Stanford Neurodiversity Summit
Accessibility Guidelines for Speakers

This packet contains the accessibility guidelines that we are asking all speakers (presenters, panelists, and moderators) follow. If you are both a speaker and an employer at the job fairs, please also review the Accessibility Guidelines for Employers packet, which contains information specifically addressing accessibility and accommodations during the job fair/reverse job fair. Should you need accessibility information or accommodations yourself, please see the Accessibility for Attendees packet for more information.

We ask that everyone read the “Allies” section in its entirety. This section, which is also included in the Accessibility for Attendees packet, provides general accessibility guidelines for everyone at the summit. The remaining sections have guidelines specific to your role as a presenter, panelist, and/or moderator. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, don’t hesitate to reach out. The packet is organized into the following sections:

Allies: How Everyone Contributes to an Accessible Summit

Presenters
• Preparing for Your Presentation
• During Your Presentation

Panelists

Moderators

Allies: How Everyone Contributes to an Accessible Summit

We’ve noticed that many conferences on the topic of neurodiversity are actually not set up to be neurodiversity-friendly. In planning our conference, we are applying Universal Design concepts to maximize accessibility and inclusion. We want neurodiverse/neurodivergent individuals to come, be comfortable, and be able to participate. While we are doing lots of planning on the backend to design a conference that is as accessible as possible, attendees also play an active role in creating an accessible and inclusive environment. We can’t do it without YOUR help. Here is how you can help us create an awesome and accessible conference:

• Balancing Needs: In a large conference like this one, there will inevitably be competing needs. For example, fluorescent lights bother many people and are the only option in some areas; however, turning the lights off may make it difficult for someone with low vision to be able to see presentations or navigate the space. Filling out the accommodations section on the registration, and communicating with us about those needs, allows us to plan for potential conflicting needs.

    Additionally, we recognize that not all neurodiverse/neurodivergent people stim or self-regulate the same way, nor do they have the same sensory needs. While some need quiet to feel calm, others find making noise (vocal stims, clapping, etc.) helps them self-
regulate. While in one of the designated specific quiet areas, please try to keep noises to a minimum. If you need to make noise, there are also some areas for that. Those are: anywhere outside, the balcony on the second floor, and the first-floor lobby.

- **Minimize Fragrance if Possible:** The Stanford Neurodiversity Summit is not a fragrance-free conference, and we recognize that some people use scents to help them self-regulate or manage pain. However, strong scents (perfumes, aftershave, etc.) can trigger sensory dysregulation, migraines, or asthma for some individuals. Therefore, we ask that you please leave the scented products at home, if you can do so without detriment to your own health and self-regulation. Please note: Stanford University School of Medicine is a smoke-free campus; no smoking or vaping is allowed anywhere within its campus. For more information, see the School of Medicine’s Tobacco-Free Campus Policy.

- **Refrain from clapping:** 400 people clapping all at once gets very loud and can be very overwhelming for those with sensory sensitivities. Instead, we ask that you show your appreciation and enthusiasm by using the ASL (American Sign Language) sign for applause, which is pictured below. We will remind attendees of this during the conference, but you shouldn’t feel embarrassed if you accidentally forget.

"DEAF APPLAUSE"
Can also mean "Yay!" and "Hurrhah!" or "Kudos."
Hold your hands in the air and twist them a couple of times.

- **Respect Disability Placard Parking and Blue Zones:** We are setting aside all of Lot 15 as parking for people with disability parking placards. Please do not park there if you do not have a disability parking placard. However, if you need to park there but do not have a placard for whatever reason, please contact us ahead of time so that we can arrange for that. Inside Li Ka Shing Center there will be designated “Blue Zones” marked off with tape. These areas can be used as wheelchair parking or for those who need to sit up front to be able to hear or see the speaker.

- **Respect Quiet Zones:** There will be several areas designated, and clearly marked, as quiet zones throughout the conference hall. These areas include: the foyer on the second floor (outside the main conference hall), the second-floor seating area by the
classrooms, and the break room on the third floor. In these spaces, we ask that you please keep your voices down and minimize conversation if possible.

- **Service Dog Etiquette:** Some conference attendees may be accompanied by trained service dogs. We know dogs are adorable, but we ask that you ignore the service dogs out of respect for the handlers and the jobs their dogs do. If you approach a service dog handler, speak to the handler, not the dog. Don’t try to pet, feed, or call to the dog; this distracts them from their job.

**Presenters**

**Preparing for Your Presentation:**

- **PowerPoint:** If you are preparing slides for your presentation, we ask that you do so in Microsoft PowerPoint. This is because the Microsoft suite has the best accessibility features. If you don’t have access to PowerPoint, you may use another program (Keynote, Google Slides). However, we will need your completed presentation earlier so that we can ensure it is in an accessible format (screen reader compatible, etc.).

