

Accessibility Evaluation Report:

AnthroSource Digital Repository

October 30, 2025

Conducted by: Accessiblü, LLC

For: Library Accessibility Alliance (LAA)

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Summary of Accessibility Findings

Accessibl^ü conducted a **high-level accessibility evaluation** of the AnthroSource digital repository platform published by the American Anthropological Association to assess its usability for individuals with disabilities. The review was conducted using the JAWS and NVDA screen readers, keyboard-only navigation, and manual inspection for conformance to select WCAG 2.2 AA success criteria.

Key Findings

The AnthroSource platform presents significant accessibility challenges that may create substantial barriers for users with disabilities. During our testing, we encountered numerous critical issues that prevented our users from effectively navigating the site, searching for academic articles, and accessing resources. These issues could severely impact the ability of screen reader users and keyboard-only users to use the platform effectively.

The testing revealed issues such as missing and inadequate alternative text for images, inconsistent and improper heading structures, incomplete ARIA role implementations, keyboard accessibility problems including partial traps, and improperly structured navigation and form elements. These problems not only hinder platform usability but often render essential functionality completely inaccessible to people with disabilities.

Addressing these concerns would significantly improve the experience for persons with disabilities and users of assistive technology, allowing them to access the wealth of anthropological research and scholarship that AnthroSource provides to the academic community.

Top 3 Issues Identified

1. Missing and Inadequate Alternative Text

- a. Images throughout the platform lack descriptive alternative text, particularly for journal covers, logos, and informational graphics. Multiple images are announced only as 'Link Graphic' or 'Cover Image Link Graphic' without providing any meaningful description of their content or purpose.
- b. **Impact:** Screen reader users cannot access visual information conveyed by images, severely limiting their ability to identify journals, understand visual content, and navigate the platform effectively. This creates fundamental barriers to accessing academic resources.
- c. **WCAG Success Criteria:** 1.1.1 Non-text Content (A)

2. Improper Heading Structure

- a. Pages lack H1 headings and present headings in illogical order, starting at H4, jumping to H2 and H3. The platform consistently fails to provide a proper document outline that screen reader users can navigate efficiently.

b. Impact: If assistive technology and screen reader users cannot effectively navigate the site using the heading structure. The lack of proper hierarchy makes understanding content organization extremely difficult and forces users to tab through entire pages to find information.

c. WCAG Success Criteria: 2.4.6 Headings and Labels (AA), 1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A)

3. Incomplete ARIA Implementation

a. ARIA roles are used throughout the platform but lack proper state announcements, parent-child relationships, and associated labels. Navigation menus are read as static text without indicating their interactive nature or expanded/collapsed states. Tab panels are not properly associated with their corresponding tabs, and landmark regions lack unique labels.

b. Impact: Screen reader users receive incomplete or incorrect information about the state and function of interactive elements, making the interface confusing and difficult to operate. Users cannot distinguish between different navigation regions or understand the relationship between tabs and their content panels.

c. WCAG Success Criteria: 4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (A), 4.1.1 Parsing (A)

Disabilities Impacted

Blind and Low-Vision Users

- **Issues:** Missing alternative text for images, improper heading structures, unlabeled landmark regions, static text announced for interactive menus, improper ARIA role implementations, lack of unique landmark labels, improper list structures, and keyboard traps in advanced search functionality.
- **Impact:** Screen reader users are unable to understand page content through images, navigate effectively using heading structure, identify and use navigation menus, or interact with many of the platform's core functions including advanced search. The platform fails to communicate the purpose and state of interactive elements, creating confusion and preventing the completion of basic academic research tasks.

Users with Motor Disabilities

- **Issues:** Partial keyboard traps in advanced search tabs, positive tabindex values disrupting natural tab order, focus indicators appearing on wrong elements, and insufficient bypass blocks for efficient navigation.
- **Impact:** Keyboard-only users become trapped in certain UI components when using advanced search features, requiring them to use workarounds to escape. The disrupted tab order and inadequate focus indicators make navigation inefficient and confusing. The lack of comprehensive skip links forces users to tab through numerous elements to reach desired content.

