FOD Digital Inclusion Collaboration project - Project Pilot Expression of Interest

Website Accessibility

- Making the world a better place one website at a time
- Imagine a world where barriers crumble and opportunities abound for everyone regardless of circumstance or ability – DAISI
- Digital equity for all
- Why be inaccessible when it's easier just to be accessible

Content

1 - Values

Q. Please tell us how the proposed pilot project aligns with the project's values?

Project Values

- Collaboration
- Co-production
- Lived Experience
- Inclusivity
- Accessibility

Answer:

Collaboration

The very nature of website accessibility means that in order to manage accessibility you have to work with people who are disabled and maybe because of their disability be excluded from your website. Additionally you have to work with developers as browsers and code are in a constant flux meaning what was accessible today may not be tomorrow.

We are collaborating and taking advice with:

- Visually Impaired (VI) community who use [JAWS](), [Supernova]() and [Apple accessibility tools]()
- Advice from [Senclude]() (VI support company run by VI community)
- Advice from Sam (VI) at the Blind life regarding assistive technology
- Worked with Dan (VI) from The Visualise Training Consultancy on education proposals to better inform organisation of legal obligations regarding accessibility
- Worked with a large group in the VI community to design a testing protocol to unify manual auditing
- Advice from Harshadha (blind) a PhD student resulting in a web build to her specification that informed this project
- Advice from Calum (SSI) resulting in a web build to his specification that informed this project
- Research data and advice from Daniel and [The Digital Accessibility, Inclusion, Support and Innovation Project]() (DAISI)

Lived Experience

Talking to individuals' about their experiences regarding digital inclusion/exclusion and collating data.

- Interviewed people at shows.
- Accompanied the Digi bus talking to individuals about their digital experiences.
- Forest Sensory Services VI group
- DAISI – Perceived barriers FOD data
- Barnwood data
- RNIB data - Sight Loss Data Tool
- Barnwood – Digital Divides Gloucestershire

Inclusivity and Accessibility

This project is all about inclusivity. For something to be inclusive it has to be accessible.

Digital services promoted by organisations and government have according to research been found to be neither inclusive or accessible depriving groups of people from important services.

The pilot hopes to be able to demonstrate that accessibility and inclusivity should be a top priority for all organisations.

The work offered and the snapshots offered to organisations during the research phase was a first step to trying to make people aware of the responsibilities they have to the public body that need to access the digital world, whilst recognising that not all people want what is on offer.

2 - Innovation

Please describe how the proposed pilot project displays innovation that benefits the individual / target audience, resulting in increased digital inclusion?

Answer:

1. POLITICAL - An objective is to make people aware that it is not really a choice when discussing access to information and data. We all surely have a right to access? Disability can at times fall into the realm of lip service meaning people and organisations acknowledge disability and then do nothing about it as is perfectly illustrated here in a video titled Meet The Winners from the The Valuable 500 a world collective of large businesses and organisation committed to actively creating meaningful jobs for disabled people. If we can start this as a process in the Forest of Dean and show best practises here and then export this to a greater audience, wouldn't that be great.

2. PRACTICAL - The greatest take away from the research so far is the reluctance of organisations to engage with inclusivity and accessibility. The scope of the project would be to illustrate how to improve website accessibility by creating self-help resources and how by engaging with the VI community we can illustrate how websites can be improved for all and not be a barrier communities.

3. REALITY – What is the situation regarding website accessibility in the Forest of Dean today. WAVE data scrapping to illustrate and testing results. The companies and organisations also become the audience for the resources.

De - Construction of websites in the Forest of Dean

Take websites in the Forest of Dean and demonstrate their accessibility either from a positive or negative perspective. The focus would be local government, charities, and large organisations/businesses.

By documenting and demonstrating these websites we can start to build a picture of where we are with website accessibility in the Forest of Dean.

- Why would this be important? Website data is relevant to all people, more services are being delivered online and many people would argue that this is a basic human right. Digital equity is for all individual's should have (DAISI).
- The selected websites are sites that have a legal obligation if not a moral obligation to be accessible.
- Using online automated testing, manual testing, and data scraping using a data analyst build a picture of accessibility.
- Website accessibility is generally assumed to be specific to people with visual impairment, but a huge and often not considered group of people are the elderly who can suffer from age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy. 19% of the UK population is over 65 and this number is growing.
- There are many other disabilities that need to be considered and this should be something explored in the future.

Self-help resources

Having witnessed the reluctance of organisations and individuals to undertake appropriate action regarding their challenged platforms and in some instances their "legal responsibilities" the research indicates this happens for a variety of reason:

1. Lack of skills
2. Lack of knowledge
3. Company culture issues

4. Company does not care
5. No support form organisation in terms of time and or resource
6. No testing so actually don't know the status of their platform
7. Don't understand legal obligations
8. A commitment to acknowledge challenges and then nothing is done about those challenges. This requires a change in the law to make companies take action rather than do nothing.

