



TIME 4 ALTERNATIVE
CREATIVITY
IN REMOTE SPACE

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of the European Union



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Best Practices Guide for Cultural Institutions

How to adapt services to welcome visitors with sensory disabilities

PROJECT CONSORTIUM



THE PROJECT



Time4AC is an Erasmus+ project of the European Union that aims to disseminate cultural heritage and increase its presence in social life using remote tools by:

- Promoting an effective operation of the creative and cultural sectors in the remote space;
- And increase access to cultural and artistic digital content for people with sensory disabilities.

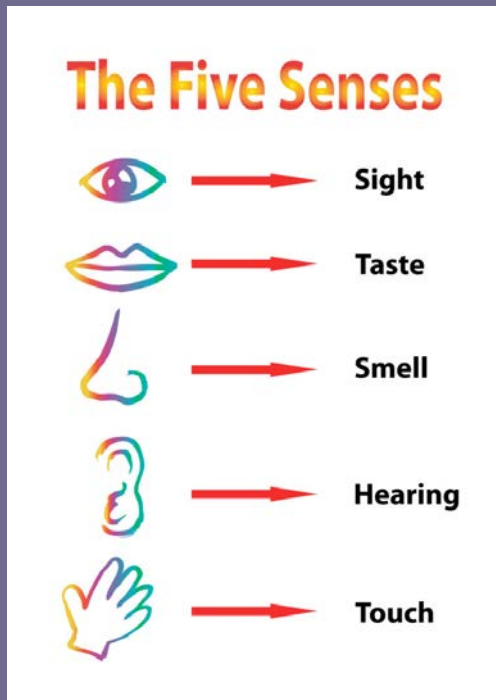
Learning from the success of others

This guide is designed to showcase best practice examples from the four countries participating in the project: Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Portugal, and other examples within the EU.

Cultural Institutions of any size and theme can take the lessons from the examples to adapt their own services for persons with sensory disabilities, offering a welcoming environment for diverse visitors to enjoy their culture and heritage.



General Tips for Welcoming Visitors with Sensory Disabilities



There are five senses.

The term 'sensory disabilities' for this particular project refers specifically to persons with varying degrees of visual or auditory disability (affecting sight, hearing or both).

Visual Disabilities

Visual disabilities can vary from impaired vision to complete blindness in one or both eyes.

Persons with visual disabilities may need to use a cane, a guide dog (service animal), or may require an escort.

Auditory Disabilities

Auditory disabilities can vary from being hard of hearing or not hearing well, to individuals who are unable to hear, or who are deaf in one or both ears.

Persons with auditory disabilities may communicate by lip reading or using sign language. Contrary to popular belief, there is not one sign language, in fact there are over 130 variations. Whilst similarities are present, each is unique.

Tips for Cultural Institutions on Welcoming Visitors with Visual Disabilities

- Introduce yourself before starting or ending a conversation.
- Be clear in explaining if you are assisting in a task (before and during).
- Use audio messages for important announcements and in case of emergency.
- Use references when describing (eg, on your left, in front of you, taller than you).
- Offer more detailed descriptions to compensate for body-language and other visual cues.
- Aside from braille or raised text, offer more verbal information.
- Keep spaces simple and avoid obstructions. Offer tactile indicators.
- Use sound, smell and touch within your exhibits/services.

Tips for Cultural Institutions on Welcoming Visitors with Auditory Disabilities

- Good overhead lighting assists with lip reading.
- Pictograms, drawings and images are better than written signage.
- Hearing Loop System (amplified sound directly to a person's hearing aid) is particularly useful in ticketing and reception areas.
- Verbal announcements should also be made by other means.
- Emergency procedures should also be made with light signalling.

Cyprus



Case Study 1

Pierides Museum - Bank of Cyprus
Cultural Foundation

Case Study 2

Christiana Charalambous Visual Arts

Case Study 3

Fotos Demetriou (Ceramics &
Sculptures)

Case Study 4

Cyprus Mosaics

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities
Wheelchair users

Pierides Museum – Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation

(historical and archaeological museum - Cyprus finds)

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www.virtuallarnakaregion.com/PieridesMuseum/

The Pierides Museum - Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation is the oldest private museum in Cyprus, and is housed in the ancestral Pierides family home - a colonial-style building built in 1825.

The museum's comprehensive collection was assembled by the Pierides family and includes some of the most representative items of the island's civilisation. It charts its economic, social and cultural development over thousands of years.

The objects on display date from 4000BC to the 15th century AD, and are an important testimony to a centuries-old civilisation that flourished in Cyprus. Prized items in the collection are the red polished ware from the Early Bronze Age, Roman glassware, and medieval ceramic dishes. A display case of Modern Greek and Cypriot sculptures can be seen in the courtyard.

The museum is part of the Larnaka Virtual Museums project – a platform that shows the museum and its exhibits in virtual 360 format with enriched information and bonus material. It also houses one of the monuments included in the Larnaka Storytelling Statues series.



[Pierides Museum - Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation](#)



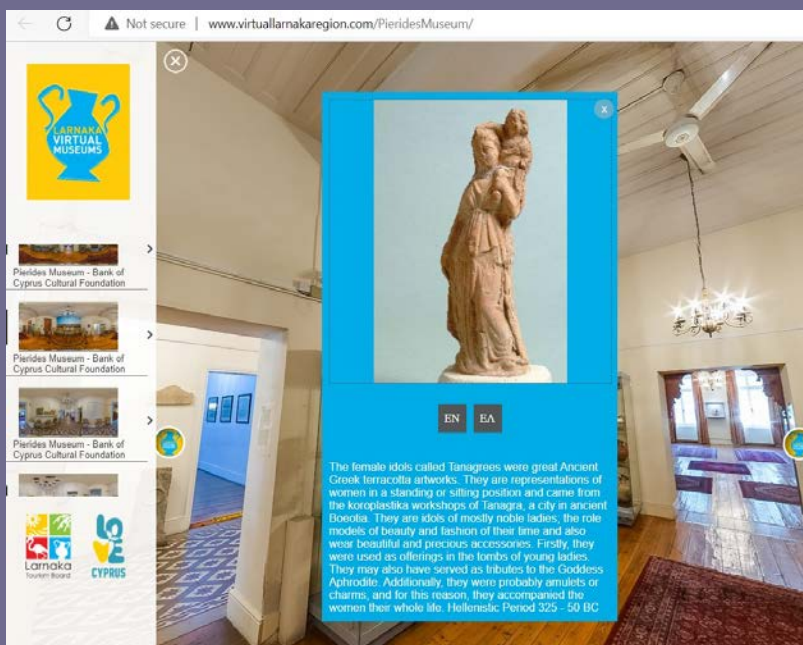
[Pierides Museum](#)

Pierides Museum – Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation



The museum has a wheelchair ramp at a side entrance with a special doorbell to alert staff to open and assist wheelchair users. Once inside, the museum itself is on one level for easy navigation, making it suitable for wheelchair users and persons with sensory disabilities due to a lack of stairs.

Guided tours for persons with visual disabilities can be arranged and incorporate touching and feeling authentic exhibits whilst hearing about their history, as well as smelling reproduced perfumes of antiquity. Audio for two of the exhibits on display allows visitors to hear the background of the exhibit narrated, whilst using the 'Larnaka Virtual Museums' platform also accesses audio to listen to.



Persons with auditory experiences can use the Larnaka Virtual Museums application on a smartphone or tablet whilst in the museum to read additional information on the exhibits they are viewing, as well as to access additional, bonus material, such as 3D renditions.

Touring the museum in a hybrid way with the online material eliminates the need for a sign language tour guide if one is not available, whilst sign language tours can also take place via video.

Best Practices

Thinking outside of the box rather than just adapting existing exhibits:

Pierides Museum decided to introduce new attractions for persons with visual disabilities to offer a unique, tailored experience for this category of tourist rather than just introducing existing exhibits in a different way.

The idea to recreate perfumes from antiquity hones in on the heightened use of other senses in persons with both impaired vision and auditory disabilities. The fragrances were carefully designed to be true to history in association with a historical institute that researched them. The result is an additional dimension to how visitors experience exhibits, and the first olfactory exhibit of the museum (and perhaps in Larnaka and Cyprus).



Feedback from a pilot tour for the visually impaired noted that touching authentic exhibits instead of replicas was a highlight.

"it was appreciated and very special to be given the opportunity to feel authentic exhibits with thousands of years of history rather than replicas."

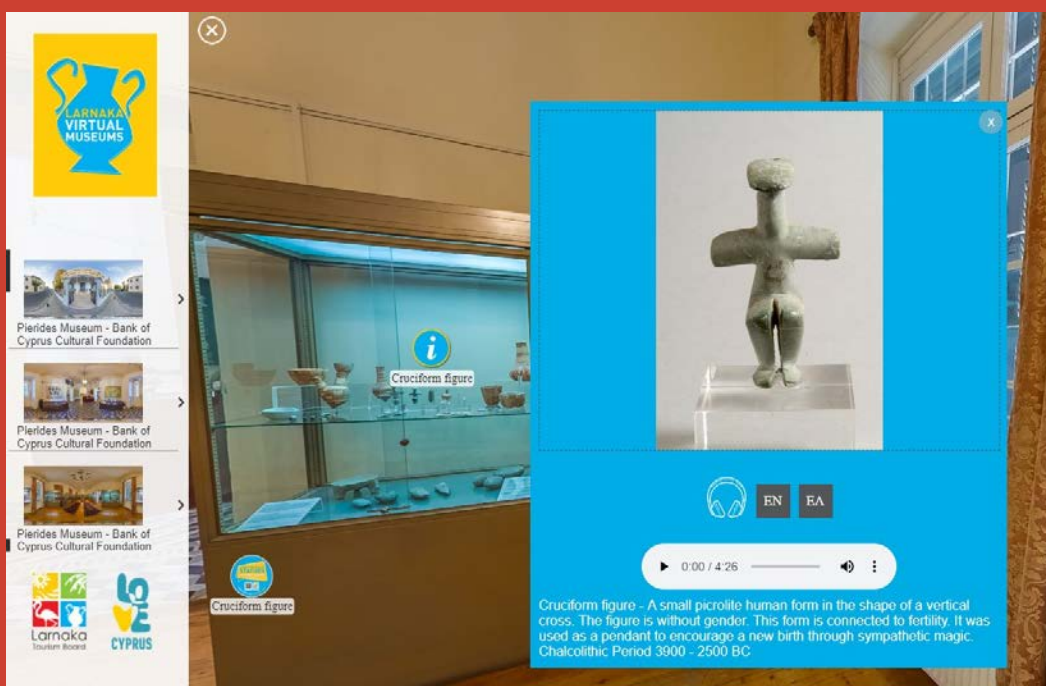
Best Practices

Adding audio to existing exhibits to make them suitable for sensory disabilities:

Including audio for some of the museum's exhibits allows persons with visual disabilities to listen to narration of exhibits in combination with being able to touch and feel some of them (as part of a specific tour for persons with visual disabilities).

The Cruciform figurine is part of the 'Larnaka Storytelling Statues' series of monuments in Larnaka that recount their story in character when a QR code is scanned on a mobile device.

The Headstone exhibit has audio included on the Larnaka Virtual Museums platform which can be heard when the platform is used as an additional tool for visits to the museum. This offers the opportunity to touch and feel the corresponding exhibits whilst listening to their history.



Additional audio for some exhibits provides information on the exhibits felt by tourists with visual disabilities.

Best Practices

Sign language guide upon request – in person or remotely:

Understanding that it is not always possible to arrange for a sign language interpreter to be present or available in person at the museum, the museum has contacts at the Cyprus School for the Deaf to arrange upon request (additional fee) either a sign language guide to give a tour at the museum for organised groups, or for a video call tour, whereby the interpreter hears the museum guide and interprets on the screen for the tourist with auditory disabilities.

Adding more visuals and readable information to make the museum more accessible for persons with auditory disabilities:

Pierides Museum has incorporated more visual information to eliminate the requirement of a sign language tour guide if it is not feasible to have one. Alongside the existing information on the labelling of exhibits, this is done through the interactive Larnaka Virtual Museums platform, which visitors can access whilst on-site to create a hybrid experience whereby the user is prompted to access further information on exhibits through enriched information. For example, where a tour guide would verbally explain about the statue of the Tanagrees female idol, a written explanation is included on the virtual museums platform that is not available on the premises – explaining the roles and representations of these female icons.

