



NATIONAL
GALLERY
OF CANADA

MUSÉE
DES BEAUX-ARTS
DU CANADA

NGC Accessibility Plan 2023-2025

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Easy Read Summary

This plan is about accessibility at the National Gallery of Canada (Gallery). We want to be more accessible to people with disabilities. This plan is part of the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). The ACA is a new law that will help make all of Canada more accessible for people with disabilities. The National Gallery of Canada has a plan to help make us more accessible for people with disabilities. This plan is for the next 3 years (2023-25). We will be writing reports on how we are working towards our goals each year. After that, we will make a new plan.

Our Plan

Over the next 3 years, the Gallery will:

1. We will formulate a plan to help people with disabilities in our building if there is an emergency.
2. We will make sure that our building has quiet spaces for people to work and visit with less noise and activity around them.
3. We will make rules about accommodations (changes that help someone do their job) for our staff.
4. We will look at the way we find and hire new staff to make sure there are no barriers for people with disabilities.
5. We will look at our job postings to make sure there are no barriers for people with disabilities.
6. We will look at the website that people use to apply for jobs to make sure there are no barriers for people with disabilities.
7. We will look at the websites that our staff uses to make sure that there are no barriers for staff with disabilities.
8. We will give training to all our staff about accessibility and disability.
9. We will make changes to our website to make it more accessible for people with disabilities.

10. We will make improvements to the accessibility of the built environment, such as: grab rails; cane detectible surfaces; lighting in gallery spaces; and colour contrasting.
11. We will make sure our programs, tours, and exhibits can be experienced by different people with different abilities.
12. We will write rules about accessibility when we are buying things to make sure that new things we buy are accessible to people with disabilities.
13. We will ensure our content is accessible in a range of formats and that you know how to request these different formats.
14. We will communicate in language that is inclusive, respectful, and easy to understand.
15. We will be sure that we communicate information on our website about what you can expect when you visit us.

Feedback

We want feedback on this accessibility plan and anything else about the National Gallery of Canada. You can tell us what you think of the plan by contacting us:

Email: accessibility@gallery.ca

By phone: 613-990-1985 / 1-800-319-2787

In-person and / or in writing: 380 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON K1N 9N4

Website: <https://gallery.ca/accessibility>

Facebook: [facebook.com/nationalgallerycanada](https://www.facebook.com/nationalgallerycanada)

Twitter: [@NatGalleryCan](https://twitter.com/NatGalleryCan)

Instagram: [@NatGalleryCan](https://www.instagram.com/NatGalleryCan)

1. General

1.1 Statement of Commitment

The National Gallery of Canada is committed to providing an inclusive experience to all the communities it exists to serve. This includes making our workplace, activities, and services accessible for all visitors, employees, volunteers, and contractors. We want everyone to be able to enjoy the Gallery in a way that respects their dignity and independence. We understand that accessibility is an ongoing process and that people with disabilities are the experts in their own experience and in accessibility. We commit to listening to people who have disabilities and to keep improving accessibility. We see the Gallery leading boldly towards a future in which art has the power to build bridges and advance a more equitable society. We strive to be responsive in our approach to inclusion and access. We value the diversity, self-worth and the human rights of all. We are committed to fostering belonging which is rooted in our culture.

1.2 Description of Gallery

The National Gallery of Canada is an organization dedicated to making art accessible to all. It does this through its collection of works of art, exhibitions, and public activities. The Gallery has one of the world's largest collections of contemporary Indigenous art and one of the most important collections of Canadian and European art in Canada. The National Gallery of Canada is headquartered in Ottawa on the un-ceded, un-surrendered traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation. We respect, honour and acknowledge the Algonquin Nation's stewardship of this land, from time immemorial and into the future.

1.3 Contact Information & Feedback Process

The National Gallery welcomes feedback from our visitors, employees, volunteers, and members of the public about accessibility and about this plan. You can send us feedback with your name or without your name. We are committed to reviewing the

feedback we receive in good faith and taking steps to address barriers that are identified through this feedback.

You can submit feedback about accessibility at the Gallery in many different ways:

Email: accessibility@gallery.ca

By phone: 613-990-1985 / 1-800-319-2787

In-person and / or in writing: 380 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON K1N 9N4

Website: <https://gallery.ca/accessibility>

Facebook: [facebook.com/nationalgallerycanada](https://www.facebook.com/nationalgallerycanada)

Twitter: [@NatGalleryCan](https://twitter.com/NatGalleryCan)

Instagram: [@NatGalleryCan](https://www.instagram.com/NatGalleryCan)

Information about how to submit feedback to the National Gallery is also available on our public website at the following [link](#).

