Accessibility Plan 2022–2025

Large Print

CONTENTS

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2022–2025

MESSAGE FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIAN

As the Parliament of Canada's knowledge centre, the Library of Parliament has a diverse and committed team of employees who play an important role in supporting Canada's parliamentary democracy. We offer a wide variety of services to parliamentarians, including confidential reference, research and analysis services, news from around the globe and an extensive collection of resources. The Library also welcomes visitors to Parliament with a number of services, including guided tours. As well, we respond to general inquiries from the public on the role, history and work of the Parliament of Canada. Further, our educational programs and resources equip teachers and students with the tools they need to understand how parliamentary democracy works.

The Library understands the importance of accessibility, and we are committed to providing a barrier-free environment for our employees, clients and the public. In order to remove barriers to accessibility, it is essential that we know what they are. We have been working assiduously to identify and eliminate barriers in our workplace, and while we have made great strides, there is still work to do. This three-year plan charts the way forward towards a barrier-free Library. It outlines our key priorities and what we hope to accomplish for each one. While we have undertaken broad consultations in developing this plan, we welcome feedback at any time about accessibility at the Library.

Dr. Heather P. Lank
Parliamentary Librarian

GENERAL

The Senior Project Coordinator, Accessibility, provides leadership and central oversight in the planning and managing of key projects and initiatives in support of the Library of Parliament's corporate-wide accessibility strategy. Questions or inquiries about the Library's accessibility plan or other accessibility initiatives can be sent to:

Senior Project Coordinator, Accessibility
Library of Parliament
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A9

Email: LopAccessibleBdP@parl.gc.ca
Phone: 613-947-7333

You can also share your feedback about accessibility at the Library by completing our online form.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Library of Parliament is committed to becoming a leader in accessibility. Our goal is to remove barriers to accessibility for employees, clients and the public by January 1, 2040, at the latest.

The Library of Parliament Accessibility Plan 2022–2025 describes how we will strengthen accessibility within our organization in the seven priority areas identified in the *Accessible Canada Act*. We have elected to add an eighth priority – culture – as we believe that a stronger culture of knowledge, awareness and understanding among our employees regarding disabilities and the importance of accessibility will be crucial in helping us reach our goals.

The plan was developed by Library employees in consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, clients and the public. Consultations were held at all stages of the development of the plan: the identification of accessibility barriers and gaps, the setting of objectives and testing accessibility before publication, among others. The Library will continue to consult with persons with disabilities to ensure we understand, identify, eliminate and prevent accessibility barriers for all.

PLANNING AND REPORTING CYCLE

The *Accessible Canada Act* and the annexed *Accessible Canada Regulations* establish a three-year planning and reporting cycle. The Library of Parliament will publish progress reports on the implementation of its accessibility plan in December of 2023 and 2024. The plan will be reviewed and updated every three years, with the first updated plan to be published in December 2025. As was the case for the current plan, progress reports and updated plans will be produced in collaboration with persons with different types of disabilities.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Library of Parliament is committed to offering an inclusive and accessible environment for employees, clients and the public. To do so, the Library works closely with parliamentary partners and partners in the Government of Canada.

The Library is committed to providing equitable services that are accessible to the most diverse group of users possible, regardless of ability. We are actively working to remove accessibility barriers and gaps for employees, clients and the public in everything we do.

- The Library is working towards Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA compliance. Our public websites are compatible with assistive technologies and work best on modern browsers. Additionally, the Library uses a variety of digital tools that meet the accessibility needs of our employees and our parliamentary and government partners.

- The Library of Parliament Accessibility Plan 2022–2025 has been published on our website but is also available upon request in other formats, such as:
  - print;
  - large print;
  - Braille;
  - audio format; and
  - electronic format.
- The Library aims to go above and beyond leading accessibility standards such as WCAG by implementing Universal Accessibility (UA) best practices.

PRIORITY AREAS

In consultation with employees, clients and the public, including persons with different types of disabilities, the Library of Parliament identified goals and actions to improve accessibility in eight priority areas: employment; built environment; information and communication technologies; communication; procurement of goods, services and facilities; design and delivery of programs and services; transportation; and culture.

