



2023 Accessibility Progress Report

Large Print



CONTENTS

- Message from the Parliamentary Librarian..... i
- General..... iii
 - A. Accessibility Statement..... iii
 - B. Executive Summary..... v
- Priority Areas: Section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act* 1
 - A. Employment 1
 - 1. Overview 1
 - 2. Objectives..... 2
 - Objective A..... 2
 - Progress..... 2
 - Objective B 2
 - Progress..... 3
 - Objective C 5
 - Progress..... 5
 - Objective D 5
 - 3. Resolving the Barriers Identified..... 6
- B. Built Environment 6
 - 1. Overview 6
 - 2. Objectives..... 7
 - Objective A 7
 - Progress..... 8

- Objective B 8
 - Progress..... 8
- Objective C..... 9
 - Progress..... 9
- Objective D..... 10
 - Progress..... 10
- 3. Resolving the Barriers Identified..... 10
- C. Information and Communication Technologies 13
 - 1. Overview 13
 - 2. Objectives..... 14
 - Objective A 14
 - Progress..... 14
 - Objective B 14
 - Progress..... 15
 - Objective C..... 15
 - Progress..... 15
 - Objective D..... 16
 - Progress..... 16
 - Objective E 16
 - 3. Resolving the Barriers Identified..... 17
- D. Communication, Other than Information and Communication Technologies 18
 - 1. Overview 18
 - 2. Objectives..... 19
 - Objective A 19
 - Progress..... 19

- Objective B 20
 - Progress..... 20
- Objective C..... 21
 - Progress..... 21
- Objective D..... 22
- E. Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities 22
 - 1. Overview 22
 - 2. Objectives..... 23
 - Objective A..... 23
 - Objective B 23
 - Objective C..... 23
 - Progress..... 24
- F. Design and Delivery of Programs and Services 24
 - 1. Overview 24
 - 2. Objectives..... 25
 - Objective A..... 25
 - Progress..... 25
 - Objective B 26
 - Progress..... 26
 - Objective C..... 28
 - Progress..... 28
 - Objective D..... 30
 - Progress..... 31
 - 3. Resolving the Barriers Identified..... 32

- G. Transportation 32
 - 1. Overview 32
 - 2. Objectives 33
 - Objective A 33
 - Objective B 33
 - Progress 33
 - 3. Resolving the Barriers Identified 34
- H. Culture 34
 - 1. Overview 34
 - 2. Objectives 35
 - Objective A 35
 - Progress 35
- Consultations 38
 - A. Overview 38
 - B. What We Heard 40
- Feedback 42
- Glossary 44

2023 ACCESSIBILITY PROGRESS REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIAN

The Library of Parliament understands the importance of accessibility, and we are committed to providing a barrier-free environment for our employees, our clients and the public. We published our first [accessibility plan](#) on 1 December 2022. This is the first progress report on the implementation of that plan, and we have made great strides. We have met several objectives set out in the plan in each of the seven priority areas identified in the [Accessible Canada Act](#), as well as in an eighth priority area – culture – that we elected to add to the Library’s plan.

While this is a good start, much work still remains to be done to ensure that we remove barriers to accessibility by 1 January 2040. In order to remove barriers, it is important that we know what they are. In keeping with our commitment to the “Nothing without us” principle, we undertook a number of consultations with persons with disabilities in 2023 and are planning more for next year.

In 2024, we will continue to build on the solid foundation established this year, during which success was the result of collaboration and commitment.

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

Toll free: 1-833-411-7845

You can also share your feedback about accessibility or any barriers you may have encountered at the Library by completing our [online form](#).

A. 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 toward Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level 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*, the *2023 Accessibility Progress Report* and the results of the feedback process have been published on our [website](#). These publications are also available by request in the following alternate formats:
 - print;
 - large print;
 - Braille;
 - audio; and
 - electronic.
- The Library aims to go above and beyond leading accessibility standards like WCAG by implementing best practices for universal accessibility.

B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Library of Parliament is committed to being a leader in accessibility. A great deal of work has been done in the last year to achieve our goal of removing barriers to accessibility for employees, clients and the public by 1 January 2040, but we still have a lot more to do.

This first progress report describes the many initiatives the Library has undertaken to achieve this objective and to strengthen accessibility within our organization. These initiatives were carried out by various teams at the Library.

Consultations were held at all stages of implementation and report development and the Library will continue to consult with persons with disabilities to ensure that we understand, identify, eliminate and prevent accessibility barriers for all.

