

Electronic Meetings and Accessibility Task Force

Charge

1. Identify best practices for Faculty Senate and Senate Assembly meetings to ensure accessibility, and develop recommendations to implement these best practices.
2. Develop procedures to address unexpected barriers to accessibility that arise during Faculty Senate or Senate Assembly meetings.
3. Develop and implement procedures to supplement the University Senate Rules to ensure that the Rules support accessibility, and identify Rules that should be revised.
4. Present recommended procedures to Senate Assembly for approval at its January 25, 2021 meeting.

Best Practices for Faculty Senate and Senate Assembly Meetings

I. Pre-Meeting Planning

A. Meeting Communications

1. Use an accessible format.
2. Include essential information in the body of the email.
3. Provide all available meeting materials to participants in advance.
4. Create and share access to an electronic folder for each meeting where all materials can be accessed during the meeting, where new materials may be added as needed, and where an electronic meeting FAQ is available, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Procedures detailing how to request to speak
 - b. Instructions for reporting technical issues
5. Include an access statement in communications for live events including:
 - a. Statement of commitment to accessibility
 - b. Information about the event
 - c. How to request accommodations

Sample Access Statement

We aim to make Senate Assembly (or Faculty Senate) meetings accessible to all participants. This meeting will include professional live transcription (Communication Access Real-time Transcription (CART)). If you anticipate needing accommodations to participate, please notify facultysenateoffice@umich.edu with as much notice as possible.

B. Receiving Requests for Accommodations

1. Confirm with the individual that their request is being met.
2. Request additional information as needed.
3. If a request will cannot be met due to time constraints:
 - a. Notify the individual
 - b. Offer alternatives
 - c. Work to plan ahead for future events

C. The Faculty Senate Office will maintain accessible meeting templates, such as:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes
3. Electronic Table of Contents
4. Executive Summary for Resolution
5. Resolution

II. Live Meeting Procedures for Electronic Meetings

A. Meeting Materials

1. The Chair will announce that a link to the electronic meeting documents and folder will be shared at the beginning of the meeting. Faculty Senate Office staff will share the link to the meeting documents.
2. The Chair will announce how participants may request technical support if needed, including guidance about how to request to speak during the meeting. The chair will also remind participants that the shared e-document includes this Information.

3. Faculty Senate Office staff will add the text of materials received during the meeting to the electronic meeting file when received.
4. If new materials exceed 300 words in length, the chair will read aloud an executive summary prior to opening discussion of the materials. If the materials are less than 300 words in length, the chair will read the full text of the materials prior to opening the discussion.
5. The full text of new materials that have not already been read aloud will be read aloud prior to taking action on the materials.
6. Materials that were distributed with the meeting agenda in advance will not be read aloud unless requested.

B. Ensuring Meaningful Participation

1. CART services will be used to provide live transcription services for all large meetings.
2. ASL services will be provided upon request as time to make arrangements permits.

C. Voting

1. An accessible electronic voting platform will be used for electronic voting.
2. Before voting occurs, all participants will have the opportunity to complete a test ballot.
3. The link to an electronic ballot will be shared electronically during the meeting, and the link will be added to the electronic meeting document.
4. IT staff or Faculty Senate Office staff will be available to troubleshoot issues with accessing an electronic ballot. Instructions provided on the e-document for the meeting should be followed to request technical support, as indicated by the Chair.

III. Managing Unanticipated Events During Electronic Meetings

1. CART Services are unavailable. If CART Services are not available due to an issue with the transcriptionist service, the Chair will acknowledge the issue. The Chair will ensure that auto transcriptions are enabled.
2. Participants are unable to access the ballot to vote. An email to facultysenateoffice@umich.edu will serve as a backup ballot when issues with accessing the electronic ballot cannot be resolved, and no more than ten meeting

participants are affected. If more than ten participants are affected, voting will be suspended until the issue is resolved, or until the next meeting.

