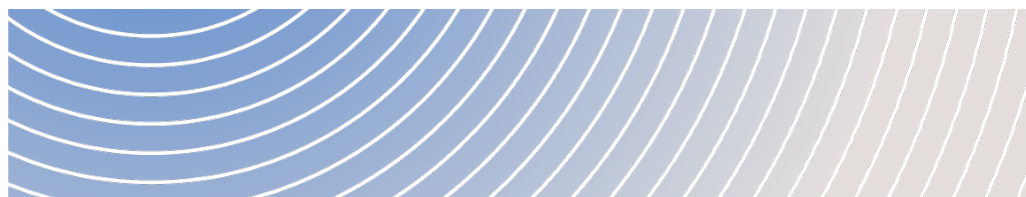Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

2024 Accessibility Progress Report

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AGENCY OF CANADA'S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

December 2024

Canada

General

How to submit your feedback?

We encourage you to reach out to us.

The person designated to receive feedback at Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) is the **Accessibility Lead**. You can submit your feedback through the following methods:

- **Online questionnaire**
- **Email**: accessibility-accessibilite@iaac-aeic.gc.ca
- **Phone**: 613-324-6984
- **Mail**: 160 Elgin Street, 22nd Floor, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H3

Anonymous feedback

You may send anonymous feedback via our **online questionnaire**, through the **mail or email** or by **phone**.

Please note that if you send feedback anonymously, you will not receive confirmation of receipt or a response.

Response time for non-anonymous feedback

- **Online questionnaire and email**: 5 business days, by email
- **Phone**: 5 business days
- **Mail**: 5 business days, plus mailing time

If you need additional tools or assistance in providing feedback, please email or call us at 613-324-6984.

Alternate formats

The feedback process and questionnaire are available in multiple formats, including:

- print
- large print (larger and clearer font)

If you would like to obtain the description or the questionnaire in an alternate format, please contact the Accessibility Lead, through any of the contact methods listed above.

The turnaround time for alternate formats is **15 days** from the date of the request.

Don't see a format that works for you?

Please contact us, and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

What we do with your feedback

Your feedback is very important to us. At IAAC, we consult persons with disabilities—including employees, clients, and stakeholders—before taking any actions.

All feedback received is read, compiled, and prioritized and can be used to create actionable items in our Accessibility Plan.

Feedback is also included in our annual progress reports, which track improvements between accessibility plans. No personal information will be linked to the data or appear in these reports.

Summary

In 2019, the *Accessible Canada Act* (the Act) came into force with the goal of achieving a barrier-free Canada by January 1, 2040. In response, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) developed an Accessibility Plan (the Plan) that outlines the mechanisms needed to identify, address, and prevent visible and invisible barriers to accessibility at IAAC. The overall objective of the Plan is to ensure that persons with disabilities are represented and treated equitably and with dignity. Implementation of the Plan began in December 2022.

This Accessibility Report (the Report) details IAAC progress in implementing the Plan according to the priority areas outlined in Section 5 of the Act:

1. Employment

2. Built environment

3. Information and communication technology (ICT)

4. Communication, other than ICT

5. Procurement of goods, services, and facilities

6. Design and delivery of programs and services

7. Transportation

8. Culture

For each area, the Report provides:

- an update on the progress; and
- information on long-term plans or activities that may extend beyond the current planning and reporting cycle.

The last two sections of the Report focus on:

- consultations with persons with disabilities, including employee surveys; and
- feedback received on development and implementation of the Plan.

IAAC's vision for accessibility

IAAC's vision is of an inclusive, barrier-free, and accessible organization where persons (staff, partners, stakeholders, and members of the public) of all abilities are well supported and represented, in line with IAAC's 2024 People Management Strategy.