So, to create self-help resources to enable web developers to understand what they are doing and more importantly why?

Resources could demonstrate the following in a logical step by step method:

- Demonstrate 8 basic issues that most websites fail with and demonstrate how they can be corrected by anyone with basics web building skills.
    1. Headings
    2. Contrast
    3. Link titles
    4. Line length/font size
    5. Alt tags
    6. Meta data
    7. Button v Links
    8. Accessibility statement
- Demonstrate how the use of overlays, widgets and popups can be problematic to screen readers.
- Demonstrate how to write up an accessibility statement using accessibility testing data.
- Demonstrate how people access websites.
- Explain legal obligations.
- Explain moral obligations.
- Demonstrate how organisations might be missing customers who can't access websites.

By improving websites accessibility you actually make the experience better for all.

Forest of Dean Kite Mark

Some branding is needed for the projects as a whole and certainly a kite mark for website built and that are accessible in the Forest of Dean makes sense.

Creating some form of unity, something that says I care and I am doing something to makes things better could be awesome.

3 - Coproduction and Reach of Pilot Project

Q - Describe how the project design and or delivery of project will involve people with "lived Experience"?

(target 'lived experience' audience)

1. Learning Disabilities/ Additional Needs
2. Physical Disabilities
3. Sensory Disabilities
4. Mental Health/ Wellbeing
5. Children & Young People that may experience any of the above

This project can only happen by working with individuals with specific sensory and wellbeing disabilities to provide a more holistic approach to accessibility from their perspective. The only way this pilot project can be delivered is by working with the people affected with accessibility challenges.

The best process in website development is to test, test, and then test again. The more testing you do the more accessible your website will be. 1 in 5 people in the UK have some form of disability and only by testing with these various groups will you get an honest answer about accessibility.

This could include within the sensory group and mental health/wellbeing group:

- JAWS users from the VI community
- Supernova users from the VI community
- Apple accessibility users from the VI community
- Normal sighted users
- Elderly users
- VI group from Forest Sensory Services

Please use the table below to indicate your intended reach.

Lived Experience Group	Co-design involvement	Access to project	Potential Access after pilot
Learning Disabilities/ Additional Needs		y	y
Physical Disabilities		y	y
Sensory Disabilities	y	y	y
Mental Health/ Wellbeing	Y	y	y
Children & Young People		y	y
*Elderly People	y	y	y

Q - How does the project reach (or could potential reach) target audiences?

Answer:

Websites and accessibility are an integral part of everyone's lives as more and more services go online and traditional delivery mechanisms dwindle away (railway ticket offices being replaced by machines is a good example) so the audience is everyone not just the groups mentioned above.

The potential reach is everybody, one website at a time.

4 - Ability to deliver within the project timelines

Q - Does the project have the ability to be delivered within the 6-month project timeline?
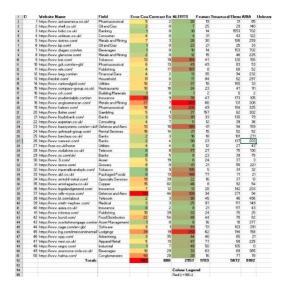
Answer:

The project is very deliverable within the time scale if appropriate resources and budget is available to bring in the necessary people to develop the project, specifically the web build (if selected), manual testing, and legacy provision (resources).

The element that will take most time will be the legacy aspect of the project. Initially the idea is to create a series of short videos showing the journey and online self-help resources.

1 - Where we are today in the Forest of Dean

- Identify websites in the Forest of Dean
- Run automated testing
- Run manual testing
- WAVE data scrape

The data scrape will allow us to create a visual representation of website accessibility in the Forest like here, red being the worst.

2 - Legacy multi media - self help

Story board process to map out the journey which should mirror the process i.e. each element is explained and is recorded showing the challenge, why it's a problem and how to fix it. (see list here [>>>>>](#))

3 - Legacy resources - self help

Online portal of resources to hold both the videos and other resources in one Forest of Dean hub. Possibly including some the resources from the DAISI project.

As well as a curating and publishing online self-help articles via a suitable platform we have discussed the idea of producing short multimedia videos*.

*Multimedia we propose mixing video, screen grabs, images text and music.

4 – Self help delivery

Working with Daisi build an online delivery site containing the resources. This to be branded as a Forest initiative working with Daisi.

Possibly look at printed material although I suspect time will not allow but it could be an ambition for the future.

Q - Are there contingencies plans in place in the event of project delays?

Answer:
Once the pilot project starts there is no reason it can not finish with the stated time frame. I can't see of any reason that would delay the project as each element is independent. If there was an overrun for unseen reason it would still come together.

5 - Success Measures

Does the pilot project have bespoke systems and processes in place to capture success measures of the project for future evulation?

