

Disability Inclusion Playbook for the Accommodation Sector





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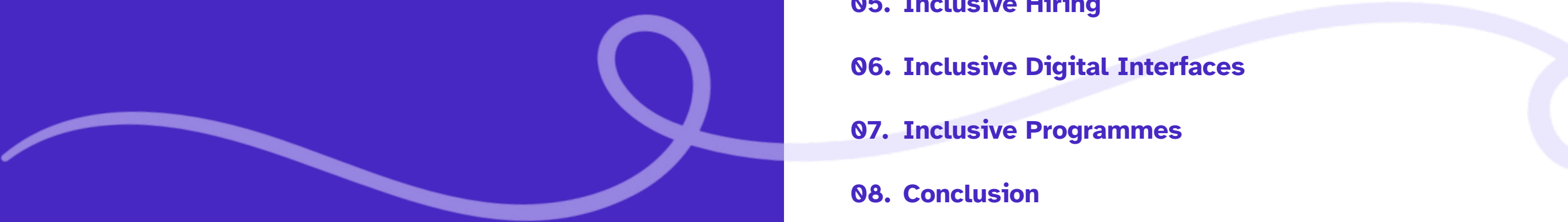
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Foreword

**Beh Siew Kim**

Chief Financial and Sustainability Officer, Lodging, CapitaLand Investment

True hospitality is more than great service – it is about creating environments where everyone feels welcome, valued and respected. At The Ascott Limited (Ascott), this belief drives our commitment to elevate disability inclusion and redefine accessibility standards in the hospitality industry.

In 2024, we deepened this commitment by partnering with SG Enable, Singapore’s focal agency for disability and inclusion. This collaboration helped us turn intention into action, making inclusion part of how we design, hire, train and serve – from launching Singapore’s first hospitality-specific disability inclusion course to empowering nearly 60% of our properties worldwide to display accessibility information online.

As our teams embraced this journey, we saw a growing desire to do more – and a need for clearer guidance to help us go further, together. This inspired the creation of the Ascott Disability Inclusion Playbook: a practical resource first developed to steer our disability inclusion efforts across our global portfolio, now adapted for public release to help uplift accessibility standards across the industry.

Grounded in real-world insights from our associates, global best practices and expert knowledge, the Playbook offers actionable guidance across five key pillars: Inclusive Training, Hiring, Digital Interfaces, Spaces and Programmes. This holistic framework is designed to help the industry embed accessibility in ways that are balanced, sustainable and deeply human.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our partners – SG Enable, World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, Valuable 500 and Colorful Earth – for their invaluable support in reviewing the content, sharing resources and helping bring this Playbook to life. Their collaboration affirms a simple but vital truth: no one organisation can achieve inclusion alone.

I have always believed that hospitality can be a force for good. We hope this resource inspires the wider hospitality community to join us in building environments where every guest and every associate can truly belong. Because real change happens when we come together – with empathy and purpose.

As Helen Keller once said, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” Let’s shape a more inclusive hospitality industry – one that reflects the warmth, openness and care at the heart of what we do.

**Lee May Gee**

Chief Executive Officer, SG Enable

At SG Enable, disability inclusion is both a value that we hold dear and a shared responsibility we nurture with our partners. True inclusion can only be achieved when each organisation takes active steps to remove barriers – physical, digital and attitudinal – so that persons with disabilities can participate fully in all aspects of life, including work and leisure.

Our partnership with The Ascott Limited, formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding in 2024, marked a significant step forward for disability inclusion in Singapore’s hospitality industry. Together, we set out to elevate accessibility standards across the sector, not only through training and infrastructure, but through mindset change and leadership commitment.

Building on this partnership, Ascott and SG Enable’s Enabling Academy have co-developed the Disability Inclusion for Hotel Professionals course delivered through the Ascott Centre for Excellence. The course empowers hospitality practitioners with the knowledge and confidence to serve guests and colleagues with diverse needs, fostering empathy, inclusion and understanding in their daily interactions.

This Disability Inclusion Playbook represents the next milestone in our partnership journey. It translates aspiration into action, providing practical guidance and tangible examples that make inclusion both achievable and sustainable across properties in the hospitality sector worldwide.

SG Enable is proud to support this effort. The Playbook exemplifies what can be achieved when industry leaders, persons with disabilities and community partners come together to co-create solutions grounded in lived experience. We hope it inspires others in the hospitality and tourism sectors to join us in shaping a world where everyone feels welcomed, valued and included.



Glenn Mandziuk

President and Chief Executive Officer, World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance

The hospitality industry thrives on its ability to welcome, connect and serve people from every corner of the world. True hospitality, however, goes beyond comfort and convenience; it is about creating experiences that are inclusive, equitable and accessible to all.

This Playbook marks a pivotal step in our shared journey towards that goal. It offers a clear, practical framework for embedding disability inclusion into the very fabric of hospitality, through governance, training, spaces, digital interfaces, hiring and community programmes. It is not only a guide for compliance, but a roadmap for transformation, one that helps businesses realise that accessibility and inclusion are essential to both sustainability and long-term success.

At the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, we believe that inclusion is integral to sustainability. The UN Sustainable Development Goals remind us that no one should be left behind, and this principle must extend to how we design our hotels, recruit our teams and engage our guests. By making our industry more accessible to persons with disabilities, we unlock innovation, expand markets and, most importantly, uphold the dignity and rights of all individuals.

This Playbook demonstrates how collaboration – between businesses, communities and people with lived experience – can turn intent into meaningful, measurable action. It provides the tools for hospitality leaders to create environments where everyone can participate fully and confidently. It also brings to life our Pathway to Net Positive Hospitality, particularly the focus on social metrics, and it showcases and celebrates our members' commitments.

On behalf of the Alliance, I commend all those involved in developing this resource. May it serve as both an inspiration and a catalyst for continuous improvement towards Net Positive Hospitality, helping us build a global hospitality industry that is not just sustainable, but truly inclusive, for guests, employees and communities everywhere.

**Katy Talikowska**

Chief Executive Officer, Valuable 500

The hospitality industry, at its heart, is about creating experiences where everyone feels welcome, valued and respected. Yet, for far too long, accessibility and disability inclusion have been treated as optional extras rather than essential elements of service excellence and business success. This Playbook is a significant shift towards changing that story.

At the Valuable 500, we believe that disability inclusion is not just a moral imperative – it's a strategic opportunity. Our mission has always been to transform leadership and unlock the business, social and brand value that comes from including 1.3 billion disabled people worldwide. By engaging the world's most influential companies, we have seen that true inclusion requires more than goodwill; it demands systems change – integrating accessibility into governance, design, digital infrastructure, workforce development and community partnerships.

This Playbook exemplifies that systemic approach. It offers practical processes and strategic guidance to help hospitality organisations of all sizes move from intent to impact. It recognises that inclusion is not a single department's job but a shared responsibility that touches every guest experience and employee interaction. From accessible digital interfaces to inclusive hiring and spatial design, the framework aligns perfectly with the Valuable 500's vision of inclusion as a driver of innovation, growth and resilience.

The hospitality industry, more than any other, has the power to shape how people experience belonging in the world. By following the guidance in this Playbook, leaders can build spaces, services and cultures that reflect the true diversity of humanity and, in doing so, future-proof their businesses for a world where inclusion is expected, not exceptional.

Together, we can redefine what hospitality means: a global standard of welcome that includes everyone.

**Martin Heng**

Partner, Colorful Earth

**Koko Tang**

Founder, Colorful Earth

This Playbook is a collaborative effort led by Ascott, with the invaluable partnership of SG Enable and the encouragement of the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance and the Valuable 500; we are grateful for their stewardship and trust. From the start, this project was never only about creating accessible spaces for guests and delivering disability awareness training to employees; its aim is to build a true culture of inclusion that touches all aspects of Ascott's operations – every department, every property and every associate. We believe this holistic approach is unique in the hospitality industry. Although it was originally conceived as an internal resource to guide Ascott's teams, we were very excited with the decision to release a public version of the Playbook so that as many businesses as possible can benefit from its practical and inspirational guidance.

It was challenging to craft a Playbook intended for global use across diverse regions and markets, given the wide variations in legal requirements, building codes, resources and culture – and the reality that organisations are at different stages on their inclusion journey. For this reason, while we make suggestions that are detailed, practical and implementable, we deliberately avoid numerical guidance, referring readers to local regulations. We also recognise that disability inclusion is a long-term journey and that 100% accessibility is unattainable; the important thing is to aim for progress, not perfection. Accordingly, this Playbook is intentionally inspirational: it offers principles, checklists and case-led ideas rather than exhaustive technical prescriptions, inviting teams to adapt and improve over time.

While the main focus of the Playbook is to provide actionable guidance for accommodation providers both large and small, we have also briefly introduced the key concepts that underpin disability inclusion – “Nothing about Us about Us”, the “ALLY” principle, the difference between equality and equity, and the social model of disability. We also touch on other key reasons beyond social justice why businesses should embrace inclusion, including the immediate financial opportunity, the benefits of a progressive diversity, equity and inclusion programme for corporate development, and the business imperative – particularly important for hospitality – of catering to an ageing demographic.

We have been pleased to see an explosion of interest in accessible tourism in recent years and we sincerely hope that this Playbook will assist and inspire hospitality businesses worldwide on their journey towards greater and more meaningful inclusion of people with disability as guests, as employees and as partners in the co-creation of a better, more inclusive world.

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Preface

About the Cover Artwork

The cover artwork was co-created by artists supported by SG Enable's i'mable Collective, in collaboration with Ascott associates. This meaningful initiative included artists from YMCA's Y ARTfelt programme, Thirtytwocm and Peculiar Matter. The design draws inspiration from the key focus areas of the Respect pillar under Ascott CARES – celebrating diversity, equity and inclusion, promoting health and safety, upholding human rights, and enhancing guest engagement.

We are deeply grateful to the artists who shaped the front and back covers of this Playbook with us: Douglas Zhixuan **Koh**, Shu Huan **Koh**, Shiaw Lun **Kuo**, Samuel En Ci **Lee**, Alethea Li Xuan **Lew**, Alicia Min Le **Tan**, Mohanaraj **Vivekanandan**, Benjamin Jia Long **Yap**, Ryan Wei Hern **Yap** and Gracia Ren Hooi **Yik**.



THIRTYTWO^{CM}

Peculiar
Matter

About This Playbook

This Playbook is a guide to advance disability inclusion in the hospitality industry. It gives strategic direction and practical steps to strengthen brand value, grow business opportunities and improve the experience of all guests and employees. It offers a systemic approach that integrates policies, operations, spatial design, digital access, workforce development and community engagement.

Purpose of this Playbook

The Playbook is both aspirational and practical. It aims to:

- Provide strategic direction and practical guidance.
- Expand business opportunities and strengthen brand values.
- Enhance the experience of both guests and employees.
- Inspire collaboration and continuous progress towards a truly inclusive industry.

How we keep this Playbook accessible

To make this Playbook as accessible as possible – for neurodiverse readers and those who have low literacy in English – we have tried to use appropriate language. This involves using short, descriptive sentences, commonly understood words, active voice and a logical structure. We have also tried to avoid using jargon and acronyms. Through technical remediation, we have tried to ensure that the Playbook is accessible to everyone, in particular people using assistive technologies such as screen readers, and is web-friendly. This involves tagging content, providing alternative text for images, and making text searchable and selectable. The font we have chosen is Atkinson Hyperlegible, which was specifically designed for people with low vision, but its clear design makes it beneficial for many users, including those with dyslexia.

How this Playbook is organised

We translate commitments into practical, actionable guidance through governance and five key pillars:

- Governance – leadership commitment, policy and standards, roles and budget, timeline, data and reporting – which covers and connects everything else
- Inclusive Training – skills, awareness and behaviour
- Inclusive Spaces – physical and wayfinding accessibility
- Inclusive Digital Interfaces – websites, apps, booking and in-house tech
- Inclusive Hiring – fair recruitment and sufficient workplace support
- Inclusive Programmes – guest services, partnerships and community

This structure works for accommodation providers of all sizes – from large hotel groups to individual properties. The advice for all is the same: determine where you are on your journey towards inclusion, start there, then scale up.

Understanding Disability Inclusion



What is disability?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines disability as any long- or short-term impairment, functional limitation or activity restriction. It affects a person's effective participation in everyday life. Disability does not exist alone. It can overlap with gender, age, ethnicity, language, migration status, sexual orientation, other medical conditions and income. These overlaps can affect how barriers are experienced – for example, safety concerns for women with disabilities at night, or older guests who may lack digital skills.

There are two common ways to talk about disability:

Medical model: looks at a person's impairment and how it can be treated or supported.

Social model: says people are disabled when environments, systems or attitudes create barriers to full participation.

The medical model focuses on what is “wrong” with an individual. Under the social model^[1], which is now more widely accepted, disability is not viewed as a personal deficiency, but as the result of inadequate support from the environment, policies, technology and societal attitudes. Considering disability in terms of such barriers, removing them will create a more accessible and inclusive environment. However, it is important to note that this can be a very challenging task: no environment can ever be 100% accessible for everyone, but it's possible to reduce barriers one step at a time. What matters most is an ongoing commitment to make achievable improvements in the short term while planning for longer-term transformation. By engaging people with disabilities and community stakeholders in the process, organisations can ensure that actions are grounded in lived experience and best practice.

^[1]*Social Model of Disability, Australian Federation of Disability Organisations*



Why Promote Disability Inclusion?

Social justice

Disability inclusion is supported by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which underscores the importance of accessible environments, services, information and opportunities for participation in tourism and leisure.^[2] It also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in education, employment and building inclusive cities.^[3]

Business opportunity

Disability inclusion is not only a matter of social equity but also key to sustainable business development.

Globally, 16% of the population^[4] (about 1.3 billion people) lives with disability, representing a vast market potential in tourism, employment and consumption. The global annual spending by disabled consumers is an enormous \$13 trillion^[5], yet most brands fail to effectively engage with this market, missing a major opportunity.

Adding to this is the fact that the world's population is ageing. By 2030, one in six people in the world will be aged 60 years or over – that's about 1.4 billion people.^[6] According to UN Tourism, one in eight international trips this year will be taken by a retiree aged 60 or above. Although seniors may not identify as disabled, many of them have access needs that increase with age.

To remain relevant, hospitality businesses must adapt to these shifts by offering inclusive and accessible experiences.



Corporate development

Inclusive workplaces and fair hiring policies benefit business. They widen the talent pool, lift morale and retention, spark innovation and productivity, and attract new talent. Gen Z often chooses employers for their ESG performance, with a strong focus on sustainability and inclusion.

What's more, people with disabilities bring unique strengths: resilience, empathy and problem-solving. They are loyal, take fewer absences and raise team awareness. In hospitality, this leads to better guest experiences.

Real-world examples show the return on investment in inclusive design.

Australia (Melbourne) – Quest Burwood East. This property implemented practical accessible features, such as a hi-lo electric bed, shower commodes, easy-pour kettles, hoists, accessible toilet fittings and evacuation chairs. With an equipment cost of A\$8300, a single long-stay booking (an average of ~90 nights at A\$350/night) generates A\$31,500 – more than triple the investment. The property also report improved guest experience and high satisfaction from guests and caregivers.

UK (Surrey) – The White Horse. The 13th-century coaching inn integrated accessibility into its boutique-style refurbishment. Its accessible rooms achieved over 70% occupancy, compared to 40% for standard rooms, generating £6900 more revenue per room per year.^[7]

UK (Manchester) – Hotel Brooklyn. Inclusive features were built in from the outset, such as ceiling hoists, accessible bathrooms and easy-access controls – all designed with style in mind. These rooms had the highest occupancy in the hotel, bringing in £132,000 in extra annual revenue, plus £85,000 in event income from accessible weddings and functions.^[8]

[2]CRPD Article 9 – Accessibility; CRPD Article 30 – Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

[3]Sustainable Development Goals and Disability, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

[4]Disability, World Health Organization

[5]"Driving disability inclusion is more than a moral imperative – it's a business one", World Economic Forum

[6]Ageing and Health, World Health Organization

[7]VisitBritain/Bespoke Hotels/Motionspot

[8]VisitBritain/Bespoke Hotels/Motionspot

Governance and Strategic Foundations

Disability inclusion is achievable for every hospitality business, regardless of size, ownership structure or resources – whether an international chain, a regional group or a boutique or independent property. Clarity of governance and a commitment to action are more important than the scale of operations.

From this foundation, we can then turn to the five pillars – Inclusive Training, Inclusive Spaces, Inclusive Digital Interfaces, Inclusive Hiring and Inclusive Programmes. These provide the practical tools and pathways through which governance commitments are translated into daily operations and guest experiences.

