

## Conference & Event Planning

### Including signed-spoken language interpreters

Planning on how to include interpreting services in an event or conference should be started at the onset or as soon as a request has been made. Accessibility is the responsibility of the host organization to ensure all participants have equal rights in their participation. One way to provide accommodation and a level of accessibility is to include interpreting services. Event details will dictate specific requirements for interpreting services. This document is intended to start that conversation.

### Top Tips

- Be prepared to provide the interpreting team with preparation materials in advance of the event. These will be used to prepare for the linguistic features and content themes being discussed. Materials could include event rundown sheets, conference schedules, presentation abstracts, keynote presentation slides, social event information, etc.
- Provide name badges for each interpreter with: ASL-English Interpreter
- The lead interpreter will manage the interpreting team and coordinate with a conference/event liaison. It is a good idea to have an on-site contact person available in case anything comes up during the event.
- If video materials are being used be prepared to turn on professional captions/subtitles. Do not rely on auto-generated captions. If you plan to incorporate music, be sure to inform the interpreting team in advance. Audio and visual materials require specific preparation methods for the team.
- The signed-spoken language interpreter will be using the microphone instead of the sign language user. A lavalier or an over-ear microphone are preferred.
- ASL is a 3D visual modality language and will require unobstructed sightlines throughout the spaces where being used. Lighting is also important, both natural and artificial, to reduce eye fatigue. Collaborate with the interpreters, and Deaf consumer(s) if possible before the event starts to determine optimal placing and lighting.

- Use terminology such as “Deaf” and “Hard of Hearing”. “Hearing impaired” is unacceptable.
- To acknowledge the interpreters a suggested statement is: “We are working with a team of American Sign Language-English interpreters to provide access in both languages for all of us.” It is also helpful to inform event & conference participants in advance that interpreting services will be at the event.

### **Additional Notes about Interpreting**

- If during the interpretations the English does not sound quite right, or something is “off” you can interrupt the interpretation process and ask for clarification. The ASL user can do the same. Additionally, if the interpreter needs clarification, they should ask for it during their work. Asking for clarification is not a reflection of the participants' comprehension. Keep in mind that the interpreters may not be subject matter experts in the topic being discussed.
- Interpreters primarily work simultaneously, i.e. taking the input of one language while outputting language two with a few seconds of processing time. You do not need to alter your style of speech; however, the interpreting team will collaborate with you to ensure that everyone has access to your information through the interpretation.
- While the interpreters are actively working, they are not participants in the conversation and event. However, please feel free to approach the team with questions and ideas for improvement beforehand or afterwards.

### **Unsure about something? Just ask!**

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