Key commitments

IAAC is committed to removing barriers for persons with disabilities and instilling a culture of inclusivity and belonging that includes:

- The organization offers accessible learning and development opportunities, and mandatory training for employees across all levels and areas of expertise.
- Systematic processes are in place to promptly address accommodation requests within the organization, ensuring quick feedback on methods for improvements.
- There is emphasis on increasing the recruitment and retention of individuals with disabilities through targeted staffing processes and support for their career advancement.
- Continuous efforts are made to enhance the accessibility of both physical and digital environments for employees, stakeholders, and the general public.
- Regular engagement is conducted to ensure that policies, programs, services, and communications are inclusive, barrier-free, and responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Areas in Section 5 of the Act and Progress

The implementation of specific accessibility action items at IAAC is overseen by each responsible team in collaboration with the Accessibility Lead, Diversity and Inclusion co-champions, the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee, and the Accessibility Network. The following sections describe the steps taken and progress made in implementing the IAAC's Accessibility Plan in compliance with the *Accessible Canada Act*.

1. Employment

Activities to increase the representation of persons with disabilities at IAAC included outreach, awareness training, staffing, onboarding, career advancement, and retention. The activities aimed to:

- remove barriers and promote inclusive and accessible human resources practices at all stages of the employment cycle; and
- ensure that all employees, including persons with disabilities, are supported and able to contribute fully to the organization.

To meet these objectives, IAAC undertook the actions described below:

1.1 Developed a targeted national outreach and staffing approach

To streamline processes and increase representation, IAAC developed a targeted national outreach and staffing approach in the form of two main initiatives.

1.1.1 Outreach to organizations that serve persons with disabilities to share employment opportunities at IAAC and provide accommodations when needed

Over the last year, IAAC built new partnerships with community organizations serving persons with disabilities to address some of the employment barriers existing at IAAC and promote the recruitment, employment, retention and career progression of persons with disabilities. New partnerships include the **Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)** and **MentorAbility Canada.** Through these partnerships IAAC hosted information sessions and has encouraged managers to consider these resources to support them with recruitment initiatives.

Moving forward, we strive to strengthen relationships with these partners and maximise opportunities through our Talent Acquisition efforts and Staffing initiatives.

1.1.2 Promote inclusive staffing best practices for recruiting persons with disabilities in the online repository for hiring managers and the Staffing Team

- As part of IAAC's efforts, a comprehensive review of all existing communication materials related to staffing processes was undertaken. This included updating standardized wording on job posters, communication material geared towards candidates, and revising all staffing templates to ensure clarity, inclusiveness, and alignment with best practices. The goal was to create more consistent communication to potential candidates, ultimately improving the candidate experience.
- IAAC thoroughly examined its standardized narrative assessment tool to identify and address any potential biases.
- Human Resources employees received additional training focused on accessibility in staffing processes. This training was designed to deepen understanding of accessibility requirements and best practices, enabling the creation of a more inclusive recruitment environment. The training enabled human resources employees to ensure that principles of accessibility are consistently applied across all stages of the staffing process, from job postings to interviews and selection.

1.2 Ensure that IAAC's onboarding, retention and performance approach supports persons with disabilities

The IAAC onboarding, retention, and performance approach supports persons with disabilities to fully integrate into their work roles through the three activities outlined below.

1.2.1 Promote the modernized self-identification questionnaire in a way that encourages staff to self-identify

IAAC will launch the new self-identification questionnaire developed by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) as soon as it is made available. The questionnaire will be a valuable tool for monitoring IAAC progress on meeting its recruitment and

retention targets for persons with disabilities. In the meantime, self-declaration is used as a tool to obtain representation data within IAAC. As of December 11, 2024, 90% of IAAC employees have completed the self-identification questionnaire. IAAC's representation for persons with disabilities represents 7.3% of its population.

1.2.2 Add accessibility resources to the online repository for managers to provide support for onboarding persons with disabilities

In October 2024, IAAC published an intranet repository with tools, resources and training opportunities for all IAAC employees called the Accessibility Corner. Specifically, the Accessibility Corner features a section tailored for managers including information and resources on the recruitment and successful onboarding of persons with disabilities.

