



Guidelines on Making Communications Products and Activities Diverse and Inclusive

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Guidelines on Making Communications Products and Activities Diverse and Inclusive

1. About these guidelines

- 1.1 These guidelines support the Government of Canada's efforts to promote inclusion and respect for diversity and are intended to support departments when planning and developing communications products and activities. A communications product is any product produced by or on behalf of the Government of Canada that informs the public about policies, programs, services and initiatives, as well as dangers or risks to health, safety or the environment. Communications products can also aim to explain the rights, entitlements and obligations of individuals.

2. Application

- 2.1 These guidelines are intended for all Government of Canada departments subject to the *Policy on Communications and Federal Identity*.

3. Context

- 3.1 These guidelines support the Government of Canada's commitment to implement Gender-based Analysis (GBA) Plus across federal departments and agencies. GBA Plus helps to ensure that federal government policies, programs and other initiatives are responsive, inclusive and reflective of diverse experiences and realities in order to address inequities and barriers.
- 3.2 These guidelines apply to communications products and activities for both internal and external audiences.

4. Guidelines

These guidelines outline considerations related to sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability, religion or any other identity factors, and are intended to help departments create diverse and inclusive communications products and activities.

Research

Departments are strongly encouraged to:

- 4.1 Use a variety of research sources to examine the barriers and inequalities of diverse populations in order to help inform the development of communications products;
- 4.2 Consult media monitoring and/or public environment analysis teams to obtain relevant media scans on target audiences; and
- 4.3 Consult with departmental or government-wide working groups with expertise in diversity and inclusion.

Language

Departments are strongly encouraged to:

- 4.4 Consult with internal resources with relevant expertise to ensure content accurately reflects diverse perspectives and lived experiences; and
- 4.5 Apply the principles of plain language writing and inclusive communication.

Imagery

Departments are strongly encouraged to:

- 4.6 Ensure diversity is considered when showcasing various audiences by:
 - 4.6.1 Using a range of images/illustrations that are reflective of Canada's diverse population;
 - 4.6.2 Using accurate images and avoiding stereotypes;
 - 4.6.3 Balancing representation of groups based on race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, age, etc.;
 - 4.6.4 Using images that represent different types of family units, people with physical differences and disabilities;
- 4.7 Consult with internal resources with relevant expertise to ensure images are culturally appropriate and reflect the intended audiences;
- 4.8 Build an inventory of photos and images that reflect a diverse population and consider sharing it with other communications teams across the Government of Canada; and

- 4.9 Ensure accurate representation of target audiences when using stock imagery.

Testing

Departments are strongly encouraged to:

- 4.10 Evaluate the effectiveness of communications products and activities and share relevant findings with the broader communications community.

5. References

5.1 Legislation

- *Canadian Gender Budgeting Act*
- *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
- *Canadian Human Rights Act*

5.2 Related policy instruments

- Policy on Communications and Federal Identity
- Directive on the Management of Communications
- Guidelines on Making Communications Products and Activities Accessible- Canada.ca

5.3 Government of Canada resources

- Communications Community Office (CCO) – Plain Language and Accessibility - GCpedia
- Office of Public Service Accessibility
- Inclusive writing – Guidelines and resources
- Centre on Diversity and Inclusion

- [Diversity and inclusion in the public service](#)
- [Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022](#)
- [Gender, diversity and inclusion statistics \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)

5.4 **Lexicons**

- [Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology - Glossaries and vocabularies - TERMIUM Plus® - Resources of the Language Portal of Canada](#)
- [Accessibility glossary - Glossaries and vocabularies - TERMIUM Plus® - Resources of the Language Portal of Canada - Languages - Canadian identity and society - Culture, history and sport](#)
- [Words Matter 2022](#) (accessible only on the Government of Canada network)
- [Inclusionary: A collection of gender-inclusive solutions](#)

5.5 **Government of Canada employee networks** (accessible only on the Government of Canada network)

- [GC Diversity Networks \(GCcollab\)](#)
- [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Communications Network \(GCcollab\)](#)

6. Enquiries

For questions, contact [Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Public Enquiries](#).

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