



## CIOB Best Practice Guide: Hosting Inclusive, Accessible, and Welcoming Events

The CIOB's objectives, defined by our Royal Charter, include the promotion for the public benefit of the science and practice of building and construction. To help meet this objective, we have adopted this guide to hosting accessible and welcoming events to ensure that we promote a diverse and inclusive built environment sector.

Research shows that diverse and inclusive organisations are more creative, productive, and profitable. Evidence demonstrates that they are more innovative and responsive to diverse customer needs and aspirations. Therefore, it stands to reason that events and conferences with an inclusive approach will provide similar benefits to all those who participate and contribute.

This guide covers all aspects of event management from deciding on the subject matter, content, and panellists for an event, to the accessibility, catering, and facilities available. However, we recognise that we won't have everything absolutely correct in this guide and know that we have more to learn as we adopt this new approach. We will add to the content and develop this guide as we continue to host events that are genuinely welcoming to all.

## Pre-Event Logistics

### 1. Representative Speakers and Panel

- Ensure that speakers are aware of and comfortable with the CIOB's commitment to diversity and inclusion as set out on our dedicated webpages: <https://www.ciob.org/industry/politics-government/campaigns/equality-diversity-inclusion>
- Ensure presentations and panel discussions use appropriate (e.g., gender neutral) language
- Commit to gender, ethnicity, and age diversity on all panels. No panel should be exclusively male or female. This is both for CIOB and partner events where the CIOB logo is in use
- Ensure inclusive views are communicated and presented for all topics
- Consider whether the event will have an international audience and recognise that the presentation and questions may need to be rephrased or translated. Avoid using colloquial language and consider the option of subtitles on recorded events

### 2. Promotion and Marketing the Event

- Make sure all promotional material is advertised in an accessible format with the offer to produce alternatives such as large print, audio, different languages, and appropriate colour schemes
- Consider the promotional images used and whether they are inclusive and welcoming to all



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### 3. Location

- When choosing venues and accommodation, make sure to consider all attendee and staff safety. It is important that all participants at the event feel comfortable and safe with the location of the venue. This is particularly relevant when events end late, and when delegates need to walk between venues, accommodation, and car parks

### 4. Venue Access Requirements

- All event rooms and spaces used should be easily accessed by all delegates. If the event takes place over multiple levels/floors, ensure that there are lifts, ramps or other means that allow delegates with mobility limitations to access all areas
- If there is a lift, review if the control buttons are at a height that a wheelchair user could reach and if there is appropriate turning space within the lift. Are there mirrors in the lift to support wheelchair use? Are the buttons raised to aide someone with a visual impairment? Is there audio in the lift to alert people to what floor they are on?
- Where possible, ensure the venue has parking available. This will support with mobility limitations and delegates who have other conditions meaning they prefer to drive to and from venues
- Try to ensure that delegates with mobility difficulties can use the same entrance as other delegates. Wheelchairs users should be able to use ramped access routes independently
- If parking is available, make sure disabled parking bays are near the entrance, accessibility ramps are available and review if there are any obstacles such as benches or signage which may restrict access to wheelchair users or individuals with mobility issues. If parking is unavailable, ask the venue for the nearest disabled parking space or research to see if spaces can be reserved
- For attendees who are unable to drive to the event, make sure there are appropriate travel routes using public transport links or taxi drop-off points
- When running events with digital production ensure there is an appropriate sound system with microphones and hearing loops
- Ensure event space has clear and visible signage to lifts, rooms, and toilets. Ask the venue to provide guidance documentation on event space access <https://www.accessable.co.uk/>



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### Event Registration

#### 5. Date/Time of the event

- If possible, choose a date that does not overlap with, national bank holidays and school breaks
- Consider avoiding important religious and cultural events and celebrations when choosing dates for events (i.e., Christmas, Eid, Ramadan etc)
- Consider the time of your event that will allow delegates with caring responsibilities or those relying on support workers to attend
- Consider running events at different times to support delegates in different time zones and delegates who work flexible hours
- Announce the date and time of the event well in advance. Delegates may need time to plan their route, book childcare, and research the event space

#### 6. Delegate information

- Include a space on the registration form where delegates are invited to declare specific needs they might have, for example learning or physical disabilities, dietary or caring needs e.g. How can we help you get the most out of this event? CIOB want to ensure accessibility for all our members.
- Consider including gender neutral registration options for the event. This may be relevant where speakers or delegates are using name badges or named seating charts
- Have visible staff contact details - delegates may feel comfortable speaking with staff personally about access and communication needs, dietary requirements, and any other requirements they may have to attend the event
- Make sure delegates are aware of the CIOB's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion <https://www.ciob.org/industry/politics-government/campaigns/equality-diversity-inclusion>
- Create a support action email or additional registration box that allows members to contact the CIOB in confidence prior to attendance to answer any questions and support any additional needs

#### 7. The Event

- Ensure there are adequate breaks throughout the event for speakers, staff, and delegates
- Make sure all delegates are briefed on fire exits and emergency exits, and gateways are clearly indicated by suitable signs
- Make sure the event topic is clearly indicated to all delegates and an agenda is provided



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### 8. Outdoor Events

- Review if the ground surface of the event can cater for people with mobility issues
- Review if there are accessible toilets nearby
- Consider if there are any obstacles or hazards in the event area
- Review if there are areas of shelter

### 9. Washrooms

- When choosing a venue, ensure that there are accessible toilets for delegates with disabilities
- Check the number and location of accessible bathrooms
- Consider having at least one gender neutral bathroom. If unable to choose a venue with gender neutral bathrooms, make attendees aware on the booking registration

### 10. Main Event Room

- When reviewing rooms/spaces to hold events make sure to allow space for delegates in wheelchairs to access and move around, and access to any staging if they are speakers
- If tables are being used at the event, consider if they are the suitable height for wheelchair users. This includes any reception desk
- Consider if the room is suitable for guide and assistance dogs
- When reviewing the main room consider the location of the nearest bathroom facilities and if these are clearly signposted

### 11. Additional Rooms

- When reviewing event spaces, consider booking a venue with small additional rooms that can be used as a quiet space for delegates to take a break, breastfeeding or use for religious observance



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### 12. Technology

- Consider providing digital and online services for delegates who are unable to attend the event on the day. This can be in the form of a hybrid event by livestreaming or video recording
- If livestreaming the event, make sure there is the option for closed captions and language subtitles
- If technology is being used to record the event, make sure all cables are covered and any trip hazards are removed
- If the event is recorded or live streamed, make sure all delegates are aware of this and have consented to being filmed

### 13. Catering

- Collect information about dietary needs and preferences when delegates and speakers register for the event
- If you are providing a buffet for the event, ensure that dishes, ingredients, and allergens are clearly labelled
- Ensure that not all social or network gatherings are alcohol or bar centric. Offer alcohol alternatives
- Be aware of religious holidays such as Ramadan, and provide options for all delegates to be able to request food and drink at the event

### 14. Post event feedback

- We will welcome constructive feedback on event management to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all those who wish to participate in our events

## Guidance ownership and review

This guide was developed by the CIOB Events Team and published in May 2022

It will be subject to review on an annual basis to ensure that it contains current best-practice.

If you have any suggestions for improvement, please email: [events@ciob.org.uk](mailto:events@ciob.org.uk)

If you have any comments about the CIOB approach to diversity and inclusion, please email: [inclusion@ciob.org.uk](mailto:inclusion@ciob.org.uk)

If you require a copy of this document in an alternative format, please email: [events@ciob.org.uk](mailto:events@ciob.org.uk)