A. EMPLOYMENT

General objective:

Promote accessible and inclusive human resource management practices so that all employees, current and future, are supported and can contribute to the organization to their full potential

1. OVERVIEW

Approximately 460 employees work at the Library in various positions in the organization's service areas: Parliamentary Information, Education and Research Services; Information and Document Resource Services; Corporate Services; and the Office of the Parliamentary Librarian. Library staff consists of determinate and indeterminate employees, students and parliamentary guides.

Some of the barriers to employment identified during consultations include gaps in the [workplace accommodation](#) process and potential issues in recruitment and retention. Some employees also mentioned a lack of awareness of topics related to disability and accessibility.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: Ensure that recruitment and assessment tools, processes and resources are accessible and inclusive, with a goal of attracting, hiring and supporting employees who have a wide range of backgrounds and abilities.

  - Ensure that human resources specialists have the necessary training in accessibility best practices for recruiting and assessing prospective and current employees.

  - In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, review current recruitment and assessment processes to identify accessibility barriers and gaps in recruitment and retention.

  - Conduct an environmental scan and research best practices regarding recruitment and assessment of persons with disabilities.

  - Adapt current recruitment and assessment processes and develop new accessible processes to address identified barriers and gaps, as required.

- Plain-language principles will be applied to communications at all stages of recruitment and assessment.

- Measure the effectiveness of the changes made to recruitment and assessment processes in eliminating accessibility barriers and continue to adapt as required.

- *Expected completion*:

  - 2023: identify barriers and gaps, analysis and training

  - 2024 and 2025: implement updated recruitment and assessment tools and processes

  - 2025 and beyond: measure the effectiveness of updated tools and processes in eliminating barriers

- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective B**: Ensure that human resources specialists, supervisors, managers and employees at all levels are trained on accessibility issues, including accessibility barriers and gaps, unconscious bias and ableism, and workplace accommodation.

  - Assess the Library's current training offerings on accessibility and identify gaps.

  - Research existing accessibility training programs offered by reliable providers with expertise in this field, such as parliamentary partners, government departments, the private sector or academia.

- In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, develop a plan for ongoing, mandatory accessibility training geared to specific audiences at the Library (i.e., employees, managers, HR specialists). Training should address issues such as identifying and removing accessibility barriers and gaps, unconscious biases, ableism, the duty to accommodate and workplace accommodation policies and procedures.

- Deliver and track the training.

- Measure the effectiveness of the training plan in eliminating barriers and gaps and continue to adapt it as required.

- *Expected completion*:

  - 2023–2024: identify needs, develop a plan and enhance existing training programs. Some ad hoc delivery of training.

  - 2024–2025: start delivering training as per the plan

  - 2025 and beyond: measure the effectiveness of the training in eliminating accessibility barriers and adapt the plan as required

- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective C**: Engage with persons with different types of disabilities to review the Library's approach to onboarding new employees and the employment life cycle. Identify accessibility barriers, gaps and areas in need of improvement and develop an action plan to remove these barriers.

  - Assess the Library's approach to onboarding new employees and the employment life cycle to identify barriers and gaps.

  - Research existing best practices of reliable providers with expertise in this field, such as parliamentary partners, government departments, the private sector or academia.

  - In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, identify and implement solutions to address accessibility barriers and gaps identified.

  - Measure the effectiveness of the proposed solutions in eliminating accessibility barriers and gaps and continue to adapt as required.

  - *Expected completion*:

    – 2023–2026: identify barriers and gaps and identify and implement solutions

    – 2027 and beyond: measure and adapt

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective D**: Review workplace accommodation policies and procedures to identify accessibility barriers and gaps in such areas as awareness, communications, tools, management skills and competencies in managing workplace accommodation.

  - Consult with all employees, including those who have received accommodation, to identify barriers and gaps in the workplace accommodation policies and procedures relating to persons with disabilities.

