



The 2023–2025 Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Accessibility Plan

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General

Note: The *2023–2025 Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Accessibility Plan* (the Plan) follows the [Accessible Canada Act](#) and the [Accessible Canada Regulations](#) (the Regulations) on formatting and content. The Plan has been written in simple, clear and concise language, as required by the Regulations.

The Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) Accessibility Secretariat would like to gratefully acknowledge the valuable contributions of:

- members of the ISED Persons with Disabilities Network
- members of the ISED Accessibility Feedback Panel
- ISED employees at every level
- other government departments and agencies as well as private industry
- the ISED Senior Management Team, without whom changing the culture at ISED would not be possible

At ISED, the Director General of the Human Resources Branch, supported by the Accessibility Secretariat, is responsible for receiving feedback on barriers as well as receiving feedback on the 2023–2025 ISED Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Secretariat of the Human Resources Branch is the author of the Plan.

The Accessibility Secretariat will work with its partners across ISED and the Government of Canada to prevent barriers, identify and remove reported barriers, and develop reports on progress. The Accessibility Secretariat will work with and provide support to functional leads in each priority area. The Accessibility Secretariat helped functional leads identify goals in each priority area. Once the Plan is published, the Secretariat will help functional leads identify how to achieve the goals and who will be involved in addressing and removing the barriers.

Members of the public can give feedback on barriers and provide feedback on the Plan in different ways:

Online – Members of the public can visit the [Accessibility at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada](#) web page and fill out the [Accessibility Feedback Form](#). This option can be anonymous.

Direct link: ised-isde.canada.ca/accessibility-at-ised

Email – Members of the public can email their feedback to ISED at ISEDAccessibilityPlan-PlanAccessibilitedISDE@ISED-ISDE.gc.ca

Mail – Members of the public can mail their feedback to ISED at:

Accessibility Secretariat
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
CD Howe Building
235 Queen Street
1 East Tower
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H5
Canada

Telephone – Members of the public can call the ISED Citizen Services Centre during the business hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time).

Telephone (toll-free in Canada): 1-800-328-6189
Telephone (Ottawa): 613-954-5031
TTY: 1-866-694-8389

Fax – Members of the public can fax the ISED Citizen Services Centre at 343-291-1913.

Employees at ISED can use the internal version of the Accessibility Feedback Form to report barriers. Employees can access the internal form through the ISED intranet main page when logged on to their ISED devices.

Some people may want to provide feedback in an alternate format. If so, they can contact the Accessibility Secretariat by online form, email, mail, telephone or fax to make the appropriate arrangements.

ISED will acknowledge feedback on accessibility in the same method it was shared, in accordance with the [ISED Citizen Services Centre service standards](#). ISED will not acknowledge receipt of feedback that was sent anonymously but will process the feedback appropriately.

Executive summary

The *2023–2025 Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Accessibility Plan* (the Plan) describes the department’s accessibility practices and programs in relation to identifying, removing and preventing barriers. By identifying, removing and preventing barriers, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) can be accessible and barrier-free for everyone.

First, the Plan explains the department's [accessibility vision](#). ISED is committed to meeting and exceeding the requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act* (the Act) and identifying, removing and preventing barriers in the department.

As required by the [Accessible Canada Regulations](#) (the Regulations), the Plan includes each priority area identified in [section 5 of the Act](#). Each priority area section contains a discussion of what was learned in the consultations with people with disabilities, ISED's accessibility progress in the area and the goals to achieve in 2023–2025. Annex A presents more information on the progress achieved in each priority area.

The [culture](#) goals focus on addressing ableist mindsets and behaviours within the department. To address ableist mindsets and behaviours, the Human Resources Branch will support management, develop strategies and provide documentation and training to ISED employees.

With respect to [employment](#), the immediate goals include establishing new strong external talent pipelines to hire people with disabilities, creating an Executive development program focused on under-represented equity groups, and preparing to make changes to staffing policies and procedures set out by the *Public Service Employment Act*.

In terms of the [built environment](#), the goals include making signage and washrooms accessible and developing reflection rooms in each building location.

Regarding [information and communication technology](#), the goals include giving training on how to make accessible documents; promoting the use of accessible software, tools and communications products; and making sure that all hybrid meetings are accessible.

For [communication](#), the goals include following Treasury Board Secretariat's guidelines on making communication accessible and making sure that all corporate department events have sign language interpreters, closed captioning, and simultaneous remote French and English interpretation.

With respect to [procurement](#), the overall goals include establishing standing offers for accessibility services for the department, and purchasing accessible goods and services, and requiring all contracted services to provide fully accessible documents, in each official language.

The goals in [design and delivery of programs and services](#) will work toward making all ISED programs and services accessible for clients and employees. Overall, the goals include requiring client services employees to complete accessibility training, increasing awareness of alternative communication methods and video remote sign language interpretation, and creating accessible fillable forms in Microsoft Word format.

Next, the Plan outlines the [consultation process](#) and results as required by the Act and the Regulations. The consultations section discusses the methodology and reports on the key findings.

The Plan then explains the [governance](#) procedures related to barrier identification, removal and prevention as well as to reporting on and monitoring accessibility.

The Plan concludes by confirming that ISED will continue to evolve and adapt progress reports and accessibility plans to meet the needs of employees and clients with disabilities and comply with the *Accessible Canada Regulations*.

Accessibility vision

ISED will adhere to the following principles as it implements the Plan:

- ISED will implement its accessibility plan in alignment with the spirit and principles of the *Accessible Canada Act* (2019) to make our department barrier-free.
- ISED will bring together innovation, compassion and determination to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities in all areas of its portfolio.
- By shifting mindsets and embedding accessibility in our culture and practices, ISED will create accessible and safe spaces for everybody, especially people with disabilities.
- All ISED employees will understand and act on their role in facilitating an anti-ableist approach to collaboration, engagement, and program and service delivery.
- People with disabilities will feel included and have a sense of belonging at ISED.

With the passing of the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (the Act), the Government of Canada is building upon the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) to create more accessible environments for everybody, especially people with disabilities.

With the Plan, ISED will demonstrate how accessibility matters for everybody:

- people with temporary, episodic or permanent disabilities, whether known or unknown
- people with visible or invisible disabilities
- people without disabilities who may one day become disabled due to illness, injury or trauma, whether physical, mental, emotional or other
- people who take care of people with disabilities, such as parents, relatives, friends, paid caregivers or volunteers
- people who have professional relationships with people with disabilities, such as managers, executives, consultants, HR or IT professionals, colleagues, stakeholders, clients, etc.

