

# Blind and Low Vision Accessibility Framework for Museum of Glass

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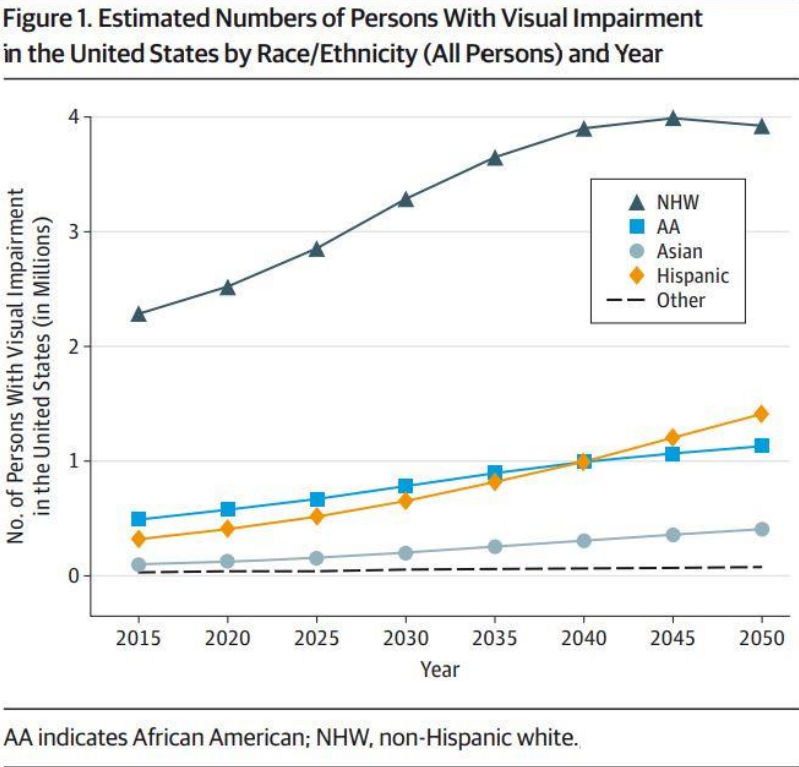
# Introduction

Art museums and other visually-focused museums are inaccessible for many vision-impaired visitors, in which visitors with disabilities often feel unwelcome to museums (McMillen & Alter, 2019). Museums may find themselves excluding visitors that are disabled through social oppressions because the museum experience isn't designed to include them (Renel 2019). Those with low or no vision have expressed that having to book special tours is an accessibility barrier because visitors with low or no vision have to do an extensive amount of planning before a museum visit (McMillen & Alter 2019). Because of this, institutions are lacking equity between sighted and vision impaired visitors. Without specialized tours, visitors who are vision impaired often express that museums lack effective lighting, auditory experiences, and tactile experiences (Henrich et al, 2014, Ginley, 2013).

Blindness and vision loss is expected to rise between 2021 and 2050. The following data is presented by the CDC.

- As of 2012, 4.2 million Americans aged 40 years and older have an uncorrectable vision impairment, out of which 1.02 million who are blind; this number is predicted to more than double by 2050 to 8.96 million.

Source: Varma, et al. (2016)



- Vision disability is one of the top 10 disabilities among adults 18 years and older and one of the most prevalent disabling conditions among children.
- Approximately 6.8% of children younger than 18 years in the United States have a diagnosed eye and vision condition. Nearly 3 percent of children younger than 18 years are blind or visually impaired, defined as having trouble seeing even when wearing glasses or contact lenses.
- Approximately 12 million people 40 years and over in the United States have vision impairment, including 1 million who are blind, 3 million who have vision impairment after correction, and 8 million who have vision impairment due to uncorrected refractive error.

Museum exhibits that incorporate multi-sensory design could enhance the museum visit for people with low or no vision, as well as general visitor experiences. Tactile and other multi-sensory interactives and exhibit features are shown to be beneficial for all museum visitors, not just visitors with low or no-vision (Bacci & Pavani 2014, Levent & McRaine 2014, Sterne & de Luca 2019). The need to touch to understand something is a natural occurrence for people to learn about the world around them (Levent & McRaine, 2014).

There are also cognitive learning impacts from using sound. While we may often overlook our other senses, people learn critical listening skills from sounds in their environment (Renel 2019). Bacci and Pavani (2014) found that museums must be more creative than just providing tactile experiences for low-vision and blind communities. There are some examples of museums, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guggenheim, and the Museum of Modern Art, all of which offer special tactile tours and programs for vision impaired visitors (Urist, 2016). By addressing accessibility through sound experiences, as well as improved descriptive narratives, museums can provide a more holistic and inclusive design (Renel 2019, Henrich et al, 2014).

Museum of Glass is pursuing this project and framework for the purpose of equitable and inclusive accessibility practice to ensure the museum is prioritizing the diversity of its community and cultivating a space where everyone is a welcome observer and participant.

The purpose of this project is to develop a framework that includes pre-visit engagement and on-site engagement which will integrate accessible design for the low or no vision community at Museum of Glass.

This project draws on the resources and recommendations developed by Art Beyond Sight (ABS), an established organization that advocates and supports access and

inclusion to the arts. ABS' handbook for successful art programs is linked [here](#), which includes step by step information on getting started, training, and sustaining successful arts programs. A more detailed list of resources is included at the end of this framework.

This project involved communicating and collaborating with people with low or no vision who provided feedback about their experiences engaging with museums online and in-person. A community advisory board of people with low or no vision reviewed and provided feedback on this project and deliverables.

# Creating and Sustaining an Accessibility Movement

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) should not be thought of at the end of a project and made to fit an existing product. IDEA are institutional values and should be considered as part of all museum functions from the beginning. It requires collective understanding and mutual efforts from all museum staff and the board. To do this takes time and intention, but will yield rich results for the communities and museum.

## Process Breakdown of Starting a Movement:

1. Create an Accessibility Committee
  - a. Identify individuals who are passionate about the work, and those with lived experiences
  - b. Representation from across the organization
  - c. Hold intentional and effective meetings, and incorporate agendas into all staff meetings
  - d. Begin building leadership support
2. Identify and build authentic relationships with individuals with disabilities and organizations serving them
  - a. How to identify and invite
  - b. Pay them for their time
  - c. Involve them in different ways (understand needs, feedback on products, make recommendations for new strategies)
  - d. Consult using various methods (advisory group, focus group, visitor survey)
  - e. Invite to them to events
  - f. Show up for partners events to build relationships
3. Build Leadership Support
  - a. Have a clear plan, describe opportunity to leadership
  - b. Ask for Commitment to Funding (see below)
  - c. Find new funders (especially funders interested in accessibility)
  - d. Leadership express support to all staff
  - e. Develop and communicate a value statement around accessibility (see Evaluating Visitor Experience)
4. Develop a stage-based institutional plan
  - a. Meet with different departments to understand opportunities, barriers, concerns
  - b. Incorporate the above into an institution-wide plan
  - c. Create a scalable, flexible institution plan that identifies order of priorities, and stages of action which can flex with capacity
  - d. Incorporate training for staff

5. Implement, Evaluate, Iterate
  - a. Ensure small, early, low cost wins
  - b. Evaluate impact on visitors
  - c. Make iterative changes
  - d. Communicate results to partners and advisors

## **Creating an Access Committee**

Working with people disabilities and people with low or no vision in the local community will play a significant role in the success of accessible spaces in the museum. An accessibility committee should consist of a mix of museum staff and people with low or no vision. Museum of Glass will need institutional buy-in to help sustain and improve accessible and inclusive spaces.

Integrating accessibility into Museum of Glass must be embedded into work culture, and this can be helped along with the formation of an accessibility committee. Everyone must play a role of increasing access within their departments. An accessibility committee must be dedicated to communicating with local networks and communities and organize training for staff.

Learn more on [how to start an accessibility movement](#).

## **Training for Staff**

Learning strategies for increasing website access and accommodating visitors with low or no vision is one of the first steps for Museum of Glass. Disability awareness training is often the first step to shifting work culture to be more aware of accessibility impact. Common training for museum staff in art institutions are how to give verbal descriptions of exhibition artifacts, and how to be a sighted guide.

This framework recommends disability awareness training for all museum staff. Because training in these areas, including verbal description and being a sighted guide can be expensive, Museum of Glass may want to work with other institutions. Museum of Glass rests in the museum district of Tacoma, often working with the Tacoma Art Museum, Washington State History Museum, LeMay America's Car Museum, and Foss Waterway Seaport, to name a few. Working with these other institutions can help share the costs of training up museum staff.

Some training is offered by Art Beyond Sight, and other local organizations. The Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) is also a comprehensive workshop and training conference.

Art Beyond Sight Disability and Inclusion Training for Museums and Cultural Institutions  
<http://www.artbeyondsight.org/mei/disability-awareness-training/>

Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD)  
<https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/networks-conferences-and-research/conferences-and-events/lead-conference>

## **Committing to Funding**

Museum of Glass must have a commitment to dedicated funding for accessibility projects to help maintain and sustain accessibility progress. Vision impairment is expected to rise for the next thirty years, and largely affects older people. According to Museum of Glass staff, many new and returning visitors to the museum are older individuals. Committing to funding can help to ensure not only that Museum of Glass is welcoming to all visitors, but also to returning museum visitors. Collaborate with the development team to find appropriate funding, and existing grant funding that applies to accessibility movements.

