Checklist for Diversity Balanced Events

Whether it is an international conference, local symposium, or internal workshop, fostering more diverse, inclusive and barrier-free encounters between researchers, co-workers, or students leads to high quality collaboration and (scientific) innovation. Careful planning is essential for attractive and effective events, where all participants can develop their full potential.

ETH Diversity encourages event organizers to consider the following practical aspects; with the goal that all participants feel more welcome, can work without hinderance, and are represented adequately.

The checklist at hand is not mandatory for events at ETH Zurich but offers a collection of recommendations. Some might be easy to implement, while others are more challenging, depending on the context, form of the event, location, and other factors. The aim is therefore not primarily to tick off all the points, but to reflect on various aspects and work out sensible measures.

The ETH Diversity team is readily available to discuss questions and offer further advice.

Event Topic and Diversity Policy

Define the **topic of your event** as broadly as possible to expand the pool of researchers and speakers who get involved.

Make your **organizing committee** diverse. Install a team that keeps an eye on aspects of diversity and accessibility. Contact points and persons are appointed in advance, so that participants can address needs, feedback, or complaints (e.g. sexual harassment, experience of racism) directly.

Create a **declaration** of non-discrimination and inclusion for your event. Make your diversity policy visible by placing an initial statement in the event announcements. Include guidelines, for example for inclusive language and accessible presentations.

► Consult the Respect Code of Conduct of ETH Zurich.

Use diverse representation in **images and inclusive language** when announcing and promoting the event.

► Recommendations from ETH Diversity on gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory language

Diversity Balance in Speakers

Determine which **topics and people / identities** (gender, race, age, academic position, etc.) you want represented at your event. Determine a number or percentage and invite speakers accordingly to meet your desired standards.

Go beyond the experts that immediately come to your mind to assure the desired diversity balance. Ask other researchers in the field, consult databases (see below), or search online and on social media.

Consider using a **blind review process** to minimize implicit bias when evaluating submissions.

Define clear **criteria to rank** applications, and determine how the final selection will be prioritized, for example by considering equally ranked submissions according to diversity characteristics.

Recommended Links:
Databases for Presenters

► P3 by the Swiss National Science Foundation
► AcademiaNet
► ResearchGate
► Queer Scientists
► npr Diverse Sources Database (USA)

Timing of Event

Fix and communicate the **time and date** of the event as early as possible. This allows for easier planning of care tasks, barrier-free travel and accommodation, and so on.

Try to plan events and sessions in accordance with the schedule of an **ordinary working day**, to facilitate the organization for people with care duties.

In the planning of your events consider major cultural or religious **holidays**.

Before the Event

Account for the **costs of accessibility** in your event budget (i.e. additional infrastructure, sign language interpreter, support for participants with fewer economic means...).

Inform speakers on how to make their **contributions** such as texts, presentations, or printed material **accessible** by providing literature or checklists. Offer practical support and a contact for their questions.

Inform participants and presenters early on about **accessibility of the location**. Do your presenters need barrier-free access or technical equipment?

Individual Support

What is your **event language**? Consider possibilities for translations or the inclusion of different languages. Are non-native speakers of the event language supported?

Offer **flexible participation fees** to ensure participation of people with less economic means. Provide information on possible fundings and consider financial support for travel expenses, i.e. for young researchers.

Additional helpful ETH Zurich Guides, Checklists and Links

► Guides for sustainable and inclusive events [the checklist at hand is intended as a supplement to the guides]

► Organising inclusive, accessible events

► E-Learning Unconscious Bias

► Gender-neutral and barrier free toilets

► Child Care Offers

► Organizing a Virtual Hub

Place of Event

Consider planning your **event in hybrid format** to ensure accessibility. For online formats include options to interact, such as chat function, virtual connection, and online tours of the site. Make sure that the online presence of the event is barrier-free (e.g., subtitles in video conference software).

Check whether the **venue is accessible** with public transport and the location of parking spots for people with disability.

Find appropriate and if needed barrier-free options for **accommodation** nearby. List suitable offers for people with different financial means.

Registration and Attendees

At registration, allow guests to share their **preferred pronouns** and what **name** they would like to be addressed by, should it differ from their legal name. Include the printing of pronouns on **name tags**, but always offer possibility to not state this information.

If it is necessary to ask about participants' **gender**: offer more than two options, the option to opt out, and state why you need the information.

▶ Get support by ETH Diversity for more information about pronouns.

Monitor the enrolments. Promote your event through **«unusual» channels** if the diversity balance of attendees is not in place (such as transdisciplinary mailing lists, social media pages).

At registration ask people with disabilities about any resources or means necessary to fulfill their needs. **Inform** speakers and participants about the possibility of requesting specific measures.

Check if participants are **accompanied by family or personal assistants** and what resources are needed. For events outside of usual working hours consider participants with care duties: offer **childcare** services and/or a family room for parents.

▶ Get support by the ETH service point Hello Kids!

Information Material

Ensure accessibility of information material, prints, and presentations. If possible, provide live streams and recordings of the event with subtitles and audio description. Offer alternative texts for images and transcriptions for audio files.

To increase the **legibility of printed matter**, sans serif fonts are used in a sufficiently large font size and at least 1.2 times the line spacing, as well as high contrast (pay attention to red-green visual impairment when choosing colors).

Make sure the **signage** for the event is accessible to people with visual disabilities and written in inclusive language , including genderneutral icons.

Inclusive and Barrier-Free Spaces

Check the **accessibility of the venue** and communicate information early on.

► Consult the checklist by ETH Zürich for more information on accessible technology, spaces, audio systems and so on.

Check if rooms, restroom facilities, buffets, exhibition booths, and speaker podiums are accessible for people with physical disabilities, and in addition to standing tables, seating is also available to allow people to interact at eye level.

Consider the need for reduced noise, **provide enough suitable rooms** for group discussions and offer the possibility to eat and rest in a quieter space. If possible, offer private rooms for prayer, childcare, and further needs.

Provide a plan for different **toilet facilities**; or check with the facility service if it is possible to re-lable facilities to be more inclusive for the duration of your event.

► Here you find an overview of gender-neutral and barrier free toilets at ETH Zürich.

Ask speakers and participants about **food restrictions** and, if necessary, identify critical ingredients. Relevant product information, such as vegetarian, vegan, allergens, kosher, or halal is provided directly with the food.

Accompanying Program

Some participants might struggle to sit still for an extended period of time. Consider offering **various seatings** or designated areas for standing where people can move around easily. **Active breaks** and other activities can help everyone to stay focused.

Plan social encounters and networking gatherings **mindfully**, so that people can get to know each other and not only mingle with peers, and social anxiety is reduced. If it makes sense, offer **networking slots** for certain groups, i.e., LGBTAIQ+ researchers, BIPoC students (Black, Indigenous, and other People of Colour), women leaders…

Consider accessibility for the **accompanying program**. Aim to plan it as accessible as possible and provide detailed information early on.

Local organizations and artists that promote inclusion and diversity are present in your accompanying program.

During the Event

Take measures to ensure an inclusive and respectful **discussion culture** (i.e., moderation, timekeeping, different modes of participation such as oral or written, inclusion of online participants).

Show attendees how to include their **pronouns in the video conference software** and encourage everyone to make this change if they feel comfortable doing so.

Get feedback, ask what could be improved about the event to be more accessible and inclusive. Reflect, collect practical experience, and share it with others.

For further questions or support contact the ETH Diversity Team

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