Suitable for:
Visual Disabilities

Christiana Charalambous

Visual Arts

(visual art: paintings, clay pottery and sculptures)

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The open workshop of visual artist Christiana Charalambous is located in a tourism cluster called 'Larnaka Art Workshops Neighbourhood' which consists of nine artist workshops located in the old neighbourhoods of Larnaka city and collectively branded as a walking tour where visitors can see the artists at work or participate. The walk can be taken as a self-guided tour at leisure, selecting which of the workshops someone wishes to visit.

The tourism cluster is sign-posted and features urban furniture made by the participating artists. A virtual 360° tour of the neighbourhood and the studios of each artist is available as part of the 'Larnaka 360° Cultural Walk'.

Christiana specialises in visual arts including painting and clay pottery. Visitors to her workshop are invited to watch her work with clay and also given the opportunity to try their hand at making something with clay in the traditional way, guided by Christiana who will then bake the creations ready to take home as a souvenir.

Christiana is also a member of the Cyprus Pottery-Ceramic Association. Within this capacity she features at artistic events and festivals across the island.



[chr.charala](https://www.facebook.com/chr.charala)



[chr.charala](https://www.instagram.com/chr.charala)

Christiana Charalambous Visual Arts

Visitors with visual disabilities can make their own clay pottery, working the clay with their hands whilst learning about the history of pottery in Cyprus and the artist's own technique and style of art. They can then take their creation home as a souvenir of their visit.



The act of creating something out of clay is highly sensory by its very nature and as such, is an ideal cultural activity for tourists with visual disabilities as it hones in on the sense of touch.



For tourists with visual disabilities, Christiana guides them on how to feel the clay and work it - and with it - providing a sensory activity that mainly uses the sense of touch.

This interactive experience that is hands-on is very different to a person with visual disabilities visiting a traditional museum or art gallery and allows them to fully immerse themselves in the local tradition.

Best Practices

Christiana Charalambous
Visual Arts

Making a cultural experience sensory and interactive:

Christiana's inclusion of guiding tourists with visual disabilities in ways that are specific to their disability has allowed her to adapt the experience of making clay pottery and tailor it to the unique requirements of diverse tourist types.

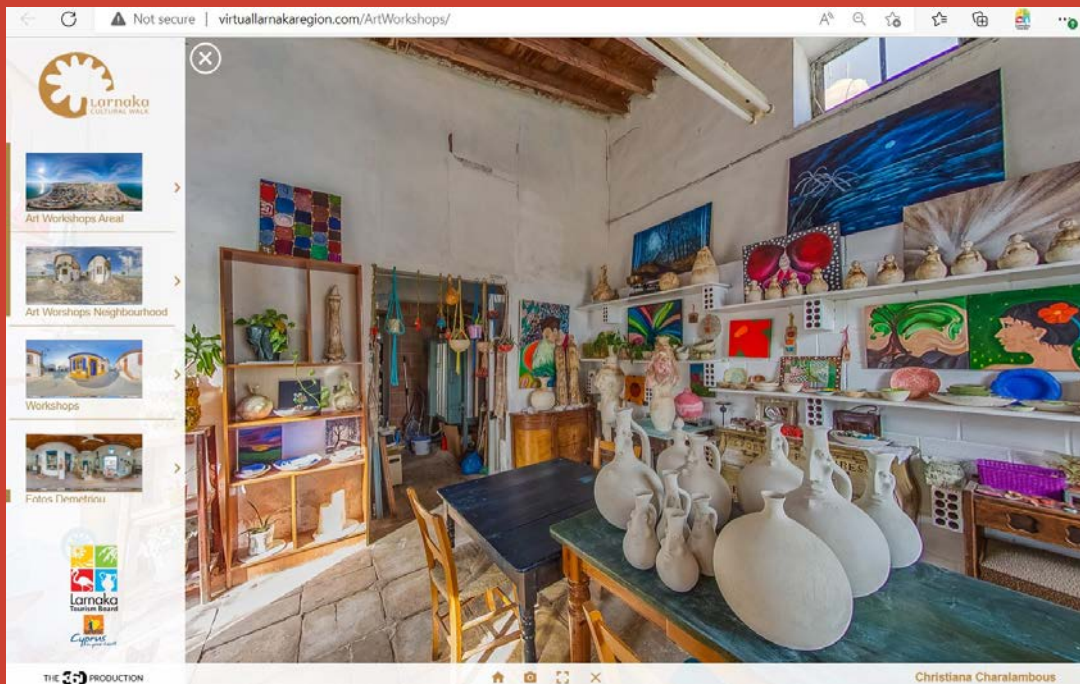
Particularly for tourists with visual disabilities, the use of touch and being able to feel a local custom is a highly immersive experience, but is also very fun as the visitor gets their hands 'dirty' and can enjoy a type of interactivity that a static activity or attraction cannot offer. In this way, Christiana has made the history of clay pottery in Cyprus a fun thing to learn about.



Feeling the artist's own clay works and hearing their connection to the island's history serves as a form of museum/art gallery for tourists with sensory disabilities.

Combining the activity with a museum experience:

Christiana's own artworks are on display at the workshop, and in the case of tourists with visual disabilities, they can serve as 'museum exhibits' with the visitor being given the sculptures and pottery to feel at their table, with an explanation of what they are feeling and its history and connection to the island. Without needing to leave their seat, the visitor is given a dual, cultural experience centred around the tradition of clay and pottery.



The workshop introduces the history and traditions of Cyprus in a more relevant and adaptable way to persons with sensory disabilities

"A messy, but highly fun experience that makes learning about the history and culture of Cyprus enjoyable. I liked the more 'modern', interactive method. It was nice to use my hands to get into it."

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities

Fotos Demetriou

(Ceramics & Sculptures)

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Fotos Demetriou's workshop is one of the nine included in a tourism cluster called 'Larnaka Art Workshops Neighbourhood' nestled in the old neighbourhoods of Larnaka city. The neighbourhood is collectively branded as a self-guided walking tour that is sign-posted for visitors to visit the workshops and observe the artists at work or participate in art making themselves, as well as hosting organised and tour groups.

Its character is also themed to include urban furniture by the artists and can also be viewed on the virtual 360° tour of the neighbourhood and the studios of each artist is as part of the 'Larnaka 360° Cultural Walk'.

Fotos specializes in visual arts, ceramics, clay pottery, and paintings. He specializes and is known for his sculptures created with several materials and operates under the umbrella of the Larnaka Art Workshops Neighbourhood. He accepts visitors in his workshop who may visit his permanent in-studio exhibition and also watch his work.

Fotos is also a member of the Cyprus Pottery-Ceramic Association and within this capacity features at artistic events and festivals across the island. He also exhibits his work all over the world, in solo or group exhibitions.



[Blue Canary Art Studio](#)



[Blue Canary Art Studio](#)

This interactive experience is suitable for both visual and auditory disabilities and is an immersive experience that allows persons with sensory disabilities to experience a hands-on way of learning about Cyprus' culture and art. The act of creating something out of clay is highly sensory by its very nature and as such, is an ideal cultural activity for tourists with visual or auditory disabilities as it hones in on the sense of touch.



Visitors with visual disabilities may create their own clay pottery and sculptures, following detailed instructions while working clay with their hands.

Visitors with auditory disabilities may create their artwork while following visual instructions and copying the artist's example.

Visitors may also simply watch the artist while he is working and then complete their own creations with the guidance of the artist.

The creations made may then be taken home as a souvenir of the visit.



Best Practices

Making a cultural experience sensory and interactive:

Foto's inclusion of guiding tourists with visual or auditory disabilities in ways that are specific to their disability has allowed him to adapt the experience of making clay pottery and tailor it to the unique requirements of diverse tourist types.

For tourists with visual disabilities, the use of touch and being able to feel a local custom is a highly immersive experience, but is also very fun as the visitor gets their hands 'dirty' and can enjoy a type of interactivity that a static activity or attraction cannot offer.

For visitors with auditory disabilities, they experience a type of 'job shadowing' and also have the chance to be a part of the whole procedure and enjoy the opportunity of creating themselves.

The fact that this activity is completed in a single spot and not as a part of a tour creates the feeling of security for the visitors with disabilities as they do not need to navigate.



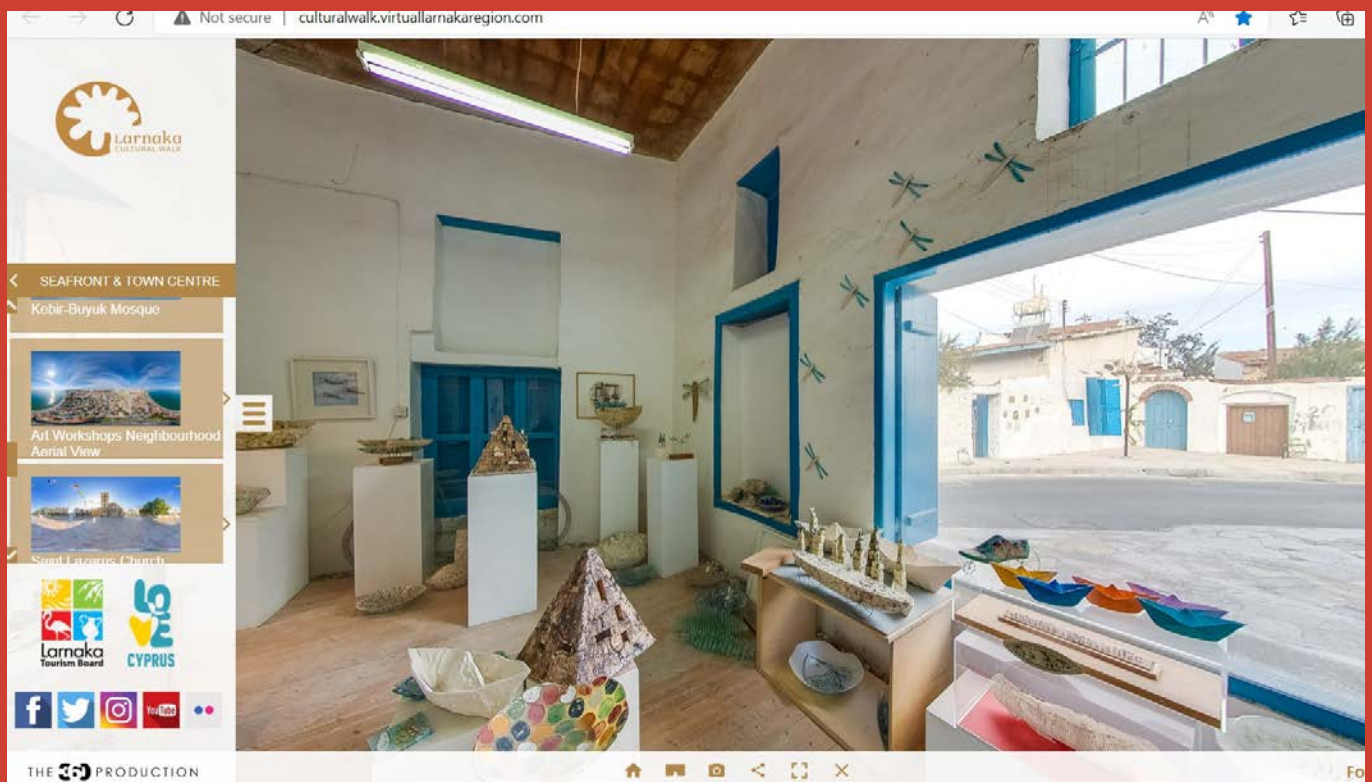
Fotos has hosted groups with sensory disabilities and adapted showcasing his art for both types of sensory impairment accordingly.

Combining the activity with a museum experience:

Foto's own artworks are on display at the workshop.

For tourists with visual disabilities, these works serve as 'museum exhibits' with the seated visitor being given the sculptures and pottery to feel at their table, with an explanation of the item and its history.

Visitors with auditory disabilities may watch the exhibition, reading the labels and learning about the sources of inspirations and how these are connected to the history and tradition of Cyprus.



