



The 2026–2028 Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Accessibility Plan



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The 2026–2028 Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Accessibility Plan

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General

The 2026–2028 Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Accessibility Plan (the Plan) was developed in accordance with the [Accessible Canada Act](#) and the [Accessible Canada Regulations](#). Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) gratefully acknowledges the valuable contributions of:

- members of ISED's Persons with Disabilities Network,
- members of ISED's Accessibility Feedback Panel,
- ISED priority area leads and supporting teams,
- ISED's Accessibility Secretariat.

ISED is committed to preventing, identifying and removing barriers to accessibility. At ISED, the Head of Human Resources, supported by the Accessibility Secretariat, is responsible for receiving feedback on barriers as well as the overall 2026–2028 ISED Accessibility Plan.

The Accessibility Secretariat can be contacted to request a copy of the Plan or the Description of Feedback Process in an alternate format such as Braille or large print, etc. To make a request, please fill out the [Publication Request form](#) or contact:

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

- Online – Visit the [Accessibility](#) at ISED page and complete the [accessibility feedback form](#)
- Email – ISEDAccessibilityPlan-PlandAccessibilitedISDE@ISED-ISDE.gc.ca
- Mail

- Accessibility Secretariat
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
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- Telephone – ISED Citizen Services Centre during the business hours of 8:30 am to 5:00 pm (Eastern Time)
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 - TTY: 1-866-694-8389
- Fax – ISED Citizen Services Centre at 343-291-1913

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

If you would like to provide feedback in an alternate format, contact the Accessibility Secretariat using the 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 cannot acknowledge receipt of feedback sent anonymously but will process it appropriately.

Application

The 2026–2028 ISED Accessibility Plan applies to the following sectors and portfolio organizations:

- Audit and Evaluation Branch
- Canadian Intellectual Property Office
- Competition Bureau
- Corporate Management Sector
- Digital Transformation Service Sector
- Health Emergency Readiness Canada
- Industry Sector
- Innovation Canada
- ISED Legal Services
- Office of the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer
- Office of the Corporate Secretary

- Ombuds Office
- Science and Research Sector
- Small Business, Tourism and Marketplace Services Sector
- Spectrum and Telecommunications Sector
- Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector
- Strategic Policy Sector

The Plan also applies to the Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy (OSB) in the Small Business, Tourism and Marketplace Services Sector, as OSB is under ISED's financial structure and is not considered a separate entity in terms of financial reporting in the department.

Executive summary

ISED is committed to meeting and exceeding the requirements of the *Accessible Canada Act* and identifying, removing and preventing accessibility barriers across the organization.

In line with the *Accessible Canada Regulations*, the Plan addresses each of the priority areas outlined in [section 5 of the Accessible Canada Act](#). For each area, it highlights themes raised during consultations with ISED's persons with disabilities (PWD) community and sets out the goals and activities to be implemented over the next three years. While the 2026–2028 ISED Accessibility Plan contains new goals, it continues to build on the objectives and commitments of the [2023–2025 ISED Accessibility Plan](#).

Each priority area is anchored in a desired outcome that envisions an ideal future state. While distinct, these outcomes collectively embed an accessible-by-default mindset into the department and contribute to building an accessible and inclusive ISED.

The Plan also describes how consultations shaped priorities and how progress will be tracked to ensure accountability and transparency throughout its implementation.

ISED's guiding principles

The following principles guided the development of the Plan and will continue to guide its implementation. In alignment with ISED's 2025–28 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy, the Plan embodies the following core values:

- **Respect for people:** Our work is centred on the values of the organization, treating everyone in the organization—and those with whom we partner and those we serve—with respect, fairness and human dignity.
- **Co-creation:** We are committed to intentional and deliberate engagement that is guided by the principle of "Nothing Without Us," in partnership with the PWD community.
- **Outcome-focused:** We focus on actions to achieve desired outcomes and concrete results.

- **Measurement:** We set out actionable and time-bound goals and outcomes, in combination with mechanisms for measuring our progress toward achieving them.
- **Transparency:** We are committed to communicating openly about our goals and progress with all employees and members of the public, as well as soliciting and incorporating feedback to inform our work as it progresses and evolves.
- **Accountability:** We are committed to holding ourselves and each other accountable.