Neurodiverse Users

- **Issues:** Inconsistent UI patterns with navigation elements appearing as static text, improper content sequence with instructions appearing after forms, single-item lists suggesting incomplete content, and confusing menu structures that don't announce their purpose.
- **Impact:** Users with cognitive disabilities struggle to develop a mental model of how the interface works due to inconsistent patterns and behavior. The illogical placement of search instructions after search fields and the lack of clear feedback about element states creates additional cognitive load, making the platform difficult or impossible to use effectively for academic research.

Page-Specific Findings and Impact Analysis

The following section lists the accessibility findings by page and WCAG violations and describes their impact on users.

AnthroSource Home Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Missing Alternative Text	1.1.1 Non-text Content (A)	Multiple images lack descriptive alternative text, including cover images and logos.	'Cover Image Link Graphic' and 'Link Graphic' announced without discernible alternative text.
Missing H1 Heading	2.4.6 Headings and Labels (AA)	The page lacks an H1 heading and headings are presented out of logical order, starting at H4 and jumping to H2 and H3.	Page structure begins with 'Browse AAA Journals' at Heading Level 4, followed by 'Latest articles' at Heading Level 2.
Improper Menu Implementation	4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (A)	Top navigation menu items are read as static text rather than announcing their interactive nature or expanded/collapsed states.	'Journals' and 'Topics' read as plain text with no indication they are menus with submenus.
Unlabeled Landmark Region	4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (A)	Menu bar with navigation items lacks an accessible label identifying its purpose.	Menu bar with 'Journals' and 'Topics' items announced without landmark label.
Insufficient Bypass Blocks	2.4.1 Bypass Blocks (A)	Only a single 'Skip to Main Content' link is provided, with no skip links for navigation or footer regions.	Skip to main content button present, but no bypass mechanisms for other major page sections.

Impact Summary:

Screen reader users face extreme difficulty understanding and navigating the home page due to improper heading structure and missing alternative text. The lack of proper ARIA implementation for navigation menus means users cannot determine which items are interactive or what they expand to. Keyboard-only users are forced to tab through all content without adequate bypass mechanisms, making navigation time-consuming and frustrating. These fundamental structural issues make the entry point to the platform largely inaccessible to users with disabilities.

AnthroSource Landing Page Screenshot:

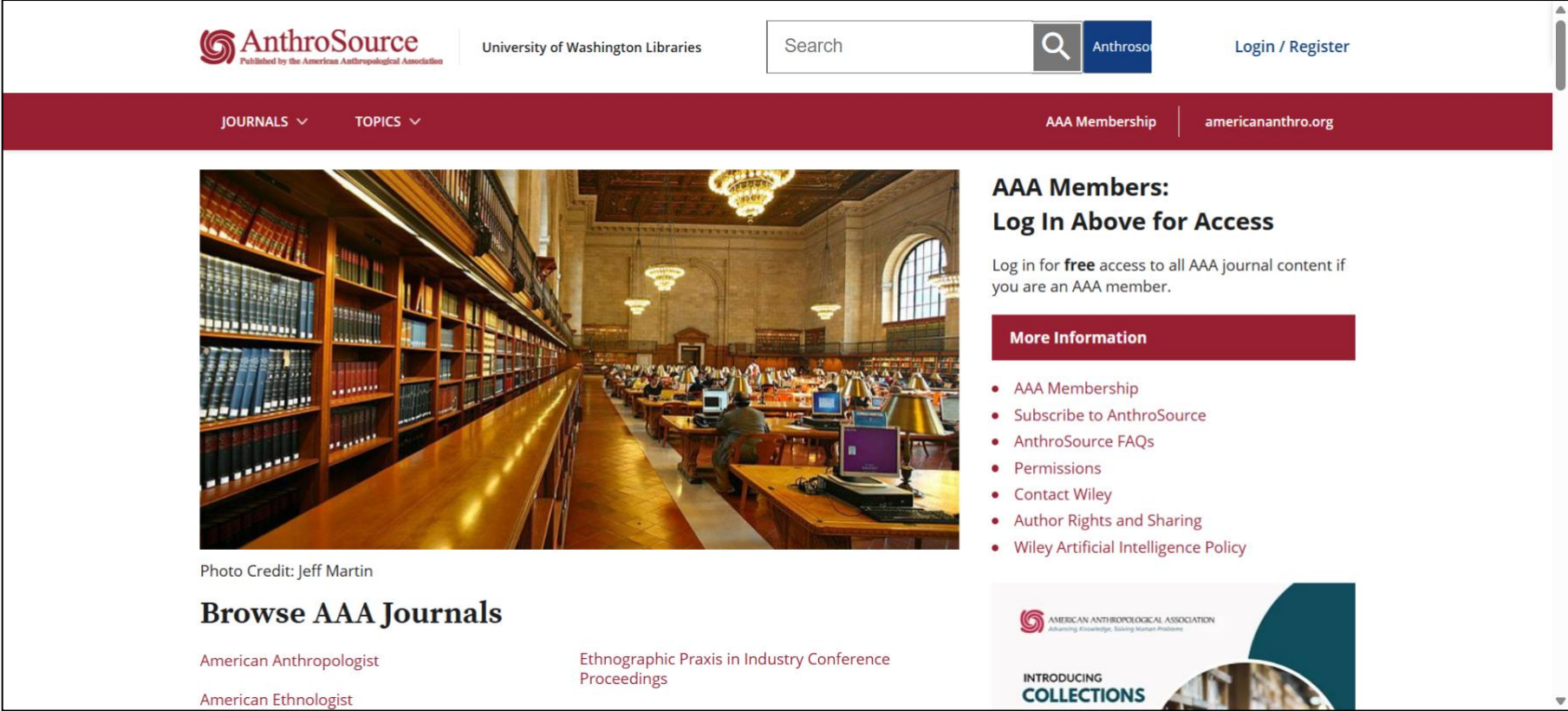


Figure 1. The AnthroSource home page displays the main navigation, search functionality, and journal browsing options.

AnthroSource Search Results Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
ARIA Required Children	4.1.1 Parsing (A)	Elements with ARIA roles that require specific child roles are missing those children, violating proper ARIA structure.	ARIA role implementation does not follow proper parent-child relationships throughout search results.
Label Content Name Mismatch	2.5.3 Label in Name (A)	Multiple elements have visible text labels that don't match their accessible names, creating confusion for voice input users.	Interactive elements where visual label text differs from programmatic accessible name.
Improper List Structure	1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A)	Lists are not properly structured, with single-item lists and lists that don't announce when navigating with arrow keys.	'List with one items' announced for search region; lists don't announce when navigating with arrow keys.
Missing Landmark Unique Labels	1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A)	Multiple landmark regions lack unique accessible names to distinguish them from one another.	Navigation regions not uniquely labeled, making orientation difficult for screen reader users.
Positive Tabindex Values	2.4.3 Focus Order (A)	Multiple elements use tabindex values greater than 0, disrupting the natural tab order and creating confusing navigation.	Tab order manipulated with positive tabindex values throughout search results interface.

Impact Summary:

The search results page, which is core to the platform's functionality, presents severe accessibility barriers. Screen reader users struggle to understand the structure of results due to improper list implementation and ARIA violations. The lack of unique landmark labels makes it difficult for users to orient themselves on the page. Voice input users face challenges due to label/name mismatches. The manipulated tab order through positive tabindex values creates unpredictable navigation patterns that confuse keyboard users.

AnthroSource Search Results Page



University of Washington Libraries

forensic anthropology

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JOURNALS TOPICS

AAA Membershipamericananthro.org

1,568 results for "forensic anthropology" anywhere

★ SAVE SEARCH

RSS

Articles & Chapters (1,568)

Collections (9)

Filters

Publication Type ^

Journals

1,568

Publication Date ^

Last Week

1

Last Month

1

Last 3 Months

6

Last 6 Months

16

Refine Search

Sorted by: Relevance

Export Citation(s)

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Full Access

The Value of Forensic Anthropology in Undergraduate Anthropology Programs

Nicholas V. Passalacqua, Sean Mulholland, Marin A. Pilloud, Alexandra R. Klaes

American Anthropologist | Volume 123, Issue 3

First published: 21 August 2021

Abstract

Figure 2. Search results displaying 1,568 articles matching “forensic anthropology. The search filters are located on the left.”

