# Accessibility Checklist

This document contains a non-exhaustive list of access considerations. We used this checklist when enquiring about venues for our conference.

## Transport and Parking

* Is there accessible public transport (bus/train/underground) close to the venue?
* Is there accessible connecting transport suitable for wheelchair users (e.g. taxis) from public transport links if required?
* Are there accessible parking spaces on site? Are they clearly signposted?
* How many designated parking spaces are available? Can these be reserved?
* Are the designated parking spaces of sufficient width to allow wheelchair users to get in and out of the vehicle, with sufficient space either side of the car and at the rear?
* If designated parking is above or below reception level, is there an accessible lift from the car park to the entrance?
* Do the designated parking spaces and the path to reception have smooth surfaces?
* Is there a phone number that disabled drivers can ring when they get near to the venue to access the designated parking spaces?
* Are there any dropping-off points?
* What assistance can be provided to visitors with mobility impairments if they are dropped off at the entrance?

## Entrance

* Are Disabled visitors able to enter the building by the same entrance as other visitors? If not, is there another entrance that is accessible to wheelchair users?
* If there are steps, how many are there and is there a handrail?
* If one is needed, is there a platform lift or a ramp suitable for wheelchair users? If there is a removable ramp, how does a wheelchair user signal that he or she needs assistance?
* If reception is above or below the entrance level, is there a lift (other than a service lift)? What alternative is available if this lift is out of service on the day of the conference?

## Reception desk

* If there is a reception desk, is it at a height suitable for people in wheelchairs? If not, can an alternative desk be used for all delegates?

## Room layout

The conference room(s) should be as accessible as possible. Consider the following points:

* Easy access to the room(s): the journey to the room should not take attendees through too many corridors or heavy doors.
* Try to avoid a venue with only one lift. What happens if it is out of service on the day of the conference?
* The main conference room needs to be large enough to allow for good circulation for a wheelchair user, particularly in the aisles. At least two standard chairs have to be removed to provide space for a wheelchair.
* A room with echoes may cause problems for people with hearing impairments
* If possible, provide a quiet room so people can step out of the main conference room.
* Are the quiet room and breakout rooms on the same floor and close to the main room?

## Toilets

* Are there genuinely accessible toilets designed for Disabled people on the same floor as the main conference hall and syndicate rooms?
* If not, are there accessible toilets accessible by a lift?
* Is there more than one accessible toilet?

## Lifts

* Are lift doors (including lifts from the car park) wide enough for a wheelchair? Is the lift big enough for a large wheelchair and at least one other person?
* Are the buttons at a height suitable for wheelchair users? Are there Braille or tactile buttons?
* Is there an audio floor indication?

## Seating

* Are the chairs comfortable for sitting for extended periods of time?
* Can a sofa be provided for people who may need to lie down? i.e., in the quiet room.
* Ideally the conference venue should have some chairs with arms and some without along with chair with head rests, as people's preferences and needs will vary.

## Hybrid set-up

Remote participation is one of the most essential tools for the inclusion of Disabled people, particularly people with energy limiting conditions, as well as those who may not have the budget or time to travel to the event or who may be in a different geographical location.

* Does the venue provide hybrid meeting technology and software? For example, a [meeting Owl device](https://owllabs.com/products/meeting-owl-3)
* Does the venue have a good internet connection?

## Sound

* Are the acoustics in the main conference rooms reasonably good? A room with echoes may cause problems for people with hearing impairments.
* Are there induction loops available in all rooms? If so, make sure they are turned on the day. (If there are no induction loops, you may be able to hire them. Check who will pay the cost of these.)

## Lighting

* Are the lighting levels adequate and adjustable?
* Can you reduce lighting levels during presentations?

## Ventilation and air quality

* Is the air quality good? Can you open windows if necessary?
* Is there air conditioning and air filtration and can it be adjusted?
* Note that people’s perception of what an ideal temperature is varies.

## Catering

* Can the venue cater for different diets?
* Can all food and ingredients be clearly labelled to meet the needs of people with allergies?
* Is the room/space where meals will be served accessible?
* Is it large enough for people to move around when all delegates are in the room?
* Is there sufficient room between tables for wheelchairs users to move around?
* Are the tables of a suitable height for wheelchair users?
* Can there be multiple serving points to avoid long queues?

## Emergency evacuation procedures

* Are there procedures in place for evacuating disabled people, including wheelchair users, in an emergency? Ask for a copy of the procedures in advance of the conference.
* Are the fire alarms audible/visible to all?
* Will venue staff be available to help evacuate disabled delegates and facilitators, and has the staff had appropriate training?

## Assistance dogs

* Can they have access to water?
* Is there an open space for them to exercise and to do their business?

It is illegal for guide and assistance dogs to be barred from venues, but the practice is still encountered.