# Accessible Math and Science in Digital Publications, T-94 Days – webinar transcript

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<https://daisy.org/news-events/articles/publishing-accessibility-policy-practice-t-66-w/>

Welcome, everyone. My name is Richard Orme and I'm delighted to have you join us today for another webinar hosted by the DAISY Consortium. As we count down the days until the European Accessibility Act comes into force. We're bringing you this series of webinars to help you prepare. Throughout this series, we've covered a wide range of topics, including some quite technical areas.

Today, with just 66 days to go, we're diving into the essential topic of publishing, accessibility, policy and practice. Communication about accessibility practices needs to continue far beyond title specific metadata. It's about how accessibility is viewed and discussed within your organization, what you say to the outside world and the systems you put in place to collect feedback and address any issues that might arise. In terms of the European Accessibility Act. Having these policies and practices in place will be essential in ensuring you can respond to new requirements. Thankfully, we have an amazing panel of experts to help us explore this topic in more detail. Initially with some short presentations, after which we'll have Q&A when we'll try to address as many of your questions as possible. So do use the Q&A button in zoom to submit them at any time during the presentations. Okay, let's get started. First up, we're delighted to be joined by Elisa Molinari from the Lia Foundation. Over to you, Elisa.

Hello, everyone. And first of all, thank you very much to the Daisy consortium for allowing me to take part into this webinar and share the screen with such a wonderful panel. As for myself, I'm Elisa Molinari. I'm a project manager at Fondazione LIA, an Italian nonprofit organization that's been working alongside publishers and all the actors of the book value chain to make sure that accessibility becomes a core element of our strategies, production and distribution workflows. Over the past year and a half, I had the huge privilege of serving as a coordinator for a European project called Apace Accelerating Publishing Accessibility through Collaboration in Europe, a project co-founded by the European Union within the Creative Europe program. In the next minutes, I'm going to talk about those two initiatives, sharing some of the takeaways that together in those two realms. Let's start with Apace. Apace is, first of all, a network of publishers association in Italy, Germany, Bulgaria and a library serving persons with print impairment in Finland, the Netherlands and Lithuania. The goal that we had was to create as many capacity building and awareness raising initiatives as possible at European level, and to provide the professionals with occasions to address different topics as production, distribution, image description and quality assurance. A starting point for all of that was a survey that we developed last year, where we wanted to understand the state of the art of adoption of accessibility for the publishers and the libraries. The survey is available on the project website. A couple of, data that resonated a lot within the survey. I think that if we are here today, we all know that the EAA is going to have a huge impact. As for the survey, 70% of publishers included, including 52% of micro enterprises, meaning companies that do not need to comply to the EAA. I believe that the act will have a huge impact on the publishing house, meaning that the industry, also last year was already moving toward that end and 42% had already taken steps to comply with a further 25% developing a strategy. Another important element that was and is the fact that, all departments where and are somehow engaged. Tilman not many years ago, usually accessibility was seen as a matter just of the production team, the digital team, the developer team. As the survey showed, for sure, the production and digital, teams are the one who are most engaged, as well as top management. But what we are seeing is a rise of interest. Also from the editorial department, the graphic department, communication, sales and also authors, especially when we talk about image description showing that accessibility is somehow contributing to a shift within the publishing houses. A couple of takeaways from a piece. First, for sure, there's still a need for training at at the many regards. Again, we talked about the production, distribution, image description, AI. There are still some ongoing challenges as the checklist remediation, workflow automation, and for sure AI meaning how to use AI to improve accessibility, for production and distribution. The second takeaway I'd like to share, I think it's the legacy of the project, is the importance of collaboration. Again, the network is, made by publisher, association and libraries. One of activities that we been carrying out was the development of some pilot projects, activities where nationally, each player had a chance to collaborate with publishers. In some cases, it was a chance to work together for the first time. In others, it was the chance to work together on very specific items complex features of, e-books, with the goal to understand and work together on possible solution in all cases. those kind of collaborations paved the way for stronger collaborations at national level, which I think is one of the main takeaways of these activities and updates itself. As for LIA, for sure, the past months have been quite hectic and we had the chance to work with many different publishers nationally and internationally, and also resonating the survey done with all publishers are different in their own way. so not everyone follow the same path to meet the deadline or the EAA? Again, one thing we would like to stress is that the EAA is not the finish line, it's rather the starting