

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Events Checklist

A comprehensive tool for planning inclusive and accessible sports events in Canada

Checklist Overview

This checklist has been developed to support the planning and delivery of events that are inclusive, accessible, and equitable. It provides a structured and practical framework to help organizers identify and reduce barriers to participation, while creating environments where all participants feel respected, valued, and able to fully engage.

This resource is intended for use across a range of sport events, including conferences, competitions, community events, and training sessions.

How to Use This Checklist

Each item should be reviewed and marked as:

	RED = Not Implemented		YELLOW = In Progress		GREEN = Implemented
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Note: Not all items will apply to every event, but each section should be reviewed to ensure inclusive planning.

Contents

1	Event Timing	7	Health & Safety
2	Event Venue & Accessibility	8	Data, Privacy & Consent
3	Transport, Travel & Parking	9	Post-Event Evaluation
4	Food & Beverage	10	Code of Conduct & Reporting Mechanicsims
5	Marketing, Promotional & On-Site Materials	11	Financial Accessibility
6	Event Activities	12	Indigenous Engagement & Reconciliation

SOURCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement

The Inclusion in Canadian Sports Network (ICSN) developed this Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Events Checklist to support the planning and delivery of inclusive, accessible, and equitable sport events across Canada.

This checklist was informed by a variety of established resources and best practices in accessibility, inclusion, cultural responsiveness, and event planning, alongside original content developed by ICSN. We are proud to acknowledge the organizations and authors whose work contributed to the development of this resource.

The **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Events Checklist** has been developed by adapting the following resources:

- 1 Barker, R. & Kek-Pamenter, J. (2024). *User Guide for Inclusive and Accessible Events* (Version 3). Inclusive Futures: Reimagining Disability, Griffith University. Retrieved from <https://inclusivefutures.griffith.edu.au/inclusive-and-accessible-events/widgets/422348/documents>
- 2 RIBA inclusive events checklist. (n.d.). <https://www.riba.org/work/insights-and-resources/riba-inclusive-events-toolkit/inclusive-events-checklist/>
- 3 *Planning Events that are Culturally Inclusive: A Guidebook – St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership*. (n.d.). <https://stelip.ca/resources/planning-events-that-are-culturally-inclusive-a-guidebook/>
- 4 *Community Event Planning Guide – First Peoples Wellness Circle*. (2025). <https://fpwc.ca/what-we-do/news/community-event-planning-guide/>

10

Disclaimer

This checklist is provided as a general guidance resource to support inclusive event planning. While reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy, relevance, and timeliness of the information at the time of publication, ICSN makes no representations or warranties, express or implied, regarding its completeness or reliability. ICSN assumes no responsibility or liability for any decisions made or actions taken based on the use or interpretation of this material.

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01 EVENT TIMING

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Date & Calendar Considerations			
Have event times been confirmed to accommodate all relevant time zones for participants?	☐	☐	☐
Does this event align with key Canadian dates (e.g., National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)?	☐	☐	☐
Does the event date avoid conflicts with major sporting, staff, religious, cultural, or school/national holidays?	☐	☐	☐
Are potential timing conflicts with religious observances considered, including partial-day observances?	☐	☐	☐
Have the needs of your specific audience been considered when selecting event times?	☐	☐	☐
Accessibility & Caring Responsibilities			
Is the timing suitable for attendees with caring responsibilities, support workers, or personal assistants?	☐	☐	☐
Have accommodations been considered for attendees who rely on caregivers or other support staff?	☐	☐	☐
Recording & Ongoing Access			
Will the event be recorded to provide access after the live session?	☐	☐	☐
Are captions, sign language interpreters, and other accessibility resources included in the recordings?	☐	☐	☐
Prayer, Reflection & Quiet Space			
Is it appropriate to provide a designated space for participants to pray, meditate, or reflect quietly during the event?	☐	☐	☐
Religious Considerations			
Does your event fall on a day when some participants may be fasting? If so, have you considered offering takeaway food options or adjusting food service timing?	☐	☐	☐
Have you considered how fasting observances (e.g., Ramadan) may affect participation?	☐	☐	☐

