

Art Shanty Projects Access Plan 2022-2023

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INTRODUCTION Art Shanty Projects intentionally creates an impermanent art village on Minnesota lake ice amid a changing climate and environment. With a spirit of embracing challenges through creativity, we support an ecosystem that inspires everyone to create and participate in art, thrive in winter, and build community.

Art Shanty Projects embraces the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in our commitment to ensuring that all members of our community can participate as fully as possible in our arts events, programs, meetings, facilities and communications. Accessibility is built into the fabric of how we do art and what we expect from artists, board members, and contracted staff.

The Operations Director will serve as an Accessibility Coordinator, conduct an Accessibility Audit, and oversee updates to the Accessibility Policy. This policy will be vetted during the August Board Meeting and voted into effect on that date. We will evaluate and address gaps internally and host an accessibility training for board members and staff prior to each on-ice program.

POLICIES:

- This Access Plan will be reviewed annually by the Art Shanty Projects Board of Directors and Staff after completion of each On-Ice Program season. Iterations of this living document will be used as an evolving tool and process to guide the organization towards continued improvements for greater access. Our organization will seek consultation from key resources, such as the Minnesota Council on Disability, and local access consultants for information regarding specific accessibility resources, publications and/or access guides and surveys.
- New board and staff members will be provided a copy of the Access Plan as part of the Board Manual used for orientation, training, and reference.
- Understanding that accessibility is an integral part of what we do, Art Shanty Projects will integrate funding for Accessibility resources into its annual budget. Funding will be earmarked for items such as: professional sign language interpreters, audio description, website formatting for accessibility features, signage, restrooms, and ramps for the

On-Ice Event.

ON-ICE EVENT ACCESSIBILITY

The On-Ice Program occurs on the frozen surface of a Minnesota lake which is not an inherently accessible space. The lake provides both barriers and unique opportunities to find creative, site-specific accessibility solutions. Given our interdisciplinary approach, we have more flexibility and opportunity to adjust and welcome different ways of presenting and accessing art.

Current Status

- In 2022 the artist manual was updated to include clear design expectations and instruction regarding accessible design. A checklist tool was developed to assist ASP staff in ensuring artists are building shanties that are accessible. The Artistic Director and Production Team utilize this tool when conducting site visits with artists to ensure design expectations and accessible design elements are incorporated. The efficacy of these resources has only been partially evaluated due to the pandemic and the exterior-only shanties.
- ASP budgets to rent two ramps annually to take visitors from the shore to the surface of the lake. (Ensure the incline ratio is 12:1.) Art Shanty Projects provides accessible bathrooms, accessible parking, and a path to the entrance and around the village that is clear, accessible, and navigable. Path from accessible parking spaces to the ramp entrance needs improvement.
- In FY2022 we improved on our information gathering process from artists about the sensory experience of shanties and performances. This information was integrated into maps, mailbox didactics, web, and handouts for visitors.
- Art Shanty Projects is committed to ensuring that Deaf and/or Blind participants can enjoy our event. We schedule daily interpretation by professional Sign Language interpreters and Audio Describers. In 2022, a production team member provided training and an orientation to these consultants and then collected post-program surveys from them. Likely due to the pandemic, we had fewer visitors request these services.
- Most of our village signage follows ADA recommendations for 18+ point sans serif fonts, high contrast. We updated the format of our village map (from lasercut to printed on vinyl) for legibility. We did not find a solution for updating our survey board questions.
- During the 2020 On-Ice season an accessibility consultant provided on-site evaluation and feedback about overall village design, specific shanty design, and printed materials. Following the 2022 season, we interviewed an artist/participant for feedback on their experience.
- We built 4 kicksleds in 2021 to add to our fleet with grant funding to be used in our 2022 program. Our current fleet includes 3 kicksleds with arms, 2 kicksleds without arms, and 1 wheelchair accessible kicksled. Kicksleds were well used during 2022 season, and required better assembly to hold up to the frequent use.
- We collected dietary information from all artists, volunteers, board and staff members to accommodate accessible snacks and lunches. Staff contracted with food trucks who

served a variety of food that supported different dietary considerations.

- We included an accessibility question in the open call that prospective artists had to respond to.
- Surveys from participants, artists, performers, and volunteers indicated a significant number of people identify as neurodivergent (ie 22% of surveyed visitors, 24% of volunteers), though our current plan does not include considerations or accommodations specific to those who identify as neurodivergent.