  - Research existing best practices of reliable providers with expertise in this field, such as parliamentary partners, government departments, the private sector or academia.

  - Where required, develop or enhance processes, tools, training, communications and competencies related to accommodation policies and procedures, measure their effectiveness and continue to adapt as required in order to address identified gaps.

  - *Expected completion*:

    - 2023–2024: identify existing barriers or gaps

    - 2024–2025: develop or update and implement the policies, procedures, tools, training, communications and competencies

    - 2025 and beyond: measure their effectiveness in eliminating barriers and gaps

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

B. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

General objective:

Provide a barrier-free environment with secure access by employees, clients and the public within Library spaces

1. OVERVIEW

The Library offers a variety of services to clients and the public, and it has offices for its employees in various locations in the Parliamentary Precinct and beyond.

The Library works in collaboration with the Senate of Canada, the House of Commons, and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to ensure that our physical spaces are accessible to everyone. The Library's spaces are provided and maintained by PSPC.

Barriers relating to the built environment identified during consultations include heavy doors, missing or broken automatic door openers, limited access to washrooms and the need to update the Library's evacuation plan.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: In collaboration with PSPC and persons with different types of disabilities, identify accessibility barriers and gaps regarding the Library's built environment and services through surveys, consultations and site visits. Identify and review areas in need of improvement and develop an action plan to remove barriers and address gaps.

  - Review UA audits of the Library's built environment and services from PSPC as they become available.

  - In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, perform accessibility assessments, such as surveys, consultations and site visits, to identify barriers to the accessibility of the Library's built environment and services.

  - In collaboration with parliamentary partners and PSPC, as appropriate, and in consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, research potential solutions and Parliamentary Precinct UA best practices, to eliminate the barriers raised.

  - Present, as appropriate, possible solutions to eliminate barriers and gaps in the Library's built environment and services to persons with disabilities and get their feedback.

  - *Expected completion*: Ongoing

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective B**: In collaboration with parliamentary partners, engage with persons with different types of disabilities to review the Library's emergency procedures and its Business Continuity Plan (BCP), with particular attention to the unique barriers persons with disabilities face. Identify and review areas in need of improvement and develop an action plan to remove the barriers.

  - In consultation with employees with different types of disabilities and with associations representing persons with disabilities, review the Library's current emergency procedures and BCP to identify accessibility barriers and gaps.

  - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia regarding accessible emergency procedures and business continuity plans.

  - Develop an action plan to modify the emergency procedures and BCP from an accessibility perspective.

  - Update training materials related to emergency procedures and the BCP to incorporate accessibility measures.

  - Build awareness among employees and develop a communications plan to inform employees about the updated emergency procedures and BCP.

  - *Expected completion*: 2023–2024 and ongoing

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

- **Objective C**: Build awareness among Library employees, clients and the public about the accessibility features of the Library's built environment and services available in the Library's workplace and public-facing spaces.
    - Consult persons with different types of disabilities on what new accessibility features or services could make the Library's built environment more accessible.
    - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia regarding incorporating accessibility features into the built environment (e.g., automatic door opening, signage, etc.) that could strengthen accessibility at the Library.
    - Develop a suite of tools (e.g., signage or web-based) to showcase the accessibility features of the Library's built environment and services.
    - Build awareness among employees and clients and develop a communications plan to inform employees and clients of the accessibility features of the Library's built environment and services.
    - *Expected completion*: 2023–2024 and ongoing
    - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services, Office of the Parliamentary Librarian and Parliamentary Information, Education and Research Services
- **Objective D**: Promote a scent-free environment in the Parliamentary Precinct, in collaboration with parliamentary partners and service providers.
    - Install signs to remind employees of the Parliamentary Precinct's scent-free policy.