The purpose of the Act is to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040, in areas of federal jurisdiction. This involves identifying, removing and preventing barriers in the priority areas. While “culture” is not a priority area in the Act, ISED included it to account for the progress already achieved in this area and reflect ISED’s commitment to broader culture change, including systemic and attitudinal change. When we embed accessibility into our culture, we make it easier for everybody to behave and work inclusively. We need to ensure that our department, our work and all our interactions are accessible and inclusive of every employee and all the people of Canada, no matter where they come from or what their needs are.

For more information on the department’s feedback process, please refer to the [2023–2025 ISED Description of Feedback Process](#).

Areas described under section 5 of the Act

The following section identifies each priority area of our plan. The priority areas include culture; employment; built environment; information and communication technologies; communication, other than information and communication technologies; procurement of goods, services and facilities; design and delivery of programs and services; and transportation. In each priority area section, ISED’s progress in accessibility and the goals to achieve in 2023–2025 are discussed.

Culture

ISED strives to create a culture for its employees and clients that is accessible by default. Feedback received through ISED’s accessibility consultations shows that including people with disabilities from the beginning is the best way to ensure that we are serving Canadians inclusively and accessibly.

The Plan includes “culture” as a specific priority area to recognize the importance of accessibility as part of an inclusive culture at ISED.

Overall outcome: ISED culture is positive and inclusive and promotes accessibility first in all areas and aspects of the workplace.

Barriers identified in culture

Culture was the most common theme in all the consultations. We learned about the importance of creating tools, projects, presentations and documents to be accessible from the start and making sure meetings (virtual and in-person) are fully accessible. Overall, it is important to raise awareness that accessibility is everyone’s responsibility and that accessibility needs to become the default across the department.

We learned that our culture needs to reduce fear and stigma regarding accommodations. Participants also shared how self-identification can be a difficult or uncomfortable process for people with invisible disabilities and how cultural factors can affect people's willingness to disclose their disabilities and ask for what they need. ISED's aim is to improve the culture to be more inclusive and supportive of people with disabilities. Additionally, we learned that ableist behaviours and language must be reduced across the department, including in meetings, documents and interpersonal interactions.

We learned through the consultations that ISED employees with disabilities consider ableist behaviour to be one of the most impactful and detrimental barriers to accessibility, especially for people who have invisible disabilities. ISED is taking action to ensure its employees are equipped to recognize and stop ableist behaviour.

Accessibility progress in culture at ISED

The following section outlines the progress achieved in culture at ISED. Accessibility has been and will continue to be discussed regularly in Deputy Management meetings. Review [Annex A](#) for more details and information on each initiative, program and resource.

Persons with Disabilities Network

ISED's Persons with Disabilities Network (PWD-N) is hosted by the Chair and the Accessibility Champion. The Network's vision is to build a safe, inclusive and accessible community for employees with disabilities that empowers them to share lived experiences, educate themselves and their colleagues, and advocate for accessibility- and disability-related change at ISED.

Accessibility Ambassador program

Employees across the department can volunteer as accessibility ambassadors to help implement accessible practices within their own teams and sectors. Ambassadors receive training from the Accessibility Secretariat and participate in a virtual community of practice to stay up to date on the latest approaches to accessibility.

Accessibility Feedback Panel

The bi-weekly panel is supported by employees with disabilities and their allies who volunteer to attend presentations from ISED staff seeking advice on accessibility related to their programs, policies and processes.

“Accessibility Matters at ISED” training

To support an anti-ableist workforce, ISED mandated that all employees complete training on accessibility by June 2022. “Accessibility Matters at ISED” is a self-paced, online training developed by the ISED Accessibility Secretariat in June 2020. The training

teaches employees about how to fulfill their responsibility to contribute to an accessible environment.

National AccessAbility Week

For National AccessAbility Week in May 2022, ISED hosted a variety of events on accessibility for the department. The theme was “Building an accessible public service: Moving forward together.”

Accessibility Hub wiki and Accessible Learning Centre wiki

In summer 2020, ISED created the “Accessibility Hub” and “Accessibility Learning Centre” wikis, where ISED employees can get information about accessibility in the department.

Inclusion of accessibility in ISED’s onboarding package

ISED’s goal is to support the orientation of new employees and students as soon as they arrive. As an alternative to the in-person orientation sessions, the Human Resources Branch created pre-recorded information sessions on the roles and functions of the work units at ISED.

Refreshed ISED Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus)

The ISED GBA Plus Network is working to strengthen the GBA Plus tool to be accessible and include ISED-specific resources, training and tools. A refreshed ISED GBA Plus questionnaire and manual will be developed and published on the ISED web pages in 2023.

Analysis of ISED’s Public Service Employee Survey results

ISED employees participated in the annual Public Service Employee Survey (PSES), led by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. The 2020–2021 results from equity-seeking groups, including employees with disabilities, were analyzed and shared with all ISED employees. All ISED employees will continue to be encouraged to participate in the survey each year.

Accessibility Passport

The Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport program developed by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat is available for all ISED employees. The Accessibility Passport helps employees with disabilities address barriers and identify their access needs in the workplace.

2023–2025 goals for culture

The Plan has been drafted with the support of persons with disabilities. The goals for culture could not have been identified without receiving messages on barriers from persons with disabilities. The Plan is written to respond to the needs of all ISED employees and clients.

Table 1: 2023 goals for culture

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Provide documentation on ableist behaviours to all ISED employees to mobilize accessibility behaviour and mindsets and promote the completion of Accessibility Matters training.	Human Resources Branch, ISED Accessibility Secretariat
Goal 2: Support each member of management to receive training on accessibility and ableism.	Human Resources Branch, ISED Champion for Accessibility
Goal 3: Implement the strategy to promote the Guide to Accessible Meetings across ISED. Support all sectors to follow the guide.	Human Resources Branch, ISED Accessibility Secretariat

Table 2: 2024 goals for culture

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Re-evaluate goals based on barrier reports and consultations.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat, Human Resources Branch
Goal 2: Analyze ISED initiatives, programs and communications to address intersectionality within accessibility.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat, Human Resources Branch
Goal 3: Publish updated ISED GBA Plus questionnaire and manual on the ISED intranet.	Strategy and Innovation Policy Sector

Table 3: 2025 goals for culture

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Re-evaluate goals based on barrier reports and consultations.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat, Human Resources Branch

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 2: Develop and apply a scent-free policy in the workplace to teach all employees about the health concerns related to scents.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat, Human Resources Branch

Employment

ISED is committed to building and supporting a more diverse, safe, respectful, healthy and inclusive workplace. While culture change is a large part of the work ahead, initiatives and tools have been identified to better prepare management to support employees and candidates with disabilities.

