

CREATING AN ACCESSIBLE DESTINATION FOR ALL VISITORS

**Practical Steps for an
Accessible Future**



SAGE

INCLUSION



CONFIDENCE CREATED BY KNOWLEDGE



**To empower with knowledge and steps
to start working on accessibility with or
without a big budget.**

Key Focus Areas:



1. Why start now?

2. Steps to begin when you don't have a budget.

3. Long-term planning for accessibility.

Importance of Starting Now



What is a Disability?

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines people with disabilities as people “who have **long-term** physical, mental, intellectual or sensory **impairments** which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their **full and effective participation** in society on an equal basis with others.”

Exploring the Various Types of Disabilities

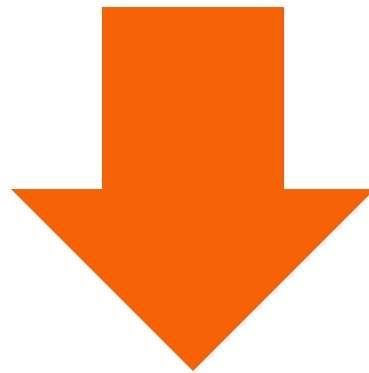
A person's life can be impacted by a wide range of disabilities, including:



- Vision
- Hearing
- Movement
- Thinking
- Remembering
- Learning
- Communicating
- Mental health
- Social relationships

WELCOMING ALL ABILITIES

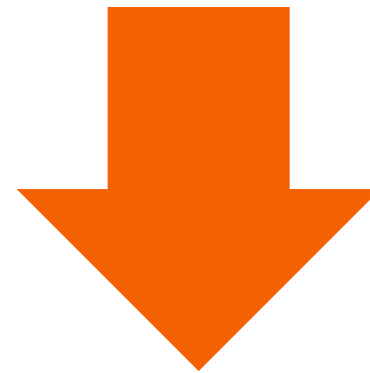
Non-Transparent



- **CHRONIC PAIN/ILLNESS, FATIGUE, SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDERS**
- **COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS THAT CAN IMPACT MEMORY, CONCENTRATION, OR MOOD**

"I CAN'T STAND IN A LONG LINE"

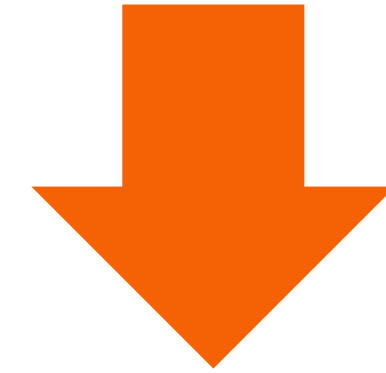
Temporary



- **PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENTS THAT ARE NOT PERMANENT AND ARE EXPECTED TO IMPROVE WITH TIMELITY OR ACTIVITY**
- **PAIN OR DISCOMFORT, REDUCED COGNITIVE FUNCTION (CONCUSSIONS OR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES)**

"I HAD KNEE SURGERY"

Non Self-Identified



- **THE PERSON NOT BEING AWARE OF THEIR DISABILITY**
- **NOT WANTING TO DISCLOSE THEIR DISABILITY**
- **NOT FEELING THAT THEIR DISABILITY IS SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO IDENTIFY WITH**

"I'M NOT DISABLED. I JUST WALK SLOWLY"

WELCOMING ALL ABILITIES



**MOBILITY AND/OR
PHYSICAL
LIMITATIONS**

In-born or
Acquired with
Age



**BLIND/ LOW
VISION**

Blind/legally
blind/limited
vision/low
vision/partially
sighted/visually
impaired



**DEAF/HEARING
LOSS**

Completely or
Partially Deaf



**COGNITIVE
DISABILITY**

Speech
Disorders,
Autism,
Attention
Deficit,
Dyscalculia,
and Memory
loss.



