



Library and Archives Canada's Accessibility Plan

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Library and Archives
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives
Canada

Canada

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Library and Archives Canada's Accessibility Plan

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General

Contacting Us or Submitting Feedback

If you experience or have experienced barriers in your interactions with Library and Archives Canada (LAC), we want to know. A barrier can be anything—physical, technological, systemic, attitudinal or something else—that hinders your full and equal access to LAC’s collections and services or contribution to the organization’s mandate.

We are committed to listening to you and taking action.

We invite you to contact us through any of the following communication channels:

Library and Archives Canada, the Accessibility Champion

- [Complete the form](#)
- Mail:
Accessibility - Library and Archives Canada
550 de la Cité Blvd
Gatineau, Quebec J8T 0A7
Canada
- Email: Accessibilite-Accessibility@bac-lac.gc.ca
- Phone: 819-921-4547
- TTY Phone: By calling 613-992-6969 (Canada's National Capital Region) or toll-free at 1-866-299-1699 (elsewhere in Canada) Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET

For more information on LAC’s Accessibility feedback mechanism process please refer to the [feedback mechanism](#). You may add your name and contact information if you would like LAC to follow up with you on your comments or feedback, either on this Accessibility Plan or on the above mentioned barriers if encountered at LAC. If you prefer to submit feedback anonymously, you can do so by filling out our feedback form without populating the name and email address fields.

Other formats

You may request alternate formats of this Plan, such as print, large print, audio, braille or electronic formats compatible with adaptive technologies. Please request alternate formats through any of the communication channels outlined above.

List of Abbreviations Used in this Document

AAACT	<u>Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology</u>
ACA	<u>Accessible Canada Act</u>
GC	Government of Canada
GLAMs	Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
OPSA	<u>Office of Public Service Accessibility</u>
TBS	Treasury Board Secretariat

Message from the Librarian and Archivist of Canada

It is with pride and enthusiasm that we introduce Library and Archives Canada's first Accessibility Plan.

Accessibility means communities, workplaces and services that enable everyone to participate fully in society. Eliminating barriers to accessibility ensures that everyone can take advantage of opportunities and services that are important to them. As one of the largest libraries and archives in the world, LAC is committed to developing inclusive tools to serve all Canadians.

Identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility supports a key component of LAC's [mandate](#): to be a source of enduring knowledge *accessible to all*, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society.

In LAC's Accessibility Plan, you will learn about our successes and the improvements that are required. LAC's entire team is committed to these improvements. By working together with persons with disabilities and their allies, both externally and internally, we will begin to address the gaps identified here.

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) is rooted in removing barriers rather than defining disabilities—an important shift away from old models. We now recognize that a person's environment, not their disability, is what prevents them from fully participating in society.

We would like to thank everyone who was involved in the development of this Plan, including Library and Archives Canada's Accessibility Exchange and Dialogue Advisory Group.

Together, let us continue to make LAC accessible to all!

Leslie Weir
Librarian and Archivist of Canada

Statement of Commitment

Library and Archives Canada is committed to making our programs, services and work environment fully accessible by putting Canadians at the forefront of our actions. Library and Archives Canada recognizes that accessibility is a human right and that it strengthens our institution and our mandate.

Executive Summary

LAC's first Accessibility Plan is the result of an initial series of consultations with persons with disabilities and their allies, clients who use LAC's services and those who work in the institution. The section [Consultations](#) describes what LAC heard and learned during this process, and its findings directly support the information and actions provided in this Accessibility Plan.

LAC's accessibility readiness and maturity, assessed using the [Accessibility Self-Assessment Tool](#) from the Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA), showed that one of LAC's main priorities must be to deepen the conversation on accessibility with all its different stakeholders.

LAC will lay the groundwork for more effective data and information gathering on accommodations and their timely delivery. LAC will also establish a Centre of Expertise in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, enabling the institution to monitor, support and promote accessibility. The section [Roles and Responsibilities](#) outlines accessibility governance and accountability.