Overall outcome: Implement accessible human resource practices to remove and prevent barriers to the recruitment, retention and promotion of persons with disabilities.

Barriers identified in employment

In the consultations, we learned that we need to make improvements to our hiring process, including accommodations during the process. More work needs to be done to make hiring practices accessible for all people with disabilities. Participants also shared that self-identifying disabilities during the hiring process is complex because biases could be involved. Accessibility should be considered in all aspects of hiring, including proactive and standing offers of accommodations.

We learned about a number of instances where accommodations were not provided and the corresponding impact on inclusion, safety and equity. Participants also expressed that they felt like a burden or were scared for their career advancement when they asked for accommodations. These feelings and a lack of support for accommodations lead employees with disabilities to feel unsafe at work and consider leaving the department.

Participants also highlighted the need for increased flexibility regarding work location. Many participants shared that they do not feel as safe (i.e. getting COVID-19) or have the same supports in the workplace as they do at home.

Accessibility progress in employment at ISED

The following section outlines the progress achieved in employment at ISED. Review [Annex A](#) for more details and information on each initiative, program and resource.

LiveWorkPlay partnership

ISED collaborates with the LiveWorkPlay organization to hire people with intellectual disabilities in the department. The goal is to make LiveWorkPlay part of ISED's ongoing

staffing options and strategies. The 2nd annual LiveWorkPlay campaign launched in fall 2022, resulting in 18 total hires from the program to date.

Student hiring

An ISED student inventory was created to refer students with disabilities, including those from the ACT to Employ and Indigenous Student Employment Opportunity programs, to hiring managers.

Intentional recruitment of persons with disabilities

An enterprise approach was developed to recruit persons with disabilities for ISED's main occupational groups. These hiring processes focused on creating a positive and barrier-free candidate experience. The resulting talent has been promoted and marketed to hiring managers across the department.

Additionally, ISED has been an active participant in the Public Service Commission's Federal Internship Program for Canadians with Disabilities since the creation of the program in 2019. All candidates made available to us from the Public Service Commission have been hired since the creation of the program.

5,000 net new hires project

ISED is participating in the public service's initiative to hire a net gain of 5,000 people with disabilities between April 2020 and April 2025. Between April 2020 and October 2022, ISED's net is 28 new people with disabilities hired. The target for this timeframe, as estimated by the Office of Public Service Accessibility, is 95. ISED will continue to increase the number of net hires by 2025.

Training and awareness for hiring managers

ISED requires that hiring managers complete the course Inclusive Hiring Practices for a Diverse Workforce as a condition of staffing sub-delegation.

People Management Minute is a new type of communication and provides actionable habits to incorporate in management practices. ISED has given guidance on establishing diverse hiring boards and building a diverse and representative team.

Training and awareness for staffing advisors

Accommodations training has been developed and delivered to staffing advisors and coordinators. Staffing advisors must complete mandatory training on establishing accommodations in the staffing process in order to be promoted within the developmental program. The training includes the basics of accommodations, ISED's accommodation process, practical scenarios and information on how to interact with candidates around accommodations.

Accessibility in job advertisements and assessments

ISED has made progress on making sure employment advertisements and assessments are accessible.

ISED is part of the Assessment Accessibility Ambassadors Network, which is led by the Public Service Commission's Personnel Psychology Centre. As a member of the Network, ISED benefits from updates and training given by experts in the field of accommodations.

ISED has developed new inclusive standard wording on its job posters marketing specific resources, diversity and inclusion priorities and opportunities tailored to candidates with disabilities. All ISED jobs advertised now feature wording on diversity and inclusion and organizational needs.

An accessibility checklist was developed for job advertisement and assessment material. A continuous monitoring approach was developed, monitoring exercises were conducted in 2020–2021 and 2021–2022, and findings were shared with staffing advisors.

Workplace Accommodation Centre

The Workplace Accommodation Centre was created to support employees with disabilities at ISED. The Centre provides a centralized approach to support and provide accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Revised Departmental Exit Questionnaire

The Departmental Exit Questionnaire is currently being improved to ensure accessibility. The questionnaire will be shared with ISED employees to raise awareness and encourage participation.

2023–2025 goals for employment

The Plan has been drafted with the support of persons with disabilities. The employment goals could not have been identified without receiving messages on barriers from persons with disabilities. The Plan is written to respond to the needs of all ISED employees and clients.

Table 4: 2023 goals for employment

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Establish new external talent acquisition projects geared toward hiring persons with disabilities by focusing on the candidate experience, providing timely and relevant	All sectors; Human Resources Branch will facilitate

Goals	Responsibility
accommodations, and reducing bias and barriers in the assessment process.	
Goal 2: Establish and implement the “Getting EX Ready” program focused on under-represented employment equity groups, while partnering with various head-hunting agencies and launching an EX-01 hiring process to fill specific EX jobs.	Human Resources Branch
Goal 3: Prepare to implement the new requirements related to the upcoming section 36 (2), identification of biases and barriers, of the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> by providing training and information to advisors and managers, assessing staffing policies and procedures, and leading an interdepartmental working group to develop tools and products.	Human Resources Branch
Goal 4: Establish a strategy for setting and monitoring departmental hiring goals for persons with disabilities to ensure not only representation but also ISED’s participation in the 5,000 net new hires project.	Human Resources Branch
Goal 5: Engage with persons with disabilities to co-design improvements to the service delivery model of our Workplace Accommodation Centre.	Human Resources Branch

Table 5: 2024 goals for employment

Goals	Responsibility
<p>Goal 1: Reassess goals for 2024, adjust recruitment approach and determine if management controls are needed based on trends and information received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What We Learned report • changes to the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> and new guidance from the Public Service Commission, policy changes and consultations • Annual Staffing Monitoring Plan findings 	Human Resources Branch
Goal 2: Finalize implementation of changes to ISED staffing policies and procedures (section 36 of the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i>), including required changes to staffing policies	Human Resources Branch

Goals	Responsibility
and practices, training and information requirements for advisors and managers and diverse assessment boards.	
Goal 3: Monitor departmental hiring goals for persons with disabilities to ensure not only representation but also ISED's participation in the 5,000 net new hires project.	Human Resources Branch

Table 6: 2025 goals for employment

Goals	Responsibility
<p>Goal 1: Reassess goals for 2025, based on trends and the information received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What We Learned report • changes to the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> and new guidance from the Public Service Commission, policy changes and consultations • Annual Staffing Monitoring Plan findings 	Human Resources Branch
Goal 2: Report on progress made toward departmental hiring goals for persons with disabilities to ensure not only representation but also ISED's participation in the 5,000 net new hires project.	Human Resources Branch
Goal 3: An annual staffing monitoring plan will be developed identifying departmental priorities and areas of risk. Special focus will be put on diversity and inclusion metrics and initiatives.	Human Resources Branch

Built environment

ISED recognizes that an accessible built environment helps everyone. ISED office buildings meet the building code; however, this does not mean that office space is accessible by default. The department has taken steps to ensure a more inclusive and welcoming environment. For example, ISED uses neutral colours to reduce potential triggers caused by bright colours or patterns for modernized spaces. For base building changes, ISED is committed to working in partnership with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and building management companies. This partnership will work to make sure that entrances and hallways in ISED office space are accessible.

