



kaleidoscope

Let the blind lead



What is 'KALEIDOSCOPE'?

Kaleidoscope, formerly known as The Institute of the Blind, is a non-profit organisation catering to the needs of the visually impaired (blind, partially sighted, visually impaired with additional disabilities) and deafblind persons.

Established in Worcester, Western Cape in 1881, the Institute's mission for over 135 years has been to further the lives of its beneficiaries through education, job creation, skills training, personal development and healthcare, towards a fulfilling life as complete and independent citizens.

LET THE BLIND LEAD

Kaleidoscope doesn't stick to the confines of an institution.

It's something different, breaking the paradigm of traditional thinking.

It's out there. Vibrant. Loud. Proud.

Kaleidoscope is the central hub for blind progression in South Africa, and soon the world.

If you're reading this with your eyes, Kaleidoscope is here to change your perceptions and show you how the blind can become leaders in this world, integrating into the workforce, society and everything in-between.

If you're reading this with your fingertips, Kaleidoscope is here to help you grow, tapping into limitless abilities and reaching every goal you've set.

Kaleidoscope is a place of learning, development and progression. For those with sight and without. We can change how the world sees the blind, and how the blind see the world.

All it takes is a change of perspective.



What is “visual impairment”?

A visual impairment is a defect of sight where there is an eye disease, or damage to the eye, which influences the function of the eye. This can mean that a person is actually totally blind or partially sighted.

On average, taken from World Health Organisation statistics:

5% of those deemed “legally blind” have **no vision at all**

15% of the visually impaired population have **light perception**

80% of individuals with a sight loss have **some remaining (functional) sight**



example of macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinitis pigmentosa and cataracts



What is “visual impairment”?

TOTAL BLINDNESS is the complete lack of sight, and is clinically recorded as NLP (no light perception).

BLINDNESS is identified as visual acuity of 6/60 or less in the better eye, with best correction possible. This means that objects seen at 60m with normal sight will only be identified by standing at 6m or closer, by someone with very poor vision.

In many countries, people with average acuity (what they can see) who have a field of vision 20 degrees or less (the norm being 180 degrees) are also identified as being blind.

LOW VISION – a person with low vision is one whose vision cannot be corrected after treatment or spectacles. Anyone with low vision can also be identified as partially sighted. Generally recognized as partially sighted vision is between 6/18 and 6/60 (6/6 being perfect vision).



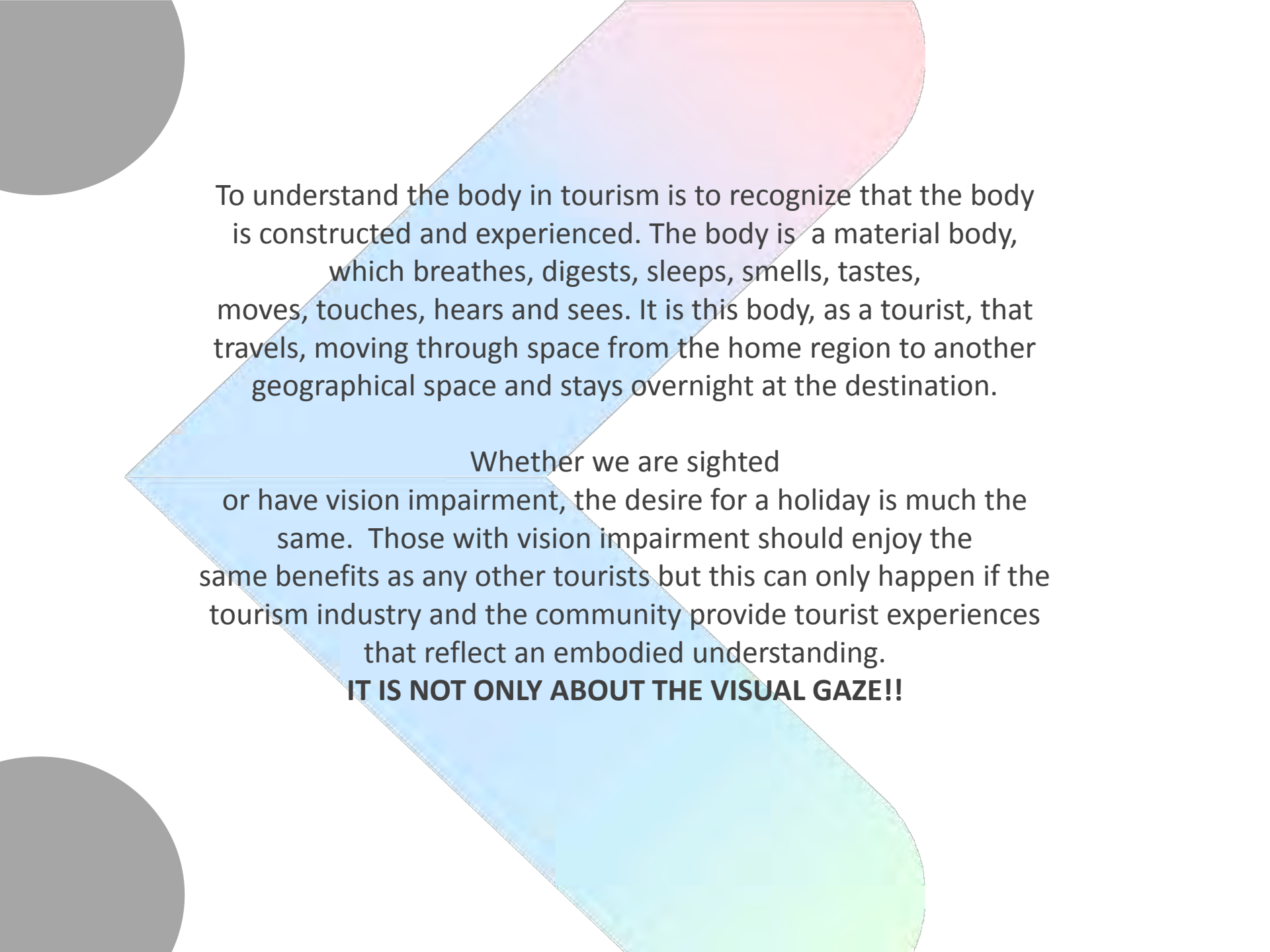
Joseph, South Africa's first blind barista