As required by the ACA, LAC has developed this Accessibility Plan under the priority areas, or "pillars," of [Employment](#), [Built Environment](#), [Information and Communication Technologies \(ICT\)](#), [Communications, other than ICT](#), [Design and delivery of accessible programs and services](#) and [Procurement of goods, services and facilities](#).

Another priority area was added: [Culture Change](#). Institutional culture change underlies all priority areas and entails specific tasks and responsibilities.

Under all priority areas defined by the ACA, LAC will be closely looking at:

1. Deepening consultations and engaging users and employees;
2. Tracking and monitoring accessibility and barriers;
3. Applying best practices;
4. Making accessibility known to LAC users and employees;
5. Training LAC's user service providers in accessibility.

A short appendix with information about [LAC's Facilities](#) follows the conclusion of this Plan. Two other appendices on Training Resources and References used are hyperlinked to this Plan.

Introduction

Over 6 million Canadians currently live with at least one disability. Disability impacts a huge range of human experiences. Canadians with disabilities encounter many barriers to full participation in society—whether these are physical, technological, systemic, attitudinal or otherwise. Accessibility refers to removing these barriers and ensuring that people of diverse abilities have equitable opportunities to participate, pursue their goals and interests and develop their potential.

Passed in 2019, the ACA is Canada’s first national accessibility legislation and was developed based on significant consultations with disability communities across the country. The stated goal of the ACA is to make a barrier-free Canada a reality by 2040. The ACA currently applies to all federal government departments and federally regulated entities.

The ACA imposes specific requirements on government departments in the short term. As of December 31, 2022, all departments must:

- prepare and publish an initial three-year Accessibility Plan;
- establish an accessibility feedback mechanism and address feedback received; and,
- report annually on the progress made to improve accessibility.

This document is LAC’s first three-year Accessibility Plan to achieve a barrier-free institution by 2040. LAC serves tens of thousands of users in person and via web services each year and has close to 1000 employees across Canada. LAC acknowledges that serving Canadians in all their diversity is impossible without an inclusive internal culture. For this reason, this Accessibility Plan focuses on both external and internal change.

The Plan outlines how LAC will identify, remove and prevent barriers in the priority areas prescribed in the ACA, as well as in the area of culture change.

Accessibility at LAC

In June 2022, LAC published its [Vision 2030 Strategic Plan](#) with its key elements resolutely turned toward inclusion and accessibility:

- Inviting users to discover the collections: Make our collections better known and more accessible.
- Reflecting diverse voices: Acquire collections that reflect a diverse and inclusive society.
- Engaging with the community, partnering with the world: Work with our partners in the community and around the world.
- Supporting our people, sustaining our heritage: Create the conditions that support our staff.

As an institution serving the public, LAC has prioritized access to its facilities, programs, services and collections from the start. However, the level of awareness at LAC—the institution’s accessibility maturity—has had to change and evolve. Cultural spaces have become community gathering places, “third places” separate from home and work where conversations and connections can take place. Inclusion has to move to the forefront of user experience at LAC.