1.2.3 Tailor performance appraisal mechanisms to accommodate employees with disabilities within the parameters set by the Performance Management Program

IAAC has aligned its practices with the *Treasury Board of Canada's guidance on Inclusive and Anti-Racist Behaviours in Performance Management*. This approach encourages managers to assess not only the completion of work objectives but also the way those objectives are achieved, with a particular focus on competencies, behaviours, and the specific challenges faced by employees with disabilities.

Moreover, IAAC has taken significant steps towards this objective by providing five comprehensive training sessions for managers. These sessions were designed to ensure that managers and supervisors are fully informed of their responsibilities in addressing accommodation needs related to work policies, practices, systems, or procedures that may exclude or hinder individuals' full and equal participation in employment. Additionally, the sessions covered essential confidentiality and privacy considerations related to accommodation.

The training provided a detailed overview of both informal and formal processes to ensure that individuals requiring accommodation, including those with disabilities, are supported up to the point of undue hardship.

1.3 Leverage existing career advancement supports to persons with disabilities

IAAC is leveraging a variety of internal resources including an internal Career Mobility Tool and Mentorship Program, as well as participation in federal initiatives like the Mosaic Leadership Development Program, and other learning and training opportunities to support persons with disabilities in developing the skills necessary for career advancement. IAAC has participated in the Mosaic Leadership Program for two years, one employee has successfully completed the program while the second has just begun their journey in the program.

Moreover, IAAC is using the latest representation data from myGCHR to inform and refine recruitment strategies, addressing both current and anticipated workforce gaps in the form of quarterly reports with Sector-specific data.

2. Built environment

An accessible built environment refers to a building or a location that is spatially designed to be an inclusive space for people with disabilities. IAAC's objective is to enhance accessibility while at the same time considering the projected impacts of the Directive for a Hybrid Workforce.

2.1 Ensure all IAAC offices across Canada are accessible

IAAC is ensuring all its offices across the country are accessible through these four initiatives.

2.1.1 Review and identify areas in need of improvement in consultation with persons with disabilities (curbs, change in floor elevation, elevators, open-concept buildings, accessibility parking options, etc.)

- A survey was launched this year, which provided high-level insights. IAAC will use the compiled data from the survey along with physical space audits to develop a project plan with timelines and deliverables in 2025.
- Visual strobe light fire alarms for the auditory-impaired were identified as a need during the Fire and Building Evacuation exercise. IAAC is working on rectifying with building management and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to install those devices.
- IAAC updated the 'Scent Free Workplace' signage for the head office and all regional offices replacing the previous one with a more accessible version favouring larger font and high contrast.

2.1.2 Develop an accessibility checklist

- Work is underway with internal networks and external partners to develop a comprehensive checklist which is aimed to be published in 2025.

2.1.3 Review and update IAAC's Emergency Evacuation Plan by involving persons with disabilities in the process and practice drills for evacuation

- IAAC must conduct no fewer than one fire drill and one shelter-in-place or lockdown drill in each region. IAAC's National Capital Region (NCR) office successfully completed a fire drill and building evacuation exercise in October 2024 to coincide with National Fire Prevention Week, while shelter-in-place or lockdown drills are scheduled for early May 2025 to coincide with Emergency Preparedness Week. During the fire drill and building evacuation exercise,

persons needing assistance were properly accommodated and evacuated without incident.
- Throughout 2024, six of the seven IAAC regional offices conducted fire drills, while the remaining office carried out two actual evacuations. In addition, one regional office organized a shelter-in-place exercise.
- All evacuation plans are now posted on IAAC's Accessibility Corner.

2.1.4 Include accessibility clauses and standards within leases and future service contracts for managing large facilities

- No new lease agreements have been put in place recently.

2.2 Ensure all employees are aware of the accessibility features of their offices and the supports available to them

This measure is being implemented through the two activities outlined below:

2.2.1 Compile and communicate to employees the accessibility features of each IAAC office through our intranet site

- IAAC currently lists all current accessibility features for the National Capital Region (NCR) office. This list is available for all employees on IAAC's Accessibility Corner and will be updated on a regular basis.
- As the next step, a questionnaire has been developed to survey all regional IAAC offices. This will enable the compilation of data to publish a comprehensive list of accessibility features for each regional office in 2025.

