

Accessibility in the Metaverse

Exploratory Group Proposal

1. Proposers

Dalya Perez, Microsoft
James Maki, Inclusive Reality
Dylan Fox, XR Access

2. Exploratory Group Scope

Build consensus and draft a proposed charter for an Accessibility Domain Working Group, including a working definition of what accessibility means and best practices for inclusive design. Determine specific XR scenarios and understand how to map WCAG requirements for 2D into immersive tech for all disability personas.

3. Proposed Working Group Goals (and Non-Goals) and Deliverables

The “Accessibility in the Metaverse” working group would be dedicated to securing accessibility for everyone in the metaverse. Our goal is to generate insights, identify risks, and recommend strategies and best practices to ensure that virtual environments, experiences, and interactions are accessible to all, regardless of abilities or disabilities. The group will also explore the accessibility needs of metaverse content creators and developers in addition to end users and how accessible experiences benefit the organizations creating them. By promoting accessibility, we can achieve interoperability and full participation across metaverse experiences for everyone. Non-goals include developing specific technical solutions or products.

4. Coordination

Metaverse platform developers: Meta, Microsoft, Apple, Google, Unity 3D, Epic Games, Valve, Three.js, Babylon.js, etc.

Standards development and industry organizations: W3C Accessibility Guidelines Working Group, W3C Immersive Web Working Group, W3C Immersive Captions Community Group, IEEE, ISO, Khronos Group, MSF Standards Registry, etc.

Advocacy Groups and disabled advocates: The ARC, American Association of People with Disabilities, National Association of the Deaf, American Foundation for the Blind, Disability Rights Advocates, E&B Deaf Law Center, 3Play Media, etc.

Government organizations: U.S. Access Board, European Commission, etc.

Academic and research organizations: XR Access, etc.

5. Risk Factors

- Insufficient representation from participant organization stakeholders
- Insufficient representation from participants with diverse experiences and backgrounds
- Lack of consensus on accessibility definitions and best practices
- Lack of clarity for long-term technology capabilities
- Current 2D web accessibility models may not translate well into 3D experiences
- Limited resources, funding, or support for the working group

6. Target timeline to create proposed Working Group charter

12 weeks

7. Additional Contributors (Participants contact Main Contact to be added)

Ally Kaiser (allykaiser@microsoft.com)
Ami Charnoff (amicharnoff@microsoft.com)
Michael Cooper

8. References

- XR User Requirements (W3C) <https://www.w3.org/TR/xaur/>
- XR Accessibility GitHub Repository (XRA + XR Access) <https://xraccess.org/github>



- Exploratory Group Brainstorming (<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-Ya0RVDpRD8yXJFeRSKOPXmknfdPMFLSD-YcXr9tcFw/>)