The Library's accessibility plan contains a total of 27 objectives of which 10 had a planned completion date during 2023, four were planned for partial completion in 2023 and five are considered ongoing initiatives. Of the 10 objectives due in 2023, eight were completed. Work is underway to meet the remaining two objectives in 2024. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the four objectives that were to be partially completed in 2023 have been delayed and are now planned for 2024. Conversely, one objective due in 2024 was completed in 2023.

Many initiatives for the five ongoing objectives were completed in 2023, and more are planned for future years. Details about each of these objectives follow.

PRIORITY AREAS: SECTION 5 OF THE *ACCESSIBLE CANADA ACT*

A. EMPLOYMENT

1. OVERVIEW

Approximately 460 employees work at the Library in various positions in the organization's service areas: Research and Education (formerly Parliamentary Information, Education and Research Services), Information and Collection (formerly 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.

The Library's plan includes four objectives as part of the Employment priority area, all of which were planned for partial completion in 2023. Due to ongoing recruitment challenges in filling several vacancies in Human Resources, these activities had to be postponed to 2024–2025. The challenges we are facing do not affect accommodation requests for employees, as these are given priority.

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.

- Status: in progress, delayed
- Expected completion: 2024 and later

Progress

- **Procurement of a New Applicant Tracking System:** The Library is in the process of procuring an applicant tracking system. To ensure that there are no barriers to accessibility, all user interface components of the new solution must meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA web accessibility standards. The Library has evaluated the mandatory requirements for vendors, which include this criterion.

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.

- Status: in progress, delayed
- Expected completion: 2024 and later

Progress

- **Human Resources Specialists in Best Practices for Accessibility to Recruit and Assess Prospective and Current Employees:** The Library's HR practitioners at all levels have completed various professional development activities with a focus on accessibility. In 2023, this training included the following sessions: Hiring 5,000 new persons with disabilities by 2025; Employment and Disability – Building a Foundation; Mental Health and the Inclusive Workplace; Accessible Recruitment and Onboarding; and Accessible Career and Performance Management. We also held a session in which we reviewed the Conference Board of Canada report on key findings related to people with disabilities. A training session on workplace accommodation was also delivered to the management community to help them assist candidates during the recruitment processes.
- **Canada School of Public Service and the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion:** The Library has given all employees access to the Canada School of Public Service and the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion. Both learning platforms have abundant content on accessibility, ranging from awareness sessions to more in-depth learning. This allows employees to access content that is appropriate to their learning journey. Accessibility learning events are promoted through the Library's monthly communication to employees about learning opportunities.

- **Other Accessibility and Disability Training Sessions:** The Library has compiled a list of training opportunities that human resources specialists, supervisors, managers and employees at all levels can follow to learn more about accessibility issues. These issues include accessibility barriers and gaps, unconscious bias and ableism, and workplace accommodation. The list is available on the intranet and will be updated as new content becomes available.
- **Library of Parliament Accessibility Plan 2022–2025 Information Session:** A mandatory information session about the Library of Parliament Accessibility Plan 2022–2025 was created by the Library and delivered to management; employees had the option to attend. The session covered important points in the *Accessible Canada Act* and the Library’s obligations under the Act. It also reviewed the various objectives of the plan and the services offered by the Senior Project Coordinator, Accessibility. A total of 13 sessions were offered in spring and summer 2023, reaching over 200 employees – almost half of the Library’s workforce. New sessions are offered upon request to any new Library employee.

Objective C

Engage with persons who have different types of disabilities to review both 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.

- Status: in progress, delayed
- Expected completion: 2024 and later

Progress

- **Consultations With Persons Who Have Disabilities:** An equity analysis is conducted as part of the process for developing policies and programs at the Library. All equity analyses include consultations with employees who have various types of disabilities to help identify and address accessibility barriers and gaps.

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.

- Status: not started, delayed
- Expected completion: 2024 and later

3. RESOLVING THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

Two barriers were identified in the Employment priority area following the publication of the accessibility plan.

Barrier 1: Workplace accommodation

- Details: Employees identified a barrier when changing managers. The need to share information about their disability and the different views managers have about the situation can be a stressful experience.
 - Solutions: The Library's accessibility plan contains an objective to review the workplace accommodation process and find solutions for removing this barrier.
-

Barrier 2: Preferred method of communication

- Details: A suggestion was made to add a module in the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to track employees' preferred method of communication.
 - Solutions: This information is already tracked in ERP as part of the accommodation needs of individuals.
-

B. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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.

The Library's plan includes four objectives in the Built Environment priority area: one ongoing and three planned for completion in 2023. All objectives were achieved on time, and many activities for the ongoing objective were completed in 2023, with more to come in future years.

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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Public Services and Procurement Canada Universal Accessibility Audits:** Over the last few years, PSPC has conducted universal accessibility audits of most of the Library's buildings. The Library is in the process of reviewing the reports and has started work to resolve the accessibility barriers presented in the audits.

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, 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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Purchase and Training: Stairway Evacuation Chairs:** The Library has purchased two stairway evacuation chairs. The chairs are located in the Library's main administrative building – one at the main reception area and one near the office of an employee who uses a mobility scooter. Additional stairway evacuation chairs will be purchased in the coming year and placed in various buildings.

The Library organized a training session for fire wardens, persons with disabilities who need a chair for evacuation and fire evacuation assistants, in collaboration with the House of Commons. The training comprised a demonstration and test of the chair in a staircase to ensure that everyone is prepared in case of an evacuation.

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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Accessibility Features at the Library:** The Library has updated its [Visit Canada's Parliament](#) web page to showcase the various accessibility options offered to visitors. They include the possibility of borrowing a wheelchair or stool, and information about how to request sign language interpretation for guided tours. It also includes information about the alternate format options available for *Parliament: The Immersive Experience*, including the use of a tablet and headphones to access online content in multiple formats, as well as Braille and large-font text for the exhibition. The Library is working on additional new options for the coming year, like the option to borrow noise-cancelling headphones. The Library has also added information on its website about accessible drop-off points for visits to East Block.

Objective D

Promote a scent-free environment in the Parliamentary Precinct, in collaboration with parliamentary partners and service providers.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Scent-Free Environment:** In the last year, the Library has worked to remove scented soaps and other scented products from use in Library spaces. The Library also included information about allergies and scent sensitivities in a communiqué about best practices for a hybrid workplace. We also started installing signage to promote a scent-free environment and information has been added to our website for guided tours. A session of the Lived Experience series, organized with the Environmental Health Association of Québec, covered multiple chemical sensitivities to raise awareness among Library employees.

3. RESOLVING THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

Most of the barriers flagged through the Library's feedback process were related to the built environment. A total of six new barriers were flagged since the accessibility plan was published.

Barriers 1, 2 and 3: Use of scented products

- Details: Two separate comments received were about the use of scented soap and the use of a scented mist in the sanitary product dispensers in the restrooms of the main administrative building.
- Solutions: The Library worked with PSPC and the building's landlord to change the soap used in all the restrooms in the building. The Library also removed scented soap in the restrooms and kitchenettes of its other buildings. What was thought to be a scented mist is a disinfectant for sanitary products approved by Health Canada.

Barrier 4: Lack of automatic door opener

- Details: There is no automatic door opener to access a floor on which the workstation of a person who uses a mobility device is located. The issue is not specific to only one floor.
- Solutions: The Library is working with PSPC and, when needed, the building landlord to install automatic door openers where there are none. Until the issue is resolved, a few temporary solutions have been put in place. Where possible, doors without automatic door openers that can be kept open are kept open. Where keeping the door open is not an option, employees must rely on the help of a colleague. The Library understands that this is far from an optimal solution and will do its best to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

Barrier 5: Lack or misplacement of d-shaped handles on accessible restroom stall doors

- Details: Reaching out to grab the current handle could be dangerous for some employees and lead to falls.
 - Solutions: With the help of PSPC and the building landlord, d-shape handles will be installed in early 2024.
-

Barrier 6: Standing outside for long periods before guided tours

- Details: When visiting the Senate of Canada building, visitors may be required to wait outside for long periods. Accessing the building from the main visitor's door can be difficult for wheelchair users, mobility device users or anyone with a mobility disability. The main entrance is accessible, but it is on a busy street without a secure drop-off zone. This barrier occurs not only at the Senate of Canada building, but also at other buildings where the Library offers guided tours.
- Solutions: The Library is working with the Senate of Canada to allow visitors to be dropped off in a safe location at a separate entrance, upon request. The solutions should be implemented in early 2024. Similar arrangements were made with the House of Commons for tours of East Block. Additional outdoor benches were added, in the shade, in front of the Visitor Welcome Centre for those visiting West Block. Although outdoor benches were already available in

front of the building, they were located in the sun. Additionally, tips and guidelines were added to the training the guides receive.

C. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

1. OVERVIEW

The Library environment is rich in information and communication technologies (ICT). The Library has an extensive 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.

As part of the ICT priority area, the Library's plan includes five objectives: one to be completed in 2023, three to be completed in 2025–2026, and one permanent objective. The objective to be achieved in 2023 is in progress and should be completed in early 2024. Many activities were undertaken in 2023 to achieve permanent objectives or objectives to be completed by 2025–2026.

