

# Design for Social Accessibility

## Method Cards

Design for Social Accessibility emphasizes disabled users and social consideration in the design process

### How To Use These Cards

Use as digital PDF or for hardcopy use, print out 1-sided. Cut along the edges and fold vertically in half so that the front-and-back of the card face outward. Use tape or glue to complete the card.

At any stage in the design process, use prompts on the cards to discuss scenarios with users with and without disabilities. Read, reflect and ask questions as prompted or come up with your own scenarios in different ways to guide discussion and design:

**Consider** prompts raise awareness for reflection.

**Design + Reflect** encourage reflecting and iterating on user needs and design ideas.

**Ask Users** are sample questions to ask users, or that can prompt project-specific questions.

Example uses for different design stages:

- *Needs Assessment*: Refer to scenarios to ask users about their own experiences.
- *Ideation*: Explore different scenarios to brainstorm together with users.
- *Eliciting Feedback*: Use prompts to ask questions and critique ideas and designs.
- *Prototyping*: Use example scenarios to envision and reflect on different ways of using design.

# Getting To Know You

## Consider

Including disabled users in the design process improves accessible design. Yet, asking the same questions about disability and accessibility risks overburdening disabled users. How can we respect their time and expertise and make the most of their input?

## Design + Reflect

It may help to have conversations that focus on users' technical expertise and user-savvy about specific designs or user scenarios, and that don't just ask about disabled experience.

## Ask Users

- How would you like to contribute?
- What are questions we should be asking of you?

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# Getting To Know You

Working with disabled users is an opportunity to understand their needs and desires toward improving design. However, repeatedly answering the same questions about their disability can be exhausting work for users.

# Non-Use

## Consider

What are social situations (i.e., a party, at work) where technology use is unappealing or inappropriate?

To what extent does comfort or discomfort depend on the way technology functions? For example, text-to-speech may be an unappealing functional solution if the social situation calls for a quiet environment.

## Design + Reflect

How might your design incorporate functions that are inappropriate or unappealing to use around others?

## Ask Users

- When do you feel un/comfortable using technology?
- When do you choose not to use technology?

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# Non-Use

People may choose not to use technology in some social situations if they feel uncomfortable, such as when worrying that others will notice hearing aids, or when feeling rude that a talking watch announces every hour.

# That Awkward Moment

## Consider

How do technologies contribute to awkward moments? For example:

- A wheelchair user is at the front of a line of people and has trouble opening a door.
- A person's hearing aid falls out when hugging a friend.

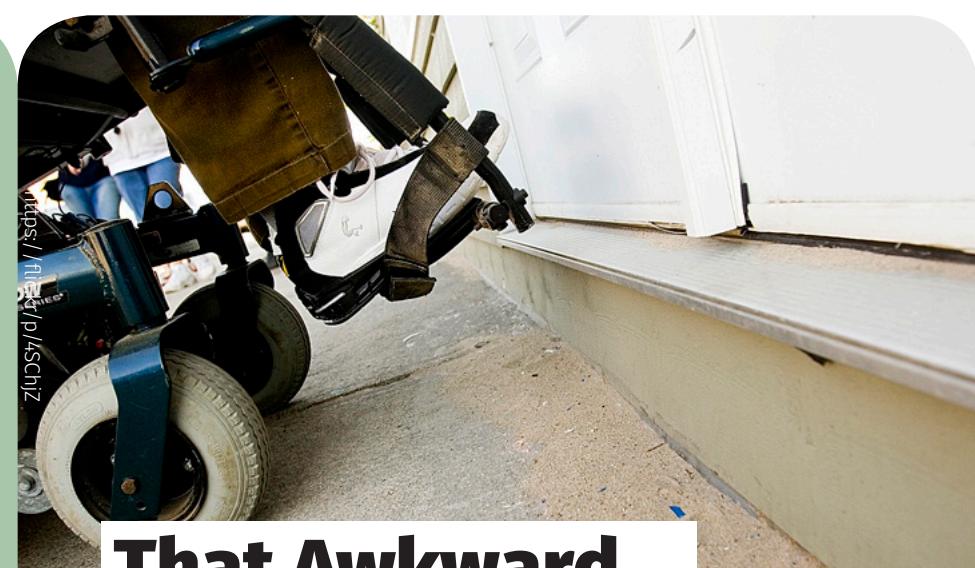
## Design + Reflect

What social situations do you assume users are in? How might design contribute to awkward interactions?

