

# Guidelines for organising events and activities for marginalised groups



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LifeLong Learning Team  
Dublin South City Partnership

Aim and context

Language

Engagement and barriers to engagement

Pre-event / activity

At the event / activity

Post event / activity

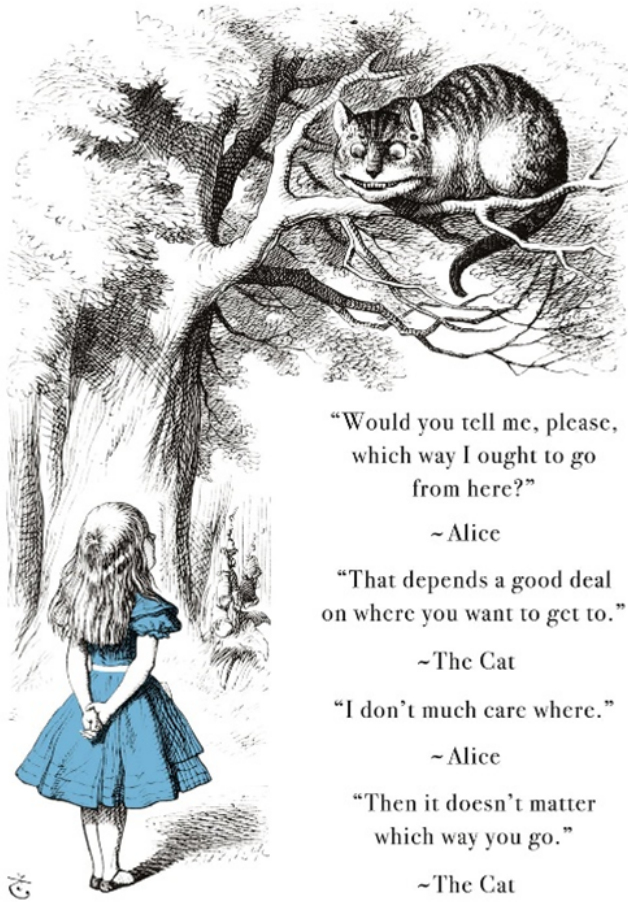
Appendices:

Universal design

Further reading

Asylum, refugee and migrant groups





"Would you tell me, please,  
which way I ought to go  
from here?"

~ Alice

"That depends a good deal  
on where you want to get to."

~ The Cat

"I don't much care where."

~ Alice

"Then it doesn't matter  
which way you go."

~ The Cat

## Context

This guide is set in a context where it is increasingly important that services are relevant and appropriate for marginalised people. The foundation for any approach is to treat all people with respect and kindness. Beyond that, we need to optimise the chances that events and activities are successful (measured by being a positive, beneficial experience for all participants – organisers and guests).

Experience shows, that creating this environment does not 'just happen' – we have to think about what we are doing.



'The discipline of writing something down is the first step toward making it happen.'



Lee Iacocca

## Points for Consideration

There is unlikely to be one set of guidelines that will be of relevance and applicable to all events, so these guidelines are not prescriptive. Instead, they are presented as points for consideration when planning activities.

## Language

Welcoming people is all about embracing everyone and creating a positive experience, which often starts with inclusive and welcoming language. The examples below address language around people seeking asylum:

<b>REPLACE</b> ✘ 	<b>EMBRACE</b> ✔ 
Asylum seeker	People seeking asylum
Ireland should/must/can	We should/must/can
Fix our broken system, tackle the problem	Create a fair and efficient process, fairly examine each (person's) case
Comply with international human rights law, humanitarian and legal obligations	Treat others the way we want to be treated, do the right thing
Security, survival	Live in peace, care for children, live free from danger, safety
Be settled in Ireland	Become members of our communities
Fleeing persecution, violence and torture	Seeking safety, rebuilding their lives where it's safe, looking to set up a safe home
It is not illegal to seek asylum, not a security issue, not a threat, no need to fear, myth-busting	It is legal to seek asylum, it is an issue of basic rights, foundation of human dignity
Survive, not seeking a better life	Flourish, prosper, thrive

