WORDS OF EUROPE

Guidelines to organize inclusive events

Premise

Words of Europe aims at creating the broadest discussion and most inclusive debate around relevant topics towards the European Elections which will be held in 2024. To meet this goal, the consortium includes social, journalistic and cultural organizations, to create a meeting point for languages, people and narratives. To empower participants of WE events and guarantee antidiscrimination throughout the entire duration of the project, basic and shared principles have been included in the **WE guidelines to organize inclusive events** and **WE Conduct Policy**. These documents represent the basis for every activity partners will carry out.

Participants outreach

- Provide broad awareness to the participants on WE code of conduct and the stand and commitment towards inclusion and diversity so as to include only those ones that share our beliefs and commitment.
- Actively reach out participants from different backgrounds culturally, religiously, age and gender wise.
- Reach out to pre-existing groups of participants, who already know each other in different settings such as school of languages, training, other organizations or movements etc.
- Promote gender balance by reaching out both genders, females and males, in the same measure with the same effort. Make efforts to reach out non-binary participants.
- Include "female, male, non-binary, prefer not to declare" in the self-identification forms and signature list in relation to gender identity.
- Make sure someone from your staff carries out a "gender watch", to measure if participation in terms of speaking time is equal among participants of different gender identities.
- Stress on the importance of representing and inviting role models at the event who could encourage and empower the participation of diverse groups of people.
- Consider suggesting more shortlisting of potential speakers representing the more diverse groups in the selection criteria.
- Protect data of your participants in the respect of European and national regulation.
- Readapt events (setting, agenda, staff involved) according to participants' needs and backgrounds.
- Include cultural and linguistic mediators in case of need to allow the participation of non-native speakers of the working language.

Inclusive and broad communication

Internal

- Always ask the pronouns participants would like to be identified with before assuming their gender.
- Provide wide access to all relevant communications, always observing the privacy of the participants.
- Include different methods of communication, including images, among other modes of communication in order to maximize participation and avoid biases.
- Diversify on the languages used to communicate while keenly observing the inclusion of a gender inclusive language, in order to create more inclusion and cut back on stereotypes.
- Ensure everyone understands the expectation with explicit explanations of expected behavior, unacceptable behavior, methods of reporting misconduct, and consequences of misconduct.

External

- Raise the much needed awareness on such important matters like the inclusion of photography in the event, clearly stating how to opt out.
- While communicating, be cautious with the language used taking into consideration what could be uncomfortable to some groups like the disable people, migrants, marginalized groups etc.
- Remember to adopt inclusive phrasing to correctly represent all gender identities in posts online (pronouns, declinations, etc).

No architectural barrier

- Appropriate access requirements for all should be given utmost consideration providing alternatives to such limitations like the lack of functioning lift, etc.
- Structural features like corridor width that could hinder access by people with special needs like crutches and wheelchairs should be highly considered.
- The most accessible seats should be reserved for people with access needs.

Methodology and setting

- Declare at the start of the event that WE events are a safe and learning space. In case the staff or moderator does not recognize a specific need or request, encourage participants to share their knowledge to learn from their experience. Partners should commit to realize a constant training of the staff in charge to be updated about discrimination processes and subjects that are structurally discriminated against.
- Share a trigger warning any time you are going to start a conversation about sensitive topics which might affect participants.

- A participatory approach should always be adopted. Provide given space to contribute in the agreed framework, clearly stating the role of the team and the goal of the meeting; and openly define the scope of the conversation.
- Such tools as live streaming, recording etc should be considered to provide access for those not in a position to be physically present, but would like to participate so as not to close anyone outside.
- Consider inviting speakers through the use of such platforms as webinars/zoom.

Selection of the date and venue should be an all inclusive process

- Consideration should be observed avoiding scheduling an event on a major religious holiday or festival.
- Consider the accessibility of the venue and seating, providing easy access for those with special needs.
- Broadly promote the event to ensure maximum inclusion of all interested parties.

Feedback

- Consider the use of equality monitoring data and feedback to review the event and improve future practice.
- Encourage unanimous feedback through use of such modes like questionnaires to eliminate intimidation and encourage more participation.

Useful Resources[1]

Broad communication

- https://www.iapb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/UN-Compact-Gender-Inclusive-Language-Toolkit.pdf
- https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus?lang=en
- https://www.europarl.europa.eu/trad/etu/pdf/glossary_sensitive_language_2020_en.pdf

Architectural barriers

- https://www.elevatorimagazine.com/en/the-new-praxis-for-the-removal-of-architectural-barriers/
- INTERVIEW: Adapt your event to deaf-blind persons (first part)
- Accessible meetings and events: a toolkit | CBM Global
- https://www.europeanheritagedays.com/sites/default/files/2020-12/Toolkit%20Web%20Version%20%28amended%29.pdf
- https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/aap/documents/UNHCR_AAPTool_PI_Supporting_Participation_of_Persons.pdf

Methodologies and guidelines

- https://www.conferencesthatwork.com/index.php/event-design/2015/02/a-glossary-of-conference-participation-techniques/
- https://www.rsc.org/globalassets/02-about-us/our-strategy/inclusion-diversity/v18_co_member-networks-conference_inclusive-event_a5_4pp_web.pdf
- https://web.whoi.edu/cdi/inclusive-event-guidelines/

Digital accessibility

- https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/digital-accessibility
- https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/Techniques/

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[1] this part will be updated throughout the entire duration of the project as a permanent hub of resources