Culture

"Accessibility is a shared responsibility across our entire organization. I encourage each of you to make intentional, gradual changes every day. Every action, no matter how small, helps build a culture of accessibility and inclusion."

- Deputy Minister Sony Perron, National AccessAbility Week 2025

ISED continues to include culture as an eighth priority area to emphasize the importance of systemic change. Our aim is to foster a culture that is accessible by default, where persons with disabilities are collaborative partners in the design, development and delivery of all initiatives. Success in this area means creating an environment where all employees feel valued, supported and included, regardless of ability. ISED recognizes and values the lived experiences of employees with disabilities as we work to build a more inclusive workplace culture.

Feedback from consultations on culture

Consultations highlighted both progress and opportunities for further improvement. Over the past three years, participants recognized meaningful progress with the support provided to the Persons with Disabilities Network and the Neurodivergence Peer Support Group. These networks provide connection, advocacy and peer learning. Many participants also noted growing trust between the PWD community and those working to identify, resolve and prevent barriers.

Participants emphasized the need for stronger and more visible senior leadership engagement in accessibility. Leaders are expected not only to understand the challenges employees with disabilities face but also to act toward resolving them. Accountability was highlighted as equally important as visibility. Participants want leaders to set clear accessibility commitments, report on progress and be accountable for measurable outcomes. Leadership commitment and accountability were viewed as key accelerators of cultural transformation.

Building on this feedback, ISED's culture goals focus on strengthening transparency and accountability in barrier resolution, ensuring leadership's commitment to accessibility through consequential accountability, embedding an accessible-by-design mindset across all sectors, and amplifying awareness through training, communication and recognition. Existing supports, such as the Accessibility Ambassadors program and the Accessibility Feedback Panel, will continue to reinforce accessibility practices across the department and provide a foundation for continued learning and engagement. These supports play an essential role in advancing accessibility across sectors, while executives and management retain primary accountability for achieving accessible outcomes across the department.

Goals and activities

Lead: Head of Human Resources, supported by the Accessibility Secretariat.

Goal 1: Improve the transparency, accountability and timeliness of ISED's feedback mechanism.

- **Activity 1:** Publish monthly barrier reports on the internal web platform.
- **Activity 2:** Integrate a satisfaction survey upon barrier closure.
- **Activity 3:** Strengthen the barrier resolution process, including the follow-up with submitters, templates and the service standard.

Goal 2: Strengthen executive and leadership engagement to champion accessibility and foster an inclusive culture across ISED.

- **Activity 1:** Integrate accessibility objectives and accountability measures into performance plans for executives using consequential accountability.
- **Activity 2:** Deliver accessibility presentations and training to executives.
- **Activity 3:** Support the Accessibility and Persons with Disabilities Network Champion through ongoing collaboration to continue facilitating improvements for employees with disabilities.

Goal 3: Broaden the capacity of sectors to deliver accessible products to foster an accessible-by-design mindset.

- **Activity 1:** Raise awareness of the Accessibility Ambassadors program, while supporting its development as a resource to help employees strengthen their own accessibility practices, recognizing that accessibility is a shared responsibility across ISED.
- **Activity 2:** Promote the use of ISED's Accessibility Feedback Panel for accessibility review of projects.
- **Activity 3:** Develop and promote accessibility resources and tools to disseminate accessibility knowledge throughout the department.

Goal 4: Increase accessibility awareness through training, communication, recognition and amplification of lived experiences.

- **Activity 1:** Promote and monitor Accessibility Matters at ISED training completion, and conduct yearly reviews to ensure content is up to date.
- **Activity 2:** Have sectors integrate accessibility training accountability into sector EDI plans.
- **Activity 3:** Organize and promote engagement opportunities throughout the year, including events during National AccessAbility Week, that amplify lived experiences.
- **Activity 4:** Develop and implement recognition mechanisms to encourage participation and celebrate successes.

Employment

"As the largest employer in Canada, the federal government has a responsibility to lead by example and use its resources wisely. Improving workplace accommodation is not about spending more money but about streamlining our approaches and making our internal processes work better for employees with disabilities."

- Former Deputy Minister Champion for Employees with Disabilities in the Federal Public Service, Tina Namiesniowski

ISED is committed to building a workforce that reflects the diversity of Canada. To support this goal, we aim to ensure that persons with disabilities have equitable access to employment opportunities and accommodations, supported by barrier-free staffing processes, clear guidance, and timely and consistent implementation of accommodations.

