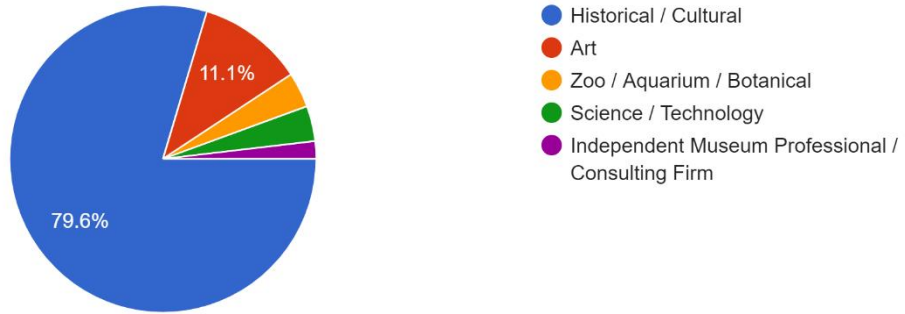


Museum Accessibility Survey Results

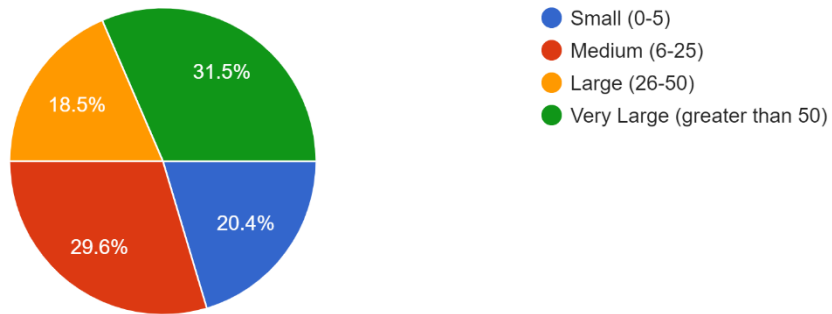
1. What type of organization do you work at/with?

54 responses



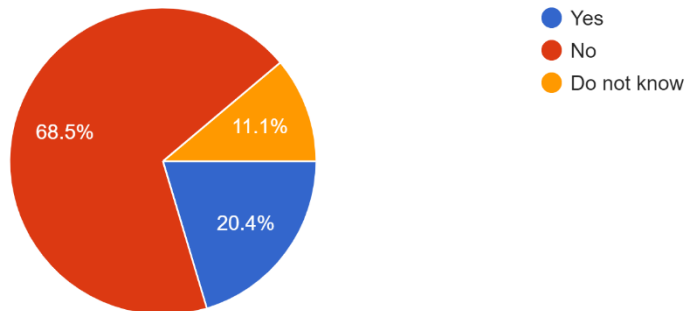
2. What is the size (based on number of employees) of the organization you work at/with?

54 responses



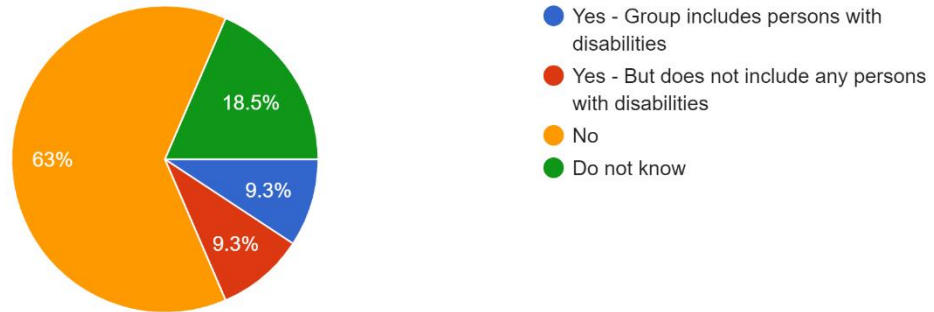
3. Does the organization have a staff member that oversees accessibility practices?