## Engagement

Effective engagement helps to:

- Improve communications and personal and working relationships
- Generate new ideas from people who may not be traditionally involved
- Wider involvement usually leads to improvement in the quality and sustainability of services
- Increase relevance and use of services
- Challenge assumptions and changes perceptions
- Promote active citizenship
- Early identification of potential issues, conflicts and benefits
- Promotion of local capacity building and learning (individual and organisational)
- Increased community cohesion and strengthened communities

## Barriers to engagement

There are lots of people and groups whose voices are not heard – for lots of reasons:

- Competing priorities
- Lack of awareness of opportunities to engage
- Accessibility reasons:
  - Language barriers
  - Cultural barriers
  - Gender
  - Timing (clash with childcare availability, working times, holy days / celebrations / prayer times)
  - Location and availability of transport
- Social expectations
- Lack of trust
- Lack of confidence
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of resources (financial, knowledge or skills)

For ease, we are presenting three sections:

- 1.Pre-event/activity
- 2.At the event / activity
- 3.Post event / activity

The points are presented as questions for consideration. Not all points will have equal relevance in planning an event.



## Pre-Event / Activity

- Clarity about purpose – what are we trying to achieve?
- Who is the intended audience – and what do I know about them?
- What methods will be most effective in reaching them?
- What resources are available?
- Who can help in terms of contacting this particular target audience?
- Can I involve a person (s) within the target group in planning the event?
- One off events are less effective – what is the link into other agencies / services/ progression etc?
- What date might work well? (one that doesn't clash with any religious holidays / holy days e.g Ramadan – fasting requirements, one that doesn't clash with any school holidays)
- What date might work well? (considerations such as carers / parents / school drop off and collection times)
- Do I have a diversity of speakers and participants (gender, race, age, educational background, identity)
- How will I manage any potential language barriers at the event / activity
- How appropriate is the venue?  
For example how accessible is it by public transport, parking; drop-down point; bicycle park; walking
- Can I provide or reimburse travel expenses?

## Pre-Event / Activity, continued...

- Can I or should I include this accessibility information on the advertisement/ poster? E.g. Public transport routes: Distances / times for walking; Map / GoogleMap coordinates; Parking rates; Photo of entrance to building
- How will I manage any specific mobility needs, such as stairs / lifts/ wheelchair access
- How comfortable is the seating?
- How clear is the venue signage?
- How appropriate is the venue sound system (for the event I am applying). Are there any facilities for hard-of-hearing participants?

## Advertising the event

- How do I want to explain what the event is for? What language / context do I use? Can I explain what the intended benefits are to the participants in attending?
- What barriers might the intended audience face in accessing the information I put out to advertise?
  - Language. Would a translated version be useful?
  - Medium of communication (Poster; Direct text / WhatsApp / email; Social media. Would a QR code be useful?)
- How clear are the details?
  - Date / Day
  - Starting time / Ending time
  - Will the doors be open early for people to arrive, feel at ease?
  - State if it is a free event
  - State if there are free refreshments
  - Are children welcome?
  - Numbers expected
  - Clarity regarding what the expectation will be for participation (or not)