Espressos, cappuccinos, americanos, and lattes – Joseph has mastered them all. “Visitors cannot believe that their coffee was made by a blind person,” he says. “It was not an easy process though. In the very beginning I had a few incidents where I burned myself. It was a nightmare learning to froth the milk. But today I can successfully prepare a cup of coffee and I get the smell of success.”





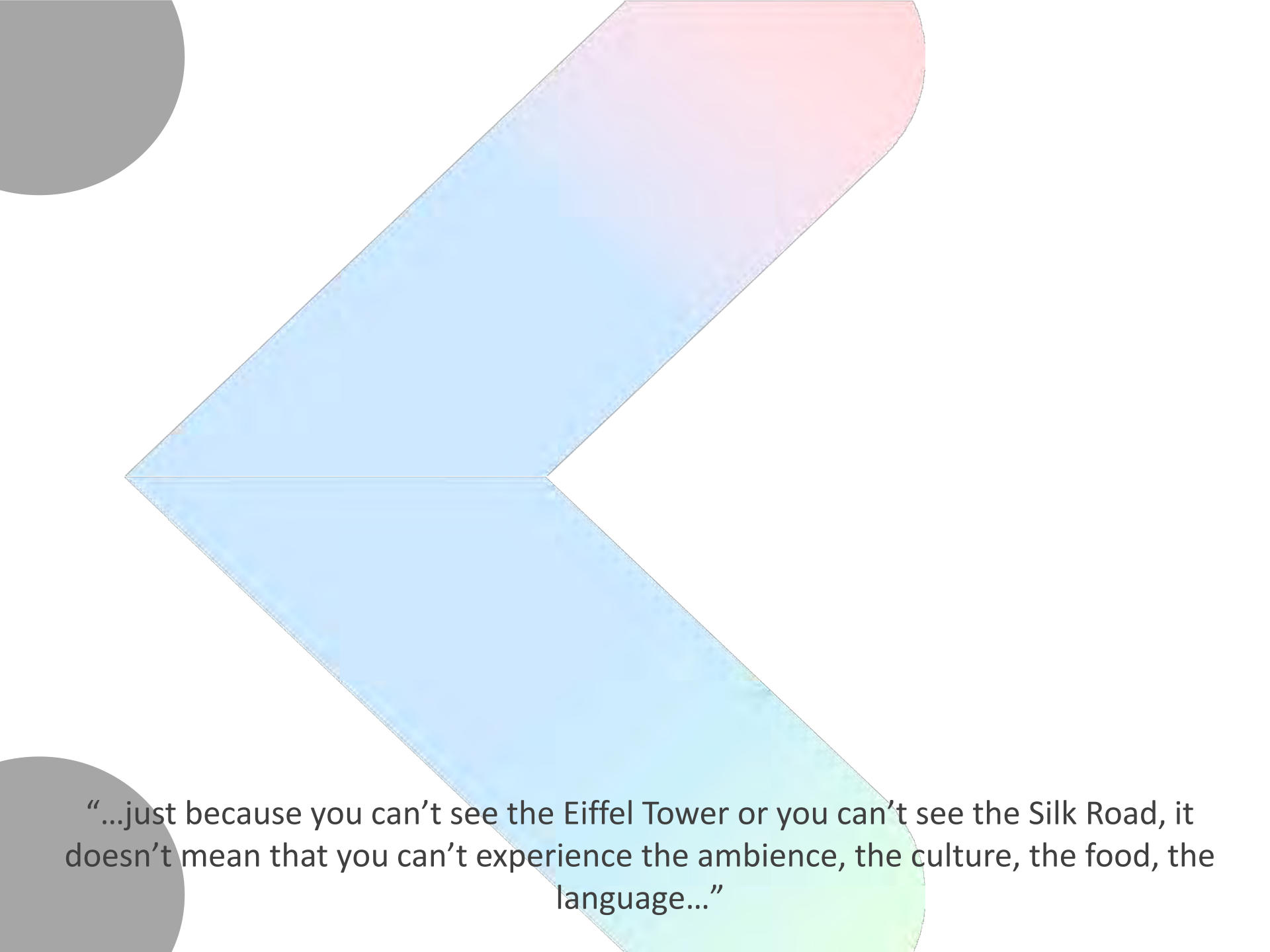
Accessibility
for people with
visual impairments
in tourism



