

Meeting the Needs of All

Your explorer's guide to accessibility.

This guide was created by Disabled, d/Deaf and neurodivergent accessibility experts from the **Universal Recognition** movement in partnership with **Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL)**.

Together we are passionate about making the world more accessible for everyone, including at Global Donut Day 2023.

This guide is made up of two parts. This is part 2 'Meeting the Needs of All at Your Global Donut Day - Practical Tips.

We recommend reading this part after reading part 1.

Using the guide this order will be useful if you are feeling uncertain about what accessibility is and where to begin.

Guide Part 1: The 7 Benefits of Accessibility for Everyone

In this section we offer **7 reasons** to get **excited** about **making Doughnut Economics accessible**.

There is also a detailed break-down of what accessibility is.

Part 2: Meeting the Needs of All at Your Global Donut Day - Practical Tips.

In this section we'll **help you explore practical tips** for **making** your **Global Donut Day** more **accessible**.

Contents

Meeting the Needs of All at Your Global Donut Day 4

Practical Tips 4

Relationships with ourselves and others 5

Relationships of trust 5

Viewing Marginalized People as Experts 7

Diversity & Professional Expertise 8

Intersectionality 9

Places & People 11

Exclusion & Marginalisation 12

Tough Topics & Experiences 13

Brave spaces 15

Access to wellbeing & joy 16

Schedules 18

Access Information Upfront 19

Getting it right first time 20

Learning is key to accessibility long term 22

Speaking of the Future 22

Communication 23

Sharing information (written, spoken, visual etc) 23

Respect & paying attention 25

Non verbal communication 25

Benefiting everyone's communication 26

Further Reading & Resources Communication 26

Organization and Resources 27

Online Events 27
In person events 30
A thought on the Built Environment 31
Invest in accessibility 31

Let's Learn by 'Our' Experience 32

d/Deaf 32
Hard of hearing 32
Blind 33
Vision impaired 34
Neurodivergent 34
Physically disabled & wheelchair users 34
Invisibly disabled & chronically ill 35
A mix of experiences 36
Our biggest top tip 37
Intrusive questions 38

Summary of our practical accessibility tips 39

Over to you to continue this work 39

Doughnut Economics ideas in easier words 40

Doughnut Economics 40
Sustainability 40
Social Foundation 40
Ecological Ceiling 40

Meeting the Needs of All at Your Global Donut Day

Practical Tips

Welcome to the **practical tips** part of the guide. In this part of the **toolkit** you will find **actionable** ways to **improve accessibility** for your **Global Donut Day** festivals!

We know that accessibility can be a complex and daunting topic, especially for those who are new to it. These tips offer a starting point for communities and local organizers hoping to make their events more inclusive.

We haven't tried to include every single thing you could ever need to know about accessibility. This would be a near impossible task and likely be a bit overwhelming! Instead, we've focused on providing some handy tips and resources to help you get started. We believe that everyone has a role to play in creating more inclusive spaces, and we hope this guide will help you make your first move.

We understand that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to accessibility. What works for one disabled person may not work for another. That's why we encourage you to be flexible and respectful of individual needs. Working with these **tools** can help **everyone** to explore and take part in **Doughnut Economics** events **together**.

We hope this guide will give you the confidence to champion inclusion at your Global Donut Day festival and beyond!

Our Relationships (including with ourselves)

The first topic we invite you to explore is the importance of relationships in accessibility. Are you and your community aware of your own needs and the needs of those around you?

Accessibility is not just about physical barriers. It is also about social and cultural barriers. By being mindful of our own assumptions and identifying our biases, we can create more welcoming and inclusive relationships.

Accessibility is not just about making things easier for disabled people. It is about creating a more just and equitable society for everyone. When we make our projects more accessible, whole communities will benefit. Everyone can take part in things together.

Join us in creating a more accessible Global Donut Day (GDD). By working together, we can build resilient relationships that nurture accessibility for all.

In this section we will share some ideas that came up around relationships and accessibility in our workshops. We'd love you to explore them within your own working groups and communities too.

Relationships of trust

The biggest thing that came up in our workshops was the need to ensure everyone was taking the time to really understand one another and build relationships of trust. This even included us thinking about you, the GDD local organizers, and your needs.

“The accessibility guide should be created in lots of different formats. We don’t know who the local organizers are - they may have differing access needs themselves!” said one expert.

We shared difficult stories of people being left out of events, activities, and decision-making processes. We also shared visions of a future where everyone is included and has the opportunity to flourish.

We noticed how even within a particular community, what we needed in terms of access differed slightly. We also found that we were often waiting for others to advocate for us.

"If I were to go into the future to change things for the better, I would actually go back to basics, to when we really listen to one another, to caring for each other," said another accessibility advisor.

Our greatest moments of accessibility and joy came when our families, communities, or public events had taken the time to authentically include us. These were not big gestures, but rather small ways that made us feel valued and included.

"I went to a friend's wedding and afterwards they sent me a card in braille. It was very thoughtful," said another consultant.

We hope this guide offers ways that might make it easier for us to care for and listen to one another. To build those trusted relationships and shared understanding. It takes time and energy to do, but it also makes the world of difference.

Viewing Marginalized People as Experts

As explored in our 7 Benefits of Accessibility, Disabled and marginalized people are the most knowledgeable when it comes to the barriers we face and our circumstances. We have a great deal to offer when it comes to advice and ideas for how to improve accessibility. We will not improve access if our communities are not given opportunities to take part or be heard.

Practical opportunities to get people involved:

- Seek out your experts. Who is marginalized in your area? Are there any advocacy groups led by those communities? Do you know any disabled accessibility consultants? Are there marginalized people already organizing in your area?
- Create opportunities so disabled and marginalized people can take part in the design and planning of Global Donut Day events. This will help to ensure that accessibility is considered from the start.
- Provide disabled and marginalized people with decision-making power over decisions that affect them. This could be done by creating advisory boards or giving them voting rights in decision-making processes.
- Value disabled and marginalized people as decision-makers within event design. This means listening to their ideas and expertise, and giving them credit for their contributions.

Top tip

Your experts are those already living within your communities. They know the barriers and possibilities for change better than anyone. We can all play a role in creating more accessible opportunities for disabled and marginalized people.

Resources created by us:

Please find Umaymah from Disability Living's thoughts and video on Disabled people's expertise in the workplace [here](#).