As part of the Larnaka Art Workshops Neighbourhood virtual tour, persons with auditory disabilities can explore the workshop in advance to feel confident that they are familiar with the space.

Suitable for:
Visual disabilities

Cyprus Mosaics

(Pafos & Lemesos)

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The Department of Antiquities is the body responsible for ancient monuments, archaeological sites and certain museums in Cyprus.

Whilst not all of the sites under its purview are suitable for persons with disabilities, two sites with mosaics were selected to cater for visitors with visual disabilities:

The House of Dionysus is located in Archaeological Park of Kato Pafos (Paphos), which is one of the most important archaeological sites of Cyprus and has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list since 1980. It includes sites and monuments from the 4th century BC to the Middle Ages, while most remains date to the Roman period. The intricate mosaic floors of four Roman villas (the houses of Dionysos, Theseus, Aion and Orpheus) form the impressive epicentre of the finds, and depict various scenes from Greek Mythology.

The House of Eustolios is located in Ancient Kourion and is one of the most important archaeological monuments in Lemesos (Limassol). The building was the residence of a rich inhabitant of the town and dates to the end of the 4th century-early 5th century A.D.. It consists of many rooms surrounding two courtyards and a bath establishment. The group of mosaic pavements, which cover the majority of the building, are of particular interest. The ancient city of Kourion was one of the most glorious city-kingdoms of antiquity and its well-preserved finds highlight the past and life of the city.



Cyprus Mosaics (Pafos & Lemesos)

Visitors with visual disabilities will find that the mosaics at the two sites and their information and history are featured in ways that are specifically geared to persons with varying degrees of visual disability. For example, aside from information in braille, there is also information in large print.



Pilot organised guided tours have taken place in groups, but the site is equally suited to self tours (with personal chaperone or guide).

The use of touch is not limited to one type of rendition or replica to tell the history of the items.



Instead, it provides interest by incorporating different tactile approaches for variety and a more rounded presentation of the antiquities. A copy of a mosaic in relief (black mosaics higher) can be touched alongside a collection of various sizes and shapes of mosaics.

Thoroughly researching and preparing before launching to persons with sensory disabilities.

Pilot organised guided tours have taken place in groups, but the site is equally suitable to enjoy outside of the organised tour (with personal chaperone or guide).

Before implementation of the services, careful and detailed audits were carried out, with the aim of achieving accessibility of the physical, sensory and intellectual accessibility of the site, as well as the level of service provision for visitors with visual impairments.

A multidisciplinary team was formed and the Department of Antiquities shared the knowledge and the necessary skills in order to implement the access plan in coordination with the St. Barnabas School for the Blind who raised awareness in order to provide a better understanding of the issues that affect people with visual impairments and their true needs and challenges when accessing an archaeological site.

In-service training on sighted guide techniques was provided to all the staff employed at the two archaeological sites to ensure that the attractions do not just offer suitable exhibits, but that the staff know how to welcome and assist persons with visual disabilities for a complete and positive experience.

Bringing the mosaics to life in different ways:

In efforts to provide the most comprehensive understanding of the mosaics, the available services are split between accessing information (practical and historical), and creating imagery and bringing the antiquities to life through the use of touching different renditions.

Accessing information

Bilingual informative panels were produced in braille and placed around the site whilst a tactile plan of both sites enables a direct understanding of the architectural organisation of the site.

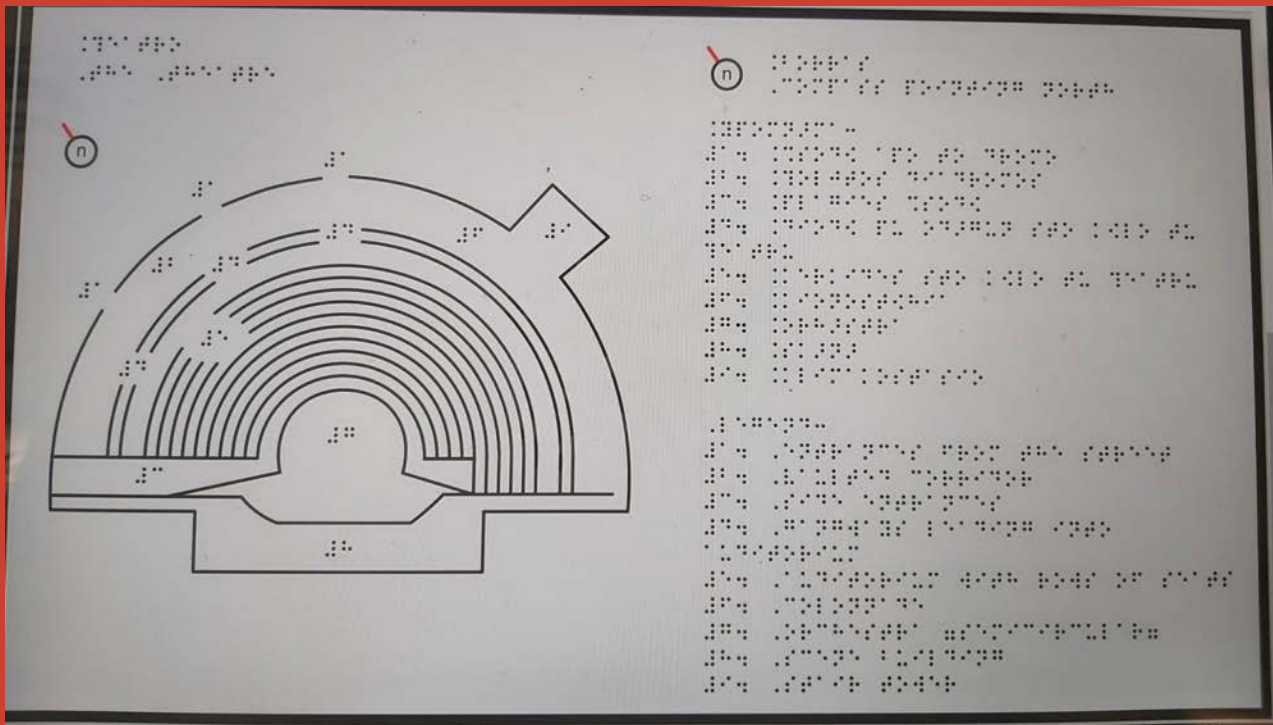
Printed guides in Greek and English in braille and large print provide accessibility to all available historic and archaeological information related to the archaeological sites, and for the varying levels of visual disability.

Accessing Exhibits

The tactile approach consists of 3D models to scale to better comprehend the layout and structure of antiquities such as the Roman amphitheatres, whilst mosaics and the materials used to create them are also available to feel. For example, a copy of a mosaic in relief can be touched in order to feel what the artworks look like. This is detailed further through a collection of various sizes and shapes of mosaics for visually impaired visitors to explore.

Best Practices

Cyprus Mosaics
(Pafos & Lemesos)



Tactile plans of both sites enables a direct understanding of the architectural organisation.

Germany



Case Study 1

German Historical Museum

Case Study 2

Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities
Wheelchair users

German Historical Museum

(National museum of Germany)

CONTACT DETAILS

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BLOG

www.dhm.de/blog/de/

Located in the centre of Berlin, the German Historical Museum is Germany's national history museum and one of the largest in the world with a collection of nearly one million exhibits.

Aside from visiting the museum, people can find out more about all exhibitions and themes, as well as gain an insight into the work of the museum itself by reading the museum's blog.

The museum has an online shop where one can buy publications, thematic brochures, magazines, posters and stationery.

Additionally, the museum has its website in simple and easy-to-understand language known as Leichte Sprache (<https://www.dhm.de/leichte-sprache/>).

Leichte Sprache is defined as: "a specific version of the German language directed to people who have low competences in German or in reading in general. The rules deal with the creation of sentences and the choice of words and makes recommendations about typography and the use of media. The content is often simplified as well."

 [Deutsches Historisches Museum](#)

 [DHMBerlin](#)



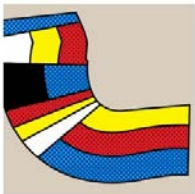
 [dhmberlin](#)

The museum pursues a strategy of being an inclusive and barrier-free place, and has a webpage dedicated to people with disability where it is possible to find:

- All the necessary general information (e.g. access and parking facilities, dressing rooms, mobility inside the building, sanitary facilities).
- Information about exhibitions and the possibility of hiring a guide (using a foreign language, sign language and easy-to-understand language).
- Information about making a reservation to see exhibitions (by teleconference, in sign language and in easy-to-understand language, with detailed descriptions of exhibits for visually impaired visitors).
- Information in sign language.
- Information about current projects dedicated to people with disabilities.

BARRIEREFREIHEIT

Das Deutsche Historische Museum möchte ein Museum für alle sein: barrierefrei und inklusiv. Auf diesen Seiten finden Sie alle Informationen rund um die Themen Inklusion und Teilhabe im Museum. Wir bieten Ihnen eine Übersicht zu den barrierefreien Zugängen, inklusiven Angeboten und aktuellen Kooperationsprojekten.



INKLUSIVE AUSSTELLUNG



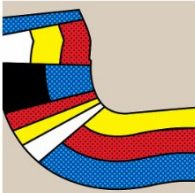
SWABISCHES SCHWÄBISCHES, FRANZÖSISCH, POLNEN, DEUTSCH-LANDESEIT 1989

GUT INFORMIERT INS MUSEUM

FÜHRUNGEN

ACCESSIBILITY

The German Historical Museum wants to be a museum for everyone: barrier-free and inclusive. On these pages you will find all information about inclusion and participation in the museum. We offer you an overview of barrier-free access, inclusive offers and current cooperation projects.






INCLUSIVE EXHIBITION

CITIZENSHIP, FRANCS, POLAND, GERMANY SINCE 1989

WELL INFORMED TO THE MUSEUM




GUIDANCES



WEB-Seite in LEICHTER SPRACHE

INFORMATIONEN IN DEUTSCHER GEBÄRDENSPRACHE

AKTUELLE PROJEKTE



WEB PAGE IN EASY LANGUAGE

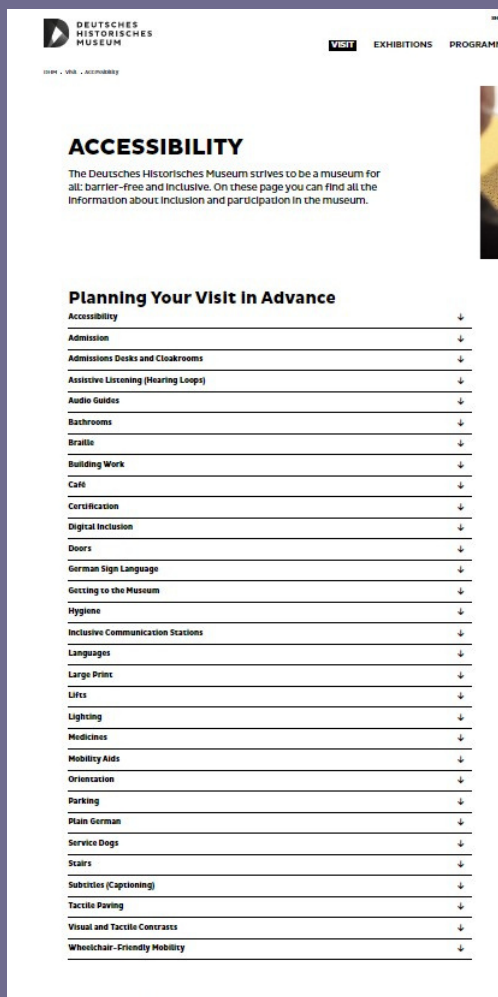
INFORMATION IN GERMAN SIGN LANGUAGE

CURRENT PROJECTS

The museum has a broad offer for visitors with sensory disabilities, which can become an inspiration for other institutions.

The key element targeted at this group is the so-called inclusive information point with replicas of exhibits that can be touched; samples that can be smelt, and recordings of texts that can be listened to (in German and English); braille alphabet and easy-to-understand language. All the inclusive information points are connected with the tactile guidance system and have special holders for sticks.

The museum's staff are trained and able to assist if there are any issues.



Inklusive Stationen zum Anfassen:

Bei uns dürfen Sie **aktiv** werden und einiges anfassen.

Einige Stationen können Sie mit **mehreren Sinnen** erfahren.



