

This Could Be a Beginning...



- an orienteering guide for
developing institutional access

**“So, the question is, how
are we going to do this?”**

– TOD member

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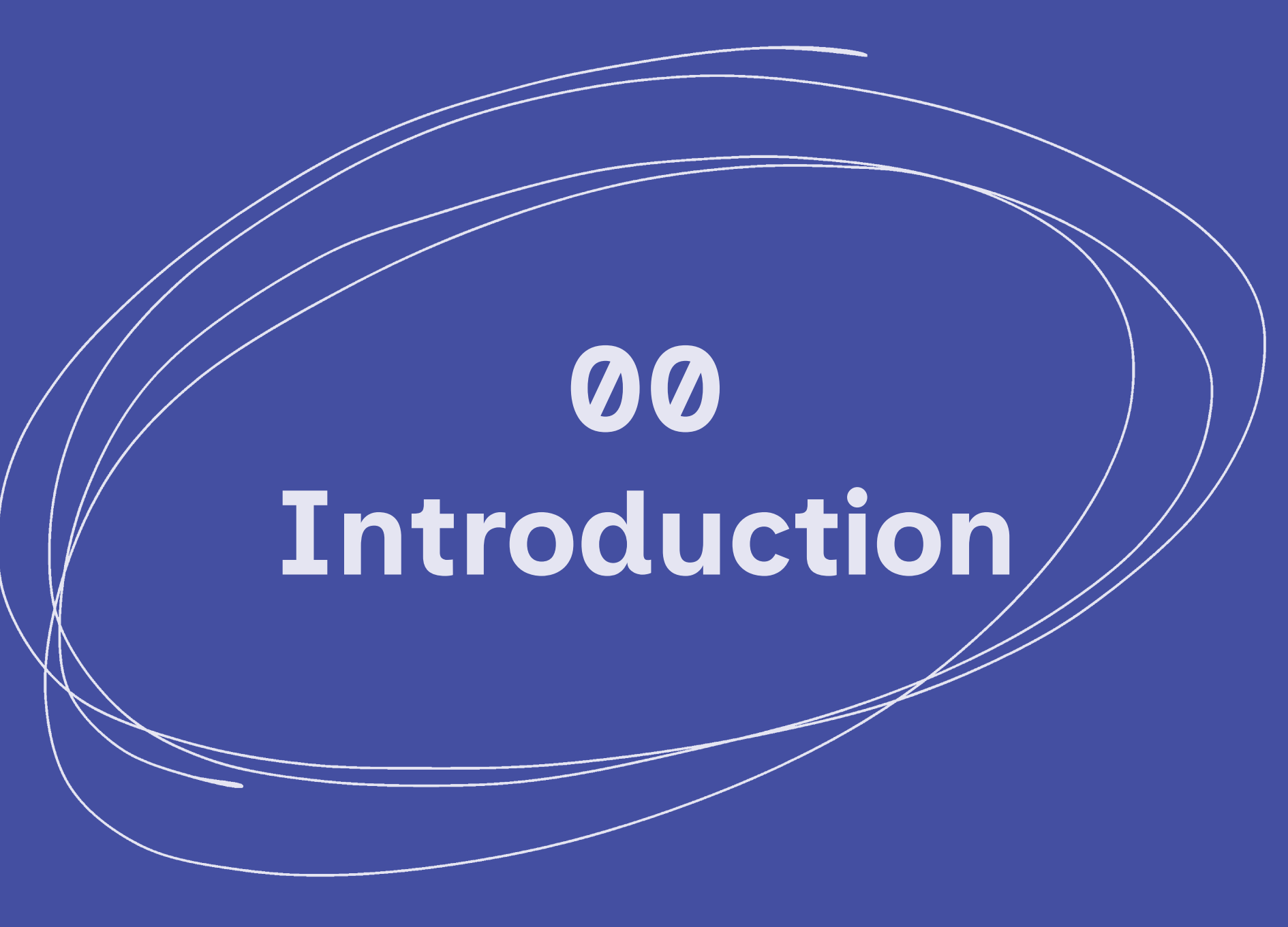
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00

Introduction

Intro to TOD

The project ‘Through Our Dialogue (TOD)’, and the publication you are holding in your hands, have been becoming for a long time. We, the TOD members – a group of young artists and art workers – set out to make a tool, that could support art institutions in developing into more accessible places to both collaborators and audiences with disabilities. This orienteering guide is a result of many hours of questioning, sharing, trusting, failing, arguing, laughing and dreaming together.

Disability works as a way of knowing as well as a position of knowledge. It asks how knowledge is shaped by ableist standards that prioritise certain bodies and minds over others. These standards are reflected in the ways society is organised through power structures and institutional practices. From this perspective, disability becomes a critical lens for questioning, expanding, and reimagining what we understand as knowledge. It offers a way of approaching, interpreting, and reshaping the world towards more sustainable futures for both disabled people and those who are not yet disabled.

The tool we have designed, as both a physical publication and a digital resource, responds to different moments of capacity, need, and preference. They move between languages, styles, and formats, balancing open-ended exploration with attempts at definition. Throughout the process, we have aimed to approach our content with generosity while also making the tool itself accessible. We have made space for complexity, welcoming contradictions and different ways of engaging, and allowing multiple truths to exist alongside one another.

The pages are collages of quotes, conversations, essays, lists, art works, among others, that together hold many access points. We have prioritised writing in short text formats that offers clarifying text with summarised key points alongside softer, more extended texts. Most of our writing follows the different combinations of guidelines in our plain language guide, which you can find in this publication.

Our tool is co-written by the many voices of TOD, with the intention of offering different reading routes through the publication and encouraging non-linear reading. We invite readers to jump between chapters, pair different parts with each other, and connect to an intuitive way of navigating. ‘This Could be a Beginning’ is an incomplete,

imperfect, relational, adoptable and adaptable orienteering guide to support your next steps in becoming a more accessible art institution. We have made it in the friction and intimacy of being different together, rather than striving for an agreement on something absolute. It is an insistence on the process of building more accessible spaces, and the process itself as an ethic, an “aliveness” of being together otherwise.

Happy reading...

Why Am I Part of TOD?

“I wanted to have conversations with other disabled that we could then bring to the people who create the art spaces we often want to be part of, but instead feel alienated from.”

”Let me first tell you how difficult it is for me to talk openly about this question. Here I am, trying to discuss something I so often try to hide or neglect in my professional life. You see, my job as a freelance cultural worker is largely based on making things work. Not complaining. Not being difficult. Not asking for additional resources in an already struggling system. Just make it work. The difficulty arises when your body decides not to work with you. This was the starting point for me joining TOD. After many years of my body becoming an increasingly uncooperative colleague, I became convinced that something was wrong with the way institutions view disabilities. I came from a place of feeling alone, but also suspecting I wasn’t. And so, after bending, reaching, and

squeezing myself into disabling conditions, I felt something needed to change. For me, TOD was the beginning of something else...”

“I am part of TOD because I wish to contribute to a broader understanding of and deeper empathy with people with diverse physical and cognitive abilities, resources and needs. And our coping, when it comes to levels of accessibility in artworks and art institutions, as well as in life. In my perspective, art institutions in DK and worldwide, are in their infant-/pre-blooming phase of the vast potential for inspiration, inclusivity and common, future diverse equality. I wish to help push, birth, investigate and activate this potential and root it into curiosity and everyday changes. I want other disabled artists and those with artistic dreams to see themselves and not have to jump through a million extra hoops that are in our way because of the industry’s ignorance and systematic oppression.”

“Because when disabled people come together to think, magic happens.”

“I wanted to learn from others’ dreams and experiences, share knowledge generated from a disabled perspective, and develop strategies for

addressing the ableism of inaccessible art institutions, within a broader framework (as a kind of a background for my thinking) of a rooted planetary dependency.”

“I’m part of TOD because my own experience of developing and working with an Access Rider has shown me how important it is to make access needs visible and negotiable within cultural institutions. I’m interested in taking this experience further: developing practical tools that go beyond individual access and can be shared, adapted and used by other artists. For me, TOD is a way of turning personal access knowledge into collective knowledge and practice.”

“The importance of making people who have trouble stating their needs to institutions and society has become more important to me after I was diagnosed with schizophrenia myself. It became apparent to me that while my diagnosis didn’t affect me a lot personally in society, it does affect most people with the diagnosis. It’s hard enough to stand up to people with authority as a non-disabled person. Therefore, I wanted to make a change and make art institutions more accommodating.”

“For me, accessibility is about both the people who create art and those who encounter it. Whether it is in a library or a museum, we have a collective responsibility as soon as we receive funding to make the experience accessible.

Accessibility begins by creating good working conditions from within by creating an environment where we dare to take on challenges and enter into collaborations across different areas of knowledge and experience. From there we can together strive to create the best possible conditions.

Artworks can contain a utopia and a creative vision. In the same way, creating accessibility is a creative task, where necessity can become an opportunity to benefit as many people as possible.

TOD has given me an expanded network and strengthened my belief that we are moving in the right direction.”

–TOD members

Wording and Translation

Language in contemporary accessibility work is in constant development. This fact can derail actual encounters where understanding is fostered. For this reason, we find it relevant to strengthen the culture of being curious and asking questions. A culture that might heal the tendency to walk on eggshells with each other.

This tool has been developed by a group primarily exchanging in English, making the project and process as open and fluent to as many as possible, also counting the reader. The group has been discussing issues related to translation between languages and in that process found it essential to settle on some terms that we have chosen to use in this specific tool. We are aware that this choice narrows down a vast field of wording and intentions, but it is done with the ambition of leaving the reader with clarity on and empathy for everyday use of words: Meaning that our wording should not always be fully correct nor

academic, but it should make everyone feel safe and curious to learn more.

We are using the term disabled/disability throughout the tool with the awareness that more nuanced wording is predominant in multiple other contexts. We are doing this to ensure inclusivity to the largest degree possible in these early stages of contemporary accessibility work.

Everyday Reality, Barriers, and Structures for Disabled People

Conversations about disability and access in arts and culture often begin with questions of representation, inclusion, or accessibility. While these matters are essential, they cannot be separated from the conditions that shape disabled people's lives. Access to cultural spaces

is inseparable from access to housing, income, healthcare, personal assistance, mobility, and the right to live a safe and fulfilling life in both private and public. Across the Nordic countries, disabled people continue to experience structural barriers that limit not only participation in the arts but participation in society itself.

The following reflections insist that disability justice must extend beyond art institutions and address the political, economic, and social systems that determine whose lives are supported and whose are made precarious:

“I think we need to address the structures that deny people with disabilities, what is considered, basic living needs. These are embodied in structural racism, the cash benefit reform, the right to have savings, cuts to early retirement (especially for young people), and the debate about assisted suicide for the disabled. These are things that are important for us to include as they reflect a lived reality for crips right now.

Most people with disabilities currently live in such miserable conditions that even basic needs are not met. If you don't have, for example, money for food, someone to help you get to the toilet or are so mentally ill that you can't go outside, it

doesn't help much that art is accessible when it comes to creating a space for the disabled in arts and culture."

–TOD member

"As a visually impaired person living in Sweden, it is almost impossible to get the right to have assistance. This makes it harder to do anything spontaneously or plan your everyday life. How to go somewhere if you haven't memorised the route and have been there multiple times before. If construction is happening on the memorised route or someone has parked their bicycle where it shouldn't, anxiety and disorientation kicks in. Everything being digitalised and not having real life contact with customer service also stops a lot of people from being able to, for example, buy tickets for cultural events etc."

–TOD member

"When attempting to respond and add a perspective, I find I can only think and write from a position of overwhelm."

I too don't think of access to arts as neutral, nor all kinds of inclusion in the arts as inherently good. For one thing, it doesn't always help, but

beyond that, what appears as access is often weaponised against disabled people in ways that blocks our/their possibility of being an equal citizen with equal mobility in the world.

When artistic practice operates within and alongside disabling structures, it likes to present itself as a care practice. An example of this would be someone who initiates a social project within the sphere of the psychiatric system and bureaucratic system of a municipality without any wishes of changing these. This may offer an activity, a place to be, and a group to socialise with. This may be a genuine attempt to help. But without consideration of the broader social structure and political ideology behind this, this practice becomes a management method, which essentially blocks access. Art becomes one more secluded, metaphorically fenced, arena where disabled people are allowed to be.

And I'm not the first person who wants to be everywhere, and for disabled people to be everywhere in the world.

–TOD member

Who is Not Here?

We are a group of young disabled artists and art workers who have created this tool. The processes behind its making reflect our multiple perspectives, shaped by our lived experiences, including the problems of how disabled people are represented within the cultural fields and in wider society. These problems involve both misrepresentation and absence, especially when it comes to intersectional representation of disability. The barriers that racialized, elderly, migrant, queer, transgender, and economically disadvantaged people face are further disabling and othering.

Within our presence, our identities, there are voids of representation too. This void requires a consistent continuation of providing the opportunities for disabled people to let themselves be known on their/our own terms and ownership of knowledge and meaning making.

Firstly, because no singular person can represent a full picture of specific disability/s or identity/s. There is no ticking of a box possible, alongside no desire for fixed categories.

Secondly, we always run out of time. Even in slow formats, we run out of time, because there is too much to say when we finally have the space to speak. And sometimes, we are not ready to say everything that we want to say. And sometimes, we need time to discover what we want and how we want to speak about it.

Speaking and being heard, it is a confrontation with incompleteness. So, within our presence, within our possibilities, the question becomes: How do we negotiate and nourish our conditions for keeping trying? This work is never fully done.

We find it important to be transparent about the voices, that we do not personally represent. Any tool made by a group of people with disabilities will be necessarily limited by the perspectives, that we inevitably do not share, since no one is

able to gather all groups of disabled people in a single project and that even two people belonging to the same group, can have very varying access needs. Here are some of the categories, that we do not have personally represented in the TOD group:

- d/Deaf people
- Non-speaking people who are dependent on speech-supporting and generating technologies
- People with speech impediments and impairments
- People with Tourette syndrome, vocal and motor tics
- Little people/People with dwarfism
- People with limb differences
- People with Down syndrome
- People with higher cognitive support needs
- People who are in bed, who can not leave their home or hospital room
- People who are terminally ill
- Undiagnosed, not-yet diagnosed, and self-diagnosed people
- People who have no access to healthcare



The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this background are several thin, white, hand-drawn style lines. These lines are abstract, looping, and swirling, creating a sense of movement and flow. They are scattered across the frame, with some lines forming loops around the central text.

01

Understanding Accessibility

Access and Power

Who is Considered Disabled?

Invisible or hidden disabilities refer to disabilities and illnesses that are not obviously apparent, like let us say the way a wheelchair user or someone with a limb difference might be. Many disabilities are hidden disabilities. Think of neurodivergence; how do you know when someone is dyspraxic or autistic, or illnesses like fibromyalgia or lupus disease? How do we know if someone has a temporary disabling condition like healing after an operation or severe infection?

When planning and executing access measures we must “think beyond the wheelchair.” A venue which has a ramp and a wheelchair-accessible toilet is not magically “100% accessible.”