Overall outcome: Clients and employees have barrier-free access to and the use of physical spaces at ISED buildings and workplaces.

Barriers identified in the built environment

In the consultations, we learned about a variety of barriers in ISED's built environment. Barriers identified include poor overhead lighting, background noise and scents in the workplace.

Regarding lighting, participants shared that the poor lighting, halogen spotlights and dark floors can be dangerous for people with visual disabilities. Wall guides can be installed to help people with visual disabilities navigate ISED buildings. Overhead lighting can cause glares that cannot be turned off or down and can cause headaches and eye strain.

Background noise was commonly reported by participants. Background noise such as sounds from ventilation systems make it difficult for people to hear and focus during work hours and meetings. Many participants shared that the open area format of the offices increases background noise and distractions. Participants suggested that acoustic drop ceiling tiles be installed and that live captioning automatically be provided for in-person meetings.

Scent sensitivities were a common issue for participants. Many participants said they were nervous about returning to work since the scent-free policy is not typically enforced at ISED. Exposure to triggering scents affects an individual's ability to work effectively in the workplace.

Accessibility progress in the built environment at ISED

The following section outlines the progress achieved in the built environment at ISED. Review [Annex A](#) for more details and information on each initiative, program and resource.

Conducted barrier review at ISED

In 2020, a review was conducted within all ISED locations to identify barriers with circulation paths, doors, and reception and service counters.

Ergonomic door openers in washrooms

ISED received a barrier report pointing out that handling the locks in washroom stalls is difficult for people with certain limitations (hands, fingers, etc.). The applicable building's washroom locks were replaced in 2022–23.

Building emergency notification system

The Communications Research Centre has an accessible building emergency notification system. It includes bells and strobe lights to alert employees of emergencies. ISED's Emergency team consulted people with disabilities during their monthly device testing.

2023–2025 goals for the built environment

The Plan has been drafted with the support of persons with disabilities. The goals for built environment could not have been identified without receiving messages on barriers from persons with disabilities. The Plan is written to respond to the needs of all ISED employees and clients.

Table 7: 2023 goals for built environment

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Complete a review of ISED signage to identify signs that do not meet the new* TBS Federal Identity Program’s (FIP) signage requirements. *Pending release of revised standards from TBS.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 2: Complete a review to identify washroom locations that do not have accessibility features.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 3: Proactively identify areas with unsecured and excess cables and wires for electronic equipment. Find solutions and develop a standard to clean up the wires and cables to prevent tripping hazards.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 4: Implement the feedback received during the testing of the review of life safety systems for emergencies.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 5: With the review of circulation paths, automated door openers, reception desks and service counters in ISED buildings across the country completed, work will continue to address the remaining 9% of barriers identified.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch

Table 8: 2024 goals for built environment

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Address 50% of signage-related barriers identified in 2023 (year 1 of 2).	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 2: Provide the 2023 washroom accessibility findings to PSPC and seek PSPC’s engagement for corrective action.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 3: Designate one enclosed room per building location as a “reflection room” for people with invisible disabilities to	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch

Goals	Responsibility
access when they need to be alone, and identify associated modifications required.	

Table 9: 2025 Goals for built environment

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Address remaining 50% of signage-related barriers identified in 2023 (year 2 of 2).	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 2: Apply modifications to designated reflection rooms identified in 2024.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch
Goal 3: Explore options to require that all new security passes include Braille on the back for emergency contact numbers.	Corporate Facilities and Security Branch

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

Information and technology are necessary to how we work. During this time of a global pandemic and remote and hybrid work, it is especially important to provide employees with barrier-free access to information, tools and technology. Using inaccessible technologies creates more stress for people with disabilities.

In the consultations, employees with disabilities shared that they are being excluded from or not able to access information and communication technologies in the department. ISED will work on making all the department’s digital content and technologies accessible.

Overall outcome: Content on digital platforms provides accessible and inclusive information for all ISED employees and clients.

Barriers identified in ICT

In the consultations, many participants talked about the inaccessible websites commonly used across the department. For example, GCdocs and wiki pages are not accessible websites and tools for many employees with disabilities. Overall, many participants shared that these websites are difficult to navigate and that the information is difficult to understand and process.

Participants noted that software applications that are installed on computers should be reviewed for accessibility before installation—especially in terms of checking screen reader accessibility. Checking software accessibility would make sure that all employees can use these applications.

Accessibility progress in ICT at ISED

Video content in Microsoft Streams

An Accessibility Checklist for Microsoft Stream was written which contains a list of items that satisfy accessibility requirements when posting video content to Microsoft Stream. Employees who take the Microsoft Streams training must complete the Accessibility Checklist. For more information on the Microsoft Stream Accessibility Checklist, review [Annex A](#).

2023–2025 goals for ICT

The Plan has been drafted with the support of persons with disabilities. The information and communications technology goals could not have been identified without receiving messages on barriers from persons with disabilities. The Plan is written to respond to the needs of all ISED employees and clients.

Table 10: 2023 goals for ICT

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Give training to all sector managers on how to make accessible documents, especially on how to make accessible documents for screen readers.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat
Goal 2: Support and promote the use of accessible software, tools and communications products.	Chief Information Office

Table 11: 2024 goals for ICT

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: ISED will comply with the requirements of the upcoming Standard on ICT Accessibility.	Chief Information Office
Goal 2: Re-assess accessibility of the BURO application for reserving workspaces at ISED. Implement changes, if needed.	Chief Information Office
Goal 3: Prepare for a critical review of all internal and external systems, software, websites and equipment to identify existing and potential barriers to accessibility.	Chief Information Office
Goal 4: Review technology in all ISED boardrooms and identify supportive equipment for a broad range of disabilities.	Chief Information Office

Table 12: 2025 goals for ICT

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Undertake the critical review and propose measures to address barriers to accessibility identified in the exercise.	Chief Information Office
Goal 2: Determine the accessibility of, and make adjustments to, GCdocs to support its accessibility and inclusivity.	Chief Information Office
Goal 3: ISED will enhance quality assurance processes for release of web and mobile applications to make sure continued compliance with the Standard on ICT Accessibility and future standards.	Chief Information Office
Goal 4: Implement the identified technology and supportive equipment in all ISED boardrooms.	Chief Information Office

Communication, other than ICT

Communication is fundamental to how we learn and keep up with information and communicate across the department. The lack of one central communication platform for the entire department is a barrier to accessible communications. ISED has one central communications office that manages the articles posted to ISED Central on the department’s intranet site and highlighted in the @ISED newsletter. There is need to make sure that all communications are accessible at ISED. This means that every employee has a responsibility to create accessible content and use plain language.