Feedback from consultations on employment

Consultations highlighted both achievements and opportunities for improvement. Participants noted that more executives are identifying as persons with disabilities, which may encourage broader self-identification across the department. Participants also recognized that ISED has exceeded departmental hiring targets for persons with disabilities under the Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada's 5,000 net new hires initiatives. In the evolving context, the focus should be on retaining these employees and supporting their career growth.

One of the main challenges identified is the workplace accommodation system. Participants highlighted the need for a simplified, more efficient process that meets user needs, where the vast majority of requests could be handled between managers and employees, without requiring unnecessary external documentation. Participants further encouraged the use of the [Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport](#) to streamline accommodations and reduce the burden on employees to repeatedly outline their needs for each new position.

Guided by these insights, ISED's employment goals and activities aim to strengthen inclusive and accessible hiring practices, streamline the accommodations process, and clarify roles and responsibilities for employees and managers. Together, these initiatives will help ensure equitable access to employment opportunities, improve employee experience, and embed accountability and transparency into the department's employment practices.

Goals and activities

Lead: Directors in People Operations, Human Resources Branch.

Goal 1: Continue to promote inclusive and accessible staffing practices that drive meaningful change and enable agile, barrier-free workforce strategies, in compliance with the *Public Service Employment Act*, the *Accessible Canada Act*, the *Employment Equity Act* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

- **Activity 1:** Promote accessibility in staffing processes by:

- providing targeted guidance and tools to support assessment-related accommodations and inclusive hiring practices, underscoring the legal duty to accommodate up to the point of undue hardship.
- raising awareness and refining strategies to identify and remove biases and barriers, in alignment with the *Public Service Employment Act* requirements and other legislative requirements.
- **Activity 2:** Establish an annual staffing monitoring plan identifying departmental priorities and areas of risk, with a focus on biases and barriers in assessment methods.
- **Activity 3:** Establish a systematic approach for tracking assessment-related accommodation requests within staffing processes.

Goal 2: Improve access to career mobility and development opportunities, which aligns with ISED's EDI Strategy.

- **Activities:** Enhance talent management practices through the updated Talent Mobility Tool 2.0 and prioritize the participation of equity-seeking groups in initiatives such as the Executive Leadership Development Program, mentorship and sponsorship programs, and the Getting EX Ready program.

Goal 3: Continue to improve ISED's approach to accommodations with the goal of removing barriers, streamlining processes and enhancing employee experience.

- **Activity 1:** Address process inefficiencies and reduce wait times.
- **Activity 2:** Hold continual consultations with the PWD community as ISED incorporates the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport into existing processes, and provide guidance and training to managers on its purpose, application and privacy considerations.
- **Activity 3:** Streamline processes with respect to the implementation of accommodations.

Goal 4: Improve awareness and knowledge about the accommodations process in order to clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure employees and managers understand their obligations and rights.

- **Activity 1:** Clarify roles and responsibilities throughout the end-to-end accommodations process, such as the required steps to implement an accommodation and the managers' legal obligations, including the duty to accommodate up to the point of undue hardship.
- **Activity 2:** Revise the accommodation intranet pages to provide essential information and resources in a user-friendly and accessible format.

The built environment

Ensuring barrier-free access to ISED buildings, offices and facilities is essential. Efforts in this area are coordinated across multiple stakeholders, including the priority area leads, Facilities, Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and building management companies, to create inclusive and accessible environments.

Feedback from consultations on the built environment

While ISED continues to modernize its workplace spaces, participants highlighted opportunities for improvement. They emphasized the importance of ongoing engagement, data-driven decision-making and communication in the planning, design and maintenance of spaces. This includes sensory considerations, flexible workspaces and environments that support diverse employee needs. Other key topics included systematic attention to health, safety and accessibility, including emergency preparedness, wayfinding, air quality and accessible washroom facilities that meet capacity and functional requirements.

Guided by the ongoing feedback, ISED's built environment goals and activities are centred on ensuring workspaces, facilities and emergency systems are accessible, inclusive and supportive of employee well-being. These activities are designed to integrate accessibility considerations into planning, design and operations, to promote employee engagement and to maintain safe, barrier-free environments across ISED locations.