- Build awareness of how this policy applies within Library workspaces and why.
- Encourage visitors and contractors to participate in the scent-free environment.
- Procure, whenever possible, products that are scent-free (office supplies, cleaning products, washroom products, etc.).
- *Expected completion*: 2023–2024
- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

C. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

General objective:

Promote and procure information and communication technologies that can be used by all employees, clients and the Canadian public, regardless of ability

1. OVERVIEW

The Library is an environment rich in information and communication technologies (ICT). The Library has a large web presence and is active on social media. Clients access Library products and services through digital platforms, including an intranet site, a client portal, our e-collections and more. The public can use our digital

platforms to learn about Parliament, reserve tickets to visit Parliament and shop at the Parliamentary Boutique. In addition to maintaining this digital presence, Library employees use a variety of software and tools throughout their workday.

Barriers relating to ICT identified during consultations include documents that are not fully accessible, a lack of training in accessible documents or IT systems, missing alternative text on some images produced by the Library and the fact that websites and systems are not tested by persons needing adaptations.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: Engage regularly with persons with different types of disabilities to test and assess the accessibility of ICT systems, hardware and software.
  - Modify our processes whereby users, including those with different types of disabilities, can test ICT systems, hardware and software to ensure they meet the accessibility needs of employees, clients and the public.
  - *Expected completion*: 2023–2024 and ongoing
  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective B**: Modify the assessment process for procuring or developing new ICT systems, hardware and software to determine whether they meet leading accessibility standards and any changes that are required to meet those accessibility standards.

  - In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, develop a process whereby users, regardless of ability, can test ICT systems, hardware and software to ensure they meet accessibility standards.

  - Develop a process to ensure new ICT systems, hardware, and software – whether they are procured externally or developed internally – meet the leading accessibility standards (such as WCAG) and determine how well they interact with adaptive technologies.

  - Build awareness among employees and develop a communications plan to help employees and managers understand the importance of considering accessibility from the very start of the ICT procurement process.

  - *Expected completion*: 2025–2026

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

- **Objective C**: Review the major corporate ICT systems, hardware and software currently in use at the Library to identify and address accessibility barriers and gaps.

  - Develop a prioritized list of major corporate systems to identify and address accessibility barriers and, depending on the urgency, assess the scope and impact of making changes to these systems to meet accessibility standards.

- In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, test all major corporate systems, hardware and software to ensure they are fully accessible and address barriers as required.

- *Expected completion*: 2025–2026

- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

- **Objective D**: Train employees at all levels on how to create accessible documents and how to hold accessible meetings and events, whether virtually or in person.

  - Assess the level of knowledge within the Library about creating accessible documents and holding accessible virtual or in-person events, as well as the Library's current training offerings.

  - Assess existing accessibility standards and tools at the Library used in producing documents, including documents for clients.

  - Assess existing accessibility standards and tools at the Library used in organizing virtual and in-person meetings or events, both among employees and clients.

  - Research existing training on creating accessible documents and holding accessible virtual or in-person meetings or events offered by parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia.

  - In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, develop and implement, as required, training tailored to the Library's needs.

- Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees on how to create accessible documents and hold accessible virtual or in-person meetings and events.

- Build awareness among employees and develop a communications plan to inform employees of the tools and training available to help them create accessible documents.

- *Expected completion*: 2023–2024 and ongoing

- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

- **Objective E**: Provide training on accessibility and the needs of persons with different types of disabilities to those responsible for creating web content, including ICT specialists, publishing and communications specialists, other employees and external consultants. Build awareness of the requirement to incorporate accessibility into the assessment, development and implementation of ICT systems, hardware and software.

  - Assess the level of knowledge within the Library about creating accessible web content and current training offerings.

  - Research training offered by parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia regarding the creation of accessible web content.

  - In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, develop and deliver, as required, training tailored to the Library's needs.

- Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees creating accessible web content.

- Build awareness among employees and develop a communications plan to inform employees of the tools and training available to help them create accessible web content.

- *Expected completion*: 2025–2026

- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

D. COMMUNICATION

General objective:

Promote equal access to information, in both official languages, for the Library's employees, clients and the public, regardless of ability

1. OVERVIEW

The Library produces a large volume of information and resources for clients. It also provides guided tours of Parliament and learning resources to help the public understand and engage with Parliament. Library employees participate in meetings and events and utilize different forms of information and resources to help them in their work.