Let us consider the different layers and scopes of disability to ensure that we include those disabled groups who are often excluded from calling themselves disabled. And let us include those who are not yet disabled, as American disability rights activist Judith Heumann referred to non-disabled people, so they can start developing a sense of disability and access before they join us.

What to Remember:

Disability is Not Always Visible

Many disabled people have hidden, fluctuating, or temporary conditions, making it essential to think beyond visible impairments.

Accessibility Goes Beyond Physical Access

Ramps and accessible toilets are important, but true inclusion requires addressing a wide range of sensory, cognitive, communication, and health-related access needs.

Design for Everyone Before Barriers Arise

Embedding accessibility from the outset benefits disabled people now and supports those who may become disabled or experience changing access needs in the future.

I Am Disabled

I'm disabled, I think to myself.

No.

It doesn't quite fit me.

Why would I, a person who isn't visibly disabled be able to call myself disabled.

Why should I even consider labelling myself?

Why would I want to label myself disabled?

Do I want to be disabled?

Wouldn't I want to be me
without my disability?
Why can't I just be non-disabled?
Am I disabled?

Yes.

I am disabled.

–Personal contribution by TOD member

The Idea of the Universal

Reflective Questions:

- What do we mean when we say universal?
- What is the universal referring to?
- How do we feel when we encounter the word?

“What is the universal? I’m having a hard time connecting it with everything that my body feels, which doesn’t fit into universal narratives. It’s as if there is a separating wall that blocks the entrance into the everything.”

–TOD member

“...I will disappear before having found a convincing answer to this question: what’s the Absolute? At the end we ended up deciding that the Absolute is a misnomer. We fell into facts, such as the fact of being hungry, the fact that the atom bomb is being constantly improved...to put it simply, we’re suffocating”

–Etel Adnan, ‘Shifting the Silence’, 2022

“The important thing to ask ourselves is; what

kind of question is this concept able to help us ask? How does it further or hinder the inclusion and liberation of disabled people? Does it help shift ableist attitudes in design?”

–TOD member

Universal Design (and its Critique)

Universal design is an approach to creating environments, products, and services that can be used by as many people as possible, regardless of age, disability, or background. Developed by architect and wheelchair user Ronald Mace in the 1980s, it aimed to remove barriers that prevented disabled people from participating fully in society. Mace’s seven principles of universal design, later expanded by architects Edward Steinfeld and Jordana Maisel, have had a major influence on how we think about accessibility, inclusion, and designing for human diversity.

At the same time, many disability scholars and activists have criticised universal design for presenting accessibility as a technical design problem rather than a political one. Designing for

“everyone” can erase the reality that disabled people have different, and sometimes conflicting, access needs, while leaving the systems that produce exclusion untouched. A ramp, accessible website, or inclusive programme means little if people lack adequate income, personal assistance, housing, healthcare or has no citizenship or freedom to move outside of the refugee system. Without challenging these wider social and political conditions, universal design risks becoming a way of managing exclusion rather than transforming it.

What to Remember:

Universal Design Promotes Inclusion

It aims to create environments, products, and services that are accessible and usable by the widest possible range of people.

Accessibility is Also Political

Removing physical or digital barriers alone is not enough if the wider systems that produce exclusion remain unchanged.

One Solution Does Not Fit All

Disabled people have diverse and sometimes conflicting access needs, requiring ongoing di-

alogue, flexibility, and shared decision-making rather than universal solutions.

Who is in Charge?

Recognising that every institution is shaped by hierarchies is often the first step towards trying to change institutional power. Decisions about funding, programming, partnerships, hiring, access, and whose knowledge is valued are never neutral. They often reflect wider systems of power that exclude disabled people and other marginalised communities, even when inclusion is part of an institution’s stated values, policies, or public programmes.

Becoming aware of these structures means asking difficult questions about who is invited in, who is expected to adapt, who makes decisions, and who is missing altogether. It also requires recognising how established ways of working can unintentionally reinforce exclusion. By examining their own practices with openness, reflection, and accountability, institutions can begin to

shift from offering access as an afterthought to sharing power more meaningfully. This creates more equitable ways of working, strengthens collaboration, broadens participation, and supports environments where a wider range of people, experiences, and forms of knowledge can genuinely shape institutional practice.

Going into fight mode. A stereotypical middle-aged, non-disabled, white cis man. Even in flat organizations, feeling a hierarchy. Being outside of the norm in a group and not being treated in the same way, even when they say you are. Actions not matching words or promises. Immigrants and disabled people have to change themselves just to get in the door.

–TOD member

What is the problem? Making hierarchies explicit. The less you think hierarchies are present, the more likely are exclusions, despite ideas like “family”, “horizontal”, etc.

–TOD member

What to Remember:

Recognise Institutional Power

Hierarchies influence decisions about funding,

programming, hiring, and access, shaping who is included and whose knowledge is valued.

Reflect on Exclusion

Meaningful change begins by questioning who participates, who makes decisions, who is expected to adapt, and who remains excluded.

Share Power, Not Just Access

Sustainable inclusion requires embedding equity, accountability, and shared decision-making into everyday institutional practice, rather than treating access as an afterthought.

Questions for Mapping Institutional Hierarchies

Here you will find a list of questions, that can be used to map institutional hierarchies. If you believe that you do not have any hierarchies at your art institution, it might be a good indicator that you could be dealing with quite a lot:

Structure and Decision-Making

–Who makes decisions, and about what?

–How are decisions communicated across

the institution?

- Who can approve exceptions, accommodations, or changes?

Roles and Responsibilities

- What are the key roles and responsibilities within the institution?

- Who is responsible for accessibility, care, and inclusion?

- Who is accountable when commitments are not fulfilled?

Resources and Access

- Who controls budgets and resources?

- How are accessibility-related resources allocated?

- Who can request additional support when needs arise?

Communication and Accountability

- How can concerns, feedback, or access needs be raised?

- How are issues addressed and followed up on?

- What mechanisms exist for accountability?

Informal Power

- Who influences decisions beyond their formal role?

- Whose voices are heard, and whose are overlooked?

- Who acts as gatekeepers to information, resources, or opportunities?

Accessibility and Inclusion

- When and how are accessibility considerations integrated into planning?

- Who is involved in shaping accessibility policies and practices?

- How does the institution ensure that representation leads to meaningful influence?

Change and Adaptation

- Who can propose changes?

- How are barriers identified and addressed?

- What enables or prevents institutional change?

Processed

Anna Walther & Anne Thomassen in Conversation

Anne: In 'Processed' (2024), you have taken art-theoretical texts and rolled them into small paper balls. What was your intention behind this action?

Anna: For me, the work is about my relationship to the texts and theories that surround the art world. I often experience art-theoretical language as being granted a particular authority, while at the same time it can feel inaccessible and alienating. By rolling the texts into balls, I process them physically rather than intellectually. It is both a gesture of resistance and an attempt to make them my own. The texts become objects that I can engage with on my own terms.

The work also expresses a grief over not being able to access academic texts about art and text-based art. There is a deep sense of loss in feeling unable to fully participate in such a significant part of the art world and its broader landscape.

I wish, for example, that this knowledge could coexist in shorter, more accessible, easy-read formats. I feel alienated from theories that could deepen my knowledge and help me feel more confident participating in conversations and debates.

I also feel distanced from the practices of my colleagues and from art that relies heavily on text. There is a particular grief in feeling that my intellectual limitations restrict my ability to develop as an artist and to make better, more informed work.

Anne: Could you elaborate on how the work relates to questions of institutional accessibility?

Anna: The work stems from my own experiences of encountering barriers within and around academic institutions. Access to knowledge is not only a matter of interest, but also of time, mobility, finances, and familiarity with certain cultural codes. I have been interested in how some forms of knowledge appear open and universal, yet in practice can be difficult to access. The crumpled texts reflect that ambivalence: the desire to approach theory alongside the experience of feeling distant from it.

Anne: What does Processed investigate in the relationship between art theory, the art academy, and your own artistic practice?

Anna: I am interested in the tension between the institutional expectations of how art should be understood and communicated, and the experiences that I myself bring into my practice. My works do not necessarily emerge from a theoretical model, but through materials, actions, and personal experiences. In Processed, I explore what happens when art theory encounters these other forms of knowledge. The work is not a rejection of theory, but an attempt to negotiate its place within my own artistic process and to question which voices and forms of understanding are granted authority in the art world.

– Personal contribution by Anna Walther



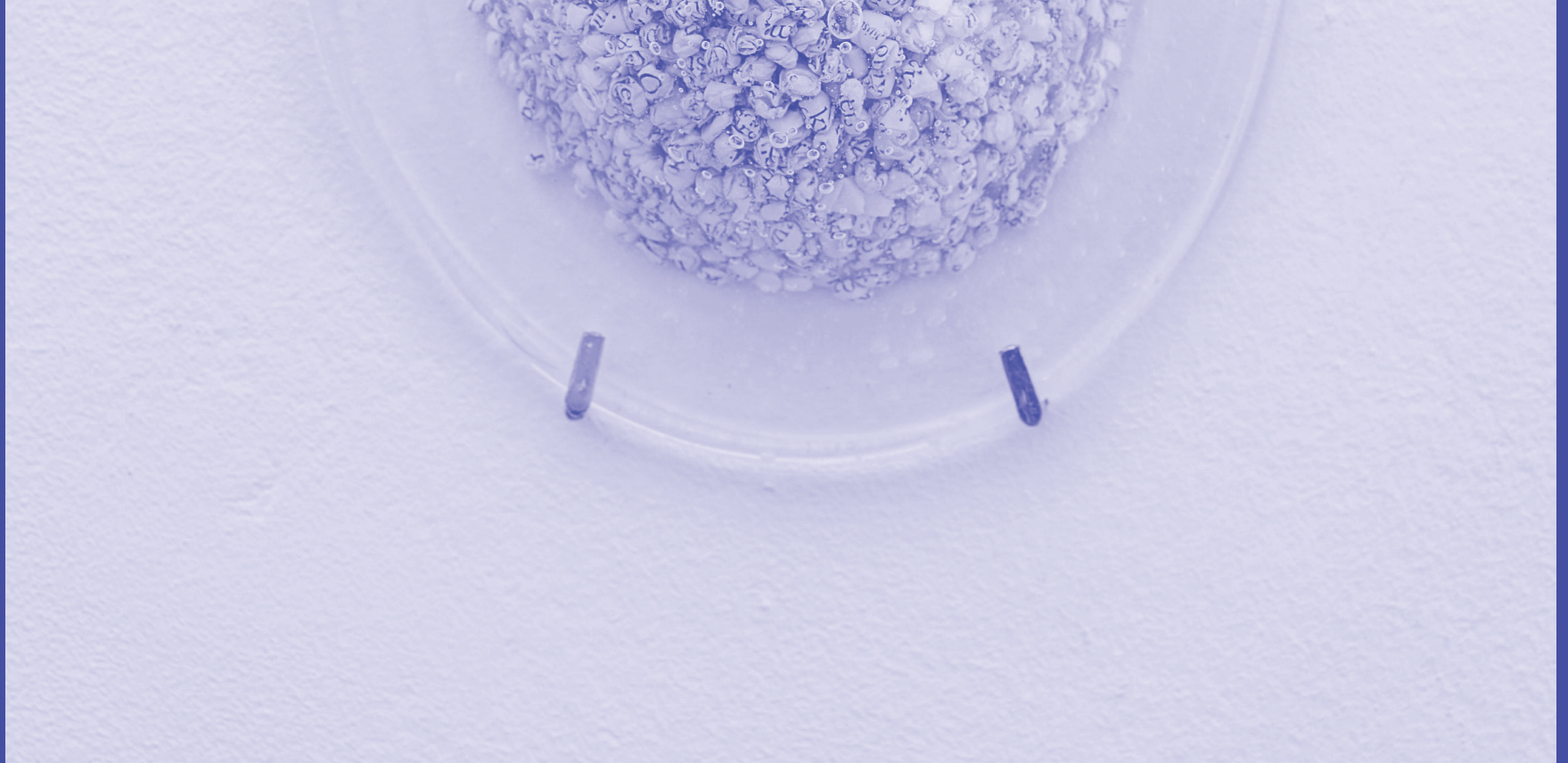


Image description: The image shows a photograph of the sculpture 'Processed'. It is a transparent circular dish mounted on a white wall. Inside the dish, there is a pile of small, white, granular or pebble-like objects made of printed paper. The print suggests that the material is densely filled with writing, but the text is unreadable to the viewer of the sculpture.

Access in Practice

Theory vs Practice

Most people who have encountered change work in practice, or initiated it, know that the challenges lie in the implementation. It is often easier to identify problems, discuss ideas, and develop conceptual frameworks than to translate those insights into lasting changes in everyday practice.

The movement from theory to practice requires more than engaging with an area as a theme or adopting a new vocabulary. It asks us to examine how ideas are reflected in the structures, habits, and decision-making processes that shape our organisations. It means allowing these issues to affect how we work, collaborate, distribute resources, and create access.

This transition is rarely straightforward. Change often unfolds through many small adjustments, negotiations, and experiments rather than a single transformative gesture. Going from theory to practice requires a willingness to engage with

uncertainty, question established ways of working, and recognise that learning is ongoing. The question is not only what we know or believe, but how that knowledge is embodied in practice.

Reflective Questions:

- How can we work our way from theory to practice?
- How do we remain attentive to the gap between what we say and what we do?
- How do we create conditions where ideas can move beyond statements of intent and become part of the lived reality of an institution?
- How are our values enacted in the world?
- Which part of ourselves are we making this decision with?

What to Remember:

Theory in Practice

Lasting change depends on embedding ideas into everyday structures, decision-making, and ways of working.

Change is Gradual

Meaningful transformation usually happens through small adjustments and continuous negotiation rather than a single breakthrough.

Practice Creates Knowledge

Applying theory is an ongoing learning process where knowledge is continually tested, challenged, and reshaped through action.

Support Structures

Adequate disability support rarely comes in a one-size-fits-all format. Instead, people need different kinds of support at different times in their lives, depending on their circumstances, environments, and individual access needs. When thoughtful, flexible, and well-developed structures are in place, disabled people have greater freedom to participate in work, education, relationships, community life, and culture on their own terms.

Art institutions can play an important role in contributing to this change. They can support disability justice by treating access as an ongoing shared responsibility, working closely with disabled communities, and paying disabled artists and art workers fairly. They can also use their influence and power to challenge the social,

economic, and political conditions that continue to exclude and marginalise disabled people, while creating more equitable and sustainable spaces for participation.

Support structures exist in a variety of ways and scales, many of which are explored throughout this tool. They should be seen as different ingredients or elements that evolve continuously.

“Everything that is perceived is pre-structured by the body’s structure before we become aware of it. If the body’s structure determines structure of perception, then we must not imagine the ideal body, but rather consider the body in its individual reality.”

– Lilian Korner, ‘Aesthetics of Blind Tactile Sensations’, 2024

What to Remember:

Support Must Be Flexible

Disabled people have diverse and changing access needs that require adaptable structures.

Access is shared

Institutions can advance disability justice through collaboration, fair practice, and ongoing commitment.

