Public Service Commission

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Creating accessible digital products and services for all NSW Government customers

The NSW Government aims to be the world's most customer-centric government. To achieve this vision, we need to ensure that customers can access our digital products and services if they wish to do so. Around one in five people in NSW have a disability, meaning we need to consider customers with diverse vision, hearing, mobility, cognitive and literacy needs.

To do this, the Department of Customer Service (DCS) created Accessibility NSW. This project will establish a one-stop shop for practical tools and resources that will help all government services to develop excellent digital systems that all users can access.

Accessibility NSW consists of four streams of work:

1. Accessibility compliance toolkit: the digital accessibility toolkit will aggregate existing tools and new digital tools that can be used across the government, ensuring customers have the resources and expertise to build, buy and deliver accessible products and services.

2. Capability program: online training modules will build the capability of NSW public servants to design, deliver, remediate, and buy for accessibility.

3. Accessibility Centre: this is a space where teams that create digital products can conduct user research and user testing with customers who have diverse needs. This will be piloted as an online resource, with the potential to expand to a physical space.

4. Accessibility Ambassadors: a NSW Accessibility Ambassadors network has been developed, comprising representatives across all clusters of the NSW Government. Some members of this network include those who identify as living with disability, providing lived experience to the project's development. This network is an environment for discussion and collaboration for accessibility compliance, content, tools, skills, and capability uplift.

Accessibility NSW will fundamentally improve how the NSW Government delivers services to the community. It will help to embed best-practice digital accessibility into our internal and externally facing digital services.

Building in-house capability with digital accessibility diversifies the digital skills of NSW Government employees and reduces reliance on external digital accessibility providers. Equally, removing digital barriers in internal services for people with accessibility needs will ensure that the public sector is a more inclusive

place to work. The project will help us provide the services our customers need when they need them. To deliver this, agencies must work to meet basic accessibility requirements to provide better experiences for customers who use their services.

This project delivers on Focus Area 4 of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021–2025, the Premier's Priority to deliver a world-class public service, and elements of the NSW Government Customer Strategy 2030. Accessibility NSW will connect regularly with the Disability Employment Network and the DCS Disability Inclusion Steering Committee to ensure it is informed by the voices of people with lived experience of disability.

Digital accessibility benefits everyone and is essential for some community members. Ensuring that digital products and services in NSW meet longstanding international accessibility standards will remove barriers for customers who are currently unable to use government services and help to improve the experiences of all users of these services.

> "Our decisions require empathy to understand people's needs and we need to remain open to discovering new ideas and practices that afford everyone the dignity and respect of equal access." – NSW Accessibility Ambassador

This project will be delivered over two years from 2022, with phase 1 due to be completed by June 2024. Key milestones for phase 1 include:

- showcasing work at the Digital NSW Showcase in November 2022
- testing the Accessibility Compliance Toolkit Alpha with government employees with diverse experience in digital accessibility and across multiple roles
- creating a policy framework for digital accessibility in government
- ensuring accessibility considerations are included in procurement and publishing processes.

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