

DEEJ Inclusion Tour Event Planning Guide

Welcome to the **DEEJ** Event Planning Guide. This guide will assist you with your planning and promotion of your event.



Goals of the Event:

- The goal of the **DEEJ Inclusion Tour** is to promote the need for inclusion of all neurodiverse people—in family, school and community—highlighting, especially, the experience of nonspeaking autistics in our/their quest for equal access to society.

A Few Requests:

Each event will be unique. We trust that you know your area well and will have the best sense of what communities to reach out to for your event.

We ask you as screening hosts to please ensure that:

- Your screening venue is wheelchair accessible.
- You show the open captioned version of the film.
- If requested, you use the audio description, also provided on your DVD or Blu-ray.
- Create an area of seats for people who require fragrance-free environments. In your marketing, please ask attendees to attend as fragrance free as possible. See more on this in the “Hosting an Accessible Event” section below.
- For events where DJ Savarese, the film’s subject and co-producer, is not attending, that you try to organize 1 to 3 speakers for a post-film discussion if at all possible. Please try your best to find *autistic self-advocates*, especially nonspeaking, in your community who could be part of a discussion following the film. It’s fine to also invite other advocates, family members, disability studies scholars, service providers, etc., but our strong preference is to have at least one autistic speaker on the panel, ideally a nonspeaking autistic.
- Finally, we are asking all of you to act as unofficial ambassadors for the film in your community, and within your personal and professional networks. Please help us with spread the word about the film; this is a grassroots effort! We don’t have a Hollywood marketing budget, but we know that, with your support, word of this important film will go far and wide. To help with this, we invite you to please explore the website, press kit and other resources we will be sending you.

Hosting an Accessible Event:

Please explore these resources on how to hold an accessible event:

- ASAN's Autistic Access Needs: Notes on Accessibility:
<http://bit.ly/2vvH7h4>

- SFSU's Guide to Accessible Events:
<http://bit.ly/2etiKct>

Finding a Venue:

Picking a venue will depend on your budget and your estimated audience size.

Here are a few suggestions for places to hold your event:

- Colleges and universities
- Community centers
- K-12 public and private schools
- Places of worship
- Local independent theaters
- Museums
- Public schools
- Community foundations
- Medical or nursing schools
- Boys and girls clubs

You might ask the groups affiliated with these venues if they would like to cosponsor the event with you and/or if the space might be available for free or at a reduced rate. Be sure to mention that your event will be free to the public!

Find Additional Partnering Organizations:

To broaden your reach and bolster your event planning team, consider looking for additional groups or organizations with whom to partner on the event. Partners can often contribute people power, financial resources and ideas, and spread the word about the event on their listserves and websites. On college campuses, potential cosponsors might include: autism or disability awareness clubs; disabled student services; departments of education or disability studies. In the community, consider reaching out to disability advocacy organizations, especially *self-advocacy* organizations, PTAs/Special Ed PTAs, parent networks, etc.. Be sure to include all of your confirmed partners in your marketing.

Accessibility Features Available on your Exhibition DVD or Blu-ray:

We have the following options available for your screening:

1) Exhibition Blu-ray:

The best possible quality we can offer is using a Blu-ray. If you have a Blu-ray player available, we suggest using this for your event. **DEEJ** Blu-rays include the film with and without open captions and the option to toggle on or off audio description.

2) Exhibition DVD:

If you do not have access to a Blu-ray player, we can send you either of these two DVDs: a) 72-minute with open subtitles or b) 53-minute with open subtitles – each with audio description as an option.

Please make sure we know your preference early on! We will be sending everyone a second, back-up DVD or Blu-ray in case any issues should arise.

Please return the DVDs or Blu-rays within 10 days after your event to:

Robert Rooy
Rooy Media LLC
7407 Hilltop Drive
Frederick, MD 21702

Which length – 53 or 72 minutes - should you use for our event?

The 53-minute version of DEEJ tells DJ's story powerfully but succinctly as he navigates the halls and preconceptions of high school, gives poetic expression to a past filled with both trauma and joy, and strives to realize his dreams of college and a future. It is designed to fit within the time constraints of most college and high school classrooms.

The 72-minute version weaves much the same narrative, but allows DJ to share more of his innermost thoughts and perceptions along the way. The viewer gains even deeper and richer insights into DJ's world, and how different that reality is from what those of us who are outsiders might think.

If either length would work within your timing parameters, we recommend using the longer version.

Screening Toolkit:

Please contact us to request the complete screening toolkit.