To understand the body in tourism is to recognize that the body is constructed and experienced. The body is a material body, which breathes, digests, sleeps, smells, tastes, moves, touches, hears and sees. It is this body, as a tourist, that travels, moving through space from the home region to another geographical space and stays overnight at the destination.

Whether we are sighted or have vision impairment, the desire for a holiday is much the same. Those with vision impairment should enjoy the same benefits as any other tourists but this can only happen if the tourism industry and the community provide tourist experiences that reflect an embodied understanding.

IT IS NOT ONLY ABOUT THE VISUAL GAZE!!



“...just because you can't see the Eiffel Tower or you can't see the Silk Road, it doesn't mean that you can't experience the ambience, the culture, the food, the language...”

Accessing information prior to departure is a necessary part of travel, but it is also part of the fun.

A greater part of the travel planning experience is taken away from individuals due to the primary format of information being print media.

Not only does the format need to be accessible, but the content needs to be disability relevant (e.g. state of the terrain, guide dog friendly etc.)

Tourists need to eat, sleep, take transport and find their way around their environment. Difficulties occur when information is not provided in a suitable form.

“You have to listen to someone read out the whole menu and when the meal arrives, comes the challenge of knowing the position of food on the plate.”

Tactile Markings

Individuals with low vision and blindness use tactile markings to identify important buttons and settings on things such as microwaves, ovens, dishwashers, radios, thermostats, telephones, and more!

Tactile markings can also be used to guide people safely in the traffic by indicating safe places.



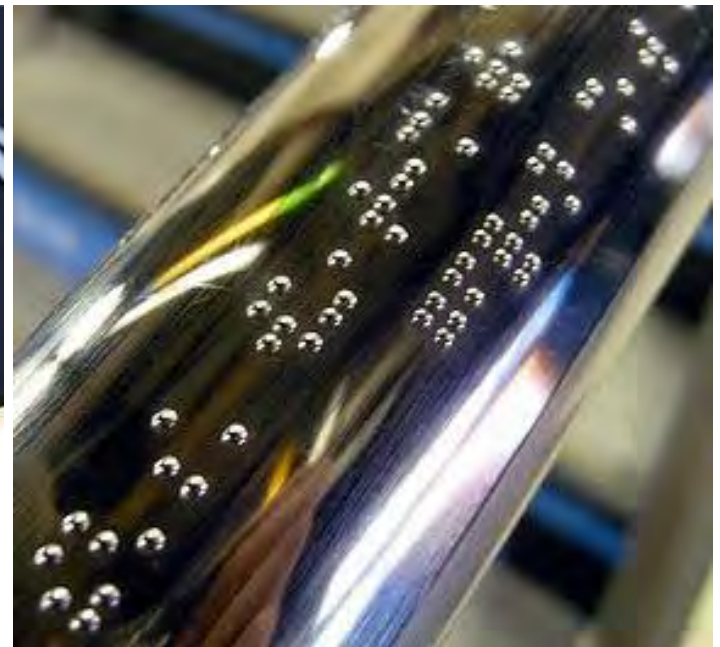
Tactile Markings

- Indicate crossings with tactile paving
- Include decision blocks that indicate that you could turn left/right



Tactile Markings

- Braille and voice over in lifts
 - Indicate restrooms and room numbers with braille
 - Hand rails with inscriptions in braille
- Smart motion sensors pick up movement and will tell you with voice over where you are

