



## **Venue Accessibility Guide**

# ReelAbilities

FILM FESTIVAL

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## ACCESSIBILITY NOTICE (TO BE APPLIED AND NOTED ON ALL YOUR MARKETING MATERIALS)

*ReelAbilities strives for inclusion of all people. Individuals needing accommodations should contact the screening venue directly at least two weeks in advance of the event. ASL interpretation, CART, Audio Description, and information in Braille are available upon advance request. All films are captioned and all venues are wheelchair accessible.*

## The Screenings

### Accessibility Aids

#### CAPTIONS

Film captions are intended for the deaf and hearing impaired. As opposed to subtitles, that display on screen titling of the dialogue in the film, captions provide on-screen description of all plot pertinent sounds and audio included in the film (both dialog and non-dialog sound), noting when music is played or a background sound is heard.

The difference between open captions to closed captions is:

Open captions are placed permanently onto the picture and display on screen without having to configure any preferences in the player or disc.

Closed captioning can be turned on or off depending on the need. Closed captions is a more familiar term when it comes to dialogue of a show or movie appearing on a television screen. Closed captioning is a requirement by law, which means today all televisions are built closed-caption ready with a reader in them.

All films screened as part of the ReelAbilities film festival must be screened with captions, either open captions embedded onto the picture, or closed captions in a separate file.

#### Venue requirements:

- Projection system
- Ability to play separate closed caption file simultaneously with the film.

#### AUDIO DESCRIPTION

Audio Description, or more correctly: Video Description, refers to an additional narration track for blind and visually impaired consumers of visual media (including television and film, theater, dance, opera, and visual art). It consists of a narrator talking through the presentation, describing what is happening on the screen or stage during the natural pauses in the audio, and sometimes during dialogue if deemed necessary.

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\*\*\* Some ReelAbilities films have a recorded audio description which is provided on a separate video/audio file, but a live Audio Description is also an option. Each must be played as an audio track, simultaneously with the main film, via assistive listening devices (similar to museum audio guides).

## Venue requirements for using the ReelAbilities-produced audio description files/DVDs:

1. While the main movie is presented on the big screen, with its original audio playing through the general venue speakers (see figure 1), the AD file/DVD needs to be played on a separate, additional player, which is connected to an assistive listening system, which transmits the AD narration through radio signal to hand-held devices (receivers), with the consumer listening to the narration via headphones (see figure 2).

FIGURE 1

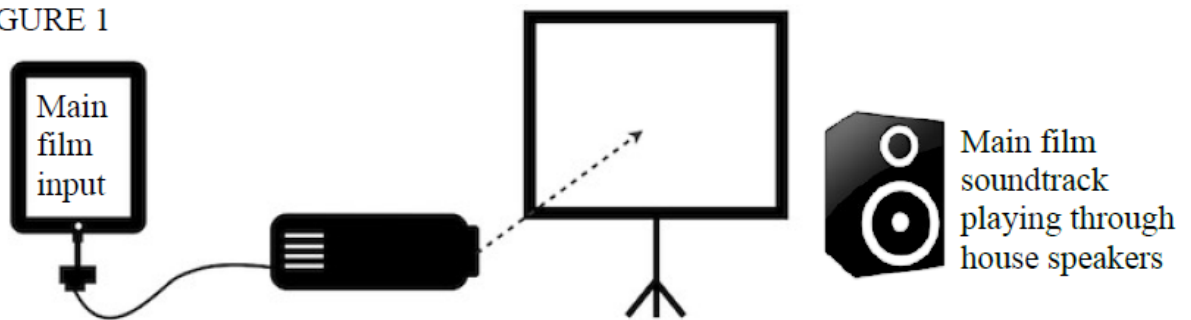
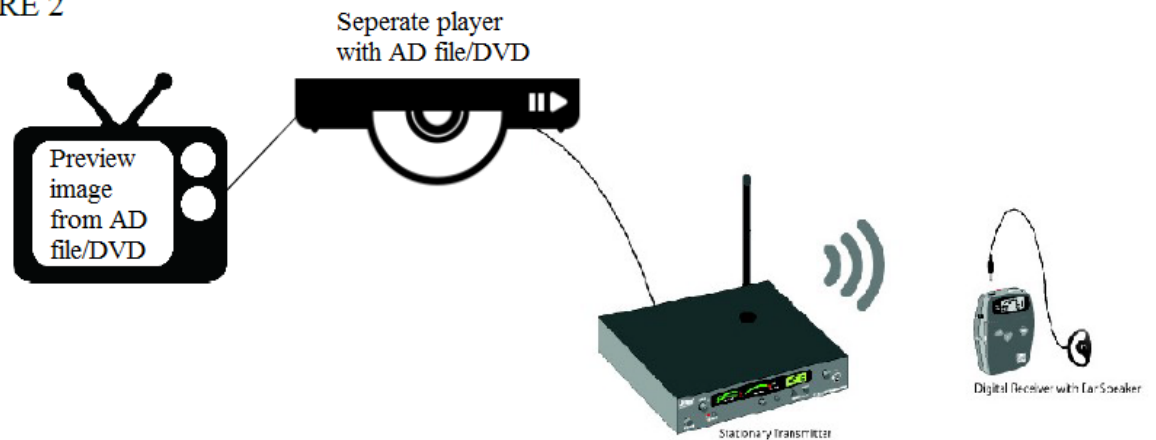


