

We welcome the recent review commissioned by the Big Ten Academic Alliance into the accessibility of our *Empire Online* product. It coincides with an internal audit of our products which is assessing them against the independent standards required for WCAG 2.0 AA-level compliance. The BTAA report has provided valuable additional feedback on what works well and where we can improve our accessibility. By combining information from internal and external evaluations, we are aiming to fully review the platform within which *Empire Online* and our other products sit. This is with a long-term view of moving these collections into a new platform that will significantly improve on previous accessibility performance.

While this process of analysis and new platform building continues, we are working to make changes to the existing platform and products to ensure immediate as well as long-term improvements to accessibility. Working through some of the elements highlighted in the BTAA evaluation, we can say that:

- The PDF download option is one way in which users can access our content. However, the online image viewer is designed as the main location for viewing this content. These pages have a keyboard-accessible “view transcript” link, which provides a text version of the page for all printed documents. Taking into consideration the review of PDF downloads, we are now looking into building a new feature which will allow text transcripts to be downloaded as well.
- The lack of an accessible version of the chronology was a bug, rather than a platform issue, and this has now been resolved. The accessible version can now be accessed, in this and other products using the same platform.
- We recognise that the homepage carousel is an issue and our most recent collections have moved away from this to static images or carousels that can be paused. We are in the process of extending this to older products as well.
- Once our internal audit is complete we will combine the feedback with the BTAA evaluation to make improvements to keyboard controls and screen reader compatibility. This will include a solution to the problem of tables, particularly search results tables, being missed.

Once again, we would like to thank the BTAA for their evaluation, and we look forward to implementing new platform initiatives that will improve the accessibility of our products and resolve many of the issues highlighted.