point, meaning that all the work done so far, will be, the basis to start to build on in the next months. as for the publishers, again, what we are seeing is that everyone is finding its way. Some start with training, maybe with awareness and then delving into production, distribution, image description, development of websites. Some authors started directly with, making their platform platforms accessible, especially educational publishers. And to communicate those efforts, the accessibility statements web pages where to feature all the information about the work done on accessibility standards, and also creating a contact point for users where to submit feedbacks and questions. Last but not least, the quality assurance working to make sure that the publications are actually all accessible and in line with the standards, and also making sure that the metadata, the accessibility metadata reflect the features of each single title. What about the takeaways? A couple. First, the fact that accessibility is becoming, I think right now is the main driver for innovation in the publishing industry. Overall, and it's increasingly becoming a mainstream feature. We are going to see more and more accessibility information, not just on publisher's website, but also on retailers website, showing the efforts done by the publishing industry at this regard. for sure. This is, the main, area we are working on right now. We are supporting a lot of publishers and retailers at this end and making sure that, the accessibility metadata are displayed in accordance to the Accessibility Metadata Display Guide for Digital Publications 2.0. For sure, this communication part is going to be the major item on the agenda for most publishing companies. Second, we think that, players involved in this area for sure, think that accessibility, we started to work for accessibility, maybe because of the actor, but that they are realizing that working in this field means working on produce is about producing and distributing high quality digital content. So this is something that I think we forget to mention too often. So I take this occasion to share the words of Andrea Angelino, the editorial director of IL Mulino, which is one of the main educational publishers in Italy. At this regard, as we began producing e-books, we raise the quality standards for our printed books. Similarly, our involvement in accessibility has announced the quality of both our e-books and websites. And with his words, I say thank you for your attention and looking forward to your questions.

Thank you, Elisa for that wonderful presentation. A reminder that if you have questions for Elisa or any of our presenters, please use the Q&A button and we'll get to those shortly. Next up, we're delighted to be joined by Kristina Kramer from Börsenverein, the German Publishers and Booksellers Association.

Hi, my name is Kristina. I'm working for the German Booksellers and Publishers Association, Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels, and I thank you for the kind invitation to speak at this webinar. And together with Elisa and Stacy, I'm very happy to be here. I want to talk about how we, as an association, engaged with members around the European Accessibility Act and accessibility as such. so we built up a task force on accessibility. And, I will give some takeaways, from our book at the end. To give you some information about our association, we are, around 4500 members. And what is interesting to mention is that we represent the three levels of trade. So we had the publishers, the wholesalers and the booksellers in Germany within our membership. And we are a typical trade association where we try to uphold the legal framework in which, the sector is operating. And we are a cultural organization where we promote books, a reading and culture that both to try and freedom of expression. We give consulting to our members on the economical and legal questions and we are a platform for interest groups, working groups and other and project groups. So this is very important when it comes to to the task force, to. The EAA was implemented into German law in July 2021. Already it will enter into force in June 2025. We all know this. And, I mentioned that we have members coming from all the parts of the value chain and, we were very aware that the requirements within the European Accessibility Act were considered and, and, and will be important and important to us to be understood by all of our members, but each one of them. So when it comes to e-books, e-readers, e-commerce, it's all something that needs to be understood by all members. So, we decided to set up a working group on this topic. We decided to call it a task force on accessibility, and it was founded already in December 2020. within our organization. We have and it was a growing and evolving structure. And we have now 44 members. we will have, we have, representatives from all the, three trade levels. And we benefit from a network where we have specialist organizations such as disabilities and from, Leipzig, a blister from Marburg and the network behind them. It's many posts. but we also have our Swiss colleagues and friends from ISPs from Zurich. we wanted to not only have a look at the German market, but on the German speaking market. So we have friends and colleagues from Switzerland and Austria, from publishing houses and bookshops, and we benefit from the network we have with our within our group, BusinessLine, and where we also have Frankfurt Book Fair, mvb, where, for example, the books and print catalog is managed, but also media companies with whom we work very closely together when it comes to, webinars and other awareness raising initiatives. And we of course consult in exchange with our international partners like Daisy, for not only, IPA, FP, APF and so on. So this is very important to, to keep up to date, to keep us up to date on the, European and international developments on