

Accessibility is about progress, not perfection.



The Aiming for ALL Collection
bit.ly/AimingForALL-Collection

Glossary by Section

This glossary brings together the acronyms, organisations, and key terms used across the Aiming for ALL collection. Each term is grouped under the section of the collection where it fits best, and terms are listed A to Z within each section.

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Nothing About Us Without Us

Section 1: What About Curb Cuts?

Section 2: Foundations

Section 3: Accessibility for Learning Communities

Section 4: Critical Frameworks and Curriculum Resources

Section 5: No-Cost Courses

Section 6: No-Cost Digital Resources

Nothing About Us Without Us

Human rights model of disability

Seeing accessibility, inclusion, and participation as rights that every disabled person holds, not as favours.

Medical model of disability

An older way of seeing disability as a problem inside the person that needs to be fixed. The collection moves away from this view.

SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals)

A set of global goals from the United Nations for a fairer, healthier, and more sustainable world.

Lived experience

The direct, first-hand knowledge a person gains from living something themselves. The collection centres the lived experience of disabled people.

Nothing About Us Without Us

The principle that the people most affected by a decision should lead it. In this collection, disabled people lead the work.

Social model of disability

The idea that people are disabled mainly by barriers in society, such as steps, attitudes, and inaccessible design, rather than by their bodies or minds alone.

Section 1: What About Curb Cuts?

Access Intimacy

A term from disabled writer Mia Mingus. It is the feeling when someone understands your access needs without you having to explain or justify them.

Accessibility

Designing places, products, and information so everyone can use them, including disabled people. The collection treats accessibility as a human right, not an added extra.

Barrier

Anything that stops a person from taking part. Examples are steps with no ramp, a video with no captions, or writing that is hard to understand.

Curb-cut effect

The idea that when you design for the people who are shut out, the change often helps many more people too. The collection opens with this idea.

Disability justice

A way of understanding disability that centres the people most affected, including disabled people of colour and LGBTQ disabled people, and links disability to other justice issues.

Ed Roberts

A disability rights leader who, with other disabled students, won the first curb cuts in Berkeley, California in the early 1970s.

Mia Mingus

A disabled writer and disability justice educator. Her work on access intimacy and Access Is Love appears in the collection.

Access Is Love

A no-cost framework and resource hub created by disabled activists Mia Mingus, Sandy Ho, and Alice Wong. It describes accessibility as an act of love and a shared community responsibility.

Alice Wong

A disability activist and writer who lived from 1974 to 2025. She founded the Disability Visibility Project.

Curb cut

A small ramp where a footpath meets the road. Curb cuts were won by disabled activists. They help wheelchair users, and also people with prams, suitcases, and trolleys.

Disability Debrief

A no-cost newsletter about disability news, policy, and culture from more than 170 countries, written by disabled contributors.

Disability Visibility Project (DVP)

A growing archive of recorded interviews in which disabled people tell their own stories. It was founded by Alice Wong, with StoryCorps.

Inspiration porn

A term from disabled activist Stella Young. It describes the way disabled people are turned into feel-good stories for non-disabled people, just for doing ordinary things.

Rooted in Rights

A disability-led media platform. All of its content is made by and for the disability community.

Stella Young

A disabled Australian comedian, journalist, and activist. She named and challenged the idea of inspiration porn.

Section 2: Foundations

AEM (Accessible Educational Materials)

Learning materials, such as documents and books, made so that every student can use them.

CC BY-NC 4.0 (Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial)

A licence that lets people share and use a work at no cost, as long as they credit the creator and do not use it to make money. The collection uses this licence.

Human right

Something that every person should have, simply because they are a person. The collection treats accessibility as a human right.

Keyboard navigation

Using a computer with the keyboard instead of a mouse. Many people, including some screen reader users, rely on it.

Progress over perfection

The idea that accessibility is built through small, steady steps, and that making progress matters more than waiting for everything to be perfect.

UNCRPD (United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)

An international human rights agreement that sets out the rights of disabled people, including the right to accessibility and to inclusive education. It is also written CRPD.

StoryCorps

A non-profit that records people telling their life stories. It partners with the Disability Visibility Project.

CAST

A non-profit education organisation that created Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

CPACC (Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies)

A professional certification in accessibility, offered by the IAAP.

Human-centred design

Designing things around the real needs of the people who will use them.

POUR

The four ideas behind the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines: Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust. Content should be possible to perceive, to use, to understand, and to work with many tools.

UN (United Nations)

An international organisation where countries work together. It created the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

W3C (World Wide Web Consortium)

The main international group that sets shared standards for the web.

WAI (Web Accessibility Initiative)

The part of the W3C that works on making the web accessible. It produces the WCAG guidelines and no-cost courses.

