

# Art Shanty Projects Access Plan-

## 2020-2021

**INTRODUCTION:** Art Shanty Projects is an artist-driven temporary community exploring the ways in which relatively unregulated public spaces can be used as new and challenging artistic environments. The organization values artists, the communities in which we present and the importance of interaction between them. Through an array of artists receiving fair wages for their work, we wish to broaden definitions of art and artist while maintaining respect for the environment and creating positive cultural impact.

Art Shanty Projects embraces the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in our commitment to assuring that all members of our community can participate as fully as possible in our arts events, programs, meetings, facilities and communications.

The Operations Director will serve as an Accessibility Coordinator, conduct an Accessibility Audit, and draft Accessibility Policy. This policy will be vetted during the March 24, 2020, Board Meeting and voted it into effect on April 5th 2020. An outside consultant will be hired to help address gaps and train artists, staff, board and volunteers in compliance.

### **ON ICE EVENT ACCESSIBILITY:**

#### **Current Status:**

- The On-Ice Program occurs on the frozen surface of a Minnesotan lake which is not an inherently accessible space. The lake provides both barriers and unique opportunities to find creative, site-specific accessibility solutions. Given our interdisciplinary approach, we have more flexibility and opportunity to adjust and welcome different ways of presenting and accessing art.
- Physical accessibility varies from shanty to shanty. The artist manual encourages artists to make sure shanties are accessible, but provides minimal guidance.
- A ramp is rented annually to take visitors from the shore to the surface of the lake. Art Shanty Projects provides accessible bathrooms, accessible parking, and a path to the entrance and around the village that is clear, accessible, and navigable
- We do not currently maintain or provide information about sensory accessibility.
- Art Shanty Projects is committed to ensuring that Deaf and/or Blind participants can enjoy our event. We have adopted the practice of scheduling daily interpretation by professional Sign Language interpreters and Audio Describers.
- Much of the signage in the village is low contrast and difficult to read from a distance or by low-vision individuals.
- During the 2020 On-Ice season an accessibility consultant provided on-site evaluation and feedback about overall village design, specific shanty design, and printed materials.

- A shanty artist group built additional kicksleds for their project that were also made available to visitors to use to get from shore to the village and to navigate between projects, supplementing the one existing ASP kicksled. These were utilized by a number of visitors and artists/performers. They were more difficult to get in and out of than the existing ASP kicksled- lacking arm rests and with an additional slope from the seat to the skis- but highlighted the utility of having multiple available kicksleds on ice.

**Goal:**

- All shanties will have opportunities for engagement by people with varying access needs.
- All participants will have access to information about accessibility considerations for each shanty.
- Art Shanty Projects will provide explicit guidance and resources for artists to implement accessibility best practices and ADA compliance.
  - **Next Steps:**
    - Before June 2020: compile and develop artist resources on ADA building standards and accessible shanty best practices.
    - Before June 2020: integrate into the artist call specific questions about how shanties will be designed accessibly, and explicit language about updated expectations around accessible building.
    - Before June 2020: Develop checklist for AD to bring to artist check-ins.
    - 2020-2021 information gathering year about how we can best support artists.
    - After artist selection (late summer/fall 2020): provide manual with updated information about accessibility best practices and expectations.
    - During site visits (November-January 2020): check in about shanty accessibility and provide additional feedback and support as needed.
    - Fall 2020 develop post program artist assessment tools about these artist/design-focused accessibility initiatives.
    - January 2021: print map inserts for village guides that include short descriptions of each shanty and accessibility notes as needed (eg door width, full dark immersion, sensory concerns). Update shanty descriptions on the website with accessibility information. (Collect information in advance, clarify during installation weekend) Print just enough for the first weekend to give us time to adjust for future weekends
    - (February-March 2021) Use post program artist assessment tools to gather information about how we can improve support in 2022.
    - **Longer term (beyond 2021) goal:** have digital versions of maps/resources that exist for folks with low vision or an alternative way to navigate the program that is appropriate for a very cold outdoor event.

**Goal:**

- Have sufficient kick-sleds to meet the demand of visitors and artist groups, so that we

can always provide this resource with minimal delay whenever they are needed or would support someone's participation.

- (August-November 2020) Based on best-practice design as observed at the 2020 on-ice event, design and build additional kicksleds for the ASP owned fleet. Kick sleds should have seats that lots of sizes of bodies can comfortably fit in and easily get in and out of.

**Goal:**

- All village signage is high contrast, large enough to read, and at a height that can be read by standing and sitting visitors.
  - **Next Steps:**
    - Evaluate what signage at the 2020 event did not work well (low contrast, too small) and what signage did work well.
    - December 2020: print signage for village utilizing sans serif font at least 18-point, with high contrast, at an appropriate height for persons standing or in chairs to read.

