Stanford Neurodiversity Summit
Accessibility for Attendees

This packet contains information about accessibility, accommodation requests, and potential remaining barriers. The information is targeted towards general conference attendees. In addition, there is a separate document specifically addressing accessibility and accommodations during the job fair/reverse job fair. If you are a presenter/panelist or employer at the job fairs, please see the Accessibility Guidelines packets for presenters and employers.

We ask that everyone, neurotypical or neurodiverse/neurodivergent, read the “Allies” section. The reasons for this are that not every neurodiverse/neurodivergent individual will have the same needs, and that there may be attendees who are neurotypical but have disability- or medical-related accessibility needs nonetheless. We don’t expect people to automatically know how to create an accessible environment for everyone. To help you find information applicable to you, the packet is organized into the following sections:

Accessibility Features
- Allies: How Everyone Contributes to an Accessible Summit
- Eating
- Listening
- Mobility
- Navigation
- Reading:
  - Sensory and Self-Regulation
- Social Communication
- Speaking
- Quiet Zones

Requesting Accommodations
Potential Remaining Barriers

Accessibility Features

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 "Hurrah!" 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 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.

**Eating:**
Catered breakfast and lunch will be provided during the conference. If you have food allergies/dietary restrictions, please contact us so that we can make sure there is food for you. Both meals will be served buffet-style, so cross-contamination may occur while people serve themselves. Food can be prepared separately for those with food allergies who contact us ahead of time.

**Listening:**
For all presentations and panels, there will be live closed captioning. In order to do this, we will be using Google Slides. These captions are autogenerated, and while they have been remarkably accurate in our testing with them, they may not be perfect. If you need to be up close to hear the speaker, you may choose to make use of the “blue zones,” chairs in the front row marked off with blue tape.

**Mobility:**
- **Blue Zones:** For each of the presentations and panels, there will be designated “blue zones” in the front, marked off with tape. The blue squares are for wheelchair parking, which will allow attendees to remain in their wheelchair or mobility scooter if they wish. Chairs marked with blue tape are for mobility aid users or those who need to be in the front to see/hear the speakers.
- **Elevators:** When you arrive at Li Ka Shing Center, you will see a large set of stairs on the outside of the building. Fear not! There are elevators located inside, and all three floors of the conference center are accessible by elevator. There will be signs outside and on each floor directing you to the elevators. Any of the conference volunteers can also help you find the elevators if needed. Li Ka Shing Center is ADA compliant and doors are equipped with power door openers.
- **Parking:** Each of the parking lots/garages has designated parking for disability placard holders. The routes to Li Ka Shing Center from Parking Structure 2 and Lots 17 and 18 are paved and mostly flat. Additionally, we are setting aside Lot 15 as accessible parking.
This lot is located right across from Li Ka Shing Center, a 3-minute walk according to Google Maps. See the “Getting Here” packet for a map and more information.

**Navigation:**
- **Guides:** Volunteers serving as “guides” will be stationed in the foyer outside of Berg Hall. Guides can help direct you to different areas of Li Ka Shing Center (e.g. quiet zones, streaming room, a specific breakout session).
- **Maps:** Maps for parking and transportation are included in the “Getting Here” packet. Additionally, we are providing a map of Li Ka Shing Center, and a video walkthrough of Li Ka Shing will be available on the summit website.
- **Signage:** The path from the parking lots to Li Ka Shing Center will be clearly marked. In addition, there will be signs clearly marking quiet zones, stair-free routes, and directions to classrooms.
- **Transit Center:** There will be volunteers at the Palo Alto Transit Center in the morning to help direct you. They can help you find the free Stanford Shuttle stop or give you walking/biking directions.

**Reading:**
- **Alternative Formats:** Presentations will also be available ahead of time as an accommodation for those who need them. We would like to be able to make presentation materials available ahead of time to everyone, but this will depend on speaker permission. We will do our best to ensure the presentations provided are screen reader accessible.
- **Presentations:** We have asked all of our presenters to use accessible formats for slides. Specifically, these recommendations include sans serif font, good contrast between text and background, and not using color as the only way meaning is conveyed.
- **Summit Information Format:** All of the summit information packets are available as both PDFs and Google Docs. The PDFs are screen reader accessible.

**Sensory and Self-Regulation:**
- **Breaks:** It is our hope that you can attend the entire day and as many sessions as possible. However, an all-day conference like this one can be exhausting, even for neurotypical people. We have built in short breaks throughout the day, but the built-in breaks may not be enough for some people since we have a very full day. Neurodiverse/neurodivergent attendees may wish to skip the “Employer Panel” session. Doing so provides an extra hour to the lunch break in the middle of the day.

  If at any time during a presentation or panel you need to take a break, feel free to step out to do so. The only thing we ask is that you be cognizant of other attendees and, as much as possible, not disrupt others when you leave. We know this is not always possible when someone is having a hard time self-regulating, so there’s no need to feel bad if you cannot make a quiet, discreet exit.
- **Crowds:** During the main sessions in Berg Hall, there is seating for 400 people; we expect to be at capacity. Other potential crowded areas/times include the registration/check-in tables, entrances to Berg Hall during breaks, and 2nd floor foyer during lunch. For those who find crowds challenging, we recommend the following:
Arrive at non-peak times: If you are able to choose your arrival time, you may choose to arrive at the very beginning of the check-in time (8:00 AM) or wait until after the welcome has started (8:30-8:45 AM).

