

B.C. Disability Employment Month 2026

13th Untapped Award Nominees Reflections

We asked 2026 Untapped Award nominees two questions: What's your vision for a more accessible future? And what's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility? Here's what they told us.



Operated by **open
door
group**


untapped

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What is your vision for a more accessible future?

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Our vision that everyone belongs in nature extends beyond the outdoors.

We believe in a future where inclusion is not an accommodation but an expectation, where diversity is recognized as a strength, and where people of all abilities, cultures, identities, ages, backgrounds, and experiences can fully participate, contribute, and belong.



Power To Be
Non-Profit Organization



What is your vision for a more accessible future?

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Roots & Rivers
Small BC Business

A more accessible future is one where universal access is the default rather than an accommodation.

As a small business, we want a future where others like us to have the support they need to make accessibility integral to how they work with their communities, clients, and collaborators.



What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Marni Robinson

Individual

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I wish more businesses understood how good it feels when you **make things work for everyone**. When we design spaces, places, and experiences for the full range of human diversity, the results can feel almost magical. New people show up because they can get in the door. They stay longer because there's a washroom designed for them. They buy more because someone anticipated their needs.

So let's stop thinking about what's the minimum we can do and start thinking about how we can all make a little more magic happen.



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



KPMG

Medium / Large BC Business

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A more accessible future for us is the one where we accept that everyone benefits from accessibility.

It's about creating a culture where accessibility is foundational, and we actively remove barriers in our communities and workplaces.





What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?

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Don't wait for someone to tell you there's a barrier. Build accessibility in from the beginning!

As someone with lived experience of sight loss, I know how often people with disabilities have to identify barriers, explain what needs to change, and advocate for access. Businesses have an opportunity to shift that responsibility. When people with disabilities are included in the conversation from the start, accessibility becomes less about fixing what's broken and more about creating experiences where everyone can participate, contribute, and belong.

Anu Pala
Individual



What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Cliff Feng

Individual



Many businesses assume that improving accessibility in the built environment requires major renovations and significant investment.

In reality, many low-cost, quick improvements can make a meaningful difference, such as clearer wayfinding and signage, staff accessibility awareness training, accessible websites, and providing accurate information about a building's accessible features before people arrive.

Other simple changes, such as rearranging furniture to maintain clear circulation routes or improving lighting and visual contrast, can also remove barriers.

Accessibility can often be improved significantly through thoughtful, practical, and incremental changes rather than expensive construction projects.



What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Elizabeth Leston

Individual

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Accessibility is often misunderstood as something meant only for people with visible disabilities, but in reality, many disabilities are invisible.

Creating an inclusive environment doesn't necessarily require a big budget – many meaningful accessibility improvements are low-cost or free.

When accessibility is treated as a shared responsibility, inclusion becomes achievable and sustainable.



What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Carina Kom

Individual

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Accessibility isn't charity, and it isn't just a compliance checkbox. It's good business and, often, just good design.

When we make something clearer, more flexible, or easier to navigate, we help more than just the group we designed for. Accessibility forces clarity, and clarity often creates innovation!



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



Carina Kom

Individual



The goal isn't to just make everything easier; it's to remove unnecessary barriers.

I want us to recognize that people experience games, technology, and workplaces in the world differently, and inclusive design enables people to participate in more than one way!

The vision is to provide more opportunities for more people to succeed, play, and belong.



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



BCIT

Public Sector

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We envision a future where accessibility is built into every environment from the start.

At BCIT, we partner with industry and prepare graduates to help create more accessible and inclusive workplaces where everyone can participate, contribute, and thrive.



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



Our vision is a workplace where everyone has a fair opportunity to enter, learn, belong and grow.

Big Way is committed to transparent career pathways and meaningful growth opportunities for newcomers, international students, work-permit holders, young people, and employees building confidence while working in a second language.



Big Way Hot Pot

Medium / Large BC Business



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



**Taproot Community
Support Services**

Medium / Large BC Business



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A more accessible future is one where people are not only able to participate, but have a real stake in what they help build.

Removing barriers matters, but so does sharing voice, ownership, and opportunity. Inclusion is stronger when people can help shape the workplace itself.