Barriers relating to communication identified during consultations include a lack of guidance for using closed captioning or sign language interpretation, alternate formats for publications and a lack of training in how to produce accessible publications.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: Develop tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees on the use of sign language and closed captioning for meetings and events.
  - In consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, research best practices of parliamentary partners, government organizations, including the Translation Bureau, the private sector and academia, regarding the use of sign language and closed captioning for meetings and events.
  - Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees in the use of sign language and closed captioning for meetings and events.
  - Build awareness among employees and develop a communications plan to inform employees of the tools available to help them facilitate sign language and closed captioning for meetings and events.
  - *Expected completion*: 2024–2025
  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

- **Objective B**: Develop tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees about preparing written communications in alternate formats, including print, large print, Braille, audio, or electronic formats before receiving an official request to do so.

  - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia regarding the preparation of written communications in alternate formats.

  - Discuss best practices with persons with different types of disabilities.

  - Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that provide guidance to employees about preparing written communications in alternate formats.

  - Build awareness among relevant employees and develop communication plans to inform employees of the tools available to help them prepare written communications in alternate formats.

  - *Expected completion*: 2023–2024

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services, Office of the Parliamentary Librarian and Parliamentary Information, Education and Research Services

- **Objective C**: Engage with persons with different types of disabilities to develop tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees about preparing digital media to ensure they are fully accessible to persons with various types of disabilities.

  - Consult experts within the Library on best practices in preparing accessible digital media products and supplement this information with best practices from parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia, as required.

  - Discuss best practices with persons with different types of disabilities.

  - Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees in creating accessible digital media, informed by consultations with persons with different disabilities.

  - Build awareness among relevant employees and develop communications plans to inform employees of the tools available to help them create accessible digital media.

  - *Expected completion*: 2023–2024

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services, Office of the Parliamentary Librarian and Parliamentary Information, Education and Research Services

- **Objective D**: Provide workshops or training to equip employees to develop communications products that are more accessible to the Library's diverse audiences.

  - Consult experts within the Library about existing best practices in accessible communications and, as required, supplement this information with best practices from parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia.

  - Assess how the Library currently trains employees on accessible communications and, as required, develop training offerings or update current ones.

  - Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees in preparing accessible communications products.

  - Build awareness among relevant employees and develop communication plans to inform employees of the tools and training available to help them create accessible communications products.

  - *Expected completion*: 2025–2026

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services, Office of the Parliamentary Librarian and Parliamentary Information, Education and Research Services

E. PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

> **General objective:**
>
> Implement procurement practices for goods, services and facilities that are accessible to the Library's employees, clients and the public, regardless of ability

1. OVERVIEW

The Library procures goods, services and facilities in accordance with various internal policies and public sector financial and accounting norms.

No barriers relating to the procurement of goods, services and facilities were identified during consultations. However, the Library has developed some objectives related to procurement to ensure it does not create new accessibility barriers when procuring goods, services and facilities.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: Add information on accessibility to the mandatory training for procurement specialists and cost centre managers, highlighting the importance of including accessibility considerations at all steps of procurement processes and practices.

  - Complete an evaluation of the Library's training needs and current training offerings related to procurement from an accessibility perspective.

  - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia regarding developing and delivering accessible procurement policies.

  - Develop procurement training offerings or update existing ones, as required.

  - Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees in the development and delivery of accessible procurement policies and practices.

  - Build awareness among relevant employees and develop communications plans to inform employees of the tools and training available to help them ensure procurement processes and practices are accessible.

