CKUA's Accessibility Plan 2024-2027

Next review: 2027

General

CKUA is proud to announce the publication of our inaugural Accessibility Plan. This plan underscores our commitment to the principles set forth by the Accessible Canada Act (ACA), which are designed to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that may affect individuals with disabilities. At CKUA, we value the diversity of our staff, and strive to bring a variety of perspectives and experiences to our audience. It is essential that our facilities, communications technologies, and services are fully accessible to all members in our diverse community.

Drawing from valuable insights provided by our employees and audience, our Accessibility Plan focuses on the proactive identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that could hinder full participation within our organization. We regard this plan not merely as a policy document, but as a foundational step towards ongoing improvement and transformation. We are dedicated to engaging with individuals who have lived experience of disability, learning from their insights to continually enhance the accessibility of our services and organizational practices.

CKUA is committed to a process of continuous learning and improvement, ensuring that we remain a leader in accessibility and inclusivity in all that we do.

We warmly welcome feedback on our Accessibility Plan or any other aspect of accessibility within our organization. If you would like to provide CKUA with feedback on accessibility within our organization, about CKUA's Accessibility Plan or any of our services, please contact:

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Executive Summary

CKUA Radio is committed to enhancing accessibility for all individuals, including those with disabilities, in alignment with the requirements of the Broadcasting Act. This plan outlines our approach to identifying and removing barriers throughout our organization and preventing new barriers in our extensive range of services and facilities.

CKUA is proud to present our Accessibility Plan, developed in compliance with the Telecom and Broadcasting Regulatory Policy (CRTC 2021-215) and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Accessibility Reporting Regulations. This plan adheres to the standards established by the Accessible Canada Act (S.C. 2019, c. 10), reflecting our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment that respects the rights and dignities of all individuals.

Accessibility Summary

At CKUA Radio, our commitment to accessibility is central to our mission of connecting everyone to Alberta's vibrant cultural landscape. Established in 1927 as Canada's first public and educational broadcaster, we have always strived to ensure that every individual, regardless of any barriers they might experience, can access and enjoy our diverse offerings. Our approach to accessibility is not just about compliance; it's about enriching the community experience and ensuring all audiences can participate fully in our cultural dialogues.

One of our strategic priorities at CKUA is investment in our people and operations. As we aim to evolve and grow, so must our staff and hosts. Investments in hiring, training, and retaining people who will be a part of the next century of CKUA are crucial to our success. So is ensuring that they have the proper equipment, tools, accessibility, and processes to thrive in their roles and best serve our community. This commitment to our team complements our goal to eliminate barriers and foster an inclusive environment.

CKUA's dedication to removing barriers is evident across all our platforms. Our network of sixteen FM transmitters, online streaming services, mobile app, and OnDemand content are designed to be accessible, catering to the needs of individuals who might face challenges accessing traditional media. This digital inclusivity allows us to bring over 1,000 Albertan and 3,000 Canadian artists' music directly to a global audience, ensuring that barriers do not prevent anyone from experiencing the richness of our cultural programming.

Furthermore, CKUA actively engages in making our physical events and facilities accessible, from ensuring wheelchair accessibility at live events to offering materials in accessible formats, we strive to eliminate physical and communicative barriers. These efforts extend to supporting local artists and businesses, making sure that opportunities for exposure and growth are equally accessible to all artists, including those who might otherwise face barriers to access.

In essence, CKUA's vision to create a better world connected by music, arts, and culture is rooted in our commitment to accessibility. We believe in creating an inclusive environment where music and culture serve as bridges, connecting diverse communities and fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation across all barriers. This commitment ensures that our legacy of inclusion continues to thrive, making cultural experiences enjoyable and accessible to everyone, irrespective of their circumstances.

The Principles of the Accessible Canada Act

CKUA's Accessibility Plan was developed using the core Principles of the Accessibility Canada Act.