Institutions can create change

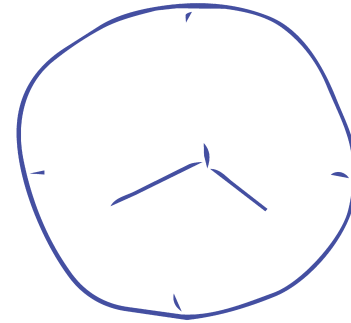
Art organisations can challenge exclusion and build more equitable spaces for participation.

Crip Time

Crip time is a concept that grew out of disability communities. It changes how we think about time in relation to disability. On a practical level, it recognises that disabled people often need more time. To get somewhere. To complete a task. This can be because of speed, reliance on others, equipment, or ableist barriers in the built environment. It is running late. But crip time means more than giving or assuming the need for extra time.

Crip time is a reorientation of time itself. It means designing events, conversations, and expectations around the fact that people move, arrive, and process language differently, instead of trying to make disabled people fit into standard ways of doing these things.

The lived experience of crip time is also a knowledge making position. Because knowledge itself is time-based. Crip time positions disability not as a topic to be explained by other fields, but a source of its own logic, theory, and insight.



“...rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds.”

–Alison Kafer, ‘Feminist, Queer, Crip’, 2013

What to Remember:

Crip Time Rethinks Time

It recognises that disabled people may experience, move through, and use time differently, challenging standards of speed and productivity.

Design Around Different Rhythms

Inclusive practice means creating flexible schedules, events, and communication that adapt to diverse ways of moving, arriving, and processing information.

Disability Generates Knowledge

Crip time is not only an accommodation but a different way of understanding the world, positioning disability as a source of insight, theory, and new ways of organising practice.

10 Practical Ideas for Designing Meetings in Crip Time

- 1) Share the programme and any reading material in advance. Assume preparation time.
- 2) Ask participants of their access needs in advance.
- 3) On the day, check in with participants. Maybe

some access needs have changed.

- 4) Plan breaks. Additionally, communicate clearly that people can have breaks at any time according to their needs. Provide quiet space for people to have a break.
- 5) Design the session by building in more time than you think you need.
- 6) Begin and end on time. If extra time is needed, acknowledge that you are running overtime and give people the possibility of exiting the meeting. Alternatively, plan an extra meeting for the extra time that is needed.
- 7) Allow people to contribute in different ways. For instance, speaking, writing, and drawing. Allow different forms of structuring argumentation. Allow silence. Acknowledge that someone's silence can be passing time or a valid point in itself.
- 8) Use a facilitator who can manage holding space and speed of the discussion, invite people to share their perspectives and be reached before and after meetings for clarification of things.

9) Have a slow approach. Allow the discussion to span over several meetings. Do not rush to a goal or conclusion. Allow it to unfold organically over time.

10) Provide a summary of each meeting. Communicate any significant changes clearly.

Access Intimacy and its Pleasure

Access intimacy is a closeness where someone understands and responds to another person's access needs, especially around disability, without making it awkward or burdensome. Writer and educator Mia Mingus, who formulated the term, describes it as a feeling of ease and safety, where your body and mind can relax because your needs are met and respected. It is different from receiving basic help or charity, which can feel obligatory or dehumanizing. It is mutual and built on trust, and it is often strongest among people who share similar lived experiences of disability and impact of ableism.

“It is a freeing, light, loving feeling” as Mingus

describes it and connects it to a form of pleasure. There is a kind of pleasure in institutional access, too. That is the pleasure of being accepted and legitimized by power. But it comes at a cost. Change is imposed on you by the pressure of adaptation to institutional hierarchies. It is a pleasure that can come from getting your needs partly met, but it does not create access intimacy.

Like many other types of intimacy, access intimacy is a foundational framework for building genuine relationships. It is not limited to happen between and to disabled people alone.

“I don't just want technical and logistical access. I don't just want inclusion, I want liberatory access and access intimacy.”

– Mia Mingus, ‘Disability Justice, is Simply Another Term for Love’, 2018

What to Remember:

Access Intimacy is Built on Trust

It describes relationships where access needs are recognised and supported without discomfort, burden, or judgement.

Access Goes Beyond Accommodation

Meeting practical needs is important, but true access involves belonging, care, mutuality, and the freedom to be fully recognised.

Liberatory Access Transforms Relationships

Access intimacy challenges institutional approaches that only provide partial inclusion and instead creates possibilities for deeper connection, dignity, and shared responsibility.



Principles of Communication

Access Through Communication

Communication plays a big role in making the world more accessible. It helps ensure that everyone, no matter their abilities, can access information and take part in opportunities. When we communicate clearly and inclusively, it is easier to spot barriers, understand different needs, and create solutions that allow everyone to participate. It also helps raise awareness about accessibility and encourages empathy, understanding, and inclusion. By listening to one another, sharing ideas, and providing information in accessible ways, we can create spaces where everyone feels welcome, can contribute with confidence, and fully enjoy cultural life.

“...because there has never been a room to accommodate that. So the language is not developed. So every time someone asks what I need or how it could be better, it’s like I didn’t even have a starting point because no institution has ever made me develop that language. But my word is accommodation.”

–TOD member

What to Remember:

Communication Enables Access

Clear and inclusive communication helps identify barriers and support participation.

Listening Creates Understanding

Sharing experiences and recognising different needs builds empathy and more inclusive spaces.

Accessible Language Supports Inclusion

Developing ways to express access needs helps everyone contribute and engage with confidence.

Plain Language

Plain language is clear, simple writing that is easy to understand. It is aimed at level A2. This means it works well for people who find reading difficult,

people who are learning a language, and anyone who is new to a topic. Plain language is also useful for a much wider audience. Most people are not specialists. When institutions and museums write about complex topics, plain language helps everyone understand the content.

Plain language is different from Easy Language. Easy Language follows stricter rules and is aimed at level A16. It is designed for people with learning disabilities. Texts in Easy Language must be reviewed by people with learning disabilities before they are published.

What to Remember:

Plain Language Improves Understanding

Clear and simple writing makes information more accessible for wider audiences, including people who are new to a topic.

Different Access Needs Require Different Approaches

Plain language and Easy Language serve different purposes, with Easy Language following specific guidelines for people with learning disabilities.

10 Principles of Plain Language

These 10 principles bring together guidelines from four sources: National Archives Washington (NARA), the EU accessibility guidelines, Oxford's neuroinclusive guide, and The Autistic Self Advocacy Network's (ASAN) Easy Read framework.

This list, the 10 principles, is not a checklist to necessarily follow in full. They work in combinations. Applying just some of them can already improve the readability of a text:

- 1) Write for your reader, not yourself
- 2) Lead with what matters most. State your main point first, then add supporting detail. Readers should not have to read to the end to understand the point.
- 3) Keep sentences short. 15–20 words per sentence. If a sentence needs a comma, consider splitting it into two.

4) One topic per paragraph. Keep paragraphs 100 words or 3 – 5 sentences maximum, each devoted to a single topic. One idea per sentence.

5) Use everyday words. Choose the simpler word whenever possible. Define any technical terms. If you have many, add a glossary.

Examples:

“laborious” could be rephrased to “hard”

“liminal” could be rephrased to “in between”

6) Use active voice. Make clear who is doing what. Active voices are shorter, more direct, and easier to follow. Use passive voice only when the actor is genuinely unknown or irrelevant.

7) Cut what does not add meaning. Remove filler words, repetitive phrases (when not necessary for understanding), and anything the reader does not need to act. Every word should earn its place. Leave out abbreviations or spell them out on first use.

8) Use lists and structure. Turn long sentences with multiple items into bulleted lists. Use tables to simplify complex comparisons. Use digits for numbers, not words. Structure aids scanning.

9) Be consistent. Repeat key terms and ideas throughout the document. Use the same word for the same concept each time. Avoid swapping synonyms to avoid repetition for the sake of verbal elegance; it confuses some readers.

10) Test readability. Ideally, have someone from your target audience read it. If they struggle, revise. Or check readability with a tool (Hemingway or Readable).

Sensing, Bending, Failing Language

Sense-Making in Crip Time

Sense-making, making sense of the world, in crip time means imagining that process outside straight, linear timelines and the kind of thinking tied to them. Just as crip time bends the clock, it also bends how we reason, letting knowledge unfold outside capitalist standards of progress,

productivity, usefulness, and speed.

Sense-making in crip time is a practice of welcoming reasoning to unfold across different timelines and futures. Knowledge is allowed to take different shapes, supported by different kinds of arguments.

It can look like conversations full of silences, or moments of intensity where too much is shared in too little time. It can look like an unfinished thought, or a fragment of one. Connections between ideas happen outside any planned schedule or expectation of arrival to a certain conclusion.

Sensing Meaning

“...there has to be something non-verbal. Relying only on language is impossible for me because my structure of thought does not come in one line. I would like to advocate for this, because, for instance, you can be thinking in images...or seeing with your hands, or like thinking with your whole body. And how art and culture in general affect your body, transforming it into a political subjectivity.”

-TOD member

Meaning is made through embodied difference. It welcomes the lived experience of the

environment where meaning is made, together with all the senses your body involves in sensing it. The phrase “making sense” becomes, in this way, quite literal, rather than referring to a form of clarity, rationality, or socially established logic. Making sense becomes a process of sensing meaning and granting the senses authority in meaning-making.

Deep Listening

Deep Listening, a practice introduced by American composer Pauline Oliveros, refers to a form of active listening that goes beneath the surface of sound. At its core, Deep Listening means listening in as many ways as possible to everything that can be heard, all the time. It explores the relationships between all sounds – natural or technological, intended or unintended, real, remembered, or imagined – including thought itself.

This includes language and its sound qualities, such as its rhythms, hesitations, silences, intonations, different grammars with more, as well as the environmental and atmospheric context sound exists within.

Listening changes both what is heard and the listener; Oliveros calls this the “listening effect.” Two balanced modes, focal (detail) and global (expansion), create connections with everything. Listening shapes culture, locally and universally, through directing attention, gathering meaning, interpreting, and deciding on action.

It can be applied as a method, a way to approach speech and communication that does not follow standard patterns or expressions as meaningful, as an equally valid form of knowledge. By honouring both focal and global attention as equally valid modes, it reframes different attention styles, including neurodivergent ones, as a way of being in the world otherwise rather than deficiency.

Welcomeability

In one of the dialogue meetings, “welcomeability” entered our vocabulary. It is a word meant to open the possibility of welcoming someone into our reality as disabled people. It carries the capacity to share knowledge and experience with someone, an institution for instance, who does not yet know enough to accommodate you.

“...for example “welcomeability”. We could make up a new word for what we mean. It’s just a small thing that I always wanted to do. I love that we can make our own words. Do you feel like the tool will be speaking to disabled people or are we trying to communicate to non-disabled people? Which one do you feel like? But wasn’t it a tool for institutions? That was how I understood it.

It would also be inclusive for disabled people carrying this out in institutions. By doing this for the institutions, we are also accommodating them to understand us.”

–TOD member

“When existing language doesn’t fit, or doesn’t exist, for what you mean, it opens space to invent new words. This practice of inventing language raises questions like: who is the text actually speaking to?”

–TOD member

Welcomeability asks for mutuality by making a temporary room for building familiarity with different forms of accommodation. It can be approached as a translation process between different ideas of needs. Its goal is future-oriented: to create the possibility for more disabled people

to enter cultural institutions. And entering a space as a disabled person means as much to enter language, producing new words, grammars, and understandings.

Carrying Wobbly Argumentation

“Science fiction writer Ursula Le Guin thought of books as carrier bags or containers; humanity’s first tools being the back, the sack, the net, something to hold it all together, rather than weapons of domination with spear like narratives. Carrier-bag books are full ‘full of beginnings without end’, holding initiations and losses, transformations and translations, containing ‘far more tricks’ than conflicts, far fewer triumphs than snares and delusions”

–Alice Hatrick, ‘Ill Feelings’, 2022

Argumentation is the process of forming reasons, drawing conclusions from them, and applying those conclusions to the matter at hand. It uses rhetoric to challenge, and potentially change, an opposing view.

Wobbly arguments differ. It does not always follow a standard model and when it does, it welcomes the model’s collapse. Its goal is not to win a debate, but to hold many realities at once,

while asking for different kinds of support for these realities. Not a spear aimed at victory, but a vessel built to carry contradiction: fragments, sensations, incoherency, “full of beginnings without end”. The term ‘wobbly arguments’ is inspired by visual artist Karin Kyto to use “wobbly” to describe this form of argumentation. She uses “wobbliness” as conceptual and sculptural tool in her artistic practice. Kyto’s application of wobbliness to sculptures makes them appear as vessels of narrative that are about to collapse.

Softness of Failure

Language always fails. Welcoming and anticipating failure can be approached as a form of generosity. It is a way of saying that there is enough, enough space, enough time, to keep trying. To re-make, re-do, feel again, shape-shift. It is a way of insisting on softness, on the not-yet fully defined. The softness of failure is, in itself, a wobbly argument to claim more space and time to keep trying. It is an opening to desire what is not yet there and a way of claiming continuous presence and process.

Staying with Discomfort

Discomfort is a part of being together as a group. It comes up when we share space, exchange ideas, and try to build something collectively. It can feel different to each person, and it can shift over time. This is an invitation to look at discomfort more closely. Not welcome it better. Sometimes discomfort comes from the gap between our values and what we experience in practice. That friction can be difficult. But it can also be generative. Discomfort can be a way of knowing, a form of closeness, and part of how trust is built.

This list is intended for conversation, reflection, and creating spaces where honouring discomfort can become an intimate way of building relationships:

- What do we mean by discomfort in the first place?
 - How does discomfort feel in our bodyminds?
- What senses are engaged? What does it do to our commitment of being together in the same space?

- How do we talk about it? How do we welcome it?
- How do we allow ourselves to feel uncomfortable emotions? How do we feel them from a beginning to an end? What do we need to fully process emotions?
- What challenges come up when our ideas and ideals create friction with what we actually experience?
- How do we adjust when our experience of discomfort shifts?
- How do we create a fluid social contract for staying with discomfort?
- How do we prefer to be held accountable when we cause discomfort for others? How is that like, or different from, how we hold others accountable?
- How do we honour discomfort as a way of making knowledge, a form of intimacy, and part of building relationships? And how can we use this knowledge when designing future spaces?

Examples of Potential Discomfort(s):

Conflicting Sensory Needs

- One person will need bright lighting, while the other needs a dimmer setting. Sound can work well for some, while others prefer silence.
- Some are supported by strong scents, while others experience headaches, migraines, disorienta-

tion, or nausea from smells.

- Some need verbal processing through an active discussion for instance, while others need long pauses and quiet to think and process.
- One person may need cool temperatures and fresh airflow, while another is highly sensitive to cold air.

Technology and Mediation

- Some require screen readers, cameras, microphones, captions, or communication apps to fully participate in all parts and processes of the group.
- These technologies while being absolutely necessary for some, can be, in some cases, overstimulating for others.

Different Relationships to Structure

- Some need clear schedules and predictability, while others feel limited by fixed planning and need flexibility or spontaneity.

