Project Title

# Project Charter

## 📕 Project Description

The Department of Justice (DOJ) recently issued a significant ruling regarding Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which has implications for our institution and our commitment to accessibility. The DOJ's April ruling emphasizes the need for public entities, including educational institutions like ours, to ensure that their services, programs, and activities are accessible to individuals with disabilities. This ruling underscores our responsibility to provide an inclusive environment where all members of our community can fully participate and benefit from our offerings.

Seattle Colleges must evaluate and update our digital content, including websites and mobile apps, to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA standards. These guidelines cover a range of accessibility requirements, such as ensuring websites are navigable by screen readers, videos are captioned, and online resources are accessible to individuals with various disabilities.

To comply with the ruling, we need to conduct a comprehensive audit of our digital content against the WCAG 2.1 AA standards, identify areas that need improvement, and implement necessary changes. This will involve collaboration across departments, including IT, eLearning, Communications, Compliance, Web, and various other units.

## 📅 Important Dates

### Start Date

* September 2024

### End Date:

* April 2026

## 🙌 Success Criteria / Outcomes

Provide a list of criteria that indicate project success.

* **Audit Completion**: All digital content and resources have been audited against WCAG 2.1 AA standards, and a comprehensive report detailing non-compliant areas has been submitted.
* **Action Plan Implementation**: An action plan addressing all identified accessibility issues is developed and initiated, with milestones for each phase clearly documented.
* **Success Matrix**: A success matrix is created that outlines measures to be used to identify success in each determined functional area such as instruction, staff, and website.
* **Awareness and Training**: At least 80% of staff across departments have completed accessibility training, and resources are readily available for ongoing learning.
* **Ongoing Compliance Monitoring**: Systems developed for regular monitoring, schedules are established, and quarterly compliance reports are submitted, showing progressive improvement and maintenance of accessibility standards.

## 🧘 Project Scope

### In Scope

Provide a list of ideas that fall within the boundaries of this project.

* **Conducting Digital Content Audits**: Review all websites, mobile apps, and digital resources to identify non-compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA standards.
* **Developing a Remediation Action Plan**: Create a step-by-step plan to address identified accessibility issues, prioritizing high-impact areas.
* **Providing Accessibility Training**: Organize workshops and online courses for staff on digital accessibility best practices.
* **Implementing Ongoing Monitoring Tools**: Set up automated tools and manual checks to regularly monitor digital content for compliance.
* **Updating Digital Resources**: Make necessary updates to digital resources (e.g., adding alt text to images, captioning videos).
* **Creating a Compliance Documentation Process**: Develop a system to document the progress of accessibility updates and compliance efforts.
* **Engaging with Users with Disabilities**: Involve students and staff with disabilities in testing and feedback sessions to improve digital accessibility.
* **Reporting to Leadership**: Provide regular progress reports to senior leadership and stakeholders on compliance status and next steps.
* **Integrating Accessibility into Procurement**: Ensure all new digital tools and software procured comply with accessibility standards.
* **Developing Communication Strategies**: Create clear communication plans to inform the community about accessibility initiatives and updates.

### Out of Scope

Provide a list of ideas that fall outside the boundaries of this project.

* **Physical Accessibility Audits**: Evaluating campus buildings and physical spaces for ADA compliance, which falls outside the digital focus of this project.
* **Developing New Academic Programs**: Introducing new degree programs or courses unrelated to accessibility.
* **Updating Non-Digital Policies**: Revising policies that do not impact digital content or accessibility, such as dress codes or parking regulations.

## 🧘 Policy Alignment

Seattle Colleges has several existing policies that support the work of the Accessibility Committee. The purpose of the committee is to really ensure that we are putting the policies to practice. The policies are created by staff in collaboration with the Compliance Officer and then ratified by the Board of Trustees. The policies can be found on our website and include:

* [Policy 110](https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/pol110?hasboth=1&docID=110&companionId=pro): Mission, Values and Goals
* [Policy 201](https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/pol201?hasboth=0&docID=201&companionId=pro): Equal Opportunity and Accommodation for the District
* [Policy 241](https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/pol241?hasboth=1&docID=241&companionId=pro): Accessible Technology and Electronic Content
* [Policy 387](https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/pol387?hasboth=1&docID=387&companionId=pro): Disability Nondiscrimination and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
* [Policy 404](https://www.seattlecolleges.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/pol404?hasboth=1&docID=404&companionId=pro): Workforce Diversity
* [Policy 418](http://www.seattlecolleges.edu/district/policies/policies.aspx?policyID=pol418): Reasonable Accommodations for Employees and Applicants with Disabilities

Beyond our own institutional policies, our work is supported at both the federal and state levels:

### Federal Disability Civil Rights Laws

* Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
* Title I of the ADA
* Section 508