FIGURE 2



2. How to synchronize the main film with the AD narration?

It is recommended that the player on which you run the AD file/DVD will be connected to a monitor/screen, so the projectionist can synchronize the main film and AD track based on the image, and not only based on the audio. Additionally, ReelAbilities has produced the captioned films and the AD files/DVDs with a 10 seconds countdown, which is intended to help the projectionist with synching the two inputs.

## SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION (ASL)

A sign language interpreter is a person trained in translating between a spoken and a signed language. This usually means someone who interprets what is being said and signs it for someone who can't hear, but understands sign language.

Of course, the interpreter also will interpret and speak the words which convey the meaning of the signing person's signs to allow hearing people to understand what is signed.

Most countries use different sign language, such as American Sign Language (ASL) in America which is different than British Sign Language (BSL) from England.

### Venue requirements:

- Well-lit designated space for the interpreter to stand/sit in, both visible to persons requiring ASL assistance and from which the interpreter has clear vision/hearing of performance.
- Designated seating area for individuals who require interpretation is recommended – seating should be close to the stage, with an uninterrupted view of the interpreter.

## COMMUNICATION ACCESS REAL-TIME TRANSCRIPTION (CART) / AKA Live Captioning

This is live stenography often used to share the conversation with the hearing impaired, or deaf individuals who do not understand sign language. Instant (live) presentation of the spoken word into English text using a stenotype machine, notebook computer and real-time software allows what is being said, to be read. The text produced by the CART service can be displayed on an individual's computer monitor, projected onto a screen, combined with a video presentation to appear as captions, or otherwise made available using other transmission and display systems.

CART is often used by late-deafened adults who do not use sign language.

### Venue requirements:

- Designated space for CART operator
- Separate monitor/screen to display captioned text visible to audience.

## BRAILLE

A system of writing and printing for blind or visually impaired people, in which varied arrangements of raised dots representing letters and numerals are identified by touch. Some ReelAbilities festivals create braille versions of their major marketing materials such as film listings and schedules.

### Venue requirements:










- Main notices, signing and visitor information available in braille in assistive printed materials and/or as part of building facilities (on signs/walls).

## The Venue

ReelAbilities screening venues should be able to accommodate visitors with a variety of disabilities and mobility devices, and of different stature according to standard ADA requirements. All personnel working on the premises (including Box Office and Ushers should be trained to accommodate different needs (service animals, charging chairs, etc.)

Please refer to Wheelchair Dimensions for Adults image for the required space that should be available for wheelchairs throughout the building's facilities (take into account turning and maneuvering range):

Wheelchair Dimensions for Adults

MANUAL		POWERED		SCOOTERS	
					
29 inch	47 inch	29 inch	59 inch	29 inch	68 inch
					

## ENTRANCES

All entrances and passageways leading to and/or part of the screening event should be suitable to the dimensions of an adult wheelchair.

### Venue requirements:

- Entrances to the building, theater, concession stand and bathrooms should be easily located and either on ground floor or may be accessed by either ramp or elevator. **Doors must have a clear width of 32 inches from the face of the door to the opposite stop.**
- Entryways must have enough space for mobility devices (such as wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, and canes) to pass through and that all pathways are unobstructed.

- If doorways do not have automatic openers, prop doors open or station a person to assist.

## **ELEVATORS**

Elevators should have low buttons and Braille or raised number markings, or audible floor announcements. If unavailable, station a person to assist.

