




CULTURE OPEN:

**HOW TO USE
ALTERNATIVE TEXT
ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

A teal-colored diagonal graphic element in the top right corner of the page.

This guide will tell you how you can use and include Alternative Text on social media.

Alternative Text, or Alt Text in short, is different from a caption. Alternative Text is used to read online images on a screen reader. Screen reader will read the image as if it were text. Therefore it is important that each image you use on a website or social media has an Alternative Text.

Alternative Text is a short description of the image content. Alternative Text should not be longer than 125 characters.



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Introduction to Alternative Text

An Image may be worth a thousand words, but what if you cannot perceive an image visually? Alternative Text is a surrogate description given to images featured online. Alternative Text is supposed to give information on the image's content and purpose.

Alternative Text is utilized, for example, on screen readers used by people who are visually impaired. When the screen reader arrives at an image, it will read the Alternative Text to the user. Alternative Text is different from a caption. More significantly, the Alternative Text does not appear in the image, but rather is featured in the website's html-source code.

A well-written Alternative Text describes the content of the image in less than 125 characters.

Next we will show you how to include Alternative Text on your Facebook, Twitter and Instagram images.

Alternative Text on Facebook

Culture Open Facebook page features a post saying that the project's coordinator Henna presented the project at a Karelia CBC -event the previous week. Related to the post is an image in which the Project Coordinator stands in front of a screen and talks to the audience about the project.

The image's Alternative Text is:

"Henna standing in front of a screen tells representatives of other projects about the goals of communication."

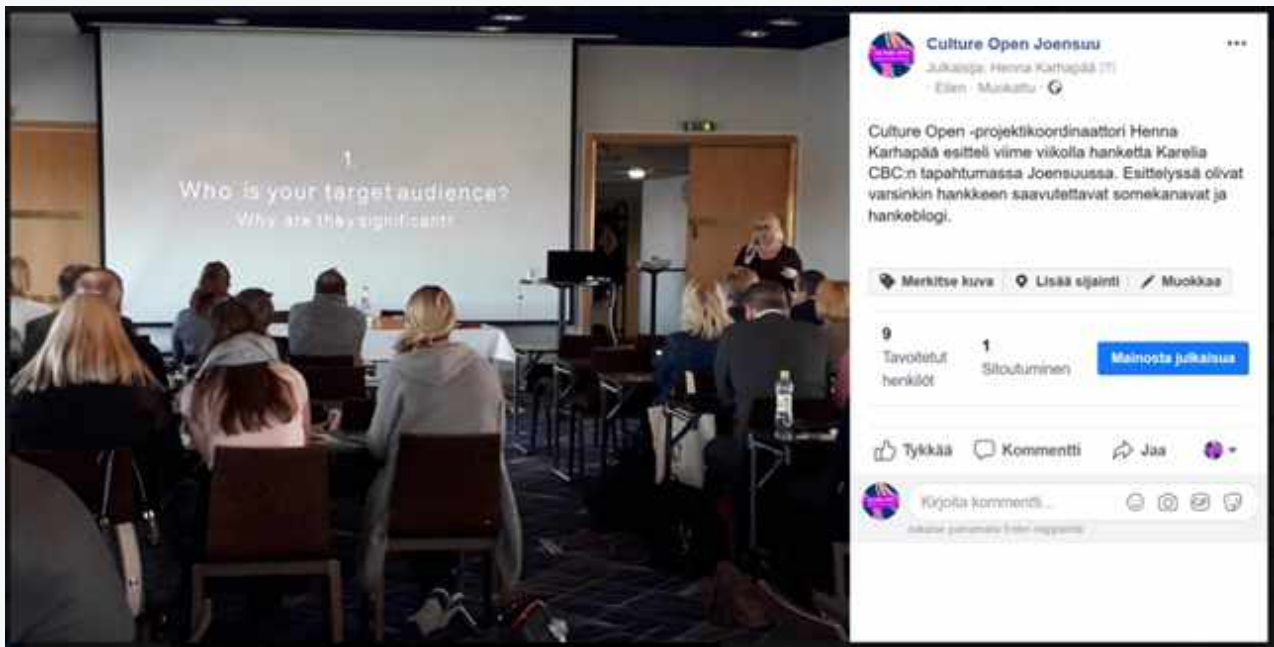
This Alternative Text includes 89 characters.

