

# Accessibility Champions

Ted Drake, Intuit's Global  
Accessibility Leader

The A11Y Global Collective,  
September 2021



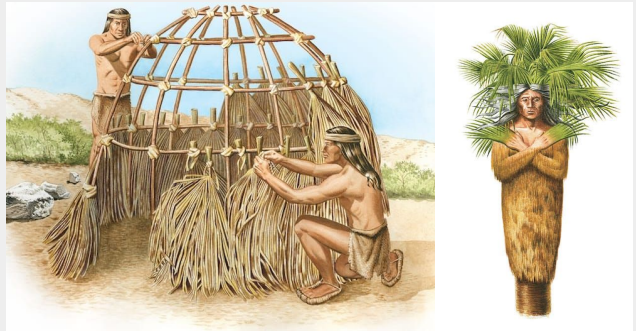
intuit.

This presentation was created for the Scaling Accessibility — Intuit's Accessibility Champions Program program, hosted by the A11Y Global Collective  
<https://www.meetup.com/A11YCollective/events/280330580/>

An Accessibility Champions Network is a great way to build your internal capability and change the culture of your organization to make inclusive design business as usual. So, what is a champions network? How do you start building one? What are the options? How long does it take to build?

During this session Ted Drake, Global Accessibility Leader at Intuit will share Intuit Accessibility Champions program road map, goals, techniques, lessons learned, and results.

# Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Nation



“I want to respectfully acknowledge the Cahuilla Nation, who have stewarded this land (Palm Springs) throughout the generations.”

## About Me

Dogs trust me. Enough said.

12 years in college, forced to graduate (BFA)

20+ years working with accessibility

Standards... Standards... Standards!

Co-founded Yahoo! Accessibility

Yahoo! European Finance, Globalization

10 years as Intuit's Global Accessibility Leader

Hackathon Veteran



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## Intuit's Accessibility Champion Program Details

Intuit's Accessibility Champion Levels

bit.ly/**394UFBI**



Expanding outreach with an Accessibility Champion Program (CSUN Conference)

bit.ly/**3Ad90YA**



Intuit has made their Accessibility Champion program open to the public. You can quickly adapt our processes with the following resources

<https://www.slideshare.net/7mary4/expand-your-outreach-with-an-accessibility-champions-program>

<https://www.last-child.com/intuits-accessibility-champion-program/>

Why Create an Accessibility Program?

## Why Create an Accessibility Program?

“Does anyone here face serious burnout over the fight to build inclusive services? Getting buy-in and creating a culture of accessibility can be exhausting. I don’t want to be the resident expert. I want to facilitate knowledge and growth by having people in the teams around me champion accessibility.”

-Anonymous, December 2, 2018  
Web-A11y Slack Channel

## Champion Reasons

- What happens if Ted gets hit by a bus?
- Common knowledge
- Communication with stakeholders
- Create a career path for new leaders
- Distribute neglected work
- Recognize people for their efforts
- Shift-Left and Accessibility-First
- Diversity and inclusion



Intuit's Accessibility Champion program recognizes a commitment to building exceptional customer experiences for all Intuit customers, regardless of physical, cognitive, mental, and sensory abilities.

The awards include education, awareness, and customer outreach.

This is the Intuit Accessibility Champion mission statement.



## Inspiration

### **Yahoo! Paranoids and Speed Freaks**

Security and Performance experts within each product team



### **Intuit Pride Ally badges**

Education and awareness campaign for LGBTQ+

### **Distributed Accessibility Teams**

Google, Adobe, BBC, Microsoft



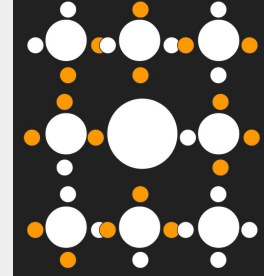
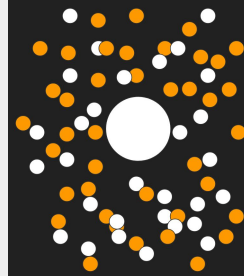
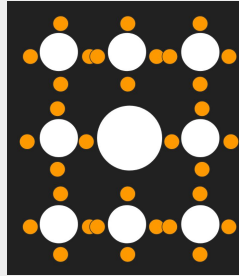
The BBC's Champion journey:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-accessibility-champions-network-started-bbcs-gareth-ford-williams/?trackingId=IJicvgGNm3Y9xQ2I5iS1Sw%3D%3D>

