



Inclusive Event Accessibility for the International Volunteer Year 2026

Accessibility is not a privilege but a fundamental human right. In line with IVY 2026's commitment to celebrating volunteers from all backgrounds, events organized in relation to the International Year should be inclusive and accessible to ensure that all individuals, including persons with disabilities, can participate fully and equally. Embedding accessibility into event planning and delivery upholds core values of equity, participation and global solidarity.

Accessibility Considerations for IVY 2026 Events

1. Collaborate with Local Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs): Ensure meaningful participation, support inclusive outreach and receive expert advice on venue and event accessibility. Follow the approach “Nothing about us without us”.
2. Discuss the topic of accessibility, universal design and reasonable accommodation as well as a human rights approach to disability with the organizing team, involving volunteers with disabilities and OPDs.
3. Ensure Inclusive Communication:
 - Confirm required sign language interpretation in advance as sign languages vary across regions. For large international events, consider hiring multiple interpreters and check if participants have personal assistants who can interpret or require interpretation support.
 - Provide accessible digital materials: All electronic communications and documents (e.g. emails, Word documents, PDFs) should be compatible with screen-reading software and follow accessible formatting standards to ensure usability for participants with visual disabilities.

Onsite

Venues must meet essential accessibility standards to ensure equal participation. This includes step-free entrances and reception areas, barrier-free corridors and pathways, accessible bathrooms, and a main meeting room designed to accommodate diverse needs. These necessary conditions ensure that persons with disabilities can participate fully and enjoy their rights on an equal basis with others.

Online

Virtual meetings should be designed with accessibility at their core. Event organizers are to select platforms with strong accessibility features, such as screen reader compatibility, captioning, and options to spotlight interpreters. Organizers should share accessible materials in advance, provide live captioning or sign language interpretation during sessions, and encourage clear, paced communication from speakers. Allowing adequate time for interaction and ensuring follow-up materials are accessible affirms the right of persons with disabilities to participate fully in all stages of the event, from preparation to conclusion.

Stage	Checklist	Done
Before the event	Include a reasonable accommodation needs-section in registration forms and advertisements	
	Ensure that support persons assisting participants with disabilities are integrated into all event-related communications	
	Share clear planning emails with dates, times, and details	
	Provide contact info for the accessibility focal point of the organizing team	
	Book sign language interpreters and captioning services early	
	Offer multiple ways to join (e.g., dial-in + virtual link)	
	Select accessible platforms – online and onsite	
	Share accessible agenda and materials in advance	
	Schedule breaks and Q&A time in the agenda	
	Conduct tech checks with accessibility service providers	
	Offer a pre-meeting to review the agenda and ask questions	
	Define meeting roles (chair, notetaker, turn-taking manager)	
	Provide a platform test run for unfamiliar users	
	Use Ethernet over Wi-Fi to reduce glitches	
During the event	Announce available accessibility services and usage	
	Set participation rules (e.g., one speaker at a time)	
	Encourage plain language and avoid jargon/acronyms	
	Ask speakers to say their names and describe themselves before speaking	
	Offer alternatives to raise-hand function	
	Share captioning links in chat and ensure easy access	
	Use quality audio/video equipment and strong internet	
	Assign notetaker and share transcripts afterward	
	Read chat comments aloud for screen reader users	
	Allow extra time for responses and interpretation delays	
	Keep video off in large meetings except for key speakers	
Presentation	Use plain language, large sans serif fonts (min. 24 pt)	
	Limit slides to six lines of text; avoid jargon/acronyms	
	Use images + ALT-Text to support key points and ensure good contrast	
	Avoid tables/graphs and excessive fonts; use bold for emphasis	
	Don't rely on color alone to convey meaning	
	Ensure videos have captions, sign language, and audio narration	
	Provide captions and text alternatives for all media (electronic, Braille)	
	Include sound/image descriptions for deafblind participants	
Onsite Support	Ensure accessible public transport and accessibility of the venue	
	Arrange flexible tables and chairs for easy movement and enough space	
	Provide accessible ramps or lifts for elevated stages	
	Ensure podiums are at an accessible height with maneuvering space	
	Ensure lighting supports lip-reading and sign language visibility	
	Use large screens for stage and CART display	
	Brief staff/volunteers to assist respectfully	
	Emergency Prep: ensure emergency exits are accessible and well-signed	
After the event	Train security staff on inclusive evacuation procedures	
	Share notes, transcripts, and recordings	
	Send a clear action list with responsibilities and deadlines	
	Collect feedback on accessibility features	