UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Sustainability Program

Student Research Report

UBC Nightlife Events: Accessibility

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UBC Nightlife Events: Accessibility

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Executive Summary

Our team worked in collaboration with UBC SEEDS to examine how we could make campus nightlife more accessible to those with disabilities. We initially based our inquiry on the evaluation of accessibility and equity guidelines for event programming at UBC (with a focus on nightlife). We chose to adopt an inclusive interpretation of disabilities to capture a breadth of peoples. We also employed a community-based research methodology to capture the myriad factors which make events inaccessible on-campus.

To inform our research, we conducted a literature review of media articles and existing events guidelines. The literature demonstrates that accessibility considerations are frequently sidetracked, mentioned in passing, or even excluded from the events programming framework.

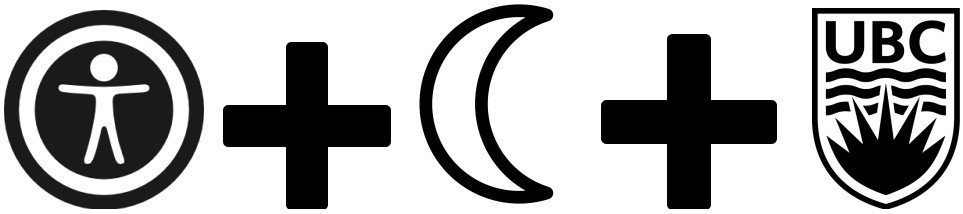
With a particular focus on barriers and recommendations for events, we produced a survey and designed interview questions. We developed a promotional campaign to recruit interviewees who identified as having a disability. While the survey was unsuccessful, interviews yielded substantial findings and numerous recommendations.

After transcribing and coding these interviews, we were able to identify two major themes that encompass barriers to nightlife programming: physical barriers and attitudinal barriers. The former comprises inaccessible infrastructure and obstructions, the latter comprises lack of consideration and ignorance. This heuristic provides insight into the commonalities that make events inaccessible, despite the particularity of any single person's disability.

Our project's limitations include the relatively small pool of research participants and a narrow window of opportunity to collect data. Because of the seeming lack of precedent partnership with communities accessibility advocates, finding a club, collective, or network was a major challenge. As such, the majority of our interviewees were graduate students.

Our recommendations make clear the breadth of infrastructural, programmatic, and training strategies and guidelines to make events accessible — many recommendations being immediately actionable. The recommendations include categories for visual impairment, mobility, organizing structures, logistics, social dynamics, hearing and non-verbal conditions, and light- and sound-sensitive conditions.

We believe that by assuming a critical approach to the evaluation of disability and accessibility, we can design events which are, really, more accessible for all. This extends to wayfinding, inclusive web platforms, emergency considerations, consistent pathways for access and exit, stronger social environments, technological upgrades, and more. From a planning perspective, these guidelines and policies will produce cumulative goods.



Introduction

An accessible event ought to be one inclusive of everyone. This is the central idea informing our research project, based on the evaluation of accessibility and equity guidelines for event programming at UBC (with a focus on nightlife). Through employing a community-based research methodology, we committed to partnership with members of UBC's disabled community, and proposed a set of recommendations to address the interconnected physical, social, and environmental barriers that make UBC nightlife inaccessible for many campus users.

Before beginning research, we needed to settle on an interpretation of disability and accessibility. We chose to incorporate an inclusive understanding of disability to conduct our research. To quote from the Canadian Government's Federal Disability Reference Guide:

> "Disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and mind and features of the society in which they live. A disability can occur at any time in a person's life; some people are born with a disability, while others develop a disability later in life. It can be permanent, temporary or episodic. Disability can steadily worsen, remain the same, or improve. It can be very mild to very severe. It can be the cause, as well as the result, of disease, illness, injury, or substance abuse."

We understand "disabled" to be a verb which indicates an environment which is not designed for, and thereby disables individuals through various mental and physical contexts. Disability is not a personal deficit. It is a shared social responsibility: where personal connections, resources, technologies, and other elements can influence social engagement and equality.

Disability is associated with health conditions (e.g. arthritis, mental, emotional conditions) or events (e.g. injuries). But disability is also connected to the social and built environment, with peoples' functioning, health, independence, and engagement in society varying according to several factors:

- Severity of the underlying impairment
- Social, political, and cultural influences and expectations
- Aspects of natural and built surroundings
- Availability of assistive technology and devices
- Family and community support and engagement

The significance of this research project is that accessible design means accessibility for all. When we design for disability, we design better for everyone. Texting was originally created for deaf folks, yet it has shaped our modern communication models and continues to be a ubiquitous influence. By designing events with disability and accessibility in mind, we are planning more inclusive, robust communities, and events that are ultimately more accessible for everyone — disability or otherwise.