accessibility. I don't want to enter too much into detail, but just to give you an idea, we have, working groups within this task force who have each of them a very specific focus on a topic like epub, PDF, what metadata? Very important, but also educational materials. And we want to make sure that we have 2 to 3 pillars that are that are defining our work. So at the beginning but also still now we have very big focus on awareness raising initiatives. We published articles, interviews. We had talks, presentation, webinars, but also events on the topics, within our membership on the at the book fairs in Frankfurt, but also in Leipzig. We have a big initiative. It's a corporation in between our, German book award and the did set. And we exchange with national and European legislators and we build up and are evolving and still working on a, exhaustive, and nearly an exhaustive knowledge pool. so you can find this, knowledge pool on our website where we have guidelines, manuals, checklists, but also growing, part where the ethics, can be, can be studied and, and we, looking for consulting in, in person at the fairs, but also online to our members. And we are part of a European project, a pace that was represented, and presented by it is and here in this webinar. so we are very proud partners of this consortium, some images and pictures of what the task force does. So as I said, we, published a lot of, interviews, articles. We published our manuals, but also talked about our cooperation, when it comes to the German Book Award. And we, have here pictures from the reading in the dark event. We were happy to organize it twice at Frankfurt Book Fair together with Fondazione LIA. It's a very immersive way to get to know and to understand what reading is. When you have a print disabilities. So, and this was a very, nice way of bringing this topic in to the people. You will see here our, manuals, guidelines that we prepared and published for our members and the, quite exhaustive, ethics part, where we are still working on and, developing, answers and, and yeah, trying to, reflect all the, questions that we received with, and that we receive, repeatedly and with via email or via telephone call. So my takeaways would be, first of all, don't be afraid. It is a process. take one step after the other and always think of the new readers you will welcome in your universe. you will be astonished because you will find a lot of information online. So there's a lot to discover at the Daisy consortium website. If you speak German on our website, on the European Accessibility Accessibility Directory that comes from the Peace Project, you will have information ready internationally. Upside. And please talk to your colleagues and other, publishing houses or bookshops and talk to your service provider and software providers. They might already have an idea of what is going on, and and they get prepared and will help you and talk to your expert in specialist organization. For us, it was really, kind of a game changer or let's put it differently, it was the core of what we did in the task force. And we are very happy to have this close relationship to, our specialist organizer in Germany, but also in Switzerland. And at the moment, we, have a lot of exchange and, material ready, for the very important topic that is metadata. You can do whatever you want on your e-book, it can be accessible and so on. But if you don't put your information in the metadata, the people with print disabilities will never know about it. So please make sure that the topic of metadata is also considered in your house and tell the world about what you are doing. Tell the world about your accessibility work. You can put it in an accessibility statement on your website. You can use other forms of communications, of course, but please tell the world about it and make sure that people yeah, understand and get to know the new the new features of your books and their reading experience. Please come along. at our website, here is the, on our website. Here's the QR code. And thank you very much for your attention.

Thank you very much, Kristina, for joining us today and sharing your experience. And editor, while Kristina will be back to answer any questions you submitted. But before that, we're joined by our final presenter for this session, Stacy Scott from Taylor and Francis, it's a pleasure to have you with us, Stacy, over to you.

Hi everyone. My name is Stacy Scott. As someone who is completely blind, I have many years of both personal and professional experience of accessibility. I currently work as Head of Accessibility for Taylor and Francis Publishing, and I am the chair of the Publishing Accessibility Action Group. So who is Taylor and Francis? We are a scholarly publisher in both houses in Stem, so health, Social Sciences and I like to think Stem know stands for science, technology, engineering, maths, Music and medicine. We published over 180,000 e-books and 2700 journals annually. We have over 1 million articles available in Epub three. We are strong partners and allies in the accessibility community. This community both informs and motivates our efforts in accessible publishing. Speaking of motivation, when it comes to digital accessibility, why do we or any publishers strive to make content inclusive? Either because it is the right thing to do, it will drive business your way, or because changes in standards and legislation will soon be upon us all. As most of us know, there are various rules and regulations, but the two celebrities at the moment are the European Accessibility Act coming into force on the 28th of June, 2025, and the Americans with Disabilities Act update to title two. The good news is they are both based on the W3C web content Accessibility Guidelines and can be conquered in harmony, so any changes made in order to adhere to the European Accessibility Act will also serve you well. For the Americans with Disabilities