## Types of Champion Programs

Choose the structure that best fits your company

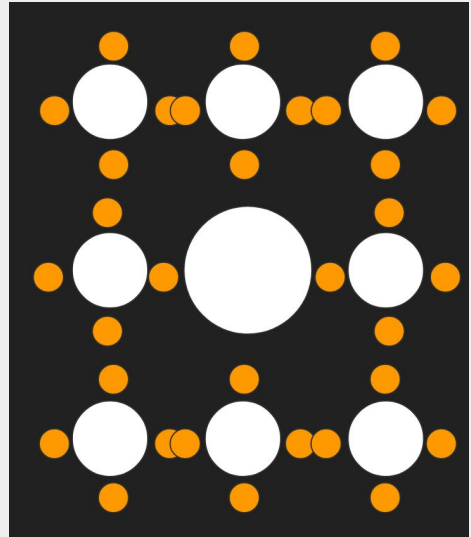
- Distributed
- Allies
- Mixed



# Distributed leadership

Common structure for large companies

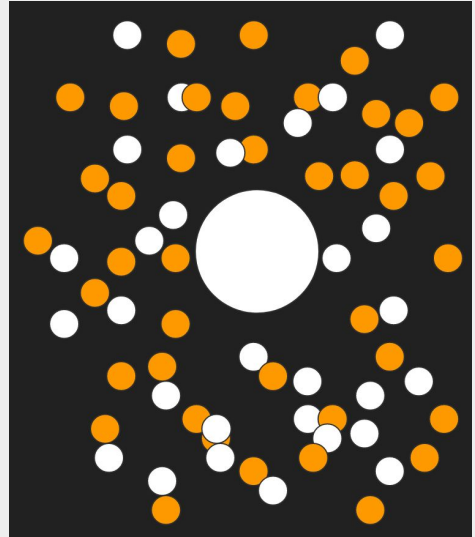
- Subject Matter Experts distributed across company
- Centralized accessibility leadership
- High barrier to entry
- Great for solving difficult problems
- Conformance Management



<https://blog.google/outreach-initiatives/accessibility/accessibility-team-helping-make-our-products-work-everyone/>  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/forproducts/champions>

## Accessibility Allies

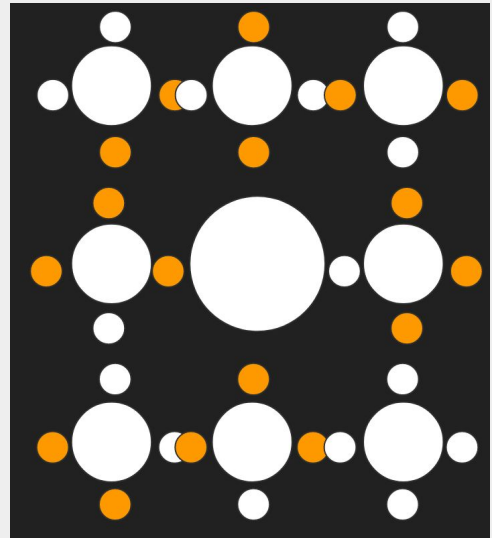
- Low barrier to entry
- High level of empathy
- Commonly used with Diversity and Inclusion
- Awareness training



<http://accessibility.cornell.edu/diversity-includes-disability/be-an-ally/>  
<http://magicalbridge.org/kindness-ambassador-program/>

## Mixed: Distributed Leaders + Allies

- Low barrier to entry
- Path to become a leader
- Distributed leaders
- Centralized leadership
- Increased empathy
- Expanded ownership and conversation



<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/ing-accessibility-champions-receive-certificate-trophy-jake-abma/>

## Level 2 and 3 Champions

- 18 Level 2 Champions
- 4 Level 3 Champions
- ~ 2 Level 2 Champions each month

They are the accessibility drivers across the company.

Each person creates projects and goals

Unique leadership opportunities for New College Graduates.

# Objectives and Goals

Defining Success, Failure, Growth, and Responsibilities

# Defining Success

## Basic Metrics

- Champion Totals
- Location distribution
- Volunteering
- Champions by Manager
- Issues created
- Event attendance
- Roles represented

## Advanced Metrics

- Promotion rate
- Attrition rate
- Time to completion for tickets
- Product improvement
- Employee satisfaction
- Diversity
- Media coverage
- Voice of the Customer



## Defining Failure

- When do you retire the program?
- What do you do when people are no longer engaged?
- Can you justify the time/expense?
- Are people being recognized?
- What is the baseline satisfaction level?
- Driver/sponsor leaves the company

Keeping your Accessibility Champion program active requires a lot of time and commitment. You should plan, in advance, for identifying when the program has run its course and no longer needed. This will help you pivot when change is needed and allow for a respectful shutdown if appropriate.

# Metrics

You can't prove what you don't measure.

- Data is Data
- Start with database or spreadsheet
- Include your success criteria
- Transparency
- Collaborate with design

# Champions vs All Employees

Measuring Impact

Intuit Champions:  
7% better attrition rates in FY20,  
5% better in FY21.

Champions have 15% greater representation outside the US.

This distribution shows the power of passionate accessibility champion leaders who have driven engagement in Canada, UK, and India.

Champions have the same Gender distribution, but fewer Under Represented Minorities.

Having access to these metrics helps you understand where you need to improve. This report has led us to increase our engagement with Intuit's Employee Resource Groups and promoting intersectionality.

- Represent 369 roles
- 330 have attended a workshop
- 39 Non-profit Organizations
- 169 visited an inclusive playground
- ~25 new champions/month
- 50 gave presentations in 2020

# Time Commitment

Accessibility Champion programs will **NOT** save you time.  
They will change your priorities!



## An Average Day - Before and After

- Check/Send email
- Audit a product
- Create prototypes
- Create product-specific documentation
- Create/report issues
- Review automated testing
- Check/Send email/Slack
- Design review
- Code review
- Coaching Champions
- Presentation/Documentation
- Manage epics and folios
- Community engagement
- Meetings, meetings, meetings
- Voice of the customer review
- Champion program management

Intuit's Accessibility Champion program has changed what I do on a daily basis. There's far less need for daily product audits, coding, and issue creation. This is now being done across the company.

Instead, I use the time for coaching and reviewing design/code, managing the champion program, creating documentation, working with leadership and communities, and lots of meetings.

The meetings change is actually a good thing. We wanted to shift left, which means we are now invited to early design and code strategy meetings.

Also, it has allowed Sagar and I to divide responsibilities. Sagar is now leading accessibility engineering and I'm focusing on design and management.

# Champion Community

Join the expanding group of companies starting programs and sharing their stories.

Charlie Turrell manages a group on LinkedIn for companies with champion programs  
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12499821/>

# Questions