Literature Review

An extensive number of materials related to accessibility were reviewed to understand existing gaps in the literature related to accessible event guidelines. These materials included UBC guidelines, Translink information, the City of Vancouver Accessible Events Checklist, *The Ubyssey* articles, and other sources.

Universities

The current UBC event guidelines were an important starting point for analysis. We reviewed the student resources for booking events such as the "Important Event Planning Policies and Guidelines" document and the "Outdoor Booking Request Form" document. While the former document highlights a zero tolerance approach towards discrimination of marginalized groups (including people with physical and mental disability), neither document makes direct reference to ensuring the accessibility of events. The University of Toronto and UBC — being large, well-established universities — offer surprisingly little content regarding disability. Contrarily, York, McGill, Queens, and Dalhousie all feature content on disability and accessibility.

York University features an Accessibility Hub website with a variety of resources for tools and resources regarding accessibility. This includes an inventory of assistive technologies that are available for disabilities, disability services, an educators' resource kit, and guidelines for accessible visual materials. However, the resources do not include guidelines for accessible event standards or planning.

McGill University has full accessibility guides for both of its campuses, including floor plans for all of the buildings. But the accessibility considerations begin and end with wheelchair access and washroom locations. Although this is essential information, a comprehensive approach to accessibility would consider the diversity of disability and corresponding accessibility needs.

Queen's University also features an Accessibility Hub, which includes an Accessible Event Planning checklist. This checklist is relatively comprehensive, with an expansive scope that goes beyond mobility. Its priorities include the logistics of advertising and outreach, getting to the event, venue features to consider, and distribution of resources. Lessons learned from Queen's checklist, the Vancouver Accessibility Guidelines, and the content of our interviews, form the basis of our recommendations for campus nightlife accessibility.

While Dalhousie University materials mention disability in only a glancing sense, their Campus Life page features a link to "Dal After Dark." This initiative offers funding and guidelines for the organization of evening events, and listings of upcoming dates. Although Dalhousie is the only university we researched that differentiates its nighttime events from daytime ones, other universities incorporate event calendars on their campus life sites as well, such as Queen's, University of Saskatchewan, and York. York's is especially engaging and an exemplary example.