1 Start with a solid foundation before acting

Before you begin work on disability inclusion, set up a clear governance and strategy framework.

First, review your current situation. Identify what is working well and where there are gaps. Then set measurable goals, confirm leadership commitment with a formal policy and assign the right resources – both budget and people.

Create a taskforce or working group to lead disability inclusion efforts. For multinational companies, regional taskforces can address local needs. Smaller businesses may only need a small core team. A clear timeline and defined roles are essential so everyone knows what to do and when.

Ascott's Disability Inclusion Journey

In 2024, Ascott signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SG Enable to elevate disability inclusion and accessibility standards in the hospitality industry. From this, Ascott developed an internal Playbook that organises work into five pillars (Spaces, Programmes, Digital Interfaces, Hiring, Training) with practical tips for daily operations.

The programme began with property assessments to identify gaps and quick wins, then set pillar-level, measurable targets. This case shows how leadership commitment, a formal partnership and a clear Playbook turn intent into trackable results, scalable for both hotel groups and single properties.



MoU signing ceremony between Ascott and SG Enable, Singapore's focal agency for disability and inclusion.

2 Build leadership and accountability

Go beyond representation – develop employees with disabilities to become future managers. At the same time, set up systems to collect data, track progress and keep your organisation accountable.

3 Include people with disabilities in decisions

Follow the principle “Nothing about Us without Us”. People with disabilities should have a seat at the table from the start. Their experiences should guide both policies and day-to-day decisions.

What does “Nothing about Us without Us” mean?

This principle comes from the global disability rights movement. It means no policy, programme or decision about people with disabilities should happen without their direct involvement and leadership.

For businesses, this requires including people with disabilities in governance bodies, taskforces and decision-making groups. Their lived experience ensures that strategies and solutions are based on real needs, not on assumptions.

4 Industry benchmarks highlight what is possible

Industry benchmarks show what “good” looks like and help you set priorities. For example, Scandic Hotels has created a 159-point accessibility standard.^[9] Use benchmarks like this to perform a quick gap check, then pick a small set of high-impact actions for the next budgeting period. You don't have to follow the list word for word – adapt it to local codes, budget and practical limits. For example, single properties can start with guest-facing basics and add more over time.

Accessibility at Scandic Hotels

Accessibility is a core part of Scandic's sustainability programme. They publish hotel-by-hotel accessibility information, so guests know what to expect.

What they built:

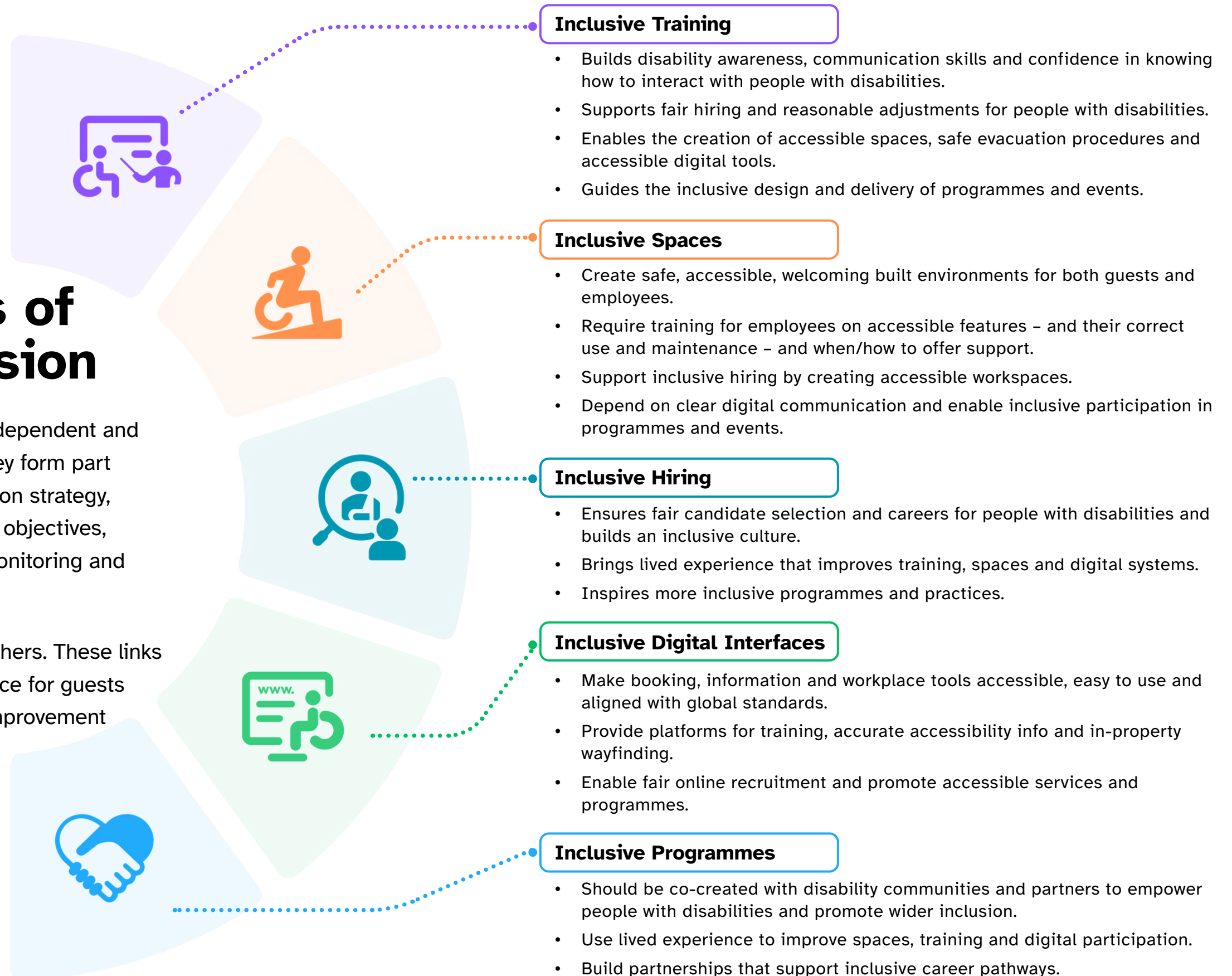
- A 159-point Accessibility Standard^[9] based on the full guest journey (from parking lot to room).
- Co-created with disability organisations, guests with mobility needs and frontline staff.
- 105 points are mandatory for all hotels; all 159 apply to new builds and renovations.
- Even though Scandic does not own most properties, they still influence accessibility through standards, training and daily operating procedures.
- Recognised internationally, the work is ongoing.

[9]Scandic Hotels' Accessible Standard, Scandic Hotels, 2023

The Five Pillars of Disability inclusion

The framework is built around five interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars. Together, they form part of an all-encompassing disability inclusion strategy, supported by clear policies, measurable objectives, adequate resourcing, and continuous monitoring and evaluation.

Progress in one pillar strengthens the others. These links create a consistent, accessible experience for guests and employees, and drive continuous improvement across the whole system.



Inclusive Training

01



Overview

Inclusive Training comes first because it supports every other pillar. It builds awareness, skills and confidence, so teams engage respectfully with guests and colleagues. This strengthens a culture of respect and inclusion and helps a hospitality business serve diverse needs well. Doing so reaches an underserved market, increases guest loyalty and revenue, builds stakeholder trust and strengthens brand value.

Inclusive training goes beyond disability awareness for front-line staff; it also supports leaders and back-of-house teams. It recognises different learning needs, including those of people with disabilities, so that training at every level can be accessible, inclusive and culturally appropriate. This gives everyone a fair chance to learn, contribute and grow.

Key Guidelines and Practical Application

How to develop training materials

The following section outlines how to develop training materials following best practice principles:



Collaborate closely with disability communities



Ensure training spaces and materials are accessible



Allow for multilingual versions and localisation



Designate required and function-specific modules



Establish training feedback mechanisms



Ensure the policies and practices of vendors and service providers align with your inclusive policy requirements



A group participating in a disability simulation activity is guided by a wheelchair user and a person with a vision impairment as they navigate the concourse at Southern Cross Station, Melbourne, Australia.

1 Collaborate closely with disability communities

- **Co-design with the community.**

Invite employees with disabilities, consultants with lived experience of disability and disability-related organisations to help design and deliver all training.

- **Set clear guidelines for providers.**

Create simple rules for selecting and working with local training partners, using a checklist and basic vetting steps.

- **Establish a feedback loop.**

Collect feedback from co-design partners and guests with disabilities. Review training regularly so it stays practical and up to date.



Points to consider when selecting training partners include, but are not limited to:

- **Relevant expertise and credentials:** Are key team members from the disability community? Do they hold certifications or a proven track record in inclusive training?
- **Experience with similar industries:** Have they successfully designed or delivered inclusive training programmes in a context similar to yours?
- **Collaborative approach:** Are they open to co-developing content with your organisation's internal experts and stakeholder groups?
- **Ongoing support and updates:** Are they willing to provide continual enhancements, refresher sessions and assistance to maintain the training's relevance over time?

Inclusive Training at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

Training is provided at managed hotels to equip team members with the skills, awareness and behaviours to deliver truly inclusive experiences to its guests. Disability awareness and inclusion training is integrated into onboarding and ongoing development for all team members, alongside Respect in the Workplace training and inclusive leadership modules.

At a corporate level, coordinated activities – including volunteering and awareness events – during Disability Awareness Month in October, amplify the focus on disability inclusion across the organisation. The company's commitment to corporate responsibility and community impact is also underscored by its Wish Days programme, which gives team members one paid workday each year to volunteer for a charitable cause of their choice.

2 Ensure training materials are accessible and user-friendly

- Provide all training materials in multiple accessible formats, including plain language versions, large-print, screen-reader-friendly text and Braille materials as needed.
- If required to support deaf employees, ensure sign-language interpreters are available during orientation and training sessions.
- Incorporate AI interpreters or provide subtitles and clear, concise transcripts for online training videos to facilitate understanding for all learners, particularly employees with disabilities.
- Employ flexible learning delivery methods to suit different learning styles, combining online and offline, videos, scenario simulations and workshops, each adaptable to the needs of different countries and departments.
- Regularly evaluate and update training materials and methods based on employee feedback to continuously improve accessibility and effectiveness.

3 Allow for multilingual versions and localisation

- If you operate in more than one country, localise training for each region (i.e. policies, examples, images, contact points etc.).
- Translate core modules into local languages, using plain, culturally appropriate terms, and avoiding idioms and jargon.
- Validate translations with local disability organisations and/or frontline employees, and include a short glossary of key terms.
- Keep a single “authorised version”, with strict version control, change permissions and update schedule.

For single properties, start simple: make core employee training and guest information available in the main local languages, with basic accessibility accommodations.

4 Design and designate required modules and function-specific modules

• Set required basics for everyone

All employees should complete core modules on disability awareness and inclusive etiquette. Alternatively, create a course for everyone that covers all core topics, entitled “Culture of Inclusion at XXX”.

• Separate “for everyone” from “role-specific”

Label modules clearly with titles, objectives and recommended durations. Suggested durations: e-learning 10–15 minutes per module (as a short series); live online workshops under 1 hour; in-person interactive sessions or drills 1–2 hours. Keep modules concise; timing may vary by format.

• Build role-specific modules

Tailor content by function and location (depending on local regulations and maturity). Examples include Front Desk, Housekeeping, Engineering, IT and Recruitment. Roll out in phases.

5 Establish training feedback and continuous improvement mechanisms

• Set up training feedback and continuous improvement

- Gather feedback from people with disabilities to assess effectiveness and relevance.
- Use a set of tools that work for different needs and learning styles – e.g. online questionnaires, short knowledge quizzes, scenario role-plays, or direct observation – to check how effective the training is.
- Use participant feedback to update and improve training materials regularly.

• Make sure vendors meet your inclusion requirements

- Share clear digital accessibility requirements with vendors of training platforms. Require compliance with WCAG 2.1 Level AA (or the latest applicable version). See the [Inclusive Digital Interfaces](#) section for details.
- Run regular basic training on disability awareness and accessibility for vendors, so their practices align with your inclusion strategy and requirements.

Property-Level Sample Training Modules

General training – for all employees

1 Setting the foundation: your vision for inclusion

- Introduce your purpose, goals and strategy for disability inclusion.
- Explain your values and the ALLY approach (Acknowledge, Learn, Leverage, Yield).^[10]
- Encourage all employees to be active advocates and agents of inclusion.

What is the ALLY principle?

Being an ally means taking regular action to support people from marginalised or underrepresented groups – in this case, people with disabilities – and helping to create a more inclusive workplace.

- **Acknowledge** – Recognise and respect the diverse abilities, perspectives and experiences of staff and guests.
- **Learn** – Actively seek knowledge and understanding of different needs, especially those of persons with disabilities.
- **Leverage** – Apply what you learn to improve services, environments and opportunities.
- **Yield** – Create positive impact for individuals, your organisation and the wider community by yielding the floor to people with disabilities to help identify and eliminate barriers.

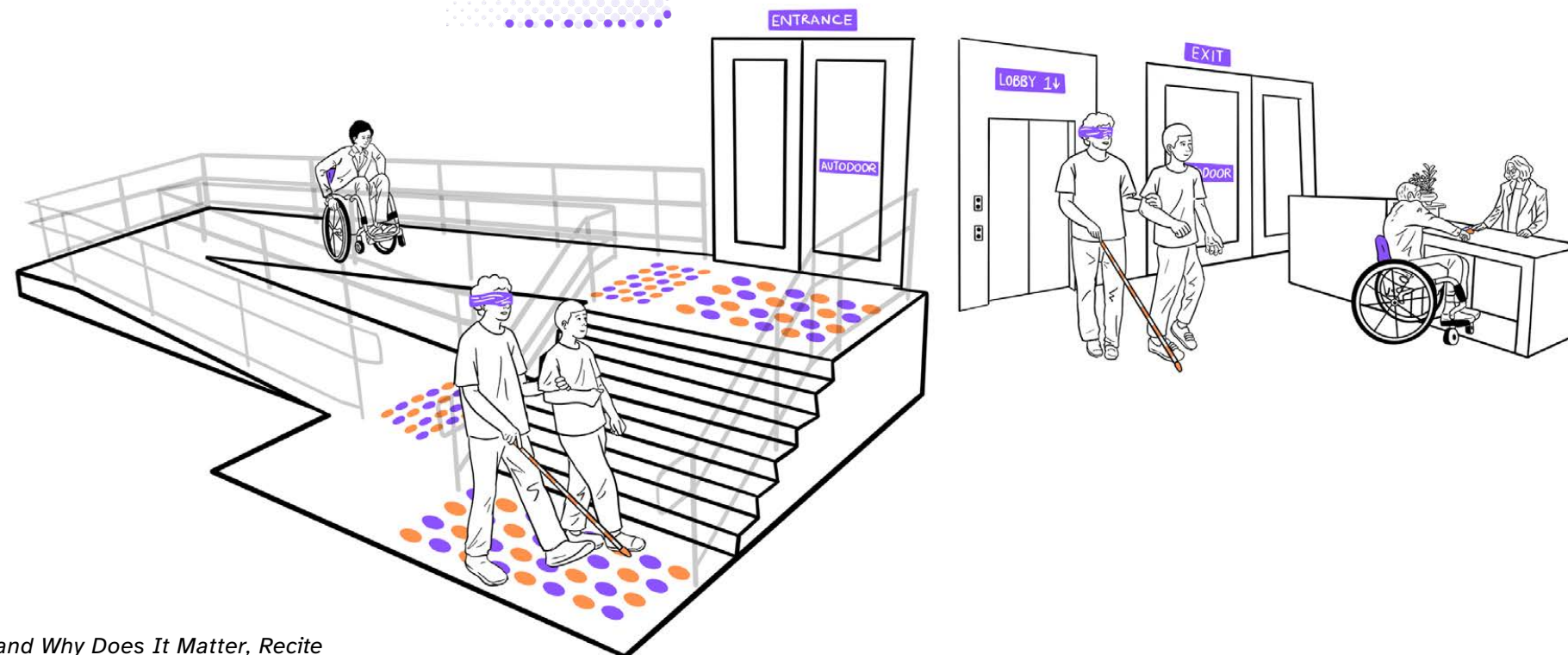
^[10][*Disability Inclusion*](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

2 Building awareness: understanding disability inclusion

- Acknowledge and respect different abilities. Outline the main disability types. Invite simple reflections from personal or community experience to normalise the topic.
- Highlight what guests and employees with disabilities value most: their key needs and common barriers.
- Changing stereotypes about disability: explain the shift from the medical model to the social model of disability, explain the difference between equality and equity^[11] and address harmful stereotypes like “inspiration porn”, that is, seeing disabled people as “inspirational” for simply living their lives.^[12]

Equality vs. Equity

Equality means giving everyone the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognises that people have different circumstances and allocates the resources and support needed to reach a fair (equitable) outcome.



