

# Q and A template



Arts Access<sup>®</sup> Aotearoa  
WHAKAHAUHU KATOA O HANGA

These are some common questions you may be asked, and guidelines on what information to include in the answers. There are also some suggestions on what you can provide to improve access. Your organisation's responses to the Accessibility Checklist will provide many of the answers for you.

## Accessible venues: getting there, getting in

### How do I find your building?

- Ensure staff can provide easy-to-follow directions and have a clear map with diagrams and symbols. Provide both written and visual directions in print and online, and able to be sent as an email attachment.
- Record audio directions that do not rely on visual references: e.g. walk twenty steps from the bus stop and then turn left at the intersection with traffic lights, *not* turn left after the yellow dairy.
- Include information on public transport stops, drop-off points and your location: e.g. Is your venue up or down a hill? Is it located within a larger building with other tenants?
- State how long it may take for people to reach the venue from the closest public transport stops: include distance in metres.
- Ensure your building is well-lit at night and signs are highly visible.
- Prepare detailed information on the path to your venue: the width of the path, the tactile indicators, the signage, and whether ground levels are consistent (i.e. Are there dropped curbs and ramps or any barriers such as stairs or uneven surfaces?).
- Utilise Google Maps or include a photo/diagram of your building in publicity material.

### Can I park there?

- If you have accessible parking spaces, give directions and describe:
  - the carpark entry
  - signage
  - how many spaces there are
  - if they can be reserved and how to book
- If you don't have accessible parking, give information on:
  - the nearest accessible parking facilities
  - costs/hour
  - how to book
- If parking is not available on-site or nearby, indicate drop-off points and be clear about any hazards such as kerbs and uneven footpaths.
- For all parking enquiries, follow up by describing the access to your building (see *How do I find your building?* above).

### **Are there any stairs?**

- Describe the number of steps to your main entrance and indicate their steepness.
- State whether stairs have colour-contrasted and tactile edges.
- If there is a railing, describe what side it is on as you approach the stairs.

### **Is there a ramp?**

- Indicate where the ramp is in relation to the main entrance of the building and parking spaces.
- Include information on the ramp's surface, gradient and length.
- If you don't have a ramp, can you hire one? Include a contact name and details for staff to arrange this.

### **How do I get in the door?**

- Include information on the main entrance doors, and the closest doors to accessible parking and ramps if these are not via the main entrance.
- Include details on:
  - width of doors
  - which way the doors open
  - types of handles
  - weight of doors and if they can be opened independently
  - tactile indicators at doorways
- If assistance is required, do you have a doorbell, buzzer or intercom? Ensure this is at an accessible height, clearly labelled and includes directions for use (e.g. press once for assistance).
- Identify any glass doors and describe the safety/hazard markings on them (e.g. what kind of glazing strips or frosted designs the doors have).

### **What are the floors like?**

- Detail the floor surfaces: does your venue have a heavy thick-pile carpet, non-slip tiles or polished wooden boards?
- If you have tactile surfaces, detail what they indicate (stairs, ramps, escalators, landings, pedestrian crossings and footpaths).
- If your venue does not have uniformity in surfaces or tactile indication, explain this because it can be confusing and hazardous.

### **Is there a toilet I can use?**

- Ensure accessible toilets are easy to find and clearly signposted.
- Have a call button fitted and include information on the procedure for staff responding to the call.
- Give details on the size dimensions of the room and its compliance with the current standards.

### **Can I use the phone?**

- Ensure any public phones are easy to locate, at an accessible height and clearly signposted.
- If you do not have accessible public telephones, can you offer the use of any office phones and give the person privacy while making the call?

### **Where can I get something to eat or drink?**

- If you have a bar or café, detail its accessibility, including:
  - bar/counter levels
  - steps, contrast, hazards
  - menus in large print or Braille
  - seating and queuing information
  - availability of adaptive equipment (straws, easy-grip cutlery, bowls, large-handled mugs/cups)
  - intermission calls (are they both audio and visual?)
- If you do not have a bar or café facility, research the nearest accessible option and allow people to bring food or drink into your venue, if required.

### **What do your staff know?**

- Be honest about the background of your organisation and any disability awareness training that has been undertaken.
- If you have a disability action plan and/or consult the disabled community, be open about what you do and respond to feedback.
- Give the name and contact details of staff assigned to accessibility and customer service.