WeCo

A disability-owned accessibility company in the United States. It runs a no-cost accessibility library written by disabled specialists.

WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)

The main international guidelines for making websites and digital content accessible. They are built on the four POUR ideas.

Section 3: Accessibility for Learning Communities

Audio description

Spoken narration added to a video that describes what is happening on screen, for people who cannot see it.

Belonging

The feeling of being a full and welcome part of a community. The collection treats accessibility and belonging as inseparable.

Easy Read

A way of writing and designing information so it is easier to understand. It uses short sentences, plain words, and a clear image next to each idea.

Plain language

Writing that is clear and easy to understand, using everyday words and short sentences.

Universal Design

Designing places, products, and information so that as many people as possible can use them, without needing a separate special version.

Section 4: Critical Frameworks and Curriculum Resources

Ableism

Treating disabled people as worth less, or treating a non-disabled way of doing things as the only normal one. The collection works against ableism.

AI (artificial intelligence)

Computer systems that can do tasks which usually need human thinking. The collection notes that AI can lower barriers for some learners and create new ones for others.

Co-design

Designing something together with the people who will use it, so they help shape it rather than only testing it at the end.

DEE (Disability Equality Education)

A disabled-led organisation that creates no-cost, disability-inclusive lesson plans for schools, organised by grade level and subject.

IDRC (Inclusive Design Research Centre)

A research centre at OCAD University in Canada that studies inclusive design. It created collection resources on AI in education and on co-designing with children.

OCAD University

A university for art and design in Toronto, Canada. It is home to the Inclusive Design Research Centre.

Weavly

An organisation whose no-cost guide on co-designing with disabled children appears in the collection.

Section 5: No-Cost Courses**AHEAD**

An Irish organisation focused on access to higher education for disabled students. It created the Accessibility Resource Kit (ARK).

GATE Learning on TAP

A no-cost learning resource listed among the collection's no-cost courses, focused on assistive technology.

ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education)

An organisation focused on technology in education. Beth Stark is a certified ISTE educator.

Teach Access

An organisation that offers no-cost courses on disability and accessible design, for educators and for students.

Neurodiversity

The idea that brains naturally work in many different ways, and that differences such as autism, ADHD, and dyslexia are part of natural human variety.

UDL (Universal Design for Learning)

A way of planning lessons so they work for the widest range of learners from the start. It offers more than one way to take in information, to take part, and to show what you know. Accessibility is the foundation UDL is built on.

ARK (Accessibility Resource Kit)

A set of no-cost, short, role-based courses on digital accessibility from AHEAD, especially useful for colleges and universities.

IAAP (International Association of Accessibility Professionals)

A worldwide professional body for people who work in accessibility. Beth Stark is a member.

NCADEMI

A provider of no-cost, self-paced courses on creating accessible digital course materials, hosted at Utah State University. The name is said as n-cademy.

Section 6: No-Cost Digital Resources

Alt text (alternative text)

A short written description of an image. A person who cannot see the image can have the alt text read aloud to them.

Assistive technology (AT)

Tools and software that help disabled people take part, such as a screen reader, captions, or an on-screen keyboard.

Braille Institute

A non-profit organisation. It created Atkinson Hyperlegible, a no-cost font designed to be easy to read.

Colour contrast

The difference between the colour of text and the colour behind it. Strong contrast makes text easier to read.

LMS (learning management system)

The online system a school or college uses to share courses and materials, such as lessons, assignments, and grades.

NVDA (NonVisual Desktop Access)

A no-cost screen reader for Windows. It reads what is on the screen out loud, or sends it to a braille display.

QR code

A square pattern you can scan with a phone camera to open a web link.

ARASAAC

A no-cost library of picture symbols used to support communication. It is one of several symbol libraries the collection points to.

ASU EdPlus

A unit of Arizona State University in the United States. Its Instructional Design and New Media team built the Image Accessibility Creator, an AI tool that drafts alt text for images.

Captions

Text shown on a video that gives the words being spoken and the important sounds. Captions help people who are deaf or hard of hearing, and many others.

DOCX

The file format used by Microsoft Word documents.

NV Access

The non-profit, founded by two blind Australians, that makes the no-cost NVDA screen reader.

PDF (Portable Document Format)

A common type of document file. PDFs need care and checking to be made accessible.

Screen reader

Software that reads what is on a screen out loud, or sends it to a braille display, for people who cannot see the screen.

WAVE (Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool)

A no-cost tool from WebAIM that checks a web page for accessibility problems.

WebAIM (Web Accessibility In Mind)

A long-running non-profit that gives practical guidance on accessible web content and makes the WAVE testing tool.

Wiki

A website that is easy to read and to update. The Aiming for ALL collection is also available as a Wiki, which works without extra software and on many devices.

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