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Access Policy

Approved by the Board on December 09th 2025

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Introduction

Community Foundation Ireland (the **Foundation**) and its donors are on a shared mission of equality for all in thriving communities. Together with 5,000 voluntary, community and charitable partners we are a philanthropic hub for Ireland which is a source of knowledge, expertise and information to ensure effective and strategic giving.

Our mission is supported by four pillars: Sustainable Futures, Inclusive Communities, Empowering Generations and Accelerating Change.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to outline the Foundation's policy with respect to accessibility. Our aim is to provide accessible services and facilities to all our stakeholders.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Board members, and all other stakeholders engaging with the Foundation.

Legal Framework

Under the European Accessibility Act (EAA) and WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines), any content made available on our website—including PDFs and other documents—should be accessible to ensure inclusivity for all users.

The **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)** are an internationally recognised set of technical standards developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

It helps organisations meet their **legal obligations** under the **European Accessibility Act** and the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**.

They are designed to ensure that websites, apps, and digital documents are **accessible to people with disabilities**.

At their core, WCAG is about making sure that everyone can use and benefit from online information and services whether they rely on a **screen reader**, need **captions**, or benefit from **clear layout and design**.

The guidelines are built on four key principles:

Perceivable – content can be seen, heard, or otherwise experienced.

Operable – all users can navigate and use the website.

Understandable – information is clear and easy to follow.

Robust – content works well with different devices and assistive technologies.

Principles

The Foundation is committed to:

- Equality of access in line with equality legislation.
- Behaving with integrity by treating all individuals fairly and respectfully.
- Being accountable and transparent by providing clear information on how to access services and support.

Improving our accessibility

Website:

We are committed to ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities. We recognise the importance of ensuring our website is accessible to everyone and we are committed to achieving the Web Accessibility Initiative's (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) Level-AA as set by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

We aim to ensure that our content and publications are written using simple and clear language.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals with disabilities or other access needs as per our Reasonable Accommodations Policy.

Events:

Our events are accessible and inclusive and take place in buildings that are accessible; invitations indicate that attendees can get in touch with the event planner in advance if they have any queries/needs. Sign language interpreters will be provided for public events, meetings, interviews and other events where necessary, as far as is practicable, and where identified/requested in advance.

Our Office Building:

Our Policy is that the building is accessible for anyone with limited mobility. Our office building has accessibility features.

Our office is not a public building and meetings with staff at the Foundation are by appointment only. Where identified as being required the wheelchair ramp is placed at the entrance. There is a unisex accessible toilet available on the ground floor.

If deemed more appropriate meetings shall be scheduled at a more convenient location.

Grant Making

- Clear, plain language guidelines along with eligibility criteria are published for all open grant rounds.

- Q&A documents shall be provided.
- Webinars may be provided if required
- Grants support staff shall be made available through email and phone call, where possible and appropriate to provide technical (regarding the system) and other guidance and support e.g. to explain and review application criteria.

Grantee Portal

It is a priority for the Foundation to ensure that systems used are in compliance with the EU Accessibility Act.

The Foundation uses SmartSimple as its Grantee Portal system provider. SmartSimple aim's to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 conformance level AA or higher. SmartSimple runs regular accessibility audits and issues the resultant Conformance Report. More information can be found Accessibility - SmartWiki.

Documentation/Publications

PDF's

The Foundation shall ensure newly uploaded PDFs meet WCAG standards which include:

- Searchable text (not scanned images of text)
- Proper document structure (headings, lists, and logical reading order)
- Alt text for images within the document
- Tagged elements to help screen readers navigate
- Sufficient colour contrast for readability
- Aptos size 12 font (minimum) as standard

PowerPoint

When creating a PowerPoint presentation, we shall aim to ensure:

- Heading –font size for titles shall be 36pt –44pt.
- Regular style -font size for body text/ Normal Text 24pt –28pt.
- Sans serif fonts shall be used as standard.
- Each slide title shall be different.
- Keep good contrast –Dark text on light background or light text on dark background.
- Avoid use of transitions if possible.
- Use the 'layout slide feature' – Will not add 'text box's'.
- Links shall be descriptive
- Informative images shall include a concise description based on their purpose and context
- Decorative images shall be marked as such, to allow screen readers to skip.

For Microsoft Word the **Check Accessibility** and **Read Aloud** Feature's shall be used to review documents and presentations. Check accessibility checks for Colour and Contrast, Illustrations, Tables, Structure and access. And Read Aloud lets your computer read the document out loud.

Printed Material

Our printed materials are available in large print or braille if required. We try to make sure the contrast between all our brand colours meet best practice guidelines, and that all text is clear and legible.

Videos and Social Media

All our videos shall include captions, transcripts and audio descriptions

Third Party Publications

This policy extends to Third Party documentation intended for publication on the Foundation's digital platforms. Only those publications which are compliant with the EU Accessibility Act shall be published by the Foundation. The onus remains with the third party to ensure compliance, however where the Foundation has input and is expected to also publish the material the Foundation shall ensure on a best-efforts basis that the material is compliant.

Procurement

We consider accessibility when procuring goods and services as per our Procurement Policy.

Feedback and Complaints

We welcome feedback on access issues and have a formal Complaints and Comments Policy which can be used to submit formal complaints and comments, positive or negative.

Complaints can be submitted in writing and will be acknowledged within 7 working days.

Disproportionate Burden

The Foundation is committed to meeting its accessibility obligations under the European Accessibility Act. However, in exceptional circumstances where full compliance would impose a disproportionate burden—due to significant financial, technical, or operational constraints—the Foundation shall document the reasons, assess the impact on users with disabilities, and explore alternative accessible formats or solutions.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board	• Ensure the organisation has a clear, fair, and legally sound Access Policy • Ensure oversight of policy implementation and effectiveness. • Through the Audit and Risk Committee support the Executive as required regarding incidents reported, and risks identified.
Chief Executive (CEO)	• Has overall responsibility for ensuring the operations of the organisation adheres to its compliance obligations, including the Access Policy.
Director of Communications, Engagement and Public Affairs	• Address any issues arising from reports from stakeholders, with regards to website, content and publications. • Ensure the Foundation's website complies with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) Level-AA.
Finance Office (through the Governance and Compliance Manager)	• Advise the Senior Leadership Team and staff on compliance, legal considerations, and best practice. • Prepare reports for the ARC and the Board as part of reporting on compliance matters. • Demonstrate policies are living documents by undertaking regular reviews. • Develop/Co-Ordinate training programmes for staff on accessibility.
All staff	• Comply with the Access Policy when creating publications and arranging meetings and events. • Participate in training related to accessibility.

Accessibility Audit

The Foundation is committed to regular accessibility audits of digital platforms and publications. Tests shall be automated and manual, including feedback from users with disabilities and guidance from industry experts.

Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed for effectiveness by the Foundation on a three yearly basis or as the need arises. The Foundation is committed to regularly reviewing the terms of this policy to ensure it remains up to date with changes in the law, best practice, and other developments.