### **Can I borrow a wheelchair?**

- Give details of the kinds of wheelchairs you have and how to book or request them.

### **Where is the lift?**

- Explain clearly where your lift is located.
- Give information on the controls: is it a "speaking" lift, does it have tactile or Braille buttons, and is there an intercom?
- What are the emergency procedures and what should someone do if the lift stops?

### **Does anyone speak New Zealand Sign Language?**

- If you do not have staff fluent in NZSL ensure front-of-house staff know some basic signs and have a notepad and pen available.
- For arts events specifically marketed to the Deaf community, ensure your staff have a Deaf awareness briefing and know how to work with NZSL interpreters.

### **How much notice must I give for access services?**

- Be clear about timeframes in your publicity material and access guide about additional services and your procedures.
- If services such as touch tours or hearing loops are available only on request, tell people how much advance notice is needed, any cost involved and details of the staff member to contact.

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## Accessible art: inside the doors

### How can I book tickets?

- Include a variety of contact options (phone number, email, box office address or reception location).
- Include the name and contact details of staff assigned to accessibility and customer service.
- Include opening hours for bookings and ticket collection.
- If your reception or box office counters are not accessible offer your customers options such as post, email, fax or text.

### What's the wheelchair access like?

- Wheelchairs come in different sizes. State if your venue complies with current minimum standards.
- Give specific details about access routes for people who use wheelchairs, and any barriers your building has (e.g. if some hallways are not wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair and two-way traffic, or if doorways and floor surfaces in some rooms are inaccessible).
- Include information on accessible toilets, bar and café areas, retail areas and reception counters.
- If any of the areas listed above are not accessible, ensure staff can give directions to alternatives.

### Where can I sit if I use a wheelchair?

- Give details on your ticketing and seating policy:
  - Can wheelchair users sit with companions?
  - Is there a range of seating options throughout the venue, and how can these be booked?
  - Do you have aisle seats with removable arm rests for people wishing to transfer?
  - Where can wheelchairs be stored if someone transfers, and will a staff member return the wheelchair at intermission, at the end of the event, and in case of emergency?

### Do you have any events that are audio described?

- If you include audio described events/performances include information on whether this is pre-recorded as a guide or if an audio describer will be at the exhibition or performance.
- Give information on any receiver and headset equipment used: e.g. are they infra-red or a hearing loop?
- Detail how to request/book equipment.

### Can I have an audio guide?

- Give information on what equipment you use; what the audio guides are for (e.g. are they for all exhibitions or just the main gallery?); whether you charge a deposit; and how to book/request them.

**This equipment is faulty. Can I have a refund?**

- A venue is responsible for providing working equipment, even if you have a maintenance agreement with the company you purchase/rent from.

**I have vision impairment. Can I visit your museum and what facilities are there?**

- It is advisable to have printed access guides that detail what facilities and services your venue offers for disabled people.
- In this example, you could give information on:
  - touch tours, audio guides, audio description, Braille/large print formats
  - the layout of your venue and any design aspects such as tactile differentiation on floors, colour contrast at entrances and doorways, stairs and rails etc
  - lighting (and be specific about brightness levels, changes or effects such as strobe lighting)
  - signage.

**Do you have touch tours?**

- If you have touch tours of your sets or exhibition spaces, give the following information:
  - who will take the tour, where to meet and who to ask for
  - how to book and maximum number of spaces
  - the duration of the tour.

**Do you provide captioned performances/screenings?**

- Give information on what you offer and which seats are available for the best viewing options.

**Do you provide NZSL interpreted performances/events/talks?**

- Give information on the times of performances. State whether you allocate seats to ensure Deaf members of your audience can best see the performance and the interpreter.

**Do you have a hearing loop or infra-red system?**

- Give information on what system you have.
- What types of receivers/headsets do you have and how can people book these?
- Ensure the seat you book for the audience member is the best seat for the audio system to work in.

**Can I have a synopsis/play-script?**

- Give information on who to contact to discuss a preferred format request.
- Let people know these services are available in your publicity material.



For the full picture about arts and accessibility in New Zealand, you can download *Arts For All | Ngā toi mo te katoa*, published by Creative New Zealand in partnership with Arts Access Aotearoa, 2009.

> [www.artsaccess.org.nz/index.php/arts-and-disability](http://www.artsaccess.org.nz/index.php/arts-and-disability)

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