A few accessibility highlights at LAC over the past two decades

- In 2000, a joint National Library of Canada and Canadian National Institute for the Blind Task Force on Access to Information for Print-Disabled Canadians released a task force report (*Fulfilling the Promise*). Following the recommendations of this report, in 2001 the National Librarian established the Council on Access to Information for Print-Disabled Canadians to provide expert advice on issues of equitable library access. The impact of this initiative is shown today in the ongoing work of the [Centre for Equitable Library Access](#).
- In 2003, after consulting with LAC’s Employment Equity and Diversity Committee, LAC engaged a universal accessibility firm to retrofit LAC’s workplace at 550 Place de la Cité in Gatineau.
- The co-design process for LAC’s new joint facility with the Ottawa Public Library included extensive consultations with public stakeholders to provide “a building that is accessible, inclusive, welcoming, and open to all members of our community, helping the partners achieve the goal of being one of the most accessible buildings in the National Capital Region.” (Further information [here](#)).
- Since 2019, LAC’s Agile Digital Access Team has embraced new ways of improving users’ digital experiences, constantly upgrading LAC’s digital tools (Collection Search, My Account, My Research and the Co-Lab crowdsourcing platform). Each of these products and experiences must be consciously designed for accessibility.
- The LAC internal Accessibility Exchange and Dialogue Advisory Group was created in 2021. It provides feedback and recommendations on all aspects of accessibility at LAC and on interdepartmental initiatives such as the new ICT Accessibility Standard.
- Real Property Management at LAC consulted LAC’s Accessibility Exchange and Dialogue Advisory Group on the accessibility features of LAC’s new award-winning [Preservation Storage building in Gatineau](#) (Gatineau 2, opened November 2022). Among other things, fenestration (window height) was adjusted for persons in wheelchairs.
- Many of the 12 actions recommended in LAC’s *Transition Action Plan to Implement the Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service, 2020-2021*—including naming LAC’s Accessibility

Champion, setting up an internal advisory group, creating a generic mailbox for accessibility and analyzing all institutional document templates—have been fully implemented.

- The new [DigiLab](#) at 395 Wellington Street in Ottawa manages the digitization of a range of materials from LAC's vast collections. Its mandate is to work with and meet the needs of a variety of users and communities to make this documentary heritage available to everyone.
- Digitization increases access to collections and aims to achieve accessibility for users living with disabilities. In recent years, LAC has digitized and made available millions of records (for example, from 2018 to 2021, 600,000 images were digitized within the Indigenous heritage digitization project alone).
- Accessibility was built in from the beginning when developing LAC's [new website](#) (launched September 2022). The website's code uses the Web Experience Toolkit, which includes reusable components for building and maintaining websites that are accessible, usable and interoperable.

Consultations

Library and Archives Canada engaged in an initial round of consultations in the preparation of its first Accessibility Plan. These consultations aimed to initiate dialogue and provide a broad picture of the state of accessibility at LAC.

LAC sees this as only a first step toward meeting the duty to consult as set out in the *Accessible Canada Act* and toward adopting and normalizing the spirit of “Nothing About Us Without Us.” Consultation is not a one-time event, but an ongoing process. Each annual progress report and three-year Accessibility Plan in the future will build on, learn from and expand on the experiences of the past year’s consultations. The institution recognizes its responsibility for building a barrier-free LAC, but knows that this is not possible without ongoing consultation with persons with disabilities and equity-seeking groups more broadly.

The following consultations took place between May and December 2022:

- There was ongoing engagement with LAC’s Accessibility Exchange and Dialogue Advisory Group, whose members were invited to provide input on drafts of surveys, communications and this Plan.
- Interviews about past practices and standards were held with employees from different LAC branches. Questions focused on five areas: employment, built environment, information and communication technology, programs and services and culture or confidence.
- An internal survey for all employees was completed by 145 individuals, 36 of whom self-identified as persons with disabilities.
- An external survey was sent to LAC users and to a dozen disability advocacy organizations across Canada, including the country’s network of Independent Living Centres and the Council of Canadians with Disabilities. Fifteen responses were received.
- Virtual conversations were held with three academic experts in the area of disability studies and/or accessibility in the broader Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAMs) sector.

The goal of the consultations was to develop a broad perspective on various types of barriers (attitudinal, systemic, physical and technological) at LAC as experienced by clients and employees. In some cases, consultations included broader questions about barriers encountered at libraries and archives in general. Learning from the experiences of other organizations helped situate LAC’s first Plan in the context of the GLAMs sector as a whole. Lastly, consultation questions invited feedback on possible opportunities and solutions to barriers encountered.

What Was Learned

Participants provided perspectives on specific and general accessibility issues at LAC. The enthusiastic engagement suggests that there is a strong appetite for further progress on accessibility at LAC.

