# Digital Accessibility Research Checklist

## The most important thing you can do:

Make it a habit to ask if anyone has any accommodation needs and work to incorporate accessible practices into your everyday work! This can help decrease the stigma and increase opportunities for disclosure of accommodation needs. Know that just because no one tells you they have a disability doesn’t mean no one actually has one. Disclosing a disability is a difficult decision and is not a requirement! If you want to learn more about disability, there are resources available that can provide guidance, training, and support.

## Are you using accessible publications/journal articles?

Traditional PDF documents are typically not accessible. Options for alternative formats like html are often accessible (or more accessible). PDFs can be made accessible, but it requires work/skills/time.

* Are you sharing research resources with your research team that are accessible?
* Do you have accessible versions of “gold standard” articles in your field that are referenced frequently to use and share with new researchers/student researchers?
* Do you have links to online sources instead of sharing inaccessible PDF copies of articles/research?

## Are you using accessible documents for your proposal or funding application?

If you are sharing documents with colleagues, consider using Microsoft Word documents and utilizing the Accessibility Checker that is built into Microsoft products.

* If you are required to submit a specific document or use a submission form for a grant, IRB approval, or any other approval or funding source, ask if the document is accessible!
* Are documents you are sharing with your research team accessible?
* Are you considering accessibility from the start of your proposal writing/funding application drafting?

## Are you using accessible platforms for collaboration?

Considering accessibility when choosing platforms for communication, brainstorming, collaboration, and engagement can be overwhelming! There are some platforms that have built-in accessibility features and some that are not accessible at all. If you are considering using a platform, ask about accessibility before you start!

* Did you give people the opportunity to request accommodations?
* Do you know what accessibility features are available to use for any meeting?
* If an accommodation is requested, do you know how to provide the accommodation or who to reach out to for assistance?
* Are the apps and tools you are using for brainstorming, idea sharing, and collaboration accessible?

## Is your participant recruitment accessible?

Unless your study population is so narrow that disability is not a possibility (this is almost impossible) or disability is an exclusion criterion, the odds are that someone who COULD participate in your research won’t if your recruitment is not accessible.

* Are you using an accessible document or platform for your call for participants/participant recruitment (email, social media, advertisement, etc.)?
* Do your potential participants have to use any electronic verification to participate? Is it accessible?
* Do you have a website for potential participants to visit to learn more about your study/project? Is it accessible?
* Have you clearly stated how someone can request accommodations or what accommodations will be automatically provided?

## Are your participant engagement tools accessible?

You might be using a variety of technology options as a part of your research project. Have you considered the impact an inaccessible product might have on your results? On your participants? On compliance with study protocols or completion of the study?

* Do your videos have accurate captions?
* Did you create an accessible survey?
* Are your electronic documents accessible (informed consent, participant agreement, study instructions, etc)?
* Are you using an accessible form of communication (email, shared documents, etc.)?

## Is your data analysis accessible for disabled researchers on your team?

When it is time to analyze your data, there are many options for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Considering accessibility and the accommodation needs of your research team is an important step in creating an inclusive space for disabled researchers.

* Are you using accessible products to analyze your data?
* Are you using accessible methods of documenting the data?
* Are you sharing accessible results (accessible charts/graphs, images, tables)?
* Are you familiar with or utilizing any built-in accessibility features of the tools you are using?

## Are you publishing accessible research?

When the research is complete and it is time to look towards publishing, the accessibility of articles, journals, books, and websites is important to consider.

* Does the journal offer multiple formats?
* Does the Journal/publication have an accessibility policy/plan?
* Are the PDFs accessible?
* Does the book come in digital as well as print? If someone needs the book in a different/accessible format, can they get that from the publisher?
* Are your publications open access?
* If you are sharing results on a website, is the website accessible?

## Are you giving accessible presentations?

Presenting about research is a common occurrence and can be done virtually or in-person. But even in-person presentations have an electronic component: slides.

* Did you check your slides for accessibility?
* Are you familiar with accessible presenting techniques?
* Are you sharing slides with participants ahead of time in a format that allows the participant to use their adaptive technology to access it (sharing it as PowerPoint slides instead of as a PDF of the slides)?
* Did you or the presentation host provide an opportunity for participants to request accommodations?

# Resources

## Accessible publications and journals:

* The university library has a variety of accessible journals, articles, resources, etc. and is working to acquire more all the time. Contact the library for assistance with identifying accessible versions, acquiring accessible copies, or for information about available accessible resources.

## Accessible documents and content:

* Learn more about [Microsoft Word accessibility](https://www.uc.edu/about/accessibility-network/documents/microsoft-word.html) or take the Microsoft Word module in the EIT Training Portal in Canvas.
* Review guides, tutorials, and a checklist for [PDF accessibility](https://www.uc.edu/about/accessibility-network/documents/pdf-s.html) provided by the Accessibility Network.
* Reach out to the Digital Access Team for more information on alternative formats as an accommodation.
* Reach out to the Communication Access Team for more information on professional captioning or for resources for self-captioning tools.

## Accessible platforms:

* Zoom has built in accessibility features that make it the top choice for many people when considering a video conferencing app
* If you have questions about Zoom specific to accommodations for deaf and hard of hearing, reach out to the Communication Access Team for assistance.
* If you are not sure if an app or platform is accessible, you can check the company website to see if they have any information about accessibility, you can email the Accessibility Network to ask if they know about or have reviewed the app/platform, or you can submit an [accessibility review request](https://ituc.service-now.com/sp?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=9d5a31951b798810e30db992cc4bcb08).
* For more information about what makes software or an app accessible, check out the Accessibility Network’s [Software and Applications Checklist](https://www.uc.edu/about/accessibility-network/purchasing/software-and-applications-checklist.html).

## Accessible apps, tools, and websites:

* If you are using a UC website for your research, you can work with your college or unit’s apex user/website admin to ensure your site is accessible.
* If you are using an outside site, you will want to ensure it is created with accessibility in mind and be sure to ask about accessibility!
* The Accessibility Network has a number of resources related to [website accessibility](https://www.uc.edu/about/accessibility-network/web.html), including checklists available on the website.
* If you want to know more about website accessibility, reach out to the Accessibility Network.
* If you re using an app, tool, program, software, etc. and need to have an accessibility review of the product done, you can submit a [request for an accessibility review](https://ituc.service-now.com/sp?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=9d5a31951b798810e30db992cc4bcb08) or you can review the information related to [accessibility and purchasing](https://www.uc.edu/about/accessibility-network/purchasing.html).

## Accessible surveys and data:

* If you are building your survey in Qualtrics, there is a Check Survey Accessibility Tool and several support articles devoted to [survey accessibility](https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/survey-module/survey-tools/check-survey-accessibility/) to help you design your survey.
* For information on building accessible charts and data visualizations, check out [Chartability](https://chartability.fizz.studio/).