

Accessibility feedback loop

Continuous accessibility improvement in your
development life cycle



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NDC Oslo 2025

My goal today!



WebAIM's Hierarchy for
Motivating Accessibility Change

Digital accessibility?

A quick introduction

- About 20% of the population worldwide has some kind of disability 🌍
- People with a disability may use the web differently
- Everyone should have the opportunity to be able to participate
- Being accessible means: everyone is able to use your service or buy your product
- It's good practice and (in directly required by law) to follow the WCAG created by W3C

Hello, I'm Tim Damen 🇳🇱

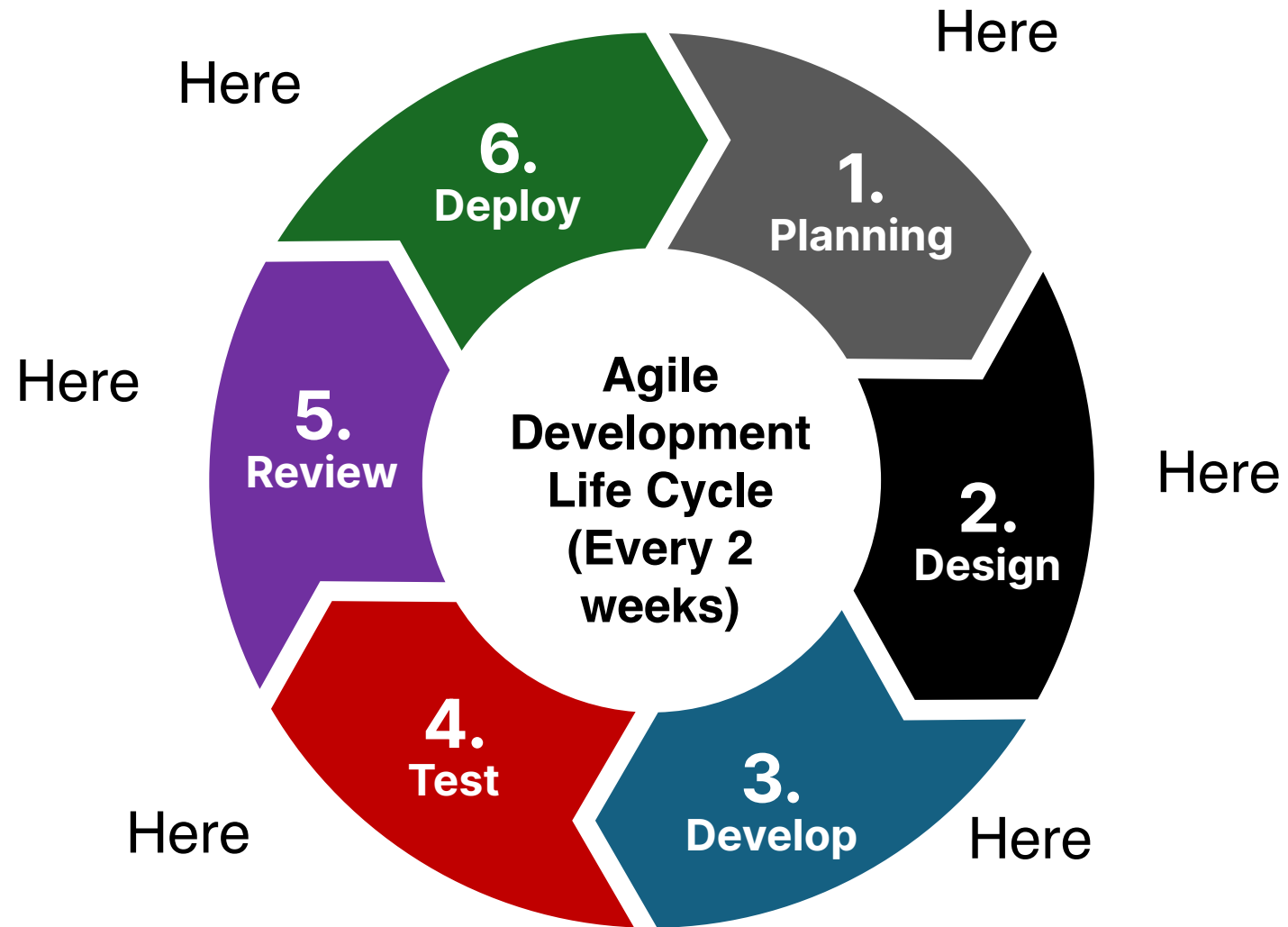
```
{  
  "Front-end Chapter Lead",  
  "Accessibility Lead",  
  "Podcast Host @ focustrap",  
  "www.timdamen.io",  
}
```



Definitions

- **A11y**
Accessibility abbreviation from 11 characters between the A and Y.
- **WCAG**
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Internationally defined accessibility standards by experts working for W3C.
- **W3C**
World Wide Web Consortium. Develops standards and guidelines to help everyone build a web based on the principles of accessibility, internationalisation, privacy, and security.