  - *Expected completion*: 2024–2025

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective B**: Examine the possibility of requiring information about accessibility be included in scope-of-work documentation as part of the procurement processes.
    - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia regarding incorporating accessibility requirements into scope-of-work documentation.
    - Consult the Library's General Counsel about the feasibility of this requirement.
    - *Expected completion*: 2024–2025
    - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian
- **Objective C**: Examine the possibility of requiring a clause in contracts to ensure accessibility in the delivery/implementation of goods, services and technical solutions. Ensure that accessibility standards are considered during future updates or changes to services or technical solutions.
    - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia regarding incorporating accessibility standards into contracts.
    - Consult the Library's General Counsel about the feasibility of this requirement.
    - *Expected completion*: 2024–2025
    - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services and Office of the Parliamentary Librarian

F. DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

General objective:

Design and deliver programs and services that are accessible to Library employees, clients and the public, regardless of ability

1. OVERVIEW

The Library provides programs and services to its employees, parliamentarians and their staff and the public. This includes giving guided tours of Parliament, designing and delivering educational programs and providing customized research and curated information, among other offerings.

No specific barriers relating to the design and delivery of the Library's programs and services were identified during consultations. However, the Library has developed some objectives to ensure our programs and services – current and future – are barrier-free.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: Consult persons with different types of disabilities to identify ways to make our programs and services more inclusive and to prevent barriers to accessibility.

  - Identify programs and services that would benefit from consultation.

  - Identify ways to consult persons with different types of disabilities.

  - *Expected completion*: Ongoing

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective B**: Review the design and delivery of existing Library programs and services to identify any accessibility barriers and develop tools and processes to adapt them as required to ensure accessibility is fully integrated into program design and delivery.

  - Consult persons with different types of disabilities to identify barriers to accessing Library programs and services and to understand the accommodations needed so that everyone can access them, regardless of ability.

  - Develop a prioritization document, outlining the order in which programs and services will be reviewed for accessibility.

- Develop and implement, in consultation with persons with disabilities, tools and processes to provide guidance to Library employees reviewing the design and delivery of the Library's programs and services from an accessibility perspective.

- Build awareness among employees and develop communications plans to inform employees of the tools available to help them review the design and delivery of Library programs and services from an accessibility perspective.

- *Expected completion*: Ongoing

- *Responsibility*: All employees and managers with executive and senior management accountability

- **Objective C**: Ensure that accessibility is a priority during the design and delivery of all new and updated Library programs and services.

  - Develop and implement, in consultation with persons with different types of disabilities, tools, processes and guidelines to incorporate accessibility into the design and delivery of all new and updated Library programs and services.

  - Ensure that accessibility is considered during the approval process for new projects or initiatives and updates to existing programs and services.

- Build awareness among employees and develop communications plans to inform employees of the tools available to help them ensure that accessibility is incorporated into the design and delivery of all new and updated programs and services.

- *Expected completion*: Ongoing

- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services, Office of the Parliamentary Librarian, Parliamentary Information, Education and Research Services, and Information and Document Resource Services

- **Objective D**: Equip all employees and managers with tools and training to design and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and services.

  - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia in designing accessible programs and services and training resources.

  - Develop training offerings or enhance current ones to meet the Library's need to deliver accessible programs, policies and services.

  - Develop a suite of tools, including checklists, that will provide guidance to employees in the design and delivery of accessible and inclusive programs, policies and services.

- Build awareness among employees and develop a communications plan to inform employees of the tools and training available to help them design and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and services.
- *Expected completion*: Ongoing
- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

G. TRANSPORTATION

General objective:

Enable work-related transportation for Library employees that is accessible for all, regardless of ability

1. OVERVIEW

The Library offers services in various locations in and near the Parliamentary Precinct, and its employees interact with clients in different buildings, which requires travelling between locations at times. Some employees also travel to other areas of Canada or abroad for work-related activities in support of parliamentary committees and associations.

Only a few barriers relating to transportation were identified during consultations, including accessible parking spaces or drop-off zones close to the workplace for persons with disabilities.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: Review the accessible transportation options that Library employees can access to perform their work duties, including work activities organized by partners, and build awareness of those options with employees.

  - Review current transportation options with persons with different types of disabilities to identify accessibility barriers and gaps in transportation options available to Library employees.

  - Research best practices of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia in providing accessible transportation options to employees.

  - Develop new transportation options for employees, as required, and build awareness of them.

