

Access Rider

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CONSEIL
DES ARTS
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Most people are familiar with celebrity riders: documents that state the requirements of an artist for a show or event. You might have even read about some of their outlandish requests; white tulips, 6 scented candles, lightly seasoned green beans etc. But have you ever considered **creating your own rider**? A way to communicate all your access needs in one place!

The idea was brought to Montréal via England, through **Sync Leadership**, a disabled-led programme exploring Deaf and disabled* leadership, founded in 2008 by Sarah Pickthall and Jo Verrent, two disabled leaders based in the UK.

In a work context, these documents are helpful for everyone involved: the person can say **what** they need, and the venue/institution will know exactly **how** to provide support for them.

Access can be a tricky subject, and sometimes it's awkward trying to let people know your needs in a working relationship. With an access rider it's an easy way to communicate your needs with fellow artists, organisations, colleagues or employers.

The Conseil des arts de Montréal has two resources: a [ready-made access rider](#) and a [document for you to create your own access rider](#).

Ready-made access rider

Title

e.g. Disability Access Needs

Intro sentence or two

You can mention what your disability is here if you want to, but you don't have to.

e.g. I am disabled and have the following access needs. Please let me know if you need further clarification on any of the below points.

Your needs

You might want to break these down into sections like the example below. The examples relate to a variety of conditions and barriers.

Meetings

- Need A
- Need B

e.g.

- I require a clear agenda at least two days in advance
- ASL interpreter
- Captioning on zoom

Online meetings

- Need A
- Need B

e.g

- Time limited meetings with rest breaks
- Clear meetings agenda in advance
- Captions for meetings
- ASL interpreter
- I deal with chronic pain in the early mornings so prefer to work afternoons

Events

- Need A
- Need B

e.g.

- Information of expectations well in advance
- Step free access to the venue

Online Events

- Need A
- Need B

e.g.

- Time limited meetings with rest breaks
- Clear meetings agenda in advance
- ASL interpreter

Time Frames

- Need A
- Need B

e.g.

- Regular working hours – I require regular working hours and am unable to stay late or work longer hours during production week
- I need regular breaks in a quiet space
- I work best in the morning.
- I can not work past 4 p.m.

Working practices

- Need A
- Need B

e.g.

- No last minute changes
- No ambiguity of communications
- Clear agreements and timeframes
- Avoid overwhelming information or events
- No steps to get to meeting rooms
- I need you to send emails, I will not remember if you tell me things orally
- Following week : I require to be paid for my recovery days, 3 days in total.

Online working

- Need A
- Need B

e.g. I check my email between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Travel

- Need A
- Need B

e.g My mobility means that I require a taxi to get from place to place

Exhibition installations

- Need A
- Need B

e.g.

- My access assistant will be with me or you need to provide an access assistant
- I require two gallery assistants to help me with install
- I need a seat to sit on in the gallery space
- Due to energy levels I can only do half days installing work

Additional notes

If you think these are useful to include – use your experience to guide you and remember this is about other people meeting your access requirements (empowering not exposing)

e.g.

There can be some variations in my condition you should be aware of and which we need to factor in.

My energy levels can fluctuate day to day / week to week so it is essential to have a balanced and well planned workload, with plans in place should things change.

Create your own access rider

Contents

Where can I use one?

Wherever and whenever you will be in contact with others. It allows both artists and organizations to feel comfortable working together. Again, remember that this document is in no way meant to expose you, but rather empower you.

What stage should I send in my access document?

For some people, sending in their access document as early as possible allows them to work out whether their working relationship will be conducive. You can let people know you have a document earlier on and send it in later when it becomes relevant for you. But introducing it as early as possible can allow for all the arrangements to be made. E.g. if you need a longer timeline.

How much information do I need to include?

As long or short as you like.

How do I make an Access Rider?

One way to start is to figure out scenarios where your access needs may or may not have been met.

- Some questions you might ask yourself :
- What access issues have you encountered in this scenario, what might you encounter?
- How did that affect your ability to carry out this task?
- What change can you envisage that would have minimized the issue or helped you carry out your work?
- Using different scenarios that you might face whilst you're working can help you find out where you'll need help.