54 responses



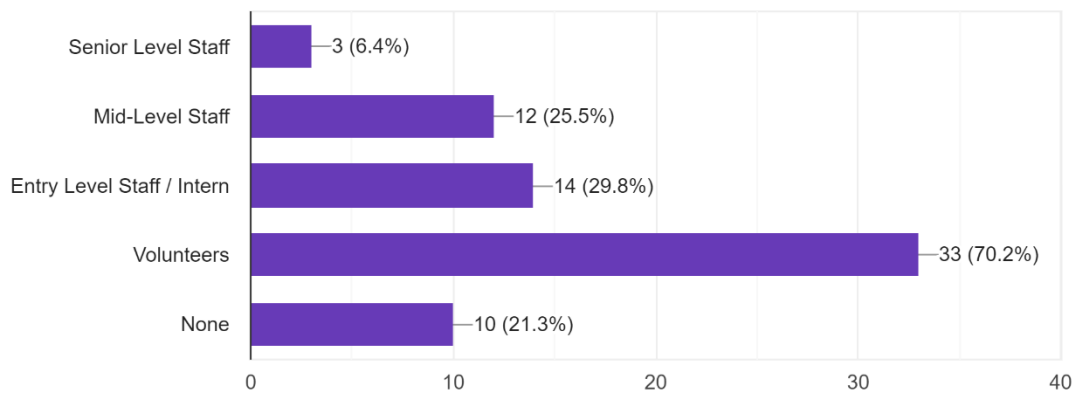
4. Does the organization have an internal accessibility advisory group?

54 responses



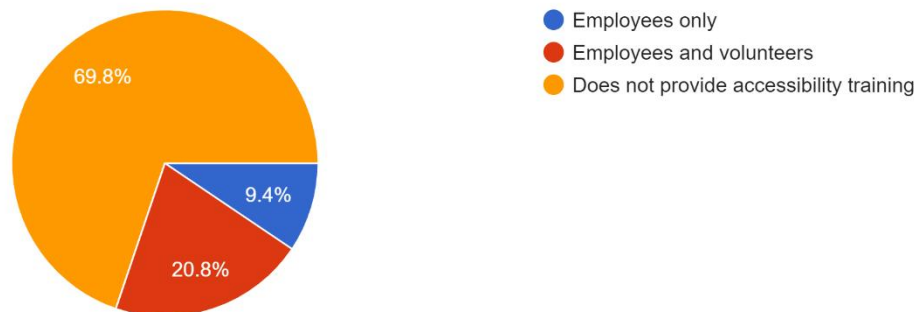
5. What roles are held by persons with disabilities (Select all that apply)

47 responses



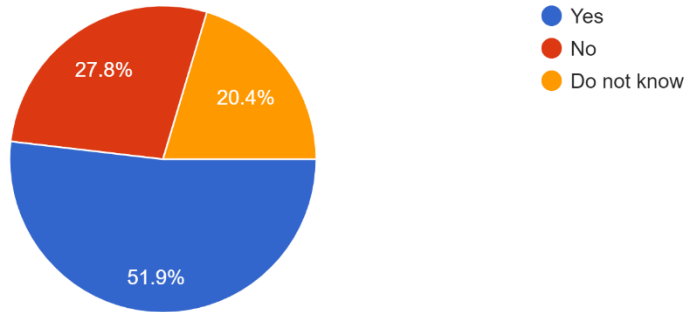
6. Does the organization provide accessibility training for the staff (employees and volunteers)?

53 responses



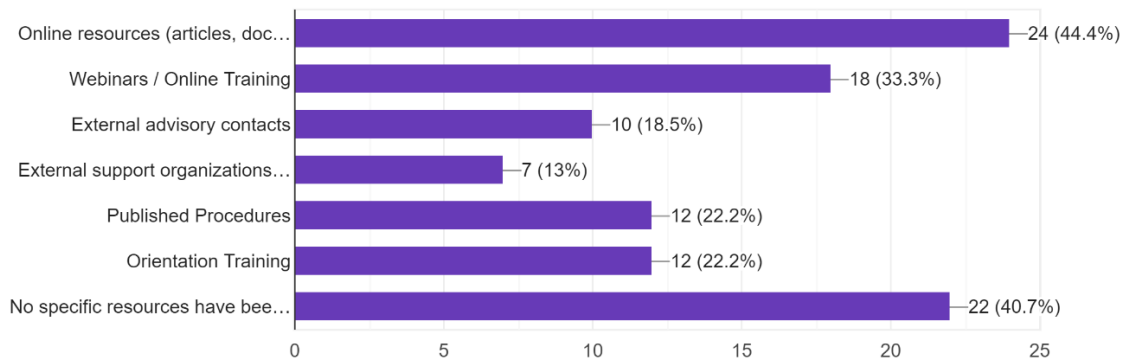
7. Does the organization have accessibility policies?