## Ask Users

- Have you felt awkward using your technologies around others? When? Why?
- How might technology design contribute to or alleviate awkwardness?

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# That Awkward Moment

It may be hard for non-disabled people to know how to best interact with disabled people; unfamiliar technology design can be a barrier to social interactions.

# Perceptions of “Special” Technology

## Consider

- How are unfamiliar technologies perceived in public places?
- How do non-disabled people react to accessible technologies (like the monocular)?

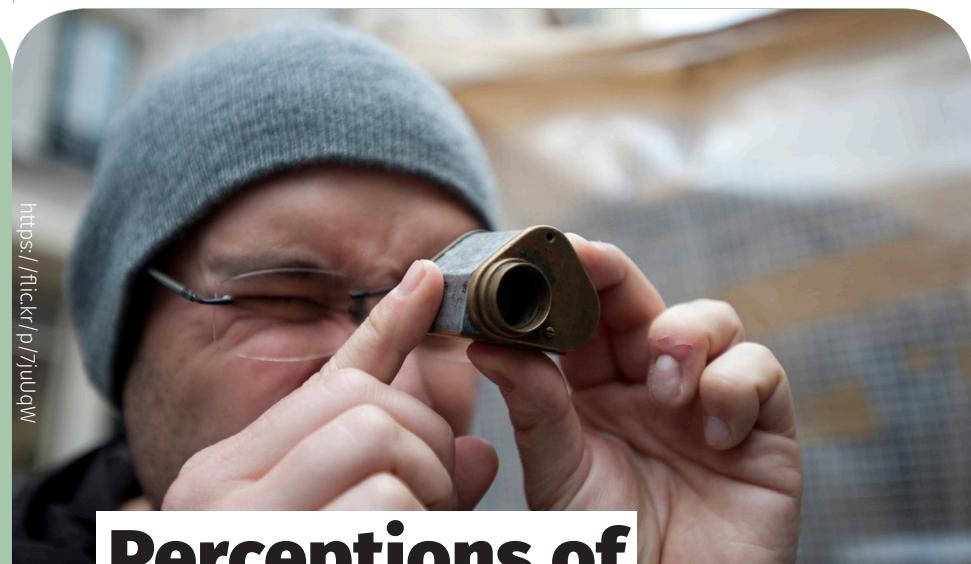
## Design + Reflect

What aspects of your design might attract negative attention?

## Ask Users

- Are you aware of bystanders that make incorrect assumptions about your technology?
- How do such assumptions change how you use your technology?

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# Perceptions of “Special” Technology

“Special” technologies used by people with disabilities may attract unwanted attention. For example, monoculars may be used by people with low-vision to magnify text, such as to read street signs, but can elicit negative reactions from bystanders who are unfamiliar with it and mistake it for something else.

# My Professional Life

## Consider

How are messages about workplace values (i.e., professionalism) conveyed? What values contribute to positive or negative impressions about coworkers?

- A user’s phone loudly announces messages during a meeting with respected colleagues.
- An assistive device’s bright orange headphones distracts conversations off-topic.

