Effective Date: **March 27, 2019**

POLICY

ACCESS AND INCLUSION, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

Website Policy

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Information Services and Technology

I. Purpose

Boston University uses web-based technology as a tool to support its missions of teaching, research, scholarship, artistic creation, professional practice, and service to the community. Faculty, staff, and academic and administrative units are encouraged to create websites that support and promote specific University units, initiatives, research projects, centers and labs. This policy provides requirements for such websites, to ensure that they are accurate, current, useful, accessible and attractive.

II. Covered Parties and Content

All members of the University community with responsibility for creating, maintaining or managing University Websites and Web-Enabled content are responsible for ensuring that such websites and content are compliant with this Policy and the related standards and guidelines. This Policy applies to all University Websites.

III. Defined Terms

a. Committee means the Common Services & Information Security Governance Committee or a successor committee made up of faculty and staff designated by Information Services & Technology.

b. Covered Party means a person or entity with responsibility for creating, maintaining, or hosting University Websites and Web-Enabled content, including (but not limited to) faculty, staff, students, third party service providers, and volunteers.

c. Eligible Person means a person with a disability who is authorized to access the relevant University Website or Web-Enabled content.

d. Effective Date means March 27, 2019.

e. Legacy Pages means University Websites published prior to the Effective Date.

f. Minimum Web Accessibility Standards (MWAS) means a set of standards devised and updated from time to time by the Committee or a sub-committee thereof that identifies and articulates the minimum technical and visual requirements needed to meet the accessibility standards of this Policy.

g. Research Website means any University Website for a research project supported by University Resources or an inter-institutional research project in which the University is participating.

h. University Business means Boston University's essential functions, such as teaching, research, scholarly communications, student and personnel recruitment, alumni relations, development and public relations, and projects, centers, labs, courses, and initiatives. The Vice President and Associate Provost for Research may determine

whether the University has provided significant enough University Resources to a project, collaboration, or the like, that it qualifies as University Business. Use of classroom resources, support for educational program activities (e.g., for class projects), and library resources shall not be deemed significant use of University Resources for the purposes of this Policy.

i. University Domain means bu.edu, wbur.org, and any other website for which the University is the service provider within the meaning of the Copyright Act of 1976, as it may be amended from time to time, and for which the University has designated an agent with the United States Copyright Office.

j. University Resources means funds, space, personnel or facilities, including direct funding such as gifts, contracts, grants and University-allocated funds; laboratory space or shared research facilities; and supervision or employment, including student employment, on any such University-funded scholarship or research.

k. University Website means any website created, maintained, or managed by a Covered Party through which the University conducts University Business. For avoidance of doubt, University Websites include all Legacy Pages and Research Websites; University Websites do not include (i) faculty members' personal websites, (ii) student organization websites, and (iii) students' personal websites.

l. Web-Enabled means products or services that can be accessed through a web browser or connect to other web and cloud based applications.

IV. Policy

a. Naming and Brands

i. Other than as provided below, University Websites must use a University Domain. Requests for new websites on a University Domain must be made via http://www.bu.edu/tech/support/get-a-website/.

1. Research Websites are not required to use a University Domain. Even when a Research Website does not use a University Domain, the Research Website must otherwise comply with this Policy unless granted an exception under section VI below.

ii. University Websites must be branded as Boston University websites and use of the University's name and logos must comply with the Web Requirements and the Brand Identity Standards: Guidelines & Usage, provided by the University's Office of Marketing and Communications.

b. Required Links

The top-level page of each University Website must include:

i. an easily discoverable link to the Boston University homepage (www.bu.edu);

ii. in plain text, contact information for the Covered Party responsible for the site, including the Covered Party's school, college, department or other unit;

iii. a link to the University's webpage about the Digital Millennium Copyright Act; and

iv. a copyright notice in the following form "© YEAR Trustees of Boston University," provided that where third parties have provided content for the University Website, such notice may be adjusted as appropriate.

c. Accessibility

i. New and Redesigned Pages and Content

New University Websites and Web-enabled content published on a University Domain after the Effective Date must comply with the MWAS in effect at the time. When the designs of University Websites or Web-enabled content are materially updated or redesigned, they must be updated to comply with the MWAS in effect at the time of the update or redesign.

ii. Legacy Pages

University Websites that are Legacy Pages are subject to the University's standards in place at the time of their development. If the design of a Legacy Page is materially updated or redesigned, it must be updated to comply with the MWAS.

iii. Website Contact Information

Each University Website on a University Domain must indicate, in plain text, a method for users to contact a responsible University employee if the user is having trouble accessing the University Website's content. Suggested language: "If you experience a barrier that affects your ability to access Boston University websites, videos, online forms, or other information technology, please send a detailed message to _____@bu.edu." The contact information must be an email and/or phone number that puts the user in touch with someone responsible for the content and function of the page who can confirm receipt of the request within one business day.

iv. Externally Hosted Content

When Covered Parties contract with a provider for a Web-Enabled service on behalf of the University, the provider should be informed of this Policy and asked to provide information related to the provider's compliance status and a process for addressing compliance gaps.

v. Eligible Person Requests

If an Eligible Person requests that a University Website on a University Domain be made accessible as an accommodation for such person, that website should either be updated to be in compliance with the MWAS or the Eligible Person provided an equally effective alternative in a reasonably timely manner. In considering a reasonable timeframe for responding to an Eligible Person's request, the University may take into account the nature of the Eligible Person's request, the type of information or service that the University Website provides, and the effort needed to make the University Website or content accessible.