# Structure of Framework

This framework is divided into two sections: Pre-engagement and On-site Engagement. These two sections define the necessary actions for Museum of Glass to take to enhance visitor accessibility.

Pre-engagement includes website accessibility. Online interactions are crucial for visitors who are blind or have low-vision.

On-site engagement includes exhibit design recommendations, tour recommendations, and programs for visitors.

The framework for Museum of Glass is compiled into stages of development for accessibility. These components of the framework may include up to three stages of progression, starting with beginning stages to advanced stages. Stages of progression are largely based on short-term and long-term solutions, feasibility with funding and staff, and priorities of community needs.

# Pre-Engagement

Pre-engagement in this framework refers to how Museum of Glass interacts and engages with museum visitors who have low or no vision before a museum visit.

The following section details recommendations for the Museum of Glass website.

## **Website Accessibility**

Website accessibility is a key consideration to ensure that the information can be reached by all people, regardless of their technological environment (hardware and software), their social status (such as location and language), as well as their physical abilities, according to the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative. The following framework from Stage 1 to Stage 3 focuses on strategies adapted for Museum of Glass website to improve their overall website navigation and user experience, accessibility of pre/post-visit information access, and accessibility of a selective artifacts archive.

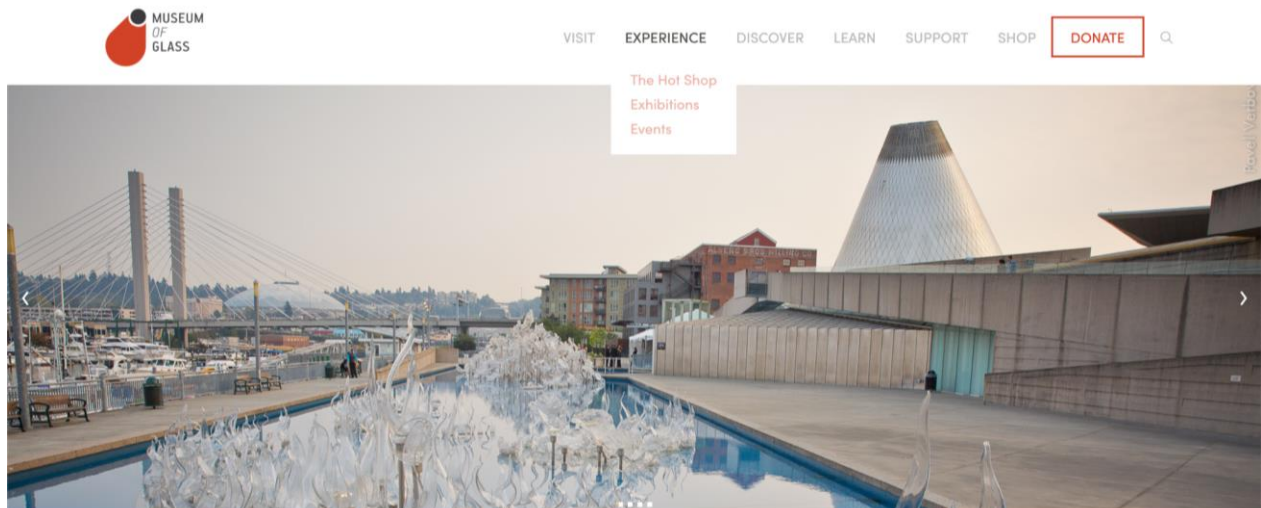
Website accessibility is especially important during this pandemic period which posts physical barriers for people to visit the museum. Having an accessible website offers an alternative platform for communication and interaction between the community and the museum.

For further reference of web accessibility standards, see a free edX course by the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative “Introduction to Web Accessibility”:

<https://learning.edx.org/course/course-v1:W3Cx+WAI0.1x+3T2019/home>

## Current Website

What is the website like right now?



### **HOT NEWS: MOG IS OPEN!**

**NEW HOURS: FRIDAY-SUNDAY | 10AM-5PM**

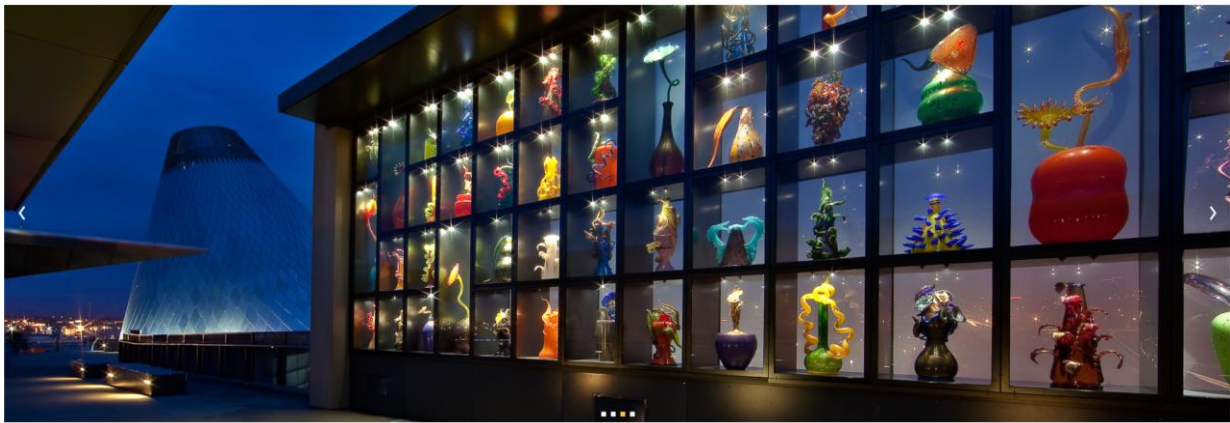
Here's what you need to know as you plan your visit.

User Interface: The first screenshot shows what is displayed on the users' screen when they open the website.

Layout - there is the logo in the top left corner, tabs bar with clickable drop-down menus, an auto-rotating photo gallery.

Font - the website has visible titles and photo captions, but the font size of the menu bar can be small, and the transparent effect of the drop down menu makes it less visible to the viewers.

User Experience: The navigation of the current Museum of Glass website could be improved by re-wording the headers and re-organizing the content under them. There is not a straight navigation path for visitors to look for accessibility information. The information of the current website is separated. For example, there is a "Calendar of Events" tab under "VISIT" also an "Events" tab under "EXPERIENCE."



## ON VIEW IN THE GALLERIES

Learn more about the exhibitions you'll be able to explore when MOG reopens.

[VIEW ALL](#)



### **TRANSPARENCY: AN LGBTQ+ GLASS ART EXHIBITION**

**Extended:** The West Coast premiere of the nation's first museum exhibition of Studio Glass works produced exclusively by artists in the LGBTQ+ community.



### **RENÉ LALIQUE: ART DECO GEMS FROM THE STEVEN AND ROSLYN SHULMAN COLLECTION**

This incredible group of nearly 200 objects celebrates René Lalique's artwork and aesthetic, which helped to define the Art Deco movement in the early twentieth-century.



### **COUNTERPARTS: GLASS + ART ELEMENTS**

*Counterparts* seeks to erase ingrained artistic-medium divisions, presenting all manner of glass and non-glass artworks side by side.

Use of Image: The photo gallery contains images of museums' artworks and environments. The images demonstrate the uniqueness of the museum and provide the visitors with an idea of what the museum does.

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## STORIES FROM THE HOT SHOP

Look back at the inspirations, techniques, and aspirations of artists that have passed through the MOG Hot Shop. Find more on Museum's YouTube Channel.

[VIEW ALL](#)



### [DANTE MARIONI](#)

Dante Marioni teams up with Janusz Pozniak and the Hot Shop Team to create one of his signature leaf vessels.



### [HOT SHOP TEAM](#)

The Hot Shop Team creates a two-color fade glass cylinder during the Museum's reopening weekend in October of 2020.



### [KATHERINE GRAY AND NANCY CALLAN](#)

Visiting Artists Katherine Gray and Nancy Callan collaborate to create a supersized clown horn made of glass.



### [FRITZ DREISBACH](#)

Fritz Dreisbach explains his ironic introduction to glass blowing and the Cameo Cut Glass series he worked on at MOG back in 2018.



### [CHRISTOPHER PAUL JORDAN](#)

Chris Jordan describes the many art forms of experimental optics and how they can shape our perspective on reality.



### [HO-WAN-UT "HAILA" OLD PETER](#)

Haila shares her experiences as a MOG Visiting Artist in 2018 and explores the commonalities between her background in basket weaving and glass blowing.

Use of Multimedia: Multimedia can help to make a website more interactive. The current Museum of Glass website has not only pictures but also videos that make the content diverse. See [Stage 3](#) which provides more information on how to make images zoomable and how to add audio clips to the website.

### **What changes is Museum of Glass looking for?**

The museum staff is looking for specific ways to adjust their website so that pre-existing information on Museum of Glass programs and exhibitions is accessible and organized. They are also looking for ways to integrate accessibility as its own topic/header page.

