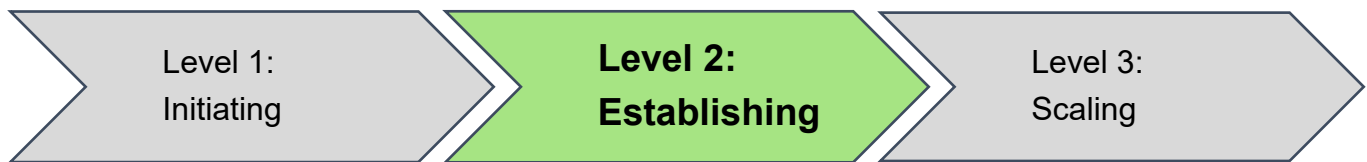


# Your Action Plan: Establishing Accessibility at Your Organization.

You are currently at Level 2: Establishing. Advance your organization's maturity by focusing on the three key actions described below.



## 1. Define your accessibility policy.

Your policy defines what standards and conformance level you are committed to meeting, what digital experiences are covered, and your roadmap for delivering on the commitments you're making. Most companies also create an externally facing accessibility statement that includes summary points from the policy and a clear path for customers to provide accessibility feedback.

**Tip:** Creating your policy should be a collaborative effort between business, legal, and technology leadership. Use examples of policies and statements from other organizations (you'll find some in the resources below) as a starting point for these conversations, then [co-create](#) your policy together.

### Resources:

- [Developing Organizational Policies On Web Accessibility](#) from the W3C
- [Developing an Accessibility Statement](#) from the W3C
- [Capital One's accessibility statement](#) includes all the key elements and is a good model to follow for your external statement.
- [Examples of accessibility policies in higher education](#)
- [How to create an accessibility plan and policy](#) from the Accessible Ontarians with Disabilities Act is a good guide.

## 2. Build accessibility into each phase of product design and development.

This action will take time and requires collaboration across all the teams involved in creating your organization's digital experiences. Don't make the mistake of focusing only on how to integrate accessibility into development and testing practices. It's equally important to focus on accessibility in design and to make sure accessibility is a formal requirement on projects.

**Tip:** Take advantage of resources from organizations with mature accessibility programs who have already figured out how to integrate accessibility! For example, use [IBM's Equal Access Toolkit](#) as a starting point. Adapt it to your organization's ways of working by scheduling conversations with partners in product management, development, project management, design, testing, and other departments and co-creating practices for how to build accessibility into their teams' work.

### Resources:

- [The Agile Accessibility Handbook](#) authored by Dylan Barrell covers key team practices and a great "coaching" model to help establish proper habits.
- [Designsystemsrepo.com](#) has dozens of examples of design systems, many of which have accessibility built in. Look to design systems like [Zendesk's Garden](#), [VMWare's Clarity](#), and [Adobe's Spectrum](#) for how to build accessibility into principles, brand guidelines, and component libraries.
- [Web Accessible Code Libraries and Design Patterns](#) is another repository of design systems that focused on accessibility.
- [Microsoft's Inclusive Design Toolkit](#) offers methods to apply during design.
- [Forrester's tips on focusing on accessibility in design](#)
- [Forrester's takeaways from the Clarity conference highlighting accessibility in design systems](#)

## 3. Expand education with role-based training and integration into new-hire onboarding

At this level, it's important to invest time and resources in creating hands-on training for key roles. This includes designers, developers, testers, and content authors. Teach these employees the techniques to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and how to test their work. Integrate accessibility education into new-hire onboarding as well so new team members get trained up quickly.

**Tip:** Most organizations partner with accessibility firms for role-based training. Firms typically offer live training, access to a virtual training platform, or a combination of the two. When it comes to new-hire onboarding, consider partner with your learning & development team to create an accessibility essentials course that new hires are required to take along with courses

on topics like compliance. If that's not realistic yet, perhaps start with a welcome email for new hires that includes educational content and links to resources relevant to their role.

### Resources:

- Use the [WCAG Checklist from The A11Y Project](#) as inspiration for creating your own role-based checklists
- 18F's [Accessibility for Teams guide](#) includes a list of checks broken down by role.

## Ideas and advice from other organizations at this stage.

Attendees shared these tips and pieces of advice during the webinar where we introduced this action plan:

- “Create accessibility wins to help promote buy-in and positivity around accessibility work.”
- “We’re going to work on the accessibility policy and the steps to get there so we have a clear ask for Leadership.”
- “Role based checklists solve a lot of the daily questions I’m getting from new employees currently.”
- “We had our Product Managers, Product Marketing and UX teams watch a talk from Kat Holmes [author of [Mismatch](#)] together to help bring cross-functional teams into the inclusion conversation”.
- “Partner with Diversity & Inclusion to provide specific info/education for accessibility.”
- “Success happens when everyone takes part — every team, every part of the process.”



Congratulations! You have advanced your organization's digital accessibility maturity. It's time to move on to Level 3: Scaling.

## Need more help?

Deque has helped initiate, establish, and scale accessibility programs at organizations of all sizes, across industries. [Contact Deque for a free consultation.](#)