

**Canadian Tourism Commission
(dba Destination Canada)**

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

General	3	The Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities	17
Executive Summary	3	Barriers	17
Accessibility Statement	4	Actions	18
Employment	5	The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services	19
Barriers	5	Barriers	19
Pre-employment	5	Actions	19
Onboarding	6	Transportation	22
Retention	6	Barriers/Actions	22
Actions	7	Consultations	23
Pre-employment	7	Budget and Resource Allocations	24
Onboarding	8	Feedback	24
Retention	9		
The Built Environment	10		
Barriers	10		
Actions	12		
Information Communication Technologies (ICT)	14		
Barriers	14		
Actions	14		
Communication Beyond ICT	15		
Barriers	15		
Actions	16		

GENERAL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Destination Canada (DC) acknowledges the difficulties persons with disabilities continue to face with accessing mainstream employment. To that end, we are committed to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, within DC. Paramount to this work is our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment at DC where people with various abilities can bring their true potential, unparalleled skills, and unique outlooks to our workforce.

Our corporate values, in conjunction with the Accessible Canada Act, have driven us to re-evaluate our current processes in the areas of employment, the built environment, information and communications technologies (ICT), non-ICT communications, the procurement of goods, services and facilities, the design and delivery of programs and services as well as transportation.

To ensure that we had a holistic assessment, we invited both internal and external stakeholders to provide feedback throughout all stages of the development of DC's Accessibility Plan. Such groups included internal staff members, the President's Group, and the Hidden Mobility Disability Alliance. With the results of this review, DC's Accessibility Committee translated the suggestions into next steps that can be implemented immediately, as well as changes in the longer term.

In areas where further expertise is required, specifically with modifications to our technological systems, we intend to work alongside our third-party suppliers or consultants to activate any available accessibility functionalities and explore how we can fill any gaps.

As an organization that strives for agility and continuous improvement, we have started to initiate steps to become a more accessible workplace, through an audit of our physical environment at Vancouver headquarters and with our communication technologies. As such, there are several items that have been completed ahead of schedule or are in progress.

To further solidify our commitment to being an accessible employer, we will be dedicating resources to educating our employees on an ongoing basis and will be requesting to increase our accessibility budget to \$20,000.00 CAD to implement the changes outlined in this plan. Despite our best efforts, we also recognize that some specific modifications, particularly to the built environment, are out of our direct control.

Accessibility is an ever-evolving area, and we believe this plan is a living document that should be updated over an extended horizon. Therefore, we highly encourage our audience to continue sharing their feedback through the channel of their choice. For those who have already dedicated time and effort in bringing this plan to life, your input is appreciated. Together, we look forward to dismantling the existing barriers and extending opportunities for people of all abilities.



ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Destination Canada is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (D.E.I.).

When we commit to diversity, we commit to recognizing all the differences between us which may result in experiencing advantages or barriers. These differences could be based on race, ability, gender identity and more.

When we commit to equity, we commit to allocating resources and our time to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities.

When we commit to inclusion, we commit to fostering a sense of belonging by centering, valuing, and amplifying the voice, perspectives, and styles of those who experience barriers based on their identities.

As storytellers, marketers, destination stewards and representatives of Canada's tourism sector, we recognize our position of influence, and the importance of our work, workplace, and workforce in reflecting the many voices and places that make up Canada.



EMPLOYMENT

The essence of accessibility and a diverse workforce begins with employment.

At Destination Canada, we strive to continuously improve our hiring, onboarding, and engagement as well as employee development activities to attract key talents and nurture an inclusive environment. It is our belief that our employees should not be limited by a lack of tools or learning opportunities and people with disabilities are no exception.

As such, we analyzed our three (3) broad employment brackets of pre-employment, onboarding, and retention to identify where accessibility barriers could exist for individuals with physical, cognitive, or sensory disabilities. Based on the post evaluation findings, we also explored practical improvements to make our current process inclusive by design and the need to educate our staff on disability awareness.

Barriers

Pre-employment

The pre-employment umbrella encompasses a broad range of activities which begins with the curation of a job posting, conducting phone screens, issuing technical assessments, and hosting panel interviews. Through careful evaluation, we found various improvement areas that would be beneficial to persons with disabilities and all applicants.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Job Posting	Limited job poster visibility to disability talent pools	All disabilities
Job Posting	Use of complex language or jargon.	All disabilities
Job Posting	Specific areas of a job may have added difficulties for people with physical or mental disabilities. Job posting portal does not have accessibility accommodations.	All disabilities
Job Posting	No audio recording, ASL, or accessible PDF/website options.	Sensory disabilities (visual and hearing)
Job Posting	No known contact for accessibility.	All disabilities
Phone Screen & Interviews	Anxiety of the unknown and being put on the spot for questions.	Cognitive disabilities
Technical Assessment	Assessments include a time restraint (i.e., completing the assessment in 3 hours).	Cognitive disabilities
Technical Assessments	Assignments are provided in a text file only and audio answer submissions are not available.	Sensory disabilities (visual)
Interviews	No alternate interview formats.	Cognitive disabilities

Onboarding

Once a candidate has successfully moved through the pre-employment pipeline, they are moved into onboarding. At the onboarding phase, we need to ensure that all employees have the necessary tools to perform their job duties and to minimize any technological restraints.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Health and Safety	No office floor plan is provided before the employee's first day.	All disabilities
Health and Safety	Lack of mobility access and speech recognition devices or software.	Physical and sensory disabilities
Health and Safety	Digital technologies, like websites, intranets, and systems, are not all fully accessible by design.	Sensory and cognitive disabilities
Health and Safety	Prolonged video conferences and meetings.	Cognitive disabilities
Remote Workers	Remote workstation configuration (physical environment, laptop setup) may lack the initial configuration(s) necessary for an individual to work comfortably from home.	Physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities
Remote Workers	Employees (new and existing) may not understand how best to communicate with individuals identifying as having a disability.	Sensory, and cognitive disabilities

Retention

As highlighted in the Roadmap to 2040 by Accessibility Standards Canada, career development for individuals with physical or mental limitations continues to be one of the biggest barriers in employment.

Due to factors such as a lack of education, highly competitive job positions and few job availabilities contribute to why there are little to no opportunities for advancement in a disabled individual's occupation.

Putting this into Destination Canada's perspective, this translated to the following employment obstacles.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Employee Engagement	Minimal routine accessibility awareness training.	All disabilities
Training	Passing of 'corporate memory' (the lived experiences of work processes that disappear when an employee leaves the organization) should be documented in formats beyond just a written form.	Sensory disabilities (hearing)
Training	Lack of education or knowledge required for career development.	All disabilities
Career Development	Specific aspects of a job may have added difficulties for people who identify as having physical or cognitive disabilities.	All disabilities
Employee Engagement	Uncertain future direction of the accessibility committee once plan is created.	All disabilities
Brand Awareness	Minimal activities dedicated towards increasing organizational awareness of accessibility challenges in both the physical and digital environment.	All disabilities
Employee Engagement	Limited key performance indicators to measure the success and impact of the proposed accessibility plan.	All disabilities

Actions

Pre-employment

The analysis of our pre-employment process highlighted that barriers in our processes exist and are hindering Destination Canada's ability to encourage candidates through the pipeline. Specifically, continued efforts must be made towards the first step of the recruitment process – attraction.

We were able to identify several actionable items which aim to increase the visibility of our job opportunities while increasing the spectrum of available accommodations that we can provide during the assessment phase.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Job Posting	Limited job poster visibility to accessibility-oriented talent pools	Engage with organizations who have dedicated job boards for persons with disabilities (example: University of British Columbia, University of Victoria, Autism CanTech, and others).	Q1 2023
Job Posting	Use of complex language or jargon	Revise job postings with plain language.	2023 - Ongoing
Job Posting	Specific areas of a job may have added difficulties for people with physical or mental disabilities. Job posting portal does not have accessibility accommodations.	Better differentiate between the required and nice to have qualifications. Evaluate alternative applicant tracking systems with accessibility accommodations.	2023 - Ongoing
Job Posting	No known accessibility contact.	Designate an accessibility contact, including a name to provide responses to a potential candidate with accessibility questions.	Q1 2023
Job Posting	No audio recording options	Create audio files and ensure they are compatible on Destination Canada's career page.	2023 - Ongoing
Phone Screen & Interviews	Increased anxiety from being put on the spot for questions	Send a broad list of questions or topics that could be asked 24 hours in advance.	2023 - Ongoing
Technical Assessment	Assessment includes a time restraint (i.e., completing the assessment in 3 hours)	Provide an extended assessment time limit for those requesting accommodation. Adjust any time-related criteria accordingly.	2023 - Ongoing
Technical Assessment	Assignments are provided in a text file only and audio answer submissions are not available	Create audio recordings of technical assessment instructions and allow candidates to email audio files.	2023 - Ongoing
Interviews	No alternate interview formats	Explore new mediums of interviews (example: recorded video interviews).	Q2 2023

Onboarding

Embedding accessibility within our onboarding practice represents Destination Canada's commitment that inclusion starts even before day one on the job. Henceforth, we considered how we can minimize or eliminate difficulties that a person with a physical, cognitive, or sensory disability may encounter before they begin their role with DC.

Other physical and technological barriers will be explored in the subsequent sections of The Built Environment and Information and Communicative Technologies.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Health and Safety	No office floor plan is provided before the employee's first day	Provide a virtual office tour in advance so candidates can point out areas where they need further accommodation (to be incorporated into the DC onboarding package).	Q1 2023
Health and Safety	Lack of wheelchair reserved areas and speech recognition devices or software	Designate accessible spaces in communal areas for people with mobility disabilities. Source the required technological equipment or software necessary to accommodate users who require these tools in their day-to-day tasks.	Q1 2023
Health and Safety	Digital technologies, like websites, are not all fully accessible by design	Evaluate commonly used websites and systems to ensure accessibility and educate staff on using assistive technology, screen readers, speech to type functionality and Alt-text or image descriptions. Build a best practices guidebook in various formats (video, audio and written).	Q2 2024
Health and Safety	Prolonged video conferences and meetings	Make video optional to minimize (social) anxiety and record meeting minutes for large staff meetings.	Q3 2023

Retention

We understand that our desire to embrace diversity and be an inclusive employer is an ever-evolving commitment. Despite having various learning and development initiatives already in place, there are further considerations that we can act upon in the areas of accessibility awareness, the delivery of training as well as introducing strategies that directly support the career advancement of those with disabilities.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Employee Engagement	Minimal routine disability awareness training.	Schedule periodic (example: quarterly) training sessions with DC staff and ensure all non-HR managers are provided with interview training for an increased understanding of how to work with people with disabilities.	2023 - Ongoing
Training	Transfer of 'corporate memory.'	Implement video training with closed captions for more complex systems or longer tasks. For online training sessions, include a live transcription function.	Q4 2023
Training	Lack of education or knowledge required for career development.	Provide access to internal or external educational resources and support.	2024 - Ongoing
Career Development	Specific aspects of a job may have added challenges for persons with physical, cognitive, or sensory disabilities.	Use the principals of job carving to modify roles to accommodate physical and mental limitations to that best suit those with physical and mental limitations	Q3 2024
Employee Engagement	Clarity regarding the future direction of the accessibility committee once the plan is created.	Work with the DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) committee to maintain and implement new action items of the plan.	2025 - Ongoing
Brand Awareness	Minimal activities dedicated towards increasing organizational awareness among the disability community.	Partner with local organizations or universities to create dedicated sessions on helping the disability community (ex. resume workshops, graphic design sessions).	2025 - Ongoing
Employee Engagement	Limited key performance indicators to measure the success and impact of the proposed accessibility plan.	Upon finalization of DC's accessibility plan, develop goals that align with the Government of Canada's Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada results framework.	2023 - Ongoing

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

On November 23, 2021, Destination Canada contracted Arnold Cheng of Spectrum Ability to complete an accessibility audit of the Vancouver HQ location at 1045 Howe Street. We have detailed the findings and recommendations from their report below. The assessment's scope includes both the interior and exteriors (including parking spots and entrances) of the facility.

Barriers

Vancouver HQ

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Elevators	Doors: Currently, the elevator doors are not contrasted with the surrounding red walls. This may be a barrier for those who with vision conditions.	Sensory disabilities (visual)
Elevators	Lobby signage: Currently, upon arrival from the elevators, there is ambiguity due to no clear signage for the location of the office entrance.	All People
Elevators	Mirror: Currently, the elevator cabs do not have a mirror on the back wall. A mirror would reduce "hiding spots" for occupants near the left and right sides of the elevator, which can cause collisions for people who are Deaf or with vision conditions. Consider adding a mirror on the rear wall of the elevator cab.	Sensory disabilities (visual)
Emergency features	Fire extinguisher cases: Currently, fire extinguishers do not have any colour contrast or signage indicating their location. This may be a barrier for people with vision conditions but also prevents quick access during a fire.	Sensory disabilities (visual)
Emergency features	Exit doors: Currently, the emergency exit door to the stairwell does not have colour contrast. This is a barrier in any situation where visibility is low, as it can prevent easy identification of the door.	Sensory disabilities (visual)
Entrances and doors	Glazing: At both the ground level and office level entrances, there are glazed doors and walls without contrasted strips or markings. This can pose a hazard for people with vision conditions, who may not be able to detect the glass.	Sensory disabilities (visual)
Entrances and doors	Power-operated options: Currently, the entrance doors (both at ground level and office level) are not powered. This can be a barrier for people with mobility issues, as well as a hazardous shatter risk due to the door being glass and self-closing. The 'PUSH/PULL' signage at entrance doors at office level also have worn off and are no longer visible.	All disabilities
Exterior stairs	Contrasting strips: Currently, the stairs at the ground level entrance do not have any strips at the nosing of each step. This can be a barrier for people with vision conditions, who may need more to differentiate between each step.	Sensory disabilities (visual)
Exterior stairs	Tactile indicators: Currently, the stairs at the ground level entrance do not have any contrasted tactile indicators at the top. This is a barrier for people with vision conditions, who may need a visual and tactile cue for a level change.	Sensory disabilities (visual)

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Hallways / Lobby	Seating: Limited or no seating available for people who can walk but not more than 15m or to stand unsupported but only for a minute.	Hidden mobility disabilities
Kitchen	Counters (knee clearance): Currently, the kitchen counters do not have any knee clearance below the sink. This makes it difficult for wheelchair users to approach and use the sink without twisting their torsos or leaning excessively forward.	Physical disabilities
Kitchen	Counters (height): Currently, the kitchen counter height is 917 mm AFF. This is slightly higher than what is considered accessible.	Physical disabilities
Meeting rooms	Seating: Currently, the meeting rooms have only one type of seating. This may be a barrier for people who may need wider chairs (i.e., without armrests) or non-wheeled options.	All disabilities
Parking	Width of accessible parking spaces: Currently, there is one accessible parking spot that is 2480 mm wide, with a wide access aisle (striped off as a no-parking zone) with bicycle racks. The width is not currently adequate for vans with side-loading ramps.	All disabilities
Parking	Signage: Currently, there is no clear signage for the doors leading to the elevator lobby from parking. This can be a challenge to newcomers or visitors.	All people
Universal washroom	Towel hooks for shower: Currently, the towel hooks near the shower are not at accessible heights. This can prevent those who are shorter (including mobility device users) from using them.	Physical disabilities
Universal washroom	Kick plates: Currently, the universal washroom door does not have any protection against scratches or scuffs. This can cause damage to the door for people using their feet or mobility devices when holding the door open.	Physical disabilities
Universal washroom	Grab bars: Currently, the grab bars for the toilet are 909 mm AFF. This is slightly too high for accessibility best practices.	Physical disabilities
Universal washroom	Shower grab bars: Currently, the grab bars for the shower are 909 mm AFF. This is slightly too high for accessibility best practices.	Physical disabilities
Universal washroom	Power-operated options: Currently, the door is not powered. This can be a barrier for people with mobility issues.	Physical disabilities
Universal washroom	Strobe light: Currently, the washroom does not have a way to alert people with hearing impairment of an emergency.	Sensory disabilities (hearing)
Universal washroom	SOS button: Currently, the washroom does not have a way for the user to signal that they require assistance.	All disabilities

Other Office Locations

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Ottawa, ON Office	Unclear of current barriers	All Disabilities
Beijing, China Office	Unclear of current barriers	All Disabilities
Tokyo, Japan Office	Unclear of current barriers	All Disabilities

Actions

People with disabilities are an integral part of the Canadian workforce and we believe that accessibility should be a universal requirement that benefits everyone. Our action plan seeks to eliminate the barriers identified in our built environment and outlines steps to remove barriers. Some of the costs associated will require significant retrofitting of our current infrastructure, which may require time to dedicate a budget and procure contractors.

As highlighted in the Roadmap to 2040 by Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC), a technical committee has been formed to develop a model standard for the Built Environment Accessibility. The working plan currently outlines a Spring 2023 publication date. Once we have access to this standard from ASC, we will review our current DC Accessibility Plan and seek to align our action plan with the new model standard.

Vancouver HQ

While most of the barriers identified below are within Destination Canada's control, there are some barriers that involve external parties such as our building and/or property manager. In these cases, outside of our control, we noted that we provided a detailed report to our building management, and met with them through a virtual meeting, requesting they include these modifications in upcoming renovation projects.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Elevators	Doors	Paint the elevator door frames a contrasting colour.	Complete
Elevators	Lobby signage	Add directional signage indicating the location of the office's entrance doors.	Q1 2023
Elevators	Mirror	Request that the building manager add a mirror on the rear wall of the elevator cab.	Out of our control
Emergency features	Fire extinguisher cases	Paint a contrasting colour on the fire extinguisher door and add signage (above the extinguisher and blade signage if in a hallway).	Complete
Emergency features	Exit doors	Paint the emergency exit doors a colour that contrasts against the white wall.	Complete
Entrances and doors	Glazing	Add contrasting strips at two levels (eye level, hip level) so that visitors can detect the glazing.	Q3 2023
Entrances and doors	Power-operated options	Install a power-operated door at both ground level and office level entrance doors.	Q1 2023

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Exterior stairs	Contrasting strips	Request that the building manager paint contrasting strips at the tops and fronts of each nosing.	Request with building manager
Exterior stairs	Tactile indicators	Request that the building manager add tactile indicators at the top of the stairs, contrasted with a colour such as yellow, white, etc.	Request with building manager
Hallways / Lobby	Seating	Offer seating every 15m for distances of more than 15m, plus just inside building entrances/lobby.	Q4 2023
Kitchen	Counters (knee clearance)	Add knee clearance below the sink, flush with the ground and at 685 mm AFF.	TBD – major renovation project
Kitchen	Counters (height)	Lower the counter height to 810-860 mm AFF.	TBD – major renovation project
Meeting rooms	Seating	Provide at least one other seating type per room as an option.	Q2 2023
Parking	Width of accessible parking spaces	Request that the building manager widen the parking space to 2600 mm wide with the access aisle at least 2000 mm wide.	Request with building manager
Parking	Signage	Request that the building manager add signage indicating the location to the elevator lobby.	Request with building manager
Universal washroom	Towel hooks for shower	Install additional options at lower heights, no higher than 1200 mm AFF.	Complete
Universal washroom	Kick plates	Add a metal kick plate to the universal washroom door (and any other doors that self-close).	Complete
Universal washroom	Grab bars	Lower the grab bars to 750-850 mm AFF.	TBD – major renovation project
Universal washroom	Shower grab bars	Lower the grab bars to 750-850 mm AFF.	TBD – major renovation project
Universal washroom	Power-operated options	Install a power-operated door to the washroom.	Q3 - 2023
Universal washroom	Strobe Light	Install a strobe light.	Q3 - 2023
Universal washroom	SOS button	Install an SOS button.	Q3 - 2023

Other Office Locations

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Ottawa, ON Office	Lack of Awareness	Hire a local consultant to complete an Accessibility Audit and provide recommendations.	Q1 2023
Beijing, China Office	Lack of Awareness	Hire a local consultant to complete an Accessibility Audit and provide recommendations.	Q1 2023
Tokyo, Japan Office	Lack of Awareness	Hire a local consultant to complete an Accessibility Audit and provide recommendations.	Q1 2023

At Destination Canada HQ most workstations are sitting desks, however there are more ergonomic options, such as standing desks. Destination Canada employees also have the option to use ergonomic ICT equipment such as a mouse or keyboard designed to keep wrists, hands, elbows, and arms in a natural position. Nonetheless, there are numerous accessibility issues within ICT that need to be addressed to support individuals with disabilities. Destination Canada will articulate its policy to 'accommodate' accessibility needs through appropriate investments in specialized equipment or infrastructure as required.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

Barriers

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Equipment	Wheelchairs may not fit under standard height computer tables.	Physical disabilities
Hardware	Some computer users do not have enough use of their hands and arms to operate a standard keyboard or mouse.	Physical disabilities
Hardware/ software	Individuals with visual impairment may be unable to access visual material presented on the computer screen.	Sensory disabilities (visual)

Actions

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Equipment	Wheelchairs may not fit under standard height computer tables.	Accommodate wheelchair users with equipment which provides flexibility in the positioning of monitors, keyboards, documentation, and tabletops.	As required
Hardware	Some computer users do not have enough use of their hands and arms to operate a standard keyboard or mouse.	Hardware modifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded keyboards for those with limited fine motor control. Mini keyboards for those with fine motor control but lack a range of motion great enough to use a standard keyboard. Speech input or keyboard emulation (e.g., scanning or Morse Code) for those with more severe mobility impairments. Macros and word prediction software. Track balls and specialized input devices (i.e., sip/ puff switch) can replace a mouse. 	As required
Hardware/ software	Individuals with visual impairment may be unable to access visual material presented on the computer screen.	Braille keyboard labels, large keyboard labels, large monitors, and speech output systems to read screen text.	As required

COMMUNICATION BEYOND ICT

At Destination Canada, we engage in a variety of platforms to communicate with our wide range of stakeholders. Our communication channels can be broadly categorized into two main categories:

1. Online systems, which are characterized by Explore DC (our intranet) and
2. DC Dispatch (via mail chimp), all-staff emails, and hybrid meetings.

In early 2021, we partnered with our media agency of record at that time, Cosette, to begin auditing our channels for accessibility and made numerous targeted improvements to ExploreDC. These included, but are not limited to, the removal of embedded text into images, the use of Arial text font as a standard across the organization for its ease of reading, considerations of the colours used and adding descriptive text on images. While we have taken steps towards making changes, there are still numerous areas that we can improve.

Barriers

Destination Canada strives to make all forms of communication as accessible as possible to persons with disabilities both inside and outside of the organization. As such, an analysis of our current channels was completed to identify the following areas of improvement.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Online System	Minimal to no audio reader functionality on ExploreDC, DC Dispatch or employee email (Outlook).	All disabilities (specifically sensory disabilities - visual)
Online System	ExploreDC materials are mostly written content with limited visual alternatives.	All disabilities
Online System	Mailchimp and Outlook platform have not been audited for accessibility.	All disabilities
Online System	DC Dispatch content is image based so it cannot be changed after it has been stored	All disabilities
Hybrid Meetings	Visual and audio from all staff meetings can be difficult to follow for an online audience	All disabilities
Hybrid Meetings	PowerPoint content is available in French but spoken content is not (video recording posted after the meeting is also not translated)	Cognitive disabilities

Actions

While an effort has already been made to improve our online system and hybrid meetings, DC intends to do a deeper audit in these areas internally and with our third-party suppliers.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Online System	Minimal to no audio reader functionality on ExploreDC or DC Dispatch.	Schedule routine website accessibility checks for the built-in audio reader function within our email platform and intranet to ensure these screen readers can properly read and function across the site, and that alternate text, colour contrast, etc. are properly set and meet web accessibility standards.	Q2 2023
Online System	Minimal to no audio reader functionality on ExploreDC or DC Dispatch.	Produce a best practice handbook or training module on content creation of all newsletters, high contrast colours, etc.	Q2 2023
Online System	ExploreDC and DC Dispatch content are mostly written with limited visual alternatives.	Include more video/audio files on ExploreDC and in DC Dispatches to provide a break from reading (example: all intranet guides should have both a written and audio version).	Q3 2023
Online System	Mailchimp and Outlook platform have not been audited for accessibility.	Consult with VERB (our current web development agency) to complete an audit of the Mailchimp platform; output from Mailchimp can be internally reviewed for accessibility.	Q1 2023
Online System	DC Dispatch content is image based so it cannot be changed after it has been stored.	Connect with Mailchimp to explore alternative storage methods or custom features; if this is not possible, investigate other potential service providers.	Q1 2023
Hybrid Meetings	No live transcripts available (in English or French) or sign language for online audience.	Enable live transcript functionality on Microsoft Teams and Zoom. DC will create written and digital guides on how to enable these functions by default.	Q1 2023
Hybrid Meetings	Visual and audio from all staff meetings can be difficult to follow for an online audience.	Improvement to the technology in the Townhall area (connecting dual OWL 360 camera systems).	Q1 2023

THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The Accessible Canada Act was passed in June 2019. It is meant to remove barriers to accessibility in all areas of federal jurisdiction. This includes the procurement of goods, services, and facilities.

Barriers

Through accessible procurement, the Government of Canada is removing and preventing barriers to equitable participation for more than 6 million people with disabilities in Canada, who are our colleagues in the public service or Canadians accessing government programs and services.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Procurement	Accessibility to Procurement competitions posted on CanadaBuys.	Sensory disabilities (visual and hearing)
Procurement	Procurement process is not accessible.	All disabilities
Procurement	Accessibility to presentations stage for Procurement competitions.	Sensory disabilities (visual and hearing)
Procurement	Accessibility plans required for all DC offices and General Sales Agents (GSAs) in Ottawa, China, Australia, Mexico, United Kingdom, France, Japan, South Korea).	All disabilities
Procurement	Accessible work equipment.	All disabilities
Procurement	Neurodiversity at work.	All disabilities

Actions

Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) is developing guidelines to ensure that procurement opportunities in the future will have accessibility criteria incorporated and will work with suppliers to contribute to a barrier-free Canada.

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Vancouver office	The total budget allocated for Accessibility Plan improvements and actions is \$20,000 annually.	Get a full list of what the renovations will entail and the requirements to make competitions accessible. Obtain quotes and update the budget requests accordingly.	In process
Procurement	Accessibility to Procurement competitions posted on CanadaBuys.	The Government of Canada (CanadaBuys) or DC could investigate ways to make the competitions that are posted in their website available in Braille or e-text CD. For online publications, people with various disabilities or limitations would also use their systems/technology to find and 'read' online content. Important to note here is that we need to ensure that websites that contain this information, and any files we provide to read/supporting information is assured to be accessible according to WCAG 2.1 just like DC's website itself. Files need to undergo a check, and placement of RFxs (procurement competitions) would need to be audited and assessed.	Q4 2023
Procurement	Procurement process is not accessible.	Identify all barriers within the process, from posting a competition on CanadaBuys to contract award.	Q3 2023
Procurement	Accessibility for the presentations portion of the Procurement competitions.	Provide a sign language interpreter during presentations.	Case by case (as required)
Procurement	Accessibility plans required for all DC offices and GSAs (Ottawa, China, Australia, Mexico, UK, France, Japan, SK).	Hire an accessibility consultant to audit each of the offices where DC has a physical presence.	Q2 2023
Procurement	Accessible work equipment.	Create an online catalogue of equipment required and available at no cost so employees can select what they need according to their specific situation.	Q3 2023
Procurement	Neurodiversity at work.	Hire a consultant on Neurodiversity to propose an action plan, specific to the needs of a DC employee(s), enabling DC to accommodate and optimize the work environment for individual needs.	Q1 2023

THE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Accessible Canada Act was passed in June 2019. It is meant to remove barriers to accessibility in all areas of federal jurisdiction. This includes the design and delivery of programs and services.

Barriers

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Disability Addressed
Digital Platforms, websites, and systems	Compliance with web accessibility standards for all our online/digital platforms and output via digital channels as part of our marketing and communication programs.	All disabilities
Marketing, Research, Sales, Corporate programs, and their output (incl digital and non-digital material)	No guidelines and processes yet established for publications and communications. Once that standard is established, all communications and published material for DC's various programs and initiatives need to be consistently checked and vetted for full accessibility.	All disabilities
DC hosted in-person events	No guideline or criteria established and confirmed within DC for in-person events.	All disabilities

Actions

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
DC Products/ Services	Website accessibility	Continue to ensure all our digital properties are WCAG 2.2 AA compliant and upgrade standards as applicable in the future. Currently in action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web agency and website team do continuous audits and updates to all our owned and managed sites. • New website pages, features, code, and design are developed with accessibility top of mind and/or use components that have accessibility built in. • Content selection and content entry adheres to accessibility standards. • Best practice guide and refresher training for all content editors and Content Management System (CMS) users to be established further. 	Ongoing
DC Products/ Services	Website accessibility	Execute additional testing with real people with a variety of disabilities to be able to truly optimize the sites and ensure more than just best practice is in action.	Q1-Q2 2023

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
DC Products/ Services	Expressing accessibility needs & preferences	<p>Identify a process and means for our (internal and external) touchpoints to be able to express accessibility needs.</p> <p>This applies to a variety of audiences at various times (i.e., events, meetings, webinars)</p> <p>Provide and clearly communicate options and ways to express accessibility requirements.</p> <p>Add opportunities to report any issues, feedback, and enhancement suggestions.</p> <p>Publish an accessibility statement with a feedback intake option on the website and establish a workflow (and RASCI) for this within DC.</p>	Complete
DC Products/ Services	Audio / Video Accessibility	<p>Provide closed captioning/audio descriptions and transcripts for all of DC's owned produced content</p> <p>Establish guidelines for partnerships that ensure external media or tourism partners (or others) provide the same standards for their productions and publications when collaborating with us.</p>	Q3 2023
DC Products/ Services	DC hosted events / DC sanctioned events	<p>Review all DC sanctioned events and meetings towards accessibility standards and requirements.</p> <p>Create a checklist and must-have criteria for these, considering walkability, wheelchair access, live captions, sign language interpretation. (and more)</p> <p><i>Related to the above item "Expressing accessibility needs & preferences" - we need to ensure that we know how to provide this type of support for events and presentations when we have an unknown audience</i></p>	Q2 2023
DC Products/ Services	File formatting for full file / document accessibility	<p>Publications such as tourism industry updates and information, travel trends and economy/industry data are posted online on website & via emails, included in presentation; presented in webinars, presentation recordings, as downloadable files etc.</p> <p>We need to establish and follow documented protocols to ensure all publication files are fully accessible and shared in an accessible way. This applies to various business units - Corporate Comms, Business Events, Media / PR, internal communications.</p>	Q1 2023
DC Products/ Services	Marketing Programs	<p>Audit for inclusive marketing campaign design; create accessible marketing & brand guidelines and playbooks.</p> <p>Establish clear guidelines for creating accessible content on social media. This applies to all our business units, not just consumer marketing.</p>	Q2 2023

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
DC Products/ Services	Training programs	Review and audit training programs i.e., Canada Specialist Program (CPS) – and other travel trade training (online/ website & emails, presentation and webinars, presentation recordings) for accessibility criteria - not just for the digital space (see website accessibility - same requirements apply for these programs) but for all ongoing communication, published files and activities as part of it.	Q1 – Q3 2023
DC Products/ Services	Employee awareness and education for accessibility standards and requirements as it affects their work output as part of our programs and services (ie. pdf files, reports, Power Point Presentations, meeting set up, any information share to partners, audiences etc.)	Equip Destination Canada employees to design and deliver accessible programs and services through a variety of training and increased awareness through communication and establishing standards for file production, publication, and communication.	Q4 2022 – Q2 2023 and ongoing

TRANSPORTATION

Life on the road and required attendance at conferences and meetings can be challenging for people with disabilities. Minimizing barriers to travel for attendance at key DC events and meetings will make our workplace more inclusive. We will use our anchor trade show, Rendez-vous Canada (RVC) 2023, as a test event to make it more accessible and then implement learnings going forward for future DC events and meetings.

Barriers/Actions

Functional Area	Identified Barrier	Proposed Action Item	Timeline
Transportation	Ease of travel with disabilities.	Remove the 300 km barrier to using your own car for travel. If you have a disability driving your own car is easier than picking up a rental.	Q1 2023
Transportation	Ease of travel with disabilities.	Review the class of air travel for people with disabilities. Different abilities may require different seating arrangements.	Q1 2023
Transportation	Ease of travel with disabilities.	Review access for DC organized events. Work with DC Event Planner on making events more accessible.	Q1 – Q2 2023
Transportation	Ease of travel with disabilities	Review transportation options for events and ensure that a full list is provided including transit and taxi.	Q1 2023
Transportation	Venue accessibility.	Implement clear labeling at venues for event booths, conference rooms, facilities, etc. This could look like arrow indicators (with good colour contrast) on the floor and walls, large signage in plain text and accessible font, etc.	Q1 – Q2 2023
Transportation	Venue accessibility.	Ensure that queue lines are wide to accommodate individuals with wheelchairs and/or walkers	Q1 – Q2 2023
Transportation	Venue accessibility.	Provide mobility aides such as walkers, wheelchairs, or canes for those who do not typically require mobility aides over short periods of time to allow a higher level of comfort navigating large event spaces.	Q1 – Q2 2023
Transportation	Venue accessibility.	Designate an accessibility coordinator on site at events to assist with navigation, directions, access to aides, etc.	Q1 – Q2 2023

CONSULTATIONS

Feedback from people with disabilities is an integral part of our plan and the work we are striving to accomplish. Therefore, we sought consultation from the following individuals/groups.

Hidden Mobility Disabilities Alliance (HMDA)

We consulted with HMDA early in the development of this plan to learn more about the priorities of people with hidden mobility disabilities. They provided feedback and were engaged after our first full draft was completed for further comment.

President's Group

Destination Canada is a member of the President's Group of Accessible Employers and our CEO (Chief Executive Officer), Marsha Walden, is a member of the steering committee. We regularly connect with their Accessibility Consultants, Yat Li, and Micaela Evans who both live with disabilities. They each took the time to review our full accessibility plan to share their feedback and suggestions for improvement, which we have incorporated into our final version.

DC Accessibility Committee members

Our Accessibility Committee has members who identify as people with disabilities. This inclusion has been helpful in the creation of this plan.

Destination Canada employees

Since this Accessibility Plan will have a major impact on Destination Canada employees, we requested their input into the creation of this plan by sharing the draft and requesting feedback prior to publishing. We have many individuals in the organization who identify as people with disabilities, and we especially wanted to give them an opportunity to provide input, either directly or anonymously. This feedback was reviewed and incorporated into the final version.

We are grateful for the time, expertise, and support of all individuals and groups who took the time to review this document and provide feedback. We continue to keep an open mind as we continue to learn and work towards becoming a fully Accessible organization.

BUDGET AND RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS

To address the ongoing Accessibility updates required to make Destination Canada a truly accessible organization, we have requested a budget of \$20,000 annually to make capital improvements, to invest in consultation, and to procure the tools and services required to enact our Accessibility Plan.

Furthermore, we recognize that organization-wide training is required to educate employees about diversity and inclusion topics to create an environment that is physically and psychologically safe for all people. We will continue to invest in training to equip our employees with the language to use.

FEEDBACK

We welcome constructive feedback that will help Destination Canada become a more accessible organization.

If you would like to provide feedback on this Accessibility Plan, please direct it to Whitney Friesen, Senior Talent Advisor by one of the following methods:



Email: accessibility@destinationcanada.com



Telephone: 604-638-8356



Mail: 800-1045 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC, V6Z 2A9



Anonymous Feedback Link: <https://forms.office.com/r/p2MA6YzBwa>

All feedback will be acknowledged with a message of receipt within 15 business days. All follow-up responses will be sent in the same method as received. Anonymous feedback will not receive a verification of receipt, other than the standardized system generated message.

The feedback will be considered by our DC Accessibility Committee during the development of status update reports and subsequent revisions to the Accessibility Plan. Our progress reports will update on the quantity and nature of feedback received and our intended actions. Your acknowledgement of receipt will advise you of the anticipated timeline of the next report or revision.

All feedback will be stored either electronically or in print for seven years on our secured hard-drive or secured HR (Human Resources) file cabinet. Any feedback provided via phone will be audio recorded (with permission) or transcribed for record keeping.

If you want to request a copy of the Accessibility Plan in an alternative format, please contact Whitney Friesen, Senior Talent Advisor (contact info above). You can expect to receive the alternative format as per the timeline below.

- For print, large print, and electronic formats: within 15 days (about 2 weeks) after receiving the request.
- For braille or audio formats: within 45 days (about 1 and a half months) after receiving the request.