Accessibility checks should be done:



Continuous a11y improvements

Goal: teach engineering teams how to build accessible software continuously

How: prevent releasing inaccessible new features

Leading initiatives via the a11y guild

0. A11y champions or guild program
1. (Role based) a11y training
2. Frequent WCAG test insights
3. A11y acceptance criteria
4. Automation and monitoring



Managing digital accessibility: a joint effort of various departments and roles

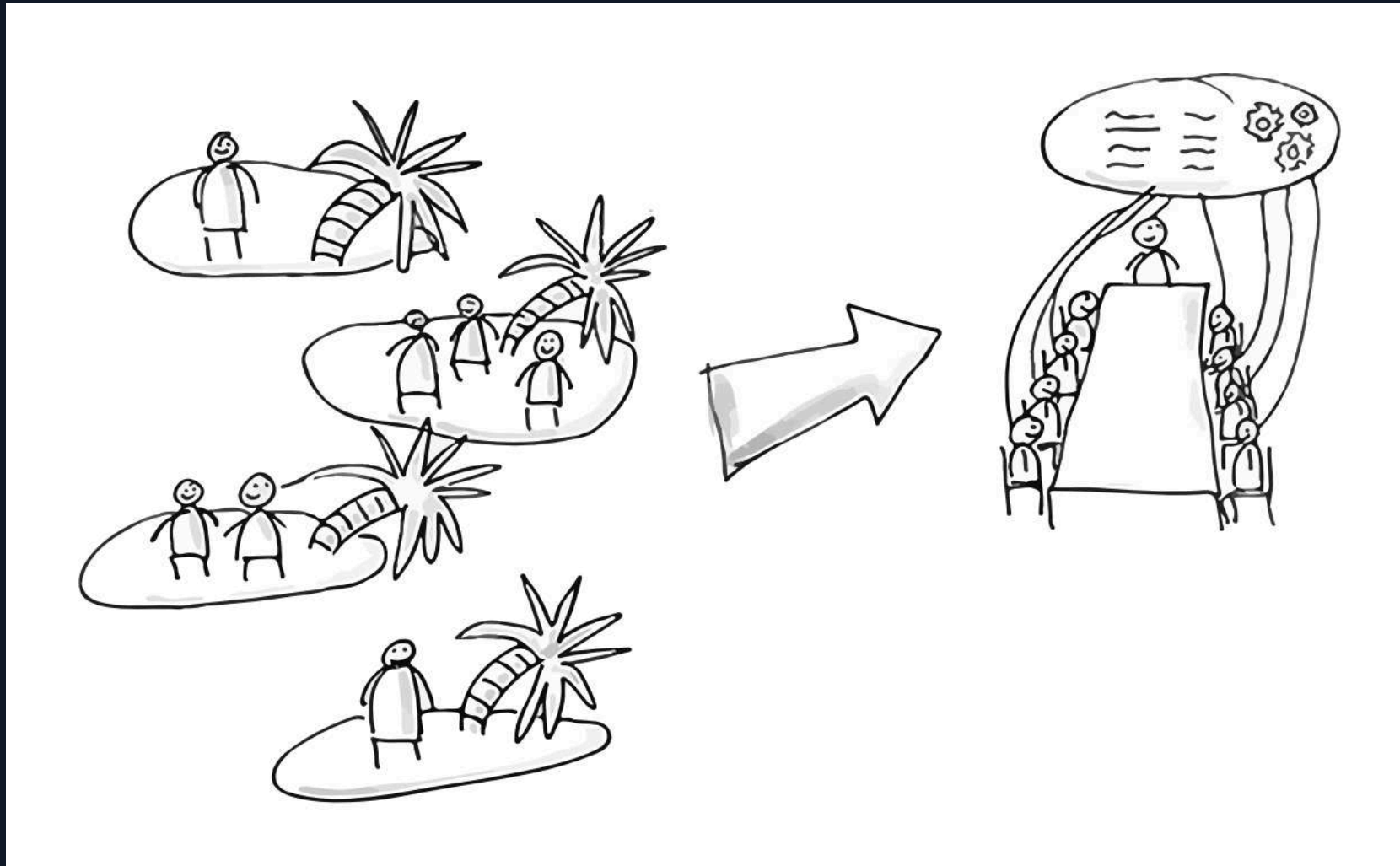


Illustration: Iacobien Riezebosch, Firm Ground

Organisation-wide approach

1. Accessibility has management support
2. There is a person who has final responsibility for digital accessibility.
3. Accessibility is included in processes and budget and capacity are allocated.

