

ADA 25 for 25

Cultural Access Project

More than 1 in 10 people in Illinois have some kind of disability.

Take the next steps to make arts and culture accessible to everyone.



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ADA 25 Chicago will commemorate and leverage the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act to promote full participation of people with disabilities, as envisioned in this historic legislation. Substantive legacy initiatives in education, employment, technology and community inclusion are in progress to help make Metropolitan Chicago one of the most inclusive regions in the nation. Chicago's arts and culture community can lead the way.

ADA 25 for 25 Cultural Access Project

The City of Chicago, Arts Alliance Illinois, Illinois Arts Council Agency and other partners see the 25th Anniversary of the ADA as an opportunity to encourage our region's cultural organizations to expand access. We seek 25 or more cultural partner organizations who will commit to increase accessible programs and services in 2015, learn about best practices, and announce accessibility plans for the future.

It's not as daunting as it seems

We recognize that initiating or advancing access efforts may seem overwhelming. Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium (CCAC), a professional development volunteer group, and the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) will provide guidance, resources and oversight for this project.

The 25th anniversary of the ADA is the perfect opportunity to make the Chicago region's cultural community the most accessible and accommodating in the nation. Join us!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Web www.ada25chicago.org Facebook /ADA25Chicago Twitter @ADA25Chicago
Engage in the conversation using #ADA25Chicago
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ADA 25 for 25

Partner Commitment Guidelines

Become an ADA 25 for 25 Cultural Access Partner

This project encourages participation and inclusion of all people in the rich and diverse cultural arts of our community – a good fit with cultural organizations’ missions.

We ask all ADA 25 for 25 cultural partners to:

- Designate a point person responsible for expanding accessible programs and participating in ADA 25 for 25.
- Conduct a basic accessibility self-evaluation to assess current status and help determine goals. A self-evaluation survey will be provided.
- Plan and implement at least one increased accessibility program or service for visitors with disabilities (above and beyond your current offerings) to be implemented during 2015 (see examples pp 6-7).
- Develop an outreach plan to reach the appropriate audience for your new program(s) or service(s).
- Participate in training and educational programs featuring best practices in accessibility, and participate in a supportive peer network.
- Share your lessons learned and announce your specific next steps and long-term plans for increased accessibility by the time of the ADA 25 Chicago closing summit in late Fall 2015.

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Partner Support & Benefits

Ongoing Support for ADA 25 for 25 Cultural Access Partners

While this is not a grant-making initiative, ADA 25 for 25 partners will receive:

- Access to trainings, checklists, best practices and workshops, including a workshop on March 26 with Betty Siegel, Director of VSA & Accessibility of the Kennedy Center.
- Networking opportunities with colleagues from other Chicago cultural spaces that are focusing on accessibility issues.
- Within the City of Chicago, support from the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD).
- Within the city and region, support from the Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium (CCAC).

Benefits for ADA 25 for 25 Cultural Access Partners

- Increase your audience diversity, and deepen your organization's impact by welcoming the nation's largest underserved community: people with disabilities.
- Enhance the humanity of your brand, become known for exemplary customer service.
- Retain existing audiences as their needs change.
- Feature your programs and long term plan on your own program partner page at www.ada25chicago.org, including calendar listings.
- Promote your organization's commitment to inclusion through ADA 25 Chicago social media, blog posts and media outreach.
- Invitation to special event for board and executive directors to network and learn together from local and national experts on cultural accessibility.
- Meet city, state and federal legal obligations (including the ADA) for compliance to provide equal access for individuals with disabilities.

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Timeframe

2015 – Select dates

March 25: Submit an ADA 25 for 25 Cultural Access Partner Intent to Participate Form including your designated contact person.

March 26: Attend one or both CCAC training sessions with national and local experts.

8:30am-noon: "Getting Started with Access" with speaker Betty Siegel (Director of VSA & Accessibility, The Kennedy Center), and Jack Catlin FAIA (LCM Architects), Chicago Cultural Center.

1-3pm: "Accessible Seating & Ticketing" with speaker: Betty Siegel (Director of VSA & Accessibility, The Kennedy Center), Chicago Cultural Center.

April 15: CCAC program: Funding for Access, Access Living.

April 25: Submit your program description for at least one expanded access program to be implemented in 2015 (see pp 6-7 for examples).

Early May: CCAC program: Accessible Youth and Family Programs, Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

May 15: Complete a basic accessibility self-evaluation.

July 18: Attend the Disability Pride Parade and participate in the ADA 25 Chicago partners booth to inform the disability community of your accessible programs.

July 26: Commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and mark your calendar for multiple events coming up throughout the anniversary year.

August 5-7: Attend the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) Conference & Training at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington D.C.

Late Fall (Date TBD): Celebrate your success, share lessons learned, and make commitments to future accessibility programs and plans at the ADA 25 Chicago Closing Summit.

Ongoing: attend workshops, receive support from local experts presented by the Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium, Mayors Office for People with Disabilities, Great Lakes ADA Center and other resources.

2016

Continue to build new audiences and retain existing audiences as you implement and continually expand your cultural accessibility plans.

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Program & Service Options

PROGRAM & SERVICE OPTIONS:

Organizations will select one area of accessibility on which to focus their efforts to commit, complete and initiate by the end of the December 2015. Some suggested

If you want assistance in selecting an area to expand your access efforts, please contact: Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium at ChicagoCulturalAccess@gmail.com, or the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (312) 744-7050.

Physical accessibility updates

Renovate and improve physical accessibility of your space to ADA regulations. (Most spaces will benefit, especially those built pre-1990.)