54 responses



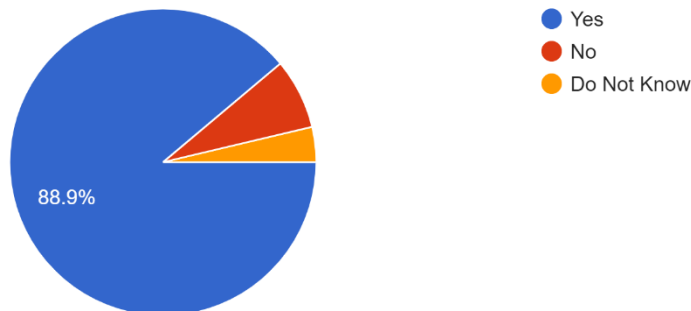
8. What accessibility resources has the organization made available to help the staff work with visitors who have disabilities? (Select all that apply)

54 responses



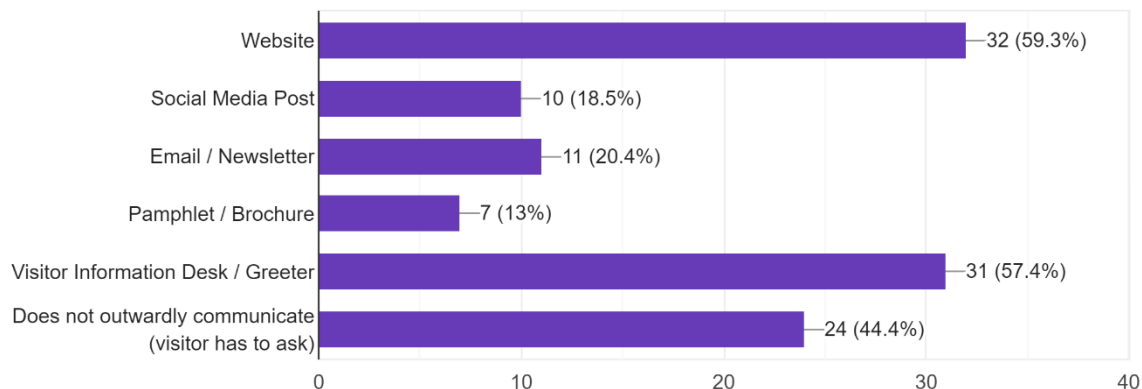
9. Does the organization support accessibility accommodations upon request from visitors?

54 responses

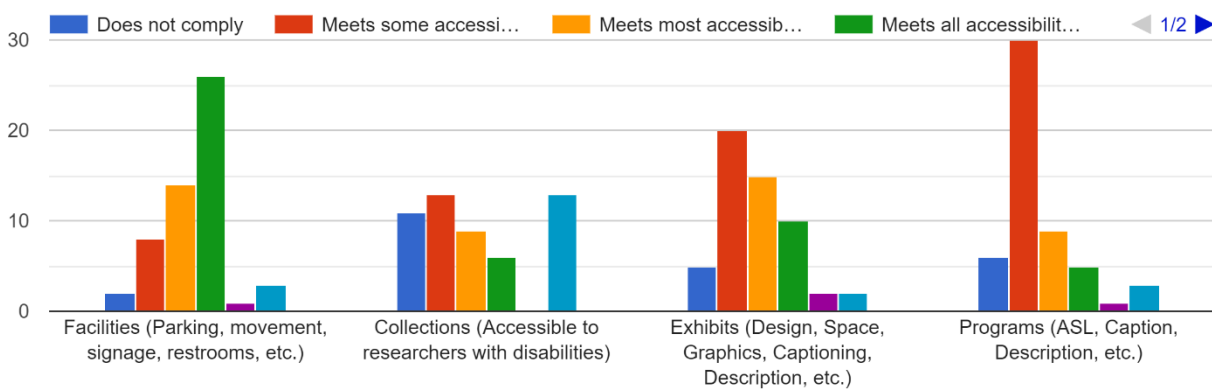


10. How does the organization communicate its accessibility accommodations and programs to its visitors and participants? (Select all that apply)

