
Accessible Iowa: Countdown to Digital Accessibility

Tiffini Stevenson Earl and Maggie Jesse, co-chairs, UI Accessibility Task Force

Staff Council – February 2026

Digital accessibility deadline

April 2026 deadline

Organizations must comply with digital accessibility rules by April 2026.

Includes all digital platforms and content

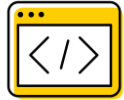
Websites, mobile apps, digital tools, and content should be accessible to people with disabilities.

Avoid legal issues

Compliance with accessibility standards helps organizations avoid legal issues and enhances the user experience.



Areas of focus Part One



Websites and web applications: All pages, forms, and interactive elements on university websites.



Documents: PDFs, Word documents, PowerPoint presentations, and other digital files.



Multimedia: Videos, audio recordings, and any other multimedia content.



Software and applications: Any software or applications used by the university, including mobile apps.

Areas of focus, Part Two



Emails and digital communications: Email newsletters, announcements, and other digital communications.



Digital signage: Electronic displays and information boards around the campus.



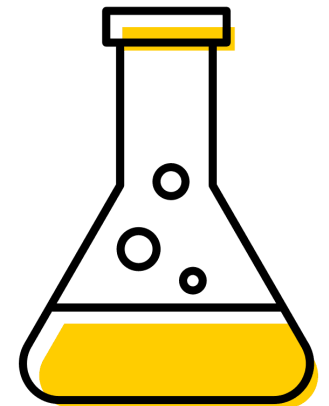
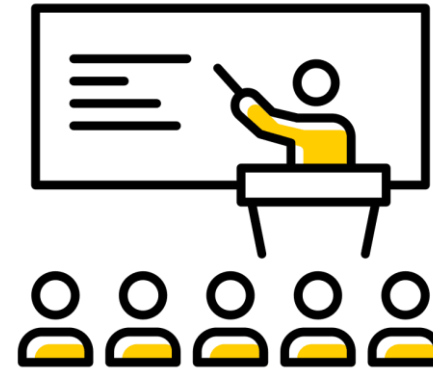
Learning Management Systems (LMS): Content and tools within platforms like Canvas or Blackboard.



Social media and mobile applications: all platforms.

What areas does this impact?

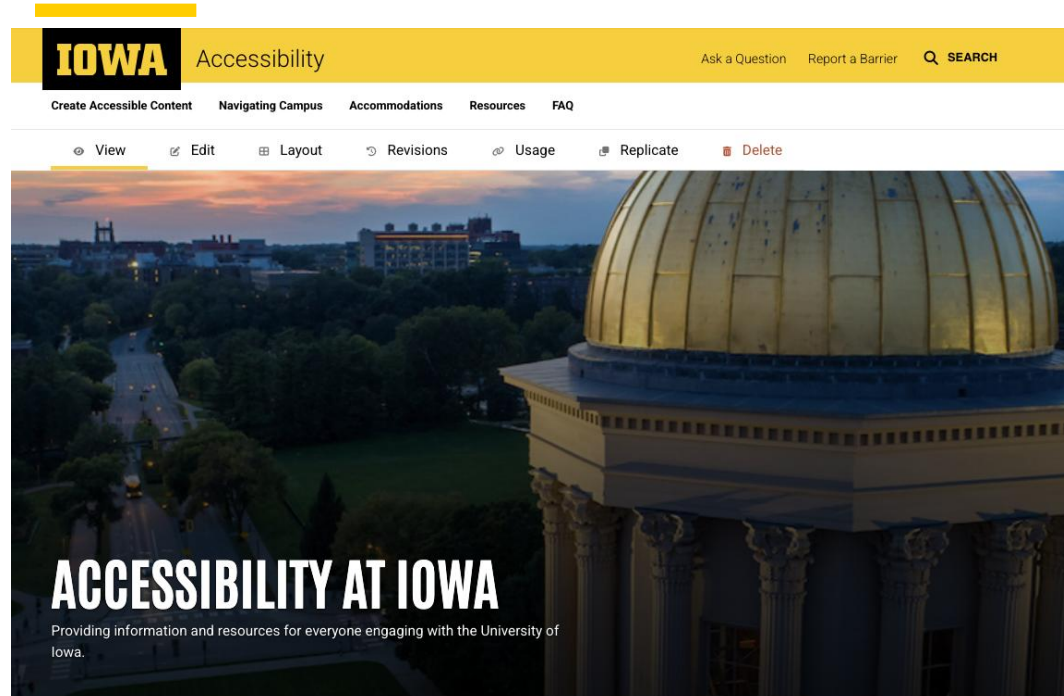
- All digital assets and applications that are provided under the umbrella of the University
 - Academics
 - Administration
 - Athletics
 - Healthcare
 - Research