You can request alternative formats of this plan, and a description of our feedback process by contacting the Senior Manager, Strategy & Inclusion at accessibility@gallery.ca.

An electronic version (that is compatible with assistive technology) of this plan can be downloaded immediately from our website at: <https://gallery.ca/accessibility>

We will provide the following alternative formats within 15 days of the initial request:

- Print
- Large print (increased font size)

We will provide the following alternative formats within 45 days of the initial request:

- Braille (a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers)
- Audio (a recording of someone reading the text out loud)

1.4 Executive Summary of this Plan

We have started to work on accessibility with staff and visitor surveys. These surveys asked about improving accessibility at the Gallery. We have a report on the building and how we can improve. We have also embarked on a new JEDI&A (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) strategy. This strategy helped with the development of our strategic plan. It also guides our work and policies. The JEDI recommendations are based on consultations with our staff and visitors and expert advice. As a result of these conversations, we recognize the need to engage more fully in this work. A separate review and report inform this accessibility action plan which aims to address issues of exclusion and barrier removal for those with visible and invisible disabilities.

1.5 Definitions

This plan uses these definitions:

Accessibility: The design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies, and rules in a way that allows all people, including people with a variety of disabilities, to access them.

Barrier: Anything that might hinder people with disabilities' full and equal participation. Barriers can be architectural, technological, attitudinal, based on information or communications, or can be the result of a policy or procedure.

Disability: Any impairment, or difference in physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, or communication ability. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary, or can change over time.

2. Areas Described under Section 5 of the Accessible Canada Act

2.1 General

Overview

Our staff need the right training and knowledge to be able to implement this plan. As a result, training is an important part of our plan. Staff need general training on disability sensitivity and accessibility. Some staff also need training on how to be accessible in their jobs. We also want to make sure that we are working with people with disabilities early and often. To uphold this commitment, we will consult people with disabilities as we design and implement accessibility projects.

NGC Accessibility Goals

1. By June 2023, we will develop an accessibility consultation strategy that will guide the establishment and maintenance of an external advisory committee.
2. By September 2023, we will develop an accessibility awareness and disability sensitivity training strategy for all staff and volunteers.
3. By December 2023, we will revise existing accessibility training and/or seek new external training to reflect feedback we received.
4. By December 2023, we will establish and pay an accessibility advisory committee of people with disabilities to ensure that all accessibility initiatives are led by people with disabilities.
5. By March 2024, all Gallery staff and volunteers will have received disability sensitivity and accessibility awareness training.

2.2 The Built Environment

Overview

The National Gallery is in Ottawa and is open to the public for exhibitions, public programs and events. We know that changes are needed so people with disabilities can find their way safely and independently around the Gallery. There are barriers in washrooms and our building, including in signage. There are challenges with the crosswalk near the Gallery. We know that people want more information on the accessibility of the Gallery to plan their visit.

NGC Accessibility Goals

1. By March 2023, any inaccessible washrooms will have accessible signage removed until changes are made.
2. By March 2023 and onwards, we will advocate with the City of Ottawa to request and ensure crosswalks are accessible.
3. By June 2023, we will provide information on our website about accessibility features and known barriers at the Gallery. This will list what features the accessible washrooms have on the Gallery website under the section “planning your visit.” This information will include the process for using the elevator, its size, and any requirements for operating (e.g. buzz security to access) and about how to request assistance to navigate the crosswalk. Any disruptions to elevator service should be communicated internally, and on the public-facing website.
4. By June 2023, we will place a sign at the top and bottom of the stepped ramp warning people to be careful maneuvering up and down the stepped ramp.
5. By December 2023, we will develop a plan for making longer-term changes to the accessibility of the Gallery’s built environment.
6. By January 2024, tactile and braille signage will be provided at all washrooms. They should be mounted at a maximum height of 1500 mm and should be provided on the latch side of the door.