3. New materials that exceed 300 words in total are unable to be shared electronically. The new materials will be tabled until the next meeting. If the new materials are less than 300 words in length, they will be read aloud before any action may be taken.
4. Unanticipated events that disrupt the accessibility of a meeting will result in a delay in voting or in taking any action at a meeting until the issue is resolved.

IV. Procedures to Supplement University Senate Rules for Electronic Meetings

A. Timeliness of Motions or Resolutions

1. A Rule on Time of Submission and Distribution of motions or resolutions should be added for Senate Assembly.
2. A limit on Motions Not in Agenda should be established for Senate Assembly to permit motions from the floor in only very limited circumstances. Similar restrictions should be considered for Faculty Senate.
3. A template for motions or resolutions should be required, which includes an executive summary.
4. All references to the mailroom should be eliminated.

B. Voting

1. Rules need to be revised to accommodate electronic voting.
2. Voting conducted for all meetings must be accessible.

Appendix

This Appendix includes resources compiled by the Electronic Meetings and Accessibility Task Force, January 2021.

Best Practices for Meeting Accessibility

Existing Resources

The following existing resources serve as starting points for this document:

- [Videoconferencing and Digital Accessibility at the University of Michigan](#) (U-M Accessibility)
- [Remote Events](#) (U-M Accessibility)
- [Accessible Meetings & Presentations](#) (U-M Library)
- [Access Statements: Accessibility & Accommodations](#) (U-M Library)

Access Notes (example)

- Please try to mute your microphone if you are typing or in a noisy area.
- Please limit cross talk (i.e., multiple individuals speaking at once) during agenda items.
- Please remember to state your name as you begin to speak/addhare a contribution. This practice is called **self-identification** and helps with caption quality and following along with the meeting.
- Please try to wait a few seconds after each speaker's contribution before speaking again.
- Please preserve heading structure and bullet point structure to the best of your capability when taking notes in this document.
- This meeting will be hosted in Zoom. **We will be using automated live captions in Zoom.** Captions may be slow to catch up. Try to speak deliberately to be mindful of caption quality and speed.
- Please message [event host] in the chat if you are following along via captions and inaccurate captions make it difficult to follow discussion points. Community members may respond to correct captions as necessary, but please try to do so via direct message, to avoid cluttering the chat.
- When bringing resources to the group, try to maximize the level of accessibility in resources that you share.
- Please hold each other accountable to this standard.\
- Try to avoid using the chat while people are speaking, this can cause a lot of noises for screen reader users who may be following along.
- For workarounds to Zoom accessibility issues, please use our [Zoom Accessibility Workarounds page](#).

Event Planning

- When planning your event, factor the costs of captioning (~\$110-\$140/hr [many companies might require 2 hours]), sign language interpretation (~\$45-\$140/hr), and other potential accommodations into your budget.
 - Costs are dependent upon how long the event is, the vendor you use, how much notice you give the vendor, and the range of accommodations needed. Also keep in mind that oftentimes many accommodations have no associated costs.
 - Review the [Videoconferencing and Digital Accessibility at the University of Michigan](#) page to understand how to set up conferencing to ensure accessibility needs are met. This document also covers how to set up captioning and provides contact information for companies providing captioning/ASL services.
- If you are sending out calendar/online invitations for your event, please include:
 - Meeting links or login codes
 - Agendas and expected outcomes
 - The format of the event (e.g., discussion vs. presentation)
 - The anticipated event run-time
 - A guide to the different technology that will be used during the event. For example, if you plan to use the breakout rooms feature in Zoom, include information in the guide explaining the feature and why it is being utilized.
 - Also try to include list of keyboard shortcuts for the technology (e.g., Zoom, Bluejeans) that will be used
 - The presentation slides that will be used.
 - Include explanations in the notes field of the calendar invitation
 - Let attendees know how you will share the slides during the event.
 - Accessibility Information
 - Contact information for the person in charge of responding to access needs and questions
 - Include an accessibility statement that gives attendees the opportunity to request accommodations in advance: “Please let us know how we can ensure that this event is inclusive to you. What accommodations or access needs can we help facilitate?”. This statement should also describe any accommodations that will be provided proactively and include a reasonable deadline for requesting accommodations.
 - A backup communication plan (see below)
 - A language/Terminology guide (see below)
- Send invitations early enough to schedule captioning and/or ASL interpreters, as well as to coordinate responses to specific accommodation requests