  - Update the Library's onboarding process to include information about accessible transportation options.

  - *Expected completion*: 2023–2024

  - *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

- **Objective B**: Review the Library's Directive on the Management of Expenditures on Travel and Conferences to ensure all employees can travel safely when travelling on Library business, regardless of ability.

  - Review the Library's Directive on the Management of Expenditures on Travel and Conferences with persons with different types of disabilities to identify accessibility barriers and gaps.

- Research similar directives of parliamentary partners, government, the private sector and academia.
- Update the directive as required and build awareness of the updated directive among employees.
- Work with parliamentary partners to ensure Library employees can travel safely when participating in committee and association travel, regardless of ability.
- *Expected completion*: 2023–2024
- *Responsibility*: Corporate Services

H. CULTURE

General objective:

Create a culture at the Library that embraces accessibility in all aspects of the Library's work

1. OVERVIEW

Culture is not one of the official priority areas of the *Accessible Canada Act*. However, to be able to remove all accessibility barriers by January 1, 2040, the Library has chosen to include it as a priority area so that a commitment to accessibility is shared by all employees.

2. OBJECTIVES

- **Objective A**: Develop and provide mandatory and optional training and awareness sessions for all employees on accessibility, barriers, inclusion and unconscious bias to build an accessible, confident organization.

  - Assess the level of awareness of accessibility issues among employees of the Library and the current training offerings available to them.

  - Research existing accessibility training programs offered by reliable providers with expertise in this field, such as parliamentary partners, government departments, the private sector or academia.

  - Develop or update, as required, training offerings on the topics of accessibility, barriers, ableism, inclusion and unconscious bias and build awareness among employees of the available training.

  - *Expected completion*: 2023–2024 and ongoing

  - *Responsibility*: All managers and employees

CONSULTATIONS

A. OVERVIEW

In keeping with the "Nothing without us" principle, consultations with persons with disabilities were and are an essential part of this accessibility plan. In January and February 2022, the Library consulted persons with various types of disabilities (visible and invisible, permanent and episodic), as well as allies of those with disabilities. Employees at all levels of the Library were invited to participate in group or one-on-one sessions or to provide anonymized or informal feedback. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the group and one-on-one sessions were conducted virtually.

Consultations also took place with key partners and clients in the parliamentary community and with members of the public through various working group and advisory committee meetings and client satisfaction surveys.

To ensure the consultations were accessible to all, separate English and French sessions with closed captioning were offered. Participants were asked if they required any accommodations to participate fully. Participants also had the option of submitting written feedback.

Consultations were held to identify accessibility barriers in each of the seven priority areas set out in the *Accessible Canada Act* plus culture and to listen to personal experiences and suggestions for improvements. The findings from these consultations guided the Library in preparing this accessibility plan. Consultations were also held on the plan itself.

B. WHAT WE HEARD

Overall, those we consulted said that the Library is on the right path to providing an accessible environment but that work is still needed to make the Library barrier-free.

Some employees are still reticent to self-identify as a person with a disability for fear of hindering their careers. The barriers that were most often raised by employees in the consultation process are the lack of awareness and training on the topics of disabilities and accessibility, as well as gaps in the accommodation process. Some participants suggested that there might be some barriers in the recruitment process and in the retention of employees with disabilities.

In the physical environment, the barriers identified were mainly those that are flagged more generally by persons with disabilities: heavy doors, missing or broken automatic door openers and limited access to washrooms. The need to update the evacuation plan was also mentioned many times.

A few barriers were raised in information and communication technologies, including no closed captioning in meetings, no alternative text on some images and the lack of fully accessible documents. The Library's websites and systems are also not tested by persons needing adaptations.

One theme that was repeated by many of the people that were consulted is that Universal Accessibility will be key in attaining our goal of a barrier-free Library by 2040. Accessibility is not just about the result; it is also about every step in the process. Accessible spaces, programs and communication benefit not only persons with disabilities but everyone.