Act. So we take the legal advice and the expertise of our fellow publishers. We know what we need to do in order to pull together an accessibility policy or strategy. But how do we drive that forward? How do we secure the resource and budget that we need? This naturally needs support from leadership. So how do we get them on board? Although we are starting to see accessibility being driven from the top down, most often it comes from the bottom up. Building grassroots support for accessibility by gathering advocates demonstrating small wins at proving value are some of the key ways to get leadership fully on board. To drive accessibility from the top down. Creating an Accessibility working group or task force spot that spans across the whole company ensures accessibility is considered and discussed around the whole business in every corner. This tells it from 1 or 2 individuals fighting for change into a business wide strategic push that is impossible for the exec leadership team to ignore. This is effective regardless of the size of your company. Larger publishers have more content and more people to reach, so it really is all relative. A company of just ten, that could be your entire accessibility working group accessibility is Northern Ireland, so having that internal internal community is hugely important in converting policy into practice. Speaking of community as well as internal support, external support is just as crucial for increasing knowledge and working together as an industry. Focusing on one key goal inclusive access for all. Tech are really proud to play a very small part in supporting DAISY by becoming an inclusive publishing partner. Many T & F staff are members of the Publishing Accessibility Action Group, and we share our content through the book, through your channels, which allows us to reach so many students through their fully accessible platforms. These are just some examples of so many wonderful groups and resources out there dedicated to all areas of accessible publishing. Once accessibility is lifted off the policy page and starts being implemented, there are so many important ways to show your commitment at demonstrate what you have practically put in place for your customers, whether it's accessibility, metadata, or a certificate to show you are a globally certified, accessible publisher. By Benetech, signing charters are winning awards. All of these let customers know that accessibility matters, so don't hide your light under that proverbial bushel. In addition to the examples you just mentioned, there are other key ways to measure, demonstrate, and communicate how accessible your content is or will become and what your accessibility roadmap looks like. So end user testing end users are your ultimate subject matter experts. Someone without accessibility needs endlessly tapping with a screen reader or just sitting further back from your laptop isn't going to cut it. End users bring a unique set of expertise and essential set of skills. They are best ways to gauge your efforts and informed inform design decisions from the very beginning. Accessibility conformance reports and accessibility statements tell your customers about how your content and platforms comply with various standards and legislations, allowing them to make informed choices. This is also where you display your roadmap towards fully accessible content and platforms. Allow customers to see what is on your radar and what changes are coming up and when, again giving them the information they need to make an informed choice. This also enables your business to business customers, such as education institutions, to see your level of dedication and how do you support their students regarding their accessibility needs? Should they sign a contract with you as a publisher? Gathering key performance indicators or KPIs, such as the number of accessibility related queries you received, the number of contracts where accessibility is specifically included, and keeping an accurate account of your content as it becomes more and more accessible. These strongly demonstrate to leadership the impact of customer drive and how accessibility benefits the business as a whole. Built in but not bolted on. Whether you're creating content for books or journals or building platforms, accessibility absolutely must be considered from the very beginning. If not, you will need to go back fix it later on. This is costly, resource intensive, and makes accessibility an afterthought rather than a foundation. So some quick wins. Wherever you are in your accessibility journey, there are some quick wins to move accessibility from the policy page into practice. First, building a supportive community by establishing an internal accessibility working group, joining and all the external industry groups. Develop your accessibility roadmaps. Even if you're just getting started or your timeline notes that completion can't happen for several years, having a roadmap and highlighting challenging areas with an intent to fix by a certain date will take you much further than simply saying we haven't started yet. And finally establishing a key contact for accessibility in your organization. This can be a person, a team, or a regularly monitored mailbox, as long as customers can quickly and easily find to the need to speak to if they need an alternative, accessible format. This helps remove frustration and anxiety, and ensures your organization considers accessibility to be a key priority and not something to be ignored. It's not difficult to say it up, and yet I am often surprised at how few publishers actually have this in place, as I would absolutely consider this a quick win. I'll. And your final final quick win if I can help at all. Or you want to join the Free Publishing Accessibility Action Group at. Please feel free to get in touch with me. Thank you to you all, and thank you to Daisy for allowing me the opportunity to speak on this webinar.