2.2.2 Add Independent Emergency Plan to the Accessibility Passport so that the needs of employees requiring accommodations are adequately addressed in cases of emergency

- Any individual requiring an individualized emergency plan are given the opportunity to develop their plans with the support of the Emergency Management team at IAAC. Plans are updated yearly or following every real or exercise-based evacuation.
- Plans are individually tailored to account for individual needs, work location and building evacuation procedures specific to their location. After further consideration, Independent Emergency Plans will not be housed within the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport given the sensitive nature of the information contained in the plans.

3. Information and communication technologies (ICT)

Information and communication technologies pertain to the hardware and software support employees require in their work. IAAC's accessibility objectives in this area are to ensure the timely processing of accommodation requests, augment the accessibility of

tools developed internally, and emphasize accessibility considerations when updating software.

3.1 Remove internal bottlenecks in the accommodation process and assess emerging barriers

- IAAC has met with internal partners to streamline the approval and procurement of tools and equipment related to duty-to-accommodate requests, enabling more timely accommodations.
- To expedite the accommodation process, IAAC obtained a list of commonly used software from Accessibility, Accommodation, and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) to conduct security pre-screens, saving significant time.
- Building on this, IAAC is working to create a list of pre-approved software that meets internal security requirements and plans to implement this by 2025 to further improve accommodation timelines.
- IAAC remains committed to addressing barriers within the accommodation process and has implemented a comprehensive awareness strategy to mitigate challenges arising from a lack of understanding of the process.

3.2 Conduct an accessibility assessment of current in-house tools

- The Human Resources and Information Technology teams are collaborating to evaluate current tools and propose standards for use within IAAC. For instance, the current PDF editor was assessed against AAACT accessibility requirements and was found to lack several critical features necessary for creating accessible PDFs. The teams will continue exploring alternatives to identify the best solution that meets IAAC's in-house accessibility needs. Additionally, the Accessibility Team is raising awareness among content authors and editors to ensure accessibility is prioritized at every stage of content production.

3.3 Ensure the accessibility of content, applications developed in-house, software procured in addition to the implementation of the upcoming accessibility standards

- As part of IAAC's efforts to ensure accessibility of content on external platforms and further to recommendations from the Office of the Accessibility Commissioner, a new accessibility landing page has been launched which provides for easier access and can be found through IAAC's home page.
- Supported compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 for IAAC web documents.
- Conducted accessibility assessments for IAAC applications based on their development type:

- In-house systems (e.g., Registry, Online Registration, Proponent Portal, AMS): Evaluated public and internal content accessibility, with ongoing improvements.
- GC Common Systems (e.g., AEM, GCdocs, SAP): Ensured accessible content managed by IAAC but clarified responsibility for assessments.
- Purchased Systems (e.g., GIS tools, NVivo, Learning Management Systems): Researched accessibility solutions but noted lack of formal assessments by IAAC.

- Expanded knowledge of web accessibility through the W3Cx Introduction to Web Accessibility course (edX), auditing its suitability for IAAC staff.
- Researched accessibility software tools for testing and demonstration purposes.

4. Communication, other than ICT

The use of language, the platforms used to communicate, and the way information is presented and/or accessed make up this category. IAAC objectives are to:

- Improve the availability of accessibility information, tools, and resources;
- Support managers, supervisors and employees in addressing concerns related to documentation;
- Enable and encourage employees to create accessible documents written in plain language.

4.1 Mandatory training to build employee capacity to write in plain language and create accessible documents

- As part of the 2024-25 Employee Performance and Talent Management cycle, IAAC has designated accessibility as one of five mandatory learning priorities. As a result, employees are required to complete one training that relates to accessibility before the end of the 2024-25 performance management cycle. Employees have been provided with several training recommendations, including courses from the Canada School of Public Service's Accessibility Learning Series.

- As described in section 4.2 below, the Accessibility Corner has published a detailed section on digital communication, plain language and accessible documents which employees are encouraged to leverage in their functions to ensure plain language and accessible documents are at the forefront of document creation.