Key messages included:

- Barriers are encountered by persons with disabilities on a daily basis.
- Culture change is needed to counter stigmatization and ableism, especially concerning invisible disabilities.
- Accessibility features and options are not widely known and would benefit from better promotion.

- There is a need for and interest in training and learning opportunities for staff, including on service provision.
- Users and employees have to navigate flawed and demanding accommodations processes.

Future of Consultations at LAC

This experience also provided lessons for consultations in the future. In particular, LAC's external consultations with clients and stakeholder organizations need to be expanded and energized. This could involve building external advisory networks and ongoing relationships with disability organizations across Canada.

Going forward, LAC takes to heart these two distinct duties: to continue to engage in consultations and to receive feedback. Receiving feedback requires LAC to be open and solutions oriented, while building consultations into LAC's culture demands proactive and substantive engagement. A strong culture of consultation is necessary to foster an inclusive workplace and provide equitable services. Building this culture will require an intersectional approach, which means recognizing that experiences of disability cannot be separated from individuals' experiences of other kinds of barriers and exclusion in our spaces.

LAC welcomes feedback concerning its consultation practices and will strive to develop and expand this area in 2023, leading up to the publication of LAC's first annual progress report on accessibility at the end of 2023.

Roles and Responsibilities

Accessibility is a shared responsibility. Whether it is following web accessibility guidelines, implementing wayfinding solutions in buildings or providing access to historical documents in a timely manner, everyone across all sectors at LAC needs to work together.

The ACA's seven priority areas for ensuring accessibility were determined through consultations with persons with disabilities across Canada. They reflect the areas in which real, day-to-day barriers prevent persons with disabilities from fully participating in society and fulfilling their potential.

Determining roles and responsibilities is a short-term goal of LAC's Accessibility Plan. These will be established in 2023.

- **The Deputy Minister of LAC** (Librarian and Archivist of Canada), supported by LAC's Accessibility Champion, Inclusion Champion and the Assistant Deputy Minister of User Experience and Engagement, will monitor and report on LAC's Accessibility Plan to Canada's Accessibility Commissioner.

Centres of Expertise

- A new team will be established under LAC's User Experience and Engagement Sector to support LAC in meeting its internal and external inclusion obligations. This will include an Accessibility stream to cover all priority areas identified in this Plan.
- LAC's Human Resources and Safety Branch (HRSB) is developing a strategic recruitment approach to ensure that recruitment strategies significantly reduce gaps in representation of equity-seeking groups, including persons with disabilities. In addition, HRSD runs a Centre of Expertise on Labour Relations, Diversity and Inclusion that coordinates all aspects of accommodation needs.

Advisory Groups

- The **Accessibility Exchange and Dialogue Advisory Group** was created in the fall of 2021 and consists of approximately 25 employees with disabilities and their allies. It forms the core of the accessibility network at LAC, is consulted on every accessibility initiative and provides LAC sectors with key feedback from expert and lived-experience perspectives.
- An **External Advisory Group** will be established to provide LAC with expert advice and participate in the development of adapted programs and guidance.

The Plan

Pillar 1: Employment

Background

LAC has nearly 1000 employees across different Canadian cities and work sites (see [Appendix](#)). It is important for this workforce to represent and reflect the Canadian population that it serves. This means creating an inclusive environment for employees with disabilities to pursue their careers on an equitable playing field.

Goals for a Barrier-Free LAC

- Recruit more persons with disabilities to ensure a representative workforce.
- Implement effective workplace accommodations and create an accessible and inclusive workplace for new and existing staff.
- Enable everyone to contribute, thrive and benefit from equal opportunities for promotion and retention.