[11]Equality Versus Equity: What's the Difference and Why Does It Matter, Recite

[12]"I'm not your inspiration, thank you very much", Stella Young Ted Talk, 2014

3 Taking actions: enabling inclusion in operations

- **Leverage and yield:** Use your role to promote accessibility; seek suggestions from people with disabilities (including lived experience via family or friends) to remove barriers step by step.
- **Emergency response and safety for all:** Training should cover personal evacuation plans, correct use of evacuation equipment and inclusive safety drills. Wherever possible, people with disabilities should be included in these drills.
- **Interdepartmental collaboration:** Train employees to coordinate across functions so accessibility requests and issues are handled quickly and well.

Travelling in the Shoes of Others: how Travellers Aid Australia raises disability awareness

Disability simulation is where people who do not have disability borrow wheelchairs, canes and other mobility equipment or use props to approximate the experience of disability. The usefulness of simulated disability to promote awareness attracts mixed opinions. Used in isolation, disability simulation can reinforce stereotypes and biases by emphasising feelings of helplessness among trainees. People with disability say it also has an unbalanced focus on physical impairment and does not demonstrate the complexity of their everyday experiences.

For this reason, Travellers Aid's experiential disability awareness programme, Travelling in the Shoes of Others, has been co-designed and is co-facilitated by people with disability. Travellers Aid has found that providing experiential learning, direct engagement with people with disability and a safe space for open dialogue results in more tangible outcomes than options such as self-guided online modules.

The programme is delivered primarily to staff in the transport sector and explores what it means to access public transport and public spaces with a disability. Workshops are customised for groups to explore a particular space or activity to understand barriers to access in the built environment for people with disability. Sessions involve facilitator introductions based on their lived experience, a central disability simulation activity, followed by a group debrief and Q&A.

Outcomes are measured through both qualitative and quantitative surveys completed before and after the session, and results demonstrate an across-the-board increase in disability awareness, confidence to interact with people with disability, and capacity to approach and provide assistance to wheelchair users or people with low vision or blindness. When asked to reflect on what they've learned and how they can apply it in their roles, participants often reflect on specific elements or procedures of their work or physical spaces in their environment, and the specific approaches that could be taken to improve the experience of people with disability. Participants also regularly note that the training has completely changed their perspective, or provided a "lightbulb" moment.



Left: As part of a disability simulation activity, a person with a simulated vision impairment is guided by his partner along a footpath.

Right: A Travellers Aid staff member sits in a wheelchair on a tram opposite a training facilitator who is a wheelchair user during a disability simulation activity.

4 Building skills: communicating and interacting effectively

- **Communication etiquette**
 - Train employees in the difference between "person-first" language (person with a disability/person with autism/hearing loss) and "identity-first" language (disabled person/autistic person/deaf person).
 - Use clear verbal and written communication; when relevant, use sign language and assistive technologies.
 - Practise with short videos and simple role-plays.
- **Empathy and simulated experiences (optional):** e.g. "Roll a Mile" or "Blindfold Wayfinding" exercises to build awareness of accessibility challenges.

Person-First vs. Identity-First Language

Person-first language (e.g. "person with a disability", "person living with autism") emphasises the individual before the disability. It is widely used to highlight that disability does not define a person's whole identity.

Identity-first language (e.g. "disabled person", "autistic person", "deaf person") reflects how some communities see disability as an integral and positive part of their identity.

Roll a Mile

Roll a Mile is a short, guided route audit using a wheelchair to move from arrival to key areas (e.g. lobby, lift, restroom, one guest room). Staff take turns pushing/rolling for 5–10 minutes to spot real barriers – tripping hazards, door weights, slopes, table or counter heights, missing or misleading signage, etc. – and log them for fixes.

Blindfold Wayfinding

Blindfold Wayfinding pairs two staff: one wears a blindfold; the other gives clear, step-by-step verbal directions along a safe, pre-checked route. It's brief (5–10 minutes), voluntary and supervised.

In each case, the goal isn't to simulate disability but to boost empathy and identify issues like poor contrast, unclear audio cues or clutter – and log actions to improve them.

Different training modules by function (examples only)



Front office and concierge



Goal

- Give employees the skills and confidence to support guests with disabilities from pre-arrival to departure, all while maintaining their dignity.



Core training topics

- **Before arrival:** Contact guests to confirm access needs and preferences.
- **Welcome and orientation:** At check-in, introduce key accessibility features and offer any assistive devices.
- **Assistive tech basics:** Show how to use devices such as vibrating alarms and visual doorbells.
- **Coordination across departments:** Record guest needs and share with other departments and teams, such as Housekeeping and Engineering.
- **Emergency preparedness:** Help guests complete their personal emergency evacuation plan on arrival.
- **Problem-solving:** Handle issues such as unauthorised use of accessible parking.



Recommended training formats

- Case studies
- Scenario simulations



Housekeeping



Goal

- Give Housekeeping the skills to prepare and maintain rooms that meet diverse access needs to ensure safe, comfortable, high-quality stays.



Core training topics

- **Room setup:** Set up a room for different accessibility needs; test features such as adjustable beds, low-height wardrobe rods, removable grab bars and emergency call buttons.
- **Temporary adaptations:** When a non-accessible room is assigned, assess if short-term adjustments are safe and feasible; document changes and restore after the stay.
- **Equipment check:** Conduct regular checks of items such as shower stools/benches, grab rails, emergency call devices and wheelchair-accessible pathways, promptly reporting issues to Engineering.
- **Amenity readiness:** Keep portable toilet chairs (commodes), bedside railings and extra lighting (e.g. desk lamps) ready for quick delivery.
- **Safety checks:** Identify and fix safety issues immediately (e.g. loose rails, cluttered paths, wet floors).
- **Cross-department communication:** Coordinate with Front Office to ensure guest requests and accessibility needs are updated in the system.



Recommended training formats

- Workshop
- Hands-on demonstrations
- Scenario simulations



Engineering / property maintenance



Goal

- Give Engineering/Maintenance the skills to run, maintain and explain accessibility features, so facilities stay safe, functional and inclusive for all.



Core training topics

- **Wayfinding and signage standards:** Apply guidelines to ensure clear, accessible route signage throughout the property.
- **Routine accessibility inspections:** Conduct regular maintenance of ramps, handrails, non-slip surfaces, lift announcements, emergency call devices, etc.
- **Assistive equipment operation:** Operate pool hoists, platform lifts and other accessibility-related equipment correctly and safely.
- **Accessible MICE facility setup:** Set up meeting/event spaces with features such as Communication Access Realtime Translation, hearing loop systems and sign-language interpreter arrangements; test before events.
- **Owner engagement:** Communicate with property owners about the value and benefits of accessibility upgrades and renovations.



Recommended training formats

- Workshop
- Scenario simulations



Food and beverage services



Goal

- Give food and beverage employees the skills to deliver an inclusive dining experience for guests with different disabilities, dietary needs and preferences.



Core training topics

- **Designated seating:** Reserve specific areas for wheelchair users; ensure comfort and accessibility.
- **Table height:** Use table risers to adjust table height to suit wheelchair users.
- **Room layout:** Arrange seating for wheelchair users and guests with low or no vision; keep clear circulation space and practical seating arrangements.
- **Accessible menus:** Provide large-print, Braille and digital menus with voice-read/screen-reader access via QR code; use illustrated versions where appropriate.
- **Respectful assistance:** Support guests with visual, hearing, mobility or cognitive disabilities as required.
- **Dietary and allergen awareness:** Identify and manage different dietary requirements and allergies (e.g. gluten intolerance, lactose intolerance, nut allergies, shellfish allergies); ensure awareness of potential allergens in all menu items.



Recommended training formats

- Workshop
- Scenario simulations



HR / hiring team



Goal

- Equip HR to run inclusive recruitment, onboarding and career development for employees with disabilities.



Core training topics

- Accessible recruitment:** Enhance accessibility in all stages of recruitment; use accessible interview venues; provide materials in accessible formats; offer reasonable accommodations; enable assistive technologies; offer remote interview options; keep communication clear and straightforward.
- Post-hire support:** Provide accessible workstations and tools (e.g. screen readers, captioning, magnifiers); arrange sign-language interpreters when needed; offer remote work options; set up employee resource groups/mentors; have reasonable accommodation policies; schedule regular check-ins with the manager and HR etc.
- Buddy system:** Select suitable buddies, give short, role-specific training, set clear roles and boundaries; hold regular check-ins; gather feedback from the employees, buddy and manager; adjust support as needs change; close with a review.
- Psychosocial and mediation basics:** Recognise communication-related stress, make timely referrals to counselling through employee assistance programmes, brief a neutral mediator (psychologist) when conflicts arise and source external partners where no in-house psychologist is available.



Recommended training formats

- Workshop
- Scenario simulations

Award-winning not-for-profit social enterprise hotel establishes Academy of Independence to train and employ people with disability

Hotel Etico Australia, established in the Blue Mountains in 2020, employs and trains young people with disability in hospitality and independent living skills. Their programme is based on a unique international model first established in Italy, in which young people with disability (18–35) are trained in hospitality and independent living skills in a fully operational hotel. They are employed across the entire business while learning independent living skills in the hotel's Academy of Independence.

The unique combination of work and life skills helps the young trainees to develop not only professional skills but also the confidence to pursue a career in hospitality. The ultimate aim is to give them the skills to live with dignity and independence. At the same time, hotel guests are given a unique and inclusive experience that changes hearts and minds about disability inclusion.

Since its establishment in 2020, Hotel Etico has employed and trained 55 young people, with over 80% of them going on to secure industry employment with more than 30 industry partners. Two new academies will soon open in Leura and Canberra. They will join the five hotels and one restaurant in Italy that are already part of the Albergo Etico family.



Employees with Down syndrome at Hotel Etico Australia work both front and back of house.



Digital / IT



Goal

- Equip digital and IT employees with the skills to design, maintain and enhance accessible digital platforms and systems for both guests and employees.



Core training topics

- **Accessible digital design:** Ensure all websites and apps comply with the latest WCAG standards; make interfaces user-friendly for all.
- **Booking platforms:** Add accessibility filters; show accessible features with clear descriptions and images; keep information accurate and up to date.



Recommended training formats

- Workshop
- Offline practices



Security and emergency



Goal

- Equip security and emergency staff to plan, coordinate and carry out safe evacuations for guests and employees with disabilities.



Core training topics

- **Evacuation guidelines:** Clear, step-by-step procedures; clearly marked accessible routes; use of specialised tools such as evacuation chairs for wheelchair users, vibrating alarms, visual alerts and SMS notifications.
- **Equipment maintenance:** Check and maintain all evacuation and safety equipment on a routine schedule so it is ready at all times. Keep simple logs.
- **Cross-department collaboration:** Work closely with Front Office, Security, Engineering, Housekeeping and other relevant departments to ensure smooth and coordinated emergency evacuations for guests and employees with disabilities.



Recommended training formats

- Workshop
- Roleplay
- Drills



Inclusive Spaces

02



Overview

Inclusive Spaces reflect a holistic approach to designing and maintaining environments that enable everyone – including people with disabilities, the elderly, pregnant women, those temporarily incapacitated and families with strollers – to access and use facilities independently, safely and comfortably. This applies to both guest areas and employee workspaces.

True inclusion means spaces are:

- Accessible
- Sensory-friendly
- Respectful of autonomy
- Adaptable
- Safe for all

The recommendations in this section are aspirational and do not override local building codes, internal design guidelines or brand touchpoints. Accessible features should be sensitively integrated to complement each property's design without compromising the guest experience.

Accessibility varies by region and property. Design decisions should be made jointly by local operations and engineering teams, balancing practical, financial and operational needs.

Creating inclusive spaces is a continuous journey, going beyond compliance with regulations. While full accessibility may not always be possible, businesses are encouraged to strive for ongoing improvements that enhance experiences for both guests and employees.

Inclusive design also presents business opportunities:

- To tap into an underserved market
- To strengthen brand equity
- To foster a responsible and inclusive culture

Acting on ongoing feedback, engaging in meaningful stakeholder collaboration and committing to consistent investment will result in improved guest satisfaction and deliver sustained returns.

Key Guidelines and Practical Application

Understanding and differentiating the needs of people with disabilities

The needs of people with disabilities vary greatly. Building upon the principles of Universal Design, we aim to address the specific needs of different disability groups, which include but are not limited to the following.



Autism and sensory sensitivities

Sensory-friendly spaces and quiet zones; sensory kits on request; reduce overstimulation from excessive light or noise.



Seniors and temporary disabilities

Grab rails; well-placed, appropriate seating for rest; intuitive digital information platforms; clear and logical layouts; easy-to-understand icons and pictures; appropriate infrastructure, furniture and equipment.



Invisible disabilities

Recognise the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme where available;^[13] flexible working and service policies; privacy-respecting communication; robust mental health support.



Mobility disabilities

Barrier-free access; suitable infrastructure, furniture and equipment; flexible layouts; no clutter and obstacles; information via QR code.



Visual disabilities

Tactile paths and Braille; high-contrast visual cues; suitable lighting; readable fonts on signs; screen-reader-compatible digital interfaces; information in large print and via QR code; clear, uncluttered routes.



Hearing disabilities

Visual or vibrating alarms; hearing loops / augmentation systems; real-time captioning; sign-language interpretation; clear visual aids.



Intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties

Simple and easy-to-read materials; clear and logical layouts; easy-to-understand icons and pictures; use of communication boards/tablets; intuitive digital information platforms.

[13] "What is the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower?" Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme, UK

Actively engaging people with disabilities in participation and feedback

It is important to engage people with disabilities and subject-matter experts in the design and construction phases of new developments and renovation projects to gather lived-experience input. All businesses should seek out and track feedback from guests and employees with disabilities, and make timely and targeted improvements based on that feedback.

Universal Design as the overarching principle

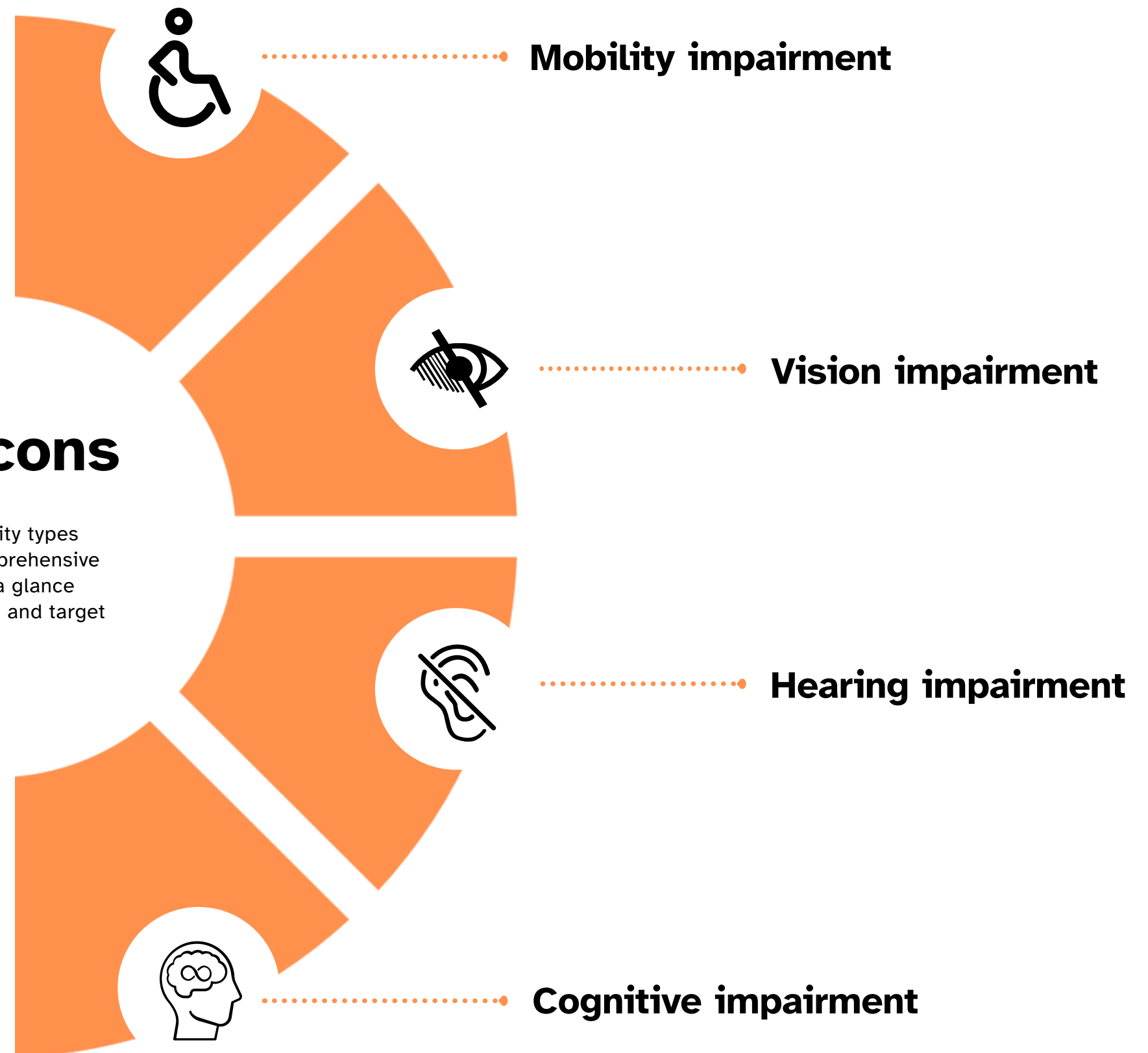
Adopting **Universal Design principles** shows an understanding that people with disabilities should not be treated as a group requiring special treatment – spaces should work for everyone. All guests and employees should be able to access and use spaces safely, comfortably and without barriers. That is the promise of Universal Design.^[14]

[14]Read more about Universal Design from the Centre for Universal Design Australia

Main Operational Guidelines for Inclusive spaces

Disability mapping icons

In the following section, each category is mapped to the disability types that would benefit most from proposed actions. This is not comprehensive or scientific, but may help you better understand the impact at a glance and choose priorities based on local context, accessibility goals and target markets when performing upgrades or renovations.



