

# Accessibility Progress Report 2023 Year 1 Annual Report



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- Telephone: 613-954-1698
- Toll Free: 1-888-603-4178
- Email: [AccessibilityPlan-PlanAccessibilite@cihr-irsc.gc.ca](mailto:AccessibilityPlan-PlanAccessibilite@cihr-irsc.gc.ca)
- Website: [www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca)
- X: [@CIHR\\_IRSC](#)
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# Executive Summary

CIHR published its [Accessibility Plan 2023-2026](#) in December 2022, in support of the Government of Canada's goal to achieve a barrier-free Canada by 2040. The launch of the CIHR Accessibility Plan was the first step toward a more accessible CIHR and will evolve over time.

The Year 1 Annual Report outlines the Agency's commitments and actions, and highlights the progress made on priority areas of the Accessibility Plan from April 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023.

The CIHR priority areas are as follows:

- Organizational Culture
- Employment
- Built Environment
- Information and Communication Technology
- Communications
- Design and Delivery of Program and Services
- Procurement of Goods, Services, and Delivery

Through meaningful consultations with diverse stakeholders and concrete goals and actions, CIHR has made incremental improvements on accessibility. Ongoing action and engagement, most importantly with persons with disabilities and experienced allies, will allow for continued progress on the Accessibility Plan over the coming years.

# General Information

## Feedback on the CIHR Accessibility Plan

The *CIHR Accessibility Plan* contact is Lindsay Carlson, Deputy Director, Strategic Programs and HR Analytics, in the Human Resources Branch. CIHR employees and the public may provide feedback as follows:

- Email
  - [AccessibilityPlan-PlanAccessibilite@cihr-irsc.gc.ca](mailto:AccessibilityPlan-PlanAccessibilite@cihr-irsc.gc.ca)
- Telephone
  - Monday to Friday 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time
  - Telephone: 613-954-1698
  - Toll Free: 1-888-603-4178
- Mail
  - Attention: Lindsay Carlson  
Human Resources Branch  
Canadian Institutes of Health Research  
160 Elgin Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Address Locator 4809A  
Ottawa, ON. K1A 0W9
- Online (anonymous)
  - Complete the [online form](#) to share feedback anonymously

This contact information enables CIHR employees and the public to:

- request the *CIHR Accessibility Plan* in one of the alternate formats described in [subsection 8\(2\) of the regulations](#).
- request the description of the CIHR feedback process in one of the alternate formats described in [subsection 9\(5\) of the regulations](#).

## What we have learned

Over the past year, CIHR has made significant efforts to identify accessibility barriers across the Agency and in the programs that we deliver. The Year 1 Annual Report provides an overview of the accomplishments, developments, and advancements on goals identified in the CIHR Accessibility Plan. As such, this report allows us to evaluate and identify areas where milestones were met, as well as those areas requiring further attention.

Important insights were learned following the implementation of the Accessibility Plan.

- **Responsibility:** In order to create and foster a culture of accessibility, all CIHR employees must play a role. From increasing awareness by attending training or learning opportunities, to leading policy or programmatic changes, everyone can contribute to a barrier-free environment that fosters equal opportunity and inclusivity.
- **Awareness:** Education (through various platforms), training tools, and other resources are required to continue raising awareness of accessibility issues.
- **Communication:** Continued dialogue with internal and external stakeholders and governance committees is needed to embed accessibility within the organization to ensure meaningful progress. For example, discussing accessibility as a regular or standing item on governance committees (i.e., the quarterly updates provided to the Senior Operating Committee) would promote open communication and early opportunities for program adjustments (where needed).

CIHR is committed to learn from best practices and its ongoing consultations and will continue to make improvements over the coming years through deliberate and meaningful actions.

## Consultations

The Accessibility Plan and the Year 1 Annual Report were the result of consultations with the following committees and networks. The consultations were conducted throughout the year to gather general feedback, develop key performance indicators, and track the status of priority items. Additionally, members of the public and employees have the opportunity to provide feedback at any point through the various channels noted earlier in the General Information section of this report.

### **Employee Network for Persons with Disabilities**

- A group of employees living with disabilities, and other staff members with close personal relationships to persons with disabilities.
- Network participants are front-line staff working in various roles and areas of CIHR.
- The network was sent targeted emails to obtain feedback on the Accessibility Plan and Year 1 Annual Report and were given the option for personalized meetings.

### **CIHR Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (CAREDIA) Committee (formerly known as CIHR EDIA Committee)**

- The CAREDIA committee is comprised of individuals whose experiences and expertise ensure that a wide range of perspectives is brought to bear on the work of advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion at CIHR, amplifying the voices of staff and connecting employees with the issues and ideas that impact our workplace.
- The committee was sent targeted emails to obtain feedback on the Accessibility Plan and Year 1 Annual Report and were given the option for personalized meetings.