(a) Dignity: CKUA's commitment to treating all individuals with dignity is evident in our approach to communication and broadcasting. In this plan we will work towards making our digital platforms, such as our website and mobile apps, incorporate accessibility features like text-to-speech and closed captions, allowing users with disabilities to engage with our content in a respectful and independent manner.
(b) Equity: We will review and revise our employment practices to provide equitable opportunities to all individuals. We plan to update hiring processes and provide accessible workplace environments.
(c) Barrier-Free Access: CKUA strives to provide barrier-free access to all our facilities and digital platforms. Regular audits and modifications ensure that physical spaces and digital services are accessible, promoting full and equal participation in all our programs and community engagements. This work is ongoing and as we identify new barriers, we will work to address them.
(d) Meaningful Options: This plan will move us toward providing meaningful choices in how individuals can interact with our services. Whether through adjustable accessibility settings on our digital platforms or through providing various formats of communication, individuals can customize their interaction based on personal preferences and needs.
(e) Inclusive Considerations: In developing our policies and programs, we will consider the diverse ways individuals interact with their environments. This includes considering the intersectionality of disabilities with other forms of marginalization, ensuring our services are inclusive and equitable for all community members. Different disability inclusive considerations include built environments (e.g. ramps), sensorial environments (e.g. lighting, sound, braille and ASL) social environments (e.g. differing communication styles or approaches), wayfinding (e.g. adequate signage), and communication needs (e.g. plain language, captioning). Inclusive considerations will evolve as greater community outreach occurs. This work will be done with an intersectional and universal design lens, recognizing people are more than just a disability and a shift in environment can be beneficial for all.
(f) Involvement in Development: CKUA acknowledges that we are at the beginning of this work. CKUA will actively involve persons with disabilities in the development and review of our policies and programs. This participation is crucial in shaping services that truly reflect the needs of all community members, ensuring that our initiatives are well-informed and effectively address real-world challenges.
(g) High Standards of Accessibility: The continuous development and revision of our accessibility standards are undertaken with the goal of achieving the highest level of accessibility. We are committed to staying abreast of technological advancements and regulatory changes to ensure that our accessibility measures are both current and effective. CKUA uses the social and intercultural models of looking at accessibility. Disability is not based on an individual's impairment, but on a lack of inclusion within the boarder community (the social model). People who experience disabilities have developed their own cultural norms and can be engaged with equitably to avoid ableism (intercultural model).

Note about language: this report uses both identity first (disabled community) and person first language (people with disabilities) to reflect the diverse ways the community sees themselves. Identity first recognizes that the disability cannot be removed from the person. Person first language recognizes humanity first, that we are people who navigate the world with our diverse needs and perspectives.

Detailed Accessibility Plan

Areas of Accessibility

Identification and Removal of Barriers:

<u>Employment:</u>

1. Action Steps:

- **Review Employment Practices**: We will conduct a thorough review of all current employment practices, including recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and career development processes. This review will focus on identifying barriers that could prevent people with disabilities from accessing equal employment opportunities.
  - We will conduct an access survey with our current employees.
  - We will make a commitment to hiring traditionally marginalized communities and conduct outreach to them for all new positions.
- **Consultation with Relationship Groups**: We will engage directly with employees with disabilities, disability advocacy groups, and other community resources to gather insights and recommendations on how to make employment practices more inclusive.
- **Policy Revision**: We will update employment policies to ensure they are not only compliant with legal standards but also actively support an inclusive and accessible workplace. This includes modifications to job descriptions, recruitment advertisements, interview procedures, and performance evaluation systems to accommodate diverse needs.

2. Timelines:

- **Consultation and Initial Review**: We will begin the consultation process and review of employment practices in Year 1, aiming to gather initial feedback and identify major areas for improvement.
- **Policy and Practice Revision**: Based on feedback, we will revise policies and practices in Year 1.
- **Implementation of Changes**: We will start implementing changes to recruitment and other HR processes in Year 2.