By listening to our views and championing our ideas, we can create a more equitable approach.

Diversity & Professional Expertise

Amongst our team of disabled accessibility experts were:

Actors . Artists . Writers . Directors . Designers . Researchers . Event organizers .
Disability advocates . Healthcare professionals . Podcast hosts . Presenters
Community-development officers . **Accessibility consultants**

As our workshop teams prove, marginalized people can be professional experts, creatives, and experts in particular fields and industries. When hiring services or seeking professional advice for your Global Donut Day festivals, seek out opportunities to hire and work with marginalized professionals.

Practical tips for creating better equity when hiring:

- Branch out and recruit disabled and marginalized people for organizational roles.
- Offer professional roles to those who also have lived experience of marginalization.
- Hire disabled and marginalized-owned services.
- Expect that disabled people may not have the same level of experience as non-disabled people.
- Disrupt the cycle of exclusion by creating accessible professional opportunities.

Benefits of hiring marginalized professionals:

- Our perspectives and expertise will be an asset to your team.
- You will gain a deeper understanding of accessibility and inclusion.
- You will help to progress social change.

Call to action

As event organizers for GDD, we have an opportunity to change things for the better for everyone. Let's start by hiring more marginalized professionals.

Resources created by us:

Please read these two LinkedIn posts by Accessibility Consultant Calum Grever's where he discusses disabled people's opportunities within employment in the UK:

[Job Opportunities & Expertise](#)
[Disabled Knowledge as an Asset](#)

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the idea that people's identities are made up of multiple layers that intersect, creating unique experiences and perspectives.

In the context of disability and accessibility, intersectionality helps us understand the complex ways in which people experience barriers. For example, a Black disabled woman may face barriers in accessing healthcare, employment, and education due to her race, gender, and disability.

- Black disabled women are often burdened with caregiving tasks and are more likely to experience poor care in healthcare settings. This limits their time and energy for rest and activities that enable them to flourish.
- Gender norms and roles can make it harder for disabled people to do things. Men might be expected to suppress their needs in order to be viewed as strong. Women might be expected to suppress their needs in order to care for others.
- Black disabled people and people from global majorities may face additional barriers due to racism and colonialism. They may not be able to access good healthcare or safe work where they live.

Importance

Intersectionality helps us understand the complex ways in which people experience barriers.

Action

Listen to the voices of people with lived experience of intersectionality to create a more accessible and just world.

“It is not just disabled people affected [by inaccessibility] There is a word [Sahera finger spells the word ‘intersectional’ as it is a new word to her in BSL]. It means everyone is thought of with all their different experiences together”

Sahera Khan,

Accessibility Advisor | Actor & Artist | Deaf British Sign Language User

“Recognising people's intersections is crucial because it acknowledges the unique experiences and challenges people face due to the overlapping aspects of their identity. As a Black woman with MS, it's important to understand how these intersecting factors shape mine and other's experiences. Building our understanding allows everyone to create more inclusivity and be empathetic to people's journeys.

By recognising and valuing intersectionality, we can work towards creating a more equitable and inclusive society for all”.

Terri Louise

Founder of Talks with MS | Multiple Sclerosis Advocate | Author

Follow this link to find out more about Terri's charity [Talks with MS](#)

Places & People

The GDD community surveyed people around the world about marginalization. While there were similarities in marginalization regardless of location (for example, related to a disability such as being blind) location also had an impact. People were also marginalized due to societal attitudes, cultural understandings, and available resources specific to their locality.

Places shape people's access to safe housing, education, healthcare, and citizenship.

We encourage you to seek out experts with lived experience of marginalization in your location. This will help you better understand people's needs and identify what access might be needed at your event.

Consider the following questions:

We encourage you to think about these questions to gain a better understanding of who is represented within your active community and who isn't yet. Asking these questions will help you involve people over time who are not yet involved. This will help your communities be more equitable in the long term. We don't expect you to fix larger systemic complex problems of exclusion or marginalization in the short term or in isolation. This guidance is about where we can start and how we can continue to ask important questions.

- How are disabled people thought of in your locality?
- What rights do disabled people have in your region?
- What resources are available to organizers in your area?
- What is the indigenous sign language in your place?
- Are there any other marginalized languages spoken in your region?
- Are there indigenous communities in your area? What land practices do they advocate for?
- Does everyone have equitable access to land, housing and resources?
- Do the rights of different groups of people differ in your locality?
- Have any communities experienced historic or current oppression in your region?
- Are there any unsafe or polluted environments in your locality where people live?
- Are any locations or groups of people lacking in infrastructure?
- What particular accessibility provisions might be needed in your region?

Top tips

- Invite underrepresented groups to join your team.
- Bring together diverse groups with care, generosity, and a willingness to learn.
- Encourage gentle, generous, and thoughtful ideas to improve accessibility.
- Share event resources more evenly.
- Consider setting up venues in remote locations or in ways that are accessible to people from these areas.

Importance

By improving accessibility, you can improve equality and inclusion at your event and beyond.

Exclusion & Marginalisation

Marginalized means being pushed to the edges of society and unable to participate fully in a thriving and flourishing life.

Exclusion is an action that we can inflict on other people, either on purpose or by accident, which means that they end up marginalized.

Marginalized people are the people least likely to find themselves in decision-making rooms. This makes it even harder for them to overcome the barriers that prevent them from living well and participating in how we produce and provide for one another (the economy) in safe and just ways. It prevents them from accessing the inner ring of the doughnut. This is what we collectively want to change.

How can you help?

- Be aware of your own biases and how they might be contributing to the marginalization of others.
- Challenge your own assumptions about who belongs and who doesn't.
- Be open to learning about the experiences of marginalized people.
- Listen to marginalized voices and amplify them.
- Encourage and empower marginalized people.
- Be an advocate for inclusion in your own community.

Importance

By taking these steps, you can help to create more inclusive events and communities where no one gets pushed to the edge and everyone has accessible opportunities to live well.

Tough Topics & Experiences

Those most affected by the issues discussed at Global Donut Day may be present at events. It is important to remember this and avoid "othering" people within the event organization or coverage.

In [Global Majority](#) (racialized or minoritised ethnic people who actually make up the global majority) communities, people are already living the effects of climate and ecological crises. One in five people worldwide face disabling barriers on a daily basis.

We must expect marginalized people to be in the room and talking alongside us when we create and present our events. We must consider that some of us will be living the difficult experiences we discuss, and that those societal and environmental issues might be personal.

