Accessibility in Digital Learning and Media

Training Workshop in Oslo, Norway

16th and 17th September 2024

Accessibility in Digital Learning and Media: Training Workshop

This will be a 2-day training workshop focused on accessibility in digital learning resources and digital news media. The workshop will take place in Oslo, Norway on Monday 16th Sept (Day 1) and Tuesday 17th Sept (Day 2). While participants can learn some theory, they will mainly acquire practical knowledge and hands-on skills. Participants will learn how to apply WCAG/WAD in real life situations; they will mainly be PhD students (recruited from areas like computer science, design, cognition, and psychology). The workshop will also engage accessibility experts and practitioners and a few researchers. We are aiming to address tools for higher levels of interactivity and accessibility as well as accessibility for linear media experiences. We will also address balancing AI personalization versus privacy, as it relates to accessible media. Experts and researchers will work as facilitators for group-work. Most participants will be members from the COST LEAD-ME network. However, those who join the workshop without being a member, can register as members without any complications. (Terminology: roles and topic are explained at the end of this document).

Application to participate

For those who have been accepted for physical participation in Oslo, all costs will be reimbursed after the event according to COST Reimbursement Rules.

Reimbursement

Students will have to sign the attendance for each day of the School, according to the COST regulations. Eligible trainees will be reimbursed by the LEAD-ME CA19142 COST Project. To be reimbursed, students should submit travel tickets reimbursement claims and carry out their obligations which will be specified by the COST rules.

Venues

Day 1, 16th Sept, will take place at **Egmont in Nydalsveien 12A**
(Ruter T-bane stop: Nydalen).
Day 2, 17th Sept, will take place at **Schibsted in Akersgata 55**
(Ruter T-bane stop: Stortinget or Oslo S, bus-stop: Tinghuset)
Early-bird gathering, 15th Sept,
18:00–20:00 For those who arrive on Sunday, we suggest meeting up at a place offering both food and/or drinks. This place will be announced later.

Relevant maps

https://maps.app.goo.gl/TCz7aTW8X9ZYm7rm6

Principles of group information, valid throughout the whole workshop:

Group 1: in-person: 3 tech/design participants, 2 cognition/evaluation participants
remote tasks: zoom-coach, documentation-coach

Group 2: in-person: 2 tech/design participants, 3 cognition/evaluation participants
remote tasks: zoom-coach, documentation-coach

Group 3: in-person: 3 tech/design participants, 2 cognition/evaluation participants
remote tasks: zoom-coach, documentation-coach

Group 4: in-person: 2 tech/design participants, 3 cognition/evaluation participants
remote tasks: zoom-coach, documentation-coach

DISCLAIMER: This program **takes priority over the first version**, sent out summer 2024. Therefore, please read this current program carefully before coming to the workshop in Oslo.

Day 0, 15th September 2024

18:00–20:00 Informal gathering

this is for participants to get to know each other in an informal setting.
Venue: Cafe FUGLEN OSLO SENTRUM, Universitetsgata 2 (tram-stop: Holbergs plass)
Optional dinner: Oslo Street Food, Torggata 16 (T-bane stop: Jernbanetorget)

Day 1, 16th September 2024: *Digital Learning Tools*

Workshop venu: Egmont AS, https://www.egmont.com/
Workshop location: Nydalsveien 12A, Ruter T-bane stop: Nydalen
Workshop rooms: Lecture room, 4 group rooms, coffee place, and roof-top

Day 1 will focus on perception, navigation and understanding of digital learning content, including an introduction session, followed by user demonstrations. Four users will demonstrate how they perceive, navigate and understand digital learning resources, with content aimed at different age groups. There will be groups (1,2,3,4) of five to seven PhD students at each demonstration station. The demo users will be testers from the *Digjobb.no* network. After lunch the workshop participants will discuss how to perceive, navigate and understand a digital learning resource in light of WCAG principles. Participants will work in groups and are prompted to take eye-gaze navigation, one-button, two-button, braille users and deaf users into account when working on relevant industry challenges. Complementary PhD-specializations will work together in each group. Participants will learn how to interpret WCAG/WAD in relation to different user's needs. There will be one designated facilitator per group.

09.00–09.30 Introduction to the two days of training

09:45–10:30 Jan Beniamin Kwiek, keynote speech
Accessibility Specialist & Responsible AI Advocate,
The Authority for Universal Design of ICT in Norway
Keynote speech: *"Bridging the The accessibility gap by AI"*,
some info on WCAG 2.1, Accessibility, Inclusive Design

10:30–10:50 ***Coffee break***

10:50–11:10 Introduction of four users demonstrate how they operate, perceive and understand digital learning resources – different age groups. 5-6 participants at each demonstration stand. The users are part of the Digjobb.no network.

11.10–12:00 Parallel hands-on stations where users with different needs will demonstrate

- Operate digital learning resources with text, pictures and video with braille, zoom, text to speech and eyegaze navigation. (10 minutes per group in this order: group 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Perceive text, pictures and video with braille, zoom, text to speech and eyegaze navigation. (10 minutes per group in this order: group 2, 3, 4, 1)
- Understand text, pictures and video with braille, zoom, text to speech and eyegaze navigation. (10 minutes per group in this order: group 3, 4, 1, 2)
- Eye-gaze: using Tobii set-up (10 minutes per group in this order: group 4, 1, 2, 3)

12.00–13.00 ***Lunch***

13.00–13.30 Yngvar Nordberg, compact lecture

The challenges facing publishers of digital learning content.
"*One size fits all or one size fits one?*" – Accessibility through preferences.

The WCAG guidelines applied to digital learning resources focusing on alt-text and navigation. This lecture is meant to help prepare the researchers for the following workgroups.

13:30–15.00 Industry challenge 1: ***Pictures, videos etc for blind and visually impair ed***

Groups 1 and 2 work on this challenge:

Providing an alternative for non-text content is essential to create accessible digital content for all users, and comply with the WCAG guidelines. This has proved a challenge for digital learning publishers that create large amounts of mixed content with thousands or even millions of pictures, illustrations, animations and videos, while at the same time having to tailor the content to different user needs. In this context some unique challenges arise. A description of non-text content (such as alternative image text, ***guideline 1.1.1***) may change based on the needs of the intended audience. Factors such as age, reading level and conceptual understanding, as well as the context and pedagogical intention of the content, must be taken into account to create accessible learning resources.

- *How can publishers utilize AI technology to streamline the process of making descriptions for non-text content?*
- *How can AI technology be used to make video content accessible by providing audio descriptions, subtitles or transcripts?*
- *How can screen readers be used best together with video content to provide synchronized descriptions?*

13:30–15.00 Industry challenge 2: ***Navigation***

Groups 3 and 4 work on this challenge:

Document structure and proper labeling of interactive elements is the foundation for accessible navigation of digital learning resources. There are many different technologies and interfaces that require proper naming and labeling to have the best effect. This includes screen readers, keyboard or button navigation as well as eye tracking and voice recognition. Taking into account the context and preferences of the individual user as well as the specific assistive technology may open possibilities for personalized navigation of digital learning resources. Users with visual impairments might need higher contrast, informative names and labels, or zoom. Eye tracking users will benefit from buttons and interactive elements that are larger and easier to click.

- *How can AI be used to create accessible navigation and document structure of digital learning resources?*
- *How can navigation be personalized to different kinds of assistive technology, interfaces and user needs?*

15.00–16.00 Presenting results of Day 1, discussion, feedback, next steps
(10 minutes per group in this order: group 1, 2, 3, 4)

16.00–17.00 ***Roof-top drinks if sunny***

18.00–22.00 Dinner with free seating
Oslo Street Food, Torggata 16 (T-bane stop: Jernbanetorget)

Day 2, 17th September 2024: *Digital News Media*

Workshop venue: **Schibsted Media, https://schibstedmedia.com/**
Workshop location: **Akersgata 55, Ruter T-bane stop: Stortinget OR bus-stop: Tinghuset**
Workshop rooms: **Rom 5 + Rom 6 + Rom 7 + Expo behind the lobby + Auditoriet**

Day 2, will focus on perceiving, navigating and understanding digital media and news content. It will begin with user demonstrations and continue with a new set of industry challenges after lunch. Working in the same groups (1-4) from day 1 we will build on the experiences from day 1 in a new context of digital media and news content. The users from digjobb.no will provide the demonstrations of the relevant media and news content. Working towards the final pitch in front of the jury the principles of WCAG/WAD remain central to propose solutions that can meet diverse user needs.

09.00–09.30 ***Mingling with coff ee***

10.30–12.00 User demonstrations, organized by TV 2, Digjobb and Schibsted facilitators

10:30–10:45 Introduction of the four users

10:45–12:00 Parallel hands-on stations where users with different needs will demonstrate:

- *How they normally consume news content from their preferred news source using their own devices (pictures and video with braille, zoom, text to speech and eye gaze navigation).*
- *Explore Aftenposten and briefly describe their initial impressions of the site's accessibility.*
- *(If they don't have an account, they can log in with user:* magnus.helgesen@bt.no *password: 2 nybygg og 1 ny kollega)*
- *Find a story on Aftenposten.no that seems interesting, and read it.*
- *Open a video article and watch the video content.*
- *Try to buy a subscription on Aftenposten.no*
- *Observers and test participants discussion*

12.00–13.00 ***Lunch***

13:00–15.00 Common industry challenge for all groups: Balancing Native Accessibility Standards and Personalized Features
While native accessibility standards provide a foundational framework for inclusive digital media experiences, they may not fully address the diverse and individual needs of users with disabilities. This raises the question of whether added personalization can offer an even more optimal user experience.

***Example:** Most landing pages for online news are designed to tease the users with a long feed of news teasers containing image and title. Will alt texts on all images really enhance the user experience in this context or are there other ways to better customize the user experience?*
How can we optimize the user experiences (plural) of a digital news site to adhere to different types of user preferences? A personalized user interface, beyond the WCAG standard and optimized for a rotating news cycle.

15.00–16.00 Pitching with jury ***(Auditoriet, entry level)***

Jury: Miroslav Bachinski *(UiB, lead)*, **Krzysztof Krejtz** *(SWPS, Poland, co-lead)*, **Yngvar C. A. Nordberg** *(TV 2 Skole)*, **Are Tverberg** *(TV 2)*

16.00–17.00 Wrap-up and mingling ***(venue tbd: Krist offer and Morten)***

Accommodation and Transportation:

Oslo airport:	https://avinor.no/en/airport/oslo-airport/
Ruter transportation:	https://ruter.no/en/
Norwegian rail:	https://www.vy.no/en
Visiting Oslo:	https://www.visitoslo.com/en/
Available Oslo:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vhD59ac7nw

Online booking will work well. We recommend a location close to the event.

Pictures of Egmont in Nydalsveien 12A:

Egmont in Nydalsveien 12A

Lecture room, max 25

Four group rooms, max 8 p.

