TOOLKIT
for libraries planning Accessibility Fairs

Produced and provided by North Texas Library Partners (NTLP) to help libraries plan and coordinate Accessibility Fairs for their communities.

This ToolKit provides general information about putting together an Accessibility Fair as a service to the community and as a way of developing relationships with and awareness of both the community members who have disabilities and the service providers and product vendors those people can turn to for assistance and ideas. The information provided in this tool is not a recommendation, referral or endorsement of any resource, vendor or service provider. This ToolKit is not intended as a tool for verifying the credentials, qualifications or abilities of any organization, product or professional. NTLP has not validated and is not responsible for any information or services provided by third parties.

About this ToolKit

With gratitude NTLP thanks the NTLP Accessibility Advisory Council for their time, efforts and expertise in the development of this ToolKit. Members of that committee at that time were:

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Contact us

Ask for help

Contact North Texas Library Partners
✦ For assistance with the development of an Accessibility Fair in your community
✦ To volunteer to help with an Accessibility Fair in your community
✦ To find out which communities are developing Accessibility Fairs in the North Texas area
✦ For more information, including a list of resources

Share your comments

To share your comments on this kit – What was helpful? What additional information could be included?, etc. – please email dona weisman.
Coordinating an Accessibility Fair in your community

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Glossary
What is Universal Accessibility?

Universal Accessibility is a term, commonly used in the fields of disability, education, healthcare, technology and telecommunications, which refers to all people having equal access – in a productive and useful way – to a service or product from which they can benefit. According to experts at Stanford (CA) University, “Universal Accessibility means conveying your ideas in such a way so that the [product] created can be re-purposed in many different ways without losing its meaning, intent or usefulness… It's about getting the most mileage out of the work you produce, saving you time, effort and resources…

“A simple analogy is sidewalk cut-curbs. Initially provided to assist users in wheelchairs, cut curbs today also benefit people on roller-blades and skate boards, cyclists and mothers with baby strollers; user-groups never originally envisioned when cut-curbs were first mandated. And while retro-fitting older sidewalk intersections was a time consuming and expensive undertaking, today the inclusion of cut-curbs in new sidewalk construction is a matter of course, and adds little to nothing to the overall cost of sidewalk construction or repair.”

Universal Accessibility results from a combination of Assistive Technology and Universal Design. All of us use Assistive Technology regularly, whether the technology enables communication, storage and retrieval, transportation or environmental comfort. Examples of assistive technology include PDAs, the Internet, telephones and automatic doors, Not all Assistive Technology is designed with the needs of people with disabilities in mind. Universal Design is the development of products and environments which are as useful as possible to everyone, without adaptation or specialized design. Such products and environments can benefit people of all ages, abilities, social classes and backgrounds. Examples of universal design include appliances on wheels, ramps, adjustable car seats and wider doorways.

Having an access need at some point in one's life is a virtual certainty. In other words, accessibility is a universal. Everyone needs access. What’s more, incorporating as much assistive technology and universal design into one’s business or life style can ultimately result in savings of money as well as time.
Why libraries are addressing Universal Accessibility

In American society, accessibility to the knowledge, information and services provided by libraries and information centers is a universal that transcends all boundaries and categories of age, gender, national origin, ethnicity, faith, geographic location and all other types of diversity. Thus American libraries serve, ideally, as an equalizer for the masses.

Yet in the years since the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, few Texas libraries have experienced a truly significant increase in use by patrons who have disabilities – despite the fact that the number of people being identified as having disabilities continues to grow throughout the state. In the years immediately before and after passage of the ADA, Accessibility-related training for library personnel was available everywhere one turned. By 2008 such training had taken such a backseat to other professional training that the Texas Library Association (TLA) Conference didn’t include a single presentation relative to serving people with disabilities.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 20 counties served by the North Texas Library Partners (NTLP) had an estimated total population of 2,680,255 in 2006. Of those 387,304 – or about 6.9% – were recorded as persons with sensory, physical, mental, self-care, go-outside-home and / or employment disabilities. With medical advancements lengthening lives, Baby Boomers retiring and the number of wounded veterans increasing, it is inevitable that the population with disabilities will grow.

In his presentation at the 2007 TLA Conference, then-Texas State Demographer Steve Murdock included a slide reflecting a 20.7% increase in the state’s 65-year-old-plus population in 2000 over that in the 1990 census. Considering the fact that the first of the Boomers began turning 60 in 2006, it is reasonable to expect an even more significant increase in our state’s 65+ population during the next two decades. It is essential that libraries be prepared for the service and accessibility demands which will result.
How Accessibility Fairs help libraries address Universal Accessibility

To assure that the entire community has access to the library and its services, libraries must constantly review their services and accessibilities to identify potential barriers. In order to use funds most wisely, however, librarians need to study the demographics and specific disabilities within their own communities and prioritize changes accordingly.

As a result of working with partners to coordinate an Accessibility Fair and gathering information from Fair attendees and exhibitors, libraries will develop an awareness of specific needs in the community, proportions of those needs and which of those needs would benefit from increased attention and services. Potential partners for improving and promoting accessibility of services and programs will be identified, also.

For library staff and supporters, Accessibility Fairs provide an opportunity to meet a significant segment of those people who aren’t using the library because they either are unaware of what the library has to offer or are doubtful that the library can meet their needs. The Fairs can open the communication channel for attendees to learn more about the library’s services and programs and for library personnel to learn more about the specific needs of people among their communities.

Accessibility Fairs offer libraries an added bonus in that they provide an opportunity to make businesses aware of the programs and services they provide to businesses and their employees. This can result in businesses recognizing added value in libraries and, in turn, increasing their support of libraries.
Finding a partner and building your planning team

It isn’t always easy to find partners in endeavors like an Accessibility Fair. Since this subject touches every corner of society, however, it might be easier to find a partner for this than for some other efforts.

Other libraries as partners

Many universities and school districts already have Accessibility Fairs of some kind, so we recommend that you contact the university libraries, school districts and PTAs in your area to inquire about possible partnerships. The availability of funding assistance available through North Texas Library Partners gives you something to bring to the table. With school libraries, the regional educational service centers (ESCs) also are good places to start as some of them offer Fairs similar to what you plan to do. If the ESCs don’t offer any leads, it is time to contact some of the individual school districts (ISDs). Many ISD websites have an event calendar, so you can browse these sections for possible partners.

You can also check out the PTAs of the local schools. PTAs often are looking for partnerships and if you can convince them to partner, it will be easier to convince the school library to come onboard if they haven’t agreed to do so already.

Don’t forget to look into local private schools as partners, too.

Other public libraries with which your library’s community overlaps are potential partners, also.

Community groups

Various community groups are potential partners for an Accessibility Fair. In addition to organizations listed among the Potential Exhibitors for Accessibility Fairs, consider such groups as your local Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations, hospitals, clinics, retirement facilities, veterans groups and churches.
Meeting with your planning committee

Once you have the partners lined up, you need to set up a time for representatives from each of them to get together to start the planning process. This planning committee will be responsible for all aspects of the Fair. The initial meeting should address issues such as the following:

- **Goals** of the event
- **Budget** for the event
- What, if any, education or training opportunities will be offered, when and how long each session will last?
- Possible event location(s) and any related costs
- Event date and name
- What the group will do to attract vendors, sponsors and attendees, and who will be responsible for what
- Risks involved in a Fair like this
- Tools to be used to collect feedback
- Roles and responsibilities of each partner
- Timetable of tasks with responsibilities described clearly
- How future decisions will be made by the steering committee

The meeting should end with each partner representative taking away a list of action items for which he / she / the person’s organization is responsible. No other face-to-face meeting will be required after this initial one if enough ground is covered. All other issues may be addressed through email and online meetings.

