

# Best Practices Exchange (BPE) Un-Conference

## Speaker Accessibility Recommendations and Guidelines

The following recommendations and guidelines are provided to assist speakers with their presentation for the year's BPE Un-Conference. All speakers and presenters should assume that the audience will include attendees with different vision, hearing, and cognitive conditions. Incorporating the below recommendations will ensure a better conference experience for all participants.

### Presentations and printed materials

- Ensure your presentation is accessible (whether PowerPoint, Google Slides, or PDF)
- Verbally describe visual materials to the audience such as slides, charts, etc., for guests in the audience who may have low vision
- Videos used during the presentation should be captioned in advance for guests who may be deaf or hard of hearing
- Post printed materials electronically, if possible, for reference after the event

### Create an accessible presentation

- Use a sans serif font (i.e., Arial or Calibri)
- Use a large font size – at least 22 point
- Use a good color contrast – a dark font on a light (non-bright white) background is most effective, and avoid red-green or yellow-blue combinations as contrasting colors
- Provide alternative text descriptions for all images, pictures, graphics, tables, etc.
- Use short bullet points; if there is too much text on a slide, edit the text or create an additional slide
- Use simple language and avoid or explain jargon, acronyms, and idioms
- Text on a slide should have nothing behind it that obstructs viewing (no watermarks or images)
- Avoid GIFs whenever possible – if necessary to your presentation, make sure it is a GIF that can be paused

## Key concepts for accessible documents and presentations

1. **Accessibility Check:** Use available Accessibility Tools to run an accessibility check of the document as you work.
2. **Document Metadata:** Add metadata to your file to clearly identify it to your audience. Give the file a clear title and file name and identify the language of the document.
3. **Write Unique and Descriptive Slides Titles:** Slide titles provide an outline and improve navigation making your document more accessible. Each slide should have a unique title; for slides that may be on the same topic, try something like “Goals 1 of 3, Goals 2 of 3,” etc.
4. **Format Text for Legibility:** Format your text so that it is easier for your audience to read. Consider using a sans serif font, setting line spacing to 1.5, keeping text left-aligned, when possible, to allow users to easily identify new lines, and keep font at a standard size or larger.
5. **Write Descriptive Links:** Write link text so that it is unique, descriptive, and clear about where the link goes. Use URL shorteners (such as tinyurl.com or bit.ly) to create more easily readable URLs.
6. **Alt Text:** Ensure meaningful images have alternative text and decorative images are marked as “decorative,” if possible. Keep it short and descriptive, like a tweet. *Don't* include “image of” or “photo of”.
7. **Color:** Choose colors that provide adequate contrast and don't rely on color alone to convey meaning.

## Links to online resources

- Color contrast checkers -
  - [WebAIM Contrasting Checker](#)
  - [Contrast Checker](#)
- Microsoft Accessibility feature in PowerPoint –
  - [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities](#)
  - [Improve accessibility with Accessibility Checker](#)
- Google Accessibility features –
  - [Make your document, presentation, and sheets more accessible](#)
- General guidance –
  - [DLF – Creating Accessible Presentations](#)
  - [User Experience – Make Your Presentations Accessible: Seven Easy Steps](#)
  - [W3C – Making Events Accessible](#)

Guidelines and online resources borrowed from the [Research Data Access and Preservation \(RDAP\) Association's Speaker Accessibility Guide](#), [Harvard University Disability Resources \(UDR\)](#), and the [National Center for Accessible Media at GBH](#).