Community Engagement and Digital Accessibility Resources

This guide is intended to provide you an overview of some of the local resources available to help you achieve digital and electronic accessibility compliance (e.g., websites, products with digital components, mobile apps), and to help you take steps toward effective engagement across disability communities.

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of everything you need to know in order to achieve accessibility compliance (e.g., note that existing architectural accessibility requirements are not addressed here), nor is this an endorsement of all accessibility resources in the San Francisco area, but we think these are good places to start.

Why Accessibility?

- Achieving Access (article) by Preety Kumar: Industry Insight: In the rush to digital transformation, don’t overlook accessibility (https://gcn.com/articles/2019/05/30/accessible-web-design.aspx)

Accessibility Standards & Resources, Digital

Meeting Federal Electronic Accessibility Requirements

- Section 508 Training (https://www.section508.gov/training)
- WCAG 2.1 (https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/new-in-21/)

Creating an Accessibility Statement

Vendors can create an accessibility statement for their mobile app, website or other electronic platform. The statement will inform people whom they can contact if they are having disability access issues while navigating the site or interfacing with the product. Accessibility statements are not intended to be a substitute for achieving accessibility compliance.

Following is a sample Digital Accessibility Statement:

**Our Commitment to Accessibility**

[Insert company name] is committed to making our website content accessible and user friendly to everyone. If you are having difficulty viewing or navigating the content on this [Insert platform: website, app, etc.] or notice any content, feature, or functionality that you believe is not fully accessible to people with disabilities, please call our Customer Service team at [insert phone number], or email our team at [insert email], include “Disabled Access” in the subject line, and provide a description of the specific feature you feel is not fully accessible or a suggestion for improvement. We take your feedback seriously and will consider it as we evaluate ways to accommodate all our customers and our overall accessibility policies.
City and County of San Francisco Resources and Support

- CCSF Accessibility Services (https://sfgov.org/accessibility-services)
- Mayor’s Office on Disability (https://sfgov.org/mod/)
- Digital Equity Playbook (https://sfcoit.org/digitalequity)

Community Outreach and Accessibility

When it is time to get direct feedback from the disability community, through either user testing, focus groups, or consultation, it is good to engage directly with disability communities. Often times the best feedback comes from those who are current or perspective users of your product, service or platform.

When developing a new product or idea, also ask yourself these questions:

- What is the potential impact of my product or service on people with disabilities?
- Are there accessibility factors that my product or service could improve?
- Are there unintended barriers to disability communities that my product or service may be creating?

If your answer is “yes” or “I don’t know” to any of the above, it is time to engage with disability communities.

Following are some disability-specific advocacy organizations that you may choose to engage, depending on the type of feedback that you are looking for. Note that some organizations are disability-specific and may or may not represent the perspective of all disabled users.

- **The Arc San Francisco**
  Address: 1500 Howard Street
  San Francisco, CA 94103
  Tel. 415-255-7200
  Fax: 415-268-0137
  Email: info@thearcsf.org
  Website: https://www.thearcsf.org/

- **DCARA**
  Address: 14895 E. 14th Street, Suite 200
  San Leandro, CA 94578
  Tel. 510-343-6670
  Email: info@dcara.org
  Website: https://dcara.org/
• **DeafHope**  
  Address: 470 27th Street  
  Oakland, CA 94612  
  Tel. 510-267-8800  
  Video Phone: 510.735.8553  
  Fax: 510.740.0946  
  Email: deafhope@deaf-hope.org  
  Website: [http://www.deaf-hope.org/](http://www.deaf-hope.org/)

• **Hearing and Speech Center of Northern California**  
  Address: 1234 Divisadero Street  
  San Francisco, CA 94115  
  Tel. 415-921-7658  
  TTY: 415-921-8990  
  Fax: 415-921-2243  
  Email: info@hearingspeech.org  
  Website: [https://www.hearingspeech.org/](https://www.hearingspeech.org/)

• **Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco**  
  Address: 825 Howard Street  
  San Francisco, CA 94103  
  Tel. 415-543-6222  
  Fax: 415-543-6318  
  TTY: 415-543-6698  
  Email: info@ilrcsf.org  
  Website: [https://www.ilrcsf.org/](https://www.ilrcsf.org/)