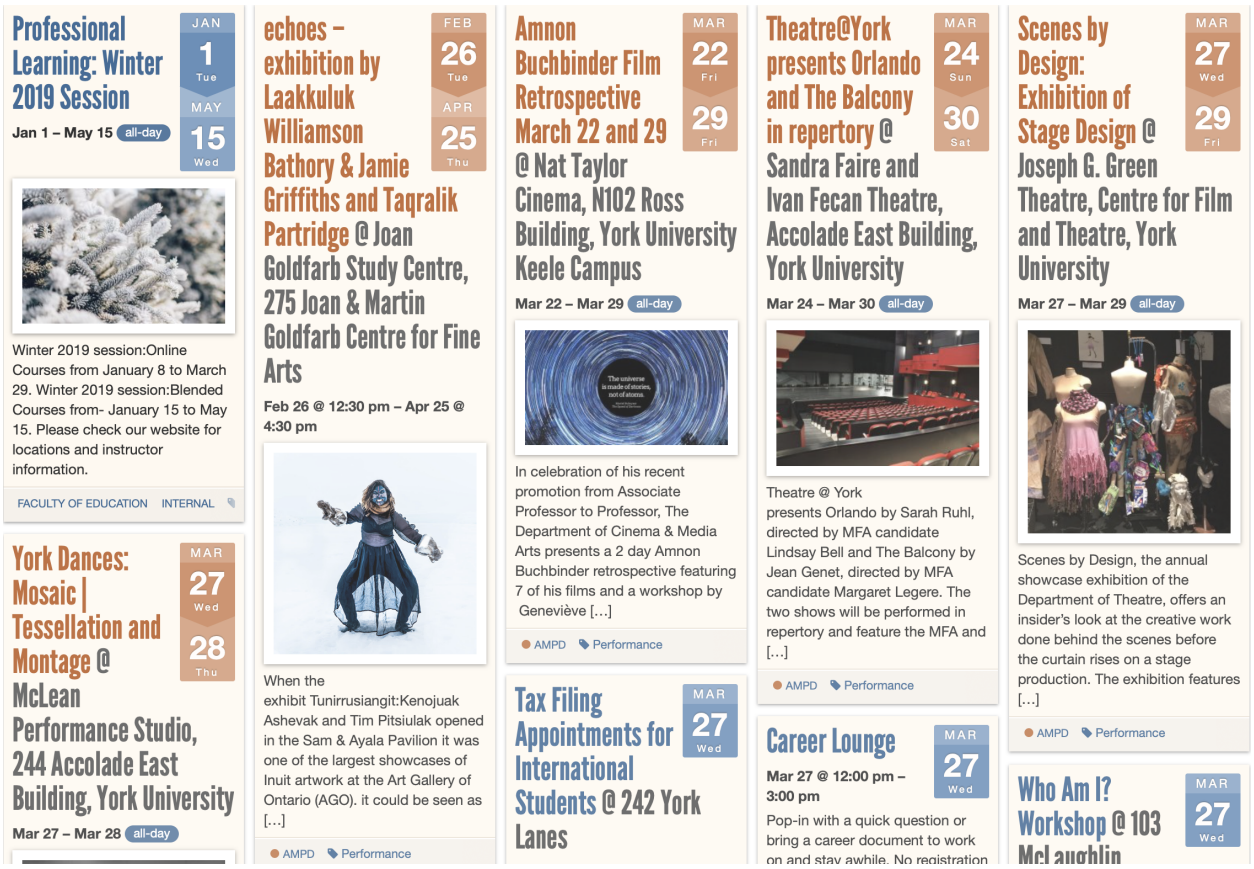


Figure 1. *York University interactive event calendar*

City of Vancouver + Translink

Similar to Queen's University, the City of Vancouver has an Accessible Events Checklist that is standardized for civic functions and available for public use. This checklist is extensive and considerate, seeking to encompass as many logistical considerations as possible in responding to disability needs. It touches on diverse voices in the planning of an event, sensory input, mobility needs, ASL, venue requirements, venue features for accessibility, staff and volunteer training, and much more.

The breadth and depth of accessibility considerations is a great start. However, this checklist uses outdated language with reference to transgender communities that needs to be updated. Furthermore, the nature of a checklist is not conducive to meaningful inclusion. Enforcing compulsory accessibility considerations for events and emphasizing the humanity behind those intentions is a difficult balance to strike. A checklist reduces accessibility considerations. complex identities, and lived experiences into boxes that can be checked before being put aside. But meaningful inclusion requires a rethinking of how diverse bodies experience events and necessitates an ongoing conversation and partnership.

Furthermore, despite how thorough the City of Vancouver's checklist is, there are missing aspects: including attention to pathways leading to exits, adequate seating, a lack of paid staff to assist in accessibility, providing presentation materials ahead of time for disabled folks, and integrating open-ended accessibility requests into the registration process.

The universal accessibility guidelines set by Translink outline the physical barriers faced by those trying to access transportation and informed our understanding of the potential challenges of getting people to and from campus safely. Unsurprisingly, many of the accessibility barriers from the guidelines were echoed from participants during our interviews.

Media Coverage

In addition to the extensive literature review on existing accessibility guidelines, we reviewed articles relating to nightlife barriers that disabled folks face. These articles also informed the production of our research questions: allowing us to understand the research subject in terms of what has already been covered, and directing us to go further in terms of our questioning.

Ubyssey articles make clear the challenges endemic to UBC's campus, including frequent and unannounced barriers according to new construction. Sophie Sutcliffe's "Bare minimum" feature cited one instance where a residence's doorway was closed for repairs — with the alternative entrance being too narrow to accommodate wheelchair users. Many of the buildings on-campus (including WMAX, where the School of Community and Regional Planning is based) do not provide elevators or other accessibility technology. Sutcliffe's article also makes clear the stigma associated with many conditions, including invisible disability, which is often cast into doubt and inconsideration. The themes of campus obstruction and stigma were echoed throughout our interviews.

We also reviewed podcasts from the CiTR 101.9FM Accessibility Collective — one of our partners in the outreach process. A common theme across the podcast episodes in general note the prevalence with which attitudes, stigmatization, or "outdated ideas of what disability is" informs the exclusivity of events, more than simply physical barriers. The "Access to Nightlife in Vancouver" episode features a panel recording of accessibility advocates discussing the notion of belonging: and how decorations, advertisements, and framing can do much to make disabled folk feel unwelcome. To quote one panelist, "what do you have in your space that will let me see myself in your space?"

In an interview with Anika Vervecken of the PuSh Festival, she notes that a good practice is to ensure that accessibility information is brought to the forefront, without requiring the potential attendee to request information: that a show with little visuals, appropriate for those with vision-loss, make that accessibility feature prominent in its promotional materials. Taking the prerogative for outreach and partnership-building essential for a community-based approach.