Pre-arrival, arrival and entrance

1 Provide information in advance



- Share detailed information to help guests plan and set clear expectations. Include floor plans and room plans, sensory environment descriptions, social stories, photos, videos (including virtual tours) and online access guides.
- Also provide: accessible parking details; public transport options; a list of additional equipment available on request (e.g. a shower chair or commode); and accessible information about the local area.
- Information should be offered in alternative formats.

2 Accessible routes and pathways



- Ensure the path from the parking to the entrance/lobby has ramps that meet local rules; is wide enough for wheelchair turning and two-way passing; and has a non-slip, even surface with no obstacles. Note: shorter ramps such as kerb ramps may be steeper, as long as they comply with local codes. On longer inclined paths, provide rest platforms.
- Install clear directional signage along both sides of the path to lobby, reception and main public facilities.

3 Accessible parking planning and design



- Provide accessible parking spaces near accessible entrances or lifts, allowing barrier-free access to the property lobby.
- Ensure spaces meet local codes, have high-contrast ground markings, prominent vertical signage and adequate lighting.
- Use a firm, level surface, avoiding soil, bark and gravel.
- Provide buffer space next to bays for side-opening doors, and for wheelchair users to enter or exit their vehicles.
- If accessible parking is unavailable close to the property, add clear wayfinding to the nearest accessible parking location and offer alternative transportation or assistance, as required.
- Designate an accessible drop-off zone near the entrance.

4 Accessibility to nearby public transportation



- Where feasible, provide a continuous wheelchair-accessible walkway from nearby bus stops or train/subway stations to the property. Keep it well lit, clearly signed and free of obstructions.
- At key intersections or points along critical routes, install tactile ground surface indicators to assist people with vision impairment in identifying direction and key locations.

5 Accessible information and communication



- At parking areas, pathways and entrances, provide accessibility information using text, universally recognised icons and QR codes to access information online.
- Place communication boards or tablets at Reception.

6 Property entrance and lobby access



- Equip the main entrance with automatic sensor doors or easy-to-operate automatic doors.
- Wherever possible, provide a sheltered route from the parking area to the lobby, so people with disabilities can access the building comfortably in all weather.

Quest Apartment Hotels, a member of The Ascott Limited, is the first multi-site hotel brand in Australia to achieve Accessible Accommodation's highest accreditation, with more than 90 properties receiving this recognition.



General suggestions for public spaces within the property

1 Doors and entrances



- Ensure doorways are wide enough for wheelchair users, with no threshold or a minimal threshold height to allow smooth access for wheelchair users and people with limited mobility.
- Automatic doors are ideal. If manual, keep them light, easy to open, with easy-to-grasp handles at waist-level height.
- Signage at door entrances should include Braille

2 Corridors and space



- Make sure corridors are wide enough for wheelchairs; remove obstacles (furniture/fixtures/decorations).
- Provide turning space so wheelchairs can move freely and access facilities.

3 Flooring



- Firm, level and slip-resistant surfaces.
- Avoid uneven surfaces and raised carpet edges.
- Avoid carpet with a very thick pile.

4 Furniture and equipment flexibility



- In accessible rooms: provide flexible and height-adjustable furniture (e.g. adjustable desks, movable chairs, chairs with and without armrests).
- In public areas (where feasible and without impacting on the guest experience) also provide chairs with/without armrests.

5 Accessible toilets



- Public areas should include accessible toilets with grab bars, emergency call features and wheelchair-adapted sinks and sanitation facilities.
- Keep them uncluttered; never use them as storerooms.
- Don't put bins next to an accessible toilet: wheelchair users need that space to transfer sideways onto the toilet.
- Where possible, consider having adult-sized changing tables.

6 Lifts

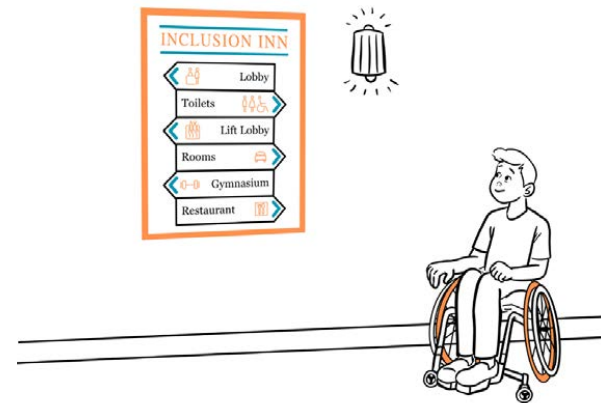


- Avoid touch-screen controls. Use raised buttons with Braille at a height convenient for wheelchair users and people of short stature.
- Install a mirror on the rear wall so wheelchair users can reverse out safely.
- Include audible floor indicators for guests with vision impairments.
- Show the floor level on the wall opposite the lift door to assist orientation.
- Keep space clear under lift call buttons (no bins, plants or ornaments) as they make it difficult for wheelchair users and people with low vision to access them.

7 Accessible signage



- Use plain language, readable fonts, and high contrast between text and background.
- Include internationally recognised symbols and Braille where appropriate.
- Keep style consistent and mount signs at heights per local code/regulation.
- Add tactile ground indicators and Braille at key points (lift buttons, main corridors, restroom entrances).



For illustration purposes only. Businesses should refer to their respective brand's signage guidelines for appropriate usage.

8 Multimodal information



- Provide interactive tools (e.g. QR code, audio navigation, touch-based interactive maps, Bluetooth beacons) to support vision- or hearing-impaired individuals to navigate.
- At entrances, offer a clearly marked help point for in-person assistance.

9 Lighting



- Use consistent, soft lighting; avoid glare and strong reflections.
- Provide task lighting for people with low vision.
- Avoid neon and/or strobing lighting that may disturb some neurodivergent guests.

10 Quiet areas



- Provide a quiet room/zone for guests experiencing sensory overload (e.g. guests with autism).
- Make sure the quiet room/zone is clearly signposted and easy to find; keep it uncluttered, with neutral décor to promote calm.
- Equip it with noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, stress balls sunglasses, earplugs and sensory items (e.g. weighted lap pads, sensory brushes).

11 Assistance and emergency facilities



- Designate waiting areas for guests/ employees with disabilities, with an emergency call button/telephone, to allow them to easily request assistance.
- Install clearly visible emergency call buttons in public accessible toilets and in accessible rooms/bathrooms, at reachable heights.
- Offer multiple alarm types – vibrating pillow alarms, flashing signals and audible announcements – to ensure timely fire warnings for guests with vision or hearing impairments.
- Conduct regular emergency evacuation drills so all employees are prepared to effectively assist guests and fellow employees with disabilities.



Kris Marinakis, Business Owner of Quest Burwood East and Quest Mont Albert, tests an evacuation chair for people with reduced mobility.

Lobby and reception

1 Accessible check-in



- Incorporate a lowered counter with knee clearance for wheelchair users and people of short stature.
- If a lowered counter isn't possible, provide a free-standing table near the front desk for use by wheelchair users and those unable to stand for long periods.
- Install a walking cane clip on the counter.
- Offer lobby seating, including chairs with armrests.
- Use mobile point-of-sale (POS) devices for guests who have difficulty reaching the counter.



A lowered counter from Holiday Inn Express Walsall, UK

2 Accessibility facilities and assistive devices



- Keep communication aids at the desk (e.g. portable communication boards, paper and pen, tablets, to support deaf or speech-impaired guests and guests with intellectual disabilities).
- Install induction loop systems and hearing-aid-compatible phones for deaf and hearing-impaired guests.
- Offer temporary loan of mobility aids (e.g. wheelchairs, walkers, canes, portable magnifiers and hearing assistive devices). Display clear signage at the front desk, on the website and in promotional materials to inform guests of this service.
- Offer sensory bags (e.g. noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, stress balls, sunglasses, earplugs or sensory-friendly items like weighted lap pads or sensory brushes).
- Set self-service facilities (e.g. water dispensers, vending machines) at a height comfortable for wheelchair users and people of short stature.
- Place QR codes at the front desk that link to audio or video guides about property services and facilities.
- Install an emergency call button at a reachable height in accessible rooms and bathrooms.
- Promote all available accessibility features online.

Bars and restaurants

1 Accessible space and furniture layout



- Keep clear circulation space so wheelchair users can move around easily.
- Make tables and chairs easy to reconfigure, including for groups with multiple wheelchairs.
- Keep table risers on hand to adjust table height when needed.
- Include at least one low-height section in bars, with adequate legroom to ensure wheelchair users can comfortably access bar services.
- Offer seating choice for different social needs: quiet single seats, small private tables and larger communal tables.
- Reserve some tables in quieter areas for guests with hearing loss or neurodivergent guests.



Equip the property with table risers to adjust the height of tables as required.

2 Accessible facilities and services



- Add low, easy-to-reach sections in buffet and beverage stations so all guests can self-serve.
- Provide assistive dining tools: easy-grip utensils, cups with straws and non-slip trays.
- Use mobile POS devices for guests who cannot reach the payment counter.
- Add food allergen labels to menus and buffet items.

3 Accessible menus and communication



- Offer menus in multiple formats: large-print, Braille, audio and digital via QR code; use illustrated versions where helpful.
- Encourage employees to proactively offer help (guiding, describing menus, helping with food collection, cutting up food before serving), while respecting autonomy.
- Set clear steps for reading menus aloud.
- Use the “clockface method” to describe plate layout for guests with low or no vision: for example, “Potatoes are at 12 o’clock, chicken is at 3 o’clock...” and so on.
- Offer meal delivery to guests with limited mobility.



Gym, pool and recreation areas

1 Outdoor areas, gardens and recreation spaces

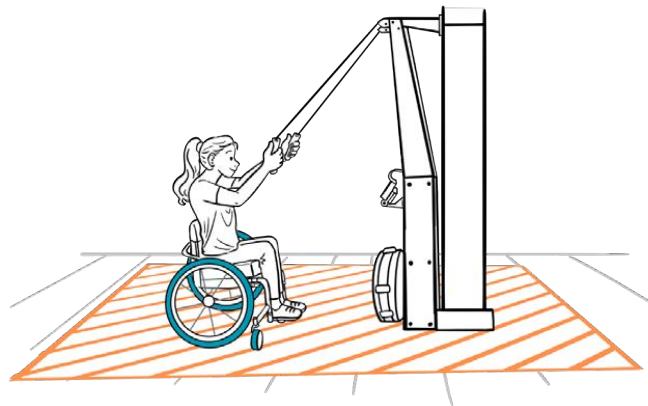


- Provide accessible pathways linking indoor areas to outdoor spaces, gardens and recreation zones.
- Keep paths smooth, even, obstacle-free and wide enough for wheelchairs.
- Ensure good/appropriate lighting, especially for evening use.

2 Gym



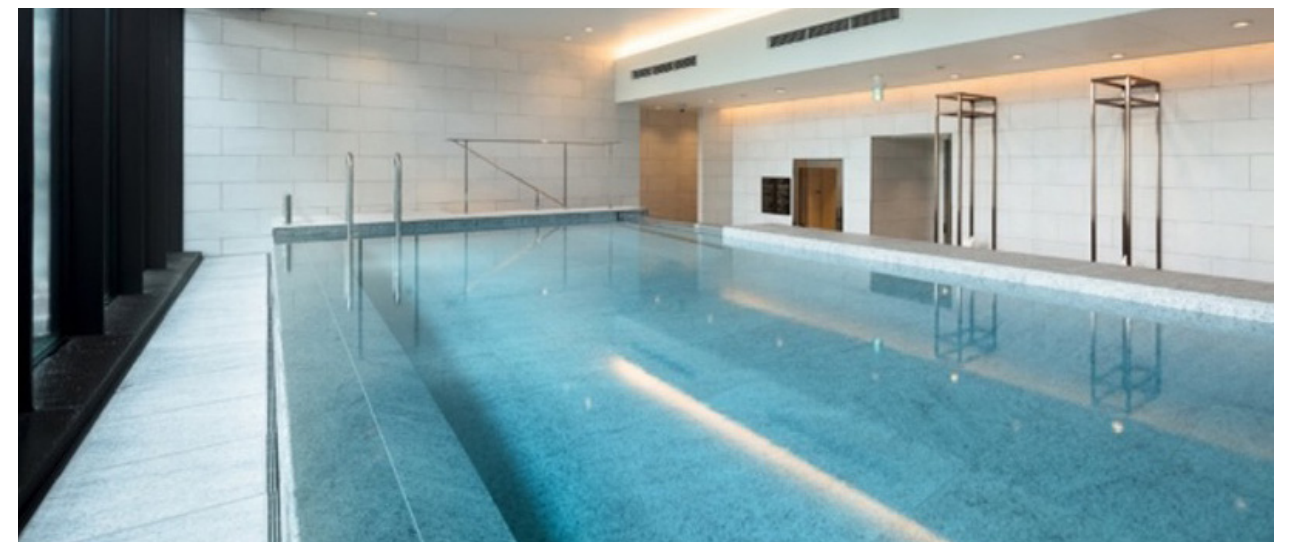
- Include accessible equipment for wheelchair users (e.g. seated resistance machines, upper-body trainers, hand-crank cycles).
- Place equipment at appropriate heights for independent use.
- Ensure sufficient circulation space around equipment to allow access for wheelchair users.
- Supply usage guides and safety instructions in multiple formats (large print, audio via QR code, Braille).
- Provide at least one treadmill or cycle with audible guidance and a large-font display for people with low or no vision.
- Offer lockers/storage that are easy to operate and at accessible heights for wheelchair users and people of short stature.
- Create an independent or semiprivate sensory-friendly workout area for guests sensitive to environmental stimuli.



3 Pool



- Provide accessible entry: pool lift, gently sloped ramp or inclusive step design.
- In changing rooms/showers, install accessible features such as grab bars, fold-down shower seats, adjustable-height shower fixtures, emergency call buttons and sufficient wheelchair manoeuvring space for comfort and safety.



Ascott Marunouchi Tokyo's swimming pool, featuring a discreet grab bar.



For properties with swimming pools, consider purchasing a pool hoist or making the pool area accessible so that families can share the pool area.

