Laura Ruby

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SENIOR DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION CONSULTANT

Policy, Standards & Regulations ● Government Relations ● Strategy, Planning & Evaluation

Versatile and accomplished Regulatory Affairs professional with extensive experience in leading global initiatives encompassing policies, laws, regulations, and industry standards. Proven ability to develop and implement compliance programs that minimize organizational risk and promote sales. Trusted advisor and thought leader adept at engaging with governments, consumer advocates, and industry organizations to address complex issues and solve difficult challenges. Strong Disability Rights advocate with deep knowledge of global laws and policies.

STRENGTHS

- Globally recognized **Technology Policy** professional with expertise in procurement and accessibility.
- In-depth knowledge of **Digital Inclusion & Accessibility Technology** laws, regulations, and standards.
- Highly skilled in analyzing **legislation, regulations, and lobbying stakeholders** to positive outcomes.
- Proven results in developing and implementing **Compliance** policies and programs.
- Expertise in **International Technology Standards** development, implementation, and conformance.
- Drives **inclusive digital transformation and innovation** in cities, education systems, and courts.
- Sought-after **facilitator of complex negotiations** over multiple geographies.
- Recognized for **growing, managing, and coaching** high-performing teams and individual contributors.

EXPERIENCE

LAURA RUBY CONSULTING / CONVERGE ACCESSIBILITY LLC, Seattle, WA December 2022 – Present

Senior Consultant - Global Accessibility & Inclusion

Expert in worldwide digital accessibility and communications technology policy.

- Provides strategic advice and consultation to organizations that want to improve their Digital Inclusion.
- Collaborates with advocacy organizations and governments to ensure that cities, courts, and justice systems transform digitally worldwide in smart and accessible ways that empower all citizens.

MICROSOFT, Redmond, WA April 2000 – December 2022

Director of Worldwide Accessibility Policy & Standards (June 2014 – Dec. 2022)

As part of Microsoft's Corporate, External & Legal Affairs group, addressed increasing technology regulation while resolving geographic differences in compliance and conformance practices and leading innovative digital inclusion initiatives, strategies, and policies. Led Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) programming as well.

- Analyzed and influenced over 50 technology laws, regulations, and industry standards resulting in positive outcomes that supported innovations in accessibility.
- Convinced governments of Mexico, Japan, India, and Canada to adopt Microsoft's Global Accessibility Standards instead of creating new ones, saving Microsoft millions of US dollars in development costs.
- Increased Microsoft's status as a trusted advisor to the European Commission, member states, and consumer advocacies regarding Accessible Digital Tech policy that creates inclusive public services.
- Accelerated city adoption of accessible technology and digital transformation by collaborating with non-government organizations, the World Economic Forum, global civil leaders, and city officials.

Director of Accessibility Policy & Standards (July 2007 – June 2014)

Responsible for building a team needed to increase Microsoft's influence on accessibility policy and standards worldwide while advising the company's Chief Accessibility Officer (CAO) and other executive leaders on key strategies, policies, standards, and relationships with global stakeholders.

- Built and managed a global team of 5 Regulatory Policy & Technical Standards professionals to engage with governments, consumer advocates, and industry leaders worldwide while minimizing company risk.
- Led Microsoft's analysis and evaluation of the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) telecommunications regulations with potential for significant impact across industry and consumers with lobbying efforts resulting in implementable regulations and trusted advisor status.
- Expanded Microsoft's accessibility policy agenda by representing the company before the European Commission and 28 member states in a complex political environment.
- Increased Microsoft's communication about accessibility with stakeholders by developing a corporate community of over 300 accessibility policy professionals across global subsidiaries and business units.

Senior Program Manager - Regulatory & Industry Affairs (May 2000 – June 2007)
As an accessibility technology policy expert, recruited to build and manage a new global corporate accessibility regulatory affairs strategy for Microsoft.

- Created and implemented the first telecommunications Accessibility Regulatory Compliance Program for Microsoft which minimized risk of FCC complaints and increased sales of products and services.
- Appointed by the US Access Board to an Advisory Committee that developed the first set of comprehensive US Technical Accessibility Regulations which served as the foundation for other countries.
- Asked by the US General Services Administration to create the first accessibility conformance reporting template (VPAT®) now used by technology companies and governments worldwide to evaluate and document the accessibility of technology products and services.
- Led a diverse team of Engineers, Developers, and Content Managers to create Microsoft's internal accessibility standards and advised engineering groups on regulatory and procurement requirements.
- Represented Microsoft in a European regulatory and standards setting effort which resulted in a comprehensive accessibility standard used by industries around the world.

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY COUNCIL (ITIC), Washington, DC

- **Inaugural Chair - Accessibility Committee:** As part of this association representing the world's largest technology companies (while working at Microsoft), created and chaired the Accessibility Committee with the goal of advancing interest in technology policy and standards worldwide.

AT&T WIRELESS SERVICES, Kirkland, WA

- **External Affairs Manager -** As part of the Law & Government Affairs group, oversaw all Federal disability-related regulatory proceedings and advised the company on accessibility compliance matters.

STATEWIDE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, Seattle, WA

- **Program Assistant** - Organized, coordinated, and monitored all non-clinical operations; coordinated communication between the team and clients; assisted clients, their families, and agencies as needed.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Social Work
Minor in Psychology with studies in American Sign Language
Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA

HONORS & AWARDS

Digital Accessibility Leadership Award
The Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (Info & Comm Tech), Atlanta, GA

Circle of Excellence Award
AT&T Wireless Services, Kirkland, WA

Business Leadership Award
Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA