

Exhibition design: a checklist

This checklist can assist galleries, museums and exhibition spaces to put on exhibitions that are accessible to everyone. Remember that how you present the content of an exhibition (e.g. curatorial text, captions and labels) is as important as the physical access you provide.

Exhibition environment	Yes	No	Comments
Is your exhibition space accessible to all people?			
If any part of your space is not accessible, have you provided an alternative way of viewing work? For example, photographic reproduction of a video shown in an inaccessible room.			
Is your reception area and any service counters at an accessible height? (775mm height recommended)			
Are there clear pathways through your exhibition environment? (at least 1200mm wide)			
Are preferred routes through the display area defined clearly by signage, layout of furniture and lighting? Are staff available to provide assistance?			
Are any hazardous objects marked clearly?			
Are noise levels reasonable (i.e. not distressing, disorienting or unsafe)?			
Have you avoided overlapping sounds? They may make navigation confusing for a person who is blind or vision impaired.			
Is lighting consistent throughout the space and adequate?			
If lighting levels change, is this change gradual or clearly identified?			
Is there rest seating provided at frequent intervals?			



Arts For All is an Arts Access Aotearoa/Creative New Zealand partnership programme. The aim of this programme is to encourage arts organisations, venues and producers to improve their access to disabled audiences. Download the guide *Arts For All*, published in 2014 by Arts Access Aotearoa, at artsaccess.org.nz or call 04 802 4349 for a hard copy.



Display of objects	Yes	No	Comments
Are wall-mounted works hung at a height of between 1220mm and 1675mm from the floor?			
Are display cases or tables no more than 900mm in height (from floor to display surface)?			
Under display cases and tables, is there sufficient space so people using wheelchairs can look at displays (at least 675mm high and 540mm deep)?			
Is there a contrast between the works displayed and the surfaces or back panels of any display cases?			
Are smaller objects mounted at the front of display cases?			
If objects are very small, have you provided a reproduction of these works (e.g. a larger-scale illustration or blown-up photo)?			
If objects are mounted on a pedestal, is the pedestal no more than 900mm high?			
Have you ensured that any pedestals, display cases or tables in the exhibition environment are clearly visible and have tactile ground indicators?			
Have you ensured it is easy to move between display cases, tables and pedestals in the exhibition space (aisles at least 1200mm wide)?			
Is there a clear approach space of 1500mm x 1500mm for all wall and floor-mounted exhibits?			
Exhibition content	Yes	No	Comments
Do you use appropriate language/images in any description or portrayal of disabled people?			

Has the disabled community been engaged in the exhibition development?			
Labels and text	Yes	No	Comments
Are main panels and introductory text in 24 point or larger?			
Is label text 18 point or larger?			
Is all text in a simple sans serif font?			
Is text aligned left and ragged right?			
Is text printed on a solid background (i.e. no patterns) of a contrasting colour?			
Have you used plain English in all labels and text?			
If plain English is not used in the main labels, do you have a plain English alternative to give out?			
Do you use braille labels?			
Can visitors get close to all labels and text (e.g. put labels at the front or outside of display cases, not at the back)?			
Is there adequate lighting to read labels and text?			
Is the placement of labels consistent throughout the space and easily recognisable?			
Are labels and text at a height of between 1200mm and 1675mm from the floor?			
Do all printed materials meet accessible guidelines?			
Have you developed a plain English alternative to essential information (e.g. information brochures, programmes, catalogues)?			

Audio-visual material	Yes	No	Comments
Can audio-visual material be viewed by everyone?			
Are any interactive buttons, controls or levers at an accessible height and operable with one hand? (at an optimum height of 1000mm)			
Is audio-visual material captioned?			
Are the instructions for use of audio-visual material clear and easy to follow?			
Theatres and auditoriums	Yes	No	Comments
Do theatres and auditoriums have wheelchair seating spaces?			
Can people using wheelchairs sit with their companions?			
Do you have a hearing loop or other hearing augmentation system?			
Access services	Yes	No	Comments
Do you have tactile opportunities for blind or vision impaired people (e.g. touch tours, models, raised images)?			
Are tactile opportunities part of your standard displays?			
Do tactile opportunities ensure that the full scope and understanding of the exhibition can be experienced?			
Do you have any braille information or guides?			
Do you provide audio guides?			
Have your access services been developed in consultation with the disabled community?			
Can you provide New Zealand Sign Language interpreters for events? Do you programme accessible tours and events for Deaf visitors?			

Access services: continued	Yes	No	Comments
Do you incorporate multi-sensory experiences: e.g. sound and smell?			
Do you use pictograms, basic symbols and diagrams to assist in exhibition access?			
Do you mark clearly any elements of the exhibition that may be hazardous or disturbing? For example, strobe lighting, smoke effects and loud noises.			
Are your public programmes, outreach and education activities accessible to disabled people?			
Have staff received disability responsiveness training?			
Is there a staff member responsible for access services?			
Is the staff person responsible for access services clearly identified in all publicity material?			
Are all access services and facilities included in publicity material?			

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Disclaimer:

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