Task Force accomplishments so far

- Launched <https://accessibility.uiowa.edu>
- New contract language for our vended products has been developed for Purchasing
- Digital inventory completed: 3,696 verified assets (software & applications)
- Launched a new Accessibility Liaisons program
- New “Build Your Digital Accessibility Skills” campaign launched
- Presentations offered and available for reinforcing institutional accountability under Title II
- Web site accessibility scores improving
- ICON accessibility showing measurable progress through increased faculty engagement with Ally
- Faculty engagement in the CAFÉ program is growing and seeing measurable results
- Training subcommittee has developed guides for manual web site testing and new micro-learning resources

Campus accessibility website



The University of Iowa is committed to ensuring the accessibility of electronic, information technology resources, and facilities used by members of the university community and general public. This commitment supports the university's mission of teaching, research and service, and is maintained in accordance with relevant federal and state laws.

Accessible means that individuals with disabilities are able to independently acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services within the same timeframe as individuals without disabilities, with substantially equivalent ease of use.



- **Accessibility.uiowa.edu**
- Broader than digital accessibility
 - Info on accommodations, navigating campus, reporting barriers
- Resources / how-to videos
 - <https://accessibility.uiowa.edu/create-accessible-content>
- Training opportunities
- Submit questions about accessibility
- Comms subcommittee working on updates/enhancements

What are we asking of campus? Get started now!

- **Change your habits**
 - Use accessibility checkers in your content creation tools (Word, PPT, Excel)
 - Add automatic captions in your Zoom and Teams sessions
 - Turn on captioning in your PPT presentations
- **Change practices in your workgroups**
 - Participate in training
 - Encourage your colleagues to check accessibility on their shared files and communications
 - Remind one another about accessibility

Everyone use the tools readily available

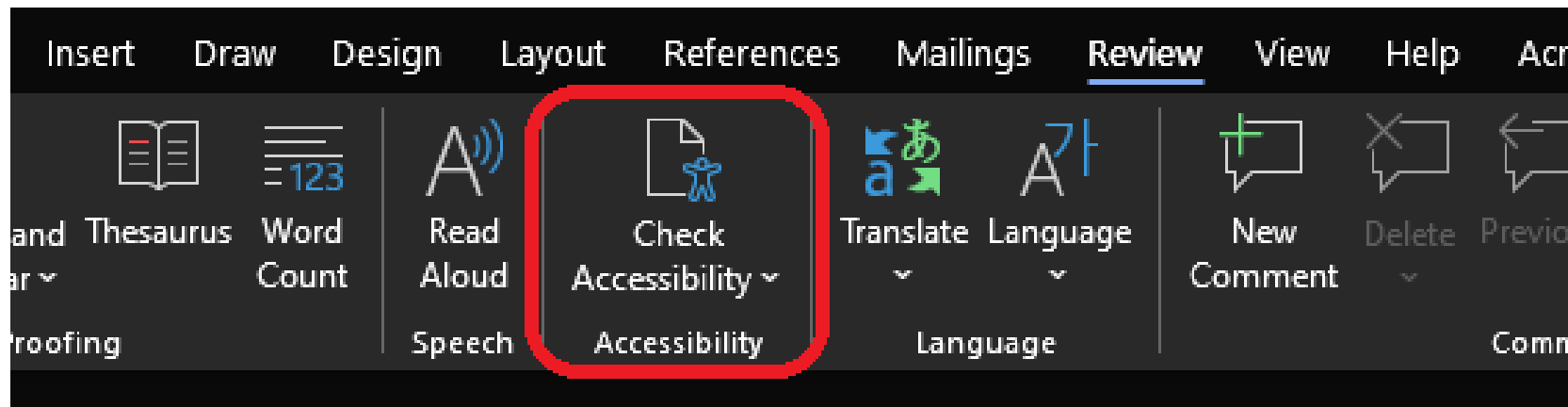
- Faculty – Use Ally in ICON
 - Real-time feedback on accessibility issues in course materials and step-by-step guidance for improvement
- Siteimprove for website administrators
 - Scans web sites flags accessibility and content issues
- Accessibility checkers in Office 365 for everyone
 - Built into all MS products to pinpoint accessibility barriers and suggest improvements. Change your habits and begin using these tools.
- Adobe Acrobat Pro
 - Licensed and available to **all UI faculty and staff**
 - Includes accessibility checking and all the remediation tools needed

