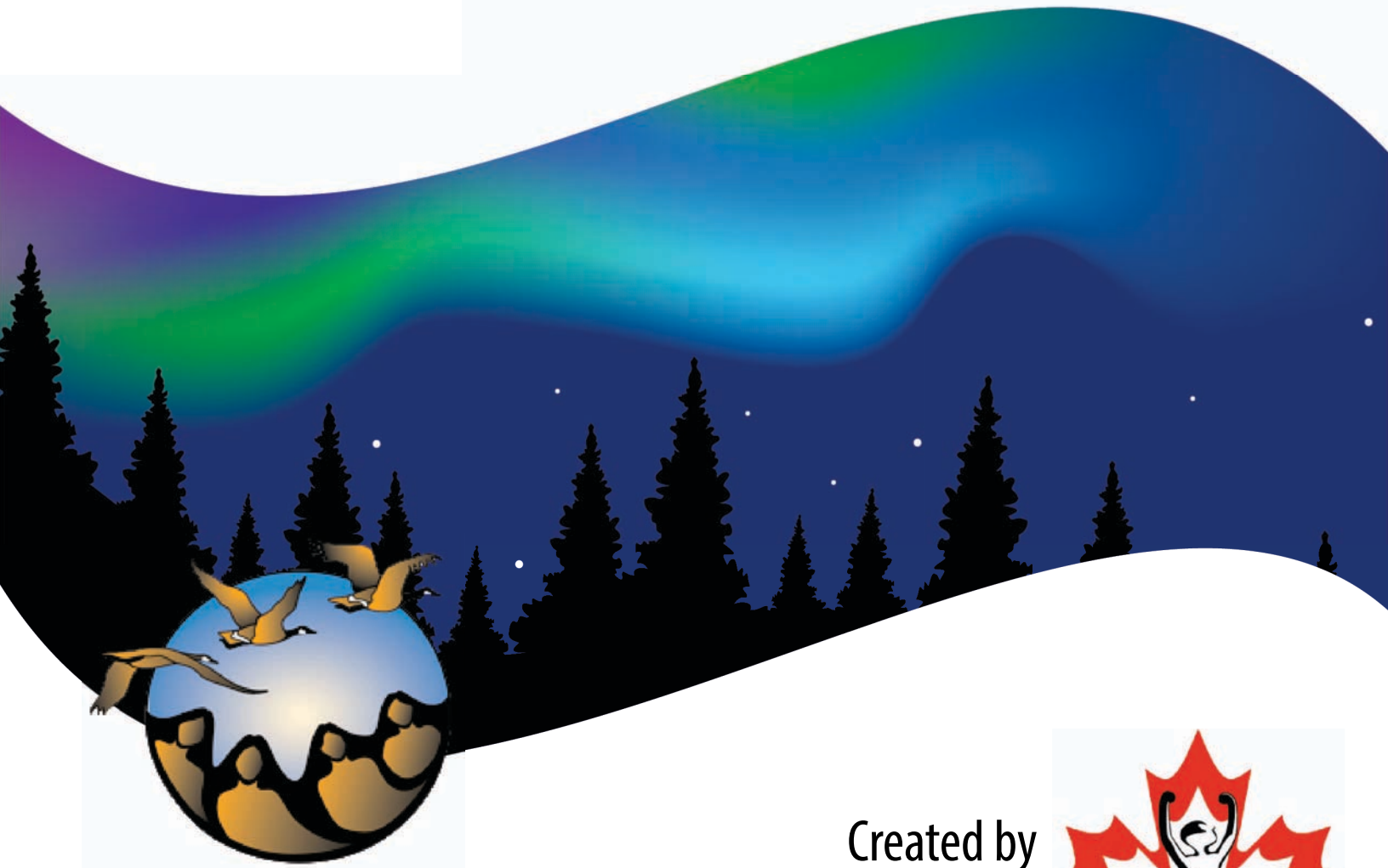




April 23, 2014

DIVERSITY THROUGH INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

The Toolkit Checklist



Created by
FemNorthNet & DAWN Canada



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THE TOOLKIT CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to track which of the recommended inclusion measures you have put in place for your event and which measures you have yet to look after. Note that not all of the inclusion measures listed below may be necessary for your event or activity.