Different Communication Styles

- Some people don not communicate verbally and/or visually.
- Some people communicate directly and literally, while others rely on implication, emotional cues,

or nonverbal expression.

- Some come from multiple backgrounds and cultures, and some expressions and words carry different meanings.
- Some are comfortable with expressing emotions, while others are not.
- Misunderstandings can arise around silence, tone, interruption, timing, expectations or interpretation.

Physical Closeness and Distance

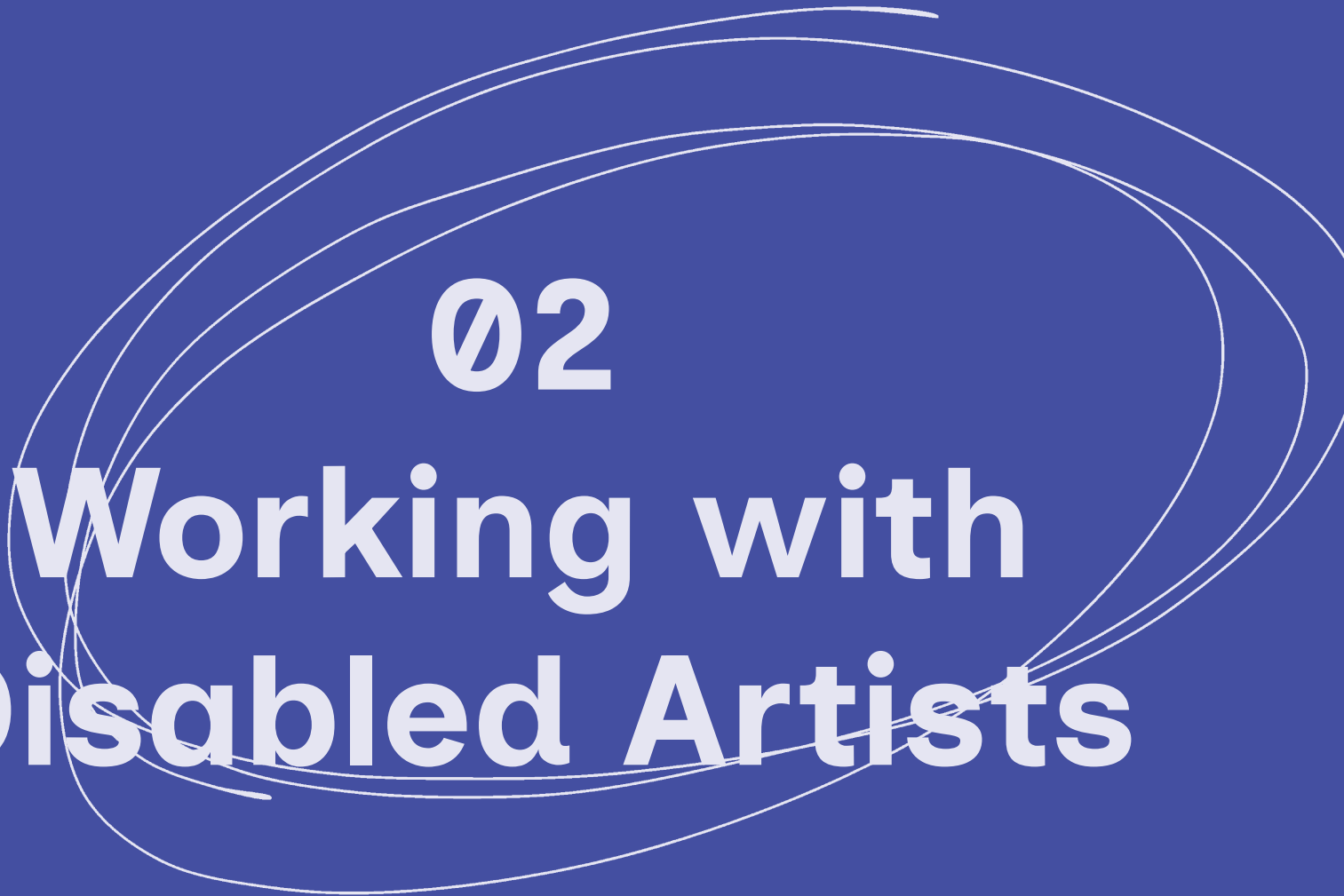
- Some people appreciate hugs and touch a form of mutual emotional co-regulation, while for others this can be overstepping a bodily boundary.

Difference in Visibility of Disability

- Invisible disabilities can create assumptions of capability, legitimacy, or labour distribution, which puts an extra task on the participant to explain and set boundaries.
- Repeated experience with assumptions can also create self-doubt and hesitance with asking for access needs.

Rhythm and Energy Differences

- Changes in capacity can affect participation. Among other things, this can be caused by pain, chronic fatigue, burnout, and overstimulation.
- While a slow rhythm can cause anxiety around reaching the goals of the group, a fast one can exclude some members.

The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this background are several thin, white, hand-drawn oval lines that are slightly irregular and overlapping, creating a sense of movement or a sketch. These lines are centered around the text.

02

**Working with
Disabled Artists**

Caring and Harmful Practice

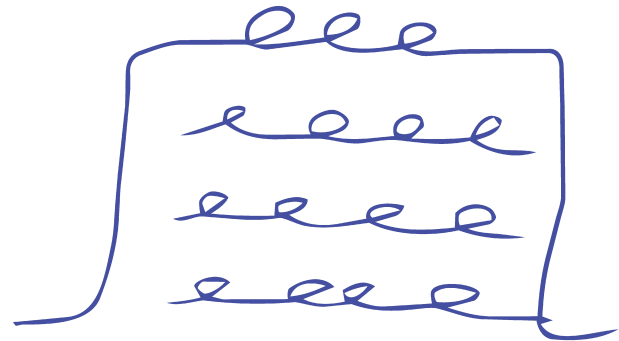
These lists have grown out of many conversations on our experiences from working with art institutions. Here they are presented in a condensed, non-conclusive format that is intended to be reflected upon and modified when applied within different groups, sensitivities and contexts.

- Hold focused, well-structured meetings and provide clear planning from the outset.
- Be transparent about deadlines, budgets, expectations, and decision-making processes.
- Define roles, responsibilities, and expectations early in the collaboration.
- Share event structures, schedules, and presentation formats in advance.
- Create clear entry and exit processes for projects.

Caring Practices

Communication, Planning, and Transparency

- Communicate clearly, directly, and try to avoid assumptions while still respecting different communication styles.
- Maintain open dialogue throughout the project, especially when needs, timelines, or circumstances change.



Access, Care, and Support

- Initiate conversations about access needs and accessibility at the beginning of a project, while allowing people to decide what personal information they wish to share.
- Read, acknowledge, and actively implement access and care riders.
- Provide practical accommodations that respond to stated needs, such as accessible facilities, reserved spaces, assistance with physical tasks, audio description, rest areas, and dietary requirements.
- Assign a designated contact person who can provide support when needed.
- Check in during periods of illness, fatigue, or acute symptoms.
- Allow flexibility in timelines and include buffers for illness or changing access needs.
- Give and inform people about sufficient time to complete tasks in ways that work for them.

Collaboration and Working Relationships

- Foster trust through ongoing communication and collaboration.
- Encourage colleagues to remain open, adaptable, and willing to learn.
- Commit to conflict resolution and staying with discomfort. Do not ignore difficulty or blame the

- person who comment on or outlines a problem
- Do not shame people for having difficult feelings in difficult situations.
- Respect different communication styles, including fragmented, non-verbal, or less formally structured forms of expression.
- Value curiosity, active listening, and the ability to sit with uncertainty, discomfort, or silence.
- Support people without making assumptions about their abilities or limitations.
- Ensure people can participate without having to hide or justify their disability.

Fair Working Conditions

- Compensate all labour fairly, including preparation, consultation, administrative work, and additional tasks that arise during a project.
- Discuss and agree on any changes in scope before adding responsibilities.
- Provide practical support during intensive working periods, including access to food and rest.
- Offer editorial, technical, or production support when needed.

Recognition and Inclusion

- Credit all contributors appropriately and acknowledge the work of the entire team.
- Treat all participants as valued collaborators whose

perspectives carry equal weight.

- Create culturally diverse environments where different experiences and ways of working are welcomed.
- Provide positive and constructive feedback.

Harmful Practices

Lack of Access and Care

- Failing to discuss accessibility, care, or support needs.
- Ignoring, dismissing, questioning, or minimizing stated access needs.
- Agreeing to accommodations and then failing to provide them.
- Expecting people to simply “make it work” without adequate support in prioritising tasks or communicate what an alternative “successful” outcome could be.
- Expecting individuals to simply “make it work” without adequate support.
- Treating access as optional despite receiving funding or resources intended for accessibility.
- Providing inaccessible environments, facilities, or working conditions.

Poor Communication and Accountability

- Lack of transparency around budgets, timelines, expectations, or decision-making.
- Changing deadlines, deliverables, or project scope without discussion.
- Not listening to concerns or responding defensively when needs are communicated.
- Shifting blame onto individuals when institutional failures or unmet access commitments create difficulties.
- Describing a space as “safe” without clearly defining what that means in practice.

Exploitation and Tokenism

- Asking people to do unpaid or underpaid work.
- Expanding responsibilities without additional compensation or consent.
- Using disabled, marginalised, or diverse participants primarily to satisfy funding requirements, representation goals, or institutional image-making.
- Seeking visibility, personal stories, or emotional labour without creating meaningful influence, support, or compensation.

- Treating people as projects rather than collaborators with agency.

Exclusion and Discrimination

- Excluding people from participation rather than adapting processes, formats, or environments.
- Making assumptions about what someone can or cannot do.
- Treating some voices, expertise, or opinions as less valuable than others.
- Pressuring individuals to perform a particular identity, persona, or category.
- Creating situations where people must continually educate others or prove the legitimacy of their experiences.
- Failing to believe or respect people's descriptions of their own needs and limitations.

Ableist and Extractive Cultures

- Prioritising toughness, resilience, or endurance over care and sustainability.
- Focusing on individual trauma while ignoring the structural conditions that produce exclusion.
- Expecting disabled people to manage the discomfort, anxiety, or learning process of non-disabled people.
- Offering unsolicited health advice or questioning the legitimacy of disability or illness.

- Responding to feedback about past experiences by becoming defensive rather than listening and learning.

Lack of Recognition and Respect

- Failing to credit contributors for their work.
- Neglecting the expertise and labour involved in accessibility work.
- Forgetting, overlooking, or sidelining people in collaborative processes.
- Moving, changing, or making decisions about someone's work, materials, or contribution without informing them.
- Showing less engagement with accessible formats and practices than with other areas of institutional work.

Toilet Access Mapping

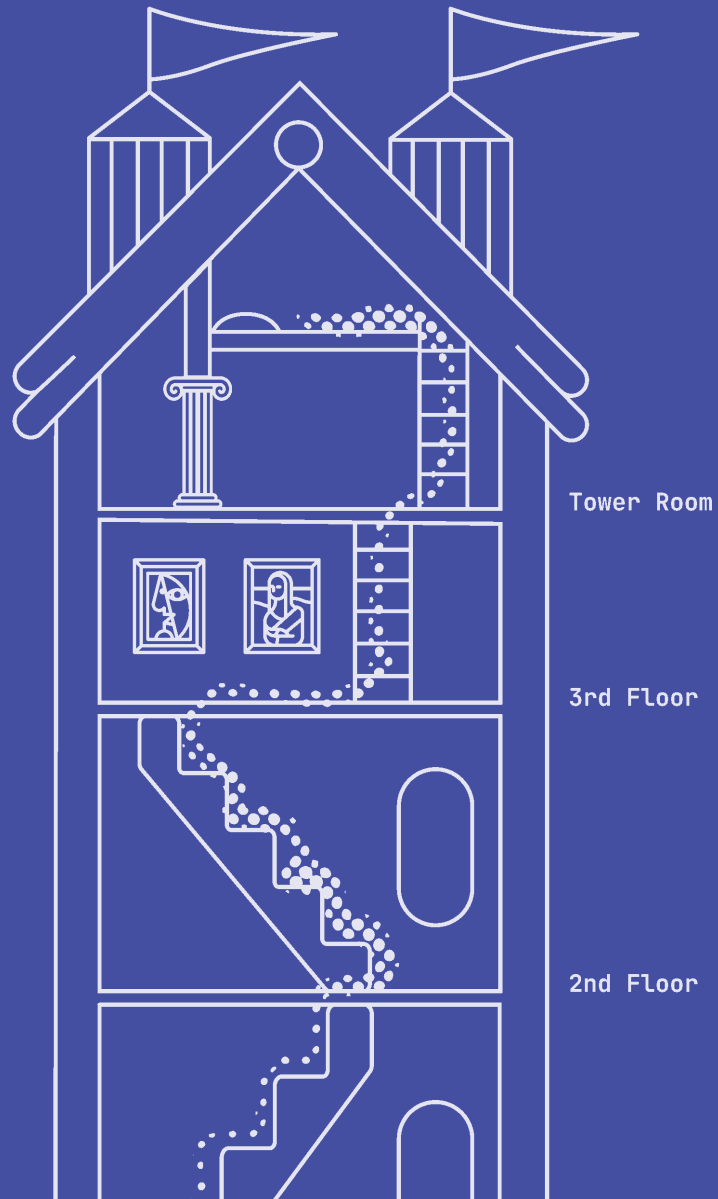
Lacking Access Case Study

Before I publicly spoke about my hidden disability and life with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), and before Access Riders became part of my artistic practice, I often found myself negotiating access indirectly. Asking for accommodation near a toilet could feel easier than explaining my condition. Yet these negotiations frequently revealed how inaccessible supposedly supportive environments could be, and how easily access needs are misunderstood when they are not explicitly named. What appeared to be a simple request often exposed different assumptions about urgency, distance, privacy, and what accessibility actually means in practice.

The 'Toilet Access Map' is a speculative mapping exercise developed from the perspective of an artist living with IBD. It serves as a conversation tool between artists and venues that may not yet know each other's access needs.

By sharing floor plans before events, venues enable artists to map toilet routes, identify barriers, and reflect on distance and urgency. Rather than treating accessibility as a fixed architectural feature, the project explores how access is experienced through time, uncertainty, predictability, and the body's need for reliable toilet access.