GLOSSARY

Ableism: A belief system that sees persons with disabilities as being less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate or of less inherent value than others. Ableism may be conscious or unconscious and may be embedded in institutions, systems or the broader culture of a society. It can limit the opportunities of persons with disabilities and reduce their inclusion in the life of their communities.

Source: Canadian Race Relations Foundation, *Glossary of Terms*.

Accessibility: The degree to which a product, service, program or environment is available to be accessed or used by all.

Source: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Glossary: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*.

Barrier:

Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation. Barriers can be physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal.

Source: [Bill C-81, An Act to Ensure a Barrier-Free Canada](#), 42nd Parliament, 1st Session (S.C. 2019, c. 10).

Culture:

The [attitudes](#), [behaviour](#), [opinions](#), etc. of a [particular](#) [group](#) of [people](#) within [society](#).

Source: *[Cambridge Dictionary](#)*.

Learned and shared patterns of thought and behavior characteristic of a given population, plus the material objects produced and used by that population.

Source: "[Classic Definitions of Culture](#)," *Cultural Reader*, Blog, 19 March 2017.

Disability: Any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment, or a functional limitation, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.

> Source: [Bill C-81, An Act to Ensure a Barrier-Free Canada](#), 42nd Parliament, 1st Session (S.C. 2019, c. 10).

Episodic disability: Episodic disabling conditions or diseases are lifelong, but unlike permanent or progressive disabling conditions, they result in episodes of disability. Even with the best possible medical management people may experience episodes of disability. The periods of disability can vary in severity and duration. There may be advance warning or the episode may come on unexpectedly. Examples of conditions that are episodically disabling are mental illness, arthritis, HIV/AIDS,

multiple sclerosis, Crohn's and colitis, and some forms of cancer and rare diseases.

Source: Episodic Disabilities Network, *About the Episodic Disabilities Network*.

Invisible disability:

Invisible disability is a disability that is not immediately noticeable. They can include brain injuries, chronic pain, mental illness, gastro-intestinal disorders, and much more. Because they're not obvious to spot, invisible disabilities may be overlooked and misunderstood. And unfortunately, this can lead to discrimination or exclusion of those with an invisible disability.

Source: Sonia Woodward, *Let's Talk About Invisible Disabilities*, Rick Hansen Foundation, 17 July 2015.

"Nothing without us": The foundational principle of "Nothing without us" recognizes that persons with disabilities are equal participants in all areas of life. They should be involved in all decision-making on policies, programs, practices and service delivery.

Source: Government of Canada, *Consulting persons with disabilities: "Nothing without us"*.

Permanent disability: A permanent disability is any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment – or a functional limitation – that restricts the ability to perform daily activities … and is expected to remain with you for your expected life.

Source: Ontario, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, *Permanent disability*.

Unconscious bias:

Refers to the unconscious assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and stereotypes that human brains have about different groups. These learned mental short-cuts affect how we perceive and respond to people.

> Source: University of Victoria, *Unconscious Biases*.

Universal Accessibility:

Universal accessibility is defined as the character of a product, process, service, information, or environment that, with equity and inclusiveness in mind, enables any person to perform activities independently and achieve equivalent results.

> Source: J. Langevin et al., Research report for Montreal's associative environments – Universal accessibility and contributory designs (version 5.3), Groupe DÉFI Accessibilité (GDA), Université de Montréal, quoted in Collectif A.U., *What is universal accessibility?*

Visible disability:

Visible disabilities can be noticed to an individual with their naked eye and by just looking at the person. They may have facial features that show they have a disability, they may have involuntary shaking throughout their body or they may not be physically able to move as the average individual does. Common examples include Down Syndrome, amputations, Tourette Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy.

> Source: 24 hour home care, *Visible vs. Invisible Disabilities: More Than Meets the Eye*.

Workplace accommodation:

[Workplace accommodation] means taking steps to adjust rules, policies, practices or situations in the workplace that have a negative impact on an individual or groups who are protected under the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

> Source: Canadian Human Rights Commission, *A Template for Developing a Workplace Accommodation Policy*, 1 January 2011, p. 7.