



# Revelland Workshop Accessibility 2.0 for the live music sector

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By Possibilize



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## INTRODUCTION

Accessibility at festivals and in live music venues is still a challenge for many live music organisers. That is why Revelland, in partnership with Live DMA, organised a workshop with representatives of music venues and festivals from various European countries to try to break this misconception and help live music organisers in embracing accessibility. The Workshop encouraged participants to see limitations as a springboard for creative solutions and possibilities. By fostering a deeper understanding of accessibility through exercises, personal stories, and innovative models, the workshop highlighted the importance of moving beyond compliance and towards inclusive, meaningful experiences for all.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Limitation as source of inspiration:** we often perceive people with disabilities as having a limitation, but this notion has broader implications. We all have something that limits us, somehow. This can be a physical limitation (e.g. being deaf or hard of hearing, being blind, etc) or something that constitutes our personality (being shy, not being able to focus for a long time, being lazy, etc). And for all of these, we have developed coping mechanism to overcome it. Limitations can inspire creativity and new possibilities.
- **It's okay to make mistakes:** this is part of the learning process. Especially regarding the words to talk about people with disabilities, these can change depending on the cultural context of a country, they can evolve over time and depending on individual preferences of people concerned.
  - **Resource:** [Inclusion in live music, the right words to build it](#)
  - **Motives for the organiser to work on accessibility:**
    - Financial necessity (e.g. get some subsidy money for a project on accessibility)
    - Social consciousness (be, or appear, socially aware of the fact that no one should be excluded from enjoying culture and the arts)
    - Gain new audiences (reach people you do not reach usually)
    - Curiosity and artistic challenge (go out of your comfort zone, challenge yourself, get to know communities that you didn't know before).
- **Assess where you are regarding accessibility:** the Matrix model provides a framework for thinking about accessibility. For each focus group, you can have provide one (or more) elements. The model is based on:
  - **Focus groups:** People with visual limitation / People with audio limitation / People with physical limitation / People with intellectual limitation
  - **Elements organisers can provide regarding accessibility:**
    - Experience (make sure the experience is good from A to Z)
    - Reliability (make sure that was you say is actually what you do)
    - Understandability (make sure your target group has easily access to all the information they need to plan their coming to your event, and enjoy it on site too)

- Treatment (make sure people are taken care of in a right way, without making a special treatment for them because of their disability)
- Reachability (considering not just the reachability and accessibility of the venue but the journey to it as well)
- Usability (make sure people can access and use all the services you provide)
- Payability (make sure there is no financial constraint burdened on the person with disability. For example: consider paying for a sign language interpreter to accompany someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, and not make it pay themselves. Or, consider offering +1 ticket for needs assistants)
- Policy (make sure accessibility is embedded in all elements of your event, from A to Z)

	Experience	Reliability	Understandability	Treatment	Reachability	Usability	Payability
Visual							
Audio							
Physical						ViPee-area	
Intellectual							

- **Although it's not only about checklists:** There are more and more guides out there with boxes to check to have an accessible live music event, and they can be really helpful! Find here a few:
  - [Attitude is Everything – DIY Access Guide](#)
  - [All Areas Access – Guidelines for more accessible live music shows](#)
  - [Yourope – Diversity & Inclusion Toolset](#)

## CONCLUSION

**Accessibility 2.0:** We believe that with a more holistic approach to accessibility, you make sure that your target group is included, thrives in its diversity, and feels a true sense of belonging to you project and event. Accessibility 2.0 is comprised of:

- **Creative Accessibility:** Accessibility in such a way that it provides added value for several (target) groups. Best Practice Example of Creative Accessibility: [Sencity Festival](#). The festival relies on the notion of Creative Accessibility: accessibility in such a way that it provides added value for several (target) groups. All the music acts presented

there have a multi-sensory dimension to it. Artists are invited to add smell, touch, taste or sight elements to their live shows, to create immersive experiences and elements of surprise for everyone.

The festival is also making efforts to turn the premises into something friendly for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing: the lighting of the venue allows for people to be able to see each other and talk in sign-language, all the lyrics are translated into Dutch Sign Language, there is a special platform that amplifies the vibrations of the bass, etc.

o **Sense of Belonging:** Belonging is the experience of the individual, when they feel accepted and included by those around them.

Belonging means to have a sense of social connection and identification with others. It shows through the following values, and actions: Inclusion, Accessibility, Diversity, Equality, Equity, Liberty. The contrary of this notion is Tokenism: a practice of appointing a person or a small number of people from a marginalised group in order to be seen to be making efforts, often without giving access to decision-making or making any efforts in terms of inclusion, equity or belonging in the environment.

o **Accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities needs to be part of an integral strategy of your organisation and of your event.**

Always think of the phrase: **“Nothing about us without us”**: always involve your target group in what you want to do with them. If you want to improve your events to be more inclusive of deaf people, invite them to one of your events and listen to their feedbacks and what they have to say!