It is a good idea for the planning committee to meet again soon after the Fair to review the event and discuss any lessons learned for future Fairs.
Setting goals

When your group starts to plan your Fair, it is a good idea to set some goals. According to the Wordnet at Princeton University, a goal is “the state of affairs that a plan is intended to achieve and that (when achieved) terminates behavior intended to achieve it.” Here are some example goals, from the library’s standpoint, for your event.

- To increase contacts with members of our community who have disabilities and / or are responsible for individuals with disabilities
- To achieve a better awareness of the disabilities of our community’s residents and guests
- To build partnerships with various businesses and community groups which serve our residents with disabilities and their families
- To increase, in the minds of people with disabilities and those who serve them, the value of the library as an institution with equal access to all
- To determine ways to improve upon the library’s “equal access to all” commitment
- To identify disabilities which exist in the community and could be addressed by the library in new ways or in ways that would enhance what is currently being done
- To better educate library staff regarding barriers which could be removed by the library and bridges which might be built in order to better serve people with disabilities
- To promote, to residents and guests with disabilities and to those who assist them, services which the library already provides (Information on enrollment in the Texas Talking Books Program, for example)
- To provide an opportunity for and encourage networking and communication among residents and guests with disabilities and service providers / product vendors available to them

During the review meeting after the Fair, the planning committee should review the goals outlined at the beginning of the project to see what was achieved. The goals can act as a report card of sorts for the Fair. Reviewing the goals after the event also provides an opportunity to add goals which were met although not stated and to hone those which need improved wording before such an event is planned again.
Budgeting for the event

It’s always a good idea to develop a baseline budget for the Fair for the purpose of controlling cost. Below are some of the categories relative to your preliminary budget.

Staffing

Staff might include any or all of the following:

- A Project Administrator
- A Facilities Coordinator
- An Exhibitor [and Activities] Coordinator
- A Volunteer Coordinator
- A Supplies Coordinator
- A Promotion Coordinator
- A Technology Coordinator

Partners may provide staff to cover some of the responsibilities, or you may prefer to keep such responsibilities within the realm of the library.

Budgeting staff may be as “simple” as determining who will be involved and how much time each person should plan on working on his / her responsibilities or as complex as determining the total cost of personnel assigned to the Fair so that the personnel provider(s) may report in-kind contribution to the event.

Include volunteer staff as part of the in-kind budget. Try to get a commitment from each partner to provide volunteers either from their organization or recruited from other groups. Consider scheduling volunteers in three shifts – Pre-event (before exhibitors arrive, while exhibits are being set up and as soon as attendees begin arriving), During event (throughout the hours of the event) and Post-event (beginning 30 minutes before the event ends and continuing until everything is packed and everyone is ready to leave). This can help prevent volunteer burnout while providing the opportunity for volunteers to cover more than one shift if they choose to do so. The overlapping of the shifts allows those taking over to get information from those ending their shifts regarding what has been happening and where things are.

Facilities

There are most likely several options for a facility for your event. The Fair’s facilities coordinator should contact the Chamber of Commerce, the city, local school districts and even local private schools to inquire about possible locations. The facility should have adequate space and the ability to support technology (plenty of electrical outlets, wireless internet, etc.). If the Fair will include continuing education opportunities, be sure to look for a place with access to break-out rooms for those presentations.

Equipment

The Technology Coordinator will need to make sure that electricity and Internet is readily available to all vendors who request either or both items, and that person will need to be present during set-up as well as during and after the Fair to assist them in getting their equipment working at their exhibit spaces. In addition, that person may be responsible for coordinating all online promotion of the event.
Supplies

Many of the necessary supplies will already be available at your library, the intended facility or a partner’s facility. The Supplies Coordinator is responsible for determining which supplies will come from which partner, which will need to be purchased, who will make the purchase and the source of funds for those supplies. Of course, you’ll need at least one table for each exhibit space, one or two for registration and sign-in, one or two for refreshments and – if you plan to have give-aways for all attendees – you will need an appropriate number of tables to display those.

Be sure to give some thought to the registration area. Our experience has been that those working that table prefer no cloth on the table itself, although plastic drapes can add class to the first impression your event will make on exhibitors and attendees.

Additional items which may need to be purchased for the event include refreshment supplies, copy or printer paper, pre-printed postcards from online sources, etc.

Plan to produce postcard-sized business cards for distribution at the library’s exhibit.

Outreach and promotion

The Promotion Coordinator will develop, produce and distribute promotional materials for the Fair. Costs will include paper, ink, reproduction, staff time and, possibly, postage.

Refreshments

The Facilities Coordinator should make sure that refreshments of some kind will be provided. A good rule of thumb is: Always provide [bottled] water; provide additional refreshments for any event that lasts two hours or more. Be sure to budget not only for any refreshments you will be providing but also for cups, plates, napkins, plasticware and decorations, if any, as well as serving bowls, trays and utensils.

Restaurants in your community might be willing to underwrite this aspect of your Fair in return for visible recognition of their contribution. Alternatively, your Friends or another community group might want to have a concession table and provide reasonably-priced refreshment options, with the income earmarked for the purchase of a specific Accessibility item for your library.

Paid keynote speaker and / or session leaders

It is possible to have a successful Fair without training sessions and without a keynote speaker. If either or both will be included in your Fair, however, your group will need to determine whether or not to include paid speakers and, if so, how much to budget for such payments. Honorariums are an option. Be sure the speakers know your payment – or non-payment – terms when you make arrangements for them to speak.

Performers and activity leaders

Some Accessibility Fairs include paid performers in order to provide entertainment for attendees and / or activities for the children. If your Fair will include performers, be sure to budget for them. It may be possible to identify people in your community who will entertain adults and / or children voluntarily or in return for free publicity.

Interpreter for people with hearing impairment

Contact providers such as Deaf Action Center, Merritt Interpreting Services LLC, Hired Hands, Inc., etc. Be aware that interpreter fees may be expensive since interpreters are usually paid by the hour and a minimum fee usually applies.
Providing education or training sessions during the Fair

As you plan your Fair determine the level of training you will offer during the Fair. If the venue is small and / or it is a first-time Fair, consider limiting training sessions or having none. Sessions may be added at future Fairs as attendance increases. The community served by the library will dictate the number and need for training sessions.

Examples of session topics and opportunities

- Tax credits and other benefits for employers who hire an individual with a disability
- What employers need to know about reasonable accommodations
- Training programs for veterans with disabilities which benefit the employer
- Ways to make your business and its services more accessible to people with disabilities
- State of Texas web accessibility guidelines
- Convincing your company’s IT department to add software, such as Zoomtext, Jaws, Magic, Window-Eyes, etc., and hardware, such as Interpretyle and large print keyboards
- How to do a walk-thru in your building in order to identify potential hazards for the visually impaired
- Sources of free accessible resources available, including surplus assistive technology equipment
- Education Entitlement Laws (IDEA, IDEA / NCLB and now the new Higher Education Opportunity Act – which, with as well as Section 508, mandates accessibility
- Texas Talking Book Program and similar programs
- Introduction to Universal Accessibility workstations or whatever technology the library offers
- Introduction to your community library and its services and programs

Pros of providing education or training sessions during the Fair:

- Increases the depth of information available. Break-out sessions with experts will allow your Fair to offer information that is more in-depth. An example is a break-out session on the topic of "What employers need to know about reasonable accommodations." This topic would be focused on business information with broad coverage of all types of disabilities. Even if an exhibitor might be providing that information if it weren’t available in a training session, there is no way that exhibitor will get as much undivided attention time as in a separate session.
- Can attract more people to the Fair. A specific presenter or topic may motivate someone to attend that might not otherwise attend. In some cases, the organization doing the presentation may promote your event in order to get more of “its people” to attend the training session.
- Provides a forum for presentations with greater focus on specific needs. For example, “How to do a walk-through in your building in order to identify potential hazards for the visually impaired” might be of interest to those attending the Fair but might not attract as large a crowd as a single library program.
Builds relationships with other organizations and persons with disabilities in the community. In order to schedule the presentations, you will have to contact various people; having the presentations will bring in additional people who bring with them information about additional contacts.