### **Why do we want those changes?**

Museum of Glass is pursuing this project and framework for the purpose of equitable and accessible inclusion to ensure that the Museum is prioritizing the diversity and non-normativity of its community and cultivating a space where everyone is a welcome observer and participant.

### **In what ways has (or will) the COVID-19 pandemic shaped the website and the virtual programs?**

The advent of the virtual Hot Shop is an exciting prospect for the Museum's accessibility as there are many hindrances in this moment preventing people from visiting the museum. The presence and availability of virtual material and exhibitions such as the Hot Shop livestreams and videos allow people to still engage with the museum without physically being present. On top of this online engagement, this type of virtual outreach can also help visitors know what programming the museums have to offer at what time, as to ensure a Museum experience that can be pre-planned around the needs of access for the Museum of Glass community.

The following are solutions we suggest towards the accessibility of the website.

## Stage 1: Overall Accessibility of the Website

These are strategies to improve the overall accessibility of the current website, including small modifications such as pinning the page header and the taskbar, and page organizations and navigations.

### 1. Pinned Taskbar

**Why:** Having the main navigational tab stays pinned, while users are able to scroll through the website freely will reduce the times when the viewer has to scroll back up or to hit the “go back” button on their browser.

**How:**

For Squarespace site version 7.1:

1. Click “Edit” in the top-left corner of the site preview on Squarespace
2. Hover over the header and click “Edit Site Header”

See a 1-minute video of how to edit site headers on Squarespace:  
<https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/360000667707-Building-a-site-header#toc-fixed-headers-in-version-7-0>

3. For Squarespace site version 7.0: Go to:  
<https://www.adolSPACE.com/squarespace-fixed-header/>  
Scroll down to the “How to add a fixed header on Squarespace 7.0” section
4. Follow the steps to add specific lines of CSS code to the site

**Examples:**

Example sites where their header/taskbar is pinned at the top:

<https://www.parrapark.com.au/>

<https://www.cramfoundation.com.au/>

<https://mcachicago.org/>

### 2. Drop Down Menus and Page Navigation

**How:**

Opt for clickable dropdown menus (engaged by a click instead of a hover).  
Create additional pages for each main header including the most pertinent and useful information:

For example, if users are to click on “Experience”, they are now taken to “The Hot Shop” page (the first page under the “Experience” dropdown menu), and this framework would instead encourage an additional “Experience” page that contains all pages within this dropdown menu, where users can freely scroll through.

Create more specific titles for the headers:

Free scrolling can be helpful with navigation, just so all information is present, however, the priority must be the presence of clear, informative, straightforward headers that skip users directly to the page needed (the MoG website should consider adapting headers like “Visit”, “Experience”, “Discover”, and “Learn” towards greater specificity: Perhaps using headers like “Plan Your Visit”, “Current Exhibitions”, “Museum Resources, Activities, and Projects”, and “Education Programs” could account for this navigation need.)

**Examples:**

Clickable Dropdown Menus:

<https://www.moma.org/> (This website includes clickable dropdown menus that the user can click on and off to toggle instead of having to hold their mouse at a specific point on the page)

<https://www.wheatonarts.org/> (This website includes normal dropdown menus, but clicking on the header leads the user to a new page for each header that includes links to the other pages within that header)

Specific Headers:

<https://www.cramfoundation.com.au/> (The headers for each section of this website are very direct and personalized, which guides the user to the information they need in a direct and comprehensive way)

[http://www.magwv.com/oral\\_histories.html](http://www.magwv.com/oral_histories.html) (This is how another glass museum is approaching specificity in their headers)

## Stage 2: The Accessibility Page

### 1. Accessibility Web Page

**How:**

One additional header should be an “Accessibility” page, where resources for accessible museum engagement are clearly and informatively laid out. The “Accessibility” page should include:

### **Pre-Visit Information**

- Directions, available in the form of visual maps, written text, and audio files to the front door/building access, as well as “Visitor Services” information and guidance for getting to and leaving the museum
- A notice of the presence of automatic doors and where to find them in the museum
- Phone number/email/contact information for access needs (for Touch Tours, contact Education department, for general information, the public phone number) (253.284.4750 - info@museumofglass.org)
- Clearly identified dates and times for the present exhibitions
- Availability of audio and touch tours (Art Beyond Sight Tours), as well as other accessible tours (sign language, etc.)
- Guide-Dog/Service Animal Rules and Notes: Service Dogs Only - NO Emotional Support Animals allowed at this time
- Nursing and Breast-Feeding Guidelines

### **Navigating/Exploring the Museum**

- Directions, available in the form of visual maps, written text, and spoken audio files to restrooms and types of restrooms: family, genders, etc.
- Identify if there are dark or otherwise visually obscured exhibits, as well as areas of the museum with dramatic sensory changes, such as places of large volume shifts, temperature shifts, lighting shifts, inclined ramps etc.
- Notice of protruding circular floor outlets

### **Resources**

- Ways to get assistance/verbal assistance at the museum
- Resources to ask for at the front desk: flashlights, magnifying glasses, binoculars
- Wheelchair reservation ability
- Availability and location of soft-seating
- Braille: On-site locations and availability, and ways to acquire large text and braille packets (Learn more about braille integration in [Exhibition Design Stage 1](#))
- Availability of Tactiles

### **Programs and Tours**

- Reference to programs of interest through the Hot Shop and Education Studio
- Sign Language Tours/Resources
- Any programs giving space and access to people with memory loss

- Pricing, grants for specific groups (if any)
- Online engagement tools (oral and other online sensory interactives)

**Examples:**

<https://www.moma.org/visit/accessibility/>

<https://www.metmuseum.org/visit/accessibility>

<https://visit.cmog.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility>

<https://www.wheatonarts.org/visit/accessibility/>

More examples can be found under [Critical Resources - Accessible Websites](#)

## 2. Tours and Online Exhibition Access

**Why:**

To provide information for people with no/low vision what to expect during a Touch Tour in advance of their visit. They may review the large print labels in advance, or even bring them to the tour.

**How:**

1. Under the “Program and Tours” of the Accessibility Page (see the section above), include a timeline and agenda for a Touch Tour. Learn more about the tour structure in [Tours - Stage 1](#).
2. Provide online access to large print label packets in Read-Only document form. Large print label packets may be included or attached on the exhibition page of the website.

See “Displaying files on your site” Squarespace tutorial:

<https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/205814348-Displaying-files-on-your-site>

Provide contact info for setting up a tour.

**Sample:**

Touch Tours for Visitors with Low or No Vision

Join us for a tour including verbal descriptions, tactile elements, and experiences in the Museum of Glass Hot Shop.

**Group & School Tours**

253.284.4713 | [tours@museumofglass.org](mailto:tours@museumofglass.org)

**Visitor Services**

253.284.4750 | [info@museumofglass.org](mailto:info@museumofglass.org)

## Stage 3: Accessible Digital Objects and Collections

Stage 3 of the website accessibility design involves selectively publishing images and audio descriptions of artifacts that represent a specific exhibition for visitors' pre-visit engagement as well as post-visit reference.

### 1. “Zoomable” Images

#### Why:

Having clickable images that can be zoomed in allows viewers to see details of the art work. Objects in the museum are often behind vitrines or other protective barriers which distance the visitor from the object. It is often difficult for people with low vision to see the objects clearly. If high-quality images accompanied with audio clips of the objects are published on the website, people with low-no vision may bring in their own devices (phone or tablets) to aid their museum experience.

#### How:

1. Check out Squarespace image formatting guidelines before starting to take photos, see this 2-min video: <https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/206542517>
2. Edit the photos into desired size and ratio by following the “Image best practices” section of this tutorial: <https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/206542517#toc-image-best-practices>
3. See this tutorial for steps of how to upload images to the website (includes both Version 7.0 and 7.1): <https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/115013631487>
4. Enable image zoom by following “Enable Image Zoom” section of this Squarespace tutorial (includes both Version 7.0 and 7.1): <https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/228183708-Products-Page-special-features>
5. Start this process with only a few testing photos, then repeat the steps for all

#### Examples:

SFMOMA “Artists + Artworks” page - <https://www.sfmoma.org/artists-artworks/>

British Museum “Collection” page “Collection highlights” section:

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection>

### 2. Audio Clips

**Why:**

Short audio clips could be used to describe a new exhibition, an object being displayed, or artists featured. It adds a multimedia element to the website, replaces large text chunks on the website, and allows the viewer to scroll up and down to view other content (such as zooming in on the image of the display object) while listening to the audio description of it.

**How:**

1. Record an audio description on their phone using built-in voice recorder apps (Voice Memo for Apple, Voice Recorder for Android)
2. Then upload the audio to a computer as an mp3 file (can be done using Google Drive, email apps, or Airdrop for Apple devices)
3. Under the “Home Menu” of the Squarespace site, click on “Pages” to go to a specific page
4. Click on “Add Block” on the top right corner and select “Audio”
5. Under the “Embed” tab of the Audio Block, upload the target file from the computer by clicking on “Add an audio track.”
6. Then add a “Title” and “Author / Artist” in the corresponding text box
7. Use the “Design” tab to change settings and appearance of the Audio Block
8. Click “Apply” to publish
9. Drag around the Audio Block to move it to the right place, and resize the Audio Block

A 2-min Squarespace tutorial video:

<https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/206543197-Audio-Blocks>

**Examples:**

<https://www.artic.edu/visit-us-virtually/el-greco-online>

<https://www.artic.edu/highlights/17/el-greco-audio-tour>

# On-Site Engagement

On-Site Engagement in this framework refers to how Museum of Glass interacts and engages with museum visitors who have low or no vision during a museum visit.