Some things to think about when creating topics:

Who is leading the discussion?

- Ensure that people from communities affected by the topics being discussed are involved in creating the event.
- Avoid asking for free education from marginalized communities. Instead, seek out advocacy organizations and consultants with lived experience.

Looking after your body and mind.

- Be mindful of the emotional toll that working on difficult topics can take.
- Ask for support from your communities and avoid burning yourself out.

Seeking professional and informed advice.

- Consult with organizations and professionals who have experience with trauma-informed care.
- Get help creating a safe and supportive space for everyone.

Providing trigger or content warnings.

- Inform your audience if any traumatic topics will be covered.
- Letting people know the content of your event is good practice in general.

Creating resilient spaces that can accommodate strong emotions.

- Allow space for people to express their emotions freely.
- Safe spaces are also brave spaces.

Ensuring there is no room for discrimination.

- Have a zero tolerance policy on hate speech or discrimination.
- Utilize your code of conduct to ensure spaces do not violate people's human rights.

Creating aftercare.

- Signpost those affected to professional organizations and advocacy groups where they can get support.
- Have this information ready in advance.

Brave spaces

We often talk about safe spaces when it comes to exploring experiences and difficult events relating to our identity. Trying to create safety is important, but safety is complex and personal to us as individuals. What we need are [brave spaces](#) where we can feel confident enough to express ourselves fully.

If you have existed for a long time in a world that was not designed with you in mind, it can take a lot of courage to speak up. It can be even harder to speak up if your communication and access needs are not met.

The stories we shared in our workshops made it clear that:

- Accessibility barriers have prevented talented people from sharing their ideas.
- Fear of rejection has silenced creative people.
- Defensiveness has discouraged people from sharing their experiences.
- Discomfort has silenced passionate voices.

As understanding of diverse needs and accessibility grows, we create spaces that are both safe and empowering for expressing and championing needs.

Things to think about when creating brave spaces

- Is it the responsibility of someone who has been marginalized to be resilient in the face of that exclusion? Or is it the responsibility of those around them who have a bit more power to take a step back, not feel threatened, and be more resilient?
- If you want people to express themselves, do you create spaces where they feel safe to do so?
- Do you listen without judgment?
- Do you believe what people tell you?
- Do you amplify their voices?

Importance

Brave spaces are not just about being polite or inclusive. They are about being courageous enough to hear the truth, even when it is uncomfortable. They are about being willing to learn and grow. When we commit to creating brave spaces we start to create a world where everyone has a more equal opportunity to thrive.

Access to wellbeing & joy

Our access to well-being and joy is often limited by the way our world is designed. Inaccessible trails, buildings, and transportation can prevent us from enjoying nature. [Ableist](#) attitudes and exclusionary practices can rob us of opportunities to experience joy. And inaccessible venues and events can prevent us from participating in cultural activities.

But nature, joy, and culture are fundamental to our well-being. They are the things that help us to flourish.

When we are excluded from these experiences, everyone misses out. Our communities miss out on our participation. Social and environmental movements miss out on our valuable contributions. And the world misses out on our creativity and our joy.

We are calling for a more inclusive world where everyone has the opportunity to experience nature, joy, and culture. This will require a shift in attitudes and practices. But it is essential for creating a world where everyone can thrive.

Action

When thinking about accessibility for your event, don't limit your imagination. Accessibility can also be part of the fun and elevation of an event. It can be celebratory, creative, and joyful. What imaginative things can you come up with with your community that center accessibility and joy?

Let's create a world where everyone has the opportunity to experience the things that bring them well-being and joy.

“If a gallery doesn’t have any image descriptions or tactile images, there is no point in going. We don’t get to experience anything cultural if there aren’t descriptions, there is nothing for us”

“There was one time when accessibility was good. I went to see a play at the National Theatre. They included a tactile tour before the show and had lots of information about the show. This made it so much more interesting and accessible”

Nitin Sinha

Blind | Accessibility Advocate

"In the future , I would like to see more celebration of disabled people's work. This could include an award ceremony with lots of glitz and glamor. I want people to get the recognition that they deserve"

Terri Louise

Founder of Talks with MS | Multiple Sclerosis Advocate | Author

Schedules

As disabled folks, time is a precious resource. We often have less of it, as we spend more time adapting to a world not designed for us.

When accessibility isn't considered, we waste time waiting for assistance, complaining about barriers, or figuring out how to do simple things.

This wasted time is frustrating and draining. It takes energy to constantly adapt and advocate for our needs.

Communication can take longer as we wait for image descriptions, learn tactile maps, request transcripts, or miss out on information when accessible communication isn't provided.

Some folks' days are also impacted by chronic pain, managing their conditions, and pacing so they can keep up with the world's pace.

As a result, disabled people often have less time for the things they want and need to do. This can have a significant impact on our lives, limiting our opportunities for education, employment, and social participation.

We urge event organizers and others to consider the impact of scheduling on disabled people. By exploring these topics, we can think of ways to make time management more inclusive so that everyone can take part.

Access Information Upfront

Legislation in most countries requires us to provide equitable access to all and not discriminate on the basis of disability. However, reality often falls short.

Our experts' most frustrating experiences were when they didn't know what access provisions would be provided or if inaccurate accessibility information was given. We need to be honest about what accessibility we can provide and what we can't. What we have learnt so far and what we don't yet know.

If a venue is wheelchair accessible, that doesn't necessarily mean it is accessible for a blind person. Often accessibility has been installed without user research or testing. It simply doesn't work for who it is meant to.

Our experts far preferred it if organizers were honest. This helped them to make informed decisions on whether they could take part or attend. They also didn't have to expend energy asking or face disappointment when something wasn't provided.

Let's take a small action that we know is achievable. Let's make sure disabled people don't have to ask about accessibility when they are already worn out.

Take 10 minutes or less out of your event prep time to write out the accessibility information for your event. This will also advertise the accessibility that you can provide to those who need to know about it. It will let folks know what to expect so they can make a decision about attending.

Actions:

- Be honest about what accessibility you can provide and what you can't.
- Don't over-claim or avoid the issue.
- Take the responsibility of asking about accessibility so disabled people don't have to.
- Write out the accessibility information for your event in advance.

Getting it right first time

Designing with accessibility in mind from the outset is far easier than retrofitting something that is not fit for purpose. This is the core idea of user-centered design, where we design around real people in the first place.