Overall outcome: Content, in print and on digital platforms, provides accessible and inclusive communication for all ISED employees and clients.

Barriers identified in communication

Participants said the department should increase use of plain language in communications. A common example was complex language in corporate communication emails from senior management. Government jargon (e.g. acronyms) can make communications inaccessible as well. Communications across the department should be clear and written in plain language at a grade 5–8 level and avoid government jargon.

Accessibility progress in communication at ISED

The following section outlines the progress achieved in communication at ISED. Review [Annex A](#) for more details and information on each item.

Guidance on accessible documents

ISED is developing guidance and tools for accessible documents. The guidance will be distributed and followed by all sectors. An updated Accessibility Verification Tool will be published and shared with sectors. The verification tool helps people to check if their documents are accessible.

Updating templates / plain language in the Competition Bureau

The Competition Bureau at ISED is building a framework to support plain language. The framework includes an editorial board, a Competition Bureau–specific style guide, and customized plain language training. In 2022–2023, the Competition Bureau will grow its public outreach by using different communications tools and communicating in plain, accessible language.

2023–2025 goals for communication

The Plan has been drafted with the support of persons with disabilities. The communication goals could not have been identified without receiving messages on barriers from persons with disabilities. The Plan is written to respond to the needs of all ISED employees and clients.

Table 13: 2023 goals for communication

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Check accessibility of ISED’s central newsletter.	Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector
Goal 2: Make sure that ISED branded templates and ISED corporate templates are accessible.	Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector, Office of the Corporate Secretary
Goal 3: Make sure that all corporate ISED-wide events (in-person or virtually) have sign language interpretation (American Sign Language and Quebec Sign Language) and closed captions for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.	Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector; Chief Information Office; Corporate Finance, Systems and Procurement Branch

Table 14: 2024 goals for communication

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Ensure all ISED communications comply with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's guidelines on making communication accessible (e.g. font type, layout, alternative text and plain language).	Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector
Goal 2: Promote the use of video remote sign language interpretation for ISED call centres.	Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector; Chief Information Office; Corporate Finance, Systems and Procurement Branch
Goal 3: In compliance with TBS guidance, all strategic communication pieces are written in plain language, with a target reading level of grade 5 to 8.	Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector

Table 15: 2025 goals for communication

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Make sure that all corporate ISED-wide events (in person or virtual) have simultaneous remote French and English interpretation.	Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector; Chief Information Office; Corporate Finance, Systems and Procurement Branch

Procurement of goods, services and facilities

Whether for physical assets, computer software or professional services, procurement is a key partner to achieving accessibility at ISED. Before the pandemic, ISED bought sit/stand desks as part of Workplace Modernization. ISED also follows government-wide standards, such as the Guideline on Making Information Technology Usable by All, when buying computer software and hardware. This includes working with Shared Services Canada (SSC) and its Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) program to identify and arrange accessible tools and technology and remove remaining accessibility barriers.

Overall outcome: Accessible procurement is practised, ensuring the purchase of goods and services that are accessible to both ISED employees and clients.

Barriers identified in procurement

Many participants talked about how the procurement process tends to be inaccessible, confusing and complicated. Ergonomic and accessible products or devices were reported to take a long time to be approved and received. The long wait time affects employees' work and health. Participants talked about how they often need to work and be in pain because the procurement process takes a while.

Some participants said they are discouraged from obtaining accessible services or devices because of the complicated procurement process. Participants also shared that some procured items they received were inaccessible or did not meet their needs properly. Participants discussed that more knowledge on accessibility and assistive technologies is needed within the procurement process.

Additionally, participants discussed that there should be a requirement for contractors to provide accessible services (e.g. accessible documents). Participants discussed the need to hire contractors who support and practise accessibility.

2023–2025 goals for procurement

The Plan has been drafted with the support of persons with disabilities. The procurement goals could not have been identified without receiving messages on barriers from persons with disabilities. The Plan is written to respond to the needs of all ISED employees and clients.

Table 16: 2023 goals for procurement

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: ISED purchases accessible goods and services, when available.	Contracting and Materiel Management
Goal 2: Establish standing offers for accessibility services at ISED, including sign language interpretation.	Contracting and Materiel Management, Systems and Procurement Branch
Goal 3: All contracts for goods and services will include a requirement for the contractor to provide documentation in a fully accessible format.	Contracting and Materiel Management

Table 17: 2024 goals for procurement

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Implement Public Services and Procurement Canada’s accessible procurement guidelines at ISED.	Contracting and Material Management; Corporate Finance, Systems and Procurement Branch
Goal 2: Promote the Better Buying accessible procurement videos about the importance of accessible procurement.	Contracting and Material Management, Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector
Goal 3: All contracted services will be required to provide fully accessible written documentation in each official language.	Contracting and Material Management

Table 18: 2025 goals for procurement

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Implement and clearly define accessibility requirements in all tenders, requests for proposals and contracts.	Contracting and Material Management

Design and delivery of programs and services

As a department with many grants and contribution programs and many regulators, ISED must consider accessibility from program conception and design to delivery. Knowledge about accessibility is high in some program areas; however, more efforts are needed to improve awareness of the needs of people with disabilities and the impact of taking an intersectional approach to developing, implementing and evaluating grants and contribution programs.

Overall outcome: Ensure ISED employees are equipped to design and deliver programs and services that are accessible for everyone.

Barriers identified in design and delivery of programs and services

In the consultations, we learned that accessibility is not systematically considered when new programs and services are being developed at ISED. To make sure services and programs are inclusive, accessibility needs to be considered at all stages of development.

A full review of the design and delivery of programs and services needs to be conducted to identify areas of accessibility improvement.

2023–2025 goals for design and delivery of programs and services

The Plan has been drafted with the support of persons with disabilities. The goals for design and delivery could not have been identified without receiving messages on barriers from persons with disabilities. The Plan is written to respond to the needs of all ISED employees and clients.

