



ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2023 – 2025

Canada

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2023-2025

Easy-Read Version

An easy-read summary is a simpler and shorter version of our Accessibility Plan. It does not include every detail of the full plan. For the full plan, please skip to the section titled [Accessibility Plan](#).

This plan is about accessibility at the Canadian Museum of History, the Canadian War Museum, and the Canadian Children’s Museum (“the Museums”). We want to become more accessible to people with disabilities. This is important for us, because the Museums are for all Canadians.

We are looking forward to making changes to be more accessible. To help us create this plan, we talked to members of the public with disabilities, and staff members with disabilities. They shared what they think about accessibility at the Museums. We used what they told us to help develop this plan.

This document explores how the Museums will become more accessible over the next three years. When we say “accessible,” we mean without barriers, enabling as many people as possible to enjoy the Museums as visitors, and as employees. Our plan includes the following commitments:

1. We will train all staff on accessibility and disability.
2. We will make improvements so that our programs, tours and exhibitions can be experienced by everyone, including people with a range of disabilities.
3. We will add information to our websites about accessibility. This will include information on what you can expect when you visit us.
4. We will communicate in language that is inclusive, respectful, and easy to understand.
5. We will make it clearer that people with disabilities can bring someone with them for free.

6. We will make sure people know whom to ask about different ways of accessing our programming and exhibitions.
7. We will be clearer on how employees can request accommodations. Accommodations are changes made to help people do their jobs.
8. We will look at how we hire new staff, and how we post jobs. We want to ensure that there are no barriers to people with disabilities.
9. We will look at the websites used by staff to ensure that there are no barriers to staff with disabilities.
10. We will make our websites more accessible.
11. We will make our buildings more accessible. We will carry out an audit of all our buildings to determine specific changes that need to be made.
12. We will make plans to better help people with disabilities during an emergency.
13. We will make sure that the Museums have quiet spaces.
14. We will continue to ensure that everything we buy is accessible. We will also look for ways to improve how we incorporate accessibility when we buy new things.

We welcome your feedback on this plan. Please tell us what you think of the plan by contacting:

Project Manager, Accessibility

By email: accessible@historymuseum.ca

By telephone:

Local: 819-776-7000

Toll free: 1-800-555-5621

TTY for people with hearing disabilities: 819-776-7003

By mail:

Canadian Museum of History

100 Laurier Street

Gatineau QC K1A 0M8

Canadian War Museum

1 Vimy Place

Ottawa ON K1A 0M8

In person:

Information Desk

Canadian Museum of History

100 Laurier Street

Gatineau QC K1A 0M8

Information Desk

Canadian War Museum

1 Vimy Place

Ottawa ON K1A0M8

On our feedback pages:

historymuseum.ca/about/contact-us

warmuseum.ca/about/contact-us

Via social media:

Canadian Museum of History

On Facebook: [Canadian History Museum \(@CanMusHistory\)](#)

On Instagram: [@CanMusHistory](#)

On Twitter: [@CanMusHistory](#)

Canadian War Museum

On Facebook: [Canadian War Museum \(@warmuseum\)](#)

On Instagram: [@CanWarMuseum](#)

On Twitter: [@CanWarMuseum](#)

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Accessibility Plan

1. General

1.1. Statement of Commitment

The Museums are committed to providing an inclusive experience. We want everyone to be able to enjoy our programs and services in ways that respect their dignity and independence.

We are dedicated to being accessible to everyone. This includes making our workplace, activities and services accessible to people with disabilities. We understand that accessibility is an ongoing process. People with disabilities are the experts when it comes to their own experiences and accessibility.

We are committed to listening to people with disabilities, and to keep improving accessibility at the Museums. We pride ourselves on being responsive in our approach to inclusion and access. In addition, we have reached out to other museums and galleries to learn what they are doing to provide an accessible experience.