## At the Event / Activity

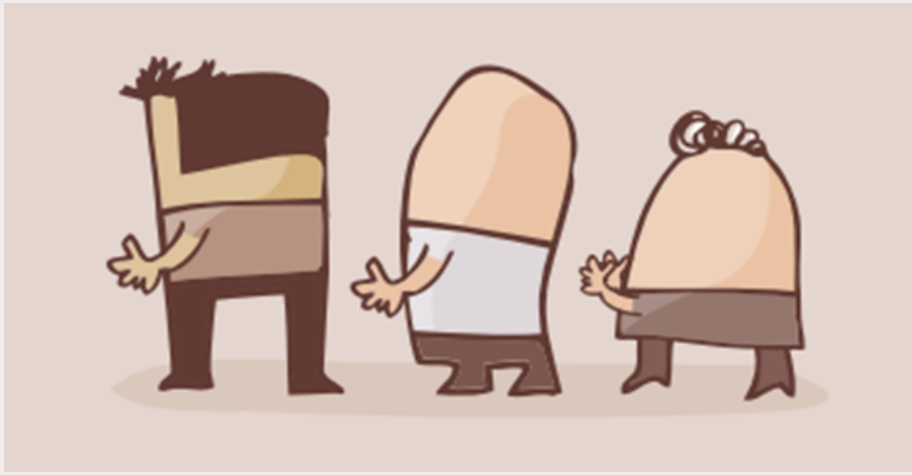
- Are there opportunities for social connections to be made? – down-time / free time, breaks
- Is there relevant information / literature accessible – free to take away  
Always verify that a resource is up-to-date and accurate; information and best practices are changing rapidly in new environments
- Think about the seating arrangements:
  - Are seats easy to get to (even if a person arrives late)
  - Letting participants choose their seat is better
- Is WiFi available? (participants may need to keep in touch with external supports / language translations / family). Is the wifi clearly signed?
- Are toilet facilities clearly signposted and accessible?
- Will participants need permissions to take pictures / record the event?  
How is this communicated?
- Do the organisers need permissions to take pictures / record the event?  
How is this communicated?
- Is the presentation made using Universal design principles? (see Appendix 1)





## At the Event / Activity, continued...

- Will an Attendance record / Sign-in Sheet be required?
  - Is this accessible for participants with literacy / language challenges?
  - Can contact details be taken at the same time so that resources can be forwarded / further contact be made?
- Consider dietary needs for any refreshments
- What are the pros and cons of name badges (specifically for this event)
- Is there a means to raise questions / increase participant involvement and voice?