7. By January 2024, we will implement staff key card for opening the doors to elevator so buzzing security is not required.
8. By December 2025, we will implement directional tactile walking surface indicator from the crosswalk, through the plaza to the main entrance. The indicator should also lead people to the pedestrian signal activator. Consideration should be given to bringing people to the sculpture and providing a decision tile there before leading to the entrance.
9. By December 2025, we will make high priority improvements to the accessibility of the built environment, including:
 - Visual contrast edging at the nosings of the stairs; and Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSIs) at the top of stairs, ramps, and unprotected drops.
 - Installing grab rails at the exterior of the Gallery between stairs and seats.
 - Installing cane detectable edges at stanchions and line-up guides at the entrance.
 - Increasing illumination in front of the washrooms, the coat closet, auditorium antechamber, and the entrance of special exhibition video installations.
 - Reconfiguring the auditorium ramp to improve the slope.
10. By December 2025, we will make additional changes to accessibility, including:
 - Improving the exterior handrail.
 - Reducing the use of deodorizers.
 - Removing barriers (ie. racks) in the boutique to improve turning radius.
 - Removing chairs and trash containers to ensure adequate space to access door controls.
 - Improving the colour contrast of guards near paintings.
 - Assessing the replacement of door handles with lever-type handles.

- Ensure all office equipment and tools are at accessible heights (e.g. lowering white board heights in the staff office areas, relocating the staff coffee machine and other appliances, etc.)
11. By December 2025, we will create a large, accessible washroom stall in the washroom between the Great Hall and the cafeteria.
 12. Once the accessible washroom stall is complete, directional signage (with the international symbol of access) to this accessible washroom will be provided in selected high traffic areas of the Gallery.

2.3 Employment

Overview

The National Gallery has about 272 employees. Since 2020, many employees have worked from home or both in the office and at home. We strive for our staff complement to be reflective of Canada's diversity. The goals outlined below will help us to improve accessibility for our current and future employees with disabilities.

NGC Accessibility Goals

1. By March 2023, we will hire or appoint an accessibility or accommodation coordinator(s).
2. By June 2023, we will review and revise our process for employee accommodations. This clarified process will outline when fully accessible documents are required and when they are not.
3. By September 2023, we will permit sit breaks during shifts and have portable seating that is height-adjustable available for front-line staff.
4. By January 2024, we will develop an employee resource group for employees with disabilities.

2.4 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Overview

The National Gallery is in the process of conducting a comprehensive review of our websites and social media for accessibility. We will be building these findings into our continued plans to improve the accessibility of our platforms.

NGC Accessibility Goals

1. We will immediately begin addressing website barriers identified.
2. By January 2023, we will post alternative contact information individuals can use to purchase tickets.
3. By March 2023, we will have a workplan to prioritize and update the alt-text for older images on the Gallery website.
4. By June 2023, we will upgrade our online ticketing form to meet WCAG 2.0 level AA standards and test before launch by persons with disabilities.
5. Starting in December 2023, we will ensure that all newly posted website or social media images have high quality alt-text.
6. By December 2023, we will conduct a fulsome website accessibility audit.
7. By March 2024, in consultation with people with disabilities, we will establish internal norms or standards on image descriptions to guide staff.
8. By December 2024, our website will be WCAG 2.0 Level AA conformant.

2.5 Communication, other than ICT

Overview

We offer information on our website and in-person on our exhibitions, programs, and artworks. We also offer tours, lectures, and special events in-person and online. We share this information on our website, in print documents, in videos, and through social media. We answer questions through our “contact us” form on our website, with options for folks to e-mail or call us. Communication is one of the areas where we have recently focused much of our attention to improve accessibility. We know that we need to write in plain language.

NGC Accessibility Goals

1. By January 2023, the Gallery senior leadership will communicate commitment to and the importance of accessibility to all staff and volunteers as part of their performance plan.
2. By March 2023, the Gallery will review and revise the language on its website referring to people with disabilities to ensure that it is respectful and dignified.
3. By March 2023, we will add and list a TTY number on our website.
4. By April 2023, we will display a toll-free number at the top of the contact form and the hours that it is answered.
5. By June 2023, the Gallery will develop and implement accessible PowerPoints and Word templates.
6. By July 2023, we will develop and post guidelines for requesting alternative formats on public-facing website and include in staff training for internal requests.
7. By December 2023, the Gallery will offer plain language training to staff.
8. By December 2023, we will review all job postings for inclusive/plain language. Once we establish internal language standards, we will put all new postings into plain and inclusive language.

