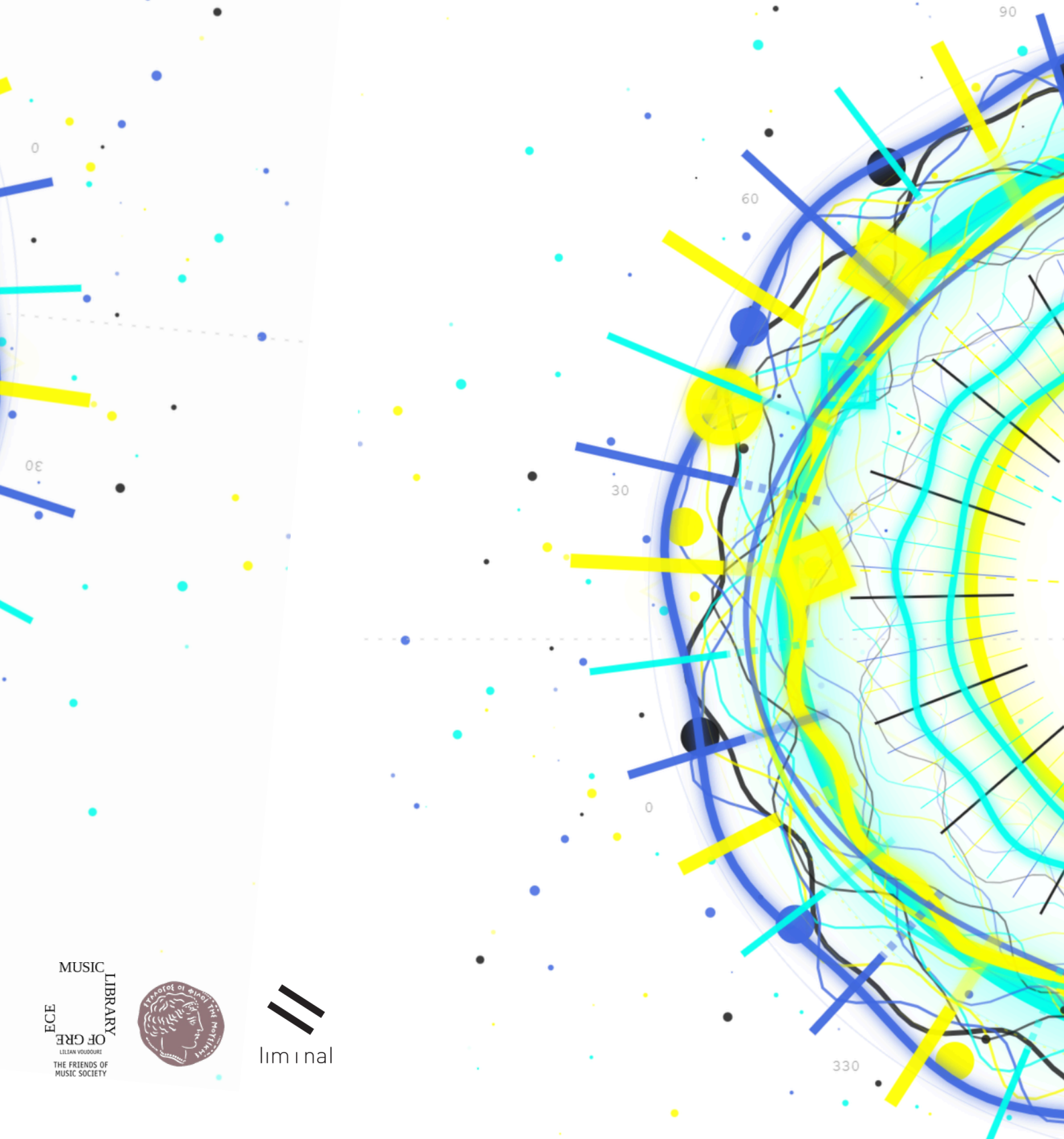
Resonances

Good practices and tools for an inclusive approach towards communities



MUSIC LIBRARY OF GREECE LILIAN VOUDOURI
THE FRIENDS OF MUSIC SOCIETY

liminal

Resonances: Good practices and tools for an inclusive approach towards communities

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Acknowledgments:
We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Deaf Community, music professionals and Greek Sign Language interpreters for their participation and valuable contributions. Their collaboration, knowledge, and experience were essential to the development and implementation of this project.

Greece, Athens 2026

ΠΙΝΑΚΑΣ ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΩΝ

- **04: Forward**
- **05: Context & Institutions**
- **07: Good Practices**

08: Preperation for an inclusive approach
12: Communication, connection, co-design
16: Foundation of Trust-Based Relationships
19: Feedback and risk management

- **22: About the Deaf Community**
- **23: Glossary**

Forward

This guide was created to support organizations that wish to reach new communities to their spaces and activities, as well as to encourage the development of meaningful partnerships and participation practices in an inclusive environment. It is intended for organizations that wish to expand their audience, create more open and inclusive spaces, and build relationships with communities that may not have had access to or been connected with their activities until now.