- Send invitations to the captioning provider or others involved with accessibility accommodations so that they can familiarize themselves with the context of the event and gain access to materials like the agenda and language/terminology guide. By providing this information, the provider can program in words and acronyms into their software ahead of time.
- Plan in breaks during and between activities
- Consider creating a backup communication plan in case you have trouble connecting with attendees on the day of the event
 - For example, you can let attendees know that in case of technical issues on the side of the attendees, the event will be recorded and shared after the event ends. For issues on the side of the host, this plan can include whether the event will be rescheduled or recorded at another time.
- In general encourage all hosts, speakers, and attendees to avoid the use of jargon.
 - If your event is about a given topic, try to provide a language/terminology guide to achieve equal understanding among attendees, speakers, and hosts.
- If the event will be interactive, allow attendees to send questions and comments in advance.
- Make accommodations to record your event. This will allow for transcription and will also be helpful for attendees who want to revisit content that may have been covered in the event.
- If using real-time captioning, be sure to send the meeting materials and terminology guide ahead of time so they have time to review in advance of your event.

Event Materials

- Follow accessibility best-practices when creating documents and presentations for your event. To learn more about these best practices please review our guide on [Accessible Digital Documents](#).
- Develop accessibility guidelines for presenters that includes content like how to create accessible digital documents and conduct remote sessions. This will help set presenter expectations and ensure that the presenter is creating an experience that all attendees can enjoy.
 - This document can serve as a starting point for accessibility guidelines; additions should be made depending on the nature of the event.
 - It may be helpful to create a similar set of guidelines for attendees that includes information on how to participate in the event.

Day of Event

- Do a practice run with the technology that is being used for the event. This will help you identify and resolve any issues before the event.
- Speakers and hosts should set up their computers ahead of time. This includes opening any applications and documents that will be used during the event and closing all other tabs, windows, and programs.
- If you are using real-time captioning, meet the captionist early on so you can set up the technology for them to do their work
- Start and end the meeting on time.
- Speakers and hosts should arrive in the meeting room a few minutes early to welcome attendees as they arrive.
- Designate an accessibility point person during the meeting to:
 - If applicable, announce that captioning is available and provide instructions so attendees can view it. In Zoom meetings, attendees should select “Show Subtitle”.
 - Remind attendees, hosts, and speakers to state their name before speaking
 - Monitor (and read aloud) messages in the chat (if used)
- After the event, offer your attendees and speakers the opportunity to provide feedback about the accessibility of the event. This feedback will be helpful as you plan your next remote event.

Audio

- Make sure your audio is clear; poor audio quality can make it hard for people to access the event and/or use apps that can help reduce background noise on calls.
 - If possible, encourage attendees and hosts who are speaking to use a headset.
 - Mute anyone who is not speaking. This will help to reduce background noise and provide a better listening experience.

Video

- Make sure all video is at eye-level for speakers/hosts/attendees that will be talking during the event. If you are using a webcam, it should not be mounted or located in a high mount or random corner.
- Be mindful in deciding whether or not to allow video for all attendees. Having all attendees display their video may be an overwhelming experience for many people and increases the cognitive load on everyone involved. The National Geographic covers this phenomenon in their article ['Zoom fatigue' is taxing the brain. Here's why that happens.](#)

Tips for Participation

General

- Whenever someone speaks, they should start by saying their name so that all attendees can easily identify who is speaking. This will also help the event captioner (if applicable) accurately document the content of the event.

Host/Speaker

- During interactive events, have the host/speaker repeat questions before answering them. To facilitate this process, it may be helpful to utilize the chat feature for question submissions.

Access Statements: Accessibility & Accommodations

This document has information for Library staff about Access Statements, which help us facilitate accessibility and accommodations.

When should I include an access statement?