Barriers to Accessibility

Data collected through our consultations established that LAC's workforce is not sufficiently representative. LAC's workforce availability target for employees with disabilities is 77, while its current declared number of employees with disabilities is 43. While there may be many reasons for this, including factors discussed in the [Culture Change](#) pillar, this situation reflects a need for targeted recruitment and retention processes. Accommodations processes can also be tracked and improved in multiple ways.

Specific barriers in this area include:

- Measures to support the recruitment and career progression of persons with disabilities at LAC remain to be implemented.
- Workplace accommodations are currently handled case by case and are undocumented except for minimal internal data.
- Funding workplace accommodations can be, or is seen as, a financial burden for the administrative unit in which the person with a disability works.
- There is often low awareness among employees about self-identification, the accommodations available to them and where to turn to request them.

Actions

- Develop hiring goals and strategies specific to persons with disabilities.
- Update employee exit and develop a retention questionnaires to identify and address barriers to retention.

- Adopt the [GC Workplace Accessibility Passport](#), which helps eliminate barriers faced by federal public service employees and applicants with disabilities in obtaining the tools, supports and measures needed to perform at their best and succeed in the workplace.
- Measure progress and identify roadblocks in accommodating persons with disabilities and create an institutional strategy for funding accommodation requests.
- Disseminate information, in plain language and in accessible formats, about self-identification, accommodations, hiring, retention and career progression.

Timeline

Immediate Term

- Adopt the GC Workplace Accessibility Passport.
- Raise awareness about self-identification as a person with a disability.
- Raise awareness about accommodations and how to obtain them.

Mid Term

- Identify and address barriers in the workplace and support progress in creating a more inclusive environment.
- Update employee exit and retention questionnaires to identify barriers to retention and promotion of employees with disabilities.
- Seek input from LAC's advisory groups about accommodations and culture at LAC.

Long Term and Ongoing

- Collect, safeguard and develop data on recruitment, self-identification and workplace accommodations.
- Monitor progress on filling representation gaps and achieving accommodations.

Pillar 2: The Built Environment

Background

LAC is the custodian of six service locations across Canada, and construction is underway for its new joint building with the Ottawa Public Library, named [Ādisōke](#). LAC also occupies leased space in locations in the National Capital Region and shares space in Vancouver and Halifax through collaborative agreements. These different locations support LAC in delivering its mandate by providing service points to the public, spaces dedicated to the preservation of documentary heritage and offices. Please see the [Appendix](#) for a full list of LAC facilities.

Goals for a Barrier-Free LAC

- Provide fully accessible spaces to the public and employees, regardless of disability or ability.
- Ensure that accessible features of built environments are clearly communicated.

Barriers to Accessibility

While LAC buildings consistently follow building codes on accessibility, consultations suggest that this is not always enough to ensure awareness, safe circulation and a welcoming environment.

Specific barriers in this area include:

- Accessibility features of LAC's built environments are not sufficiently communicated to the public and to employees.
- Compliance with the Government of Canada's new [Directive on the Management of Real Property](#) remains to be fully established.
- Accessibility in all its forms must be taken into account in all aspects of the built environment. This includes lighting, evacuation or emergency plans, wayfinding solutions and spaces for neurodiverse needs, as well as other features.

Actions

- Develop a plan for regular and periodic reviews of built environments in compliance with the [Directive on the Management of Real Property](#).
- Revise or establish detailed evacuation plans for each site for persons with disabilities (public and employees) and clearly communicate these plans.
- Implement formal mechanisms for public and employee feedback on the accessibility of LAC's buildings and data collection.

Timeline

Immediate Term

- Review existing built environment barriers in compliance with the [Directive on the Management of Real Property](#).
- Revise evacuation plans for persons with disabilities and communicate these plans.

Mid Term

- Implement robust mechanisms for public and employee feedback on the accessibility of LAC's buildings.

Long Term and Ongoing

- Build mechanisms to proactively consider disability inclusion and accessibility during the development of any new built environment.