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



MindMosaic Inclusive HR

Small BC Business

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Accessibility starts with a simple question: what do people need to do their best work?

Small changes in how we communicate, hire, meet, or share information remove barriers before someone has to ask. I wish more businesses saw it that way, not for a few, but for everyone.



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



Happy Cities

Small BC Business



Accessibility is more than just a checklist. It's a continuous practice that strengthens inclusion, innovation, and wellbeing—for both our team and the communities we serve.

Accessible workplaces remove barriers so that everyone can reach their full potential. In this way, accessibility is a commitment to designing communities where everyone can thrive.



What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Harper Learning
Small BC Business



I wish more businesses understood that accessibility isn't an optional piece of learning design or something to do when legislation requires it.

Let's stand for accessibility for all and do our best in all situations to be inclusive and reduce barriers wherever possible before someone has to ask.

-Cara-Johns,
(Founder-HarperLearning)



untapped

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Cathy's Café LTD

Social Enterprise



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We wish more businesses understood that accessibility is not only about removing barriers or adding handlebars—it's also about creating opportunities for people to learn, grow, and feel that they belong.

In our café, that can look like giving someone the time, patience, encouragement, and support to try something new, practice a skill, make mistakes, and try again.

Sometimes, what a person needs most is simply a safe and welcoming space where they are given the chance to learn alongside everyone else. When businesses make room for different ways of learning and growing, we get to see confidence build, independence grow, and people discover abilities they may not have had the opportunity to show before.

A little patience, kindness, and belief in someone can open doors that might otherwise have stayed closed—and that can be incredibly meaningful for the individual, the workplace, and the whole community.

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?

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Hummingbird Café

Small BC Business

Accessibility means believing in potential, not limitations. People with disabilities and diverse abilities can learn, contribute, and succeed when given the right environment, effective support, and enough time to develop their skills.

Every person has unique strengths and a purpose.
With understanding, patience, and opportunity, everyone can belong and thrive.



What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?

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Carol Simpson

Individual

Accessibility is a mindset that denotes respect for people with barriers. Consider whether you would deny someone their hearing aids, glasses, or wheelchair in a typical workplace? Of course not.

But have you denied or discouraged anyone from accommodations that you deem unnecessary, an unfair advantage, or too much effort?

When an accommodation is deemed unnecessary, a person's lived experience is dismissed. When an accommodation is deemed an unfair advantage, equality and equity are being confused. When an accommodation is deemed too much effort, the importance of productivity, psychological safety, and mental health diminishes.

When it comes to accessibility, ask yourself: do your decisions or mindset create a barrier to inclusion, deny someone their dignity, or impede improvements that may benefit everyone?