The guide was created as part of the **European Cultural Foundation**'s "**The Europe Challenge**" programme, in which the **Music Library of Greece "Lilian Voudouri"** of **The Friends of Music Society** and the cultural nonprofit organization **liminal** collaborated on the project "**Resonance: Music Appreciation for the D/deaf and hard of hearing**".

Resonance's experience has shown that reaching out to a new community is not simply a matter of attracting a new audience. It requires time, a willingness to continually reflect and learn, adaptability, consistency, and, above all, the active participation of the community members themselves.

The best practices presented here do not constitute a rigid or uniform model that can be applied in the same way in every situation. Each community's approach must begin with the organization's willingness to learn, to recognize the diversity of experiences, and to adapt its planning and practices accordingly.

The goal is not only to encourage more people to walk through an organization's doors, but also to create an environment where they feel that this space is relevant to them, values them, and welcomes them as equal partners and collaborators.

Context & Institutions

MUSIC LIBRARY OF GREECE
LILIAN VOUDOURI
THE FRIENDS OF MUSIC SOCIETY

E-mail address:
library@megaron.gr
Website:
https://mmb.org.gr/en

The Music Library of Greece "Lilian Voudouri" of the Friends of Music Association is the largest music library in Greece and one of the country's most important cultural institutions, focusing on music education, research, and the promotion of Greek musical creativity.

For two decades now, it has been making its unique collections —which include both Greek and international music—available to the public. Its analog collections include nearly 180,000 titles, while it also houses one of the largest Digital Composers' Repositories, with over 600,000 items from the archives of Greek composers such as Mikis Theodorakis, Theodoros Antoniou, Nikos Skalkottas, Aimilios Riadis, and many others.

The Music Library focuses on the three pillars of Preservation – Research – Dissemination: it records and preserves cultural material in accordance with contemporary standards, utilises it through new technologies, thereby opening up new foundations for research and innovation, and brings it back to the community through new, co-created formats.

liminal

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Liminal is a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting equal participation in culture. Since 2016, it has been contributing to the transition towards a cultural landscape that embraces human diversity in all its forms, acting as a platform for dialogue and creative collaboration.

Its work is based on four pillars: Education, Accessibility Services, Productions and Research. liminal designs and implements accessible and inclusive artistic projects and events, trains cultural professionals and artists on issues of accessibility and inclusion, and develops innovative solutions that link accessibility with artistic creation.

Having collaborated with the country's leading cultural organisations as well as independent artistic groups, liminal is a prominent organization in the field of accessibility and inclusion in Greece, whilst maintaining close ties with the international community through its network of partners.

Z**oi Angelopoulou** works as a Digital Librarian at the **Music Library of Greece "Lilian Voudouri"** of **The Friends of Music Society**, where her role involves the management of digital resources and repositories, research projects and inclusive musical practices. With a background in Information Science as well as music, she combines technology with musical creation. She explores the creative use of technology, innovation and the development of new ways of interacting with music.

The Community representative for The Europe Challenge programme, **Andreas Plemmenos**, works at **liminal** as a Community Liaison, overseeing the production and quality control of Accessibility Services for Deaf and hard-of-hearing people, as well as providing support to professionals and organisations on issues of accessibility and inclusion. He is a theatrologist, artist, writer and Consultant/Trainer in Accessibility and Inclusion. He has completed postgraduate studies in Non-Formal Education and in Information and Communication Technologies.