Accessibility is a key part of user-centered design because it enables people to use things no matter their circumstances or disability. This is helpful in creating things that work for people as they age, if they have an injury, if they are unwell, are busy with other responsibilities, or have different impairments.

By designing with people from the start, we can prevent a lot of unusable resources or policies being made. We can also test objects, ideas and policies with people with diverse experiences such as disability, to ensure that they are going to work in the real world.

Action

How can you apply the practice of getting it right first time to your event organizing for GDD?

“If people don’t give you the access information you need when you are arranging a trip, it can put you off. This makes you not want to go in the first place. This means that hotels and venues miss out on disabled people going to them”

Umaymah

Blogger at Disability Living | Disability Advocate

Umaymah’s advocacy work sometimes involves researching the accessibility of places and attractions on her social media platform. You can find out more via Umaymah’s blog account [Disability Living](#).

“ The most important accessibility recommendation that I have is for people to rest. It is really important for us to rest in a world that is not designed with us in mind ”

Terri Louise

Founder of Talks with MS | Multiple Sclerosis Advocate | Author

Learning is key to accessibility long term

Learning about accessibility is an ongoing process. As people grow and circumstances change, so does accessibility. The biggest trick to improving accessibility is learning about it with your communities.

Before your event

- Learn from experts: Talk to advocacy organizations, accessibility consultants, and disabled people.
- Create together: Include disabled people in the planning and execution of your event.

During your event

- Be responsive: Have a team ready to answer questions and address concerns.
- Be transparent: If you can't answer a question, be honest about it.
- Be open to feedback: Gather feedback from attendees and use it to improve future events.

After your event

- Reflect on your learning: Take time to think about what went well and what could be improved.
- Gather feedback: Collect feedback from attendees to get their perspective.
- Use feedback to improve: Use the feedback you gather to make your next event even more accessible.

Remember, accessibility is a journey, not a destination. Keep learning, keep growing, and keep making your events more inclusive.

The four big questions to keep asking:

1. What did people enjoy?
2. What did they think worked well?
3. What might they change the next time?
4. Do they have any new ideas for what to do next time?

Speaking of the Future

When schedules and ideas are built without marginalized people in mind, it can be difficult for community members to see themselves in the future. It is hard to imagine a better future when the present is so difficult.

That is why a big part of this project was centered around what people wanted to change and what the future could be for us if things were completely changed for the better.

Action

This is a magical activity to encourage with your communities too. By moving beyond the impossible, we can start to imagine the possible. And imagining sci-fi futures that embrace our communities and enable them to flourish can be very joyful and fun! It can also move and inspire everyone with decision making power to do better.

Communication

Communication is a fundamental human right. It is through communication that we connect with others, share our thoughts and ideas, and participate fully in society.

For disabled and marginalized people, accessible communication is essential for living full and independent lives. When we are able to communicate effectively we can access education, employment, healthcare, and other essential services. We can also build relationships, participate in our communities, and make our voices heard.

However, too often, disabled and marginalized people are excluded from communication. This can be due to a lack of accessible communication formats, such as sign language, Braille, or easy-to-read materials. It can also be due to attitudinal barriers, such as the assumption that disabled people are not capable of communicating effectively.

The impact of inaccessible communication can be profound. It can lead to social isolation, poverty of information, and language deprivation. For example, the Milan Conference of 1880 banned the use of sign language in deaf education. This had a devastating impact on the deaf community for generations, as many deaf people were denied access to education and language.

Accessible communication is essential for ensuring that disabled and marginalized people have equal access to information and opportunities. It is also essential for building a more inclusive and just society, especially at our GDD events.

We encourage everyone to learn more about accessible communication and to take steps to make communication at and around events more accessible. This is why we are covering communication in detail in this section - Read on to find out more and how you can take action.

Sharing information

We can't always provide all the accessibility we would like to straight away, however we can start somewhere. All the small actions we take lead to a big impact. When creating important communication resources and tools for your events, consider accessibility from the start to help share your message with more people, long into the future. We can invest in accessible resources to spark the conversation!

Here are some examples of how you might share and communicate ideas in more accessible ways:

Written information:

- Use clear and concise language, avoiding technical jargon.
- Provide definitions for any unfamiliar terms.
- Use short sentences and bullet points.
- Avoid large blocks of text.
- The [Plain English Campaign](#) can offer you guidance. Their advice can be applied to other written languages.
- Use images, diagrams, and other visual aids to support your text.
- Make sure digital content can be read by [screen readers](#).
- Provide [braille](#), [easy-read](#) and other transcripts.

- If writing online, follow the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) standards.
- The WCAG can be a little overwhelming at first. Use [a11y project checklist](#) to help get you started.

Languages

- Find out which [sign languages](#) are used in your area.
- Provide sign language interpretation at your events. Consider creating signed video content for your written text as well.
- Remember that written text [is not always accessible to Deaf people](#). Written text is not a direct translation of sign language; sign languages are languages with their own grammar.
- Provide translations of infrequently used languages or the marginalized languages of those most disenfranchised within your communities.
- Provide both written and spoken translations where possible.
- Invest in interpreters for panel sessions and meetings where technical language will be used or sensitive topics will be covered.

Audio-Visual information:

- Offer [transcripts or captions](#) for any audio or video content.
- Provide [alternative text](#) for images.
- Provide rich image descriptions.
- Use accessible fonts and font sizes.
- Avoid busy, bright cluttered images.
- Make your content available in multiple formats, such as PDF, HTML, and EPUB.

Spoken information:

- Use clear and concise language, avoiding technical jargon.
- Think ‘how would I share this information with a friend in an informal setting?’.
- Match the person’s level for technical words.
- Face the person you are talking to or audience and don’t cover your mouth.
- Do not assume that people do or do not know what you mean.
- Enable people time to think through what they are saying.
- Do not interrupt, ignore or speak for people.

Sensory:

- Explore tactile ways of sharing your information for people who are blind
- Make sure there are options so people can also [minimize or avoid sensory information](#). Some people process sensory information differently. Too much sensory stimuli can hurt them. People who are pregnant, anxious or stressed may also experience something similar. Avoid strong smells. Have quiet rooms away from noise, bright lights and activity.
- Provide [sensory environments](#) so that people can stay calm and well.