The Alternative Text explains the following things:

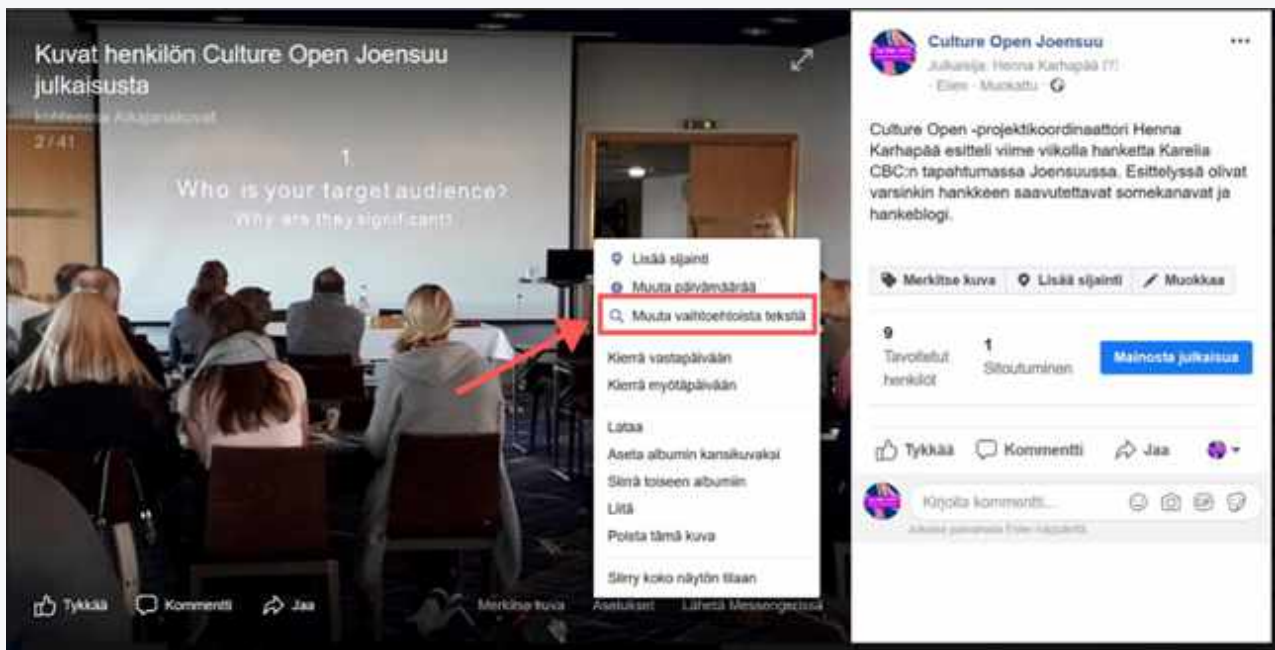
Who? Where? What? To whom?

Adding Alternative Text to images on Facebook is done in the following way:

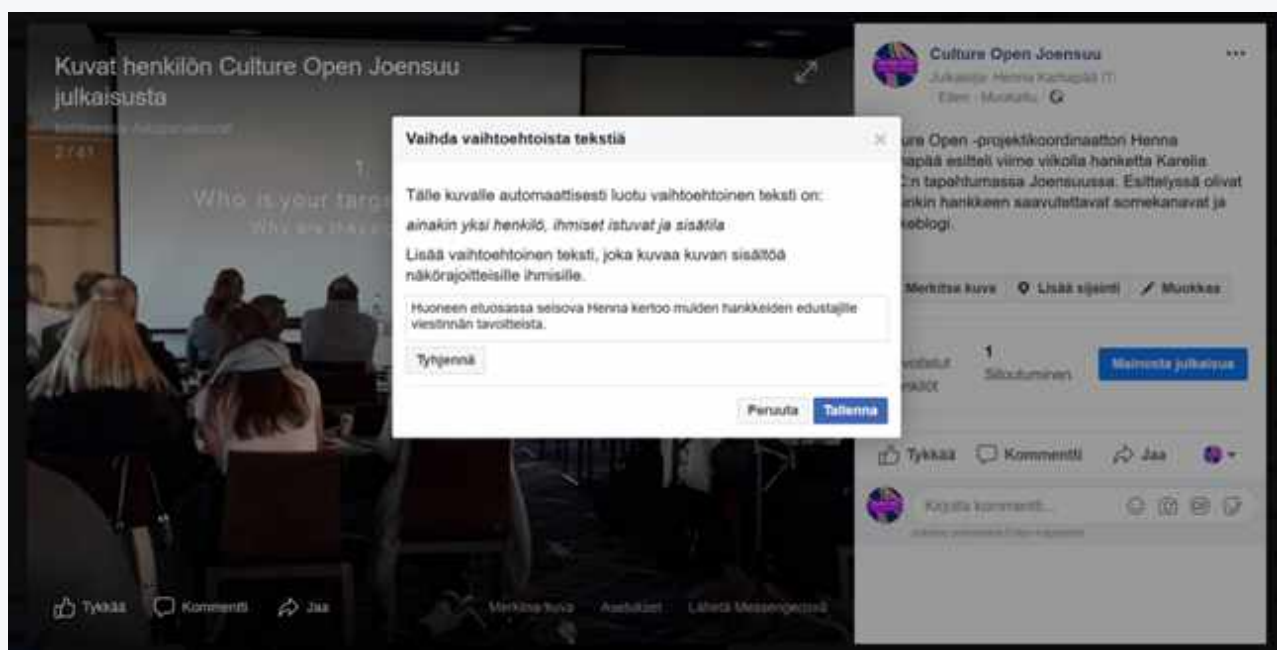
- Click the image you have downloaded on Facebook.
- When you bring your cursor to the image, a menu appears on the right lower side of the image.



