Accessibility Review: Atlas Events

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Client: Libraries Homepage

URL: http://libraries-dev.mit.edu/

The following review assesses both the underlying code and the surface of the Atlas Events Website. Comments include perspectives of both assistive technology i.e. using the JAWS screen reader, and the design and code were assessed with a combination of human and automated testing tools. Recommendations and comments reflect relevant WCAG 2.0, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines for A and AA levels of compliance.
Summary of Findings

The Libraries homepage looks good overall. We found a list of issues that require a small amount of development time for remediation, but doing so will allow the application to meet the accessibility guidelines that MIT follows (WCAG 2.0) resulting in broader accessibility. The key items that should be addressed and the details with recommendations are outlined in this report.

1. Dropdown Search menu confusion
2. Extraneous tabindex attribute
3. Keyboard access should be added
4. Search button is not labeled
5. Add headings to navigation list
6. Search dropdown label misleading
7. Headings necessary for long list of nav links in header
8. Remove redundancy in link labels
9. Add headings to increase structure

Contents

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Homepage

The homepage contains dropdown navigation listed under the label “search”. This is somewhat misleading in that it’s not a form, it’s a drop down list of different areas of the website. Another phrase to use instead of “search” could be “Browse…” or something that effect. The term “search” has taken on its own meaning and there are expectations associated with it; thus people with cognitive and learning disabilities may be frustrated by a text label that doesn’t lead to a form.
Homepage

Tabindex values
Please remove tabindex attributes with positive values. This disrupts the reading order of the document. Its very confusing since the tab order is different than the html order. This means that reading with screen reader commands may give different results than tabbing. For instance, if you move to the "search" heading via the screen reader nextHeading command and press tab, you will not end up in the search field.

Keyboard Access
Users who do not rely on a mouse should be able to keyboard through the page and navigate without the use of a mouse. Currently this is not possible on the homepage.

Navigation

Search button not labeled
The search button seems to be an svg element. However, its also wrapped in a button element. Its not in the tab order.
- remove the alt from the svg, and include aria-hidden="true" instead;
- include some hidden text inside the button before the svg.

Use CSS to clip the text to zero size:
http://www.mit.edu/~rjc/aria/visually-hidden.css
Add headings to the long list of nav links in banner

Probably making all of these h2s would be fine.

There are some items where a link to the corresponding section is immediately followed by a bare text (not a link) section title. For instance:

- [link] hours and location, followed by bare text "location";
- [link] Borrow & request, followed by bare text "borrow, request, renew";
- [link] about us, bare text "about us";

I'd suggest placing the bare text (wrapped in a heading) before the link, or remove the bare text and wrap the heading in a link. For instance:

- [h2][link] about us
- [h2][link] borrow, request, renew

Search (Browse)

All of the following should be headings:

- START HERE
- ALSO TRY
- Hours & locations
- USING THE LIBRARIES
- BORROW, REQUEST, RENEW
- MORE INFORMATION
- HELP & USEFUL TOOLS
Links

Redundancy in link labels
For instance, there are two links “dewey” and “Dewey Library” immediately following each other. The second is wrapped in a heading tag. Remove the first of these. In fact, all the libraries following the hours and locations heading have two links, the second of which is wrapped in a heading tag. Why the redundancy? If you must include two links, hide the first one with aria-hidden=”true” on the “a” element.

Add link

h2: [link] hours and locations

News

Headings
This should be introduced with a link wrapped in a heading which links to the news page. Each article should then be a title linked to the corresponding article. Currently there is a link simply labeled “news” followed by a heading representing the title of the article, however the heading does not contain a link so the user then has to know to back up to the “news” link just before the article title. Not very intuitive...
Research guides and experts

Headings
This section is confusing via a screen reader. Consider two additional headings, an h3 introducing the guides list, and another introducing the experts list:

- h3: Guides:
  - [link] Astronomy
  - [link] Music
  - [link] Real Estate

- h3: Experts
  - [h4] [link] Christine Sherratt
  - [link] ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, NUCLEAR SCIENCE, & MORE
  - [h4] [link] Peter Munstedt
  - [link] MUSIC

There are slashes in the level one heading that introduces the site. What are these slashes meant to convey? Strongly recommend removing them and using words.

There is another line of slashes, inside an anchor tag in the footer.

There is also another link whose content is: “web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit” One instance of this is plenty.

Footer

Slashes in headings and links
There are slashes in the level one heading that introduces the site. What are these slashes meant to convey? Strongly recommend removing them and using words.

There is another line of slashes, inside an anchor tag in the footer.

There is also another link whose content is: “web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit web.mit” One instance of this is plenty.