• **LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired**  
  Address: 1155 Market Street, 10th Floor,  
  San Francisco, CA 94103  
  Tel. 415-431-1481  
  Email: info@lighthouse-sf.org  
  Website: [http://lighthouse-sf.org/](http://lighthouse-sf.org/)

• **Positive Resource Center**  
  Address: 170 9th Street  
  San Francisco, CA 94103  
  Tel. 415-777-0333  
  Website: [https://prcsf.org/](https://prcsf.org/)

• **Senior and Disability Action**  
  Address: 1360 Mission Street #400
Some local colleges and universities are also willing to reach out to their disabled communities, too. If you are interested in feedback from college populations, we recommend reaching out to the Disabled Student Services offices in your area.

**Accessible Meetings, Events, and Gatherings**
When you are ready to hold your community gathering, you also want to make sure that your meeting and event spaces are accessible to everyone. It is good practice to include information on meeting notices indicating that people with disabilities are welcome, and information on who to contact should someone need an accommodation to participate. Please refer to the Mayor’s Office on Disability resources for Planning Accessible Events (https://sfgov.org/mod/planning-accessible-events) for more information and guidance.

**Procurement**
Some vendors appreciate tools that help them indicate and track the accessibility of their product. Here are a few examples:

**Creating a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT)**
- Voluntary Product Accessibility Template from the Information Technology Industry Council (https://www.itic.org/policy/accessibility/vpat)
- SF State University Vendor Accessibility Demonstration Requirements (https://access.sfsu.edu/ati/procurement/vpat)

**Removing Pre-or Post-Procurement Accessibility Barriers (Roadmap)**
- Example: CSU Accessibility Road Map (http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/access/procurement_process/AccessibilityRoadmap.shtml)

**User Testing & Consulting**
Sometimes, the best way to test your platform is to ask people with disabilities to test for you. Here are a few organizations that provide local testing and consulting services. We recommend that you research the specific services provided by each organization, and select the vendor that best meets your needs.

- **Helix Opportunity**
  Tel. 510-590-7363
  Contact: David Fazio, President, Email: dfazio@helixopp.com
Website: www.helixopp.com

- **LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired**  
  Address: 1155 Market Street, 10th Floor,  
  San Francisco, CA 94103  
  Tel. 415-431-1481  
  Contact: Erin Lauridsen, Director of Access Technology, Email: elauridsen@lighthouse-sf.org  
  Website: http://lighthouse-sf.org/programs/access-technology/

- **World Institute on Disability**  
  Address: 3075 Adeline Street, Suite 155  
  Berkeley, CA 94703  
  Tel. 510-225-6400  
  Contact: Thomas Foley, Managing Director, Email: at tom@wid.org  
  Website: https://wid.org/consulting/user-testing/

**Training/Testing Resources**

There are also businesses that provide training and technical assistance around electronic accessibility and compliance. Some also develop and/or provide automated or manual testing. Many provide free webinar opportunities and online classes too.

Again, we recommend that you research the specific services provided by each business or organization, and select the vendor that best meets your needs.

- **Access Ingenuity**  
  Address: 4751 Hoen Avenue  
  Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
  Tel. 1-877-579-4380  
  Email: info@accessingenuity.com  
  Website: https://www.accessingenuity.com/

- **ADA Site Compliance**  
  Email: info@adasitecompliance.com  
  Website: https://adasitecompliance.com/

- **Audioeye**  
  Address: Corporate Headquarters  
  5210 E Williams Circle, Suite 750  
  Tucson, AZ 85711  
  Tel. 1-866-331-5324  
  Website: https://www.audioeye.com/

- **Deque**  
  Address: 2121 Cooperative Way, Suite 210
• Level Access
  Address: 114 Sansome Street, Suite 950
  San Francisco, CA 94104
  Tel. 1-800-889-9659
  Email: info@levelaccess.com
  Website: https://www.levelaccess.com/

• Pacific ADA Center
  Address: 555 12th Street, Suite 1030
  Oakland, CA 94607-4046
  Tel. 1-800-949-4232
  Email: adatech@adapacific.org
  Website: https://www.adapacific.org

• WebAIM
  Address: Center for Persons with Disabilities
  Utah State University
  6807 Old Main Hill
  Logan, UT 84322-6807
  Tel. 1-435-797-7024
  Website: https://webaim.org/