



**visits4u case studies:
Museum of Modern Art
New York, U.S.A.**

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)

New York, U.S.A.

Title: Deaf MoMA

Description

The Museum of Modern Art in New York, opened in 1929 and became in less than one hundred years a model museum of the accessibility for all.

MoMA is established in a building that was restored and modernized between 2002 and 2004. After the renovation, the number of MoMA visitors rose to 2.5 million a year.

MoMA is considered by many the best collection of world art masterpieces: more than 150.000 works, 22.000 films and 4 million still images.

Becoming inclusive:

1. Description

Already from the website (<https://www.moma.org/visit/accessibility/>) the good organisation of the museum is evident: the section about accessibility is divided according to the need of the person and each possibility explains the services and materials anyone can find in the museum.

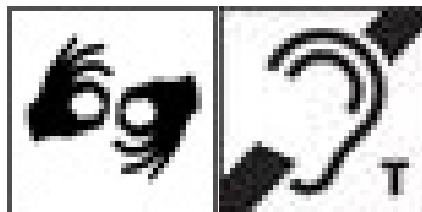


According to the second principle of Universal Design (“Flexibility in Use”), *the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities*. This means that a cultural place has to have many different supports in order to answer all the requests. Only when these methods and elements are ready, we can discover that they can be used by anyone according also to their preferences, not disabilities.

3. Description of steps taken, changes and progress

MoMA’s services for d/Deaf people are not only really well organized, but they also arouse curiosity:

- they show how deafness is multifaceted, so how the needs depend on many elements: the level of deafness (severe deafness, mild deafness), how deafness is seen (a disability or a way-to-be on the world, so an identity), the age of exposure to a language (anyone: sign language, spoken language), the family and the social environment...
- the tools that d/Deaf people use are amazing also for other users, for example the great use of images and videos are loved by children too.
- Deaf guides inside the museum: how anyone can learn from anyone and how we can practically remove prejudices.



4. Main stakeholders / actors

The museum can be visited by anyone, in particular the services available for d/Deaf and hard of hearing people are many and cover a wide range of needs if we consider that there is a wide range of types of deafness.

It is really interesting that in MoMA staff is ready to welcome anyone, and some guides have themselves disabilities, so they are better aware of and understand what the best solution is for disabled visitors.

5. Costs of the changes

The costs were totally responsibility of the museum.

Results and Impact

The huge number of MoMA's visitors (2.5 million) a year clearly shows that people are interested in culture if it is accessible, not only in terms of physical access, but also in communication. When the contents are explained in an easy way, they have more value because they are comprehensible from anyone, accessible from anyone regardless of their educational or cultural background.

Lessons learnt

Direct experiences: "the didactics of doing", from the practical to the "theory" in order to internalise the various concepts.

Further information

<https://www.moma.org/visit/accessibility/hearing>

<https://www.moma.org/about/contact>



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