We will create a staff accessibility advisory group and an external accessibility advisory committee. We support the goals of the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA), and will create policies, practices and procedures that promote and require accessibility.

1.2. Contact Information and Feedback Process

We welcome feedback, including feedback submitted anonymously. Feedback can be provided by employees, volunteers, visitors and anyone else who comes into contact with the Museums. Comments can be about accessibility at the Museums, or about this plan. We are committed to reviewing the feedback we receive and taking steps to address the barriers identified.

You can submit feedback about accessibility by contacting:

Project Manager, Accessibility

By email: accessible@historymuseum.ca

By telephone:

Local: 819-776-7000

Toll free: 1-800-555-5621

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100 Laurier Street

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historymuseum.ca/about/contact-us

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Social media:

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On Facebook: [@Canadian History Museum \(@CanMusHistory\)](https://www.facebook.com/CanadianHistoryMuseum)

On Instagram: [@CanMusHistory](https://www.instagram.com/CanMusHistory)

On Twitter: [@CanMusHistory](https://twitter.com/CanMusHistory)

Canadian War Museum

On Facebook: [@Canadian War Museum \(@warmuseum\)](https://www.facebook.com/CanadianWarMuseum)

On Instagram: [@CanWarMuseum](https://www.instagram.com/CanWarMuseum)

On Twitter: [@CanWarMuseum](https://twitter.com/CanWarMuseum)

In addition, you can request alternative formats of this plan, and a description of our feedback process by contacting:

Project Manager, Accessibility

By email: accessible@historymuseum.ca

An electronic version of this plan, compatible with assistive technology, can be downloaded immediately from our websites at: [Accessibility Plan 2023-2025](#)

Upon request, the Museums will provide this plan in the following alternative formats as soon as possible. We commit to meeting these deadlines:

- Print: 15 days
- Large print (increased font size): 15 days
- Braille: 45 days
- Audio (a recording of the text read aloud): 45 days

1.3. Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this plan:

Accessibility: The design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies and rules that makes their access possible for all people, including people with a wide range of disabilities.

Barrier: Anything that could hinder the full and equal participation of people with disabilities. Barriers can be architectural, technological or attitudinal. They can also be related to information or communications, or can be the result of a policy or procedure.

Disability: Any impairment, or difference in physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning or communication ability. Disabilities can be permanent or temporary, and can change over time.

1.4. Descriptions of the Museums

We are made up of three different physical museums: the Canadian Museum of History, the Canadian War Museum, and the Canadian Children's Museum. The Children's Museum is located inside the Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec. The War Museum is located 2.4 kilometres away in Ottawa, Ontario. We also have a funding program for online projects, called Digital Museums Canada.

The **Canadian Museum of History** is this country's national museum of human history. It explores Canada's rich cultural heritage, including the outstanding achievements of Indigenous Peoples.

The **Canadian War Museum** is Canada's national museum of military history. It is also a recognized centre for the study of armed conflict.

The **Canadian Children's Museum** provides young visitors with opportunities to learn through play on a fun and interactive trek around the world.

Digital Museums Canada is a federally funded program managed by the Canadian Museum of History. It invests in digital projects produced by Canadian museums and heritage organizations, helping them share unique regional stories with people everywhere.

2. Areas Described Under Section 5 of the *Accessible Canada Act (ACA)*

2.1. General

Through our consultations with people with disabilities, we have learned about some changes that we need to make. This includes being better connected with disability communities, and developing ways of consulting people with disabilities. We need to have the right employees to be able to do this work, and staff members need to have

the right knowledge to be able to bring accessibility into their daily tasks. We also need to be clear that all Museum employees share a responsibility when it comes to thinking about accessibility and making the Museums and their activities more accessible.

There are some aspects of creating and maintaining accessibility that require specific knowledge. In some cases, this knowledge is needed by all or most of employees. For example, many people create documents, and may need training on how to produce accessible documents. In other cases, training might be offered only to specific staff. For example, only the people who work on the Museums' websites need to know how to create accessible webpages.

Here are the general actions that we plan to take to improve accessibility:

1. We have created a position to support accessibility planning. The person in this role will ensure that the goals in this plan are achieved. This includes documenting, tracking, analyzing and reporting on accessibility and feedback. The person in this position will also be responsible for consultations with people with disabilities, progress reporting, and updating our Accessibility Plan.
2. By March 2023, we will review and revise existing basic accessibility training, or seek new external training. By March 2024, all employees and volunteers at the Museums will have received basic accessibility training.
3. By September 2023, we will develop a consultation framework. This framework will outline how we will consult with people with disabilities, to ensure that accessibility initiatives are led by people with disabilities, while building relationships with the community.
4. In 2023, we will establish an internal advisory group of employees with disabilities. Also in 2023, we will lay the groundwork for an external advisory group. This will include consultations and developing terms of reference, along with the recruitment and infrastructure required to launch the internal advisory group. In 2024, the Museums will establish an external advisory group consisting of people with a wide range of disabilities.

5. By December 2023, we will implement a new Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Through this policy, we will communicate key accessibility principles, along with roles and responsibilities related to accessibility across the Museums.
6. In 2023, we will review how best to support accessibility planning through our governance structures. This may include updating terms of reference and membership for committees and/or working groups responsible for accessibility.
7. In 2024, the Museums will develop a training plan identifying other training needs across the Museums, in support of accessibility initiatives. We are already aware of the need to train employees and/or provide them with resources on plain language and inclusive language. Employees also need training and/or resources on how to produce accessible documents in Word, PowerPoint, PDF, Excel, and other media and digital formats.

2.2. The Built Environment

Accessibility within the built environment has a significant impact on whether people with disabilities can comfortably use the space in a manner equal to those without disabilities.

Our plans about exhibition design can be found in [Section 2.6., Design and Delivery of Programs and Services](#).

We are planning to integrate better wayfinding into our renovations over the next five years. This may include better markings on stairs, accessible signage, and improved lighting. We are also planning upgrades to improve the accessibility of all spaces within the Museums. Our goals are described in the next section.

Here are the actions that we plan to take to improve accessibility of our built environment:

1. By January 2023, we will define the scope of work for an audit of accessibility within the built environment at the Museums. This audit will assess both administrative and public spaces, including service areas, theatres, and exhibition areas.
2. By December 2023, we will undertake an accessibility audit of the built environment at the Museums. This will include both public and administrative spaces.

In 2024, following the audit of our built environment, barriers to accessibility at key customer service areas, and those associated with wayfinding, will be prioritized in consultation with people with disabilities.

By December 2024, the Museums will develop an action plan to begin addressing other barriers within the built environment.

3. By December 2023, we will review and update the Plan Your Visit pages on our websites. We will add information about accessibility features and known barriers at the Museums. This will include explaining why there are low-light levels in some exhibitions, which spaces are quieter or louder, and what we already know about accessibility at the Museums.
4. By December 2023, we will deliver on the first phase of an ongoing LED lighting-conversion project that will address some current lighting issues.
5. In 2023, we will review processes related to how we assist visitors who use wheelchairs or scooters, at service counters that are not at an accessible height. We will also provide training to visitor-facing staff, accordingly.
6. By December 2023, we will make portable seating available to the public. Prior to this, we will research what is available, and buy appropriate seating. This initiative will also include setting up processes and communications to guide visitors using the seating.