**What the event looks like when this work is done well:**

- There is a ramp from shore to the surface of the lake, accessible bathrooms, accessible parking, and a path to the entrance and around the village that is clear, accessible, and navigable. Our budget includes provisions to build these into the infrastructure of the On-Ice Event.
- ASL interpretation and audio describers are available every day we are open to the public.
- The artist manual provides explicit expectations and best practice guidance about ramps, door widths, and other barriers to accessibility and ADA compliance. Artists get support and feedback throughout the build process so they have the tools they need to build accessible shanties.
- All shanties have opportunities for engagement by people with varying access needs.
- Visitors know what to expect, accessibility-wise, at each shanty.
- Accessibility is built into the fabric of how we do art and what we expect from artists.

**COMMUNICATIONS ACCESSIBILITY:**

**Current Status:**

- Most communications with board members, individuals or organization members, artists and the general public currently involve in-person meetings, telephone, e-mail, print media, mailings, website, and Facebook.
- Inconsistent use of alt text across website and social media platforms.
- Website ([artshantyprojects.org](http://artshantyprojects.org)) has not been audited for accessibility.

**Current Policies:**

- Art Shanty Projects will provide notification of meetings, programs and other opportunities for constituents at least two weeks prior to the announced activity.

Notices will be posted on the Art Shanty Projects website ([www.artshantyprojects.org](http://www.artshantyprojects.org)).

**Goal:** Ensure the website is accessible.

**Next steps:**

- 2020-21: Work with a consultant to assess the accessibility of the current website. Update current website to meet accessibility standards. Develop a manual and training for staff and board for ongoing website accessibility maintenance.

**Goal:**

- Upon request, our written information and publicity will be made available in alternative formats including email, large print, Braille or electronic.
- Art Shanty Projects will arrange and pay a sign language interpreter for meetings between staff or board members and individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing. We will budget for and publicize the provision of interpreters for designated public presentations, workshops and programs. We will also publicize our policy for requesting a professional Sign Language interpreter which states the organization reserves the right to have a minimum one week prior notification of interpreter need outside of scheduled programming. We will remind participants to speak clearly and to identify themselves when necessary so that all can hear, know who is speaking and participate.
- **Next Steps:**
  - Update list of interpreters used to schedule for the 2020 event including rates and preferred contact.
  - Identify who on the board or staff reaches out to interpreters as needed.
  - Research and develop an internal manual of how to provide materials in accessible formats (costs, where, who does it).

**OFF ICE EVENTS ACCESSIBILITY:**

**Current Status:**

- Art Shanty Projects does not own or rent any facilities. Board meetings take place at facilities which are wheelchair accessible.
- We maintain a policy to arrange for meeting spaces or venues to assure that entrances, rooms, bathrooms and audience areas are physically accessible to persons with mobility impairments. This physical access pertains to parking, entrance areas, movement to and through the activity area, and restroom facilities. The board will work with other venue owners to make accommodations for accessibility and assure that all people can enter and exit safely.

**Goal:** Have an on-hand list of venues appropriate for various kinds of off ice gatherings that meet our accessibility requirements and have aligned organizational values.

- **Next Steps:**

- Identify what events we have throughout the year. (Number of attendees, internal or external, technology needs, food needs, lighting, noise level).
- Identify potential venues.
- Visit venues, evaluate if they are good fits, get prices, cultivate relationships.

**ENGAGEMENT WITH PEOPLE IN ACCESSIBILITY COMMUNITIES:**

**Current Status:**

- Individuals with disabilities comprise a small percentage of our artists, audience, and other stakeholders.
- There is not currently an outreach strategy for reaching members of disability communities during our call for artists and only minimal outreach to audiences in disability communities during the On Ice Event.
- There is not currently a strategy for soliciting feedback about accessibility from members of disability communities.
- In seeking a diversity of people, talents and abilities to participate in our organization, staff, board, volunteers, artists, etc., we include people with disabilities among other groups whom we wish to attract and serve.
- The On-Ice Program is free admission for everyone in order to encourage attendance. We publicize this policy in our publications, news releases, website, production manual and other correspondence.

**Current Policy:**

- We publicize efforts for greater mobility and accommodations for the disability community in our print/email/social media publicity, [artshantyprojects.org/access](http://artshantyprojects.org/access), and through Minnesota’s Accessible Activities Calendar. We will use accessibility graphics (symbols for wheelchairs, ASL, Audio Description, etc) in advance publicity to make people aware of accommodations that are available. Deadlines will be indicated.

**Goal:** We will allocate funds for outreach to artists with disabilities and funds to address barriers as identified by participating artists.

● **Next Steps:**

- Summer 2020-On Ice 2021: Identify barriers in artist call, artist events, and on ice event.
- Summer 2020-On Ice 2021: Identify potential partnerships. Invite potential partners to 2021 On Ice event- begin building relationships which may include learning about their artistic practice, have follow up conversations about potential interest in participating and how ASP can better support.

