



THE REVOLUTION ~~WILL BE~~ MUST BE ACCESSIBLE

TIPS & ADVICE FOR ORGANIZERS

A guide for building access-centered
online movement education

Prepare, Prepare, Prepare!

- Include access information on all promotional materials and translate materials into as many languages as you will have available (e.g. create ASL video announcement).
- Invite interpreters and captioners to join any early tech rehearsals and have panelists practice working with interpreters before the event begins.
- Find or hire a language/access justice specialist to coordinate access. Ideally, this person will be disabled.
- Don't overfill your panel! Too many panelists often causes presenters to be rushed and anxious. This is almost always inaccessible for most of your audience.
- Provide the agenda and any specialized vocabulary, names, pronouns, acronyms, concepts, slides, notes, or visual materials to interpreters and captioner at least one day in advance.

**Budget and plan for
access well in advance.**



Interpreters Aren't One-Size-Fits-All

- Interpreters' skills vary. When hiring an interpreter, it is important to find someone who will be able to accurately and clearly interpret the content.
- Check the interpreter's background, experience, familiarity with the content, and identity.
- Be intentional about hiring culturally competent and qualified interpreters who can sign/speak to the content of your webinar as well as the experiences of panelists.
- Once you identify/hire an interpreter, you can ask them who they work well with. If the referred interpreters/captioners are a good fit, consider adding them to the interpreting team.
- After the webinar always check in with deaf/signing participants about interpreter quality, improvements, etc.



It is important to find someone who will be able to accurately and clearly interpret the content.

The Importance of Deaf Interpreters

- Signed languages are visual/spatial/tactile languages that are distinct from spoken languages (e.g., ASL is different from English).
- Many concepts that have words in English do not have established signs in ASL and many concepts in ASL do not have direct translation into English.
- Deaf Interpreters are skilled at using visual-tactile signed languages to explain concepts that do not have signs, without relying on fingerspelling.
- To host a truly accessible event, you will want to hire Deaf Interpreters.



Deaf Interpreters are skilled at explaining concepts that do not have signs or that are abstract or complex.

Interpreting Teams

HIRE 2+ INTERPRETERS

For events lasting more than one hour, it's important to hire two or more interpreters.

If the content is dense, complex or fast paced, it's a good idea to hire two interpreters for events under an hour also.

If one interpreter is unable to connect or be seen due to tech issues, that issue must be resolved before continuing with the webinar in order to protect the integrity of the interpretation.

Interpreters work together and support one another.

INTERPRETING WORK IS EXHAUSTIVE & INTENSE

Interpreting results in mental and physical fatigue

It is standard for interpreters to switch off every 15 - 20 minutes. Be prepared, plan & pause if needed.

The interpreter who is off-screen is not on "break." They support the on-screen interpreter with accuracy by feeding them information or signs they miss.



Tech Tips

SIGNERS & INTERPRETERS NEED TO BE SEEN CLEARLY

Ask people who are not participating in the discussion to turn off their cameras.

Hide non-video participants.

If in a webinar, pin the interpreter so they can be seen for the entire webinar. Assign the interpreters as co-host.

If recording, edit settings to ensure that sign language users will be visible in any final recordings. In Zoom, this is done through selecting "Record Gallery View" in settings in addition to other recording views.

INCLUDE ACCESS TEAM AS PART OF PLANNING

Vet third party streaming software to confirm that image quality of interpreters and presenters is not impacted.

Conduct a test-run with the entire team (including interpreters and captioners) to address any tech issues.

You will make mistakes. Try to fix them before you are "live." If issues come up: pause, breathe, and address them in real-time. If the problems cannot be fixed, cancel the session until everyone has access.



If the problems cannot be fixed, cancel the session until the time when everyone has access.

