

Accessibility Efforts Underway at Syracuse University Libraries

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Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

Syracuse University has a mission to foster an inclusive and accessible experience for its diverse staff and students. These efforts include recognizing and addressing the systemic barriers that people with disabilities physically, mentally, and socially experience in their daily lives. Ongoing education, training, and actions are steps towards eliminating these barriers.

One notable action is our enactment in January 2018 of a comprehensive Information and Communication Technology Accessibility Policy that mandates:

- New ICT purchases must meet WCAG 2.0 AA standard
- All new and updated web pages and online content must be accessible (WCAG 2.0 AA).
- Ongoing replacement and remediation of existing online content and services.

<http://itsaccessibility.syr.edu/ict-accessibility-policy/>

Accessibility in Libraries

Ensuring that patrons of all abilities and disabilities can access library services is not the responsibility of one or a single librarian or department. Library staff from all areas and disciplines have substantial roles to play to make our various services accessible to all patrons:

- Service desks
- Interlibrary loans
- Licensing
- Web content
- Physical access
- And more...

Building a Library Accessibility Community

Syracuse University Libraries cannot create systemic change in library accessibility alone. The larger library community must collaborate. We invite you to join us in:

- Working with vendors to improve accessibility
- Contributing product reviews and evaluations
- Sharing training materials and best practices
- Learning and asking questions

Training & Education

- Development of best practices guides for documents, web pages, presentations
- Workshops on making Word, PowerPoint, PDF, etc. accessible
- Onboard training of new staff, including graduate student workers
- Outreach to campus content creators: graduate students, instructors, etc.

Archives & Repositories

- Working with vendors to address technology issues
- Developing best practices for unique materials (i.e., special collections)
- Incorporating accessibility into digital collection decisions and policies

LibGuides

- Extensive accessibility review and remediation of existing guides
- New committee for LibGuide policy and management
- Consultation with SpringShare to further improve accessibility

Physical Accessibility

- Addition of adjustable height tables throughout library
- Some study corrals raised to accommodate wheelchairs
- Item retrieval services
- Working with blind/low vision patrons to address wayfinding



Journals & Databases

- Accessibility now a part of purchasing decision workflow
- Vendors asked to provide a VPAT or accessibility statement
- Plan for ongoing accessibility review of most used resources

Assistive Technologies

- Installation of common assistive software on library computers
- Public room outfitted with specialty furniture and equipment for use by disabled patrons
- Connecting with developers to propose new technologies or features

Alternative Format Services

- Development of in-house abilities to reformat and remediate library content
- ILL requests for alternative formats
- Development of accessibility workflow for course reserve materials
- Coordination with disability services for access rights, work reduction, shared services

For more information, visit <https://library.syr.edu/accessibility/>