7. By December 2024, we will review and update existing exhibition display standards to improve accessibility. This will include how we place panels, objects and structures within our exhibition spaces.
8. By December 2024, we will review and update existing exhibition text and graphic standards to ensure accessibility. This will include considering font sizes and other factors that affect text readability in our exhibitions. Starting in 2025, these standards will be applied when developing new exhibitions.
9. Starting in 2025, we will ensure that formal consideration is given to seating, lighting, and quiet and loud spaces, and that these considerations are embedded into the planning and development of new and renovated exhibitions, along with other considerations.
10. In 2025, given the unique challenges of exhibition spaces, we will consult with people with disabilities on how to make content available in alternative formats. This could include large print, electronic, Braille, or audio in new and renovated exhibitions.
11. We are currently evaluating the future of the existing Children's Museum, and are determining next steps for its redevelopment. We will continue to work with an accessibility advisory group throughout the renewal process. We will ensure that children and adults with disabilities feel welcome, safe and secure in the space. Once next steps have been confirmed, we will be able to provide a timeline for improvements to accessibility within the Children's Museum.

2.3. Employment

There are approximately 350 employees across the three Museums. They include researchers and historians, exhibition developers and designers, curators, program developers, visitor-facing staff, and people who care for collections. We have staff who give tours to the public, create content for our exhibitions, manage our websites and

social media, and supervise employees. We strive to ensure that Museum staff members reflect Canada's diverse population. Since 2020, many employees have worked from home, or both in the office and at home.

The goals outlined below will help us to improve accessibility for our current and future employees with disabilities:

1. In 2023, we will develop guidelines for accessible meetings.
2. In 2023, we will take steps to ensure that the staff intranet is more accessible. We will also begin to identify and prioritize other barriers to be addressed, in consultation with an internal advisory group of employees with disabilities.
3. By December 2023, we will review new job postings and job description requirements to ensure that they are inclusive of people with disabilities.
4. By December 2023, we will write new job postings in plain language.
5. In 2024, we will communicate our updated accommodation processes to managers and employees, and provide any required training.

2.4. Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

The Museums have three different websites: the [Canadian Museum of History](#), the [Canadian War Museum](#), and [Digital Museums Canada](#). We know that our websites are not fully accessible. We will be conducting a comprehensive review of our websites and social media for accessibility. We will be building these findings into our continued plans to improve accessibility across all of our platforms.

We use social media — YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram — to share information on our exhibitions, videos and programs. Staff also use a variety of technology in their work, including many Microsoft programs.

Here are the actions we are planning to take to improve the accessibility of employment information and communications technology:

1. By June 2023, we will identify a contact on the job-postings webpage to make it possible for applicants to obtain information in an alternative format.
2. By December 2023, we will complete an audit of our websites. This will include our Plan Your Visit information, calendar of events, blogs, and collections search.
3. By December 2023, we will complete a review of social media content and practices for accessibility.
4. By December 2024, we will make sure that the most important information is accessible, and the biggest barriers are removed on our websites and social media platforms.
5. Starting in 2024, we will audit other areas of our websites and begin to identify and prioritize additional barriers to be addressed in consultation with people with disabilities.

2.5. Communications (Other Than ICT)

We provide information, both on our websites and in person, on our exhibitions and collections. We also offer information through tours, lectures and films, both on site and online. We share this information on our websites, in print documents, in videos, and through social media. We answer questions through our Contact Us form on our websites, with options for the public to email or call us. Communication is one of the areas in which we have recently focused attention towards improving accessibility.

We need to provide content in plain language that is inclusive of a wide range of audiences and learning styles. We are striving to develop a plain-language strategy that will be incorporated into all online and print information. We also need to provide alternative formats of materials to visitors with print or visual disabilities.

Ensuring an inclusive visitor experience is our top priority, so we are implementing a social story on our websites that walks visitors through what to expect during a visit, including tips for planning an accessible visit. In addition to visitor-facing

communication, staff members also communicate with one another through meetings, written documents, the intranet, and emails. All of these can also present barriers to accessibility.

Here are the actions that we have planned to improve accessibility of information and communications technology for Museum staff and the public:

1. By December 2023, we will develop and implement accessible PowerPoint and Word templates. We will also develop a checklist for making documents accessible in Word, PowerPoint, PDF, Excel, and other media and digital formats.