It contains:

- Template flyer in color*
- Template flyer in B&W*
- Press kit
- Discussion guide
- Event planning guide

- Mailing list sign up sheets for your event - please pass these around at your events and send back to us
- SFSU resource guide: How To Hold an Accessible Event (as a reference)

Steps for Hosting a Great Event:

1. Organize!

- a. Confirm a venue, date and time.
- b. Make sure that the film team knows about your event by filling out this form: <https://goo.gl/forms/sqa18rAkNhVI0wEvI>
- c. Decide which length of the film you will screen, 53 or 72 minutes, and via DVD or Blu-ray, and let Rob Rooy know (rer@rooymedia.com).
- d. Consider inviting DJ Savarese to present the film to your community, or confirm 1 to 3 local autistic self-advocates for a post-film discussion.
- e. Look for 2, 4 or more volunteers to help with your event. See “Volunteers” section below for details.

2. Publicize!

- a. Using the flyer template in the Screening Toolkit, create flyers for your event and post widely around your school, organization and local community.
- b. It’s fine to create your own flyer design too; just please be sure to include our website: www.DeejMovie.com.
- c. Create an online event page on your website, your school’s activities calendar or a Facebook event, where you can post all the details.
- d. Use your social media networks and that of your organization or institution to promote the screening, linking to your online event page or calendar listing.
- e. Make sure your campus calendar and your local paper’s community calendar has listed the event. This can take weeks of lead time. It’s best to check in about this as soon as possible.
- f. Send an email announcement to your friends, colleagues, and other networks. Don’t forget to include groups like your church, your PTA, your kid’s soccer team, etc.
- g. Reach out to media; see separate “media outreach” section below.

3. Day-of-Screening Preparations:

- a. Be sure to test the Blu-ray or DVD on the equipment you will be using ahead of time – ideally a few days in advance and, if at all possible, by watching the entire film through.*** This way, in case there are any problems, you can set up your back-up DVD.
- b. Test the audio. Make sure it is loud enough, but not too loud.
- c. Test the captions. Make sure you are using the open-subtitle version.
- d. Post signs to create a space for fragrance-free individuals to sit.

- e. Make extra flyers to hand out at the event. You can size down the full 8½ x 11 sized ones you made for your event to quarter sheets to save paper.

4. During the Event:

- a. Make opening announcements before the film (See “Announcements – Before the Film” below for details).
- b. Play the film!
- c. Ask a few volunteers to pass around sign-up sheets immediately following the film, ideally on clipboards. It’s not enough to leave it by the door. Most people won’t stop and sign up. It is important for us to be able to report attendance and interest to our funders and also to have these numbers to seek future grants to expand our community engagement efforts with the film. We thank you for taking this extra step!
- d. While the film is playing, do a silent head count of how many attendees you have at your event. Please write the total number on the sign-up sheets before sending them back to us.
- e. Facilitate the post-film discussion.
- f. Have a volunteer or two take photos of the audience watching the film and of both the audience and the speakers during the Q&A. Please send copies to us at info@Deejmovie.com. We’ll make good use of them on social media!
- g. See “Announcements – After the film” for closing comments.

5. After the Event:

- a. Post photos of the event on your social media outlets and tag us so we can share.
- b. Mail DVD and/or Blu-rays back to Rob Rooy, 7407 Hilltop Drive Frederick, MD 21702, along with your sign-up sheets within 10 days of the screening.
- c. If you would like to purchase a copy of the film for classroom use or staff trainings at your school or organization, please contact us for details. We will be offering our Inclusion Tour hosts a 30% discount on the institutional DVD.
- d. Send a thank-you email to your volunteers, cosponsors and attendees.

Volunteers / Staffing:

It’s important to have enough support to pull off a successful event.

Roles to Fill Before the Event:

- As many people as possible to help with publicity to ensure you have a large crowd: flyer distribution, social media postings and targeted outreach to your local media.
- Social media point person and/or documentarian: help publicize the event widely on social media ahead of the event, using our hashtags so we can repost.

Roles to Fill the Day of the Event:

- **AV/tech point person:** One person should focus on the AV/tech setup and make sure your DVD or Blu-ray is working well, checking audio levels in particular., (**Again, it's best to test the DVD/Blu-ray before the day of the screening on the equipment you will be using, to check for any particular glitches that might occur on that player. DVD/Blu-ray players can be finicky.)
- **Access point person:** Another person should focus on accessibility issues and plan how best to arrange the chairs, the lighting, setting up a fragrance-free space, etc.
- **Greeters/volunteers:** Someone should welcome people as they enter, explain about the fragrance-free section, pass around the clipboard at the appropriate time, hand out flyers as people leave, help with cleanup.
- **Event host/emcee:** This person should greet your guest speakers, ask them how they pronounce their names and how would they like to be introduced, serve as the emcee for the evening, facilitate Q&A. After the event, remember to mail back the DVD or Blu-rays to Rob Rooy.
- **Documentarian/social media point person:** Take photos and post to Twitter during the event if possible, or right after, using our hashtags. After the event, email info@Deejmovie.com your 5 best photos with image descriptions.