Barnwood Evaluation measures

Q - How your project has benefited disabled people and people with mental health conditions?

Q - How disabled people and people with mental health conditions have been involved in the planning, delivery and/or evaluation of your project?

Q - How you have made your projects accessible to a wide range of people?

Q - How you have considered the sustainability of your project beyond the life of the funding?

Numeria Data

Q - How many disabled people and people with mental health conditions were involved in co-producing the work (e.g. involved in designing, planning and/or delivering the work)?

Q - How many disabled people and people with mental health conditions took part in/accessed the activities or services you delivered (e.g. the number of people who attended workshops you delivered or accessed a service you provided)?

Q: How your project has benefited disabled people and people with mental health conditions?

- By having better and more accessible platforms everyone benefits. The project is endeavouring to include accessibility initially for the VI and elderly communities. Obviously, there is always more work to be done to help other groups have a more accessible online experience.

Q: How disabled people and people with mental health conditions have been involved in the planning, delivery and/or evaluation of your project.

- The project is informed and led by the VI community. My role is development, management and coordination, acting as the conduit between the VI community and those people and organisations that need help with accessibility challenges.
- Whilst I have the skill sets to audit websites specifically automated and WCAG testing which is what underpins most countries legislation regarding accessibility. We (myself and the VI community) always considered manual testing by people using assistive technologies deliver a much more accurate test.
- Therefore, automated audits are useful indicators and generally cover most common accessibility issues. But it is the user who informs the process.
- The data scraping using the WAVE api is produced by an individual with a bipolar condition.

Q: How you have made your projects accessible to a wide range of people.

- This is the purpose of the project and the research. Make websites and platforms accessible for all. Working with the VI community and coders in the US specifically Joe who leads on Foundation 6 we have been able to inform improvement of the code. Foundation 6 is a front-end responsive mobile first Framework compiling HTML, CSS, and JavaScript used by hundreds of thousands of developers everyday powering over 2 million websites.
- Whilst the scope of the project is here in the Forest of Dean the scope is the whole of the world wide web. Poor websites are everywhere.

Q: How you have considered the sustainability of your project beyond the life of the funding?

- Yes. Ongoing discussions are currently being had to create a recruitment and training program to employ people from the VI community to be accessibility ambassadors and auditors.
- Additionally, we are in discussion to establish a one stop shop in the Forest which would train young adults to be web developers, learn stacks, learn coding, and be introduce to w3. Coding is going to be the future and the young will lead the way.
- For the wider community we hope it would be a place businesses and organisations could come for advice and help.
- These two elements, young VI people and web developers working together would be unique.

Numeria Data - Pilot project?

Q: How many disabled people and people with mental health conditions were involved in co-producing the work (e.g. involved in designing, planning and/or delivering the work)?

VI consultant partners that informed the research and shaped the direction of the project.

- VI opinion and advice from JAWS, Supernova and Apple accessibility tools auditors
- Advice from Senclude (VI support company run by VI community)
- Advice from Sam (VI) at the Blind life regarding assistive technology
- Worked with Dan (VI) from The Visualise Training Consultancy on education proposals to better inform organisation of legal obligations regarding accessibility
- Worked with a large group in the VI community to design a testing protocol to unify manual auditing
- Advice from Harshadha Balasubramanian a blind PhD student resulting in a web build to her specification that informed this project
- Advice from Calum (SSI) resulting in a web build to his specification that informed this project
- Research data and advice from DAISI
- Off the record advice from UsableNet blind auditor

Forest of Dean collaborators

- Producing website accessibility snapshots based on the above for
    - Art space
    - CAB
    - Dean Heritage Centre
    - Forest Sensory Service
    - Forest Pulse
    - Newent Initiative Trust
    - Ross Labels
- Worked with Ashley's Meadow about accessible web provision for a disability centre
- Workshop with Forest Sensory Services VI Group testing FSS website confirming the snapshot that FSS website is not accessible
- Several Digibus sessions talking to members of public that ranged from young to old – principal interest in older people to inform and substantiate VI issues due to age related conditions
- Electronic form to collate online data feedback on digital divides questionnaire – still ongoing although the lived experience data was more reliable and telling.

Q: How many disabled people and people with mental health conditions took part in/accessed the activities or services you delivered (e.g. the number of people who attended workshops you delivered or accessed a service you provided)

- The web platform that were audited were assessed in passing by a number of VI people (informally) to provide an idea of accessibility challenges, this was not a full audit.

The pilot stage is where real engagement would inform the project. Snapshots provided to date are just that. In order to create or quantify a web platform the only way this can be measured is by using disabled people to tell us and provide the feedback.

"Is this platform accessible or not?"

Despite the global efforts of W3C and specifically WCAG v2.1 and v2.2 standards the blind community er something is accessible or not accessible.

Imagined, Built and Delivered in the Forest of Dean. Making the world a better place one website at a time.