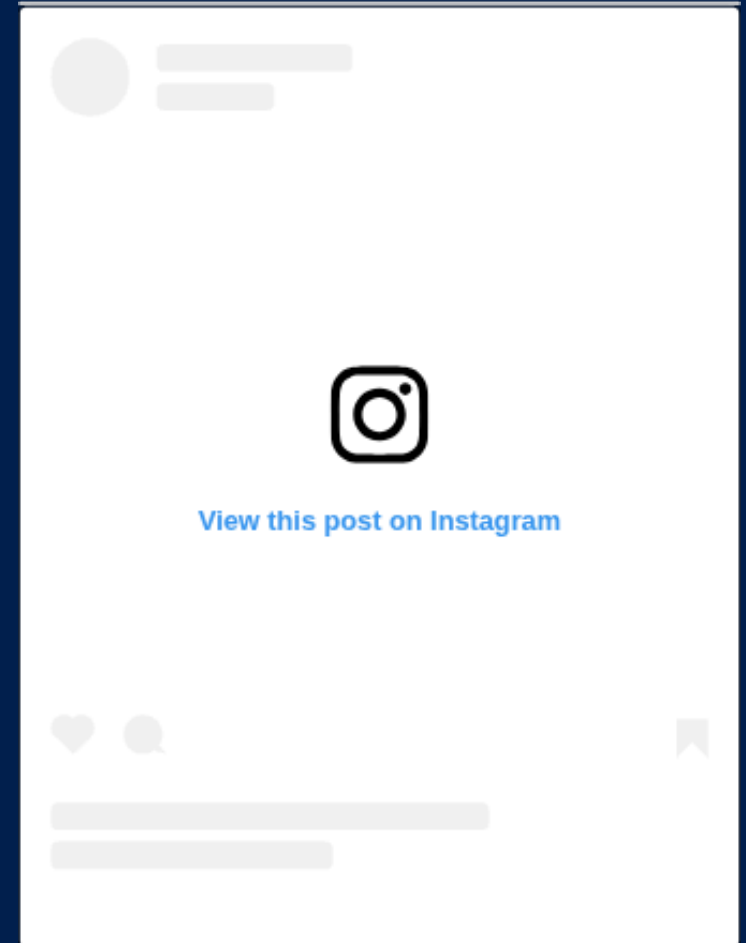


What is your vision for a more accessible future?



Deborah Petrovitch

Individual



[Press play to hear their insights!](#)

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?

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**Adaptive
Strength Association of BC**

Non-Profit Organization

A world where no one feels pressured to pass as able-bodied, neurotypical, or anything other than themselves to come through the door of a movement space.

Where specialty programs and separate facilities are unnecessary, because every space welcomes every body.

Not just the gym bro the industry was built for.



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



Tammy Morris

Individual



Accessibility means not having to ask. My vision is a future where accessibility is built into the way we design workplaces, technology, products, and services—not added later or left for individuals to request or navigate as they fall behind.

It is a future where we anticipate and celebrate human difference from the beginning, remove systemic barriers and create multiple ways for people to participate, contribute and succeed.

When accessibility becomes part of everyday business practice, when organizations gain access to a broader range of talent and ideas, when all businesses understand that this 'grand experiment' of inclusion in the workplace has been proven out again and again, and everyone benefits from more flexible, usable and inclusive experiences, and when we meet the growing demands for talent and inclusion from future generations, only then will our work here be done.



What is your vision for a more accessible future?



Adishi Gupta

Individual

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I dream of a future where having a body and mind, with all their wonders and joys as well as their struggles and frustrations, is expected and accepted.

No one should have to face illness, exhaustion, or disability alone, or feel afraid of systems that treat some people's bodies and minds as more valuable than others.

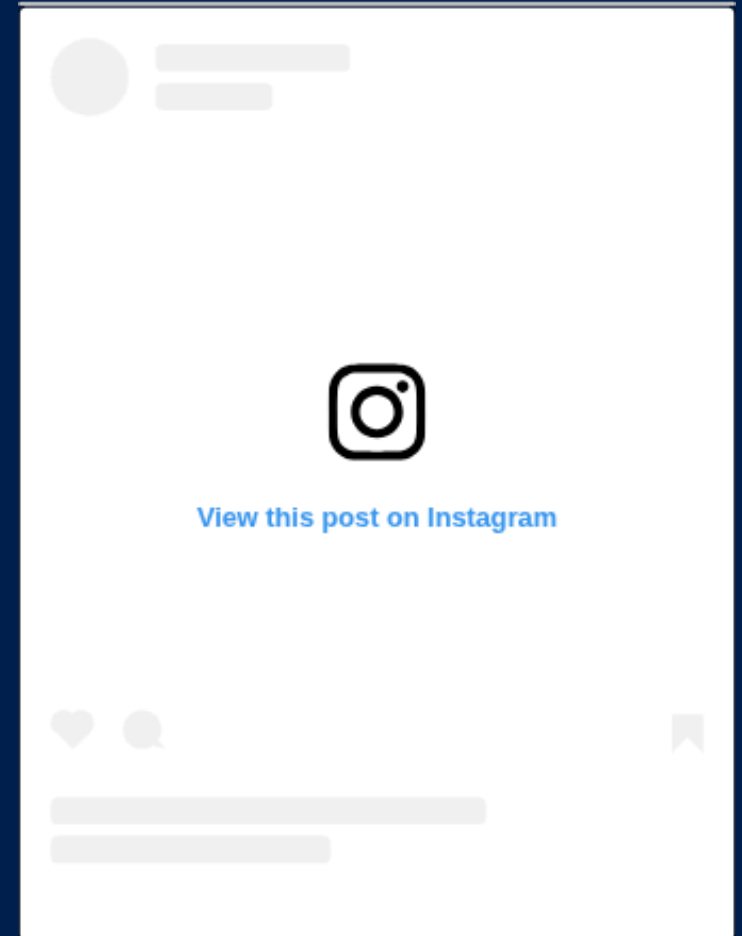
I want a world where being sick, tired, disabled, or struggling mentally is just part of being human, not something we're pressured to fix just to fit in or stay productive.