Egmont-Zone

Mingling and coffee place

Roof-top on a sunny day

Pictures of Schibsted at Akersgata 55:

Schibsted, Akersgata 55

Main office

Campus

Campus

Roles

- ***Experts and educators*** partly accessibility experts from media companies (Schibsted, TV2 Skole, and TV2), partly researchers of interactive media with a specialization of accessible media.
- ***Users requiring assistive technology*** Users with challenges related to accessibility, motor skills and visual impairment.
- ***Facilitators*** facilitation will be offered by the experts, the educators, and by the users.
- ***Online industry observers*** Invited iOS Developer and software engineers from Schibsted Media Products & Technology AB who want to learn from the workshop. They will not be actively part of any group.
- ***Jury*** there will be an expert jury that will give feedback on the second day.

Experts/Educators/Facilitators/Keynotes

Yngvar C. A. Nordberg
Managing Director of TV 2 Skole AS
Elevkanalen.no / Digjobb.no
Chair of committee SN/K-607 Standardisation of accessible learning materials, Standards Norway Yngvar.Nordberg@tv2.no

Philipp Bock
Data Journalism and Editorial Development team at BT/Schibsted
philipp.bock@schibsted.com

Magnus Helgesen
UX Lead, Bergens Tidende & Stavanger Aftenblad
Kyst Product Consumer & Technology
Schibsted Media
magnus.helgesen@schibsted.com

Dr. Morten Fjeld
WP4-co-leader at MediaFutures, UiB, Bergen and Chalmers University of Technology
https://www4.uib.no/en/find-employ ees/Morten.Fjeld
morten.fjeld@uib.no

Dr. Krzysztof Krejtz
SWPS University, Warsaw, Poland
www.swps.edu.pl
kkrejtz@swps.edu.pl

Dr. Kristoffer Tangrand
Senior researcher DARWIN, NORCE, Oslo
WP4-co-leader at MediaFutures, UiB, Bergen
https://
mediafutures.no/2024/05/27 / kristoffer-tangrand/
krta@norceresearch.no

Dr. Miroslav Bachinski
UiB, Bergen
www4.uib.no/en/find-employ-ees/Miroslav.Bachinski
miroslav.bachinski@uib.no

Jan Beniamin Kwiek
Accessibility Specialist & Responsible AI Advocate
The Norwegian Digitalisation Agency (Digdir)
jan.beniamin.kwiek@digdir.no

Daniel Gloppestad Bajer
UX Designer
TV 2 Skole / Elevkanalen.no / Digjobb.no / MediaFutures
daniel.bajer@tv2.no

Sigve Resaland
UX Designer
TV 2 Skole / Elevkanalen.no / Digjobb.no / MediaFutures
sigve.res@gmail.com

Wilde Worren
UX Designer in E24
Schibsted Media Products & Technology AS
wilde.worren@schibsted.com

Kristine Hellem Aanstad
Senior UX Researcher in VG
Schibsted Media Products & Technology AS
kristine.hellem.aanstad @schibsted.no

Industry Observers

Tormod Tønnesen
Team Lead
TV 2 Play Apps
tormod.tonnesen@tv2.no

Remi Sture
Technical Lead
TV 2 Play CTV
remi.sture@tv2.no

Tobias L. Andersen
Technical Lead
TV 2 Play Apple
tobiaslie.andersen@tv2.no

Inger-Marie Nilsen
Technical Lead
TV 2 Play Web
inger-marie.nilsen@tv2.no

Alexander Arnesen
Technical Lead
TV 2 Play Android
alexander.arnesen@tv2.no

Andrii Chernenko
Senior iOS Developer
Schibsted Media Products & Technology AB
Department: NDE - App - iOS
andrii.chernenko@schibsted.com

Karolin Frennert
Software Engineer
Schibsted Media Products & Technology AB
Department: Premium SvD Tech
karolin.frennert@schibsted.com

Klara Ränk
Software Engineer
Schibsted Media Products & Technology AB
Department: Premium SvD Tech
klara.rank@schibsted.com

Simon Jespersen
Software Engineer
Schibsted Media Products & Technology AS
Department: Premium Regional Tech
simon.jespersen@schibsted.com

Rine Grue Carlsen
Senior Web Developer,
Web Accessibility Specialist
Gyldendal Norsk Forlag
rine.grue.carlsen@gyldendal.no

Vegar Østhagen
Compliance Officer
Gyldendal Norsk Forlag
vegard.osthagen@gyldendal.no

Topic terminology:

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, WCAG
  URL: https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/

- Web Accessibility Directive: WAD, EU Directive 2016/2102:
  URL: https://web-directive.eu/

- COST LEAD-ME: https://lead-me-cost.eu/, LEAD-ME aims to help European stakeholders in the field of Media Accessibility to meet legal milestones requested by European legislation. Researchers, engineers and scholars as well as businesses and policy makers will be empowered by LEAD-ME with a common and unique platform which will collect, create, and disseminate innovative technologies and solutions, best practices and guidelines.

- DIGJOBB, https://www.digjobb.no/: Technological solutions alone do not ensure that your digital services are available to all users. Digjobb.no involves people with various disabilities in the work with universal design. In addition to reviewing your digital services, we offer technological solutions, courses and advice. Digjobb participates in and leads a number of works and initiatives within standardization nationally and internationally.