– Personal contribution by Hendrik Quast made in collaboration with Christina Maeckelburg



Tower Room

3rd Floor

2nd Floor

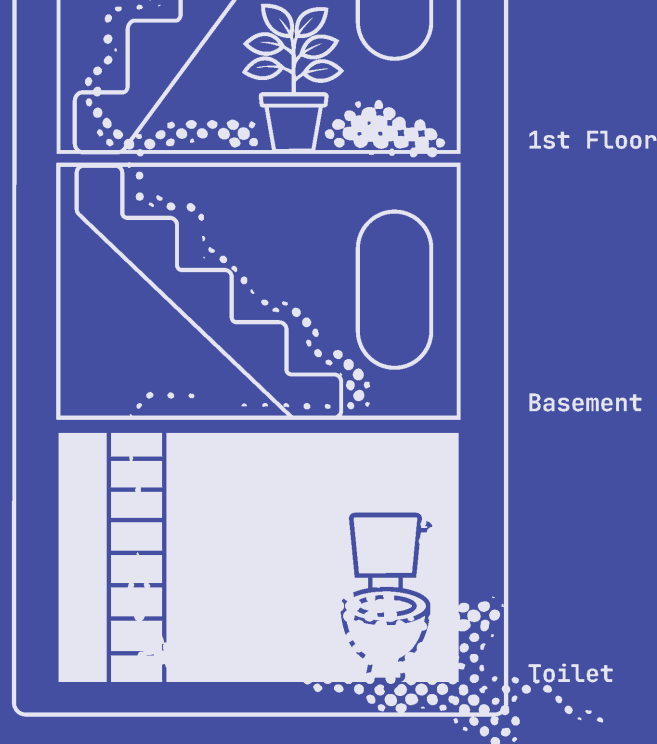
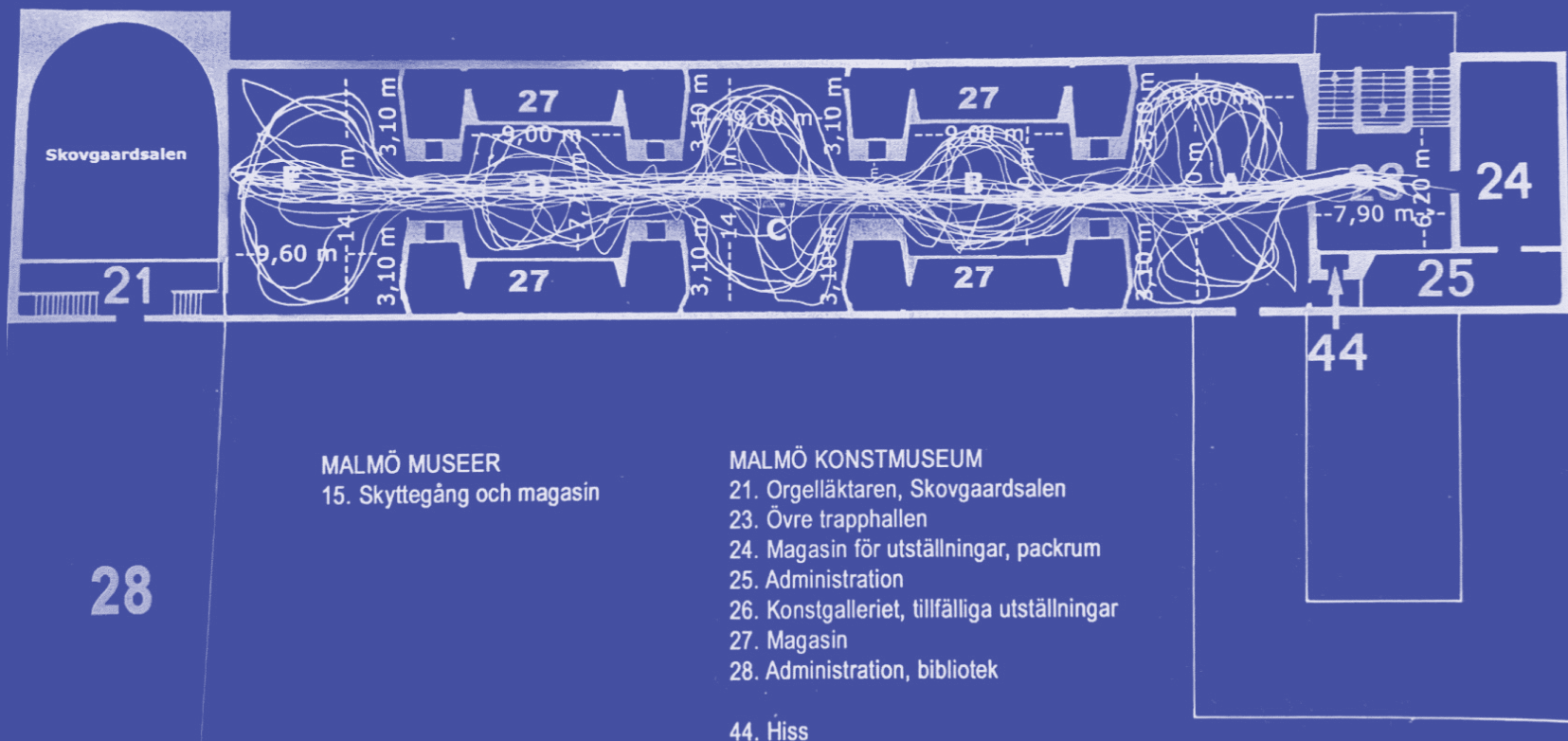


Image description: The 'Tower Room Map' shows a reconstruction of the route between the accommodation and the nearest toilet during an active flare-up.

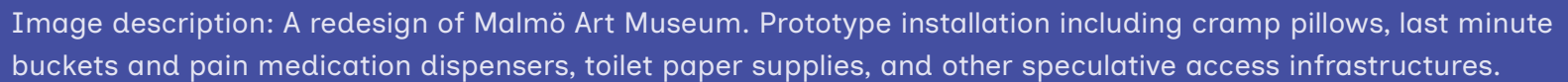
The Tower Room Map reconstructs an experience from a residency during an active flare-up. After requesting accommodation with a private toilet, I was offered the institution's "Tower Room." While the request was technically granted, the nearest toilet was located in the basement. During a period of high stool frequency, what appeared accessible on paper became an everyday exercise in urgency, navigation, and endurance. The map traces this journey and reflects on the challenges of communicating access needs before Access Riders became a common practice within the arts.



MALMÖ MUSEER
15. Skyttegång och magasin

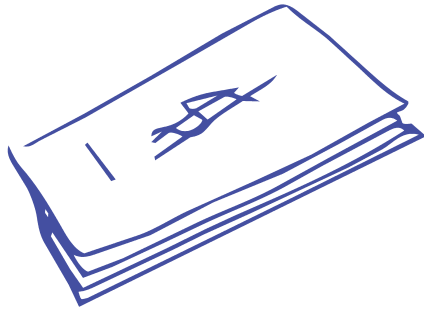
MALMÖ KONSTMUSEUM
21. Orgelläktaren, Skovgaardsalen
23. Övre trapphallen
24. Magasin för utställningar, packrum
25. Administration
26. Konstgalleriet, tillfälliga utställningar
27. Magasin
28. Administration, bibliotek
44. Hiss

Image description: The image shows a mapping of thirty daily toilet visits onto Malmö Art Museum's floor plan. The route is repeatedly traced by hand, visualising the distance travelled while imagining daily artistic work within the building.



Payment to Artists and Art Workers

The working conditions in the arts are increasingly shaped by a structural imbalance between ambitions, resources, and recognition of professional labour. For many artists, project-based work is not an exception but a fundamental condition, requiring constant applications, networking, and temporary collaborations. This instability is often intensified for disabled artists and art workers, who may face additional barriers related to access, capacity, and unequal expectations around productivity.



Fair payment is not only a matter of income; it is a recognition of expertise, creative contribution, and professional value. Yet many disabled artists face a difficult tension between being paid for their artistic labour and maintaining essential disability-related benefits. In some systems, receiving payment or demonstrating the ability to work can trigger reassessments of disability status, creating uncertainty and discouraging participation in professional opportunities.

Art institutions have a responsibility to address these structural barriers by ensuring transparent fee structures, fair minimum rates, accessible contracts, and long-term support for disabled artists. Sustainable change requires recognising disability access costs as part of professional practice and creating conditions where disabled artists can contribute without risking financial security or social support.

How to Establish Better Conditions:

- Establish transparent fees, minimum rates, and clear contracts.
- Develop longer employment models for artists and art workers beyond the project-based.

– Create more inclusive organisational structures that enable diverse professional perspectives to shape curatorial and strategic decisions.

Five Concrete Actions for Art Institutions

1) Fair pay for artistic labour and consultancy, and transparency on how funds are distributed.

2) Provide transparency on working conditions, preferably in written form that can be used as a reference.

3) Plan, prioritise, and budget for accessibility from the beginning of a working process. Approach it as an ethic of being together, applied to non-disabled people too, as a way of sustaining the practice.

4) Approach disability as a knowledge-producing framework, and value it at the same level as other frameworks within the arts, policymaking, academia, etc.

5) Be curious. Ask questions. Build genuine, lasting relationships.





Cutdowns

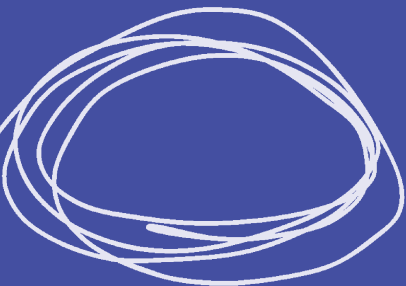
–Personal contribution by Yuvia Maini

Image description: The image shows a photograph of the work 'Cutdowns' (2025), an abstract geometric composition on a tall rectangular canvas. A large, irregular central shape dominates the work, surrounded by smaller rounded forms, rectangles, arcs, circles, and organic shapes. Thin hand-drawn lines weave between the forms, creating loops, curves, and sharp zigzag patterns. The composition combines geometric and organic elements, with strong contrasts between solid shapes and open negative space, giving it an abstract, modern, collage-like appearance.



04

Hosting Disabled Visitors



Caring and Harmful Practice

These lists have grown out of many conversations on our experiences from visiting art institutions. Here they are presented in a condensed, non-conclusive format that is intended to be reflected upon and modified when applied within different groups, sensitivities and contexts.

Caring Practices

Physical Comfort and Rest

- Provide seating throughout exhibitions, workshops, and event spaces, allowing visitors to rest and engage with the programme from a seated position.
- Offer comfortable chairs with back support.
- Create designated rest areas and low-sensory spaces.
- Ensure access to free drinking water, affordable refreshments, and hot drinks.

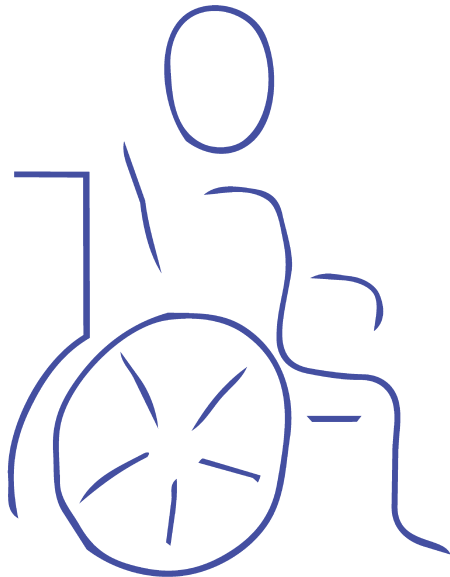
- Provide practical amenities that support visitors' needs, such as accessible restrooms, period products, and power outlets for assistive devices or medical equipment.

Accessible Information and Communication

- Present information in multiple formats, including concise summaries alongside longer or more theoretical texts.
- Use plain language, readable font sizes, and accessible visual design.
- Provide audio descriptions, audio guides, captions, and other alternative formats without requiring visitors to use their own devices.
- Make accessibility information easy to find on websites and in physical spaces.
- Clearly communicate available accessibility services, facilities, and points of contact before and during visits.
- Ensure staff are knowledgeable about accessibility and able to answer questions respectfully and accurately.

Physical Accessibility and Navigation

- Clearly mark steps, level changes, obstacles, and restricted areas using high-contrast visual cues.
- Ensure routes, exits, and emergency procedures are clearly visible and easy to navigate.
- Provide open and clearly marked exit paths, including the possibility of leaving events early when needed.
- Make doors, entrances, and circulation spaces easy to access and use independently.
- Ensure exhibition spaces are spacious enough to reduce crowding, noise, and unnecessary sensory overload.



Access to Artworks and Programmes

- Allow visitors to engage with artworks in ways that support their access needs, including approaching works closely where appropriate.
- Provide tactile experiences, replicas, outlines, or touchable objects whenever possible.
- Ensure artworks can be experienced from multiple perspectives and distances.
- Allow photography when it supports accessibility and engagement.
- Provide accessibility tickets, companion tickets, and other access-related services through the same booking systems used by other visitors.

Inclusive and Supportive Environments

- Ensure visitors can ask for assistance without being questioned, judged, or required to justify their needs.
- Offer access to trained staff or designated accessibility contacts.
- Welcome visitors with different disabilities, access requirements, and support needs without requiring additional documentation beyond what is necessary.
- Create environments where visitors feel respected, included, and able to participate on equal terms.

- Acknowledge and credit the full range of contributors involved in exhibitions, events, and programmes.

Sensory Considerations

- Provide noise cancelling equipment and sensory maps.
- Provide balanced lighting that supports visibility without creating discomfort through excessive brightness or darkness.
- Minimize unnecessary glare, reflections, and visual barriers.
- Offer fragrance-free facilities where possible.
- Include visible clocks and other orientation tools during talks, lectures, and events.

Harmful Practices

Physical and Sensory Barriers

- Providing insufficient seating or seating that is uncomfortable and lacks back support.
- Designing spaces that prioritise aesthetics over accessibility and comfort.
- Using lighting that is excessively bright, dark, or creates glare and reflections that make artworks

difficult to perceive.

- Creating crowded, noisy, or overstimulating environments without offering quieter alternatives.
- Installing heavy doors, inaccessible entrances, or other physical barriers.
- Failing to provide low-sensory spaces or opportunities for rest.

Inaccessible Information and Communication

- Presenting information only through long, complex texts, small typography, or academic language.
- Providing accessibility information that is incomplete, difficult to find, or focused on only a narrow range of disabilities.
- Requiring visitors to make additional phone calls, emails, or special requests in order to access information or services that could be available through standard systems.
- Failing to provide captions, audio information, or alternative formats.

Exclusionary Access Practices

- Requiring visitors to prove, explain, or justify their disability in order to access

accommodations.

- Restricting companion tickets, discounts, or support services to specific disability categories while excluding others with equivalent support needs.
- Refusing access to visitors who have legitimately booked accessibility services.
- Treating requests for assistance as inconveniences rather than part of institutional responsibility.

Barriers to Experiencing Art

- Displaying artworks in ways that prevent meaningful access, such as placing works too far away, too high, or behind visual obstacles.
- Preventing visitors from using reasonable access strategies, such as moving closer to artworks or taking photographs where these support access needs.
- Creating restrictions that prioritise institutional concerns over equitable participation without providing alternative access solutions.
- Failing to provide tactile, audio, or other accessible forms of engagement when visual access alone is insufficient.

Lack of Respect and Understanding

- Responding to requests for assistance with judg-

ment, scepticism, or unnecessary questioning.

- Assuming what visitors can or cannot do instead of listening to their stated needs.
- Monitoring or correcting disabled visitors in ways that undermine their autonomy and expertise regarding their own access requirements.
- Expecting visitors to navigate inaccessible environments without support.

