# aNNOUNCING: The WA Learning Lab

## October 21, 2022

## About

**The Web Accessibility (WA) Learning** **Lab** is a ten-week intensive training program designed to teach participants about the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and Principles, legal requirements for web accessibility in higher education, and accessibility considerations for IT procurement.

The WA Learning Lab is a joint project between SBCTC and the [**Committee on Accessible Technology Oversight (CATO)**](https://www.sbctc.edu/about/task-forces-work-groups/stac/cato/) (CATO) and is inspired by the Access 360 program offered to colleges in 2017 and 2018. Our partner, [**WebAIM**](https://webaim.org/), will provide technical training. WebAIM is a recognized leader in web accessibility internationally and non-profit organization based at the[**Institute for Disability Research, Policy, and Practice**](https://idrpp.usu.edu/) at [**Utah State University**](https://www.usu.edu/)**.**

## Why

The WA Learning Lab aims to strengthen our system’s achievements in implementing web and IT accessibility best practices and compliance. By participating in the WA Learning Lab, you have the opportunity to become an emerging leader in web accessibility and make a positive impact across the CTC system. Ensuring web accessibility is critical for people with disabilities to effectively participate in the programs and services offered by all 34 Washington State Community and Technical Colleges as well as the State Board, such as remote learning or online class registration.

Additionally, [**Policy 188**](https://ocio.wa.gov/policy/accessibility) from the [**Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)**](https://ocio.wa.gov/) requires that all covered technology at Washington state agencies must be accessible and usable by people with disabilities. Each college must identify an Accessible IT/Policy 188 Coordinator to develop policy and procedures that support accessible technology.

## Time Commitment

This is a **ten-week intensive training program** that includes a series of virtual meetings, coaching sessions, and activities assigned to teams between meetings. The program will take place between **February and April 2023** and requires approximately two to five hours of work each week. A detailed program schedule will be released with the forthcoming program application materials.

## Who Should Apply

The WA Learning Lab is open to all 34 Washington State Community and Technical Colleges as well as SBCTC. A total of five teams will be accepted for the 2022-2023 academic year. This is a cohort-based program and applications must be submitted by teams made up of between two to six people from the following cross-functional areas:

1. Policy 188 Coordinators/IT Accessibility Coordinators
2. IT directors and managers
3. eLearning directors and managers
4. Procurement and purchasing directors and managers overseeing IT acquisitions
5. Public Information and relations officers

## Application Release Coming Soon!

The application instructions and questions are coming soon, and acceptance will be awarded to a total of five teams through a competitive application process. If you have read this far and want to apply, there are two things you can do in preparation:

1. Start putting together your team
2. Plan to attend the WA Learning Lab Information Session at **1pm on Thursday November 10th, 2022**

## Contact

Please direct questions to Monica Olsson, Policy Associate for Accessibility.

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