Read and/or familiarize BEFORE coming to Oslo (compulsory):

Aleesha Hamid and Per Ola Kristensson. 2024. ***"40 Years of Eye Typing: Challenges, Gaps, and Emergent Strategies".*** Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 8, ETRA, Article 222 (May 2024), 19 pages.
https://doi.org/10.1145/3655596

Chun Yu and Jiajun Bu. 2021. ***"The practice of applying AI to benefit visually impaired people in China"***. Commun. ACM 64, 11 (November 2021), 70–75.
https://doi.org/10.1145/3481623

Michael Heron, 2024: ***"The importance of inclusive game design".***
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tVeJmA6Jto

Read and/or familiarize BEFORE Day 1 (compulsory): Digital Learning Tools

Jan Beniamin Kwiek (August, 2023): ***Bridging the gap at the AI World Congress in London***
https://www.uutilsynet.no/uubloggen/bridging-gap-ai-world-congress-london/1829

Related to WCAG/WAD

Introduction to WCAG: https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/Understanding/intro
Text-alternatives: https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/#text-alternatives
Keyboard: https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/#keyboard-accessible
Time-based media: https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/#time-based-media

Documentation of the event

Day 1, 16th September

Janina Wildermuth, Communications Officer
MediaFutures - Research Centre for Responsible Media Technology & Innovation
University of Bergen, Department of Information Science and Media Studies
E-mail: Janina.Wildermuth@uib.no

Day 2, 17th September

Investigate if we have any journalists available for the two hours of user demo.
E-mail: magnus.helgesen@schibsted.com

IN-PERSON PARTICIPANTS

Aleksandar Petrovski
Macedonia
Faculty of Architecture
sustainable design
Im Early Career
Investigator (ECI)

Motivation and background: *As an Early Career researcher in the domain of Sustainable Design I am highly interested in digital tools for media accessibility. Also, my research interest is accessibility in digital learning resources considering the needs of different groups of learners. The knowledge obtained at the TS regarding navigation and perception of digital learning, while considering different age groups will be highly useful for my growth as a researcher. Therefore, this Training School will provide me a unique opportunity to learn more on tools for higher levels of interactivity and accessibility as well as accessibility for linear media experiences. The lectures and hands-on approach on the aforementioned topics will increase my capacity and skills as a researcher to create more Sustainable and Accessible Designs. Even more, by attending the TS I will have an opportunity to interact with peers working in the domain and to create new partnerships and exchange ideas for future research projects during this workshop.*
(36) Aleksandar Petrovski | LinkedIn

Anton Nydal
Norway
University of Bergen
Human-Computer
Interaction (HCI)
PhD student

https://github.com/ntnon

Antio Almeida
Portugal
Gema Digital
Digital Health
Researcher

Motivation and background: *As a software developer currently involved in accessible software development, I'm eager to learn more and perhaps also focus/specialize in digital learning resources to broaden inclusivity. My experience in developing accessible digital solutions, such as the World of Wine and Pelé Museum, has reinforced my commitment to creating inclusive digital environments. I prioritize accessibility standards and patterns in my work, as demonstrated in many projects, some available at my github. Participating in this training school will provide me with the opportunity to learn from accessibility experts and collaborate with peers. I believe this experience will further enhance my ability to contribute to the creation of accessible and inclusive digital learning environments.*
https://promatik.pt

Antria Argyrou
Cyprus
University of Cyprus
Cognitive Accessibility
Researcher

Motivation and background: *My name is Antria, and I am in my final year of my bachelor's degree. I am currently studying computer science at the University of Cyprus.I work at a fintech company as a part-time software developer.We are currently working to improve accessibility for both our clients and employees with any kind of impairment. This is where I first got the opportunity to work with accessibility related projects and it got my attention. A lot of people there work on projects like that and they explained to me how important accessibility is in the technological world. That's why my thesis is*

related to cognitive accessibility for children. I am researching for the creation of a platform that will help both parents and kids.For the parents some helpful activities to help their kids, and for the children online games to help them improve their daily task skills.This will be a great opportunity to advance my knowledge in the field as I am relatively new at this.
Antria Argyrou | LinkedIn
Antria Argyrou (aargyrou01.github.io)

Diana Silva
Portugal UP
Data science
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *I am keen in advancing patient care through innovative digital solutions, thus, I am eager to participate in the LEAD-ME Training School on "Accessibility in Digital Learning Resources." My motivation stems from a deep commitment to ensuring that healthcare information and resources are accessible to all individuals. This training is directly relevant to my current work, as I am involved in a project aimed at using quality and accessible digital health tools for patients to empower these patients by providing them with information that is not only medically accurate but also accessible, easy to understand, and engaging.*

Ferlanda Luna
Brazil
University of Coimbra (Portugal)
Social Science
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *As an advocate for inclusive education and a researcher in digital accessibility, I am particularly interested in the opportunity to witness demonstrations by users from diverse scenarios and how to use the available tools to build bridges to connect, for example, disabled and ageing people into the digital community and make them part of the process. As a researcher engaged in building inclusive and accessible tools to integrate citizens in shaping public policies, participating in the training workshop will open a new path for the framework of my ongoing project considering the obstacles and the technology deprivation faced by vulnerable populations. Furthermore, it will enable me to understand how to enhance user experience while maintaining ethical standards in AI applications, as well as support me in enhancing my expertise in digital accessibility and contributing to the development of more inclusive learning environments. I believe that the insights gained from this workshop will not only advance my research but also enable me to implement more effective accessibility solutions in digital learning resources.*
https://ces.uc.pt/en/ces/pessoas/doutorandas-os/ferlanda-luna