SECTION 1: PLANNING FOR DIVERSITY

A Range of Abilities

Make sure you have...

- educated yourself, staff, and volunteers about the range of disabilities that exist, about the importance of demonstrating respect through People First language, and about the appropriate ways to interact with and support individuals with disabilities to allow for full inclusion in the event.
- offered as many services and support for individuals with disabilities as your budget will allow.
- shared the “Planning for Diversity” section of the toolkit with event sponsors, service providers, presenters, and exhibitors and reminded them to demonstrate respect towards participants with disabilities and to fully include these participants in all aspects of the event.

LGBTQ+ - A Very Inclusive Acronym

Make sure you have...

- educated yourself, staff, and volunteers about the range of gender identities and sexual orientations that exist.
- contacted organizations that represent and/or serve LGBTQ+ individuals to inquire about how to create an inclusive environment and provide appropriate support.
- ensured that event sponsors, service providers, presenters, and exhibitors are aware that your organization supports human diversity, including diverse genders and sexual orientations and confirmed these partners will be respectful of this diversity and commit to serving all participants equitably during your event.

- put policies in place regarding discrimination and harassment related to gender or sexual orientation and taken steps to make these policies enforceable.
- informed staff and volunteers of the importance of learning the preferred name and pronoun of each participant and using these preferred names and pronouns to address them.
- designated gender-neutral restrooms.
- created a resource list of LGBTQ+ information sources and organizations to provide to all staff, volunteers, participants, event sponsors, service providers, presenters, exhibitors, etc.
- reassured participants (and any other people involved in your event) that information related to their gender identity or sexual orientation is not required but will be held in confidentiality if shared with event planners.
- established a dress code that allows all individuals to express their gender identity freely.

Inclusion Across the Years

Make sure you have...

- included both youth and senior representatives on your event planning committee.
- invited youth and seniors to actively participate in the event as volunteers, media contacts, presenters, exhibitors, or moderators.
- avoided token representation of youth or seniors and ensured that at least two individuals from each age group are present at the event to support one another.
- scheduled the event to end before dark, made alternative transportation arrangement, or provided overnight accommodations for older participants who have difficulty driving after dark.
- scheduled the event so as not to interfere with school or daily work hours (scheduled on an evening or weekend with plenty of notice).
- promoted the event at places that youth frequent (e.g. in youth magazines, at popular local hang-out spots, in youth shelters, at schools, on campuses) and included a youth section on the event website (if applicable).
- chosen a venue that is accessible by public transit or have arranged for carpooling, a bus, or other transportation to help individuals without private vehicles get to the event.
- chosen a venue space that offers bright, natural light.
- adapted written materials into large print format and used plain language as much as possible.
- created signs that are done in large and high-contrast font.
- reduced background noise/music as much as possible as older participants often find it hard to hear in noisy environments.
- established a dress code that does not require highly formal clothing, as this may be beyond the financial means of many youth and seniors.

- trained staff and volunteers to be sensitive to the needs of youth and seniors.
- planned event activities that specifically appeal to youth or seniors.
- ensured youth will have the proper resources and adult support to accomplish assigned tasks.

Spirituality & Religion

Make sure you have...

- included members of various religious and spiritual groups in the planning committee or consulted with spiritual and religious institutions to determine appropriate measures for inclusion.
- referred to cultural calendars to ensure the event date(s) avoid conflict with major religious events or holidays.
- reviewed registration forms to determine which spiritual supports have been requested and found ways to appropriately accommodate these requests.
- contacted participants whose spiritual or religious supports you feel unsure about how to appropriately accommodate to discuss potential solutions.
- confirmed with each participant who requested spiritual or religious supports to confirm the accommodations you will be providing are sufficient.
- allocated a venue space as an interfaith centre where participants can go to pray, consult with religious teachers/leaders, sit quietly, or meditate. Participants instructed to be respectful of others using the space and understand it is a multi-faith space.
- established a dress code that is respectful of religious or spiritual clothing and accessories.