- **Presentation Format:** In creating the slides for your presentation, please keep the following principles in mind:
  - Text: Text should be large enough to be easily read, be written in a clear font (sans serif is best) and have good contrast against the background. See the resources linked below for more information on best practices.
  - Color: While color is a great way to communicate and group information, do not rely on color alone to convey information. In particular, don’t use red/green pairing to communicate key information as some people (red-green colorblind) may not be able to see the difference. Keep color schemes simple and avoid neon colors.
  - Animations: Animations add excitement to presentations, but they also add to visual processing demands, which can be overwhelming or distracting. Any transitions between slides or animations should be simple.
  - Multimedia: If you include pictures in your slides, please add image descriptions (alt text). See the resources below for instruction on how to do that.

- **Resources:**
  - [PowerPoint accessibility guide](#)
  - [Dyslexia-friendly style guide](#)

- **Send Us a Copy:** We are asking all presenters to send their slides to us no later than March 7th (if you used PowerPoint) or March 1st (if you used another program like Keynote). We will provide the slides ahead of time to people who have requested it as an accommodation (for example, someone who uses a screen reader). Ideally, we would like to make the presentations available to everyone, but we also recognize everyone may not be comfortable with this. In your email, please let us know how we may share them.
During Your Presentation:

- **Google Slides**: All presenters are asked to present in Google Slides; yes, we want you to create the presentation in one program and present in another. But we have a good reason! With Google Slides, we are able to use two built-in accessibility features: live closed captioning and digital audience Q&A. Both of these features are available in the control bar after you click “Present.”

- **Closed Captions**: The closed captioning feature provides live captioning of your presentation. The words will automatically appear at the bottom of your presentation as you speak. This way, you don’t need to have pre-scripted your presentation or provide a transcript. In our (informal) experimenting, it has been remarkably accurate. If you have not previously used this feature in Google Slides, you will need to allow Google Slides to access the microphone on your computer. We recommend trying out this feature beforehand so that you know how it works.

- **Audience Q&A**: The Q&A button displays a link that allows audience members to type in a question, which you can then see in a separate window. If you have a Q&A session after your presentation, please turn this on. You may choose to turn it on at the beginning and display the link for the duration of your presentation, but you don’t need to if you don’t want to. Of course, feel free to also answer questions from audience members who raise their hands or approach the microphone. Again, we recommend trying out this feature ahead of time so that you are familiar with it.

- **Volume**: If you are provided with a microphone, please use it. Presenters/panelists in the smaller rooms during the breakout sessions will most likely not have mics, so please make sure to project your voice. It is also helpful to keep your mouth visible while speaking, for anyone who reads lips or watches mouths to help them understand what is being spoken.

- **Expect That People May Take Breaks**: Many neurodiverse/neurodivergent individuals need to take frequent breaks during events like conferences. We have told attendees that they should feel free to step out during presentations and panels if they need to take a break. And while we have asked that individuals be cognizant of other attendees and, as much as possible, not disrupt others when they leave, this is not always possible when someone is having a hard time self-regulating.

  There isn’t anything you need to do per se, but just something to be prepared for. We certainly don’t expect it to be an issue as you all are familiar with this population, but if this does happen, please don’t make a big deal about it or take it personally.
Panelists

- **Audience Q&A**: Moderators will set up a Google Slides presentation and turn on the audience Q&A feature. This means that people will have the option to submit questions via text. Moderators will monitor the question submissions and ask questions from both the audience and the Q&A submissions.

- **Volume**: If you are provided with a microphone, please use it. Presenters/panelists in the smaller rooms during the breakout sessions will most likely not have mics, so please make sure to project your voice. It is also helpful to keep your mouth visible while speaking, for anyone who reads lips or watches mouths to help them understand what is being spoken.

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Moderators

- **Prepare a Background Slide**: Using Google Slides, create a background slide to display during the panel. The slide should be simple and just include the title of the panel, panelist names, and photos.

- **Closed Captions**: The closed captions feature will generate live captions of what is being spoken. If you have not previously used this feature, you will need to allow Google to access the microphone on your laptop. The one drawback to this feature is that the speaker must be close enough to the computer for the microphone to pick up their voice. In the breakout sessions and individual presentations, this likely won’t be an issue. However, if you are moderating a panel in Berg Hall, it may not be possible for panelists to sit close enough to the computer for it to work.

- **Audience Q&A**: This feature displays a link on the screen for people to submit questions digitally. The questions will appear in a separate window while the presentation slide is displayed. Make sure that you are monitoring the submissions and are asking the panelists some of those questions. Of course, please also take questions from audience members who raise their hands or approach the microphone.

- **Practice**: Play around with Google Slides to familiarize yourself with how to turn on closed captions and the audience Q&A features. Both of these features are available in the presenter control bar that appears at the bottom of the screen once you click “present.”