

# Ensuring accessibility for your virtual events during the COVID-19 crisis

## Streamed and live-streamed performances

- Will the performance be live-captioned (preferred) or can the captions be included and synced up for later streaming?
  - Real-time captioning options:
    - Vendor examples - [National Captioning Institute](#), [CaptionAccess](#), and [Streamtext](#).
    - Other vendors are available via internet search.
  - Post-production and DIY captioning options:
    - Upload video to YouTube and use the platform to add captions. Be sure to edit them because auto-generated captions are not always accurate.
    - Vendor examples - [Rev.com](#), [Alternative Communications Services](#), and [ASLCaptions](#). Other vendors are available via internet search.
    - For more information see [How to Caption Your Videos](#) - by Tina Childress, See Hear Communication Matters Blog.
- Will you provide sign language interpretation in American Sign Language? (ASL) Many platforms allow sign language interpretation alongside the performance or discussion.
  - ASL interpreters can be found via the [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf](#), or search for ASL interpreting companies that offer video relay or video remote interpreting services.
- Consider adding visual description of your performance videos for people with vision disabilities. The [American Council of the Blind](#) has information on audio description, and a [list of audio description vendors](#).

## Virtual exhibitions and collections

- Will all images include alternative text for people who are blind or have low vision and use screen-reading software? Alternative text (also called “alt attribute”, “alt text”, or “alt-tag”) is a visual description of an image that can be added using image formatting tools to describe the image for screen-reader users. Social media platforms also allow users to add alt text to their images before they are posted.
- Ensure videos are captioned and consider adding visual description (see above).

## Videoconferencing & webinars

- Will the webinar be live-captioned? Note: Since webinars provide a platform for people to ask questions and interact with the speakers in real time, live captions allow people who are deaf or hard of hearing to participate in real time.
- Are presenters making their material as accessible as possible? Be sure to:
  - Describe all images used in the presentation.
  - Use text that is high-contrast and in a large, legible font. Avoid italics and specialty or decorative fonts.
  - Balance the need to provide visual information for visual learners with the need to keep the text concise.
- Real-time captioning options:
  - Vendor examples - [National Captioning Institute](#), [CaptionAccess](#), and [Streamtext](#).
  - Other vendors are also available via internet search.
- Examples of platforms with accessibility features (please note that automated captions do not replace a live person captioning):
  - [Zoom – Accessibility](#) and [Zoom – Getting Started with Closed Captioning](#) (3rd party vendor required)
  - [Google Hangouts Meet Accessibility](#) (automated captions)
  - [BlueJeans](#) (automated)
  - [Jitsi Meet](#) (automated)
  - Other vendors available via internet search.
- For more information see [Captioning Options for Videoconferencing and Learning Management Systems](#) - by Tina Childress, See Hear Communication Matters Blog

## Online Learning Events

- Do your students need accommodations, such as real-time captioning or ASL (American Sign Language) interpreting?
- Is there a convenient way for students to request accommodations via phone or email?
- Are videos captioned? See caption options above.
- Is the platform accessible for a person who uses screen-reading software, such as a person who is blind or has low vision?
- Have you communicated with the vendors of the online platforms to understand what their capabilities are for accessibility?
- [#DeafEdTips: E-Learning Accessibility](#) - blog by the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education