Iga Szwoch
Poland
SWPS University
Psychology
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *I already participated in two training schools organized by LEAD-ME, in which I greatly improved my understanding of XR technologies and research surrounding them. Those experiences helped me advance my research skills; therefore, I would be delighted to expand my knowledge on the topic further.*
https://orcid.org/0009-0008-6390-9824

Mariona González Sordé
Spain
Universitat Automa de Barcelona
Media Accessibility
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *I am a PhD candidate specializing in Easy Language and cognitive accessibility at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain). Currently in the final stages of my PhD, I have spent the last three years engaged in testing the recommendations in Easy Language guidelines on a target audience of this language variety (people with intellectual*

disabilities), as as per today, these guidelines are not built upon empirical evidence of what aspects of language and layout are beneficial to reading and comprehension. My work is driven by a passion for making communication more inclusive, and I believe that the insights I've gained could greatly contribute to the workshops at this school. Having participated in previous COST schools and events, I can confidently say that these experiences have been incredibly valuable. The opportunity to meet and collaborate with fellow researchers from diverse fields is something I deeply appreciate. The cross-disciplinary synergies that emerge from these interactions have consistently enriched my work, and I am eager to see what new ideas and collaborations will arise from this event.
https://linktr.ee/marionagsorde

Miguel Ángel Oliva-Zamora
Spain
Universitat Automa de Barcelona
Game Accessibility
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *The COST Lead-Me training workshop on "Accessibility in Digital Learning Resources" presents a significant opportunity for my PhD research, which focuses on accessibility for people with dyslexia. This aligns perfectly with the second day's emphasis on u nderstanding accessibility challenges related to dyslexia, symbol users, and cognitive difficulties. Moreover, I have already reviewed the WCAG because webs are among the closest audiovisual products related to video games, thus helping to understand how to implement accessibility in the latter. I believe participating in this training would provide an ideal platform to apply this knowledge in practice, guiding future reception studies in the context of video games. In general, the workshop aims to enhance participants' understanding and practical skills in creating accessible digital environments, aligning with my focus on video games, which can be viewed as a form of digital environment. Overall, I think this is a unique opportunity to learn from accessibility experts and practitioners while engaging in collaborative group work, potentially fostering future collaborations. Therefore, I am highly motivated to participate in this workshop.*
https://webs.uab.cat/transmedia/miguel-angel-oliva-zamora/

Onur Bayram
Tkiy e
Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University
Journalism
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *Turkey draws attention as the country with the highest number of social media users in Europe after Russia. Turkish national and local media are trying to integrate in the digitization process. However, digitalization cannot be fully achieved due to reasons such as the high cost of technological devices in Turkey due to the exchange rate difference, the fact that Turkey has not yet switched to 5G technology, and the inability of existing journalists to follow the technology sufficiently. For this reason, I believe that the 'Accessibility in Digital Learning Resources' training school can make great contributions to my studies and education.*
https://avesis.comu.edu.tr/onurbayram

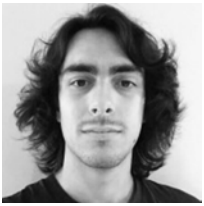
Onder Islek
Tkiy e
Aksaray University
Special education
assistant professor

Motivation and background: *I am a blind researcher who uses assistive technology and researching accessibility. So, I would like to attend in person to establish a network and increase my knowledge about this subject and collaborate with other researchers. Due to accessibility matters, I prefer to attend only in person.*

Paulina Haide Becerril Palma
Norway
University of Bergen
Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and Design
PhD student

Motivation and background: *I am a PhD student in Human-Computer Interaction with a focus on inclusivity, accessibility, and equity of access to immersive environments. My interest is to create*

systems that are designed to enable access for a wide set of users, including marginalized users. As we move towards pervasive extended reality (xR), I would like to set up guidelines to create fair and equity access while also considering concerns such as digital literacy, privacy, security, and over-use. I am very excited to get to see different perspectives on accessibility and how to integrate a multi-disciplinary view on the topic. My research so far has been through the lenses of Human-Computer Interaction, however, I am very keen on getting to learn more about how we can leverage diverse areas of expertise to create more inclusive environments.
https://www.linkedin.com/in/paulina-b-8970b1a2/



Pedro Fernandes
Portugal
Lusona University, HEI-Lab
Game Design
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *I am motivated to participate in the LEAD-ME Training School on "Accessibility in Digital Learning Resources" in order to expand my knowledge on WACG/WAD and effectively apply them in the future as I work on research projects that may engage with accessibility and learning. The topic of this training school is also directly related to the financed research project where I am currently working on as I continue my PhD: GameIN. This project's goal is to create accessible games for People with Intellectual Disabilities (PwID) that are entertaining to a general audience with the goal of fostering interaction and incentivizing the social inclusion of PwID. Crucially, the project is also interested in creating an online platform where people from around the world may share their experiences with the games and any adaptations they may have made as well. Ensuring the accessibility of this digital platform is essential to allow anyone who may want to share their experiences and creations with others to be empowered to do so. Besides GameIN, the research lab where I currently work (HEI-Lab) also features projects dedicated to education and learning. The knowledge, and general awareness regarding WCAG/WAD, that I will gather, and share, from this training school will prove an important contribution to these projects.*

