



## Accessibility Checklist – Venue & Event Promotion

- Is the hosting venue accessible for students and audience members using mobility devices, such as wheelchairs or scooters?
  - ✓ ground-level/no-step entry, ramped access, and/or elevators to the auditorium
  - ✓ wheelchair-accessible stage/backstage and dressing rooms
  - ✓ integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in assembly areas
  - ✓ wheelchair-accessible restrooms, water fountains, and parking spaces
  - ✓ directional signage for accessible entrances, restrooms, and other facilities
  - Tip! For historic sites, pay extra attention to this criteria. If possible, do a walkthrough of the access to assure it meets the needs of your event.
  
- Is public contact information for accessibility requests available in event communications?
  - ✓ Communications include promotional materials, announcements via email/social media, school websites, etc.
  - ✓ Text example: “For accessibility requests, please contact [email and phone].” Provide a deadline for requests [e.g., 1 week, 10 days before event], but make every effort to accommodate requests that come in after the deadline.
  
- Are American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or real-time captioners available upon request?
  - ✓ For audience members requesting services, please designate seating and make sure the ASL interpreter is in view of the students and presenters on a well-lit stage.
  - ✓ For students requesting services, please refer to the ASL supplemental materials or contact [NEA POL/Accessibility email/phone listed below].
  - ✓ Ask anyone requesting services for their preferences and accommodate as best as possible.
  - ✓ Communicate poem selections to interpreters as early as possible. Their communication with audience members will be enhanced if they are familiar with the poems ahead of time. If there is a musical performance or guest presentation of any kind during the event, be sure to communicate that text as well.
  - ✓ Consider hiring additional interpreters to work directly with contestants or judges, separate from the public event interpreters on stage.
  - Tip! Reach out to vendors ahead of time to make them aware of the event date should there be a request, and ask how far in advance they need to be booked. Costs for ASL interpreters or real-time captioners are allowable expenses within the POL budget, but should be communicated with the vendor as early as possible.

- Are assistive listening devices (ALDs)\* available?
  - ✓ Portable ALD systems can be rented or borrowed from local vendors or community partners (e.g. theaters, libraries, etc.) if the venue does not own one.
  - Tip! Communicate potential access service requests to the event coordinator and host site as early as possible. Costs for renting assistive devices are allowable expenses within the POL budget but should be planned for in the budgeting process.
  
- Is signage available onsite to communicate accessibility?
  - ✓ Accessible/inaccessible routes, entrances, exits, etc.
  - ✓ Assistive listening device assistance location.
  - Tip! Use [downloadable accessibility symbols](#) for signage, programs, etc.
  
- Can the printed program be made available in alternate formats, such as large print, Braille, or electronic?
  - ✓ Communicate with your designer about contrast and font sizes. If possible, provide a plain text, large font version.
  - ✓ Ask anyone requesting services for their preferences and accommodate as best as possible.
  - ✓ Identify potential Braille vendors ahead of time.
  
- Does your catering consider people with disabilities?
  - ✓ If you are offering refreshments, are the platters set up so they are accessible to individuals of different heights or who might use mobility devices?
  - ✓ Have you considered food allergies and made sure items are properly separated? If you are working with a caterer, remind them of the different needs of your attendees.

### Questions?

Please contact your [State POL Coordinator](#) or the NEA POL Team or Office of Accessibility.

NEA POL – Lauren Miller, POL Program Manager, [poetryoutloud@arts.gov](mailto:poetryoutloud@arts.gov), 202-682-5490

NEA Office of Accessibility – Lauren Tuzzolino, Accessibility Specialist, [tuzzolinol@arts.gov](mailto:tuzzolinol@arts.gov), 202-682-5748

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\*Assistive listening devices are headsets with receivers that provide amplification of sound for individuals.