Social Media Accessibility

WHAT IS INCLUSIVE DESIGN?

Inclusive design aims to provide the best user experience for as many people as possible.

Inclusive design creates for a diverse range of users by addressing barriers and providing a variety of ways for people to engage.

By contrast, universal design aims to serve the broadest range of people and situations.

Very often, inclusive design benefits everyone.

Closed captions on videos are a prime example. The primary use case for captions is to assist people with hearing impairments. But they also help language learners and viewers watching with <u>sound off</u>.

WHY ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Inclusive design increases access.

Without accessibility, you miss out on connecting with your full potential audience. At least <u>one billion</u> people—15% of the world's population—experience some form of disability.

Non-inclusive content and experiences push people away.

Keeping social media accessible means recognizing exclusion, learning from your followers, and presenting information in the clearest ways possible. And at the end of the day, that's just being a good marketer.

Plus, just about everyone likes to see inclusivity in advertising. According to a recent survey by Google, 64% of people took an action after watching an ad they considered inclusive.

1. Write in plain language: Avoid jargon, slang, or technical terms unless they are appropriate.
2. Don't overuse caps.
3. Use PascalCase, which is the practice of capitalizing the first letters of words in multiple-word hashtags for a screen reader to recognize.
4. Include mentions and hashtags throughout the caption/copy of your post to avoid it becoming too long.
5. Avoid saying "click here." Use descriptive call-to-actions like: Sign up, Try it for free, or subscribe.
6. Limit emoji use. Emoji and emoticons (i.e. ¯_(ツ)_/¯) are read aloud by assistive tech.
7. Use an adequate font size. Make sure text is legible, especially when used in images or areas that aren't modifiable.
8. Avoid special characters. In addition to reduced legibility, VoiceOver and other assistive tools read special formatting very differently
9. Limit line length. Lines that are too long can interfere with readability and retention.

1. Convey the content: There's a huge gap between "Image of a chart," and "A bar chart illustrates that there has been a year-over-year increase in forest fires, peaking at 100 this year."
2. Skip saying "image of" or "photograph of."
3. Mention color if it is important to understanding the image.
4. Share humor. Descriptive text doesn't have to be overly formal and should do its best to express what's funny.
5. Transcribe text. If the image has copy that is central to its meaning, make sure you include it in the description.
6. Don't forget GIFs. Twitter recently made alt-text an option for GIFs. If the platform does not support alt-text, include a description in the action.

Include video captions. Closed captions are crucial for viewers with hearing impairments. They also enhance the viewing experience for people watching in their non-native language, or viewers in sound-off environments. Captions even benefit children learning to read.
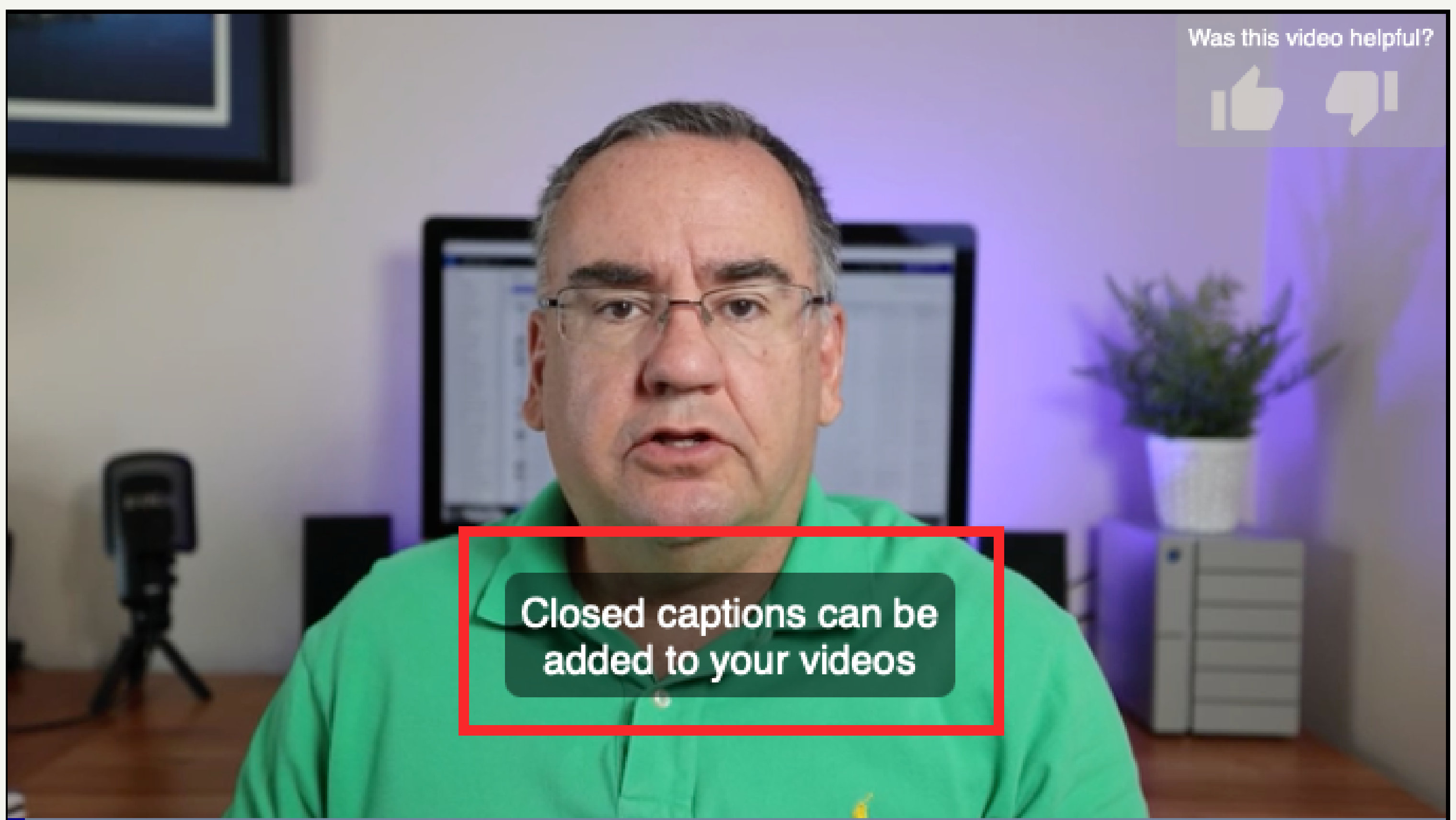
ADD VIDEO DESCRIPTIONS

