

MEDIA ARTS RESOURCES

Web site links updated March 2011

Tips for Creating a Media Arts Access Checklist

Media arts programs involve many different activities in the production, distribution, exhibition, or broadcast of films, video programs, and radio programs. Media arts programs may present workshops, conferences, seminars, and lectures, as well as support research, newsletters, and residencies or working space for independent artists.

All programs should be accessible to speakers, participants, audience members, and staff. While many organizations may claim to be accessible, each facility, activity and art form should be carefully evaluated in conjunction with: a checklist and knowledgeable individuals **prior** to being opened to the public.

A Media Arts Access Checklist may combine the following sections of the *Arts and Humanities Accessibility Checklist* (Step 6):

- **Media** includes captioning and audio describing film, video and television.
- **Assembly Areas** includes integrated and dispersed seating that is required for wheelchair users so they have a selection of locations and ticket prices.
- **Print Materials** include ways to make programs, publicity and other print materials available to people who cannot use traditional print.
- **Registration, Box Office and Reception** includes access considerations for information and ticket purchase such as the height of the box office window (service counter) and a TTY telephone.
- **Food Service** includes access requirements for food service counters and bars, vending machines areas and restaurants.

In addition, all organizations are strongly encouraged to complete the following sections of the Arts and Humanities Accessibility Checklist:

- **Policies and Practices;**
- **Employment;**
- **Checklist for Existing Facilities (with Addendum);**
- **Interior Signage;**
- **Emergency Evacuation;** and
- **Marketing and Publicity.**

Media Arts Resource Directory

[Actors Equity Association](#)

New York, NY

Phone: (212) 869-8530

Email: info@actorsequity.org

Description: Actors equity association (AEA) is the union for Actors and Stage Managers who work on the legitimate stage in the United States. Actors Equity represents more than 48,000 Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans, for its members. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts.

[Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts](#)

New York, NY

Phone: (212) 730-4750

Email: info@inclusioninthearts.org

Description: Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts (AIA) is the nation's leading advocate for full diversity as a key to the vitality and dynamism of American theatre, film, and television. They promote inclusive hiring practices and standards, diversity in leadership and balanced portrayals of persons of color and persons with disabilities. The Alliance considers diversity a comprehensive issue which extends to the participation of those who make up the artistic team: actors, directors, designers, writers, stunt performers, choreographers, as well as the production team and administrative staff, board of directors and the audience.

[American Film Institute](#)

Los Angeles, CA

Phone: (323) 856-7600

Description: The American film Institute (AFI) is a national organization dedicated to advancing and preserving film, television and other forms of the moving image. AFI provides leadership in screen education, recognition and celebration of excellence in the art of film, television and digital media. AFI trains the next generation of filmmakers at its world-renowned AFI Conservatory, preserves the legacy of America's film heritage through the *AFI Catalog of Feature Films* and AFI Archives, explores new digital technologies at AFI Digifest, and honors artists and their work through a variety of programs and special events.

[Audio Description Coalition](#)

Email: info@AudioDescriptionCoalition.org

Description: Audio Description Coalition members are trained audio describers, administrators, and users dedicated to the highest quality of audio description through training, mentoring, evaluation and professional development and are committed to upholding the Audio Description Coalition Standards for Audio Description and Code of Professional Conduct for Describers. Audio Describer Coalition advocates

compensation for audio description services, including training, description, mentoring and professional development.

Audio Description Project

American Council of the Blind

Phone: (202) 467-5083

Description: Audio Description Project (ADP) aims to boost levels of description activity and disseminate information on that work throughout the nation. They sponsor a broad range of activities designed to build awareness of audio description among the general public as well as its principal users, people who are blind or have low vision. Their web site offers links to audio describers [nationally](#) and [internationally](#). They provide assistance on how to provide audio description to your organization or event.

Culture! Disability! Talent!

Berkeley, CA

Phone: (510) 845-5576

Email: cdtinfo@aol.com

Description: Culture!Disability!Talent! (CDT) is a non-profit organization that works to improve the representation and participation of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of media by promoting performers, artists, and media makers with disabilities. Comprised of disability cultural artists, activists and allies, CDT promotes artistic excellence and diversity by presenting disability cultural events. A major activity of CDT is their annual SUPERFEST International Media Festival. The film festival exhibits works by both amateurs and professionals. These films and videotapes have offered a forum for the examination of ideas, myths, fears and attitudes about people with disabilities.

