

The Early Textiles Study Group

Guidance for handling disability issues at ETSG events

A few simple adjustments can make all the difference to the smooth running and inclusivity of conferences and other events.

1. Ask the person with the disability what his/her needs are.
2. Speak directly to the person and listen to the answer.
3. Remember that they probably have more experience of handling difficulties than you do. If a problem looks insoluble, ask if they have experienced it before and if a strategy is already in place for handling it.
4. Prepare a plan in advance so that both parties know what to expect. Ensure that the disabled person knows who to go to if things go wrong on the day.
5. Remember the right of a disabled person to ask for a 'reasonable adjustment' from institutions (Equality Act 2010). Most academic and government organisations will understand this and provide help free of charge, to support the inclusion of people with disabilities.
6. If things go wrong, avoid allocating blame. Keep the language and tone positive and friendly.

Chair and Committee of ETSG
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