Dort gibt es eine drehbare **Trommel** mit Informationen in

- DE** Deutsch
-  Brailleschrift
-  Leichter Sprache
-  Deutscher Gebärdensprache
- EN** Englisch

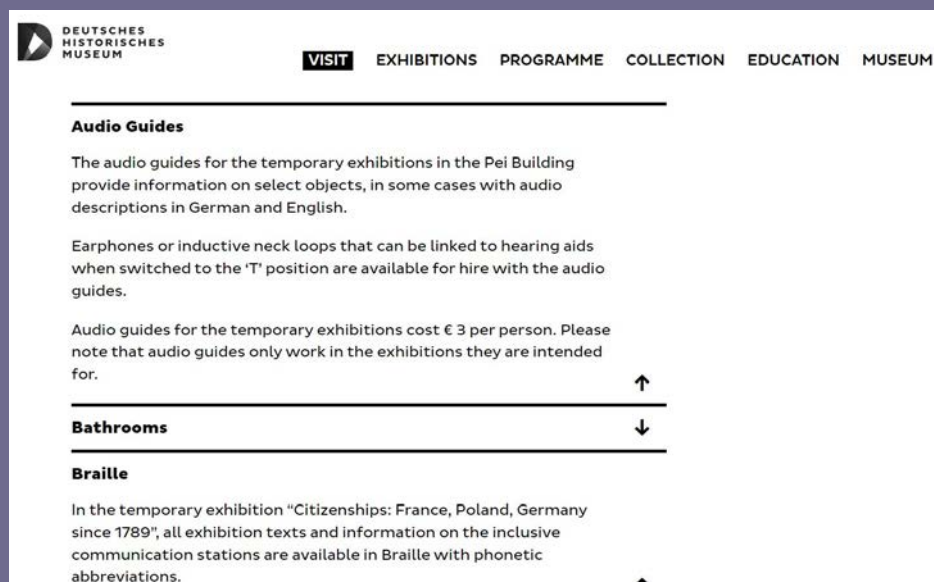


The offer for visually impaired and blind visitors also includes:

- A tactile museum map.
- Audio guides - information about selected exhibits and audio description (also in English)
- Information in the braille alphabet next to exhibits - selected exhibitions and displays.
- Portable induction loops (available for hire).
- Very well-lit floors and passageways, contrast-marked entrances, a tactile floor guidance system.
- Guided tours or phone-guided tours possible – a detailed description of rooms and exhibits.

An offer for hearing impaired and deaf visitors also includes:

- Information in sign language - video recordings at designated inclusive information points.
- Portable induction loops (available for hire).
- Guided tours in sign language.
- Information about the museum and exhibitions available on the website in sign language (<https://www.dhm.de/dgs/>).



The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu with 'VISIT' selected. Below the menu, there are three sections: 'Audio Guides', 'Bathrooms', and 'Braille'. Each section has a title, a description, and a small arrow icon (up for 'Audio Guides' and 'Braille', down for 'Bathrooms').

DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM

VISIT EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME COLLECTION EDUCATION MUSEUM

Audio Guides

The audio guides for the temporary exhibitions in the Pei Building provide information on select objects, in some cases with audio descriptions in German and English.

Earphones or inductive neck loops that can be linked to hearing aids when switched to the 'T' position are available for hire with the audio guides.

Audio guides for the temporary exhibitions cost € 3 per person. Please note that audio guides only work in the exhibitions they are intended for.

↑

Bathrooms

↓

Braille

In the temporary exhibition "Citizenships: France, Poland, Germany since 1789", all exhibition texts and information on the inclusive communication stations are available in Braille with phonetic abbreviations.

↑

Example of some of the tabs for accessibility which you can click on to see the information in the listing. Shown here are the tabs clicked for 'Audio Guides' and 'Braille'. All the information is on the website in German and in English.

Best Practices

A guide for visitors with disability:

The guide is available in pdf format and can be downloaded free of charge. It enables potential visitors to prepare for visiting the museum, and the extensive photographic material included in it gives them an idea of the facilities available on site. This example of good practices is universal and can be used in any institution.

https://www.dhm.de/assets/DHM/Download/Bildung/2021-02-23_DHM_Wegweiser.pdf

Telephone-guided tours:

Such a form of tour has been prepared for blind, visually impaired and sighted visitors, regardless of the fact whether they live in Berlin, or are able to visit the museum in person or not. Guides provide guided tours with the use of the phone, describing both exhibition rooms and exhibits in detail. Tours can be booked by an individual as well as groups, and they are also possible in the form of a teleconference.

Information on rotating prisms:

Placing information about exhibitions/exhibits on rotating drums in the form of 26 x 26 cm prisms is an innovative and unique solution introduced by the German Historical Museum. This solution makes it possible to minimise the size of the text area and to fit it in one place in several languages (one language on each side of the prism): German, English, braille and easy-to-understand language. The drums can be rotated by visitors as required. The walls of the drum can be repeatedly covered with new text, which is advantageous in the case of temporary exhibitions.

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities
Wheelchair users

Max Ernst Museum

Brühl des LVR

(Art museum))

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WEBSITE

[Kontakt | Max Ernst
Museum Brühl des LVR](#)

 [Max Ernst Museum Brühl
des LVR](#)

 [max_ernst_museum](#)

 [Max Ernst Museum](#)

The Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR presents the works of Max Ernst, a German painter, sculptor, graphic designer and a representative of surrealism (1891–1976).

It is the only museum in world dedicated to his works and resembles an art gallery showing exhibits from the artist's creative work spanning more than seventy years.

The collection also includes works owned by the Max Ernst Foundation, which includes almost the entire lithographic works of Max Ernst as well as a unique collection of more than 700 photographic portraits and documents by outstanding photographers such as Man Ray, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Lee Miller.

The museum is almost barrier-free and operates with an ethos of inclusion.

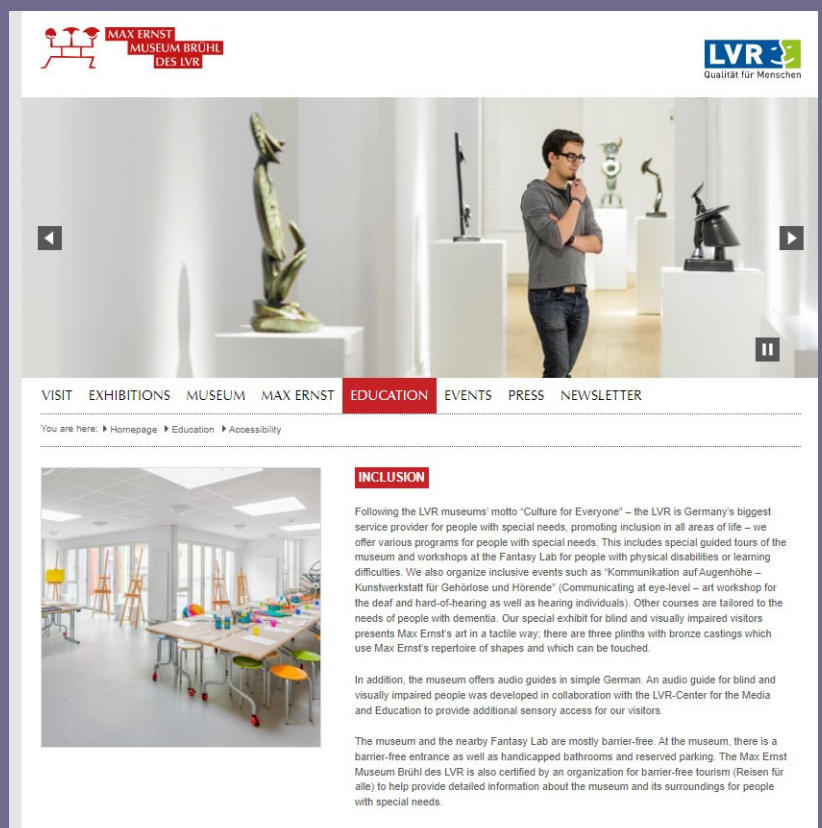
With prior contact, the staff can help disabled persons to plan and carry out a visit to the museum.

The building, including the foyer, exhibition rooms, the lift and the toilet, are accessible for disabled persons including:

- Designated parking spaces in front of the building.
- Paintings hung at a height of 1.5-1.6 metres, and with the works properly lit.
- Special exhibits that visitors can touch, and showcases that those using wheelchairs can get close to with ease.
- Audio guides with recordings in easy-to-understand language.

Visitors with intellectual disability can participate in workshops and guided tours.

Guided tours for people with dementia are on offer too, including specially selected exhibits and a quiet and relaxing atmosphere while visiting. This target group can take part in creativity workshops in a barrier-free laboratory where they can learn simple drawing, painting or other artistic techniques. Meetings end with a relaxed conversation or discussion over coffee and cake.



The screenshot displays the website for the Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR. At the top left is the museum's logo, and at the top right is the LVR logo with the tagline "Qualität für Menschen". Below the logos is a large image of an exhibition room with a man looking at a sculpture. A navigation menu includes "VISIT", "EXHIBITIONS", "MUSEUM", "MAX ERNST", "EDUCATION" (highlighted), "EVENTS", "PRESS", and "NEWSLETTER". A breadcrumb trail reads "You are here: ▶ Homepage ▶ Education ▶ Accessibility". The main content area features a section titled "INCLUSION" with the following text:

Following the LVR museums' motto "Culture for Everyone" – the LVR is Germany's biggest service provider for people with special needs, promoting inclusion in all areas of life – we offer various programs for people with special needs. This includes special guided tours of the museum and workshops at the Fantasy Lab for people with physical disabilities or learning difficulties. We also organize inclusive events such as "Kommunikation auf Augenhöhe – Kunstwerkstatt für Gehörlose und Hörende" (Communicating at eye-level – art workshop for the deaf and hard-of-hearing as well as hearing individuals). Other courses are tailored to the needs of people with dementia. Our special exhibit for blind and visually impaired visitors presents Max Ernst's art in a tactile way: there are three plinths with bronze castings which use Max Ernst's repertoire of shapes and which can be touched.

In addition, the museum offers audio guides in simple German. An audio guide for blind and visually impaired people was developed in collaboration with the LVR-Center for the Media and Education to provide additional sensory access for our visitors.

The museum and the nearby Fantasy Lab are mostly barrier-free. At the museum, there is a barrier-free entrance as well as handicapped bathrooms and reserved parking. The Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR is also certified by an organization for barrier-free tourism (Reisen für alle) to help provide detailed information about the museum and its surroundings for people with special needs.

The museum has an additional offer adapted to the needs of the visually impaired and blind, the hearing impaired and deaf persons, as well as people with intellectual disability and dementia.

Bearing in mind the visually impaired and blind persons, the museum prepared a display with exhibits that reflect the Max Ernst's sculptural concept and can be explored through the sense of touch. The museum provides specially developed audio guides.

During the workshops, visually impaired and blind visitors use the 'seeing hands' method to explore the Max Ernst's artistic concept (a group of figures in front of the museum and plaster models of selected works). Next, they transfer their impressions into works that they create with plasticine. The entire range of services for the blind and visually impaired is presented on a dedicated website, making it easy to find it quickly and get an idea of the existing possibilities.

Hearing impaired and deaf visitors can participate in art workshops and experiment with different means of expression. It is also possible to see the exhibition with a sign language interpreter in groups of max. 12 people (a prior reservation is required). The examples of exhibits together with their descriptions in phonic and sign language (German) are presented on YouTube. This enables those interested in art to learn about Max Ernst's selected works regardless of whether they are able to visit the museum or not.

