



## Hypothesis response to 2024 VPAT Report (of March 22, 2024)

At Hypothesis, we are committed to making our annotation tools accessible to all users, regardless of their abilities or the technology they use to access the web.

Every year, in alignment with our dedication to continuous improvement and open dialogue, we engage in a review of our Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) report. At present, these have been conducted by the Inclusive Design Research Centre (IDRC) at OCAD University who has been excellent to work with. While we acknowledge the value of their feedback, there are always areas within the report that merit additional discussion and clarification.

### VPAT Findings we already addressed:

1. **VPAT 3.3.1 (Form Validation aka Error Alert Role)** - An error is identified for URL input within the assignment creation flow, however the error is missing an alert role and is not announced in real time.

This error was addressed in the following changes.

- a. <https://github.com/hypothesis/product-backlog/issues/1535>
- b. <https://github.com/hypothesis/frontend-shared/pull/1534>

### VPAT Findings we will address:

We have assessed other areas that were marked as "partially" or "mostly" supported. Each of these are tracked publicly on our GitHub repositories and will be addressed moving forward—likely by the time of our next VPAT in 2025.

1. **VPAT 1.3.1** - (2nd half) <https://github.com/hypothesis/client/issues/6185>
2. **VPAT 2.1.1** - <https://github.com/hypothesis/client/issues/6306>
3. **VPAT 4.1.2** - (2nd half) - <https://github.com/hypothesis/client/issues/6307>

### VPAT Findings we will not address:

1. **VPAT 3.3.2 (Placeholder Text in Text Boxes)**: Our use of placeholder text, supported by accessible labels, adheres to common practices in mainstream applications. This method helps keep our interface simple and user-friendly while ensuring accessibility. While the VPAT report suggests modifications, we believe our design achieves the necessary accessibility standards and maintains optimal usability.

## **Next Steps**

As each of the issues is addressed above, we will endeavor to obtain a fresh VPAT report reflecting these improvements. Please check in with us on the specifics of individual items to understand their current status.

## **Looking Forward:**

Accessibility is ingrained in our practices at Hypothesis. We have a roadmap that includes regular reviews of our software by independent entities, iterative updates to our VPAT, and ongoing revisions to our website to reflect the latest in accessibility guidance.

We emphasize that it is real-world testing and engagement with users, especially those who rely on assistive technologies which provides the most value ultimately. We prioritize actionable insights from our community over mere compliance.

## **Conclusion**

Incorporating feedback from both our user community and independent assessments such as the VPAT facilitates a critical understanding of our tools' accessibility. This ongoing dialogue enables Hypothesis to not only meet compliance standards but to exceed them.

Your feedback is welcome.

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