Unlike captions, which are usually a transcript of spoken dialogue, descriptive language denotes the important sights and sounds that are not spoken.

Descriptive Audio. Described video is the narrated description of any important non-verbal elements in your video.

Descriptive Transcripts. Sometimes referred to as media alternative transcripts, these transcripts provide descriptions alongside dialogue, much like a script.

Live Described Video. Live video hosts should be familiar with descriptive video techniques, taking pauses to describe what's happening on screen. Accessible Media Inc. has a good best practices guide

The ideal contrast between a text color and its background should be at least 4.5 to 1, as recommended by WCAG

For people who are colorblind color contrast is important.

Avoid green and red or blue and yellow combinations, as they're difficult to read.

Text can be difficult to read on images, so consider using a solid background or opaque overlay.

On graphs and charts, consider also using patterns to differentiate data.

Use a Color Contrast Checker. Adobe Color has a really useful tool for this.

YLC

At least 2.2 billion people globally have some form of vision impairment, including colorblindness, low vision, near vision, and blindness.

In fact, Facebook's color scheme is blue because its founder, Mark Zuckerberg, is red-green colorblind.

Visualize links. Add an underline or a hover animation to convey that hyperlinked text is clickable. Nielsen Norman Group has helpful guidelines for visualizing links.

Use symbols. In graphs or infographics, use symbols or patterns as an alternative or addition to color. Or, add clarifying labels.

Stay informed on different resources and tools around social media accessibility:

- Digital.gov's Federal Social Media Accessibility Toolkit Hackpad
- Nielsen Norman Group's articles on web accessibility
- W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
- WebAIM (Web Accessibility in Mind)
- Adobe Color for Color Contrast
- Inclusive Design for Social Media: Tips for Creating Accessible Channels Article on Hootsuite.

To promote positive inclusion, make sure to use inclusive language. Avoid ableist language, use gender-neutral pronouns and terms, share diverse voices and emoji, and evaluate text for assumptions of limited points of view.