Guest rooms

1 Room entrance and internal circulation



- Install automatic or lightly sprung doors with a hold-open function for easy entry and exit. (Doors must still self-close for security and fire safety.)
- Fit accessible door locks with tap keycards at heights reachable when seated or standing.
- If keycard slots are used, make them easy to find and use with colour contrast, tactile indicators and clear labels.
- Provide tactile keycards with raised or embossed numbers.
- Room numbers should be consistently placed for all rooms, have suitable colour contrast and be tactile. Ideally, numbers should also be in Braille.
- Add auditory feedback to indicate doors locking and unlocking (beeps or voice prompts).
- Keep clear circulation space so wheelchair users can move and reach all features.
- Use easy-to-use lever or push handles on room/bathroom doors (no fine finger actions).
- Make balconies/patios/adjoining rooms step-free or add a threshold ramp.
- Install a peephole at wheelchair-user height.
- Wherever possible, install an interconnecting door wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair between accessible rooms and adjoining rooms for guests travelling with a caregiver.

2 Accessible bathrooms



- Provide a step-free, non-slip shower with a fixed bench or portable shower chair and grab bars.
- Fit a height-adjustable shower head and easy-to-operate lever taps reachable from the seat.
- Ensure soap and shampoo dispensers are reachable from the seat.
- Ensure towels are reachable by wheelchair users and people of short stature.
- Ensure hooks are reachable by wheelchair users and people of short stature.
- Install grab bars, non-slip flooring and an emergency call button reachable from floor level.
- Ensure adequate turning space and level entry.
- Ensure knee clearance under the sink. Use sensor or lever taps for ease of use.
- Keep at least one commode (wheeled shower/toilet chair), one over-toilet chair and one toilet riser per property.
- Stock more portable shower chairs than the number of designated accessible rooms, so standard rooms can also meet seated-shower needs.

3 Accessible kitchen



- Ensure adequate circulation space for wheelchair users.
- Install worktops at different heights to suit seated users.
- Use adjustable shelves in cabinets and pantries.
- Ensure sinks and taps are accessible for wheelchair users and people of short stature.
- Mount microwaves/ovens/dishwashers at usable heights (e.g. wall ovens, microwave drawers).
- Equip all designated accessible rooms with an easy-pour tipping kettle.
- Use sensor or touch-top bins (not foot-pedal bins).

4 Accessible furniture and equipment design



- Use colour-contrasted skirting boards and door frames to help guests with low vision.
- Use beds with moderate height and a firmer mattress to support easy, safe transfers.
- Leave clearance under the bed for a portable hoist, or make bed risers available.
- In at least one accessible room, provide a portable or ceiling hoist and a hi-lo electric bed for higher-support needs.



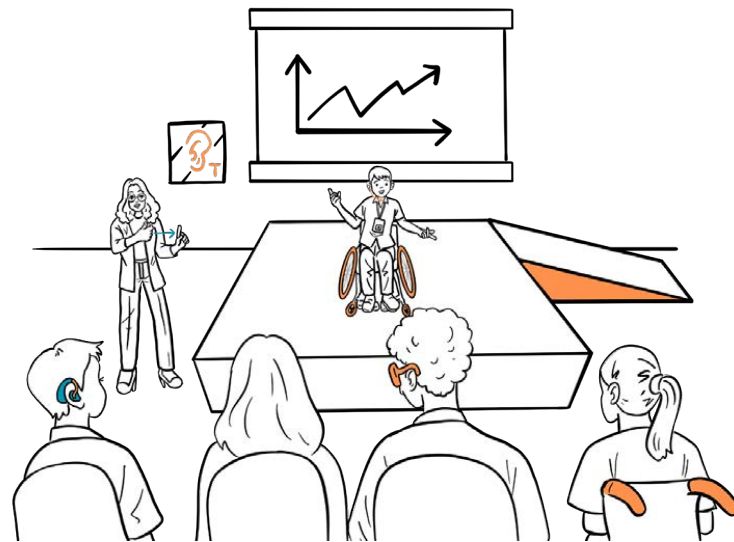
An electric hi-lo bed is an adjustable bed that can raise or lower the head, knees and feet, as well as the entire bed height, making transfers easier for people with limited mobility.

- Use waterproof mattress protectors.
- Keep clear space around the bed for wheelchair users.
- Provide accessible wardrobes/storage: appropriate height, easy-to-open handles (no recessed finger pulls) and lowered/adjustable rails.
- Place power outlets, light switches and air conditioning controls at reachable heights with no obstacles in front.
- Switches and remote controls should be easy to operate by people with limited finger function or low vision.
- Provide portable or cordless phones so guests with limited mobility can make calls from anywhere in the room.
- Install clearly labelled touch-control lamps so guests can easily switch them off/on.
- Add visual/vibration alerts for doorbells and phone calls for guests who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Install a full-length mirror in the bathroom and/or living area.
- Ensure TVs support captions and audio description; employees can help activate these on request.

MICE spaces (meeting rooms and events)



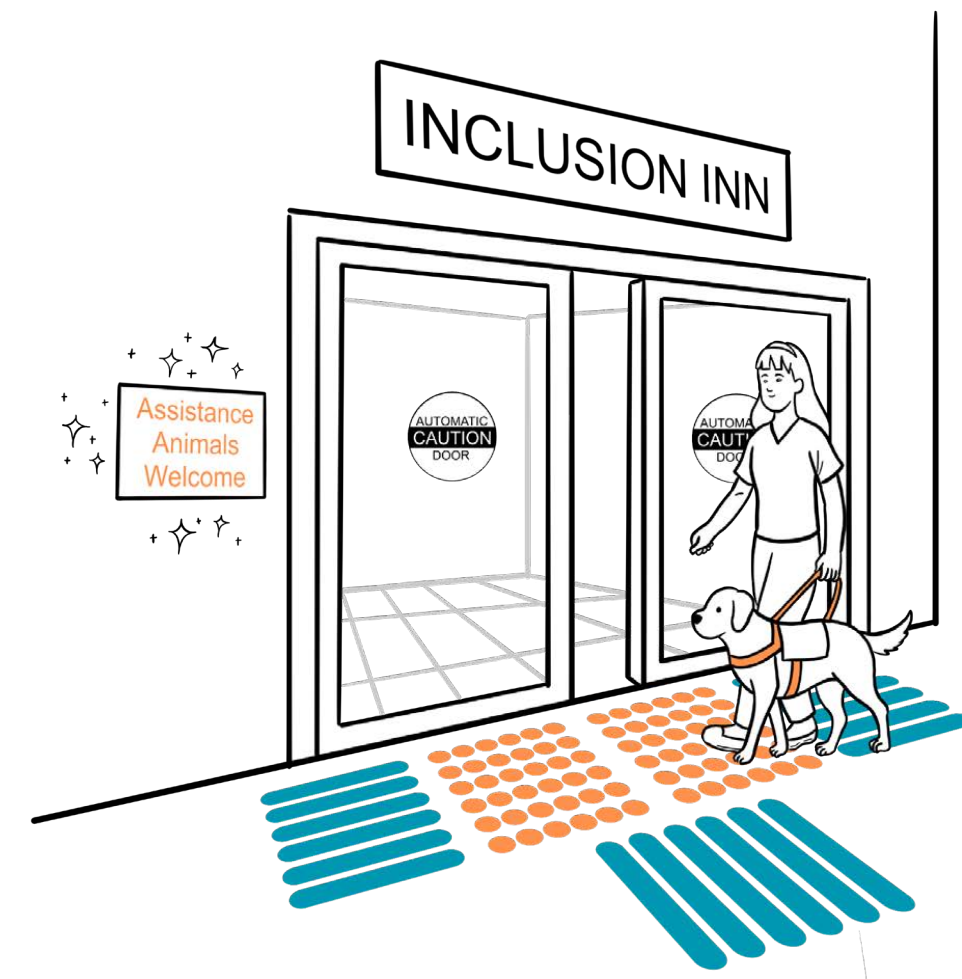
- Inform attendees about accessible public transport to the venue and accessible routes from public transport to the venue.
- Inform attendees about accessible drop-off points.
- Keep clear circulation space for wheelchair users.
- Reserve wheelchair spaces with good sightlines and easy access.
- Provide accessible routes (e.g. gentle ramps or platform lifts) to speaker platforms/stages to allow speakers with mobility impairments to access them independently.
- Highlight the route to the nearest accessible toilet.
- Offer height-adjustable or wheelchair-accessible podiums/stands.
- Make lapel microphones available for those unable to use hand-held mics.
- Provide meeting materials in multiple formats: large-print, Braille and digital/audio via QR code.
- Provide real-time captioning or sign-language interpretation upon request.
- Make hearing assistive systems (e.g. induction loop systems or portable assistive listening devices) available and display hearing loop signage where installed.
- Improve acoustics: use soft finishes to reduce background noise.
- Train event employees to offer help proactively (seating guidance, access to materials) while respecting autonomy.



Assistance animals



- State “Assistance animals welcome” on the website, in promotional materials and at the entrance.
- Allow assistance animals in all public areas, including dining areas, guest rooms and common areas.
- Provide a clearly signposted toileting area for assistance dogs.
- Have a water bowl available for service animals.



Workspaces

1 Office facilities and layout



- **Desks and chairs**

Provide height-adjustable desks and workstations, with knee clearance to ensure wheelchair users and employees with limited mobility can work comfortably.

- **Storage**

Position storage and filing cabinets at an appropriate height with easy-grip handles (no finger slots), so everyone can access them easily.

- **Switches and sockets**

Install switches, power outlets and similar facilities at accessible heights for wheelchair users and people of short stature.

2 Accessible communication and assistive devices

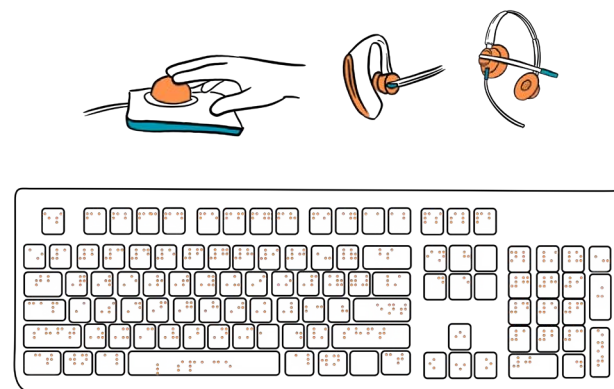


- **Multimodal tools**

Equip offices with assistive technologies such as screen-reader-compatible software, large-font keyboards, adaptive mice and speech-to-text systems to help employees with vision, mobility or hearing impairments.

- **Hearing assistance systems**

Provide hearing support systems (e.g. induction loops or portable hearing aids) in office areas, so employees with hearing impairments can easily participate.



3 Training and skill development spaces



- Provide barrier-free training facilities that simulate real office environments, enabling employees with disabilities to safely practise and enhance their independent working skills.

4 Sensory-friendly and social spaces



- **Sensory-friendly work areas**

Offer dedicated or semiprivate workspaces for employees with autism or sensitivity to environmental stimuli, helping them stay focused and work efficiently.

- **Community spaces**

Designate and design specific areas for employees with sensory disabilities to engage in social activities.

5 Supportive facilities and rest areas



- **Accessible break areas**

Provide tea rooms or lounges with flexible layouts, suitable furniture and easy-to-use equipment for daily needs.

- **Quiet rooms**

Designate a room with sensory kits (e.g. noise-cancelling headphones, fidget items) for anyone who needs a calm space.

- **Accessible restrooms**

Locate near office areas, equipped with grab bars, emergency alert features and wheelchair-friendly washbasins.

Maintenance and feedback



Daily maintenance

- Inspect public areas, guest rooms, offices and meeting rooms. Keep accessible routes clear.
- Check accessible restrooms for cleanliness and working features.
- Check accessible parking. Act promptly on any misuse or violations.



Monthly maintenance

- Inspect accessibility features in public areas, restaurants/bars, gyms and pools.
- Do at least one full inspection each month of all accessibility facilities, with special focus on hearing loops and fire alarm systems.
- Maintain a rapid response process for faults.



Quarterly maintenance

- Run a comprehensive inspection across the property. Include signage systems, doors and windows, ramps, emergency alarms, furniture and lighting.
- Confirm everything functions as intended.



Maintenance budget

- Set a dedicated budget for maintenance of accessibility facilities.
- Use it to fund routine checks, repairs and replacements.



Feedback

- Establish accessible feedback channels for guests and employees.
- Assign dedicated personnel to regularly consolidate feedback, track fixes and close issues.
- Summarise feedback regularly (monthly or quarterly) to guide maintenance and upgrades.

Inclusive Hiring

03



Overview

Inclusive hiring means taking proactive steps so all job seekers – including people with disabilities – have equal, fair access to jobs. It uses standardised, transparent processes and shows a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Inclusive hiring goes beyond job posts and interviews. Success needs a whole system that is friendly and accessible, including policies and governance, digital interfaces, workspaces and training.

Inclusive hiring helps attract and keep talent, serve customers better and strengthen culture. It also grows brand value, loyalty, innovation and productivity by opening up new talent pools. Hiring people with disabilities brings unique skills and perspectives, which strengthens the organisation and builds empathy. Clear policies and actions also support social equity, competitiveness and long-term growth, enhancing brand value.

Key Guidelines and Practical Application

Before hiring

1 Build and publish disability employment policies

- Develop and publicly release a disability employment policy.
- Make sure all practices align with the internal goals, local laws and regulations.
- Set clear, measurable (short-/medium-/long-term) targets aligned with local laws and regulations.
- Involve employees with disabilities (or representatives) in policy development and implementation to ensure the policy is practical and effective.

2 Clarify non-discrimination policies and feedback

- Develop clear workplace non-discrimination policies covering all aspects of recruitment, hiring, promotion, training, job transfer, evaluation and dismissal, ensuring fair and just treatment for all employees, including employees with disabilities.
- Create a channel to report disability-related discrimination anonymously.
- Create a five-pillar feedback channel to collect and organise constructive input and best-practice examples.
- When a complaint is made, respond quickly, follow a set investigation process and ensure fairness. Use informal or formal remedies as needed.
- Review the process regularly and train employees on prevention, handling and escalation.

3 Fair promotion and career development

- Define career development paths for employees with disabilities. Ensure equal access to development, promotion and training. Keep standards and processes transparent and fair.
- Consider developing and offering tailored career counselling and mentorship programmes to employees with disabilities.
- Strictly prohibit any bias or discrimination in performance evaluation, promotion decisions and training nominations. Base decisions on abilities, performance and results.
- Where possible, include disability representatives on policy/implementation/review committees.
- Hold regular feedback/development conversations so employees understand their path and get timely support.

4 Enhance the disability awareness and communication skills of the recruitment team

- Provide targeted training for recruiters and hiring managers.
- Cover common disability types, their likely needs and how to match candidates to suitable roles and tasks.
- Strengthen communication skills: ask (don't assume), use plain, respectful language and offer reasonable accommodations during interviews.
- During the hiring process, keep interactions unbiased and professional; avoid subjective assumptions and ensure communication is clear, effective and respectful.

5 Cross-departmental collaboration and external partnerships

- Strengthen collaboration with HR, management, labour unions and disabled people's organisations so plans meet real needs.
- Proactively establish long-term partnerships with social enterprises and disabled people's organisations to improve the effectiveness and inclusivity of recruitment through shared resources, channels and experiences.

6 Conduct workplace accessibility self-assessment and optimisation

- **Environment and facilities:** Regularly assess offices and public areas against Universal Design: wheelchair routes, accessible lifts/toilets, clear signage and assistive tech.
- **Reasonable accommodations:** Provide reasonable accommodations as needed (e.g. adjustable desks/chairs, screen readers, sign-language interpretation, plain-language materials).
- **Maintenance:** Set a maintenance routine to keep accessibility features safe and reliable.
- **Digital interfaces:** Ensure recruitment sites and internal systems meet WCAG; support accessible communication (e.g. sign language, Braille outputs, plain language).
- **Accessible materials:** Provide accessible formats for all training/online resources so everyone has equal learning opportunities.
- **Flexible work:** Where the role allows, offer flexible hours, remote/hybrid options and tech support for home-office assistive tools.

Lemon Tree Hotels' long history of inclusive employment

Lemon Tree Hotels is one of the largest hotel chains in India, with more than 120 properties in 80 cities under seven different brands spanning all segments from economy to upmarket. In the belief that their brands should stand for more than just profit, they have been a dedicated equal-opportunity employer for nearly two decades, beginning their inclusion initiative in 2007 in one hotel with two deaf team members. Soon after, they started recruiting more speech- and hearing-impaired colleagues, beginning with five hotels in three cities. To ensure all team members understood the inclusion initiative and how to engage with people with disability they developed an induction and sensitisation programme. Furthermore, to facilitate the integration of hearing-impaired employees the whole workforce now has a basic Indian Sign Language ability.