- Click "settings" on the menu.
- Choose "change alternative text"



- You will see a text box, which will show you the automatic Alternative Text Facebook has given for your image.
- You can change this automatic description by clicking "disregard automatic alternative text".
- Write your preferred Alternative Text in the box and click "save".

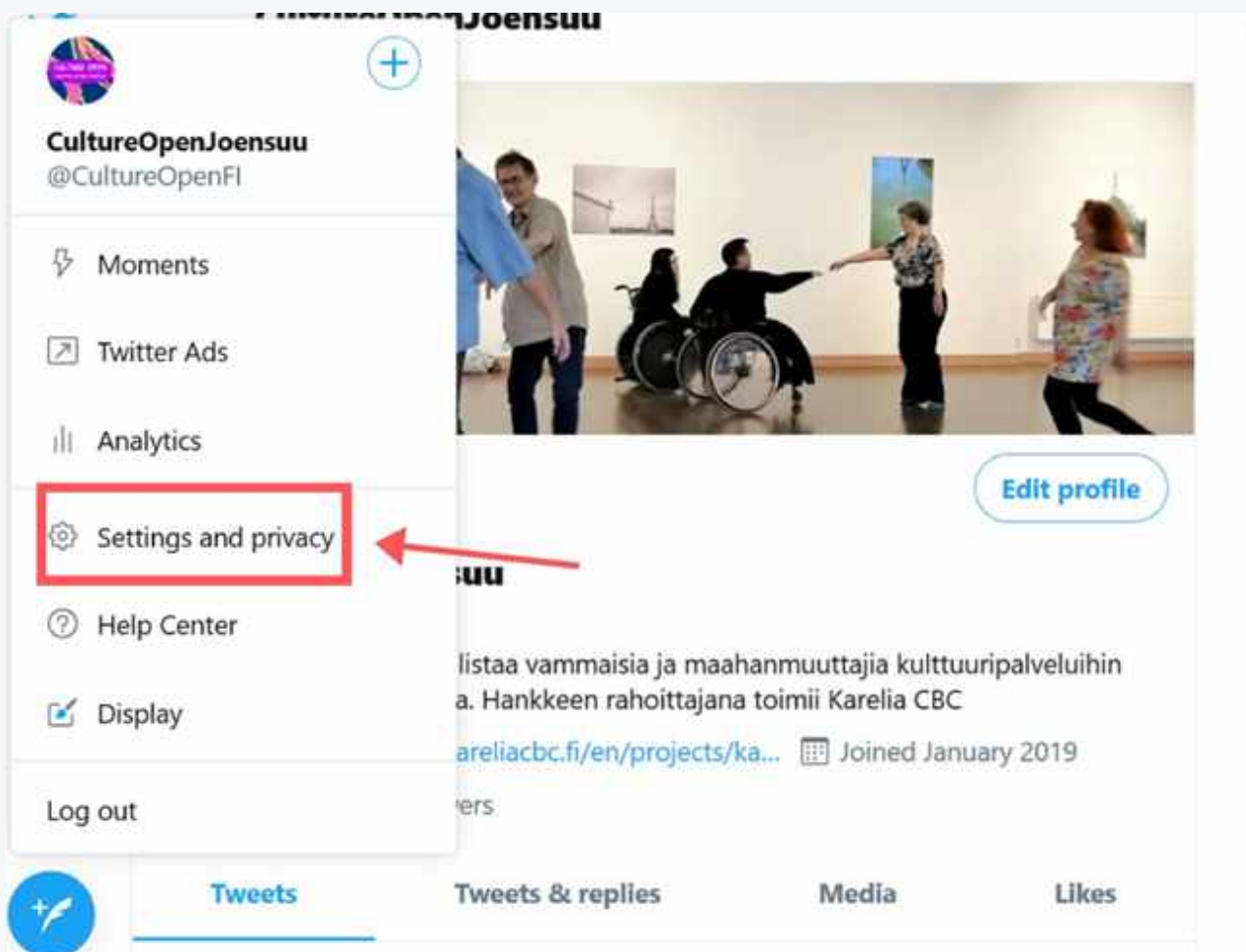


Alternative Text on Twitter

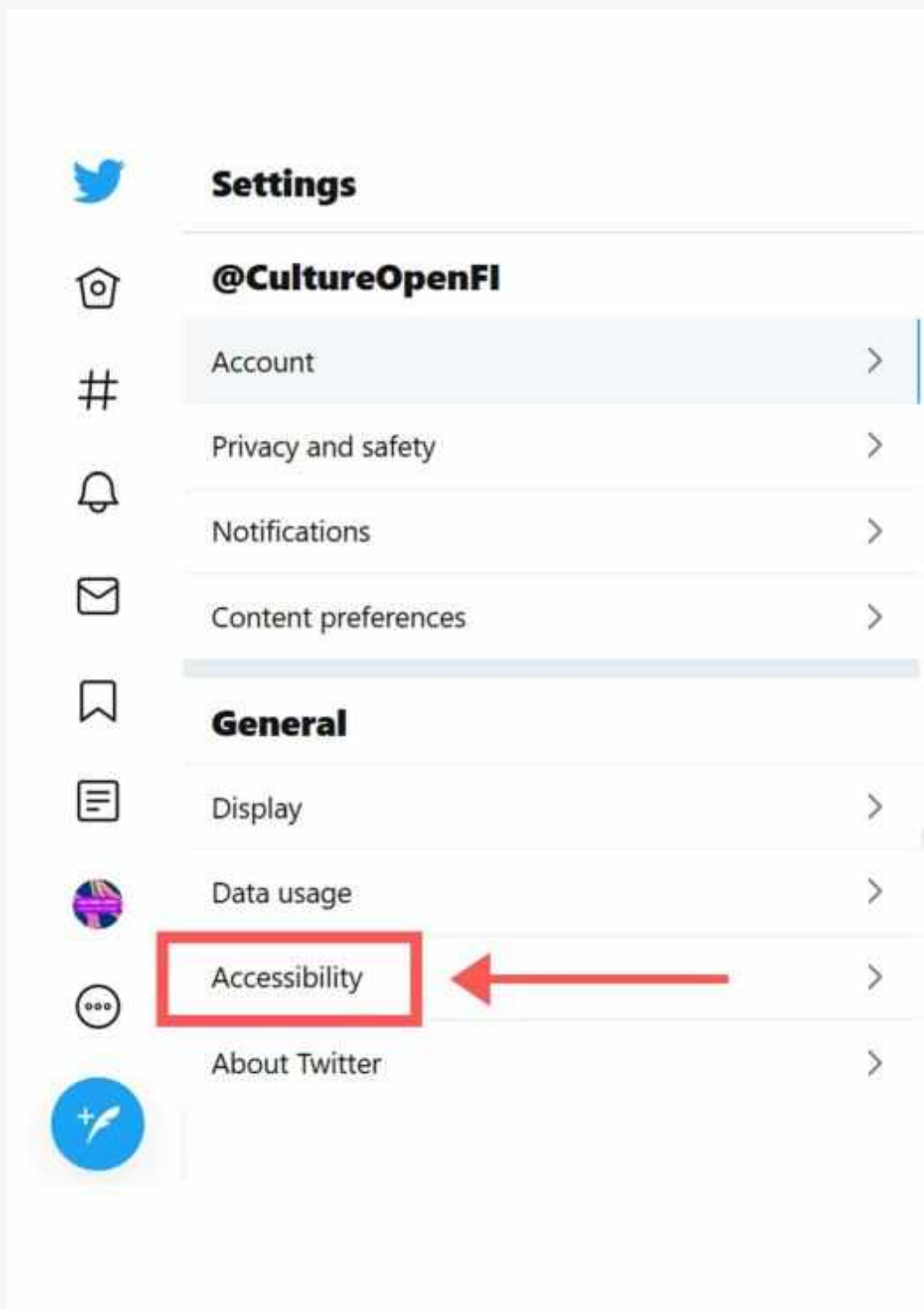
On Twitter you may add Alternative Text by clicking the profile settings:



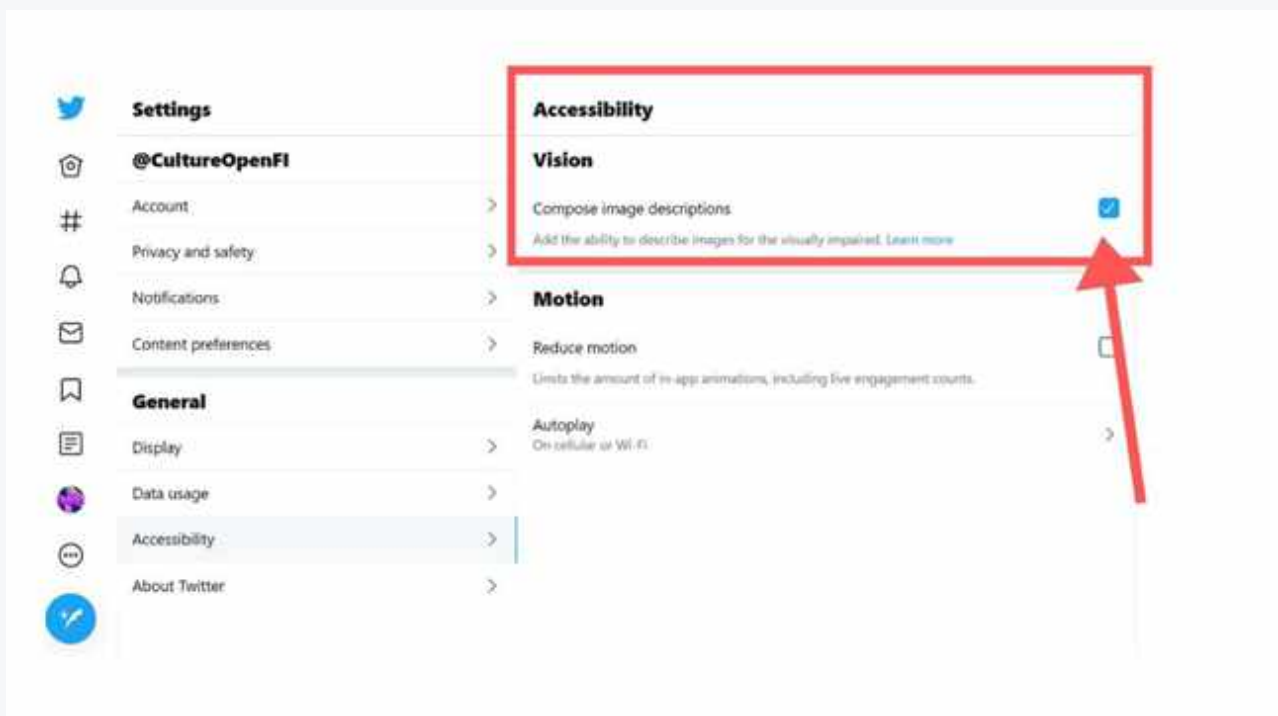
- On Menu, choose "settings and privacy"



- On sub-menu, choose "accessibility".



- On "accessibility", click "image" and click blue the box "compose image descriptions".



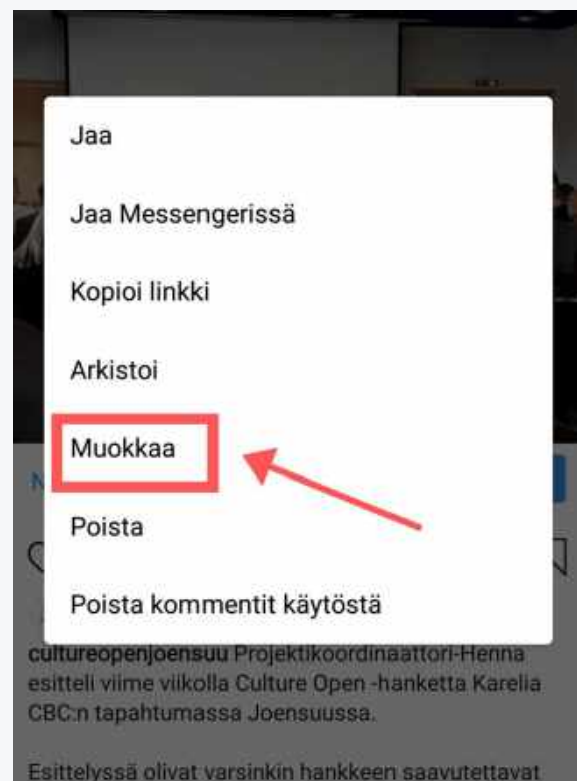
- Once the Alternative Text has been activated on Twitter, you may add the Alt Text by clicking the "add description" -bar.

Alternative Text on Instagram

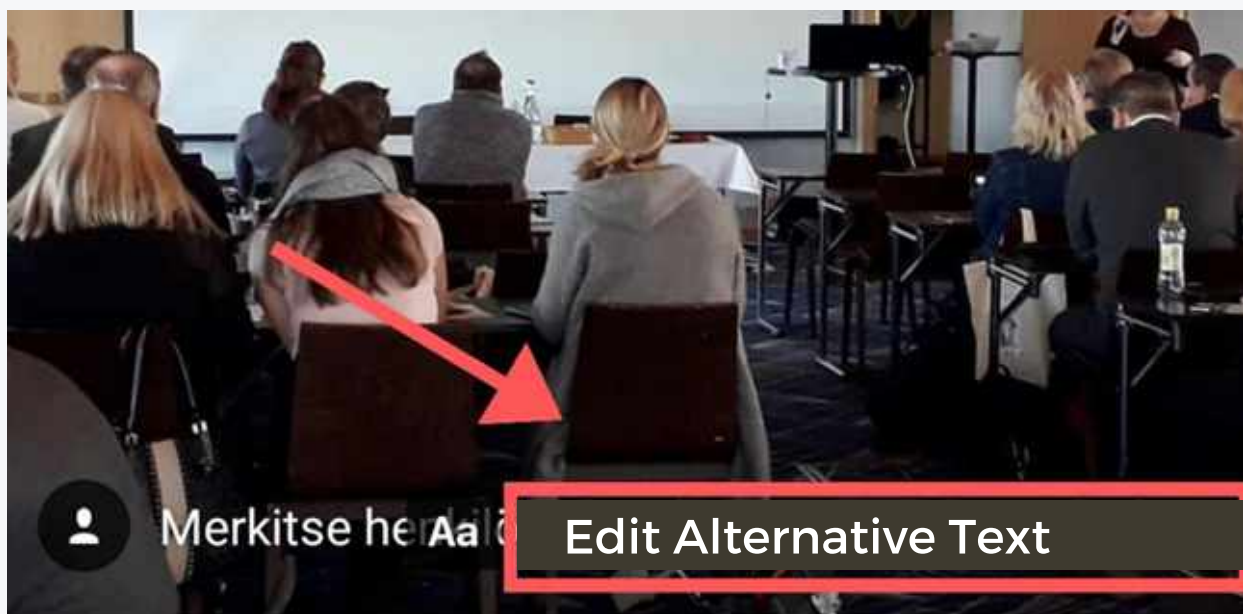
On Instagram there are two ways you may include Alternative Text to your images.

Option A

- Click the image you have published.
- Click the menu appearing on the upper right side of the image (appearing as three dots).
- Choose "Edit"



- On the bottom of the image you will now see the text "edit alternative text".



Project Coordinator Henna presented the Culture Open -project last week at a Karelia CBC -event in Joensuu.

In her presentation, she emphasized especially the project's blog and accessible social media channels.

#cultureopen #cultureopenfi
#cultureopenjoensuu #kareliacbc

- Write your Alternative Text in the box and click the blue tick.



ALTERNATIVE TEXT



Write Alternative Text here.