Word document accessibility

- Check your accessibility on the bottom of the screen

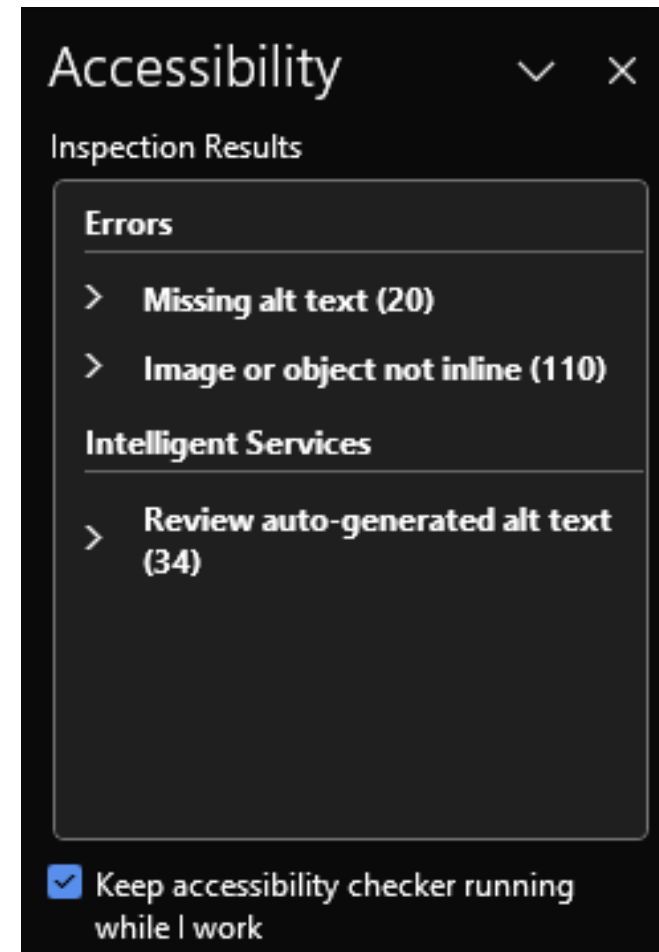


- Use Word's built-in accessibility checker



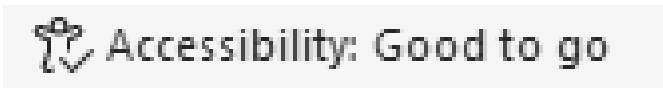
Word document accessibility - continued

- Follow its guidance

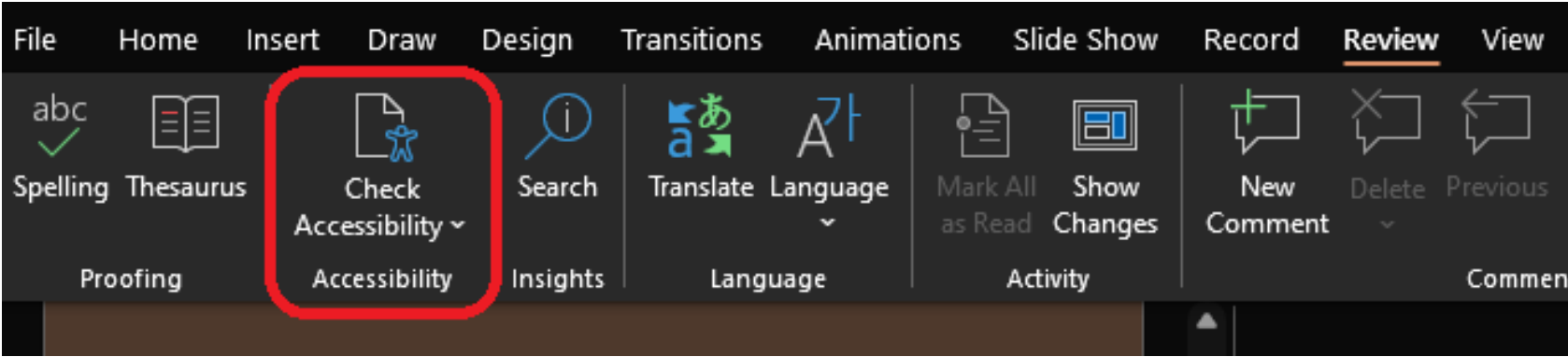