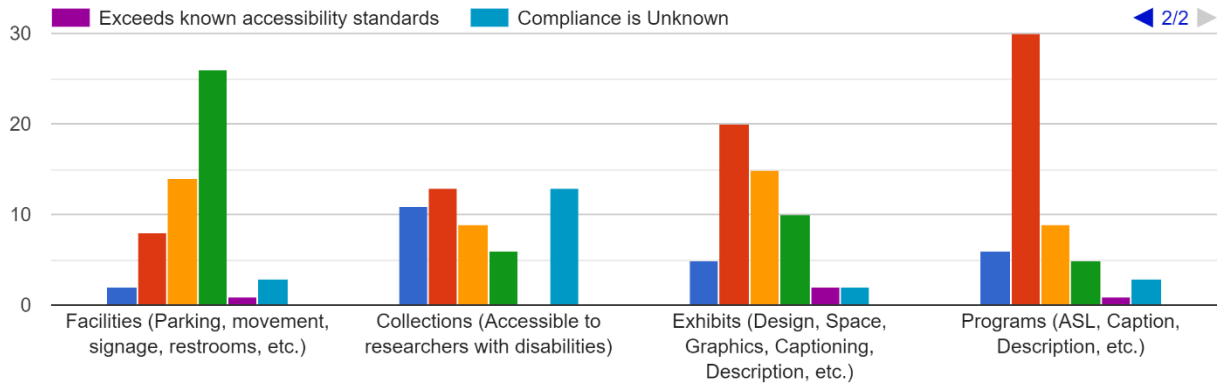
54 responses



11. Rate the following the organization's implementation of accessibility support for all categories of disability (physical/mobility, blind/low vision, Deaf/...logical, developmental/cognitive, dementia/Alzheimer)

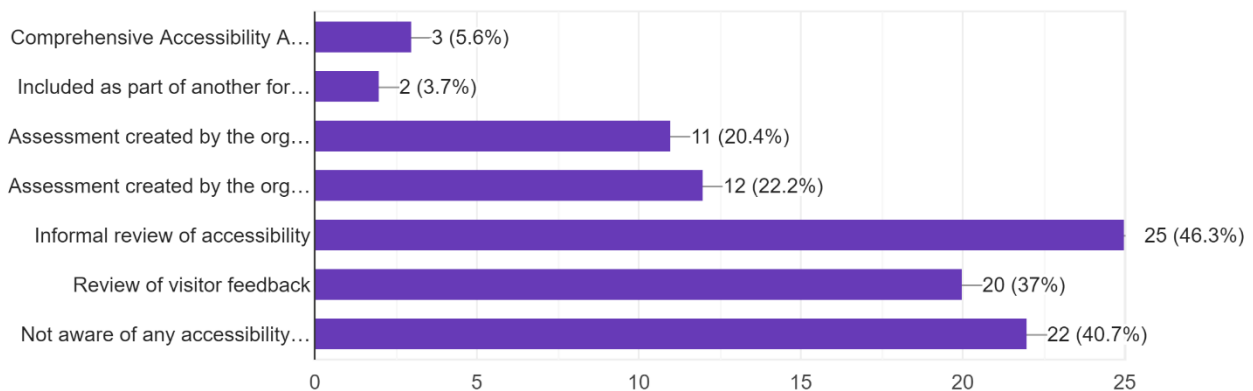


11. Rate the following the organization's implementation of accessibility support for all categories of disability (physical/mobility, blind/low vision, Deaf/...logical, developmental/cognitive, dementia/Alzheimer)



12. What accessibility assessment tools has or will be used to conduct an accessibility evaluation for the organization? (Select all that Apply)

54 responses



13. What is your impression of accessibility in the museum community? (enter answer in text box)

45 responses

I see a lot of movement forward but there are still challenges

Most museums can do better

Ease of entrance, docents to give support

No impression other than an effort is being made to be more accessible.

Not going far enough to provide access across the board and consistently. The costs associated with it have not, but need to be fully integrated into budgeting at my institution and at many others. There is internal pushes by lower level staff, but it has not been fully realized at the leadership levels of many institutions.

