

Inclusive communications

Format

What formats/channels are you using to communicate your content? Are you enabling engagement from a diverse audience?



Consider the needs of your audience, remembering that their needs may stem from characteristics that you cannot see or identify with.



- Design your material to be as legible as possible, including for those who use assistive technology such as screen readers, which read text aloud.
- Consider a diverse range of communication formats, such as videos, podcasts, alternative printed formats (such as large print and Braille), and 'easy read' versions for people with a learning disability.
- For printed materials, matte paper is more readable than glossy paper.





Typeface and design

Is your text easily readable for all users?

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- Use a plain, evenly spaced font. Sans serif fonts are usually more readable for people with dyslexia.
- Use 12-14pt font (14pt is preferable) and 1.5 line spacing.
- Use bold for emphasis, rather than underlining or italics, as these can make text less readable for neurodivergent people.
- Avoid using block capitals as these are harder to read for people with dyslexia, and may not be read properly by screen readers.
- Ensure high contrast between text and background. An off-white or pastel background with black text is more readable for people with dyslexia than black on white.
- Avoid colour combinations that are difficult to distinguish for those with colour blindness, such as green and red. Use resources such as this [Colour Blindness Simulator](#) to check that colour and contrast choices are accessible.
- Social media hashtags should use CamelCase capitalisation - capitalising each word within the hashtag, e.g. #ThisIsAHashtag - so that screen readers can read them correctly.
- Ensure your hyperlink text is clear and descriptive. Use wording such as 'inclusive communications guide' rather than 'www.123inclusivecomms.co.uk' or 'click here'. This benefits people using screen readers and makes your content easier to find.

Images

Are the images you have chosen accessible and appropriate for a diverse audience?



- Choose images carefully to ensure that they are easily understood and support the text.
- Consider what the image may suggest to a wide audience; avoid unintended consequences and perpetuating negative stereotypes through images.
- Maintain high contrast against the background to ensure readability when overlaying text on images.
- Provide image descriptions for digital media (in the 'alt text' field and/or in the caption) so that images remain accessible to screen readers and those on slower internet connections. More information on using alternative ('alt') text is available for many platforms, including through these links for [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Microsoft Word](#).
- On social media, do not rely on screenshots or images to share content; include important information within the post itself and/or a link to a webpage with more details.



Video and audio

Can your whole audience understand your video and audio communications?





- Add subtitles and/or transcripts to video and audio content to make it accessible for D/deaf and hard of hearing people, as well as neurodivergent people and those not fluent in the spoken language.
- Ensure all visually communicated information in a video is also communicated on the audio track, for example, by including an audio description if necessary so that Blind and partially sighted people don't miss any information.
- Avoid strobing or flashing effects in videos or GIFs, as these can be triggers for people with epilepsy or some migraine conditions.
- Avoid setting videos to autoplay on websites or social media.

Language

Is the language inclusive for a diverse audience?
Does it reflect your intentions and values?



- Language should be professional, inclusive and respectful to all.
- Use plain and concise language, avoiding or explaining any jargon.
- Avoid words or phrases that may reflect or perpetuate discrimination, prejudice or stereotyping.
- Consider whether everyday phrases carry unintended meaning. For example, phrases such as 'double-blind' are potentially stigmatising or exclusionary - instead, use 'double-anonymised'.
- Use gender-neutral language to avoid being exclusionary towards women and/or non-binary people.

 INSTEAD OF	 USE
'mankind'	'humanity' or 'people'
'chairman'	'chair'
'spokesman'	'spokesperson'
'he or she'	'they'
'husband or wife'	'spouse' or 'partner'
'mother or father'	'parent' or 'guardian'
'men and women'	'everyone' or 'people of all genders'



Together we can help make chemistry truly for everyone.

See our quick guides for more help with inclusive events, communications, and committees.