Table 19: 2023 goals for design and delivery of programs and services

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Determine what programs and services to review with an accessibility lens. Figure out what barriers exist in these programs and services and find solutions to remove barriers.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat, Accessibility Taskforce Working Group
Goal 2: During the onboarding process, require that all client service specialists take the “Accessibility Matters at ISED” training as well as training on accessible client service delivery.	Accessibility Taskforce Working Group, Human Resources Branch, ISED Accessibility Secretariat
Goal 3: Increase awareness and educate employees at ISED call centres (i.e. ISED Help Desk and HR Services) on the use of video remote sign language interpretation .	Accessibility Taskforce Working Group, Human Resources Branch, Accessibility Champion
Goal 4: Increase awareness of alternative communication methods (e.g. pictures, letter boards and communication devices) to reduce attitudinal barriers at ISED call centres.	Accessibility Taskforce Working Group, Human Resources Branch, Accessibility Champion

Table 20: 2024 goals for design and delivery of programs and services

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Remove all barriers in the identified programs and services from 2023. Make sure these programs and services are accessible for clients and employees.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat, Accessibility Taskforce Working Group
Goal 2: Review programs and services that are due for renewal this year. Determine accessibility	Corporate Management Sector, Accessibility Taskforce Working Group

Goals	Responsibility
issues and barriers and resolve them for each program and service during the review period.	
Goal 3: Make sure that all newly created forms and fillable forms are available in Microsoft Word format.	Chief Information Office, Corporate Management Sector

Table 21: 2025 goals for design and delivery of programs and services

Goals	Responsibility
Goal 1: Reassess goals for 2025 based on barrier reports and consultations.	ISED Accessibility Secretariat, Accessibility Taskforce Working Group

Transportation

The area of transportation is beyond the scope of ISED.

Consultations

As required by the *Accessible Canada Act (Act)*, people with disabilities were consulted to collect input of what to include in the 2023–2025 ISED Accessibility Plan. ISED consulted, collaborated, and co-developed the consultation process with people with disabilities across the department. Additionally, people with disabilities were consulted on the 2023–2025 ISED Accessibility Plan.

ISED is committing to having annual consultations with people with disabilities. The consultation process for ISED’s 2023 Progress Report will begin in June 2023.

Consultation methodology

The consultations ran from August 15, 2022, to September 9, 2022. To be fully supportive of inclusion, ISED employees could participate via any, or all, of the following methods:

- attending information gathering meetings conducted via MS Teams, in each official language (French and English) to leverage all the accessibility features of the platform
- responding via a SimpleSurvey (which was available on the ISED Accessibility Plan wiki page)
- submitting an email to the Accessibility Secretariat

- contacting the Accessibility Secretariat to schedule a conversation

In total, 654 ISED employees participated in the consultations. ISED's employees and existing groups and committees were contacted to participate. In total, 13 group sessions were held with the following groups: Persons with Disabilities Network, Workplace Accommodation Centre, Accessibility Feedback Panel, Managers Community Steering Committee, Ambassadors Program and the ISED Champions and Chairs Committee. French and English sessions were held for ISED employees. Additionally, 65 individuals requested one-on-one consultations with a member of the Accessibility Secretariat on Microsoft Teams. Overall, 88 individuals submitted their responses through SimpleSurvey.

All the consultation methods asked a series of questions to gain insight into the barriers that exist within the department. The consultation questions are available in [Annex B](#).

Overall, participants reported and identified the most barriers in the culture and employment priority areas. The least reported priority area was design and delivery of programs and services.

As required by the Act, people with disabilities were consulted on the 2023–2025 ISED Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Secretariat held a consultation session with the Persons with Disabilities Network and the Accessibility Feedback Panel. Members of the Network and Panel provided their feedback on the Plan and their input on what to include in future quarterly updates on ISED progress.

Governance

Over 2023–2025, ISED will embed accessibility into its internal governance structure. ISED has established a series of new standard operating procedures to implement change and monitor progress. These new procedures relate to (1) barrier identification, removal and prevention and (2) reporting and monitoring. For more information on ISED's feedback process and reporting, review the [Description of Feedback Process](#).

Barrier identification, removal and prevention

As explained in the “General” section, members of the public and ISED employees can report barriers to accessibility in many different ways. These reports will be used to make changes at ISED so that its spaces, operations and policies are more accessible for everybody, especially people with disabilities.

ISED's sectors will have the responsibility to proactively identify barriers to accessibility in their policies, programs, practices and services. The Accessibility Secretariat will

coordinate regular data collection activities with sectors to identify barriers and monitor progress in their removal.

Data collected from these activities will be included in ISED's annual progress reports.

Reporting and monitoring

Consulting, reporting and collaborating with the disability community is critical to ensure ISED is on the right path. Beginning in 2023, on a quarterly basis, the Director General of the Human Resources Branch will report to the employee Persons with Disabilities Network (PWD-N) on progress related to accessibility at ISED. These reports will also be shared for information purposes with ISED's senior management team, including the Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for accessibility and Assistant Deputy Minister's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The quarterly reports will include statistics and information on ISED's progress in responding to identified barriers.

Moving forward

The Act seeks to create a Canada without barriers by January 2040. As a service provider to businesses, ISED has a key role to play in helping to achieve this goal.

As an employer and a service provider, ISED is committed to creating a diverse, safe, respectful, healthy and inclusive workplace. This means a commitment to identifying, removing and preventing barriers to full participation for persons with disabilities. The department will continue to evolve and adapt progress reports and accessibility plans to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Annex A – Progress Achieved in Accessibility at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Culture

Persons with Disabilities Network

ISED's Persons with Disabilities Network (PWD-N) launched in November 2020. The Chair and the Accessibility Champion host the Network. The Network's vision is to build a safe, inclusive and accessible community for employees with disabilities that empowers them to share lived experiences, educate themselves and their colleagues, and advocate for accessibility- and disability-related change at ISED. The Accessibility Secretariat and the PWD-N will meet frequently to ensure alignment on accessibility within the department. The Accessibility Secretariat will also send quarterly reports to the PWD-N (beginning January 2023) on accessibility progress and feedback on barriers.

Accessibility Ambassador program

ISED has 16 distinct sectors, three deputy ministers and four ministers. The department recognizes that accessibility is everybody's responsibility. To help change the culture across its diverse sectors, the department launched the Accessibility Ambassador program in fall 2021. Employees across sectors can volunteer as accessibility ambassadors to help implement accessible practices within their own teams. Ambassadors receive training from the Accessibility Secretariat and participate in a virtual community of practice to stay up to date on the latest approaches to accessibility. Currently, 147 ambassadors are enrolled.