Well, thank you, Stacy, for sharing the publisher's perspective, which perfectly complemented what we've learned from an expert accessibility organization and from an industry association. So folks will now move into the Q&A section of the webinar. If you have questions for Elisa, Kristina, or for Stacy, you can use the Q and A button in zoom to submit these. And we'll cover as many as possible. And we start with a question, Elisa, to you, which is that Leah works with lots of different publishers in Italy and across Europe. I wondered what lessons you've taken away from such a diverse range of publishers that you'd like to share with the audience today. Thank you very much of each one. And how many hours do we have to cover these questions in a proper way? I try to be brief. for sure. We just work with a different range of publishers. I think that something that resonates also with the work in a space is that accessibility, for sure, has proven to be a huge, driver for innovation, for big publishing houses, medium size, but also for very small publishing houses in throughout Europe and the same wider. So, for sure, we had the chance to work with big educational groups that have been working, all around their digital products. So platforms, websites, production and distribution. so we had a chance and they had the chance to really group very focus and, feature accessibility within the whole landscape alongside this huge project, we had the chance to work alongside, again, very small publishing houses, showing that accessibility is indeed something that can be done even by organizations that employ fewer than two employees and, do not have turnover. So for sure, I think this is the main takeaways will be accessibility is for a legal requirement, but it's also a chance to improve the quality of production and distribution. another element, I think, is the willingness right now to communicate the efforts to try to build a bridge between content producers and users. So finding ways for sure each country, each publisher is finding its own way. So there's no magic formula to copy and paste, but each publisher, even small ones, are, trying to tell users, all the experts down. Some concrete examples. Some, for example, are starting to features, not just accessibility metadata, but also about accessibility information on their main website, some other, organizing initial activities of awareness. for example, we do run this reading thing with Ofcom where we involve authors to read alongside persons with print impairments showing that and everyone can read, should we? So, we, can yeah, we can show that if everyone can work in this field and achieve which results. Great. Thank you. Yeah. And, turning to you now, Kristina, of course. I was really, pleased that you mentioned in your presentation the value of working with specialist organizations, many of whom would be Daisy members. And so I'm bound to ask, could you tell us a little bit more about this, maybe make it really concrete for us? What? What do you mean by that? So, as I told you, we built this, task force in 2020. And from the very beginning, it was very clear that, members have to be, that there are the specialist organizations in Germany that we know and we already work with should be a members of this task force so that we have the chance to really work with them on the very concrete, challenges, but also solutions. And we always have their in mind with us. And we, besides the task force work, we also had a very concrete project of, for example, media both, and disabilities and our partners in Leipzig, where we, joined forces for our German Book award, German Book Prize. So is the we. Every year there is the novel of the year. that is given the prize to in Germany, it's very, renowned, and prize. And, we started working together on the longlist because there is a long list of the, of the novels. We have 20 novels that are on this list, and we try to work on the available e-book titles together with the disciplines. And, and we managed to have already from 2022. all the titles from then the then published shortlist, but also most of the 20, longlist titles, accessible for, for the readers in Germany. So we started quite early to not only build this awareness, about what is coming soon, but also to give really technical advice for the, publishing houses, because when they do the assessment of the e-book titles, they then did a report where people in the publishing houses could work on their, books again and make it accessible. So it was a bit also a learning project. and I guess everybody, every association has a kind of initiative or project where they could consider working together with their specialist organizations and get the exchange running. So for us, it was really the heart of all our work. We did. If I may, thank you for, Yeah. Sorry. Keep going. Please. Oh, if I make it back to a basin again this year. So I think the what Kristina just shared, we got, we have right now seven projects like the one Kristina mentioned are running. And the feedback I think is the same throughout the seven six countries involved. So having chances to work with publisher, publisher, association and especially sometimes also for the first time for sure has been a huge change in also, for the publishing industry to start moving. So understanding one another. I think both worlds have incredible skills complement we want sometimes some that are not known from the other, let's say a word. So having a chance to work to to work together has proven to be, one of the most important activities done within the project. Again, we had the chance to, in a couple of cases, to have, inside publishers and specialist organization for the first time. In other cases, it was a chance to delve into very specific themes. For example, in the Italian project, we had a chance to work on image description, and I was for sure not working on I right now with something that it's not thinkable. So but overall, I think that the main thing was the creation of a bond between those two realms and had the chance to work together. Yeah. Well, so, Elisa, you mentioned that magic, phrase, AI artificial intelligence. So this is the question coming to you, Stacy. You get this one. So many organizations, now leveraging AI to support accessibility processes. And I wondered if from your experience at Taylor and Francis. Well, are there policy implications for this new kind of opportunity, this new way of working? Yeah, certainly. I mean, as we all know, AI is massive and and it keeps us remaining