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4.2 Dedicate an intranet page for resources, tools and training on accessibility

- IAAC collaborated with multiple partners, including the Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee, the Communications Division and IAAC's internal Accessibility Network to realise this key objective in IAAC's 2022-2025 Accessibility Plan.
- The dedicated intranet page for resources, tools and training on accessibility has been created and was published and launched as the Accessibility Corner on October 23, 2024.
- The Accessibility Corner can be found on IAAC's Intranet site.
- Here are some of the key features found on the Accessibility Corner:
    - Learning, training and development opportunities
    - Information on IAAC's Accommodation Process
    - Accessibility features at IAAC
    - Tools for accessible communication
    - Understanding disabilities section that includes guides, books, podcasts.
    - Accessibility Standards and Guidelines
    - Section tailored for manager including resources on Duty to Accommodate, Disability Management, Recruitment and Onboarding

For the purpose of reporting on plan objectives, this action is deemed to be completed although continuous updates will be made as new resources and tools are published.

5. The procurement of goods, services and facilities

Procurement refers to the purchase of tools and equipment that are essential for persons with disabilities to perform well in their roles. IAAC's objective in this area is to streamline the procurement process for essential tools and equipment to minimize or avoid delays caused by internal factors.

5.1 Regular review of the procurement process

IAAC's procurement team has improved efficiency by:

- Assessing accommodation requests individually

- Implementing Shared Services Canada (SSC) exceptions for time-sensitive or technical needs; and

- Expediting delivery of specialized tools like speech-to-text software

IAAC enhanced their expertise through Shared Services Canada training sessions on Accessible Information and Communication Technology, including:

- Overview of workplace adaptive technology and smartphone accessibility features
- ICT accessibility procurement strategy development
- Document accessibility workshop
- Digital accessibility and disability inclusion

To strengthen accessibility in procurement processes, IAAC has enhanced client guidance documents by using plain language tools, Sample accessibility considerations, Contract accessibility criteria and Digital accessibility toolkit for virtual events. Furthermore, IAAC has integrated accessibility requirements as a mandatory first step in all procurement processes and collaboration with clients is ongoing to ensure accessibility standards are included in external consulting proposals.

6. The design and delivery of programs and services

This section sets out IAAC's strategic vision for accessibility across the organization and how best to implement a results-based approach for tackling accessibility barriers. Strategies include establishing targets, systems reviews, budgetary requirements, and consistent engagement with persons with disabilities to ensure that accessibility is a key consideration in determining the design and delivery of programs and services.

6.1 Establish a Persons with disabilities network

As stated in IAAC's 2023 progress report, IAAC has established an Accessibility Network, an open consultation group that focuses on increasing accessibility, supporting persons with disabilities, promoting awareness, advocating for rights, and building an inclusive workplace community.

For the purpose of reporting on plan objectives, this action is deemed to be completed.

6.2 Develop and adopt accessibility guide

In 2028, Accessibility Standards Canada will release its Standard for the Design and Delivery of Programs and Services. The standard will identify barriers related to program and service costs, policies lacking accessibility considerations, attitudinal challenges, accessibility of technology, information and customer service, inclusive design for buildings and outdoor spaces, and effective communication with service providers. Once the standard is published, IAAC will develop an accessibility guide to align with the standard.

Until the Standard for the Design and Delivery of Programs and Services is released, IAAC is using the Accessibility Corner intranet page to centralize all resources, tools and training materials on workplace accessibility.

6.3 Use a data-driven approach to derive targets and identify and overcome barriers to accessibility

There are three prongs to this data-driven approach.

6.3.1 Develop hiring targets for persons with disabilities subject to regional workforce availability to ensure higher representation and create accountability to fill gaps

IAAC is leveraging federal recruitment programs and pools for persons with disabilities such as The Virtual Door to Talent with Disabilities and the Federal Internship Program for Canadians with Disabilities.

As part of the Accessibility Strategy aimed to hire 5000 net new persons with disabilities by 2025 to help create a representative federal workforce, IAAC has consistently implemented measures to achieve or surpass targets. For 2022-2023, IAAC achieved 300% (target was 2 and 6 were hired) of its hiring target, ranking it second across the federal public service. In 2023-2024, IAAC met its target achieving 100% (target was 5 and 5 were hired). Efforts are ongoing to ensure recruitment strategies enable IAAC to help close the representation gap of persons with disabilities.

IAAC recently conducted a hiring process using blind assessments, in which all identifying details were removed from candidates' resumes and applications. This approach was taken to ensure a fair, unbiased selection and to promote equity in hiring decisions.

6.3.2 Conduct multi-year analysis at all stages of the employment cycle to identify and address persistent barriers

IAAC is currently focused on establishing foundational reporting capabilities to support the Employment Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EEDI) team in a multi-year strategy for analyzing employment equity data across the employment cycle. Resources like Power BI dashboards to track key metrics will ultimately enable the EEDI team to identify and address persistent barriers more effectively.

6.3.3 Conduct an employment systems review to understand challenges surrounding representation and address them through actions in the Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

IAAC is progressing with the Employment Systems Review (ESR) to address challenges related to representation in line with our Employment Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan. IAAC has secured funding for this initiative and consulted with Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) members to define the necessary work.

The ESR will be conducted by a third party selected through a Request for Proposal (RFP). This review aims to identify and analyze systemic and attitudinal barriers across

all employment systems, including recruitment, selection, training, promotion, and retention, impacting equity seeking groups such as persons with disabilities.

The process will involve:

- Analyzing workforce data to pinpoint under-representation;
- Conducting consultations to gather insights and experiences; and
- Drafting reports that not only identify barriers but also provide actionable solutions and recommendations for improvement.

6.4 Centralize resources and dedicate a cost center

A centralised cost centre is in place and is designated to provide IAAC flexibility in addressing accommodation requests, removing barriers such as potential strain on sectoral budgets thus allowing all employees with options for an expedient process for such requests.

For the purpose of reporting on plan objectives, this action is deemed to be completed.

7. Transportation

Since the launch of the Directive for a Hybrid Workforce, consultations took place with all employees and new barriers faced by employees were identified, including but not limited to:

- Long commutes that extend the workday;
- Hybrid work arrangements that could affect the safe travel of persons with disabilities;
- Limited secure bike parking due to the increasing popularity of cycling; and
- Insufficient general and accessible parking availability.

Analysis of the consultations and survey results is ongoing and IAAC will work towards developing action items for addressing these barriers.

8. Culture

Culture implies an environment based on awareness, inclusivity, and belonging that enables persons with disabilities to achieve full integration, acceptance, and participation in society. IAAC's overall objective in this area is to foster an inclusive and respectful workplace culture by creating awareness and learning activities.

8.1 Promote learning tools and raise awareness

IAAC is promoting learning tools and raising awareness of the importance of accessibility and inclusion for staff and management through four branches of activity on an on-going basis.

8.1.1 Run internal communication campaigns throughout the year to raise awareness of accessibility resources to all employees

Accessibility initiatives or events related to commemorative dates including but not limited to:

- Celebrating National AccessAbility Week through a calendar of events offered at IAAC, through other federal departments and within the community (May)
- Celebrating International Week of the Deaf in September
- Celebrating Disability Employment Awareness Month in October
- Celebrating ADHD Awareness Month in October
- In addition to promotional events, IAAC also published and promoted multiple resources such as the new Accessibility Corner on its intranet, accessibility-focused training programs through the Canada School of Public Service and external resources and tools such as the Accessibility Hub (Office of Public Service Accessibility) and the [Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport](#)

IAAC also developed and launched a new Accessibility Article Series entitled: *Did you Know?* The series is designed to help employees better understand barriers to accessibility with topics related to the physical environment, the digital world, communications and employment. Each article presents concrete steps around accessibility and encourages each employee to act and become an agent of change in their workplace. The first two articles in the *Did You Know?* Series focused on communication barriers and accessible documents. Overall, the articles aimed to get employees to reflect on accessibility before starting to create new articles, new forms or new reports and to integrate accessibility features.