What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?

i11o
**Creative
Alliance**

Small Business



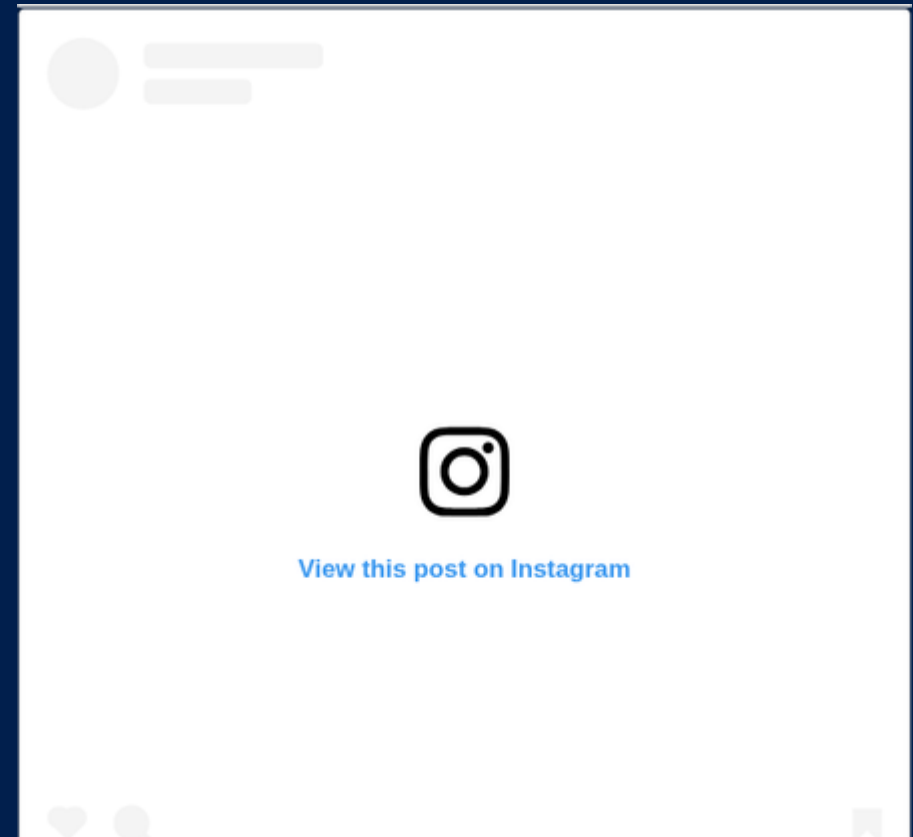
[Press play to hear their insights!](#)