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.

- Status: in progress
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Consultations With Persons With Disabilities:**
The Library has begun compiling a list of hardware, software and systems that could benefit from accessibility testing. The Library held discussions with the Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) program team at Shared Services Canada and will conduct testing in the next year.

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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: 2025–2026

Progress

- **Procurement and Development of New Information and Communication Technologies:** The Library strives to ensure that all new ICT systems meet accessibility standards, including WCAG 2.0 Level AA, and that all users can fully use the systems.

The Library is reviewing project management processes and practices to ensure accessibility requirements are considered as part of non-functional requirements. This will help make sure that accessibility requirements are captured when procuring new tools and technologies. Additionally, the user-acceptance testing phase of projects will include users with various types of disabilities.

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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: 2025–2026

Progress

- **Review of Existing Information and Communication Technologies:** The Library is updating its list of existing ICT systems for employees, parliamentary clients and the public. The next steps will be to evaluate the accessibility of each system and prepare a priority list for testing by persons with various types of disability.

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.

- Status: in progress, delayed until early 2024
- Expected completion: 2023

Progress

- **Creating Accessible Documents and Hosting Accessible Meetings and Events:** The Library has prepared various toolkits to help create accessible documents and host accessible meetings and events (see details in the Communication priority area below). The Library also met with AACT, which provided documentation on conducting accessible hybrid meetings. The Library has completed its review of these documents and is determining how these best practices can be put in place.

The toolkits prepared by the Library include a list of the training sessions offered by AACT, the Canada School of Public Service, the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion and other providers on creating accessible documents and hosting accessible meetings and events.

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.

- Status: not started
- Expected completion: 2025–2026

3. RESOLVING THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

Since the publication of the plan, three new barriers were identified in the ICT priority area.

Barrier 1: Employee intranet cannot be used with high contrast and large font

- Solutions: The Library was already aware of this issue, and an intranet platform replacement project is slated for the near future. One requirement for the new system will be accessibility. Consultations and testing with persons with disabilities will be part of the project.

Barrier 2: Location of identification numbers on various pieces of ICT equipment

- Details: An employee with mobility and dexterity disabilities had difficulty accessing or could not access some of the equipment identification numbers.
- Solutions: The issue was noticed in only one office. Placing the identification numbers in an easy-access location is a best practice; a reminder was sent to the technicians responsible for ICT equipment.

Barrier 3: Library-issued mobile phone

- Details: Employees cannot choose their preferred mobile phone, even for accessibility or as an accommodation.
- Solutions: The Library will review requests individually to remove any barriers to accessibility.

D. COMMUNICATION, OTHER THAN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

1. OVERVIEW

As the Parliament of Canada's knowledge centre, the Library produces a large volume of information and resources for parliamentary clients. It also provides guided tours of Parliament and learning resources to help the public understand and engage with Parliament. The Library has developed many tools in the last year to ensure it can communicate with everyone in the most accessible way. The Library has also added accessibility statements in various publications to indicate how to request documents in a variety of alternate formats. No new barriers relating to communication have been reported since the launch of the plan.

The Library's plan contains four objectives in the Communication priority area: two to be completed in 2023, one in 2024–2025 and one in 2025–2026. All objectives due in 2023 were completed on time. The Library was also able to fulfill the objective due in 2024–2025.

2. OBJECTIVES

Objective A

Develop tools, including checklists, that will guide employees on the use of sign language and closed captioning for meetings and events.

- Status: completed ahead of schedule

Progress

- **Creation and Launch of Tools on the Use of Sign Language and Closed Captioning:** A tip sheet was developed to guide Library employees on running accessible meetings and online events. It also includes instructions on how to enable captioning.

A detailed guide was developed for running successful and accessible in-person events, with instructions for requesting and preparing for sign language interpretation.

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.

- Status: completed

Progress

- **Creation and Launch of Tip Sheet on Alternate Formats:** Consultations were held with persons with different types of disabilities regarding best practices for content in alternate formats.

A tip sheet was prepared to guide Library employees on best practices for preparing written communications in alternate formats, including large print, Braille and audio formats. A contact list was produced for support accessing these services through the Communications team or through third-party service providers.

A communications plan was developed to build awareness among Library employees of how to prepare written content in alternate formats. Guidelines and other resources have been posted on the Library's employee intranet, and a communiqué promoting this information was distributed.

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.