The following section details recommendations for Museum of Glass' exhibition designs, tours, and programs.

## Current On-Site Accessibility

Museum of Glass currently presents a number of on-site challenges given the museum's geographic area and physical structure. Navigating to the front door is the first challenge of a museum visit, where visitors either walk across the Bridge of Glass, or park in the parking garage below the museum.

The glass facade allows for a well-lit entrance and event area, a privilege of showcasing glass art. The exhibition spaces are often darker, allowing for brighter lights to accentuate the displayed art. Labels are more than likely black text on white labels, and wall text is well lit. Spacing between pedestals and art is wider than the standard exhibition design, allowing for easier maneuverability in gallery spaces. Seating within galleries is dispersed as needed, typically with black seating which contrasts from the floor.

Tours at the museum are typically arranged in advance for larger groups such as schools, programs, or organizations. Group tours typically follow the same format, meeting in the lobby or entrance area, breaking into groups, and rotating at three "stations": the galleries, the Education Studio, and the Hot Shop. The tours are led primarily by docents, and a member of the education staff at the museum. Currently tours do not include verbal descriptions.

### **What changes is Museum of Glass looking for, and why?**

Museum of Glass is looking for ways to make the museum more accessible to people with low or no vision by creating accessible tour programs. To make tours accessible and effective, Museum of Glass will need to integrate inclusive practices into exhibition design and tour structures. Inclusive and accessible practices will likely affect other aspects of the museum experience for all museum visitors who engage online or in-person.

## **In what ways has (or will) the COVID-19 pandemic shape exhibition design and tours?**

Tactile elements and interactive elements which involve high visitation and close in-person interactions will likely be limited until normal operations continue once more. Tactile elements and interactives stimulate cognitive function and help people learn more effectively (Levent & McRainey, 2014). Once tactile and interactive experiences are able to happen in person, visitors will be able to have greater interaction with Museum of Glass and the art.

## **Exhibition Design**

### **Stage 1: First Level Access**

#### **Large Text Packets**

Providing large text packets can offer visitors a more personalized experience during an exhibition visit. Compile exhibition labels into a laminated booklet. Font size should be 18 to 22 point font, in a Serif or Sans Serif font. Provide large text packets in a digital format on the online exhibition page, and within museum exhibitions, especially in well-lit locations with seating.

#### **Braille Text Packets**

Braille text packets and tactile overlays are an option for additional resources for increasing access to label descriptions. Braille texts are often not used during museum visits, but providing a booklet at the desk for check out can be beneficial for those who are interested. Because the Museum of Glass does not have permanent displays, the museum may be interested in creating a Braille booklet about the museum itself, such as the architecture, and information about the museum which could be useful for research and interest in the museum history. If braille text packets are incorporated into the exhibition space, they should be provided near a seating area.

Things to know about braille text:

- Not everyone who has low-vision or blindness will know braille.
- Braille texts should have the same text as a print label.
- Braille needs to be proofread by a braille reader. Supplying a receipt of proofreading before install will help make sure it is referring to the correct object.

## Washington State Braille Services

The Washington State School for the Blind provides printing services for braille readers. They offer a few options for braille or textured panel materials. Contact the [Washington State Braille Services Team](mailto:braille@wssb.wa.gov) at [braille@wssb.wa.gov](mailto:braille@wssb.wa.gov), or call (360)-947-3344.

Plaques: Typically for wall labels and exhibition panels or plaques, they print an overlay which can go over the text. Typically these are about \$2 a sheet, but size variation of the panel affects the price.

Images: Image printing, such as paintings or photographs are \$7.00 per print. Creating 3-Dimensional graphics will alter the original form to be simpler, and less detailed. For example, a photograph print will be an outline of the primary image elements.

The image below is a sample, showing the original images on the top row, and the texture prints on the bottom row. The standard braille printing size is 11"x 11.5". The WSSB charges \$10 per creation, and \$1 per copy.

Prints are mailed through UPS, with the standard shipping price fee.

## Washington State Braille Services Team Estimate:

The Transparency: An LGBTQ+ Glass Art Exhibition Large Type Text Packet (85 pages):

With graphics recreated:  
\$479.50 (transcription / proofing / tactile creations  
\$77 approx. per copy (bound)

Without graphics:  
\$255.50  
\$45 approx. per copy (bound)

Shipping is additional and added at the time of invoicing



## Labels and Font Size

According to the Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Design, many people with low vision must often be within 3 inches of a label to read it. Labels must be mounted and situated without barriers or shadows from the reader.

The Museum of Glass can have very dark galleries where shadows can impose a viewer's ability to read labels. Ensure that lighting is situated so shadows don't cover labels when a viewer is close to it.

Colors on labels and graphics need at least a 70% contrast between the background and foreground.

Font Sizes: The table below shows the accessible type by probable viewing distance for exhibition labels.

Probable Viewing Distance	Interpretive Exhibits Minimum Type Size (Helvetica Reg.) X-height mm (in)	Set size (pt)
Less than 75 mm (3 in)	4.5 (3/16)	24
1 m (39 in)	9 (3/8)	48
2 m (78 in)	19 (3/4)	100
3 m (118 in)	28 (1-1/8)	148

*Courtesy Parks Canada, Design Guidelines for Media Accessibility, available from the Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Design.*

## Stage 2: Artist Presence

Supplying visual descriptions for online content and tours can enhance content. Collect visual descriptions from the artists themselves to bring the artist's voice into the narrative of an object. If an artist is unsure about how to create a visual description, use a few prompts.

*What size is the art? What size does it compare to?*

*What material is the artwork?*

*What color is the object?*

*Are the colors warm, or cold?*

*Is the object soft, or sharp?*

*What do you want your viewer to know about how the object looks?*

If possible, ask the artist if their work can be used for tactile learning during monitored tours.

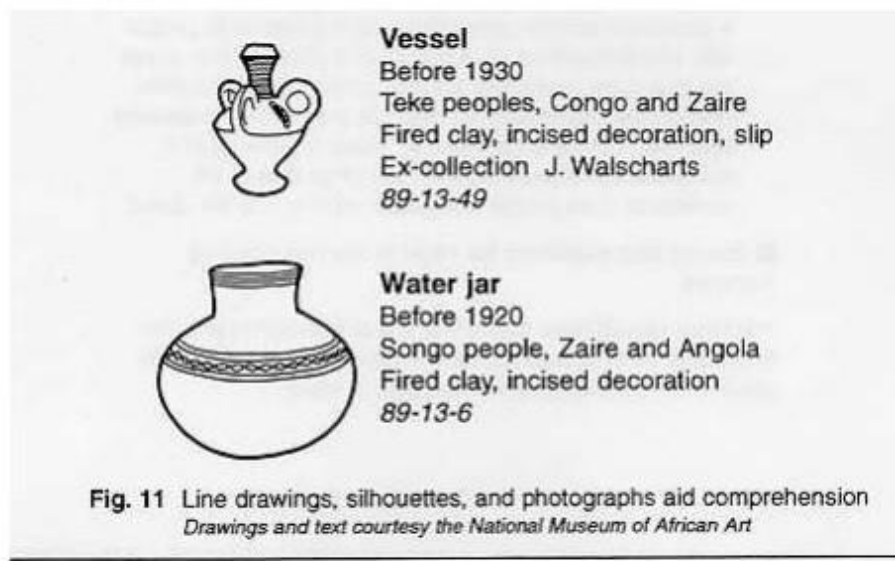
Worksheet available in [Appendix A](#). See more about visual descriptions in [Touch Tours Stage 1: Providing Verbal Descriptions](#).

### Stage 3: Accessible Design

#### Tactile Labels

An option for creating accessible labels can be to create tactile labels. For tactile labels, include a simple drawing of the object on display on the label itself. Tactile images and labels are effective for converting 2-dimensional flat images, such as photographs or drawings, to tactile renderings. See the image below as an example. Have the label made with a tactile printer so the image is generated into a tactile 3-dimensional form. Alternatively, re-create textures and imagery with puff paint on a board. Puff paint drawings should be high contrast, either black puff paint on a white board, or white puff paint on a black board.

Tactile labels and images should be on level surfaces, ideally parallel to the floor at reaching distance, or vertical on a wall. Read more about tactile images in [Exhibition Design Stage 1](#).



## High Contrast Gallery Elements

Use high color contrast gallery elements and furniture as much as possible. Pedestals, seating, and other gallery furniture should have a high contrast (at least 70%) against the floors and walls. Additional lighting on gallery furniture may aid in creating additional contrast, but avoid shiny furniture that creates glare.