**Cons of providing education or training sessions during the Fair:**
- Requires additional work for planning, coordinating, executing and follow-up
- Necessitates additional space for the sessions, preferably in separate rooms
- Usually prompts additional equipment needs
- Expands the area to be covered by volunteer assistance
- Competes with time for attendees to visit with exhibitors
- Takes time to discover quality presenters. Not all experts are good presenters, and not all good presenters are knowledgeable about topics you want addressed.
- Can require additional funding

**Finding appropriate session leaders**
In determining appropriate session leaders, it is best to start with those already familiar with the information to be covered. When contacting these organizations, inquire about presenters specifically. Possible contacts include the following:
- Local school districts and their Accessibility departments
- Local universities and colleges and their Accessibility counselors
- Local churches
- Specific organizations (See Potential Exhibitors for Accessibility Fairs and Online Resources.)
- City or county staff
- Local attorneys who specialize in the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Human Resource departments for local businesses / corporations
- Online resources such as blogs or podcasts (Search for special needs blogs.)
- National organizational conferences which might have leads to local speakers, such as Closing the Gap, National ADA Symposium, Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality and others
- Attendees and vendors at this year’s Fair who may have suggestions for next year

**Setting up the schedule to include training sessions**
In setting up the Fair schedule with training sessions, there are several considerations to address. Among them are the following:
- Should sessions be scheduled at the same time as exhibits or separately?
  This has been successful either way, but the standard is that exhibits and sessions occur simultaneously. A bonus of this schedule is that it allows for a larger crowd without necessarily causing overcrowding. Also, people may to visit the exhibits while sessions are underway in order to get more individualized time with exhibitors since there are fewer people in the exhibit area during sessions.

On the other hand, if the sessions reduce attendance in the exhibit area too much, exhibitors will get frustrated and may leave early. If you schedule sessions simultaneously with exhibits, be sure to allow some dedicated exhibit time, such as
15-20 minute breaks between sessions, in order to encourage attendees to visit the exhibits as well.

How long should sessions last?
This also is open for what the specific topic dictates, but keep in mind that most people aren’t used to sitting for long periods of time. To keep sessions dynamic and interesting, it’s suggested that each session be no longer than 1 hour - with at least 10 minutes for question and answer time at the end - so 50 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for Q & A. If there are more questions than can be addressed in that time, the presenter can continue to answer questions if there isn’t another session in the room or can tell those with questions where to find him / her after the presentation.

How should the schedule be set up?
If you are planning to have a keynote speaker, it is best to open the Fair with this presentation. If the presenter is speaking on a "hot" topic, schedule one or two break-out sessions for this speaker also.

Having a keynote speaker isn’t a prerequisite for a successful Fair. If there is no keynote speaker, open the event with refreshments and exhibits. Give attendees time to get familiar with the Fair area and get settled.

In setting up the break-out sessions, consider the audience for the sessions in determining beginning and ending times. Avoid scheduling similar presentations at the same time. Spread the sessions throughout the hours of the Fair, allowing time for attendees to visit exhibits, rest or get refreshments.

If you will have simultaneous presentations, consider both potential audience and room size. Assign to larger spaces those topics which are more likely to be popular.

How will attendees know what’s happening and when?
Be sure to develop, produce and distribute schedules and facility maps so that all participants will be aware of the sessions, session times and how to get to the sessions and exhibits from the sign-in area. If possible, include this information on your library’s website and in email messages to potential attendees.
Determining the event name, date, time and place

Naming the event

Keep the event name as simple, descriptive and inviting as possible. In this document we call the event the 2009 Accessibility Fair to allow including such accessibility tools as cell phones, ceiling fans with portable remote control and PDAs so that everyone who attends, including members of the mainstream, will find exhibits which interest them.

If you want to include the name(s) of the sponsoring agencies, consider putting them into the event name, as in “2009 Anytown Public Library & Northeast Chamber of Commerce Accessibility Fair,” or adding a secondary title, as in 2009 Accessibility Fair / Produced by Anytown Public Library & Northeast Chamber of Commerce.

Some libraries have preferred to combine the Fair with another community event, such as a Safety, Community Services or Health Fair. The advantage to this is that the Accessibility Fair portion is visible to everyone who attends the larger event and benefits, also, from promotion of the larger event. In such an arrangement, it is important that the Accessibility Fair be mentioned in all promotions for the larger event and that the coordinators of the Accessibility Fair promote their event with as much energy and determination as if the event were happening on its own.

Choosing the day and date

The best date for an Accessibility Fair varies according to the makeup of the community, yet there are some common guidelines.

♦ Make a list of local, nearby and televised major events, and avoid those dates.
♦ Consider the religions in your community and avoid related Holy Days.
♦ Sabbath Days of local religions may be options, depending on the religion and provided you avoid times when members will be involved in worship ceremonies.
♦ Holidays such as Columbus Day might work, if you know that a significant number of people in your community will be off that day and that a community event isn’t scheduled for that date already.
♦ Summer Reading Club demands make summer Fairs challenging, but it might be possible to schedule an event after the club finale and before school starts. Avoid tax-free weekends and the weekend just before school starts.

Determining the beginning and ending times for the event

When planning event hours, determine first how long the event will be. Evening events – especially during the school year – may not attract as many attendees and exhibitors as a daytime event. Evenings are an option for a first-time Accessibility Fair which will be used to provide guidelines for a future, larger daytime event. If you decide to hold an evening event, make sure that it doesn’t start before 6:30 p.m. or end after 9:30 p.m.

Two to four hours should be sufficient time for a daily event, depending on the size of the facility, the maximum number of attendees and exhibitors you expect to participate, and whether or not education or training sessions will be included. The more exhibitors you have in a small space, the longer it will take everyone to get through the Exhibit Hall – unless that hall is so crowded that attendees give up before visiting all exhibits. Similarly, failing to allow enough time for attendees to visit exhibits as well as attending any sessions of interest will lead to frustration among attendees.
Schedule daytime Fairs in the afternoon between meals or in the morning before lunch, with times such as 8 a.m. - noon, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., noon – 4 p.m. and 1-5:00 p.m. If you plan to include outdoor activities, think of the possible temperatures on the date in question when setting the beginning and ending time of your Fair.

**Selecting a location**

At the very least the facility needs to accommodate exhibits and visitors while providing comfortable movement. At most it also needs to accommodate any performers and / or sessions which will be included.

Some libraries have meeting rooms large enough to accommodate exhibits and attendees; some also have board and / or study rooms which accommodate either education or training sessions, entertainment or children’s activities.

If the library can’t provide adequate space, look into other community facilities such as community centers, recreation facilities and event local hotels. Verify that the facilities and related parking are user-friendly for people with disabilities. NTLP makes funding available – by application – for member libraries partnering with other community groups in order to provide an Accessibility Fair. Payment for event space is among the potential uses of that funding.

The facility will need to have a quantity of parking spaces near the entrance which can be temporarily marked with clearly visible handicap access signage and added to those spaces which already exist since this event will attract an unusually large number of people who need those spots.

As you consider facilities, sketch a map of the potential Exhibit Hall layout based on room size, table size and the numbers of exhibitors and attendees you hope to attract. Use that sketch to help you decide whether or not the space will be adequate for your needs. It is best to plan a “front” for each exhibit space and to determine where you want exhibitor representatives to be.