European Cultural Foundation

The Europe Challenge

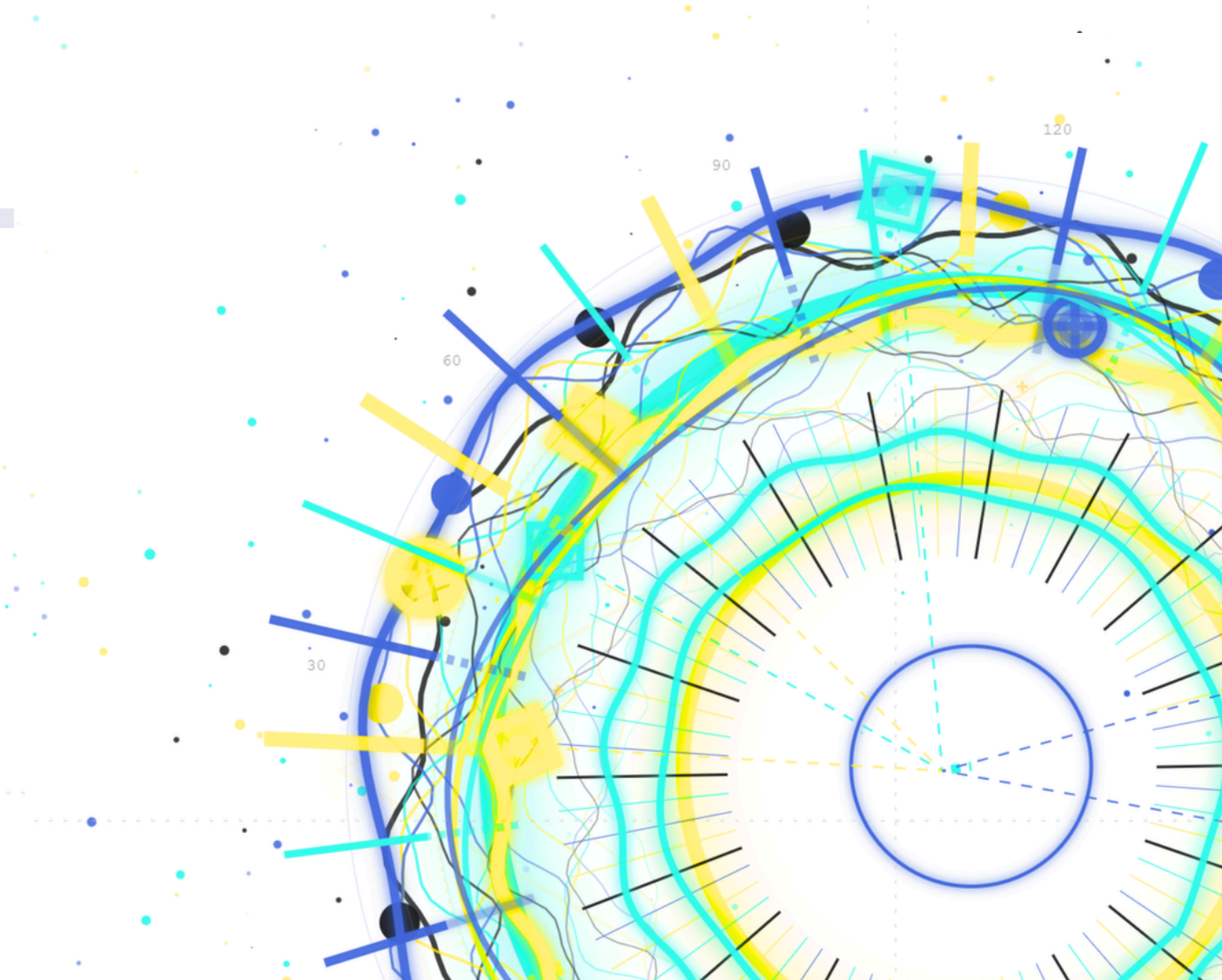
The **Europe Challenge** is a European programme run by the **European Cultural Foundation** (ECF) that connects libraries and communities across Europe. Its aim is to support libraries and communities in recognising and addressing contemporary social, digital and environmental challenges by developing creative, participatory and practical solutions.

The programme is based on collaboration between libraries and communities, encouraging participants to jointly plan and implement initiatives that meet the real needs of their audience. At the same time, it creates a European network for the exchange of knowledge and experience, through workshops, mentoring, meetings, peer-to-peer exchanges and networking opportunities.

Good practices

The good practices are presented in four sections:

08: Preperation for an inclusive approach
12: Communication, connection, co-design
16: Foundation of Trust-Based Relationships
19: Feedback and risk management

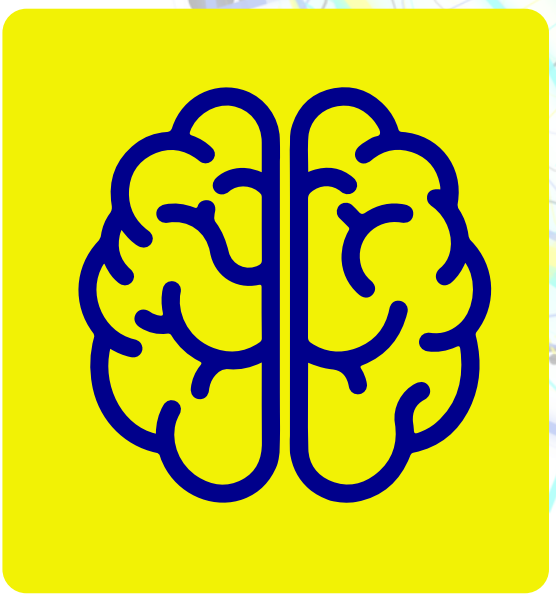


Preperation for an inclusive approach

Adopt an open mindset:

Engaging with a new community means you will come into contact with aspects that were previously unfamiliar to you. These may include the culture, way of life and means of communication of the community's members, as well as their life stories and experiences to which you have not previously had access. It is important to maintain an open-minded attitude when encountering these, as they are very likely to differ – sometimes radically – from the image you had of the community or from the stereotypical characteristics and behaviours attributed to it. A willingness to accept these new insights and to reconsider your initial perceptions will enable you to forge a meaningful relationship with the community, to learn from it and to cultivate an equal and long-term partnership.