Accessibility Feedback Panel

As demonstrated in the Accessible Canada consultation (2017) and ISED's accessibility consultation (2022), fostering inclusive environments requires that people with disabilities meaningfully take part in the policy decision process—in the spirit of “nothing without us.” To facilitate this consultation, the Accessibility Feedback Panel (the Panel) was launched in fall 2021.

The Panel gives ISED staff the chance to meet with accessibility experts in ISED to learn about how their initiatives and projects can be more inclusive for everybody, especially people with disabilities. The bi-weekly Panel is supported by employees with disabilities

and their allies who volunteer to attend presentations from ISED staff who want advice about accessibility. The Panel has given advice on barrier prevention, including on touchless door openers, video content in Microsoft Stream, the future of work, the talent management strategy and more. As of October 2022, a total of 21 sessions have been held.

Training

To support an anti-ableist workforce, ISED mandated that all employees complete training on accessibility by June 2022. “Accessibility Matters at ISED” is a self-paced, online training developed by the ISED Accessibility Secretariat in June 2020. The training teaches employees about how to fulfill their responsibility to contribute to an accessible environment. Topics covered include legal and regulatory frameworks; built-in accessibility features in Microsoft products; and appropriate fonts, templates and colours, etc. ISED has partnered with the Office for Public Service Accessibility to share the contents of the training with other federal departments. “Accessibility Matters at ISED” is on the department’s internal training platform, ISED Campus.

The Accessibility Secretariat collected feedback from employees about the content and format of the training. Some employees with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), reported that the training could be more accessible for them. For example, having the option to listen to an audio recording or watch videos of the modules would help with learning. As a stopgap measure, employees who reported this type of barrier were told about text readers built in to their browsers that could be used to listen to the content. The Accessibility Secretariat will develop and launch audio recordings of the training’s virtual modules in 2023.

National AccessAbility Week

For National AccessAbility Week in May 2022, ISED hosted events for the department. The theme was “Building an accessible public service: Moving forward together.” A launch event with ISED’s deputy ministers was held at the beginning of National AccessAbility Week. The launch event talked about accessibility and highlighted stories about working to remove barriers in the department. The Persons with Disabilities Network hosted a lived experience session with the deputy ministers and ISED’s Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer. During this event, employees with disabilities had the opportunity to share their perspectives and advice with senior management on how ISED can become a more accessible department.

Accessibility Hub wiki and Accessible Learning Centre wiki

In summer 2020, ISED created the “Accessibility Hub” and “Accessibility Learning Centre” wikis, central locations where ISED employees can get information about

accessibility in the department. The Accessibility Hub wiki helps employees find information about accessibility and the programs that support accessibility. The ISED Accessibility Learning Centre wiki gives employees access to training and information on making accessible and inclusive documents, improving communications, organizing accessible events and more. Both wiki pages will be transferred to the ISED intranet. The Accessibility Learning Centre and the Accessibility Hub will continue to grow as the knowledge base expands.

Inclusion of accessibility in ISED’s onboarding package

ISED’s goal is to support the orientation of new employees and students as soon as they arrive. As an alternative to in-person orientation sessions, the Human Resources Branch created pre-recorded information sessions on the roles and functions of the work units at ISED. The orientation program will be revised to make sure that it is accessible and provides information on accessibility at ISED. Also, the orientation guide will be revised to reflect updates in the department and ensure accessibility.

Refreshed ISED Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus)

The ISED GBA Plus Network is working to strengthen the GBA Plus wiki and consulted the Accessibility Feedback Panel. The revised GBA Plus wiki will have ISED-specific resources, training and tools. The new GBA Plus wiki will help ISED continue to be a leader in developing and implementing inclusive and accessible programs and policies. A refreshed ISED GBA Plus questionnaire and manual will be developed and published on the ISED intranet pages in 2023.

Analysis of ISED’s Public Service Employee Survey results

ISED employees participate in the annual Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) led by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. The 2020–2021 results from equity-seeking groups, including employees with disabilities, were analyzed and then shared with all ISED employees. All ISED employees will continue to be encouraged to participate in the survey each year. Narrative analyses will be done on a continuous basis.

Accessibility Passport

The [Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport](#) program developed by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat is available for all ISED employees. The Accessibility Passport helps employees with disabilities address barriers and identify their access needs in the workplace. The Accessibility Passport promotes collaboration between employees and management.

Employment

LiveWorkPlay partnership

ISED collaborates with the LiveWorkPlay organization to hire people with intellectual disabilities in the department. The goal is to make LiveWorkPlay part of ISED's ongoing staffing options and strategies. The 2nd annual LiveWorkPlay campaign launched in fall 2022, resulting in 18 hires total hires from the program to date.

Student hiring

An ISED student inventory was created to refer students with disabilities, including those from the ACT to Employ and Indigenous Student Employment Opportunity (ISEO) programs, to hiring managers. During summer 2022, ISED was listed in the top 4 organizations with the highest number of students officially registered in the ISEO program, which invites students and their managers to participate in different activities organized by the Public Service Commission.

Intentional recruitment of persons with disabilities

An enterprise approach was developed to recruit persons with disabilities for ISED's main occupational groups. These hiring processes focused on creating a positive and barrier-free candidate experience. The resulting talent has been promoted and marketed to hiring managers across the department.

Additionally, ISED has been an active participant in the Public Service Commission's Federal Internship Program for Canadians with Disabilities since the creation of the program in 2019. All candidates made available to us from the Public Service Commission have been hired since the creation of the program.

5,000 net new hires project

ISED is participating in the public service's initiative to hire a net gain of 5,000 people with disabilities hired between April 2020 and April 2025. Members of Digital HR (human resources) participate in a multi-department working group tracking the number of persons with disabilities hired across the government. Between April 2020 and October 2022, ISED's net is 28 new people with disabilities hired. The target for this timeframe, as estimated by the Office of Public Service Accessibility, is 95. ISED will continue to increase the number of net hires by 2025.

Training and awareness for hiring managers

ISED requires that hiring managers complete the course Inclusive Hiring Practices for a Diverse Workforce as a condition of staffing sub-delegation. In addition, ISED's in-house staffing sub-delegation training is being continuously reviewed to include more concrete information for new sub-delegated managers. Current training provides managers with tips on actively diversifying their workforce.

People Management Minutes, a new type of communication to influence the behavior of people managers, provides actionable habits to incorporate in their management practice. ISED has produced guidance on establishing diverse hiring boards and building a diverse and representative team.