hopeful that it will do a lot of the heavy lifting and and certainly, you know, it can, for us, you know, we're, we're really keen that we can't just leave that engine running. it's not the answer to filling in the back list, unfortunately. it does require human checks, to make sure that the content is in line with the standards. The language and the tone of the surrounding content. but also to make sure that that the AI doesn't use inappropriate, or offensive language. I have seen a few examples of this, fortunately not at TnF, but but other in other places. and understanding where that dataset is coming from is really important. And so we do work with, with Lumina datamatix. to, to do, AI on our backlist. But it is, is very much, with that human element involved. And that all had to be established and built in to policy and strategy before we could, could get even started on trying it. It. Right. Well, we'll have a webinar all on AI and accessible publishing, next month. I think it is. But good to know that with the technology moving so fast, there's also consideration at the policy side of things to make sure that there are the appropriate guardrails. And it's done thoughtfully and appropriately. And Stacy is sticking with you for a moment and still with, you know, technology, what advice would you have for organizations so that they can respond to questions for end users where the questions are around, this isn't working for me, and it's not entirely clear whether it's to do with the assistive technology or the content or, or the skills, these sorts of things. So it's good to have that communication with end users. But how can organizations do that? Well, yeah, it's it's a really good question because it does all come down to supporting the customers and the end users. So I think in an ideal world, you would have, people with with the accessibility expertise or lived experience working for, you know, organization, you know, the way you would hire an accountant to do the finances. ideally you would hire an accessibility expert to, to support with with that work. However, you know, I do appreciate there are small organizations who who may struggle to do that. but but don't panic because there's actually so much you can do on your own. It could be that someone comes to you and says, I, this epub isn't accessible. And so actually what you can do is you could you could run it Ace by Daisy and check where the accessibility failures are. And a lot of this stuff you can now do by yourself just by having the appropriate tools. And the final thing I would say is being part of the accessible publishing industry is, is incredibly helpful, even to people who've worked in accessibility for decades. They are a huge part of that community because things always change and we're always learning and it's really, really supportive. And so, you know, there's groups for everything. There's there's a European group, there's for publishing, there's a maths group, there's a music group, there's a large print group. Any group you can think of, it exists. it's they're all free. They're welcoming. Whether it's the Publishing Accessibility Action Group in the UK or the DAISY groups, actually, just having that supportive network where you could you can join the mailing lists or the LinkedIn groups, or turn up at a meeting and ask those questions and get the support. And the final thing is, is don't be afraid to ask questions of your end user as well, or the customer that's giving that feedback. Have a phone call. like like we used to do in the old days. Have a call, talk to them. Ask them what what what are your challenges? What can we help with? How can we fix it for you? and sometimes that will get you really quite far. It might be a lot simpler than you think. Right. Thank you for that. Very clear. practical, advice. and some advice from you, Kristina. next. So as an industry association and we haven't featured so many publishers, associations, on this series of webinars. So we're very grateful that you've come and, and bringing that perspective from your experience of the last few years working in the way that you described in your presentation. What suggestions might you have for publishers associations in other countries? How can they best support the companies in their countries? What are the things that you've done that you think are the best wins that you would like to see replicated? Maybe. I think I would start with a dedicated website or part of the website where you feature, this topic, and then, I would, as you have seen, there are in every country, the specialists that are already working for a long time on this topic and try to find out who's who's doing what and who could be, a sparring partner on, on, on this, on this topic and maybe future right now we are only some days before the entering into force, but to gather maybe some best practices from your members and have some exchanges around this. And, what is really useful for us is our ethical part, because we, collect the frequently asked questions and we can then, help very easily when, when, publishing houses or booksellers come with the same question to just settling or I'll call them. But we we are trying to keep track of the frequently asked question and that helps us, but also our members to get a quick and good advice and maybe also links that refer to some other sources. So, I think that would be my three go to, takeaways. right now, 66 days, you said before the entering into, force of the EAA. Very good. thank you for that. And, just gives me the opportunity to say that, this webinar is recorded and we will produce a page on this, and we'll also be providing links to many resources, and of course, will link to your website so people can go and have a look at that and see what, great resources you've put there for publishers, in Germany. And people clearly are looking for that advice. We have a flood of questions here. Really at the kind of level of getting started. So let's cover some of these off now. So one question is from, Emily, could you offer advice to a new university press on creating an accessibility statement and roadmap? So this is at the statement level. And then following this we're going to have one at the author level. So who would like to have a go. giving someone some pointers on an accessibility statement and the roadmap, the kind of planning side of things. I think would that be for all different people? Yeah. Okay. Okay. Let's try to, I think that the first thing could be to have a good assessment of all the services