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# Awareness of diverse travel needs

*'Translating Research into Design Opportunities: Highlighting ways to improve accessibility on public transport for disabled people.'*

**Conversations with disabled people and transport staff revealed a design opportunity to raise public awareness of diverse, often non-visible access needs.**

**The following social and cultural barriers were identified as factors that reduce dignity, understanding, and positive interactions across journeys:**

- Non-visible impairments are often dismissed or misunderstood by staff and passengers.
- Difficulty accessing priority seating or requesting space without judgment or confrontation.
- Passengers with mobility aids or guide dogs face hostility or a lack of cooperation when boarding.
- Constant need to explain or justify access needs causes emotional fatigue.
- Low public awareness of schemes like Sunflower lanyards and priority signage.
- Inconsistent staff training leads to uneven levels of understanding and support.
- Stigma and lack of empathy undermine confidence and comfort when travelling.

Design opportunity

**Build greater public awareness of diverse and often non-visible access needs. Thoughtful communication and cultural messaging can foster empathy, reduce misunderstanding, and support more respectful and confident interactions in shared travel spaces.**

**What's next?** This design opportunity serves as a foundation for co-design, prototyping, piloting, and scaling new solutions.

**We will continue to:**

- Build strong partnerships with industry to enable practical implementation.
- Act as a convening partner, connecting disabled people, designers, and service providers to ensure every solution is grounded in lived experience and real-world feasibility.

**Visit ncat.uk for the full design opportunity**