Advanced Search Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Tab Panel Association Issues	4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (A)	While tabs are correctly coded, tab panels are not properly associated with their corresponding tabs, breaking the tab interface pattern.	'Advanced Search' and 'Citation Search' tabs exist but panel associations are incorrect.
Partial Keyboard Trap	2.1.2 No Keyboard Trap (A)	Selecting a tab creates a partial keyboard trap that requires specific navigation knowledge to escape.	When activating a tab, keyboard focus becomes trapped and difficult to move away from.
Missing Required Field Instructions	3.3.2 Labels or Instructions (A)	Asterisks indicate required fields but no instructions explain this convention anywhere on the page.	Volume, Page, and Article ID fields marked with asterisks but no legend explaining meaning.
Focus Indicator Issues	2.4.7 Focus Visible (AA)	Focus indicator appears on entire container box rather than specific form fields, making it unclear which element has focus.	Journal field shows focus on entire tab panel box rather than the input field itself.
Improper Content Sequence	1.3.2 Meaningful Sequence (A)	Search instructions and tips appear after the search fields rather than before them, creating poor usability.	Boolean operators and wildcard instructions appear after search form instead of before.

Impact Summary:

The advanced search functionality, which should allow researchers to precisely filter information, is largely inaccessible. The keyboard trap prevents users from freely navigating the interface, while the improper tab panel associations make the tab interface confusing and non-functional. The lack of required field instructions and the misplaced search tips create unnecessary barriers to successful searches. Users with disabilities are effectively prevented from using one of the platform's core research features.

AnthroSource
Published by the American Anthropological Association

University of Washington Libraries

forensic anthropology

Q

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JOURNALS ▾

TOPICS ▾

AAA Membership

americananthro.org

ADVANCED SEARCH

CITATION SEARCH

Advanced search

Context Search

Term

Anywhere ▾

forensic anthropology

×

Anywhere ▾

Enter Search term

×

Anywhere ▾

Enter Search term

+

Published in

Enter a journal, book, or reference work title

PUBLICATION DATE

Anytime

From

To

1900

2025

Search Tips

You can use the Boolean operators AND (also + or &), OR and NOT (also -) within search fields. These operators must be entered in UPPERCASE to work.

If more than one term is entered, and no operators are specified, terms are searched using AND. To search for a phrase, put the terms in quotes. For example, *spinal cord* searches spinal AND cord while “*spinal cord*” finds this exact phrase.

Wildcards

Use a question mark (?) in a search term to represent a single character (*wom?n* finds

Figure 3. The Advanced Search interface allows users to refine searches using multiple fields and Boolean operators.

Article View Page

Issue	WCAG Success Criteria	Description	Example
Inconsistent Heading Structure	2.4.6 Headings and Labels (AA)	Article pages maintain the site-wide issue of missing H1 headings and inconsistent heading hierarchy.	Article content headings don't follow proper nesting structure (H4, H2, H3 pattern continues).
Missing Image Descriptions	1.1.1 Non-text Content (A)	Article images, including journal covers and figures, lack adequate alternative text describing their content.	Journal cover images and article figures not properly described for screen reader users.

Impact Summary:

Article pages inherit the site-wide heading structure problems, making it difficult for screen reader users to navigate within research articles. The missing alternative text for journal covers and article figures means blind users cannot access important visual information that supplements the article content. These barriers prevent equal access to the scholarly content that is the primary purpose of the AnthroSource platform.

Article View Screenshot



Figure 4. An example article page displaying publication information, abstract, and journal cover. This page features the article “The Value of Forensic Anthropology in Undergraduate Anthropology Programs from the American Anthropologist.

Code Snippets

The following code snippets demonstrate current problematic implementations and recommended fixes for critical WCAG success criteria.

Missing H1 and Improper Heading Order (2.4.6, 1.3.1)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->
<h4>Browse AAA Journals</h4>
<h2>Latest articles</h2>
<h3>Cyberspatial agency: experimenting with gender...</h3>

<!-- Recommended fix -->
<h1>AnthroSource: Digital Repository</h1>
<h2>Browse AAA Journals</h2>
<h2>Latest Articles</h2>
<h3>Cyberspatial agency: experimenting with gender...</h3>
```

Missing Alternative Text (1.1.1)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->

<a href="/journal/123"></a>

<!-- Recommended fix -->

<a href="/journal/123">
  
</a>
```

Improper Menu Implementation (4.1.2)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->
<div class="menu-bar">
```