Watch Collection Insights: Capricorn by Max Ernst

<https://youtu.be/gnKQEBn7jCk>

Workshops for visitors with sensory disability:

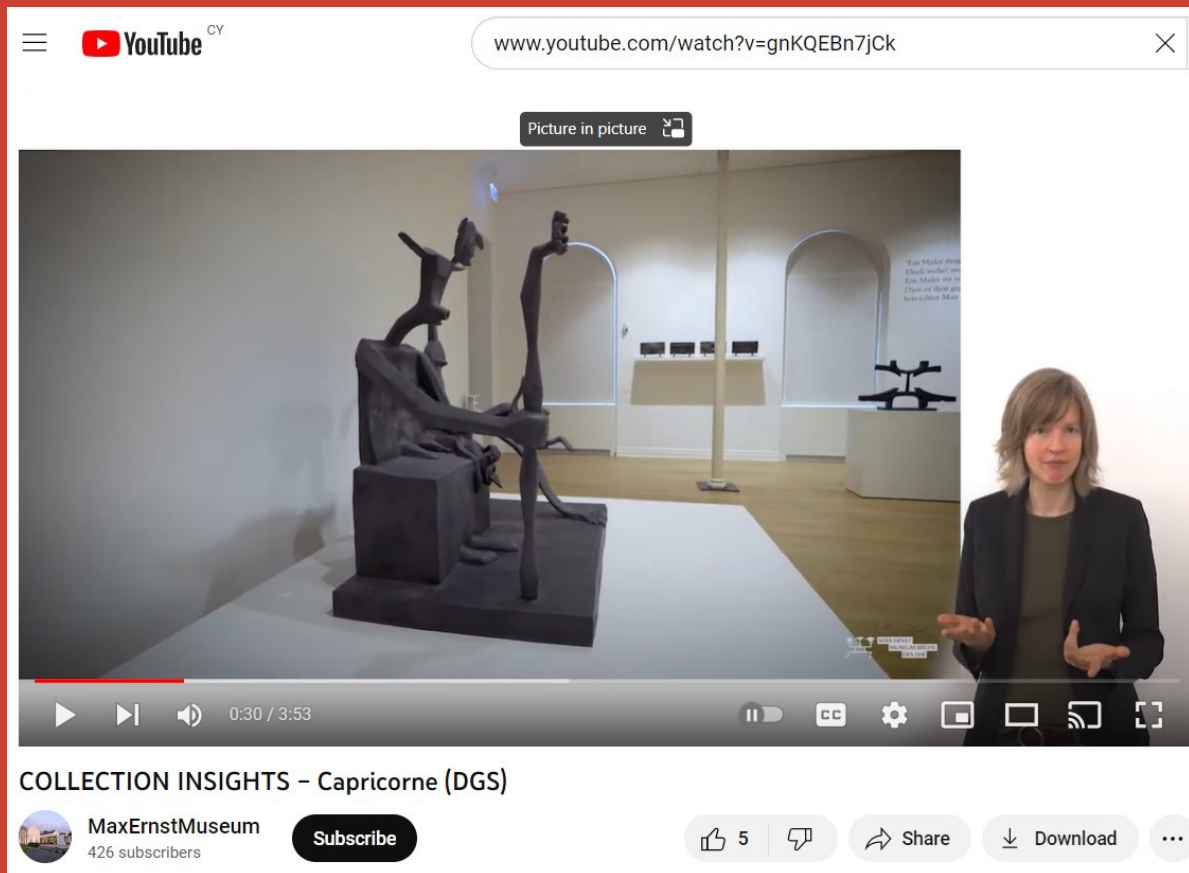
On the one hand, workshop participants can improve their knowledge about contemporary art (Dadaism and Surrealism). On the other hand, they can creatively develop their interests in areas such as sculpture, graphic arts or painting thanks to the wide range of Max Ernst's work.

During the workshops, visually impaired and blind visitors use the 'seeing hands' method to experience the works of Max Ernst. The experience that they gain is used in the second part of the workshops when they create their own plasticine sculptural works.

During the workshops, hearing impaired and deaf people can learn or improve various techniques of artistic expression. They can make artistic works on their own or under the guidance and assistance of an instructor. It is worth noting that hearing people can also participate in the workshops, which provides an opportunity to exchange experiences, engage in a dialogue and integrate.

As an example, other places that offer handicrafts can also introduce the method of 'seeing hands' so that visually impaired or blind people can learn about a selection of products on offer and then try to transfer/express their feelings by working with a modelling material.

Hearing impaired or deaf people can learn about one of the techniques used to make handicrafts, and they can try to use it when creating something (either on their own or under the guidance of an instructor). It is also possible to use handicrafts as a source of inspiration for making works using different techniques of artistic expression (drawing, painting, graphic).



Audio guides for blind or visually impaired visitors:

Recordings available in audio guides were created thanks to close cooperation with visually impaired or blind people visiting the museum.

With their help, the recording of the text describing exhibits was supplemented with a spectrum of sounds, thanks to which it is possible to visualise the exhibit being described and enjoy a deeper experience while moving around the museum.

An example of the recording describing a sculpture of Capricorn):
<https://maxernstmuseum.lvr.de/media/mem/museumspaedagogik/Max-Ernst-Museum-Capricorne-neu.mp3>.

Greece



Case Study 1

National Archaeological Museum

Case Study 2

NEXT STOP

Social Cooperative Enterprise

Case Study 3

Tactual Museum of Athens

Case Study 4

Museum of Cycladic Art

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities
Mobility disabilities

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National Archaeological
Museum / Εθνικό
Αρχαιολογικό Μουσείο



[all4nam - all for national
archaeological museum](#)



[namuseumathens](#)

National Archaeological Museum

(Historical & Archaeological Museum - Greek Finds)

The National Archaeological Museum of Athens is the largest archaeological museum in Greece and one of the most important museums in the world devoted to Ancient Greek art.

It was founded at the end of the 19th century to house and protect antiquities from all over Greece, thus displaying their historical, cultural and artistic value.

Its rich collections, numbering more than 11,000 exhibits, offer the visitor a panorama of ancient Greek culture from the beginning of prehistory to late antiquity.



One of the main goals of the museum is to ensure that its thousands of exhibits and the historical stories that they tell are accessible to all kinds of diverse visitors.

National Archaeological Museum

The National Archaeological Museum has developed a number of actions that addresses specific target groups. One of these actions is the establishment of a virtual digital tour.

The digital virtual tour was designed and developed with the needs of persons with mobility impairment or auditory disabilities as its central focus, and took place within the context of the National Archaeological Museum Action Plan for People with Disabilities. More specifically, an innovative application has been uploaded on the official museum website, which gives internet users from all over the world the opportunity to digitally visit the largest Museum in Greece.

Visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a digital tour through the 36 rooms of the National Archaeological Museum and familiarise themselves with 86 significant artefacts.

The digital visitor of the National Archaeological Museum strolls freely through the museum rooms and has access to information about the selected exhibits, while at the same time, also has the opportunity to see all the thousands of exhibits in their permanent place. The digital tour is the outcome of the collaboration of the National Archaeological Museum with the PostScriptum company, via cultural sponsorship in kind.



Other activities that the museum undertakes includes training seminars for the blind and people with visual impairments.

The main goal of these seminars is to facilitate the social inclusion and equal participation of these groups in society. The choice of the theme of the educational programme is made after consultation with the persons concerned and the persons in charge of the museum's educational activities.

Indicative suggested topics of the seminars are:

- A) Ancient games
- B) Ancient Greek music and musical instruments
- C) The archaic statue of the daughter of Frasiclea, etc.

The educational programmes usually follow a specific structure, which can be adapted depending on the group, like:

- A) Introduction to the museum
- B) Tactile contact with replicas of ancient objects
- C) Workshop of creative expression
- D) Tour/research in the exhibition space.

Inclusion & integration:

In general, the National Archaeological Museum is focused toward the inclusion of various vulnerable groups in the community, which can be achieved through their familiarization with the history and culture of the ancient Greek civilization. Apart from people with any type of disabilities, activities are also tailored for prisoners, the elderly, immigrants, people with mental illnesses and former addicts.

Bringing the museum to those who cannot visit:

The digital tour is a tool that could be of great value for a cultural institution as it provides people who - for numerous reasons - would never physically visit the National Archaeological Museum the opportunity to visit it digitally and enjoy the exhibits at their own pace. It also offers the assistance of additional material like subtitles, videos etc for maximizing the visitor's knowledge and understanding of what they are seeing and experiencing.



In general, people with visual impairments and the blind can experience 20 different replicas of significant ancient artefacts through touch.

Design and development of training seminars that are customised to the needs of the target group they are addressed to:

Specifically for blind people, this constitutes a tool that enables people with visual impairments to understand how significant artefacts of ancient times - and other significant pieces of art like sculptures, ceramics and the like - appear, and their progression through time via the sense of touch, thus experiencing in a unique way their starting point and the inspiration of the artefacts as they look now.

These kinds of practices could be an inspiration to other cultural organisations as well, to proceed with the development of similar seminars tailored to the topics of their institutions, thus promoting their cultural good.



People with visual impairments and the blind have the opportunity to get to know artefacts from the permanent exhibition of the museum by touching exact replicas.

Pictured is one from the exhibition with ancient Greek musical instruments.

Suitable for:
Auditory disabilities

NEXT STOP

Social Cooperative Enterprise

(Social Cooperative Enterprise - Café)

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The Next Stop is a Special Purpose Social Cooperative Enterprise (Social Cooperative Enterprise) where the priority of Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups in the Labour Market lies at the heart of the enterprise.

NEXT STOP was established according to Law 4019/2011, where all its members work and do their best for the sustainability of this venture.

The enterprise marks the 'next step' of its members within the labour market. It was initially established in September 2020, but due to the Covid-19 restrictions on its operation, it actually began its action in the summer of 2021.

Its headquarters are located inside the portico of Nea Agora (right next to that of Modiano), in the heart of Thessaloniki. The majority of its employees are deaf or hard of hearing.

The primary goal is to show society as a whole that people from vulnerable social groups can work equally and be just as productive in an equal business environment as any other group of society.

The enterprise is against discrimination and against prejudices that isolate people with any type of disability from any production process.



NEXT STOP Social Cooperative Enterprise

One of the main goals of the enterprise is to distinguish and define the needs for the smooth integration of its members and employees into the labour market, encouraging them to become independent in the future; taking on living expenses based on their own salary, the individual management of their own home, the organisation of their free time, the choice of a hobby, but also their active participation in civil society issues.

For this to be achieved the enterprise is organised in such a way so as to be accessible not only by tourists with sensory disabilities (particularly deaf and with hearing impairments), but also for hearing ones.

In the case of deaf tourists and those with hearing impairments, the Next Stop Café constitutes a great opportunity to get familiar with a local café that is built on an old covered market in the heart of the city centre of Thessaloniki.



All the employees - apart from the owner - are deaf or hearing impaired, thus they are aware of the needs of people with sensory impairments and therefore a friendly, relaxed and accessible environment for all has been created.

The venue also holds numerous activities that tourists can enjoy like events, exhibitions, seminars, book presentations, performing arts and the like.

Best Practices

NEXT STOP
Social Cooperative
Enterprise

Inclusion & integration:

The provision of services to people with sensory disabilities, and especially to the deaf and people with hearing impairments, from other people who also have sensory disabilities constitutes a great example of how people with disabilities are encouraged to integrate in the labour market.

This is achieved through the provision of services towards people who have the same disabilities and the same needs, and who know exactly how they feel and how to meet their expectations when it comes to service delivery.



The waitress takes orders by using sign language. However, hearing people can also order through the menu and also by using body language... and their imagination!

The provided services and the structure of the social cooperative enterprise have been designed and developed, with the support of a Greek sign language interpreter:

This ensures that unhindered communication between deaf and hearing people will take place and with a psychologist specialised in deaf issues and youth policies for people with disabilities.

The basis of this cooperation lies in the establishment and promotion of the communication between hearing people and deaf and people with hearing impairments, thus enhancing the socialisation of the latter, and avoiding any chances of isolation from the wider community.

Welcoming and accessible to all:

A hub has been created where both people with disabilities and without disabilities can enjoy their coffee and the provided services and other activities on offer, like exhibitions, events, performing arts, music, seminars and book presentations.

In this sense, the activities undertaken within this framework do not limit any specific target groups, making the environment of the cafeteria friendly and accessible to all, as it was originally envisaged by the owner - who was inspired to unite all societal groups.

Best Practices

NEXT STOP
Social Cooperative
Enterprise

Effecting future changes:

Through these kind of practices, experts have the opportunity to record the needs of young people with disabilities and to create statistics, starting even from a young age within the family environment.

In particular, for the deaf community, this includes the areas of education, professional rehabilitation, acquisition of skills, unemployment and opportunities of their socialisation within the wider society; of their development, and avoiding their isolation through the 'ghettoization' of their community.