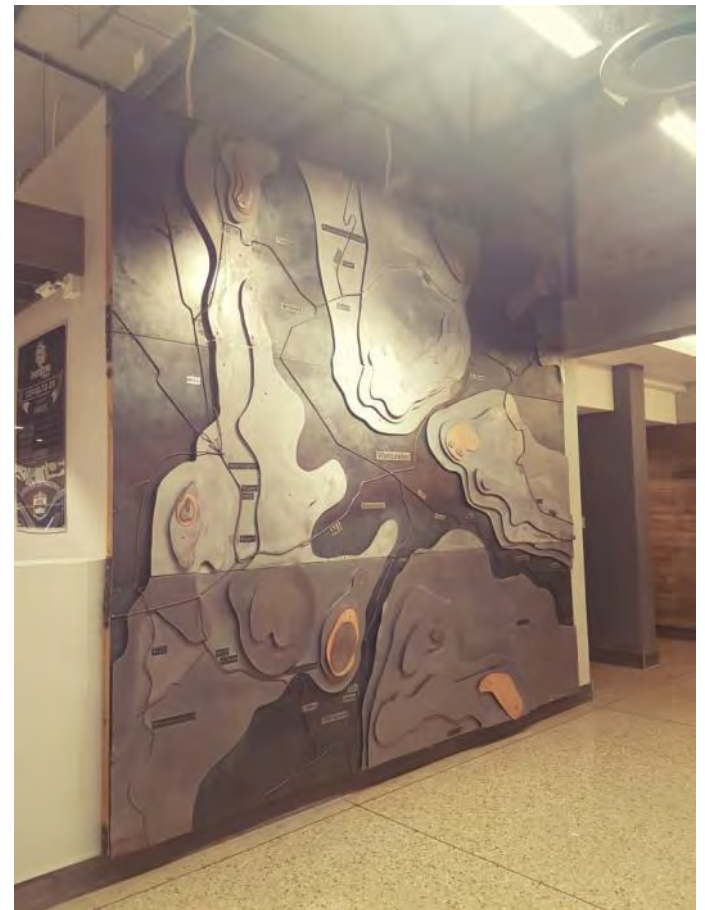


Tactile Markings

Tactile map/layout of shopping centre
e.g. Mountain Mill Mall in Worcester



Tactile map/layout of surroundings
e.g. Breede Valley Shell Ultra City



Tactile Markings

Clear indications of amenities in hotel rooms

identical containers with different contents make it difficult to know whether it is shampoo, conditioner or toothpaste

Room card

indicate in braille what end of the card must be entered in the door slot



Tactile markings can be visually appealing AND effective!



Low Vision

- Make use of contrasting colours – do not put a white handrail on a white wall
- Add a colour strip to glass doors to ensure that partially sighted or persons with low vision will see the door
 - Add colour to paths, staircases and steps



Deafblind



Deafblind sensors to ensure safe road crossings.

Can be used for both blind and deafblind.

The beeping sound will indicate when it is safe to cross the road.

The arrow will vibrate when it is safe – just hold your hand over the arrow and you will know when it is safe to cross the road.

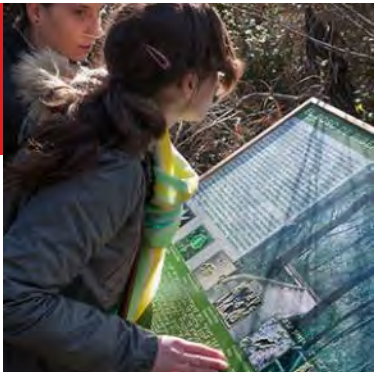
Train taxi drivers to communicate with deafblind clients



Blind Side Tours

Full Senses Travel, in association with Kaleidoscope, developed African safari experiences tailored to the specific needs of visually impaired persons.

- major focus on touch, smell, taste and sounds
- interactive wildlife activities – physical contact with live animals as well as scale models
- interactive tours of attractions, e.g. wine cellars, smell the fermenting wine, feel the barrels, etc.
 - tailored to include all your senses
- create 3D models of the landscapes – “feel the view”
- guided nature walk in the fynbos area with focus on plant textures, smells and sounds



Botanical Gardens

Installed a braille trail with descriptions of the area and specific plants

e.g. Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Karoo Desert National Botanical Gardens



Tactile Exhibitions

For the blind and partially sighted, the greatest obstacle to mobility is a lack of orientation and guidance systems, as well as interior design low in contrast.



Exhibitions are traditionally behind glass and visitors are not allowed to touch. This implicates that blind persons can't 'see' the exhibitions.

Kaleidoscope has implemented the following for our visually impaired residents and tour groups to enjoy:

- tactile art gallery
- tactile fossil trail
- tactile geological exhibition

Visually impaired visitors can guide independently through these exhibitions



Tactile Fossil Trail - Kaleidoscope



Tactile Geological Exhibition - Kaleidoscope



Guide Dogs

Being large dogs, guide dogs require space to sit and/or lie at their owner's feet.

Unfortunately, it's still the case that a lot of accommodation providers don't realise that they have to take the dog with.