Research Methodology

Our literature review allowed us to come up with strategic methods to analyze the current gaps in inclusive and accessible nighttime events at UBC. Our process was designed to answer the following research questions:

- What are the largest barriers campus users with disabilities currently experience in engaging with campus nightlife?
- What guidelines can be implemented to make UBC campus nightlife events more accessible to campus users with disabilities.
- What resources need to be made available to engage campus users with disabilities in UBC campus nightlife?

To answer the listed research questions, our team developed a communication strategy to reach out to our target audience. We designed a poster that was widely distributed to our accessibility contacts on campus and distributed through strategic sites such as relevant social media groups (See Appendix 1). Printed copies were widely posted throughout campus including accessible Library washrooms and UBC Accessibility Shuttle bus stops.

However, word-of-mouth and social media proved much more effective as means of recruiting participants. Only one participant was recruited through the postering method.

Due to accessibility considerations (such as the difficulty of coordinating a joint focus group during a period of heavy snow), we chose to conduct one-on-one interviews. This was additionally favourable due to the diversity of accessibility challenges, as we were able to go further into detail. Participants were able to identify their prefered interview method. Wandering tours were held with two participants who wanted to demonstrate their particular considerations of the built environment at UBC. While we allowed interviews to flow, and for participants to direct portions of each interview according to their knowledge-base and interests, our default interview question sheet can be seen in Appendix 2.

The interviews were recorded for further transcription, coding, and further analysis. In the course of coding, we gathered common themes which are apparent in the Insights section below. We then analyzed individual meaning units and common themes to make specific and broad recommendations for accessible nighttime events at UBC.

To compliment the interviews, we also created a survey on Qualtrics, promoting it around campus and through multiple media streams. This survey contained a series of open-ended questions designed to give people with disabilities a platform to describe their lived experiences. Unfortunately, the survey had a very limited response, highlighting the difficulty of targeting a specific audience through broad-based approaches like postering.

Findings

Survey

Our survey was unsuccessful, receiving only one response. Additionally, this single response was submitted incomplete. As such, we did not take the results of this survey into consideration.

Interviews

With a total of six in-depth personal interviews, we gained a well-rounded (though incomplete) understanding of the intersection between disability, accessibility, and UBC campus nightlife. A key concept that was shared with us by Participant 1 is the distinction between physical and attitudinal barriers surrounding disability.

Physical barriers include physical aspects of campus (and the world) which are inaccessible in a variety of ways to different bodies. These barriers are most commonly conceived of as accessibility barriers: including obstructions such as a lack of wheelchair ramps, digital content that is incompatible with visual impairment software, and intense lighting.

In contrast — and more subtle than physical barriers — attitudinal barriers include obstructions such as personal or collective attitudes. Attitudinal barriers can include feeling like a burden in event spaces, undefined accessibility information, and biases against invisible disabilities.

Both of these types of barriers are crucial to understand. In creating more accessible, inviting spaces and events that include people with disabilities, a built environment that is universally accessible (or close to) and that is welcoming to all bodies is essential.

Some of the quotes that resonated with our team during interviews about the importance of attitudinal barriers are showcased below:

> **"I should be an advocate for myself but I feel like a burden."**
>
> **"A little thing like a note in the registration really can make a big difference… it's saying 'you belong here."**
>
> **Speaking about asking for a hearing aid microphone to be used: "How much do I need them?"**
>
> **"I felt like I had to be responsible for my lack of ability as the world wasn't going to accommodate it."**
>
> **"I don't want to feel like a burden"**

In moving forward with these findings, we will unpack and discuss both attitudinal and physical aspects of disability and events. Furthermore, we will make recommendations that pertain to both categories of barrier. Ultimately, what our informed recommendations have the capacity to do, is to transform an experience of being an unexpected burden at an event into the experience of being a welcomed guest.

Insights

Visual Impairment

At night, people with visual impairments have an especially hard time navigating spaces. For example, it is difficult for someone with visual impairments to find an unfamiliar entrance to a building if the main entrance is locked in the evening. Night also means there are less people around to ask for help.

Patterned tiles, like those by the Nest, can be difficult for people with visual impairments because they will often use contrast to navigate obstacles and drops. Strips at the end of each stair are useful for people with visual impairments. The staircase shown below at the UBC Nest lacks them even though it is relatively new. The drop off zone outside the nest is another problematic space for the visually impaired, as pedestrian and vehicle zones are not specifically demarcated.

Many sites and resources are not accessible for visual impairment readers and software, particularly PDFs and images that contain important text information. Event organization platforms are not always accessible to those with visual impairments, which obstructs people with these disabilities from organizing events themselves.