Puneet Jain
India
Zurich University of Arts, Switzerland and Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
HCI and Disability Studies
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *I am a PhD student (Specialization: HCI, XR, and Disability Studies) at Zurich University of Arts (ZHdK), Switzerland. My PhD is supported by SNSF funded research project "Probing XR Futures" (ZHdK, Switzerland). As a part of my current PhD research, I am developing multimodal and uncommon body-based input modalities in VR/AR technologies using AI for users with sensorimotor disabilities (e.g. paraplegia/quadriplegia) – making XR accessible for people with physical disabilities who cannot use "hand-held" controllers. Specifically, my recent project involves the integration of a set of 6 mouth gestures using computer vision technology within XR to enable people with quadriplegia to navigate and interact in VR/AR using their jaw, chin, and tongue movements. While the technologies I am building enable quadriplegic communities (who cannot operate controllers or use hand gestures) to functionally access XR technologies using an innovative input modality such as the mouth, the built prototypes still lack integration of WCAG/WAD guidelines to create, access, and evaluate XR content - a missing part of training in my current PhD program. Especially when the disabled communities I am working with are artist performers, and activists who expect to use assistive XR to create immersive media content and narratives around their disability.*
https://jainpuneet798.github.io/portfolio/

Rosmel Rodriguez
Portugal
CES- The Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra
Political Science-Democracy
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *Participating in the LEAD-ME Training School presents an invaluable opportunity to bridge my expertise in sustainability and public policy with advanced skills in digital accessibility. The workshop's focus on practical application of WCAG/WAD guidelines will enhance my ability to create inclusive digital learning environments, ensuring that educational resources are accessible to all learners, regardless of their*

abilities. My experience with stakeholder engagement, policy development, and sustainable management will allow me to contribute effectively to the workshop's collaborative environment. Furthermore, learning from leading experts and interacting with peers from diverse specializations will broaden my perspective and deepen my understanding of the challenges and solutions in digital accessibility. I am eager to participate in the LEAD-ME Training School to acquire practical skills, collaborate with interdisciplinary teams, and contribute to the development of more inclusive digital learning resources. This experience will be instrumental in advancing my academic and professional goals, as well as in promoting accessibility and sustainability in digital education.

Syed Uddin
Poland
AGH University of Krakow Poland
Information and Communication Technologies
PhD candidate

Motivation and background (length reduced using chatGPT): I have some experience in the themes covered by this training, having conducted research in data protection, privacy in digital services, and accessible user interfaces for elderly users. My work in Information Management and Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) has focused on merging human behavior, perception, and technology to create better designs and learning methods for both youth and elderly users. I aim to continue this work professionally, particularly in the developing world, where many disadvantaged, less educated, and elderly individuals could benefit from improved technology access.
The advanced facilities and research laboratories at European universities are a significant attraction, offering resources to develop effective user interfaces and privacy tools. I am also eager to network with international students and researchers, as this would provide an excellent opportunity for experience exchange and personal development. Further training in user experience and accessibility design will enhance my ability to develop effective user interfaces and information management systems. My experience in creating interactive interfaces for elderly users positions me well to contribute to research projects that address their challenges with technology. Therefore, I believe I am an ideal candidate for this workshop.

Dr. Szentgáli-Tóth Boldizsár
Hungary
Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law
Centre for Social Sciences
Postdoctoral researcher

Motivation and background: *As a post-doctoral researcher working in the field of media law who lives with visual impairment, I have conducted several research from media accessibility and published more academic contributions to this topic especially in the light of technological development with special regard to AI. What is missing for me to deepen my technological knowledge is how to adapt the best media contents for different forms of disabilities. I now have just the digital skills of an average user to identify the difficulties raised for disabled persons concerning accessibility of the digital media. Owing to this knowledge, as a young legal researcher, I could elaborate more cohesive policy recommendations in my papers which legal requirements might be set on the European level for media content providers to secure accessibility, and to include different groups of disabled persons in the public discourse more effectively. Apart from this, I could also give valuable feedback as a disabled media user with relevant expertise, how the current tools to be illustrated in the training school might be developed further for the promotion of media accessibility.*
https://tk.hun-ren.hu/en/researcher/szentgali-toth-boldizsar-artur

Vegard Bolstad
Norway
University of Bergen
Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and Design
Master student and creative consultant

Motivation and background: *I hold a degree in Media and Communication from the University of Bergen and a degree in design from International Media and Marketing Academy in Denmark. Complemented by extensive professional experience across graphic design, media production, entrepreneurship and digital communication, my work has spanned various*

aspects of media accessibility, including the development of emergent interfaces, print media, services and content, with a focus on ensuring accessible design and communication for and with diverse audiences.

Currently, I run a small creative agency (BULB), lecture and assist master students, and participate in a research project (ANeED: Joint Effort 21) on dementia and technology as part of my master project. I hope to incorporate insights from the workshop into my project if possible, connect with potential collaborating partners, and foster cross-disciplinary collaboration via workshop facilitation.