9. By December 2023, we will identify priority signage to replace, and that signage will be replaced by June 2024.
10. By December 2023, we will develop an internal standard on sign language interpretation at events. This standard will include when sign language interpretation will be provided without a request and how requests will be resolved.
11. By December 2023, the Gallery will have alternative format documents available on-site for visitors. These will include large print and braille.
12. By December 2023, the Gallery will have established processes to fulfill requests for documents in alternative formats.
13. By December 2023, we will develop reference information for visitor services staff to answer accessibility questions. This document will be developed in consultation with people with disabilities and reflected in onboarding and training modules.
14. By December 2023 and onwards, we will ensure that everyone who staffs the visitor phone line, answers visitor emails, or staffs the ticket desk is equipped to address access questions or know a point person guests can be directed to.
15. By December 2023, we will develop and post a social story, in an accessible format, describing what visitors can expect during a visit.
16. By December 2023, the Gallery will provide training to all staff that develop documents on document accessibility.
17. By January 2024, all emergency and elevator signage will be reviewed and approved to conform to applicable standards.
18. By March 2024, we will have ASL/LSQ for online and in-person events and videos upon request.

19. By June 2024, the Gallery will establish internal plain language standards in consultation with people with disabilities.
20. By June 2024, all new signage in the Gallery will comply with signage best practices, including fonts, font size, illumination, height, and braille.
21. By September 2024, we will identify which older documents should be put into plain language. By December 2024, we will develop a work plan to make these documents available in plain language.
22. Starting in 2025 (January), all new documents will be published to be consistent with the Gallery's plain language standards.
23. By December 2025, all signage in the Gallery will use accessible fonts, font sizes, colour contrast, illumination, and braille.

2.6 Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Overview

The National Gallery provides programs and services both online and in-person. These programs are for a wide range of audiences. Audiences range from school-aged children to visitors living with dementia. We have many different types of programming, including self-guided tours and specialized programming. We host lectures, performances, and special events. As such, the items listed as communications (non-ICT) barriers are largely also related to programs and services.

NGC Accessibility Goals

1. Effective immediately (January 2023), we will begin to explore ways to increase tactile / experiential elements in future exhibits.

2. By February 2023, we will list in membership info on the website that supports persons/attendants of persons with disabilities are not required to pay admission.
3. By June 2023, we will appoint or hire an accessibility coordinator within the Learning and Community Engagement team.
4. By June 2023, we will implement and/or review accessibility training for all guards, specifically, as it relates to how to assist people with disabilities in an emergency.
5. By August 2023, we will develop, implement, and practice a fire safety strategy for persons unable to evacuate independently.
6. By September 2023, we will review our current audio guides and standards for accessible tours with input from community stakeholders and develop a strategy.
7. By September 2023, we will review current guidance on programming. By November 2023 new guidance on the development of accessible programs will be completed. Starting in January 2024, this guidance will be incorporated into the development of all future programming.
8. By December 2023, we will provide updated equipment for audio amplification for in-person tours and updated guidelines for captioning for online tours.
9. Starting January 2024, we will begin to communicate on our website and in visitor documents what visual, audio and sensory components are available in exhibits.
10. By March 2024, the Gallery will implement and promote accessibility-focussed tactile tours.
11. By April 2024, in consultation with persons with disabilities, we will strategize and implement special sensory focussed visiting hours and/or quiet and loud rooms (areas) and list this on the website under “planning an accessible trip.”

12. By December 2024, we will provide amplification devices in meeting rooms and in the auditorium. We will also notify employees of this new technology and post signs with information about it.
13. By March 2025, this guidance will be incorporated into all older programming.
14. By December 2025, we will aim to have 5% of our exhibits be tactile/ experiential or have a tactile alternative.

2.7 Buying (Procurement) Goods, Services and Facilities

Overview

By thinking about accessibility when buying goods or services, we can prevent barriers. Our goals are to make sure that accessibility is part of the Gallery's buying processes.

NGC Accessibility Goals

1. By December 2023, we will make sure that accessibility is added to our procurement documents. This will include procurement checklists, procurement policy, requirement templates, and template contracts.
2. By December 2023, people who work in procurement and contracts will receive training on accessibility in procurement.
3. From January 2024 onwards, accessibility will be considered in all procurements. We will do this by including accessibility requirements or documenting the decision to not incorporate accessibility requirements.

2.8 Transportation

As the National Gallery does not offer transportation, this pillar is not addressed in this plan.

3. Consultations

We consulted people with disabilities to prepare this plan. This includes:

- We sent a survey to employees to ask about accessibility.
- We asked a consulting firm to interview employees with disabilities about their experiences.
- We held two focus groups of people with disabilities to ask about their experience as visitors to museums and art galleries.

4. Conclusion

The National Gallery has identified the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of our organization as a top priority. Over the next three years, we will implement this accessibility plan, resulting in a significant, positive difference for visitors with a wide array of disabilities. Accessibility improvement is an ongoing, iterative process, and we are committed to working with people with disabilities to make changes that will enhance the visitor experience for all.