

TIGERS Grant Proposal
April 2001

**Web Accessibility:
Making the Right a Reality**

Category: Regional CATS Workshop

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Narrative

Project Background

Web accessibility is looming as a major concern for educational institutions. As more and more university operations and learning environments become web-enabled, the need to ensure access to all members of the campus community becomes critical. In addition to concerns about excluding a portion of the student audience for the information and services offered on an educational Web site, there are legal ramifications to having inaccessible Web pages. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 guarantee access to educational institutions and systems of communication. The establishment in December 2000 of accessibility standards for Federal agencies under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act clarifies accessibility requirements for Websites and lays the groundwork for the liability of universities who do not comply.

The release of the Section 508 Federal standards for accessible Web pages has served as a catalyst for efforts to ensure that educational Web sites are accessible to those with physical and developmental impairments. The standards give clear directives for insuring accessibility, however, how to implement the changes needed within the distributed web development environment of a university is a key question and challenge.

Project Description

During the next few months campuses in the CSU must develop and begin implementing plans to ensure that their Website's are accessible. In order to facilitate this effort, we propose a series of regional summits and Webcast video conferences focused on Web accessibility. Expanding on our presentation at the CATS 2001 conference (see <http://www.csusm.edu/accessibility/cats>), the day-long Accessibility Summits will provide a forum for more in-depth presentation and discussion of information and issues involved in dealing with ADA information technology requirements. The video conferences will be used to provide an introduction to Web accessibility for those who can't attend the summits and follow-up planning and implementation information after the summits.

The goal of this project is to provide CSU campus representatives with a primer on Web accessibility that will enable them to begin the process of developing policy and implementation plans that will lead to making their Websites accessible to all.

The objectives of the summits are to provide:

- an overview of Web accessibility: what it is and what it means to universities
- an overview of pertinent legislation: ADA, Rehabilitation Act, Section 508
- demonstration and feedback from users of adaptive technology
- an introduction to usability design and its application to accessibility
- Web design techniques and tips



- information on resources and tools available to assist in making Web pages accessible
- examples of the planning process and how to implement Web accessibility on a campus
- an opportunity to share and discuss activities, concerns, problems and solutions between participants

The audience for the workshop not only includes CSU IT professionals, but would be of value to administrators, faculty, services for students with disabilities practitioners, online learning staff, and instructional media producers. It is proposed that the Accessibility Summits and video conferences be publicized broadly within the CSU system as a resource to all who are interested in Web accessibility.

Project Deliverables

The project deliverables are three regional workshops and two webcast conferences.

Accessibility Summits

The agenda for the day-long summits is:

- Introductions and event agenda
- Session 1-Overview of Web Accessibility (based on the CATS conference presentation)
- Session 2-Know Your Users: Demonstration of Adaptive devices and disabled user panel (The host campus will provide assistance in arranging for Services for Students with Disabilities professionals and users, and the equipment for the demonstration.)
- Session 3-CUDA Usability Overview
- Session 4-Design techniques and Tools
- Session 5-Planning Round Table
- Closing: Where do we go from here?

Suggested dates: June 25-Central Valley, July 11, and July 20

Times: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

The Accessibility Summits are recommended to be held in southern California, the Bay area, and the Central Valley. Location and arrangements for the workshops are expected to be determined by CATS/CDL. It is suggested that California State University, Fresno host the Central Valley summit, since one of the proposal authors is from that campus.

Webcast Video Conferences

The topics for the video conferences are:

- Overview of Web Accessibility (based on the CATS conference presentation)
- Planning and implementing Web accessibility on campus: Ideas from the CSU

Information and materials associated with the summits and the video conferences will be included in Merlot CATS.



Timeline

The deadline for Section 508 compliance is June 21. Applicability of this deadline to the CSU is not yet clear, however, some interpretations of the legislation suggest that all new Web pages created after this date should be in compliance with Section 508 standards. Therefore, CSU campuses need to begin their planning process immediately, if they have not already begun to do so.

In order to best facilitate campus efforts it is suggested that the regional summits be scheduled as soon as possible.

- June 1 - 22 – Arrangements for summits, announcement and publicity, preparation of presentations and session materials
- June 25 – Fresno Summit
- July 11 – Bay Area or Southern CA
- July 20 – Bay Area or Southern CA
- August – Video Conference: Overview
- September – Video Conference: Planning and Implementation

Reference and Source Material

This project is based on the Web Accessibility presentation given at the CATS 2001 conference. The presentation, handouts, and resource information are available at <http://www.csusm.edu/accessibility/cats>.



[Still needs to be revised]

To provide three regional workshops on accessibility, we are requesting \$3,662.13 to cover the costs of preparation, travel, and compensation for time.

Budget Request				<i>Totals</i>
Travel				
Egan	Southern CA		Hallford	Southern CA
	Airline	\$345.50		Mileage.34 x 200 m \$ 68.00
	Hotel	\$120.00		Per Diem \$ 41.00
	Per Diem	\$ 41.00		
	Ground	\$ 36.00		
	Transportation			
	Bay Area			Bay Area
	Airline	\$192.50		Airline \$166.00
	Hotel	\$120.00		Hotel \$120.00
	Per Diem	\$ 41.00		Per Diem \$ 41.00
	Ground	\$ 36.00		Ground \$ 36.00
	Transportation			Transportation
	Central Valley			Central Valley
	Mileage.34 x 400 m	\$136.00		Airline \$319.00
	Per Diem	\$ 41.00		Hotel \$120.00
				Per Diem \$ 41.00
				Ground \$ 36.00
				Transportation
		\$1109.00		\$988.00
				\$2097.00
Compensation (3 days of 8 hours plus 5 hours of preparation)				
Egan	\$33.42 per hour x 29 hours		Hallford	\$20.55 per hour x 29 hours
		\$969.18		595.95
				\$1565.13
Total Budget Request				\$3662.13



Biographical Information

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Candace Egan has been serving as the Web Manager at California State University, Fresno since August, 2000. She is the first person to serve in this new position and co-authored the proposal that established the position and the Web Office. Ms Egan oversees the university's home and top Web pages, coordinates Web design training for faculty, staff, and students, and is responsible for a number of campus-wide Web initiatives. She formed the Web accessibility work group at Fresno State and is leading the group's efforts to develop the policy and implementation plan for the campus. Prior to becoming Web Manager she was the team leader for the university's Web redesign project. Ms. Egan has a B.A. in Radio-TV-Cinema, and M.A. in Multimedia and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Technology.

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Adra Hallford began researching and writing about the sociological and cultural issues of computing technology in 1996 while pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Communication at CSU San Marcos. As a Web Developer in Academic Computing Services at CSUSM, Ms. Hallford works with campus departments to develop and deploy their departmental sites. She is responsible for researching and implementing web accessibility for the CSUSM campus and serves as a liaison between Disabled Student Services and Instructional and Information Technology Services at the CSUSM campus. In addition to campus web development and accessibility implementation, she is currently working on the ITS website for the Chancellor's Office and serves as an accessibility resource for their office.