Access statements should be used in communications when Library staff offer live events. Some examples may include:

- Library instructor communicating with faculty member about course instruction session
- Library staff person coordinating public event showcasing student work or a guest speaker
- Library staff person offering an open workshop, or direct support to patrons in a classroom or virtual meeting

What is an access statement?

An access statement has 3 basic parts:

1. Statement of commitment to accessibility
2. Information about the event
3. How to request accommodations

The purpose of these parts are to (1) communicate our values and commitment, (2) give the participant enough information to know whether accommodations may be needed, and (3) provide a process that ultimately allows us to enable equitable access.

- **Note:** Sometimes information about the event is provided in a general description rather than in the access statement.
- **Note:** Requests for accommodations, depending on the specific needs, may require advance notice. We ask attendees to notify us with as much advance notice as possible. In some cases, we may not be able to arrange accommodations due to time constraints.

What exact language should I use in my access statement?

With the basic parts and goals of an access statement in mind, you can customize yours to meet your needs. Here are some examples you can use or modify:

- Library events are free and open to the public, and we are committed to making them accessible to attendees. If you anticipate needing accommodations to participate, please notify the listed contact with as much notice as possible.
- We aim to make all Library workshops accessible. This online workshop will be offered over Zoom with automatic captions. If you anticipate needing accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible.
- I want to make my session accessible to and inclusive of all students in your class. If I may need to make accommodations for any of your students (due to disability or for any reason), can you please let me know as soon as possible?

What do I do if I get a request for accommodations?

Get Library Support

- Contact lib.accomm@umich.edu if you have questions.
- Library Accessibility Specialist Stephanie Rosen (ssrosen@umich.edu) is available to consult and/or answer questions.

Make Arrangements

- Begin taking steps to make an accommodation.
- If the accommodation requires professional services, such as a professional captioner (CART) or a professional American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, contact lib.accomm@umich.edu. See also [CART & ASL Accommodations Process](#).

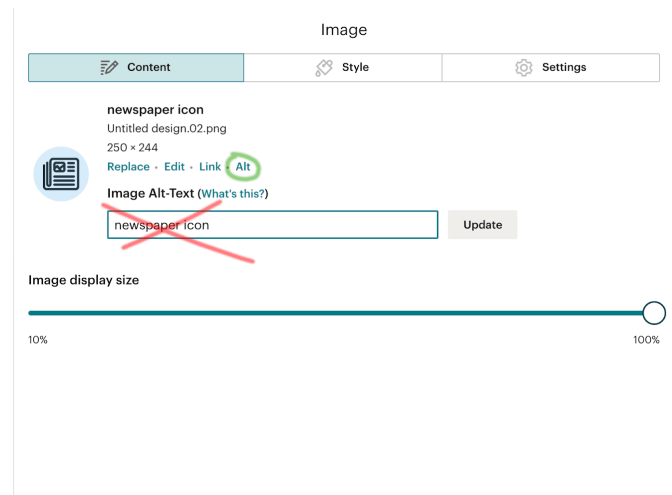
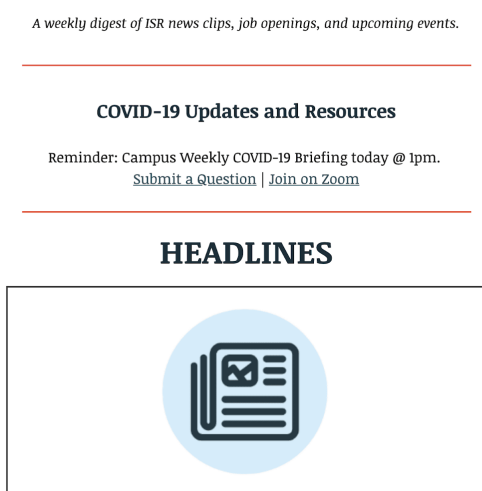
Contact the User

- It is good practice to confirm with the user that we are meeting their request, and to seek additional information as needed.
- If we might be unable to meet the request due to time constraints (e.g. a student signs up for workshop on the next day and needs professional live captions for access):
 - Reach out to the individual, let them know we are trying to meet their request and will follow up to confirm.
 - If we are able to arrange the accommodation, notify the user that the accommodation will be provided.
 - If we are not able to arrange the accommodation given the time constraints, notify the user and offer alternatives. (For example, share the workshop slides and offer to meet the user at another time for additional consultation. Or, invite the user to the same workshop offered next month. Ask the user if they have another alternative they prefer.)