Difficult

Large institutions tend to succeed at it more than small ones. I've assumed that this involves having more staff [and their cumulative experience], more staff-hours, more specific roles, and being more likely to put accessibility procedures/policies in place so that everyone is thinking of it. In a small institution, where lots of work is done by volunteers and staff members have many varied responsibilities, it's harder to get everything done, or even to remember that things can/should be. I've made a point of measuring the exhibit area to ensure ADA-compliant pathways, but I've never heard anyone bring up other forms of accommodation while designing programs or exhibits (braille labels, interpretation or captioning, etc.), so it's easy to get overwhelmed or forget. There are no policies in place, to my knowledge, or checklists of accommodations to consider when designing an exhibit/program/video. I will be adding such a procedure to my "to do" list, but it will take time to implement.

It seems to vary widely, and may be somewhat connected to the size/resources of a museum and/or potentially the "progressiveness" of a museum.

It's something many people are aware of, but not very many people put much attention towards.

Varies greatly depending upon the financial stability/size of the museum. For museums that struggle just to stay open, accessibility beyond basic ADA compliance is very challenging. There are simply not enough resources (human or financial) to think about accessibility. When people are simply thinking of how to keep the doors open and get people in the doors, all other issues fade into the background.

Almost completely unaware

Accessibility is a topic that has just started to be broached in museum spaces. Centering disabled voices is the next step in the journey.

Awareness

I think museums as a whole know they need to make their exhibits, programs, etc. accessible, but many are not at a phase yet that they are able to make the changes they want (lack of money, lack of staff, lack of time, etc.). There are also so many accessibility considerations as well as so many ways to address accessibility issues that it can be both overwhelming as well as liberating

(think of how many different ways you can try to address low-vision alone! It's daunting ["Do we need to do ALL of these things?!?"] but also freeing ["If we do even *one* of these things, we're making good first steps! Our audience will love this and find it helpful, and we're showing that we're at least TRYING!").

Lacking to say the least, I've yet to see a museum that truly anyone entering could enjoy and participate in 90% of the same experiences.

It is getting better (slowly) but it is not seen as a priority so concerns (especially regarding special exhibit accessibility) are often brushed off

I think it is more in the light today but there is still a long way to go

needs work. would be amazing to have some field wide standards (or if those exist- make them widely known and accepted)

Everyone aims for ADA compliance as a minimum, and most of us want to do more. But it's a real struggle to hone in on the best course of action because a change/accommodation is usually only or most beneficial to a set of disabilities (visual or auditory or physical or cognitive) so you have to decide who to prioritize with your limited resources.

It seems to only be a priority for large museums who have the staff, funding, etc. to employ accessibility tools.

The museum levels are flat and offer a variety of different mediums

Accessibility is universal seen as necessary, but implementation is uneven for a variety of reasons. The initial fiscal impact is often a serious road block, particularly in smaller institutions or institutions with a fixed income (such as government museums).

the museum community is slowly gaining traction for addressing accessibility; that there is significant desire to increase accessibility but there is not as many necessary changes being made. There is a severe lack of funds/budget allocated to making changes; there needs to be more grants offered to specifically deal with large ticket items like desk & exhibit renovation & consultation, especially for historically preserved sites. As well as more budgeting toward professional training for staff on a usual basis (bi-annual, etc.). Investment needs to be made from the top down and in monetary value to enact change, whereas most of the desire/change-making language I witness happening in the museum community is coming from the bottom up with less decision-making power.

We need more attention and conversations on this topic.

There isn't enough funding, funders need to make this a priority

Terrible in 2021 with Minecraft exhibit and lack of signage or consistent staff guidance for ADA

Museums follow guidelines such as handicap parking, space and ramps for wheel chairs, close captioning of videos and possibly the rental of audio guides, but I don't get the general sense that broad accessibility is on the radar. If the basic ADA laws are met, that box is considered "checked."

Not taken seriously

Decent

The sites with larger attendance tend to comply the most with accessibility standards. Smaller sites, due to either inability to alter historical buildings or lack of funds to comply, offer less. Also involved might be the inability to obtain skilled people to help meet accessibility needs.
in progress

Very few museums implement universal accessibility design any access programs tend to be an afterthought

Needs work

Needs improvement

Less than stellar, by far. 30 years on, we are still struggling.

real accessibility is not often offered/achieved, usually due to scarcity mindset
I think the focus of access in the museum community is mostly on buildings, and adaptive technologies for accessing materials can be quite lacking.

There is very little knowledge about it in the field.

Overall it's pretty good, especially for mobility and for the deaf/hard of hearing.

