

The AAS Working Group on Accessibility and Disability (WGAD): Year 1 Highlights

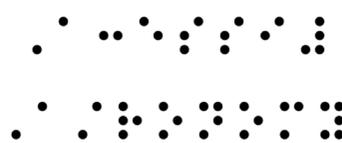
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The AAS Working Group on Accessibility and Disability (WGAD) was formed in January of 2016 with the express purpose of seeking equity of opportunity and building inclusive practices for astronomers with disabilities at all career stages.

In our first year, we have built online presence and infrastructure, developed recommendations for accessible publishing practices, and are currently working to develop a site visit program for assessing accessibility.

(QR code here for audio recording of poster contents)



Accessible Astronomy

Our recommendations for journals, publishers, and authors is a living document that centers users of all abilities: to unwittingly deny people with disabilities the same amount and quality of information has the exclusionary effect of severing our links with the field and society.

Below, we outline a few recommendations; please find the document in its entirety on our website:

<http://wgad.aas.org>

Publication accessibility

Goal: achieve access for assistive technology users, mobility impairments, all learning styles and cognition.

Journal submission: the user interface design

Avoid small clickable elements and pop-ups

Use alt text, bookmarks, and tags for ease of navigation

Standardized format across journals

All steps from publishing to accessing publications should be doable and interpretable by assistive technology devices (e.g., screen readers, text-to-voice software).

Use colorblind intuitive palettes for graphics, font choices for dyslexic readers

Journals: refereeing and online content access

Provide authors and referees with accessibility guidelines

Referees: comment on a manuscript's accessibility

Verify: do the words used in articles have ASL counterparts?

Make sure webpages and documents are screen reader compatible

Authors/presenters: making your work accessible

Provide multimodal access to engage not just visual learners

Note: these are not items for checklists to be completed once and then discarded. Accessibility through universal design requires continued effort to center users and verify their continued ability to engage with content as technologies evolve.

If you would like to join Access Astronomy and help WGAD, please visit our display and representatives at the AAS exhibitors' booth for more information!