

TASA DISABILITY ACCESS, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

This document provides guidelines for promoting access, inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in TASA events, communications, administration and governance. All members with an official role in carrying out the functions and tasks associated with TASA should refer to these guidelines. Where appropriate the guidelines will be incorporated into TASA’s Memorandums of Understanding (e.g. conference, public lecture, thematic groups).

Preface

Definition: Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others

Source: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 1

Language: One aim of these guidelines is to promote an awareness of disability issues through recommendations about use of language. This should avoid the perpetuation of assumptions about disabled people and ensure the writing of sociologists does not cause offence. The adoption of these guidelines should help to challenge ‘disablism’ in sociological education and research, promote a social, political and cultural rather than individual model of disability, and support non-discriminatory practice.

Language and terminology change through time and may be challenged. The use of particular words can reinforce beliefs and prejudices, but can also be used to challenge these. As such, it must be recognised that the meaning of these terms will be subject to revision and/or change at a faster rate than these or any other guidelines or sources may be issued.

TASA recommends using the following non-disablist terms when referring to people with a disability.

<i>DISABLIST (avoid)</i>	<i>NON-DISABLIST (preferred)</i>
Handicap	Disability
Invalid	Disabled person or person with disability
The disabled /The handicapped	Disabled people or people with disabilities
Special needs	Support needs or assistance
Patient	Person
Abnormal	Different or disabled
Victim of	Person who has / person with
Crippled by	Person who has / person with
Suffering from	Person who has / person with
Afflicted by	Person who has / person with
Wheelchair bound	Wheelchair user
The blind	Blind and partially sighted people or visually impaired people
The deaf	Deaf or hard of hearing people
Cripple or crippled	Disabled or mobility impaired person

The mentally handicapped	People / person with an intellectual disability; people / person with cognitive disability / impairment
Retarded / backward	People / person with an intellectual disability; people / person with cognitive disability / impairment
Mute or dumb	Person with communication impairment
Mentally ill or mental patient	Mental health service user / mental health service consumer
Able bodied person	Non-disabled person

Source: Adapted and amended to the Australian context from the British Sociological Association ~ Equality & Diversity ~ Disability [April 2004]

Outcomes: There are six desired outcomes of TASA’s Disability Access, Inclusion and Participation Guidelines. These are that:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the **services** of and any **events** organised by TASA.
2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the **buildings** and other facilities of TASA (i.e. our office space).
3. People with disabilities receive **information** from TASA in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. People with disabilities receive the same level and **quality of service** from the staff of TASA as other people receive from the staff of TASA.
5. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make **complaints** to TASA.
6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any **public consultations** by TASA.

Source: Adapted from Disability Services Commission WA

TASA activities affected by the guidelines:

While TASA will endeavour to take disability access, participation and inclusion into account when conducting its day to day business, there are several key activities that warrant particular attention.

1. TASA Conference

Registered participants of the TASA Conference should be able to access venues and have the opportunity to be included in all events associated with the conference.

To achieve this, the following guidelines will be implemented:

- The University's Disability Support Officer will be included in the planning of the conference and utilized as a resource person for the local organizing committee (LOC).
- The LOC will use the '**Creating Accessible Events**' checklist as a planning tool (available on TASA Web)
- The registration forms will seek information about access requirements. Where participants have indicated they have access requirements, action is to be taken to follow up, identify requirements and provide appropriate information, venues or services.
- Where participants require a companion or support person, this person will be eligible to attend TASA without paying full registration rates, but will be required to cover costs associated with catering, social events and similar. Companion or support persons may be asked to provide a 'companion card' or other form of identification.
- The Conference Program will include an 'Accessibility Information Page' which includes a disability access map (available at most campuses) and information about the accessibility of transport, venues, toilets, pathways between venues, and other relevant information. Where facilities are NOT accessible, this information needs to be clearly stated.
- Signs for the conference and conference venues need to be visible and useful for navigating between transport, the venues and other relevant places (eg accommodation). Pathways to and from the venues should be accessible.
- Universal symbols associated with access and inclusion will be used on documentation, including webpages.
- Accommodation with disability access will be identified and available to participants with access requirements. A range of options should be provided, including accommodation suitable for students. When displaying information about accommodation on the website, use the universal symbols for access.

2. TASA Public Events: eg Public Lectures, AGM/SGM, Seminars and workshops (including those hosted by thematic groups)

TASA members and members of the public should be able to access TASA Events.

To achieve this, the following guidelines will be implemented:

- The organizers will use the '**Public Participation**' checklist (events) as a planning tool (available on TASA Web)
- Universal symbols associated with access and inclusion will be used on advertising material and other documentation, including websites

- Signs for the event need to be visible and useful for navigating between transport, the venues and other relevant places. Pathways to and from the venues should be accessible.

3. Membership database

The identification of member's needs regarding disability access and inclusion will assist TASA in decision-making and the allocation of resources for carrying out its functions. The registration form will include questions ascertaining member's access requirements. This information will be embedded in the database, so that members with access requirements will be identifiable when registering for events etc.

4. Website

Web-based information about TASA needs to be accessible to users operating in a range of contexts, and who may use specialized software or hardware to assist in reading text. TASA will work towards meeting **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** (<http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/full-checklist.html>).

To achieve this, TASA will:

- Meet all relevant Priority 1 checkpoints in the TASAWeb redevelopment process.
- Meet relevant Priority 2 and 3 Checkpoints that can be incorporated into the TASAWeb redevelopment process, with the exception of Priority 3, 11.3 (Provide information so that users may receive documents according to their preferences re language, content type etc).
- Create content that meets Priority 2 Checkpoint requirements; and, where practical, meets Priority 3 Checkpoint requirements

5. Electronic communication (E-list)

The TASA E-list is an important means of communication with the membership and it therefore needs to be accessible. The following guidelines will be implemented:

- The typeface and styles used will be clear and simple
- Where colours are used they will be high contrast and clearly visible
- A Word or HTML version of attachments will be available

6. TASA Office

The TASA Executive Officer needs to be aware of potential access requirements in order to provide appropriate member services and be a resource for members who are organizing events, conferences or developing websites. As part of the induction process, the TASA Executive Officer will undertake disability awareness training which will be updated as required.

7. TASA consultation processes

TASA undertakes to have a systematic process for including people with disabilities in the consultation process regarding the development or review of policies; and when issues pertaining to access, inclusion and participation are being addressed by the TASA Executive. This includes:

- Seeking advice from the Critical Disability Studies TG as TASA's consultative partner
- Inviting comment and suggestions from members identifying as having access requirements
- Seeking feedback on accessibility in evaluations of TASA events, conferences etc