Numerous activities are organised and take place within the café premises that bring together people with and/or without disabilities, such as performing arts, music, seminars, exhibitions etc.

Suitable for:
Visual disabilities

Tactual Museum of Athens

(Greek Cultural Heritage)

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WEBSITE

<https://tactualmuseum.gr/>

The Tactual Museum of Athens was created with passion and love, and with the aim for people with visual disabilities to come closer to the cultural heritage of Greece.

Statues, vases, sculptures and useful objects - exact copies of the originals exhibited in museums of Greece - adorn the two floors of the building, seeking, through touch, those who have not seen the works of great cultural value from the Cycladic, Minoan, Geometric, Archaic, Strict Rhythm, Classical, Hellenistic and Roman period.

The Tactual Museum of Athens is part of the Lighthouse of the Blind in Greece and was founded in 1984. In 1988 it received the honour of the European Museum of the Year among 70 other European museums. In 2004 it opened its doors to the general public and today is one of the five touch museums in the world.



Blind and people with visual impairments have the opportunity to discover famous artefacts, statues and maquettes of monuments from the Ancient Greek culture.



[Μουσείο Αφής](#)

Tactual Museum of Athens

At the heart of the Tactual Museum of Athens lies the vision of equal access of culture for all. More specifically, the museum is designed in a way that it can offer equal opportunities to the blind, or visitors with visual impairments of all ages, from Greece or abroad. Visitors with visual disabilities can come into contact with the greatness and richness of the Ancient Greek cultural heritage through the sense of touch.

Apart from this great mission, the Tactual Museum of Athens has another, which is more indirect, but can have a huge impact on the betterment of the quality of life of people with visual impairments and sensory impairments in general.

This is achieved through the invitation to people with no disability at all to visit its premises and to experience the museum's artefacts through the sense of touch.

By being in the blind person's shoes for a while, visitors have the opportunity to be made aware of - and become more sensitive to - issues and limitations that people with sensory impairments experience within their community, thus acting as agents of change by raising awareness within the wider community following their experience and new understanding.

Finally, the Tactual Museum of Athens promotes the artwork of artists with visual impairments in a effort to inspire other people with sensory impairments to pursue their dreams.

Best Practices

Opening up accessibility to all groups - not just those with visual impairment and blindness:

A lack of sight limits the number of opportunities and experiences available within the cultural sector. Historical monuments, exemplar pieces of art - and especially paintings, as well as others, which are closely connected to the contemporary world and shaped it as it is today are not readily accessible. A dedicated cultural institution that is accessible bridges this gap for those with visual disabilities.

Furthermore, by encouraging sighted persons to experience culture in this way, awareness is raised regarding the experiences of those with visual disabilities.



Visitors have the opportunity to touch original replicas of artefacts that are presented in museums not only from Greece (National Archaeological Museum of Athens, The Acropolis Museum, The Ancient Olympia Museum), but also from other famous museums abroad, like the Museum of Louvre.

Best Practices

This accessibility was achieved by taking a new direction for designing services that focus on different target groups with particular needs, along with specific and thorough planning of how to meet these needs.

Finding a way to make cultural products accessible to people with visual impairments can include the use of digital technology and, more specifically, 3D scanners and 3D printers to make replicas of highly important monuments, sculptures, paintings etc 'visible' through the sense of touch to this specific target group.



Replicas of artefacts that present famous historical persons (philosophers, politicians, scientists, artists, poets etc).



Workshops are organised at the museum to introduce its work to people with sensory disabilities, but are also open to people with no impairments at all so as to communicate to the wider community how one can experience the world without sight, and only through the sense of touch.

These workshops also target children and youths, because they constitute the future and can be inspired to pave the way to a better future for all.

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities

Museum of Cycladic Art

(Private art collection)

CONTACT DETAILS

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EMAIL ADDRESS

museum@cycladic.gr

WEBSITE

<https://cycladic.gr/>

The Museum of Cycladic Art is a living cultural institution in the centre of Athens that focuses on the promotion of the ancient civilizations of the Aegean and Cyprus, with special emphasis on Cycladic art of the 3rd millennium BC. It is a Legal Entity under Private Law supervised by the Ministry of Culture without state funding.

The Museum has operated since 1986 to house and display the private collection of antiquities of Dolly and Nikolaos Goulandris. Since then, it has expanded significantly and today holds one of the most complete private collections of Cycladic art in the world, with representative specimens of the world-famous Cycladic marble figurines.

Unlike the majority of museums that do not offer sign language interpretation, which makes communication with the deaf almost impossible, the Museum of Cycladic Art, aiming at the accessibility and inclusion of all its deaf and hard of hearing visitors, offers a special experience on the 1st floor.

Here there are specially formatted videos (automated tour) in Greek sign language, but also international signs for visitors from abroad. In the videos there is a simultaneous subtitling in Greek and English. You will also find accessible videos on the museum's website.

 [Museum of Cycladic Art](#)

 [MuseumOfCycladicArt](#)

 [cycladic_museum](#)

 [Museum Of Cycladic Art, Athens](#)

 [Museum Of Cycladic Art](#)

Museum of Cycladic Art

The 'IN CONTACT' programme was launched in 2022 to enable people with sensory disabilities (visual and auditory impairment) to have access to the permanent exhibition of Cycladic Art.

The project was carried out within the framework of the European Erasmus+ Programmes in which the museum participates and is implemented with the support of Eurolife FFH, a strategic partner of the Museum of Cycladic Art. It was designed in close cooperation with the 'With Other Eyes' Foundation and 'HandsUp' - the first sign language interpreters agency in Greece - and was put into operation after a pilot implementation in focus groups of people with sensory impairments.

The aim of the project is a museum open to all based on the principles of inclusion, now enabling people with sensory disabilities to have access to the permanent exhibition of Cycladic Art.



People with visual disabilities can read information about the museum and its permanent exhibition through braille



There are informative videos that contain sign language interpretation in Greek and in international sign language with English subtitles for persons with hearing impairments.

The 'IN CONTACT' programme includes:

1. A showcase that consists of cases and includes a floor plan of the hall, tactile maps of Greece and the Cyclades, and replicas of exhibits made of marble or resin.

2. Multisensory museum apparatus.

The museum package contains a book with information in braille and large print, an embroidered map, a tactile water map, stones, threads, fragments of replica figurines and marble replicas of figurines. A video aimed primarily at the teacher/programmer explains how the material contained in the museum kit can be used for a journey through space and time.

3. A series of actions to make the museum accessible to deaf or hard of hearing people.

Information on visiting the museum is available in Greek sign language at cycladic.gr. At the entrance of the museum, a video in sign language also provides detailed information about the museum (museum collections, opening hours, etc.).

In the permanent exhibition of Cycladic Art, a video with a recorded tour in Greek sign language with Greek subtitles and in international signs with English subtitles has been designed and included.

Best Practices

Inclusion & integration:

In general, the Museum of Cycladic Art has organised its actions towards the inclusion of various vulnerable groups. For example, there are specific programmes for the elderly (over 65 years old), for people with disabilities, for people with sensory disabilities, and for migrants.

In this sense, the museum has developed a series of social actions/workshops with relative NGOs in order to facilitate the inclusion of everyone in culture. This is also achieved through the support of other organisations and institutions.

This inclusive orientation and mindset could be adopted by other cultural institutions so as to be able to design holistic actions rather than just fragmented ones, establishing their brand in the wider community as institutions that are open to all.



The museum of Cycladic art has organised its structure of the permanent exhibition so as to be accessible for people with sensory disabilities.

Best Practices

Creating multisensory experiences:

The development of the specialised multisensory museum apparatus specifically for blind people is a tool that enables people with visual impairments to experience the different historical milestones through their other senses.

The existence of video with sign language in Greek - and also in the international sign language with English subtitles - in the permanent exhibition of the museum makes the exhibition accessible to people with hearing impairment, not only from Greece but also from abroad.

Through alliances and collaborations with associations that provide sign language services to people with hearing impairments, the museum arranges guided tours with sign language interpreters on demand.



People with visual disabilities have the opportunity to get to know artefacts from the permanent exhibition of the museum by touching exact replicas that lay beside the original ones.

Poland



Case Study 1 The Silesian Museum

Case Study 2 Forest Education Centre

Suitable for:

Sensory disabilities

Wheelchair users

Autism spectrum

The Silesian Museum

(Museum and Cultural Education)

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The Silesian Museum is a regional museum co-led by the Marshal Office of the Silesia Voivodship and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland.

The cultural institution has turned the former coal mine into a cultural mine, and, 14 metres below ground level, has provided access to rich and diverse collections: the Gallery of Polish Art 1800–1945, the Gallery of Polish Art after the Year 1945, the Gallery of Silesian Religious Art and the Gallery of Non-Professional Art, as well as a popular exhibition 'The Light of History: Upper Silesia over the Ages.'

The underground space also includes educational rooms, a library with a reading room, an auditorium with 320 seats, an educational corner for children and space for temporary exhibitions that is 12.5 m high.

After exploring the riches of the depths of Muzeum Śląskie, the Observation Tower offers a different perspective of Katowice. Located 40 metres above the ground the former Warszawa II shaft offers views of the entire Culture Zone and the city skyline.



For persons with visual disability the museum offers:

- Accessible space inside and around the building (paths accessible for visually impaired people walking with a red & white guide cane).
- Convex maps and brief descriptions of major locations for blind persons to independently navigate the building and become familiar with the museum space.
- Blind visitors are welcome to visit the venue with a guide dog.
- Free guide books in braille are available, as well as tour guides who are educated on how to guide a person with disability.
- 3D Objects. Blind people assisted by a guide may experience sculptures of the Gallery of Polish Art 1800–1945 and the Gallery of Polish Art after the Year 1945 through touch. The works are also audio-described.



Blind man with the assistance of a woman who handles his cane as he touches a sculpture of a pregnant woman with baby fingers protruding from a hole in the belly.

- Touch Tour with select artworks at the Gallery of Polish Art 1800–1945 and the Gallery of Polish Art after the Year 1945 that can be examined by touching. Pieces of tactile graphics support audio-described tours, workshops and independent visits. The tour is under constant development and new tactile items such as sculptures are regularly added to it.
- Audio-described tours are available for permanent and temporary exhibitions for both organised groups and individual visitors.
- Visitors with visual impairment may contact the Education Department to organise dedicated visiting tours or art classes designed for groups with special needs.

For persons with auditory disability the museum offers:

- Induction loops in the ticket office and mobile induction loops for the tour guides and conference rooms.
- The organisation of dedicated visiting tours or art workshops designed for deaf visitors (main language).
- A native sign language speaker (a member of staff who is deaf and holds a degree from the Fine Arts Academy).
- An exhibition of art that explains the culture of deaf people.
- Translation into sign language of most cultural seminars.



Two deafblind women are taking part in a museum workshop designed for people with sensory disabilities. They are trying to mimic the facial expression of the sculpture as they explore it.

For persons on the autism spectrum the museum offers:

- The opportunity to plan an individual path of visiting the museum. Staff have knowledge about hypersensitivity and can advise what type of exhibitions a person on the autism spectrum should avoid.
- Acoustic earmuffs can be borrowed.
- A silent room (a place to chill and find quiet and calm) is available for use. Silent Hours are held each Wednesday from 17:00-20:00.
- Special tours and workshops designed for small groups of people on the autism spectrum can be arranged with activities tailored to the needs of these visitors.

For persons with mobility disability the museum offers:

- Lifts, ramps and escalators for access. Visitors can enjoy comfortable seats in corridors and exhibition halls.

Best Practices

Philosophy of accessibility:

The institution does not speak about disability, special needs, or special visitors and instead creates the conditions for each visitor (disabled or non-disabled) to perceive and experience the art via different senses: vision, hearing, touching, smelling, feeling, understanding etc.

By creating an alternative way to communicate and present art, everyone can benefit in the future from this path that is created together and that changes the typical perception that persons with disabilities are 'less' just because they are visually or hearing impaired or use a wheelchair, which is a very antiquated way of thinking.

One of the museum's missions is to engage artists and art curators with disabilities and to include their art within mainstream art presentation. Disability may give an artist a unique way of seeing the world.