Please also be aware of another language around race, gender, and other underrepresented communities. Be as inclusive as you can to promote an excellent experience for all. We need to be welcome feedback because it challenges us to be better, so our social media can accessible to everyone.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY

LEADERSHIP CREDIT:

<u>YLC Initiative:</u> Accessibility
<u>YLC Members:</u>
- Vanessa Ocana *(California, USA)*
- Kendall Liesching *(Rhode Island, USA)*
- Zane Landin *(Washington D.C., USA)*

Co-Chair: Margo Meley *(Connecticut, USA)*
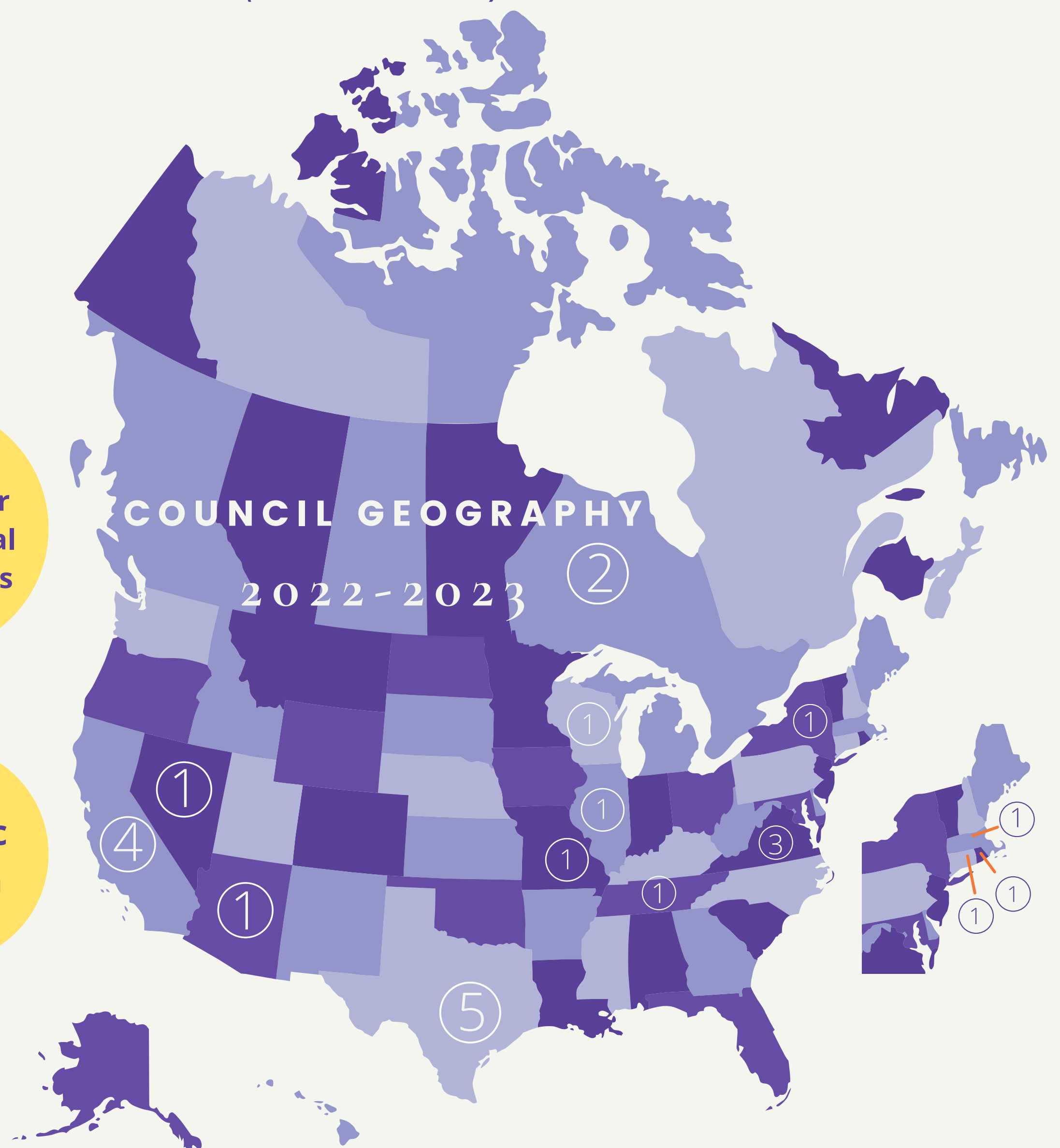Chair: Garett Tomasek *(Texas, USA)*

Meet the members of the YLC!

Developing project management skills

Survey Data Analysis

Preside over international partnerships

Designing project proposals

Graphic Design

COUNCIL GEOGRAPHY

2022-2023

The <u>Young Leaders Council (YLC)</u> is a diverse group of individuals of all abilities who bridge the gap between the student perspective and staff experience for Best Buddies International initiatives. We conceptualize, design, and execute unique initiatives that apply to all aspects of the Best Buddies ecosystem: Friendship, Leadership, Jobs, and Inclusive Living. To learn more about the council, subscribe to our linktree by scanning the QR code!