In the following example, tables are grouped closely. This set-up works in that it discourages traffic behind or between individual exhibits, enables a clear traffic flow pattern and may allow more exhibitors to participate. It is challenging in that an appropriate amount of space must be allowed for exhibitors who will be standing or sitting – possibly in wheelchairs – in front of their spaces. (Remember that some exhibits involve multiple representatives at one space.) Attendees may have trouble distinguishing exhibitors from other attendees since all are in the same traffic flow.

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WALL
↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓

↓ 5’ minimum between groups of tables ↓

↑ exhibit front ↑  ↑ exhibit front ↑  ↑ exhibit front ↑  ↑ exhibit front ↑  ↑ exhibit front ↑

↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓  ↓ exhibit front ↓

↓ 5’ minimum between groups of tables ↓
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In the next example, space is allowed for exhibitors to sit or stand behind their tables. This set-up works in that it enables exhibitors to sit or stand near their spaces without being among the attendees, and it helps attendees distinguish exhibitors from other attendees. It is challenging in that it can require additional space and, in order to define the traffic pattern, tables must be arranged in such a way that they discourage attendee traffic behind or between individual exhibits while allowing exhibitors to move easily to and from the back of their exhibits when they need to do so. Note that openings aren’t directly across from each other yet each exhibitor has access to an opening within two tables from him or her.

Spaces along the walls are easier to plan, but it is necessary still to know whether you want exhibitors behind or in front of those exhibits.

Repeat each “middle of the room” set-up as many times as possible. It may be necessary to combine the two set-ups, depending on the size of the room you will be using and the number of exhibitors and attendees you hope to accommodate.

Although you will want to accommodate as many exhibitors as possible, remember that empty tables detract from your event. Be prepared to set a limit to – and a waiting list for – exhibit spaces and / or to use unclaimed tables in some way, such as for a passive promotion of the Friends of the library, to register people for library cards, etc.

**Finding local service providers, vendors and other potential exhibitors**

The [NTLP Accessibility Advisory Council](#) and NTLP staff maintain an online listing of [Potential Exhibitors for North Texas Accessibility Fairs](#). Please contact dona weisman with any suggestions for additions, corrections or updates.
Promoting the Fair

Your success at promoting the Fair will directly affect the success of the event itself. An in-depth and very broad marketing resource is available online from the Texas Commission on the Arts. In it you will find: an overview of marketing and public relations basics; guidelines for creating a media plan; an overview of the different vehicles for getting the word out and their unique considerations; tricks of the trade; information on conducting market research and developing a media list; tips on what to say when being interviewed; sample ads; sample fact sheets and press releases; and more.

This following list of ideas for promoting an Accessibility Fair may help you get started.

City Council proclamation

Request a proclamation from the City Council, naming the date as [City] Accessibility Day. Be sure to include information about the Fair in the “whereas” sections.

Promotional items

Use an online resource such as www.vistaprint.com, http://www.bargainprinting.com/ or www.gotprint.com to develop and purchase postcards. If such postcards are too expensive for your budget develop printed brochures, flyers and/or bookmarks instead.

Develop a simple promotional item as the text of an email so that you can send that out with PDFs of your promotional items attached. Remember that some people won’t open the attachment, so be sure that vital information is included in the text of your message. Since some ISPs mark as possible spam anything sent in bulk, it may be wise to send your messages out in very small batches if time and personnel allow.

Create bookmarks and signs, but spread them throughout the community. Setting them out or posting them only in the library will do little to bring in people who aren’t currently library users. Many people with disabilities aren’t currently using the library because they either know that the library offers little they can access easily or have no idea what the library does offer for them.

Distribution of promotional items

Traditionally libraries have attempted to promote special events by sending press releases and written public service announcements to print and broadcast media outlets. It has been argued that it is more effective to call a reporter or columnist directly with a catchy description of the event. Nothing says you can’t do both.

Technology has increased significantly one’s opportunities for promoting an event. In addition to the long-existing options of printed brochures or flyers, signs and posters, bookmarks, business cards and postcards, there now are numerous options available via the Internet and computers. Posting information and/or links on websites, via email messages and even as a promotional line added to the email signatures of library supporters and staff are among the options. Online opportunities include Twitter, Youtube and blogs. As Public Relations Professional Jeff Crilley explains in his February 21, 2009 newsletter, that “The old way of doing public relations doesn’t work anymore. You have to move at the speed of news.”

Modern recording devices facilitate production and reproduction of audio and video promotional items which can be used in podcasts and vodcasts or stored on discs for
individual distribution. Remember that audio and visual promotions may reach people with disabilities more effectively than print media.

Naturally, limits to distribution methods and opportunities are set by your budget, time, expertise, willingness and what technology is readily available to you.

Despite all technological advancements, word-of-mouth remains among the most effective methods of promoting an event. If your library’s staff and supporters mention the Fair frequently, both in and out of the library, word is bound to get to people who might not otherwise hear about the event.

Signage

Use banners as well as portable and / or electronic marquees to announce the event throughout the community. Ask local businesses if they will add the announcement to their indoor and outdoor electronic message boards.

Effective and appropriate signage on the day of the event is an essential part of promoting the event. Develop outdoor signage which will help attendees and exhibitors locate the facility, verify that they are using the correct entrance and remember the hours of the event. Develop indoor signage which will direct them to the sign-in table, the Exhibit Hall and session and entertainment locations. If your event includes sessions and / or entertainment, post schedules of those events in various places throughout the facility. Be sure that signs can be read from a reasonable distance.

Printed programs for attendees and exhibitors

While printed programs aren’t necessary, they are a great way to acknowledge community support for your event. Other items which might be included in a printed program include schedules of sessions and / or entertainment or other activities, a map of the exhibit hall, refreshment information and contact information for anyone who would like to assist with a future Accessibility Fair.

Involving exhibitors

As you contact potential exhibitors, provide them with promotional literature.

Give exhibitors a reasonable amount of time to respond, and then contact again those who haven’t responded. Remind them of the event and make sure that they received the invitation to participate. If they won’t be participating because of a conflict or reason beyond their control, ask if they would be willing to distribute your materials and, if so, ask how much of it to provide for them or offer to send the information electronically. Even if a business requests only a dozen copies or forwards the information to as many addresses, remember that the potential exhibitor is a direct connection to the people you’re hoping will attend.

When the potential exhibitor is a service provider, ask them to help by distributing information via email to their customers.

As you receive exhibit space reservations, ask those exhibitors to consider posting on their websites a link to your online promotion of the event.

Involving local employers and the business community

An in-person presentation to civic groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club and the Lions Club can help you get the word out and, possibly, result in additional outlets for distribution of promotional materials or online links. Among the audience may be potential exhibitors and / or sources of volunteer assistance.
Distribute promotional information to local employers via email, through the US mail or in person. Include a fact sheet of information businesses need to know relative to the ADA and similar laws. Be sure to include positive information, such as the fact that businesses can benefit from hiring people with disabilities.

When businesses are approached in person, have a supply of promotional material handy and ask if they will help distribute it.

Ask if the business has a program which supports volunteering within the community. If so, ask how you can get volunteers to help distribute promotional materials, help with the event itself or help with other activities your team has identified in advance.

Local clinics and hospitals may allow you to put a stack of promotional items out wherever they display items for patients and visitors to pick up.

Apartment complexes and retirement facilities are sometimes willing to allow community organizations to post announcements and / or drop off promotional items. Restaurants, laundry mats, dry cleaners and book stores often have a "community bulletin board" where you can post a postcard or sign.

Involving educational institutions

Local public and private schools may allow to you to post a flyer or to put a promotional item into each faculty and staff mailbox.

Send a flyer to the PTA president, in care of the school. If you have enough helpers, include a letter requesting permission to set up a table at an upcoming PTA meeting in order to promote the event; try to have someone available at the table who can answer questions about the Fair.

