# Accessible Community Forum: Digital Accessibility - Summary Report

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# Part 1: Panelists

1. **Kim Donaldson**: Pathways Lead at Fable Tech Labs

   ◦ kim@makeitfable.com

2. **Shane Kehoe**: Community Talent Manager at Fable Tech Labs

   ◦ shane@makeitfable.com

3. **Ean Price**: Innovation Strategist and Peer Team Lead at Technology For Living

   ◦ eprice@technologyforliving.org

4. **Nate Toevs**: Marketing Manager at Neil Squire Society

   ◦ natet@neilsquire.ca

5. **Jenn McLean**: Team Lead of Web Governance and Digital Accessibility for Government Experience for the Government of British Columbia

   ◦ jennifer.mclean@gov.bc.ca

6. **Katrina Summers**: Team Lead of Web Governance and Content Strategy for the Government of British Columbia

   ◦ katrina.summers@gov.bc.ca

# Part 2: Forum Information

**44 participants** including panelists and ConnecTra staff

# Part 3: Survey Results

**57 survey responses**

1. *Tell us about yourself*

   – **28** have a visible disability

   – **24** have an invisible or hidden disability

   – **6** are primary care aids for persons with disabilities

   – **5** are healthcare professionals or other aids

   – **1** prefers not to say

   – **8** said "Other"

2. *How old are you?*

   – **0** under 18

   – **2** between 18-30

   – **17** between 31-50

- **27** between 51-70

- **10** over 70

- **1** prefers not to say

3. *Please Identify the type(s) of disability you are living with?*

- **36** with mobility impairments

- **13** with cognitive disabilities

- **12** with mental health difficulty

- **9** with visual impairments

- **9** with memory impairments

- **8** with degenerative diseases

- **7** with communication impairments

- **5** with hearing impairments

- **5** who do not have a disability

- **3** prefer not to say

- **4** answered "Other"

4. *In what city do you live in?*

- Majority live in BC, with some in Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.

5. *Do you use devices often in your everyday tasks?*

- **56** said Yes

- **1** said No

6. *Do you use the Internet frequently?*

- **56** said Yes

- **1** said No

8. *What barriers (if any) do you experience to accessing websites or apps?*

- **20** said they were not aware of assistive technologies available to them

- **14** said they do not have access to assistive technology training

- **12** said they have inadequate devices

- **22** said the design of websites or apps makes it difficult to use them

- **14** said it is difficult to to bring attention to accessibility issues with website managers

- **16** said assistive technologies are unavailable or too expensive

- **12** said none

- **11** answered "Other"

9. *How do barriers to digital services impact you?*

- **36** said they increase feelings of stress and anxiety

- **37** said they are time consuming and frustrating

- **26** said they prevent my independence

- **27** said they feel excluded or isolated

- **15** said they cause them to lose employment or income opportunities

- **8** said they prevent them from receiving an education

- **10** said barriers do not affect them

- **6** answered "Other"

10. *Which accessibility issues do you encounter on most of the websites you visit?*

- **29** said small text

- **12** said poor colour combinations

- **20** said no closed captions for videos

- **12** said no audio description for visuals

- **9** said no alt image text

- **16** said unclear language

- **11** said text spacing is too close together

- **7** said improper headings

- **22** said small links and buttons

- **9** said unable to use magnification

- **11** said complicated graphic design

- **20** said website forms time out

- **6** said incompatibility with screen readers

- **9** said incompatibility with voice navigation

- **12** said incompatibility with voice to text

- **17** answered "Other" [too many ads, overwhelming options, unable to scroll]

11. *In your opinion, what are some features of an easily accessible website?*

- High contrast, simple navigation, adjustable font, simple language, clear labels, easy navigation, voice recognition, no flashing, large buttons

12. *What are some barriers on an inaccessible website?*

– No alt text, small text, poor design, convoluted navigation, incompatibility with assistive devices, complex language, high density organization

13. *Do you ever feel excluded from receiving information because of the lack of digital accessibility around the topic?*

– **18** said Yes

– **17** said No

– **22** said Not Sure

14. *If you answered "Yes" to the above question, can you provide a situation where this has happened to you?*

– Using social media, online shopping, email, receiving inaccessible files, services that require apps, no accessible customer service, desktop vs. phone usage

15. *What positive resources have you gained because of digital/internet services?*

