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HSB Event Inclusivity and Accessibility Guide

The pandemic forced us to rethink traditional ways of doing things, and the events industry was transformed by the surge in necessity of virtual events. Almost overnight, many of the barriers to entry for attending in-person events disappeared: time, distance, resources, accessibility. Time and again, we've heard from event hosts that they appreciate how the switch to virtual events increased inclusivity. HSB wants to help keep the spirit alive with these free tips to help you keep inclusivity, in all its many forms, front-of-mind when you plan your next event.

Inclusive Language: *Keep in mind that language used in HSB events and other materials is inclusive of all audiences.*
- Beware of words or phrases with unintentional negative historical meaning
- Exercise caution with words that deal with race & ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, and mental health and consult the Conscious Style Guide
- If you need help crafting the introduction to your speaker, contact HSB for their approved bio – you're free to use it as you wish
- You may want to ask a colleague to read your prepared remarks to make sure that there are no trouble spots
- Consult the list of additional website resources below that can help you find the right words

Event Logistics: *Virtual or hybrid events can contain a mix of attendees with different needs*
- Provide anonymous feedback channels (e.g. email, phone, etc.) for attendees to confidentially request accommodations when they sign-up for your event, which allows you time to make arrangements and guarantees their needs are met discretely
- Make your event website accessible to everyone, ensuring the fonts and colors are easy to read, instructions about how to purchase tickets are clear, and the details about the timing and structure of the event are explained clearly
- For paid ticketed events, consider offering a sliding scale or reserving a set number of free tickets for attendees with financial sensitivities. Consider partnering with a local community groups to offer free or discounted tickets available to those who need it and would highly benefit from attending your event. Check with HSB if you want to know if the speaker has any particular causes they wish to support
- If you're planning any icebreaker-style events, keep the groups small to encourage both introverts and extroverts to participate. This can be done both in virtual breakout rooms and in-person
- If you're incorporating an online chat feature in a Q&A session, read the questions aloud when addressing them

- If you record the event to share afterward, ensure the recordings are captioned. Consider adding descriptions of visual actions and environmental sounds using a qualified third party like [ASL Captions](#)

Livestreaming and/or Recording: *Broadening your ability to reach the widest possible audience*
- Before submitting an invitation for a speaker, develop a good estimation of the size of your expected audience to ensure HSB is aware of the reach of your event. If there are significant changes in the size of the audience, it may incur additional fees. It's always best to plan on the front end to set expectations accordingly
- HSB requires prior written approval over requests to livestream
- You will want to let attendees know if the livestream is only available one time or if it will be recorded and shared later. Recorded events require HSB's prior written approval so please plan accordingly
- Events that must be viewed live should take into account any conflicting holidays, overall timing considerations (including time zone differences), attendees' ability to access the internet, and the medium through which events will be livestreamed

Additional Resources: *Further your education and awareness about issues important to your audience*

Language:
> [Conscious Style Guide](#)
> [Autistic Hoya: Ableism/Language](#)
> [Diversity Style Guide](#)
> [GLAAD Glossary of Terms: Lesbian / Gay / Bisexual / Queer](#)
> [National Center on Disability and Journalism Style Guide](#)
> [Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#)

Logistics:
> [Inclusive Design Principles](#)
> [Crowdcast: 10 Ways to Make Your Online Event More Inclusive](#)
> [InclusionBC: How to Make Your Event More Inclusive](#)
> [Virtual Events Institute: 11 Ways to Design a Truly Accessible and Inclusive Virtual Event](#)

Please consider HSB a helpful resource in your event planning and when thinking about issues of inclusivity and accessibility. Contact us to learn more or ask questions – we'd love to hear from you!
www.hachettesspeakersbureau.com

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