Tourism management 33 (2012) 941 950; authors Jennie Small, Simon Darcy and Tanya Packer

Most airlines do accommodate guide dogs on flights

British Airways (Comair)

Passengers with disabilities, who require the services of a guide dog, can request to travel with their service animal in the cabin. British Airways offers this service free of charge.

South African Airways

SAA will allow medically certified service animals such as guide dogs to travel in the cabin with a blind or deaf passenger free of charge.



Restaurants



Wimpy Braille Burger

Restaurants

- Accessible to visually impaired in braille and/or audio
- Train waiters to assist customers with special needs



South African Rand

Features for the visually impaired

There is prominent raised print on the bottom left- and right-hand sides on the front of all the banknotes.

R10: One raised line

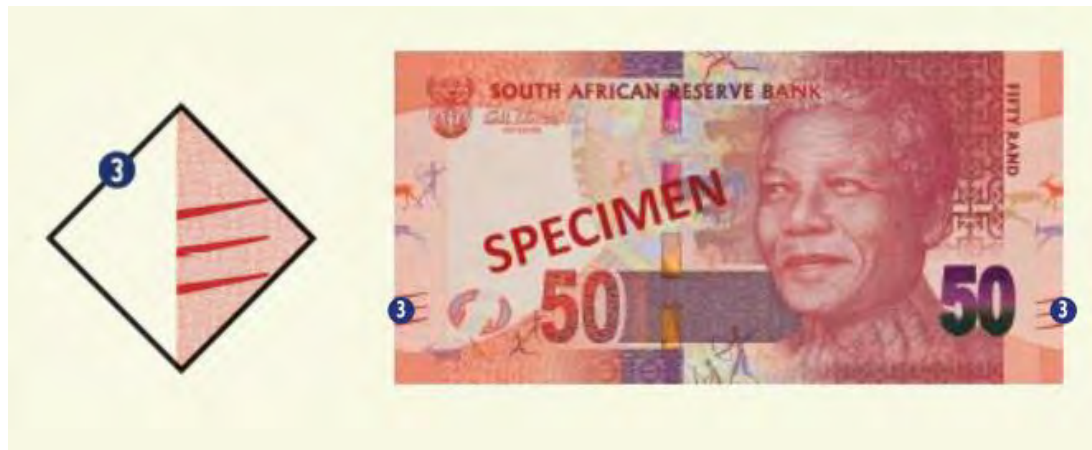
R20: Two raised lines

R50: Three raised lines

R100: Four raised lines

R200: Five raised lines

The notes differ in sizes



Technology

Kaleidoscope Technological Training Centre

As the first of its kind in Africa, this new initiative, introduced in partnership with Apple and ABSA, trains the visually impaired to utilise specialised information technology, enabling them to enter the labour market on the same level as sighted individuals.

All the training modules will begin with the basics of voiceover - the Apple accessibility tool for the blind.

We've designed the facility to be very blind friendly with a logical layout and underfoot tactile markings in order for the blind to navigate the open-plan centre with ease and independence.

Our trainer, Philip Crouse, is also blind as we believe that a trainer who is blind himself will use the most ideal method to transfer his knowledge and skill to the students in such a high tech facility.



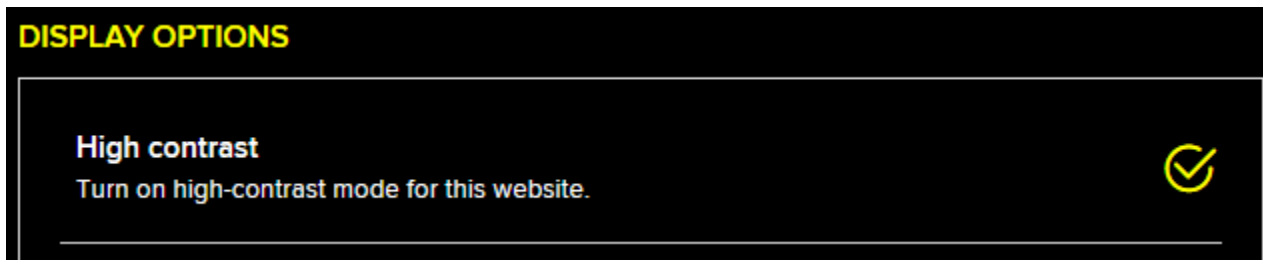


Technology

To plan a trip, the information needs to be accessible both in **format** (web based, audio, tactile, large print and appropriate colour contrast) and in **content** (appropriate to the needs of the person).