Be sure to distribute information about the event to local colleges and universities, especially education and medical schools. If possible, have a promotional item put into faculty and staff mailboxes. Don’t forget that education and medical students at colleges, universities and appropriate vocational schools may be interested in attending not only to learn more about the products and services but also to identify potential employment opportunities.

Involving the members of your community

Contact businesses, organizations and agencies which serve your community, seeking sponsors, partners and – at the very least - help in promoting the event. That help may include making promotional material available in the business, posting a sign in the building or on an outer window or – ideally – an agreement to mail postcards to their membership and / or to those on their mailing lists. Consider offering to cover the cost of postage if they agree to mail the postcards. Be sure to get a copy of the USPS receipt.

Check with the school district’s office to find out if you can provide promotional items for distribution to the teachers of children with disabilities.

Providing materials in alternate formats

Always have a reasonable supply of promotional items printed in large print and, if possible, in Braille on hand as you approach people and places for help with distribution of materials so that you can leave some of them if the contact indicates a need for such.
Making it happen

The week of the event

1) Create an Exhibit Hall map indicating where tables will be. Unless you plan to allow exhibitors to select their own locations as they arrive, assign exhibitors to specific tables. The benefits of letting exhibitors select locations as they arrive include:
   ♦ Those who arrive first have first choice of location.
   ♦ They don’t have to wait to find out which tables will be theirs.
   ♦ It won’t be necessary to assign volunteers to help exhibitors find their locations.

The benefits of assigning tables in advance include the following:
   ♦ You can provide attendees with a map showing locations of specific exhibitors’ tables.
   ♦ Exhibitors benefit from an additional listing of their names.
   ♦ Exhibitors who arrive later, whether due to procrastination or greater driving distances, aren’t penalized.

2) Contact exhibitors and remind them of the time when they may begin setting up and when the event will end. If you’ve assigned spaces, provide a map so that they will know where their table will be. If necessary, provide information about how to access the facility before it is open to the public.

3) Contact volunteers to reconfirm that they will help, to verify when they are to arrive and leave and to review what they will be doing. If necessary, provide information about how to access the facility before it is open to the public.

4) Develop a list of volunteers and their shifts to provide to members of the planning team. Develop one which includes sign-in spaces and will be used to record their hours on the day of the event. Weeks or months after the event, a volunteer may ask for confirmation their volunteer hours so that they can pass that information on to another organization.

5) Make sure refreshments will arrive and be set up by the time the event begins.

6) Contact speakers and paid presenters or entertainers to confirm arrival time and beginning and ending times of their presentations. If possible, tell them where they will be during the event and, if necessary, tell them how to access the facility before it is open to the public. If you will be reserving parking spaces for them, let them know where those spaces will be.

7) Request whatever checks will be needed for refreshments, presenters, entertainers, facility, etc. and put them into envelopes, ready for distribution during the event.

8) Locate and / or gather tables, equipment, signage and other supplies which will be needed during the event. Before packing electronic equipment, verify that it works properly and that you have packed extra batteries, bulbs, cords, etc. Be prepared to contact a partner for or even rent equipment if what you need isn’t working properly and can’t be repaired in time.

9) Arrange for delivery of items in #8 to the facility either the day before the event – if the facility will allow you to set up early or if things must be there before your team arrives – or on the day of the event.
10) Make sure you have emergency contact information for the facility in case of toilet problems or other unexpected occurrences.

**During the hours immediately preceding the event**

Have everyone involved in set up arrive 2 hours to 45 minutes before the event begins.
Be sure that the Exhibit Hall is set up as you intended it to be.
Set up the refreshment area and make sure that coffee and hot water, if provided, will be ready when attendees begin arriving.
Post signage outside of and throughout the facility in easy-to-see locations.
Put up decorations, if any.
Be sure all electronic equipment is in place and working appropriately.
Set up the sign-in table, a “How’d We Do?” table if you will be using one and any other tables your planning team is hosting.

**During the event**

See that the event opens on time and that sessions and other activities begin and end on time.
Record attendance at each session and / or activity so that you’ll have it for post-event discussions and next-event planning.
Be aware of the ambience. Deal with torn or falling signage quickly, check bathrooms frequently to be sure that they are well supplied and appropriately clean, watch for items which need to be moved to allow ease of pedestrian traffic and see that the refreshment area always looks inviting.
Have volunteers posted at exits to open doors for people and to listen for and record comments about the event.
After the Fair

The project doesn't end when the event does. This event has a purpose and, without gathering information from the event and learning from it, that purpose can't be met. Plan ahead to be sure you collect and record the information you will need when assessing the success of the event as well as what you learned about the needs of the community. Develop a final report reflecting your findings and possible next steps.

Organize and save important paperwork to pass on to future planners so that they will know what was done, what worked and what alternatives to look into next time. Include such items as the following:

- Budget information and receipts
- List of exhibitors and their contact information
- Examples of all promotional items including articles, press clippings, ads and electronic files of both materials used and online promotions. Save online promotions electronically since links may be removed and/or deleted eventually.
- Examples of evaluations, letters, invitations, etc.
- Notes from the planning team regarding successes, challenges, suggestions for changes and, if possible, explanations of why certain things did or didn't work.
- A copy of the final report

Collecting reactions

You will want attendee, exhibitor, planner and volunteer input on their experiences at your Fair. Consider having a “How'd We Do?” table near the exit to collect very brief on-the-spot comments. Encourage volunteers and planners to provide comments there, also, whenever they think of anything that might help with planning next year's event.

Make it possible for people visiting the “How'd We Do?” table to comment either in writing or vocally. Small, hand-held audio recorders which can be downloaded to a computer via USB connection are ideal for this use, provided you have someone available to facilitate their use each time. If such devices aren't available to you, volunteers – with laptops or legible handwriting – might be available and willing to record comments manually. Providing some sort of reward (donated coupons for a soft drink, ice cream or discount from a local business?) for those who take the time to comment before leaving often encourage responsiveness.

Have a supply of printed evaluation forms ready for distribution to all attendees and exhibitors. These could be distributed to as individuals arrive, which is fast and easy – especially if you will be planning to give some sort of bag to each participant – but could result in those evaluation forms being forgotten completely or at least until those individuals look through the items they gathered at the Fair. Alternatively, you could distribute those evaluations as people leave, either at the “How'd We Do?” table or at the door or both. This might prompt people to remember they have the forms and, possibly to complete them on the way home if they will be a passenger during the trip.

By collecting email addresses during sign-in, you'll be able to contact attendees and exhibitors soon after the event, thanking the addressee for participating, asking them to let you know how things went for them and providing a link to the online survey. Various online sites, such as SurveyMonkey, surveygizmo, SuperSurvey, infoPoll and Zoomerang,
enable you to design and distribute surveys as well as to collect, review and store results. Often there is no change unless the survey goes out to over 100 addresses.

Assessing results: What the library, the planning team and its community learned

Meet with the planning committee as soon after the event as possible, while the event is still fresh in your mind. Ideally, you will have scheduled this meeting long in advance in order to encourage team members to keep the time free so that they can attend.

Review the event itself as well as the planning process and promotional efforts. Discuss personal experiences and observations, comments made at the “How’d We Do?” table and overheard during the event, responses on written and online evaluation forms and any comments you’ve heard in the community after the event is over.

Focus on constructive criticism and keep in mind the fact that it isn’t possible to please everyone all of the time. Make a record of what seems to have worked and what didn’t work so well and possible ways to change those.

Develop a list of what the group believes that they and the community learned as a result of the Fair. Review the goals your group set at the beginning of the planning process to see which were met, which weren’t, which need to be reworded or added and which were unrealistic.