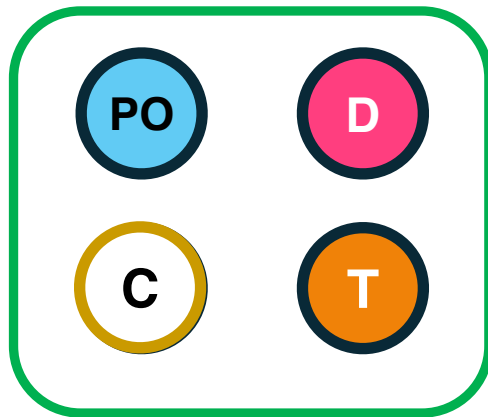
If not, start advocating

0. A11y champion or a11y guild program

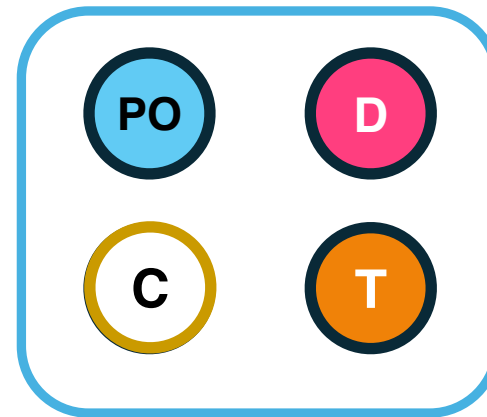
Dev Team A



Dev Team B

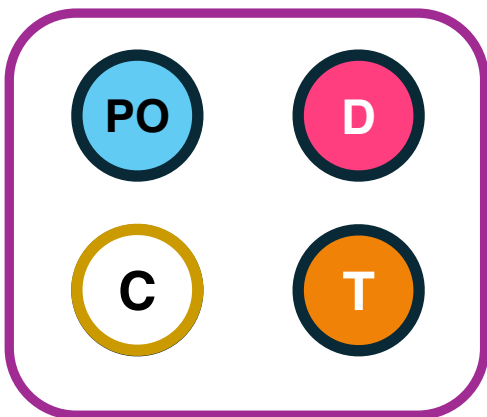


Dev Team C

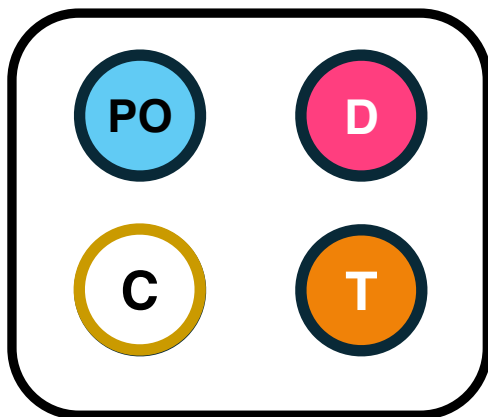


Accessibility champion program

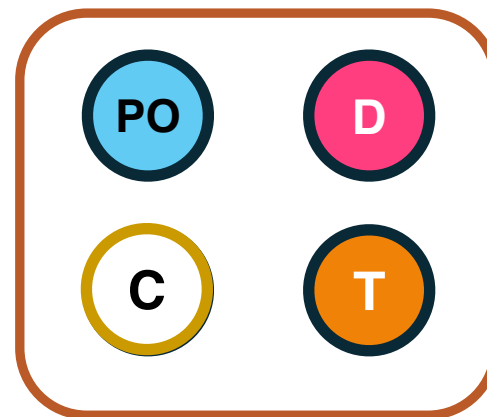
Dev Team D



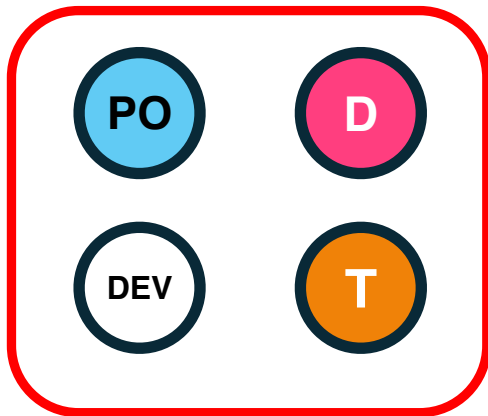
Dev Team E



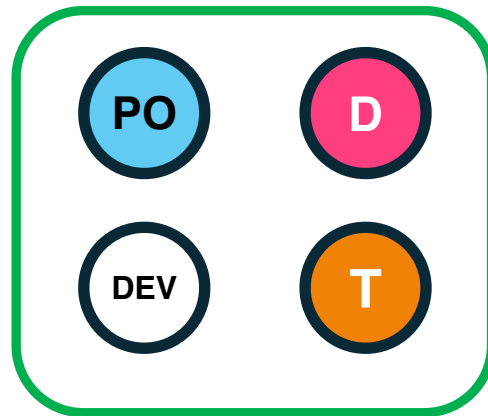
Dev Team F



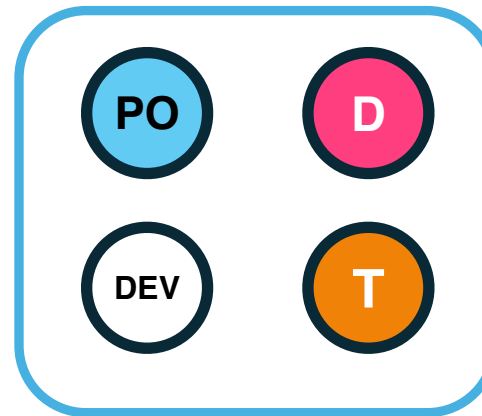
Dev Team A



Dev Team B