During the Webinar

- **ANNOUNCE** how attendees can activate closed captioning and other tech tools (ex: increasing size of videos or slides).
- **PRIORITIZE** signers in terms of visual space as opposed to speakers. Interpreters on tiny screens are not accessible.
- **VISUAL DESCRIPTIONS** should be given for all presenters once at the beginning of the session.
- Presenters should **GIVE THEIR NAMES** before presenting (ex: "This is Jamal. Prisons are harmful because...").
- **CONFIRM** that interpreters are ready before anyone presents. If interpreters are not ready, do not present.
- **BE PATIENT** with the interpreting process. Interpreters and presenters will likely request/make clarification or repetition.
- **PAUSE** to give attendees time to view slides, before each presenter, and during times the interpreters switch.
- **BUILD IN BREAKS!** If the webinar is longer than an hour, give participants opportunities to take care of themselves.

People who are signing on screen should be prioritized in terms of visual space



Captioning!

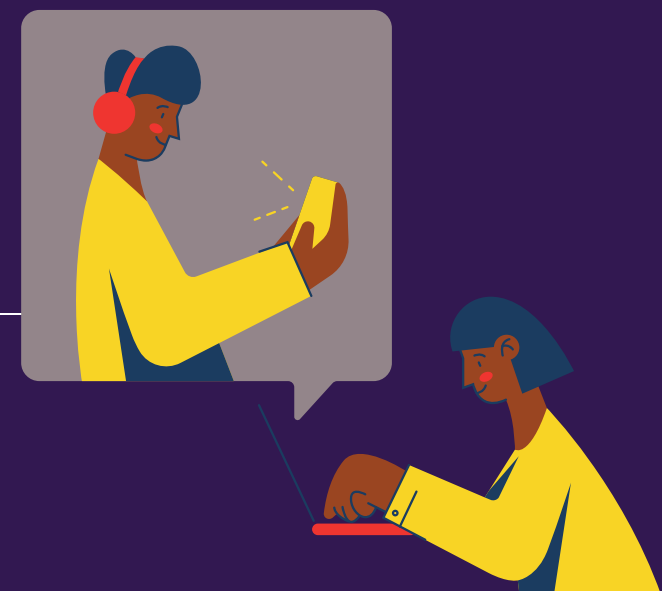
Captions are not a substitute for sign language interpretation nor vice versa. When organizing an accessible event, it's important to provide both, not one or the other.

Captioners are not one size fits all. All advice given in earlier slides about selection and preparation for interpreters applies to captioners as well.

Check whether the captioner has experience connecting their live captions to the interface or platform you will be using.

Provide a separate link with live captions and integrate the captions into the livestream. There are pros and cons to both formats depending on individual access needs.

Save the captions at the end of the webinar to create a transcript. Edit the transcript for accuracy and make it publicly available following the event.



Captions are not a substitute for sign language interpretation.

Access is a Practice Not a Place.

- Being access-centered is more than a checklist. It means we are committed to disability justice and language justice.
- Access needs vary between individuals, change over time or on the spot, and sometimes conflict with one another. The recommendations in this resource will not match the access needs of every disabled person.
- Access-centered space means that flexibility, openness, and innovation are welcome and necessary.
- Practice real-time access interventions and invite collective support during the session to make for the best access.
- Provide resources in advance to as many people as possible to allow community to provide real-time language/access support and ensure that people can set up their own access solutions (e.g. slides open on a separate screen allows some people to focus on interpreters, captions, and/or presenter).



"Disability is innovation."

- Ki'tay Davidson

PLAN AND BUDGET FOR ACCESS EARLY.

**DO NOT ASSUME ACCESS WAS GREAT
BECAUSE IT LOOKED GOOD TO YOU.**

**FOLLOW UP WITH DISABLED
ATTENDEES AND PANELISTS FOR
FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS.**

**ACCESS, LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE WE DO,
IS A WORK IN PROGRESS.**

THIS RESOURCE IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE.

OTHER RESOURCES:

**"ASL Access: Every Organizer's
Responsibility" by Drago Rentería**
bit.ly/every-organizers-responsibility

Examples of in/accessible webinars:
bit.ly/access-webinars