Tip: Try rephrasing the common assumptions you hear about the community. For example, 'This community isn't open to collaboration' could be rephrased as: 'What conditions does this community need in order to feel comfortable collaborating?'



Suggested tool:
Exercises for reflection and analysis of stereotypes. Try answering questions about the stereotypes you are aware of regarding the community you wish to engage with, such as:

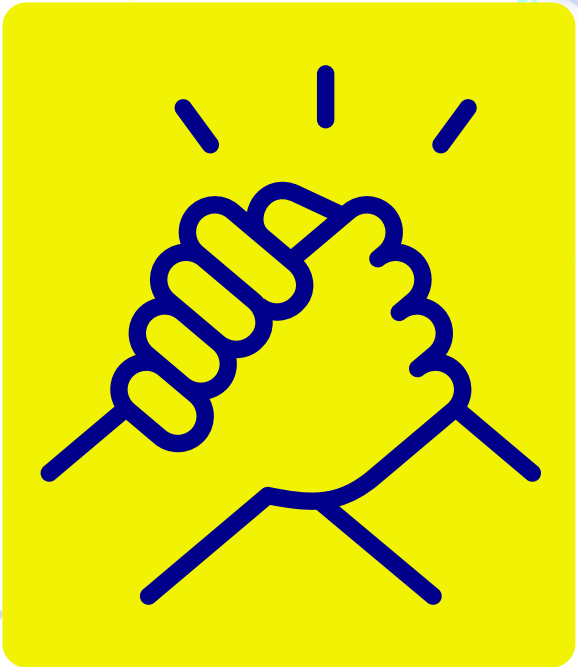
- Does my knowledge of this subject come from reliable sources or from personal experience?
- Do I have sufficient information on this subject from the community's perspective?
- Are there any sources or pieces of information that I might be overlooking?
- Whose voices are missing?
- What could I ask community members about this?

Preperation for an inclusive approach

Gain support:

The support of your organisation's management will play a decisive role in any action you undertake. Beyond the financial resources required for a project, management support will influence practical aspects such as the allocation of premises and staff, promotion, problem-solving and the removal of barriers. Furthermore, it will have a positive impact on staff morale and energy levels, strengthening their commitment to the objectives and creating the conditions for greater participation and active involvement in the implementation of the project. Finally, management support enhances the prestige of the project and the team responsible for it, thereby facilitating its dissemination outside the organisation and providing a solid foundation for the creation of new relationships and partnerships.

Tip: Demonstrate the value of your project by linking its objectives to those of your organisation and anticipating potential obstacles, whilst also suggesting possible solutions.



Suggested tool:
A brief and coherent presentation (pitch). Create a brief presentation in the form of a 'pitch' that covers the key points of the project. Aim to capture your audience's attention right from the start and to clearly answer the questions 'what will you do', 'why will you do it', 'how will you do it' and 'what will you need'. The more clearly these questions are presented, the more likely you are to gain the support of your organisation.

Preperation for an inclusive approach

Keep the staff informed:

All staff at your organisation should be fully informed about any outreach activities aimed at a new community, as they will need to interact with members of that community. Staff should therefore have received briefings and/or training on issues relating to the community. This should be done in a way that allows for the exchange of views and the generation of insights by the staff themselves, rather than simply presenting facts and information. With this preparation, staff will feel ready to welcome members of the community to the premises. Furthermore, by conveying your message and its significance to the staff, they will become a great ally, willingly supporting your initiatives and creating a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Tip: Encourage staff to voice their questions and acknowledge any potential biases, using any existing attitudes as a starting point for discussion.



Suggested tool:
Staff training workshops. Organize workshops on topics related to the community, the needs and experiences of its members, with the support of specialized professionals and representatives from the community itself. If possible, incorporate experiential activities, case studies, and group discussions so that staff have the opportunity to ask questions, exchange views, and prepare for meaningful and equal communication with community members.

Preperation for an inclusive approach

Enrich your resources:

Create a collection of diverse resources related to the community you want to reach, and make them available to that community. Try to include as many different types of resources as possible. This can serve as an educational resource for you and your organization while also fostering a sense of belonging among community members who visit the space and find elements there that reflect their culture, experiences, or interests, thereby reinforcing the sense that they can be part of this space.

Tip: Enrich your sources by seeking out voices that haven't had the opportunity to be heard due to barriers imposed by society in the past or even today.



Suggested tool:
Subject-specific bibliographies. Search for bibliographies, source lists, educational guides, and recommended works made available by other organizations. Contact libraries, archives, research centers, museums, and organizations that operate in related fields or collaborate with the community you wish to engage. Consider whether the sources cover different experiences and perspectives, paying particular attention to material produced by community members themselves. Select from the thematic bibliographies the sources that best align with your project's objectives and the interests of the community you wish to engage.