The articles on accessible documents have been broadly promoted and have recently been reported to be among the most frequently consulted pages on IAAC's intranet.

8.1.2 Offer workshops and training for managers on disability management, accessibility, inclusion and duty to accommodate

Accessibility was listed as one of IAAC's five mandatory learning priorities for 2024-25, as such all employees are required to take part in accessibility training to further their understanding on the subject. The Accessibility Corner also includes recommended training options for managers such on unconscious bias and inclusive hiring.

In addition to the mandatory training requirement, IAAC also hosted three workshops and sessions, some tailored for employees in managerial roles, others available to the entire IAAC population.

For National AccessAbility Week (NAAW), IAAC hosted an information session on the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport. An Assessment Specialist at the Assessment Center of Expertise of the National Recruitment Directorate (NRD) of the

Public Service Commission (PSC) delivered an informative presentation to 120 employees.

For Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM), IAAC held a workshop on Engaging and Recruiting Talent Through Disability Inclusive Hiring presented by the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN). The session was geared to Supervisors, Managers and Human Resources employees.

IAAC also launched the 'Understanding Disabilities' Workshop Series', designed to bring greater awareness around disabilities and accessibility, to break down stigmas and eliminate misconceptions. Through greater awareness and understanding, IAAC hopes to encourage better cohesion within teams and foster more inclusive and supportive working relationships.

The first workshop in the Series was entitled: Understanding Hearing Loss, Deafness and Deaf Culture with a guest speaker from the Federal Speakers' Forum on Lived Experience. Sixty-nine employees attended this workshop in which the guest spoke of their lived experience with progressive hearing loss from a personal and professional standpoint.

To maximize overall accessibility of content, most sessions were hosted separately in French and English and were presented through Power Point Live. The latter allowed participants to benefit from numerous key features such as screen interactivity (permitting navigation at one's own pace), screen reader and closed caption activation, and high-contrast mode, etc.

8.1.3 Create an online repository of tools, resources and training that support supervisors and managers in nurturing inclusivity within their teams, creating a safe environment for conversations around disability and handling of accommodation requests

A Manager's Section was created within the Accessibility Corner (Intranet Accessibility Resource site) to provide resources and tools to support managers in answering questions around Duty to Accommodate, disability management, inclusive hiring and onboarding.

There is also a dedicated section on the Accommodation Process designed to provide support and clarification on the IAAC process for managers and employees. The conversations starter tools focused around the GoC Workplace Accessibility Passport, are particularly conducive to creating a safe environment for accommodation requests.

For the purpose of reporting on plan objectives, this action is deemed to be completed.

8.1.4 Encourage staff to take part in the following accessibility training offered by the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS):

- Addressing Disability and Barriers to Accessibility (INC115)
- Disability Management and Workplace Wellness (INC120)

- Understanding Unconscious Bias (INC105)
- [Video: Making Documents Accessible (INC1-V46)](#)

During 2024-25, employees are required to take at least one training course related to each of the five priorities, one of which being accessibility. Although the specific courses taken are up to the discretion of each employee and their manager, the above-mentioned courses form part of a repertoire of courses recommended by IAAC.

For the purpose of reporting on plan objectives, this action is deemed to be completed.

8.2 Support persons with disabilities

Actions to support persons with disabilities at IAAC were taken through the following two activities:

8.2.1 Mobilize constructive dialogue to harness and advance accessibility issues and concerns to IAAC's senior management

Since the Accessibility Plan's implementation in December 2022, the Diversity and Inclusion co-champions have engaged in constructive dialogue with senior management to identify and address accessibility issues and concerns in three significant ways.

Leveraging on the work already being conducted, the co-champions engaged with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee in working towards two of the priorities of the Accessibility Plan:

- to develop and adopt an accessibility guide with best practices and considerations in designing and delivering programs and services; and
- to create an accessibility checklist containing the essential actions to be taken to make internal and external meetings accessible.

