



### Understanding How Inclusion Relates to Your Department: Exhibition Design

Thoughtful exhibition design is key to an inclusive museum. This requires knowledge of legal obligations for accessibility of space and information, as well as an understanding for design choices that will maximize appeal to an audience inclusive of people with disabilities. These tips can help when designing your next exhibit:

- Follow federal guidance for accessibility.
- Consider flow for wheelchairs, service animals, or other mobility aids when designing space.
- Position display cases and object labels so that they can be viewed comfortably by people of various heights, whether standing or sitting.
- Place seating at regular intervals throughout the exhibition space for visitors who wish to rest or to sit and take a longer look at works of art.
- Use an easily legible font style and size for labels and wall text, and choose contrasting colors. Use a sans-serif font; Arial is a good option.
- Select lighting that properly illuminates both the space and the objects in it. When an object requires low light, consider offering alternate means of access such as photographs, copies, or digital images. Consider touch screens or LCD displays right in the gallery space for this purpose.
- Consider adding multi-sensory or interactive elements to your exhibition experience, including tactile objects and sound pieces, to enhance experiences for people with and without disabilities.

Access these resources to learn more about inclusive exhibition design:

- *Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessibility*  
<http://www.si.edu/Accessibility/SGAED>
- *The Standards Manual for Signs and Labels*  
[http://books.google.ca/books/about/Standards\\_Manual\\_for\\_Signs\\_and\\_Labels.html?id=jFRLMwEACAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](http://books.google.ca/books/about/Standards_Manual_for_Signs_and_Labels.html?id=jFRLMwEACAAJ&redir_esc=y)
- *Institute for Human-Centered Design*  
<http://www.humancentereddesign.org/universal-design>
- *U.S. Access Board*  
<http://www.access-board.gov>