MailChimp Accessibility Tips

Adding alternative text to images

- **Don't** add alt text to decorative images. If it's added by default, please remove it:




Instead, leave the alt text field empty

- **Don't** leave an alt text field empty when using meaningful images:

SHOUT OUT

Congrats to Jessica Finlay for being named an Outstanding Postdoctoral Fellow Awardee from the U-M Postdoctoral Association!



Drop Content Blocks Here

Jessica Finlay

UPCOMING EVENTS

To add events to the ISR Event Calendar, include isr-events@umich.edu in your Google

- Monday, Oct 19, PSC

Image

Content

Style

Settings

finlay.jpg
250 × 250

Replace · Edit · Link · Alt

Image Alt-Text (What's this?)

Update

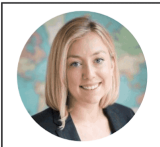
Image display size

10% 100%

- Add alt text to meaningful images:

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Image

Content

Style

Settings

finlay.jpg
250 × 250

Replace · Edit · Link · Alt

Image Alt-Text (What's this?)

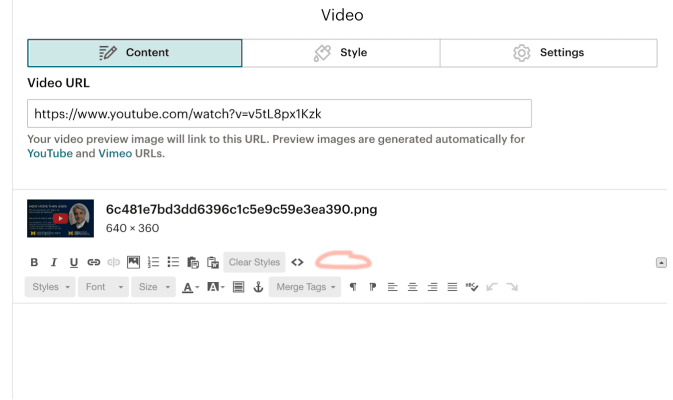
Jessica Finlay

Update

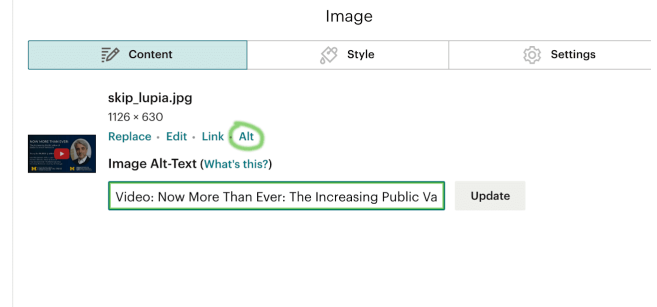
Image display size

10% 100%

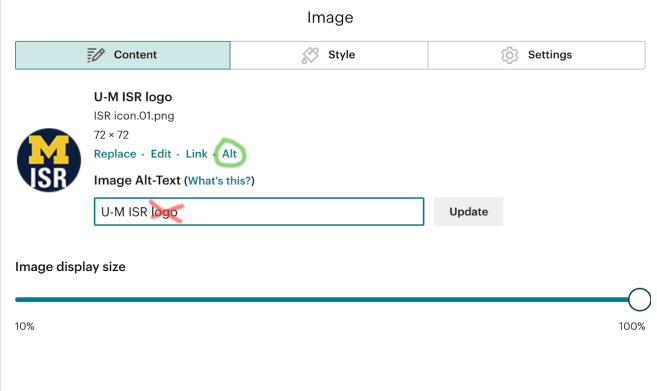
- **Don't** add videos as links (which doesn't allow you to add a title to the video link):



