The WCAG 3 Subgroup Handbook

This version is deprecated. See the new version of [The WCAG3 Subgroup Handbook](#).

WCAG 3 subgroups are small and temporary groups within the Accessibility Guidelines Working Group (AGWG), which are set up to work on proposals for specific topics or issues. Each subgroup has 5 to 8 members, including a facilitator, and will work for 8 weeks to come up with a proposal for AGWG. Ideally, the subgroup members should reflect diverse opinions in the main group about the topic.

Starting A Subgroup

The decision to start a WCAG 3 Subgroups is made by the chairs based on ongoing schedule prioritization. If the question the subgroup is working on does not fall under existing placeholder content, then the subgroup will be formed after a survey to add new placeholder content. This survey will be discussed in the working group and will ask for initial feedback and participation.

Setup

- All subgroups fall under a milestone. The subgroup facilitator or chair must add the subgroup to the Silver wiki under the appropriate milestone.
- When added, the subgroup should have a specific goal for the 8 weeks of work. This will be captured in the wiki under the milestone.
- After the facilitator determines a time for the meeting(s), Michael or one of the chairs will set up a zoom call for the 8 weeks.
- Use the milestone irc channel for meeting minutes as these will automatically be tied to the milestone.
- Email conversations outside of meetings should go to the subgroup members only and cc group-ag-plan@w3.org.

Deliverables

Each subgroup is expected to deliver content. Subgroup work should result in a GitHub pull request for an update to the WCAG 3 Editors Draft, in addition to some amount of non-normative content. The only exception to this is a subgroup creating reference content that the working group needs to move forward, such as use cases, evaluation results, etc. The goal is to advance a section of WCAG 3 one [stage in its maturity](#) (placeholder, to exploratory, to developing, to refining, to mature).

- Subgroups working on new guidelines must follow the [Silver writing process](#).

- Subgroups working on outcomes must follow the process outlined in [Writing testable WCAG 3 outcomes](#).
- Subgroups working on methods must use the [Revised Method Template](#)

Note: While the goal is to advance sections of WCAG 3, this should not be seen as a measure of success. There are many dead ends in writing WCAG 3. Learning what those are, exploring them, and documenting those explorations is just as important as publishing new content for WCAG 3.

Commitment

Subgroups are set up to run for 8 weeks. Participants of a subgroup should expect to spend 4 hours per week on a subgroup, including meeting times. Groups meet at least once a week. The meeting time will be coordinated by the facilitator.

While individuals can join a subgroup after it starts, the group runs more smoothly if the group sets goals and works through them from the beginning. If you want to join a subgroup after it begins, please reach out to the subgroup facilitator and chairs.

Timeline

A subgroup is expected to work on the following schedule:

- Week 1: First meeting occurs
- Week 4-5: The subgroup presents its initial findings to AGWG
- Week 6-8: The subgroup works with AG as needed
- Week 8: AGWG decides if the subgroup's proposal is accepted, and at what status level

Regardless of AGWG's decision on the deliverable, after 8 weeks the subgroup stops. The subgroup facilitator is responsible for ensuring a clean hand-off of the work to WCAG 3 editors and AGWG chairs. If AGWG decides the work needs to continue after week 8, it can do so by starting a new subgroup.

Exceptions

This handbook outlines the "default" for a subgroup, exceptions are always possible. If the subgroup believes it necessary to deviate from the handbook, this needs to be confirmed with the AGWG chairs, who can be reached via group-ag-plan@w3.org.

Proposing A Subgroup

Anyone interested in starting a subgroup for a topic not on the AGWG agenda can request it to be added to an upcoming agenda, either at the start of the AGWG meeting, or by e-mailing group-ag-plan@w3.org.

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (CEPC)

Participants of WCAG 3 Subgroups are expected to follow the W3C's [code of ethics and professional conduct](). This is the same code of conduct used by AGWG and its Task Forces.

Subgroup Facilitator

For each subgroup one facilitator is appointed by the AGWG chairs. The facilitator has additional responsibilities.

- Send out a meeting invite to [public-silver@w3.org]() and [w3c-wai-gl@w3.org]() at least 2 days before the meeting. This must use the following subject line for the e-mail:
    - [*Subgroup name*] Agenda *Date*, week *#*
- Chair the weekly meetings, and coordinate work
- Provide a weekly status report (2 - 5 minutes) during the AGWG call
- Ensure minutes, or a summary is sent out to [public-silver@w3.org]() and [w3c-wai-gl@w3.org]() for each meeting. The e-mail subject must use the following format, for easy filtering:
    - [*Subgroup name*] Meeting minutes *Date*, week *#*
- Notify and coordinate with AGWG chairs via [group-ag-plan@w3.org]() on reviews
- Keep the [subgroup wiki page]() up to date, and add document links to the wiki during the work.

The facilitator is not expected to put in more time than the participants of a subgroup. Because the facilitator has additional responsibilities, they should do less of the research and authoring than other subgroup participants.

To run the group efficiently, and make the best of the 4 hours per week participants have available facilitators should encourage asynchronous work. Don't focus everything on what happens during the meeting. Make sure participants can miss a meeting but still stay actively involved in the group.

To ensure everyone comes to the meetings prepared, it is useful for the facilitator to put together a list of resources that participants must have read ahead of participating in the meeting. This can include such things as open issues related to the milestone, sections in the editors draft, and minutes of previous subgroups. Additionally, facilitators should look for tasks that can happen outside the meetings and assign those to participants. Make sure to agree on a due date for such tasks. These tasks can include things like do research, write proposals, review work from other participants, set up a pull request, etc.