Figure 2. *Patterned tiles by Nest*

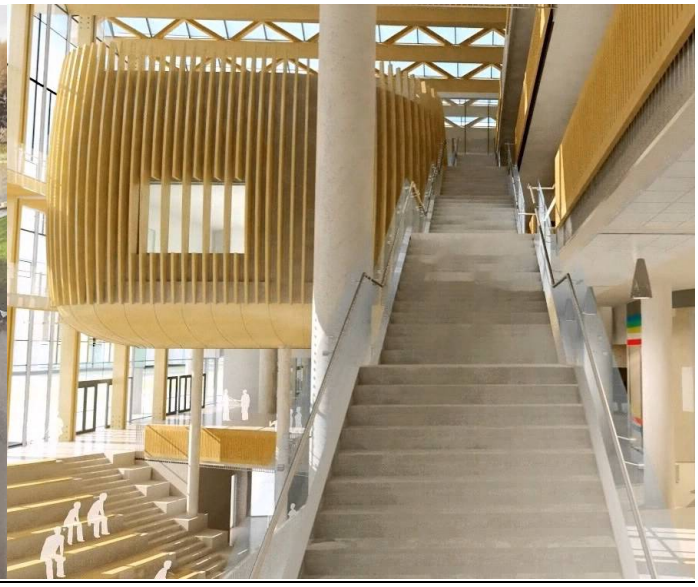


Figure 3. *Staircase in the Nest*

Mobility

Maneuvering through built environments can be difficult, as they are not designed with all bodies in mind. Barriers include uneven surfaces and steep grades, which are difficult for manual wheelchair users and campus users with conditions like arthritis. Events which require navigating uneven ground or a steep grade without assistance are events that potential participants will avoid if they have mobility issues.

There are many who have mobility disabilities but are still ambulatory. That is to say, that not all those who have a mobility disability are solely confined to a wheelchair. This can include individuals with conditions like arthritis or those who are able to mobilize themselves for short amounts of time but require the regular use of a wheelchair.

A lack of easily available seating options can further exacerbate accessibility concerns for those with mobility disabilities. Even for those who require a wheelchair all the time, seating is an issue when it comes to not having enough wheelchair accessible seating and openings.

Finally, many participants spoke to the importance of staging an event with multiple transportation options available — to the event, and back.

Organizing Structures, Communications, and Platforms

Accessibility details for events are often unknown and/or not integrated into promotional materials. This is an additional barrier if an individual does not have time or is unsure with whom to connect about accessibility needs. Participants spoke to the need for advanced notice of logistics. This would reduce the feeling being unwelcome.

There are currently no comprehensive platforms that enables potential attendees to see all events on-campus. This can make it difficult to find out about events with sufficient time to confirm with designated point persons (when there is one) about the accessibility of events.

Social Dynamic Insights

The planning of events should design for all users. While this is most relevant when we speak about accessibility related to mobility challenges, it is not limited to physical space. Segregated wheelchair-only areas separate event participants which can contribute to making events less welcoming and less inclusive.

Logistics

As mentioned time and again thus far, the spectrum of accessibility needs is extremely diverse. With that being said, it difficult to accomodate all needs. While Night-time and darkness exacerbates accessibility concerns, it is difficult to determine an event time of day that works for everyone. Poor wayfinding contributes to this issue especially at night. In addition, it is important to consider and make emergency plans known and available for the participants. This would help to manage the concerns such as not being able to hear alarms.

Hearing Impairment and Nonverbal

Without a mic on the podium or a sound system that includes hearing aids, participants with hearing impairments are not able to hear. Hearing impairment is extremely common and often unnoticed. Communicating nonverbally is difficult.

Light and Sound Sensitive Insights

While wheelchair accessibility is often well understood, the area of light and sound sensitivity accessibility challenges is rarely addressed and poorly understood. Certain types of light and sound can cause migraines and other complications. The lack of shaded areas is another barrier to attending outdoor events.

Limitations

Length and Timing

The brief timeline of the research was non-negotiable: something unfortunate, but that we were given space to work around. Nonetheless, it did produce some challenges for our project given our research focus.

Much of our interviews were sourced through interpersonal connections. While this did not hamper the interviews in and of themselves, it speaks to the difficulty of networking with the subject community as a whole. On-campus resources, collectives, and organizations are not as prominent as with other groups — nor is the subject of disability something you can presume to base a spot-interview on. Moreover, the seasonal challenges of Winter — with heavy snowfall in February — made organizing with interviewees

challenging in some cases. For people who already deal with mobility issues, a walking interview is out of the question.