02 EVENT VENUE & ACCESSIBILITY

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Land Acknowledgements			
Have you considered including a land acknowledgement at the beginning of your event?	☐	☐	☐
Stage & Presentation Area			
Is there access to the stage via stairs, ramp, or both?	☐	☐	☐
Do the stairs have railings? Does the ramp have railings and an incline no steeper than 1:14?	☐	☐	☐
Is there reliable Wi-Fi and cellular reception?	☐	☐	☐
Is there a public address (PA) system available and functioning?	☐	☐	☐
Is the venue temperature controlled?	☐	☐	☐
Is the lighting adjustable for presentations and accessibility needs?	☐	☐	☐
Will flash photography or bright lights be used, and if so, has this been communicated to attendees during registration?	☐	☐	☐
Venue Operations & Staffing			
Have venue staff been briefed on inclusion and accessibility requirements?	☐	☐	☐
Have photographers and filmmakers been briefed to ensure diversity is represented?	☐	☐	☐
Do photographers/filmmakers have the necessary tools and knowledge to capture all skin tones accurately?	☐	☐	☐
Venue Location & Structure			
Is the venue entrance accessible to all attendees?	☐	☐	☐
Are all rooms and areas within the venue accessible?	☐	☐	☐
Are lifts large enough to accommodate a range of wheelchair users?	☐	☐	☐
When possible, is the event hosted on a ground floor or fully accessible floor?	☐	☐	☐

PLANNING ELEMENT

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Signage & Wayfinding

Is venue signposting clear, visible, and easy to understand, including temporary event signs?



Are signs provided from multiple directions and entrances, incorporating both text and graphics?



Does signage include braille where appropriate (e.g., venue rooms, toilets, lifts)?



Is there a site map that includes access information, OHS/evacuation instructions, and inclusive features?



Toilets, Washrooms & Change Facilities

Are there enough toilets/restrooms relative to the venue size and audience?



Are toilets accessible to ambulant users?



Are there unisex/gender-neutral options?



Are showers, Changing Places facilities, or parent rooms available?



Are gender-neutral change rooms and washrooms available, with appropriate signage?



Are wheelchair-accessible and gender-inclusive bathrooms available?



Are lactation rooms accessible?



Are reflection rooms available where possible?



Are the locations of accessible bathrooms, lactation, and reflection rooms clearly indicated?



For large audiences with wheelchair users or low-mobility attendees, are multiple accessible toilets available?



Access to Venue & Movement

Is the path to the venue uninterrupted and free of hazards?



Are pathways open, covered, and safe, with stairs and railings where needed?



Are elevators, escalators, and ramps with railings available?



Are doorways wide enough and equipped with automatic doors where possible?



PLANNING ELEMENT

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Assistance & Support

Have support services (e.g., security, interpreters) been booked in advance?

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Are staff or volunteers assigned to assist attendees who may require support?

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Have support staff completed Disability Awareness Training?

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Are designated assistance staff clearly identified with large, readable name tags?

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Are assistance staff encouraged to offer attendees verbal assistance?

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Is provision made for assistance animals, including toileting areas and water bowls?

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Is on-site childcare available for attendees?

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Furniture, Seating & Layout

Can furniture be rearranged to allow clear, accessible pathways?

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Are a variety of seating options available (hard, soft, stools, chairs with and without arms)?

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Are some seats equipped with back and arm support?

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Are seats available at different heights?

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Are tables of various types and heights available, including wheelchair-accessible tables with adequate knee clearance?

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Room Layout & Space

Is there adequate space for movement for all attendees, including wheelchairs, powerchairs, and assistive equipment?

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Are entry/exit routes, evacuation paths, toilets, and amenities accessible?

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Are aisles wide enough for wheelchairs, powerchairs, and strollers?

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Are accessible seating areas available, including chairs with armrests for low- mobility attendees?

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Seating, Presentation & Speaker Access

Do speakers have accessible routes to the presentation area, including ramps where needed?

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Are seats available in the presentation area, and is water provided for speakers?