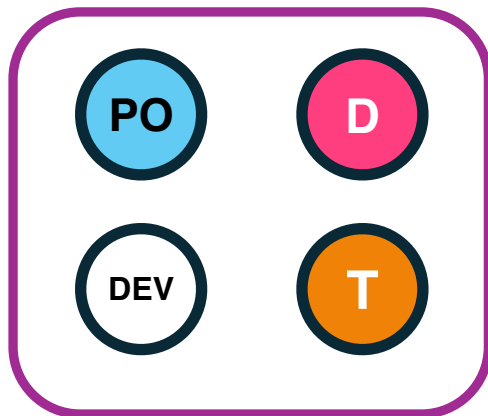
Dev Team C



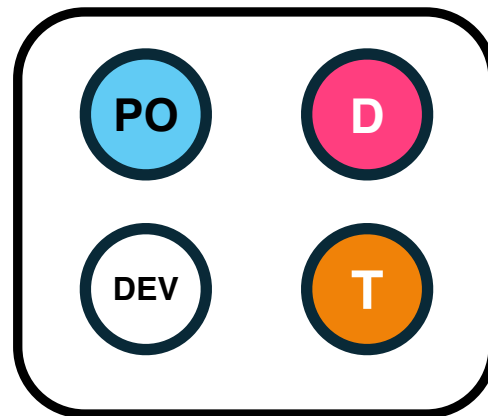
**Accessibility
Guild program**



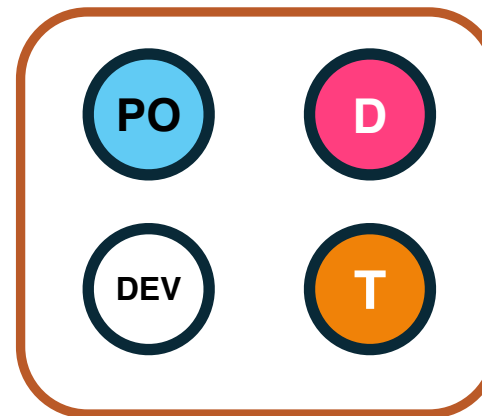
Dev Team D



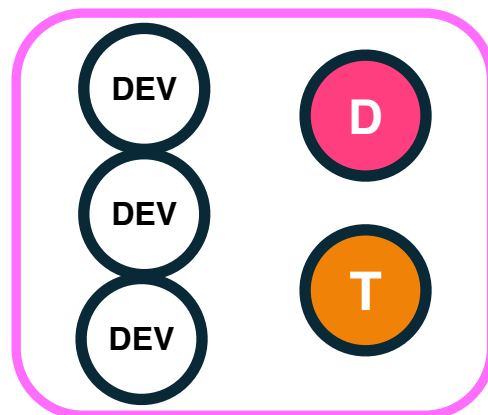
Dev Team E



Dev Team F



A11y guild



1. (Role based) a11y training

Start with building knowledge

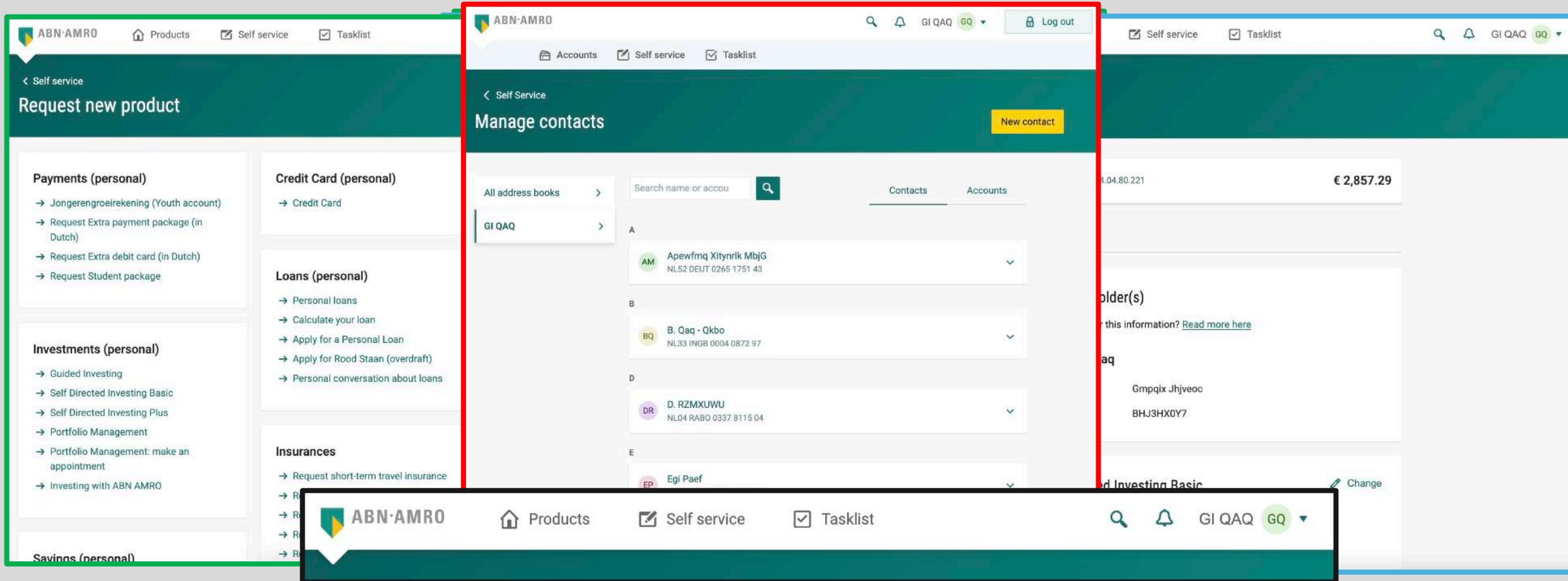
Intro a11y training for every role.

Specialist training for Devs, Designers, Testers and other roles.

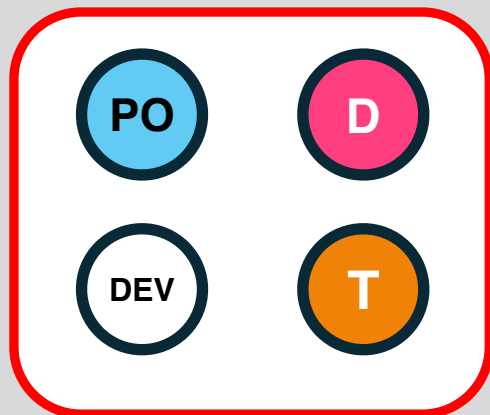
Online training certifications.

