Digital Accesibility Handout

Instructions

✓ Identify the issue/s surrounding equity, access and belonging in each scenario.

✓ Reflect on how this situation may, or may not, be relevant or present in your own chorus.

✓ Brainstorm a range of possible responses to the scenario.

✓ Determine who in your chorus is responsible to speak up, challenge, or support the issue presented?

✓ Record your conversations and responses for reporting back to the larger group.

Scenarios for Discussion

1. Amir clicks on your choir audition welcome video. It has no captions so he contacts the chorus to indicate he needs captions in order to access the video. You have never received a request like this before and no one in the chorus knows how to caption a video. A week later you realize that no one has responded to Amir and auditions are coming up.

2. A singer with low vision requests a digital copy of a piece of music so that they can use the zoom feature on their tablet to make the words and notes bigger. You scan the music and email it to them but are surprised when you receive an email the next day saying that they cannot read it because the words and notes become distorted when magnified.

3. Your chorus has decided to go green. Rather than printing paper programs, your website lists a URL to download a digital program. Printed signs outside the concert hall also include a QR code to access the program digitally.

4. A new soprano singer signs up for auditions and indicates in the notes field that she is blind. She arrives 10 minutes late because she is not able to read the sign on the front door indicating how to enter the building, and no one was available at the chorus office phone. She indicates that she has perfect pitch and is able to recall and learn music very quickly. At the first rehearsal, the music librarian hands her a music packet and let's her know that rehearsal tracks will be ready by the third rehearsal.

Action Steps

What are some concrete steps your chorus could undertake to better address digital accessibility?

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Digital Accessibility Checklist

The following guidelines should be implemented in any content platform you use: email, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Google Docs, HTML, etc. This list can be used as a quick reference whenever you are creating new content.

☐ **HEADINGS**: Provide headings and titles to organize and structure your content.

☐ **COLOR**: Use color contrast for text and image content. Colors alone (i.e. red text) should not convey information. If you want to emphasize, use color with bold and underline. Colors should have good contrast.

☐ **STYLE**: Consider increasing your line spacing. Text should be written at an 8th-grade reading level or below.

☐ **FONTS**: Fonts should be san-serif and at least 14 pt. whenever possible.

☐ **LINKS**: Create hyperlinks with link text that provide an informative description of the destination website rather than just pasting the actual URL. Indicate the file type if the destination is not a webpage. For example: New Harmony Workbook - PDF.

☐ **IMAGES**: Make images accessible by adding a text-based description of what is seen using alt text, and consider captions. Images should be in line with the text rather than wrapped. Images with important text information should be typed into the document. Don't use pictures of tables which are not readable.

☐ **VIDEO**: Use audio descriptions to convey the visual content of a video. Never autoplay videos and avoid pop-ups on your website.

☐ **CAPTIONS**: Provide closed captions for videos and transcripts for audio files.

☐ **TABLES**: Use table headers and captions; avoid the use of merged cells. It is important to only use tables when they are needed for data, and not use them solely for visual formatting. Navigating tables using assistive technology requires extra steps and can cause confusion.

☐ **LYRIC TRANSCRIBING**: For singers who are blind, or individuals with low level vision, it can be helpful to transcribe the text of musical scores exactly as they appear for the individual voice part needed. These text transcriptions can also include dynamic markings, breath marks, and other relevant score notes.

☐ **BRAILLE MUSIC**: GOODFEEL® Braille Music Translator can transcribe Finale, Sibelius and other music notation software into Braille music scores.

☐ **REHEARSAL TRACKS**: These can be an excellent tool for singers who are blind or have limited sight, but they are also helpful for singers who simply do not read music. Make sure that each voice part is highlighted prominently enough to be easily distinguishable, and that the format for downloading or streaming rehearsal tracks is accessible.

☐ **DIGITAL COMMUNICATION**: Ensure that singers and audiences have an alternative way to access digital chorus communication (or QR codes) especially if they do not have access to a computer or smartphone.

☐ **IMAGES OF TEXT**: Use a PDF files is exported from software rather than scanning a document as an image. PDF files exported from software can be viewed and read exactly as they were originally created. A scanned image cannot be read by screen readers.

☐ **SIGNS**: Make sure that signage for events is accessible to all, or provide volunteers to assist singers or audience members who are not able to read signs.