

How inclusive is my conference?



DISC
Diversity and Inclusion in
Scientific Computing

A checklist for conference organisers based on the [DISCOVER cookbook](#)

Organizing committee

✓ High effort, high impact

- The organizing committee itself should reflect the diversity you want to create in your conference. Consider age/career stage, gender, race, sexual orientation, social and professional background when assembling your committee.

Venue

🍎 Low effort, high impact

- Seats reserved for wheelchair users and other mobility-impaired people
- Wide aisles between chairs for easy navigation
- Large text signs and easy-to-read maps for people with impaired vision
- Bathrooms: signs posted in restrooms that say something along the following lines: “If you think someone's gender doesn't match the sign on the door, please follow these steps: Don't worry about it, they know better than you.”
- Tampons and pads in all restrooms (some people who identify as male have periods and may need them)
- Nursing and pumping room: Clearly labelled, single-occupancy room with lock dedicated as nursing and pumping room
- Bottle-feeding room: Clearly labelled, gender-neutral, multiple-occupancy room for bottle-feeding babies (different from nursing and pumping room!)
- Quiet room: dedicated room for people to take a break (no phones, no talking, no notification beeps!) which can also be used as a prayer room

✓ High effort, high impact

- Sign-language interpreters or real-time captioning in place for people with hearing impairment
- Easily accessible gender-neutral bathrooms

Catering

🍎 Low effort, high impact

- Labels in front of each dish with list of ingredients and common labels/allergens (e.g. “gluten free”, “kosher”, “includes peanuts”)
- A variety of beverages, in particular non-alcoholic and non-caffeinated

✓ High effort, high impact

- Planned for the following dietary needs: gluten free, dairy free, vegan, vegetarian, pork free, shellfish free, soy free, nut free - especially peanut (this is usually a serious allergy so take extra care), kosher, halal

Code of Conduct

🍎 Low effort, high impact

- Code of Conduct (CoC) in place ([example here](#))
- Tick box at registration where every participant confirms that they have read the CoC
- Copy of CoC included in sponsor packet
- CoC easily accessible on conference website
- Short version included in the printed schedule as reminder
- Mentions in welcome talks and at start of every day, including who to contact if there is a problem

Participant and Speaker Selection

🍎 Low effort, high impact

- Considered specific wording of how talks were solicited so as not to put people with diverse backgrounds off (e.g. call for "speakers who have advice or expertise to share" rather than "experts in best practices")
- Call for Proposals: Are you transparent that you want a broad and diverse group to share expertise? What are the criteria that will be used to assess their submissions? How and why are you trying to shake things up regarding diversity and inclusion compared to previous conferences?
- Attracting attendees: Considered what kind of photos you use to advertise your event and what kind of message that sends about diversity and inclusion

✓ High effort, high impact

- Invited Speakers: Reached beyond the conference organizers' own network and the circle of usual suspects to solicit speakers
- Review of submitted proposals: There is no 100% guaranteed way to avoid bias, but have you done everything you can to mitigate bias in the review process (e.g. by choosing double-blind review)?

Event Registration

🍎 Low effort, high impact

- Can registrants request additional accessibility support?
- Can registrants specify dietary restrictions, in particular severe allergies?
- Can registrants opt out of having their photos taken at the event?
- Is there a check-box for registrants to indicate that they have read the Code of Conduct?

 **High effort, high impact**

- Demographic information is better collected during a post-conference survey, but if you do collect demographic info: are you thoughtful in what you ask and how so as not to alienate people?
- Sufficient measures for anonymity and data security in place

Childcare

 **High effort, high impact**

- Offering financial support for childcare, either through childcare grant or onsite services

Check-in

 **Low effort, high impact**

- System for photography opt-outs in place (e.g. by adding sticker or lanyard to conference badge)
- Pronoun pins (he/him, she/her, they/them), buttons or ribbons in place (optimally colour-coded)

Grants/Scholarships

 **High effort, high impact**

- Offering grants to support attendance of traditionally underrepresented and/or marginalized groups in technology and/or open source communities (including persons identifying as LGBTQ, indigenous, women, persons of color, and/or persons with disabilities) who otherwise wouldn't have the means to participate

Assessment of event

 **High effort, high impact**

- Post-event survey of participants to establish whether your diversity and inclusion measures had an effect