Goals and activities

Lead: Director General of the Corporate Facilities and Security Branch, Corporate Management Sector.

Goal 1: Ensure physical workspaces are accessible, inclusive, sensory-friendly and supportive of employee well-being.

- **Activity 1:** Inform the PWD community on the status of projects as part of the Long-Term Accommodation Plan and provide an opportunity for feedback.
- **Activity 2:** Promote the VEGA portal as a tool for requesting certain workstation accommodations (e.g. alternate furniture).
- **Activity 3:** Identify and designate work zones in key ISED office locations, and equip these spaces with features such as reduced lighting, sound-dampening materials and clear signage.
- **Activity 4:** Promote awareness and consistent application of ISED's scent-free policy through updated signage, internal communications and awareness initiatives that equip managers to lead by example and address situations constructively.
- **Activity 5:** Monitor and improve air quality in high-traffic and scent-sensitive areas, and share air quality information with employees.

Note: Air quality testing falls under the building's property management area of responsibility (base building) in leased or Crown-owned spaces. In office space locations where ISED is the real property custodian, ISED is responsible for air quality testing.

Goal 2: Provide accessible and inclusive washroom facilities in all ISED buildings.

- **Activity 1:** Increase washroom capacity in ISED's office space in the C.D. Howe Building with all-access and accessible washrooms.
- **Activity 2:** Assess the washroom locations for all ISED locations to determine if the accessibility features are up to date per the current National Building Code of Canada and accessibility standards.

Note: Washrooms fall under the building's property management area of responsibility (base building). Timelines and funding are subject to PSPC's capability to deliver on this initiative.

Goal 3: Ensure emergency systems and evacuation procedures meet accessibility standards.

- **Activity 1:** Support PSPC/BGIS in implementing the feedback received during the testing of the fire and life safety systems for emergencies in the C.D. Howe Building.

Note: As lead tenant in the C.D. Howe Building, ISED is responsible for ensuring emergency preparedness and coordinating building evacuations. Building fire and life safety systems fall under the building's property management area of responsibility (base building).

- **Activity 2:** Provide emergency training to equip floor emergency officers and monitors to effectively support persons with disabilities, including those with special mobility needs.
- **Activity 3:** Assess emergency systems in ISED's real property custodial buildings for code compliance and accessibility.

Goal 4: Maintain accessible environments during construction and renovation projects.

- **Activity 1:** Review procedures for planning and communicating construction impacts on employees, ensuring considerations for health, safety and accessibility, and include plans for timelines, detours, disruptions and accessible exit routes.

Goal 5: Implement signage in and outside ISED spaces to meet the new Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) Federal Identity Program's (FIP) signage requirements (note: the release of the revised standards is pending).

- **Activity 1:** Conduct a review of signage in ISED-occupied spaces to identify and replace signage that does not meet the new TBS FIP signage requirements.
- **Activity 2:** Create a generic signage package that includes ISED's various wayfinding and signage requirements, to be used to address the identified signage-related barriers in collaboration with the applicable contacts.

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

"I believe the most inclusive mindset for accessible design is to treat accessibility as an experience to be lived and felt by all users—not just a checklist to be completed. True accessibility is achieved when inclusive design supports dignity, independence and usability for everyone!"

- Omar Bani-Taha, Senior UX Researcher at ISED

As hybrid work technologies remain central to the Government of Canada's operations, ISED is prioritizing digital tools and systems that are accessible, inclusive and easy to use.

Ensuring employees can collaborate and communicate effectively in physical and virtual settings is essential to a barrier-free workplace.

Feedback from consultations on ICT

Participants noted that ICT is an area where ISED has made strong progress. They commended the responsiveness of IT support staff and the department's agility in adopting new, modern technologies. These efforts have improved day-to-day accessibility.

In parallel, participants identified opportunities to further strengthen hybrid collaboration. Challenges remain with boardroom technologies, where inconsistent equipment quality and limited user knowledge can undermine the accessibility of hybrid meetings. Investment in high-quality microphones, cameras and headsets, aligned with Translation Bureau standards, were highlighted, along with training to ensure employees can use the technology effectively.

