# NACA

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

# INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING GUIDE

When coordinating programs for diverse student populations, it is important to be inclusive in the planning, execution, and wrap-up phases of each event. This guide is designed to help student leaders and advisors begin to consider nuances of inclusive programming. With this starting point in mind, leaders are encouraged to listen, observe, and respond to accommodate the specific needs of the communities they serve.

## GENERAL

- Examine programming board member recruitment and retention practices to ensure representation of various identities. Be mindful of what identities are most present and what identities are absent from each committee and the organization.
- Include reflective discussions around diversity and social justice in all organization meetings and retreats, as well as when budgeting and programming decisions are being made.
- Consider using NACA 24/7 to explore Associate Members whose businesses are owned by individuals of various identities or who offer programming that meets a wide range of interests, ideas, and perspectives.
- Incorporate education around social identities and their intersections in student and professional development experiences. Learn to recognize and challenge assumptions about people or groups.
- Partner with offices or departments that serve various student populations to learn more about the nuances of creating experiences where all belong.
- Train students and staff on ways to interrupt racism, issues of homophobia, gender oppression, and cultural appropriation.

## PROGRAM PLANNING

- **Scheduling**
  - ☐ Be aware of holidays and religious observances. Resources of common dates are offered by the Interfaith Action and Diversity Resources groups.
  - ☐ Consider how each holiday is observed. Attendees may be fasting, have a specific schedule for prayer or services, or choose to spend time with family or friends.

- **Themes**
  - ☐ Be aware of how a theme may be interpreted by people with various identities. Be thoughtful of how those interpretations are or are not aligned with what you hope to achieve through this program.
  - ☐ Avoid themes that might stereotype groups of people.
  - ☐ If a theme represents specific identities, collaborate with people/groups who hold those identities in the planning and delivery process to ensure the program is affirming.

- **Marketing**
  - ☐ Include persons of multiple identities in promotional materials.
  - ☐ Avoid language that is ableist, sexist, racist, culturally insensitive or includes appropriated verbiage or cultural slangs.
  - ☐ Incorporate gender-neutral language. Do not make assumptions about people of specific genders who might be most interested in events (ex: only targeting men for a sporting event).

☐ Consider language such as friend, partner, or guest for events where students may be allowed to invite a visitor.
☐ Use alternative text to describe images on websites and electronic promotions.
☐ Include high contrast colors for persons with color vision deficiency. Utilize a [contrast checker](#) to confirm the marketing is accessible.

**• Accessibility**
☐ Clearly include accommodations statements in all materials.
***Example 1:*** "The [college/university name] strives to build a culture of belonging where all members of the community feel valued. For questions about accessibility or to request accommodations, please contact [name] at [phone] or [email] no later than five days prior to the event."
***Example 2:*** "If you require an accessibility-related measure (e.g.: sign language interpretation, captioning, accessible parking, specific dietary requirements, or any other accessibility-related measure) please contact [name] at [phone number, email, office location]."
☐ Include a brief description of what the event will entail so attendees will know which accommodations they may need. For example, "this event will include moving around the room to several different make and take stations."
☐ Research local, certified American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter providers. Include this cost in the overall organization budget for use in any event where requested, if this service is not available through a campus provider.
☐ When choosing a location, ensure that all emergency evacuation procedures accommodate mobility or sensory needs.
☐ Utilize the National Center on Disability and Access to Education (NCDAE) [cheat sheets](#) to help create accessible content.

## PROGRAM EXECUTION

**• Language**
☐ Consult with the Office of Disability Services or similar department/staff member to learn whether person-first or identity-first language is preferred on campus. Use their guidance when creating marketing, signage, and presentation materials.
☐ Use requested names and pronouns, but do not assume that everyone wants their pronouns to be shared publicly. For this reason, avoid requesting pronouns on registration materials or on nametags unless a person asks that it be included.
☐ Use language such as "everyone" or "you all" instead of gendered language such as "ladies and gentlemen" or "you guys."
☐ Be aware of the challenges of idioms, metaphors, and pop culture references.

**• Accessibility**
☐ Know where gender inclusive and family-friendly bathrooms are located. Offer signage, as needed.
☐ Offer accessible parking at drop-off/pick-up locations.
☐ All routes entering, exiting, and within the venue should be wide, flat, and clear of debris or obstacles. If the event is not held on the ground floor, ensure that elevators are working and/or ramps are clear.
☐ Use accessible cord covers to cover all exposed cords or hoses on the ground.
☐ Offer seating for individuals using a wheelchair in accessible and integrated spaces in the venue.
☐ Provide space and lighting for 1-2 American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters near the presenter/performer. Ensure attendees requesting this accommodation have clear sight lines to the interpreter(s).
☐ If transportation is provided as part of the event, be prepared to include accommodated transportation if requested.
☐ Respect a person with a disability if they do not want assistance. Do not continue to offer if they have already declined.

**• Presentations or performances**
☐ Ask for presentation materials in advance so printed copies or larger font sizes can be accommodated if requested.
☐ Confirm with presenters in advance about room set-up of furniture and audio/visual that will offer the greatest accessibility for attendees.
☐ Provide a microphone for events larger than 50 people. Ask presenters to use a microphone if it is provided.
☐ Avoid strobe lighting.
☐ Use closed captioning for videos.
☐ Include alternative text with all visuals.
☐ Ask presenters to verbally describe images displayed on screens or in charts.
☐ If icebreakers or team builders are involved, consider mobility accommodations that can be made.
☐ When conducting a question and answer session or gathering information from the audience, ask the presenter to repeat questions or comments into the microphone before moving forward.
☐ Consider a variety of strategies for audience participation (ex: polling technology, clickers, etc.).
☐ Announce the use of sensitive content or loud noises.
☐ Utilize the [materials provided by Microsoft](#) to make PowerPoints more accessible.

- **Food**
  - ☐ If food is provided, ask attendees about food preferences in advance.
  - ☐ Be aware of and prepare for the most common restrictions including allergies (ex: milk, nuts, soy, and shellfish), vegan/ vegetarian/pescatarian diets, and religious accommodations (ex: Kosher and Halaal).
  - ☐ Understand that while food is often viewed as a draw for attendees, it may be keeping people away.
  - ☐ Consider offering a light snack or meal if the event coincides with when individuals may be breaking fast.

## PROGRAM WRAP-UP

- In external evaluations of attendees, include questions about the ability for guests to fully participate in all aspects of the program. For example:
  - ☐ Were you able to fully participate in this event? What activities did you participate in?
  - ☐ Is there anything that could have been incorporated with the program to allow you to be more engaged?
  - ☐ Were you aware of how you could request accommodations?
  - ☐ Do you have feedback on how to make this event more accessible in the future?

- In internal post-event reflection, ask all involved in planning the event about successes in accommodating all attendees. For example:
  - ☐ Did we meet all requests? If so, how? If not, why?
  - ☐ Was this a similar experience for all?
  - ☐ Were there varied experiences and activities that promoted engagement from a diverse group?
  - ☐ In what ways was this an inclusive experience for participants? How can we improve in the future?

- If any feedback is received on accessibility successes or needed improvements that relate to others involved in the event (vendors, food service, performers, etc.) share the information with them.

- Document what worked well and what should be adapted for future events. Provide this information in transition materials for future student leaders.

**REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

*Resource inspired by University of Miami's Guide to Inclusive Meetings, Programs, and Events.*

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