As such, the museum appreciates the value of an exhibition of deaf art and organises workshops on this topic, as well as for visitors with visual disabilities and visitors on the autism spectrum.



Museum workshops designed for people with sensory disabilities. The man on the left is deafblind. He is wearing an individual induction loop which is connected to the guide. Thanks to this technology he is hearing the guide.

Best Practices

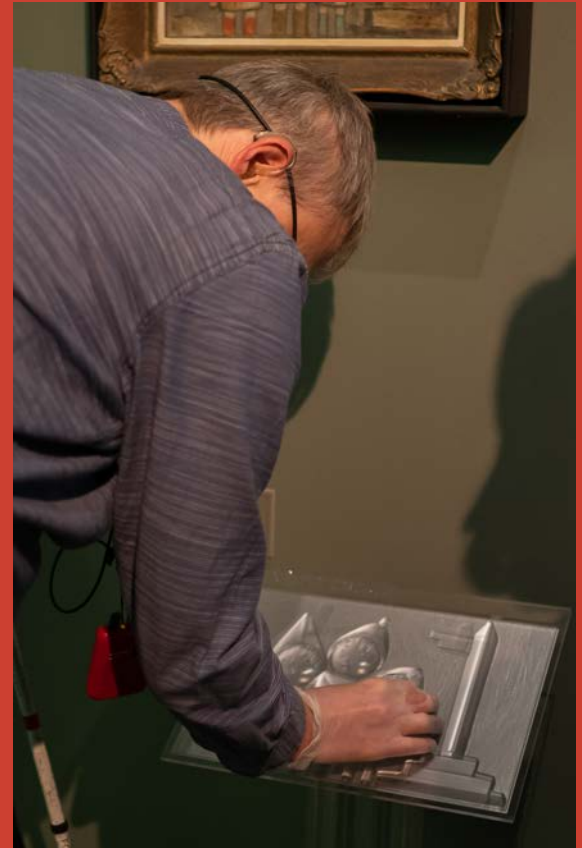
Making everything accessible for everyone:

Every visitor has a right to visit the institution, and every exhibition is accessible for persons who do not see and would like to experience it by touch.

If a blind visitor would like to come back to the museum without an assistant they have this opportunity thanks to the accessible architecture, which offers pathways and plan print guides in braille, complete with convex maps and brief descriptions of major locations.

Each guide has a basic knowledge of sign language and is trained in assistance for people with disabilities.

For visitors who need dedicated tours or art workshops designed to their needs to enjoy equal access to the art (deaf, hard of hearing, visually impaired or on the autism spectrum), this can be organised.



A blind man touches the tyflographic of the picture that is above the tyflographic.

"I was amazed that I could connect my individual induction loop to the audio description sound system."

Best Practices

Learning from feedback:

The institution has good contacts with local organisations for people with different disabilities and uses their feedback to evaluate, plan and improve accessibility.

Assistive technology compatible with individual assistive tools:

Thanks to dialogue with local organisations and visitors with disability, the institution was able to choose the best assistive technology.

The induction loops at the info point or in the conference room cooperate with the hearing aids of visitors. The audio description technology and sound system of the interactive modern art exhibition cooperates with the individual induction loop.

The audio description and modern art exhibition are accessible for a deafblind visitor at no additional costs to the visitor.

“I took part in a workshop where everybody was drawing the music in complete darkness. Then the animator took our drawings and put them in a machine that made them 3D. Still in darkness we could touch our drawings and the drawings of our friends. For me it was a lifetime experience!”

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities

Forest Education Centre

(Nature workshops, creativity and education)

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https://katowice.katowice.lasy.gov.pl/lesna-sala-edukacyjna/-/asset_publisher/1M8a/content/lesna-sala-edukacyjna-1#.YwXsZXYwhPY

The Forest Education Centre is run by the forest inspectorate – public institution, which is mainly responsible for forest management .

The institution also provides forest education to local society. This education is always very practical, such as ecological tours or educational centre with the opportunity to experience nature.

As the centre is situated in Silesia – an industrial and urban region of Poland, where people have few opportunities to encounter nature – the ecological education in practice is crucial.

This ecological centre cooperates with local institutions – mainly schools and NGO's. Groups of students or NGO's participants visit the forest centre, or forest educators visit schools to organise ecological lessons.

The forest workshop gives participants the chance to come in contact with forest fauna and flora. Forest educators help to foster an understanding of nature.

Those workshops are free-of-charge for participants; financed from public funds for protecting nature.

When the institution was creating the educational centre, people with sensory disabilities were defined as one of the main target groups of visitors, alongside children.

Having a sensory disability makes contact with nature much more difficult, and persons with disabilities find obstacles in experiencing the natural environment of the wild forest without assistance. For this reason, this type of institution offers persons with disabilities the opportunity to explore the forest with tailored tours or ecological workshops, and with educators who are trained in contact with people with sensory disabilities.

When the forest inspectorate decided to create this centre, they consulted with local organisations for blind and deafblind people to gain advice and feedback on what they should do to make it accessible for people with sensory disabilities.

People with disabilities were engaged in creating the special services at this centre and continue to have the support of the forest inspectorate in organising forest tours, integration campfire and ecological initiatives.



People with sensory disabilities are also partners in the action of spring forest renovation. They help to plant the trees and feel they are part of nature, enjoying a sense of achievement by helping the forest to regenerate.

Forest Education Centre

Nature is experienced by being active and using all the senses via education in the forest (Education Sensory Pathways) and workshops in the educational centre.

For example, when participants are learning about the life of bees they can hear the bees' humming, and touch, smell and taste the honeycomb.



The same applies for getting to know the animals and learning about forest plants; they can use touch, hearing and smell. Educators assist in this process and share professional knowledge to add to the experience.

Multimedia with subtitles and Polish sign language - such as films - are created in cooperation with people with auditory disabilities.



For persons with visual disabilities, an audio description accompanies written or visual materials. The information is also written in association with blind people.

Best Practices

Partnering with local organisations for persons with sensory disabilities:

It is very important to understand that people with disabilities are among the visitors of an attraction. It is also important to admit that they are not the standard visitor and that we cannot know how to best offer them accessibility if we do not ask them and involve them in the process.

Some of the ways in which the Forest Education Centre has done this are:

Sharing responsibility for the mission

People with sensory disabilities who experience social exclusion do not need 'help, compassion, special treatment'. They need to become a part of their community. Cultural organisations and attractions need to be aware of this important social mission and allow people with disabilities to become a part of this mission and be actively involved.

Adding Braille

As sighted people do not use braille it is easy to overlook this. A very simple and effective solution is to invite persons who use this alphabet for written communication to assist in adding it to an attraction.

Multimedia accessibility

It is important to remember to add subtitles and closed captions in multimedia and ask target groups about alternative text for visual information. Adding audio description makes the visual information accessible for those with visual disabilities.

Best Practices

Tailoring tours and workshops to persons with sensory disabilities:

In recognising the specific needs of people with sensory disabilities, the Forest Education Centre has tailored services and ensures that staff are trained in how to interact with persons with sensory disabilities and how to adapt to their unique requirements.

It is preferable for each person on a tour to have their own assistant where possible. As such, it is a good idea for these tours to be organised in partnership with local volunteer organisations.

Adding information to a website that explains that it is possible to organise and tailor such services and what they specifically include for visitors with disabilities is important. This information can also be distributed among local partners to promote the services.



Forest tour and workshop designed for people with sensory disabilities. Each deaf, deafblind and blind person is accompanied by the assistant. The tour is guided by professional forest educator who is trained to teach people with disabilities.

Portugal



Case Study 1
Architecture House

Case Study 2
Northwest Theater – Viana do Castelo
Dramatic Center

Case Study 3
Teatro D. Maria II (TDM II) in partnership
with Santa Casa da Misericórdia de
Lisboa

Case Study 4
Museu Nacional Ferroviário (MNF)

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities

Architecture House

(Exhibition space.
cultural initiatives, workshops and visits))

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Created in 2007, the Architecture House – Portuguese Center of Architecture is a non-profit cultural association dedicated to the dissemination and affirmation of architecture at both a national and international level.

Its ethos of making its documentary collections of different architects welcoming and accessible to all, and for bringing architecture the general public, has earned it recognition from the Portuguese State for its cultural contribution year after year.

As part of its mission, Architecture House proposes to:

- Treat, archive and make known, through various instruments, the architectural collections and estates donated, deposited or delivered to its care.
- Increase and support research and dissemination of knowledge in the field of architecture.
- Hold conferences, colloquia, conversations, workshops and other activities related to the debate, reflection and promotion of architecture.
- Foster recreational, tourist, cultural and social activities aimed at different audiences that contribute to a better and greater knowledge of national and international architecture.



[Casa da Arquitectura](#)



[Casa da Arquitectura](#)

In accordance with the objectives of Architecture House, it regularly carries out recreational, tourist, cultural and social activities aimed at different audiences.

Since 2017, Architecture House has organised and held an 'open-door' weekend with guided tours aimed at the general public, having also created conditions to accommodate the blind and deaf communities with the accompaniment of guides (for visually impaired persons) and sign language interpreters (for auditory impaired persons).

More than 700 people are normally involved in this organisation. It is worth mentioning the work of the 270 volunteers, as well as over 100 architects and specialists; more than 260 representatives of the spaces, and the dozens of guides and sign language interpreters who accompany the visits of the blind and deaf groups.

Small specific groups are usually organised for these two communities according to their interests, preferences and upon prior registration, with the tours allowing full access to all spaces, their presentation and experimentation.

The 7th edition of the Open House registered over 25 thousand visits during the weekend, in the 74 spaces of the four municipalities involved. A "remarkable" number.

The 'Open House' project arises from the interest in making the architecture that surrounds us known to the general public, not only the public spaces but also the private ones that are often unknown to us. It allows the public to reflect on the importance of architecture in our daily lives; its beauty, functionality and influence.

In this way, it intends to show a more unknown aspect to the general public, making visits to iconic spaces in the municipalities of Maia, Matosinhos, Porto and Vila Nova de Gaia (cities in the metropolitan area of Porto); spaces of daily life (e.g. station of the Metro); spaces of regional and national interest (e.g. Port Wine Cellars, Manoel de Oliveira's Casa de Cinema); spaces with history (Museu Vivo de Conservas, Museu do Carro Elétrico); iconic spaces (e.g. the Cruise Terminal, Torre dos Clérigos), or even private housing offering new perspectives on the built environment.



Immersion in context in order to be able to see, hear, feel and taste the visit depending on the characteristics of each group - Cockburn's Port Wine Cellars (Vila nova de Gaia)

Conducting visits with a group of blind and deaf people, using guides and sign language interpreters - Cruise Terminal (Matosinhos)



Best Practices

Making culture and spaces accessible to persons with sensory disabilities through clear planning and organisation:

The activities of Architecture House include:

- Carrying out clear awareness campaigns of all available visits through the media and social networks, with all information accompanied by translation into sign language.
- Existence of direct 'open paths' for prior clarification of doubts for the deaf and blind community.
- Registration (free of charge) for the better organisation of the groups and the visits themselves.
- Greeting and accompaniment of blind people by tour guides.
- Greeting and accompaniment of deaf people by interpreters at visits.
- Possibility (depending on the spaces to be visited) to experience objects through touch/tact (for blind people).
- Possibility (depending on the spaces to be visited) to experience sounds through vibrations (for deaf people).



Immersion in context -
Serra do Pilar Monastery
and Barracks (Vila Nova de
Gaia)

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities
Mobility disabilities

Northwest Theater – Viana do Castelo Dramatic Center

(Municipal theatre)

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[Teatro do Noroeste - Centro Dramático de Viana](#)

Northwest Theater – Viana do Castelo Dramatic Center is the professional theatre company resident at Teatro Municipal Sá de Miranda, in Viana do Castelo. It was founded in 1991, in the midst of cultural decentralization in Portugal.

As a foundational institution of professional artistic creation in Alto Minho, it is a Collective Person of Public Utility and an Institution of Municipal Merit. It promotes a regular cultural offer committed to artistic and professional excellence, accessibility and the development of audiences for the enjoyment and pursuit of a true cultural democracy.

Each year it presents, on average, five new creations that cover all age groups and performs more than 100 performances per year, including re-performances, hosting and circulation of shows in national and international territory.

