About Us, More Support and FAQs

About Us

The Open Book Futures project is co-funded by Arcadia and Research England Development (RED) Fund (UKRI). Arcadia is a charitable foundation that works to protect nature, preserve cultural heritage and promote open access to knowledge. Since 2002 Arcadia has awarded more than $1 billion to organizations around the world. Research England Development (RED) Fund (UKRI) is a fund supporting institutional-level innovative projects in research and knowledge exchange including collaborations between education providers and between education providers and business.

This Copim Compass Open Book Accessibility output represents all of the custom guidance that Work Package 5 Accessibility created for the project. You can see a document version of this guidance at Zenodo - Open Book Accessibility and read about how the guidance was developed and used at Copim.pub Accessibility.

The accessibility work package members are below, and can be contacted about this work at



Rupert Gatti, Trinity College Cambridge University

**Joanne Fitzpatrick, Lancaster University**

**Jordy Findanis, OAPEN**

Mailing Lists

The Accessibility Work Package created this mailing list as a 'safe space' for small publishers to discuss accessibility issues, particularly with regards to open monographs.

OPENBOOK-ACCESSIBILITY@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

There is also a general Copim mailing list to carry on the conversations about all aspects of Open Books

COPIM@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

The following are other mailing lists where you can contact groups of digital accessibility experts with any specific technical queries.

PAAG UK - PAAG@groups.io

LIS-accessibility - LIS-ACCESSIBILITY@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

Digital Accessibility Regulations - DIGITALACCESSIBILITYREGULATIONS@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

Accessible Maths - ACCESSIBLE-MATHS@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

Query Services

Ask UP - Rotating presses give first hand experience answers. Also an FAQ section and list of previously curated answers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Accessibility Statements in Metadata - should this be at the individual book or whole publisher content level?

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Metadata formats, for example ONIX, often include a field for a human readable summary that describes the accessibility of the product. The purpose of this is for end users to make a decision on whether they are able to perceive, operate and understand the content based on their individual accessibility needs. In order to do this, it needs to describe the individual book, as each book will be very different. However, doing this could be considered an unreasonable burden for a small publisher, and in that case the publisher level description would be better than nothing. Remember, unreasonable burden exceptions generally do not apply until a full costing and benefit analysis has been completed and can be produced on request.

If books are available online, do they have to comply with every country's accessibility legislation in the world?

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For general download - we would recommend complying with the legislation in the country or countries where the publisher is based. If seeking investment from an institutional library - we would recommend complying with the legislation in the country where the institution is based.

Should I use short or extended ALT text descriptions in PDFs, or both?

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Best practice = short descriptions with links to extended descriptions within a specific section at the back of the book (not a supplementary file). Alternative solution = offer EPUB as a more accessible version to those that require extended descriptions, state this in the metadata.

How do I know my ALT text is good?

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Firstly, you will never please every user with your ALT text, and one useful approach when writing descriptions is to imagine you are describing the image to someone over the phone.

There are two very useful extended guides here: Alt-texts: The Ultimate Guide and Cooper Hewitt Guidelines for Image Description.

How to Tag Footnotes and References in PDFs

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For most PDF tagging queries, you can consult the PDF Association - Tagged PDF Best Practice Guide: Syntax. There are some additional suggestions, sourced from this description from a mailing list:

- add a link to footnote/endnote reference numbers and a backlink from the note to the reference number in the body text so that visual readers can jump back and forth to

the footnote and its reference easily.
- enclose footnote/endnote reference number in square brackets to increase the target size of that link and to generally make it easier for readers to notice that there is a note number there, and customise the font size of footnote numbers so that they are not so small as to be difficult to read
- some PDF checking software will flag one or both uses of <Lbl> as an error, you can turn off this check in Acrobat's settings by clearing the "Lbl and LBody must be children of LI" checkbox.

Some issues in this area are down to the choice of screen reader, which publishers don't have control over.

Should examples of code be tagged as a figure and given ALT text?

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Best practice is to nest code snippets in a <code> tag within the <figure> tag, which can control the formatting of the figure. You can also use a <figcaption> tag to describe the code. No ALT text is required.

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