

Section 7: ACQUISITION PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: PROCURING ACCESSIBLE IT

PROCEDURE: 7.2.15

POLICY: The University of Washington Procurement Services (Procurement Services) department supports the procurement of accessible information technology under Washington State Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Policy #188, University of Washington Administrative Policy Statement (APS) #2.3, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 along with its 2008 Amendments. Wherever practicable, Procurement Services shall procure information technology that meets accessibility requirements as specified in the University of Washington IT Accessibility Guidelines at <https://uw.edu/accessibility/guidelines>

This policy applies to all solicitations, responses thereto, and contracts for websites, web applications, software systems, electronic documents, e-learning, multimedia and programmable user interfaces wherever practicable. It covers the technology's user interface, access and content; but does not cover content that a user may encounter after leaving the covered technology (example: links to other web content). It applies to all technology interfaces that are intended for use by students, employees, and visitors of the University of Washington.

PROCEDURE: In order to facilitate the procurement of accessible information technology, the following three steps shall be implemented for all products and services that fall within the scope of this policy as described above:

Step 1. Solicit accessibility information. University of Washington bidders and vendors shall be required to demonstrate that information technology provided to the University of Washington conforms to or addresses each of the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA success criteria wherever demonstrating such performance is practicable. Vendors may do so by providing a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) using VPAT 2.3 or higher. The VPAT templates are available from the Information Technology Industry Council at <https://www.itic.org/policy/accessibility/vpat>. There are four different editions of the VPAT, based on different accessibility standards. Since IT procured by the University of Washington must meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA, the most appropriate edition for our needs is the WCAG edition (the INT edition is also acceptable since it includes WCAG 2.1 guidelines). NOTE: It is not sufficient for a bidder or vendor to simply provide a VPAT; they must take care to do so accurately. If they have insufficient expertise in-house, they should receive help from an independent third party accessibility consultant. The VPAT 2.x templates includes detailed instructions. Bidders and vendors should be expected to follow these instructions, and complete all required parts.

Step 2. Validate accessibility information received. Wherever practicable, the University of Washington, in consultation with Procurement Services, UW-IT Accessible Technology Services, or other qualified staff with expertise in IT accessibility, will attempt to validate the information provided by bidders and vendors, by:

- (a) obtaining additional information from the bidder or vendor to develop a complete and thorough understanding of the accessibility of the product or service;
- (b) consulting with independent third parties who have evaluated the product or service for accessibility; or
- (c) conducting an internal evaluation of the accessibility of the product or service

Step 3. Include accessibility assurances in contracts. The following statement along with the **UW IT Accessibility Rider** available at: <https://finance.uw.edu/ps/suppliers/terms-conditions> shall be inserted in agreements and contracts for the procurement of websites, web applications, software systems, electronic documents, e-learning, multimedia and programmable user interfaces wherever practicable:

Accessibility: Vendor represents that it is committed to promoting and improving accessibility of all its products as specified in the University of Washington Guidelines at: <https://uw.edu/accessibility/guidelines> and will remain committed through the term of this Agreement.