3. Resources:

- **External Accessibility Consultant:** We will hire an expert in accessibility and employment law to ensure that the review and revisions of employment practices meet best practices and legal requirements. This consultant will also help interpret feedback from relationship groups and translate it into actionable policies.
- **Budget Allocation**: We will allocate a specific budget or access funds through the Broadcast Access fund. This may include external assessment and subsequent modifications, covering consultant fees, training programs, physical modifications to the workplace, and other resources needed to support employees with disabilities.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee**: We will change the terms of reference of CKUA's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility committee to oversee the review process, work with the consultants, and ensure that changes are implemented effectively.

- **Administrative department**: Will be responsible for executing changes in recruitment, onboarding, and ongoing support for employees with disabilities.
- **Marketing and Communications and Broadcast and I.T. departments**: Will be tasked with overseeing the audit and revision of our digital platforms to comply with WCAG and ACA standards. As well, they will be tasked with implementing any required physical modifications to the workplace as identified during the review process.

5. Outcome Measurement and Tracking:

- **Regular Reviews and Adjustments**: We will schedule annual reviews of employment practices to ensure they continue to meet accessibility goals. Use feedback from these reviews to make ongoing adjustments.
- **Create community informed evaluative framework:** In Year 1, we will start with demographic tracking amongst employees. This information will be collected voluntarily. In Year 2, we will work alongside the accessibility standards, disability advisory consultancy and CKUA's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee to set reasonable measurable goals for greater accessibility. In Year 3, we will be able to quantitatively report on our progress toward greater inclusion.
- **Reporting**: We will include findings and progress on accessibility initiatives in annual reports and review these outcomes with the senior management team to ensure continued alignment with organizational goals and adequate resource allocation.

Facilities: CKUA has its headquarters in downtown Edmonton. The building was constructed in 2012 and adheres to the building code established for that year. Street parking is available in front of the building, and the building is accessible via transit. CKUA also has a broadcast studio in Calgary's East Village. It is accessible by transit but does not offer street parking.

1. **Action Steps:**

- **Regular Audits**: We will conduct comprehensive accessibility audits of CKUA's 5-story building and other associated facilities. These audits will assess all areas, including entry points, workspaces, restrooms, and public areas, to identify any potential barriers that could hinder accessibility. This includes adding wayfinding and social stories into all our facilities.
- **Addressing Audit Findings**: We will establish a protocol to address any issues identified during audits.

2. Timelines:

- **Initial Audit**: We will schedule the first comprehensive audit in Year 1. This audit will set a baseline for current facility accessibility.
- **Annual Reviews**: Following the initial audit, we will conduct yearly audits to ensure ongoing compliance and to address any new challenges that may arise as building usage evolves or new standards are implemented.

3. Resources:

- **Accessibility Consultant**: We will contract an external accessibility consultant who specializes in facilities including performance spaces to conduct the initial and subsequent audits.
- **Budget Allocation**: We will allocate a specific budget or access funds through the Broadcast Access fund.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Chief Operating Officer and Accessibility Officer**: The primary responsibility for overseeing the accessibility of facilities will be the Chief Operating Officer. This individual will coordinate audits, liaise with the external consultant, and ensure that modifications are executed as planned.
- **Broadcast Services and I.T. Team**: Will be responsible for the implementation of immediate modifications and to maintaining accessibility features in good working order.

5. Determining and Tracking Intended Outcomes:

- **Feedback System**: We will implement a continuous feedback system where employees and visitors can report accessibility concerns at any time. This system will also be used to gather input on the usability and effectiveness of implemented changes.
- **Create community informed evaluative framework**: Year 1, we will start with demographic tracking amongst employees, patrons and broadcasted content.
  Year 2, we will work alongside the accessibility standards, disability advisory consultancy and CKUA's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee to set reasonable measurable goals for greater facility and event accessibility.
  In Year 3, we will be able to quantitatively report on our progress toward greater inclusion.
- **Regular Reporting**: We will include a section in the annual management report that details the outcomes of accessibility initiatives, ongoing issues, and our future plans. This report should be reviewed by senior management and the board if applicable, to ensure alignment with organizational objectives and resource allocation.