Accessible internet

- The layout and format of websites need to be accessible with voice over
- All graphical elements must have alternative text to explain what the image is about
 - LOW VISION: font size and colour must have the option to be adjusted



Contrast

- › Dark Background
- › Light Background

Text Size

- › A A A

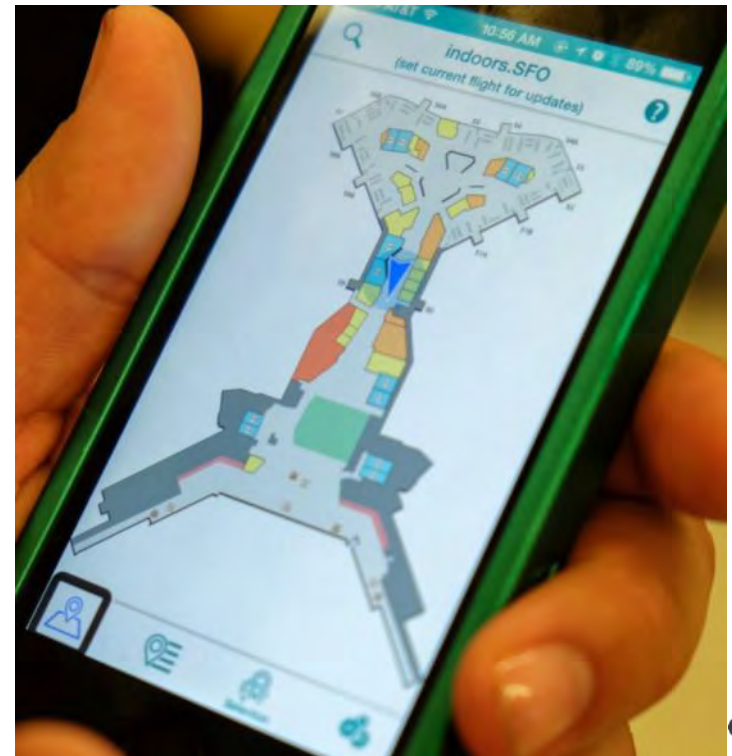


Technology

APPLICATIONS

Hein Wagner, blind adventurer, motivational speaker, world traveler and Kaleidoscope's brand ambassador as well as Apple product user, stresses the importance of applications to use to navigate through airports and unknown surroundings.

- **Amsterdam Airport Schiphol** is now offering travellers and visitors a free App. This official, free Schiphol App is suitable for iPhones, Androids and Windows Phone. A mobile website is now available to users of other smartphones.
- **San Francisco Airport** beacon system for blind travellers – this application will tell visually-impaired travellers, and eventually everyone, what's around them at all times



Technology

BlindSquare is the World's Most Popular accessible GPS application developed for the blind and visually impaired. It describes the environment, announces points of interest and street intersections as you travel. In conjunction with free, third-party navigation apps it is a powerful solution providing most of the information blind and visually impaired people need to travel independently



How to assist a person with a visual impairment?

APPROACH – ASK - ASSIST

Approach:

if you suspect someone may need a hand, walk up, greet them and identify yourself.

Ask:

"Would you like some help?" The person will accept your offer or tell you if they don't require assistance.

Assist:

listen to the reply and assist as required. Not all people who are blind or vision impaired will want assistance - don't be offended if your assistance is not required.



How to assist a person with a visual impairment?

Address people who are blind or have low vision by their **names** so they know you are speaking to them.

Let the person who is blind or has low vision **know that you have entered the room.**

Do not walk away from a person who is blind or has low vision without indicating that you are doing so – it is embarrassing and frustrating to talk to thin air.

Let the person who is blind or has low **vision take your arm.**

Do not relocate objects or furniture without telling the person who is blind or has low vision.

Do not fill glasses or cups to the **brim.**

If people who are blind or have low vision extend their hands to shake, do so.

When seating people who are blind or have low vision, **put their hands on the back of the chair** and they will then be able to seat themselves

Use **ordinary language** when directing or describing and be specific. Do not point, or say "over there". Direct people who are blind or have low vision to their left and right, not yours.

Use words like "**look**" and "**see**"; they are part of everyone's vocabulary. Otherwise both you and the person who is blind or has low vision will feel awkward.

Describe the surroundings and obstacles in a person's pathway (remember to look up as well as down). Warn of the presence of over-hangs, such as kitchen cupboards, jutting side mirrors of cars, or trees.

Do not leave doors ajar. Close them or open them fully. Be aware that the person who is blind or has low vision will be disadvantaged by not seeing what is going on. Therefore talk about what is happening.

Ask people who are blind or have low vision what they want or need. **Do not direct questions through their companion.**



How to assist a person with a visual impairment?

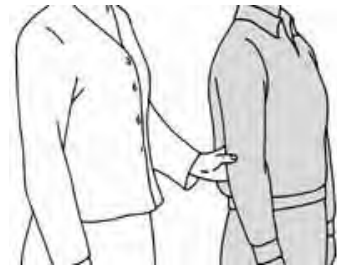


Getting started

Ask the person if they need assistance. If they do need assistance, contact the back of their hand with the back of yours.