Tokenistic or Uneven Approaches to Care

- Representing of disability without involving disabled people.
- Representation of disability that relies on stereotypes rather than everyday realities and a framework of legitimate knowledge production.
- Applying content warnings selectively in ways that centre the comfort of non-disabled audiences while overlooking potentially harmful or triggering content for disabled visitors.
- Treating accessibility as an add-on rather than an integral part of exhibition, event, and programme design.
- Unwillingness by curators to engage with harmful material within the museum collections and archives to challenge difficult histories, and unwillingness to include disabled perspectives to examine these histories.

To Be Expected – An Audience Perspective

I remember the first time that I could no longer access an art exhibition. I was at Louisiana with my family to see the Arthur Jafa show. I had, during the previous year, developed a handful of strange symptoms in my eyes, that my optician and eye doctors were struggling to understand. I was seeing double all the time, had near constant visual disturbances, my eye muscles and lenses were in spasms pretty much every minute of every day. Sometimes the visual disturbances were so vivid, that the whole world disappeared into flickering white static. Other times everything was shaking back and forth or blinking as a stroboscope light. It was as if the connection between my eyes and my brain had been severed and no one seemed to know why. Most of the time my eyes hurt too much to be of any

functional use. I had just stopped being able to read and use a computer in a normal way, but I was still hopeful that enough surgery and medication would give me my functioning vision back. I had a feeling that this was a strange period of my life, something to withstand and make it through. Five years later, I know this was not the case. I also know, that gaining a disability might be the hardest thing I have tried, but also a gateway to a new world of understanding and a persistent and stubborn need for making the world more accessible, not just for people like myself, but disabled people in all shapes and forms.

During the Arthur Jafa show I remember trying to hold on. I was a film maker at the time, just about to finish my education at the National Danish Film School. Visual art has always been the place, that I found the most inspiration and solace. I had just come out of a year long film production of an experimental Dracula film, where we tried to recreate the dark blurry shapes of Francis Bacon's triptychs, by adjusting the shutter speed on the camera. My first year, film had been heavily influenced by the video work of Pipilotti Rist. I was hardly very original in my taste, but loved the feeling of being able to swallow the whole world visually, of going in the

footsteps of someone who had been pursuing their aesthetic curiosity before me. Now I was struggling to make my eyes work at the Jafa show. I remember seeing his masterpiece "Love is the message, the message is Death" (2017), and how much the flickering images hurt my eyes. I tried to hold on, to force myself not to look away. I remember feeling the urgency and importance of the work and wanting to engage with it wholeheartedly. The further we got, the worse the pain got. In the end I squeezed my eyes shut, and I know that I missed almost everything beautiful, strong, and important about Jafa's art that day. At the time it made me feel ashamed. I wanted to power through, to be able to read the flickering ants of texts that were on the museum walls. I wanted to scan the room and understand the atmosphere of the curation. I wanted to be able to engage with the art in a way, that felt like I was showing respect to the artist's intentions. Instead, I ended up staggering around, clutching the arms of various family members with my eyes shut and a pounding headache on the way. It felt like a defeat. I didn't go to another art museum for years after that. Eventually something started to shift. I was going through the painful process of trying out new treatments and surgeries, none of which had any real effect. The

doctors rearranged my eye muscles, shut off my right eye, paralyzed my pupils and started pulling out my eye muscles and injecting them with botox every three months. My vision was clear on one eye if I was standing right in front of the object, but my eyes were constantly spasming and hurting almost all the time. I have ended up with something, that is a good enough vision to recognize the person I am talking to, but with too many spasms and disturbances to be able to read, see further than a few meters ahead for longer than a minute, or orient myself well in new spaces. My eyes are always running on 2% battery power and making it through a whole day, even with screen readers and assistance, usually renders my eyes completely broken down by night time. Therefore, visual art is a luxury good, that I rarely have the capacity for. Still, I yearn for it. I choose my vacations on where the most interesting art can be found. I keep myself up to date with everything going on in my city's art world and I have started to stubbornly show up.

After I started identifying as a person with a vision impairment, instead of just a "person with eye problems that are probably, maybe going to

be fixed one day", I have started asking for accommodations at art institutions. It has almost become a kind of experiment for me. I find that art institutions in other European cities are very imaginative. I have been handed a large print program, been allowed to touch objects and have tried audio guided descriptions of the work. My favorite was a show in Vienna, where the artist also audio described pieces of work, that were no longer at display. It felt like a secret extra ingredient, just for me. The preferences in audio description will vary wildly from person to person. I love when the audio description is made by the artist and is creative and exciting in its own way. I love when it is mixed with poetry and is emotionally charged. I want to hear about the atmosphere created by the cuts and colors. I want to know the emotion of the movements in a video piece. Those things matter much more to me, than the color of someone's dress or the exact content of the background in a painting. Some people prefer an audio description to be a lot more objective, to be able to draw their own conclusions. As it turns out, visually impaired folks are all exactly as different in taste and preferences as everyone else.

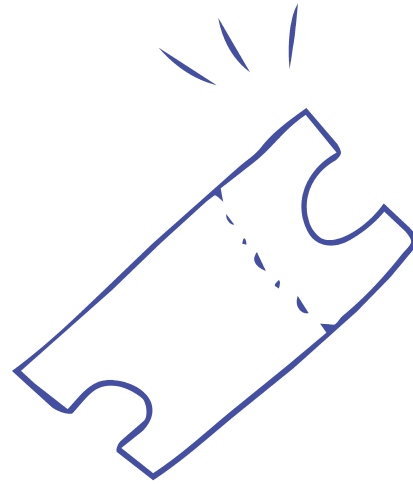
I think that paving a way forward for the involvement of visually impaired people as audience in the art world, is not only necessary and democratically important, I also think it is going to make art institutions better. In her excellent book *There Plant Eyes: A Personal and Cultural History of Blindness*, the writer and scholar Leona Godin calls the world that we live in ocularcentric. I think by shutting your eyes and leaning into the other senses as both an artist and a curator, you can expand your perception of art and the world. I think we could widen the reach and capacity of art institutions by making them a place, where everyone might not have the same experience, but everyone should be able to have some intentional experiences. In the end, for me, it is a matter of being an expected audience member in a space – if an art institution already has audio description in its audio guide, if the institution has large printed or braille programs, if I would be able to get close or even touch the art work without setting off the alarm, if there were tactile guidelines in museums, to make sure that visually impaired visitors, do not bump into a sculpture or other precious work. That would make me feel, that no matter the state of my vision, I was welcome as a guest, and maybe, instead

of this feeling of shame and anxiety, I could feel welcome, excited and curious to visit art institutions again.

– Personal contribution by Tone Ottilie Frederiksen

Five Concrete Actions for Art Institutions

- 1) Free entrance, affordable entrance, sliding scale prices or reduced entrance without having to prove low-income, age, or “official” disability.
- 2) Resting space, nap space, free water, recharge stations.
- 3) Making guests feel welcome and safe.
- 4) Communication clearly. Wording that is too academic closes doors for many visitors.
- 5) No mass-disabling activities such as engagement with oil and weapon production, collaboration or being tied to colonial and genocidal powers.



The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this background are several white, hand-drawn style scribbles. These scribbles consist of multiple overlapping loops and swirls, creating a sense of movement and spontaneity. They are distributed around the central text, with some larger loops framing the text and smaller, tighter scribbles interspersed throughout.

05

Imagining Better Futures

Disabled Dreams and Utopias

–We dream of a future in which disabled artists, art workers, and practitioners are present in equal measure to all other invited contributors and where disability is not treated as an exception, but as an integral and valued part of artistic life.

–We dream of art institutions that employ significantly more disabled people at every level, recognising disability as a source of knowledge, creativity, leadership and an ethic of how to be together as people (disabled and not yet disabled). In this future, accessibility is not an occasional project or temporary initiative, but a long-term commitment embedded in the structure, culture, and everyday practices of institutions.

–We dream of institutions that understand that budgets are always expressions of priorities, and

that accessibility, inclusion, and care are funded accordingly. A future where the people who work within institutions are not separated from them, but are recognised as part of the living ecosystem of the museum – shaping its values, experiences, and communities.

–We dream of cultural spaces where beauty, pleasure, sound, architecture, and sensory experience are deeply interconnected. Where architecture is conceived as a composition of experiences, and where artworks can be encountered through multiple senses and modes of perception.

–We dream of greater openness in processes of translation, interpretation, and access. A future where there are many ways to relate to beauty, many pathways into an artwork, and many forms of participation.

–We dream of reducing the distance between visitor and creator, audience and institution. A future in which cultural spaces foster exchange rather than hierarchy, and where people feel invited into meaningful relationships with art and with one another.

–We dream of a fuller understanding of sensory experience, of the wholeness of perception and how engaging multiple senses can deepen connection, understanding, and presence.

–We dream of truly free access: where disabled visitors and their assistants can participate without financial barriers, and where accessibility is understood as a collective public good.

–We dream of cultural institutions that cultivate agency, freedom, and negotiation. Spaces where visitors are empowered to shape their own experiences rather than follow predetermined paths. Spaces that feel genuinely public, open, and shared.

–Most of all, we dream of unlearning the idea that art institutions belong only to a select few. We imagine a future where art spaces are experienced as common spaces – places of collective ownership, belonging, curiosity, and possibility for everyone.

Access and Continuity

“As a person born with a physical disability that constantly consumes energy, I am confronted daily with accessibility barriers and frictions, both within and beyond my work as a dancer and my flex job as a contemporary arts conveyer. I also observe and experience, at close hand, the slowness and obstacles that often hinders a development of institutional accessibility.

If we want accessibility initiatives and CSR efforts to have a lasting impact, they must be continuously and economically prioritised. They should be critically evaluated and further developed across departments, with relevant partners, and in response to evolving legislative frameworks.

Only through such an ongoing commitment can we move beyond symbolic gestures and meaningfully share knowledge, experiences, and practices in a visionary way. From there, we all have the possibility to learn, to ground our work in lived experience, and ultimately, to grow and bloom.”

– Personal contribution by Cath Borch Jensen

Creative Accessibility (Falling in Love Through Access)

The approach to accessibility is evolving rapidly across the arts. Increasingly, artists, curators, and art institutions are exploring ways to embed access into the creative process rather than treating it as an add-on or legal requirement.

This approach, often described as creative accessibility, goes beyond compliance checklists by using diverse access needs as a source of artistic inspiration and innovation. Building on the principles of universal design, it integrates features such as captions, audio description, sign language, tactile experiences, and sensory adaptations into the artistic concept itself.

Access becomes part of the storytelling, enriching the work for all audiences while creating

experiences that are more welcoming, engaging, and meaningful. Creative accessibility recognises that designing for difference often leads to stronger, more imaginative artistic outcomes.

Some Examples of Creative Accessibility:

Access as Co-Creation

Disabled artists, access consultants, and community members collaborate from the beginning of a project, ensuring accessibility shapes the creative process instead of being added at the end.

Integrated Audio Description

Instead of offering audio description as a separate service, descriptive language is woven into the work or performance through dialogue, narration, or sound design, making it part of the artistic experience for everyone.

Creative Captions and Closed Captions

Captions become a storytelling element by using colour, movement, typography, and placement to reflect emotion, rhythm, or character, rather than simply displaying spoken words.

Sensory-Conscious Exhibitions and Performances

Lighting, sound, audience movement, and social expectations are adapted to create a welcoming environment for neurodivergent audiences, families, and anyone who benefits from a more flexible experience.

Multi-Sensory Exhibitions

Artworks are experienced through sound, scent, touch, vibration, and interactive materials, inviting multiple ways of engaging rather than privileging vision alone.

Touch Tours and Tactile Design

Before or after an exhibition or performance, audiences can explore objects, textures, models, costumes, props by touch.

Sign Language as Artistic Expression

Rather than placing interpreters at the side of the stage, sign language is integrated into visual composition, choreography or performance.

What to Remember:

Access as Creativity

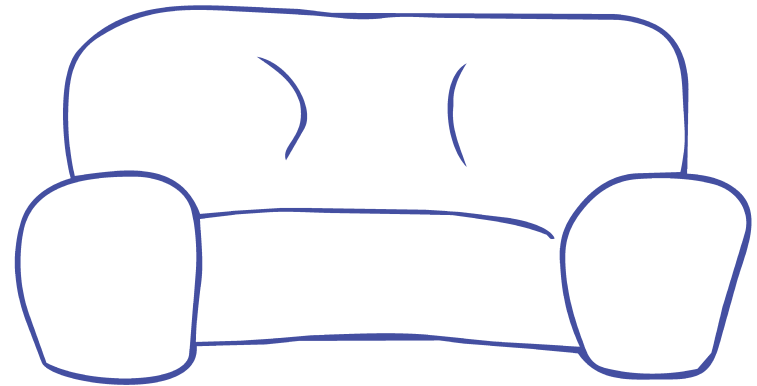
Accessibility is embedded into the artistic process, not added afterwards.

Better for Everyone

Creative access features enhance storytelling and enrich the audience experience for all.

Innovation Through Inclusion

Diverse access needs inspire new artistic ideas, methods, and ways of engaging with audiences.





06

Tools and Glossary

Exercise in Becoming an Oyster Reef or an Invitation to Meeting Without Words

Prior to the exercise hand out two oyster shells to all participants.

We Arrive

An oyster's life is mostly quiet and still. They are shaped by drifting beginnings, shapeshifting, and then most of its life in bed, an oyster reef, spent filtering the sea.