Be sure to review your budget and make notes of what keep in mind when budgeting for another Fair. Be sure that payments due have been received and that payments owed have been made.

This review is the first step toward planning the next Accessibility Fair, whether that event will occur soon or in the distant future and no matter who will be involved.

Determining next steps

By this point, the library should have the beginnings of
- A strong network among residents and guests who have disabilities, their caregivers and those who serve the that sector,
- An assessment of what disabilities exist in the community, which would benefit from additional services and how the library can help provide those services,
- What library programs and services could be more universally accessible with relatively minor tweaking,
- Barriers to Universal Access of current library programs and services, and
- Universal Accessibility methods the library might add to those it already offers.

The next steps, then, include tweaking current programs and services in order to make them more universally accessible and working toward removal of barriers. That is Phase 2 of the NTLP Expanding Accessibility program. As a part of that phase, libraries will work with an experienced web designer to reduce digital discrimination in their online programs and services. They also will add universally accessible hardware and software to the technology available for public access.

Saying thank you

The Texas Commission on the Arts website includes a very useful list of ways to say thank you which, although intended for thanking volunteers, includes options appropriate for thanking sponsors, partners and staff as well. Be sure to send a final report to sponsors and partners.
Additional resources

Quotable quotes

Here are some quotes for use when putting together promotional material for your Fair. Sources used to identify the quotes include BrainyQuote, QuoteGeek, ThinkExist and GAIA.

“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.”

Calvin Coolidge

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.”

Winston Churchill

“All you could do was take on as much weight as you can bear. And if you're lucky, there’s someone close enough by to shoulder the rest.”

Sarah Dessen in Just Listen

Kirk: “I take it the odds are against us, and the situation is grim.”
Picard: “You could say that.”
Kirk: “Sounds like fun!”

Movie: Star Trek Generations

“There has never yet been a man in our history who led a life of ease whose name is worth remembering.”

Theodore Roosevelt

“The heroic actions are performed by such as are oppressed by the meanness of their lives. As in thickest darkness the stars shine brightest.”

Henry David Thoreau

“I seldom think about my limitations, and they never make me sad. Perhaps there is just a touch of yearning at times; but it is vague, like a breeze among flowers.”

Helen Keller

“I am always doing that which I cannot do in order that I may learn how to do it.”

Pablo Picasso

“Nothing is too small to know and nothing too big to attempt.”

William Cornelius Van Horne

“Too late, I found you can't wait to become perfect. You got to go out and fall down and get up again with everybody else.”

Ray Bradbury in Something Wicked this Way Comes
“Congress acknowledged that society’s accumulated myths and fears about disability and disease are as handicapping as are the physical limitations that flow from actual impairment.”

William J. Brennan, Jr.

“It was ability that mattered, not disability, which is a word I’m not crazy about using.”

Marlee Matlin

“Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you’re needed by someone.”

Martina Navratilova

“People didn’t always see a person with a disability who had to use a ramp or elevator as people who have been given unnecessary privileges, but I run into that often now. People are saying, ‘Why do we have to go to great expense for these people?’”

Major Owens

“New information and communications technologies can improve the quality of life for people with disabilities but only if such technologies are designed from the beginning so that everyone can use them. Given the explosive growth in the use of the World Wide Web for publishing, electronic commerce, lifelong learning and the delivery of government services, it is vital that the Web be accessible to everyone.”

Bill Clinton

“We all have a disability of some kind; all are lacking in one way or another. Saul has an injury to his leg. What if his personality was deformed? How much worse if his soul was lame? Preachers or teachers look for the good in all of us. (Bless them for doing so.) I don’t see a cripple. I haven’t met anyone yet who isn’t handicapped in some way. So what’s the big deal? Don’t hide your deformity. Wear it like a Purple Heart.”

The Nursing Home Fugitive, Georgiann Baldino

“A few years ago at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with the relish to run the race to the finish and win. All, that is, except one boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and paused. Then they all turned around and went back. Every one of them. One girl with Down's syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line. Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for 10 minutes.”

Unknown

“I discovered early that the hardest thing to overcome is not a physical disability but the mental condition which it induces. The world, I found, has a way of taking a man pretty much at his own rating. If he permits his loss to make him embarrassed and apologetic, he will draw embarrassment from others. But if he gains his own respect, the respect of those around him comes easily.”

Alexander de Seversky
Success stories

The following information was found on the Internet using various search engines. It provides just a sample of what some libraries have done to make their programs and services more universally accessible.

Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt

The Taha Hussein (TH) Library for the Visually Impaired offers a new concept in library services for the blind and visually impaired through technology, enabling them to access all the resources of the library as well as selected web resources. The TH Library is equipped with special software packages and equipment which allow its users to access the Library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) and other e-resources, including accessibility compliant websites.

The library was named after Taha Hussein, a great Egyptian writer named who was blind himself. He was one of the prominent writers of his time, affecting the cultural life in Egypt, as well as the Arab world.

"Education is like the water we drink and the air we breathe."

Taha Hussein, Ph.D., Receiver of the United Nations Human Rights Award

City of Austin

Although the ADA was signed into law in 1990, it didn't become effective until January of 1992. At that time, city and state governments were required to insure non-discrimination on the basis of disability in all public programs, services, and activities. The City of Austin, however, saw this as a priority and initiated implementation of its compliance program in 1991, before the mandated date for local governments.

In 2005, the City’s 15th year of implementation under the ADA, the City of Austin / Austin Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities partnership participated in the National Organization on Disability’s Accessible America Competition. In early 2006, the City was recognized as a third place winner and awarded $10,000 to use for improved access. It was the only winning city from the southern United States that year.

The Austin Public Library has made some noteworthy efforts for improving services for library patrons with disabilities. Among them are the following:

All public computers at the Austin Public Library have JAWS software to navigate through pages using audio. In Spring 2009 they will install Magic, a screen magnifier, on all public computers. The Faulk Central Library has a computer set up with a scanner and Kurzweil 10.01 software to have text converted to speech. A stand-alone Kurzweil Reading Edge reading machine is available at the Faulk Central Library and at the Austin History Center. Magnifying equipment is available at the Faulk Central Library.

Old Quarry Library - During Fiscal Year 2005-2006 steps were taken by library facilities personnel to improve access to this older library facility. The heavy metal doors which had impeded access for some patrons were removed, and a new automatic door was put in place. This improvement facilitates access to the library for people with disabilities. In addition, library personnel took the time to re-stripe the faded markings of the ADA parking spaces.
**Austin Sign Language School** - Since 2001, APL has funded tuition for some library staff members to attend Austin Sign Language School. Of the seven individuals who have taken classes, some have taken one or two and others have taken several levels. One librarian at the Central library is quite fluent. She is able to sign people up for the Pharos Internet system, respond to reference questions and help people from other countries (and different written languages as their first language). Library customers are thrilled to find a librarian who can speak with them in sign language. A couple of Youth Services librarians offer sign language storytime for deaf and hearing children and their parents.

**Gates Public Library, Rochester, NY**

The Gates Public Library ADA Advisory Committee was formed in the summer of 1992 to examine methods of bringing the library into compliance with the law. Their final report was accepted by the Library Board the following year, and this site reflects changes made at the time and since then. The Committee continues to meet regularly.

**University of Texas**

The university libraries are committed to providing access to their collections and services in compliance with the ADA. UT’s *Policies and Guidelines No. 35 - Services to Users with Disabilities* reflects a policy to provide, whenever possible, arrangements that enable library users with disabilities to work independently.

The policy covers Services for Accessing Electronic Information, Services for Accessing Print Materials, Reference Services, Library Instruction, Lending of Library Materials, Inter-Library Service, Copying Services, Library Publications in Alternate Formats, Physical Facilities and Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD).

