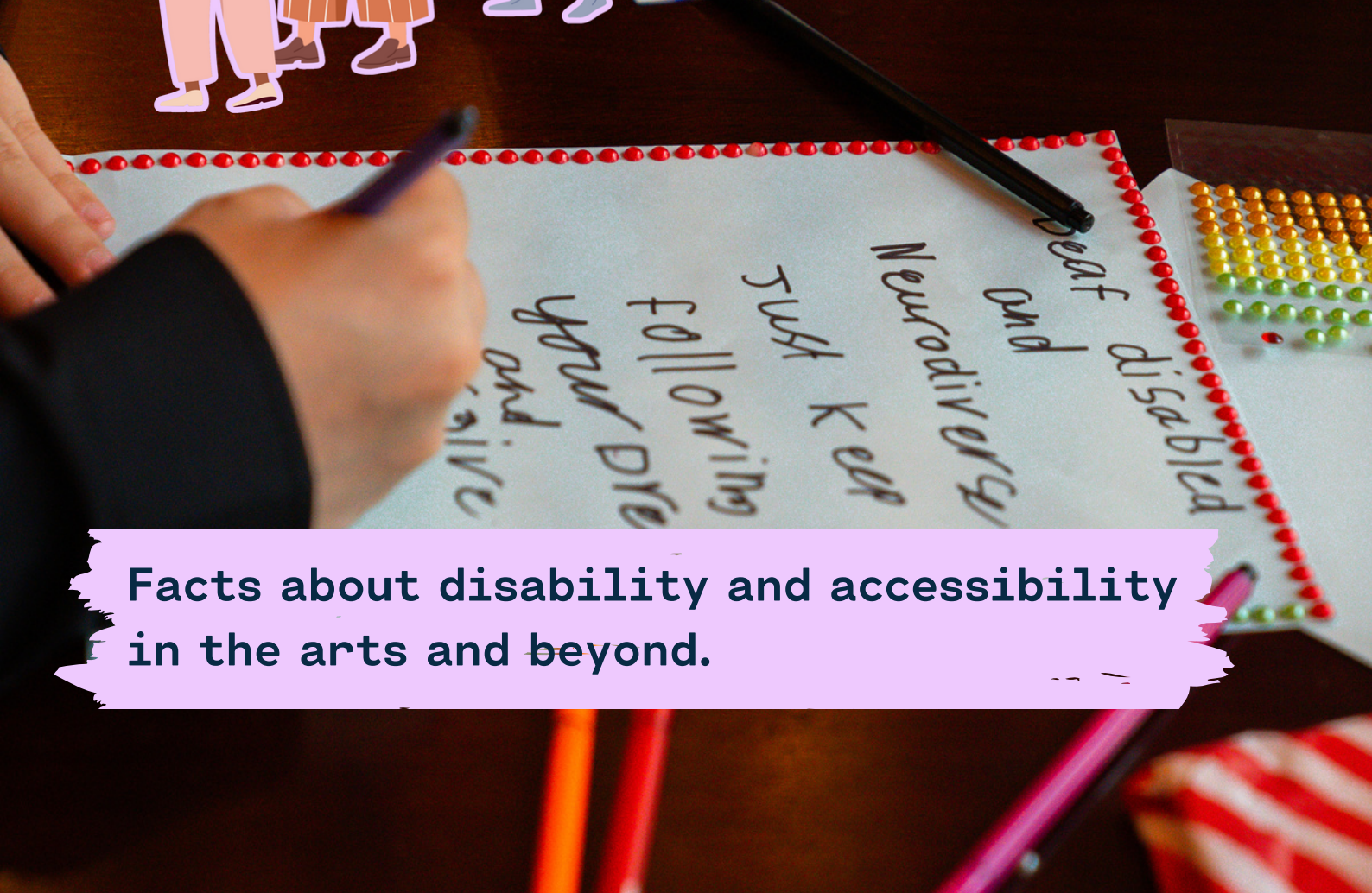


The Access Manifesto: A New Chapter for the Arts

Access Facts



Facts about disability and accessibility
in the arts and beyond.

What Is the Access Manifesto?

The Access Manifesto: A New Chapter for the Arts is a call to action for arts organisations, venues, and leaders to revolutionise the accessibility of the arts. Written by Maisy Gordon and Ayzah Ahmed, this manifesto is rooted in the voices and experiences of young Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodiverse artists and activists. It offers a practical, step-by-step guide to help arts spaces become more inclusive and accessible for all.

Why it is so important:

In March 2023, young people from Liverpool, London, Leeds, Chester, and Manchester collaborated with 20 Stories High and Graeae to attend workshops and be a part of creating the show: High Times And Dirty Monsters. This project highlighted the ongoing barriers faced by young Deaf, Disabled, and Neurodiverse individuals within the arts. The Access Manifesto was born from these experiences, aiming to inspire and guide change within the arts sector.

How to use these facts:

This resource is a collection of facts and statistics about disability and accessibility, designed to reinforce the key principles of The Access Manifesto. Use this resource to deepen your understanding of the lived experiences of disabled individuals and to recognise the critical importance of accessibility for everyone.

Access Fact:

Did you know 60% of people underestimate how many disabled people there actually are?

The Statistics:

An estimated 16 million people in the UK have a disability. This represents 24% of the total population. That's 1 in 4 people.

- An estimated 2 million people are living with sight loss.
- Approximately 11 million people are Deaf or have hearing loss.
- Around 1.5 million people have a learning disability.
- 6.8 million people live with a mobility-related impairment.

Lack of accessibility directly impacts 1 in 4 people in the UK.

Access Fact:

While 24% of working-age individuals are disabled, only 7% of people working in the arts are disabled.

The Statistics:

One in 10 businesses feel they are not able to support an employee with a disability or health condition.

- 4% of staff in National Portfolio Organisations are disabled (ACE)
- Disabled employees in the arts are 20% less likely to advance to senior roles compared to their non-disabled counterparts. (ACE)
- 40% of disabled individuals interested in working in the arts cite lack of accessibility as a barrier to entry (Disability Arts Online, 2021).

Lack of accessibility directly impacts peoples access to the creative industry.

Access Fact:

Only 15% of arts education programs offer specific provisions or support for disabled students.

The Statistics:

Only 9% of students enrolled in arts-related courses at higher education institutions identify as disabled.

- 30% of disabled students report facing significant barriers to accessing arts education. (NUS UK)
- Disabled students in arts courses have a graduation rate of 65%, compared to 78% for non-disabled students. (HESA)
- Only 10% of arts education institutions offer specific scholarships or financial aid tailored for disabled students. (UCAS)

Lack of accessibility directly impacts disabled students in accessing education.

Access Fact:

Only 35–50% of theatres in the UK can be considered fully accessible.

The Statistics:

70% of theatres in the UK have wheelchair-accessible entrances, only 50% have accessible backstage areas...

- Accessible seating in UK theatres is fewer than 10% of the total seating capacity. (Attitude is Everything)
- 25% of theatres regularly offer captioned or audio-described performances. (ACE)
- About 75% of theatres have accessible toilets, but only 50% of these are fully compliant with modern accessibility standards. (DisabledGo)

Lack of accessibility directly impacts disabled audiences and creatives from accessing work and entertainment.

Your role in Flipping the Script

The Access Manifesto is our response—a beacon of change, developed by those directly impacted, to inspire and guide the arts sector towards a more inclusive future. We invite you to join us in embracing this new chapter for the arts.

Together, we can create a world where every young person, regardless of their abilities, can enjoy and participate in the arts.

Now it's up to you. Flip the script. Make the change.



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