## A Note on Exhibition Stanchions

Providing access to art while also protecting art from damage can be difficult. Different types of stanchions provide different levels of protection and accessibility to art. Wire stanchions which are low to the ground are effective for cane users, but can also act as tripping hazards for museum visitors. Stanchions which are too high are inaccessible to cane users and can also obscure viewing for visitors who are in wheelchairs. Textured flooring around display objects are often not strong indicators of proximity to art work especially with cane users.

It is important to invite visitors with low or no vision to provide feedback on stanchions as needed. Community input will help guide best practices for accessible and protected art.

# Tours

## Stage 1: Trainings and Structures

Familiarize staff, docents, and volunteers with appropriate behavior and language when preparing for a tour. Ideally, Museum of Glass should gain formal training on being a sighted guide and providing verbal descriptions, especially for frontline workers, tour guides, and managing staff. Art Beyond Sight provides a significant amount of information on how museums can train staff. The following sections use Art Beyond Sight recommendations.

### Training

Staff and volunteers should be comfortable and respectful towards people with disabilities. It is important for docents and tour guides to be provided with a comprehensive training session of approaching people with disabilities and verbal descriptions. This includes use of language and behavior. Museum of Glass may consider inviting community members to help practice, and hire consultants for training staff and docents.

Here are a few general guidelines to know as a tour guide for people who have low or no vision:

- When referring to people with disabilities, the person comes first, not the disability, unless an individual preference is identified.
- Do not grab onto a person who has low or no vision to guide them. Instead, describe to the person how to navigate the space. They will approach you if they need assistance.
- Do not speak or pet a service or guide animal. Guide dogs and other service animals are there to work, not to socialize. Speaking or touching a service animal distracts them from their job.
- Greet people when they enter the museum, and welcome the visitors into the space. When addressing someone, identify yourself. Begin conversations with “Hi, this is (your name) speaking, I am the (position) \_\_\_\_\_ at Museum of Glass...”
- Be open about improving a tour experience and be open to receiving feedback. Ask if assistance is needed--do not assume. At the beginning of a tour, you may say: “Let us know if you need anything before or during your tour, we would be happy to accommodate any needs.” You may also introduce yourself, and give a verbal description of your appearance, such as your clothing or accessories.
- Do not isolate tour groups from other people during a museum visit, or hold tours outside of normal operating hours.
- Museum visitors will have a diversity of level and history of vision. Be aware that some people will have different needs than others throughout their visit.
- Spatial awareness is important while guiding a tour. When describing a space, include an estimate on the measured distance with what is being described. For example, “Three feet away on your left is a Chihuly glass chandelier. It is eight feet tall, hanging from the ceiling, two feet from the floor.”
  - When describing a work of art, include commentary on the relative size. What size does the object compare to? For example, some objects may be the size of a loaf of bread, while others may be the size of a full size mattress.

- Be aware of your personal biases while describing art, artists, and other aspects of tour content. Your perspective is different from other people. You may choose to identify your opinion as you describe.

## Providing Verbal Description

Use verbal descriptions to give museum visitors an impression of the work of art. Verbal descriptions provide descriptions of the object, and are only the beginning step towards providing an informational tour about artwork. Tour guides, and the Hot Shop mic controllers should be thoroughly trained in providing verbal descriptions. The following list summarizes a few key points from [Art Beyond Sight's Guidelines for Verbal Descriptions](#).

1. Provide tombstone information first, such as:
  - a. Artist name
  - b. Nationality
  - c. Title of the work
  - d. Date
  - e. Medium
  - f. Dimension
2. Describe the subject matter, then the composition, and follow up with color tone, mood, atmosphere and overall impression of the art.
3. Describe orientation of the art subject matter by using number orientation on a clock (“...at the figure’s 3 o’clock, there is...”) and identify the orientation of left and right directions relative to the viewer.
4. Describe the technique or medium used. With glass art, there is a lot of opportunity to talk about process, and how different glassmaking techniques lead to different textures and patterns. Depending on the art, tour guides may want to include more or less information about how the creation process affects the outcome of the object.
5. Focus on style of the art, and what makes it a unique piece, or part of an artistic movement.
6. Specificity in word choice matters, be cognizant of using literal wording for describing art.
7. Vivid details in verbal description will help a visitor develop their own understanding and conclusions about the piece. Details and objective

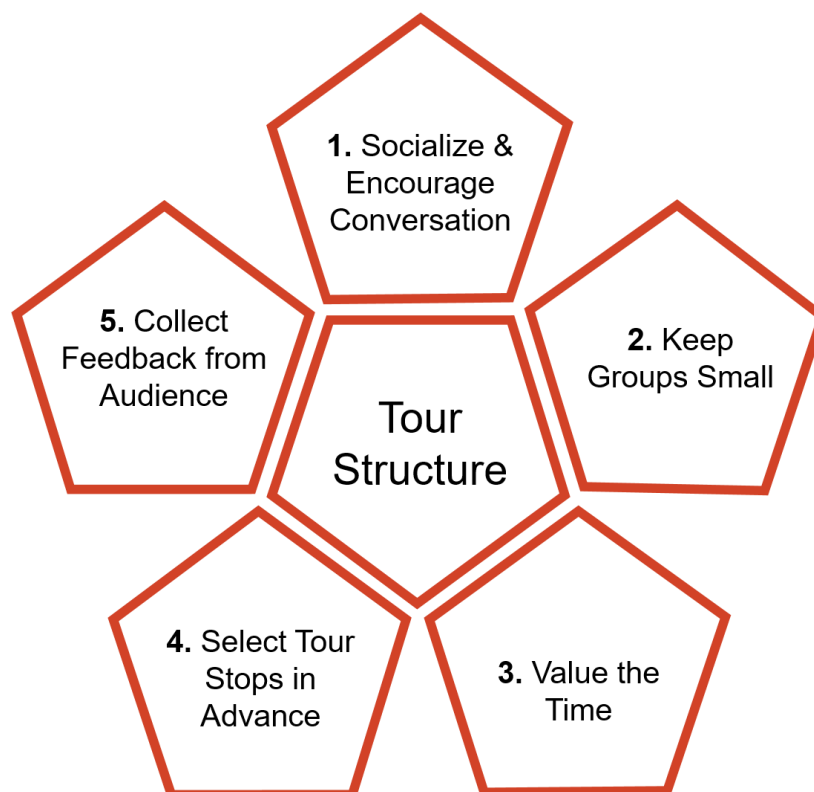
description also help the audience to have a developed sense of what the piece looks like.

8. Use other senses to help describe the art. Include whether the subject matter implies a scent, sound, taste, or texture. For example, a blue may be an *icy* blue, a red color may be *hot*, or the art may resemble an object that is normally rough, or soft.

Continue to learn more about training, and for comprehensive self-training for verbal descriptions, visit the [Art Beyond Sight Verbal Description Training](#) webpage.

## Tour Structure

Gallery tours are a learning experience for museum goers, but they can also act as social events for tour guide participants. Approaches to giving tours to people who have low or no vision vary, but have a few common factors. This framework proposes a structure for tours, based on feedback from other museums and their audiences.



1. **Socialize and encourage conversation by integrating socialization into a tour program.** As tour participants enter the museum, use the Education Studio as a community space. Provide beverages, like tea and coffee, and welcome and speak with the participants. Tell participants where restrooms are located, and where snacks and beverages are located within the room. Encourage dialogue between participants during a tour, because everyone perceives art differently, and have different ideas about the art and the artist.
2. **Keep groups small.** A group of fifteen people should be divided into five people each. Smaller groups help people get closer to the objects, and makes it easier to hear the tour guide.
3. **Value the time, but make it valuable.** People's time must be respected, especially if their transportation is time sensitive. Verbal description tours may take longer than a traditional tour depending on the level of description. It is important to provide a wholesome experience that balances description, thought, and questions.

For example, a 45 minute tour will have fifteen minutes at each object, enough time for a verbal visual description, question and answer, and time to share thoughts and perspectives about the object.

4. **Select your gallery tour stops in advance.** Practice verbal descriptions for artifacts you are speaking about and keep track of the time you spend at each artifact. Depending on group sizes and feedback, you may assign tour guides to describe specific artifacts. With this method, try having a stationary tour guide at each artifact and rotating the tour group every 15 minutes to each location. Alternatively, rotate small tour groups with the tour guide to each object location. Practicing verbal descriptions and planning on what is being said will play a significant role for keeping time.
5. **Reconvene and collect feedback.** Towards the end of the tour, return to the Education Studio. Begin a discussion session with participants. Those who were in separate groups may have had different experiences they would like to discuss. Use this time to collect any feedback about participants' tour experiences.

See more about [Evaluating Visitor Experience](#) and [Appendix D](#).

A note on **Visiting the Hot Shop**. Prior to entering the Hot Shop, let the tour group know what to expect. Describe the atmosphere; the guest speakers and mic controller, the furnaces, and the seating arrangements in advance. Let the Mic Controller (MC) know in advance that a group with low or no vision is visiting.

If you are able to, provide tactiles while in the Hot Shop which can be passed around while the MC discusses the Hot Shop project. Ideally, have multiple copies of the tactile being described so each participant of the tour group can follow along with the MC.