Data and Representation

While we are confident with our findings, our recommendations are based on six interviews, and additional participants could have certainly improved our recommendations. The majority of our interview subjects were postgraduate students who already have a limited amount of time for convivial activity — let alone campus nightlife activity. Many of our interviewees outright excluded UBC as a space for nightlife, and it took some deliberate questions to get recommendations that specifically pertained to UBC at night.

While these interviews yielded valuable data, the difficulty of sourcing interviews given the challenges of our subject and time should be a paramount consideration for future groups tackling accessibility research. It is not necessarily representative that the majority of our research participants were graduate students, when the majority of campus users at UBC are undergraduates.

Outreach and Promotion

We had success doing our own promotions through Social Media groups, but it is hard to say whether our postering and collaborations (Centre for Access + CiTR Accessibility Collective) yielded any response. This particular research subject would lend itself to having organizational contacts lined up, and aware in advance. We would recommend ongoing relationship building and outreach so that more diverse pool of participants can be sourced.

The Survey Constraint

Our survey was unsuccessful, with one (incomplete) submission being our sole piece of survey-data. We chose not to incorporate this response in our data. Future research groups should consider a synthesized survey which allows the groups to network their responses. Furthermore, it may be worth boiling the survey down to something as simple as a comments field: especially if a research is meant to provide a qualitative analysis.

Recommendations

Based on the common themes analyzed in each of our interviews, we are able to provide recommendations on inclusive (nighttime) event planning on UBC campus. While our recommendations have been carefully thought out, it is only the start of a process of planning for accessible events. Meaningful inclusion requires an ongoing, participatory dialogue and the representation of diverse bodies and perspectives in decision-making roles. These recommendations should be re-evaluated and expanded regularly to ensure that campus users with disabilities are being meaningfully considered in campus nightlife.

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment requires a considerable amount of planning across many contexts. Careful consideration of floor materials is imperative. In the case of one of our research participants, they shared that the large art installation, "The Shadow," in the stonework outside of the Nest looks like uneven ground for people with visual impairments. This participant also noted that high contrast (usually yellow) strips at the edge of stairs assists in safely navigating stairs. Consistent ways of accessing buildings helps to streamline campus navigation, as those with visual impairments may rely heavily upon memory for wayfinding and entering buildings.

Outside of physical design, it is crucial for all university materials to be accessible as well. This includes ensuring that online booking forms and event guidelines are compatible with accessibility software and all images include readable descriptions. This makes sure that folks with visual impairments can access all of the information and textual resources they need in order to be fully engaged community members and organizers. We recommend that all RSVP processes and event advertisements are compatible with accessibility software as well.

Mobility

Mobility disabilities are relatively the most considered when planning for accessibility. However, many accessibility gaps exist. One participant recommended that automatic doors be considered over push-to-open doors: especially in the tight entryways of UBC buildings.

Uneven ground (e.g. grass, steep grades) is ubiquitous. Even ground is by far the most accessible for anyone with mobility aids, manual wheelchairs, and arthritis. Because of the diversity of mobility disabilities, multiple seating options can create more dynamic social interaction for participants. By having one empty space at each table, tables at appropriate heights for wheelchair users, and ample seating throughout the venue, folks with mobility disabilities can fully integrated into an event's social landscape.

Finally, transit can be a core variable in whether or not people with mobility disabilities will attend an event. This variable is only increased in the evening and nighttime hours. We recommend having nighttime events directly adjacent to transit hubs (e.g. bus loops) or to arrange additional transit services, like a shuttle. If additional services are required they should be well-communicated to participants so getting to and from events is as seamless as possible.

Organizing Structures, Communications, and Platforms

It is clear that there is room to improve the organizational structures, communications, and platforms for events. Posting all known accessibility information in all event advertisement channels ensures that potential participants can make informed decisions about whether or not they would like to attend an event and prepare themselves accordingly. Including these details should be as compulsory as clearly stating the time and location of an event.

We recommend auditing the entire process of booking an event to find barriers and inefficiencies for folks with various disabilities (e.g. visual, cognitive, and so on) so that they can take leadership positions in event planning. In addition to this, supports, like a set of guidelines, can empower campus users to plan and execute accessible events. By integrating accessibility into the logistical requirements of events, the need for individuals to spend energy advocating for themselves will be limited and they will

feel more welcome.

Most importantly, campus events should require the presence of a paid and trained staff person on site with first aid who is committed to the safety and wellbeing of event participants. When this support person is a volunteer, responsibilities can be shirked in a first aid emergency. We believe that having a paid support person with training will generate accountability toward health and safety.

