



**UIA
GUIDELINES
ON ACCESSIBLE AND
INCLUSIVE BUILT
ENVIRONMENTS**

2019 EDITION

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARCHITECTS



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INCLUSIVE BUILT ENVIRONMENTS
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INTRODUCTION

I. COMMITMENT



- 1.1 The International Union of Architects (UIA) is committed to the global development, maintenance and improvement of accessible and inclusive built environments

2. CONTEXT



- 2.1 The UIA supports the political, social and humanitarian objectives of the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the World Health Organisation’s Disability Action Plan, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. In particular it will work to support the following:
 - **To make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.** Ref: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development SDG 11 adopted at UN Summit September 2015
 - **To promote safer, inclusive, accessible green and quality public spaces.** Ref: New Urban Agenda – Quito Declaration (Habitat III) adopted by UN General Assembly, December 2016
 - **To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life.** Ref: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Article 9
 - **To adopt accessibility and universal design as core principles into national, sub-national and local action plans for implementing the New Urban Agenda through inclusive, accessible and participatory processes.** Ref: World Urban Forum Declaration on Cities 2030, Kuala Lumpur February 2018.

3. PRINCIPLES



- 3.1 The UIA recognises that for architecture to truly benefit and reflect society’s needs it must be inclusive of all who use it, irrespective of their age, ability, gender, education, sexual orientation, ethnicity or culture.
- 3.2 Inclusive and universal design (also sometimes referred to as accessible design or design for all) aims to remove barriers that create undue effort or segregation and to achieve sustainable buildings and places which are user-friendly, accessible and understandable for everyone.
- 3.3 The UIA seeks to ensure that inclusively designed environments which support diversity, foster a strong sense of community and achieve the best possible outcomes for health and well-being, are central to architectural practice.
- 3.4 The UIA acknowledges the responsibility of architects to contribute to the provision of universal access throughout the built environment as a basic human right

4. GUIDELINES



- 4.1 The UIA will use its international influence to promote the principles of accessibility, inclusion and universal design in high quality architecture and the role of architects in creating accessible and inclusive built environments
- 4.2 The UIA will ensure that each UIA Commission (Architectural Education, International Competitions, Professional Practice and Sustainable Development) and its Work Programmes embed the principles of accessibility, inclusion and universal design in all areas of work within their remit
- 4.3 The UIA will highlight the relevant criteria in the UNESCO-UIA Charter for Architectural Education which call for an understanding of the relationship between people, buildings and the spaces between them, the requirement to relate these to human needs and scale, and the importance of ergonomics, equity and access.
- 4.4 The UIA will ensure that universal and inclusive design is included as a qualitative criteria in all UIA Competitions and when selecting UIA Medal and Prize Winners
- 4.5 The UIA will continue to participate with the International Standards Organisation in the development of standards for access and use of the built environment
- 4.6 Recognising the unique and sensitive nature of implementing accessible and inclusive design modifications in existing and historic buildings the UIA will encourage collaboration with specialists with particular conservation and access skills when implementing appropriate access solutions in the heritage and conservation contexts.
- 4.7 The UIA will acknowledge and promote exemplary practice in inclusive design through its support for the UIA Friendly and Inclusive Spaces Awards and its support for the UIA Architecture for All Work Programme
- 4.8 The UIA will actively encourage its member sections to formulate and develop policies on access and inclusion and ensure the principles of universal design are an integral part of their education, practice and awards processes
- 4.9 The UIA will encourage member sections to include training in the principles and practice of inclusive design in Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- 4.10 The UIA will encourage member sections to convey the benefits of consultation and engagement with all stakeholders, minority groups and people with disabilities in the design process
- 4.11 The UIA will encourage member sections to promote an accessible and inclusive profession where diversity is celebrated and where recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups are actively supported
- 4.12 The UIA commits to reviewing this policy every three years to ensure its continuing relevance to the objectives of the organisation and adherence to current best practice



2019 Edition

The 2019 Edition of the guidelines will be revised regularly; it is conceived as an evolving document that will be adapted to new challenges, needs and transformations in the world.

The authors of these guidelines are experts in the field of accessible and built environments. The development of this document was spearheaded by the UIA Architecture For All Work Programme co-directors Fionnuala Rogerson (Ireland) and Krzysztof Chwalibog (Poland). It was approved by the 137th UIA Council Session held on 10 June 2019 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARCHITECTS/UIA
WWW.UIA-ARCHITECTES.ORG
UIA@UIA-ARCHITECTES.ORG

