University of Connecticut Guidelines for Accessible Events

Introduction

All University sponsored events either on or off-campus are subject to the accessibility requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as Amended (2008), and Section 504 the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Event organizers have a responsibility to ensure accessibility for participants or attendees with disabilities. All event organizers should be familiar with these guidelines. Event organizers seeking assistance coordinating event-related access may contact the Office of Institutional Equity: 860-486-2943 or equity@uconn.edu.

Planning for Disability Access and Accommodations

Start Early

Creating equal access can take time, and commitment to determining appropriate and reasonable solutions. Event organizers should work proactively, which not only mitigates many access concerns but also allows organizers to identify access barriers and make their events accessible to the widest range of participants as possible.

Consider what aspects of the event can be made accessible in advance

A major aspect to the accessibility of an event is considering what can be done without an accommodation request in place for a person's unique needs. For example, if an organization is hosting a live keynote speaker with video access, consideration for a Communication Access Real-Time (CART) Reporter to provide captioning might make sense, regardless of whether there was a request for one. This is an easy way to ensure access to anyone who may identify as deaf or hard of hearing, without requiring them to disclose and request accommodation. Pieces like this can help participants feel welcome at events, and that that the event coordinators were intentional in their planning.

Designating an Access Coordinator for your event

Every event should have a specific person that participants can reach out to in order to request accommodations. This person should also be listed with contact information on any promotional material, flyers, brochures, etc. that are meant to advertise the event. The person designated should have a good understanding of the event's details and logistics, ability to assess the accommodation need against the purpose of the event as well as the ability to respond to the requests in a timely manner. Suggested Language for promotional materials can be found below:

If you require an accommodation to fully participate in this event, please contact NAME OF PERSON at PHONE and/or EMAIL as soon as possible.

Receiving and Responding to Accommodation Requests

The University is required to provide equal access for people with disabilities at University sponsored events, programs and services. Even if the designated Access Coordinator is unsure of the funding or logistics around the accommodation, they should proceed as though the accommodation should be provided. If an Access Coordinator feels unsure about the implementation of a request, they should reach out to the Office of Institutional Equity for guidance or support.

An Access Coordinator should request details of the accommodation request, specifically, the participant's contact information, their requested accommodations and any preferences regarding the implementation of their accommodations. From there, the Access Coordinator can implement the accommodation as reasonable, or contact the Office of Institutional Equity for assistance in discerning a solution.

At times, requests may come in late or provide logistical problems that prevent the implementation of the accommodation request. Access Coordinators should always make a good faith effort to implement the accommodation, though if they are unable to, they should provide that information to the person making the request with as much detail as possible and holding compassion in the process.

Funding for Accommodations

Event organizers and planners should work some accessibility cost into their event to cover unplanned accommodation requests. This helps to ensure that there are not any issues in implementing accommodations when requested.

Resources for Planners

Office of Institutional Equity

The Office of Institutional Equity serves as the University's primary ADA Compliance office and can support event planners in their provision of accommodations for participants. OIE can consult on types of accommodations, historical perspective and other facets of event planning.

Contact Office of Institutional Equity
Email: equity@uconn.edu

Phone: 860-486-4957

UConn Communication Access and Interpreting Services

UConn Communication Access and Interpreting Services provides CART or captioning services for the university and its events.

Contact UConn Communication Access and Interpreting Services
Book Services

Email: ucis@uconn.edu

Phone: 860-486-2020