In addition, conversations between the executives responsible for accessibility and facilities within IAAC have led to more cohesive direction and clear actions.

A sub-committee was created to review the progress made, challenges that may arise, and possible solutions and ensure engagement was continuous on this item.

8.2.2 Leverage the Network and our intranet site to promote resources available to employees with disabilities concerning wellness, mental health, counselling, conflict management and other supports.

The Accessibility Corner has a sub-section specially dedicated to the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Wellness Team at IAAC. There is also information on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which supports federal departments with their workplace wellness initiatives to both prevent and address the concerns of employers, employees and their immediate family members.

The Accessibility Corner also provides information on how to sign up for a Safer Space Discussion Group, more specifically, 'Safer Space for Employees Living with Disabilities'.

Consultations

The consultation process developed to support the preparation of the progress report included consultations with IAAC's Accessibility Network along with launching an internal survey to all employees. The IAAC Directive for a Hybrid Workforce and Accessibility Survey was launched to obtain feedback on workplace barriers and the implementation of the Directive for a Hybrid Workplace. In terms of workplace barriers, emphasis was placed on physical barriers allowing IAAC to gather more information and put together a plan to address them.

A demographic component was added to the survey to conduct a Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus), in addition to gathering the feedback received.

The survey was conducted online and anonymously. A total of 245 people participated, representing 34% of employees. Participants identified as persons with one or more disabilities accounted for more than 20% of the responses received.

Results

The survey offered new insight into the diversity of perspectives and experiences among IAAC employees, noting that the results of the survey apply to those who responded to the survey. Overall, the quantitative data indicates that all 'barrier' areas identified below require further attention.

- **Physical and Environmental Barriers**: Limited availability of boardrooms and private spaces; noisy open work areas; bright lighting; faulty meeting room equipment; poor ventilation; lack of accessible parking, powered doors, and storage solutions; malfunctioning rotating doors; insufficient restroom/kitchen space; and environmental sensitivities (e.g., perfumes).
- **Digital and Technological Barriers**: Faulty microphones in boardrooms, unreliable desk reservation systems, and limited access to ergonomic tools for term and casual employees.
- **Communication and Cultural Barriers**: Challenges with inaccessible documents, ineffective communication methods, microaggressions, and ableism creating workplace discomfort.
- **Employment and Policy Barriers**: Residence requirements limiting remote work opportunities.

Public Service Employee Survey

Results from the 2024 Public Service Employee Survey will be analyzed and incorporated to future plans and objectives once they are made available. This will help ensure IAAC can have a more fulsome understanding of identified barriers within IAAC but also across the Public Service.

Feedback

As noted in section 3.3 of this report, a new Feedback Process Description and Feedback Form will be released on our new Accessibility Landing page. This will provide greater access and an anonymous option for feedback on Accessibility at IAAC. The creation and promotion of a generic inbox specifically for accessibility related inquiries has also allowed for easier and more direct communication for employees and the public.

Questions about IAAC's development and implementation of the Plan

IAAC has received multiple inquiries regarding the Dedicated Cost Centre for Accessibility, which was established as an objective in the Accessibility Plan. While the Cost Centre is operational, questions about its access and usage have been addressed individually via email and discussions.

To improve transparency and provide broader access to information, the Accessibility Team will add an FAQ section about the Cost Centre to the Accessibility Corner. This initiative aims to better support managers seeking to supplement their budgets to fulfill accommodation requests.

Feedback on information sessions

Positive and constructive feedback on information sessions delivered on various topics related to the theme of accessibility was received through the Accessibility Inbox. All feedback was addressed, and thorough and thoughtful responses were drafted and sent to the participants in a timely manner.

New barriers identified

Newly identified barriers to accessibility are linked to:
- Various physical barriers (built environment) in some regional office locations

In response, IAAC has relayed the information to the relevant teams, and updates are pending.

As part of IAAC's commitment to transparency and responsiveness, it is diligently assessing all feedback received. Appropriate actions and/or considerations will be integrated into future planning and reporting, as necessary.