```
<span>Journals</span>
<span>Topics</span>
</div>

<!-- Recommended fix -->
<nav aria-label="Main">
  <ul role="menubar">
    <li role="none">
      <button role="menuitem" aria-haspopup="true" aria-expanded="false">Journals</button>
      <ul role="menu">
        <li role="menuitem">American Anthropologist</li>
      </ul>
    </li>
  </ul>
</nav>
```

Tab Panel Association Issues (4.1.2)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->
<div role="tab">Advanced Search</div>
<div role="tab">Citation Search</div>
<div class="panel"><!-- content --></div>

<!-- Recommended fix -->
<div role="tablist" aria-label="Search Options">
  <button role="tab" aria-selected="true" aria-controls="advanced-panel" id="advanced-tab">
    Advanced Search
  </button>
  <button role="tab" aria-selected="false" aria-controls="citation-panel" id="citation-tab">
    Citation Search
  </button>
</div>
```

```
<div role="tabpanel" id="advanced-panel" aria-labelledby="advanced-tab">  
  <!-- content -->  
</div>
```

Missing Required Field Instructions (3.3.2)

```
<!-- Current problematic implementation -->  
<label for="volume">Volume*</label>  
<input type="text" id="volume" required>  
  
<!-- Recommended fix -->  
<p id="required-legend">Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.</p>  
<label for="volume">Volume <span aria-label="required">*</span></label>  
<input type="text" id="volume" required aria-describedby="required-legend">
```

Final Thoughts and Recommendations

The AnthroSource platform, in its current state, presents significant accessibility barriers that make it largely unusable for people with disabilities, particularly screen reader and keyboard-only users. The issues identified are not merely cosmetic; they prevent access to the platform's core functionality.

Multiple critical accessibility issues were encountered throughout the testing, including missing alternative text for images, improper heading structures, incomplete ARIA implementations, keyboard traps, and improperly structured navigation and form elements. These issues collectively create an experience that is frustrating at best and completely unusable at worst for users with disabilities attempting to access anthropological research.

While the platform shows some positive aspects, such as properly labeled buttons and functional error messages in the citation search, the fundamental structural and semantic issues require comprehensive remediation to ensure equal access to scholarly content.

Recommended Fixes

- **Implement proper heading structure:** Add H1 headings to all pages and ensure headings follow proper hierarchical order (H1, H2, H3) without skipping levels. Create a logical document outline that screen reader users can navigate efficiently.
- **Add comprehensive alternative text:** Provide meaningful alternative text for all images, including journal covers, logos, and informational graphics. Ensure alt text describes the content and purpose of images, not just generic labels like 'Link Graphic.'
- **Complete ARIA implementation:** Properly implement ARIA roles, states, and properties throughout the platform. Ensure navigation menus announce their interactive nature and expanded/collapsed states, tab panels are properly associated with tabs, and landmark regions have unique labels.
- **Fix keyboard accessibility:** Eliminate keyboard traps in the advanced search interface, remove positive tabindex values that disrupt natural tab order, and ensure focus indicators clearly show which element has focus.
- **Improve bypass blocks:** Add skip links for navigation and footer regions in addition to the main content skip link. Provide comprehensive bypass mechanisms for all major page sections.
- **Enhance form accessibility:** Add instructions explaining required field indicators (asterisks), place search instructions before search fields rather than after, and ensure all form fields are properly labeled with clear accessible names.
- **Fix list structures:** Eliminate single-item lists and ensure lists are properly coded so they announce correctly when navigating with arrow keys.

The significant number and severity of issues suggest that a comprehensive accessibility remediation effort is required, potentially involving substantial redesign of interface components to ensure they meet WCAG 2.2 AA standards and provide equal access to the anthropological research community.

Disclaimer

Accessiblü prepared this report as a high-level accessibility evaluation of the AnthroSource platform. The evaluation utilized industry-standard testing methodologies, including screen reader testing (JAWS 2025 and NVDA), keyboard-only navigation, and manual inspection for select WCAG 2.2 AA success criteria.

This report does not represent a comprehensive WCAG compliance audit and should not be seen as a certification of accessibility compliance. While we have identified significant accessibility concerns and usability barriers, this evaluation was limited in scope and may not encompass all accessibility issues on the platform.

No Legal Liability:

Accessiblü offers this report for informational purposes only. It assumes no legal responsibility for accessibility violations or compliance failures resulting from its use. Organizations seeking formal certification should conduct a comprehensive audit and user testing with individuals with disabilities.

Limitations of Testing:

This evaluation was conducted at a specific time, and platform updates may have occurred after testing was completed. Additionally, while automated tools and expert reviews were utilized, real-world users with disabilities determine the true measure of accessibility