



**visits4u case studies:
Accessibility in Turin
Turin, Italy**

Accessibility in Turin

Turin, ITALY

Title: Manifesto for Accessible Culture to All

Description

In contemporary society, culture, with its events and the spaces in which they take place, has a primary role for each person, in relation to the path of long-life education, to pleasure and entertainment, to inclusion in society, precisely because the manifestations of culture bring together different and multiple areas of personal, collective, social growth.

These areas touch upon artistic, expressive, aesthetic, emotional, relational aspects. Additionally, there is a close link between participation in cultural events and the state of well-being and health of the person.

That's why it's important to define the public and the different publics: they are consumers and producers of culture.

If the right of access to culture is denied or reduced by social conditions and by the physical environment, it is compromised the full and effective participation of many people in relation to their state of health and their social and cultural origin.

What each one has to safeguard and implement is the article 30 of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities:

‘States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life.’

From these ideas museums, foundations, associations, municipalities, libraries and many other cultural and educational places in Turin metropolitan city and in the province decided to create a strong working group.

Becoming inclusive:

1. Description

Supporting cultural places and staff to become accessible and confident when hosting a person with disability.

The common aim of the working group is the spreading of the accessibility culture: at a starting point it's important to spread it among the staff so that it can spread the concept in turn when working and among visitors. In order to do that the working group prepared a common document, a guide "manifesto", to which each partner involved should refer to in everyday work and activities.

The greatest challenge is to raise the awareness of museum curators and event organisers so that they can design their events to be accessible right from the beginning, instead of «adapting» them later on. This document wants to be a kind of demonstration that the first topic in institutions' decisions will be accessibility from the very beginning so that there would be neither physical nor cultural, communicative or social barriers.

This path seems to be easy, but it's not if we think that mental barriers are the most difficult to drop: if we make a place accessible from every point of view to the person with more difficulties, it will be accessible for all.

3. Description of steps taken, changes and progress

The proposal of a document "Manifesto della cultura accessibile a tutti" ("Manifesto for the accessible culture to all") originates from the works and comparisons between the Consortium for People in Difficulty of Turin (Consulta per le Persone in Difficoltà onlus di Torino) and of the Department of Education Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art started in 2010 during the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. In September 2011, the first public presentation of the Manifesto during a seminar in Lecce, allowed the widespread of the project and the involvement of more and more institutions and the establishment of a solid group.

From that moment on, the institutions from Turin metropolitan city and from the province of Turin started to write a draft document: it was

discussed publicly in the context of a large contemporary art fair “Artissima” edition 2011, in order to have public opinion.

From all these phases, ten main rules compose the Manifesto:

1. Know, consider and reconcile the different needs of the plurality of people.
2. Offer a satisfying cultural experience for any person.
3. Mix and balance accessibility to spaces, experience and information.
4. Stimulate the relational aspect, education and hospitality.
5. Communicate in a positive, non-discriminatory and exclusionary way.
6. Use multiple communication modes and appropriate use of technologies.
7. Provide objective information to allow self-evaluation of cultural offer.
8. Promote training of operators towards accessibility to culture.
9. Invite Artists to Consider Accessibility Instances.
10. Promote research on accessible culture themes.

The final Manifesto was signed by nineteen bodies on the 6th of April 2012.

4. Main stakeholders / actors

- Museums, libraries, cultural associations, foundations, schools, universities, educational centres, cinemas, theatres... any cultural and educational place;
- People with or without disabilities;
- Schools.

In particular the partners involved in the working group are:



Associazione Artepertutti (Ivrea), Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea (Rivoli), Consulta per le Persone in Difficoltà Onlus (Torino), Cittadellarte Fondazione Pistoletto Onlus (Biella), Città di Torino, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo (Torino), Fondazione Paideia Onlus (Torino), Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo (Torino), Fondazione Torino Musei - GAM Torino, Istituto Italiano per il Turismo per Tutti (Torino), Istituto dei Sordi di Torino (Pianezza), La Venaria Reale (Venaria), Museo Civico Casa Cavassa (Saluzzo), Museo Nazionale del Cinema (Torino), Parco Arte Vivente (Torino), Piano di valorizzazione Valle di Susa Tesori di Arte e Cultura Alpina (Susa), Susa Culture Project, Tactile Vision Onlus, Unione Italiana dei Ciechi e degli Ipovedenti Onlus.

5. Costs of the changes

The costs came from the partners that freely decided to be part of Manifesto and depended on the mission of each institution: for many museums, for example, making a site accessible to everyone means allowing more people to visit it and thus keep it alive.

Results and Impact

From this collaboration many projects in different museums started to build a good path to real accessibility, for example in Rivoli's Castle Museum of Contemporary Art you can find the tactile map of the castle and the explanation of the history not only in written text but also in Sign Language through the use of a QRcode. Another example is Fondazione Paideia whose staff has been trained in the accompaniment of blind people and in a brief course about Sign Language for the welcome of Deaf people.

Lessons learnt

Success factors:

- Collaboration between different institutions;
- Support of human rights;
- Support of design and communication for all.

Challenges:

- Attitudinal barriers: sometimes it's not immediately clear why people with disability need a specific kind of physical, technological or communicational support.
- Turn “special” events of accessibility into mainstream scheduling.
- Design accessibility from the very beginning, instead of “adapting” later on.

Further information

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<https://culturaccessibile.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.comune.torino.it/pass/arteplurale/tavolo-%E2%80%9Cculturaccessibile%E2%80%9D/>



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