Internal researching and knowledge sharing sessions via champions or guild

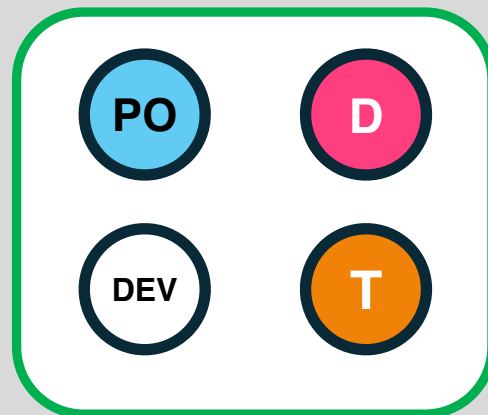
2. Frequent WCAG test insights



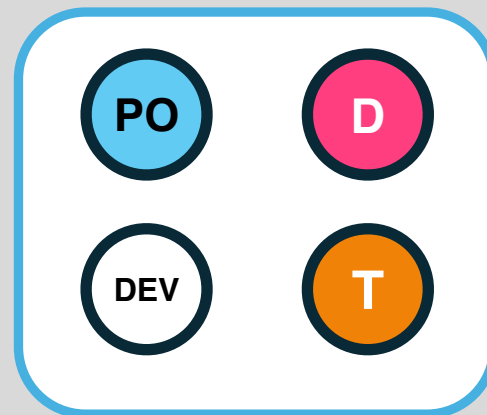
Dev Team A



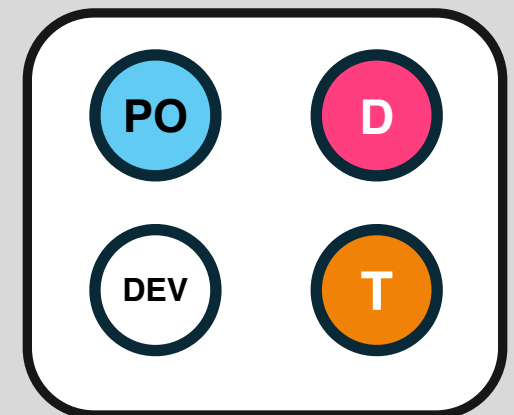
Dev Team B



Dev Team C



Dev Team D



WCAG-EM (Evaluation method)

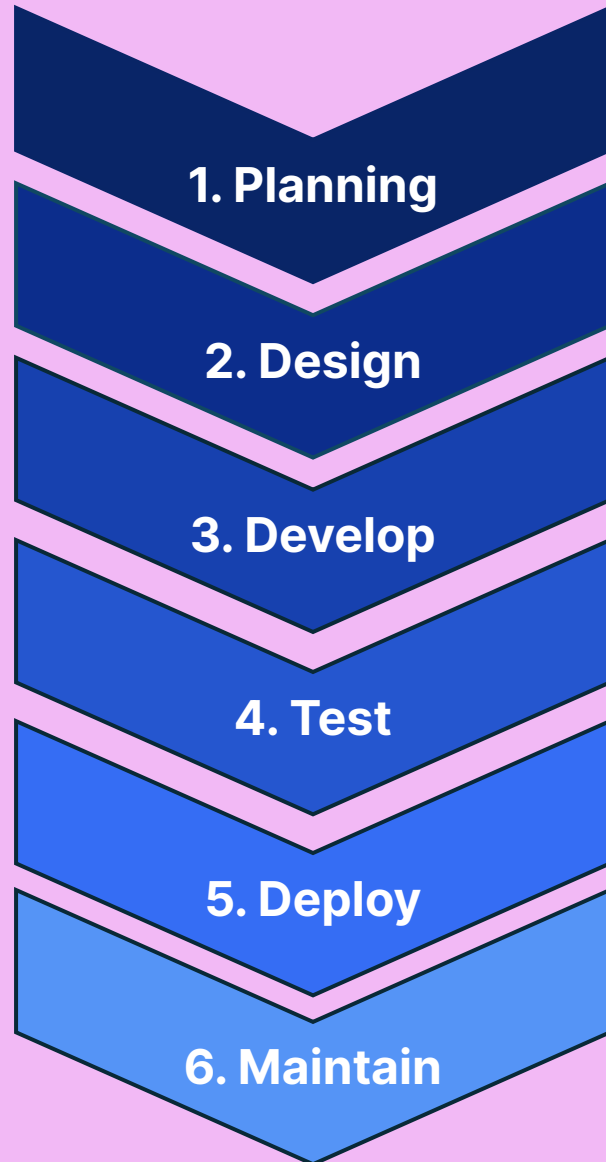
Large sample size (different page) → **could be a lot of different teams**

Not mandatory to show all issues per WCAG requirement
→ **Potential to miss a lot of issues**

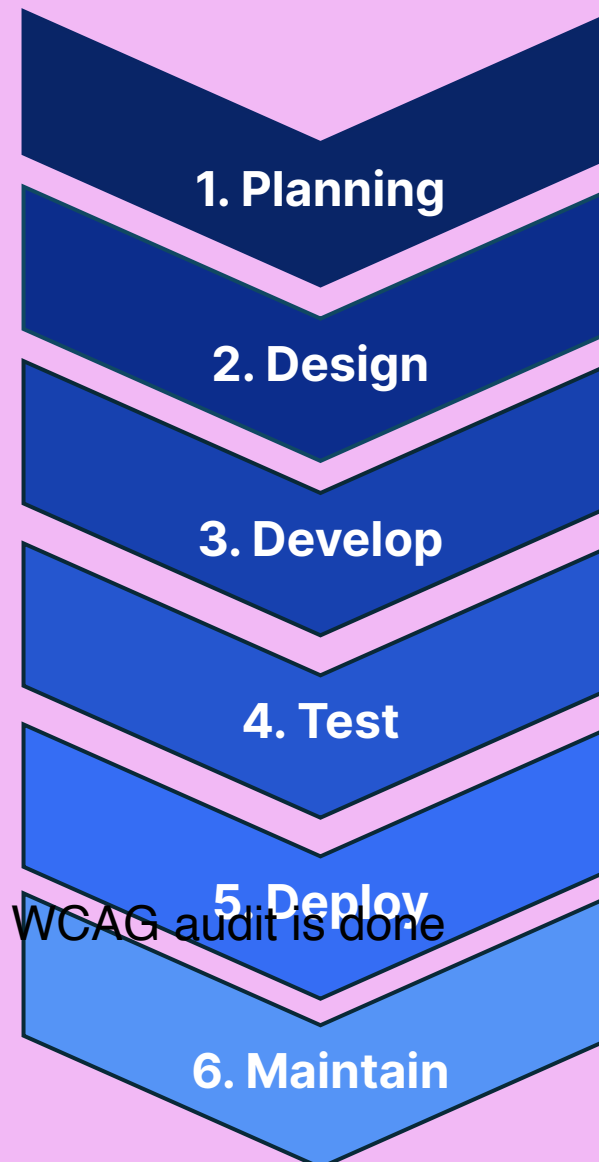
Release party?



