

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation, like any piece of communication, should be designed with your audience in mind.

Done well, this will increase response rates and give you better data and stronger evidence. But done poorly and it can put people off taking part in your evaluation – or worse still, in the project itself.

Accessible Evaluation is about designing evaluation that is suitable and inclusive for the people who will take part in it.

This is particularly important for people with specific communication requirements. This applies to audiences such as disabled people or those who do not use English as a first language. Accessible evaluation is vital to collecting good data, so we can support these audiences to be active.

Accessible Evaluation can be very challenging to get right. Every audience will have different needs – sometimes down to individual level. Each evaluation is different, and it can be tough to strike the right balance between accessibility and data quality.

This guide includes advice on designing accessible evaluation, a list of external resources and contacts, and two case studies that demonstrate how accessible evaluation can work in practice.

If you have any questions, comments or feedback on this guide please email us at se.evaluation@sportengland.org.

ADVICE ON DESIGNING ACCESSIBLE EVALUATION

Design your evaluation	<p>Like any evaluation, design it well and design it early. Our Evaluation Framework offers tools, resources and guidance to help you design your evaluation, set outcomes, identify your measures, collect data, use the findings, and more.</p>
People come first	<p>Your project participants come first. Make the evaluation as good as it can be, but don't allow it to compromise anyone's individual experience.</p>
Understand your audience	<p>Accessibility can relate to sight, hearing, mobility, cognition, mental health, physical health, culture, language, age... The first step is to understand your audience and what their accessibility needs and preferences are.</p>
Involve your audience	<p>If you can, involve your audience in designing the evaluation approach. Speak to them, ask their views, test your materials and recruitment channels, and find out what works for them.</p>
Venue and location	<p>Think about physical access and transport to any venues you use (e.g. for focus groups). Would in-home research work better?</p>
Show the value	<p>Explain to your participants why the data is important and how you will use it. Knowing that it can help improve or expand a service can motivate them to take part in the evaluation.</p>
Collaborate	<p>Speak to other organisations who work with your audience and use their insight and expertise.</p>
Adapt standard measures	<p>It's ok to adapt standard measures for a more accessible evaluation. Recognised or validated questions can provide rigour and consistency if they're suitable for the audience, but there's no point using them if they can't be understood or answered accurately, so don't worry if you have to change or remove them.</p> <p>Such changes do not weaken your evaluation: they strengthen it – by making it as valuable and meaningful as it can be for your project and your audience. Your evaluation and the judgments you make from it will be better as a result.</p>
Care with comparisons	<p>If you adapt standard measures, make this clear in your reporting and avoid directly comparing results with other projects that use the original (or different) measures. This is because changes to wording or format can affect how people respond, meaning you won't have a like-for-like comparison. Only compare results directly if they use the exact same measure.</p>

ADVICE ON DESIGNING ACCESSIBLE EVALUATION

Language and length	<p>As with any communication, aim to write in plain English with short, clear sentences. Remove or replace jargon and technical words, and explain acronyms. Simplify or adapt the language as much as you need to for your audience. Consider getting an Easy Read translation produced, and don't make it too long – shorter is usually better!</p>
Format and design	<p>Design questionnaires and forms carefully. Are the font, text layout, design, use of images and use of colour suitable for your audience? If not, change it.</p> <p>Be prepared to provide materials in alternative formats. For example, large print, braille, a different language, or a different format – such as converting a written form into a British Sign Language video. You may not be able to provide every format, so consider what is feasible with your resources: e.g. how much it would cost, how long it would take and who would do it.</p>
Adapt your tools or method	<p>Be creative in changing or adapting your evaluation method. Here are some examples to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use images or emojis in place of descriptive text or numbered scales● Include an option to complete surveys over the phone● Consider alternatives to questionnaires, like hands-up surveys or focus groups
Support and independence	<p>Offer support if needed, but aim for independence. Completing surveys independently is more accurate as answers aren't interpreted by somebody else, and can build more confidence in participants. If parents, friends, carers or support staff do provide help, ensure they are as objective as possible.</p> <p>If someone completes a form on behalf of someone else, note this on the form to help with your analysis.</p>
Versatile and inclusive	<p>Even within a given audience, accessibility needs will vary. You may need two or more different versions of your evaluation materials in order to include as many people as possible.</p>
Data collection	<p>As for any evaluation, consider how you can maximise your data collection – read our guide on how to do this.</p>
Learn and share	<p>Learn and share from your experience. Use it to improve your next evaluation, and to raise awareness of how others can make evaluation more accessible.</p>

USEFUL RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

Activity Alliance has lots of useful resources to enable you to support disabled people in sport and physical activity. This includes advice on inclusive communication, research and insight, performance measurement and learning, and engaging disabled people:

- The [Talk To Me report](#) sets out 10 principles to improve the service you provide to disabled audiences
- Their [Resources](#) page includes an Inclusive Communications guide and checklists

The **Government** has published posters on the [Dos and don'ts on designing for accessibility](#) covering low vision, D/deaf and hard of hearing, dyslexia, physical disabilities, users on the autistic spectrum and users of screen readers. They also provide guidance on developing [accessible communication](#) formats such as Braille, Audio and Easy Read.

We recommend contacting organisations who work with your audience, activity or in your sector who may be able to help. The [National Disability Sports Organisations](#) can provide impairment-specific advice. Other organisations might include the Youth Sport Trust, National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs), charities such as Age UK, Mencap or Sense, as well as other national and local organisations.

Note: Most of the resources and organisations listed above provide guidance on inclusive **communication**, which is a critical aspect of accessible evaluation. There is limited specific guidance on **accessible evaluation** (hence this guide) – but if you are aware of some please let us know by contacting us at se.evaluation@sportengland.org.

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