They can then hold your arm just above the elbow.



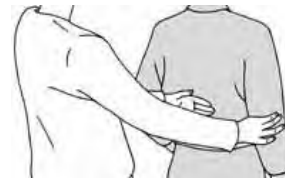
Walking

When you start walking, make sure the person is half a step behind you and slightly to the side. Walk at a pace that is comfortable for both of you. Look ahead for obstacles at foot level, head height and to the side.



Narrow spaces

Tell the person you are guiding that a narrow space is ahead. Move your guiding arm towards the centre of your back to indicate that they need to walk behind you. The person should step in behind you while still holding your arm. When you have passed through the narrow space bring your arm back to its usual position by your side.



Changing sides

If you need to change sides with the person you are guiding it is important they do not lose contact with you. This is easiest to achieve if you remain stationary. Allow the person to hold your guiding arm with both of their hands. They can then move one hand to reach your other arm without losing contact.



Doorways

When passing through a doorway, ensure the person who is blind or vision impaired is on the hinged side of the door. As you get close to the door, explain which way it opens. Open the door and walk through, allowing the person you are guiding to close it behind you using their free hand.

How to assist a person with a visual impairment?



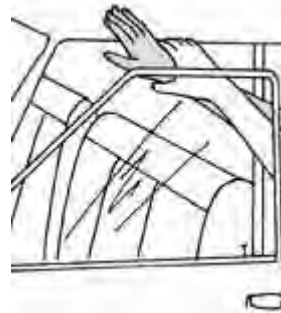
Steps and staircases

Stop at the first step and tell the person you are guiding whether the steps go up or down. Change sides if necessary to ensure the person you are guiding can use the handrail. Start walking when the person is ready, remaining one step ahead of them. Stop when you reach the end of the stairs and tell the person you are at the top or bottom.



Seating

Explain which way the chair is facing and where it is placed in relation to the rest of the room. Then walk up and place your guiding arm on the chair and explain which part of the chair you are touching. The person you are guiding can then move their hand down your arm to locate the chair to seat themselves.



Getting into a car

Tell the person you are guiding which way the car is facing and which door they will be getting into. Place your guiding arm onto the door handle and ask the person to move their hand down your arm.

Allow them to open the door and seat themselves. If the car is unfamiliar to them, place your arm inside on the roof so they can follow it and avoid bumping their head. Once seated, allow the person to close the car door.

Describe surroundings

When describing the person's surroundings, try to be specific. Rather than saying, 'there is a spare seat to your right', it might be more helpful to say 'the seat next to you, on your right, is occupied but the next seat along is vacant'.

If you are unsure ASK!



Recommendations

Public transport **usually** caters for the physically disabled, but not necessarily for visually impaired tourists, e.g. Gautrain

FACILITIES

FACILITIES FOR PASSENGERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Accessibility on the Gautrain System is of paramount importance. The design of the Gautrain System may exceed local standards. The Gautrain System provides facilities for mobility impaired passengers as well as passengers with special needs; i.e. to assist blind and partially sighted persons, to assist deaf or hard of hearing persons, as well as mobility impaired persons. Wheelchair-friendly access is provided at all stations, on all Trains and on every second Bus.

The system has accessibility features to aid people with difficulties in walking, gripping, reaching or balancing (including non-slip surfaces, handrails and handholds). Blind and partially sighted people are assisted through the consistent use of colour contrasts, clear signage and lighting, non-reflective surfaces, tactile surfaces, audible as well as visual announcements. Passengers that are hard of hearing are assisted through induction loops and visually through clear signage.

Other considerations made for passengers with special needs are:

- The Gautrain parking areas are equipped with dedicated disabled parking bays located very close to the entrance of the station.
- Easy access to the Ticket Vending Machine (TVM), the emergency telephone (E-Tel) at concourse level, in the unpaid area.
- At concourse level, access to the paid area is through the service gate, or wide fare gate.
- Elevators / lifts are available, if necessary, to reach the platforms.
- All elevators / lifts have pushbuttons at the correct height.
- Inside the Train there is a dedicated area for wheelchairs in the pantograph (Ptos) carriage.



Recommendations

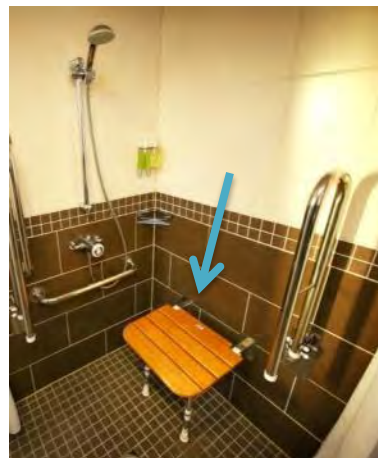
Meet and assist areas at airports do not have the basics like water, coffee, tea etc. at hand for the waiting travellers.