Indigenous Peoples

Make sure you have...

- included members of indigenous groups in the planning committee or consulted with Aboriginal organizations to determine appropriate measures for inclusion and which, if any, ceremonial activities should be built into the event.
- educated yourself, staff, volunteers, and other individuals contributing to your event about Aboriginal groups and how to be respectful of the diversity amongst indigenous peoples.
- identified the traditional territory the event is taking place on and arranged to acknowledge the traditional territory at the event opening.
- arranged to have an indigenous representative from the territory present to offer a blessing or welcome at the event opening, if appropriate.
- informed participants that they are not required to participate in any ceremonial event they may be uncomfortable attending.

- arranged to have any smudge ceremony (if appropriate) to be held outdoors.
- arranged to have an Elder or spiritual guidance available to Aboriginal participants (if requested).
- compensated Aboriginal representatives or Elders who assist with parts of the event for their travel and accommodations and offered an appropriate gift of thanks.

Ethno-Cultural Racial Communities

Make sure you have...

- included members of ethno-racial communities in the planning committee or consulted with organizations that represent or serve such communities to determine appropriate measures for inclusion.
- educated yourself, staff, volunteers, and other individuals contributing to your event about racial discrimination, racial privilege, and ways to overcome racism to promote inclusion.
- promoted the event through community groups and organizations that are known to have racially and ethnically diverse membership and reflected the diversity of your audience in the images and language used in promotional materials.
- confirmed event sponsors and partners are committed to promoting and supporting racial diversity and equity.
- instructed presenters, exhibitors, staff, and volunteers to avoid using language that may be offensive to members of particular racial/ethnic groups.
- ensured presenters come from a mix of ethno-racial backgrounds.
- developed methods of responding to instances of racism that may arise during the event.
- established a dress code that respects cultural modes of dress.
- avoided token representation and actively worked to attract a diverse group of participants from many different ethno-racial communities.

Facing North

If planning an event that will take place in the North or that will have northerners participate, make sure you have...

- included individuals from both the South and the North in the planning committee or consulted with northerners or northern organizations to ensure the northern perspective is represented.
- made efforts to host the event in a northern community.
- reached out to northerners for creative solutions to any planning or resource issues.
- reflected northern cultures, languages, and images in promotional materials.
- the event includes opportunities to interact with one another while enjoying food together.

SECTION 2: PLANNING AN INCLUSIVE EVENT

Deciding Who Will Participate

Make sure you have...

- identified who will most likely be participating in our event or process.
- considered the range of diverse identities that may be represented within our participant group.

Budgeting for Inclusion

Make sure you have...

- discussed anticipated inclusion service and support needs and added these to the list of event budget items.
- allocated an amount to allow individuals with disabilities to arrive a day before the event and leave a day later (if resources allow and if necessary).
- allocated an amount to send cash advances to participants who require care services (pet care, childcare, care of other dependent) or coverage of travel costs to attend the event (if resources allow and if necessary).
- set aside a contingency fund for additional services and supports needed by participants (as indicated in advance on registration forms or that arise during the event).
- set aside a reasonable amount to support the work of any volunteers (e.g. reimbursement for mileage, provision of meals, purchase of name tags or t-shirts, etc.).
- referenced the sample budget in **Appendix A** and/or contacted local service providers to determine cost estimates for services and supports.
- established reasonable rates for reimbursement of travel costs, accommodation costs, care service fees, etc. along with criteria that must be met for reimbursement to occur.
- arranged for waiver of the requirement to produce a credit card during hotel check-in for participants whose accommodation is covered by the event host (if applicable).

Putting Together an Event Team

Make sure you have...

- identified which social identity groups participants at your event may belong to (e.g. Individuals

with disabilities, LGBTQ+, seniors, youth, Aboriginal peoples, ethno-racial communities).

- tried to ensure each social identity group is represented through a member on the event planning committee.
- researched local organizations that represent or serve members of various social identity groups.
- scheduled phone calls or meetings with local organizations (as necessary) to discuss appropriate inclusion measures.

