



Accessibility TipSheet

Universal Design Resources On the Web

FROM THE ACCESS OFFICE

What’s the difference between “accessible design” and “universal design”? Accessible design tends to follow the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), which lay out the minimum requirements or standards for making environments accessible. Universal Design looks beyond those minimums to develop environments that are functional and usable by the broadest number of people in our society, whether disabled or not, using seven key principles of design.

The following are online resources for information on universal design.



Specific to the Arts



1. Smithsonian Accessibility Program:

“Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design”
<http://www.si.edu/opa/accessibility/exdesign/start.htm>

This document is a must for anyone working in museums or with exhibit design.



2. National Endowment for the Arts:

“Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator’s Handbook”
<http://www.nea.gov/resources/Accessibility/pubs/DesignAccessibility.html>

This resource is designed to help you not only comply with Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, but to assist you in making access an integral part of your organization’s planning, mission, programs, outreach, meetings, budget, and staffing.



Other Resources

1. The Center for Universal Design

<http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/>



The Center for Universal Design (CUD) is a national information, technical assistance, and research center that evaluates, develops, and promotes accessible and universal design in housing, commercial and public facilities, outdoor environments, and products.



Their mission is to improve environments and products through design innovation, research, education, and design assistance.



2. Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDEA)

<http://www.ap.buffalo.edu/idea/>

The IDEA Center is dedicated to improving the design of environments and products by making them more usable, safer, and appealing to people with a wide range of abilities throughout their life spans. IDEA provides resources and technical expertise in architecture, product design, facilities management, and social and behavioral sciences. From the main webpage, there is also a link to a site that supports educators and students in their teaching and study of universal design.



3. National Center on Accessibility (NCA)

<http://www.indiana.edu/~nca/>

A collaborative program of Indiana University and the National Park Service, the National Center on Accessibility is the nation's premiere resource promoting access for people with disabilities in recreation. Through the comprehensive services of Research, Technical Assistance and Education, NCA focuses on universal design and practical accessibility solutions creating inclusive recreation opportunities for people of all abilities.



4. Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)

<http://www.cast.org>

With Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a blueprint, CAST researches and develops ways to support all learners according to their individual strengths and needs. On this site, you'll learn how CAST's research and development, which draws on the latest brain research and multimedia technology, translates into more effective professional development, policy and practice, products, and publications.



5. Adaptive Environments

<http://www.adaptenv.org/>

Adaptive Environments is a 27-year-old educational non-profit organization committed to advancing the role of design in expanding opportunity and enhancing experience for people of all ages and abilities. Adaptive Environments' work balances expertise in legally required accessibility with promotion of best practices in human centered or universal design.

ABOUT TIPSHEETS

TipSheets are produced collaboratively with members of the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) network. TipSheets are intended solely as guidance and are not a determination of an organization's legal rights and responsibilities. You are welcome to copy and distribute this TipSheet.

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