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



WORTH Association

Non-Profit Organization



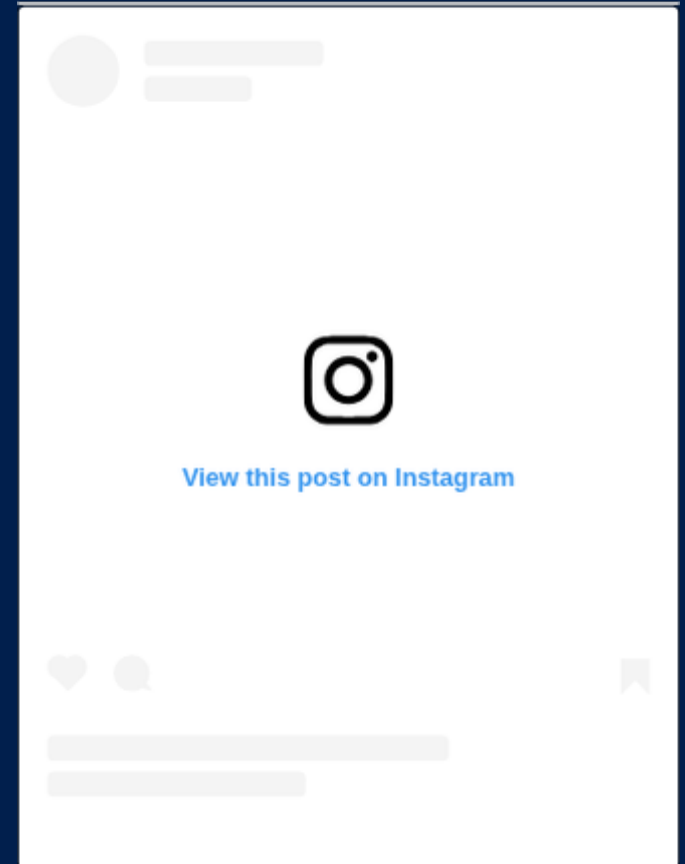
[Press play to hear their insights!](#)

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



ReuseTechBC

Non-profit organization

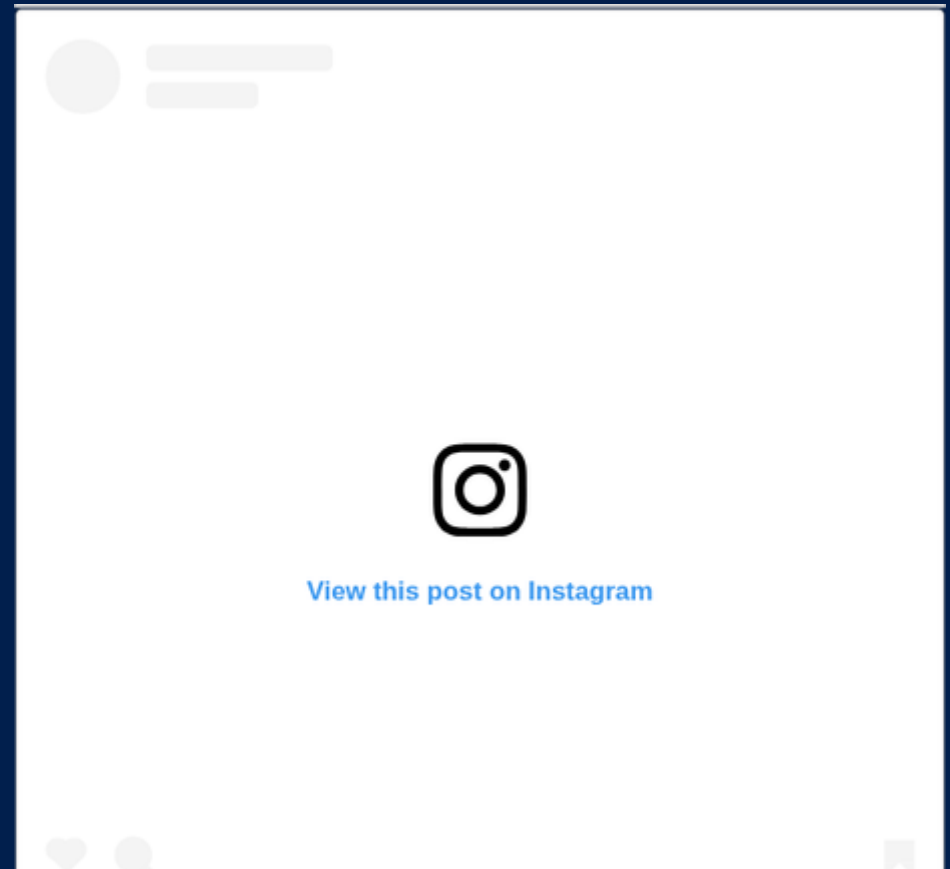


[Press play to hear their insights!](#)

