



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM *of* MARYLAND  
**KIRWAN CENTER FOR  
ACADEMIC INNOVATION**

## Boosting Course Accessibility

Fall 2025 USM Faculty Mini-Grants | October 1-November 21,  
2025

### Call for Applications

The USM Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation is pleased to announce a call for applications for the Boosting Course Accessibility mini-grant program. This initiative will support 12 USM faculty members in engaging in digital accessibility-related course redesign to better meet the accessibility needs of all students. Each selected faculty member will receive a \$1,500 stipend and participate in a collaborative professional development program designed and co-taught by our nonprofit partner, [Teach Access](#).

### Program Overview

Faculty grantees will engage in a hybrid program running from October 1 through November 21, 2025. The program includes:

- Completion of five **asynchronous** online modules (topics include: Defining Disability, Accessible Design, Universal Design, and two elective modules such as Content Development, Game and Interactive Media Design, Instructional Technology, Organizational Communication, and more).
- Participation in five 90-minute **synchronous** Zoom sessions held on Wednesdays from 12:00–1:30 p.m. (October 8, October 15, October 22, October 29, and November 5).
- Presentation and discussion of course revisions at a culminating **in-person event** on Friday, November 21, 2025, at the National Federation of the Blind Headquarters in Baltimore, MD.
- Serving as a faculty ambassador for digital accessibility in Spring 2026, creating one outreach opportunity engaging faculty in conjunction with your representative from the USM Digital Accessibility Work Group.

### Program Goals

This program aims to:

1. Promote inclusive teaching practices by equipping faculty with tools, strategies, and frameworks grounded in accessibility and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
2. Support the redesign of existing courses to reduce digital barriers for students with disabilities and increase access for all learners.
3. Build a faculty-led culture of access and accountability across the USM through shared learning, peer exchange, and cross-campus collaboration.
4. Establish models of accessible course design that can be shared, celebrated, and potentially scaled across departments, disciplines, and institutions.

## Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Full-time faculty member at a USM institution
- Teaching is your primary professional role
- Available to participate fully in all synchronous and asynchronous program components, including the in-person event on November 21.

## Grant Award

Each selected participant will receive a \$1,500 stipend. Breakfast, lunch, and parking will be provided at the in-person event.

## Application Instructions

Applications will be submitted using this [submission form](#) by **Friday, September 12**. The form requires the following information:

- Faculty member's contact information
- Course Title(s) for Proposed Accessibility (Re)Design, Course Modality, and Approximate Enrollment per Term
- Response Questions:
  - Describe the course you intend to focus on in this program. The course should be one that you will be teaching in Spring 2026, although grantees are welcome to incorporate techniques starting in the Fall. Include details about the student audience (undergraduate general education, undergraduate in the major, graduate) and any known challenges or opportunities related to accessibility in the course. (350-500 words)
  - Why are you interested in participating in the Boosting Accessibility mini-grant program? What do you hope to learn, change, or contribute? (350-500 words)

- What experience (if any) do you have with accessibility, inclusive teaching, or Universal Design? (Prior experience is not required.) (200-300 words)
- How do you anticipate sharing what you learn with your department, colleagues, or institution? Consider ways your participation might have broader impact. (200-300 words)
- Confirmation of availability to attend all required sessions
- Letter of support from department chair or dean uploaded
- *Please note:* The submission form is a Google form and requires you to sign in with a Gmail address to allow for your uploaded letter of support. If you do not have a Gmail account and prefer not to create one, please reach out to Jennifer Potter ([jpotter@usmd.edu](mailto:jpotter@usmd.edu)) to submit your materials via email.

## Selection Criteria

Grantees will be selected based on:

- Demonstrated interest in designing inclusive and accessible learning experiences
- Potential for impact within a specific course and broader department or discipline
- Clear articulation of goals and alignment with program objectives
- Campus representation across the USM

## Timeline

- **August 11** – Call for applications opens
- **September 12** – Application deadline
- **September 22** – Notification of selected grantees
- **October 1–November 5** – Program participation
- **November 21** – In-person event at NFB Headquarters, Baltimore, MD