- Make a screenshot of your video and add it as an image that looks like a video (which will allow you to add alt text/title to the linked image of the video):

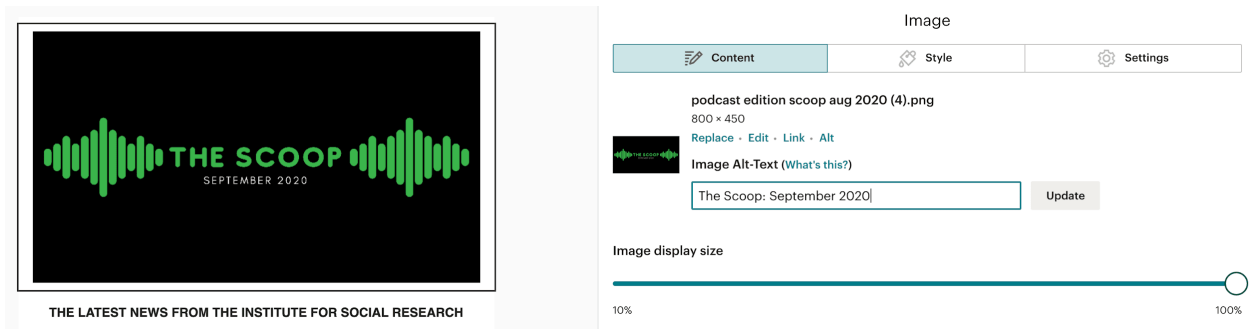


- Don't** add words like “picture of”, “photo of”, “headshot”, “logo” to alt text:



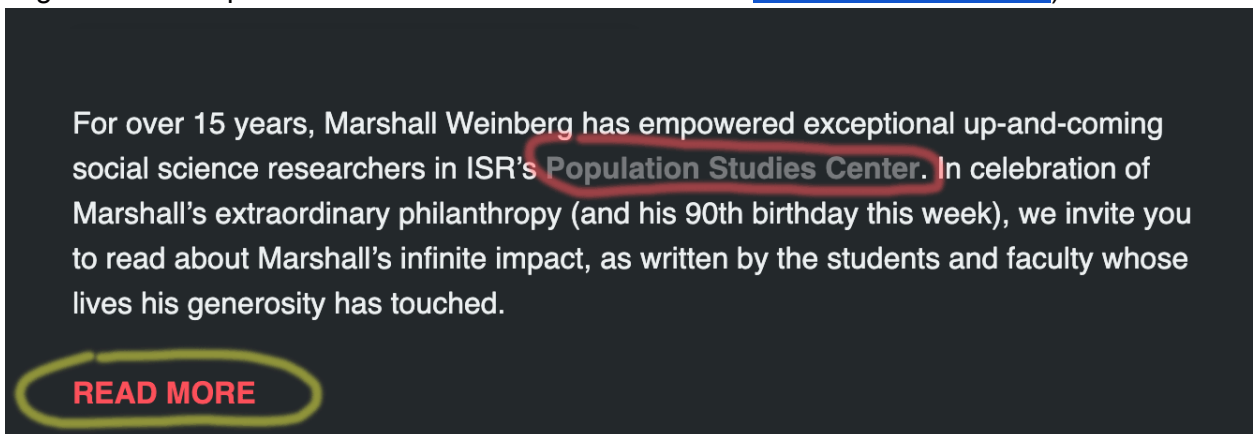
- Use descriptive alt text relevant to the content of the image (remember that alt text is all that a screen reader can “see”, and it doesn't need to know that the image is a headshot or a logo because it will read it as such). If it's an image of text (such as a textual logo),