For information-based University Websites, an equally effective alternative is one that accurately communicates the same information with a comparable level of detail. For interactive or service University Websites, equally effective means that the end result (e.g., registration) is accomplished in a comparable time and with comparable effort on the part of the requesting Eligible Person.

d. Copyright

Creation of web content for University Websites might involve incorporating original works of third parties (e.g., written works, photographs, music, software code, and video) that are protected by copyright laws. Other than in those circumstances that third party works may be permitted under principles of fair use, consistent with applicable law, Covered Parties should obtain permissions necessary to incorporate such third party works on University Websites.

e. Legacy Status

University Websites that are Legacy Pages are subject to the University's standards in place at the time of their development and to the Legacy Page Guidelines promulgated pursuant to this Policy. If the design of a Legacy Page is materially updated or redesigned, it must be updated to comply with Section IV of this Policy.

f. Accuracy

Covered Parties are responsible for ensuring that the content appearing on a University Website is up-to-date and accurate.

g. Commercial or Fundraising Activity; Advertisements

Any Covered Party wishing to conduct commercial or fundraising activity via a University Website, including receipt of online credit card payments, must comply with and obtain prior authorization pursuant to the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standards. Websites on a University Domain may not include any advertising materials or other

materials relating to the outside business or commercial activities of any Covered Party or third party, provided that factual mentions of third parties are permissible so long as they are not an endorsement of such parties' business or commercial activities.

h. Permitted Purposes of University Websites

University Websites may be created and posted only for purposes of University Business.

V. Exceptions

When compliance with a section of this Policy is not technically possible, may require extraordinary measures, or is inappropriate under the circumstances, exceptions may be granted by the Committee or a sub-committee thereof. Cost alone is not a basis for an exception under section IV(c).

Requests for exceptions to this Policy must be made in writing to ithelp@bu.edu.

VI. Responsible Parties

a. The **Vice President for Information Services & Technology**, with input and advice from the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research and the Senior Vice President for External Affairs, will be responsible for establishing and maintaining procedures and administrative support needed to implement this Policy.

b. The Committee and/or a sub-committee thereof will be responsible for the following:

i. Reviewing this Policy, the MWAS, and the Legacy Page Guidelines at least once every 5 years and revise, as necessary;

ii. Promulgating Legacy Page Guidelines;

iii. Granting exceptions to this Policy, as appropriate;

iv. Receiving and resolving complaints about the Policy;'

v. Providing guidance to offices and individuals on complying with this Policy and the accompanying standards and guidelines;

vi. Consulting with units on web accessibility; and

vii. Providing training on web accessibility.

c. Individual University units are responsible for the following:

i. Ensuring all University Websites they create, control, and maintain comply with this Policy, the MWAS, the Web Requirements, and the Legacy Page Guidelines; and

ii. Ensuring employees within the unit receive appropriate training on website accessibility and other matters such that they understand their obligations to comply with this Policy, the MWAS, the Web Requirements, and the Legacy Page Guidelines.

VII. Policy Violations

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the removal or disabling of the relevant University Website from university servers, networks and/or support services.

VIII. Policy Revisions

The Committee will initiate a review and necessary revisions of this Policy and its associated standards at least once every 5 years.

IX. Related Policies and References

The University maintains other policies which relate to this topic, including but not limited to:

- Acceptable Use of Computing Services Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Data Protection Standards Overview
- Digital Privacy Statement
- Disclaimer for Student and Personal Web Sites
- BU Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standards (for accepting credit cards) (5.2.3)
- Social Media Community Guidelines

X. History

On the date this Policy was adopted, no other policy specifically governing University Websites existed.

END OF POLICY TEXT

Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

Related Policies and Procedures

- BU Minimum Web Accessibility Standards (MWAS)
- Disability Accommodation Policy
- Employee Handbook – Section 104 Reasonable Accommodations
- Policy on Reasonable Accommodations for Employees or Applicants for Employment
    - Procedures for Reasonable Accommodations for Employees or Applicants for Employment
- Reasonable Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities, or Individuals who are Pregnant or Have a Pregnancy-Related Condition
- Boston University Non-Discrimination Policy

    - Boston University Non-Discrimination Procedures
- Copyright Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy

Related BU Websites

- Disability and Access Services Office
    - Accommodations/Campus Accessibility
- Website Accessibility - Information and Topic Areas: website accessibility best practices, accessibility and PDFs, Accessibility for Blackboard: Blackboard Ally for instructors, Blackboard Ally for students

BU Resources

- Maintaining Accessible Content - BU Tech Web website
- Accommodating Students with Disabilities | Tips for Faculty

Categories: Acceptable Use, Access and Inclusion, Disability Accommodations and Access, Information Management, Research and Scholarly Activities Keywords: access, accessibility, accommodation, accommodations, disability, minimum web accessibility standards, MWAS, web accessibility, website, website accessibility