I plan to contribute to the "Status-quo and Future Directions of Media Accessibility", and the "Technical Platform" working groups by sharing insights on integrating media accessibility, technologies and design thinking principles. My experience and education hopefully positions me to help develop solutions addressing the current challenges and future needs of media accessibility.
https://www.linkedin.com/in/vegard-simplifiies-complexity/

Yesica Duarte
Argentina
UADE Argentina. / IT:U Austria
Human Computer Interaction and Design Researcher

Motivation and background: *I have recently completed my master's degree in Electronics Arts with a specialization in design HCI and immersive technologies (VR/AR/XR). I am currently teaching in an undergraduate design faculty, offering courses on design for VR, and I am seeking to further my academic and professional development as I prepare to pursue a PhD at Interdisciplinary Transformation University (IT:U) in Linz, Austria. Throughout my academic journey and professional career, I have been deeply committed to the principles of inclusive design and accessibility. Specifically, I am developing novel body-based input modalities such as the use of breath in VR/AR experiences. The aim is to make XR accessible for both body diversity and individuals who are not familiar with traditional interfaces such as joysticks and other common control devices. I am eager to deepen my understanding of the WCAG/WAD guidelines and learn how to effectively implement them to enhance the interactive digital media that my students develop, given that these prototypes are not yet fully aligned with accessibility standards for the creation, access, and evaluation of XR content. This is vital for the disabled communities I support, who are primarily artists and activists looking to use assistive technologies in XR to produce immersive media that tells their stories of disability.*
https://yesicaduarte.wixsite.com/website

ONLINE PARTICIPANTS

Alina Secară
Austria
University of Vienna
Translation Studies
Researcher

Motivation and background: *I have been interested in accessibility for a number of years, focusing on accessibility via captions particularly for the live entertainment industry - I freelanced in the UK as a certified theatre captioner for over a decade and worked with theatres to render their productions accessible to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing viewers - this included developing integrated captions and working with smart glasses. Now part of a EU project "Literacy in Digital Environments and Resources" (LT-LiDER) I will be in charge of developing digital learning resources to support a wide range of language and translation trainers improve their skills for integrating AI and Natural Language Processing (NLP)-based technologies into their language or translation classrooms. My aim would be to apply principles from your workshop to the development of these resources. I would be particularly interested in extending my knowledge around WCAG, working with peers to apply hands-on accessibility and interactivity principles, and discovering new tools which could be deployed for this purpose in digital learning resources. I have been a MS Member for Austria for LEAD-ME COST from early 2020 and participated online to its first summer school LEAD-ME Winter Training School Barcelona 2020.*
https://ucrisportal.univie.ac.at/en/persons/alina-secara

Beyza Etiz
Tkiy e
Sivas Cumhuriyet
Üniversitesi
Marketing
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *As a PhD student in marketing, my interest in the accessibility of digital learning resources has deepened as I've become more aware of both the significance of my academic research and its potential positive impact on society. The democratization of education and knowledge requires that digital resources be equally accessible to everyone. Therefore, I believe that enhancing the accessibility of digital learning materials provides a more inclusive learning environment for both students and educators.*
Ensuring accessibility is not only an ethical responsibility but also a strategic advantage from a marketing perspective, as it enables a broader reach to diverse user groups. I understand how crucial it is in marketing to comprehend consumer behaviors and needs. Similarly, making digital learning resources more accessible will increase their appeal and usage among a wider audience.
I believe this training will provide me with in-depth knowledge on how to apply accessibility standards in the design and marketing of digital learning resources. This expertise will not only make my academic work more meaningful but also enable me to make significant contributions to the field of educational technology in the future.
https://www.linkedin.com/in/beyza-etiz-0694b1136/

Cátia Casimiro
Portugal
Lusona University
Communication
Accessibility
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: I *have a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Communications, as well as a Master's Degree in Organizational Communications. My Master's Thesis focused on the equity of organizational communication between hearing people and people with hearing loss. I'm currently a Ph.D. student in Communication Sciences. Aligned with my interest in inclusion, my PhD will also focus on this topic and take a participatory approach, where it is intended that neurodivergents have an active role in it. My PhD will focus on communication accessibility, more specifically on the*

communication of ethical guidelines for inclusive research. One of the phases of my PhD thesis is to create a digital course to teach research guidelines about inclusive research with neurodivergent people. I would like to learn more about digital accessibility so that the course can be accessible to as many people as possible, which I believe will help me and complement the training school held in Trabzon. Having participated in other training schools, I believe that they had great value to my academic development. I'm looking forward to learning more from the specialists in this field and getting to know more people with similar interests and their projects.
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5606-5474

Diana Silva
Portugal
Sesaram
Digital health
assistant professor

Motivation and background:
Increasing digital health context.

Giedre Valunaite Oleskeviciene
Lithuania
Mykolas Romeris University
Education
associate professor

Motivation and background: *The school focuses on accessibility in digital learning resources which is one of my main research interests. I would like to deepen my knowledge in practical application of the tools for higher levels of interactivity and accessibility. I would also like to investigate matters of balancing AI personalization in relation to accessible media. In Lithuania there is still a lack of practical implementation of media accessibility and as a member of the Network of Equal Opportunities Researchers, approved by the Ministry of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania, I could share the knowledge gained in the training workshop with my colleagues in the Network and suggest new avenues for research and practical applications. I am a professor at the Institute of Humanities, Mykolas Romeris University. I work in the domains of humanities and social sciences. In the domain of humanities, my scientific interests include discourse analysis, corpus analysis, professional English and legal English, linguistics and translation research. In the domain of social sciences, educational science my scientific interests include social research methodology, modern education, philosophical issues, creativity development in the modern education system, etc. I am also actively engaged in second language teaching and learning research, linguistics and translation research.*
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Giedre_Valunaite_Oleskeviciene/research

María Asunci P érez de Zafra Arrufat
Spain
University of Granada
Translation Studies
assistant professor

Motivation and background: *Mariasun is a Professor at the University of Granada, where she has specialized in digital accessibility within the Department of Translation and Interpreting. Mariasun's work primarily addresses the enhancement of access to information and communication in the digital context, focusing on captions for the deaf, audio descriptions, sign language, easy to read and other accessibility resources. Having participated in previous COST schools and events, she found these experiences to be exceptionally enriching. The opportunity to interact with fellow researchers from various disciplines has been deeply valued, and also fostered significant cross-disciplinary collaborations.*