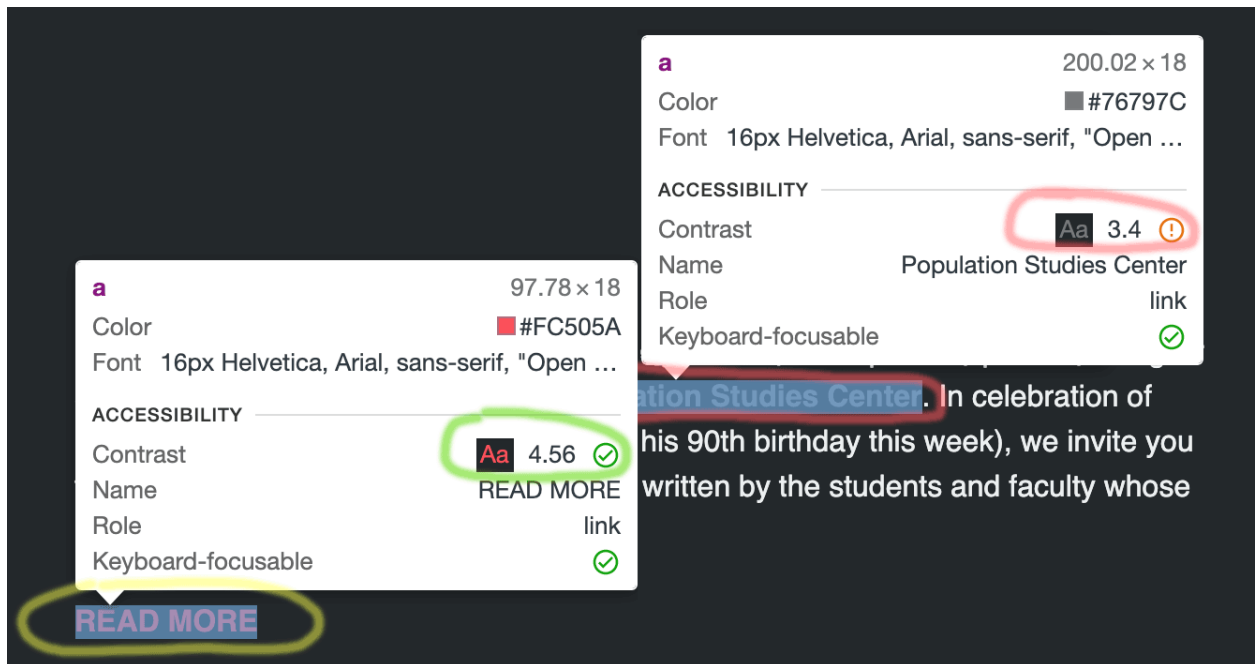
spell out the words:



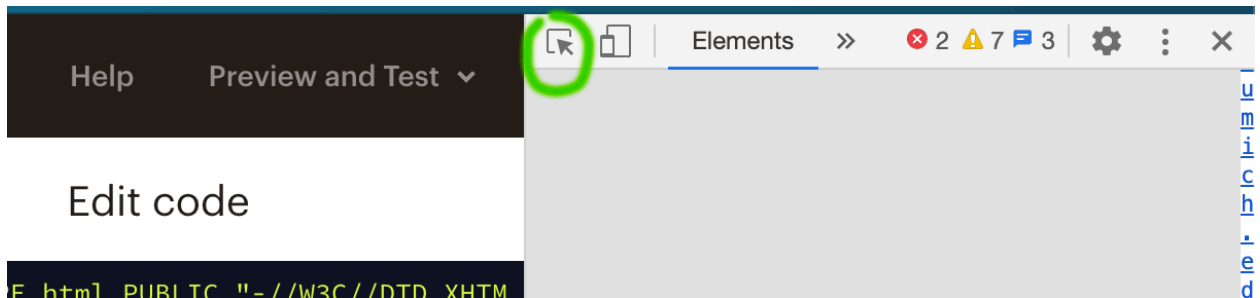
Checking if there's sufficient color contrast for good readability

- Make sure the color contrast between text color and its background is **4.5:1** or higher (it might also be helpful to install a Chrome extension called [WAVE Evaluation Tool](#)):