### **Use Tactile Elements during Tours**

Simulate a feeling, scent, or idea within the gallery space by using tactile objects. Tactile objects do not have to be exact replicas of the art or object. Consider what ways an object can be interpreted. Is there a part of the object which can be portrayed by a tactile artifact? For example, if the object has flowers, supply artificial flowers resembling those on the object to the tour group. Accompany tactile objects with verbal descriptions of what the object looks like.

Ideally, each visitor should have access to the tactile being described during the verbal description. If there aren't multiples of a tactile, make the participant group smaller.

If possible, allow visitors to touch original artwork. Learn more about this in [Touch Tours Stage 2](#).

### **Emailing Participants.**

If Museum of Glass is emailing individuals or groups of participants, be aware of participants who have low-vision. Use an inclusive format and tone. This includes increasing the font size, bolding text, underlining text, and providing clickable links. View an example of emailing in practice in [Appendix B](#).

## **Stage 2: Evolving Tours**

Collect feedback from people who attend the Touch Tours, and evaluate how to adequately accommodate needs. The following discusses possible enhancements to Touch Tours.

**Move towards a case-by-case tour schedule.** The Touch Tour program will evolve over time. Try starting out by having scheduled tours to make sure you

have enough time for accommodating yourself and others. Gradually set goals of having a Touch Tour once a month, and narrow down to more frequent visits, as needed. Ideally, Touch Tours should move towards a case-by-case basis. People who have low or no vision should be able to come to the museum and not have any barriers in their museum experience.

### **Enhance Tactile Elements and Experiences**

Tactile elements are some of the most helpful tools for learning. There are a few ways tactile experiences can happen in a museum. The following will detail three options, coinciding with tactiles used in Stage 1 of Touch Tours.

#### **Hot Shop Custom Pieces**

Based on exhibition content, Museum of Glass may want to provide custom tactile elements for tours, created by the Hot Shop team. Hot Shop custom pieces are a unique way to better describe and explain an artistic process of glassmaking, or the conceptual artistic elements. They can be used on a tour of the gallery, and/or the Hot Shop. Custom fabrications may include:

- Textured glass: Re-create a texture on a piece of art which may not be touched, or cannot be touched.
- Process sample: A piece of glass which hasn't been modeled or created into a final form to indicate stages of the glassmaking process. For example, a small, cooled lump of glass which could have been pressed, or cane.
- Representation: A re-creation of an element or concept integral to an artwork or series. For example, provide a tactile example during explanations in the Hot Shop, such as a small tactile glass unicorn. Or, for exhibition representations, re-create examples. The *Into the Deep* show could have been supplemented with glass seashells.

#### **Touch Cart**

Tactile objects may be compiled on to a designated cart for Touch Tours. While it may not be feasible to place artwork on a movable cart, tactile supplements can easily be exchanged depending on the tour topics. Objects from the Community Collection offer many samples of glassmaking processes, and could serve as excellent tactile and learning tools during verbal descriptions of glass art. Other tactiles may be examples of materials and textures. A cart or similar tool to this works best in small groups.

See a Touch Cart concept design in [Appendix C](#).

### Specific Artifacts

Depending on the Touch Tour topic, tactile objects may need a space for exploration and creativity. The Education Studio can serve as a space for tactile experiences. Based on tours and programs used in other museums, here are a few examples to consider:

- **Touching Original Artwork:** For touching tactile objects and artwork, groups need to be small. People need to be able to get up close, and touch during verbal description of the object.
- **Craft Projects:** Some museums have created programs with time for artistic creation using multi-dimensional materials such as modeling clay.

### **Stage 3: Specialized Programming**

As Museum of Glass makes continual efforts for accessibility, special programming events can help make the museum more inclusive. Adapt current programs to better accommodate people with disabilities.

#### **Kids Design Glass:**

Designated months for Kids Design Glass in collaboration with Washington State Services for the Blind.

# Evaluating Visitor Experience

There are multiple approaches to evaluating the success of an accessible museum, from ensuring the accessibility of the website to focus group evaluation and conducting questionnaires.

## 1. Website Accessibility

### Evaluation

Evaluating the accessibility of a website can be also called “assessment”, “audit”, and “testing” in the following list of resources. It is important to evaluate the accessibility of the website early on and throughout the stage of redesigning the website when it is easier to address the problems. More evaluation can be done later on by conducting user-experience surveys.

Guides and tools:

- A checklist guide from Squarespace updated on April 28, 2021 for designing an accessible website on Squarespace: <https://support.squarespace.com/hc/en-us/articles/215129127-Making-your-Squarespace-site-more-accessible>
- A website accessibility evaluation guide developed by W3C Website Accessibility Initiative”: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/test-evaluate/>
- SquareADA- a accessibility solution plugin that caters towards Squarespace websites which has a free audit tool to help identify accessibility problems, insert the URL to conduct the accessibility test: <https://squareada.com/>

### Developing an Accessibility Statement

Why:

An accessibility statement can be developed after ensuring the accessibility of a website, app, or other digital content. It describes that the owner ensures the content complies with accessibility requirements and provides the users with information about the site’s accessibility features. An accessibility statement is often linked within the site footer, which not only helps the users identify the accessibility of the website but also demonstrates the social responsibility of the organization.

How:

See this [W3C Web Accessibility Initiative guide](#) for “What to include in an accessibility statement,” “Where to put an accessibility statement,” “Examples of accessibility statements,” and a generator tool for accessibility statements.

## 2. Visitor Focus Group Evaluation

Art Beyond Sight built a framework to aid museums in focus group evaluation. To view the formal evaluation guides and forms, see [Appendix D](#). To learn more about conducting a focus group for visitors with low or no vision, view the [Art Beyond Sight Focus Group Training](#).

The following evaluative goals and questions are examples which specifically pertain to Museum of Glass visitor experience. Museum staff may use these questions, coinciding with Art Beyond Sight questionnaires, to prompt visitor responses about their museum experience.

Impact	Questions for the Visitor
<b>Website Access</b>	
Visitors who have low or no vision will use the museum website.	<p>Did you visit the Museum of Glass website prior to your visit? (Yes or No)</p> <p>If Yes: How did the Museum of Glass website enhance your experience of engaging with us online?</p> <p>If the website did not enhance your experience engaging with the Museum of Glass online, please explain why.</p>
Visitors who have low or no vision will sign up for a Touch Tour.	Did you sign up for a Touch Tour using contact information on the Museum of Glass website? (Yes or No)
	What would make the Museum of Glass website more enjoyable to use?
<b>Hot Shop</b>	
Visitors who have low or no vision will learn about the glassmaking process and environment in the Hot Shop.	<p>How satisfied were you with your experience in the Hot Shop? (Completely Dissatisfied; Slightly Dissatisfied; Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied; Slightly Satisfied; Completely Satisfied)</p> <p>Why did you choose the rating above?</p>
	<p>Did you find seating in the Hot Shop? (Yes or No)</p> <p>What was one thing you learned while in the Hot Shop? How much time did you spend in the Hot Shop during your visit?</p>

## **Emailing Participants**

If Museum of Glass is emailing individuals or groups of participants, be aware of participants who have low-vision. Use an inclusive format and tone. This includes increasing the font size, bolding text, underlining text, and providing clickable links. View an example of this in practice in [Appendix B](#).

# Critical Resources

Art Beyond Sight: Museum Education Institute

<http://www.artbeyondsight.org/mei/>

Art Beyond Sight Disability and Inclusion Training for Museums and Cultural Institutions

<http://www.artbeyondsight.org/mei/disability-awareness-training/>

Art Beyond Sight Handbook: A series of modules that takes you step-by-step through the process of creating an accessible arts program for people with visual impairments. <http://www.artbeyondsight.org/handbook/az-home.shtml>

Visual Descriptions Guidelines (Art Beyond Sight)

<http://www.artbeyondsight.org/handbook/acs-guidelines.shtml>

Verbal Description Training (Art Beyond Sight)

<http://www.artbeyondsight.org/mei/verbal-description-training/>

Verbal Visual Description Example from the Seattle Art Museum

<http://www1.seattleartmuseum.org/tours/media/205>

Washington State Braille Services: For inquiry into braille printing.

<https://www.wssb.wa.gov/departments/bac/>

## Accessible Websites

Parramatta Park: Website allows users to navigate via scroll through instead of just drop down menus. <https://www.parrapark.com.au/>

Wesley Mission: Includes a feedback section for accessibility needs.

<https://www.wesleymission.org.au/home/site-accessibility/>

Cram Foundation: Example of straightforward headers that can aid in navigation.

<https://www.cramfoundation.com.au/>

Seattle Art Museum: Use of the accessibility “button” that can route users directly to information on accessibility. <https://www.seattleartmuseum.org/>

The Museum of American Glass in West Virginia: Includes linked oral histories to allow

for multi-sensory exhibit/website engagement.

[http://www.magwv.com/oral\\_histories.html](http://www.magwv.com/oral_histories.html)

Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass: Includes SPARK! A program for those with memory loss. <https://bmmglass.com/visit/spark-cultural-programming-for-people-with-memory-loss/>

Things to Consider when hiring a website design consultant:

<https://www.aam-us.org/2021/02/17/how-to-procure-digital-services-with-accessibility-in-mind/>

## **Accessible Museum Experiences**

The Art Institute of Chicago: An online exhibit showcasing images and audio narratives.