Streaming room: There will be a live video conference that is streaming the conference to one of the classrooms. You may choose to watch the video feed of the conference from the classroom instead of sitting in the main conference hall.

Taking breaks early: If you plan to leave the conference hall (or streaming room) during the break times, you may choose to step out a few minutes early to avoid the potential crowds at the entrance/exit doors.

Taking lunch early: One way to avoid the rush at lunch is to plan to leave the “Employer Panel” early. For neurodiverse/neurodivergent jobseekers, this is the panel that we suggested as a possible extra break in the section above.

- **Lighting:** The foyer (big hallway) on the second floor of Li Ka Shing Center has tons of natural light, as do some, but not all, of the classrooms. Because of this, it may not be possible to entirely avoid fluorescent lighting. Some people find that wearing a hat, sunglasses, or other tinted glasses helps them deal with fluorescent lights. Feel free to wear these inside.
  
  Here are the rooms/spaces that HAVE natural light:
  - 1st floor: main lobby
  - 2nd floor: foyer and hallways, room 205/206, room 209
  - 3rd floor: hallways

- **Noise:** With about 400 attendees, some level of noise is unavoidable. In order to reduce some of the noise, we are asking attendees to refrain from clapping and have designated quiet areas. Importantly, the designated quiet areas include areas, like the foyer and hallways, that attendees must walk through in order to get to Berg Hall or the classrooms. If you use noise-cancelling headphones, we recommend bringing them just in case. Feel free to wear them to any of the presentations, panels, etc.

- **Scents:** The Stanford Neurodiversity Summit is not a fragrance-free conference. We are asking that people forgo using scented products if they can do so without detriment to their own health and self-regulation. If you use scented products for health reasons or to self-regulate, you are welcome to do so; please just be aware of other people. For example, if you are going to spray something, do so outside or away from other people, then rejoin everyone. If you are particularly sensitive to scents, you are welcome to bring things, such as masks, to help you avoid fragrance. We encourage all sorts of self-regulation items (masks, hats, sunglasses, headphones etc.) and welcome attendees to wear them inside.

- **Temperature:** All of the conference spaces are indoors, with central air/heating. The temperature might vary throughout the day or room to room, so we recommend dressing in layers.

**Social Communication:**

- **Color Communication Cards:** When you check in, you will receive color-coded communication cards along with your nametag. The cards will have the color as well as the color word written out. You can display the green, yellow, or red card to let others
know whether you’d like to engage in conversation. The color you choose to display may change throughout the day. Below are the meanings for each color. This information will also be printed in the program as a reminder.

- **Green:** I might have difficulty initiating conversations, but I want to talk. Please come up and talk!
- **Yellow:** I only want to talk to people I know. I might go up to a stranger and start a conversation. If I do, they are welcome to talk with me.
- **Red:** I only want to talk to specific people. Please do not approach me unless I have given you permission ahead of time.

**Neurotypical Social Conventions:** This is a conference about neurodiversity, for neurodiverse/neurodivergent individuals, planned with neurodivergent individuals. As such, we are not expecting that everyone look as neurotypical as possible. In fact, we’d rather you to do what you need to do to be comfortable than focus on passing as neurotypical. Feel free to stim during presentations (as long as you don’t disrupt those around you) and wear hats/sunglasses/headphones inside.

**Speaking:**

- **“I need a break” cards:** In addition to the color communication cards, we are including a card that reads “I need a break,” with options for break locations listed on the reverse. If you need help finding a place to take a break, you may show this card to any of the volunteers and they will take you to the break location of your choice. No words needed!
- **Q&A:** During question and answer sessions, you may of course ask questions verbally if you choose. Depending on the setup, this may mean you come up and speak into a mic or just ask your question from your seat. Alternatively, we will have a link displayed along with the presentations that you can go to and submit questions by typing. You will also have the option of asking your question anonymously.

**Quiet Zones:**

- **Locations:**
  - The main foyer (hallway) on the second floor
  - The hallway outside the classrooms on the second floor
  - Room 309, the designated break room

**Requesting Accommodations**

- **Registration:** On the summit registration form there is a place to indicate the general type of accommodation you need (mobility, visual, etc.) If you selected any accommodations when registering, our team member in charge of accommodations will contact you to determine what your specific needs are.
- **Email Us:** If you did not select any accommodations when registering, you should email Isabelle Morris (isabell2 ‘at’ Stanford ‘dot’ edu) to arrange accommodations. In addition, if you did indicate on the registration form that you need accommodations, but haven’t received an email about specifics, feel free to reach out to Isabelle. We ask that all
accommodation requests are submitted by **March 7th**, so that we have time to make the proper arrangements.

**Potential Remaining Barriers**

- **Fluorescent Lights**: Some areas do not have natural light, but instead have artificial light, potentially including fluorescent bulbs. We cannot change this, but we have provided a list of rooms that have natural light vs artificial lighting.

- **Carpeting**: Berg Hall, the second-floor foyer, and the hallways on the second and third floor all have low-pile carpeting, which could make wheeled mobility more difficult.

- **Imperfect Closed Captions**: Because the closed captioning is being provided through Google Slides, the speakers must be close enough for the laptop microphone to pick up their voices. This should not be an issue for individual presentations or breakout sessions, but the captioning may not work perfectly for the panels in Berg Hall. Having panelists speak into a microphone may allow the captions to work while the speakers are away from the computer, but we won’t know until we try it.