- Status: completed

Progress

- **Creation and Launch of Guidelines on Preparing Accessible Digital Media Products:** Consultations were held with persons with different types of disabilities regarding best practices for preparing accessible digital content, and this expertise was shared with communications experts at the Library.

Staff with relevant expertise in the Communications team researched best practices for preparing accessible digital media products. A compilation of resources was prepared for Library employees.

Guidelines on how to create accessible digital content, prepared for Library employees, include contact information for resource persons in the Communications team who can provide assistance and support. Various tools prepared to assist Library authors include an overview of how to create accessible PDFs and a document that explains alternative text. A new chapter of the Library's Style Guide was also produced specifically to

guide authors of Library research publications on writing alternative text for images in Library documents.

A communications plan was developed to build awareness among Library employees of how to prepare accessible digital content in various formats. Information was shared with employees on the Library's intranet, and a communiqué promoting this information was disseminated.

Objective D

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

- Status: not started
- Expected completion: 2025–2026

E. PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

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 the consultations, and no new barriers have been identified in this priority area since the Library published its plan in 2022.

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.

- Status: on track, planning underway
- Expected completion: 2024–2025

Objective B

Examine the possibility of requiring information about accessibility be included in scope-of-work documentation as part of the procurement processes.

- Status: on track, planning underway
- Expected completion: 2024–2025

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.

- Status: on track, planning underway
- Expected completion: 2024–2025

Progress

- **Public Services and Procurement Canada’s Agents of Change for Accessible Procurement:** The Library has joined the Agents of Change for Accessible Procurement, an interdepartmental community established by PSPC’s Accessible Procurement Resource Centre. This community aims to bring together procurement practitioners to build accessible procurement capacity. To help the Library achieve its planned objectives for 2024–2025 in the Procurement priority area, it will develop and share best practices in accessible procurement, address organization-specific barriers to accessibility and have access to the timely on-the-ground intelligence, insights and advice of procurement experts from various federal organizations.

F. DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

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.

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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Consultations With Persons With Various Types of Disabilities:** The Library is planning consultations for various initiatives. These sessions will start in early 2024 and include the following programs and services:
 - Poets’ Row (an exhibit featuring every Parliamentary Poet Laureate at the Interim Main Library);
 - Ambassador Program (introductory briefing sessions on Library products and services);
 - administrative processes and templates for briefing, routing information and correspondence;
 - client services;
 - Lawyers’ Forum (community of practice for Library employees who have a law degree);
 - values and ethics training; and
 - parliamentary client outreach activities.

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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Reviewing the Existing Programs and Services:**

The Library started to assess its existing products and services to determine which accessibility considerations or best practices were already being followed or put in place. A review to determine whether these considerations meet the accessibility needs of people with all types of disabilities will follow, and a plan will be prepared to address any gaps or barriers identified. This includes guidance for developing visual elements for research products.

 - **Training for Tour Guides** – In spring 2023, the training given to tour guides was partially evaluated. A review of the training materials for the Client Service training module was completed; it ensured that the documents were accessible and that they did not contain ableist language or images. Minimal changes were required following the analysis. Other training modules, such as the Logistics and Visitor Experience modules, were also reviewed. These training modules lead guides through the tour route and teach them important points that they

can share with persons with disabilities. Following this review, some changes were made in the tours to provide the best experience for all.

- **Visit Canada’s Parliament Web Page** – A review of the Visit Canada’s Parliament web page was conducted to confirm that it contains accessible content and information for visitors. The web page already included information about drop-off locations near the Visitor Welcome Centre, and similar information was added for East Block visitors. Additional accessibility information was also added to the web page for each of the four visitor locations to ensure the public knows what to expect before they arrive.
- **Parliamentary Boutique** – The Library assessed the Parliamentary Boutique website and made changes to make it more accessible. The descriptions of products are being modified to add more relevant details and alternative text to the products images. Product details that include colours, logos, fabric, textures and finishes are being added so that users of all abilities have a better understanding of the items. Measurement abbreviations and sizing tables are being modified to give users the information they need to make informed purchase decisions.

Objective C

Ensure that accessibility is a priority during the design and delivery of all new and updated Library programs and services.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Ensuring that Accessibility is a Priority in the Design and Delivery of Programs and Services:**
 - **Approval of New Initiatives** – Members of the Library Executive Committee and the Directors' Forum consider accessibility when reviewing, discussing and approving new initiatives.