In 2024, we will provide employees with training and/or resources, as appropriate, to support the creation of accessible documents in these formats.

Starting in 2025, new documents created in Word, PowerPoint, PDF and Excel will be accessible. We will make prioritized information available in alternative formats. In addition, all new and prioritized written communications for the public will be published consistent with the Museums' standards for plain language and inclusive language.

2. By December 2023, we will establish internal standards for plain language and inclusive language. We will also develop processes to meet these standards. In 2024, we will train employees and/or give them resources on the use of plain language and inclusive language.

3. By December 2023, we will establish internal processes to respond to and fulfill requests for other materials in alternative formats. We will also make a source list for accessibility services.

In 2024, we will identify, in consultation with people with disabilities, key information to make available to visitors in alternative formats. Also in consultation with people with disabilities, we will prioritize existing documents to make them accessible, and to review them for plain language. Job postings have already been identified as a priority and will be addressed in 2023.

4. In 2023, we will continue to provide sign language interpretation and captioning at in-person and virtual public events and programs, when requested in advance. By December 2023, we will review the accessibility of our current in-person events, and the technology that is used.

By December 2024, we will develop standards on when we will provide sign language interpretation and captioning at in-person and virtual events and programs. This will include outlining when alternative formats will be provided without request and standardizing the process for responding to requests.

In 2025, we will provide information on our websites about how to make a request for sign language interpretation at in-person and virtual events or programs, and how to make requests for other materials in alternative formats.

5. By December 2023, we will review and revise the language on our websites when referring to people with disabilities. We want to ensure that it is respectful and dignified. This includes removing all references to “special needs.”
6. By December 2023, we will review and update the Plan Your Visit pages on our websites, and provide information on accessibility features and known barriers at the Museums, including a list of available amenities in accessible washrooms.
7. By December 2024, we will develop and post social stories in an accessible format on our websites, describing what visitors can expect during a visit.
8. In 2025, given the unique challenges of exhibition spaces, we will consult with people with disabilities on how to make the content in existing exhibitions accessible, while also identifying priorities to inform longer-term planning.

2.6. Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

The Museums offer programs and services both online and in person. These programs are designed for a wide range of audiences, including children. We have many ways in

which audiences can enjoy the Museums, including self-guided tours and specialized programming.

We have already done some work to engage those living with disabilities.

In terms of describing accommodations available to visitors with disabilities, our websites do not clearly communicate that, when purchasing admission, a visitor with disabilities is allowed to bring a support person or caregiver free of charge.

We are also aware of best practices at other galleries and museums, which have designated quiet, loud or relaxed hours. We are planning to implement specific quiet/loud hours, and make these known in our public communications. We understand that a large part of implementing these quiet/loud hours will involve consulting people with disabilities, and we are developing a strategy to engage with the local disability community.

Here are the actions that are planned to improve accessibility in the design and delivery of our programs and services:

1. By December 2023, we will make noise-cancelling headphones available to visitors. In 2023, we will research and buy these headphones. We will also set up processes and communications around lending them to visitors.
2. By December 2023, we will review our procedures around asking visitors to check bags, and implement dignified alternatives for visitors who need to keep certain items with them for accessibility reasons. We will also review our procedures for conducting bag searches under specific security situations, and provide training/briefings to visitor-facing staff on the need to use discretion when asking to search visitors' bags.
3. By December 2023, we will update admission information, as well as accessibility information. These updates will clearly indicate that support persons and caregivers for people with disabilities are not required to pay admission.
4. By December 2023, we will revise our visitor code of conduct to be more inclusive.

5. In 2023, we will audit the training provided to employees who interact with the public. This will include training for visitor services staff, security staff, staff working in the library or research centre, volunteers, and contractors working in boutiques or food services.

In 2024, we will review and revise existing accessibility training for customer service staff, to ensure that it aligns with and enhances the basic accessibility training that will be provided to all employees by March 2024. By December 2025, we will provide training on accessible customer service to all employees, contractors and volunteers who interact with visitors, along with training on potential barriers for people with disabilities.

6. By December 2023, we will have a written scent-free policy in place. This policy will be posted on the Museums' websites, in employee training manuals, and the future intranet.
7. By December 2023, we will have a form on our websites, as well as a telephone contact, where visitors can request scooters for visits. By December 2023, the Canadian War Museum will have at least one dedicated mobility device available to volunteers.
8. In 2024, we will audit how other cultural institutions approach quiet/loud hours, consult people with disabilities on preferred approaches for the Museums, and assess operational requirements.

2.7. Procurement of Goods and Services

We want to ensure that the goods and services we buy are purchased with accessibility in mind. This will help to avoid creating new barriers. It is also easier and better to prevent barriers in the first place, than to remove them later. When the Museums buy something, staff will write descriptions of what they need, including any specific

requirements. When determining these requirements, it is important think about best practices, and what people with various disabilities might need.

Improvements to this process can be made. Here are the actions we plan to take to improve accessibility of procurement:

1. By December 2023, we will update our Contracts Policy.
2. By December 2023, we will confirm that accessibility considerations are included in all procurement documents. By December 2023, we will also plan how to better support procurement decision-makers to define accessibility criteria.
3. By December 2023, we will establish a source list for required accessibility services (for example, plain language writers/editors/translators, Braille, digital, audio, captioning, descriptive video, and sign language interpretation).
4. By December 2024, contracting officers will receive training on how to support employees incorporating accessibility into their procurement documents.
5. From 2025 onwards, accessibility will be explicitly outlined in all procurement documents — either by providing information on a decision not to include accessibility requirements, or by describing how accessibility is being incorporated.

2.8. Transportation

The Museums do not provide transportation, so we do not have any goals related to this area.

3. Consultations

This section outlines how people with disabilities were consulted in the preparation of this plan. We consulted with an advisory group made up of members from the cross-disability community. This advisory group spent time exploring our websites, and

offered feedback on how our programs could be made more accessible, as well as areas in which we are currently offering inclusive programming. They described the barriers they encountered on the Museums' websites, their past experiences visiting our Museums or other museums, and the information they would want when planning a visit.

We also developed a survey that was distributed to all employees at the Museums. In the survey, we asked employees if they had experienced barriers to accessibility. We also asked employees to provide details about any barriers, and potential ways of removing them. Twenty-seven employees with disabilities filled out the survey. Responses focused on themes such as accommodation processes, hiring processes, and barriers for visitors.

The Museums are committed to hearing from people with disabilities. To meet this commitment, we will consult people with disabilities on all aspects of this plan, as well as other major projects.

To be successful in improving our accessibility, we must include people with disabilities early and often. We are creating a standing advisory committee to allow visitors with disabilities to participate in developing accessible solutions that work for everyone. Members who represent a broad range of people with disabilities, along with seniors, will share their knowledge and experiences with the Museums. This advisory committee will meet regularly to review projects and plans, and to guide the Museums' work on accessibility. Once established, this group will be included in project planning at the Museums, including asking them for their feedback, and seeking their advice on accessibility.

A positive visitor experience is incredibly important to us at the Museums. We rely upon visitors to inform us about their experiences, and to let us know where we can make improvements. The feedback submitted via our visitor feedback form and through our advisory group will help us identify barriers. This information will also be shared with staff and volunteers. We will track the information closely to identify ways of improving and removing these barriers — through policies, procedures, and operational changes.

4. Conclusion

Including and welcoming people with disabilities in all aspects of our organization is a top priority for the Museums. We are committed to improving accessibility by implementing this Accessibility Plan over the next three years. We are also dedicated to continuing the work of examining our practices, policies and operations to find and address barriers to accessibility. We understand that accessibility is an ongoing process, and we are committed to engaging in that process through consultations with people with disabilities.