At first, employees with disability were employed in back-of-house roles, but Lemon Tree soon extended this initiative to guest contact areas such as restaurants, re-engineering service processes and training programmes accordingly. Now, the organisation employs people with a wide range of disabilities, including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities – such as those living with Down syndrome and autism – as well as physical disabilities and low vision. Not only that, Lemon Tree also aims to provide equitable employment opportunities for other marginalised groups, including acid attack survivors, school drop outs and members of the LGBTIQ+ community. Currently, Lemon Tree employs more than 400 people with disability (about 4.5% of the workforce) and more than 1200 people (about 14% of the workforce) from economically and socially marginalised communities. Over the last 18 years, more than 5000 employees with disability have worked with Lemon Tree and either moved on to other opportunities or continued to build their careers within the organisation.

The inclusion initiative at Lemon Tree has been sponsored and driven by the leadership team – from the Executive Chairman through corporate function heads and senior vice presidents – and incorporates all departments, including HR, learning and development, operations, revenue, engineering, housekeeping, food and beverage, sourcing and security/administration. This is because management sees the business benefits in hiring people from diverse backgrounds, including a larger talent pool, increased creativity, increased employee engagement and satisfaction, and most importantly reduced attrition. Management also acknowledges the competitive advantage and brand value these activities build, not to mention the improved customer loyalty.



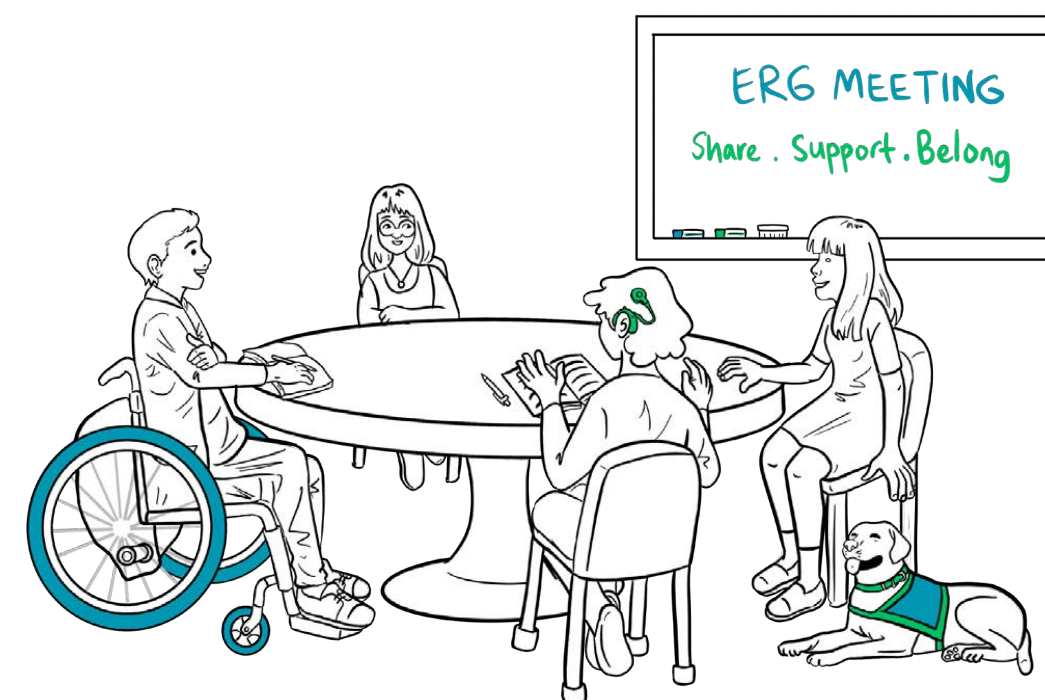
Left: Casual interaction among Lemon Tree team members – a deaf woman, a manager without disability and two team members with Down syndrome.

Right: Two team members with Down syndrome fold napkins in a coffee shop.

7 Foster an inclusive corporate culture and team atmosphere

An inclusive culture and strong disability awareness help new hires with disabilities integrate and grow. It's important to build awareness among all employees as part of a friendly, respectful team culture.

- **Disability awareness training for all employees**
 - Run regular, practical training on disability etiquette, communication skills and simple simulations to build empathy.
 - Keep an internal info hub up to date: use the intranet, bulletin boards, handbooks and internal comms to share policies, legal updates and other disability-related information.
- **Internal support networks**
 - Create Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) for employees with disabilities to share information, connect and support each other.
 - Set up a Buddy System to pair new hires with disabilities with experienced colleagues for social integration and immediate peer support. Train buddies in general awareness and role-specific support for the employees they are helping.
- **Build an inclusive team environment**
 - With the new hire's consent, plan team introductions so they can integrate quickly and avoid misunderstandings.
 - Keep email communication clear and concise to improve everyone's work experience.
 - Provide post-hire support and coaching; identify and leverage each person's strengths to improve property operations and overall team performance.
- **Psychosocial wellbeing and communication support**
 - Offer confidential access to a psychologist/counsellor.
 - Equip employees with skills on simple sign language, non-verbal tips and how to speak up with respect. Partner with external consultants/non-government organisations if internal resources are not available.



What is an Employee Resource Group (ERG)?

An Employee Resource Group is a voluntary, employee-led network that brings together individuals with shared identities, experiences or interests – such as employees with disabilities. ERGs provide a safe platform for peer support, information sharing and collaboration, while also giving management valuable insights into workplace needs. By amplifying employee voices, ERGs help build community, foster inclusion and strengthen both staff engagement and organisational culture.

What is a Buddy System?

A Buddy System pairs a new employee – such as a person with a disability – with an experienced colleague who acts as a mentor and peer supporter. The “buddy” helps the new hire navigate workplace routines, understand available resources and build social connections within the workplace. Effective Buddy Systems include training for buddies so they can provide respectful, tailored support. This approach eases onboarding, reduces feelings of isolation and promotes smoother integration into the workplace.

Hiring and interviewing

1 Write inclusive job advertisements

- State clearly that people with disabilities are welcome and that reasonable accommodations are available.
- Use plain language; avoid health/age/ability-coded or gendered terms.
- Use authentic images only with permission/consent (especially on careers pages).
- Focus on core duties and real skills (e.g. say “ability to travel to client meetings” instead of “must be able to drive”).
- Provide a contact point for recruitment inquiries.
- Offer job info in alternative formats on request (Braille, large print, audio).

2 Offer multiple application methods

- Provide online and offline application channels.
- Ensure the online platform is screen-reader compatible and accessibility tested regularly.
- Explain the steps and timelines of the process and how to request accommodations.
- If there are tests or practical tasks, inform candidates in advance so they can request adjustments.

3 Attract diverse candidates

- Post job advertisements on platforms used by the disability community (disabled people’s organisation websites, government services, disability job boards).
- Encourage targeted referrals.
- Run recruitment campaigns specifically targeting people with disabilities.



Disability inclusion at The Merrion Hotel

The Merrion operates on the principle that genuine hospitality is rooted in inclusivity, and therefore welcomes not only guests but also colleagues exactly as they are. One of their most meaningful partnerships in this area is with The Together Academy, an innovative social enterprise dedicated to creating employment opportunities for young adults with Down syndrome.

The Together Academy was founded in response to a striking reality: 90% of adults with Down syndrome in Ireland are unemployed. In partnership with the Education and Training Board, and Quality and Qualifications Ireland, the academy delivers a two-year certified training programme – Employability Skills – focused on culinary, hospitality and retail. The course equips students with the skills, confidence and experience to transition into meaningful employment.

The Merrion was proud to be one of the academy’s first hospitality partners and employers. Two graduates – Michael and Conor – have become valued members of their team, contributing daily to the warmth, professionalism and spirit that define The Merrion. Their success is a testament to the power of inclusive employment, demonstrating that when opportunity meets support, talent flourishes. As Billie Jeanne King said, highlighting the importance of representation, “You have to see it to be it”.

The Merrion is proud to be part of that vision – championing a hospitality industry where everyone belongs.



4 Inclusive interview methods

Inclusive interview methods aim to ensure that all candidates, regardless of their disability status, have a fair, comfortable and respectful interview experience. This includes offering flexible and diverse interview options, along with necessary accommodations, to candidates with diverse needs.

Before the interview

- Offer remote/online interview options where helpful.
- Confirm any reasonable accommodations in advance (e.g. sign-language interpretation, assistive listening devices, captions for online meetings, plain-language or visual-aid materials).

Venue accessibility

- Ensure the interview location is accessible, with facilities such as accessible pathways, lifts and restrooms.
- Inform candidates in advance about the facilities and specific arrangements to help them prepare.

Employment tests and medical examinations

- Do not create special tests only for people with disabilities.
- Do not require a medical exam before a formal offer, unless all candidates for the same position are required to undergo the same tests.
- If rejecting a candidate due to disability, you must show the decision is tied to essential job functions and business needs.

Self-identification (Self-ID)

- Self-ID is voluntary. Do not force or indirectly pressure candidates to disclose health or disability info before hire.
- Explain that Self-ID data is used only for internal DEI statistics and to identify appropriate accommodations; it does not affect hiring decisions.
- Provide a private channel for accommodation requests so candidates do not need to disclose publicly.
- Follow local laws on collection, storage and use of Self-ID data; protect privacy and security at all times.

Interview “dos and don’ts”



Prohibited questions (do not ask)

- “How did this happen?”
- “How long have you been like this?”
- “How do you commute to work?”
- “What kind of treatment do you receive?”
- “Do you have a mental health issue that affects work?”
- General questions about the candidate’s overall health, specific medical conditions or medication use.
- Personal life questions not related to the role.
- Do not disclose a candidate’s disability status to others without permission.



Permissible questions (job-related)

- “How would you complete [a specific task]?”
- If the candidate voluntarily mentions it or if their disability is apparent, do not assume. Ask “Do you need any accommodations to perform the job tasks?”
- “Can you meet the Company’s basic attendance requirements?”
- Safety-related questions tied to essential job tasks.
- “Are there any adjustments to the work environment that will help you do the job better?”
- “Do you need more information or training to do the job safely?”

What is Self-Identification (Self-ID)?

Self-identification means a candidate or employee chooses to share information about a disability or health condition. It must always be optional – no one should be forced, pressured or indirectly required to disclose this information during hiring or before they start work.

When collected, Self-ID data should only be used to analyse diversity and inclusion efforts. It must also follow all privacy and data protection rules.

Success stories and continuous improvement

1 Sharing success stories

- Create channels to share real cases of recruiting and developing employees with disabilities.
- Invite successfully hired employees with disabilities – and/or their managers – to share hiring and career stories.
- Use multiple formats to spread these stories: newsletters, intranet, workshops and experience-sharing sessions.

2 Establish a recruitment feedback mechanism

- Provide accessible, standardised feedback for the hiring process (surveys, interviews, online forms).
- Collect input from all applicants – successful and unsuccessful – and from recruiters.
- Ask about accessibility of facilities, accommodations, communication and overall experience.
- Analyse feedback regularly to find gaps, set improvement priorities and define actions so practices match the needs of people with disabilities.
- Regional HR leaders should run regular internal workshops with property employees, business units and employees with disabilities to review feedback and refine strategy.

3 Strengthen communication strategies

- Provide ROI data and successful case-study analyses to show the long-term practical and economic benefits of inclusive recruitment.
- Arrange site visits to locations that have successfully implemented inclusive recruitment and accessibility upgrades to build knowledge, engagement and enthusiasm.

How two Four Seasons hotels proudly embrace inclusive hiring

Following best practice, Four Seasons properties in Greece and Hong Kong have partnered with local disability-related organisations to provide opportunities for people with disability.

The team at Four Seasons Astir Palace Hotel Athens is deeply committed to inclusion, with a key focus on welcoming and supporting people of all abilities as employees. Its Employment Inclusion Program supports neurodiverse employees in partnership with Nevronas, a non-government organisation that works alongside people with disabilities to emphasise their skills, protect their rights and promote their full participation in society and the economy.

Additionally, the property seeks to promote learning and empathy through a structured educational programme. In partnership with Anagennisi – an association of parents and friends of autistic people – the property hosted an event and discussion to increase awareness on autism.

In 2023, the property also partnered with Herbox AB, a women-owned Swedish company, to provide 100% organic cotton menstrual products to female employees with a view to transforming the property into a “period-friendly” workplace. After a successful pilot, the practice was made permanent in 2024.

Since 2021, Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong has partnered with a local agency to provide meaningful learning and employment opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. The Hong Chi Association is dedicated to educating, training and empowering people with intellectual disabilities. In 2024, the team at Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong hosted four students connected to Hong Chi, working with the organisation and the students to identify appropriate full-time roles and adapt them to the students’ abilities and interests.

Each student received personalised training and was paired with a mentor, or “buddy”, who supported their integration into the team. The partnership has been a win-win, with students demonstrating impressive commitment and growth as they’ve worked alongside Four Seasons colleagues to contribute to an exceptional experience for guests of the property.



**Inclusive
Digital
Interfaces**

04



Overview

Inclusive digital interfaces go beyond basic accessibility features on websites or applications – they involve a comprehensive consideration of the diverse needs of users, especially people with disabilities. It's vitally important to design, develop and continuously enhance digital products and services to ensure they are intuitive, accessible and inclusive for everyone.

For guests, this means clearer accessibility information, a smoother booking experience and broader appeal. For employees, it leads to increased productivity and greater job satisfaction. For the business, it reflects your values, reduces legal risk, strengthens brand reputation and lowers long-term costs by minimising rework and complaints.

Inclusive digital design also fuels innovation, delivering better experiences not just for some but for all.

Key Guidelines and Practical Application

Digital accessibility principles



Inclusive by design

- Consider the needs of users with disabilities from the start, avoiding "fixing it later".
- Involve diverse users, including people with disabilities, throughout the process (design, testing and iteration).
- Use assistive technologies during product development to simulate real use.



Usability (POUR)

Adhere to the four key principles of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines for digital accessibility:

- **Perceivable:** Information and user interface components must be presented in ways that users can recognise and understand.
- **Operable:** Users can navigate and operate controls in different ways
- **Understandable:** Information and user interfaces must be clear and comprehensible.
- **Robust:** Content works with different browsers, devices and assistive technology.

These principles help all users to access and use digital services easily and reliably.



Safety and privacy

- Protect user privacy and data security, including for users with disabilities.
- Prevent information leakage or misuse.



Multilingual support

- If operating in multiple countries, provide localised content and support for local languages.

How to develop accessible digital interfaces



User research

- Run interviews with people with disabilities to identify real needs and pain points.
- Use personas – fictional, generalised representations of users with different access needs – to define representative user profiles.



Design and development phase

- Involve people with disabilities and subject-matter experts in the design, early-stage testing and optimisation of digital interfaces.

Principles for writing alt text



- Use accurate, concise and descriptive language to summarise image or non-text content (e.g. symbols, icons and emojis).
- Avoid generic descriptions; say what the images actually shows.
- For decorative images, use an empty alt text (alt=""), allowing screen readers to skip it.
- For complex images (such as charts or infographics), provide a brief summary in the alt text and add a longer explanations below the image or via a link.
- Avoid phrases such as "click here" or "this image shows".
- For linked images, write alt text that describes the destination (what users get when they activate it).

Design recommendations for different types of disabilities



For people with visual disabilities

- Add alt text for images and non-text elements.
- Ensure screen reader and voice control compatibility.
- Use high-contrast; allow zoom and text size adjustment.
- Provide audio-description for video content.
- Avoid the use of a carousel to display photos.
- Don't convey information only with the use of colour, or bold or italic text.



For people with hearing disabilities

- Add captions or real-time subtitles to all video content.
- Provide alternative communication channels (e.g. SMS, email, web chat).
- Offer sign-language interpretation for videos and webinars.
- Where audio is used, also provide the same info in writing.



For people with intellectual disabilities

- Use simple and plain language.
- Use clear, direct language (avoid metaphors or sarcasm).
- Use images and/or symbols to support text where helpful.
- Avoid the use of a carousel to display photos.



