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Statement on Accessibility, Usability, and Digital Inclusiveness

To improve the experience of all users, the ACM U.S. Public Policy Council strives to advance public policies, practices, and research in usability, accessibility, and assistive technologies. Information technology comes in many forms and implementations. We believe the basic principles of accessibility for human input and device output developed for computers, the World Wide Web, computer applications, visual displays, and aural and tactile devices have wide applicability for innovative devices in all forms.

This set of principles aims to promote accessibility, usability, and digital inclusiveness. These principles are a tool that designers, developers, and policy makers can use to assure that the promise of computing can be enjoyed to the maximum extent possible by all members of society.

Implement Accessibility and Usability for the Digital Age: Accessible and usable technologies extend beyond web and mobile applications. Accessibility and usability for the digital age should support and encompass accessible ICT in all its forms and assistive technologies.

Build Accessibility in from the Beginning: Incorporating accessibility and usability from conception can help reduce issues once technologies are deployed and affecting individuals' lives. This also avoids difficult and costly retrofitting.

Promote Awareness and Clarity About Compliance: Improving accessibility of ICT can often be a relatively inexpensive process. Educational resources aimed at improving awareness of accessibility requirements can reduce resistance and increase compliance.

Encourage Tool and Software Development: Tool and software development make it easier for developers and content providers to design accessible technologies. Improved tools for testing and auditing accessibility might provide clearer feedback and assistance in improving accessibility, thus simplifying the process of bringing ICT into compliance.

Promote Innovation and Accessibility: Promoting innovative architectural technical solutions that encourage entities to get creative in the way they provide access can help foster an affinity for and commitment to accessibility and usability rather than dismissal.

Foster Digital Inclusiveness: A technology-centered society must consider that individuals may have a range of accessibility concerns associated with mobility, vision, hearing, cognition, disabilities and changes in abilities associated with aging. Current and emerging ICT and assistive technologies should consider all of these audiences and plan for appropriate accessibility.

Emphasize the Importance of Privacy and Security: The ubiquity of ICT and assistive technologies broadens the scope and scale of their impact. Privacy and security are instrumental in ensuring robust and reliable technologies for individuals with disabilities.