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PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Seating, Presentation & Speaker Access			
Is the lighting appropriate for attendees who lip-read?	☐	☐	☐
Is front-row seating available for captioning or interpreting?	☐	☐	☐
Sensory Considerations			
Are sensory-friendly spaces provided where attendees can rest or desensitize if overstimulated?	☐	☐	☐
Are potential sensory triggers minimized, including bright lights, noisy spaces, high-traffic areas, and flashing/strobing lights?	☐	☐	☐
Audio-Visual (AV) & Technology			
Are microphones available, including handheld and lapel options?	☐	☐	☐
Are screens available for presentations, captioning, or projecting interpreters?	☐	☐	☐
Are microphone styles and screen placements suitable for speakers with low mobility and accessibility needs?	☐	☐	☐
Hybrid, Recording & Audio Access			
Is a hearing assistance system available and functioning?	☐	☐	☐
For hybrid events, is the sound tested so virtual attendees can hear in-person participants clearly?	☐	☐	☐
Captioning, Interpreting & Language Access			
Are accessibility services provided according to audience needs, including live captioning, auto captioning, transcripts, Auslan or ASL interpreting, and audio descriptions?	☐	☐	☐
Are captioners/interpreters provided with pre-reading, handouts, scripts, and speaker names in advance?	☐	☐	☐
Are requests for ASL/CART services accommodated with sufficient lead time?	☐	☐	☐
For virtual events, is CART provided via the platform (e.g., Zoom)?	☐	☐	☐
Access Statements & Communications			
Are access and accommodation statements written in plain, accessible language?	☐	☐	☐
Are statements included in all communications (RSVPs, emails, invites)?	☐	☐	☐
Is sufficient time given for attendees to request accommodations?	☐	☐	☐

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Access Statements & Communications			
Are anonymous accommodation request options available?	☐	☐	☐
Are presenters aware of and prepared to meet accommodation needs?	☐	☐	☐

03 TRANSPORT, TRAVEL & PARKING

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Transport			
Is the venue close to accessible public transport services?	☐	☐	☐
Is organized transport provided to and from the event if needed?	☐	☐	☐
Have the needs of guests with disabilities been considered, including support for arrival or departure?	☐	☐	☐
Are drop-off points clearly identified and located near accessible venue entrances?	☐	☐	☐
Accessible Parking			
Does the venue have clearly designated accessible parking bays?	☐	☐	☐
Are accessible parking bays conveniently located relative to the venue or event rooms?	☐	☐	☐
Are parking options covered (undercover) or open-air?	☐	☐	☐
Are parking options free or paid, and is this communicated to attendees?	☐	☐	☐
Do accessible parking spaces have adequate circulation and manoeuvring space?	☐	☐	☐
Can accessible parking be reserved or allocated for specific guests?	☐	☐	☐
Access from Transport to Venue			
Is there a continuous, even, and unobstructed accessible path from parking, drop-off points, and public transport to the venue entrance?	☐	☐	☐
Is sufficient lighting provided along pathways leading to the venue entrance?	☐	☐	☐
Is undercover access to the venue available?	☐	☐	☐

PLANNING ELEMENT

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Access from Transport to Venue

Are ramps and elevators available for accessible entry?

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Have all transport options been considered, including walking/cycling routes, public transport, and private parking?

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Has wayfinding support been provided in advance, including clear directions to accessible entrances/exits?

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Is cycle storage available for attendees?

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Have any additional access requirements been identified and addressed?

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04 FOOD & BEVERAGE

PLANNING ELEMENT

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Dietary Requirements

Have dietary preferences and requirements been collected from attendees in advance?

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Does the menu accommodate common dietary requirements, including Halal, Kosher, vegetarian, vegan, and major allergens?

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Are allergens clearly listed for all food and beverages?

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Are common allergens such as nuts avoided on the premises where possible?

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Are ingredient lists provided in large print, including information on possible cross-contamination?

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Are Kosher and Halal options clearly labelled and easily identifiable?

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Are gluten-free, vegetarian, and vegan options clearly labelled and available?

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Are food and beverages individually packaged or adequately separated to prevent cross-contamination?

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If alcohol is served, has this been communicated to attendees in advance?

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Are a variety of non-alcoholic beverages available, beyond water and juice?

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PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Dietary Requirements			
Are water and non-alcoholic alternatives provided in equivalent availability when serving alcohol?	☐	☐	☐
Are straws provided for beverages where appropriate?	☐	☐	☐
Are accessible serving points available for all attendees?	☐	☐	☐
Are seating and table options suitable for attendees with varying mobility and stature?	☐	☐	☐
Dining Areas			
Are catering and dining areas accessible for all attendees, including wheelchair users and persons of short stature?	☐	☐	☐
Are accessible low tables and seating options provided, rather than only stools or high chairs?	☐	☐	☐
If using food trucks or vans, is the order window accessible to attendees with mobility limitations?	☐	☐	☐
Fasting & Food Service			
Does your event take place during a period when participants may be fasting?	☐	☐	☐
If so, have you considered offering takeaway options or adjusting food timing accordingly?	☐	☐	☐

