

Provision of Interpreters for Conferences and Webinars

Introduction

As the primary service agency for Auslan/English interpreters, the Deaf Society aims to provide a high-quality interpreting service to all our customers. Interpreting for a conference or webinar requires preparation, experience and exceptional interpreting skills. To ensure that our customers are provided with the highest quality access, the Deaf Society asks that organisations or individuals who request to book interpreters for conferences and webinars adhere to the following guidelines.

What qualifications do the interpreters need?

It is recommended that only Conference Interpreters or Certified Interpreters, work at conferences. Occasionally, it may be appropriate to travel interpreters from interstate who have this level of expertise.

How many interpreters are required?

For a conference or webinar under three hours in duration, two interpreters will be required.

For a conference or webinar that is three hours or longer, such as a full day or multiple day conference then three interpreters will be required per day.

It is important to book multiple interpreters to comply with workplace health and safety guidelines as well as accuracy and quality control of the interpretation services. The interpreters will work as a team, switching over approximately every 20 minutes depending on presentation length.

For 'break-out' sessions or workshops, two interpreters will be required per session. This is the case even if only one deaf person is attending the session. If there are multiple deaf people in attendance and they plan to attend different 'break-out' sessions, then two interpreters at each session will be required. For this situation, we recommend three interpreters booked for the full conference or webinar and then a fourth interpreter is booked for only the 'break-out' session times. This allows for interpreters at two sessions per timeslot.

If there are deaf people both presenting and, in the audience, additional interpreters may be required. In this case, please discuss your needs with the Deaf Society's interpreter booking officers.

People who are DeafBlind have specific needs and will usually require their own team of interpreters. If you are expecting registrants who are DeafBlind, you will need to know which form of interpretation they require (eg, tactile fingerspelling, close vision, hand-over-hand) and discuss these arrangements with the Deaf Society's interpreter booking officers.

Preparation for the conference or webinar

Given the amount of content and register of language required for a conference or webinar, a preparation charge will apply. Preparation time and costs will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis depending on the length and subject matter of the conference. The interpreters will require full papers of all presentations and programs at least one week in advance of the event. This will allow the interpreting team to thoroughly prepare for the event in advance and enable them to deliver accurate and high-quality access on the day. All preparation material supplied will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with the Interpreter Code of Ethics and will be destroyed once the event is complete.

Technical set up

Interpreters will need to be booked to start at least 30 minutes before the event commences. This is to allow time to check the set-up of all technical equipment required either in person or online.

For an in-person event, the interpreters will need to be placed on the stage standing next to the podium that presenters will use. This will ensure that Deaf attendees can keep both the presenter and the interpreter in their line of sight at the same time.

For large events which utilise multiple large screens behind the presenters, it is recommended that one is dedicated to showing the interpreter.

A fold back speaker for sound should be placed in front of where the interpreter will stand. Appropriate lighting will always be needed on the interpreter, including if the lights are turned off for parts of the presentations. Easy stage access and reserved seats in front of the interpreter's position on stage for the team interpreters to sit is also required.

For an online event, instructions and log in details for the virtual platform used will need to be provided. If you require a 'test call' with the interpreters in advance of the day to ensure proper set up, that can be arranged at an additional charge. The minimum time is 30 minutes per interpreter. Please advise at least a week in advance so that a time can be found in the interpreter's schedule to complete the 'test call'.

Contact Person

A designated contact person will be required from the conference organising committee to liaise with the interpreters on the day. They will need to be at the registration desk to greet the interpreters on arrival, show them where to set up and be available throughout the day for any questions or concerns the interpreters may have.

Break time

Interpreters are booked for a start and finish time that is inclusive of any breaks in the schedule. It is expected that interpreters will be given the chance to break for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea in the same manner as other presenters and attendees. If an interpreter is specifically needed to continue working during the break time, this needs to be arranged in advance of the booking with an interpreter booking officer.

If food is being provided to the attendees at the event, it is expected that the interpreters are provided food also.

Where possible, an interpreter's room should be provided as a private preparation/rest area for the interpreters to use during break time.

Filming or Live Streaming

If you intend to record or live stream your conference please advise our bookings officers when you place your booking.