Diversity and inclusion at events and conferences

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My background

- Currently a data scientist at Medium, PyLadies organizer
- Previously a Student Ambassador at UCL
- Inaugural DISC Unconference participant
DISCOVER Cookbook

https://github.com/numfocus/DISCOVER-Cookbook
Contents

- Organizing committee
- Venue Selection & On-Site Services
- Catering
- Childcare
- Code of Conduct (CoC)
- Grants/scholarships
- Participant selection
- Event registration
- Inclusive practices during check-in
Organizing committee
Organizing committee

- Diversity and inclusion starts with you!
- It should reflect the diversity you want to create in your conference and event - special care should be taken to recruit participants as diverse as the event you’re trying to organize
Venue Selection and On-Site Services
Accessibility considerations - mobility

• Reserve seats in the front (or easily accessible seats)
• Create wide aisles between seats
• ”No standing zones”
• Recording
• Provide large-text signs and easy-to-read maps
• Sign-language interpreting or real-time captioning
• Hand-held microphones
• Encourage session chairs to repeat questions
Accessibility considerations - bathrooms

- Gender-neutral bathrooms
- Tampons/pads in all restrooms
- Wheelchair accessible restrooms
- Fragrance-free hand wash
- Labels
IF YOU THINK SOMEONE’S GENDER DOESN’T MATCH THE SIGN ON THE DOOR, PLEASE FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS:

1. DON’T WORRY ABOUT IT, THEY KNOW BETTER THAN YOU.
Accessibility considerations – rooms

• Clearly labeled!
• Don’t allow people to use them for other purposes
• Nursing & pumping room
• Gender-neutral bottle feeding room
• Quiet room
Catering
Common dietary needs

- Gluten free
- Dairy free
- Vegan
- Vegetarian
- Pork/soy/nut free
- Kosher
- Halal
Other considerations

- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Labels
Childcare
Financial support for childcare

• Build it into your budget
  – Donations/sponsorships
  – Ask how many people will need it?

• Choose between:
  – On-site services
  – Grants
    • Will they need to submit an invoice?
On-site services

- Number of companies specializing in this
- Parallel event for older kids
  - E.g. coding for kids at PyCon UK
Code of Conduct (CoC)
Goals

• Easy to read and find
• How to report?
  – In person, email, form
• Consequences of violations
• Include deadlines/timelines
• Two versions: quick and longer
Awareness

- Registration
- Sponsor packet
- Speaker guidelines
- Easily access on the website
- Short version on printouts
- Keep on mentioning it (emails, welcome talks)
Reporting

- Confidentiality
- Data storage
- Awareness on reporting mechanism
- Authority figures
Enforcement

• How long will it take?
• Have a process in place
• Third party review
• Reporter should be aware of steps in place
Grants/scholarships
Why funding is important

- Registration
- Travel and lodging
- Eligibility
  - Decide beforehand
- Payment
  - Upfront/claims etc.
- Where to seek funding
Participant selection
Speakers

• Invited speakers
  – Reach beyond your networks
  – Consider wording

• Selecting speakers
  – Call for Proposal Instructions
  – Speaker training
  – Incentivize first-time speakers
Attracting attendees

- What is your event about?
- Photos
- Partner with organizations and meetups
- Scholarships
- Advertise CoC
CFP review

- Open vs Blind/Closed
- Double Open
- Double Blind
Event Registration
Registration form

- Outline accessibility you plan to provide
- Ask about needs
- Grants
- Dietary restrictions
- Photo policy
- T-shirts
Demographic information

• Why do you need it?
• Alienating questions
  – Not having an option that matches your identity can be fairly alienating
• Data storage and access
Suggested format for demographic question

- "Do you self-identify as an underrepresented minority in either the [conference] community or in your professional field?""Along which dimension(s) you self-identify as underrepresented? Check all that apply:
  - Gender identity
  - Ethnicity, nationality, skin color, race
  - Sexual orientation
  - Socioeconomic status
  - Religion
  - Age
  - Ability
  - Do not wish to provide
  - Other (please specify)
Inclusive practices during check-in
Check-in

- Photography permissions
- Pronoun pins/ribbons/buttons
- Welcoming new attendees
- Social events
  - First-time attendee
  - Evenings
  - Alcohol
Other considerations
Other considerations

• Scent policy
• Smoking policy
Thank you