<u>Best Practices Guide for Accessible & Inclusive Event Planning</u>

- Pre-event considerations:
  - ❏ Review this checklist in its entirety before you start planning to ensure that you are considering accessibility and inclusion at every level of your event planning.
  - ❏ Review the Principles of Universal Design so that you can readily incorporate low/no-cost features in your event planning to enhance accessibility.
  - ❏ Some events may require cost-bearing accessibility services (such as sign language interpreters, closed captioning, or transcription services) in your event budget. Based on the goals of your event and your anticipated audience, factor in this cost to your event budget.(E&I has created an Accessibility Fund to assist event planners with some of these costs.) Contact E&I if/when interested.
  - ❏ Use the Principles of Universal Design during the event planning process.
  - ❏ Designate a point person on your planning team who will manage accommodation requests and ensuring accessibility/inclusion.
- Date, food, and venue selection:
  - ❏ For on-campus events at Penn, refer to the Accessibility Mapping Project to select a location that is as inclusive as possible for your particular event.
  - ❏ Strive to avoid religious holidays and dates of cultural significance. The University's Office of the Chaplain provides a calendar annually that can help you avoid such conflicts. When in doubt, check in with E&I!
  - ❏ Solicit caterers who serve a wide range of dietary needs, including, but not limited to: vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free, Halal, and Kosher.
  - ❏ Seek venues with accessibility needs in mind, including: elevators, ADA restrooms, entrances without stairs/with ramps, wheelchair seating, closed-captioning, etc.
  - ❏ Ensure that at least one gender-inclusive restroom is available, or that an existing restroom can be designated as such. Your accessibility point-person will need to ensure adequate signage on the day of the event to direct attendees to these spaces. Their availability should also be noted in the event program.
  - ❏ Confirm the availability of a(n) extra room(s) for prayer, lactation, quiet space, etc.
  - ❏ Provide transportation options/instructions for those who may not be able to walk long distances.
- Event registration and event promotion:
  - ❏ Consider providing a hybrid option for in-person events.
  - ❏ Provide an opportunity for guests to request accommodations and indicate dietary needs. Include a text box for guests to write any additional needs that are not listed. Remember, one event planner should focus on responding to and addressing these requests.
  - ❏ Provide an opportunity for guests to list their pronouns and provide the option to list their pronouns on their nametags.
  - ❏ Allow for the resubmission of forms in case a guest makes an error.
  - ❏ Use high contrast color schemes and readable fonts whenever possible.
  - ❏ Consider providing electronic copies of materials to registrants before the event, so they may make fonts bigger, take notes, etc.
- Event Preparation:
  - ❏ Inform program participants (i.e. panelists, moderators) that ensuring accessibility is a goal in your event planning, and let them know that you will keep them informed of any special measures you may be asking them to take in order to ensure that. Remember to ask your participants if they need any kind of accommodations as they participate in your event.

- ❏ If your speakers plan to use slides, provide them with presentation templates that use a large, readable font and high contrast colors.
- ❏ Ask speakers to speak slowly and clearly in their presentations, and prepare to remind them periodically.
- During the event:
  - ❏ Use a large sans serif font for signs, printed materials, and presentations.
  - ❏ Clearly label foods that are reserved for special dietary needs.
  - ❏ Provide reserved seating near exits for those who may need to leave or take breaks during the event.
  - ❏ Ask that speakers use a microphone when presenting, and remind them to speak into the microphone to ensure the best sound quality and recording (if applicable).
  - ❏ For longer programs/symposia, schedule breaks *at least* every 90 minutes.
  - ❏ Ensure that aisles are wide enough for wheelchair users to access.
- After the event:
  - ❏ When possible, make recordings of your program, along with transcription, available online after the event. Notify all who registered when and where the recording is available.
  - ❏ Send a post-event survey to gather feedback on accessibility at the event.

E&I is here to support all event planners in ensuring that our programs are as inclusive and accessible as possible. This guide is a work in progress. We welcome your additions/suggestions and will continue to update the checklist accordingly. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions/concerns at inclusion@law.upenn.edu. Thank you for your partnership in ensuring equity and accessibility in everything we do!