Goal:

- All shanties will provide opportunities for engagement by people with varying access needs.
- We will provide participants with information about accessibility considerations for each project through the website and project signage.
- Art Shanty Projects will provide artists with explicit guidance, best practices and resources based on ADA guidelines.
- Provide accessible pathways between parking spaces and the ramp to the village.
- Increase the variety of supports available to navigate through the village.
 - **Continuing Steps:**
 - *2022-2023:* continue to test out the artist implementation of best practices; do research to learn how to intentionally better serve those who identify as neurodivergent. Some possible ways research could be used: to better prepare artists (in terms of engagement) or for communications (accessibility notes on didactic materials).
 - *After artist selection (late summer/fall 2022):* Provide manual with updated information about accessibility best practices and expectations.
 - *Fall 2022:* Engage Marian Lucas (2022 artist who is deaf) to help with PR and outreach to deaf and blind communities/audiences.
 - *During build visits (November 2022 -January 2023):* Check in about shanty accessibility and provide additional feedback and support as needed.
 - *January 2023:* Project didactics include short descriptions of each shanty and accessibility notes as needed (eg door width, full dark immersion, sensory elements). Update shanty descriptions on the website with accessibility information. (Collect information in advance, clarify during installation weekend)
 - *January 2023:* Explore and test solutions for improving the route between accessible parking spaces and the ramp, including wayfinding.
 - *February-March 2023:* Use post program surveys to gather information about how we can improve support in 2024. Budget for new initiatives or shortfalls for next program year.
 - Test out a variety of implements, including walkers, hiking sticks, traction cleats, etc, and assess their usefulness.
 - **Longer term (beyond 2023) goal:** Continue learning and explore new ideas based on feedback.

Goal: All village signage is high contrast, large enough to read, and at a height that can be read by people of all heights.

- **Next Steps:**

- *November 2022:* Find a more accessible solution for the survey wall signage.
- *November 2022:* Add access symbols to indicate where to meet/find ASL interpreters and Audio Describers; incorporate access symbols in other places.
- *December 2022:* Continue to print signage for village utilizing sans serif font at least 18-point, with high contrast

What the event looks like when this work is done well:

- There are two ramps (12:1 incline) from shore to the surface of the lake, accessible bathrooms, accessible parking, accessible paths from parking to ramp, and a path to the entrance and around the village that is clear, accessible, and navigable. Our budget includes provisions to build these into the infrastructure of the On-Ice Event.
- ASL interpretation and audio describers are available every day we are open to the public and participants can find where to meet them.
- The open call provides explicit expectations, and the artist manual provides best practice guidance about ramps, door widths, and other barriers to accessibility and ADA guidelines. Artists get support and feedback throughout the build process so they have the tools they need to build accessible shanties. Artists respect the spirit of these guidelines and make their best effort to create accessible projects.
- Artists get feedback and guidance from staff, with ample time to make adjustments to their projects.
- People with varying access needs actively participate in the program.
- People who want more information both in advance and at the program can find it!

OFF ICE EVENTS ACCESSIBILITY:

Current Status:

- We host a limited number of off-site special events for artists, members, and the public at business locations already required to comply with ADA.
- Board meetings take place remotely (over Zoom or similar).
- Currently all artist meetings are remote, held on Zoom or at artist build spaces. While remote meetings are not ideal for everyone, we embrace the ways remote meetings can increase accessibility for many in our community.

Goal: Accommodate access needs at virtual meetings.

- **Next Steps:**

- *September:* Find out what access needs are not being accommodated at virtual meetings, and what access needs will need to be supported at in person meetings.

- *Ongoing*: Research how to support any needs, fulfill them as possible

COMMUNICATIONS ACCESSIBILITY:

Current Status:

- Most internal and external communications currently involve in-person meetings, virtual meetings, telephone, e-mail, website, and social media. We provide notification of external meetings, programs and other opportunities at least two weeks prior to the announced activity through email, website, social media, or other relevant channels.
- All images posted to social media, website, or used in newsletters include alt text following guidance from the [alt text styleguide](#). This style guide has been developed, is followed by staff (who wrote it) and is being tested by board members. Adding alt text to past images on our website is in progress.
- Website (artshantyprojects.org) was audited for accessibility and was updated in 2021 to follow standards detailed in the [ASP Web Accessibility Guide](#).

Goal:

- Prepare ourselves for accommodating people who are blind or low-vision during virtual meetings.
- Art Shanty Projects will offer live captions during virtual meetings. If we return to in-person meetings we will notify artists that an ASL interpreter can be provided upon request (with at least one week notice before the event) and we will take on the labor and costs for providing this.
- To determine how to best communicate on-ice written information (ex. Project didactics) with blind and low-vision visitors.
- Accessibility info is easy to find on the web site and includes Accessibility Coordinator name and phone number.
- **Next Steps:**
 - *September 2022 / ongoing*: Facilitators of virtual meetings will practice giving visual descriptions of themselves during introductions. We will remind participants to speak clearly and to identify themselves when necessary so that all can hear, know who is speaking, and participate. *October 2022 & March 2023*: Update list of interpreters for on-ice program including rates and preferred contact.
 - *Fall 2022*: Research and develop a list of resources and options for future materials in accessible formats including large print, Braille, etc. (consider logistics, costs, who does it). Note: consult with attendees if possible.
 - *January 2023*: Update accessibility info (and website placement?) in the Accessibility, Visit, and Artist sections.
 - *April 2022*: Determine what of these resources and costs to include in the 2023 budget. Add the cost of live caption services if we are to continue virtual

meetings.