Maria Diacon
Republic of Moldova
Moldova State University,
Legal, Political and Sociological Researches Institute,
Political sciences
post-doctoral researcher

Motivation and background: *I intend to discuss and deepen my knowledge in the digital learning resources area, since digital skills have no age, no space, no limits. From my short experience in project writing and leading, I understood that IT competences are an important aspect that allow to assure a long-term impact of the proposals. On the event agenda I saw interesting approaches delivered by the trainers, which will allow to foster new or in trend qualitative research methods in IT skills, even with concepts that are new for me.*

I would like to work together with young researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds with a big interest in networking otherwise fragmented research efforts towards more holistic views of the problem and the solution. Personally, I have high expectations from this edition because as a young researcher I want to know from the best experts the new paradigms on accessibility in digital resources. I will share the good practices taken from the event with my colleagues and we will make a new vision on IT skills in research. Last, but not least, this will be an exciting opportunity to learn about Oslo, Norway, the local history, culture and cuisine.
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3306-9886

María Eugenia Larreina
Spain
Universitat Automa de Barcelona
Media Accessibility
part-time professor at Universitat Automa de Barcelona

Motivation and background: *I am very interested in attending this training school as a recent PhD graduate focusing on the accessibility of interactive media. In my research, I have examined the accessibility of video games as educational tools for promoting awareness about environmental issues, particularly for players with visual disabilities who use sound for navigation. It would be very enriching for my research to learn more about other accessibility features, such as button navigation or braille, and to broaden my perspective on game accessibility from the WCAG/WAD point of view. In addition, now that I am teaching at university, I could apply what I learn in the training school to my classes to ensure that the course materials are engaging and accessible for all students.*

Selçuk Turan
Tkiy e
Zonguldak Bent Ecevit University
Educational Administration
assistant professor

Motivation and background: *My motivation for participating in this event stems from my role as an educator in a faculty of education, where I teach prospective teachers, and from my research interests. Accessibility in digital learning resources is crucial for both my students' and my own learning environments. Additionally, the digitization of educational settings is indirectly related to my course topics. Attending this workshop will greatly benefit me as both a teacher and a researcher, enhancing my ability to create more inclusive and accessible learning experiences.*

Sérgio Barbosa
Portugal
Centre for Social Studies
Sociology
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *It would be a unique opportunity to significantly improve my academic expertise about AI and accessibility in digital learning resources. I am seeking to enlighten COST LEAD-ME Training School with a privileged lens from a digital sociology researcher. It's a decade since a new 'golden age' of EU policies were heralded in the wake of the unprecedented consequences of AI use, as well the recent approval of the European AI act. Over the years, urgent state policies have been settled. However, the academic, civil society and pro-democracy solutions about accessibility in digital learning resources are largely missing from this canon. To be sure, my participation will discuss ongoing notions of AI and accessibility and what it means to democratize this latter. It would allow me to work in excellent conditions and to expand my international network with other doctoral graduate*

students, as well as senior and prestigious scholars.

Serkan Derici
Tkiy e
Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University
Digitalization
assistant professor

Motivation and background: *As a cost member, I have never been able to participate in any event before. I would love to take advantage of it before Cost ends.*

Tatiana Lisnic
Italy
University of Milan
Resident doctor in radiology
PhD candidate

Motivation and background: *(length reduced using chatGPT): The world is rapidly shifting towards a digital economy, with technology becoming an integral part of daily life. The Covid-19 pandemic underscored the importance of digital innovation, which the European Union recognizes as crucial for achieving climate neutrality by 2050. The New European Innovation Agenda emphasizes deep technological innovation to drive the green and digital transition. The EU aims to strengthen its digital sovereignty by setting its own standards, focusing on data, technology, and infrastructure. This strategy ensures that all societal actors, including businesses, can navigate the complex interaction between technology and human rights.*

One of the European Commission's key priorities is creating "A Europe fit for the digital age," emphasizing digital skills, business transformation, infrastructure, and public service digitization. Successful implementation of these priorities will drive innovation across all sectors, requiring enhanced knowledge and technology transfer beyond traditional academic boundaries.

As a radiology resident, I use specialized software like PACS daily, which enhances image management efficiency. I am eager to expand my understanding of applying WCAG/WAD standards in real-life scenarios through the LEAD-ME Summer Training School. The workshop on accessibility in digital learning resources is particularly relevant to my interests. It will deepen my knowledge of navigating and interpreting WCAG/WAD standards for diverse user needs, including those with visual, cognitive, and physical challenges. This training will be invaluable for my future research, particularly as I explore the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in medical imaging and digital resource accessibility.

SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

SFI MediaFutures: Research Centre for Responsible Media Technology and Innovation, at the Department of Information Science and Media Studies, University of Bergen, Norway.

Department of Information Science and Media Studies, University of Bergen, Norway.

COST is an excellence-driven EU-funded organization for the creation of open and inclusive research networking tools in all areas of science and technology in Europe and beyond. The COST Action CA19142 is the Leading Platform for European Citizens, Industries, Academia and Policymakers in Media Accessibility (LEAD-ME) is. COST is funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union.

Schibsted Media, Oslo, Norway

TV 2, TV 2 Skole Elevkanalen.no, Norway

Digjobb, digjobb.no, Norway

Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden

NORCE Norwegian Research Centre, Bergen, Norway