Disabilities Network of New York City

New York, NY

Phone: (212) 284-4160

Email: lawrence@dnnyc.net

Description: The Disabilities Network of New York City brings people, organizations, government and industry together to find solutions to the problems faced by New Yorkers with physical, visual and hearing disabilities. They are an organization of individuals, advocates, academics, artists and professional organizations working on behalf of people with physical, visual and hearing disabilities. They offer disTHIS! Film Series, a project of the Disabilities Network of NYC in association with the New York University Council for the Study of Disability, which is a monthly showcase of festival quality independent and international short, documentary and feature films with disability themes audiences are unlikely to see elsewhere.

Down Syndrome in Arts and Media

Van Nuys, CA

Phone: (818) 786-0001

Email: gailwmson@aol.com

Description: The Down Syndrome in Arts and Media works with the Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles and other DS Affiliates across the US to provide a Casting Liaison for Talent with Down Syndrome and other developmental disabilities; script consultation and Visual Artist Referrals.

Duet Productions, LTD

Bloomington, IN

Phone: (203) 245-8846

Email: Info@duetltd.com

Description: Duet Productions, LTD is a not-for-profit company which aims to provide and promote accessible materials and services for the blind and visually impaired, including audio description, live and taped wherever needed. They aim to disseminate information about the availability of these services to the visually impaired persons in Indiana and adjacent states. They provide audio description in live theaters for local small theatre groups. They provided program and pre-show notes scripted and recorded, some scene transitions and tricky descriptions scripted for quick reference. They describe live theatre performances, and films.

Media Access Office North

Concord, CA

Phone: (925) 602-7721

Email: dgordy@edd.ca.gov

Description: Media Access Office (MAO) North actively promotes the employment and accurate portrayal of persons with disabilities in all areas of the media and entertainment industry, ensuring that the industry recognizes people with disabilities as part of cultural diversity. The Media Access Office North is located in northern California, and is operated by the State of California, Employment Development Department in partnership with the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, volunteers, the disability community, and the entertainment industry. Media Access Office services include: Casting liaison service representing over 900 performers with disabilities; script consultation on disability issues and themes; referrals to assistive technology and experts in the disability community; educational opportunities offered to the media and entertainment industry about disabilities and related issues; career development and planning for members with disabilities; and classes and scholarships for both adults and children with disabilities to help develop and improve their craft.

Media Access Office South

Glendale, CA

Phone: (818) 409-0448

Email: GCastane@edd.ca.gov

Description: Media Access Office (MAO) South actively promotes the employment and accurate portrayal of persons with disabilities in all areas of the media and entertainment industry, ensuring that the industry recognizes people with disabilities as part of cultural diversity. The Media Access Office South is located in southern California, and is operated by the State of California, Employment Development

Department in partnership with the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, volunteers, the disability community, and the entertainment industry. Media Access Office services include: Casting liaison service representing over 900 performers with disabilities; script consultation on disability issues and themes; referrals to assistive technology and experts in the disability community; educational opportunities offered to the media and entertainment industry about disabilities and related issues; career development and planning for members with disabilities; and classes and scholarships for both adults and children with disabilities to help develop and improve their craft.

Media Image Coalition

Los Angeles, CA

Email: agutierrez@hrc.lacounty.gov

Description: The Media Image Coalition (MIC) is a program of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. Its mission is to promote increased visibility, diversity and balanced imagery of ethnic, cultural, racial and religious groups, women, LGBTQ, seniors, people with disabilities and other protected groups subject to unfair portrayals in media and the arts. They are a membership organization that offers legislative and social advocacy, marketing and promotion, web site listings, and membership news to its members.

National Arts and Disability Center

Los Angeles, CA

Phone: (310) 825-5054

Email: bstoffmacher@mednet.ucla.edu

Description: The National Arts and Disability Center's (NADC) mission is to promote the inclusion of audiences and artists with disabilities in all facets of the arts community. The NADC is a university based organization that has two major focuses: careers in the arts for people with disabilities and making the arts accessible to people with disabilities. The NADC offers a directory of [Film Festivals For, By and About Persons with Disabilities](#) as well as technical assistance requests in this area.

National Captioning Institute

Chantilly, VA

Phone: (703) 917-7600

Email: jagudelo@ncicap.org

Description: National Captioning Institute (NCI) is a nonprofit company that introduced closed captioning on network television in 1980 and remains the global captioning leader. Services include: closed captioning for prerecorded and live video programming; subtitling and language translation services for videos and DVDs; and described video service to make television programming accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired. NCI now offers a help desk that is designed to provide information on topics such as the availability of captioned programming, how to resolve problems with displaying captions, accessibility of closed captions in Spanish and on DVD's and home videos.