**Stanford (CA) University**

“**SOAP.**” or “Stanford Online Accessibility Program,” has been established to provide guidance to the Stanford community as they use various online means to share information to their respective constituents. The program has the mandate to assist web designers and online content creators in producing material that is accessible to the greatest audience possible. The program achieves this through the promotion of Universal Accessibility and web standards compliance.

Their website, a key component of the program, provides “a number of resource materials outlining best practices, policies, development guidelines and more. It also provides tips, tricks and tutorials geared towards the web developer / designer – from the novice to the experienced. The developer’s toolbox has a variety of tools that all content creators can employ as they create and publish online material on campus. Finally, information is provided regarding the number of consulting services offered, from training and compliance assessment to assistance in the design and development process - whether done in-house or contracted outside of the campus.”
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Youth with Special Needs: A Resource and Planning Guide for Wisconsin Public Libraries is a resource and planning guide intended to provide guidance and practical suggestions to public librarians to ensure that all youth with special needs have appropriate, convenient and equitable access to materials and technology at public libraries to meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs. It offers strategies public librarians can use to provide youth with special needs the means to use library services effectively, foster personal growth and obtain the information necessary to be successful and productive members of society.

Wisconsin Statewide Outreach Services

The Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI)-Outreach provides a series of parental brochures which address the needs of babies and preschoolers who are blind. The most recent brochures is called "Dandy Hands" and includes tips on how to start a baby using his / her hands to explore as preparation for the many things the child's hands will eventually help do, including reading Braille. This colorful brochure, and the others in the series ("Calendar Systems: A Developmental Approach for Youth Children with Sensory Impairments," "Powered Mobility," "Stroller & Wheelchair Mobility" and "The Teaching Cane Strategy"), can all be downloaded from the site.
Suggested Accessibility Fair supply kit

The following is a sample listing of supplies you may need. You may prefer to develop your own list based on your normal needs and what is usually available at the facility.

Store the first three groups of items and a laminated copy of your supply list in a light-weight toolbox, plastic carrying case or wheeled plastic storage tote.

Be sure that everyone who helps coordinate the event knows where the kit will be during the Fair, what it contains, that the kit itself is to remain in one place throughout the day, and that each item is to be returned to the kit as soon as it is no longer needed.

### Equipment-Related Supplies

- Extension cords
- Extra-long Ethernet cords
- Power strips
- 3-Prong to 2-Prong Adapter(s)
- Patch cords & plugs for all equipment
- Spare bulb for each piece of equipment
- Batteries in a variety of types

### Office & Display Supplies

- Tablecloth(s) – plastic or cloth
- Table drapes
- Clear plastic display frames (8½ x 11)
- Brochure holders
- Business card holders
- Flip pad markers that aren’t dried out (Don’t use these on white boards.)
- White board markers that aren’t dried out (Don’t use these on paper.) and related supplies
- Pointer (laser and / or telescoping)
- Pens
- Pencils
- Manual pencil sharpener
- Extra-large name tags (and large print)
- Markers to be used on nametags
- Sticky pads
- Note pads
- Clipboards (legal and / or letter-size)
- Hole punch
- Stapler
- Staples
- Paper clips
- Binder clips (various sizes)
- Rubber bands (various sizes)
- Tacks
- String
- Ruler and / or tape measure
- Scissors
- Transparent tape (wide as well as narrow)
- Masking tape
- Duct tape
- Painters tape (to tape down power cords)
- Paper towels
- Door stops
- WD-40
- Clock with large, easy-to-read face or digital time display
- Small fire extinguisher, appropriate for all kinds of fires

### Personal Supplies

- First aid kit
- Lint remover
- Tissues
- Small sewing kit
- Manicure set
- Lozenges, cough drops, mints
- Matches or lighter
- Matches or lighter

### Presentation Supplies, Equipment & Signs (won’t fit in supply kit)

- Flip pads
- Easel for flip pad(s)
- Portable white board
- Laptop
- Projector
- Sound system
- Microphones – various types
- Temporary handicap access parking signs
Tips to make the Fair more accessible to residents and guests

With limited hearing

1) Recognize that limited hearing is an invisible disability; you won't know that the person has the disability until you begin to communicate with him / her.
2) When a hearing-impaired person approaches you, be considerate, asking how you can help. Ask if he / she can write notes to facilitate communication.
3) Face the person while speaking, and don’t cover your face or lips.
4) Speak normally, and don’t over-emphasize words.
5) Don’t speak loudly; it doesn’t help.
6) Take the person with limited hearing to a quiet area. Also, don’t stand in front of a light source such as a window, lamp, etc.
7) Have paper and pen available to communicate.
8) Ask the person whether they have a preference in communicating – not everyone can lip read, sign or write.
9) Be sensitive to poor language skills; use short and simple words.
10) If the hearing-impaired person brings an interpreter, don’t speak to the interpreter as if the hearing-impaired person doesn’t exist.
11) Don’t exclude the hearing-impaired person from the conversation within a group.
12) To avoid startling a hearing-impaired person, avoid approaching him / her from the back. When doing so can’t be avoided, move quickly and try to get their attention.

With limited mobility

1) Identify handicap access parking spaces and look into adding additional, clearly marked spaces on the day of the event. Temporary signs may be available from your city’s Public Works Department.
2) Volunteers just outside the doors can help direct people to the appropriate entry.
3) Keep wheelchairs and scooters in mind when setting up the sign-in table. Consider ways to make the table height accommodate their needs or to make the sign-in materials otherwise accessible to them.
4) When a hearing-impaired person approaches you, be considerate, asking how you can help. Ask if there are any special accommodations that the person might need, or ask the person what is easiest for him / her, and then respect their requests.
5) If it isn’t possible to sit when talking with a person who is in a wheelchair or using a scooter, try standing far enough away that he / she won’t have to look up to see you yet close enough to be heard.
6) Address the person in a wheelchair or using a scooter directly, not through the person accompanying them.
7) Make sure that all Fair helpers know the locations of handicap access restrooms, accessible ramps and elevators in the facility in case they are asked or need to give directions.
8) If possible, have a wheelchair available in case someone with limited mobility needs to borrow it during the event.
9) Greet a person in a wheelchair or scooter or using a walker the same as you would anyone. Extend your hand, even if the person have limited use of his / her hands or an artificial limb. Generally, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands regardless of their condition.

**With limited speech**
1) Recognize that limited speech is an invisible disability; you won’t know that the person has the disability until you begin to communicate with him / her.
2) When a speech-impaired person approaches you, be considerate, asking how you can help. Ask if he / she can write notes to facilitate communication.
3) Recognize that a person with limited speech may have an electronic communication device. Acknowledge that as their “voice.”
4) Face the person while speaking instead of looking at the communication devices.
5) Don’t attempt to predict words before they complete their sentences.
6) Allow people with limited speech time to complete their sentences.
7) Understand that people with limited speech may not pronounce words correctly; listen attentively, and strive to understand their speech patterns.
8) Repeat what was said by paraphrasing to ensure it is, in fact, what was said.
9) Go to a quiet area to enhance your listening skills.
10) Speak normally, and don’t over-emphasize words.