**Goal:** Get meaningful feedback from folks in disability communities who are already actively engaged in ASP.

**Goal:** Develop a strategic plan for outreach, feedback, and engagement.

**ONGOING ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING:**

**Policy:** This Access Plan will be reviewed annually by the Art Shanty Projects Board of Directors after completion of each On-Ice Program season. Iterations of this living document will be used as an evolving tool and process to guide the organization towards continued improvements for greater access. Our organization will seek consultation from key resources, such as the Minnesota Council on Disability, and local access consultants for information regarding specific accessibility resources, publications and/or access guides and surveys.

**Policy:** New board members will be provided a copy of the Access Plan as part of the Board Manual used for orientation, training, and reference.

**Policy:** Art Shanty Projects will include a budgetary line-item for Accessibility resources for items such as professional sign language interpreters, audio description, Braille, large print, website formatting for accessibility features, training, ramp for the On-Ice Event, and event expenses related to ADA compliance in order to maintain and improve ongoing implementation of this Access Plan.

- **Goal:** Integrate accessibility into our mission/vision/values and overall strategic plan as an organization.
  - **Next Steps:**
  - Identify our current understanding of access/ accessibility. Board evaluates current mission/vision/values, reworks to integrate accessibility.
- **Goal:** update our 504/ADA grievance policy to better match our values and how we function as an organization. We want it to be easy to use, so that we can receive, respond to, and improve with feedback.
  - **Next Steps:**
  - Obtain other 504/ADA grievance policies for comparison, with a focus on other arts organizations.
  - Identify how we already receive feedback (email, facebook, etc)- how should we integrate different sources of feedback? Should we make a google form? How can we ensure it is accessible?
  - Update grievance policy.
  - Post updated grievance policy clearly on our website in both the feedback and accessibility sections, and anywhere else as appropriate.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The general public as well as Art Shanty Projects employees, Board members and volunteers may, at any time, submit comments, complaints or grievances regarding the organization's efforts to make its programs, events and facilities accessible to people with disabilities. These comments can be received by email, snail mail, or voicemail. All comments in this regard will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for consideration. (SEE Grievance Policy at the end of this Access Plan.)

Art Shanty Projects will strongly encourage organizations who partner with us in presentations or events to follow the policies above and make every effort to ensure compliance with these

policies.

When Art Shanty Projects is one of many collaborators / funders / sponsors at an event / performance / presentation, even when it is not the main (or largest) of the collaborators, the organization will work to ensure that goals listed in these Access Policy Statements are achieved. The organization will work diligently to implement its policies and use these opportunities to educate and advocate for improved access in future collaborations.

This updated report is presented to the Board of Directors on March 24, 2020

Arlo Sombor, Operations Director

## 504/ADA Grievance Procedure for Art Shanty Projects

Art Shanty Projects makes every effort to make its programs accessible to artists, arts organizations, community groups and other constituents. To ensure these programs remain accessible, we set forth this grievance policy and procedures for individuals to file complaints about aspects of our programs or services which they deem inaccessible.

1. The general public as well as Art Shanty Projects employees, Board members and volunteers may, at any time, submit comments, complaints or grievances regarding the organization's efforts to make its programs, events, and facilities accessible to people with disabilities. These comments should be in writing, via e-mail or an acceptable alternative format. All comments in this regard will be forwarded to the Art Shanty Projects Board of Directors for consideration.
2. Grievances will be communicated to the Operations Director in written or verbal form, or in a means of communication most appropriate to the person filing the grievance. The individual or organization filing a grievance will bear any costs necessary to prepare and present the grievance to the Operations Director.
3. A grievance will include the following:
  - a. Full name, address, and telephone number, and the name of the person alleging discrimination, if different;
  - b. The specific program or service involved in the complaint;
  - c. Date of the incident;
  - d. A description of the specific complaint about the accessibility of the program or service;
  - e. Other information that you believe necessary to support your complaint.Do not send original documents or materials. Please send copies and retain originals.
4. The Operations and/or Artistic Director(s) will conduct an investigation of the grievance and will respond within 30 days from the date of the grievance in a form of communication most appropriate to the grievor (e.g., Braille, large print, email, etc.). This will be done at the organization's expense.

If additional action is needed, the The Operations and/or Artistic Director(s) will seek the expertise of other related entities for advice and direction including the Minnesota State Council on Disability and the Minnesota State Arts Board.

5. The decision of the The Operations and/or Artistic Director(s) may be appealed to the Board of Directors by presenting the above materials, the Director's decision, and your reason for appealing the decision within 30 days from the date of the Director's decision.

The appeal will be presented to the Board at its next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The decision of the Board will be set forth by the Board Chairs 10 days after the Board meeting and will be the final step in this grievance policy. Such appeal would be sent to the Board Chairs with a copy sent to the Operations Director.

6. In all complaint cases, Art Shanty Projects will look for good faith compliance with ADA/504 regulations and gestures of reasonable accommodations toward individuals with disabilities. If Art Shanty Projects is unable to resolve the complaint, the Board Chairs will refer the complaint to the appropriate state or federal agency.