

# Request for Proposals: Accessibility Audit of the WordPress Gutenberg Editor

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## Background

WPCampus values accessibility.

WPCampus participants are primarily located in the United States. Our organization is sensitive to the legal requirements set by [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#). The recent 508 refresh brought these requirements in line with [WCAG 2.0 level AA](#), an industry standard that helps ensure accessibility. WCAG 2.0 is also [commonly used as a baseline for policies](#) governing many WPCampus participants outside the United States, with the [European Union already moving to WCAG 2.1](#).

Beyond our institutions' legal obligations, colleges and universities worldwide have committed to providing their communities an accessible digital experience. This is consistent with the broader culture of higher education, which values inclusivity and an exchange of ideas free from artificial barriers.

## WordPress and Accessibility

The WordPress community shares our commitment to accessibility. WordPress adopted [accessibility coding standards](#) in 2016 that make a clear and unambiguous promise to its users:

All new or updated code released in WordPress must conform with the WCAG 2.0 guidelines at level AA.

This is a promise we depend on in higher education, where many institutions support a large, and varied, user base. Across our participating institutions, WordPress may be used for:

- public-facing departmental, unit, and university-wide websites
- faculty and/or staff intranets

- publishing faculty and student research, and promoting research activities and groups
- learning management systems
- class websites
- student e-portfolios, projects, and blogs
- self-service website creation by any community member

Our academic communities are diverse, making accessibility critical. An inaccessible publishing platform contradicts our values and would put many of our institutions at legal risk.

## WordPress 5.0 and Gutenberg

In the upcoming WordPress 5.0 release, the “classic” content editor will be replaced by a next-generation editor called “Gutenberg”. The [new editor](#) is a powerful and extensible tool, with relevant use cases in higher education. WordPress 5.0 is scheduled for release on November 19, 2018 or soon after.

The new editor has not received a full accessibility audit. Therefore, at the time of this writing the overall accessibility of Gutenberg is unclear. This makes it difficult for colleges and universities to determine the best course of action once WordPress 5.0 is released.

## Project Goals and Scope

WPCampus seeks proposals from accessibility testing vendors to audit the Gutenberg editor. This audit will provide our participating institutions (and the WordPress community at large) an independent assessment that may be used to help determine:

- potential legal risk (if any) posed by upgrading to Gutenberg
- potential challenges when supporting the new editor, particularly for assistive technology users
- potential impact of Gutenberg on the accessibility of public-facing web content

## Testing Scope

Testing should be conducted using the WordPress 5.0 release candidate (or other agreed upon version of WordPress and/or Gutenberg, closely approximating the final release).

Testing should assess the overall experience when using the editor. This includes:

- creating new content
- saving and publishing content
- using options available in the editor to change the appearance of content
- making edits to existing content

Common editor tasks that should be included in testing:

- build a post with at least 20 blocks of various types
- create a block, then move it to a different location
- add an image, change its size, and change its alt text
- add multiple categories and tags to the post
- edit one of the paragraphs in the middle of the post
- change its font size and font color, then edit again its content
- add new blocks using the inserters
- insert a link
- insert a mention
- change block type
- change something in the top bar settings and then go back to the block that was edited
- jump to the sidebar, switch to Document / Block settings and then go back to the block that was edited
- edit the post permalink
- make a reusable block
- add and edit an existing reusable block

Additional tasks may be identified in consultation with the selected vendor.

In addition, testing should assess the accessibility of the content created by each default block in the new editor. Front-end markup from each default block generated by the editor should be tested on the default Twenty Nineteen WordPress theme (or using another “Accessibility Ready” theme agreed upon with the selected vendor if Twenty Nineteen is not yet released at the time of testing).

## Project Deliverable

The selected vendor will compile a report based on their testing, which will be published by WPCampus. The report must include:

- any instances in which the editor fails:
  - one or more WCAG 2.0 level A or AA success criteria
  - one or more WCAG 2.1 level A or AA success criteria (when different from WCAG 2.0)
- any instances in which the published markup generated by the editor fails:
  - one or more WCAG 2.0 level A or AA success criteria
  - one or more WCAG 2.1 level A or AA success criteria (when different from WCAG 2.0)
- a qualitative assessment of the editor’s accessibility, preferably commenting on:
  - tasks that are particularly easy, difficult, or impossible when using assistive technology including, but not limited to, keyboard only, screen readers, and speech recognition software
  - comparison with the existing “classic” editor
  - whether the editor matches user expectations informed by other accessible interfaces
  - cognitive load required to use the editor

Willingness to submit actionable issues to the [Gutenberg GitHub repository](#) (or to comment on existing issues) in addition to generating the report is a plus, but is not required.

## Timeline

- RFP Announcement: October 24, 2018
- Submission Deadline: November 7, 2018
- Selection of Vendor: No later than November 30, 2018
- Completed Audit: No later than January 17, 2019

WordPress 5.0 has a November 19, 2018 scheduled release date. We are looking to have an audit completed and published as soon as possible, so that it can inform decision-making at WPCampus institutions. Ability to complete an audit ahead of schedule is a plus.

## Proposal Evaluation and Selection

Successful proposals will include the following information:

- An overview of your company and its history in web accessibility testing, preferably including a list of relevant past clients
- A description of your company's approach to accessibility testing, and complex user interfaces in particular
- An anticipated schedule outlining when testing can begin and when a report would be ready
- A statement acknowledging that the report (and any appropriate supporting documents) will be made available to the public on [wpcampus.org](#)
- Discussion of any potential issues or roadblocks that may prevent on-time completion of the audit

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following required weighted criteria:

- Experience in the accessibility testing field (30%)
- Experience testing the accessibility of complex web interfaces (30%)
- Ability to complete testing and generate a report on schedule (20%)
- Cost of services (20%)

Proposals may receive a bonus of up to 20% based on the following optional criteria:

- Ability to complete testing and generate a report ahead of schedule (+10%)
- Willingness to provide actionable issues directly to the [Gutenberg project in GitHub](#) (or to comment on existing issues) (+10%)

## Additional Information

To submit your proposal or to request additional information, contact:

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