Top tip

Whether someone is Disabled, d/Deaf or neurodivergent, they are also a person who wants to enjoy life, be understood and make their own choices. Who wouldn’t want this? People will have their own thoughts and ideas that they want to share with others. Take the necessary time to understand how they prefer or are able to communicate. Put energy and resources into communicating with them in this way.

Respect & paying attention

Often people who communicate in non-typical ways can be spoken to as though they are a child, or worse be ignored completely. This is called infantilization and can feel very humiliating. If you aren't sure why the conversation isn't flowing, be patient, stay respectful and pay attention.

There may be clues that someone doesn't communicate in a conventional way. For example are they:

- Very focused on what they are doing and avoiding other people.
- Wearing ear defenders or dark glasses in a public space.
- Working with an assistance animal.
- Not looking up if you call them.
- Have a cochlear implant or are wearing a hearing aid.
- Using sign language to communicate.

People's communication methods can vary greatly even within the same community. Not all deaf people use sign languages for example. Sign languages are also regional, similar to spoken languages. We encourage you to seek training for communicating with people who are non-verbal, d/Deaf or blind. We recommend that training be led by folks from these communities. This helps non-disabled people gain confidence and helps community members feel safe and valued.

Non verbal communication

If someone is non-verbal it often means speaking is not accessible to them or it is not their preferred way to communicate.

Top tips on including non-verbal people at your events:

Let them guide the way.

Pay attention to their cues and preferences for communication. They may use gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, cue cards, drawings or assistive technology.

Be patient and understanding.

It may take longer for them to communicate their thoughts and ideas. Give them the time they need to express themselves fully.

Don't assume.

If you're not sure what they're trying to communicate, ask clarifying questions. Avoid making assumptions about their abilities or understanding.

Celebrate their unique communication style.

Every person communicates in their own way. Appreciate the beauty and diversity of non-verbal communication.

Benefiting everyone's communication

It's always helpful to ask people how they prefer to communicate and ask if they have any access needs. The ways people like to communicate can differ depending on who they are and their circumstances.

Further Reading & Resources Communication

[Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) a11y project checklist](#)

[Plain English Campaign](#)
[Scope's guide to subtitles, captions and transcripts](#)

[Deaf Umbrella's information on global sign languages](#)
[Sign languages and grammar \(and how this differs from spoken languages\)](#)
[Why written text can be foreign to Deaf people](#)

Global Donut Day's brand guidelines

Resources created by us:

Jessica Oddi [she/her] Disabled Designer and Accessibility Consultant has written a useful resource on Accessible Content Tips. You can access it [here](#).

For more information visit [JessicaOddi.Com](#)

Organization and Resources

The way we organize, make things, provide for each other, and shape our surroundings all have a big impact on accessibility.

The [Social Model of Disability](#) sees disability as created by the way society is organized, rather than by a person's impairment. In other words, it is the barriers in society that disable people, not their impairments themselves.

For example, if a building does not have a ramp, a person who uses a wheelchair cannot enter the building. This is not because the person is disabled, but because the building is not accessible.

By making changes to the way we make things and provide for one another we can create a more accessible world that works for everyone.

This doesn't mean that we have to make everything the same. Instead, it means being aware of the different needs of people and designing things in a flexible way that everyone can use.

When we do this, we are not just making the world a more accessible place, we are also making it a more inclusive and just place.

Whilst you organize your GDD events think about how you can make your set up, venue and resources accessible to everyone.

We have covered some practical and organizational ideas in this section that might help...

Online Events

Online events offer so many possibilities for connection and engagement, going beyond the limitations of in-person events. For those whose circumstances confine them to their homes, these virtual gatherings serve as a door to the world and all its possibilities.

While the potential for inclusivity is immense, far too many online events fall short of embracing accessibility. This is where we, the GDD community, have the opportunity to shine. Let us together demonstrate how accessible online events can be not just feasible, but new and exciting!

Through innovation and empathy, we can craft online experiences that are welcoming and engaging. We can set a new standard for inclusivity, where no one is left behind.

In this next section we have included accessibility features that event organizers can get curious about.

What new accessible ways of presenting events does this open up to you?

Who does it allow to be in the room?

Before your event

- **Research and choose a platform that is accessible.** Do you know how well your online platform works for blind folks, deaf people or neurodivergent collaborators? If not, get curious and find out. Some people will take part and attend using screen readers, magnification software or using keyboard navigation.
- **Invest in accessibility audits.** If your group has built your online platform yourselves and you don't know whether it is accessible to our disabled community, invest in an accessibility audit to find out and build your knowledge. The information you gather will help you learn more about accessibility and show your disabled community how much you value them.
- **Invite disabled and marginalized people to speak and present at the event.** This is a great way to not only amplify our voices but to get more people in the room creating exciting ideas for Doughnut Economics.
- **Use alt text and image descriptions for all visuals.** When sharing digital visual content with your blind or visually impaired audience it is important to add alt-text to images. Alt-text is the description of the image that is read aloud by screen readers. Image descriptions can be read aloud or sit in the main text offering more information. If sending out transcripts and slides ahead of your event again make sure alt-text and image descriptions are provided. This ensures everyone can understand the full picture and allows you to explore describing your visuals in rich and interesting ways!
- **Book translation services** For both international and online events, providing translators will increase your audience and the reach of your ideas. Ideas can then travel and flourish across the globe!
- **Book sign language services.** Sign language interpreters often have different guidelines for recorded and online events. Make sure you book them and budget for them early so that your deaf audience can contribute and take part. Not all deaf people speak spoken languages or can read captions. Ensuring people can take part in their own language which adds another dynamic perspective to Doughnut Economic ideas!
- **Provide a code of conduct for the event.** A code of conduct should make it clear that all forms of discrimination and harassment are unacceptable. It can also help promote and build confidence in doing things in accessible ways.

During your event

- **Provide captions.** Providing captions on video content (both live or pre-recorded) will help d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing people access any spoken or audio information. We know from research that this can improve engagement in general. Many people watch content with the sound turned off and captions on. It allows them to follow information if in busy or noisy spaces.
- **Record the event so that people can watch it later.** This is helpful for people who are unable to attend the live event due to time zone differences, accessibility barriers, or care responsibilities, amongst many other reasons. People can then attend at a time that suits them

better which could be the next day, a month or years after the event. This again enables your event to have further reach. Your ideas will then travel further in time and space.