Broadcasting Services:

1. Action Steps:

- **Annual Accessibility Review**: We will conduct a comprehensive review of all digital platforms including the CKUA website, mobile app, and digital content delivery systems on YouTube and podcasts. This review will assess compliance with the latest WCAG standards, including wayfinding on all digital channels. We will research and implement best practices for the pan-disability community in Alberta and our online environment.
- **Adjustments Implementation**: We will identify any accessibility shortcomings during the review and develop a detailed plan to address them. This might include redesigning interface elements for better usability, enhancing contrast ratios, adding alt text to images, and ensuring all media has corresponding captions and audio descriptions.

2. Timelines:

- **Review Phase**: We will initiate the accessibility review of all platforms in Year 1. This phase involves both automated testing and user testing sessions, particularly involving users with disabilities.
- **Adjustment Phase**: Based on the review findings, we will make adjustments in Years 2 and 3. This timeline allows sufficient scope for careful deployment of changes and ensures minimal disruption to users.

3. Resources:

- **Teams Involved**: The IT and Web Development teams will collaborate closely with external accessibility specialists who bring expertise in the latest accessibility practices and solutions.
- **Budget Considerations:** We will allocate a specific budget for purchasing necessary software upgrades and tools that facilitate accessibility. This includes investments in screen readers, captioning services, and other assistive technologies that enhance the digital experience for users with disabilities. Additionally, we would apply for the Broadcast Access Fund to cover any expenses beyond our budget.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Director of IT and Broadcast Services**: Will oversee the entire review and adjustment process, ensuring that all digital platforms comply with WCAG standards. This role involves strategic planning, resource allocation, and cross-departmental coordination.
- **Marketing and Communications Department**: Will be a key relationship group involved in the assessment and revision of content across all platforms and manage external communications to ensure accessibility.
- **IT and Broadcast Services Team**: Will execute the technical aspects of the review and adjustments, including coding changes, content modifications, and testing of new features to enhance accessibility.

5. Outcome Measurement and Tracking:

- **Feedback Mechanism**: We will establish a robust mechanism for gathering user feedback specifically focused on accessibility. This could be through direct surveys, feedback forms on the website, and interactive user sessions.
- **Create Community-informed Evaluative Framework**: In Year 1, we will start with demographic tracking amongst broadcasted content, educate our hosts and promote the increase of programming artists with disabilities and other marginalized artists. We will also track barriers to access, including technological needs and changes.
  Year 2, we will work alongside the accessibility standards, disability advisory consultancy and CKUA's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee to set reasonable measurable goals for greater accessibility.
  In Year 3, we will be able to quantitatively report on our progress toward greater inclusion.
- **Reporting and Documentation**: We will provide regular documentation and reporting on accessibility status to our relationship groups. This will include detailed reports on the

adjustments made, the outcomes of these adjustments, and plans for future enhancements. We will integrate this into our annual business plan, and regular updates will be presented to the management and the board of directors. We will also include an update in our annual community report.

Communication:

1. Action Steps:

- **Accessibility Assessment**: We will conduct a comprehensive assessment of all existing communication channels, including newsletters, event announcements, live events, and community engagement activities. This assessment will identify current accessibility gaps in these channels.
- I**mplementation of Accessibility Tools and Practices:**
  In Year 1 we will undertake the creation of a protocol document that will aid in identifying how we implement the below criteria:
    - Plain Language Use: Revise all communication to use clear, jargon-free language that is easily understandable to diverse audiences.
    - Text-to-Speech Options: Integrate text-to-speech technology on all digital platforms to assist users with visual impairments.
    - Closed Captions for Videos: Ensure all video content, whether pre-recorded or live-streamed, includes accurate closed captioning.
    - ASL: Include ASL interpretation for live events and announcements as applicable.

2. Timelines:

- **Accessibility Assessment and findings:** We will complete in Year 1.
- **Implementation of Tools and Practices**: Following the assessment's findings, we will implement necessary changes and enhancements in Years 2 and 3.