Informed by this feedback, ISED's ICT goals and activities will continue to build on existing strengths while addressing persistent barriers. Areas of focus include advancing boardroom and hybrid-technology modernization, ensuring equitable access to adaptive technologies and equipment, and promoting accessible digital content and platforms supported by training on best practices. Where appropriate, ISED will seek guidance from the Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology program to inform the adoption of accessible and adaptive technologies across the department.

Goals and activities

Lead: Directors of the Modernization, Innovation and Delivery Directorate and the Product Design and Integration Directorate, Digital Transformation Service Sector.

Goal 1: Modernize ISED's meeting spaces with hybrid meeting technology.

- **Activity 1:** Assess current equipment in boardrooms.
- **Activity 2:** Install required accessibility technology in boardrooms.

Goal 2: Ensure employees can access and assess adaptive technology and equipment that meets their accessibility needs.

- **Activity 1:** Dedicate a space (e.g. Digital Lounge) with a variety of accessibility tools and equipment (e.g. keyboards, mice, headsets) for employees to test before their acquisition.

Goal 3: Ensure ISED's digital platforms and content are accessible.

- **Activity 1:** Promote the Accessibility Feature video series on digital displays across ISED workplaces.
- **Activity 2:** Update the Accessibility Feature video series in the Adoption application SharePoint with the latest information.
- **Activity 3:** Redevelop the Adoption application in SharePoint to ensure full compatibility with accessibility tools (e.g. screen readers) by 2027.
- **Activity 4:** Enable Microsoft 365 accessibility tools and verify they are all available in the ISED tenant.

Goal 4: Promote inclusive digital practices and increase adoption of accessibility tools.

- **Activity 1:** Publish inclusive design tips (e.g. colour contrast, font size) on digital displays on a quarterly basis.
- **Activity 2:** Create DigiKnow postcards within the Microsoft Teams Adoption application highlighting tips and best practices.
- **Activity 3:** Promote new and updated Microsoft 365 accessibility tools.

Communication, other than ICT

"Plain language makes information accessible to everyone, regardless of reading level, first language or abilities. This inclusive approach builds public trust and, most importantly, helps vulnerable people more easily recognize and reject misinformation."

- Christopher Colyer, Web Communications Manager

Communication is central to inclusion. ISED strives to ensure that employees and people in Canada have equitable access to clear, inclusive and barrier-free information across advertising, video content, internal and external messaging, and corporate events. The department continuously reviews and enhances its web content and provides ongoing training to strengthen accessible and inclusive communications.

Feedback from consultations on communications

Participants noted that communications at ISED are a strong area, reflecting a clear commitment to accessibility. They emphasized the importance of sustaining this momentum and maintaining plain language and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA compliance in digital and print products, ensuring consistent accessibility supports at corporate events, and incorporating lived experience stories into internal communications to deepen understanding of accessibility and disability across the department.

ISED will continue to build on its strengths by embedding accessibility standards and best practices across its communication channels.

Goals and activities

Lead: Director of Outreach and Engagement, Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector.

Goal 1: Ensure all advertising materials meet Government of Canada accessibility standards to deliver inclusive, barrier-free communications to all Canadians.

- **Activity 1:** Ensure that accessibility is integrated into every stage of the advertising process, from creative development to final production, and that all advertising materials comply with Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat accessibility standards before publication.

Goal 2: Embed accessibility into all video production workflows to ensure content is inclusive, discoverable and usable by people with disabilities.

- **Activity 1:** Ensure accessibility is embedded into every stage of the video production process, including planning, filming, editing and publishing, by updating procedures and checklists to reflect accessibility requirements.
- **Activity 2:** Ensure all published videos are captioned and accompanied by descriptive transcripts suitable for screen readers.

Goal 3: Ensure department-wide external and internal communications materials are inclusive, written in plain language, and free from ableist language.

- **Activity 1:** Review publishing processes for internal and external platforms to integrate accessibility and plain language reviews.
- **Activity 2:** Promote the use of approved tools and checklists to help content creators identify and remove barriers before publishing.
- **Activity 3:** Ensure all web pages, digital documents and communication platforms meet or exceed WCAG standards.
- **Activity 4:** Ensure all ISED social media content conforms to accessibility best practices, including the use of alternative text (alt text), plain language, hashtags, and captions in videos.
- **Activity 5:** Participate in interdepartmental communities of practice focused on accessible communications to share and learn best practices.

