

# Accessibility, Participation, Correction, and Public Accountability Standard

How people access, challenge, improve, and safely use the institution

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| REVIEW CYCLE<br>Annual      | CANONICAL RECORD<br>Living HTML record                           |

**Under Review.** This first-edition record is complete for institutional review but does not become current authority until approved and published.

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## 1. Purpose

This standard establishes public commitments for accessibility, participation, feedback, correction, support, and accountable interface design.

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## 2. Accessibility as infrastructure

Accessibility is not a final visual check. It should be considered in content models, navigation, forms, data displays, documents, exports, authentication, error handling, offline behavior, and product architecture.

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## 3. Semantic and keyboard access

Public interfaces should use meaningful headings, landmarks, labels, link text, focus order, keyboard operation, and visible focus states. Interactive controls should not depend exclusively on hover, drag, color, or pointer precision.

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## 4. Visual access

Text and controls should use readable contrast and size. Layouts should reflow on smaller screens and zoom. Motion should be restrained and respect reduced-motion preferences. Status should not be communicated by color alone.

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## 5. Nonvisual access

Images, charts, maps, diagrams, and media should provide alternative text, captions, summaries, data tables, or equivalent explanation proportionate to their informational role. Decorative images should not create noise for assistive technology.

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## 6. Language and comprehension

Important instructions, errors, limitations, and decisions should use direct language. Technical terms should be defined. Plain-language summaries should supplement rather than distort complex records.

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## 7. Documents and exports

PDFs and downloadable documents should preserve heading structure, reading order, metadata, links, table headers, and legible layout where the format permits. HTML should remain available when it provides a more accessible canonical record.

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## 8. Participation pathways

People should be able to propose features, report defects, identify documentation gaps, request support, and submit corrections through understandable pathways. Participation should not require public disclosure of private or sensitive information.

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## 9. Feedback states

A report or suggestion should have a visible state where feasible: received, under review, needs information, accepted, planned, resolved, declined, duplicate, or closed. Declining a request should not require pretending it was not heard.

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## 10. Correction

Good-faith correction reports should identify the affected record, claimed error, supporting evidence, and desired clarification where possible. Urgent safety, security, privacy, or legal concerns may require a separate confidential process.

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## 11. Known issues

Material known issues should be documented when they affect access, reliability, data integrity, privacy, security, or interpretation. A workaround should not replace a fix indefinitely without visible status.

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## 12. Nonmanipulative design

Interfaces should avoid dark patterns, forced consent, misleading button hierarchy, hidden costs, artificial urgency, obstructive cancellation, or language that pressures users to accept an uncertain output.

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## 13. Data and privacy choices

Consent and privacy controls should be understandable and proportionate. The platform should collect only what is needed for the stated function and should not make essential public information dependent on unnecessary profiling.

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## 14. Public accountability

Product versions, operational status, source freshness, known limitations, maintenance expectations, and correction history should be visible at an appropriate level. Public code alone is not sufficient accountability if users cannot understand the live service.

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## 15. Testing

Accessibility and usability testing should include automated checks, keyboard review, responsive layouts, assistive-technology testing where possible, reduced-motion behavior, error states, slow or failed networks, and realistic content lengths.

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## 16. Limits and continuous improvement

Sustainable Catalyst does not claim perfect accessibility. Gaps should be treated as defects and roadmap work, prioritized according to impact and feasibility, and documented honestly.

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# 17. Governance

Accessibility, participation, and correction requirements should be included in release acceptance criteria. Significant barriers should be eligible to block publication or release.

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## Related Foundation Documents

- SC-FND-002
- SC-FND-006
- SC-FND-009

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## Revision History

| Version | Date       | Status       | Summary                                                                            |
|---------|------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.0.0   | 2026-07-16 | Under Review | Institutional Foundations First Edition draft prepared for review and publication. |

**Authority statement.** This living HTML document is the proposed first-edition record within its defined scope. Fixed PDF editions preserve review snapshots. Earlier records remain available for historical reference.