## **RESTROOMS**

Restrooms facilities and stalls must be accessible for mobility devices and clearly marked within the venue.

### Venue requirements:

- The floor area beyond the swing of the door must have sufficient space for a walker or wheelchair.
- Stalls should have grab bars and sink.
- Soap and paper towels should be reachable to people of short stature or using a wheelchair.

## **BOX OFFICE**

Ticketing and will call should also be made accessible.

### Venue Requirements:

- Phone sales should include a TTY line which allows people who are deaf to transmit a message.
- Pick-up of tickets after purchase should include an accessible window/table for people of short stature or in wheelchairs.

## **WEBSITE AND ON-LINE PAGES**

Website and on-line pages should be accommodated to provide maximum usability to a variety of visual impairments and assistive reading devices.

- Provide Alt text for images, graphs, charts, and other non-text elements.
- Provide equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation that shall be synchronized with the presentation. For video, that means closed captioning and video description, when applicable.
- UI design that functions in black & white just as well as in color.
- Design pages with an easily readable structure.
- Provide redundant text links for each active region of a server-side image map.
- Provide client-side image maps instead of server-side image maps.
- Markup tables with correct HTML for rows and column headers.
- Give frames Title text.

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- Design pages that will not cause the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz (with a maximum color contrast to allow best readability).
- Provide a text-only equivalent page when compliance cannot be accomplished any other way.
- Allow users to skip repetitive navigation links.
- Embedded forms must be accessible with assistive technology.
- Include an alarm warning for any timed response submissions.

### **PRINT MATERIALS**

All printed materials should aim to be in as large a font as possible and using contrast guidelines.

### **THEATER SEATING**

Seating within the theater should accommodate people with different abilities and allow audience members to choose their preferred seating area. Provide support for people accessing and leaving their seats and give enough time between doors opening and the start of the film to make sure everyone is seated in advance of the start time.

Accommodate people with disabilities so that they can share the entire screening experience with their friends, family, companion, support person or service animal by including non-disabled seating with wheelchair seating.

Remember to keep in mind the expected audiences for each event and provide proper accessibility seating accordingly.

#### Venue requirements:

- At least 10% overall accessible seats that have unobscured views of the stage/screen and have the option of companion seating (Accessible seats - spaces specifically designed for wheelchairs and include features such as an accessible approach, location at grade, clear floor space, and larger dimensions).  
A single wheelchair space must be 36 inches wide.
- Accessible seats must provide spectators with choices of seating locations and viewing angles that are substantially equivalent to, or better than, seating for other spectators.
- Railings and/or usher assistance.
- An area to store mobility devices such as walkers, scooters, canes and wheelchairs for people who wish to transfer into a standard seat during the film. Make sure this area isn't disruptive to other audience members trying to reach their seats or view the film. Have usher support available to place the devices in the designated area and return them to users at the end of the program.



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- Location of sign language interpreters within the theater must be of clear sightlines to audience.
- Seating close to interpreters for deaf or hard of hearing audience members on request.
- Ushers should be available to assist people who need assistance to access washrooms or concessions during the film.

### **STAGE AREA**

If your event uses a stage for introductions, panel discussions or artist talks before or after the film, consider stage access for people who use mobility devices.

While conducting your event, stay on schedule – people who use specialized accessible transportation services need to leave your event on time. Repeat any questions from the audience or use a microphone for audience questions and answers.

Seating and lecterns on the stage for interviews or speeches should be standardized and universally accessible. If a person in a wheel chair or someone who cannot access a tall chair is part of the conversation, all seats in the panel should be the same height. Similarly, lecterns should be standardized to accommodate people in wheelchairs and people of short stature.

#### Venue requirements:

- Microphones for all speakers. If possible, make sure different types of microphones are available to support different disabilities, such as attachable microphones or headsets.
- Universally accessible stage seating
- Adjustable height podiums for speakers.
- Accessible entrance to stage and sufficient space to maneuver mobility devices on stage.

### **SERVICE ANIMALS**

Service animals are mostly canine and they are not pets. They work to make life easier for people with disabilities, and they are welcome in public areas including where food is served (though not where food is prepared). Make sure to make audiences with service animals feel welcome and try to provide as much support as possible to accommodate the venue to their needs.

#### Venue requirements:

- Providing a relief area for animals and notifying owners of its location.
- A water bowl easily accessible to service animal.