Communication, connection, co-design

Include the community:

Tip: Encourage the community by giving it the space and time to express its views and make its voice heard, without putting pressure on it.



Perhaps the most important factor in community outreach efforts is the participation of the community itself! Community members possess valuable knowledge and experience for developing initiatives; however, it is very common for their participation not to be planned for, resulting in initiatives that fail to resonate with them. Therefore, at every stage of the process—from planning through implementation—it is essential to involve community members, who provide invaluable information and experience. Great care must be taken in managing this type of collaboration, as a balance must be maintained between the organization's goals and the community's contributions.

Suggested tool:

Open discussions and suggestion boxes. Invite community members or other groups who you believe may have useful knowledge, experiences, and perspectives for the community to participate in group open discussions. It's a good idea for groups to meet separately during the first few sessions to create a safe environment for expression and to avoid any potential awkwardness. Additionally, establish ground rules for respecting different opinions and ensuring everyone's equal participation. At the same time, set up a suggestion box where participants can anonymously submit their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. You can keep the box on the organization's premises so that a channel of communication remains open for future community initiatives.

Communication, connection, co-design

Adopt multiple ways of communication and dissemination:

Tip: Each platform has its own digital community, so reach out to the community you want to target. The closer your communication is to their language, the more people you'll be able to reach.



Make use of all possible communication methods and dissemination channels at your disposal, as each community—and indeed each individual—may have different preferred ways of communicating. In addition, include as wide a variety as possible of information formats, such as text, images, audio, and video. Don't forget to take into account information regarding communication and dissemination provided by the community members themselves. These methods may include newsletters, websites, social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.), personal emails, announcements from community organizations, and magazines (both online and print).

Suggested tool:
Communication Log. Start by listing all potential recipients of your communication along with their preferred methods of communication. Using this information as a guide, create a log where you clearly note when, how, and with what content each communication will take place. Update the calendar regularly, taking into account feedback from recipients and evaluating the effectiveness of each channel, so that you can adjust your strategy accordingly. Update the calendar regularly, taking into account feedback from your audience and evaluating the effectiveness of each channel, so that you can adjust your strategy accordingly and ensure that the information reaches as many people as possible in a way that is accessible, understandable, and meaningful.

Communication, connection, co-design

Direct and personal communication:

Tip: The more information you provide while maintaining a positive attitude toward the community, the better your rapport with it will be.



Don't rely solely on general announcements. Personal communication that includes specific details and personalized invitations can foster greater familiarity and trust. Give people the opportunity to contact you directly; encourage them to share your work with the right people and to freely ask any questions or raise any concerns they may have, giving them the option to contact you in whatever way they prefer—that is, via text message, video call, phone, or in person, by providing access to contact information such as your phone number, email, website, and social media profiles.

Suggested tool:

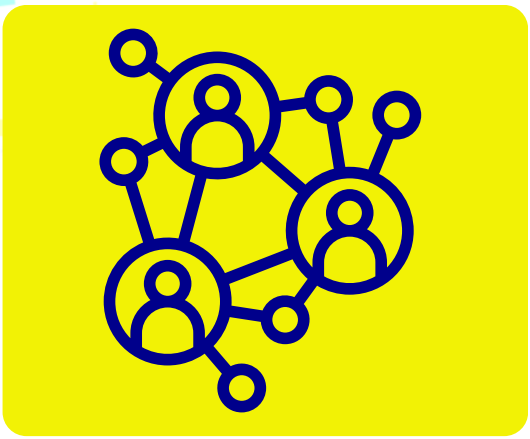
Contact Card. Create a contact card for each team member participating in your project, in both printed and digital formats. On the card, clearly list basic information such as full name, position or job title, phone number, email, and any other information that may be useful for direct communication. Use friendly and direct language, encouraging community members to reach out to you with questions, concerns, ideas, and suggestions. Distribute the card through your initiatives, events, informational messages, and digital channels, making sure it is easily accessible and that the information on it remains up to date.

Communication, connection, co-design

Connection with organizations and networking:

Tip: Start with organizations that are most similar to your own or that share common goals with you. Leverage existing partnerships and their contacts to meet new people and groups, gradually expanding your network and creating opportunities for future collaborations and joint initiatives.

Identify and document institutions, organizations, groups, and other stakeholders associated with the community you are trying to reach. All of these will serve as a valuable source of resources and information regarding how to approach the community and the content of your activities, and they can act as a point of access to the community. Furthermore, communicating with them can be the beginning of a lasting relationship and a collaborative network. This also encourages participation in future activities.



Suggested tool:
Networking Map. Create a shared file for your team in whatever format works best for you. Start by listing your existing partners and organizations active in the same field. Then use this file to add new contacts you make, as well as potential contacts you'd like to establish. Provide detailed information about each contact, as well as the ways in which you could collaborate. Update the file regularly by adding new contacts, recording the results of collaborations, and noting opportunities for joint initiatives.