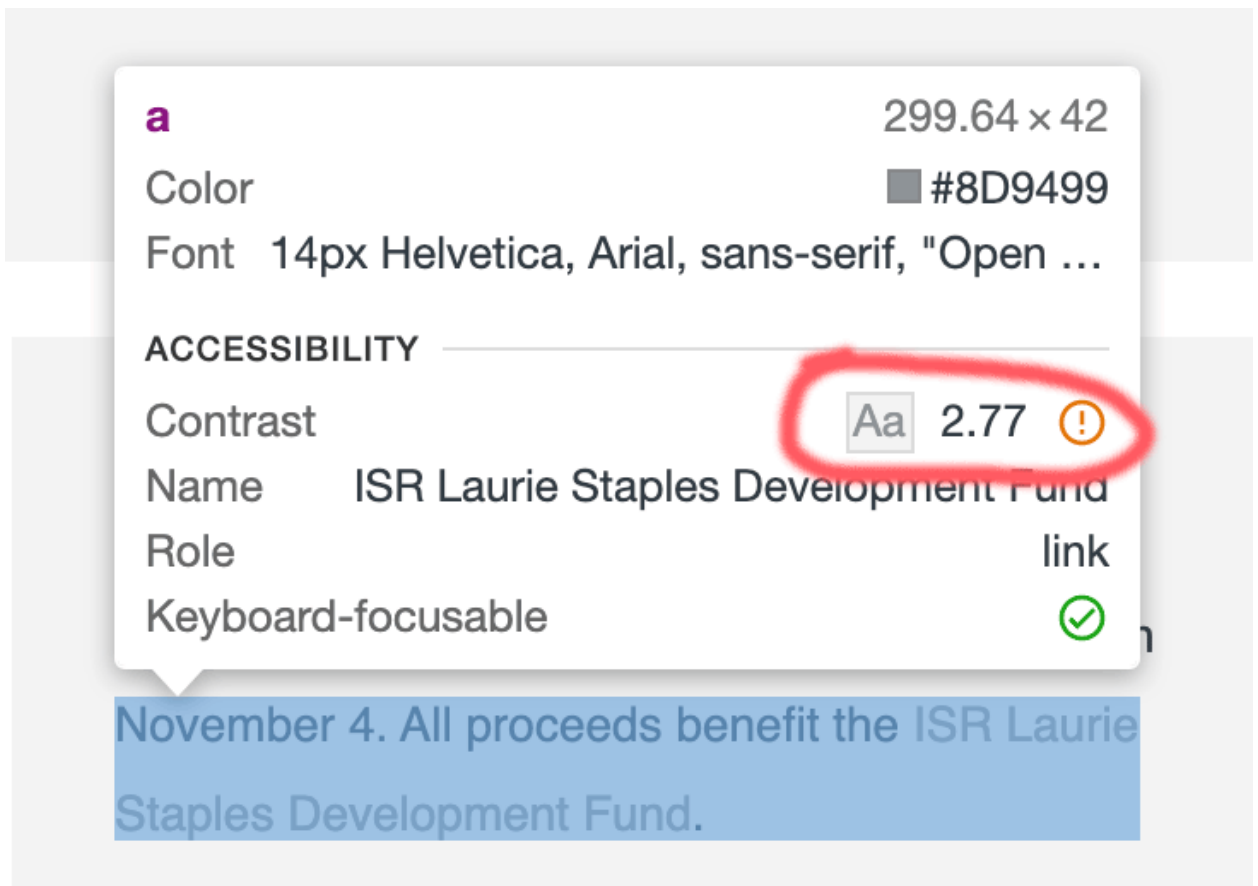




To check if the color contrast is sufficient use the [WebAIM Contrast Checker tool](#). To find out the hexadecimal color code of the text and background (in Google Chrome), right click on the text in question, then click on “Inspect” (which will bring up a side panel in your browser window), and click on the Inspect tool on the top left of the side panel:



After the Inspect tool turns blue you can mouse over the text and see an info box pop up that will show you the color contrast ratio:



To edit text and background colors in MailChimp, click on a text block (it will bring up an editing panel on the right where you can edit the text and background colors):