Pillar 3: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Background

ICT—both software and hardware—has steadily increased the demand by LAC users for better and faster access to information, as it has for all memory institutions around the world. A digital future brings new challenges, and the Government of Canada is producing guidelines for meeting some of them, such as the new [ICT Accessibility Standard for the Government of Canada](#).

Goals for a Barrier-Free LAC

- LAC clients and employees should be able to access and use all information and communications technology, regardless of ability or disability.

Barriers to Accessibility

Specific barriers in this area include:

- While many ICT products already meet current accessibility standards, there is a general lack of awareness on the part of employees about ICT tools available to them.
- Currently, IT-related accessibility issues are reported solely through LAC’s generic IT ticketing system. There is no tracking of accessibility specifically.
- ICT procurement processes ensuring accessibility have not yet been formalized.

Actions

- Instigate accessibility-specific tracking processes.
- Adopt new ICT Accessibility Standard, effective April 2023.
- Track and centralize user feedback on ICT issues (potentially by use of a “tag” in the ticketing system), and ensure that steps taken for reporting on ICT accessibility are clearly and regularly communicated to all employees.
- Formalize accessibility considerations and requirements into ICT procurement processes.
- Build awareness of available tools for both external and internal purposes.

Timeline

Immediate Term

- Instigate accessibility-specific tracking processes.
- Ramp up awareness of accessible ICT tools.

Mid Term

- Develop findings, recommendations and specific actions to meet new ICT Accessibility Standard.

Long Term and ongoing

- Adopt new ICT Accessibility Standard.
- Continue to liaise with Shared Services Canada's [Accessibility, Accommodation, and Adaptive Computer Technology \(AACT\)](#).

Pillar 4: Communications, other than Information Technology

Background

The [Treasury Board Policy on Communications and Federal Identity](#) requires that government communications be written in plain language. Clear, concise and well-organized information supports everyone.

Accessible documents enable users to understand and navigate messages in different ways. The presentation of information (font size, line height and line length, for example) can be just as important as the content in making material accessible. A blind user may use a braille display. A person with a motor impairment may use a keyboard rather than a mouse. Other users may need to adjust font size or spacing or use a screen reader to compensate for vision loss or cognitive challenges.

Using alternate formats in combination with an array of channels will allow diverse audiences to receive and understand LAC's messages.

Goals for a Barrier-Free LAC

- LAC clients and employees should be able to access and make use of all LAC communications products, regardless of ability or disability.

Barriers to Accessibility

Accessible practices in the area of communications are often done on a case-by-case basis and are not supported by high-level organizational policies and standards.

Specific barriers in this area include:

- LAC has no policy-driven requirements for documents, presentations and other products to be accessible. Where such requirements exist, they are not documented and arise on a case-by-case basis.
- LAC's public website partially meets [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1 AA](#), but improvements are required.
- Plain language is inconsistently applied in LAC's communications.
- LAC service points respond to accessibility issues on a case-by-case basis, resulting in deficient or non-existent systems and accommodations for diverse communication needs.

Actions and Timeline

Immediate Term

- Test all existing public-facing LAC web products against the latest ICT accessibility standard.
- Review plain language protocols and applicability.

Mid Term

- Prepare all new web content to conform to the latest version of the European Standard for Accessibility [EN 301 549](#).
- Include clear accessibility statements across LAC's website.
- Standardize and share knowledge of plain language best practices at LAC.
- Work with Shared Services's AACT on relevant communications issues that are solvable through enhanced web standards and protocols.

Long Term

- Ensure that all LAC's communications products meet the most recent standards.

Pillar 5: Design and Delivery of Accessible Programs and Services

Background

LAC offers a variety of online and in-person services to Canadians, including access to vast and diverse archival and library collections and public programming aimed at sharing diverse stories, as well as access to historical records that ensure government accountability and transparency.

LAC has the third or fourth largest collection in the world:

- 22 million books
- 250 km of textual documents
- 35 million photographs, maps and artwork
- 700 million megabytes of digital records

Facilitating access to these vast collections presents a number of challenges—for example, digitized images of handwriting must be transcribed to be compatible with screen readers—and the resources to make them available online are limited. Due to the quantity and variety of information and formats, historical materials require different creative approaches to make them accessible.

Goals for a Barrier-Free LAC

- LAC collections, programs and services should be fully accessible to all clients and employees, regardless of disability or ability.
- LAC employees should be equipped to design and deliver accessible programs and services to Canadians.

Barriers to Accessibility

LAC's approach to the accessibility of programs and services has been on a case-by-case basis. LAC does not have a systematic approach to accessible design, assessing existing programs and services, collecting client feedback or training service providers.

Specific barriers in this area include:

- Historical materials and documentary heritage have generally been exempt from accessibility standards due to volume, variety and complexity.
- LAC has not historically had any feedback mechanisms to seek input from people with disabilities on the accessibility of programs and services, whether digital or in person.
- There have been no internal assessments of accessibility in LAC programs and services at the organizational level.
- There is no general training for service staff on how to provide services to persons with disabilities.

- When service staff find accessible solutions for individual clients, these solutions are not promoted or integrated at an organizational level.

Actions

- Explore options for facilitating access to historical materials in a way that reduces or removes barriers, based on best practices from other memory institutions.
- Establish mechanisms for client feedback on the accessibility of programs and services, both as part of broader user experience data collection and with a targeted focus on accessibility.
- Develop a plan for assessing existing core programs and services in accordance with best practices for the needs of a wide variety of persons with disabilities.
- Provide mandatory training modules to service staff on accessible service provision and program delivery.
- Empower service employees to identify barriers and propose solutions and have these solutions systematically implemented and promoted.
- Integrate consultation with people with disabilities into processes of program and service design.

Timeline

Immediate Term:

- Establish active feedback mechanisms with a solution-oriented, “Start With Yes” approach for addressing barriers.
- Identify or develop practical training modules for service staff.
- Promote accessibility features and solutions as they are developed in response to feedback.

Mid Term:

- Use data and feedback to systematically assess existing core programs and services.
- Build consultative processes to proactively consider disability inclusion and accessibility in order to support continuous improvement of programs and services.

Long Term:

- Regularly assess existing programs and services in consultation with advisory bodies and experts on a variety of accessibility perspectives.
- Integrate accessibility considerations into program and service development at the operational level.
- Ensure that service staff at all levels are trained on diverse accessible service provision and embrace a “Start With Yes” culture that is creative and responsive to diverse experiences.

Pillar 6: Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

Background

LAC purchases goods and services in support of the public it serves, including for Information and Communications Technologies.

The Treasury Board [Directive on the Management of Procurement](#) mandates that, where appropriate, accessibility be considered in all federal procurement when specifying requirements for goods and services, including ensuring that deliverables incorporate accessibility features. The goal of the Directive is to advance the objectives of the ACA.

LAC's Financial Services and Procurement Branch has already begun implementing the accessibility requirements for the Directive.

Goals for a Barrier-Free LAC

- LAC includes accessibility criteria when specifying requirements for goods and services and ensures that deliverables incorporate accessibility features or are accessible by design, where possible.
- LAC's suppliers of goods and services provide accessible options and are accountable for the accessibility of the goods and services they deliver.

Barriers to Accessibility

Specific barriers in this area include:

- No evaluation is available on the accessibility requirements that LAC's suppliers are delivering.
- There is no way to know if bidders are providing Accessibility Conformance Reports.
- An approval process for suppliers of goods and services to LAC specifically addressing accessibility is currently being developed but is not yet implemented.

Actions and Timeline

Immediate Term

- Develop a plan to evaluate appropriate accessibility requirements for suppliers of goods and services across LAC.

Mid Term

- Ask bidders to provide accessibility conformance information.
- Develop an accessibility approval process for suppliers.

Long Term

- Achieve accessible procurement of goods and services in all appropriate areas of LAC.

