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# Ensuring accessibility in IR: a guide for IROs

The modern IRO is a master of many trades. You're a storyteller, a relationship builder, a data analyst, and a strategic advisor. But there's a new skill set demanding your attention: accessibility. Tanya Thomas explains.

It's no longer enough to simply disseminate information; you need to ensure that information reaches everyone.

With the UK Equality Act already in place and the European Accessibility Act (EAA) coming into force on June 28, 2025, ensuring your IR efforts are inclusive is not only ethically sound but legally required.

## Why accessibility matters

Imagine an investor keen to engage with your company, but they encounter barriers on your website that prevent them from accessing key information. They may rely on assistive technology, struggle with low contrast, or need captions for your webcasts. These obstacles not only exclude potential investors but also reflect poorly on your company's commitment to inclusivity.



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Prioritising accessibility demonstrates your commitment to all stakeholders and strengthens your company's reputation.

## A step-by-step guide to accessible IR

Here's how to seamlessly integrate accessibility into your IR strategy:

## 1. Optimise your digital presence

**WCAG compliance:** Ensure your website meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA guidelines, the internationally recognised standard for web accessibility. This includes clear navigation, sufficient colour contrast, alternative text for images, and keyboard-friendly functionality.

**Step 1:** Conduct a thorough audit of your website using available tools and services to identify any accessibility gaps.

**Step 2:** Prioritise and address the most critical issues, such as insufficient colour contrast, lack of alternative text for images, and poor keyboard navigation.

**Step 3:** Implement a continuous monitoring system to ensure ongoing compliance as your website evolves.

**Accessibility statement:** Publish a comprehensive accessibility statement on your website. This should clearly state your commitment to accessibility, detail the steps taken to ensure compliance, and provide contact information for reporting accessibility issues.

**Step 1:** Draft a statement that outlines your organisation's dedication to providing an inclusive online experience.

**Step 2:** Clearly describe the accessibility features of your website and any known limitations.

**Step 3:** Provide a contact method for users to report accessibility issues or request alternative formats for information.

## 2. Make your IR materials accessible to everyone

### Accessible documents:

Ensure all IR materials, including PDFs, presentations, and reports, are accessible. This involves providing alternative text for images, using proper heading structure, and ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies.

**Step 1:** When creating documents, use built-in accessibility checkers and tools to identify potential issues.

**Step 2:** Provide alternative text descriptions for all images and graphics.

**Step 3:** Use clear and concise language and structure content with headings and subheadings for easy navigation.

### Webcast accessibility:

Provide closed captions and transcripts for all your webcasts and videos.

**Step 1:** Work with your webcasting provider to ensure they offer captioning services.

**Step 2:** Make transcripts readily available for download on your website.

### Accessibility tools:

Consider incorporating tools like text-to-speech software, screen readers, and zoom functionality into your website to empower users with diverse needs.

**Step 1:** Research and select tools that are compatible with your website and content management system.

**Step 2:** Clearly label and promote these tools on your website.

### 3. Communicate your commitment

#### Transparency:

Clearly articulate your company's dedication to accessibility and the steps you are taking to comply with the UK Equality Act and the EAA in your annual report and ESG reporting.

**Step 1:** Include a section in your annual report and ESG disclosures that specifically address your accessibility initiatives.

**Step 2:** Provide concrete examples of how you are meeting accessibility standards and addressing the needs of diverse investors.

#### Shareholder engagement:

Proactively communicate your accessibility efforts to shareholders through your website, investor presentations, and other channels.

**Step 1:** Highlight your accessibility features and commitment in your investor presentations and communications.

**Step 2:** Engage with investors on accessibility topics and solicit feedback on your efforts.

### 4. Prioritise accessibility in procurement

**Accessibility requirements:** Make accessibility a non-negotiable. Include specific accessibility requirements in your procurement contracts to ensure all new products and services meet the necessary standards.

**Step 1:** Clearly define accessibility expectations in your contracts with vendors.

**Step 2:** Request and review accessibility documentation, such as VPATs (Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates), from your vendors.

**Vendor selection:** When evaluating IR service providers, prioritise those with a demonstrated commitment to accessibility.

**Step 1:** Include accessibility criteria in your vendor selection process.

**Step 2:** Request information on their accessibility policies and compliance measures.

“ Consider incorporating tools like text-to-speech software, screen readers, and zoom functionality ”

By embracing accessibility, you're not just meeting legal obligations. You're fostering a more inclusive environment, strengthening your brand reputation, and expanding your reach to a wider audience.

Q4 is a leader in providing accessible IR solutions. Our platform, in partnership with Level Access, is designed to help you meet the highest accessibility standards. To learn more about how Q4 can empower your IR strategy, visit [www.q4inc.com](http://www.q4inc.com) ■

## Recent CIR and ICIR passes

The IR Society would like to congratulate the following candidates who passed the CIR or ICIR from July until September 2024.



Afrizal Chiron Meydiantoro – PT Pertamina (Persero)  
 Ahmad Al Izham Bin Izadin – MBSB Bank Berhad  
 Ahmad Basem A Alshanti – MEIRA  
 Andrew Williams – HoneyBee Consulting  
 Anna Bocharnikov – Equiniti Group  
 Arif Perdananto – PT Pertamina (Persero)  
 Ashman Hafiz Bin Adrul Hisham – MBSB Bank Berhad  
 Deborah Walter Vaz – MEIRA  
 Faisal Alsayyari – MEIRA  
 Gary O'Shea – Sodali & Co  
 Haider Madani – MEIRA

Hoang Ngoc Anh – Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam  
 Howard Lambert – MEIRA  
 Juhani-Al Mohammed – MEIRA  
 Keziah Enyan – AngloGold Ashanti  
 Luiza Weinhold de Freitas – Sodali & Co  
 Luke Watkinson – BAE Systems  
 Maria Babkina – Somerset Comms  
 Martin Currie – Citypress  
 Max Burke – H/Advisors Maitland  
 Mukami Njue – Hudson Sandler  
 Narissa Kruathorn – Independent  
 Paola Mantovani – Independent  
 Prem Patel – RD:IR

Quranisya Ikhtiardani – PT Pertamina (Persero)  
 Rupert Gowrley – Flutter  
 Serine A Altamimi – MEIRA  
 Stefani Irriani – PT Pertamina (Persero)  
 Stephanie Mountifield – GSK  
 Tom Robertson – H/Advisors Maitland  
 Wai Hung Paul Cheung – EcoCeres  
 William Johnson – Zopa

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