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Medium/Large BC Business



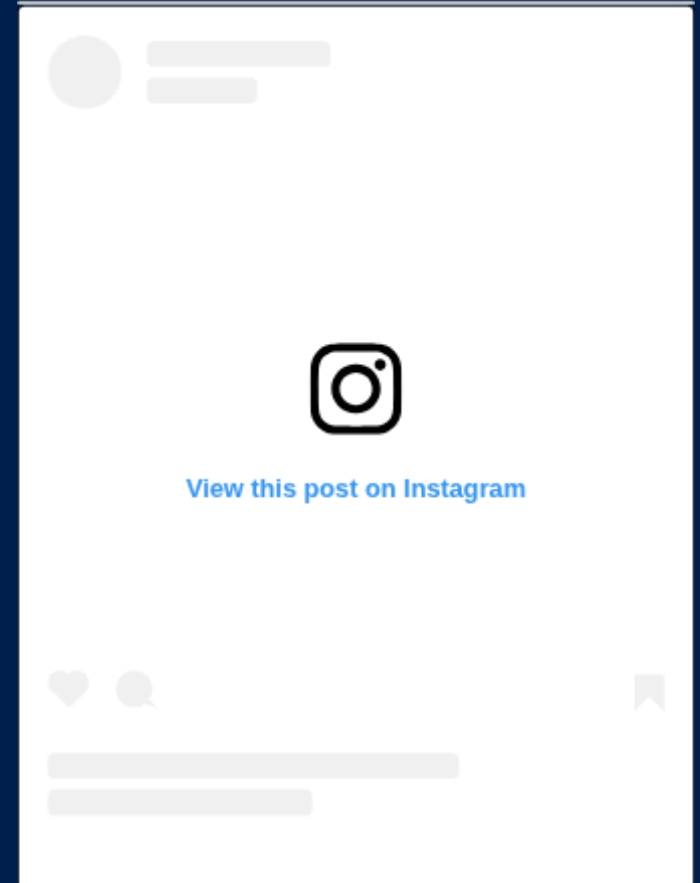
[Press play to hear their insights!](#)

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Shivani Gandhi

Individual



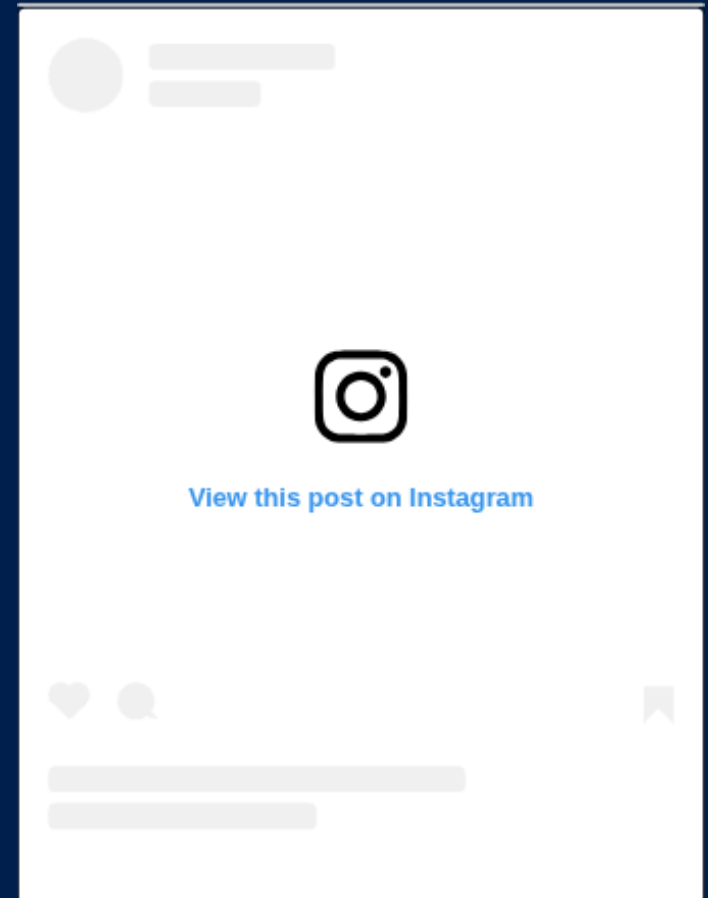
[Press play to hear their insights!](#)

What's one thing you wish more businesses understood about accessibility?