- **Introduce yourselves when first speaking and give visual descriptions.** This helps people who are blind follow who is talking in the conversation and have equal understanding of who is in the room. It also helps break the ice and enables us to get to know each other better.
- **Avoid using flashing lights, busy backgrounds or loud noises.** These can be triggering for people with autism, epilepsy, and other conditions. People who are tired, stressed or overwhelmed will also benefit from this. Keep things visually calm and simplify what you present. It's good when online events encourage us to feel relaxed and comfy.
- **Refrain from using chat functions on video calls.** Running two different conversations at the same time can be very overwhelming for all of us! It can also disrupt people who are using screen readers as the software will try to read out live text on the screen at the same time as people are speaking. Setting up online forums and chat rooms instead, separate from your video call will enable people to stay connected both before and after events.

After your event

- **Connecting after the event.** Everyone can feel a loss after the buzz of an event (especially one that was accessible to them). It is a great idea to allow the communities to continue to talk about the event topics after the event has finished. This could be done through setting up a permanent online forum, chat room, or Discord server.
- **Providing feedback.** This might be the first time that you have attempted an accessible online event. You will know how it went from your side of things. We also encourage you to get feedback from your audience and collaborators. This will help you both celebrate achievements and improve accessibility for future events. Feedback can be gathered through surveys, interviews and story gathering. It can be a great way to reflect on events.

“In a future that benefits me and my community I would love to be able to hop around in time. To go to events that are happening on any day or time or place that we choose. This would mean that you wouldn’t miss out on events only held in person or only for a day. It wouldn’t matter if people were unwell or unable to go on the day. Everyone would still get to share their ideas and creativity, if events could time travel”.

Sharon Marcelis

Accessibility consultant | Brain injury survivor | Service designer

In person events

In-person events offer a unique opportunity to connect with others in a shared physical space. They can generate a buzz of excitement of being in a new place. Activities can involve sharing food, being active (in whatever ways you are able) and feeling a part of your surroundings.

To ensure that everyone can experience the thrill of in person events, let's embrace accessibility and open the door to innovative ways of inclusivity!

1. **Consider the built environment.** Is the venue wheelchair accessible? Are there clear and wide aisles? Are there accessible restrooms? Are there quiet spaces for people who need a break from sensory overload? How can these venue facilities add to the atmosphere of the event in a joyful way? Would a quiet bean-bag and comfy reading room benefit everyone in a long day of activities?
2. **Provide communication accommodations.** Offer sign language interpretation, real-time captioning, and transcripts of presentations. Make sure all materials are available in accessible formats, such as large print, Braille, or audio recordings. This type of access, enables more people in the room, to champion your speeches, topics and presentations!
3. **Be mindful of vulnerability.** Consider social distancing at your event to prevent overcrowding. Keep areas well ventilated. Encourage mask wearing to protect elderly and immunocompromised people from contagious illnesses and viruses. Make sure everywhere is clean and hygienic. Provide a variety of food options, including vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free options. Label all food items clearly. For some people this can be a matter of life and death, so it is important to take it seriously.
4. **Be aware of sensory sensitivities.** Avoid using flashing lights or loud noises. Provide earplugs or noise-canceling headphones for people who need them. Letting everyone navigate the space in a way that suits them leads to a room full of happy people!
5. **People's knowledge and confidence .** Take the time to properly train and prepare the people running your event so they are aware of Disability and accessibility. Have they had access to resources outlining how they can be an ally and be respectful of people's access needs and choices? Set up a session where organizers can go through scenarios with accessibility consultants. Events always run more smoothly when people feel confident in themselves and their roles!

By taking these steps, you can make your in-person events more accessible to everyone.

Top tip - still ask

Our accessibility ideas don't cover every possibility. If you are unsure about how to make your event accessible to someone, ask them.

By making your events accessible, you can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate and enjoy them.

A thought on the Built Environment

Choosing your venue and putting thought into accessibility of the built environment can make a huge impact. How you design your space also offers possibilities and opportunities.

“The accessible ramp at the Art Gallery of Ontario [AGO in Toronto], is a great example of art merging with access joy. Not only does it have railings and a lower steep ratio, but it was designed in part with the stair structure that the architect made for the building. It's so thrilling to know that my community was thought of as part of the piece, and not an after-thought or juxtaposition within a space. It reminds everyone that we are here, and deserve to experience the same joy and expression as non-disabled people”

Jessica Oddi (she/her)

Disabled Designer | Accessibility Consultant

Invest in accessibility

Disabled and marginalized people have to spend more money just to live their daily lives. When you invest in accessibility, you're not just giving them what they need right now. You're also investing in their long-term participation and building infrastructure that will benefit everyone.

Here are some ideas for how you can invest in accessibility for your Global Donut Day events:

- Provide childcare and eldercare support so that parents and caregivers can attend.
- Cover travel costs for people who are unwaged, disabled, or on low incomes.
- Invest in accessibility for the long term. It may take time for people to feel comfortable attending your events, but if you show them that you value their presence, they will come.
- Advertise your accessibility investments in a way that is accessible to everyone.
- Pay marginalized people for their expertise.
- Do not require proof for financial aid.
- Budget for accessibility investments early.
- Recognise and celebrate your investment in accessibility.

By investing in accessibility, you are creating a more inclusive and welcoming world for everyone.

Let's Learn by 'Our' Experience

People, particularly those who are Disabled, d/Deaf and neurodivergent, can greatly impact what we should think about when designing events. Here are our experts' top tips on what could turn a potentially negative experience at events into a positive one.

We respected each other's self-identification during this project and acknowledged the label someone chooses to use or not use is their decision. However, we also recognise within this guide that people can still be disabled by the world built without their needs in mind, regardless of whether they identify as disabled. We always advocate for people to listen to how others identify and to take the lead from them.

This section also aims to highlight how disabled experiences can be very diverse. Experiences that seem similar might require very different approaches. Experiences that seem very different might benefit from the same accessibility resources. This is just a taster; nothing works better than chatting with and involving people in your community.

d/Deaf

Accessibility that makes sure we are in on the plan:

- Sign language interpretation
- Real-time captioning (CART)
- Transcripts of presentations and other materials
- [Assistive listening devices \(ALDs\)](#) such as hearing loops
- Quiet spaces for lip reading
- Rooms where sound doesn't bounce around or echo
- Visual cues (e.g., flashing lights, vibrating pagers)
- Written communication (e.g., handouts, emails)

Hard of hearing

Accessibility that helps us never miss a punchline:

- Assistive listening devices (ALDs) such as hearing loops.
- Amplified sound
- Clear and concise communication
- Facing the speaker when speaking
- Avoiding background noise
- Using visual aids (e.g., handouts, slides)
- Written communication (e.g. handouts, emails)

It is important to note that the specific needs of deaf and hard of hearing people can vary. The best way to ensure that someone's needs are met is to ask them directly.