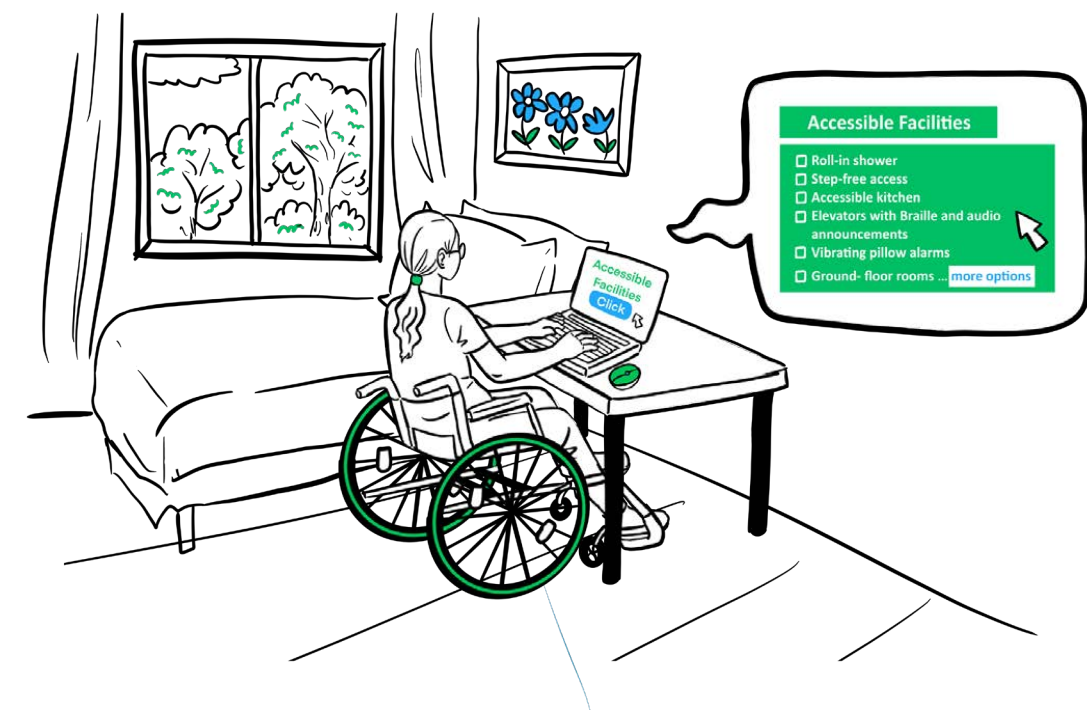
For people with sensory disabilities/autism

- Avoid overly bright colours and excessive animation.
- Keep language clear and direct; avoid metaphors or sarcastic expressions.
- Use images and/or symbols, where possible and appropriate, to supplement text to support comprehension.
- Avoid the use of a carousel to display photos.



For people with motor disabilities

- Support keyboard navigation, allowing full access without a mouse.
- Provide large buttons/links for easier clicking.
- Support alternative inputs (e.g. voice control and eye-tracking).
- Avoid the use of a carousel to display photos.



Regular audits and establishment of feedback channels



Feedback mechanisms

- Set up a “one-click feedback” button on website and app to enable users to promptly report accessibility issues on digital interfaces for fast follow-up.
- Create channels for feedback on the website and app for questions about accessible facilities and inclusive services.
- Create an intranet channel where employees can share suggestions on workspaces, digital systems, inclusive hiring and HR support to drive continuous improvement.



Regular audits

- Conduct regular WCAG compliance audits across all digital interaction interfaces.
 - Use automated tools (e.g. Powermapper, SortSite, WAVE, Lighthouse) to identify common issues. In some regions and languages, automated accessibility tools may face limitations. In this case, engage third-party experts for manual audits instead.
 - Perform manual testing, including but not limited to keyboard navigation, screen reader compatibility and sound-off scenarios.
 - Invite users with disabilities to conduct User Acceptance Testing (UAT) in real-life scenarios, record issues and implement fixes.

Radisson's deep commitment to universal digital access

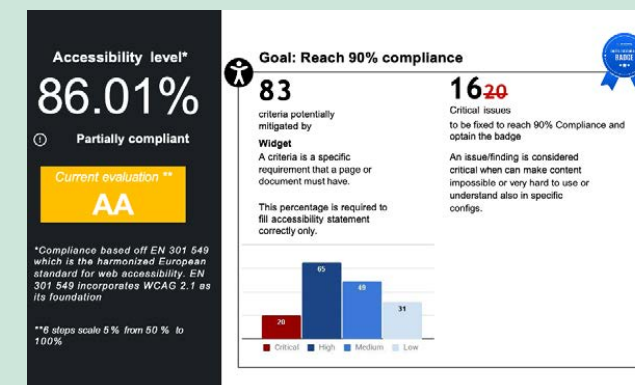
By strategically blending advanced technology, thoughtful design and purpose-driven partnerships, the Radisson Hotel Group is setting new standards for how digital platforms can empower individuals with disabilities. Its mission is to redefine the guest experience through championing accessibility and inclusion for everyone, with accessibility deeply integrated into every layer of its digital ecosystem.

Radisson has already achieved 86% WCAG AA compliance and is on track to reach 100% compliance across its web and native app platforms. But its efforts to achieve digital accessibility go beyond compliance – they are an expression of its core values. While their efforts represent a proactive approach to the *European Accessibility Act*, they also show a commitment to ensuring that guests with diverse needs can seamlessly engage with all its digital services.

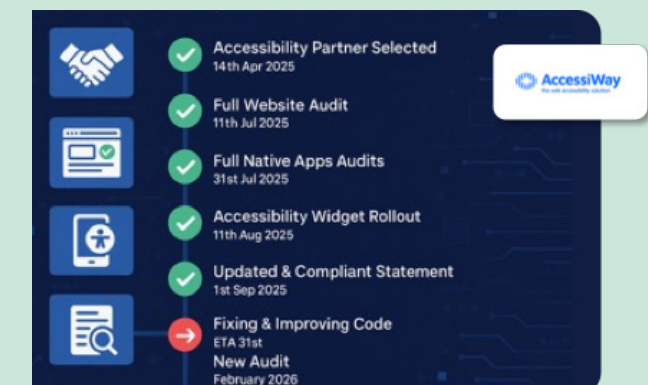
Their platforms incorporate AI-powered smart search, immersive content and personalised guest journeys – all designed to be intuitive and inclusive. The integration of accessibility widgets through a collaboration with accessibility partner AccessiWay, regular audit-driven content updates and certified re-testing services show a commitment to continuous, evolving improvements in accessibility. This work is supported by a cross-functional team of UX designers, developers and certified accessibility specialists in their Digital Experience Center of Excellence, ensuring that every digital touchpoint – from booking to check-out – is optimised for inclusivity.

Radisson Hotel Group’s leadership in digital accessibility has been recognised by its being shortlisted as a finalist in the upcoming International Customer Experience Awards (ICXA) in the Best Digital Customer Experience category.

By embedding inclusion into its digital DNA, the group is not only elevating guest satisfaction but also inspiring the industry to build a more equitable future. Find out more by visiting <https://www.radissonhotels.com/en-us/digital-accessibility>.



Accessibility level



Accessibility roadmap

Accessibility requirements for digital platform vendors

When sourcing or managing third-party digital platforms – for training, recruitment, internal systems, customer tools etc. – they should state and uphold the requirements below.

Scope of accessibility requirements

Accessibility should cover all key functions and contents, including but not limited to:

- User interface design: overall layout, navigation structures, interactive controls.
- All content types: videos, audio, interactive modules, images, text, PDF documents etc.
- Assessment components: tests, quizzes, feedback forms.
- User help: support, chat/help widgets and guidance.

Continuous commitment

Encourage vendors to issue written commitments that they will, throughout the contract term:

- Maintain compliance with current and evolving WCAG standards.
- Run regular accessibility audits to find and fix issues.
- Provide dedicated support channels to respond quickly to user-reported accessibility problems.

WCAG compliance

Require vendors to meet with the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards.

Audits and documentation

Encourage vendors to share accessibility audit results and any fixes made.

Communicating accessible features and booking function optimisation

1 Challenges of accessibility labels

- People's access needs are diverse and specific, so one label rarely fits all.
- Following Universal Design principles helps, but it cannot cover every individual requirement.
- Without clearly defined standards and third-party checks, labels can mislead and create disappointment.

2 Optimised booking functions

To facilitate convenient bookings for guests with disabilities, digital booking platforms (websites and apps) should:

- Offer precise filters for accessible amenities (e.g. accessible pools, step-free bathrooms, designated parking) to allow direct booking without extra confirmation.
- Provide detailed, standardised property-level accessibility information.
- Include real photos or short videos so guests can see actual conditions.
- Set up an internal, real-time update process so online info matches on-site reality.
- In cases of maintenance or temporary unavailability of facilities, update filters and descriptions immediately to avoid negative guest experiences.

3 Practical approach for claiming accessibility

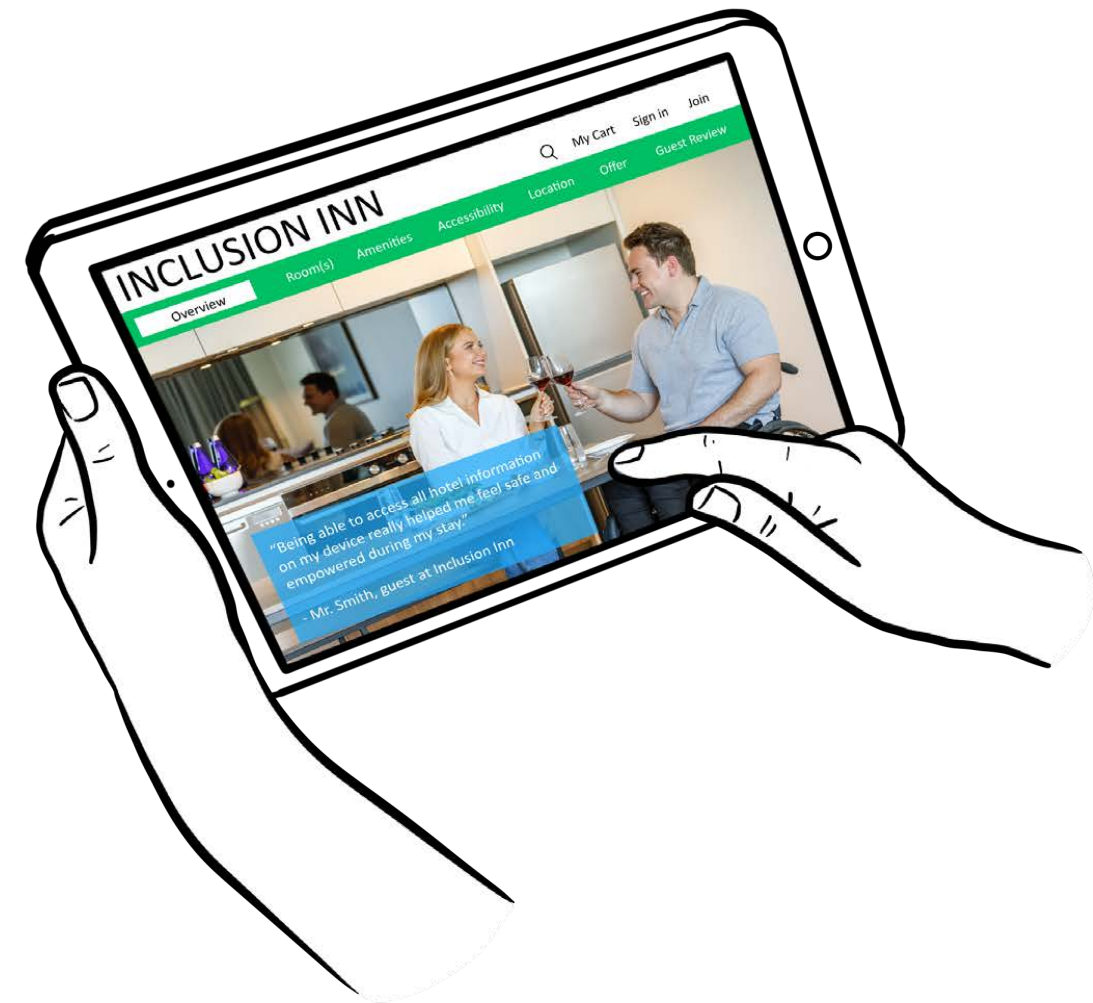
In the absence of a fully standardised labelling system, describe specific accessible facilities clearly and accurately, so guests can make well-informed choices.

Recommended measures include:

- **Detailed accessibility information**
 - Clearly describe accessible amenities (e.g. ramps, accessible rooms, roll-in showers).
- **Enhanced digital presentation**
 - Provide clear photos and videos of accessibility features.
 - Ensure media are accessible (e.g. alt text, subtitles, audio descriptions).
- **User-driven feedback**
 - Share previous guest reviews and experiences.
 - Provide a feedback tool specifically for accessibility.
- **Individualised property profiles**
 - Maintain concise digital access statements outlining property-specific accessibility features, limitations and planned improvements.

Inclusive content creation and external marketing communication

- Use plain language in promotional materials, guest messages and signage. Avoid jargon, abbreviations and complex terms.
- Highlight your disability inclusion commitments and policies across your website, app and social media pages.
- Invite guests with disabilities to feature in videos, interviews or case studies to show the real value of accessible facilities. Pay them for their time with either money or a complimentary stay.
- Collect authentic feedback and testimonials from guests with disabilities and use them (with consent) in marketing materials.
- Appoint a content reviewer to check accessibility, accuracy and compliance, and to keep all external content aligned with internal organisational standards.
- Provide ongoing training for marketing and communications employees on accessibility best practices.



Digital accessibility in MICE scenarios

- Use platforms that support real-time captions, sign-language windows and screen-reader compatibility.
- Provide accessible registration forms and accessible event materials. Offer real-time captioning and sign-language interpretation during the event.
- After the event, offer accessible meeting records and feedback channels.

Workplace accessibility

- Create intranet channels for anti-discrimination complaints and reasonable accommodation requests.
- Regularly share DEI materials and training to build awareness and skills.
- Ensure that all common internal systems meet basic digital accessibility standards, including:
 - Compatibility with screen readers, keyboard navigation, voice-activation and other assistive technologies.
 - When buying new tools, require vendors to meet accessibility standards.

What are “reasonable accommodations”?

Reasonable accommodations mean adjustments that remove barriers so a person with a disability can access services or do their job on an equal basis. Accommodations are tailored to individual needs, so they are too numerous to mention here. Please see [Useful Resources](#) for further suggestions.



- Provide reasonable accommodations based on individual needs, for example: :
 - Speech-to-text software, Braille keyboards, sign-language interpretation etc.
 - Assign a responsible contact in each property to manage requests and approvals to respond quickly.
- Add an accessibility feedback agenda item to regular property meetings. Encourage all employees to report accessibility issues and suggest improvements.
- For internal meetings and training, use digital platforms with live captions, sign-language support and screen-reader compatibility, as required.
- Send accessible materials at least one day in advance.
- During meetings, enable real-time captions. Hosts and speakers should describe any shared screens, documents so everyone can follow.
- After each meeting, share accessible digital notes/records.

Inclusive Digital Interfaces at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

To support diverse needs among staff, Wyndham, leverages technological solutions and enables accessibility options whenever they are needed. HR teams work alongside hiring teams to perform accessibility assessments on request, with appropriate modifications being made to suit the needs of each individual. This includes support in the form of standing desks, accessibility settings on devices and the installation of suitable monitors and lighting.

In addition, Wyndham team members have access to Zoom’s AI Companion, a generative AI assistant to help boost productivity and enhance team collaboration. Like closed captions, AI Companion can be used as a meeting resource for individuals with vision or hearing loss as well as those with dyslexia and cognitive impairments. Team members can utilise AI Companion features such as Meeting Summary, Companion Questions, Whiteboard Content Generation and Smart Recording.

Inclusive Programmes

05



Overview

Inclusive programmes refer to all corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives aimed at empowering people with disabilities, fostering community inclusion and promoting social inclusivity. These programmes – which should be carried out in collaboration with local communities, non-government organisations, people with disabilities and relevant stakeholders – meet real needs and remove barriers.

When planned and delivered well, these programmes improve accessibility not only within properties but also in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Key Guidelines and Practical Application

How to develop inclusive programmes

1 Community assessment and goal setting



Community needs analysis

- Build close ties with local disabled people's organisations, non-government organisations and government agencies.
- Collect and assess real needs around facility accessibility, vocational skills, community participation and digital service experience.
- Produce a simple needs profile with priorities and success measures.



Gap analysis of property performance

- Review current performance against the other four pillars: Inclusive Hiring, Inclusive Training, Inclusive Spaces, Inclusive Digital Interfaces.
- Identify gaps and quick wins.
- Pinpoint where Inclusive Programmes (e.g. co-design sessions, awareness events) can close those gaps.



Align with corporate strategy

- Ensure projects align with short- and long-term corporate goals.
- Set clear objectives, owner, timeline, budget and basic KPIs.
- Keep consistency across individual properties while allowing for local adaptation.