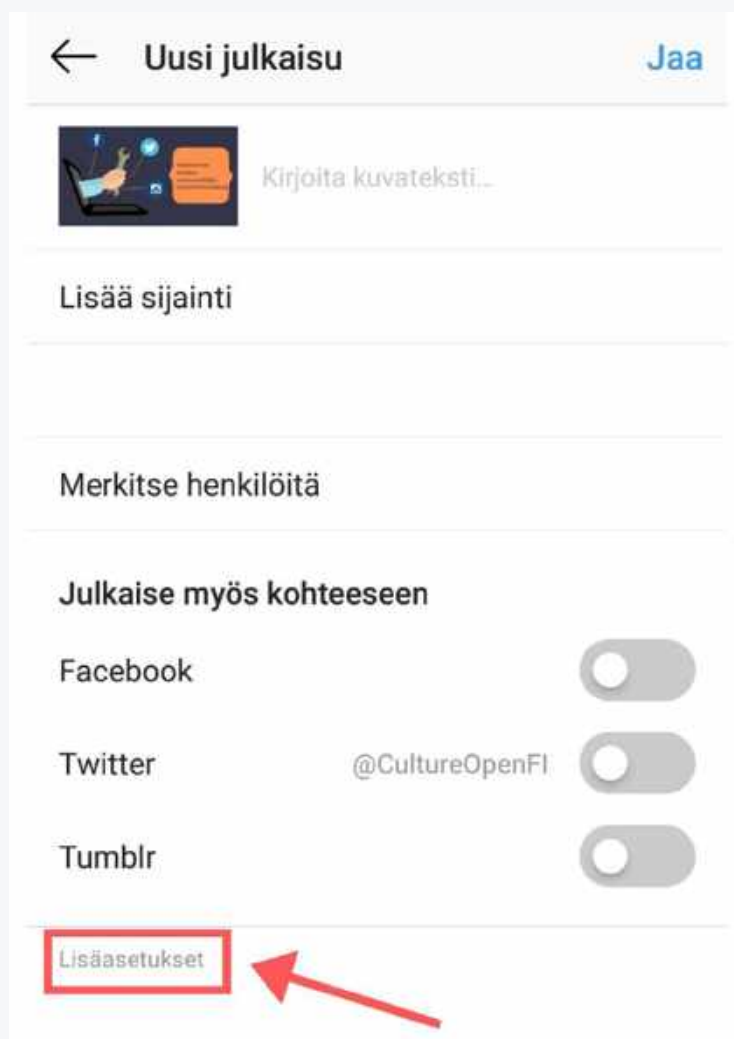
Henna stands in front of a screen. She talks to representatives of other Karelia CBC -projects about accessible communication.

Option B


You can also include the Alternative Text to your image as you as publishing it.

Including Alternative Text on a new publication:

- Choose "additional settings" on the menu under the box for your image description.



← Uusi julkaisu Jaa

 Kirjoita kuvateksti...

