

Conference Organizer Responsibilities Regarding Individuals with Disabilities

Step 4: Planning

Stanford has an institutional commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To provide equal access for individuals with disabilities, accommodations (including auxiliary aids and services) will be provided to the extent necessary to comply with state and federal laws. Every Conference Organizer who uses Stanford facilities assumes the legal obligation to not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and to provide reasonable accommodations as necessary to participate in program activities.

The following information is intended to help you plan an accessible conference:

Designate an onsite disability access coordinator. We recommend that you designate someone on your staff as an onsite “disability coordinator” who will be familiar with such things as the nearest disabled parking, accessible paths of travel and accessible (step-free) meeting spaces, as well as who to contact for local disability-related resources (e.g., brailled materials, sign language interpreters, etc.). We also recommend that the onsite designee’s name and phone number be made available to all appropriate parties.

Ensure equal access to web content and electronic applications/forms. Keep in mind that some individuals with disabilities access information on websites using assistive technology, such as a screen reader. Please review your websites to ensure that they include text descriptions for images related to content; that there is adequate color contrast between the background and key pieces of information; that videos are captioned; and that websites include contact information or a link if an individual is having difficulty accessing content on the website.

Provide information and contact name for requests for disability-related needs and/or accommodations. Conference organizers must refrain from asking disability-related questions on any application and/or registration forms provided to conference attendees. Once enrolled and/or admitted to the conference, organizers should include a “disability access information & request for accommodations” statement in your printed and online materials. Your registration materials and mailings must include an announcement that describes **how** a person can request a special accommodation, **who** the request should be made to and **when** the request should be made.

SAMPLE DISABILITY ACCESS & INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Request for disability access information & accommodations: Attendees needing any disability accommodations and/or accessibility information may request such accommodations by contacting _____ (name of person or office). Requests should be made by _____ (one month in advance). Include phone number, fax number and email of contact.

Inform Conference Account Manager/Coordinator of requests for disability accommodations. If you find that any of the participants in your program have disability-related needs, it is important to let your Conference Account Manager/Coordinator know this as soon as possible (but no later than one month before the start of your program). Communicating this information on a timely basis is essential for allowing your Conference Account Manager/Coordinator adequate time to make the necessary arrangements for accessible programming, dining and housing needs.

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Provide for disability-related needs and accommodations. Conference Account Managers/Coordinators are legally obligated to provide disability-related accommodations to an individual with a disability if they are deemed necessary for the individual to use the entity's (your program's) goods and services. All reasonable accommodations, other than building or housing access, are the responsibility of your program. Examples of auxiliary aids and services that your program may be required to provide include: Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices and materials with enlarged print or in braille. Examples of auxiliary aids and services (of a personal nature) that your program is not required to provide include: Hearing aids, wheelchairs and personal assistants. The Diversity and Access Office can provide you with a list of resources to assist you in making appropriate arrangements (e.g., names of interpreters, agencies or services).

Requests for service/support animals in University housing and in academic buildings. As a general rule, the University does not allow animals on campus without prior authorization.

Service Animals (trained to perform a specific task) are allowed to accompany their Owner at all times and in all places on campus (except where animals are specifically prohibited because of health and safety restrictions). The University requests that Service Animals be registered with the Diversity & Access Office.

Support Animals (also referred to as Assistance Animals, Emotional Support Animals, Comfort Animals, Companion Animals, etc.) require approval by the Diversity & Access Office and identification of an approved Housing assignment (as applicable) **prior** to accompanying its Owner onto campus. Please contact the Diversity & Access Office at disability.access@stanford.edu or (650) 725-0326 prior to bringing a service animal and/or assistance animal to campus.

For emergency purposes, notify Housing Service Center (HSC) of participants with disabilities. During campus emergencies, special consideration may be required for participants with disabilities (e.g. wheelchair user, individual who is deaf, hard of hearing or blind, etc.). To ensure that proper assistance will be administered in the event of an emergency, please make sure your CFD is aware of the names and room assignments of any participants with disabilities in your program prior to their check-in.

Please contact the Diversity and Access Office for disability access questions and resources:
(650) 725-0326 or disability.access@stanford.edu

For additional information on planning an accessible event at Stanford University, please visit:
<https://diversityandaccess.stanford.edu/disability-access/event-planning>