[Performing Arts Studio West](#)

Inglewood, CA

Phone: (310) 674-1346 ext. 201

Email: info@studiowest.com

Description: Performing Arts Studio West (PASW) provides hands-on individualized training, career management, and on-location support for performers with developmental disabilities that work in television, film and commercials.

[Performers with Disabilities/Tri-Union Committee](#)

Screen Actors Guild

Affirmative Action Department

Los Angeles, CA

Phone: (323) 549-6644

Email: saginfo@sag.org

Description: The Performers with Disabilities/Tri-Union Committee includes members from AFTRA, AEA, and SAG. The mission of the Tri-Union Performers with Disabilities Committee is to promote the advancement of performers with disabilities; nurture members knowledge and skills; improve members professional careers through the sharing and dispersing of information; promote the profession as a whole; further the understanding of the profession and foster understanding and respect for the disabled performers within; develop and improve working standards and assist in the continuing development of ethical standards for practitioners in the industry. [I AM A PERFORMER WITH A DISABILITY \(I AM PWD\) Campaign](#), launched in 2008, focuses on the civil rights of performers with disabilities. For more information go to

[Screen Actors Guild](#)

Los Angeles, CA

Phone: (323) 954-1600

Email: diversity@sag.org

Description: The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) is the labor union representing film actors in the United States. SAG works to advocate for the hiring of underrepresented groups including performers with disabilities. Through workshops, symposiums and panel discussions they educate the industry and discuss issues related to diversity. One of their diversity committees is the Tri-Union Performers with Disabilities Committee.

[Sprout](#)

New York, NY

Phone: (212) 222-9575

Description: Sprout programs are available to people with developmental/intellectual disabilities and the agencies that serve them throughout the United States. Sprout participants have the opportunity to experience age-appropriate, recreational and leisure activities in a small group setting. By offering these experiences, they hope to enhance the mobility, self-confidence and socialization of participants. Sprout presents the Sprout Film Festival with the goal of reinforcing accurate portrayals of people with developmental disabilities in film. The goal of Sprout is to offer an enjoyable and enlightening experience that will help breakdown stereotypes, promoting a greater

acceptance of differences and awareness of similarities.

Metropolitan Washington Ear, Inc.

Silver Springs, MD

Phone: (301) 681-6636

Email: information@washear.org

Description: The Metropolitan Washington Ear offers free services for blind, visually impaired, and physically disabled people who cannot effectively read print. They are a national organization that conducts research and provides services for persons who are blind or have partial vision, as well as people with other disabilities. The Ear has developed and perfected audio description, a technique that uses trained narrators to describe, between lines of dialogue, what is happening on screen, television or stage.

TheatreVision

Woodland Hills, CA

Phone: (818) 992-0500

Description: TheatreVision is an exciting new program making films accessible to the visually challenged. TheatreVision™© is a new process of incorporating a special soundtrack for feature films that runs concurrently with the dialogue of the picture. This track provides a "descriptive narration" of what is being shown on the screen, so that those without sight can still experience the wonderful medium of motion pictures. Over the next few years, plans call for these special narrative tracts to be heard via headsets in theaters all over the United States.

VSA

Washington, DC

Phone: (202) 628-2800

Email: info@vsarts.org

Description: VSA is an international, nonprofit organization where people with disabilities can learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. Programs are implemented through a network by State affiliates in over 60 countries worldwide. They offer programs for playwrights, educational programs, as well as they administer numerous awards and events that recognize the artistic achievements of young artists with disabilities. Check out their web site to see the programs that they offer in the media arts.

WGBH Educational Foundation

National Center for Accessible Media

Boston, MA

Phone: (617) 300-5400

Description: WGBH Educational Foundation has several media projects designed to reach out to under-served audiences excluded from mass media due to language, geographic or physical barriers. Projects include the CPB/WGBH National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM), Captioning, and Descriptive Video Services.

[Writers Guild of America, West](#)

Employment Access Department

Los Angeles, CA

Phone: (323) 951-4000

Description: Writers Guild of America (WGA), West assists with scripts and screenplays, including those about characters with disabilities. The Guild works with producers, studio and network heads and writers to increase their employment and the availability of writing assignments for writers who are Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian and people with disabilities.

See also:

The **[National Arts and Disability Center](#)** to search for additional resources and information related to the Media Arts.