A person with a simulated vision impairment is guided by his partner onto a Melbourne Metro train.

2 Programme design



Define scope and objectives

- Use community needs analysis and internal gap assessment to set a clear scope and goals for each project.
- Make sure every project meets local needs and aligns with your business's disability inclusion strategy.



Possible initiatives (adapt to local context)

- Vocational skills training and internship programmes for people with disabilities.
- User feedback events to guide accessibility upgrades/renovations and to assess outcomes after changes.
- Public advocacy and community events that build disability awareness and the rights of people with disability.
- Digital feedback sessions to co-design and test accessible digital interfaces/tools.
- Disability awareness days and open-house activities.



Stakeholder engagement and consultation

- **Internal:** Involves Front Office, Engineering, Marketing, HR and Digital teams early to align design with capacity; keep owners engaged with return-on-investment (ROI) analysis to secure support and funding.
- **External:** Consult people with disabilities (including employees), disabled people's organisations, specialist service providers, non-government organisations and community groups so projects reflect real needs and are feasible.



Link each programme to the other four pillars



Support for Inclusive Training

- Collect case studies and real feedback during programmes to enrich training.
- Co-develop training tools with professional organisations to raise awareness and enhance service skills.

Celebrating innovation and inclusion at lyf one-north Singapore

The annual sustainability event held at lyf one-north Singapore in late 2024 was a resounding success, spotlighting the inspiring work of Salvage Garden, Southeast Asia's first assistive technology maker space.

Using recycled materials, including e-waste, Salvage Garden co-creates customised assistive devices with members of the disability community through 3D printing. Their innovations range from prosthetic hands and adaptive grips for everyday items like pens and cutlery, to Braille-enhanced versions of popular games and countless other tools that support individuals with disabilities and their caregivers.

What sets Salvage Garden apart is their tech-for-good philosophy. They openly document and share their design processes, technologies and product blueprints to encourage collaboration and knowledge exchange. Their goal is to build a global network of like-minded organisations committed to inclusive innovation - not just in Singapore, but across Southeast Asia and beyond.



During lyf Sustainival at lyf one-north Singapore, Salvage Garden showcased its 3D-printed assistive devices. Together with Salvage Garden, Ascott is piloting an accessible amenities toolkit, which will be refined through guest and property feedback and provided to guests with disabilities to enhance their stay.



Support for Inclusive Spaces

- **Accessibility Open Day:** Invite people with disabilities, the public and media to experience and review accessible facilities at the property; collect feedback to develop improvement action plans.
- **Promote accessible facilities:** Raise awareness of accessible rooms and features through community outreach and media, improving occupancy and attracting new guests.



Support for Inclusive Hiring

- Build long-term partnerships with community groups to create employment and career pathways.
- Host skills training and career counselling for local disability communities; create internship and employment opportunities.
- Work with schools, non-government organisations and government to develop a sustainable inclusive hiring pipeline.
- Invite employed or interned brand ambassadors with disability to share their work journeys and use of accessible facilities to build trust and inspire applicants.



Support for Inclusive Digital Interfaces

- Use programme events to introduce and demonstrate accessible digital platforms.
- Invite people with disabilities to do hands-on trials; collect structured feedback to drive continuous improvement and make tools more user-friendly.

3 Inclusive event planning

Plan events to be accessible and welcoming for everyone, especially persons with disabilities.



Invitation and registration

- Share information in accessible formats (screen-reader-compatible Word/PDF with alt text).
- List available accessibility features and accommodations on the registration form.
- Offer multiple request channels (email/phone/web chat/SMS) for specific accommodations.



Venue

- Choose wheelchair-accessible locations equipped with: ramps, lifts, automatic doors, accessible seating and adequate accessible restrooms.
- Check for tactile signage and Braille for guests with vision impairments.
- Provide a quiet room for sensory sensitivities; stock with simple sensory kits and signpost the room clearly.
- Station trained employees/volunteers at key points to give verbal guidance to facilities.
- Use clear wayfinding: simple words, high-contrast colours, clear icons.
- Make food/refreshments independently accessible for wheelchair users and people with low/no vision; brief employees to assist when needed; provide wheelchair-friendly tables.



Programme design

- Schedule regular breaks (e.g. 30 minutes every 90 minutes).
- Prepare materials in accessible formats (large print, high contrast, captions/subtitles, sign-language interpretation) and share in advance where possible.
- Brief speakers to speak clearly, at a moderate pace, facing the audience.
- Ensure all videos are captioned.
- Provide wireless or lapel microphones for speakers and interpreters.
- Use hearing loops or equivalent assistive listening.
- Adjust lighting and avoid bright/flashing lights to support guests with visual sensitivities or neurodiverse needs.
- Provide key documents in plain language (agenda, guidelines, announcements, key info).

Inclusive Programmes at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

Annually since 2023, Wyndham's Corporate Responsibility team has partnered with Be My Eyes to host a global virtual volunteer event for corporate team members. The free, easy-to-use Be My Eyes App connects almost a million blind and low-vision users with real-time visual assistance from almost 10 million volunteers around the world. Participating team members with access to a smartphone volunteer their time to be "on-call" for a six-hour period to help blind and vision-impaired individuals – in their respective regions and languages – to navigate a huge variety of daily tasks that sighted individuals take for granted, such as matching clothes, reading cooking instructions or food expiration dates, checking a thermostat temperature and so on.

Programme implementation and feedback



Roles and cross-department collaboration

- Create a clear implementation plan with roles, responsibilities and timelines for each department.
- Set up a cross-functional check-in (regular meetings) to track progress and quality, resolve issues quickly and keep delivery on time.



Development of standardised execution framework

- Continuously refine the project plan based on feedback and develop a standardised and replicable implementation process and toolkit. This may include project guidelines, case-study libraries, accessibility evaluation templates and training materials.
- Document lessons learned during implementation and share them within the hotel team to build internal knowledge, improve efficiency and ensure that future initiatives follow best practice.



Pilot implementation and rapid feedback collection

- If your organisation is a multinational, at the regional level, start with a moderately sized pilot property to test the framework at lower cost and risk.
- During the pilot, collect feedback from people with disabilities, employees and community partners via on-site interviews, online surveys and short review sessions (in person or online).
- Offer multiple feedback channels (email, phone, web chat, SMS). Make feedback timely, accurate and easy to analyse.
- Refine the plan using pilot feedback.
- Create a repeatable process and toolkit: project guidelines, case-study library, accessibility evaluation templates and training materials.
- Share pilot lessons internally so other properties can reuse what works and improve roll-out speed and consistency.

Evaluation and continuous improvement



Diverse feedback channels

- Each quarter, collect input via online customer feedback, interviews with people with disabilities and employee workshops.
- Assign ownership: name the departments that collect, analyse and respond. Review both the feedback and the process regularly to ensure issues are addressed and channels work well.



Comprehensive evaluation framework

- Use both quantitative and qualitative indicators (e.g. number of participants, satisfaction ratings, facility improvements, employees engagement).
- Issue a quarterly evaluation report for stakeholders.
- Produce an annual report and integrate it into your environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting, giving transparent updates to owners, corporate leadership and external stakeholders.



Continuous improvement and knowledge sharing

- Hotel groups should hold quarterly knowledge-sharing across properties and regions to exchange best practices, discuss challenges and co-solve issues. This will contribute to building a culture of continuous learning.
- Showcase progress and success stories on official websites, social media and local media.
- Keep stories accurate and proportionate to real efforts.

Conclusion

The core aim of this Playbook is to inspire a shift in mindset: from simply providing accessibility to creating true inclusion. Accessibility is the foundation, but inclusion goes further – it is about building an environment where everyone, regardless of ability, is respected, supported and empowered to thrive.

An integrated approach: governance and the five pillars

Sustainable disability inclusion requires alignment between governance and the five pillars. Governance sets the rules of the game – leadership commitment, clear policy and roles, budget and timelines, data and reporting, and participation of people with disabilities. The five pillars then turn this into practical actions. Each pillar supports the others, ensuring that accessibility is embedded into physical environments, digital platforms, workplace culture and guest experiences. This holistic, structured approach facilitates long-term success – and keeps progress practical for both large groups and single properties.

Compliance is a baseline, not a goal

Meeting legal accessibility requirements is the minimum standard, and it's important to keep up-to-date with changing standards and requirements, but true inclusion requires going beyond compliance to create an environment that is welcoming, empowering, inclusive and universally accessible.

Disability inclusion is not just a social good; it's a business strength that boosts revenue and enhances brand equity, operational excellence, and employee attraction and engagement. Through proactive leadership, ongoing learning and collaboration with disability communities, businesses can set new industry benchmarks for inclusive hospitality and ensure that every guest and employee feels valued, respected and empowered, while helping to ensure their sustainability into the future.

Progress, not perfection

Disability inclusion is a continuous journey, not a one-time initiative. It's unrealistic to expect perfection from the start – what matters is a commitment to continuous improvement. Small, consistent steps drive long-term impact and learning from challenges is part of the process.

Nothing about us without us

Disability inclusion must be shaped with and by people with disabilities, not just for them. Ensuring direct participation in policymaking, programme design, workplace decisions and service enhancements strengthens authenticity, relevance and impact. This principle reinforces a commitment to inclusive governance and ensures that initiatives are driven by real lived experience.

Useful Resources

Inclusive Training

1. "Accessible Feature Example List", A&AT, SG Enable, 2024 [\(Online\)](#)
2. "A Guide to Disability Inclusion Training and Development", Asian Development Bank/Global Disability Innovation Hub, 2024 [\(Online\)](#)
3. "Disability Inclusion Trainer's Manual", Light for the World, Cambodia/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/Australian Aid/ACCESS, 2020 [\(Online\)](#)

Inclusive Spaces

1. "Accessibility Checklist and Solutions Guide: Accommodation", City of Melbourne, 2023 [\(Online\)](#)
2. "Crafting an Accessibility Guide", City of Melbourne, 2023 [\(Online\)](#)
3. "Accessibility Checklist and Guide: Restaurants and Cafes", City of Melbourne, 2023 [\(Online\)](#)
4. "Design Playbook for Inclusive-Spaces", SG Enable, 2022 [\(Online\)](#)
5. "Champions of Inclusive Spaces", Zero Project/Essl Foundation/SG Enable, 2025 [\(Online\)](#)
6. "Code on Accessibility in the Built Environment", Building and Construction Authority, Singapore, 2025 [\(Online\)](#)
7. "Lodging-Accessibility-Guide", Expedia Group, 2022 [\(Online\)](#)
8. "Self-Assessment Checklist", Version 10, Equal Opportunities Commission, Singapore, 2023 [\(Online\)](#)
9. "Scandic Hotels Accessibility Standards", Scandic, 2019 [\(Online\)](#)

Inclusive Hiring

1. "Attracting and Recruiting People with Disability to Your Organisation", Australian Human Rights Commission, 2021 [\(Online\)](#)
2. "The Inclusive Workplaces Toolkit: Including People with Intellectual Disabilities in the Workplace A Guide for Employers", Inclusion International/Inclusive Futures/UK Aid, 2022 [\(Online\)](#)
3. "Guide to Ensuring Accessible and Inclusive Recruitment Processes for Individuals with Disabilities Employers for Change", Open Doors Initiative, 2022 [\(Online\)](#)
4. "Starter Kit for Disability Employment: Building an Inclusive Workplace for Persons with Disabilities", SG Enable, 2020 [\(Online\)](#)
5. Making changes for different types of disability, Job Access, 2025 [\(Online\)](#)

Inclusive Digital Interfaces

1. "E-Accessibility Playbook for Digital Inclusion", SG Enable, 2024 [\(Online\)](#)
2. "Inclusive Design for a Digital World", Regine M. Gilbert, Apress, 2019 [\(Online\)](#)
3. "How to Meet WCAG (Quick Reference)", Web Accessibility Initiative, 2025 [\(Online\)](#)
4. "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1", World Wide Web Consortium. W3C, 2025 [\(Online\)](#)
5. "Testing for Accessibility", Crown Copyright, UK, 2024 [\(Online\)](#)
6. "Assistive Technology", SG Enable, 2025 [\(Online\)](#)
7. International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP) [\(Online\)](#)
8. "Write Helpful Alt Text to Describe Images", Harvard University, 2025 [\(Online\)](#)
9. "Online Accessibility Guide for Businesses", City of Melbourne, 2023 [\(Online\)](#)

Recommended Automated Testing Tools

1. WAVE (Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool) [\(Online\)](#)
2. IBM Equal Access Toolkit [\(Online\)](#)

Inclusive Programmes

1. "Organising Inclusive Events: A Practical Toolkit to Build Social Inclusion", SG Enable, 2020 [\(Online\)](#)
2. "Accessibility Checklist and Solutions Guide for Festivals and Events", City of Melbourne, 2023 [\(Online\)](#)



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SG Enable Caregiver Champions
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The Ascott Limited (Ascott) is driven by a vision to be the preferred hospitality company, enriching global living with heartfelt experiences. Headquartered in Singapore, Ascott is a wholly owned business unit of CapitaLand Investment, with a portfolio of more than 1000 properties spanning over 230 cities across more than 40 countries, Ascott's presence spans Asia Pacific, Central Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the USA. Its diverse collection of award-winning brands includes Ascott, Citadines, lyf, Oakwood, Somerset, The Crest Collection, The Unlimited Collection, Fox, Harris, POP!, Preference, Quest, Vertu and Yello.

Ascott specialises in managing and franchising a wide range of lodging options, including serviced residences, hotels, resorts, social living properties and branded residences, catering to the varying needs and preferences of global travellers.

As a trusted accommodation provider with a global outreach, Ascott is committed to extending its culture of care and hospitality to the people and environments it interacts with through its business and across its supply chain. In 2022, the global hospitality company launched Ascott CARES, its sustainability framework that aligns the company's growth strategy with ESG considerations alongside Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Criteria. The framework serves as the global standards for sustainability in travel and tourism, and is centred around five pillars representing the acronym CARES – Community, Alliance, Respect, Environment and Supply Chain. Ascott has since become one of the first hospitality companies to achieve GSTC-Committed Status globally and is a proud recipient of the Impact Excellence Award (Large Enterprise) in the 2025 Sustainability Impact Awards, presented by The Business Times and UOB.



SG Enable, the focal agency for disability and inclusion in Singapore, enables persons with disabilities to live, learn, work and play in an inclusive society. We create equitable opportunities for persons with disabilities through thought leadership, sustainable social innovation and impactful partnership. Guided by our core values of professionalism, innovation and empathy, we envision a more inclusive Singapore and enabled lives. Set up by the Ministry of Social and Family Development in 2013, we are a registered charity and an Institution of a Public Character. For more information, visit www.sgenable.sg.



The World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance brings together engaged hospitality companies and the wider hospitality value chain, along with strategic partners, to address key challenges affecting the planet, people and places around the world.

Through their strategic initiatives and global networks, they develop practical programmes and resources to create a prosperous and responsible hospitality sector that gives back to the destination more than it takes.

Their members represent over 66,000 hotels spanning 300 brands – totalling over 8 million rooms – and include world-leading companies including Accor, Choice Hotels International, Hilton, IHG Hotels & Resorts, Radisson Hotel Group, Marriott International, and Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, as well as regional brands. Their network, which includes over 100 partners, also includes other parts of the hospitality value chain, including owners, investors, suppliers and other partners to further drive joined up action on sustainability, and accelerate the industry on the path to Net Positive Hospitality.



Valuable 500 is the global organisation of over 500 partners and companies working together to end disability exclusion. Unified in our purpose to accelerate inclusion for the one in five people living with a disability, we transform business systems to transform society.

By engaging with the world's most influential business leaders and brands, Valuable 500 now has a market cap of over \$23 trillion, combined revenues of over \$8 trillion and employs a staggering 22 million people worldwide. We drive change through Synchronised Collective Action. Channelling the power of over 500 partners and companies working in harmony – moving in the same direction, at the same time, against the same system barrier.

We hold our partners and companies to account in taking action in three key areas:

- Leadership, putting disability inclusion on the leadership agenda
- Reporting, tackling the disability data gap to create business accountability
- Representation, ensuring that people with disability are represented authentically and participate at every stage of the process.

Valuable 500 won't stop until everyone is seen and valued equally. With the support of iconic partners, we are accelerating change and creating a new standard of inclusion in business.



Colorful Earth is dedicated to sustainable development and transformation, prioritising social responsibility over commercial profit. Founded in 2021, Colorful Earth focuses primarily on the promotion, training and consulting of sustainable tourism standards, biodiversity conservation, diversity/equity/inclusion (DEI), and ESG strategies.