3. Resources:

- **Training:** We will provide specialized training for the Communications, Marketing, Content, IT and Broadcast Services teams on accessibility best practices. This training will include how to create accessible content and how to use accessibility software effectively.
- **Software and Tools**: We will invest in and deploy accessibility software tools, such as captioning services, text-to-speech software, and other assistive technologies. This will also involve engaging with vendors to ensure these tools are integrated seamlessly into existing systems.
- **Budget:** We will allocate a specific budget or access funds through the Broadcast Access fund.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Marketing and Communications Department**: Will lead the assessment and revision of written content across all platforms and manage external communications to ensure accessibility.
- **Content Department**: Will ensure that all content produced, especially for media broadcasting and public engagement, adheres to accessibility standards.
- **IT and Broadcast Services Department**: Will implement and maintain technological solutions for accessibility, such as captioning and text-to-speech functionalities. A budget will be assigned, or funds obtained through the Broadcast Access fund.

- **Administration**: Will support the initiative by coordinating training sessions, managing budget allocations for accessibility tools, and ensuring all staff are aware of their roles in promoting accessibility.

5. Outcome Measurement and Tracking:

- **Feedback Mechanism**: We have an [accessibility form](#) and feedback system that allows all relationship groups, especially people with disabilities, to provide input on the accessibility of communications. This could include surveys, and qualitative options such as focus groups, voice notes, and direct feedback options.
- **Evaluation Benchmark setting**: We will work alongside advisory committees to set goals that are applicable beyond compliance. For communication, this may be setting a goal of new technological equipment, ASL interpretation for all events, etc. Year 1 will be outreach, assessment of current practices and setting initial community-based goals. Year 2 and 3 will be iteratively assessing goals.
- **Regular Reviews and Reporting**: We will schedule regular reviews of the accessibility features implemented and report these findings internally. Based on feedback and technological advancements, we will adjust strategies to continuously improve accessibility.

The Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities:

1. **Action Steps**:
   Create and update CKUA's procurement processes by:
   - Incorporating accessibility criteria into all procurement documents to ensure that we consider accessibility in all procurement practices.
   - To enhance accessibility awareness within the supply chain, we will promote supplier diversity by developing initiatives to source goods and services from suppliers that employ or are owned by individuals with disabilities.
   - We will provide ongoing training for procurement staff on accessibility standards and inclusive procurement practices to ensure they can effectively evaluate and demand accessibility in purchased goods and services.
   - To verify compliance with accessibility standards, we will regularly audit procured goods and services and use feedback from users to improve procurement practices.
   - We will embed accessibility clauses in contracts with suppliers, ensuring that the accessibility of goods and services is maintained throughout the contract term and regularly reviewed.

2. **Timelines:** Implementation by Year 3.

3. **Resources**:
   - We will provide accessibility training for all employees who procure goods and services and allocate a budget for it.

4. **Roles and Responsibilities**:

   - **Administration**: Will be responsible for updating procurement policies, practices, and contracts. This department will also set a budget and arrange for staff training.

5. **Outcome Measurement and Tracking:**

- **Regular Reviews and Reporting**: We will conduct regular audits of procured goods and services and track all vendors we use to see about increasing engaging with companies that are owned or staffed by persons with disabilities.

The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services:

1. **Action Steps:** We will assess all programs and services (newsletters, event announcements, live events, and community engagement activities) for accessibility. Implement tools and practices like relaxed performance options, sensory kits, and closed captions for videos.

2. **Timelines**: Implementation in Year 2.

3. **Resources**: We will provide the communications team with training and engage with accessibility software vendors.

4. **Roles & Responsibilities:**
   - **Marketing and Communications Department**: Will lead the assessment and revision of written content across all platforms and manage external communications to ensure accessibility.
   - **Content Department**: Will ensure that all content produced, especially for media broadcasting and public engagement, adheres to accessibility standards.
   - **IT and Broadcast Services Department**: Will implement and maintain technological solutions for accessibility, such as captioning and text-to-speech functionalities. A budget will be assigned, or funds obtained through the Broadcast Access fund.
   - **Administration**: Will coordinate training sessions, manage budget allocations for accessibility tools, and ensure all staff are aware of their roles in promoting accessibility for CKUA's programs and services.