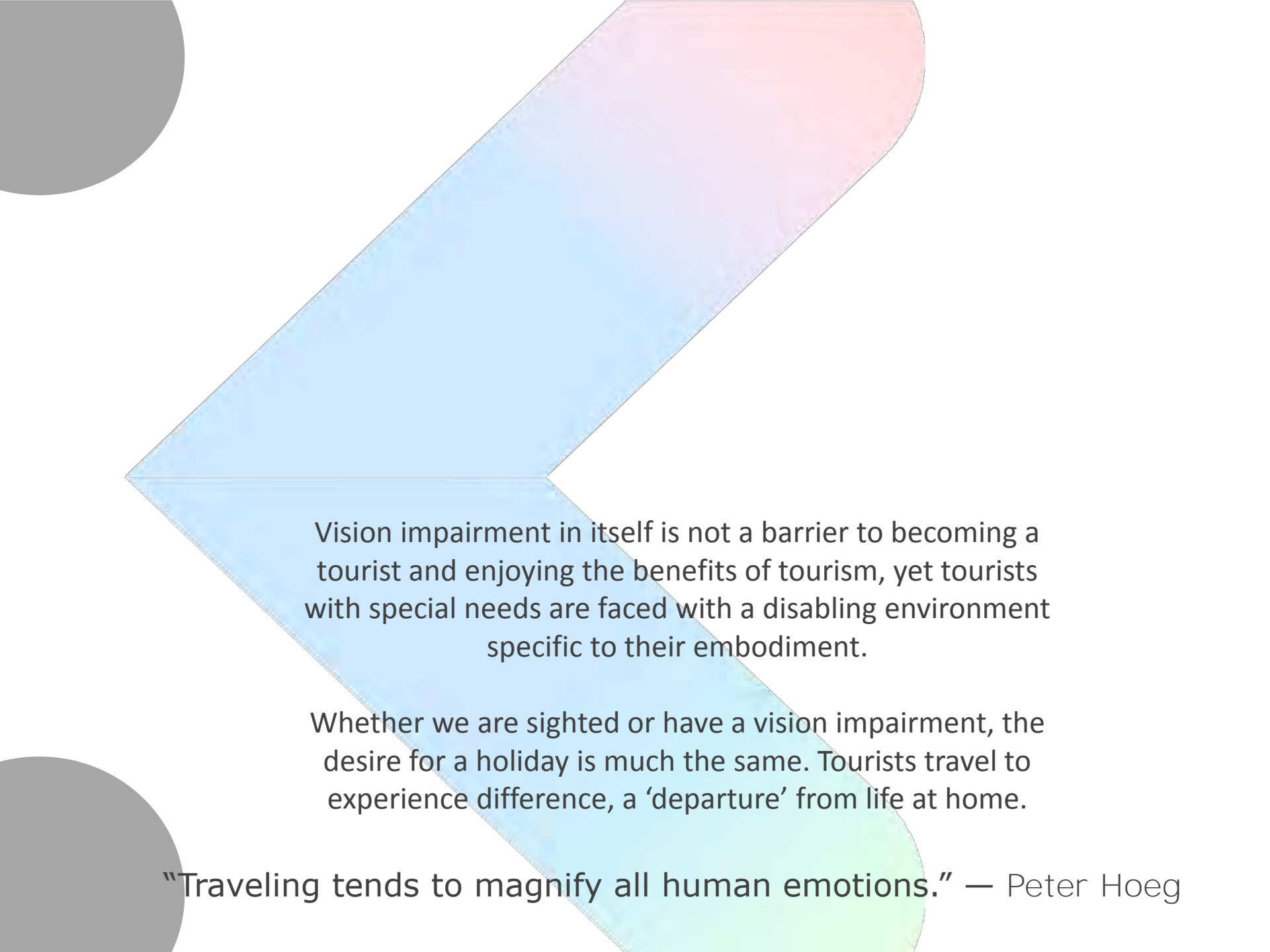
“A hotel room for physically disabled persons can be more hazardous to the blind than a ‘normal’ hotel room.” – Hein Wagner

Adjustments to hotel rooms for physically disabled guests have special altered features, e.g. seating in the shower, bars around the toilet, lower showerhead, etc.

A visually impaired guest is not prepared for those alterations and an unexpected bar or handle can cause more damage than good.

There is no need to book a visually disabled guest into a physically disabled room.





Vision impairment in itself is not a barrier to becoming a tourist and enjoying the benefits of tourism, yet tourists with special needs are faced with a disabling environment specific to their embodiment.

Whether we are sighted or have a vision impairment, the desire for a holiday is much the same. Tourists travel to experience difference, a 'departure' from life at home.

"Traveling tends to magnify all human emotions." — Peter Hoeg

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Freddie Botha

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