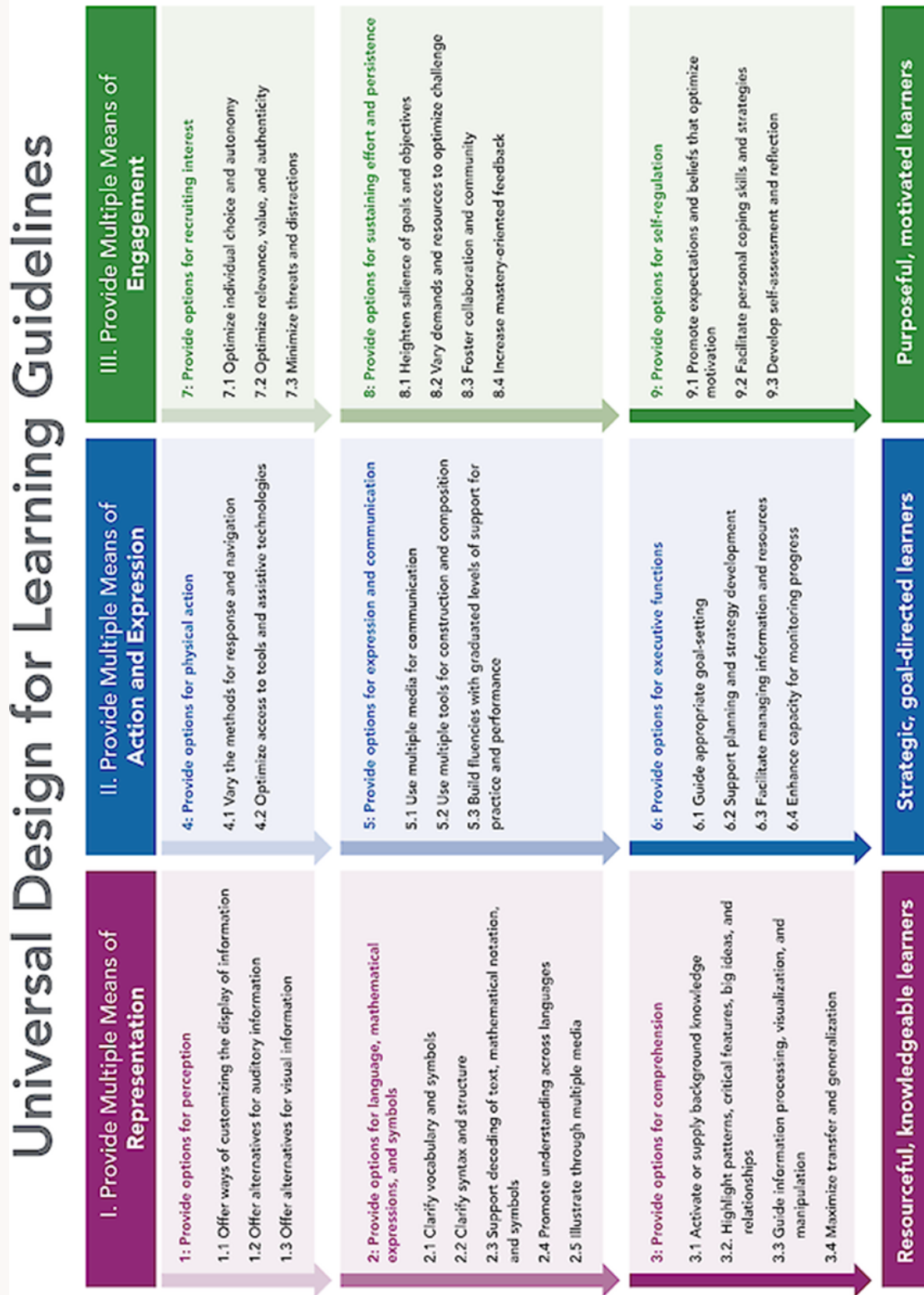


## Post Event / Activity

- Will resources be forwarded to all participants, and how is this communicated?
  - How will feedback and evaluation take place, and how might this be adapted to take into consideration potential language / literacy challenges?
  - What are next steps or progression for participants? Organisers?
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'Coming together is the beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.'

Henry Ford



## Appendix B

### Further Reading on Planning Inclusive Events

Amnesty International. A 'How to' Guide for Amnesty International Activists on Creating Welcoming Communities. Accessed online: <https://www.amnesty.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Welcoming-Communities.pdf>

Government of Ireland (2019) The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017 – 2020. 2019 Progress Report

Institute for English Studies, University of London (2020) Best Practice Guide for Inclusive Events Accessed online : <https://ies.sas.ac.uk/s>

Lambat Ahmed I & Lambat Yusuf I (January 2011) Engaging with Hard to Reach Groups the Trafford Way Accessed online: <https://lmcp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Hard-to-reach-workbook.pdf>

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland March (2008) Tools for Social Change A Resource Guide for Community Work with Migrant Workers and their Families in Ireland Accessed online; <https://www.mrci.ie/app/uploads/2020/02/ToolsForSocialChange-compressed.pdf>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 'UNHCR Resettlement Handbook'. Accessed online: <http://www.unhcr.org/resettlementhandbook>

World Health Organisation (2011) Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers Accessed online: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241548205>

## Appendix C

### Asylum, Refugee and Migrant groups

*The following is a non-exhaustive list of some of the larger, national groups and organisations.*

Doras Luimní <http://dorasluimni.org/>

Immigrant Council of Ireland <https://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/>

Irish Refugee Council <http://www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/>

Jesuit Refugee Service Ireland <https://jrs.ie/>

MASI – The Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland <http://www.masi.ie/>

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland <https://www.mrci.ie/>

Nasc, the Migrant and Refugee Rights Centre <http://www.nascireland.org/>

New Communities Partnership <https://www.newcommunities.ie/>

Places of Sanctuary Ireland <http://ireland.cityofsanctuary.org/>

RAMSI – Refugee and Migrant Solidarity Ireland <https://www.ramsi.info/>

The Irish Refugee and Migrant Coalition (IRMC) is a coalition of Irish NGOs that seek to advance the rights and dignity of people on the move and those in need of international protection <http://www.irmcoalition.com/>

If you need any support, or have queries or feedback about this guide, please contact us in Dublin South City Partnership.

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