Timing Your Event

Make sure you have...

- allowed time to give potential participants ample notice of the event so they can make the necessary arrangements to be able to attend.
- checked that the dates of the event do not conflict with major cultural, religious, or national holidays.
- allowed time to book the necessary services and supports required to ensure full inclusion at your event.
- considered the potential for participants to desire additional social activities following the formal event activities and, if a possibility, added these as optional activities in the formal schedule.

Finding a Location

Make sure you have...

- scheduled an on-site visit for each venue of interest prior to booking the location.
- planned to have an individual with a mobility disability accompany you to the on-site visits (if possible).
- chosen a venue with a level front entrance or safe ramp for participants who face mobility challenges. (A safe ramp is considered to have slope of 1:20, or a 1cm increase in height for every 20cm of ramp length, but a slope of up to 1:12 is acceptable. Ramps should have a non-slip surface, handrails, be well lit, and kept free of snow, ice, or other obstructions, such as locked up bicycles.)
- ensured wheelchair accessible parking is available close to the main venue entrance(s).
- checked that elevators have low buttons, Braille markings, and are equipped with audio floor indicators (voice or chime).
- confirmed there is a wheelchair accessible washroom available with a wide door (92 cm) that opens outwards, a stall with a grab-bar and enough space between the toilet and the side and front walls (89 cm) to allow for a side or front transfer, and 1.5 m by 1.5 m of clear space for

turning mobility devices around.

- confirmed there are accessible telephones in each venue including a hearing aid compatible telephone with volume control and a lowered telephone for wheelchair users (coin slot located no higher than 1.22 m above floor level).
- ensured venue floors are stable, firm, and slip-resistant.
- verified that accessible hotel rooms are available and in good repair.
- allowed enough venue spaces for event activities as well as a resting place for individuals with fatigue disorders and an interfaith space for religious participants.
- inquired as to whether or not an accessible stage or adjustable podiums are available for presentations.
- confirmed there are spaces available for on-site care services that are accessible for those with physical disabilities or mobility challenges.
- checked each venue space for sufficient electrical outlets and confirmed with the venue manager that necessary technical equipment will not overwhelm available power supply or electrical circuits.
- found out if a back-up power generator is available in the event of a power outage.
- ensured refrigeration is available on-site for any refreshments or medication required by participants.
- checked for a biohazards container at the venue(s) and ordered a container if one was not available.
- put in place plans to make the venue(s) as inclusive as possible, which includes limiting background noise, ensuring lighting is appropriate, confirming the venue(s) are smoke-free, requesting that venue staff avoid wearing strongly scented products for the duration of the event, and establishing good ventilation and temperature control are available.
- negotiated with the venue manager(s) to have maintenance and housekeeping staff available to assist participants at check-in to the event venue and other accommodations.
- confirmed with the venue manager(s) in writing that no anticipated repairs or remodeling will occur during the event. (If repairs/remodeling will be going on, ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to maintain the safety, usability, and accessibility of the space).
- met with the venue manager(s) to discuss emergency and evacuation procedures.
- ensured the proper insurance and licenses are in place for the event.
- confirmed that all event activities fall within venue(s) safety regulations.
- scheduled a time to walk through the venue(s) the day before the event with the manager(s) to identify any maintenance issues that should be addressed (e.g. Ice-covered walkways, missing grab-bars or loose toilet seats in wheelchair stalls, burned out light bulbs, tripping hazards or mobility barriers).

Safety & Evacuation Procedures

Make sure you have...

- reviewed participant registration forms and noted all potential personal health-related emergencies that could arise along with individualized evacuation procedures.
- developed strategies to reduce risk of emergency situations along with responses for each particular emergency that could arise.
- put together a list of key contacts, indicating each contact's role, that must be notified in the event of each type of emergency.
- put together a package on the individualized evacuation protocols of participants.
- assigned a staff person or volunteer as an Emergency Response Lead to be in charge of managing communication, information, and procedures during emergency or evacuation situations.
- stored a copy of emergency contacts (both for the organization and participants) at an off-site location with an individual that will be available to respond to information requests for the duration of your event.
- obtained a First Aid kit appropriate to the size of your event.
- determined if on-site Emergency Medical Service, First Aid, or security or police personnel are necessary for the size and type of event. If necessary, they have been added to the list of services that need to be booked.