They begin as a tiny free-swimming larva, drifting with currents for days, weeks, feeding on plankton, riding tides with no fixed home. At some

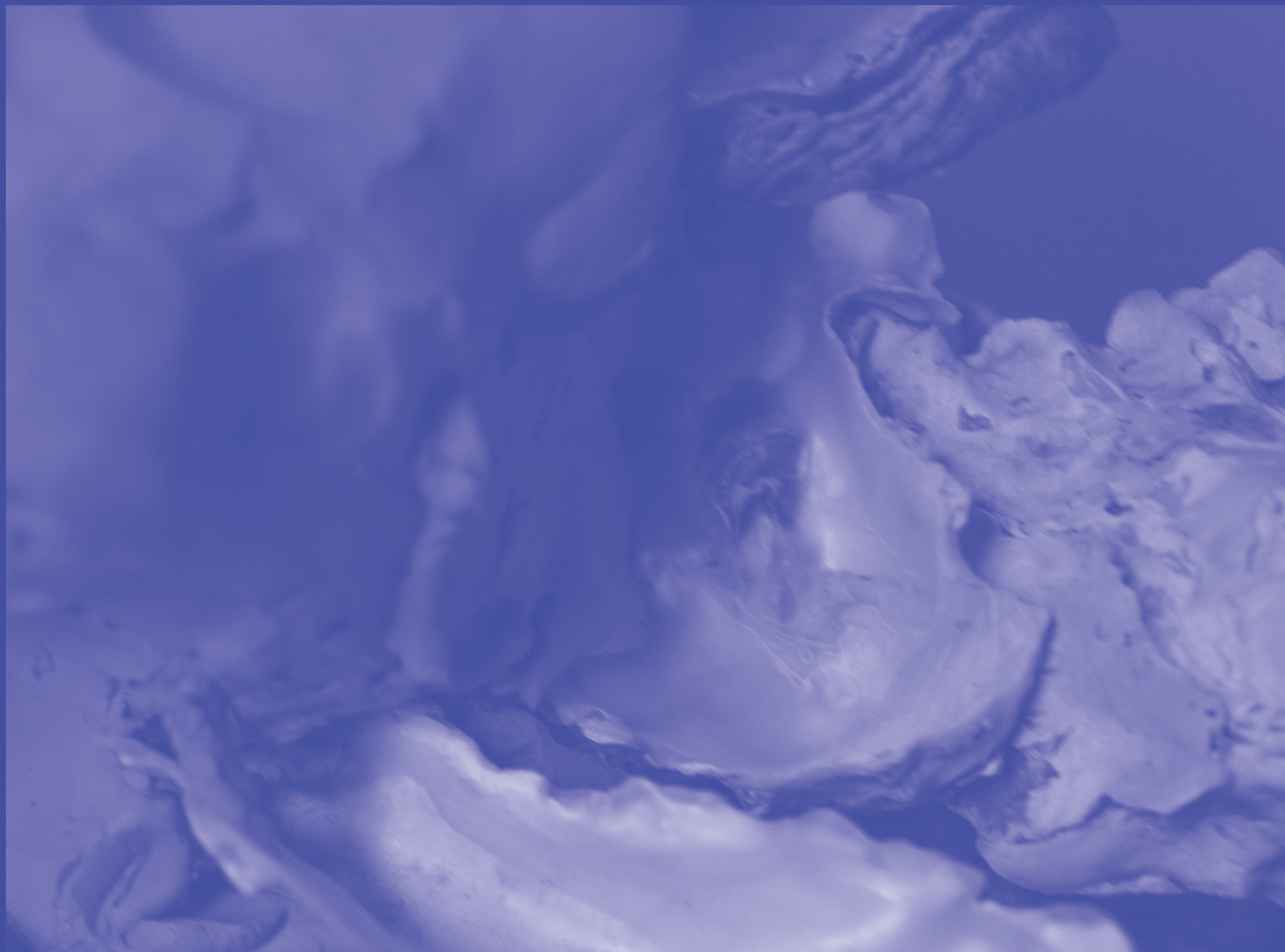
point they develop a foot, and by then they will look for a place to settle. Once they find a suitable spot, they stick to it for life, where they grow their shell among a community of other oysters.

In this position, the sea is passing through them throughout their lifetime. Their shell becomes an archive, recording water temperatures, rainfalls, pollution with more. Just as trees speak of time through their rings, the oyster speaks through their shell.

Right now, we are settled somewhere within this space temporally for a short time frame. From this fixed position, your body-mind is invited to go where it wants to go. Let the sensations lead. Gently, softly, setting aside language, analysis, and interpretation. Rest in direct experience.

Imagine the space as the sea passing through you, and your body-mind becoming a record of this. Of the noise, rhythm, breath. And how you move within, alongside, and with them.

There are two oyster shells in front of you. Let them be a guide into shapeshifting alongside the sensations that you experience.



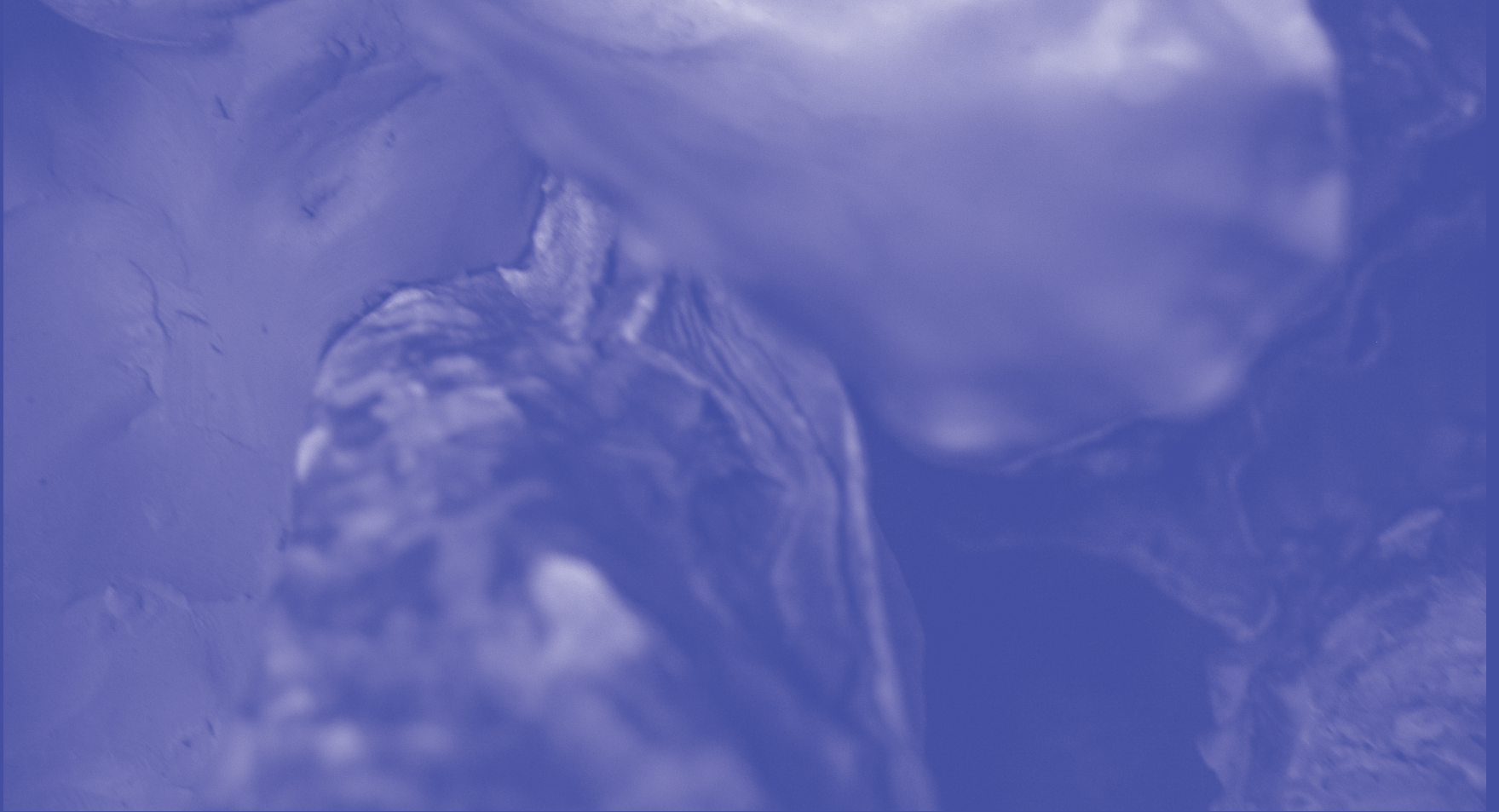


Image description: A close-up view of several oyster shells fixed to an unfired, soft clay form. The shells are layered with varying textures. The central shell is open, revealing a smooth, shiny interior. Surrounding shells have a rough, ridged exteriors.

They are resonant shells. Your movement activates this resonance. They resonate with you, with each other, one shell to the other, and just as much with the other pairs present in our group. Each object participates in a shared field of vibration and listening.

Together, we are moving towards becoming a sonic oyster reef. A composition of noise that resembles a multiplicity of movement within a static position, that is shaped by attention, resonance, and the archive of the body-mind.

Breathing

- 1)** Sit or lie comfortably. Gently close your eyes or soften your gaze.
- 2)** Take five slow, natural breaths.
- 3)** Take five more breaths, but this time noticing different parts of your body

Breath 1: Breathe through your nose and let the air out through your mouth.

Breath 2: Place both hands on the sides of your ribs. Breathe in and notice how the space around your ribs changes.

Breath 3: Place a hand on your upper or middle back if possible. If not, guide your attention there. Breathe in and notice how this area moves and changes in a similar or different way.

Breath 4: Place your hands on your chest, if that feels comfortable. Notice the change that the breath is bringing to the area.

Breath 5: Breathe in through your nose, and let the air out through your mouth.

Pursuing Rhythm, Searching Speed

Now, we will continue with tracing the rhythm of your breath. This time with using the sound of two oyster shells sliding, scraping, grinding against each other.

If or when you prefer to trace your breath by staying in silence, it is welcome too.

Act 1: Place an oyster shell in each of your hands.

Breath sequence 1: Breathe in. Strike the shells together. Hold your breath. Listen to the sound. And then let their surfaces slide against each other, as you breathe out, corresponding to the length of the breath. Repeat 3 times.

Breath sequence 2: Breathe in. Hold your breath for a moment. Breathe out. Listen to the silence.

Breath sequence 3: Repeat first breath sequence five times.

Closing rhythm: Place your hands holding the shells alongside your body. Listen to the silence.

Calling, Responding

We will now shift more towards the sound, and rhythm generated by the oyster shells. Without abandoning the sensation of the breathing, let the

noise be something that in a similar way passes through you, something that you respond to, and something that responds to you. Approach the sound as a call.

1) Improvise freely and intuitively. Without analysing, create a new rhythm by striking or sliding the shells against each other.

2) As you continue exploring rhythm, start listening to the rhythms around you. Try to isolate one sound from within the noise of the space, and let your attention rest on it.

3) Treat that rhythm as a call. Respond to it however feels right, by mimicking it, contradicting it, or something in between. Whatever comes to you, embrace it.

In Closing: Listening to Silence and Traces of the Remaining Noise

We will now move away from the noise towards silence. Take a moment to be still.

Then, slowly let your attention drift toward these questions:

1) How does it feel to listen to the sound of the shells?

2) How does it feel to listen to the absence of this

sound? Is there something that remains? A fragment of a feeling, or a corresponding memory?

3) How does it move through you? Which part of your body does the experience of sound and silence resonate with most?

4) What is the weight of this sound, is it light, or heavy? Notice the remaining sound in the room.

5) How do you feel the weight of it?

6) What current sound or experience of silence gives you most comfort?

7) Does it have a color? Does it have shape?

8) If you could keep it within your body? Which body part would you store it in? Or would you grow an additional body part to carry it?

9) Think of the shape you are taking with the sound?

Slowly open your eyes, or shift your attention back to the space.

This is soft closing

This exercise is inspired by Sonic Meditations of Pauline Oliveros, written between March and November 1971.

- Personal contribution by Anastasija (Nastija) Kiake

Access Rider

An Access Rider is a practical document that communicates the access needs and working conditions that enable a person to participate fully and sustainably in a project, workplace, event, or collaboration.

It provides commissioners, employers, institutions, venues, producers, project partners, and colleagues with clear guidance on how to create accessible working conditions and remove barriers to participation.

An Access Rider can include information about communication, working hours, scheduling, travel, accommodation, physical and sensory environments, meetings, support, and other practical arrangements.

It is a starting point for conversation, not a fixed set of rules. Access needs can vary depending on the person, the context, and the circumstances. The document should therefore support an ongoing dialogue about adjustments, boundaries, resources, and possible solutions.

The access measures outlined in an Access Rider should be understood as part of the working conditions required for equitable participation. They should be planned, budgeted for, and agreed upon as an integral part of the project.

Access Rider Template

Project Information

Name: [Name]

Pronouns: [Optional]

Project/Event: [Project name]

Date/Project period: [Date]

Organisation/Commissioner: [Organisation]

Version: [Date/version]

Access Needs

An Access Rider communicates the conditions and adjustments that enable me to participate fully, equitably, and sustainably. My access needs may vary depending on my capacity, the context, and circumstances.

I am a [disabled/chronically ill/neurodivergent/ etc.] artist. My capacity may fluctuate due to [fatigue/pain/mobility/sensory overload/medication /other]. I have strategies that enable me to work effectively, but require the following adjustments to maintain sustainable working conditions.

These are not additional benefits; they are the conditions that enable me to participate and carry out the agreed work.

My main access needs

- [Access need]
- [Access need]
- [Access need]...

Please be aware

- My capacity may fluctuate.
- I may need breaks or temporary withdrawal without being able to explain why immediately.
- Changes to plans can require additional time and energy.
- I may need time to rest, regulate, eat, take medication, or use the bathroom.
- I will communicate my limits as clearly as possible.

Communication and Meetings

Clear, predictable, respectful communication is important to me.

Communication

- Main contact: [Name/role]
- Preferred channel: [Email/phone/other]
- Please provide important information in writing whenever possible.
- Please avoid last-minute requests and changes.
- I need sufficient time to process information and respond.
- Agreed communication hours: [e.g. Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm]
- Please do not contact me outside these hours unless there is an emergency or prior agreement.
- Meetings
- Please provide agendas and relevant materials in advance.
- Meetings should normally be no longer than [duration].
- Breaks: [e.g. 15 minutes after every 90 minutes]
- Please avoid unnecessary meetings; written communication may replace meetings where appropriate.
- Online meetings: [captioning/camera optional/recording requirements/other].

Working Hours and Scheduling

Predictability and sufficient planning time are essential to sustainable working conditions.

- Normal working hours: [time – time]
- Maximum working hours per day: [number]
- Maximum consecutive working days: [number]
- Required breaks: [number/duration]
- Overtime: [not permitted/only by prior agreement]
- Weekend/public holiday work: [requirements]

Schedules should be agreed as far in advance as possible. Changes should be communicated early and significant changes discussed with me before confirmation.

If my capacity changes unexpectedly, I may need to adjust the schedule, take additional breaks, or modify the work plan. The aim is to maintain the agreed work while allowing reasonable adjustments when necessary.

Travel and Accommodation

Travel arrangements must take my access needs into account.

Travel

- Maximum travel time per day: [number]
- Preferred transport: [train/direct route/other]
- Direct connections where possible.
- Assistance/taxi required: [details]
- Additional travel or rest day required for journeys over [number] hours.
- Flights, if required: [direct/fastest connection/seat/legroom/other]

Accommodation

- Single room.
- Private bathroom and toilet.
- Quiet room/quiet area.
- [Accessible bathroom/kitchenette/fridge/cooking facilities/heating/other.]
- Accommodation should support appropriate rest and recovery.
- Where dietary needs apply, facilities to prepare suitable food may be required.

Access-related travel and accommodation costs should be included in the project budget rather than treated as personal or unexpected expenses.

Workspace and Dressing Room

The workspace should allow me to manage my access needs independently and with dignity.

Required facilities

- Accessible toilet.
- Drinking water.
- Chair/sofa/place to rest or lie down.
- [Kitchen/kettle/refrigerator.]
- [Medication storage.]
- [Low-sensory space.]
- Accessible entrance.
- [Other.]

Environment

- Calm and free from unnecessary noise where possible.
- Unnecessary people should not enter the space.
- Inform me before photography, filming, or visitors enter.
- Space should be clean and appropriately maintained.
- [Specific sensory requirements.]

Cooperation, Support and Confidentiality

My physical, mental, or sensory capacity may vary. I will communicate my needs and limits as

clearly as possible, while collaborators are asked to support reasonable adjustments.

Please

- Take my access needs seriously.
- Ask before making changes affecting my working conditions.
- Respect agreed boundaries.
- Allow breaks without requiring justification.
- Avoid assumptions based on how I appear.
- Discuss practical solutions rather than questioning the legitimacy of my needs.
- Keep personal and medical information confidential.