### **CIHR Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee**

- The OHS Committee is made up of managers, employees, and subject matter experts from Human Resources, Facilities, and Security.
- The committee was sent targeted emails to obtain feedback on the Accessibility Plan and Year 1 Annual Report and were given the option for personalized meetings.

## **External Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Systemic Ableism (EAC – ASA)**

- The EAC – ASA membership includes health researchers living with disabilities, experienced allies, accessibility advocates, leaders within disability communities, and representatives from key stakeholder groups including Indigenous community members.
- The EAC – ASA was established in January 2022 and has met monthly to provide guidance on the identification of barriers to accessibility within the health research funding system. Discussions of the EAC – ASA have been used to develop the “design and delivery of programs and services” priority area, as well as barriers and actions that are cross-cutting in nature.
- The committee was consulted throughout the year to obtain feedback on the Accessibility Plan.

## **CIHR Accessibility Plan Working Group – Business owners of priority areas for action**

- Each priority area for action in the *Accessibility Plan* (e.g., Employment, Built Environment), draws on one or more functional business lines within CIHR (e.g., Human Resources Branch, Finance and Administration Branch, Equity Strategy Branch).
- Business owners are the subject matter specialists for a function. They are mostly the primary leads for action reflected in the plan. They are the main sources of guidance to other functions/branches.
- The working group was consulted throughout the year to obtain feedback on the Accessibility Plan and Year 1 Annual Report (including the development of key performance indicators) and to track the status of priority items

## **CIHR Internal Governance Committee**

- The mandate of the Senior Operations Committee (SOC) is to provide leadership for operational planning and related decision-making for Agency-wide management areas.
- SOC also serves an advisory function to the Senior Leadership Committee (SLC), at the latter’s request, on matters where cross-Agency perspectives could add value.
- The CIHR Accessibility Plan 2023-2026 remains a quarterly standing item at SOC to provide senior leadership with updates on action items, and an opportunity to provide feedback on program adjustments (as required).



- Progress on the CIHR Accessibility Plan is also presented to the Senior Leadership Committee (SLC) as required.

# Feedback received

**Note:** Feedback received by CIHR throughout the year is reflected below, grouped by theme for ease of reference.

## Corporate Culture

### Feedback received

There is a need for training on accessibility best practices and awareness for CIHR employees.

#### ***Channel used to convey feedback***

CIHR's confidential internal suggestion box

#### ***Status***

Training and awareness opportunities have and will continue to be identified and shared with CIHR employees. Additionally, all CIHR employees are required to take mandatory training in 2023-2024 that includes material on the Accessibility Plan, CIHR's Strategic Plan, and government-wide corporate priorities. Mandatory training is tracked (and senior management is notified) to ensure completion.

Awareness activities will continue to be provided on an ongoing basis.

## Employment

No feedback received for this pillar.

## Built Environment

### Feedback received

CIHR was asked to indicate the service that provided the building accessibility certification training taken by the Property and Facilities team as they work to design the new CIHR offices.

#### ***Channel used to convey feedback***

Email

#### ***Status***

The service provider was shared with the requestor:

[www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/accessibility-training-and-education/professional-training](http://www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/accessibility-training-and-education/professional-training)

No further action required.

## **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

No feedback received for this pillar.

## **Communications (other than ICT)**

### **Feedback received**

Questions were raised about the added value of including sign language interpretation in CIHR communications.

#### ***Channel used to convey feedback***

Internal email

#### ***Status***

CIHR clarified that sign language interpretation was indeed included in the email, as it had been requested by multiple stakeholders. Additionally, the Accessibility webpage was formatted to be fully accessible to all screen readers.

No further action required.

## **Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities**

### **Feedback received**

It was recommended that CIHR update its travel policy to allow for expenses to be covered related to patient-partner caregiver support when out of town travel is required to attend CIHR events.

#### ***Channel used to convey feedback***

Email to an Institute's partnership lead working with patient-partners.

#### ***Status***

Discussions in progress between the Equity Strategy Branch and the Finance and Administration Branch.

# **Design and Delivery of Programs and Services**

## **Feedback received**

Comments were received regarding the mandatory use of the font Times New Roman to submit Project Grant competition documentation. Requestors mentioned that the Serif font is raising accessibility challenges.

### ***Channel used to convey feedback***

CIHR's Contact Centre, social media platforms, and the Accessibility Plan's anonymous feedback form.

### ***Status***

For known requestors, alternatives have been identified to their satisfaction. The information was shared with the concerned branches for consideration.

Competitions will use accessible fonts in the future.