PowerPoint presentation accessibility

- Check your accessibility at the bottom of the screen

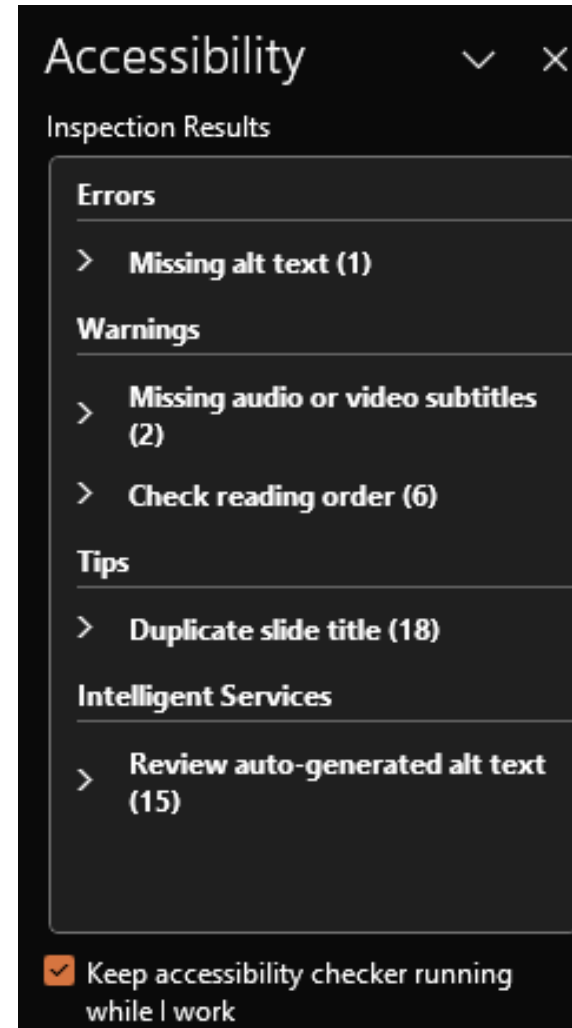


- Use PowerPoint's built-in accessibility checker



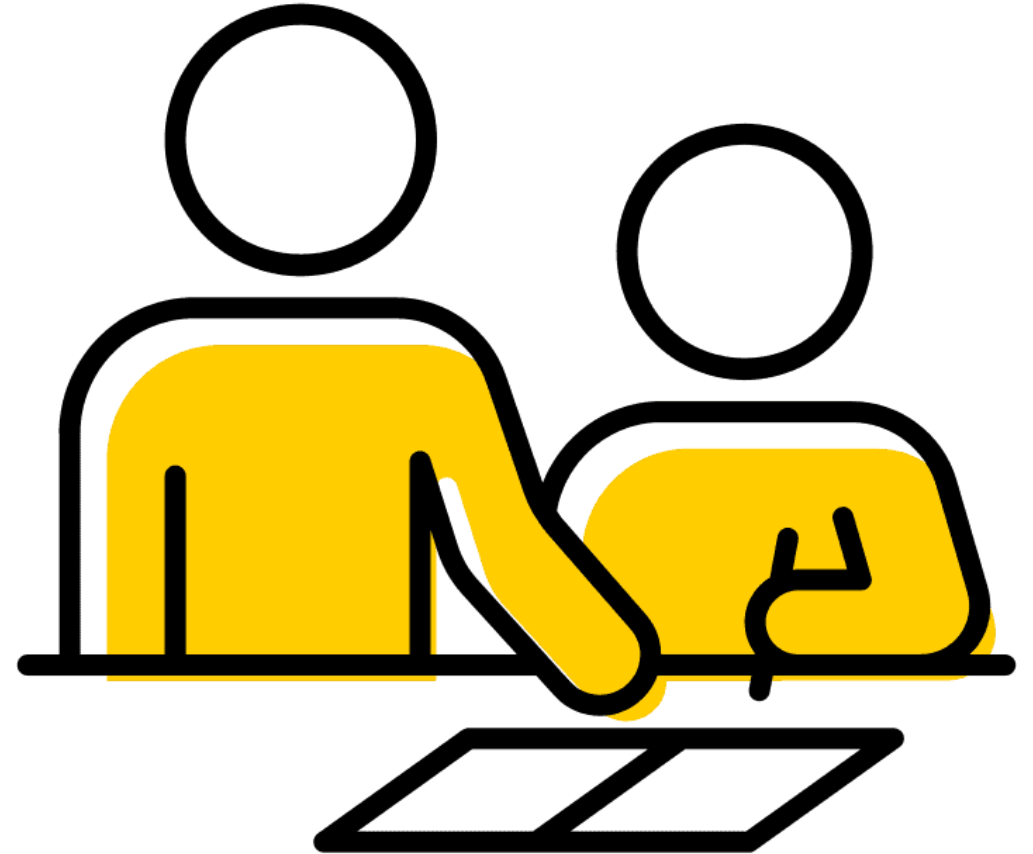
PowerPoint presentation accessibility - continued