Overall it seems to be an aspirational goal that individual organizations try to meet.

There has been a lot of focus on accessibility for folks with mobility aids, especially in indoor purpose-built museum spaces, and larger museums seem to be doing a better job in the past ten years in making exhibits accessible to those with vision- or hearing-related disabilities and making their online and digital offerings accessible through alt-text, conscious web design, etc.

Children's museums seem to be leading the way with accessibility design for neurodivergent visitors. Mid- and small-sized museums, as well as historic sites and outdoor museum spaces,

seem to be lagging behind on all accessibility fronts. From my perspective this lag is caused by a lack of staff time and funds to devote to accessibility-focused renovation projects, the slower pace of major new projects that would incorporate accessibility into their planning, and a lack of funds to devote to accessibility services like sign language interpreters for online programs. At all levels and types of institutions, those organizations who already had a culture of thinking about diversity and access before the pandemic seem to be doing more and doing better at making their offerings accessible during and after the pandemic.

I think most larger museums do pretty well in accommodating people with physical disabilities (elevators, ramps to get in and out, wide spaces for access..), but smaller historical museums are often limited by the building they inhabit. My museum is in a historic building with no elevator to the 3rd floor office. It is not an issue for staff, yet, but our older volunteers can no longer manage the stairs so we have to meet them in the volunteer office on the first floor. At some point we will have to put in an elevator or sliding chair on the hand railing, but right now there is no funding for that.

The museum tries to address accessibility concerns as they arose.

Field is becoming more aware, but still has much to learn and implement to be accessible. It's getting better for visitors, but Museum Professionals with disabilities are still being left behind.

14. Is there anything else you would like to share concerning accessibility?

18 responses

No, we are a small, no paid staff museum and work to benefit all who visit us

Tbh, it'd be nice to have the staff and funding to better address our accessibility short-comings. Send me resources

I think I covered most of what I wanted to say in #13 (sorry for complicating your coding). Thank you for this reminder that I should add more accessibility options going forward. Unfortunately, with the equivalent of 2.5 full-time staff, and no institutional history of professionally-trained staff, it's easy for such things to slide, or to run into competing priorities. There's a lot to do, and few hours in the week.

Just to note: on your survey, my institution is classed at "very large," while in most museum surveys, the 75-100 employee range (which we fall into) is categorized as "medium" to "large."

How to make accessibility "accessible" to museums with limited personal and resources is something that would be very helpful.

For our organization, a major roadblock to accessible facilities and an accessible website is time and money.

Staff accessibility may be an HR issue and unknown to other staff/parties

In my last organization, accessibility was something I tried to address, but because of financial considerations (it takes money to implement accessibility changes [creating new exhibit graphics, hiring an ASL interpreter, training for staff), small staff size, and "more important" projects needing to be worked on, increasing our accessibility was not a high priority (despite the fact that our main audience was older men, who, because of their ages, were likely to need some of these accessibility considerations.)

I have a hard time with the term "accessibility" because it is so all encompassing, and everyone usually has a different set of unspoken assumptions when talking about "being accessible". In my museum it includes emotional and cultural safety for Native visitors, not just disability accommodations, so I think the term itself is too broad and amorphous at this point.

Accessibility is built on "shifting sand" and the standards seem to change almost yearly, making it difficult for any institution to provide 100% accessibility to the broadest range of patrons. It would be lovely if there was funding specifically made available for this by foundations or the government or other sources. We recognize to do this well we really need to be able to hire a consultant to do a full assessment and have funding to put those recommendations in place. We do the best we can on our budget with staff researching as we go but it is not ideal. We know to do this right we need to actually have input from the disability community.

Minecraft exhibit in 2021 was abysmal for ADA

We have some folks starting to look at accessibility, but changes that have a monetary cost are always hard to implement.

When accessibility standards are being reviewed, the group conducting the review should not just be administration and consultants. It is important to include one or two members from the field who can identify need or problems as they interact with it daily. It should be a requirement that community members are also in the group to express what is working or not working for them to visit the museum.

I would be very interested in trainings on improving accessibility

No.

Accessibility for those with disabilities can help others as well. A curb cutout for a wheel chair will also help a parent pushing a stroller, or a person with a broken ankle on crutches... larger print on

exhibit labels help those who are sight impaired and those of us who are starting to need 'cheater' glasses to read small print.