Facilitating Medication Storage, Use & Disposal

Make sure you have...

- provided sufficient health breaks in the schedule for participants to rest, stretch and move around, administer medication, and receive refreshments.
- scheduled a pick-up of the venue(s) biohazards container (if necessary).

Preparing Event Materials

Make sure you have...

- chosen a date on which all event materials must be submitted for adaptation into other formats and notified all sponsors, presenters, exhibitors, and other event partners of this deadline. This date is set after the registration deadline to allow time to review participants' formatting needs.
- referred all presenters to **Appendix G** of the Toolkit for assistance in creating accessible presentations and presentation materials.
- written all promotional materials in clear language and ensured promotional images are

reflective of the diversity of the people you anticipate will attend the event.

- indicated the official language(s) of the event on promotional materials.
- gathered written materials and submitted them to the necessary service providers for re-formatting (Braille, large print, language translation, audio recordings, etc.).
- ensured all other written materials are printed in a sans serif font that is at least 14-point in size. (If doing large print yourself, enlarged all written materials by 1 ½ times on a photocopier).
- utilized “access symbols” on registration forms, promotional materials, schedules, and/or room signage to indicate which services and supports will be available to participants if needed.
- collected audio-visual materials and submitted them to the necessary service providers for re-formatting (close-captioning, described video, transcription, etc.).
- uploaded all materials onto CD/DVDs or memory sticks (if necessary).

Event Registration

Make sure you have...

- created a registration form that includes a section for inclusion measures (see Appendix B) OR an invitation that requests information about personal health issues and required supports and services upon confirmation of attendance.
- distributed registration forms or invitations well in advance of the event, with a registration or response deadline that allows enough time for booking necessary services and supports and making other accommodation arrangements.
- gathered information on personal health issues and required services and supports for inclusion from all participants, presenters, exhibitors, service providers, staff, and volunteers that will be on-site during your event.

Allergies

Make sure you have...

- specified in the venue contract(s) that no construction or remodeling is to take place during the event (to prevent air-borne allergens such as dust, construction fumes, and paint fumes).
- reviewed registration forms or invitation responses and compiled a list of each participant with allergies, what they are allergic to, and how to identify and respond to an allergic reaction.
- assigned one staff person or volunteer to be in charge of dealing with allergies and allergic reactions. This individual has familiarized themselves with participants’ allergies, has a copy of the list to be kept on hand for the duration of the event, and is trained in basic first aid and the proper technique for administering an EPI pen.
- notified all individuals involved in your event that it is smoke and scent-free.

Booking Services & Renting Equipment

Make sure you have...

- reviewed registration forms or invitation responses to determine which services and supports participants will need. (If budget does not allow all services and supports to be booked, prioritize and book the most necessary ones.)
- contacted participants whose service or support requests can not be accommodated to determine an appropriate alternative.
- referred to **Appendix A** of the Toolkit for a list of service providers and rental companies or found local/regional service providers and rental companies to contact.
- contacted service providers and rental companies to discuss service and support needs and to receive quotes or pricing.
- booked a caterer that is able to accommodate special dietary needs OR assigned a staff person or volunteer to look after meals and refreshments.
- rented all required accessibility/support equipment (e.g. spare wheelchair or scooter with an air pump, bath seat, commode chair, Hoyer lift, etc.) and arranged for delivery and pick-up.
- booked all necessary interpretation services (e.g. Sign language interpreters, spoken language interpreters, oral interpreters, CART, Deafblind interveners, etc.) and associated technology (computers, screens, FM or infrared system, headsets, etc.).
- ensured interpreters are able to work overtime if event runs over the planned schedule.
- booked the required number of microphones and sound systems.
- booked the technicians required to run all audiovisual and support equipment.
- booked all necessary on-site care services (e.g. childcare, care for aged or disabled family members, care for service animals).
- booked Emergency Medical Service, First Aid, or security or police personnel to work on-site if necessary for the size and type of event.
- followed up with all participants requiring a Personal Care Attendant to ensure they have received a copy of **Appendices C and D** of the Toolkit, booked a provider, and returned copies of the care provider contract to the event host.
- arranged for direct payment to service providers booked by participants or for service cost reimbursement to these participants following the event. Participants requiring reimbursement for care services have been notified of the need to attach receipts and copies of the care contract to all claim forms.
- requested that language interpreters and care providers remain with individuals requiring their services during breaks and social activities so these participants can continue to interact effectively with their peers.