<https://www.artic.edu/visit-us-virtually/el-greco-online>  
<https://www.artic.edu/highlights/17/el-greco-audio-tour>

Guggenheim's Mind's Eye Program: An interactive arts program for people with low or no vision. [https://www.guggenheim.org/event/event\\_series/minds-eye](https://www.guggenheim.org/event/event_series/minds-eye)

## **Collecting Feedback**

Art Beyond Sight: Framework for museums working with focus groups.

<http://www.artbeyondsight.org/mei/focus-group-for-visitors-with-low-vision-or-blindness/>

Protecting Human Research Participants: Online Training for ethics and guidelines for research, recommended by Art Beyond Sight. <https://phrptraining.com/>

## **Grants and Funding**

National Federation of the Blind and Tactile Images:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:a86d27ea-a5d9-430e-8b76-4b56344a56d0>

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# Appendices

[Appendix A](#): Worksheet for Artist Visual Description

[Appendix B](#): Sample Email

[Appendix C](#): Touch Cart Concept Design

[Appendix D](#): ABS Evaluation Guidelines and Forms

## Appendix A

# Worksheet for Artist Visual Description

We want to welcome your voice as an artist into the gallery. Please provide a visual description of your artwork. Visual descriptions help people who are blind or have vision impairments experience your art. Below are a few prompts for key ideas to incorporate into a visual description.

What is the size of the art? What size does the art compare to?

What material is the artwork?

What color is the art?

Are the colors warm, or cold?

Is the art soft, or sharp?

What do you want your viewer to know about how the object looks?

## Appendix B

### Sample Email Practice

The following text was created by the Museum of Modern Art for their *Art inSight At Home* program.

---

Dear Art inSight Participant,

Hello! Thank you for registering for MoMA's [Art inSight at Home: Creating Spaces](#) program, scheduled for tomorrow, Tuesday, February 9 at 2:00 p.m. ET.

During this program, we'll be inviting you to share how you have created and curated your own space. We'll be asking volunteers to give 3-minute descriptions of their own home environments. You may describe the space around you using all of your senses, or you may describe something you've brought into or removed from your home in the past year. More details on this sharing opportunity to come in a separate email!

#### **PROGRAM DETAILS**

Art inSight at Home: Creating Spaces

**Tuesday, February 9, 2021**

Led by Francesca Rosenberg

"Doors" open: 1:45 p.m. ET

Program: 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. ET

If possible, we recommend joining before 2:00 p.m. so that we may start the program promptly.

All times are US Eastern Time.

**Preview or download a PDF of artwork images we'll be discussing by clicking this link:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tewpeDBcZVklSxfe1Czp5ymr-ZPMjer/view?usp=sharing>

Note: For best results with screen readers, download the PDF to your computer or device. The Download button is on the top right of the web page and looks like an arrow pointing downward into a tray.

**Learn more about the artworks we'll be discussing by visiting these links:**

- [Henri Matisse. The Red Studio. Issy-les-Moulineaux, fall 1911](#)
- [Marguerite Zorach. \*New England Interior\*. 1915](#)
- [Carrie Mae Weems. \*Untitled \(Man smoking\)\*. 1990](#)
- [Laurie Simmons. \*Blonde/Red Dress/Kitchen\*, from the series \*Interiors\*. 1978](#)
- [Do Ho Suh. \*348 West 22nd St., Apt. A New York, NY 10011\* at Rodin Gallery, Seoul/Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery/Serpentine Gallery, London/Biennale of Sydney/Seattle Art Museum/Smith College Museum of Art, Northhampton/North Carolina Museum of Art. 2000](#)
- [Anna Blume, Bernhard Blume. \*Kitchen Frenzy\*. 1986](#)
- [Thomas Demand. \*Room \(Zimmer\)\*. 1996](#)

## HOW TO JOIN

Join with your computer, smartphone, or tablet using this link:

<https://moma.zoom.us/j/96819859570?pwd=eG9yOWZ6T2R0b2FQOXdoQzJzb1djUT09>

Meeting ID: 968 1985 9570

Passcode: 295890

- OR -

Dial in on your phone using any one of the numbers below:

- . (929) 205-6099 (New York)
- . (312) 626-6799 (Chicago)
- . (877) 853-5247 (US Toll-free)
- . (888) 788-0099 (US Toll-free)
- . Find your local number outside the US:

<https://moma.zoom.us/j/a7qETI2T9>

You will be prompted to enter the Meeting ID: 968 1985 9570

## **SOME TIPS FOR USING ZOOM**

### **Muting and unmuting**

With a gathering so large, it's important for us all to be able to hear each other. We recommend that everyone stay muted - with their microphone turned off - unless you are actively participating in the conversation. Occasionally we will mute everyone during parts of the presentation. We will let you know when this is happening. When you have a question or a comment - and we hope you will have many! - please feel free to unmute yourself. When you're finished speaking, please mute your microphone again to minimize background noise.

### **How to mute and unmute yourself on a computer:**

You may find the microphone icon at the lower left corner of your screen and click it - if it's red with a line through it then you are muted. Click it again to unmute yourself.

Or you may use keyboard shortcuts. On a Mac computer, press **Command+Shift+A** to turn your microphone on and off. On a PC computer, press **Alt+A**.

### **How to mute and unmute yourself on the Zoom mobile app (smartphone or tablet):**

Find the microphone icon. It will usually be in the lower left corner on smartphones, but may be in the upper right on some tablets. If no icons are

showing, tap your screen once to make them appear. Tap the microphone icon to toggle between being muted and being unmuted.

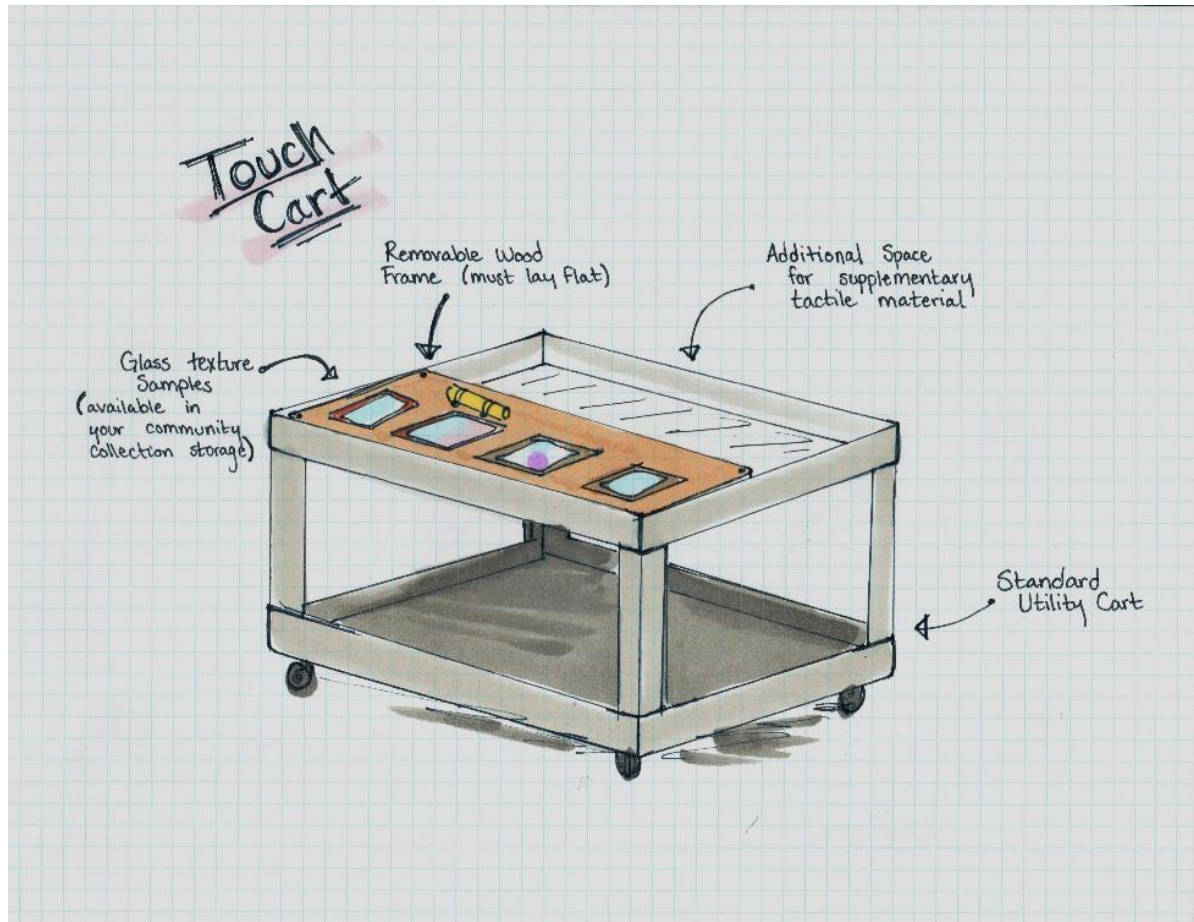
How to mute and unmute yourself when dialing in on your phone:

On your number keypad, press **\*6 ("star" 6)** to mute and unmute yourself. An audible prompt should let you know whether your microphone is muted or not. If you are using a smartphone and do not have access to your numeric keypad, find the smartphone's own mute button, which will look like a microphone, and tap it.