Goal 4: Ensure ISED-wide corporate events are planned and delivered in ways that proactively remove barriers and support full participation.

- **Activity 1:** Develop and implement a standardized checklist to assess the accessibility of in-person and virtual event venues, and ensure it is used in the planning process for all ISED-wide corporate events.
- **Activity 2:** Ensure all ISED-wide corporate events proactively offer accessibility services like interpretation into American Sign Language and Quebec Sign Language, and real-time captioning.

Procurement of goods, services and facilities

Procurement plays an important role in supporting accessibility and inclusion at ISED. Whether by providing employee accommodations, goods or services, ISED aims to ensure that procurement processes, tools and decisions are inclusive, efficient and responsive to the diverse needs of employees.

Feedback from consultations on procurement

Participants noted that procurement processes can be complex and time-consuming. Opportunities exist to make these processes more accessible and user-friendly, including by engaging end users to ensure accommodations and supports effectively meet individual needs.

Guided by this feedback, ISED has prioritized initiatives to simplify procurement processes, enhance timeliness for accommodation-related requests, and build awareness and capacity among procurement professionals regarding accessibility requirements.

Goals and activities

Lead: Director of Contracts and Material Management, Corporate Management Sector.

Goal 1: Simplify the procurement process to ensure it is accessible, user-friendly and inclusive for all employees and stakeholders.

- **Activity 1:** Review current procurement processes to identify accessibility barriers and develop recommendations.
- **Activity 2:** Develop and implement clear guidance in plain language to support employees navigating procurement procedures.
- **Activity 3:** Convert procurement forms and documents into accessible formats for all users.

Goal 2: Ensure the timely procurement of goods related to employee accommodations.

- **Activity 1:** Implement a prioritization process to expedite approved procurement for accommodation-related requests.
- **Activity 2:** Identify a procurement service standard for duty to accommodate requests.

Note: Refer to the [Employment](#) section for additional information related to employee accommodations.

Goal 3: Enhance procurement processes by building awareness of accessibility and participating in knowledge-sharing networks.

- **Activity 1:** Deliver accessibility-related information sessions to raise awareness and build capacity among procurement professionals.
- **Activity 2:** Participate in interdepartmental communities of practice focused on accessible procurement to learn and adopt best practices.

Design and delivery of programs and services

ISED is committed to ensuring that all programs and services are accessible, inclusive and designed with intersectionality in mind. ISED aims to equip employees with the knowledge, tools and frameworks needed to design and deliver programs and services that meet the diverse needs of employees and people in Canada.

Feedback from consultations on the design and delivery of programs and services

Participants emphasized that accessibility and intersectional considerations, including those identified through Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus), must be embedded into program design from the outset. Greater consistency and accountability across programs and services

were identified as key priorities. Participants also highlighted the value of training in accessible program design, plain language communication and unconscious bias to support these improvements.

Building on these insights, ISED's goals and activities focus on embedding accessibility and intersectional thinking throughout program and service design, delivery, and monitoring; enhancing employee capacity through guidance and training; and expanding awareness and participation in programs and services. In addition, under the leadership of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Secretariat, ISED will conduct research to identify potential accessibility barriers in AI and develop strategies to mitigate risks. This work aligns with the Government of Canada's broader AI mandate to ensure the responsible, inclusive and equitable implementation of AI technologies across federal operations.

Goals and activities

Lead: Senior Director of the Grants and Contributions Centre of Expertise and Treasury Board Affairs.

Goal 1: Ensure all programs and services are accessible by default.

- **Activity 1:** Proactively identify and address accessibility barriers in external-facing programs, services and policies through equity gap assessment questions in the planning, design, delivery and monitoring phases of their lifecycles.
- **Activity 2:** Expand and diversify promotion channels for programs, services and policies to reach a broader audience for awareness and participation.
- **Activity 3:** Develop and deliver targeted accessibility guidance and training for program managers.
- **Activity 4:** Review the accessibility of new grants and contributions tools, guides, forms and procedures to make these accessible by default.

Goal 2: Proactively identify and eliminate accessibility biases and barriers in AI.