05 MARKETING, PROMOTIONAL & ONSITE MATERIALS

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Marketing Materials & Channels			
Are multiple, diverse communication channels being used to promote the event to reach a wide audience?	☐	☐	☐
Are a variety of media used (emails, flyers, posters, websites, social media) to ensure accessibility for different audiences?	☐	☐	☐
Accessibility of Materials			
Are accessible versions of all materials provided, including accessible fonts (sans serif, 12pt+), high colour contrast, large-text versions, and screen reader compatibility?	☐	☐	☐

PLANNING ELEMENT

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Accessibility of Materials

Are accessible PDFs, ALT text for digital images, closed captions, audio descriptions, and easy-read versions provided?

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Are electronic forms easy to complete and correct errors? Are materials free of flashing or strobing elements?

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Inclusive Language & Representation

Do marketing materials use inclusive language throughout?

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Can the audience relate to the images of people in promotional materials?

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Are materials available in other languages upon request?

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Do invitations include an inclusion and access statement?

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Are contact details provided for participants to make inclusion or access requests?

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Invitations & Booking Systems

Are invitations provided in an accessible format for all recipients?

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Does the booking system allow participants to indicate personal pronouns and access/inclusion requirements?

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Pre-Event Information & Planning

Are site plans available pre-event so attendees with additional access requirements can plan travel and attendance?

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Are public transport links, maps to the venue, and a venue accessibility map provided?

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Are key event specifics communicated in advance, including access measures, flash photography use, and opt-out activities?

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If there is a dress code, has it been explained inclusively?

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Language Access

Have you assessed whether language interpretation or translation services are needed?

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If participants may not speak English fluently, have you explored available translation or interpretation options?

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Event Materials: Handouts, Signage & Wayfinding

Are handouts and other collateral accessible and inclusive?

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PLANNING ELEMENT

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Event Materials: Handouts, Signage & Wayfinding

Are onsite signage and wayfinding materials clear, visible, and accessible, including event signage, site maps, event agenda, and emergency/evacuation procedures?

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Are QR codes or URLs for live captioning access, and photo/videography notices, included?

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Communication, Materials & Formats

Are printed copies of materials available? Are slides or images visible and clear from all angles?

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☐

Have schedules and agendas been sent to attendees in advance?

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☐

Are sessions presented in multiple formats (written, verbal, visual aids)?

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Are printed materials using accessible colour schemes, fonts, and formats, including large text, dyslexia-friendly fonts, braille, plain English, and multiple languages where relevant?

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Will presentation materials (e.g., slideshows) be made available to participants to improve accessibility?

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06 EVENT ACTIVITIES

PLANNING ELEMENT

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Activity Participation

Does the activity require physical or technical participation (e.g., running, drawing, cutting, or similar)?

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Are there any height, weight, or other restrictions that could limit participation?

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Inclusion & Choice

Do the activities offer broad appeal to a diverse audience?

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Is an opt-out option provided for participants who may not wish to engage in certain activities?

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Theme Selection

Have you avoided using someone's culture purely as a theme, decoration, or costume?

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PLANNING ELEMENT

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Theme Selection

Have you considered selecting a theme unrelated to a specific culture (e.g., seasons, colours, decades, popular media)?

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Have you reviewed your theme to ensure it does not unintentionally include offensive stereotypes?

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Cultural Inclusion & Respect

Are you approaching any cultural element with appreciation rather than appropriation?

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Are individuals from that culture involved as planners, performers, or contributors?

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Have you avoided stereotypes and caricatures?

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Have you ensured accurate and respectful representation of any culture featured?

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Have you avoided engaging with sacred or culturally restricted practices, symbols, or items?

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Cultural Context & Representation

If entertainment or activities relate to a specific cultural practice, will the roots and history of the activity be acknowledged?

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Have you considered hiring speakers or entertainers who belong to the group they are speaking about?

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Planning Team Alignment

Have you had open discussions with your planning team about safety, respect, and anti-discrimination expectations?

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Do event organizers feel prepared and confident responding to harassment or discrimination if it occurs?

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Content & Wellbeing

Have you considered including content warnings if the event may involve material that some participants could find distressing?