covered, because sometimes I think that we collectively forget that it's not just about e-books, but it's about the whole ecosystem. So understanding if you're talking e-books, platforms, website and again metadata. So the distribution part. So first thing first I go for an assessment understanding also who covers what internally externally other vendors implied. the procedures guidelines to have a concrete idea. What about training. How many skills do we have already. Which ones do we need to develop if we want to? to. Yeah. To meet that end. so this goes for the roadmap. As for the statement that, for sure, it should reflect the work done. And also one thing about what is when it's meant to be a dynamic web page. So not something which is set in stone, but which reflects the current level of accessibility. So don't be afraid to show on the outside. But some things that are not perfectly accessible yet. But again, it's a roadmap. But there are many steps to take so it's okay to start saying, okay, we've covered this in this picture, and we've covered the next one in the next month. And the meantime, as Stacy suggested. And also, Kristina offered a point of contact and understanding which are the users needs getting feedback which can improve also the quality of the work done. Yeah, we've heard this so many times from panelists on these webinars, which is don't wait for perfection, just start. Every journey starts with some steps. So, you know, putting up some basic things and a point of contact. People should be feeling that. That's a good first, step. It's good to hear you echoing, that. so then we hear from Arielle. I hope I've pronounced that right and really is an author who wants to produce accessible books. So here, golly, we talked to Elisa about the diverse range of the actors in this, space. So Taylor and Francis, a huge company with many imprints producing many, many books, and an author who's looking to make sure that their own content. And, Lisa, do you have advice for Arielle? for an I don't we don't know if it really is self-publishing or whatever, but what are the kind of principles do you think, for an author, who's, you know, what responsibility is and, contribution can the author make here? I can start with the other side of the room. So we heard from publishers who turn to accessibility because of all, first of all, the writers who were interested in having their books published for all the readers. on the other side, we've been, most the engagement of the authors, especially in regards to image description, especially in educational contexts, as experts all over matter. but for sure there also, again, involvement in the term. So I want to make sure that my, ebooks are for everyone can reflect into the contracts that. So that book for sure is ongoing. So not it's a work in progress, but for sure as things receive all their author parts, make their own. Yeah, all players make their own part in this process for sure. the request goes to the publishers. You've made as many requests arrived. The better and the better results meet again. So yeah. And Israel has, has confirmed their, self-publishing. So, they don't have a publisher. They're. I guess they're going via a platform or something like, this. So, knowing that that's where the question is coming from. Is there anything. And, Kristina, I think you maybe you wanted to add something here. Yeah. For example, we just, we learned that our self publishing, association. So the association of the publishers, they also dedicate quite a big part of their, website and, yeah, let's put it awareness raising around accessibility. so maybe there and I don't know where, she comes from. so maybe there is also an association where she can get some information. And I would say that I would really say that also, every source we mentioned here with Stacy should be of interest also for, of an author, because you, you, you get to know, the topic and where the bits and pieces are, where you have to take care of also for the agenda, for the text, for the image description, for example, I think there are relevant sources that we use for our members, but they are of course also of relevance for for authors. That's great. Again, in the resources that we publish, we'll provide links to that website and to other resources that will support, self publishers. Now, Stacy, the questions coming in your direction? it is a question from Sylvia. the question is on your specialist topic of math, which is, I've lost it on my screen. Yeah. How about how do you at Taylor & Francis, handle math? What kind of work is done to to prepare from for this? Or is mathematics included in the in scope. so mathematics is definitely included in in scope. we encode math as MathML, which essentially means that it's most of the way there in terms of being read by screen reader technology, which is where the biggest challenge lies with math and accessibility. So you maybe have to tweak it a little after you've embedded it in as MathML. But having it as MathML does a huge amount, of the work for you, my colleague James Yanchak actually took part in a DC webinar on this very topic. I think it was the last one, that we had. and that can be found in the archives. So I would absolutely recommend watching that one. Fantastic. Thank you for that. so the next question is from Lucia. which is where would you suggest beginning when conducting a platform audit? and how might they prioritize the work, for this. So again, maybe Kristina, you have some thoughts on this? Maybe, well, any of the panelists really? So I guess when it comes to the whole platform, that could mean the the website, it could even be the distribution system and so on. So a question of prioritization. Well, I can I can say what we did, we exchanged with our specialist organization and asked for advice where we could do a check up for our associations website, for example. And they had really good advices, for where we can do this. It was for our website, but I guess for platforms, I don't know. Stacy, if you want to, add something there, it might be a bit more, I don't know, complicated, but a bit more complex maybe. I don't know, Stacy, please. Yeah. Happy to. So, for Taylor and Francis, we have quite a number of platforms. So the first task was, what do we have? basically doing an audit of our platforms. So what do we have? Who owns those platforms? Who are the developers associated? Do they have an accessibility conformance report and an accessibility statement? if so, the when would they last updated so they