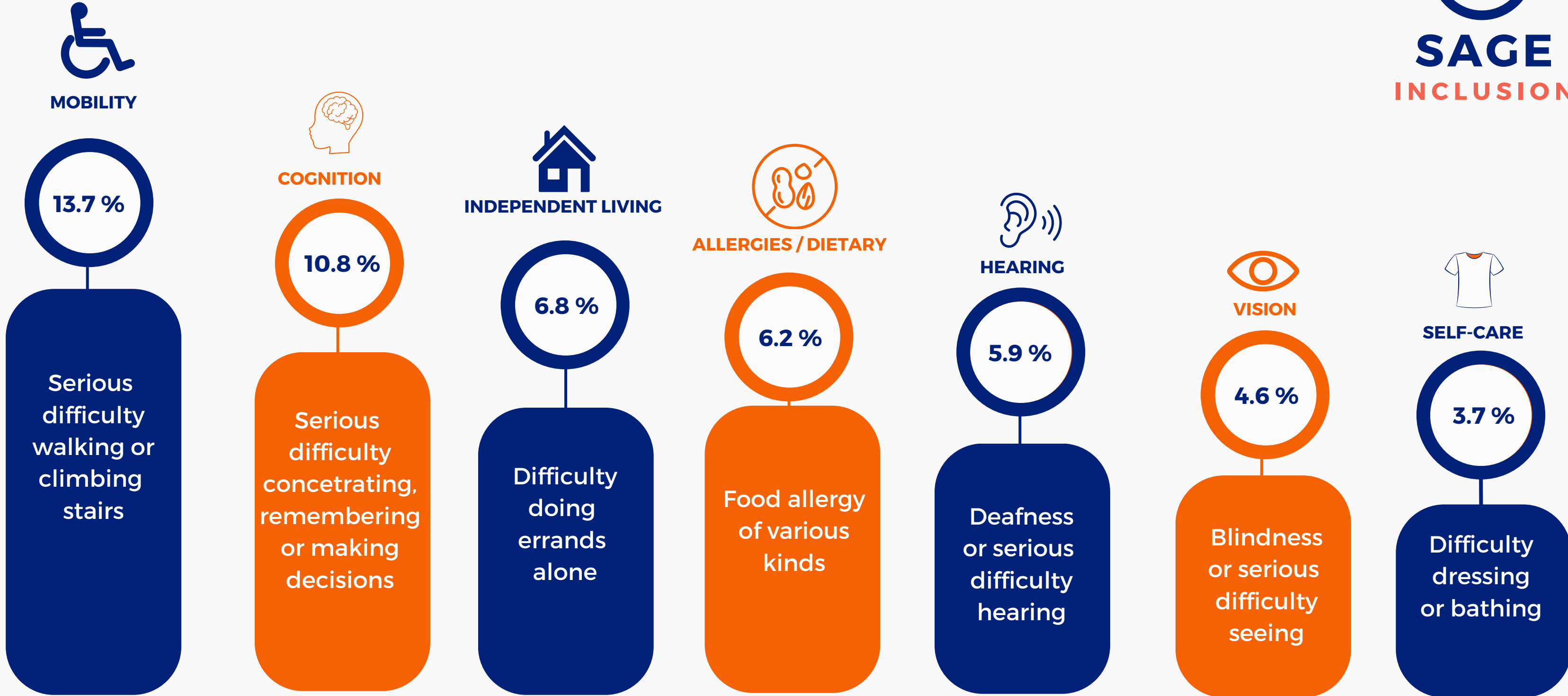
**ALLERGIES /
DIETARY**

Severe
Allergies can
lead to life-
threatening
reactions



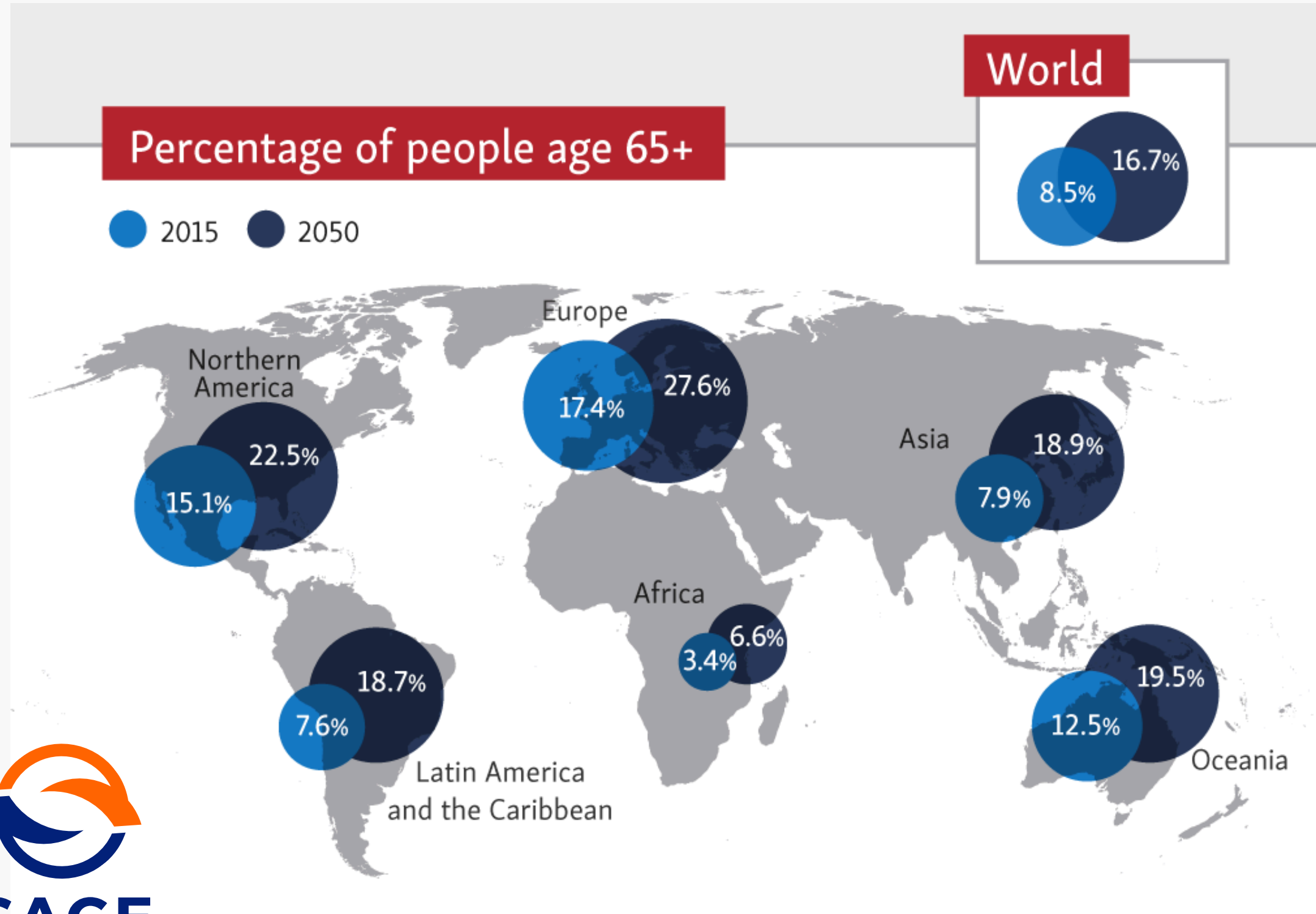
Percentage of Adults with Functional Disabilities **by** Types

US Census: 20% of Americans have a disability



*According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Disability and Health Data System

Ageing Population Tendency



According to the United Nations Population Division, the number of persons aged 65 and older is expected to **double** over the next three decades, reaching **1.6 billion** in 2050.

MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DISABILITIES

Myth #1 All Disabilities are Visible

- Not all disabilities are visible
- Some disabilities, such as chronic pain, mental health conditions, and hearing loss, may not be immediately apparent

Myth #2 - People with Disabilities are Sick and in Constant Pain

- Disabilities are not contagious and do not make someone sick
- People with disabilities should not be treated differently or avoided due to misconceptions about their health



Myth #3 People with Disabilities are Always in Need of Help

- People with disabilities are capable of doing many things independently
- Ask if someone needs assistance before assuming they do
- Respect their answer and provide assistance only if requested

Myth #4 - People with Disabilities are not Interested in Travel or Leisure Activities

- People with disabilities enjoy travel and leisure activities just like anyone else
- Provide accessible accommodations and activities to ensure all guests can fully participate

Steps to Get Started Without a Budget

STEP 1 - CONDUCT A SELF-ASSESSMENT

Review your current infrastructure and digital presence for accessibility gaps.



Here are five basic questions to ask:

Mobility:

Are public transportation options (buses, trains, and taxis) equipped with ramps, lifts, or low-floor entry points to accommodate wheelchair users and people with mobility challenges?

Vision:

Do pedestrian crosswalks, public buildings, and tourist attractions have tactile paving, audible traffic signals, and Braille or large print signage for individuals with visual impairments?

Hearing:

Are public spaces, including visitor centers, museums, and theaters, equipped with visual or vibrating alerts, captioning services, and hearing loop systems for individuals with hearing impairments?

Cognitive/Autism:

Are there sensory-friendly zones or quiet areas in high-traffic public spaces such as airports, museums, and tourist attractions, and do these areas provide clear and simple signage for people with cognitive disabilities?

Allergies:

Do restaurants, hotels, and attractions in the city provide clear labeling of food allergens and accommodate dietary restrictions to ensure the safety of individuals with severe allergies?

STEP 2 - TRAIN YOUR TEAM

Low-Cost Training: Educate staff on disability etiquette and how to assist guests with disabilities.

Use free online resources to provide basic training. Train on clear communication and awareness of different disabilities.



STEP 3 - LEVERAGE EXISTING RESOURCES

Objective 1

Partner with Local Organizations: Seek free advice and support from local disability advocacy groups.



Objective 2

Grants: Research available grants or sponsorships for small accessibility improvements



Objective 3

Online Tools: Use free website accessibility checkers to improve digital access.



Step 4 - Improve Digital Accessibility



Low-Cost Website Fixes: Add alt text to images, improve text readability, ensure navigation via keyboard.

Promote Your Efforts: List any accessibility features you already offer on your website (e.g., wheelchair access, accessible restrooms).

Step 5 - Start Small, Think Big



Signage: Improve clarity of signs and ensure they are readable for those with vision or cognitive impairments.

Simple Changes: Add accessible seating or create areas where people with disabilities can comfortably engage.

Step 6 - Gather Feedback

Feedback



Visitor Feedback: Implement a feedback system for visitors to share their experiences and suggestions.

Improve Based on Feedback: Small, low-cost improvements based on real input can lead to better visitor experiences.