- **Activity 1:** Conduct research and analysis on accessibility-related biases, barriers and potential discriminatory outcomes in AI, and establish guidelines and mitigation strategies.

Transportation

While ISED's mandate does not directly encompass transportation, consultations with PWD have identified opportunities where ISED can influence and improve accessibility outcomes for employees. This includes issues such as accessible parking spaces, construction around ISED buildings that can impact access, and accessibility considerations for employees on travel status. In response, goals have been developed to strengthen transportation-related services, tools and communications.

Goals and activities

Lead: Director of Contracts and Material Management, Corporate Management Sector.

Goal 1: Convert fleet management forms, documents and tools into accessible formats for all users.

- **Activity 1:** Conduct a review of fleet management digital forms and convert them to accessible formats that meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards, ensuring compatibility with screen readers and assistive technologies.

Goal 2: Provide information about transportation services available near ISED buildings.

- **Activity 1:** Develop and maintain an intranet page listing transportation options, including parking, cabs, public transit and adapted transport.
- **Activity 2:** Provide timely communications to employees regarding any changes to paratransit drop-off and pick-up locations during construction projects.

Goal 3: Embed accessibility considerations for ISED employees on travel status.

- **Activity 1:** Examine the list of national and international hotels to ensure all hotels listed have accessibility features for persons with disabilities.
- **Activity 2:** Enhance communications to ensure employees with disabilities know their rights to travel accommodations.

Goal 4: Ensure accessible parking options are available at locations owned by ISED.

- **Activity 1:** Develop and implement a plan to secure accessible parking spaces, including assistance features such as call buttons and ramps.

Consultations

The Accessibility Secretariat prioritized collaborative consultation with persons with disabilities during the development of the 2026–2028 ISED Accessibility Plan, guided by the principles of co-creation and "Nothing Without Us." Recognizing that consultations can sometimes be perceived as procedural, the Accessibility Secretariat structured the sessions to be substantive, participatory and transparent, ensuring that feedback would shape departmental goals and activities.

The first series of consultations focused on identifying barriers faced by employees with disabilities at ISED and on exploring opportunities for improvement across each priority area. Participants were asked to reflect on existing initiatives, critical changes needed and their vision for a fully accessible workplace. A follow-up consultation reviewed the proposed outcomes, goals and activities to ensure alignment with the earlier feedback and demonstrate how recommendations were being addressed.

Throughout this process, the Accessibility Secretariat worked closely and continuously with the ISED Persons with Disabilities Network. Participants confirmed that their perspectives were well represented and provided refinements to improve the clarity of certain activities and ensure alignment with indicators used to measure progress. Topics raised during consultations have been integrated throughout the corresponding sections of this plan, ensuring that employee input informed the goals, activities and indicators.

Questions used during these sessions are available in [Annex A](#). Participants also had the option to provide feedback through alternate channels, including Slido for anonymous responses.

Accountability and reporting

Monitoring and reporting accessibility-related feedback and results are essential to ensure ISED's initiatives remain effective and responsive. To support this, ISED introduced a results framework to track progress across all priority areas of the 2026–2028 ISED Accessibility Plan. This framework provides a foundation for annual reporting, informed decision-making and the continuous measurement of outcomes.

To further enhance transparency and demonstrate responsiveness, the Accessibility Secretariat will share monthly reports with employees on reported barriers, including actions taken and resolution outcomes. For more information on ISED's feedback process and reporting, visit the [Description of Feedback Process](#).

Together, these mechanisms strengthen accountability and drive continuous improvement across the department. ISED will continue to evolve and adapt its accessibility plans and progress reporting to meet diverse needs and help create a more accessible and inclusive Canada for all.

Annex A

List of questions from ISED's Accessibility Plan consultations (February to April 2025)

The following questions were replicated for all eight priority areas identified in this plan.

1. What initiatives are currently effective in the (selected priority area), and how can we expand on these successes?
2. What are the most critical and impactful changes we need to implement to transition to the future state you described?
3. What would the future state look like if we successfully achieve our goals in the (selected priority area)? Can you describe the envisioned state?

List of questions from ISED's Accessibility Plan consultations (September 2025)

1. What are your overall impressions of the framework?
2. Are there any gaps with the proposed goals, initiatives or indicators in the priority areas?
3. Do you have any additional comments or feedback?