Current situation a11y auditing

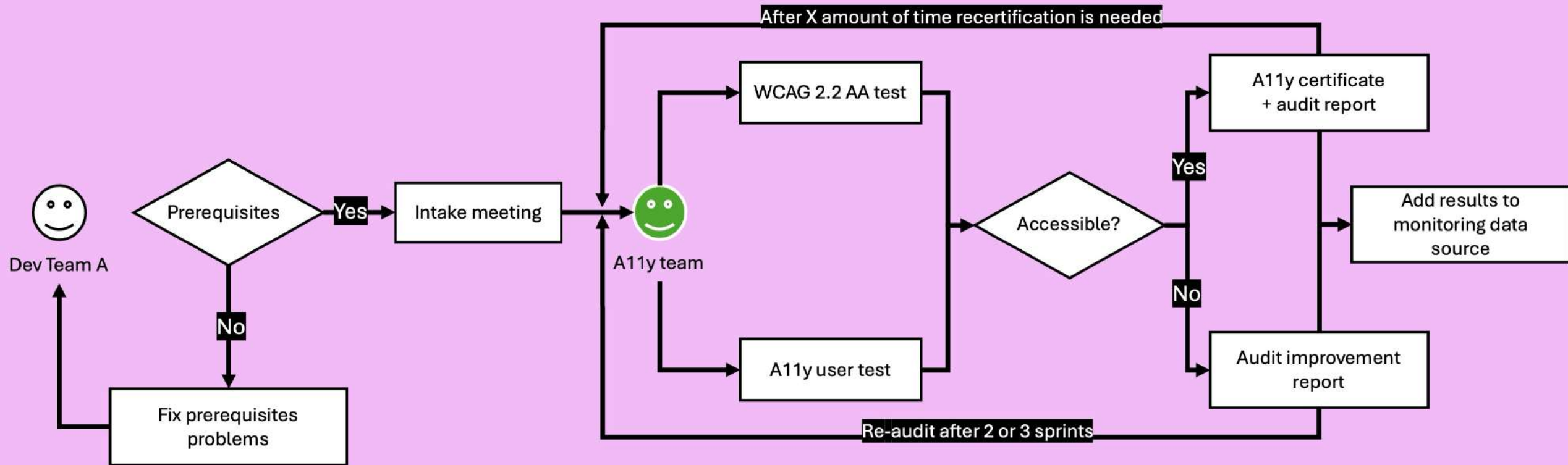


< somewhere here an WCAG audit is done
“Months go by”



< Audit is done

The accessibility feedback loop



Dev teams need something like this!

Issues

1. [Main menu does not work with keyboard](#) (2.1.1)
2. [Focus style missing](#) (2.4.7)

Issue 1

Main menu does not work with keyboard

Problem

The main menu does not work with just a keyboard. The links are marked up like this:

```
<div class="link 202034rsfd oiarjgeoi" onClick="woo()">About us</div>
```

Solution

Use `<a>` tags for the links, and use the `href` attribute for the location to link to, like this:

```
<a href="/about-us">About us</a>
```

The `<a>`-tag works with keyboard out of the box, does not rely on JavaScript and makes it easier for search engines to understand what is going on.

WCAG criterion:

2.1.1: Keyboard [🔗](#)

Difficulty:

High

Severity:

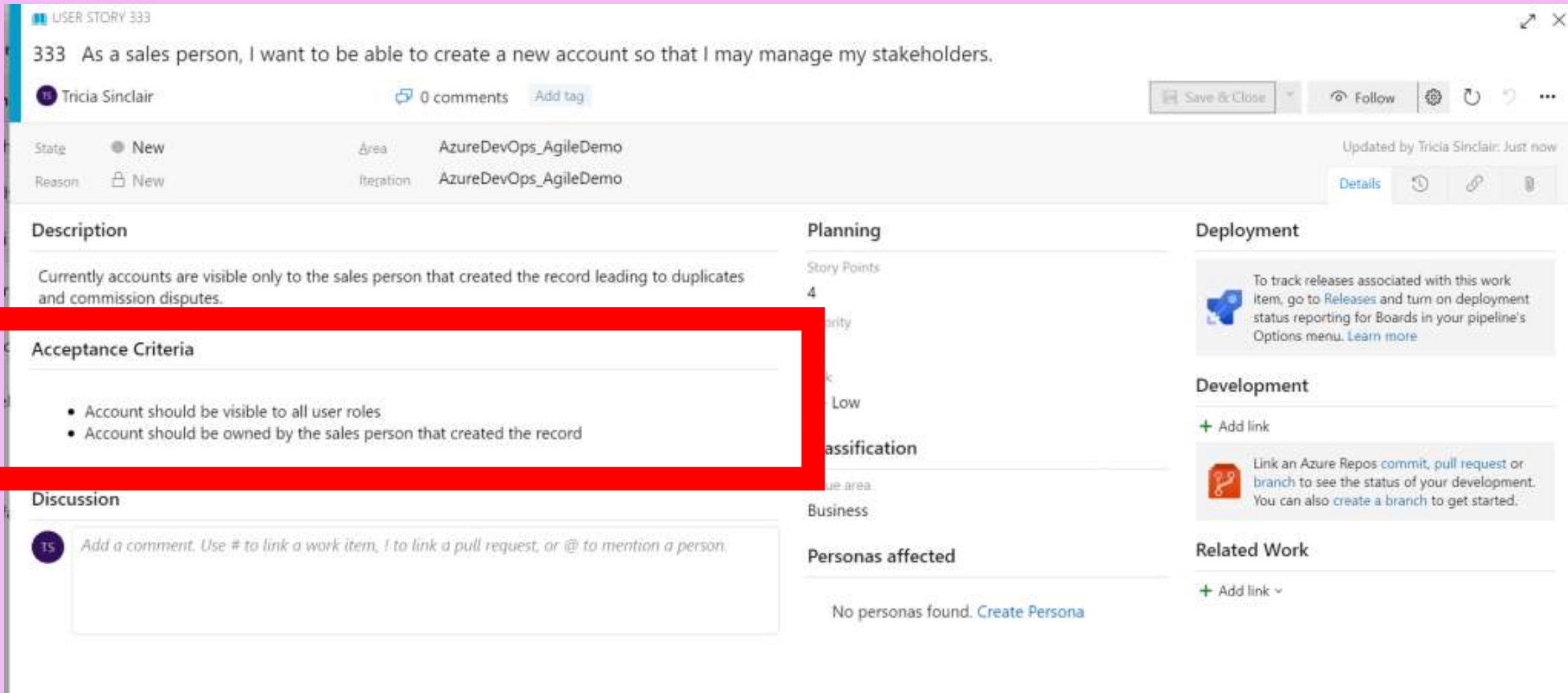
High

Sample:

[blog-post](#)

3. A11y acceptance criteria

Acceptance criteria



The screenshot displays a Microsoft Azure DevOps interface for a user story. The story is titled "333 As a sales person, I want to be able to create a new account so that I may manage my stakeholders." and is created by Tricia Sinclair. It has 0 comments and an "Add tag" button. The story is in the "New" state, with the area "AzureDevOps_AgileDemo" and iteration "AzureDevOps_AgileDemo". The description states: "Currently accounts are visible only to the sales person that created the record leading to duplicates and commission disputes." The acceptance criteria section, highlighted with a red box, lists two criteria: "Account should be visible to all user roles" and "Account should be owned by the sales person that created the record". The right sidebar contains sections for Planning (Story Points: 4), Deployment (To track releases associated with this work item, go to Releases and turn on deployment status reporting for Boards in your pipeline's Options menu. Learn more), Development (Add link), Related Work (Add link), and Personas affected (No personas found. Create Persona).

USER STORY 333

333 As a sales person, I want to be able to create a new account so that I may manage my stakeholders.

Tricia Sinclair 0 comments Add tag

Save & Close Follow Settings Refresh More

Updated by Tricia Sinclair: Just now

Details History Links Attachments

Description

Currently accounts are visible only to the sales person that created the record leading to duplicates and commission disputes.

Acceptance Criteria

- Account should be visible to all user roles
- Account should be owned by the sales person that created the record

Discussion

TS Add a comment. Use # to link a work item, ! to link a pull request, or @ to mention a person.

Planning

Story Points
4

Deployment

To track releases associated with this work item, go to [Releases](#) and turn on deployment status reporting for Boards in your pipeline's Options menu. [Learn more](#)

Development

+ Add link

Link an Azure Repos [commit](#), [pull request](#) or [branch](#) to see the status of your development. You can also [create a branch](#) to get started.

Related Work

+ Add link

Personas affected

No personas found. [Create Persona](#)

Example 1: adding a <table>

Scenario 1: A screen reader user hears the purpose of a table.

GIVEN a user navigates a web application with a screen reader

WHEN the user sets focus on a table heading or caption

THEN the screen reader announces the caption or a heading to describe its purpose

Example 2: adding a <button>

Scenario 1: A keyboard user can access and select a button.

GIVEN a user navigates a web application with a keyboard

WHEN the user sets focus on the button with the keyboard's ***Tab*** key

THEN the system shows a **visual indicator** that button is selected

List of templates based on WCAG SC's

Related a11yAC for audio and video:

In this section you can find a set of **accessibility acceptance criteria** that could be used for creating stories and for audio and video. Please note that the full set of BDDs will depend on the application; here are some general scenarios.

⊖ A11yAC for audio and video

A11yAC for audio and video

Audio and Video player ⇨ *A11yAC for keyboard users*

Scenario 1: A keyboard user can access and select an audio or a video player.

GIVEN a keyboard user navigates a web application that contains an audio or video player

WHEN the user sets focus on an audio or video player with the keyboard's **Tab** key

THEN the system shows a **visual indicator** that the audio or video player is selected

Scenario 2: A keyboard user can trigger the **play** action on an audio or video player with an **Enter** key.

GIVEN a keyboard user sets focus on a play control on an audio or video player

WHEN the user presses the **Enter** key

THEN the system starts playing the audio or video action

Scenario 3: A keyboard user can trigger the **play** action on an audio or video player with a **Spacebar** key.

GIVEN a keyboard user sets focus on a play control on an audio or video player

WHEN the user presses the **Spacebar** key

THEN the system starts playing the audio or video action

4. Automation and monitoring

Automation

Static code analysis with **ESlint** AXE-Core plugins

Automated testing with **AXE-Core** & **Evinced** in Unit, Functional and e2e tests

Context related automation with **Playwright**, **testing-library** and **guidepup**