Facilitators experiencing issues running the subgroup should contact the AGWG chairs via [group-ag-plan@w3.org]() for help. Issues may include difficulties managing technologies such as GitHub or Google Docs, absences from meetings, participants not completing their agreed on tasks, participants experiencing accessibility challenges, or violations of [CEPC](). Facilitators are not expected to handle such issues by themselves and should involve the AGWG chairs.

Facilitator Zakim Commands

Please use the irc channel for your subgroup (wcag3-[subgroup name])
Setting up meeting:

- /invite zakim
- /invite rrsagent
- zakim, start meeting
- rrsagent, make logs world
- Agenda+ [replace brackets with your agenda topic]

During meeting:

- zakim, take up item [replace bracket with item number]
- zakim, take up next item
- scribe: [type first few letters of name in IRC and hit tab]
- agenda?
- ack [type first few letters of name in IRC and hit tab]
- q?

Ending meeting:

- rrsagent, generate minutes
- Wait a few minutes and check minutes. If they show an access error, try "rrsagent, make logs world" again. After the minutes generate, end the meeting
- zakim, end meeting

[W3C IRC IRC Commands](#)

Background

Writing for WCAG 3 is best done in smaller groups. These groups will be short lived. This allows participants to step in and out of different work efforts as their availability changes. It also ensures that groups get regular feedback from AGWG and the Silver Task Force.

WCAG 3 development is an iterative process. For the 2022 - 2024 charter, the focus will be on proposing concrete solutions to all major outstanding questions for WCAG 3. While these questions are known, in what order these questions will be answered is not planned in advance. Instead, the AGWG chairs will regularly evaluate the next highest priority to work on, based on results of previous efforts. New subgroups will be set up accordingly.

Sample Timeline & Agendas (Draft)

This section provides general guidance to facilitators on what an 8 week schedule might look like. It is a starting point and should be used (or not) however it is most helpful to you.

Prework for facilitators

- Set up a zoom call or request one of the chairs do so
- Send a calendar invitation to identified participants
- Update Silver wiki page

Week 1: Finalize goals and preparation

1. **Finalize goals:** The subgroup is given a specific question or questions that they are to explore over the 8 weeks. The end result of the 8 weeks of work should be written content of some type (See [Deliverables](#))
   With those points in mind, you will need to agree as a group on what you will be doing over the 8 weeks. Depending on the current state, this may include (but isn't limited to):
   - Creating user stories
   - Documenting options as exploratory
   - Identifying and documenting additional challenges
   - Answering related issues
   - Writing text for the draft
   Agree and document as a group what you will be doing.
2. **Prepare**: Each group will be building off of previous work and subgroup participation will vary each round. Identify what documents, issues, and other content members need to read in order to be ready to work.
3. If there is time in meeting 1, move onto meeting 2

Everyone should leave the first meeting knowing the goals and what they need to read before the next meeting. This should be documented off the appropriate wiki page.

Week 2: Schedule, framework and challenges

- Week 2 should be about creating a high level outline, framework or schedule, depending on the groups' goals.
- Identify and record places where there is consensus and where opinions differ.
- Identify known challenges or outstanding questions that need to be answered

Week 3-6: Work on details

- Work on filling in the high level work
- Continue to capture areas of consensus and disagreement

Week 4-5: Report back to AG

- Provide a short report back to AG at the halfway point.
- If getting feedback from the group as a whole is helpful, work with the leadership team to create a survey and get more than 10 minutes on the agenda

Week 6-7: Working with AG

The last few weeks should focus on:
- completing writing and
- Building consensus and understanding in AG

You can choose any of the options below over the last few weeks to help do this:
- Present at AG
- Survey AG by email to get feedback on an initial draft or other ideas
- Survey AG and discuss the results in the meeting

Week 8: Final PR to AG

- At the end of week 8 you should be ready to present a final draft to AG for approval
- For TPAC this draft will be reviewed and presented for discussion during the meeting.

How to Use Google Docs in a Subgroup

The suite of Google applications are useful tools in a shared collaborative environment. They are not universally accessible. These suggestions help protect your documents and enhance your collaborative work.

1. **Ownership**: Your work belongs to W3C. W3C has recently acquired a license for Google applications. Please give ownership of your files to W3C by giving ownership to cooper@w3.org.
2. **Public Visibility**: The public should be able to read any document created in your group. If there is something you think should be confidential, discuss it with leadership. Set your Share General Access to Anyone with the link can View (or Comment). See 5. Permissions section for more details.
3. **Creating New Files**: When creating new files, ensure that the person creating them has the ability to grant ownership to W3C. Some organizations with their own Google licenses restrict transferring ownership outside the organization. If it happens, have someone with a personal google account create a new document and copy the info over.
4. **Folder**: Every Subgroup has a folder on the W3C Google Drive. Please create any new documents in that folder so they automatically have the correct permissions. Contact the leadership if you have a permission problem with the folder.
5. **Permissions** (Share feature): Everyone in the subgroup has Edit access to the folder. Contact the leadership if there is a problem. Active work should be set so that anyone with the link can Comment. When work is complete, set the link so anyone can View. Do not set it so anyone can Edit. While this is a short term fix for a member not having access, it makes it easy for people to alter the documents purposefully or by accident while they are trying to read them. Screen reader users who are unfamiliar with the keyboard commands for Google docs can accidentally make significant changes while reading the document if it is set to Edit.

6. **Comments**: Comments and editing are powerful features of collaborative software. Be aware that they are not generally visible to screen reader users. Strikeout information will be read as if it were normal text.
7. **Link to your document on your wiki page**, so that others can find it and there is a permanent connection to the document.