

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

2023 Annual Progress Report

December 2023



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GENERAL

FEEDBACK

The NFB is committed to inclusivity for people with disabilities. We welcome feedback about barriers you have encountered when dealing with us and about the implementation of our Accessibility Plan.

We offer a variety of ways for employees, collaborators, members of our audience and the public to offer feedback. You may use any of the following communication channels:

E-mail: accessibility@nfb.ca

Feedback form: [Contact the NFB](#)

Phone: 1-800-267-7710 (toll-free in Canada)
We are available to take your call Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)

Mail: National Film Board of Canada
1501, Rue De Bleury
Montreal, Quebec H3A 0H3

Social media: [Twitter-X](#)
[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)

Information on our feedback process is also available on [our website](#).

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team receives feedback on barriers and the Accessibility Plan. Feedback is acknowledged through the same means by which it was received, unless it was sent anonymously.

As mentioned in our Accessibility Plan, we plan to engage in ongoing discussions with people who have disabilities. This might involve forming an internal group of employees with disabilities (an advisory committee or employee resource group) or an advisory committee for our audience. We want to provide a platform for people with disabilities to share their experiences with accessibility at the NFB. We also want to hear their thoughts on our current accessibility efforts and any issues they see in the film industry regarding accessibility.

We believe it's crucial to understand how we're doing in breaking down barriers and carrying out the steps outlined in our Accessibility Plan. To achieve this, we are working to gather feedback anonymously. This may involve various methods, possibly including a questionnaire on our website. We want to simplify the process for employees,

collaborators, audience members and the public to share their experiences with the NFB and offer suggestions on how to enhance our accessibility.

ALTERNATE FORMATS

A [digital version of the Accessibility Plan](#), which works with assistive technology, is available on our website.

Alternate formats include:

- Print;
- Large print (increased font size);
- Braille (a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers);
- Audio (a recording of someone reading the text out loud).

You can also contact the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team to request a copy of the Accessibility Plan, progress reports or a description of our feedback process in an alternate format.

We will respond to requests for other formats as soon as we can.

THE NFB'S INTENTIONAL ACCESSIBILITY EFFORTS SO FAR

In 2022, the NFB started working on our first accessibility plan. In 2023, we teamed up with Left Turn Right Turn Ltd. (LTRT) and its Accessibility Advisory Committee to hear about barriers people with disabilities face. On August 29, 2023, we published our Accessibility Plan (2023–2025). The plan complies with the *Accessible Canada Act* and is aligned with the NFB's 2021 commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Grounded in the principle that disability rights are human rights, the plan asserts universal access as a shared benefit. We believe the NFB must be a platform where people with disabilities are full participants, both as creators and audience members. This vision extends to ensuring individuals with disabilities can seamlessly connect with and enjoy our works.

Since we published the Accessibility Plan, we have been intentional in implementing it. This report documents our advancements up to and including December 2023, addressing key areas specified in the *Accessible Canada Act*. We focus mainly on objectives that were identified in our Accessibility Plan, so this is a non-exhaustive list of work we have undertaken toward accessibility. Overall, the NFB is on track to meet our accessibility objectives as set out in the plan.

The NFB remains resolute in advancing accessibility, fostering inclusivity and championing the rights of people with disabilities.

This report presents our progress in six¹ of the areas of focus under the *Accessible Canada Act*:

- [Employment](#);
- [The built environment](#);
- [Information and communication technologies](#);
- [Other communications](#);
- [Procurement of goods, services and facilities](#);
- [Design and delivery of programs and services](#).

Following the discussion of progress under each of these areas, this report contains information about the consultations we undertook and the feedback we received in 2023.

EMPLOYMENT

The NFB is dedicated to establishing a workplace that embraces inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring an equitable environment for people with disabilities. We are committed to providing equal opportunities for applicants with diverse needs, both during the application process and throughout their employment journey. Our goal is to cultivate a workplace culture that recognizes the value of diversity and accessibility, achieved through industry best practices and comprehensive training resources.

To actively promote inclusivity, the NFB has already undertaken several initiatives, including:

- Actively researching disability-focused career fairs to connect with potential candidates;
- Developing a comprehensive workplace accommodation policy that provides clear guidance on requesting accommodations;
- Proactively seeking and adopting best practices for ensuring accessibility in employment processes;
- Considering the removal of the personal qualities section from job postings to eliminate potential barriers to employment.

These measures reflect our ongoing commitment to fostering an environment where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can thrive professionally.

¹ The *Accessible Canada Act* covers seven areas. However, we did not include the seventh area, transportation, which does not apply to the NFB.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The NFB aims to create inclusive and barrier-free workspaces that cater to the needs of people with disabilities, fostering a more equitable and accommodating work environment.

Improving the NFB's physical work spaces is a key aspect of our accessibility work and will unfold over an extended period of time. Our goal is to improve physical spaces and adjust evacuation plans in every office by December 2025 to make them more accessible.