Foundation of Trust-Based Relationships

Attune to the community:

The information—as well as the way you present it—should be tailored to the community you are trying to reach. No information should be omitted on the assumption that it is common knowledge or self-evident! Even information that is considered self-evident should be mentioned and explained to leave no room for misunderstanding. Avoid unnecessary jargon and complex language, as they can cause fatigue and discourage participation, especially among people who have experienced ongoing exclusion in the past. Information should be clear, specific, and easy to understand so that everyone knows what to expect and how they can participate.

Tip: If you're not sure whether your information is clear and understandable—or whether you've taken something important for granted—ask members of the community itself to review the content and provide feedback before using it in your activities.



Suggested tool:

Inclusive Language Checklist. Create a checklist to serve as a guide for the content you'll use in your activities and communication materials. The checklist may include questions such as:

- Is the message understandable without prior knowledge of the subject?
- Are all necessary terms explained?
- Are the location, time, requirements, and steps for participation clearly described?
- Are complex phrasing and unnecessary jargon avoided?
- Is the content available in a variety of formats?

Use feedback from project participants to refine and then expand your list by adding new checkpoints that address the community's needs and experiences.

Foundation of Trust-Based Relationships

Be transparent:

Be clear and specific about your organization, as well as the nature and objectives of your activities, and whether they are part of a larger programme. Provide all necessary information about the activities, the venue, the participation process, and the representatives implementing them. Also present the context and objective of the project so that participants and visitors know who you are, why the activities were created, and what you are aiming to achieve. In addition, be clear about the use of personal data and inform people in an understandable way about what data you collect, for what purpose it will be used, and how it will be protected. If you wish to publish material, be sure to respect the boundaries of community members. If you wish to publish material, be sure to respect the boundaries of community members. Transparency with the community is a solid foundation for building a relationship of trust.

Tip: The more participants know about your professional background, the more comfortable the atmosphere becomes.



Suggested tool:

Information and Transparency Document. Create a brief informational document or a section on your website where you can compile key information about your organization, project, and activities. Include the objectives, implementing and funding entities, participation procedures, as well as clear information on the collection, use, and protection of personal data. Also explain how any photographic or audiovisual material will be used, and obtain the necessary permissions or consents, where required. Keep the material up to date and available in an accessible format so that anyone interested can easily stay informed and know what to expect from their participation.

Foundation of Trust-Based Relationships

Pay attention to consistency:

Consistently adhere to the dates and times of your activities, as well as any information and instructions you have provided regarding them. Your reliability will be one of the most important factors in engaging a community and ensuring its successful participation. This is particularly important when interacting with communities that face exclusion and/or discrimination. Inconsistency toward such communities reinforces feelings of devaluation and inequality, undermining trust in your organization and team and making it difficult to build a meaningful and equitable relationship with them.

Tip: Consistency encourages community members to trust and engage with the organization. Inconsistency is a common reason why a community may feel excluded.



Suggested tool:

Participant Notification System. Create a unified system that integrates the scheduling of your activities with participants' contact information. For each event, record the date, time, and location, as well as the individuals who have registered and their preferred method of communication. This way, in the event of a change, postponement, or cancellation of an event, you'll be able to immediately identify which individuals need to be notified and contact them in a timely manner. Be sure to confirm that the notification has been sent and to manage contact information securely, respecting the privacy of participants.

Feedback and risk management

Identify potential obstacles:

Tip: Look for people who play an active role in the community and regularly participate in its activities, as they are usually easier to find and get in touch with.



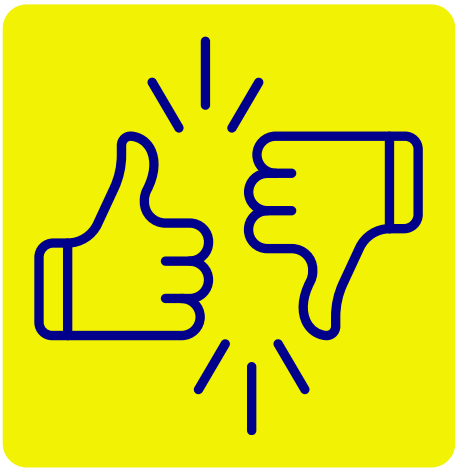
In any new initiative, it is inevitable that obstacles will arise. Before implementing your initiatives, try to identify potential obstacles that might limit community participation, such as practical difficulties, accessibility issues, linguistic or cultural factors, a lack of information, or past negative experiences with organizations and institutions. It is important that this effort be carried out in collaboration with community members, as the very people who may face these barriers can provide valuable insights into how to identify and address them. At the same time, plan for alternative solutions and adjust your plan in a timely manner whenever necessary. In this way, you are not limited to addressing obstacles as they arise, but rather you create the conditions from the outset for a more accessible, inclusive, and effective initiative.