### Washington State Policies

* The Washington State Core Services Acts re-affirms the requirements set out in Section 504 and the ADA in more succinct and defined terms.
  + [RCW 28B.10.910 Students with disabilities—Core services](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/Rcw/default.aspx?cite=28B.10.910)
  + [RCW 28B.10.912 Students with disabilities—Core services described—Notice of nondiscrimination](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/Rcw/default.aspx?cite=28B.10.912)
  + [RCW 28B.10.914 Students with disabilities—Accommodation](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/Rcw/default.aspx?cite=28B.10.914)
  + [RCW 28B.10.916 Supplemental instructional materials for students with print access disability](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/Rcw/default.aspx?cite=28B.10.916)
* [SBCTC Policy 30.20.3B](https://sbctc.instructure.com/courses/1781777/files/115943683/download?wrap=1)
* [WaTech User-01 Accessibility Policy (formerly Policy 188)](https://watech.wa.gov/policies/accessibility-policy)

## 👥 Interested/Affected Parties

Provide a list of those impacted by this project, their role, and how often you need to communicate with them about the progress of this project.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Role** | **Communication Frequency** |
| Students | Impacted By Outcome | Annually |
| Faculty | Create/Remediate Content | Monthly |
| Staff | Create/Remediate Content | Monthly |
| Chancellor’s Executive Cabinet | Approvers/Enforcement Support | Quarterly |
| Communications Team | Enforcement Support | Quarterly |
| HR | Enforcement Support | Quarterly |
| Union Representation | Training Requirement |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## 🧑‍🤝‍🧑 Committee Members

Provide a list of those impacted by this project, their role, and how often you need to communicate with them about the progress of this project.

| **Name** | **Role** | **Department** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Maria Ales | Member | IT / 188 Coordinator |
| Kevin Bowersox-Johnson | Chair | eLearning |
| Cebrina Chavez | Member | Access - Central |
| Eli Dow | Member | eLearning |
| D’Andre Fisher | Member | EDIC / CEC |
| Tim Foster | Member | Communications / Web |
| Briane Franks | Member | HR |
| Lorine Hill | Member | HR / Compliance |
| Rose Kolovrat | Member | Access – South |
| Thuy Nguyen | Member | eLearning |
| Reed Rodgers | Member | EDIC |
| Rachael Torella | Member | Access – North |
| Andrew Svec | Member | Communications |
| Reed Wacker | Member | Communications / Web |

## 📚 Resources

Provide an initial list of resources needed for this project.

1. Human Resources
   1. **Accessibility Specialists**: Experts to conduct audits and guide remediation.
   2. **IT Staff**: For technical updates and system changes.
   3. **Trainers**: To provide staff training on accessibility best practices.
   4. **Project Manager**: To coordinate and oversee the project.
2. Tools and Software
   1. **Accessibility Auditing Tools**: Software like WAVE, Axe, or Siteimprove for automated checks.
   2. **Screen Readers and Assistive Technologies**: Tools for manual testing, such as NVDA, JAWS, or VoiceOver.
   3. **Learning Management System (LMS) Resources**: Accessibility modules and e-learning content for training.
3. Financial Resources
   1. **Budget for Remediation**: Funds to address identified accessibility issues (e.g., hiring consultants, purchasing software).
   2. **Training Budget**: For workshops, webinars, and accessibility certification courses.
4. Documentation and Reporting Tools
   1. **Compliance Tracking Software**: To document progress, manage tasks, and track compliance status.
   2. **Report Templates**: For documenting audit results, progress reports, and action plans.
5. Communication Channels
   1. **Internal Communication Platforms**: Tools like Teams for project coordination and updates.
   2. **Feedback Mechanisms**: Tools for gathering feedback from students, staff, and users with disabilities.
6. Policy and Guidance Documents
   1. **WCAG 2.1 AA Guidelines**: Accessible copies of the guidelines for reference.
   2. **Institutional Accessibility Policies**: Current policies and any new guidelines related to digital accessibility.

## ⏳ Timeline

Provide a high-level list of milestones and the dates.

| **Milestone** | **Deadline** |
| --- | --- |
| Conduct a thorough audit of our current digital content and resources based on WCAG 2.1 AA standards. |  |
| Develop and implement an action plan to address identified accessibility issues while documenting our process and progress. |  |
| Promote awareness and provide training and resources around accessibility best practices across the district. |  |
| Ensure ongoing compliance with accessibility standards and monitor/document progress. |  |

## 💰 Initial Budget Ideas

Provide a high-level list of budget items and estimated amounts needed for each.

| **Budget Item** | **Estimated Budget** |
| --- | --- |
| Accessibility Consultant – Training |  |
| Accessibility Consultant – Document Remediation Support |  |
| Accessibility Consultant – Website Review |  |
| Faculty Training Stipends |  |
|  |  |