Social Dynamics

Physical and logistical barriers are critical to understand. People with disabilities can face barriers getting to events, experience sensory overload, or cannot access the content. But an even wider set of factors play into the event's social dynamic. Many events that boast wheelchair accessibility have a limited scope of what this means. Wheelchair accessible seating for events like concerts can involve a level of social segregation that able-bodied attendees do not experience. There is typically a specific space that is designed for wheelchair accessibility with room for one friend to sit beside or behind, which is not conducive to quality time and leaves those in wheelchairs unable to share group experiences. We recommend that events find creative solutions to spatially integrate all attendees.

Logistics

Event logistics events are central to an enjoyable experience for all participants, but have a higher impact on disabled folks. Although this research project sought to gather data about campus nighttime events, participants encouraged holding events at various times of the day due to busy schedules and the accessibility issues that nighttime exacerbates.

First, we would recommend that UBC undertake an exhaustive accessibility and disability audit of every space on campus and create user-friendly floor plans and space guides that can be referenced for all uses of campus spaces. The practicality of this project would go far beyond nighttime activities. This serious investment would benefit all bodies that navigate campus and gather in UBC spaces. Taking the time to fully audit campus will create a collection of reliable information that can be used on an ongoing basis.

Those who spoke directly about nighttime events shared a sense that their vulnerability was heightened in darkness and that late-night timing would impact their attendance. If a nighttime event were to be held in the early evening into the night between the spring, summer, and early fall months of the year when there is light for longer, this would help keep people on campus longer. Location is key due to the physical variables that are listed above. Thoughtful location selection will minimize accessibility barriers and maximize placemaking.

Because UBC is a large campus, most campus users are acquainted with only specific areas of campus. We recommend using wayfinding signs on campus and posting wayfinding maps for reference ahead of time so that attendees can acquaint themselves with their best path from their location at the end of their day to the event location. Consideration of all the means through which participants may arrive on-campus for wayfinding signs is essential. Clearly identify all accessible washrooms within the vicinity, as this is a primary concern for folks with physical disabilities.

Although it takes time and labour, being diligent in posting signage and maps is an impactful step in

helping campus users with disabilities to participate in an event. We also recommend that emergency procedures are designed with diverse disabilities in mind and that these materials be posted well in advance of the event. Because emergencies are particularly fraught for people with disabilities, the worry of one can weigh heavily on event participants who don't know what will happen should one arise. By posting an emergency protocol, participants can enter an event and plan for what they will need.

Advanced notice of events will also aid in planning travel routes as well as other personal logistics like bringing equipment and medications. Because campus users will sometimes require equipment and medications, having a free and secure area or lockers in which to store items (with access during the event) will enable them to fully participate without worrying about the security of their belongings and needs.

We recommend that all disability services are offered proactively and stated explicitly in all event advertisements and descriptions. Accessibility requirements can be integrated into registration processes to ensure that needs are being met at the event. This can also include using a known or newly-UBC-created accessibility logo (Figure 4) which can be used to signify that an event has met a specific set of accessibility requirements. When people view an event advertisement that features this logo, they will know that there is a certain level of accessibility accommodation included in the event.

Figure 4 *Example of a universal accessibility logo (Apple's Universal Access)*

In order to consistently advertise all of these details and the wide variety of events at UBC campus, we recommend using a centralized calendar system which will feature all of our communications recommendations.

Hearing Impairment and Nonverbal

Hearing impairment is an extremely common experience that often goes unnoticed. We recommend using live or closed captioning services for all events. Captioning is a service that benefits those who are hard of hearing as well as a wide variety of other disabilities such as audio processing disorders and autism. Although these disabilities are very distinct from one another, captioning events is one of the solutions which specifically benefits all of these. We also highly recommend that UBC invests in Loop technology for as many shared venues as possible. Loop technology is an audio system, visualized below, which can connect to hearing aid frequencies and allow those who use hearing aids to fully hear everything within the space. This would also make the dissemination and archival of event audio easier.

Nonverbal disabilities are wide ranging from a physical inability to talk to symptoms on the autism spectrum. It is challenging to communicate at events for people who are nonverbal, and accessing basics like washroom directions or refreshments can be arduous. Lower volume at events would help those

who physically struggle to talk but may be able to whisper, as well as including icons alongside basic necessities, such as food and drink menus, that can be pointed at. Training staff to be willing and patient to help interpret gestures is highly recommended.