The Community Project and the Educational Service provide complementary initiatives of artistic participation and mediation to community initiative and/or school groups, in a regular and temporally sustained way, aiming at the affirmation of a dynamic regional theatre-pole oriented towards artistic creation, cultural programming, mediation and the development of audiences for the arts.



[Teatro Municipal Sá de Miranda](#)



[teatromunicipalsademiranda](#)

Northwest Theater – Viana do Castelo Dramatic Center

In order to be as inclusive as possible, in recent years the theatre has been developing much of its programming in an accessible way:

The Sá de Miranda Theater building was inaugurated in 1885 and is an Italian-style theatre with a horseshoe-shaped audience and three orders of boxes with a 400 seat capacity. It has always been treated and restored over the years with great concern for its originality. The space underwent adaptations in terms of accessibility for people with mobility difficulties, with easy access to wheelchairs included.

With regards to people with low vision or blindness, whenever they are present, there is care for guides to accompany them - not only to their place in the audience to watch the show, but also backstage and on sets so that they can come into contact with the stage space and all the objects/props that appear in it. Sound equipment (earphones) are also given during the play in order to offer access to the simultaneous audio description of the play.

With regard to deaf people, a sign language translation and interpretation service is available for deaf people.



Audio description of the shows and a preview of the stage and scenography by blind people to more easily perceive the play.

Best Practices

Northwest Theater –
Viana do Castelo
Dramatic Center

Effective implementation of conditions of access to this cultural space and the services it provides:

Carrying out good prior dissemination of all available shows and activities that offer accessibility to various audiences is done through the media and social networks and schools, with all information accompanied by translation into sign language.

Direct 'open avenues' for prior clarification of doubts for the deaf and blind community (via e-mail) exist.

Good prior preparation (on the date of the show) of guided tours for blind participants behind the scenes and on stage is in place so that they can perceive and touch all objects and props on stage, understanding in a more concrete way the entire environment of the play in question.



Lectures and visits aimed at the general public, with the participation of deaf and blind people.

Best Practices

Northwest Theater –
Viana do Castelo
Dramatic Center

Before the show starts, audio equipment aimed at blind and/or low vision people is distributed so that they can follow the entire show on stage in audio description.

On the date of the show, a reception and orientation of deaf people takes place in order to reserve the front seats to clearly visualise the sign language interpreter and the stage.

Normalising accessibility in culture:

Regardless of whether the audience consists of persons with auditory impairments or deafness or not, the scheduled shows always have translation into Portuguese sign language, making this a 'normal' reality at the theatre. In this way, greater cultural interest on the part of the deaf community is fostered.



Simultaneous on-stage translation of plays are included in annual Festivals.

Suitable for:
Sensory disabilities
Mobility disabilities

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www.scml.pt/media/noticias/arquivo-noticias/teatro-para-todos-a-audiodescricao-permite-me-ver-o-mundo

Teatro D. Maria II (TDM II) in partnership with Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa

(Cultural Institution - Social Solidarity Institution)

The Teatro Nacional D. Maria II (Queen Maria II National Theatre) is a historic theatre and one of the most prestigious Portuguese venues, located in the Rossio square, in the centre of Lisbon.

The building is the best representative of Neoclassical architecture of Palladian influence in Lisbon and topped by a statue of Renaissance playwright Gil Vicente (c. 1464-c. 1536).

The theatre is a Corporate Public Entity with administrative, financial and patrimonial autonomy, which is subject to the powers of oversight and protection of the members of the Government responsible for the areas of finance and culture, to exercise jointly and individually, in accordance with and for the purposes provided for in its Statutes and in the legal regime of the state business sector, with the public service as its mission.

With more than five centuries of existence, the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa is a private institution of public administrative utility that has guided its performance, in the community, by the defense of priceless social values, in a perspective of proximity, respect and advocacy for good causes.



[Teatro Nacional D. Maria I](#)



[Teatro Nacional D. Maria II](#)

Teatro D. Maria II (TDM II) in partnership with Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa

Inclusion is a priority of D. Maria II with the view that theatre is only presented to everyone when people with disabled mobility have access to all the spaces of the building. This has been achieved with the support of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, sponsor of D. Maria II for the area of accessibility.

At the same time, efforts to cater for audiences with other specific needs is increasingly being expanded, such as sessions with interpretation in Portuguese sign language, audio description and relaxed sessions.

The unique 'Programa Valorizar' (Valorize programme) is a helpline for The Accessible Tourism of Portugal, which supports D. Maria II in these issues, and is also applied to the tourism sector. This initiative is part of an accessibility project that aims to provide universal access to the building, programming and other initiatives developed throughout the season. The goal is that no one misses out on going to the theatre, whatever their disability or requirements.



Teatro D. Maria II (TDM II) in partnership with Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa

The Audio Description Sessions of Teatro D. Maria II are intended for blind or visually impaired audiences. One hour before the session, a moment of prior recognition of space is organised and a tactile approach to the set design and costumes, as well as a meeting with the actors.

Blind or low-vision people who will attend the play have the possibility to enter early; make a prior recognition of the space, meet the actors and then, during the show, with a headset, listen to the translator who will narrate the audio description. The goal is to describe all movements, actions and all scenario elements. How to describe a smile, a grimace, a sad face, an expression of surprise or irritation, or even a dance movement for visually impaired people? This is one of the challenges of audio description and its success means that theatre is transformed into a complete experience for those who don't see.

The Sessions with Interpretation in Portuguese Sign Language provide interpretation in Portuguese sign language for hard of hearing and deaf theatre-goers. Most conversations with artists also have interpretation.

"it was a piece that translates images into words..."



Best Practices

Teatro D. Maria II (TDM II)
in partnership with Santa
Casa da Misericórdia de
Lisboa

Providing extra context for better understanding:

Aside from the audito descriptions and sign language sessions, the opportunity to experience and familiarise oneself with the set design and costumes, as well as interacting with the actors one-on-one, offers an extra context and understanding of the production for a more rounded and complete experience of the art.

The real contextualized relationship between audience and actor allows the inclusion of blind or low-vision people and hard of hearing and deaf people to experience a more personal and human touch. In this sense, and having verified the success of this initiative, these are practices that can be implemented by other entities that promote the theatre in an inclusive way and for all.



2021 production of *Calígula morreu. Eu não* [Caligula died. I didn't].

In this Luso-Spanish production, Marco Paiva directs a cast that brings together actors with and without disabilities.

Performed in Portuguese and Spanish with Portuguese surtitles and Sign language.

Image & caption: theatre website

Suitable for:

Sensory disabilities
Mobility disabilities
Intellectual disabilities

Museu Nacional Ferroviário (MNF)

(National Rail Museum)

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The Museu Nacional Ferroviário (MNF) - National Railway Museum (MNF) is a museum of national dimension with a collection that can be visited in various parts of the country.

The objects that are shown there are mostly representative of the communities that have served and are connected to the railway lines and their infrastructures, enlivening the memory and identity, individually and collectively of each region.

The Network of Railway Museums is an organised system of museums that aims to strengthen qualification and cooperation by promoting the valorization of each of these railway museums and, at the same time, sustaining the strategic strength of a collection that is present throughout the continental national territory.

"The rule is to put us in each other's shoes. Welcoming all people, including those with specific needs, is mainly by trying to understand who is in front of us and what we can do to make that person's experience in the museum as pleasant as possible."



[Museu Nacional Ferroviário](#)



[Museu Nacional Ferroviário](#)

Museu Nacional Ferroviário (MNF)

Accessibility is understood and worked as the starting point and, at the same time, a point of arrival, for a positive and memorable experience, when visiting the National Railway Museum.

In addition to material resources, accessibility is a matter for people – the people who visit the Museum and the people who work at the museum.

Promoting accessibility is accepting that all people have different needs, providing them with equal access to the museum and its contents, and respecting the richness of human diversity.

The results are shown through the winning of the award ICOM 2010 with the 'multimedia audioguides' project and a nomination for the European Museum of the Year 2018 award by EMYA - European museum forum/council of Europe, as well as the award of Travelers' Choice Winner 2020 and 2021 from Tripadvisor.



Image source:

<https://www.patrimonio.pt/post/o-museu-nacional-ferrovi%C3%A1rio-recebe-bem-todas-as-pessoas-projeto-welcome-all>

Museu Nacional Ferroviário (MNF)

With a belief that increasing the level of accessibility at the museum for all is a matter of priority and urgency, this includes, in addition to physical issues, better communication with audiences and a more inclusive programming.

This strategy is based on the values of Equity and Dignity in Access. With this project the aim is to capture new audiences, namely people with specific needs who travel through Portugal and Europe, and who select and prepare their trips according to the accessibility resources that they can identify at the destination.

As for Communication Accessibility, MNF has integrated a project to develop resources that facilitate intellectual access to content and exposure – 'Welcome All' - as audio guides with the languages Portuguese, English, French, Castilian, German and Japanese; the creation of a Museum Guide in Clear Language; the creation of a film for the presentation of the museum in Portuguese and English, with translation into Portuguese sign language and International Gesture, and the creation of a website that meets the criteria of success of AAA compliance and offers robust navigation on different devices.

The 'Welcome All' project also integrated the component of training in care for people with specific needs, namely people with visual impairment, physical impairment, intellectual disability, or with difficulties in oral expression, and people with impaired hearing or deafness.

Parallel to the work developed in the physical and communication allocated components, the museum's programming aims for more inclusivity by currently integrating the interpretation in Portuguese sign language within most of its activities, as well as monthly tactile visits.

Best Practices

Providing supporting materials for the hard of hearing and deaf:

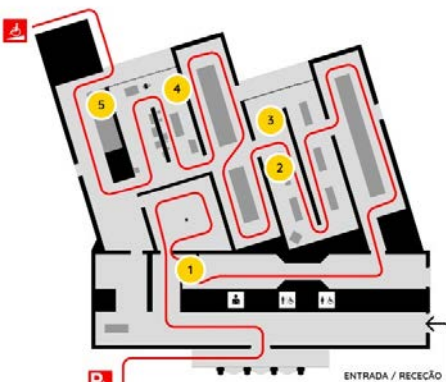
The availability of audio-guides, translation into Portuguese sign language and International Gesture, and the creation of an informative website are extremely important and inclusive for persons who are hard of hearing or deaf.

For tourism - and visitors with disabilities - providing the audios in a variety of languages, as well as universal languages, such as the International Gesture, opens up culture to a more diverse array of visitor.

Accessible Way

The route visitors make through the Museum complies with the European Accessibility Standards. Therefore, there are ramps and lifts to facilitate access with wheelchairs and prams. However, due to certain particularities of the Museu Nacional Ferroviário there are some physical obstacles that may constrain visitors, namely, rail lines and some protruding objects. Thus, we have devised a route dedicated to all people who have some kind of temporary or permanent physical disability.

Building 20 Blocks 14 and 15 Roundhouse



Download
the route.

1. Darkened Room
2. Timetable - Wing 2
3. Press - Wing 2
4. Stretcher - Wing 2
5. Lounge Space

Accessible toilets and baby changing stations

The Museu Nacional Ferroviário has accessible Toilets in all its premises. The accessible Toilets also have baby changing stations.

Lifting platforms

The Museum has a lifting platform to help visitors view the interior of the Royal Train. This lifting platform can be also be used for viewing the interior of other carriages. All you need to do is ask our Staff.

Guide dogs

Guide dogs are welcome at the Museu Nacional Ferroviário. The Museum has properly signalled pet water stations.

Cloakroom

The Museu Nacional Ferroviário has a cloakroom next to Reception.

Wheelchairs

The Museu Nacional Ferroviário has wheelchairs that can be requested at Reception. If you need a wheelchair and are not near reception, please ask one of our members of staff for help. We will be very pleased to help you.

Lift

The Museu Nacional Ferroviário has a lift that allows access from the ground floor to the first floor of Wing 13. This lift complies with accessibility standards, allowing for the entrance of people in wheelchairs. It has an audible warning signal and a control panel located at a height that allows shorter people and wheelchair-bound people to easily operate it.

Blind and visually impaired visitors

The Museu Nacional Ferroviário has audio guides with audio descriptions in the following language portuguese.





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TIME 4 ALTERNATIVE
CREATIVITY
IN REMOTE SPACE

PROJECT CONSORTIUM