In terms of visitor services, in August 2023, the Library launched *Parliament: The Immersive Experience*, a new destination that brings Centre Block to life through an exhibition and a 360° multimedia show. The Library worked with consultants to make the experience accessible to as wide a range of visitors as possible. It features an inclusive design, sign language, closed captioning, audio description, Braille and large-print guides and visual descriptions. Many of these are available on-site, while others are presented on a dedicated website that can be accessed during the visit.
 - **Guided Video Tours** – The Library modified its approach and enhanced accessibility for upcoming public outreach projects by updating video tours of the Senate of Canada building and West Block.

New versions of the videos that incorporate sign language and audio description are currently in development. The Library has also made accessible design and programming a requirement for other upcoming projects, for example, a new edition of the flagship publication *Our Country, Our Parliament* (print and online versions) and other educational publications.

- **Long Term Vision and Plan (LTVP)** – A new Parliamentary Boutique will be built as part of the Centre Block rehabilitation project. A visit with PSPC of the current Boutique was organized in fall 2023 to discuss ways to minimize accessibility barriers at the future site. In the coming years, when the design is more advanced, additional consultations will be held with PSPC and with persons living with all types of disabilities. Further, the Library has included the Accessibility and Client Experience leads in various LTVP working groups to ensure that the requirements are adequately captured and prioritized.
- **Accessibility Information** – The Library reviewed its website and catalogue to ensure that users know they can request alternate formats of documents and they know how to request them. A warning was added on the *Parliament: The Immersive Experience* web page to caution individuals ahead of their visit that moments of near darkness, flashing lights, motion video and immersive sounds occur throughout the experience, and that some people may experience motion sickness,

nausea, disorientation or other discomfort.

The Immersive Experience tab on the Visit Canada's Parliament web page also lists all the accessibility features available to visitors.

- **Training Sessions** – Client training is meant to be as accessible as possible, and the Library aims to ensure that participants have accessibility options, including who to contact and how if any barriers are encountered or if a participant needs an accommodation to participate fully in any event.
- **Research Services** – The Library's research divisions ensure accessibility is considered in discussions about new products and services. They also ensure accessibility is covered in certain guidelines, such as those for developing visual elements for research products. The research divisions have also added references for accessibility training as mandatory items for onboarding senior managers and research staff.

Objective D

Equip all employees and managers with tools and training to design and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and services.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Provide Tools and Training to Design and Deliver Accessible and Inclusive Programs and Services:**
 - **Values and Ethics** – A new virtual training session on values and ethics for employees was developed on an accessible platform in March 2023.
 - **Workplace Accommodation** – A training session on workplace accommodation was delivered to the management community, equipping them to assist employees in accommodation processes.
 - **Research Services** – The Library’s research divisions added virtual training options for individuals who require accommodations for in-person training in their divisions. Accommodations are now offered in all invitations to in-person training events. Accessibility is addressed in the design and delivery of research products that are available to the public, including alternative text for visual elements. Employees are also encouraged to consider accessibility in other products, and new guidelines include a reminder to authors to consider accessibility in the design of visual elements. Library analysts have received training on creating accessible documents and producing alternative text for visual elements.

3. RESOLVING THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

Two new barriers were identified and resolved in 2023.

Barrier 1: Non-accessible PDF version of Senate of Canada brochure featured on the Library's website

- Solutions: The document was tested and a new fully accessible version was added to the website within a few days.
-

Barrier 2: Incomplete contact information

- Details: Two individuals flagged a barrier to accessing sign language interpretation for guided tours. Requests for interpretation services had to be made by phone; a barrier was experienced because there were no alternate contact methods.
- Solutions: The Library changed its process and visitors can request sign language interpretation by phone or email. The new contact information was added to our website.

G. TRANSPORTATION

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.

2. OBJECTIVES

Objective A

Review the accessible transportation options that Library employees have to perform their work duties, including work activities organized by partners, and build awareness of those options among employees.

- Status: in progress, delayed
- Expected completion: 2024

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.

- Status: in progress, delayed
- Expected completion: 2024

Progress

- **Library's Directive on the Management of Expenditures on Travel and Conferences and Review of Accessible Transportation Options:** The Library completed an initial review of the Directive on the Management of Expenditures on Travel and Conferences with an accessibility lens and found that the directive does not address accessibility

or accommodation. The Library will complete a more extensive review of the directive and accessible transportation options in 2024.

3. RESOLVING THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED

Only one barrier related to the Transportation priority area has been raised since the publication of the plan.

Barrier 1: Para-transportation drop-off in the wintertime

- Details: The amount of snow at the curb prevents the full and secure deployment of wheelchair lift platforms. Snow is removed from a small portion of the curb, but vehicles were often found blocking the space.
- Solution: Discussions are underway with PSPC, the landlord and the City of Ottawa to resolve the issue.