We've recognized some obstacles, like open offices posing challenges for neurodivergent individuals, as well as the absence of automatic door openers on certain doors and issues with faucets for people using wheelchairs. Since we are tenants in the buildings housing our offices, we plan to collaborate with a Built Environment Accessibility Specialist, building management, Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and others. Together, we'll identify and address additional barriers beyond what we've already found, working to enhance the accessibility of our facilities. For instance, we will ensure that:

- Doorways are sufficiently wide for people using wheelchairs and mobility aids;
- Appropriate signage is in place for people with visual impairments;
- Countertops and shelves are at an adequate height for those with mobility or height-related challenges;
- Accessible formats of important information, such as emergency exits and room numbers, are available when needed.

Also, our Occupational Health and Safety and Security Advisor will work with disability specialists to review evacuation plans for all NFB offices.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The NFB is dedicated to enhancing the accessibility of our public-facing websites and apps. Our objective is to identify and eliminate barriers, ensuring compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG 2.1) by the conclusion of our Accessibility Plan. Through enhancements in captioning, navigation and overall design, we aim to establish an inclusive online environment that facilitates equal access and usability for people with disabilities. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering digital inclusivity and ensuring user-friendly experiences for all.

Acknowledging the intricacies of information and communication technology, our full objectives span a more extended timeframe, aiming for completion by December 2025.

Meanwhile, we're making sure our main website, nfb.ca, follows the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) at the AA level, which means we are implementing various design and development practices that enhance the usability of our website for people with disabilities. This includes making it easy to use a keyboard, using contrasting colours, describing images with text for those with visual impairments and making the website's navigation clear. We are also staying informed about evolving standards for described video and audio descriptions in audiovisual content, as established by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The NFB is committed to ensuring our communications are inclusive and accessible to all. We want our films to include clear closed captioning and descriptive audio in their descriptions, and we're making sure all our new films have these features. This is part of our commitment to ensuring everyone, including our employees and the public, is included in our communications.

These efforts are part of our larger accessibility plan. We're aiming to have everything in place by September 2025, aligning with our broader communication goals. Meanwhile, we're working on making our films more accessible by adding labels that highlight their accessibility features.

We have been implementing an accessibility standard for all new productions and co-productions. These works must be delivered with closed captioning in English and French and in descriptive video in the original language of production. To date, the film catalogue on nfb.ca has a total of 2,729 versions with closed captioning and 513 films with descriptive video. This ensures a more accessible viewing experience for our audience.

PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The NFB is committed to promptly integrating industry best practices, developing guidance and checklists by December 2025, and conducting training for employees engaged in the procurement process. This effort is geared towards enhancing accessibility in the acquisition of goods, services and facilities.

To date, we have taken the following steps:

- ✓ Connected with Shared Services Canada’s Accessibility, Accommodations & Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) Program to seek out expertise on accessibility and inquire about their [Lending Library Service Pilot Project](#);
- ✓ Drafted guidance and checklists for how to take accessibility into account in procurement.

DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The NFB is creating a more inclusive and accessible environment, and ensuring educational materials, film submissions and interactions with creators are barrier-free and that people with disabilities are accommodated effectively in workshops and events.

In the first few months of implementing the Accessibility Plan, we have:

- ✓ Developed a formalized structure and data-collection process for equity-seeking groups, including people with disabilities, for development, production and post-production roles;
- ✓ Started to prepare disability-specific customer-service training for our Client Services staff;
- ✓ Drafted wording for a statement to include in event invitations for workshop and event attendees to request accommodations;
- ✓ Begun preparing an accessibility-for-events checklist to be used by programming staff for all events.

TRANSPORTATION

The NFB does not provide passenger transportation services.

CONSULTATIONS

During most of the 2023 calendar year, the NFB worked very closely with disability specialists at Left Turn Right Turn Ltd. (LTRT) to assess the current state of accessibility within our organization. LTRT is an accessibility and transit consultancy firm specializing in transforming public agencies through innovative services. LTRT worked with us to

identify known barriers to accessibility within the NFB and determine opportunities to reduce or remove those barriers. To accomplish this, they used the following methods:

- A review of relevant internal documents;
- Background research on the NFB;
- Consultations with various subject-matter experts on staff at the NFB;
- A voluntary survey distributed to NFB employees;
- A voluntary survey distributed to the NFB's external stakeholders and audience;
- A voluntary survey distributed to the NFB's network of freelance film industry professionals;
- A meeting with LTRT's Accessibility Advisory Group, a group of 10 Canadians with various disabilities and lived experiences.

LTRT's Accessibility Advisory Group conducted a high-level review of the NFB's public-facing website, app, social media accounts, and customer service and education platforms. Members were asked to navigate through the NFB's various platforms and recount any barriers they experienced.

These activities culminated in a list of barriers to accessibility at the NFB as well as recommendations to remove those barriers.

Notably, the surveys we launched as part of this process received relatively low engagement. Therefore, we have concluded that surveys may not be the best way to seek feedback from employees and freelancers with disabilities.

FEEDBACK

We value feedback on accessibility at the NFB and welcome input from employees, collaborators, audience members and the public. As indicated in the General section of our Accessibility Plan (2023–2025) and this report, various channels, including email, phone, mail and social media, are available for submitting feedback. Feedback can be submitted anonymously, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team reviews and considers all feedback for progress reports and future accessibility plans.

Beyond the Consultations section above, we have not received feedback on the implementation of the NFB's Accessibility Plan or barriers encountered by our employees, collaborators, audiences or the public.

Therefore, in the coming years, we will promote the feedback process both internally and externally through our social media channels and messages to staff.