5. **Outcome Measurement and Tracking:**

- We will conduct annual surveys with the community to ensure we are not overlooking any accessibility needs and make improvements in our programming and services where required.

Transportation:

1. **Action Steps**:
   - We allow for a hybrid working environment, and most activities do not require the use of private transportation. We will assess and plan for transportation options for work trips or activities that happen offsite.

2. **Timelines**: Implementation in Year 3.

3. **Resources**:
   - We will budget for any changes to transportation that would be required to meet the needs of our employees. For example, if we hired someone who required the use of hand brakes, we would make those modifications.

4. **Roles and Responsibilities**:
   - **Administration:** Will communicate with the relevant departments about any transportation accommodations required for our employees prior to their start date.
   - **IT & Broadcast Services**: Will arrange to make modifications to any of CKUA's vehicles to meet the accessibility needs of our employees.

Prevention of New Barriers:

1. **Action Steps**:
   - All new projects, whether digital or infrastructure, will incorporate accessibility considerations from the onset, following the principles of universal design.

2. **Timelines**: Implementation In Year 1.

3. **Resources**:
   - Staff and volunteers will undergo regular training on accessibility guidelines and best practices.

4. **Roles and Responsibilities**:
   - **Chief Operating Officer and Accessibility Officer**: The primary responsibility for overseeing the prevention of new barriers will be the Chief Operating Officer. They will coordinate audits, liaise with the external consultant, and ensure that CKUA's accessibility plan is executed as planned.

Consultation with Persons with Disabilities

Consultation methods: CKUA believes in the "nothing about us, without us" disability approach that is also heavily noted within the origins of the Accessible Canada Act. As noted throughout the report, we are at the beginning stages of implementing the ACA. For consultation, CKUA will use three different approaches to continue the accessibility journey.

First, we will contract subject matter experts with both learned and living experience of disability, as both are important. Subject Matter Experts (SME) will conduct our space audits, online and web audits. They will assist with environmental scans for best and emerging practices within accessible broadcasting, evaluation structures, community outreach and analysis of data. Second, we will create training, advisory and focus group committees of people from the pan-disability community through partnership with Voices for Albertans with Disabilities. This allows us direct community feedback to learn a diversity of lived perspectives and priorities. Third, when applicable, we will ask the general patron public for feedback through our accessibility form and a yearly online town hall meeting. Both established patrons and under-represented groups will be invited to the town hall meeting to give feedback and invited to sit on any specific focus groups, as applicable in our accessibility journey. Focus groups and feedback town halls will be all hybrid to allow most modes of involvement, verbal, video, chat, captioning, etc. ASL interpretation will be provided when applicable.

All three avenues allow us to garner wisdom from the community, current literature and approaches and to build our own specific protocols to be responsive to the unique Albertan disability communities. This also allows to be intersectional and nimble in our approach—directly serving community, not just mapping approaches that may not work for our mandate.

Primary Consultant:

- Brooke Leifso, Research Chair, Workplace Accessibility and Inclusion – NorQuest College Spring 2024. Brooke is a disabled/crip academic, cultural worker, and community facilitator. Brooke has published and presented within the accessibility employment sector regarding best practices and fostering good quality of for neurodivergent youth, a social return on investment for employment programs and the impact of assured income on autistic youth employment. Brooke is also known as an accessibility consultant for arts and culture events and has most recently worked with the Edmonton Poetry Festival, Edmonton International Fringe Festival, and SkirtsAFire Theatre Festival.

  Brooke is a Subject Matter Expert, who worked with us to review our plan and ensure that we addressed all possible requirements. We are consulting with persons with disabilities in our accessibility work and ensure we're taking their direction to meet all folks' needs.