Suggested tool:
Obstacle Course. Map out each step of the process in detail, from the initial announcement and registration to access to the venue, participation in activities, and providing feedback. For each stage, look for relevant sources, the experiences of organizations and individuals who have carried out similar projects or projects with the same community, and, of course, the input of the community members themselves, in order to identify potential obstacles, their causes, and suggested solutions for addressing them.

Feedback and risk management

Conduct ongoing evaluations:

Tip: Use apps such as Kahoot, Mentimeter, or Google Forms. Ask specific, pre-planned questions during a live discussion to gather feedback.



No matter how much attention and time you devote to preparing your activities, there will always be aspects that can be improved or unforeseen situations that you'll need to address. Continuously evaluating your initiatives will allow you to identify what is working effectively, which areas need improvement, and which community needs have not yet been met. Evaluation should not be limited to the end of an initiative, but should be an ongoing process that begins with planning and continues throughout its implementation. Make use of the observations, experiences, and feedback from both staff and community members to gradually adapt your initiatives to actual needs and circumstances. In this way, every action can serve as a learning opportunity and help improve future actions, while also enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of the overall community outreach effort.

Suggested tool:
Evaluation and Improvement Plan. Create a shared file or a shared digital space where you can compile the team's observations, participant feedback, the challenges that arose, and the elements that worked effectively in each activity. This way, all team members will have access to the relevant information and will be able to work together to identify potential improvements and develop specific solutions. For each proposed change, document the next steps, the implementation timeline, and the person responsible for carrying it out, so that you can track progress and use the findings to improve future actions.

Feedback and risk management

Be patient and persistent!

Tip: Include the concept of "crip time" in your design—that is, a conception of time that is not linear but flexible, and reflects how each person experiences time differently.



Reaching out to a new community takes time and effort. It is common for participation in your initial activities to be very low or even nonexistent, especially when dealing with communities that have faced severe exclusion and discrimination in the past. Many communities are not used to seeing cultural organizations that do not exclude them; not only that, but often there has been a lack of proper communication in advance, with the result that the space and activities are ultimately not truly accessible and inclusive for the communities, which causes frustration. As a result, organizations and activities are viewed with skepticism. This should not discourage you. Give community members time to get to know your organization and your goals, to become familiar with your space and activities, and to feel that their participation is truly welcome and safe. Perseverance in your efforts, combined with a willingness to listen, adapt, and learn from your experience, will gradually create the conditions for greater participation and a stable, mutually supportive partnership.

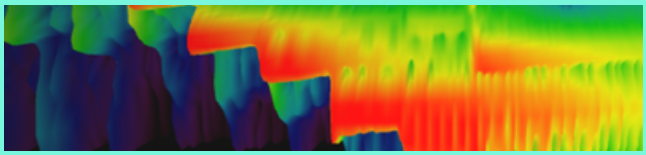
Suggested tool:
Framework for Gradual Engagement. Outline the possible stages through which community members can come into contact with your organization, project, and activities. For example, these stages may include initial contact, getting to know the organization, learning about the project and its goals, participating in activities, providing feedback, and personal communication. Use these as a flexible guide rather than a linear path. Each person may need a different amount of time to become familiar with the organization, may choose different ways to participate, or may wish to remain at a particular stage for as long as they feel comfortable.

About the Deaf Community

This guide was created in response to the Deaf Community's outreach, out of a desire to learn about its culture and dispel stereotypes about it. Below you'll find resources and a glossary of key terms to help you discover the richness and beauty of its culture for yourself!

Explore the sound waveform through this application:

Spectrogram



Discover Sign Languages through this application:

Spread the Sign

The enchanting music of sign language



Get informed about Deafhood

Deaf President Now!