can be done every year. And if not, let's get started on that. So in terms of testing for accessibility, looking at priorities. So Taylor and Francis have been doing this for quite some time. So before the the EAA was was a hot topic. We were working on the platforms that we use the most by our customers. So like Uber, because our main e-book platform, as that's been hand and should be fully accessible, the, the, the ones that we now focus on are our own inbuilt e-reader because that's covered under the EAA and any site where we use e-commerce functionality because again, that's covered under the EAA. And so those are the sites that we are prioritizing at the moment. Now that the the bigger sites that reach the most customers for us have been tackled and hopefully made fully accessible. Right. Well, we recognize that not everything can be done at once. but it's amazing to see all the efforts done by the, but across the all the different stakeholders in the publishing industry to, to, to get as much ready in, in time for the implementation of the, European Accessibility Act, just in 66 days. So the final question is going to come to each of you, this is, projecting forward to policy and practice. Maybe in five years time, how might you see things differently? to, June 2030 than is the case in 25? when it comes to, accessible reading and publishing. So, with your crystal balls in your, in your hands, Elisa, what do you think? are the opportunities and, and the work yet to be done and the prize yet to be obtained, maybe in 2030? thank you for this wonderful question. as for let's start with the wish, which is let's hope that this EAA kind of rush right now turns into a starting point rather than the finish line of all the work we've done collectively. So that's the wish in terms of policy implementation. What I hope we will see more and we will work more again collectively is to communicate more the efforts done both by the publishers and especially its organization. So so make sure that everyone is aware of the huge work and investment done by the industries, so that in the end, all readers can have fruitful reading experiences. So that's a big one. And again, I really hope that we can communicate through the metadata with their display on retailers website, through again, our communication joint working association and networks, with the goal to make as many readers as possible aware of all this transformation. Very good. Yeah. Very compelling. And Kristina, what's in your crystal ball? I think a sad, a view because people want each other so often anymore, I guess, because, the webinars and, and seminars won't be, necessary anymore, but I can only, I have the same wish. Then. Then these are the nobody speaking about EAA and the countdown too, but the it's it's a common thing and we are not wondering about any, new technology. terminology and so on, but it becomes a part of our, very natural way of buying books and reading books and, yeah, it becomes part of something. Yes. Inclusion. Well, let's put it that. Yeah. Erica. That's something certainly to, to wish for and hope for. And Stacy, to you, I mean, similarly, just looking at the EAA in the rearview mirror and seeing some of the results change. So we've had, you know, surveys go out like, like a piece and, and DC and seeing those figures increase to where we're seeing actually the majority of publishers or publish content is is fully accessible. I doing more than we could have dreamt of that would also be fantastic for a number of reasons. I mean, AI generated audio description, for example, would would help a lot even in education. more end users working in accessible publishing. So we're getting that lived experience and hands on. I think that would be fantastic. And then finally, I guess for me personally and and professionally, just, you know, seeing people with disabilities in areas that now or ten years ago they couldn't have dreamt of. So, you know, medicine, can we see some some blind doctors or visually impaired pilots? You know, let's dream big. because that's that's what this is about. It's equal access to everything for everyone. Well, many thanks to you, to Elisa and to Kristina for that glimpse of the future.

We're coming to the end of our session for today. so thanks again to all of our panelists for being excellent guests on the webinar and guiding us on the path to better communications around accessibility, the policies and the practices. that's us for today. But before we go, let's just realize we're not there yet. I've got time to remind you that in the treasure trove that is the Daisy Webinar Archive, you will find more than 30 hours of video articles and links to resources related to accessible publishing. This webinar is part of our EAA Countdown Series. This 12 month program exploring all aspects of accessible publishing and reading, facilitating knowledge sharing and helping all involved to understand and prepare for the European Accessibility Act will be returning on May the 28th with just 31 days to go, and we'll be looking at AI and accessible publishing. Of course, debate about artificial intelligence is everywhere, with new and improved services being launched every week and the promise of automating tasks and producing higher quality content. But what might these developments mean for accessible publishing? Do they offer practical solutions, or do the costs and the risks outweigh the benefits? So join us as our panel of experts discuss their experiences of using AI and accessible publishing in a variety of ways, and how the promise of AI might become a reality. And finally, on June the 25th, just three days before the European accessibility Act comes into force, we have a celebration, reflection and prognostication. We'll be taking a look back at the journey, celebrating the positive changes and the clarity that we found along the way. We'll be looking also to the future of AI for the remaining challenges and topics that still require clarification. We'll also take a look at similar legislation that's emerging around the world, will identify lessons from our AI experiences that we can share. Just as people are beginning their path towards accessible publishing. Find out more at Daisy.org/webinars where you can also sign up for the webinar announcement mailing list to learn about new topics as we add them. And if you'd like to share your perspective on the European Accessibility Act, then please email us at webinars@daisy.org Thank you so much for coming today. I hope you'll join us again next time. Goodbye.