*Depending on how many people are involved with your event, the same person can fill several roles as needed.

Announcements at the Event:

- **Before the Film:**
 - Welcome to the ___(insert your town/school/org)_ screening of the national **DEEJ** Inclusion Tour! This event is part of a series of screenings of **DEEJ** around the country to kick off the release of this groundbreaking new film. The primary goal of the film and of this tour is to promote the need for inclusion of all neurodiverse people—in family, school and community—highlighting, especially, the experience of nonspeaking autistics in our/their quest for equal access to society.
 - Acknowledge your events sponsors and guest speakers. Please stay after the film for a discussion with _____.
 - Thank you for being here.
 - Please turn off your cell phones. Point out where the bathrooms are.
 - We will be passing around clipboards with sign-up sheets for the film team, so they know who was a part of the tour. This is important information for their funders and for future grants, to show that there's a lot of interest in the film. Please be sure to sign up!

- **After the Film:**

- Remind folks that there will be a Q&A and to please stay for the discussion.
- Also offer another reminder that if people haven't signed up on the clipboards yet, to please do so.
- Lastly, please encourage attendees to spread the word about the film! If they enjoyed it, please tell your friends, family and colleagues. Consider where else a community screening would be a good idea.

Media Outreach:

While not necessary, you might consider sending a press release about ten days before your event to your local media, including campus press and radio, and/or any bloggers who write about disability, autism, or education. Let them know about your event and encourage them to cover it. We have a template press release which you can adapt for your event and a press kit available in the Screening Toolkit.

Please note: It is now best practice to include the text of the press release *within the body* of an email and to email to your local media contacts *with no attachments*. Please copy and paste the text we've provided in the template press release into an email and make the necessary changes for it to work for your event. If your event is affiliated with a university, your school probably has a community relations office that may be able to help you with this to drum up a larger audience.

***Please note: The DEEJ film team will be contacting major media outlets about the film, our upcoming TV broadcast, and the national tour. So that we don't overlap our efforts and mix our messages, please only focus on reaching out to local press. Please let us know if any major media does contact you. Also, if local media would like to interview DJ Savarese (film subject/co-producer) or Robert Rooy (director/co-producer), please email info@Deejmovie.com and we will put them in touch right away.**

Food:

Though not necessary, free food is a proven tactic to attract a crowd, especially on a college campus. If your budget allows and depending on the venue and type of event you're going for, consider ordering a few pizzas and including that in your social media push.

Social Media:

As DEEJ Inclusion Tour community partners, we encourage you to advertise your event and the film widely on social media.

DEEJ Official Hashtags: Please use some or all of these hashtags when making posts on social media: #DeejMovie #LiveInclusion and/or #DeejInclusionTour

*****Please be sure to tag us on social media so we can repost your posts!**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DeejMovie/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DeejMovie>

Sample Social Media Posts:

Feel free to adapt these for your events.

Facebook:

*Join us for a free screening of the award-winning documentary **DEEJ** on #autism and #inclusion. X date at X time in X location. Free pizza! Sponsored by the X department/organization as part of the National **DEEJ** Inclusion Tour.*

*About **DEEJ**: Abandoned by his birth parents and presumed incompetent, DJ Savarese (“Deej”) found not only a loving family but also a life in words, which he types on a text-to-voice synthesizer. As he dreams of college, he confronts the terrors of his past, society's obstacles to inclusion, and the sometimes paralyzing beauty of his own senses. In this first-of-its-kind collaboration between a veteran filmmaker and a nonspeaking autistic, Robert Rooy and DJ Savarese share editorial control as they attempt to navigate the challenges of representing autism. **DEEJ**, with its insider view of autism, challenges us all to #LiveInclusion.*

Learn more about the film: <https://www.Deejmovie.com/>

Watch **DEEJ** trailer: <https://www.Deejmovie.com/#watch-trailer>
#DeejMovie #Autism #NeuroDiversity #InclusiveSchools

Twitter: Join us for **DEEJ**, new film on #autism & #inclusion @ (location) on X date @ (time) #DeejInclusionTour (if there's space, add the website: www.Deejmovie.com or a link to your event if you have one).

Materials Needed for Your Event:

- Enough chairs for your intended audience
- Speakers, projector and a screen
- Extra quarter-sheet flyers for people to take with them.
- Signs to designate a section of seats as fragrance-free
- DVD or Blu-ray
- Clipboards and pens
- **DEEJ** mailing list sign-up sheets

Questions?

If you have questions about anything in this guide, please contact us at info@Deejmovie.com

Learn more:

Website: www.Deejmovie.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DeejMovie/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DeejMovie>