Through Deaf Eyes



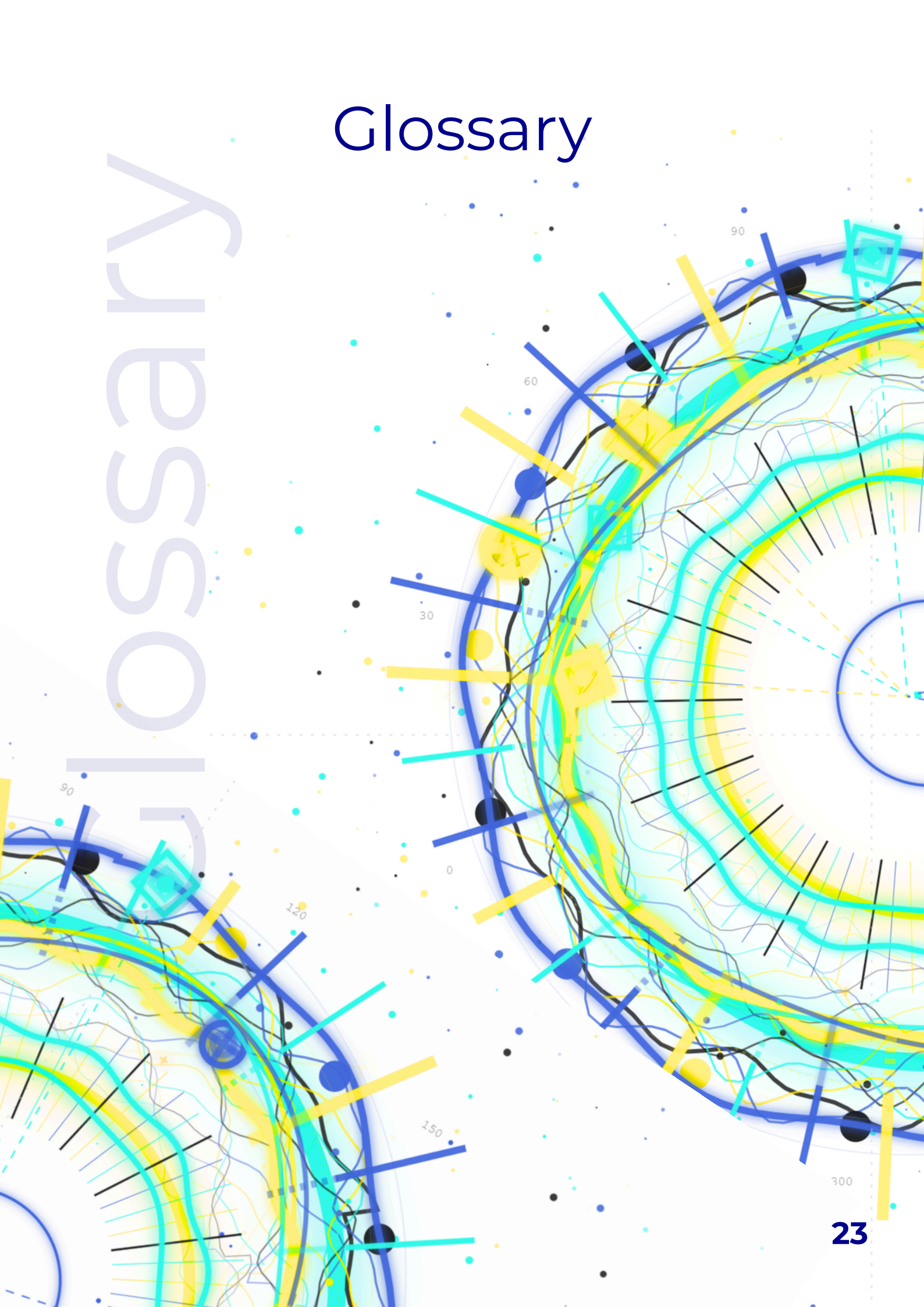
Deaf Identity | Episode One of "Deaf And..."



European Union of the Deaf

European Union of the Deaf Youth

Glossary



Glossary

- **Accessibility:**

Creating conditions, spaces, services, experiences, and tools that enable individuals to participate in and access information, activities, and opportunities through different approaches.

- **Inclusion:**

The active participation of people with diverse identities in decision-making, with recognition of and respect for their different experiences and ways of communicating. This is not just about someone's presence in a space, but also about their ability to participate meaningfully and help shape the experience.

- **Co-design:**

A process in which the people who will participate in or be affected by a project actively participate in its design. The community's knowledge and experience are part of the creative process itself.

- **Creative Accessibility:**

A creative process that incorporates different ways of perceiving, communicating, and participating from the very beginning, rather than treating accessibility as an afterthought at the end of the process.

- **Accessibility Chain**

A series of interconnected accessibility steps that enable a person to reach a service or cultural experience.

Glossary about Deafhood

- **Greek Sign Language (GSL):**

The sign language of the Greek Sign Language Community. It is a complete and independent language, with its own grammar, syntax, and linguistic structure, based on visual-spatial expression. Greek Sign Language is not a global language.

- **D/deaf:**

The term “Deaf” (with a capital D) is used to refer to individuals who identify as members of the Deaf Community and are connected to the Community’s language and culture. The term therefore refers not only to hearing but also to a linguistic and cultural identity. When written with a lowercase “d” it is typically used to describe the loss or absence of hearing, or hearing impairment to varying degrees, as a characteristic. The experiences and communication methods of deaf individuals vary significantly and may include the use of spoken language. Therefore, writing the word with a lowercase “d” does not necessarily indicate identification with the Deaf community or Deaf culture.

- **Hard-of-hearing:**

A person with hearing loss of varying degrees. The experiences and communication methods of people with hearing loss vary significantly and may include the use of spoken language, hearing aids or cochlear implants, captions, sign language, or a combination of these.

- **Deafblind / deafblind:**

It refers to a person who has both vision loss and hearing loss to varying degrees. When written with a capital “D” it signifies the person is a member of the Deaf community. Whereas the lowercase "d" means that the person is not a sign language user/knower.

- **Deaf Community:**

A linguistic and cultural community of individuals connected, among other things, through sign language, shared experiences, and cultural references.