When this work is done well, the organization looks like: Staff is confident, knowledgeable and prepared to support PWD in virtual meetings, understands best practices for communicating on-ice written information, and ready to provide services upon request at any time.

ENGAGING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:

Current Status:

- Individuals with disabilities comprise a small percentage of our artists (~3% of 2022 artists identified as people with disabilities in a voluntary, anonymous survey), audience (14%), and other stakeholders.
- There is not currently an outreach strategy for reaching members of disability communities during our call for artists.
- Outreach efforts to audiences in disability communities in advance of the On Ice Event include posting our events to Minnesota's Accessible Activities Calendar and sending notices to organizations that serve people with disabilities.
- We provide detailed accessibility information on our website.
- Soliciting feedback about accessibility from artists, volunteers, and audience members with disabilities is collected as part of our anonymous post-ice audience survey. We conducted an interview with a 2022 Shanty artist who is deaf to collect feedback and insights.
- The On-Ice Program is free admission for everyone in order to encourage attendance. We publicize this policy in our publications, news releases, website, social media, and other correspondence.

Goal: Present projects by artists with disabilities in the on-ice program.

● **Next Steps:**

- *Ongoing:* Identify barriers in artist call, artist events, and on ice events.
- *Summer 2022-On Ice 2023:* Begin building relationships with arts groups that already center people with disabilities. Learn about their artistic practice, invite them to visit the 2023 on-ice event.
 - *Summer 2022:* Identify those groups that we might want to partner with. (arts groups that center people with disabilities, possibly also schools, faith-based organizations, other community groups). Possibly look into MSS, Avivo, or Interact—art and art-making orgs that serve people with disabilities.
 - *Summer-November 2022:* Reach out to groups to evaluate interest.
 - *November 2022- January 2023:* Set up times for interested groups to visit the event. ASP staff and/or board will greet and welcome visitors.
 - *February-April 2023:* Follow up with primary contact(s) about how the visit to the on ice event went and:
 - Evaluate interest in future engagement

- Collectively identify barriers to successful and enjoyable participation. (And figure out how ASP can support future participation).
- *2024 and beyond*: Deepen engagement with organizations/ groups/ artists that visited in 2023. Reach out to additional organizations/groups/artists.
- *April 2023*: Based on feedback and interest, evaluate our capacity and resources to allocate funds for outreach to artists with disabilities and funds to address barriers as identified by participating artists for future programs.

Goal: To attract and serve people with disabilities in leadership roles (staff, board, volunteers, jury)

- **Next Steps:**
 - *February - March 2023*: Get meaningful feedback from people with disabilities who are already actively engaged in ASP.
 - *2023 and beyond*: Internally assess our capacity to work alongside and provide services and accommodations for people with disabilities in these various roles.
 - *2023 and beyond*: Using the artist plan as a model, adapt strategies for each of these individual groups.
 - Develop a strategic plan for outreach, feedback, and long-term engagement with people with disabilities as audience, board, staff, and volunteers.

When this work is done well, our organization looks like: people are engaging as part of project teams, and as leads of project teams. People with disabilities are creating art as part of ASP that is meaningful and exciting to them. People with disabilities are supported as decision makers and artists, and impact the direction of ASP.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING:

Current Status:

- There is regular significant annual board and staff turnover, necessitating ongoing annual training.
- Our mission/vision/guiding principles were updated in Spring 2021. Accessibility was integrated into our vision and values at this time.
- We have an updated grievance policy that includes accessibility.
- One of our production team members made a significant contribution to our accessibility work, promoting and furthering our initiatives. This staff member is not returning next year.
- The Grievance policy is difficult to find on our website.

Goal: Our community knows about the grievance policy and how to easily access it. As an organization, we are prepared to respond to accessibility-related grievances.

- **Next Steps:**

- *August 2022*: Board and staff review grievance policy and avenues of feedback (email, social media, surveys, in person complaints/comments, incident report forms, etc)
- *September 2022*: Post updated grievance policy clearly and prominently on our website in both the feedback and accessibility sections, and anywhere else as appropriate.
- *Fall 2022*: Elaborate on the actionable steps to take for an accessibility-related grievance.

Goal: Provide ongoing accessibility training and onboarding for board and staff. Everyone integrates accessibility in the work that they do.

- **Next Steps:**

- *Summer 2022*: when hiring seasonal production staff, ensure that there are candidates interested in and/or knowledgeable about accessibility and the arts.
- *Fall 2022*: Set up accessibility training for all staff and board. Training should reinforce that accessibility is a priority and also help board and staff understand their roles in activating the plan.
 - Identify if staff is capable of facilitating this training. If not, discuss funding options with the EC to hire a professional facilitator.
- *Spring 2022*: Add annual training to the budget.

When this work is done successfully: Art Shanty Projects board and staff have a common understanding of what accessibility looks like for our organization, and members are prepared to activate the plan. Our organization is welcoming of criticism and grateful for the invitation to better meet the needs of our community. We are prepared to handle any grievances.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

See [Art Shanty Projects Grievance Policy](#) for steps for resolving grievances.