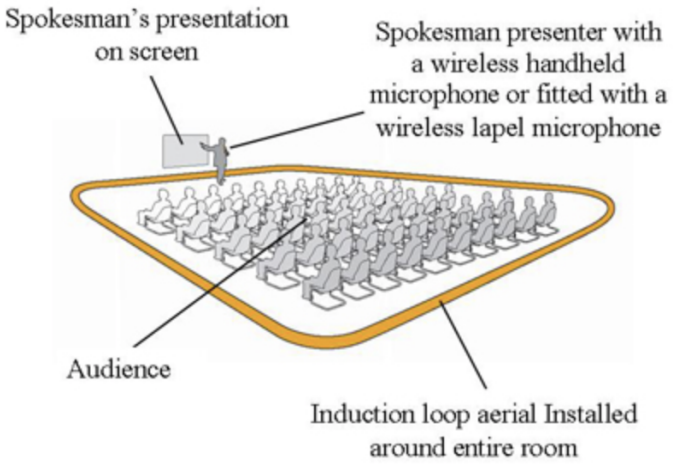


Figure 5. *Loop technology into which hearing aids can tune (hearinglink.org)*

Light- and Sound-Sensitive

Light- and sound-sensitivity, along with other sensory disabilities, are some of the least acknowledged accessibility concerns. They can be difficult to accommodate and, like all disabilities, are best approached as a partnership with those affected. Providing as much venue information as possible in event descriptions, including sensory details like strobe lighting, is essential in allowing potential participants an informed choice. Although not all intense sensory input can be managed, event descriptions can remind folks that they are encouraged to bring sunglasses and other equipment that is suitable. Other small and proactive considerations like having ear plugs on hand for events with loud music demonstrates community empathy and lets participants know that they being considered.

We recommend providing covered social areas to protect an event from rain, as well as creating shade from intense lights and the sun. Further, having respite areas where guests can take a break from the event and its sensory stimulants is beneficial to both those with and without disabilities. Even those with no disabilities may prefer to be able to come in and out of the event, or take a break in a calmer area.

Conclusion

The literature review and data gathered from interviews in collaboration with research participants inform recommendations for hosting accessible nighttime events on UBC campus. Our proposals attempt to address both physical and attitudinal barriers by looking at inaccessible infrastructure, potential obstructions, and opportunities for improved outreach and empowerment. Understanding that those affected by accessibility challenges are extremely diverse and can be impacted in a variety of ways, we based our recommendations on the following themes:

- Visual Impairment
- Mobility
- Organizing Structures, Communications, and Platforms
- Social Dynamics
- Logistics
- Hearing and Nonverbal
- Light- and Sound-Sensitivity

When we design accessible events, we are designing events for all. The guidelines proposed in this report provide UBC with the tools to lead by ensuring its built and lived environment is universally accessible. While we have developed a thorough and comprehensive list of recommendations, all guidelines are not static, and should be treated as a living documents that require constant adaptation for the changing needs of this diverse community. As one interviewee stated, engaging the UBC disability community must be an ongoing process as opposed to a tokenistic gesture. We hope that our recommendations, community-based research, and partnership development will support an ongoing practice of collaborative design for accessibility.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Recruitment Poster

SCARP School of Community And Regional Planning

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

sustainability

This is a student-led collaboration with faculty, staff, and community partners as part of the SEEDS Sustainability Program.

Let's Talk Accessibility

SCARP has partnered with UBC Community Development to get a better understanding on how to design accessible night time events on campus and we need your help!

Our Team is looking to interview the UBC Community about how to make UBC more accessible at night.

We would be happy to meet with you in person, over walking interview, over the phone, video chat, or email.

Interested in giving some input but don't have time to meet with us? Find the link for our online survey at the bottom of the page!

INTERESTED IN PROVIDING YOUR INPUT?
EMAIL US AT
UBCNIGHTLIFEEVENTACCESSIBILITY@GMAIL.COM

ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_erkQsH1z7rPX7XD

Appendix 2. Interview Questions

What is your relationship with UBC?

What would be some ideal location for outdoor events on campus?

What gender do you identify with?

If you self-identify as disabled, do you feel comfortable sharing the disability/disabilities you identify with?

Do you have any experience attending or organizing events on-campus?

What is the biggest obstacle to attending nightlife on-campus?

What is an accessibility feature for events on-campus that is actually not very effective?

Is there a very positive experience with accessibility you have had during an on-campus event?

Follow-up: How could on-campus events better make sure that your experiences remain positive?

Is there a very negative experience with accessibility you have had during an on-campus event that you would like to share?

Follow-up: What measures would be necessary for you to believe that future on-campus events would not be similarly unaccessible in the future?

Would you be more inclined to attend events if there some some kind of mail-out, student club, or other community service that connected people with accessibility concerns?

What would you say is most missing from the conversation about accessibility and disability on-campus?

How have you been navigating campus in bad weather?