Preparing Presenters & Exhibitors

Make sure you have...

- notified presenters and exhibitors of the deadline for submitting presentation materials for adaptation and re-formatting.
- noted the technology requirements of presenters and exhibitors and confirmed that these will be available on-site along with technical assistance (e.g. extension cords, power bars, laptops, VHS/DVD/Blu-Ray/CD player, microphone, sound system, projector, etc.).
- discussed how the presenter will deliver their presentation (e.g. from behind a podium, while walking around and interacting with the audience, while sitting at a table) and made the necessary arrangements to facilitate this in the presentation space.
- followed up with presenters and exhibitors after receiving all event registration forms or invitation responses to ensure they are aware of the particular services and supports that will be in use during their presentation (e.g. interpretation, captioning, adapted materials, assistive listening devices, etc.) so they can plan accordingly.
- referred presenters and exhibitors to the “Planning for Diversity” section of the Toolkit to prepare themselves for being respectful of the diversity of participants at the event.
- asked exhibitors, presenters, and sponsors to ensure they have omitted any perfumes in the products, samples, or other promotional materials they bring to your event.
- referred presenters and exhibitors to Appendix G to assist them in preparing accessible presentations and presentation materials and reminded them to speak clearly, using plain language as much as possible, and to make their presentations dynamic to maintain audience interest.
- informed presenters if simultaneous or consecutive translation will be used for their presentation. If using consecutive translation, you have reminded them this will automatically double the length of the presentation.
- reminded presenters and exhibitors that some people take longer to express their ideas and individuals should be given time to ask questions or make statements at their own speed.
- emphasized the importance of staying on schedule.
- noted any service or support needs presenters or exhibitors may have and confirmed that these can be provided.

Recruiting Volunteers & Training Staff

Make sure you have...

- arranged for an appropriate number of volunteers who reflect the diversity of event participants.
- screened volunteers through necessary processes (e.g. Interview, police check, references, etc.).

- asked all volunteers to complete a form on personal health issues and any supports or services they may need to fulfill their role (refer to Appendix B of the Toolkit).
- assigned specific tasks to the volunteers and confirmed each volunteer is comfortable with their assignment.
- appointed a staff person as a Staff Coordinator (if necessary).
- appointed a staff person or volunteer as a Volunteer Coordinator (if necessary).
- assigned a staff person or volunteer to assist as an Attendant Assistant (if necessary). This person has familiarized themselves with the supports required by each participant requiring accompaniment and organized a time to collect feedback from care providers about their experiences (either in a short survey or debrief session).
- assigned a staff person or volunteer as a Service Provider Assistant (if necessary).
- assigned a staff person or volunteer as an Exhibitor Assistant (if necessary).
- assigned a staff person or volunteer as a Presenter Assistant (if necessary).
- assigned a staff person or volunteer as a Catering and Refreshments Organizer.
- appointed a staff person or volunteer as an Emergency Response Lead.
- held an event orientation session for all staff and volunteers.
- arranged diversity and inclusion training for all staff and volunteers covering topics such as disability, sexual orientation, ageism, racism and racial privilege, cultural and spiritual diversity, etc.
- trained volunteers and staff who are assigned to assisting participants with disabilities in regards to understanding how to effectively communicate with each participant and which supports they require for full participation in the event (if necessary).
- briefed all staff and volunteers on emergency and evacuation protocols.
- prepared high-contrast name tags, arm bands, or vests so staff and volunteers can be easily identified.
- allocated tables and/or seating for staff and volunteers in the event venue(s) or set up a separate room for staff and volunteer use.
- scheduled a debrief for staff and volunteers at the end of the event (or at the end of each day of the event).
- developed a survey or discussion questions to gather volunteer feedback about their experience at the end of the event.