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07 HEALTH & SAFETY

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Safety, Incident & Emergency Information			
Have you obtained a copy of the venue's evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐
Are emergency exits clearly marked and accessible for all attendees, including people with disabilities?	☐	☐	☐
Is there a designated assembly point for emergencies?	☐	☐	☐
Are there accessible exits specifically for wheelchair users or attendees with reduced mobility?	☐	☐	☐
Does the evacuation plan address the needs of Deaf or hard-of-hearing attendees?	☐	☐	☐
Are emergency service access points identified and clear?	☐	☐	☐
Are safety protocols established to account for attendees with limited mobility or other disabilities?	☐	☐	☐
Are first aid and mental health first aid resources available onsite?	☐	☐	☐
Do fire and emergency alarms provide both audible and visual alerts?	☐	☐	☐
Are mental health supports beyond first aid included?	☐	☐	☐
Are de-escalation protocols for incidents in place?	☐	☐	☐
Emergency Communication & Protocols			
Are emergency procedures clearly communicated to attendees via announcements and/or signage?	☐	☐	☐
Are attendees informed that they may step out, take a break, or leave the event at any time if needed?	☐	☐	☐
Policies & Commitment			
Have you developed event policies that affirm your commitment to a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment?	☐	☐	☐
Is there a clear anti-discrimination policy in place?	☐	☐	☐
Have you clearly communicated how the event will remain safe and respectful for everyone?	☐	☐	☐

08 DATA, PRIVACY & CONSENT

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Is the collection of personal information limited to what is necessary, clearly explained, and optional wherever possible?	☐	☐	☐
Are attendees explicitly informed in advance about any photography, videography, or recording taking place?	☐	☐	☐
Are clear and practical opt-out mechanisms in place (e.g., identifiers, designated no-recording zones)?	☐	☐	☐
Are data handling practices (storage, access, retention, and disposal) aligned with applicable privacy standards?	☐	☐	☐
Is personal information managed in a manner that ensures confidentiality, security, and informed consent at all stages?	☐	☐	☐

09 POST-EVENT EVALUATION

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Is there a structured and accessible process to gather feedback on inclusion, accessibility, safety, and overall experience?	☐	☐	☐
Are equity-deserving participants actively invited and supported to share their perspectives?	☐	☐	☐
Are insights, gaps, and outcomes systematically documented and reviewed?	☐	☐	☐
Is there a defined process to translate feedback into measurable improvements for future events?	☐	☐	☐
Are key findings and planned actions communicated transparently to relevant stakeholders?	☐	☐	☐

10 CODE OF CONDUCT & REPORTING MECHANISMS

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Is there a clearly articulated and publicly accessible Code of Conduct outlining expected behaviours and accountability standards?	☐	☐	☐
Are formal and well-communicated processes in place to report incidents of harassment, discrimination, or misconduct?	☐	☐	☐
Are multiple, accessible reporting channels available, including anonymous options?	☐	☐	☐
Has a trained and identifiable point of contact or response team been designated and communicated to all participants?	☐	☐	☐
Are response procedures timely, confidential, consistent, and grounded in trauma-informed practices?	☐	☐	☐
Are consequences for violations clearly defined, proportionate, and consistently enforced?	☐	☐	☐

11 FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Have concrete measures been implemented to reduce financial barriers to participation (e.g., tiered pricing, subsidized or complimentary access)?	☐	☐	☐
Are financial supports (e.g., travel subsidies, bursaries, stipends) available and clearly communicated to attendees who may require them?	☐	☐	☐
Are all anticipated costs (including registration, parking, food, and materials) transparently communicated in advance?	☐	☐	☐
Have potential hidden or indirect costs been identified and mitigated to prevent financial exclusion?	☐	☐	☐
Are speakers and contributors from equity-deserving groups compensated fairly and consistently?	☐	☐	☐
Does the overall pricing model align with the goal of equitable access and broad participation?	☐	☐	☐

12 INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT AND RECONCILIATION

PLANNING ELEMENT	NOT IMPLEMENTED	IN PROGRESS	IMPLEMENTED
Are elders being engaged early in the planning process to help shape cultural protocols and practices for the event?	☐	☐	☐
Is there an opportunity for an elder to lead an opening/closing prayer, reflection, or teaching?	☐	☐	☐
Will contributors such as elders, presenters, drummers, or knowledge carriers be recognized with a gift for their time and knowledge?	☐	☐	☐
If feasible, are there plans to provide small appreciation items for participants as well?	☐	☐	☐
Where possible, are gifts or materials being purchased from Indigenous- owned businesses or local creators?	☐	☐	☐