What you might not know:

d/Deaf people may not be able to hear announcements or instructions. Make sure to provide visual cues for important information.

d/Deaf and hard of hearing people may not be able to follow conversations if there is a lot of background noise. Try to find a quiet space for conversations.

Hard of hearing people may have difficulty understanding speech if the speaker is not facing them. Speak how you normally would and do not cover your mouth.

Both hard of hearing people and d/Deaf people may not be able to follow conversations if the lighting levels are low and they cannot see people's faces clearly.

Both d/Deaf and hard of hearing people may be very loud themselves. If someone is being loud don't assume they are being rude or purposefully disruptive.

Not all d/Deaf people sign. Not all deaf people can read written languages. Not all deaf people can lipread.

Blind

Accessibility that makes us feel valued:

- Visiting the space earlier: Visiting the space ahead of time helps us to know where things are
- Crowd control: Making sure spaces don't get too busy or that there are less busy spaces
- Introducing yourself: Introducing yourself and saying who you are when starting conversation
- Braille signage and materials: Provide Braille signage for way-finding, as well as Braille copies of handouts, programs, and other materials.
- Audio descriptions: Provide audio descriptions of visual elements, such as presentations, performances, and artwork.
- Tactile maps and models: Provide tactile maps and models of the venue and surrounding area.
- Assistive technology support: Ensure assistive technology, such as screen readers and magnifiers, can be used with your content.
- Guide dogs: Welcome guide dogs and other service animals.
- Sighted guides: Provide trained guides who are used to working with blind people

What you might not know:

Blind people like to be given a choice just like anyone else. Whilst sighted guides can be helpful they may not offer people the independence that they want when attending events. Always ask what access provisions people want and would prefer.

At events people often handout information on flyers. Written materials on paper are completely useless for blind people. Think about other engaging ways you can share ideas. Perhaps the workshop activities and storytelling might be more appropriate.

Vision impaired

Accessibility that offers us the full picture:

- Large print materials: Provide large print copies of handouts, programs, and other materials.
- Increased lighting: Provide increased lighting in all areas of the venue.
- Glare reduction: Reduce glare on screens and other surfaces.
- High-contrast materials: Use high-contrast materials for signage and other visual elements.
- Seating with good sight-lines: Provide seating with good sight-lines of presentations and performances.

What you might not know

People with low vision experience the world very differently from blind people. Sometimes they can see visual imagery if it is presented in the right way. This is why high-contrast, large font and easy-read posters, flyers and handout materials are important accessible materials for people who have low vision.

Action

Think about all the different formats you could create your event content and materials in. This is a chance to experiment with what will be accessible and interesting to more people. Could diagrams be tactile for example? Could you create a sculpture?

Neurodivergent

Accessibility that lets us show up and leave their mask at home:

- Avoid using flashing lights or loud noises. These can be triggering for people with autism, epilepsy, and other conditions.
- Provide breaks throughout the event. This is important for people with ADHD, autism, and other conditions that can make it difficult to sit for long periods of time.
- Offer a quiet space for people who need a break from the noise and stimulation of the event.
- Provide clear instructions and expectations for all activities and participation. This is helpful for people with autism, intellectual disabilities, and other conditions that can make it difficult to understand and follow social cues.
- Provide information about the event and the activities before it happens

Physically disabled & wheelchair users

Accessibility that helps us access all areas:

- Accessible entrances and exits: Ensure that all entrances and exits are wheelchair accessible.
- Ramps and elevators: Provide ramps and elevators to all levels of the venue.
- Wide aisles and doorways: Ensure that all aisles and doorways are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs.

- Accessible restrooms: Provide accessible restrooms with grab bars, raised toilet seats, and roll-in showers.
- Accessible seating: Provide accessible seating with armrests and transfer space
- Assistive technology support: Provide support for people using assistive technology, such as wheelchairs, walkers, and prosthetics.

Invisibly disabled & chronically ill

Accessibility that helps us not feel so invisible:

- Flexible attendance policies: Allow people to attend events on a part-time or as-needed basis.
- Record sessions: Make sure sessions are recorded so people can attend in their own time.
- Quiet spaces: Provide quiet spaces where people can rest or take breaks.
- Scent-free environment: Avoid using strong fragrances or scents.
- Flexible seating: Provide a variety of seating options, such as chairs with backs, cushions, and armrests. Make sure that there is seating.
- Flexible activities: if you are asking people to take part and move around in activities add the caveat 'if you are able'. Have alternative ways of joining in physical activities. Can people join in whilst sitting down for example?
- Communication accommodations: Offer real-time captioning, easy read materials and transcripts of presentations.
- Safety: Make sure your space is well ventilated and those who need to distance from other people have space to do so. Normalise mask wearing.
- Outdoors: Consider hosting your event outside if the weather allows.
- Understanding ambulatory wheelchair use: Stay informed and aware that some people need to use wheelchairs intermittently to preserve energy, manage fluctuating mobility issues and chronic pain.

What you might not know

People who have chronic illnesses or who were on specific medication and treatments may have compromised immune systems. This means that they are more vulnerable to everyday germs and viruses as well as COVID-19. Making sure that they can protect themselves at in-person events and other people value their attendance and are committed to keeping them safe can mean the world. It can mean the difference between being able to attend and not being able to.

A mix of experiences

While we have categorized people's experiences for clarity, it is important to acknowledge that individuals can have a mix of access needs. A wheelchair user may also be deaf, and someone who is chronically ill may also be blind. Family and friendship groups can also have a mix of differing experiences. Other characteristics such as being a parent may impact our access needs in intersectional ways.

This is why it is always best to ask people directly about their access needs. By doing so, we can ensure that everyone has what they need to participate fully and inclusively.

"Screen on the Green did a wonderful job of providing a safe and supportive space for the parents and carers of babies. It allowed everyone to engage with the film and care for their little ones without hassle. Most importantly, as someone who is hard of hearing, I was thrilled to discover the screening would have subtitles. It meant I could engage with the whole film which was an absolute delight! And for those dealing with crying babies they didn't have to worry about the noise affecting their or others' experience!"