Creating an Event Schedule

Make sure you have...

- allowed enough time during presentations for questions and discussions.

- scheduled short breaks (5-10 minutes) in between each event activity.
- scheduled longer breaks (20-30 minutes) in between each meal break.
- planned to have the event start and end during times at which public transit is running regularly.
- tried to schedule the event during daylight hours to make travel safer.
- scheduled the event outside of regular school hours if youth are expected to participate.
- added a time block for social activities following official event activities (if socializing is anticipated).
- clearly indicated which activities on the schedule are optional.
- finalized and sent out the event schedule at least a week in advance of the event so participants have time to make travel arrangements to and from the venue(s).

SECTION 3: HOSTING AN INCLUSIVE EVENT

Setting up the Venue

Seating, Tables, Booths & Displays

Make sure you have...

- referred to **Appendix I** of the Toolkit and chosen seating and table arrangements for the event that will allow wheelchair users and other individuals with spatial or mobility challenges to circulate freely and for individuals to have as clear a view of speakers (during presentations) or each other (during discussions) as possible.
- ensured there is enough seating to accommodate all participants, staff, volunteers, presenters, service providers, and others who may need to be in the room during an event activity.
- set up tables or booths for any interpreters that will be present and ensure these booths and related technical equipment do not block the view of any presentations.
- allowed for 4 feet of space around each table and ensured aisles are wide.
- cleared pathways of any tripping hazards.
- left enough space around tables for wheelchair (or other mobility device) users to choose where they would like to sit.

- avoided clumping individuals with disabilities together in one seating area.
- reserved seats near entrances for participants who have requested it and staff and volunteers so they can enter and exit the venue(s) discretely.
- reserved seating for Personal Care Attendants where they will be available to the participant they are assisting if signaled but otherwise unobtrusive.
- ensured no wheelchair (or other mobility device) users will be seated on a steep slope.
- reserved seats in the front row for Deaf, hard of hearing, and people with low vision.
- provided some seating options for any event activity where participants are expected to be standing or walking around (e.g. cocktail hour, networking session).

Signage

Make sure you have...

- designed signs that are high-contrast, in large print, and in a consistent format/layout.
- used access symbols (refer to **Appendix H** of the Toolkit) on event signs to indicate which supports are available in specific event spaces or activities.
- printed the proper signs and had them adapted into all necessary formats (e.g. Braille or other language translation).
- printed a large poster of the event schedule and placed it in a central location at the event venue(s).
- posted signs accordingly around the venue(s).
- arranged for someone to take signs down at the end of the event.

Managing Staff & Volunteers

Make sure you have...

- ensured a staff person or volunteer will be available to assist any service providers or exhibitors who require early set-up (either the night or early morning before the event).
- set up a central information/check-in table to be manned by staff and/or volunteers at all times during the event.
- instructed staff and/or volunteers to report to the Volunteer and/or Staff Coordinator(s) when they arrive at the event venue(s) to receive their name tag, identifying t-shirt (or other item), and information package (if required) and to find out about any last minute changes to task assignments.
- briefed staff and volunteers on the anticipated event schedule and layout of the venue(s).
- requested staff or volunteers assigned to key roles be present at the opening of the event to be

identified to participants.

- asked staff and volunteers to visually and verbally check in with each other during the event to make sure everyone's personal needs are being met.
- notified staff and volunteers of the debrief session at the end of event (or the end of the day).

Managing Service Providers

Make sure you have...