- Follow its guidance



Training opportunities

- [Short videos](#) on the campus accessibility site
 - Learn to use accessibility checkers in Word, Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint, and Adobe Acrobat in minutes
- [Accessibility 101](#) course available through My Training on HR Self-Service
 - Complete short modules at your own pace
- [Instructor-led trainings](#) for faculty
 - Sessions on course-accessibility tools



Use the 3Rs framework*

You can use the 3Rs framework to prioritize your accessibility work.

Remove

Remove content you do not need to share right now, and delete content you no longer need.

Revise

Revise any digital content you need to share.

Right First

Create new content with digital accessibility in mind.

*Developed by the BTAA Accessibility Peer Group, special thanks to the [University of Minnesota](#)

How we are helping faculty and instructors

- CAFÉ: Course Accessibility for Everyone
- Accessible Canvas templates in ICON
- Anthology Ally and TidyUP
- SITA supported PDF remediation advice

 Anthology Ally



How we are helping researchers

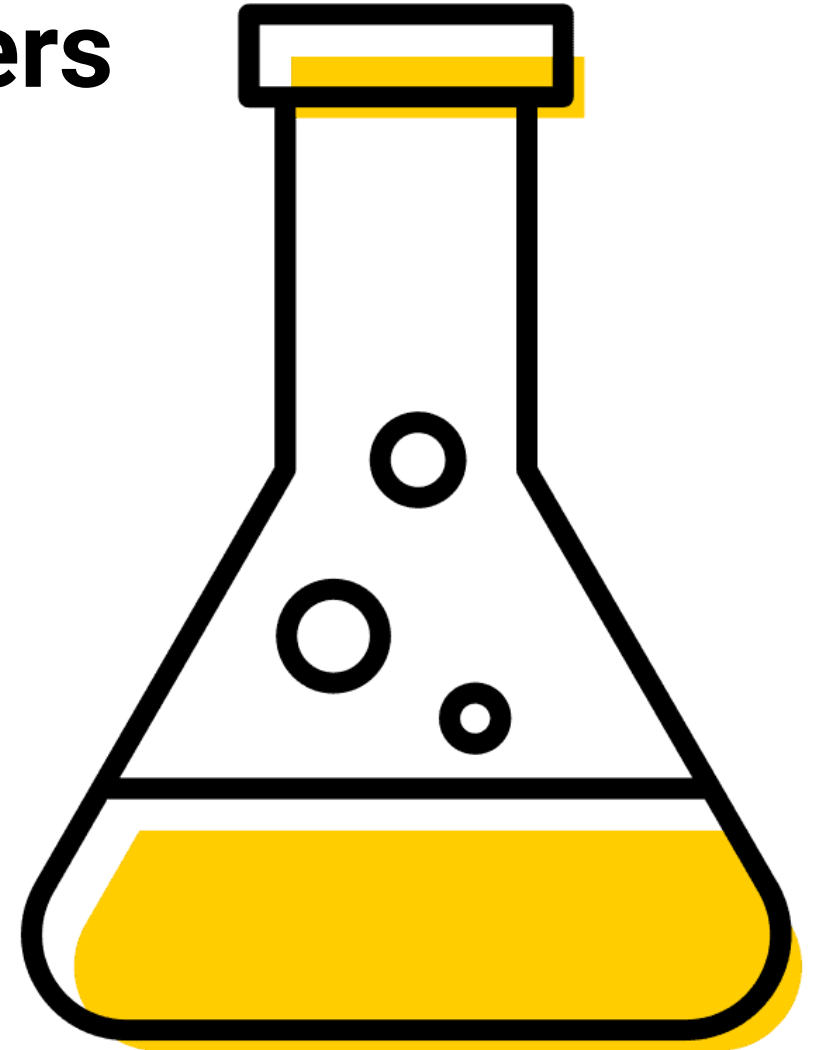
New website resource for researchers

- <https://accessibility.uiowa.edu/researchers>
- <https://accessibility.uiowa.edu/exceptions>

WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK

COMING SOON

- Message from VP Schwebel to researchers
- Campus communications directed to researchers



New Accessibility Liaison Program

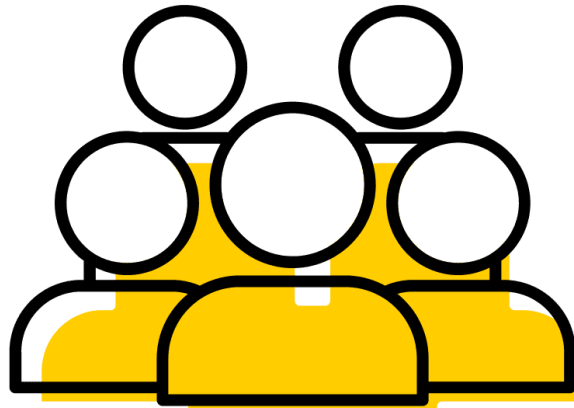


- Sponsored by the Task Force
- Local representatives to help you find answers and solutions
- Group meets regularly for training and updates
- **Find your liaison at**
 - <https://accessibility.uiowa.edu/resources/liaisons>

Recent communication

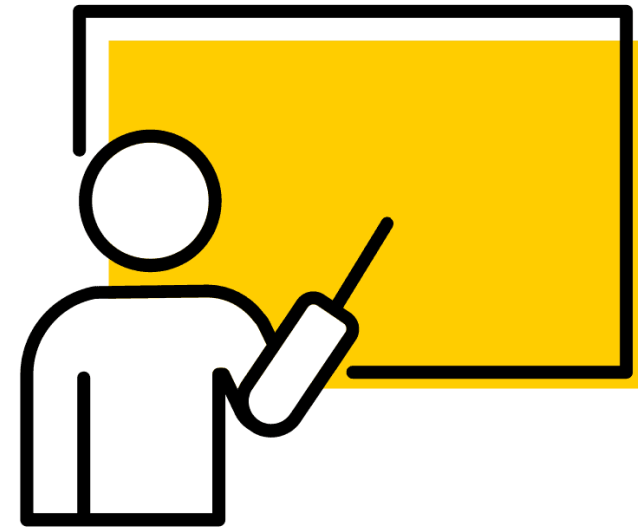


May and September messaging in Iowa Now and from Provost about the Accessible Iowa effort, pointing to resources



Comms with deans/cabinet to recruit accessibility liaisons who are being trained to help answer questions in their units

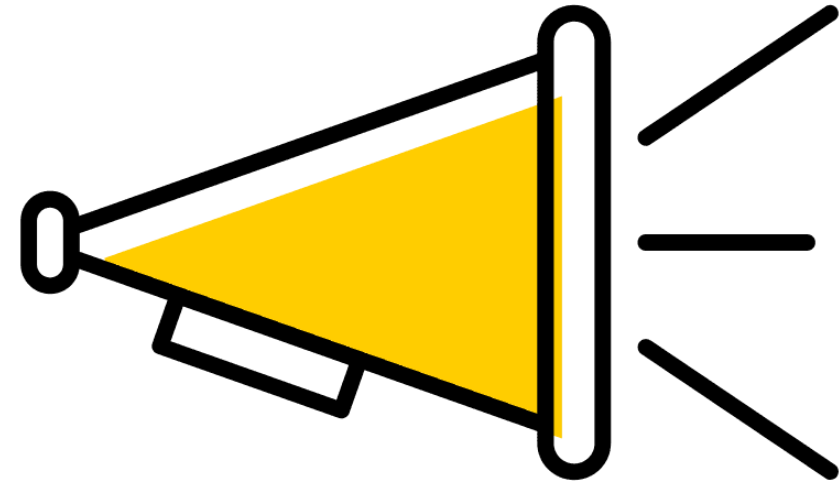
<https://accessibility.uiowa.edu/resources/liaisons>



Comms about training opportunities

How can you help

- Take advantage of and help promote training
- Familiarize yourself with accessibility.uiowa.edu
- Follow accessibility best practices when creating content
- Leverage accessibility tools within apps, use SiteImprove
- Help raise awareness about your accessibility liaison
- Feedback – we welcome questions and ideas!



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