H. CULTURE

1. OVERVIEW

The Library elected to establish “Culture” as a priority area in its accessibility plan, in addition to the seven priority areas identified in the *Accessible Canada Act*. We did so because we recognize that creating a culture of awareness and understanding of accessibility and disabilities is key to becoming a barrier-free organization. A great deal of work has been done on this front since the accessibility plan was launched.

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.

- Status: in progress, on track
- Expected completion: ongoing

Progress

- **Launch of a New Accessibility Web Page:** The page contains the Library's accessibility statement, accessibility plan, progress report, feedback process document and web accessibility guidelines. The site will be updated as needed with new initiatives, resources or documentation.
- **Development of an Awareness Plan:** An awareness plan developed and approved in June 2023 takes into consideration that not everyone learns in the same way. The plan includes in-person and virtual sessions, written tools and resources, and more. Each initiative is organized or offered by the Library or by reliable external providers with expertise in the field. All activities are designed to be accessible to everyone. Whenever possible, in-person and virtual activities are offered separately in English and in French, with closed captioning. Documentation is shared in advance in an accessible format, and employees are invited to request alternate formats at any time. The same

is true for any further accommodation they may need. Employee feedback is welcome through various means, anonymously or not, at any time. The following initiatives are all part of this awareness plan.

- **Creation and Launch of the Accessibility Plan**
Information Session: The Library prepared an information session about the accessibility plan which was mandatory for management and optional for employees. The session covered important points in the *Accessible Canada Act* and the Library's obligations under this Act. It also reviewed the various plan objectives and the services offered by the Senior Project Coordinator, Accessibility. In total, 13 sessions were held in spring and summer 2023, reaching over 200 employees – almost half of the Library's workforce. Additional sessions are available to new Library employees upon request.
- **Development and Launch of a New Accessibility Intranet Page:** Through this [accessibility page on the employee intranet](#), employees can easily find information about the *Accessible Canada Act* and the Library's various accessibility initiatives. They can also access various tools and resources to help them prepare accessible documents or to organize accessible meetings and events. The page includes links to guides on inclusive writing and non-ableist terminology. It also includes training, videos, articles and more about subjects related to accessibility and disability. The site will be updated quarterly with new information and links.

- **Ongoing – You Can’t Ask That Panel Discussion and Lived Experience Series:** Launched in spring 2022, the Lived Experience series features a presentation given by a person who lives with a disability. In it, the person tells their personal story and explains their disability and the various barriers they encounter. In You Can’t Ask That panel discussions, employees have the opportunity to ask any question at all about living with a disability (even a question they would not normally dare to ask). Over the last year, employees have had the opportunity to hear from a person living with blindness, a person living with both pain and an episodic mobility disability, people living with multiple chemical sensitivity, a person living with paraplegia, a person living with Morquio Syndrome (a rare metabolic disorder) and a person living with thrombocytopenia-absent radius syndrome (a rare disorder that affects the blood and certain bones). In total, 202 employees attended one or more Lived Experience presentations, and a record 105 employees participated in You Can’t Ask That panel discussions.

Since the launch of these initiatives, employees have also had the opportunity to hear from a person with cerebral palsy, a person living with fibromyalgia, people who live with mental health issues, people who have cognitive disabilities and neurodivergent people.

- **Activities to Come in 2024 and 2025:** In 2024 and 2025, the Library plans to organize one You Can’t Ask That panel discussion and at least four Lived Experience sessions

each year. These sessions will be offered in collaboration with our parliamentary partners to all administrative staff of the Senate of Canada, House of Commons, Library of Parliament, Parliamentary Protective Service, Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer and Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner.

The Library is also working on various awareness initiatives and exploring others, like creating an accessibility space on MS Teams for Library employees; creating an accessibility open-hour chat with the Senior Project Coordinator, Accessibility; developing a series of Lived Experience articles; and developing a Dear Abby-styled column.

CONSULTATIONS

A. OVERVIEW

In keeping with the “Nothing without us” principle, consultations with persons with disabilities are an important part of all Library accessibility initiatives. In spring 2023, the Library developed a consultation plan that was approved by the Library Executive Committee. The plan includes a list of initiatives on which to consult with employees, parliamentarians and their staff, experts on accessibility and disabilities, and the public. These initiatives include: web pages and online survey discussions about the draft progress report; future accessibility plans and progress reports; in-person or virtual workshops on identifying, removing and preventing accessibility barriers for persons

with disabilities; improving employee knowledge and awareness of the *Accessible Canada Act*; and addressing topics related to accessibility, barriers, ableism, inclusion and unconscious bias.

