

Accessibility Policy for 2023

Accessibility Policy

This policy is in effect as of 5/10/2023. Readercon's Safety Committee (safecom) and Conference Committee (concom) will annually review these procedures and amend them as needed. "We" and "Readercon" refer to the members of Readercon's committees and corporation.

Readercon welcomes everyone. Accessibility is a vital part of ensuring a safe and enjoyable Readercon. To that end, here are our commitments to accessibility:

- The hotel's restrooms, restaurant, and conference rooms (where most programming takes place) are all on the ground floor with wide hallways. The hotel has elevators, making it easy to attend programming on other floors or visit the Consuite on the ninth floor.
- The Peacefield Room on the second floor is our designated Quiet Room, where lights and voices are low. You are welcome to bring your own fidgets or stimming toys/tools - nothing noisy or scented, please!
- Each conference room will have a wide aisle and taped-off spaces reserved for scooter and wheelchair parking. There will also be designated seats reserved for individuals who need them for accessibility reasons. Please respect the signs.
- Multiple versions of our program guide and schedule grid are available for download on our [program page](#). We've also updated our signage design and placement to promote accessibility; please let us know how we can make them even better.
- We will provide Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) support for some Saturday afternoon and evening program items, including the Guest of Honor interviews. For virtual conferences, all programming will have closed captions.
- **Program Participants:** The Green Room is located on the ground floor. The hotel will install its only ramp to the stage in Salon 4; there will be no ramp to the stage in any other Salon. The smaller rooms will be set up with plenty of space behind the participants' tables for accessibility. If you are a program participant, please email program@readercon.org with any requests for specific accommodations.
- **Bookshop:** We will have a "No Parking or Standing Zone" taped off with white tape in the entrance to the Bookshop to help relieve traffic congestion. Please do not stop to chat in this area.

We strongly encourage all attendees, program participants, volunteers, and staff to treat one another with thoughtfulness and respect. To that end, here are guidelines for the kind of behavior we expect around accessibility issues:

Auditory Accessibility

In spoken conversation, especially in a setting without captioning, avoid cross-talk and speaking over others. In a voice chat without videos, say your name before speaking. In the audience for a program item, don't audibly chat with your neighbors and try to avoid creating auditory disturbances. Respect designated seats for those who are deaf/Deaf, partially deaf, hard of hearing, etc., if asked to repeat yourself, do so without changing what you initially said, your tone of voice, or your volume.

Visual Accessibility

Respect designated seats for those who are blind or low-vision, and keep personal items out of the path of traffic. When sharing an image in Discord, describe it for those who are blind or low-vision. Do not post images, videos, or links that contain rapid strobing or other disturbing visual effects.

Mobility Accessibility

Respect designated seating areas and spaces for scooter and wheelchair parking. Make room for people using mobility aids (canes, walkers/rollators, scooters, service animals, etc.) in hotel spaces and keep items out of the path of traffic.

Allergy Support

Refrain from wearing personal scents if possible; if you need them for your own health or comfort, wear them in moderation. Don't bring pets into the conference space; service animals are always welcome. If you host a room party, label all food with an ingredient list.

Immune Support

In spaces where Readercon or hotel policy requires everyone to wear a mask, wear yours so that it completely covers your nose and mouth. Respect those who choose to wear masks in spaces where it's optional. Bump elbows instead of shaking hands. Wash your hands frequently with soap and hot water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Cognitive Support

Wear your name badge where it can be seen. Don't take it personally if someone you've met before forgets your face or name.

In General

- Don't stare at or question people who are visibly disabled or use assistive devices, who have motor or vocal tics, who stim or move repetitively, or who are taking medication or otherwise treating a disability or medical condition while in the conference space.
- Remember that not all disabilities are visible. If someone is sitting in the reserved seats or making use of our other accessibility resources, assume they have a good reason.
- Think of assistive devices as part of a person's body and treat them with the same consideration. Do not touch another person's assistive device without their express permission. Do not interact with another person's service animal, regardless of whether you believe they are on duty or off duty, unless expressly invited to do so.

- If you think someone may be struggling with a task or in distress, ask whether they need help. If they refuse help, respect that. If they request help, follow their directions. In an emergency, always alert a concom member.

If you have any feedback on the above or suggestions for improvements, please email accessibility@readercon.org.

Thank you for helping to make Readercon a safer, more welcoming, and more equitable space!