

## Inclusivity and Accessibility: POD 2018 Conference Session Recommendations

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In every POD session, there will be a wide range of individuals with similarities and differences that are both visible and invisible. The recommendations below are intended to benefit everyone.

### General Tips

- Assume and address a diverse audience with multiple, intersecting identities, including differences in ability, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, position, and more.
- Utilize the principles of Universal Design for Learning (<http://udlguidelines.cast.org/>) and Universal Design (<https://www.washington.edu/doit/universal-design-education-principles-and-applications>) to increase accessibility.
- Recognize that we all have implicit biases. Try to develop an awareness of your own and adjust for them accordingly (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>).
- If you have any questions about inclusivity or accessibility, please email [pod.diversity@gmail.com](mailto:pod.diversity@gmail.com) or contact one of the POD Diversity Committee representatives at the conference.

## Use of Language

- Refer to participants by the terms they prefer, when possible.
- Honor dignity and autonomy (e.g., “a person who uses a wheelchair” rather than “a person confined to a wheelchair”).
- Use person-first language (e.g., “a woman who is blind” rather than “a blind woman”).
- Be specific (e.g., “Dominicans” rather than “Hispanics”).
- Consider the implications or effects of word choice for a diverse audience (e.g., “that was crazy” or “hey guys”).
- Be transparent and provide context when you must use language that would otherwise seem ill-advised.
- Inclusive language is constantly evolving and context-dependent. Assume everyone has good intentions. Accept that you will make mistakes and acknowledge when you do!

## Cultural Competence

- Provide a range of examples that reflect diverse backgrounds, cultures, identities, abilities, and perspectives.
- Be transparent about who is included in data... and who isn't. Identify the possible implications of those parameters.
- Use images, graphics, and visual aids that include people with disabilities as well as culturally and ethnically diverse groups.
- Avoid culturally specific idioms (e.g., “quit cold turkey”).
- Indicate whether the resources highlighted in your presentation are available in different languages.

## PowerPoint Presentations

- Download and follow this Accessibility PowerPoint ([https://www.aucd.org/docs/annual\\_mtg\\_2008/accessibility\\_ppt\\_apha2007.ppt](https://www.aucd.org/docs/annual_mtg_2008/accessibility_ppt_apha2007.ppt)).
- Utilize graphics in conjunction with text only to enhance the meaning of your slide content.
- If graphics are included, add an explanation of their meaning in a subsequent text-only slide. The meaning of the graphic is what's important (e.g., "this chart shows..."), not a description of the graphic itself (e.g., "a chart with blue and red bars").
- Use WAVE (<http://wave.webaim.org/>) to ensure maximum accessibility of websites.

## Spoken/Audio Presentations

- Have several printed copies of your presentation on hand. If sign language interpreters are in the room, give them a copy.
- Speak directly to conference attendees who are deaf or who have hearing impairments, not the interpreter(s).
- When presenting, be sure to describe any slides and graphics briefly (e.g., "this slide covers these three key points").
- Avoid using demonstrative pronouns (e.g., "this") on their own. Clarify meaning with nouns (e.g., "this map shows...").
- Use a microphone (these will be provided in each room) and ask others to do the same. Don't assume everyone will be able to hear you. Speak directly into the microphone and avoid covering your mouth.
- Speak clearly and at a moderate pace to give sign language interpreters or CART transcribers enough time to translate (<https://www.nad.org/resources/technology/captioning-for-access/communication-access-realtime-translation/>).

- When answering questions, repeat them for the entire group.
- If showing any videos, ensure closed captions are turned on.
- Provide a transcript of any videos shown, if possible.

## Poster Presentations

- Keep the floor free from sharp objects or other obstructions.
- Bring a version (e.g., flash drive) of your poster in text-only or descriptive PowerPoint format to provide as needed.
- Offer to narrate your poster to participants.
- If you have a laptop with you, you can use voice output software or prepare a brief description of your poster.
- Follow the "Guidelines for Creating Accessible Printed Posters" ([https://www.aucd.org/docs/annual\\_mtg\\_2008/accessibility\\_posters\\_gilson2007.pdf](https://www.aucd.org/docs/annual_mtg_2008/accessibility_posters_gilson2007.pdf)).

## Handouts

- Use at least 12-point font size (18 for large-print copies).
- Write in a simple, sans-serif font (e.g., Verdana or Arial).
- Minimize the number of different fonts used.
- Avoid small caps, italics, or all caps.
- Left justify, avoid columns, and use 1-inch margins.
- Unless landscape orientation is necessary, use portrait.
- Make lines heavy/thick in charts and graphs.
- Use grayscale or high black/white contrast, rather than colors (especially green and red) for options or emphasis.
- Omit decorative graphics that do not add any meaning.
- Print on one side, 8.5" by 11" paper, stapled at the top left.

### **Additional Center Resources:**

- Vanderbilt: Diversity & Inclusive Teaching  
(<https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/diversity/>)
- Cornell: Inclusive Teaching Strategies  
(<https://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/building-inclusive-classrooms/inclusive-teaching-strategies.html>)

### **Guidelines adapted from:**

- Association of University Centers on Disability  
(<https://www.aucd.org/conference/index.cfm/presenter-guidelines-accessibility--inclusion2016#handouts>)

This evolving document has been compiled by POD Diversity Committee members Tricia Elam Walker (2014), Jennifer Stanton (2015–16), Riley Caldwell-O’Keefe (2016–17), and Emily Gravett (2018). Please email Emily at [graveteo@jmu.edu](mailto:graveteo@jmu.edu) with any questions, concerns, or suggestions for improving this guide.