In October 2023, the Library consulted with its employees through an online survey. The survey sought to understand how Library employees felt about accessibility, their training needs and the Library's various accessibility initiatives. A total of 165 employees completed the survey.

Consultations were also held 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. In fact, the Library of Parliament led the creation of the Parliamentary Precinct Accessibility Working Group for all parliamentary partners to exchange on best practices, resources, perspectives, etc.

In November 2023, a consultation was held with members of various local associations, including the Association des personnes handicapées visuelles de l'Outaouais, the Autism Alliance of Canada and the Association de l'Ouïe de l'Outaouais, on accessible documents, visualization and alternative text. Five people participated in this consultation. The Library will review the comments received in December 2023 and early 2024. The best practices identified

will be added to the existing toolkits and a plan will be developed to remove any barriers flagged.

The multiple consultation activities on accessibility held with people who live with a disability throughout the year are evidence of the Library's commitment to the "Not without us" principle. The organization hopes to increase the number of consultation activities on accessibility in the next year.

B. WHAT WE HEARD

Through various channels, the Library heard that some members of the public did not feel included in the Library of Parliament Accessibility Plan 2022–2025, because their disability was not specifically mentioned in any objectives. When it developed its plan, the Library purposely did not include disability-specific objectives. The *Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017* covers 10 disability types: seeing, dexterity, flexibility, mobility, developmental, pain-related, hearing, learning, memory and mental health-related. Language about disability is always evolving and not everyone can see themselves in one of these categories. By not developing disability-specific objectives, we wanted to ensure that we were addressing barriers as broadly as possible and that we were not excluding anyone with overly narrow language.

Comments received throughout the year still show that overall, the Library is on the right path to creating an

accessible environment. Although some employees may hesitate to self-identify as a person with a disability for fear of hindering their careers, we have seen an increased number of people contacting the Senior Project Coordinator, Accessibility.

In October 2023, the Library launched an employee questionnaire to gather comments on the Library's various accessibility initiatives. A total of 165 employees completed the Accessibility and Me survey. All survey respondents said that they were either interested in or well-informed about accessibility. In total, 36% of respondents said they would benefit from more training.

Employees responded that the training sessions they would most like to receive are creating accessible documents and understanding invisible accessibility barriers.

Employees were asked if they had participated in any of the awareness activities offered by the Library in 2023. A total of 117 employees participated in at least one session; 87% of them did so because they were interested in the topic. Some employees mentioned that they would have liked to take part in activities, but they were unable to for various reasons. About 26% of respondents mentioned they wished some awareness activities were offered in a different format.

The last question asked employees whether they had noticed any changes at the Library when it comes to accessibility. More than 53% of respondents said they have noticed changes, with the majority saying that they have seen an increased number of awareness and training sessions. They also noticed that the Library was removing barriers flagged in 2022 through various consultations and through the feedback process. They also noted that the accessibility team was always available to discuss barriers or to work on various accessibility-related initiatives.

FEEDBACK

With the publication of its accessibility plan on 1 December 2022, the Library launched an official [feedback process](#). Anyone can use the feedback process to report an accessibility barrier, anonymously or not, or to comment on accessibility. The process can also be used to request a document in an alternate format or to ask a question about any of the Library's accessibility initiatives. Feedback can be shared through the [Accessibility Inquiries and Feedback](#) form, by [email](#), mail or phone, or in person.

In the past year, the Library's feedback process was used 17 times. The Library received one request for an alternate format, 14 reports of barriers, one comment and one accessibility-related question. Over 85% of the feedback was provided by people who identified as living with a

disability, and only 29% of the feedback was provided anonymously. About half of the people (52%) who submitted feedback requested a follow-up. Most of the requests came from Library employees (82%), followed by clients (12%) and the public (6%).

The Library responded to the only request for an alternate format on the same day it was received. The requester wanted a PDF version of the accessibility plan, which was already available on the website.

Out of the 14 accessibility barriers flagged, six came under the Built Environment priority area, two under Employment, three under Information and Communication Technology, one under Transportation and two under Design and Delivery of Programs and Service. Over 70% of concerns have been addressed and barriers were removed swiftly once brought to our attention, most within a few weeks. The Library plans to address the remaining the four barriers identified in the feedback process over the next few years. Details about how the Library addressed these concerns and how it removed or plans to remove the barriers identified can be found in [“Priority Areas: Section 5 of the Accessible Canada Act”](#) in this document.

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”*](#).

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?](#)

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.