Lisää sijainti

Merkitse henkilöitä

Julkaise myös kohteeseen

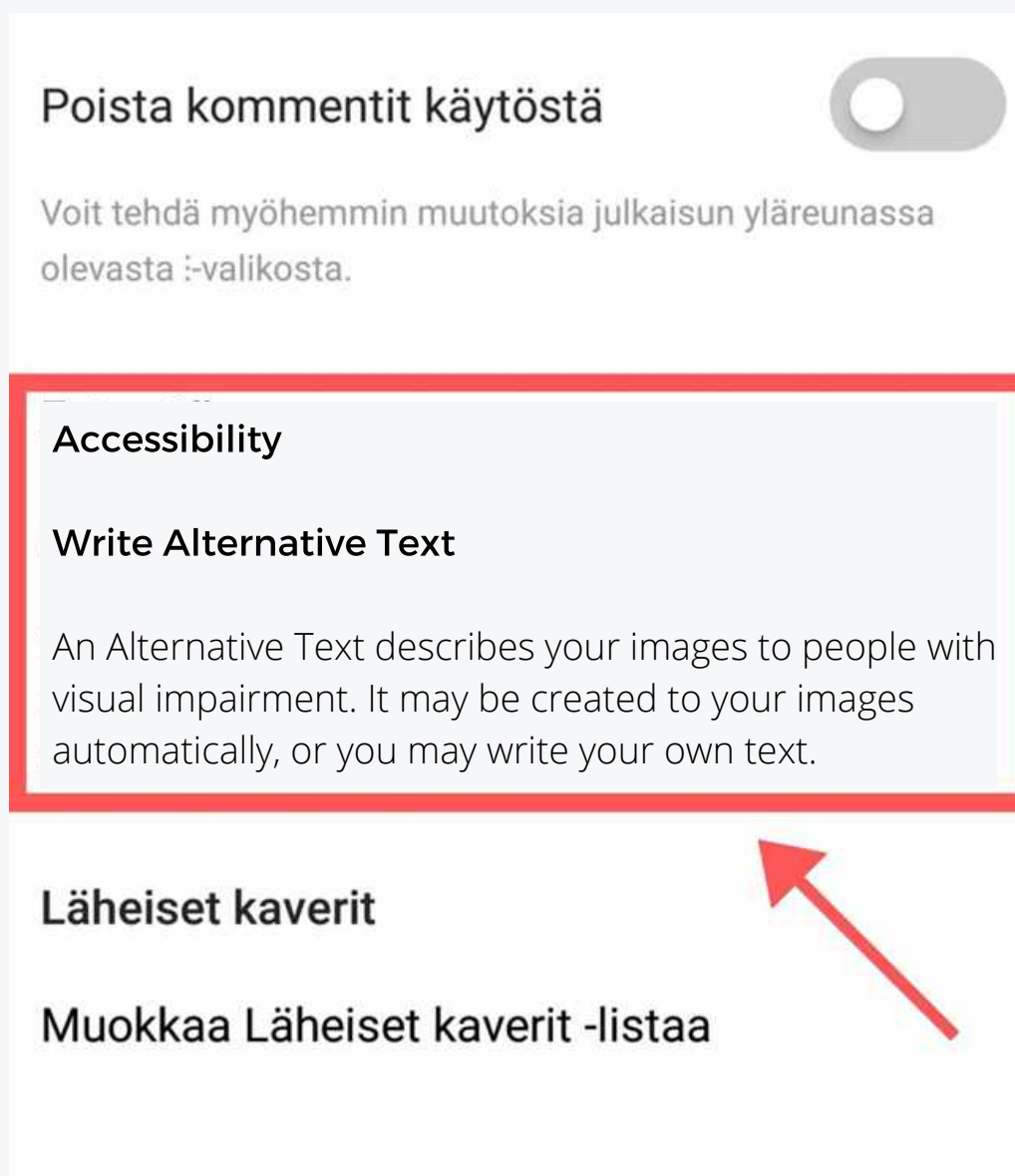
Facebook ☐

Twitter @CultureOpenFI ☐

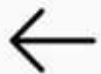
Tumblr ☐

Lisäasetukset

- After clicking "additional settings", click "accessibility" and choose "write alternative text".



- Write your Alternative Text in the text box, then click "save button in blue".



ALTERNATIVE TEXT

SAVE



Illustration of a wrench appearing from a computer screen. Accompanied with text telling about the accessibility of Alternative Text.

How to write a good Alternative Text

Alternative Text is primarily a short description of an image. A good Alternative Text answers the following questions:

- Who?
- Where?
- What?
- To whom/ with you?

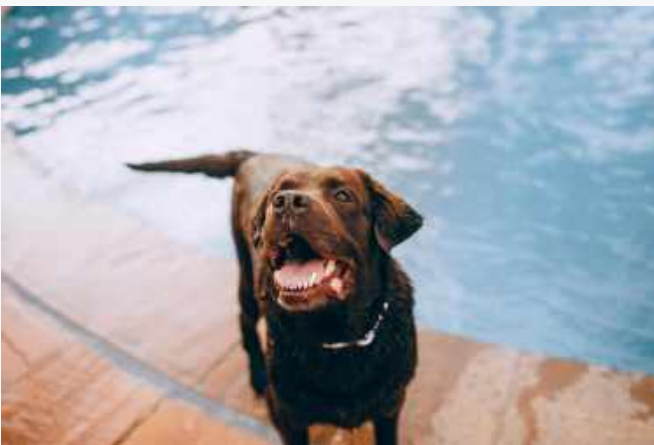
If you describe a photograph you do not need to say in the Alternative Text that the image is a photo. Instead, if you describe an animated image, you may want to highlight the specific medium.



Example:

A cartoon of a red-haired woman sitting in her office. She is looking at her computer screen, while talking on the phone and taking notes.

With photos it is unnecessary to include the media:



Example:

A brown dog barks at the camera by a pool of water.

Try to be concise and specific:



Bad Alt Text:

Mitch and Laura enjoy music.

Good Alt Text:

Mitch and Laura sit relaxed by a wall. Mitch listens, while Laura plays the guitar.

What makes this a good Alternative Text?



Alternative Text:

Mitch and Laura sit relaxed by a wall. Mitch listens, while Laura plays the guitar.

This Alternative Text answers the following questions:

Who? Mitch and Laura

Where? By a wall

What? Playing the guitar and listening

To whom/ with who? With each other

Sources on Alternative Text

WebAIM-guide to Alternative Text:

<https://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>

Moz-guide to Alternative Text:

<https://moz.com/learn/seo/alt-text>

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C):

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/alt/>

How to Use Alternative Text on Social Media -guide is part of Culture Open -project's guidelines for accessibility.

Culture Open develops inclusive and accessible cultural services for immigrants and people with disabilities in Joensuu and Petrozavodsk.

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KARELIA

CBC // Cross-border cooperation



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