- **Timeline**:
  - June 2024 – December 2024
    - Confirm SMEs for audits and initial consultation
    - Schedule in collaboration with Voices for Albertans
    - Initial audits begin with Voices for Albertans and SME's
    - Plan out training with SMEs
  - January 2025-June 2025
    - Prioritize and strategize regarding Initial SME feedback
    - First town halls and focus groups regarding general feedback
  - June 2025-December 2025
    - Analyze prioritize and map out feedback
  - January – June 2026
    - Implement all feedback and assess through an iterative internal framework with employees
  - June-December 2026
    - Another round of SME, focus groups and a town hall to obtain larger feedback

Updating and Reporting the Accessibility Plan

- **Regular Updates**: The plan will be reviewed and updated every three years or as regulatory changes require.

- **Reporting**: CKUA Radio will report all updates and maintain open communication with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) as required.

Budget and Resources

- Our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Committee will spearhead the work, but all staff will share the responsibility to revise and implement the policies and procedures as outlined in the Accessibility Plan. CKUA will commit to an annual plan of training initiatives and projects and budget appropriately for them. The progress on this plan will be updated annually as outlined by the Accessibility Act.

Glossary

1. **Accessible Canada Act (ACA):** Legislation that aims to make Canada barrier-free by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers in areas that fall under federal jurisdiction.

2. **Accessibility:** The practice of making products, services, and environments usable by people of all abilities and disabilities.

3. **Access needs:** an informal term used within the disability community and adapted beyond to describe any needs that someone may have for a space to optimally function. For example, this can include screen-readers for low-vision workers but can also include an adjusted work schedule to pick up children, a hybrid work policy, or a carpooling schedule. Most workers have access needs or preferences that make their work or life easier.

4. **Accommodations:** accommodation is used formally and informally as a term to describe alternations an individual may need to complete a task. For example, this could include screen reading software for low vision workers. Formally within Canada, accommodation requests within a workplace become a legal obligation to comply with to undue hardship.

5. **At grade:** All amenities are on the ground level and there are no stairs or steep inclines or declines.

6. **Audit:** A systematic review or assessment of something, such as an organization's facilities or services, to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.

7. **Barrier:** Any obstacle that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including physical, architectural, informational or communicational, attitudinal, technological, or policy-related barriers.

8. **Broadcasting Act:** Federal legislation that regulates radio, television, and other broadcast media in Canada to ensure that they meet national standards.

9. **CRTC 2021-215:** A regulatory policy from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission that outlines requirements for accessibility in broadcasting services.

10. **Digital Inclusivity:** The assurance that all people have equal access to digital resources and technologies, particularly those with disabilities.

11. **Disability:** Any impairment, including physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory, or a functional limitation that interacts with barriers hindering a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

12. **Employment Practices Review:** A thorough evaluation of hiring, training, and workplace practices to ensure they support diversity and accessibility.

13. **Feedback Mechanism:** A process or system set up to receive comments, concerns, or complaints from users, especially regarding accessibility issues.

14. **Inclusive Design:** Designing products, devices, services, or environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

15. **Relationship Groups Consultation:** Engaging individuals who are impacted by a decision or project in its development process, particularly those with disabilities, to ensure that their needs and feedback are considered.

16. **Intercultural Model of Accessibility:** An approach that recognizes the cultural dimensions of disability, advocating for the inclusion of people with disabilities as a cultural group with distinct norms and needs.

17. **Social Stories:** A plain-language step-by-step guide describing accessing a building or event from the beginning to end. Social stories use photos and text. They give details about the door, if stairs or elevators are used, what floor, how many steps. They can also include safety plans, emergency exits, and other information someone way wish to know to plan or ease anxiety.

18. **SMEs**: Subject Matter Experts.

19. **Universal Design:** The design of buildings, products, or environments to make them accessible to all people, regardless of age, disability, or other factors.

20. **WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines):** Guidelines developed through the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to provide a single shared standard for web content accessibility that meets the needs of individuals, organizations, and governments internationally.