Today's Presenter

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Associate Professor and Head of Research & Instructional Services, Fashion Institute of Technology, and Author, Creating Inclusive Libraries by Applying Universal Design

Universal Design At Your Library

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What is Accessibility?

Photo by Stolbovsky. CC BY-SA 3.0
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ThyssenKrupp_wheelchair_lift_in_Moscow_03.jpg

What is Universal Design?

“Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.”

- Ronald L. Mace

“Universal Design assumes that the range of human ability is ordinary, not special.”

- Elaine Ostroff, 2001

Universal Design focuses on inclusion instead of minimum legal requirements set by accessibility law.

Photo by Chona Kasinger. CC BY 4.0.

Universal Design Can Help You Serve

- Patrons of all ages
- Patrons of all sizes
- Patrons who speak all languages
- Patrons with limited access to technology
- Patrons who are caregivers
- Patrons who who are distracted
- And all members of your community!

What are day-to-day examples of Universal Design?

VISA

Seven Principles

1. Equitable Use
2. Flexibility in Use
3. Simple and Intuitive Use
4. Perceptible Information
5. Tolerance for Error
6. Low Physical Effort
7. Size and Space for Approach and Use

Adapted from The 7 Principles, Center For Excellence in Universal Design
http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/The-7-Principles/7-Principals-.pdf

Equitable Use

Photo by Wallygva at English Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15372441

Flexibility In Use

Simple & Intuitive Design

Perceptible Information

Fire Alarm by Tony Webster. CC BY 2.0 https://flic.kr/p/2h4uGNK

Tolerance for Error

WFD142: Figure 9.4b by Rosenfield Media, CC BY 2.0

Low Physical Effort

Size & Space for Approach & Use

Problems to Watch For When Implementing Universal Design

One Size Does Not Fit All

Too Much Focus on Technology

Competing Priorities Complicate Implementation

Designers May Not Understand User Needs

How To Bring Universal Design To Your Library

Universal Design Needs A Multi-Level Commitment

- How does Universal Design fit into your strategic plan?
- Can you make clear connections to specific goals?
- How will these principles be reflected in ongoing workflows?

Involve Your Community Along the Way

- Provide opportunities to offer feedback in multiple formats
- Ensure feedback populations reflect your community
- Ask those not using your library what barriers exist

Highlight What Your Collection Has To Offer

- Market specialized formats, such as: audiobooks, large print books, Braille books, High Interest, Low Reading Level Books, captioned video, or audio described video

- Integrate multiple formats into displays

Start with No or Low Cost Changes

- Rearrange furniture and displays to make paths wider to ease navigation to support varied uses

- Redesign signage for accessibility

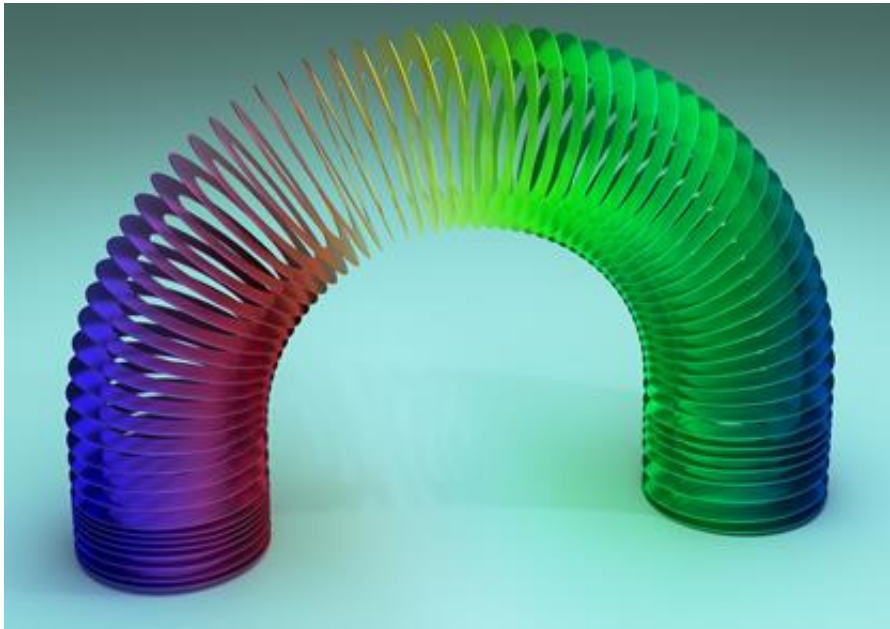
- Work Universal Design considerations into your workflows

Creativity & Flexibility Are Key to Success

- Rethink existing spaces & services rather than undertaking construction projects

- Facilitate user creativity by offering modular & movable (or even circulating) furniture/equipment

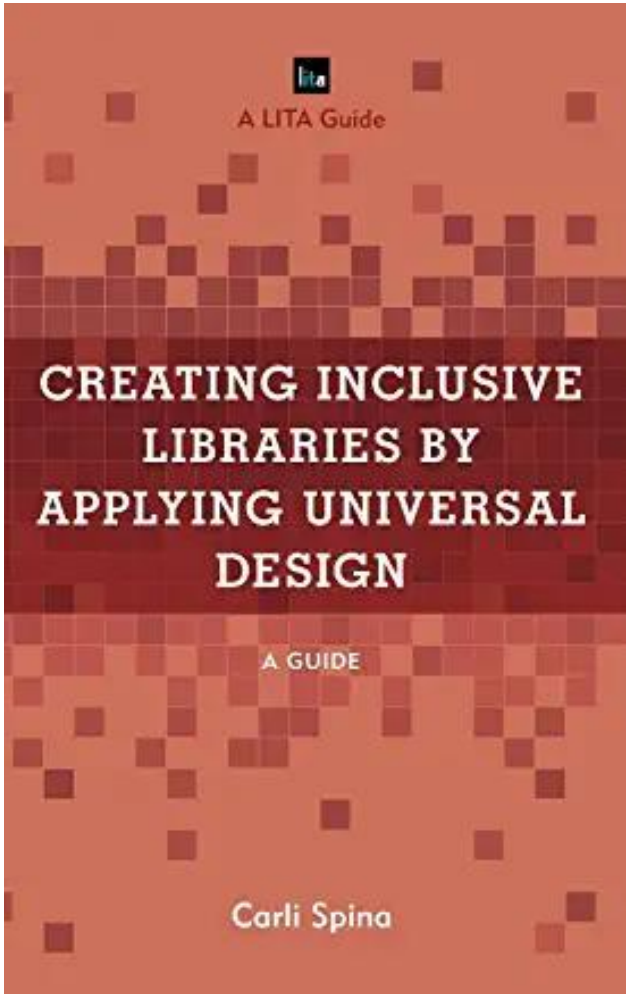
- Dream big, but start small!



Final Thoughts

- No matter how well designed a space or service is, accommodations must still be supported
- New designs may require policies and procedures to ensure equitable, inclusive service
- Outreach and communications about accessibility and Universal Design are key
- Universal Design is an iterative process and an ongoing commitment

Thank you!

Feel free to reach out if you have specific questions related to your library:

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