Please let us know if you have any questions, and we look forward to your participation!

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## Touch Cart Concept Design



### Design Features:

- Utility Cart
- Removable wood frame
- Glass samples from past exhibitions

### Notes:

- Glass samples are recessed into the wood frame to keep them secure from handling and risk of falling
- Glass samples must lie flat for tactile experiences, not at an angle
- Additional space in the cart may be used for other tactile materials which may be used during a Touch Tour.

## Appendix D

### **Evaluating the Blind/Low Vision Museum Experience**

The following pages include evaluative questions to aid the museum in creating a more inclusive experience. The content was created by Art Beyond Sight.

## **Focus Group Guide: Preferences, needs, experiences, and expectations of visitors who are blind or have low vision**

### **Welcome and Introduction**

- Thank participants for coming
- Introduce yourself to the group:
  - Your name
  - What you do at your museum
- Ask participants to briefly introduce themselves:
  - Name
  - Why they came
- Purpose of the focus group:
  - To learn about art museum experiences for people who are blind/have low vision
  - To gather feedback from you before we develop new programs
- How focus groups will run:
  - One person speaks at a time
  - Honest conversation – so both positive and negative comments are encouraged
  - No right or wrong answers
  - We want to hear from everyone here today!
  - Anonymity – we will not associate your name or any identifying information with what you say today, and we ask all participants to keep this conversation confidential
  - If words you don't understand / speaking too fast / can't hear let us know
  - Bathroom location, other comfort considerations
- Questions?
- Introduce focus group outline:
  - First, we want to hear about prior or current museum visits
  - Then, we want to hear your thoughts about potential future museum visits

## **Focus Group Questions**

[Numbered and lettered questions are the ones you should definitely ask. Bulleted items are probes you might if your initial question is not answered.]

### **We are going to begin with a set of questions about your current museum experiences**

1. How many of you have been to [your museum] before?
  - a. Ask them to raise their hands if they've visited [your museum] before
  - b. Count aloud the number of hands raised [so that the group knows how many people raised their hands]
  - c. If some participants do not raise their hands, ask the group to raise their hands if they've visited another art museum, but not [your museum]
  - d. Count aloud the number of people who raise their hands again
  
2. Before you visit a museum, what do you do to plan your trip?
  - *If participants do not discuss where they get information to plan their visit:*  
Where do you get information about the museum?
    - From the museum
      - Website, phone call, radio or TV ads
    - From other sources
      - Newspaper articles, friends/family
  - *If participants do not discuss how they get to the museum:*  
Do you need to make any transportation or other arrangements?
  - *If participants do not discuss who they plan trips with:*  
With whom do you plan your visit?
  - *If participants do not discuss helpful resources:*  
What resources could the museum provide that would help plan your trip?
  
3. When you are visiting the museum, what do you do?
  - *If participants do not mention any of the following elements, and your museum is interested in them:*
    - Gift shop?
    - Cafeteria?
    - Participate in special programs?
    - Audio guides?
    - Visit specific exhibitions?
    - Take a tour?

4. What, if anything, do you usually do as a follow-up to your visit?
  - *If participants do not mention any of the following elements, and your museum is interested in them:*
    - Talk about the experience with others?
    - Continue learning about topic?
    - Go to the museums Web site?
    - Connect with other visitors you met at the museum?
  
5. In general, what prevents you from visiting this museum more often?
  - *If participants do not mention any of the following elements, and your focus group is interested in them:*
    - Price?
    - Location/convenience of transportation?
    - Lack of interesting programs/exhibits?
    - Lack of accessible programming?

**This second set of questions relates to possible future experiences in art museums**

1. Describe what an ideal experience for you would be like in an art museum.
  - *If participants do not discuss visiting group:*  
Who would you visit with?
  - *If participants do not discuss specific experiences:*  
What would you experience during your visit?
  - *If participants do not discuss what they would like to learn:*  
What would you learn during your visit?
  - *If participants do not discuss interactions with staff or other visitors:*  
What types of conversations would you have while in the art museum?
  - *If participants do not discuss issues of physical comfort:*  
What services or accommodations would the museum offer that would make you feel physically comfortable? (Resting places, restrooms, temperature, etc.)
  - *If they do not mention how they go through the museum:*  
During your visit, would you take an organized tour or view the galleries on your own/with your group?
  
2. Describe the worst possible art museum experience you could imagine.
  - *If participants do not discuss visiting group:*  
Who would you visit with?
  - *If participants do not discuss what they would or would not experience:*  
What would you experience or not experience during your visit?
  - *If participants do not discuss what learning opportunities they would miss:*  
What wouldn't you learn during your visit?
  - *If participants do not discuss interactions with staff or other visitors:*  
What types of conversations or interactions would you have that would upset you while in the art museum?
  - *If participants do not discuss issues of physical comfort:*  
How might the museum make you feel physically uncomfortable? (Resting places, restrooms, temperature, etc.)
  - *If they do not mention how they go through the museum:*  
During your visit, would you take an organized tour or view the galleries on your own/with your group?

3. I'm going to describe [three or four] different kinds of programs [your museum] might develop in the future. We'll then go through each example one by one, and I'll ask you what you like most and least about it.
  - A verbally described tour of our watercolor collection that includes touch exploration of the artist's process tools, such as brushes, paints, paper, etc.
  - A series of sculpting classes inspired by Greek ceramics.
  - Exploration of Rodin's work through touch, scale models, and reenactment.
  - A verbally described tour of our furniture collection with touchable scale models, carvings, and tools.
  - Verbal descriptions of multi-media installations that explore environmental issues followed by a discussion or artist talk.
  - [For each program, re-read description and ask:]
    - What did you like best about this program? What did you like the least?
4. Out of everything that has been discussed here today, what are some of the experiences [your museum] could offer that would make you want to...
  - a. Visit again?
  - b. Bring family or friends?
  - c. Become a member?

### **Conclusion**

- Thank participants again for taking the time to provide you with feedback
- Share information with the group about any existing programs or exhibits you think they might be interested in [Note: DO NOT do this before the focus group begins or during the focus group discussion]
- Encourage them to contact you again if they have any further suggestions or questions.

[Museum name] focus group survey

Please help us to better understand who will be attending our focus group by answering the questions below.

How often do you visit art museums? (Please check one)

- Once every five or 10 years or less
- Once every few years
- Once a year
- 2-4 times a year
- 5 or more times a year

How often do you visit [museum name]? (Please check one)

- Once every five or 10 years or less
- Once every few years
- Once a year
- 2-4 times a year
- 5 or more times a year

When was the last time that you visited [museum name]? (Please check one)

- Never
- Within the past three months
- 3 – 6 months ago
- 6 months to within the last year
- 1 – 2 years ago
- 2 – 5 years ago
- 5 – 10 years ago
- More than 10 years ago
- Not sure

With whom do you usually attend art museums? (Please check all that apply)

- Alone
- With adults and children
- With other adults only
- With children only
- With family
- With colleagues
- With friends
- As part of a community group outing
- Not applicable/do not attend art museums

Which of the following educational offerings have you experienced in art museums before?  
(Please check all that apply)

- General guided tours
- Touch tours
- Audio guides
- Large print labels
- Large print brochures
- Tactile models of artwork
- Lectures

- Hands-on art making

Which of the following educational offerings do you enjoy participating in at art museums?  
(Please check all that apply)

- General guided tours
- Touch tours
- Audio guides
- Large print labels
- Large print brochures
- Tactile models of artwork
- Lectures
- Hands-on art making

What is your age? (Please check one) (Please check all that apply)

- Younger than 18
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 29
- 30 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 – 74
- 75 – 84
- 85 or older

What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

OPTIONAL: With what racial or ethnic group(s) do you classify yourself? (Please check all that apply)

- African-American
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian-American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White, not of Hispanic origin
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARTICIPANT RELEASE FORM

**Contact:** Your Museum Contact here

### **Adult Participant Release Form**

You have been invited to participate in a focus group for a group of museums led by [MUSEUM]. This focus group, conducted by staff from [museum name], is intended to help art museums develop educational programs for visitors who are blind or visually impaired. To help ensure that we accurately capture your feedback, the focus group will be audio recorded.

The focus group will be audio recorded for research purposes. These audio recordings will only be shared with staff working on the project. You will never be identified name in the audio tapes, every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that your ideas and feedback are kept confidential, and pseudonyms (made-up names) will be used.

The focus group is intended to collection information so art museums can design more educational and engaging programs for visitors who are blind or have low vision. By collecting feedback about what you want from a museum experience, what encourages you to visit museums, and what discourages you from participating at museums, we hope to better design future educational programs.

If you do not wish to participate or be audio recorded, please indicate so below. You have the right to withdraw consent at any time and may do so and direct any questions, comments, or concerns about this project at any time to [NAME OF THE MUSEUM STAFF PERSON] the contact information above.

#### **Consent for Participation and Audio Recoring (check one)**

- Yes, I **agree** to be interviewed and audio recorded as detailed in the letter above.
- I **do not** agree to be interviewed and audio recorded.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_