Improve





Long-Term Planning for Accessibility

Why You Need an Accessibility Master Plan

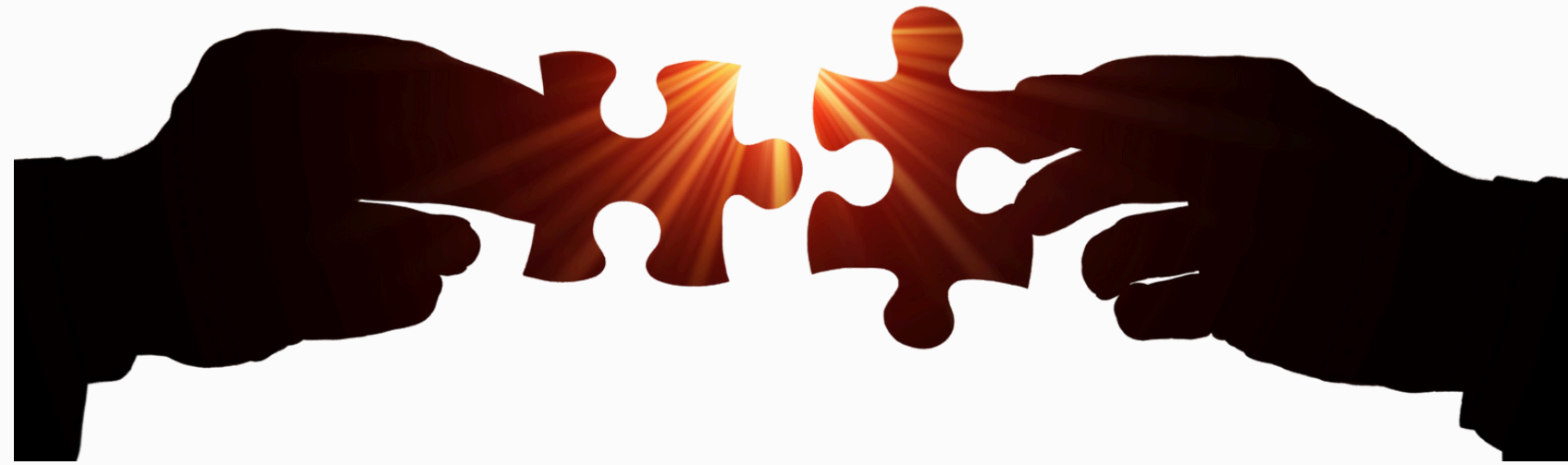


- **Strategic Approach:** An Accessibility Master Plan helps guide you in prioritizing improvements and allocating resources efficiently.
- **Long-Term Goals:** A master plan ensures that your destination is continually improving.

Step 1 - Develop a Roadmap

- **Short-Term Actions:** Identify changes that can be implemented within the next 6 months, like updating your website.
- **Long-Term Vision:** Plan for improvements over 3-5 years, such as collaborating with accessibility experts to enhance accessibility.





Step 2 - Build Partnerships

- **Collaborate with Local Businesses:** Work with hotels, restaurants, and attractions to create a more accessible destination together.
- **Cost-Sharing:** Share resources and costs with these partners to make improvements more affordable.



Step 3 - Seek Funding and Grants



- Explore Funding Opportunities: Look for grants and sponsorships available for accessibility improvements.
- Tip: Sage Inclusion can help you identify potential funding sources for your projects.

Step 4 - Communicate What You're Doing

Market Your Efforts:
Promote the accessibility improvements you've made, no matter how small.



Transparency: Let visitors know what's available and where you plan to improve.

Being open about your progress builds trust with travelers with disabilities.

Step 5 - Monitor Progress



- **Measure Impact:** Use visitor feedback and engagement data to see how your improvements are affecting tourism.
- **Adapt Your Plan:** Continuously update your master plan based on feedback and evolving needs.

Accessibility Is Inclusion

Accessibility goes beyond compliance; it's about making your destination welcoming for everyone.

By starting now, you demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity and equality.



Start Small, Think Big



Begin with Simple Steps: Conduct a self-assessment, train your staff, and make small changes.