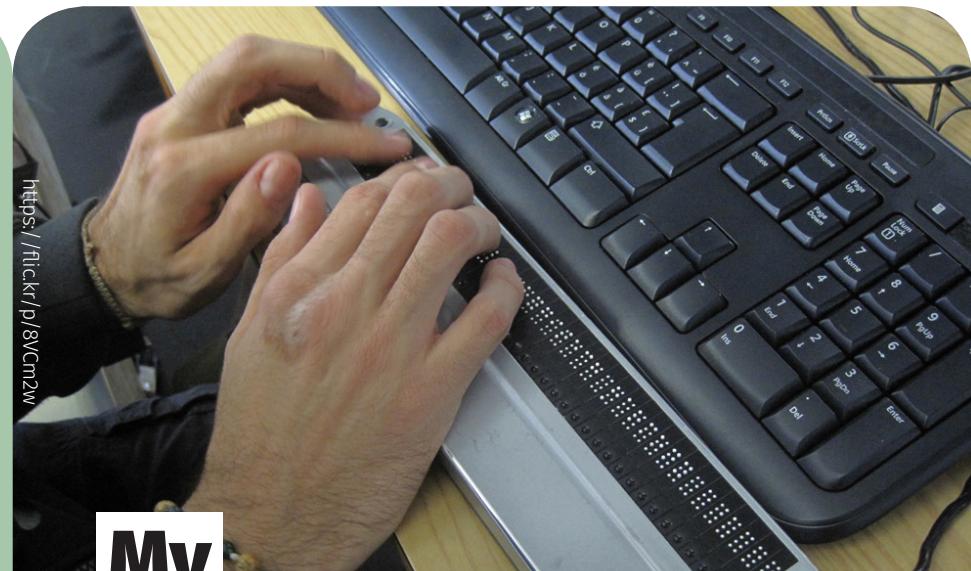
## Design + Reflect

How might your design unintentionally convey negative or unwanted messages about the user?

## Ask Users

- How do you desire to present yourself professionally in the workplace?
- How can design align with your professional priorities and preferences?

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# My Professional Life

Work accommodations for disabled people may lead to different perceptions of ability or professionalism. For example, assistive software or hardware, or extra time or space, may give negative impressions to coworkers.

# Just Like Every One Else

## Consider

Different modes are often used to provide access, such as text-to-speech. How might modes impact how users:

- Find directions using Google Maps?
- Browse an “accessible” version of a webpage versus “the original”?

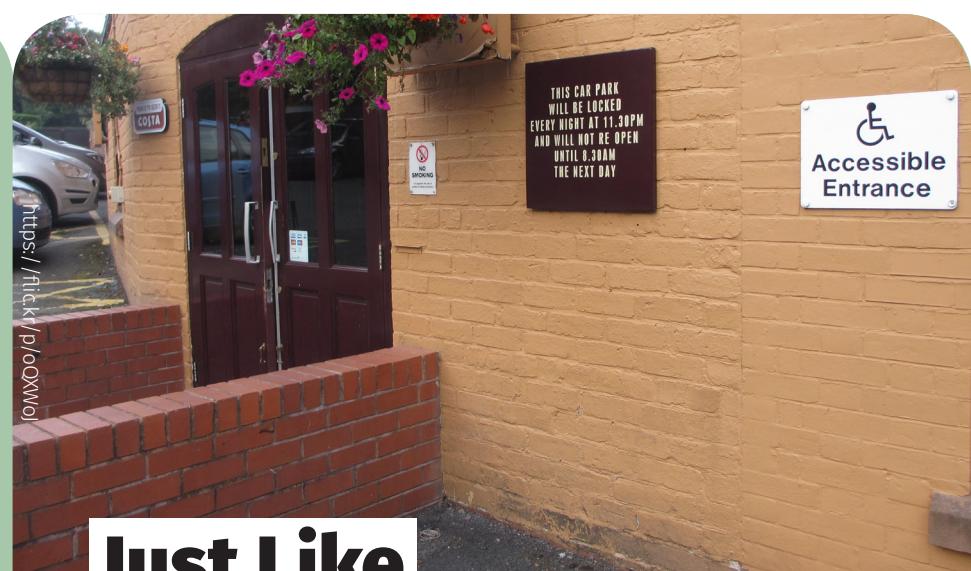
## Design + Reflect

How do alternative modes and accommodations (e.g., voice vs. touch input) result in differences in access? How might the use of modes create different user experiences?

## Ask Users

- When have different modes not provided equal access?
- Describe a time when an accommodation required more work for you to do the same thing as others.

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# Just Like Every One Else

Alternative accommodation does not always mean access is the same for disabled people. For example, sometimes there is only one accessible entrance to a building and it is in the back.