# Making PDFs Accessible

## Why should we create accessible PDFs?

Generally speaking, an accessible PDF contains "tags". Tags are like labels attached to the elements in a document that denote the type of text or content, similar to styles in a Word document. Tags are not visible to the naked eye but are part of the document's code. Assistive technology, like screen readers, will detect the tags and will voice the content.

A common practice is to scan a hard-copy document and save it as a PDF. Doing this will create merely an **image** of the document, and does not include any tags, i.e. will not be readable by a screen reader. You must start with an accessible source document and save it using a specific procedure or use Acrobat Pro DC to add tags to an existing non-tagged PDF.

Here is a link to how to create an accessible PDF from scratch: https://www.dvc.edu/faculty-staff/online-accessibility/accessible-pdfs/4-accessible-pdfs-create-from-scratch.html

Here is a link to how to fix an existing pdf for accessibility: https://www.dvc.edu/faculty-staff/online-accessibility/accessible-pdfs/4-accessible-pdfs-fix-existing.html

Information above was adapted from Diablo Valley College's Online Accessibility page at https://www.dvc.edu/faculty-staff/online-accessibility/index.html