- confirmed language interpreters and care providers are available to remain with individuals requiring their services during breaks and social activities so these participants can continue to interact effectively with their peers.
- prepared appropriate information packages for each service provider.
- communicated venue rules and regulations to each on-site service provider.
- instructed service providers to check in with the Service Provider Assistant when they arrive at the event venue(s) and ensured the Assistant is available to meet service providers either the night or morning before the event to assist with set-up.
- instructed catering staff to check in with the Catering & Refreshments Organizer upon arrival to the event venue(s) and ensured the Organizer is prepared to assist with catering staff with managing the special dietary needs of participants.
- directed Personal Care Attendants or supporting family members of participants to check in with the Attendant Assistant upon arrival to the event venue(s) and ensured the Assistant is prepared to support care attendants as necessary.

Managing Presenters & Exhibitors

Make sure you have...

- instructed exhibitors to arrive early and check-in at a central information table or with a key staff person or volunteer.
- clearly labeled and outlined exhibitor spaces/booths.
- delivered all necessary technical equipment to exhibitor spaces in advance of their arrival (e.g. extension cords, power bars, speakers).
- instructed presenters to arrive at least 15-30 minutes prior to their presentation and to check-in at a central information table or with a key staff person or volunteer.
- informed presenters as to whether or not they are welcome to participate in the entire event or only during their presentation.
- allocated time for the presenters to familiarize themselves with the presentation space and test any technical equipment to be used during their presentation.

- reminded presenters to speak clearly, to be sensitive to the needs and identities of audience members, and to keep their presentation running on time.
- briefed exhibitors and presenters on important aspects of the event such as the schedule, venue layout, and emergency and evacuation procedures.

Welcoming Participants

Make sure you have...

- put together event packages for each participant that include a copy of the venue layout, event schedule, emergency and evacuation procedure instructions, and any adapted materials they may require. (Packages with adapted materials should be clearly labeled with the participant's name who requires those specific formats to prevent confusion during check-in.)
- instructed participants to check-in at a central registration table or with a key staff person or volunteer when they arrive at the event venue(s).
- positioned staff or volunteers at the check-in location to assist participants, distribute name tags and event packages, deal with any last-minute accommodation requests that may arise, and direct participants to necessary services.
- gathered participants in a single location for the event opening.
- reminded participants to be respectful of one another's diversity and to actively participate in creating a safe and welcoming space for everyone.
- explained to participants how to identify staff and volunteers and introduced individuals playing key roles such as services coordinator, emergency response coordinator, or meal and refreshments coordinator.
- reviewed venue layout and key features (e.g. accessible washrooms, emergency exits, information desk, interfaith/meditation room, charging stations for cell phones or laptops).
- provided an overview of the event schedule and asked participants to arrive at event activities on time so the schedule is not delayed.
- reviewed emergency and evacuation procedures (told participants what the alarm will sound like, which staff or volunteers will lead them out of the venue, and where the outdoor safe meeting place is).
- advised participants that all interpreters will translate everything that is said or signed and will not add words, edit, or censor presenters' words or discussions.
- reassured participants that they should feel comfortable approaching staff or volunteers with any questions or concerns they may have.

Meals & Refreshments

Make sure you have...

- included meal and refreshment breaks in the event schedule.
- reviewed participant registration forms or invitation responses and noted all special dietary requirements and food allergies.
- assigned one staff person or volunteer to be in charge of managing food and refreshment services. This person has familiarized themselves with the special dietary needs and food allergies that must be accommodated and has a list of food accommodations with them at all times.
- shared information about special dietary needs and food allergies with the catering company and venue manager(s) and ensured caterers are able to accommodate these needs.
- labeled food items clearly to assist servers or to assist participants if the meal/refreshments are received buffet-style (either with the specific participant's name, with labels that indicate what diet type the food is safe for, or with a list of ingredients, highlighting known food allergens).
- ensured that catering company staff, venue staff, or your own staff and volunteers will be on-hand during snack breaks and meal times to assist people who require it.
- made bendable straws available for every meal or serving station for those who may require one to drink.
- confirmed that refreshments will be available at all times for individuals with particular dietary or health needs.

For more information:

For more information or to request a webinar to support your use of the Toolkit please contact:

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