Web accessibility

Ensure online information is accessible to all users. This will include collaboration between your organization's IT department and a recognized web accessibility expert or company, following World Wide Web Consortium WCAG 2.0 (Guidelines can be found at: w3c.org - most cultural spaces will benefit.)

Staff training on disability awareness

Provide funding to hire experts to lead disability awareness trainings specific to your organization for all staff, especially front-line staff, such as box office, front of the house, and information desk staff, making plans to provide ongoing training for new hires and current staff. Develop and document procedures and best practices for the facilitation of accessibility customer service scenarios specific to your organization. (All spaces will benefit.)

Open Captioning at events

Provide open captioning to make your performances, events and programs accessible to visitors who are deaf and hard of hearing. (Performances or lectures will benefit.)

Provide assistive listening system

Purchase and provide a working assistive listening system, and commit to use, advertise and promote that your venue offers this service. Assistive listening systems help visitors with hearing loss access the audio content of a tour or performance. An important aspect of any assistive listening device is signage and promotion, including ensuring there is visible signage about the system and how to request it. Information about the assistive listening device should be made available online and in printed form (e.g., in printed programs, or brochures). (Performances or lectures will benefit.)

Provide ASL Interpretation

Provide a certified sign language interpreter at events or performances, which also requires reaching out to the deaf and hard of hearing communities so people can choose to benefit from this form of access. (Performances or tours will benefit.)

Implement a Deaf tour guide program

Partner with members from the Deaf community, formulate a plan to recruit, train and pay for Deaf educators to lead tours at your institution for those who are deaf and hard of hearing. (Performances or tours will benefit.)

Provide audio description or verbal description at your venue

Contract trained, vetted audio describers to provide audio description in your performance space or verbal description at your museum, OR partner with a respected audio describer and trainer to lead intensive trainings for your staff and create an in-house program. (Performances or tours will benefit.)

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Program & Service Options continued

Initiate programming for people on the autism spectrum

Create a partnership with a respected organization or expert to develop sensory friendly performances or programs. (Most spaces will benefit.)

Work with theatre set designer to implement access in the design

Create an innovative set that permits full integration of accessible services, such as a set place in the set for an open captioning display in design, rather than relying on external displays.

Create Access Advisory Committee

Create an Access Advisory Committee comprised of appropriate staff and members of the disability community. (All cultural spaces will benefit.)

Present a tactile experience for people who are blind or have low vision

Before a performance, allow audience members who are blind or have low vision to touch and interact with important costumes and sets.

Tips for Selecting your Expanded Accessibility Program

- Focusing on one specific area is encouraged.
- The program selected must be propelled during 2015. The area selected may be a brand new initiative or could be an ongoing goal initiated or completed during 2015.
- Discuss what disability group will be the focus and what program or service you will provide.

Example: We want to begin providing audio description at our performances for visitors who are blind or have low vision. Currently we do not have trained staff to provide the service, and we do not have the technology. We intend to purchase the equipment, and would like to train two staff members (the Front of House Manager and Education Coordinator) in audio description. We would promote our efforts, and schedule two performances in the 15/16 season to have this service. This effort would be overseen by the Education Manager.

- This commitment will not simply focus on the presentation of a single, one-time program or service during the ADA25 celebration in 2015, but will be a step toward a longer-term plan.

Or at your exhibit or display, share touch objects (materials, raised line graphics, or the objects themselves) that help the visitors create a mental image. Tactile experiences must always be accompanied with strong, visually descriptive information.

Conduct a full accessibility audit

Performing a thorough accessibility audit is an important step to ensure your organization is as accessible as possible. Bring in an outside consultant or group to assist with your thorough review to assess all aspects of your physical and programmatic offerings, with staff members assigned to work with them. Using the audit as a basis, develop a plan and timeline to improve lacking areas.

... Or create a service or program that is appropriate for your venue!

ADA 25 for 25 Partner Commitment Form

INTENT TO PARTICIPATE:

We want to be an ADA 25 for 25 Cultural Access Partner!

Deadline: March 25, 2015 (Send to Pat Daley, pdaley@cct.org)

Organization Name

Executive Director

Website

Mailing Address

Designated Accessibility Contact

Name

Title

Phone

Email

Director Signature

Date

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Program Description

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION – PLEASE SUBMIT BY APRIL 25

Please answer the following questions in an attached document, and send to Pat Daley (pdaley@cct.org):

- 1.** Provide a description of your organization, including your mission. (This can be your boilerplate wording used for grant applications -- 200 words maximum.)
- 2.** List access programs or services for visitors with disabilities that are currently offered by your organization. A bulleted list is acceptable (400 words maximum).
- 3.** Identify one (or more) **Focus Area(s)** in which you intend to expand your access efforts during 2015 and beyond. Possible suggestions are listed on the **Program & Service Options** page. (400 words maximum per focus area.)
- 4.** Discuss the estimated timeline. A bulleted list is acceptable. (200 words maximum.)
- 5.** Discuss the legacy of this program or service after 2015. How will your program continue beyond 2015? (200 words maximum.)

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Chicago
Cultural
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www.chicagoculturalaccess.weebly.org

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF
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www.cityofchicago.org/dccase



www.equipforequality.org



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www.arts.illinois.gov

MOPD

Mayor's Office for
People with Disabilities

www.cityofchicago.org/disabilities

For further information:

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Chicago Cultural Accessibility
Consortium

chicagoculturalaccess@gmail.com

Lead Sponsor of ADA 25 Chicago

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