## ACCESSIBLE PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

Venues should be easily reachable to visitors with different disabilities coming from different areas by having parking spaces and public transportation pick-up and drop-off stops in close proximity.

### Venue requirements:

- Each venue must have a sufficient number of conveniently located accessible parking spaces, and must be in close proximity to accessible public transit.
- Location of accessible transit passenger pick-up and drop-off areas should be advertised in venue marketing materials and brochures.

## SENSORY FRIENDLY AND RELAXING SCREENINGS

A sensory-friendly or relaxed screening is specifically designed to welcome people who will benefit from a more relaxed environment, including people with Autism Spectrum Disorder, sensory and communication disorders, or a learning disability. A sensory-friendly screening means:

- There is a relaxed attitude to noise and movement.
- House lights remain on at a dim level, and sound is slightly lower.
- The nature of the screenings is highlighted in communications in advance, and also when introducing the film so that the audience knows what to expect.
- A designated rest area outside the screening room may be offered.

## ReelAbilities Venue Accessibility Checklist

### The Screenings

#### ACCESSABILITY AIDS

##### Captions

- Screening system
- Ability to play separate closed caption file simultaneously with the film.

##### Audio Description (AD)

- Separate broadcasting audio system transmitting only to assistive listening devices
- Multiple personal assistive listening devices

##### Sign Language Interpretation (ASL)

- ASL interpreter
- Designated space for the interpreter to stand/sit in, both visible to persons requiring ASL assistance and from which the interpreter has clear vision/hearing of performance.
- Designated seating area for individuals who require interpretation

##### Communication Access Real-Time Transcription (CART)

- CART operator
- Designated space for CART operator
- Separate monitor/screen to display captioned text visible to audience.

##### Braille

- Main notices, building signing and visitor information available in braille

### The Venue

#### Entrances

- Easily located entrances to the building, theater, concession stand and bathrooms either on ground floor or easily accessed by either ramp or elevator. **Doors must have a clear width of 32 inches from the face of the door to the opposite stop.**
- Entryways with enough space to allow mobility devices to pass through and unobstructed pathways.
- Automatic openers or ability to prop doors open, or a person to assist.
- Elevators with low buttons for wheelchair users, and Braille or raised number markings, or audible floor announcements. If unavailable - a person to assist.

#### Elevators

- Low buttons
- Braille or raised number markings and/or audible floor announcements.

## Restrooms

- Facilities and stalls accessible for mobility devices and clearly marked within the venue.
- Floor area beyond the swing of the door must have sufficient space for a walker or wheelchair.
- Grab bars and sink within stalls.
- Soap and paper towels reachable to a person using a wheelchair.

## Box Office

- A TTY line for phone sales.
- Accessible window/table for people of short stature or in wheelchairs.

## Website and on-line pages

- Alt text for non-text elements.
- Alternatives for multimedia presentations.
- Closed captioning and video description, when applicable.
- UI design that also functions in black & white.
- Easily readable page structure.
- Redundant text links for each active region of a server-side image map.
- Client-side image maps.
- Markup tables with correct HTML for rows and column headers.
- Title text for frames.
- Pages with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz (with a maximum color contrast to allow best readability).
- Text-only equivalent page.
- Option to skip repetitive navigation links.
- Embedded forms accessible with assistive technology.
- An alarm warning for any timed response submissions.

## Print Materials

- As large a font as possible and using contrast guidelines.

## Theater Seating

- At least 10% overall accessible seats. A single wheelchair space must be 36 inches wide.
- Choices of seating locations of accessible seats.
- Railings and/or usher assistance.
- An area to store mobility devices
- Designated area for ASL interpreters
- Seating close to interpreters for deaf or hard of hearing audience members.
- Ushers available to assist people to access washrooms or concessions during the film.

# ReelAbilities

FILM FESTIVAL

## **Stage Area**

- Microphones for all speakers, to accommodate different types disabilities
- Universally accessible stage seating
- Adjustable height podiums for speakers.
- Accessible entrance to stage and sufficient space to maneuver mobility devices on stage.

## **Service Animals**

- A relief area for animals and proper signage for attendees.
- A water bowl easily accessible to service animal

## **Accessible Parking and Transportation**

- A sufficient number of conveniently located accessible parking spaces in close proximity to accessible public transit.
- Location of accessible transit passenger pick-up and drop-off areas advertised in venue marketing materials and brochures.