Monitor data sources



**Azure DevOps
tickets**



**Lighthouse & Evince
pipeline results**



**WCAG audit
results**

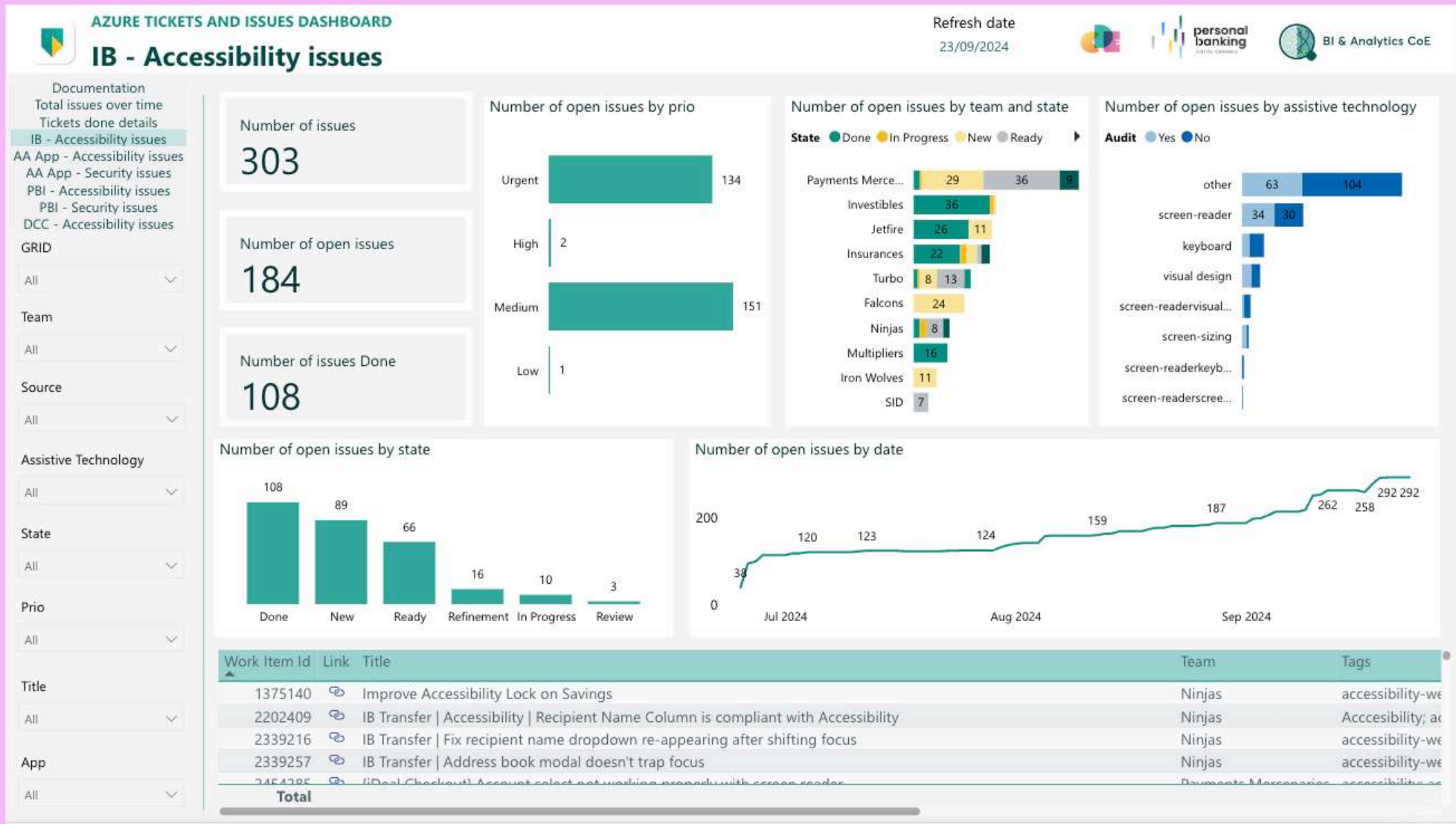


**User (UX) testing
results**

Dashboard



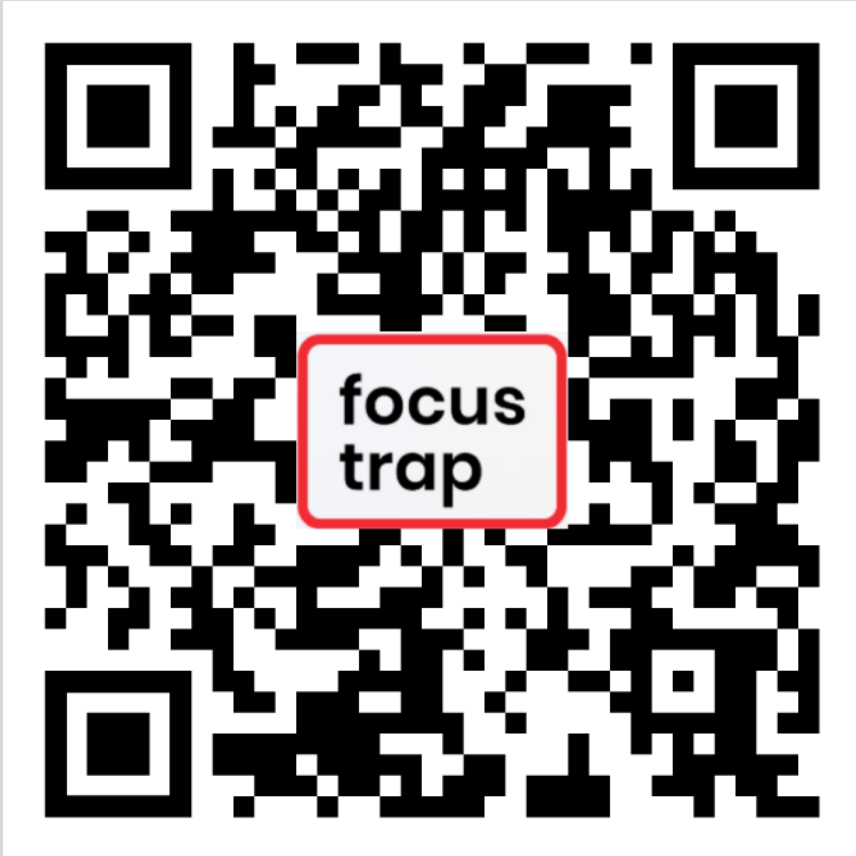
Monitoring



Summary

- Organisation-wide approach
- A11y champion or guild program
- (Role based) a11y training
- Frequent WCAG test insights
- A11y acceptance criteria
- Automation and monitoring

Let's stay connected!



www.focusing.io/podcast-focustrap



www.linkedin.com/in/tim-damen-20a1b4106/