Pillar 7: Culture Change

Background

For the purposes of this Plan, culture refers to how ability, disability and accessibility are talked and thought about in a setting or institution. Organizational culture influences employee well-being as well as outward-facing programs and client services.

Culture change and building inclusive environments are major challenges for the service sector as a whole. Libraries in particular are important and unique community spaces in our society. They should be welcoming and comfortable for all Canadians.

As such, culture change in the area of accessibility cannot and should not be separated from other culture-changing initiatives at LAC. We all stand to benefit from an institutional culture that creates space for the full range of individual difference and diversity.

Goals for a Barrier-Free LAC

- LAC should cultivate a proactive approach to accessibility considerations, anticipating future barriers.
- LAC should adopt “Nothing About Us Without Us” as a core principle, recognizing that persons with disabilities are in the best position to speak to their experiences.
- LAC should adopt a “Start With Yes” attitude toward adaptations and accommodations, creating space for the expression of diverse needs and for pursuing solutions flexibly and creatively.

Barriers to Accessibility

Consultation results show that accessibility and disability can still be invisible and stigmatized and that not all users and employees with disabilities experience LAC as a safe place.

Specific barriers in this area include:

- Culture change has not been discussed or planned for systematically at an organizational level in the past.
- Employees and clients do not feel safe or comfortable speaking about situations they encounter, and they do not expect meaningful actions and changes.
- Institutional resources are not sufficiently dedicated to culture change, inclusion and accessibility initiatives.

Actions

- Prioritize developing, resourcing and training teams that will be involved in coordinating and implementing LAC’s Accessibility Plan.
- Strengthen relationships with existing culture change initiatives, including but not limited to Workplace Wellness, Trauma-Informed Practice, etc.

- Develop and deliver various opportunities for dialogue and discussions, such as advisory groups, events, panels, etc.

Timeline

Immediate term:

- Establish centres of expertise to support the implementation of related action plans and culture change at LAC.

Mid term:

- Raise awareness of and promote the Accessibility Plan as well as LAC's commitment to all users and employees.
- Carry out consultations and surveys to develop data-based indicators related to culture, e.g. proportions of users and employees who feel comfortable self-identifying.

Long term:

- Advance culture-changing initiatives across LAC by aligning diverse inclusion plans.

Conclusion

This Plan is LAC’s first systematic assessment of accessibility in the institution. It sets out goals, barriers and paths forward. It will be followed by yearly progress reports and further recommendations for continuous improvement, with the aim of moving toward a barrier-free LAC by 2040.

Meaningful results will only be achievable with public and employee participation and accountability. As such, we invite you to continue to submit feedback on this Plan or on barriers at LAC. We also encourage you to use this [feedback mechanism](#) to register your interest in being involved in future consultations.

Expanding consultations and engagement, setting clear goals and responsibilities for accessibility at LAC and tracking improvements to our services and our workplace—these are the overarching goals of this Plan.

We are excited to move forward, and we are grateful for your engagement.

Appendix – LAC facilities

Service points for the public are:

- [395 Wellington St \(Ottawa\)](#)
- [Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, 1055 Marginal Road \(Halifax\)](#)
- [Federal Records Centre, 1700 Inkster Boulevard \(Winnipeg\)](#)
- [Library Square Tower, 420-300 West Georgia Street \(Vancouver\)](#)
- Ādisōke (Ottawa) – A new joint facility with the Ottawa Public Library (in construction—opening in 2026)

LAC employees also work in office spaces and preservation or storage centres:

- [550 Place de la Cité, Gatineau, QC](#)
- [Preservation Centre, Gatineau, QC](#)
- [Preservation Storage Facility, Gatineau, QC](#)
- [Renfrew Collection Storage Facility, Renfrew, ON](#)
- Collection Storage Facility (CSF), Gatineau, QC
- Nitrate Film Preservation Facility (NFPP), Ottawa ON