Training and awareness for staffing advisors

Accommodations training has been developed and delivered to staffing advisors and coordinators. Staffing advisors must complete mandatory training on establishing accommodations in the staffing process in order to be promoted within the developmental program. The training includes the basics of accommodations, ISED's accommodation process, practical scenarios and information on how to interact with candidates around accommodations.

Broader employment equity and inclusion topics were examined and discussed throughout staffing learning circles, which are provided to human resources advisors:

- Establishing merit criteria
- Staffing options and tactics
- Choice of process – non-advertised
- Choice of process – advertised
- Choice of process – advertised (assessments)
- Selection decision and notifications

Additionally, an inclusive hiring practices infographic was developed and made available to the HR Staffing community. The infographic provides examples of key diversity and inclusion considerations for each stage of the hiring process.

Accessibility in job advertisements and assessments

ISED is part of the Assessment Accessibility Ambassadors Network, which is led by the Public Service Commission's Personnel Psychology Centre. As a member of the Network, ISED benefits from updates and training given by experts in the field of accommodations. The network can assist with complex or particularly challenging accommodations to ensure equitable solutions are found.

ISED has developed new inclusive standard wording on its job posters marketing specific resources, diversity and inclusion priorities and opportunities tailored to candidates with disabilities. All ISED jobs advertised now feature wording on diversity and inclusion and organizational needs.

All candidates invitations have an active offer of accommodation with links to learn more about accommodation.

An accessibility checklist was developed for job advertisement and assessment material. A continuous monitoring approach was developed, monitoring exercises were conducted in 2020–2021 and 2021–2022, and findings were shared with staffing advisors. This approach is being reviewed to consider upcoming changes to section 36 of the *Public Service Employment Act* that will require hiring managers to identify and address biases and barriers in their assessment tools.

Workplace Accommodation Centre

The Workplace Accommodation Centre was created to support employees with disabilities at ISED. The Centre provides a centralized approach to support and provide accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Revised Departmental Exit Questionnaire

The Departmental Exit Questionnaire is currently being improved to ensure accessibility. The questionnaire will be shared with ISED employees to raise awareness and encourage participation.

Built environment

Conducted barrier review at ISED

In 2020, a review was conducted at all ISED locations to identify barriers. The review examined the following:

- Circulation paths in all ISED office spaces
- All doors into ISED buildings, office spaces and common areas to identify which doors needed an automated door opener, repair or repositioning,
- Height of reception desks and service counters in all ISED locations to find where modifications are required to ensure they are accessible.

The reviews identified 1337 barriers in ISED’s buildings, including leased buildings. Currently, 51% of the barriers identified have been resolved and 40% are in progress of being resolved. Additionally, 9% of barriers will be resolved within this 2022–2023 fiscal year.

Ergonomic door openers in washrooms

As part of accessibility in the workplace, employees are asked to submit barrier reports when they experience or identify barriers. A barrier report was received from an employee who pointed out that the locks in washrooms of their building were difficult to handle for people with certain limitations (hands, fingers, etc.) The Facilities team consulted with the Accessibility Feedback Panel on the best way to fix the issue. The applicable building’s washroom locks were replaced in 2022–2023.

Building emergency notification system

The Communications Research Centre has an accessible building emergency notification system. It includes bells and strobe lights to alert employees of emergencies. ISED's Emergency team consulted people with disabilities during their monthly device testing. The Accessibility Feedback Panel provided input on the Communications Research Centre's building emergency notification system, and the feedback obtained will be implemented in 2023.

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

Video content in Microsoft Streams

The Digital Adoption Team launched Microsoft (MS) Streams. The new service offered to everyone at ISED allows employees to securely upload, view and share videos of meetings, presentations and training sessions, as well as other videos. The team sought feedback from the Accessibility Feedback Panel and implemented changes to the software. An Accessibility Checklist for MS Stream was written which lists mandatory items that must be satisfied before posting to Stream. This includes things like providing closed captions and turning on noise suppression. Employees who take the Microsoft Streams training must complete the Accessibility Checklist before having access to upload videos to the platform.

Communications, other than ICT

Guidance on accessible documents

A barrier often faced at the department is regular requests for document accessibility review. ISED is developing guidance and tools for accessible documents which will be distributed and adhered to across the department. An updated Accessibility Verification Tool was developed to help people to learn if their documents are accessible. The verification tool breaks down all the steps needed to make documents accessible. The Accessibility Verification Tool will be published on the ISED Accessibility Hub website.

Updating templates / plain language in the Competition Bureau

The Competition Bureau at ISED is building a framework to support plain language, including an editorial board, a Competition Bureau-specific style guide, and customized plain language training. Recently, a plain language review by default was incorporated in the policy committees. The Competition Bureau finished one round of training where 1/6 of the organization took an interactive course on plain language. The International Affairs team has a goal of anything going out from the Bureau being grade 12 or less.

In 2022–2023, the Competition Bureau will grow its public outreach by using a variety of communications tools and communicating in plain, accessible language.

Procurement of goods, services and facilities

There is no progress on accessibility in procurement to report on at this time. A full review of ISED's procurement needs to be conducted to identify further areas of accessibility improvement.

Design and delivery of programs and services

There is no progress on accessibility in procurement to report on at this time. A full review of the design and delivery of programs and services needs to be conducted to identify areas of accessibility improvement.

Annex B - List of Questions for ISED Accessibility Plan Consultations

The following list contains the questions that were asked in each consultation.

1. Imagine ISED as a completely accessible department.
 - What is your vision for an accessible ISED?
 - What does “completely accessible” mean to you?
 - What is your role in making ISED “completely accessible”?
2. Thinking about the next few years, how would you like to receive information about:
 - progress on accessibility at ISED
 - your legal and departmental obligations related to accessibility
 - ways to contribute to an accessible culture
3. What do you think ISED is doing well in terms of accessibility and disability inclusion?
4. How do you think ISED could improve in terms of accessibility and disability inclusion?
5. Have you encountered or witnessed a barrier to accessibility at ISED in any of the following areas? How did that impact you, your team or your stakeholders?
 - Employment
 - Built environment
 - Information and communication technologies (ICT)
 - Communication, other than ICT
 - Procurement of goods, services and facilities
 - Culture
 - Design and delivery of programs and services
 - Transportation
6. What action has your team taken to become more accessible? Think about:
 - how you communicate with each other
 - how you develop and deliver programs and services
 - how you involve persons with disabilities in your work

7. What is your role in identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility? Think about your capacity as:
 - a public servant
 - a subject matter expert
 - a member of your specific directorate, branch, or sector
8. Is there anything else you would like to share to help identify areas to be addressed in support of accessibility?