– **44** said online communication/support groups

– **22** said assistance for independent living

– **38** said medical information/services

– **33** said financial services

– **29** said working from home

– **25** said streaming videos

– **9** said video games

– **39** said online shopping

– **11** answered "Other" [social media, education, webinars, research]

16. *Do you use any assistive technology to help you use digital services?*

– **7** said screen readers

– **4** said screen magnification software

– **7** said phones, laptops, or other devices with large buttons

– **5** said text readers

– **19** said closed captioning

– **21** said speech input software (voice to text)

– **7** said alternative keyboard navigation

– **1** said head pointers

– **2** said switch controls

- **18** said they don't use any assistive technology

- **13** answered "Other" [digital reminders, rollermouse system, large screens, augmentative communication

17. *If you use assistive technology, does your workplace or school adapt to your accessibility needs?*

- **17** said Yes

- **6** said No

- **30** said N/A

- **4** said "Other" [sometimes, retired]

18. *What are others examples of assistive devices or device ideas that would increase your digital accessibility?*

- Less bulky/big accessories, simpler phones, more training, more accessible/less finicky voice control, have accessible functions incorporated into websites so no need for separate buttons, apps for accessible parking/travel/etc.

19. *Do you believe people with disabilities have a right to be provided with any assistive technology they need to engage adequately with digital services?*

- **49** said Yes

- **0** said No

- **8** said Not Sure

20. *Has assistive technology improved your quality of life?*

- **42** said Yes

- **4** said No

- **11** said Not Sure

21. *Please explain your above answer.*

- Helps me work remotely, CC helps with understanding, independent living, education and doing homework is more accessible, easier to keep track of things, work faster, easy access to finances, provided a social life, helped with mental health, made homes more accessible

22. *Have you ever received any funding, subsidy, or bursary to help pay for assistive technology?*

- **13** said Yes

- **44** said No

23. *Have you ever paid for assistive technology yourself?*

- **26** said Yes

- **28** said No

- **3** said I prefer not to say

24. *Are you aware of any non-profit organizations that provide assistive technology to people with disabilities?*

- – **30** said Yes

- – **27** said No

25. *If you answered yes to the above questions, which organizations are you aware of?*

- – Neil Squire, WorkBC, Fable, Tetra, Disability Alliance, Cnib, ConnecTra, Technology For Living, Team Inspire, Netclé, TeleMiracle, CAYA, Learning Disability Association, EmpowerNL, Easter Seals NL

26. *Do you think government bodies are doing enough to remove barriers to digital accessibility for people with disabilities?*

- – **2** said Yes

- – **44** said No

- – **11** said Not Sure

27. *Are you aware of the Accessible Canada Act passed in 2019?*

- – **25** said Yes

- – **32** said No

28. *Have you noticed any differences or changes in your digital accessibility in recent years?*

- – **23** said Yes

- – **22** said No

- – **12** said Not Sure

29. *Should government organizations have authority over monitoring digital accessibility on the Internet?*

- – **25** said Yes

- – **13** said No

- – **19** said Not Sure

30. *Please explain your answer for the question above.*

- – Have authority to make large changes to accessibility but not interfere with users

- – Only monitor if organization is not meeting accessibility standards

- – Should establish set standards

- – Utilize education instead of government authority

- – Oversight is needed to ensure standards are being met

- – Rather a private organization overseeing accessibility and implementation

- – Independent businesses should be responsible for their accessibility

31.  *Currently, only private organizations regulated by the federal government have to adhere to the Accessible Canada Act. Do you believe all private organizations and companies should be legally obligated to meet accessibility standards?*

- **44** said Yes

- **1** said No

- **12** said Not Sure

32.  *Please explain your answer for the question above*

- Private organizations will often not implement accessibility standards because it has no cost benefit

- If government has to everyone has to

- Pwd deserve equal access

- People shouldn't be barred from services because they aren't accessible

- Shouldn't be treated as an afterthought

- Sometimes it is impossible for small businesses to afford it

- Not providing equal accessibility is discrimination

33.  *Is digital accessibility an issue that your workplace or school has responded to?*

- **17** said Yes

- **10** said No

- **30** said N/A

34.  *If you answered yes to the above, please tell us how they are responding.*

- Accessible collaboration tools, environment where everyone has equal treatment, more CC, online education, catering to assistive technology needs,

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