If a difficulty arises, I prefer to address it early and collaboratively.

Contracting and Production

A draft contract should be provided at least [number] weeks before the project begins. This Access Rider should form part of the contract and be treated as an agreed component of the working conditions. Substantial changes to access arrangements should be discussed and agreed in advance.

A production / access meeting should take place at least [number] weeks before the project,

involving relevant artistic, production, technical, and organisational staff.

The meeting should confirm:

- Schedule and working hours
- Access requirements
- Main contacts and communication procedures
- Travel and accommodation
- Workspace requirements
- Emergency procedures
- Audience / participant accessibility
- Responsibility for arranging and paying for access measures

All access-related costs should be identified and included in the production budget.

Accessibility and Public Communication

Accessibility should be treated as an integral part of the project and artistic practice, not an additional service.

Where relevant, measures may include:

- Step-free access and accessible toilets
- Accessible seating / wheelchair spaces

- Quiet or low-sensory spaces
- Sign language interpretation
- Live captioning
- Audio description
- Easy-read information
- Tactile / touch tours
- Relaxed performances or events
- Sensory information
- Accessible digital information
- Clear venue-access information

Accessibility measures should be communicated clearly and in advance through relevant websites, ticketing platforms, event information, press materials, and other public communication.

Emergency and Key Contacts

Emergency contact

Name: [Name]

Relationship/role: [Role]

Phone: [Phone]

Email: [Email]

Project/Access contact

Name: [Name]

Role: [Role]

Phone: [Phone]
Email: [Email]

Production/Venue contact

Name: [Name]
Role: [Role]
Phone: [Phone]
Email: [Email]

AGREEMENT

This Access Rider describes the access measures required for me to participate in the project on an equitable and sustainable basis.

Access needs and circumstances may change, and adjustments may therefore need to be discussed during the project. This document is intended as a practical working agreement based on open, respectful communication.

Artist

Name: _____
Date: _____
Signature: _____

Commissioner/Organisation

Name: _____
Role: _____
Date: _____
Signature: _____

Care Rider

A collective care rider is a tool that can be used across different contexts to facilitate shared reflection on care and develop a common language for open communication. It provides a starting point for conversations about how we create accessibility, make room to different voices, care for one another, and develop more conscious ways of working together.

The care rider is not a fixed document, but a living working tool that can be revisited throughout the entire course of a project. In this way, the group can continuously respond to changing needs, address new challenges, and identify where additional support or adjustments are needed.

The purpose of a collective care rider is not to replace individual access or care riders, but to create a shared understanding of the needs and circumstances that each participant brings to the collaboration. When the group collectively acknowledges both the possibilities and challenges of the collaborative process, mutual understanding and transparency are strengthened.

A collective awareness that everyone involved in a project has a responsibility to communicate and act with care creates a more holistic way of working together. It fosters empathy, strengthens solidarity, and provides better conditions for developing inclusive and sustainable working processes.

Project Team

- Who is part of the project group, and what roles do they have? Are the roles fixed, or can they develop and overlap along the way?
- What are our individual areas of responsibility?
- What skills, experiences, and resources does each of us bring to the collaboration?
- What kind of collaborative culture do we want to create? How do we support curiosity, mutual learning, trust, and shared reflection?
- How do we prioritise time to get to know one another — both as a group and one-to-one?

Planning

- What individual needs, resources, and limitations do we need to take into account? (For example, accessibility needs, caring responsibilities, working capacity, and other projects)

- How do we prefer to meet? (In person, digitally, or a combination.)
- How do we want to communicate? (Collectively or individually, which platforms do we use, and when can we be contacted?)
- How do we organise the project schedule so that it takes the different needs and working conditions of the group into account?
- How do we distribute ownership, responsibility, and credit?
- How do we decide on the project's shared goals and expectations?
- Who is responsible for the project or exhibition after the launch or opening?
- If the project leaves behind artworks, products, or other outputs, who is responsible for them, and who can make decisions about their future use?

Spaces

- Are all spaces physically, mentally, and sensorially accessible to the entire project group?
- Does anyone in the group need to visit or be introduced to the working or exhibition spaces in advance?
- What visible or invisible power structures shape the spaces in which we work? (For example, re-

lations between hosts and guests or institutional frameworks)

- How can we create more equitable conditions?
- Can we share responsibilities or change the way we use the spaces?

Budget and Payment

- Is the project non-profit or commercial?
- Is the budget transparent and accessible to everyone in the project group?
- How are accessibility costs and individual accessibility needs covered?
- When are fees paid, and are the payment terms clear to everyone?

Install, Exhibition and Events

- Who is able to participate with installing, opening events, and other events, and are there any circumstances that limit participation?
- Is there access to a quiet/rest space during installation and events?
- Is food, snacks, or drinks available to everyone?
- Has everyone been informed about photography and filming, and has consent been obtained?
- Does everyone in the project group have the opportunity to invite family, friends, or other close relations to openings and events?

Transport

- Does anyone need support with transportation?
- How is transportation organised?
- How are transportation costs covered?

Mediation and Communication

- How does each participant wish to be referred to and credited in dissemination and communication?
- How do we want to communicate about the project?
- How do we approach the press, interviews, and public communication?

Evaluation

- Who participates in the evaluation?
- How do we conduct the evaluation so that everyone has an opportunity to contribute?
- Who has access to the evaluation, and how is it used in the ongoing work?

Accessibility Glossary

General Terms

Accessibility

Creating, designing and delivering products, environments and services, so as many as possible can use it and not just access it, but have a comparable experience.

Accommodation

An individual adjustment made when something is not already accessible.

Ableism

Discrimination, prejudice, or bias against disabled people, often based on the assumption that non-disabled ways of living are the norm.

Critical Access

An approach that views accessibility as an on-going, collaborative practice shaped by disabled people's lived experiences rather than a checklist.

Cripistemology (a portmanteau of “crip” and “epistemology”)

A concept in disability studies that refers to ways of knowing and navigating the world generated directly through disabled, Deaf, and mad experiences. Coined in 2014 by Merri Lisa Johnson and Robert McRuer, it centres the knowledge, survival strategies, and distinct perspectives of disability communities.

Intersectionality

The way different aspects of a person's identity and experiences—such as disability, race, gender, class, or sexuality—overlap and can shape how they experience discrimination and access.

Visible/invisible disability

A visible disability is a disability that may be immediately apparent to others, while an invisible disability is not readily apparent. Both can affect a person's access, participation, and need for support.

Auditory

Deaf / Hard of Hearing

People with partial or complete hearing loss who may use captions, sign language, or assistive tech.

d/Deaf

Distinguishes between the audiological condition of hearing loss (lowercase “deaf”) and belonging to the cultural and linguistic Deaf community (uppercase “Deaf”)

Hearing Impaired

A general term for mild or temporary hearing loss, though “hard of hearing” is often preferred.

Captions and Closed Captions

Captions usually show just spoken words. Closed captions include sound cues (like music or effects).

Alt Text

A short text description added to images so screen readers can describe them to people who cannot see the image. It also appears if an image fails to load.

Image Description

A written or spoken explanation of important visual details in an image, helping people who cannot see it understand the content.

Transcript

A full written version of audio or video content helpful for accessibility and quick reference.

Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)

Difficulty understanding and processing sounds, especially in noisy environments.

Visual

Blindness

Complete or near-complete vision loss. Blind people may use screen readers, Braille, or other assistive technologies.

Blind

A person with little or no functional vision. Some blind people have partial sight, while others have none.

Visual Impairment

A broad term for reduced vision that cannot be fully corrected with glasses, contacts, or surgery.

Transient Vision Impairment / Temporary Visual Disturbance

A short-term reduction in vision caused by factors like bright sunlight, eye strain, injury, or medication.

Low Vision

A level of vision loss that cannot be fully corrected but still allows some usable sight.

Cognitive and Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity

The idea that differences in how people think and learn (like ADHD, autism, dyslexia) are natural and should be supported, not “fixed.”

Neurodivergence

A term describing people whose brains work differently from what is considered typical, including autistic people and people with ADHD, dyslexia, and other neurological differences.

Acquired Neurodivergence

Changes in how the brain functions due to illness, injury, or other life events, such as stroke or traumatic brain injury.

Neuronormativity

The assumption that neurotypical ways of thinking, communicating, and behaving are the standard or preferred norm.

Neuroqueer

A term describing the intersection of neurodivergent and queer identities, or the act of challenging social norms around both.

Cognitive Disability

Affects memory, attention, problem-solving, or understanding. Clear structure and plain language help a lot.

Visual Processing Disorder

Difficulty interpreting visual information, which can affect reading, writing, or pattern recognition.

Intellectual Disability

A lifelong condition affecting learning, reasoning, and everyday skills, with varying levels of support needs.

Neurological Disability

A disability caused by conditions affecting the brain, spinal cord, or nervous system, impacting movement, sensation, or cognition.

Pathology Paradigm

A framework that views disability primarily as a problem or defect to be diagnosed, treated, or cured.

Mobility and Physical

Wheelchair User

A person who uses a wheelchair for mobility. Accessibility includes ramps, elevators, and reachable layouts.

Motor Disability

Affects movement or coordination, which can impact using a mouse, keyboard, or touchscreens.

Models of Disability

Medical Model

Views disability as a problem within the individual that should be treated, cured, or managed.

Social Model

Views disability as the result of barriers in society rather than a person's impairment.

Biopsychosocial Model

Recognises that disability is shaped by biological, psychological, and social factors working together.

Affirmative Model

Views disability as a valued part of human diversity and identity rather than something to overcome.

Disability Rights Model

Focuses on equal rights, accessibility, and removing discrimination through laws, policies, and inclusive design.

Digital and Technical Accessibility

Assistive Technology

Tools like screen readers, voice input, or alternative keyboards that help people interact with content.

Focus Indicator

A visible highlight showing where you are when navigating with a keyboard.

Keyboard Accessibility

Making sure everything works without a mouse just using a keyboard.

Semantic HTML

Using meaningful code (like proper headings and buttons) so assistive tech can understand content structure.

Tone Indicator

A short marker (such as “/j” for joking or “/s” for sarcasm) that helps clarify the intended tone of written communication.

Design Principles and Standards

Universal Design

Designing from the start to work for as many people as possible no retrofitting needed.

WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)

A widely used set of standards created by the World Wide Web Consortium for making web content accessible.

Presentation and Media

AD Audio Descriptions

Additional spoken narration that describes important visual details in videos, films, or presentations during pauses in dialogue, making visual content accessible to people who are blind or have low vision.

Speaker Notes

Extra notes in presentation slides that presenters can see. These can also be read by screen readers.

Subtitles/Captions

Text displayed with video content. Captions include dialogue and important sounds, while subtitles typically only show spoken words or translations.

**“Always remember, that
multiple things can be
true”**

– TOD member



07

Credits

TOD Members

Narjes Nácisz Al-Ansari (SE)

Narjes Nácisz Al-Ansari (she/her) is a sound and word artist. Her practice centres primarily on music and lyrics which was her focus during her years of studying and working in radio. Creating art through sound and taking people through a story using only the sense of hearing have been central to her artistic practice. In a world of art that is often heavily focused on the visual, she is interested in foregrounding the many ways that art can be experienced.

Gin Mariá Gonzáles (MX/DK)

Ginger naps (he/she/they) works with archives, access history, disability justice. Their mediums include zines, collage, interior design, rehearsals, prototypes, and experiments.

Cath Borch Jensen (DK)

Cath Borch Jensen (she/her) is a cross-media Conveyer of #Whatwedonttalkabout, a public speaker, BodyActivist, an experienced integrated dance-& performance pioneer and an accessibility-and performance. consultant. She flex job

works as an experienced mediator of contemporary art. Additionally she uses a manual wheelchair due to permanently birth induced cerebral palsy.

Anastasija (Nastija) Kiake (LV/DK/NL)

Nastija Kiake (they/she) is a visual artist and writer working between The Hague and Copenhagen. Their practice engages with the ways social, political, and spiritual conditions are shaped by economies of feeling, ecologies of belonging, and structures of violence. Situated within the context of post-Soviet identity formation, alongside experiences of disability and im/migration in Scandinavia and Western Europe, Nastija's work primarily focuses on developing methods for negotiating language and narration.

Yuvia Maini (SE)

Yuvia Maini (she/her) is a visual artist and animator whose practice explores and expands notions of movements and memories in public space. With a background in painting, kinetics, and programming, she blends non-linear narratives with analog and digital techniques to create animated stories that often questions the traditional hierarchy between visitor and author.

Ella Neller (SE)

Ella Neller (she/her) is a visual artist with a strong passion for creating a more inclusive art world. She primarily works with photography, painting, and ceramics, drawing inspiration from people, encounters, and different life experiences. Through her work, Ella aims to create space for diverse voices and contribute to a more open art community.

Tone Ottilie Frederiksen (DK)

Tone Ottilie (they/she) is a writer. They have published two novels, written short films and a play. Their work often centres on coming of age stories, often from a queer, disabled perspective. They have had work selected for international film festivals including Berlinale. For their literary work Tone has won Politikens Litteraturpris and YA Debut of the year from the National Children's Library. Tone has also been a board member of LGBT+-Ungdom and is a teacher at the Cross Media School of Children's Fiction.

Hendrik Quast (DE/SE)

Hendrik Quast (he/him) is a theatre maker, performer and artistic researcher working across

performance, comedy and disability arts. His practice explores chronic illness, class, care and bodily norms through ventriloquism, clowning and autobiographical performance. Hendrik's work often turns access needs and experiences usually kept private, waiting, urgency, toilets, medication and bodily unpredictability, into artistic material. Through this he develops performances and access practices that question whose bodies, rhythms and needs cultural institutions are built around.

Anna Walther (DK)

Anna Walther (she/her) is a visual artist based on the island of Lolland in Denmark. Her practice is primarily sculptural, with a focus on site-specific art and art in public spaces. Anna uses art as a catalyst for drawing attention to norm-challenging positions within society and is deeply involved in accessibility within the art scene. She's interested in the subject both on a philosophical and an activist level, but also as a direct artistic approach to creating a more inclusive art world.

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We thank the foundations that truly support development projects and allow space for open-ended processes, exploration, and learning. These approaches recognise that meaningful change cannot always be planned in advance or measured through fixed outcomes alone. By trusting the knowledge, experience, and expertise of those leading the work, foundations can create the conditions for deeper, more sustainable impact.

We hope the time is ripe for more foundations to adopt trust-based approaches like this, providing

greater flexibility, longer-term perspectives, and support for processes that respond to complexity and uncertainty. Such approaches are especially important for projects involving social change, inclusion, and cultural development, where transformation often requires time, dialogue, and the ability to adapt along the way.



Colophon

This Could Be a Beginning

A publication by the Through Our Dialogue
(TOD) members and Malmö Art Museum

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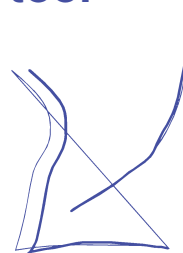
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