

UNIVERSAL DESIGN TOOLBOX ÅBEN FESTIVAL

QUICK GUIDE

Consider accessibility from the start

Location

Access conditions (underground, stairs, ramps), toilet facilities, parking options, transport options, etc.

Communication and information

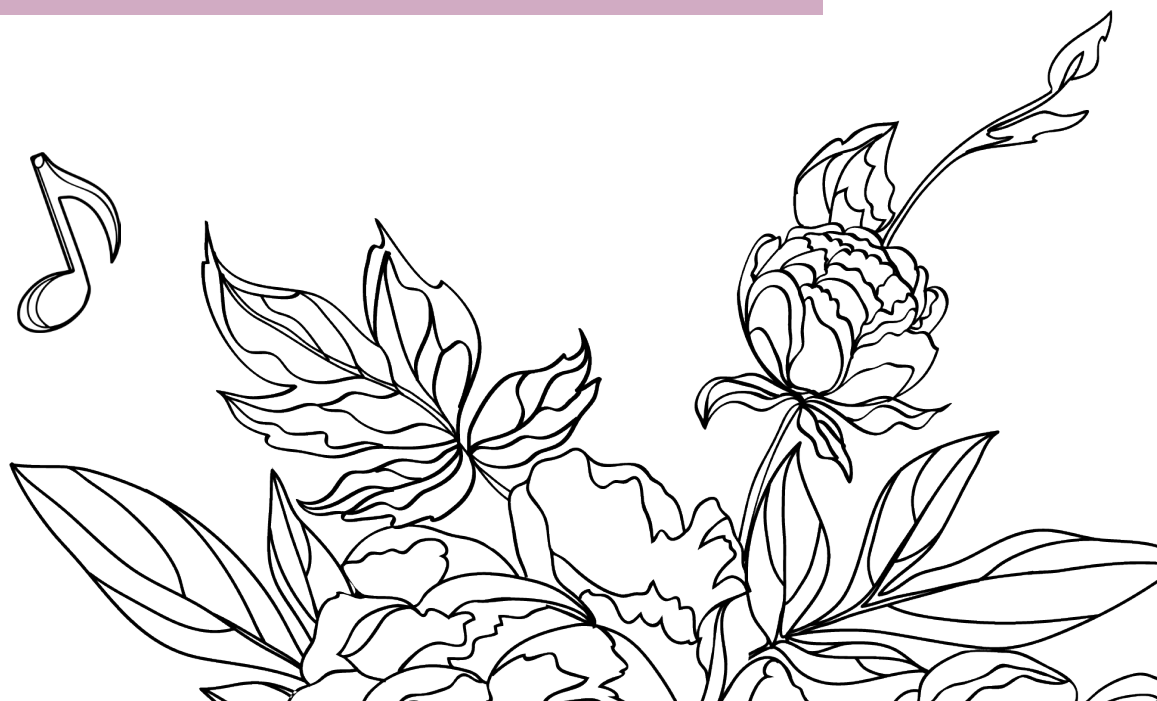
Clear communication and information about the availability before, during and after the event that targets different senses, in the form of e.g. text, video, sound, etc.

Spatial design

Quiet zones and the option of a break, wayfinding (signs, icons, color codes), sensory overview of exits, etc.

Attitude

Acceptance, openness, kindness, seeing difference as strength, etc.



Starting point for this guide is the premise that all guests and volunteers at Åben Festival can thrive, have a good experience and participate in the festival as they are. It is part of the Kulturdistriktet's and Åben Festival's DNA that everyone is welcome and feels welcome. For some people, there are challenges associated with participating in events because they encounter barriers that prevent participation. As organizers and hosts, we will do our best to lower these barriers - through a joint effort based on universal design thinking.

WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN?

The purpose is to design the space, the activity or the community so that everyone can participate on an equal footing, and without special measures or adaptations having to be made. The starting point is the basic condition that people are different, and by embracing diversity, create solutions that meet the greatest possible number of needs. Stop by the [Universal Design Hub](#) and learn more about what universal design is. The hub is a research unit established by our partner Bevica Fond.



The guidance is particularly focused on people who face special challenges due to one or more of the following:

Movement

e.g. difficulty walking, pain, problems with balance, using a wheelchair

Senses

e.g. vision, hearing

The cognitive

e.g. difficulty planning/finding your way/remembering; mental fatigue, dyslexia

The psychological

e.g. anxiety, sensitivity to noise, insecurity at not being able to get away





HELP CREATE ACCESS

Clear and detailed communication about access conditions will not only help the audience to find their way to the event. It will also be a helping hand to those who, for one reason or another, are challenged to participate. Therefore, it is a good idea to communicate in advance how the location is set up so that people can assess whether they are physically able to participate.

For example, you can improve accessibility by informing about:

- Ramps on site**
- Substrate and possibly level difference on site**
- Lighting conditions**
- Possibly podiums at stages**
- Parking options**
- Toilet conditions**



Logical access and escape routes, the use of clear signage, or colour codes make it easy to create an overview and find your way around the site.

OFFER YOUR HELP

In general, openness should be encouraged so that all participants feel safe to talk about their difficulties in case they need help. People usually have a lot of knowledge about their own functional abilities.

Therefore, ask the person yourself and be careful with your own prejudices about the person's needs.

- Talk directly to people - not just their friends or helpers.**
- Don't help without asking first.**
- Assume that people can take care of themselves.**
- It is ok to say no if people make unreasonable demands.**



CREATE A CALM AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Everyone can experience the need for a breather, to take a break from the festival and to create distance from a larger crowd. The risk of feeling psychologically and mentally overwhelmed is reduced when the physical conditions of the event are easy to understand, and the attitude reflects helpfulness, openness and responsiveness to different needs.

Therefore, it is important to consider these needs when planning the event, for example by arranging areas:

Which are calm

Which are smoke-free

Where the least possible activity takes place



Ideally, the participants - regardless of where they are - have the opportunity to withdraw, to leave and the opportunity to find help.

MAKE ROOM FOR DIVERSITY

Although it can be difficult to consider everyone's needs in the organization of Åben Festival, the ambition is to create a culture where you can be open about your difficulties and where you help each other to meet different needs. How to create a framework for a good meeting between people who are different?

You can for instance pay attention to the following qualities:

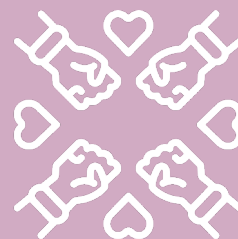
Friendliness, openness, kindness

Mutual acceptance, curiosity about the other, open-mindedness

See diversity as a strength

Have expectations that everyone does the best they can

Openness about the fact that not everyone's needs can be met everywhere



CHECKLIST

In order to give participants a better opportunity to plan their visit, the organizer can provide information about the specific conditions on site, such as:

- ☐ **Lift / ramp / barrier-free entrance**
- ☐ **Disabled toilet in the building or disabled toilet within 200 meters of the building**
- ☐ **Disabled parking**
- ☐ **Free entry for companion**
- ☐ **Possibility to eat / drink on site**
- ☐ **Chairs / benches to rest on**
- ☐ **Possibility of alternative participation (e.g. podcast, video streaming etc.)**

It is also a good idea to provide contact information so that guests can contact the organizer if they have questions about the accessibility of an event.