**With limited vision**
Some of the following suggestions come from [Helping Hands for the Blind](#).
1) Recognize that limited vision can be an invisible disability; you may not know that the person has the disability until you begin to communicate with him / her.
2) When a vision-impaired person approaches you, be considerate, asking how you can help. Ask if there are any special accommodations that the person might need.
3) Don’t speak loudly; it doesn’t help.
4) Don’t pet, feed or distract service dogs. A service dog is *not* a pet; it is a working companion on whom the person depends.
5) Be prepared to accommodate service dogs (park, source of water, etc.)
6) Address the person directly when speaking to him / her.
7) Don’t be afraid to use words like "blind" or "see."
8) If the person has very little or no vision, use a light touch on that person’s arm or the person’s name when addressing him / her so that the person will know that you are speaking to him / her and not someone else in the room.
9) Have volunteers available to assist anyone who requests a guide.
10) Don’t grab the person to guide them. Allow him / her to take your arm when you are walking together.
11) Give specific directions such as "The next step will be slightly lower," as opposed to saying "Watch your step here."
12) Use large print on all signage; if possible, add Braille to indoor signage.
13) Use large print – and Braille, if possible – on all materials the library will distribute.
14) Use large print on sign-in forms – especially on instructions to the person signing in – and provide plenty of room for signatures.
Sample forms and promotional items

Samples provided in large print are ready to use and intended to be used in large print. Other samples will need to be provided in large print, and Braille if possible, after your library develops its version of the item.

- Bookmark
- Brochure
- Sign or poster
- Session leader agreement
- Exhibitor invitation, space reservation and terms
- Exhibitor sign-in sheet
- Attendee sign-in card
- Participant comment record
- Evaluation form - attendees
- Evaluation form - exhibitors
Glossary

Definitions in this section were found in various sources, including ASL Info and MedLine Plus.

**A**

Access Accommodations, such as auxiliary aids, barrier removal and specialized services, are those which ensure that individuals with disabilities affecting hearing, vision, speech, cognition or physical movement are provided with the means to communicate and participate equally.

Access Policy Statement describes an entity’s commitment to universal accessibility of programs, services, communication, etc. Here is an example of an Access Policy Statement which addresses an entity’s communications: “The Texas Commission on the Arts places a high priority on overcoming physical and communication barriers in the delivery of its services. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided on request. This publication is available in alternative formats. Please call (512) 936-6564 or TTY (512) 475-3327.”

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the US law that ensures rights of persons with disabilities with regard to employment and other issues.

Assistive Technology (AT) refers to any assistive, adaptive and / or rehabilitative technological device which facilitates access, comfort, communication, education, independence, interaction, storage and retrieval, and transport.

Audiologist is a professional who diagnoses and treats, individuals with hearing loss or balance problems.

**B C D**

Deaf, when written with a lower-case “d,” indicates a person’s partial or complete lack of hearing.

Deaf, when written an upper-case of “D,” indicates the community of deaf people and their culture.

Deaf Culture is a set of learned behaviors of a group of people who have their own language, values, rules of behavior, and traditions

Disability, according to the ADA, is a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. This includes people with life threatening illnesses, such as individuals with AIDS / HIV.

Dyspraxia is the brain’s inability to plan muscle movements and carry them out. In Speech, this term may be used to describe Apraxia.

**E F G H**

Hard-of-hearing is a term which refers to a group of people who have a partial loss of hearing or to those who lost their hearing after birth or later in life.

Healthy Development (See Typical Development.)

Hearing impaired is a term which refers to people with a range of hearing loss.
Higher Education Opportunity Act 2008 (Public Law 110-315) (HEOA) was enacted in August, 2008, and reauthorizes the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 as amended.

Hyperlexia is the ability to read at an early age. To be hyperlexic, a child doesn’t need to understand what he or she is reading.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the 1975 US law mandating the “Free and Public Education” of all persons with disabilities between ages 3 and 21. The most recent amendments to the act were passed in 1997 and 2004.

Inclusion, for the purposes of this ToolKit, involves extending access to programs and services to the greatest extent allowed by budget so that everyone in the community may take advantage of programs and services offered by its libraries.

Letter of Commitment is a letter indicating an entity’s specific role and commitment in a collaborative project. The letter should clearly specify the resources that the entity is committing.

Limited hearing - See hard-of-hearing.

Mainstreaming, for the purposes of this Tool Kit, is where individuals are expected to access library programs and services in traditional, general ways, whereas an inclusive program provides programs and services accessible to community members with limited hearing, speech, vision and / or mobility.

Motor deficits are physical skills that a person can’t perform or has difficulty performing.

Motor function (or Motor Skills) is the ability to move and control movements.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was passed in January, 2002, to promote standards-based education reform

Occupational Therapist helps minimize impact of disability on independence in daily living by adapting a person’s environment and teaching sub-skills of the missing developmental components.

Physical Therapists design and implement physical therapy programs and may work within a hospital or clinic, in a school, or as an independent practitioner.

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) an alternative communication system using picture symbols. Taught in phases starting with simple exchange of symbol for desired item. Individuals learn to use picture symbols to construct complete sentences, initiate communication, & answer questions.

Prevalence is the current number of people in a given population who have a specific diagnosis at a specified point in time.
Reasonable accommodation, to employers, may include such necessities as modification to a facility, modified work schedule, adaptive technology, restructuring a job, providing qualified readers or interpreters.

Section 508 is the result of 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. It was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology, to make available new opportunities for people with disabilities, and to encourage development of technologies that will help achieve these goals. The law applies to all Federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology. Under Section 508 (29 U.S.C. ‘ 794d), agencies must give disabled employees, and members of the public, access to information that is comparable to the access available to others.

Social Worker is a trained specialist in the social, emotional & financial needs of families & patients. Social workers often help families & patients obtain the services they have been prescribed.

Special Education is specially designed instruction, at no cost to families, to meet unique needs of child with disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals & institutions, & in other settings & instruction in physical education.

Speech & Language Therapist, or Speech Language Pathologist, specializes in human communication. The focus is on communication, not speech, to increase child’s ability to impact and understand their environment.

Speech Disorders are caused by various conditions. Some speech disorders develop gradually, but anyone can develop a speech and language impairment suddenly, usually in a trauma. Conditions which may cause speech disorders include the following:

Aphasia
- Alzheimer's disease
- Brain tumor (more common in aphasia than dysarthria)
- Dementia
- Head trauma
- Stroke
- Transient ischemic attack (TIA)

Dysarthria
- Alcohol intoxication
- Dementia
- Diseases that affect nerves and muscles (neuromuscular diseases), such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease), cerebral palsy, myasthenia gravis, or multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Facial trauma
- Facial weakness, such as Bell's palsy or tongue weakness
- Head trauma
- Head and neck cancer surgery
• Nervous system (neurological) disorders that affect the brain, such as Parkinson’s disease or Huntington's disease (more common in dysarthria than aphasia)
• Poorly fitting dentures
• Side effects of medications that act on the central nervous system, such as narcotics, phenytoin, or carbamazepine
• Stroke
• Transient ischemic attack (TIA)

Voice Disturbances
• Growths or nodules on the vocal cords
• People who use their voice heavily (teachers, coaches, vocal performers) are more likely to develop voice disorders
• Also, an impaired ability to produce speech sounds, ranging from mild to severe, and may be characterized by omissions or distortions of speech sounds, fluency disorder, etc. (See http://www.washington.edu/doit/Conf/articles142.)

T

Typical Development (or healthy development) describes physical, mental & social development of a person who acquired skills according to expected time frame.

U

Underserved refers to the population groups which have historically been overlooked in terms of access and support. People with disabilities make up one such group.

Universal Accessibility is a term, commonly used in the fields of disability, education, healthcare, technology and telecommunications, which refers to all people having equal access – in a productive and useful way – to a service or product from which they can benefit. According to experts at Stanford (CA) University, “Universal Accessibility means conveying your ideas in such a way so that the [product] created can be re-purposed in many different ways without losing its meaning, intent or usefulness.” Universal Accessibility results from a combination of Assistive Technology and Universal Design.

Universal Design is the development of products and environments which are as useful as possible to everyone, without adaptation or specialized design. Such products and environments can benefit people of all ages, abilities, social classes and backgrounds. Examples of universal design include appliances on wheels, ramps, adjustable car seats and wider doorways.