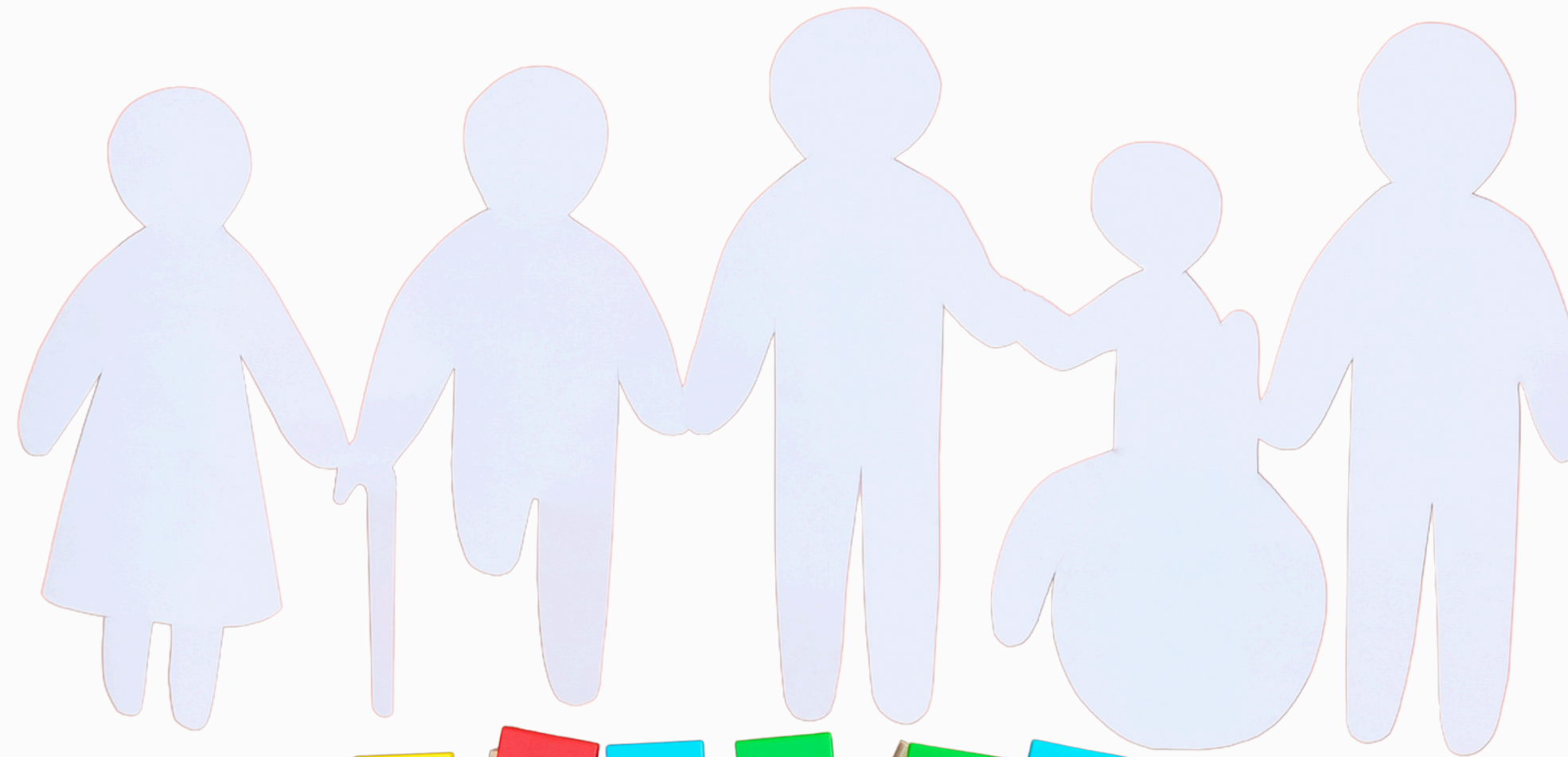
Long-Term Vision: Develop an Accessibility Master Plan and collaborate with local partners.



No-Budget Steps: Even with no budget, there are plenty of impactful changes you can make today.

"Diversity is a fact. Inclusion is an action."

Arthur Chan



I N C L U S I O N

**Take your first step today by
visiting the Sage Inclusion
website.**

**Use the QR code to access our free
assessments and start evaluating
your destination's accessibility.**