Nina Chou

Individual



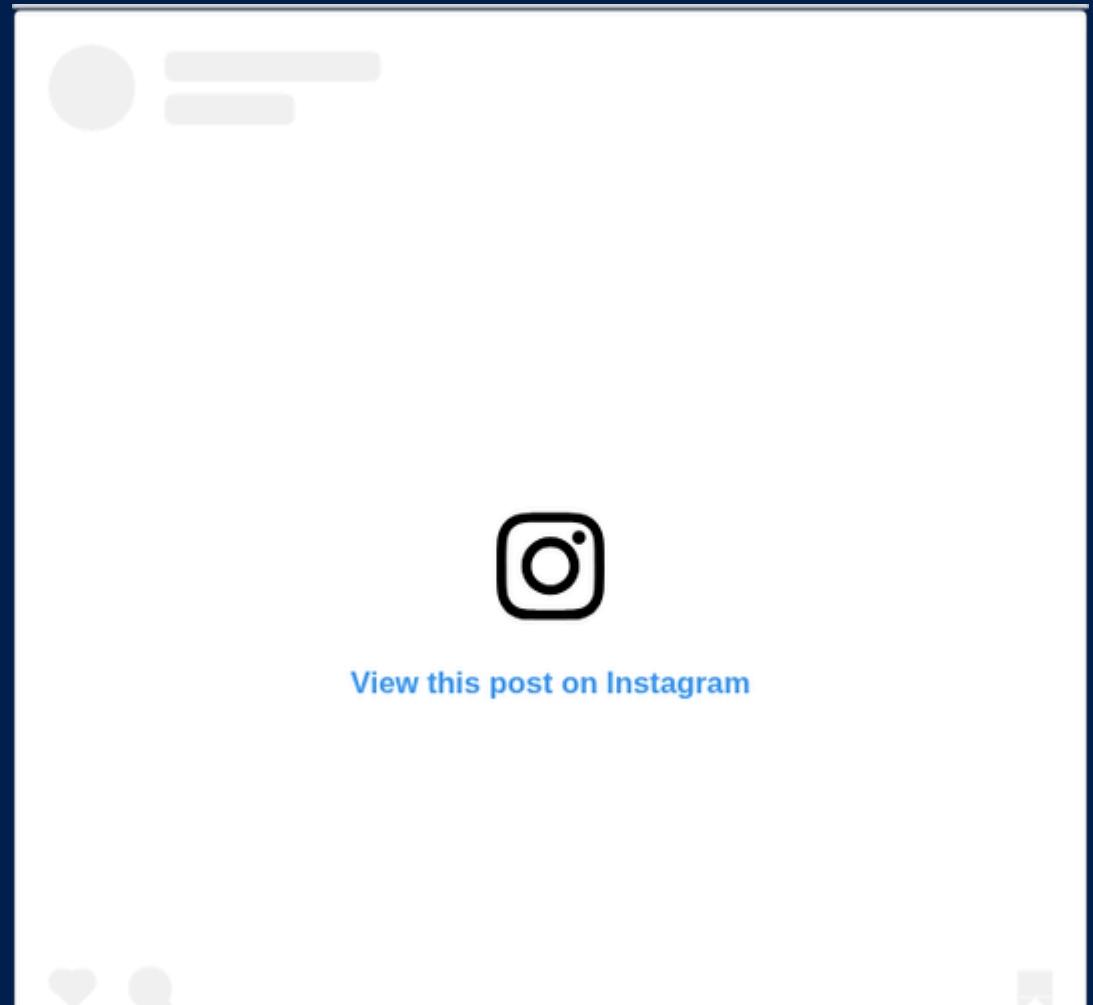
[Press play to hear their insights!](#)

What is your vision for a more accessible future?



Vantage Point

Non-Profit Organization



[Press play to hear their insights!](#)