Poppy Rowley (she/her)

Hard of hearing | Theatre Director | Podcaster | Accessibility Consultant

Poppy speaks about community and parenting on her podcast 'It Takes a Village'. You can listen to the podcast [here](#).

"At my best friend's wedding there was a handheld bubble machine which not only added fun but also offered sensory benefits for my autistic daughter and entertainment for my neurotypical sons. The floating bubbles provided a visually captivating and soothing experience, going beyond just dancing. She integrated various elements like this (including baskets of comfy slippers for dancing) which made the day intuitively inclusive."

Laura Spence

Accessibility Consultant | Sexual Health Midwife | Birth Trauma Service Coordinator.

You can find more of Laura's work via her ADHD Midwife account [here](#).

Our biggest top tip

Our top tips will not include or be accurate to everyone's experiences, and we haven't even touched the surface of mental health or cognitive disabilities. It is however a starting point on your journey to understanding accessibility.

Remember, the best way to ensure someone has what they need is to simply ask. After all, everyone's access needs are as unique as they are!

“I am deaf and this is my own experience. I would not know my child with Down syndrome’s experience. I want him to be able to speak about his experience himself”

Sahera Khan,

Accessibility Advisor | Actor & Artist | Deaf British Sign Language User

“Accessibility can be about creating and meeting guidelines for people to use but it's also about fostering community and understanding the lived experiences of individuals. By bringing people together, we can bridge societal gaps in understanding of disability.

I recently took part in a unique, audio-only film premiere, a testament to the potential for blind and visually impaired individuals to enjoy the same cultural experiences as everyone else. Inclusion isn't just a matter of necessity; it's an opportunity for shared fun and mutual learning”.

Conor Joseph

Visually Impaired Accessibility Consultant

Intrusive questions

We understand if you have no personal experience of Disability asking about access needs might be a little daunting. Here are three top tips to think about when asking questions about access:

1. We must learn and understand the difference between asking about access needs and asking about private experiences or medical information.

If you want to better understand what it is like to live as a disabled person, we recommend following people who are already openly and willingly providing this information. There are also plenty of advocacy groups and disability consultants who provide educational resources online.

People may share personal information with you but this will be their choice and likely after building a long relationship of trust. Ask yourself do I need to know this information to improve access or am I asking someone about their private life.

2. You are not entitled to people's personal information especially when doing so can cause harm.

Asking people to share medical information or personal experiences can be intrusive. If you confront people with intrusive questions, you could be bringing up medical trauma for them or simply asking them to share things they do not want to share with you. This can be harmful to them. People have the right to privacy and to share information about themselves with who they want to.

3. When organizing events focus on people's access needs

If you are unsure about whether or not a question is intrusive, it is always best to err on the side of caution and not ask. Instead, focus on asking questions about the person's access needs. For example, you could ask:

- What are your access needs?
- How can I make this event more accessible for you?
- How is the access here today?

By asking respectful and inclusive questions, you can create a more welcoming and accessible environment for everyone.

Summary of our practical accessibility tips

At the heart of all our practical tips lies the Universal Recognition movement's values. Our movement recognises that expertise comes in all shapes, sizes, abilities, and contexts. It acknowledges that to truly address the adverse circumstances faced by people, we must give them co-ownership in the process. They know the map and the terrain of their situations better than anyone else.

Embracing the Universal Recognition approach is not just about being polite or inclusive. It is about changing minds and being effective. When we listen to and learn from the people we are trying to help, we are more likely to find solutions that are both relevant and sustainable.

So, as you go out and put these practical tips into action, remember to approach your work with humility and openness. Be willing to learn from the people you meet, and be prepared to be challenged.

The Universal Recognition approach is not always easy, but it is always worthwhile. It is the only way to build a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

So, let us all strive to Universally Recognise each other regardless of our circumstances. Let us all be learners, listeners, and collaborators in the work of accessibility. And let us all take action together to create an accessible world where everyone can take part as themselves, universally.

Over to you to continue this work

In this project, we focused on unpaid carers, Global majority diaspora, and Disabled folks. This was a starting point, a necessary first move in making Global Donut Day more accessible. But this is just the beginning.

We are at the beginning of a journey to address the practical barriers that hinder accessibility. This work needs to be continued by the Doughnut Economic community.

Let us go forward asking:

What changes can we make to improve accessibility to the GDD annual event this year and beyond?

What have we learnt so far and how can we share that learning, accessibly, with others?

How might we improve accessibility in our places with the most marginalized in our communities?

How might folks living in marginalized global majority communities, those deeply affected by the climate crisis, Black and brown communities, LGBTQ+ communities lead on similar projects?

How might those with decision-making powers and resources facilitate that?

How might we make Doughnut Economics itself more accessible?

This is a call to action asking us to continue the work of making Doughnut Economics accessible to all. Let's continue along this journey together!

Doughnut Economics ideas in easier words

Doughnut Economics

Doughnut Economics is a way of thinking about the economy that is good for the planet and people

Sustainability

Doughnut Economics encourages us to make sure that everyone has what they need without using up too many resources or creating too much pollution.

Sustainability is one way to do this. It means making things in a way that is good for the environment. Examples of this could be:

- not taking too many things away from nature in order to make the things we need
- Only making what we need and not making any more than that
- Not making things out of materials that can harm the planet when they are thrown away, like plastics
- Making things out of things that can return to nature when they are thrown away and no longer used
- Mending things so we can keep using them
- Making things in a way that doesn't create more rubbish
- Making things in a way that doesn't create pollution (bad rubbish or chemicals) that hurts the planet

Sustainability helps us to protect the environment for future generations.

Social Foundation

Doughnut Economics teaches us that we must protect the social foundation. This means protecting people and ways they can live well without hurting the planet. Examples could be making sure everyone has:

- enough to eat and drink
 - a safe place to live
 - a chance to learn
 - an opportunity to live and grow
 - somewhere they are safe from harm
-

Ecological Ceiling

Doughnut Economics teaches us that the planet has a limited supply of natural resources. We must be careful not to take too much or take them in a harmful way. Our businesses and organizations use natural resources to make the things we need to live. The ecological ceiling is the limit to how much natural resources can be taken without harming the planet. We should only take or make things within this limit.