# CIHR Progress in Priority Areas

**Note:** The progress identified in this section reflects only those actions scheduled for year 1 of the Accessibility Plan, from April 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023 (end of CIHR's second quarter for 2023-2024). Progress for the second half of the first year will be measured and reported upon in the year 2 annual report, due to the legislated reporting timeline.

## Organizational Culture

**Goal 1: CIHR has an organizational culture in which persons with disabilities feel safe to openly disclose their disability without fear of it impacting their interactions with CIHR.**

*Action 1.1: Appoint joint leadership for accessibility.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

The President appoints joint leadership for accessibility to the Executive Vice-President (EVP) and the Vice-President, Learning Health System (VP-LHS).

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Completed

*Action 1.2: Explore best practices and lessons learned related to introducing the role of Chief Accessibility Officer.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

A summary of findings is developed and submitted to the CIHR President for consideration.

**Timeline**

2023-2026

**Status**

Not initiated

**Additional information**

Work to be initiated later in 2023-2024.

*Action 1.3: Release a public message from the CIHR President on the launch of the plan, including external research excellence progress.*

**Key Performance Indicators**

A public message from CIHR President is published and shared on CIHR's various social media platforms.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Completed

*Action 1.4: Establish a repository of information related to accessibility supports for staff and for applicants/researchers.*

**Key Performance Indicators**

Usage of the repository is monitored (access to the repository and links clicked).

**Timeline**

2023-2026

**Status**

Not initiated

**Additional Information**

Further work is required to identify specific usage targets.

*Action 1.5: Apply consistent public health measures to in-person activities.*

**Key Performance Indicators**

Municipal and provincial public health guidelines are followed by CIHR where in-person activities occur.

**Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

**Status**

Ongoing

### ***Additional Information***

As a Science-based organization, CIHR follows municipal and provincial public health guidelines for in-person activities. Guidelines for employees included: staying home if not well, the provision of masks, and encouraging social distancing.

CIHR continues to monitor any changes to the guidelines and will implement them as required.

## **Goal 2: All employees are educated on what it means and how to contribute to an accessible organization.**

*Action 2.1: Launch an accessibility awareness campaign.*

### ***Key Performance Indicators***

Participation rates to Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) and the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) learning opportunities on accessibility, using CSPS and CCDI reports.

Accessibility-related articles and information, using page consultation rates on CIHR Intranet (click numbers and time spent on pages).

### ***Timeline***

2023-2024 and ongoing

### ***Status***

Ongoing

### ***Additional Information***

Training and awareness opportunities have and will continue to be identified and shared with CIHR employees. Additionally, all CIHR employees are required to take mandatory training, which is based on organizational priorities, CIHR's Strategic Plan, and government-wide corporate priorities. Mandatory training is tracked (and senior management is notified) to ensure completion. Mandatory training, specifically focussed on accessibility will be launched.

Awareness campaign will continue on an ongoing basis.

*Action 2.3: Deliver disability/accessibility/ableism awareness training for managers/team leads/supervisors.*

**Key Performance Indicators**

Provide more focused learning for those who manage employees, as well as for subject matter experts who support the management of other resources.

Key Messages and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Managers were created and posted on the CIHR Intranet. Disability/accessibility/ableism awareness training for managers/team leads/supervisors is currently underway.

**Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional Information**

All CIHR employees are required to take mandatory training, which is based on organizational priorities, CIHR's Strategic Plan, and government-wide corporate priorities. Mandatory training is tracked (and senior management is notified) to ensure completion. Mandatory training for managers/team leads/supervisors specifically focussed on disability/accessibility/ableism will be launched.

*Action 2.4: Promote Ombuds and wellness services.*

**Key Performance Indicators**

Number of promotional activities for the ombuds and wellness services at CIHR, through information bulletins and other communication strategies (such as town halls).

Usage of Ombuds and wellness services.

**Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

**Status**

Ongoing



***Additional Information***

The ombuds and wellness services are actively promoted using regular internal communication methods. Consultation rates for year-1 will be used to establish target rates for the coming years.

**Goal 3: An integrated governance structure supports the CIHR Accessibility Plan.**

*Action 3.1: Create an ongoing accessibility forum for employees.*

***Key Performance Indicators***

Number of accessibility forums offered annually for employees to participate in accessibility-related consultations meant to improve accessibility at CIHR.

***Timeline***

2023-2024 and ongoing

***Status***

Not initiated

***Additional Information***

This forum will be established in the coming months and be reported on in the year-2 annual report.

*Action 3.2: Maintain Accessibility Plan Working Group.*

***Key Performance Indicators***

The Accessibility Plan Working Group remains active to support the implementation and monitoring of the Accessibility Plan.

***Timeline***

2023-2024 and ongoing

***Status***

Ongoing

***Additional Information***

Key branches supporting the actions in the CIHR Accessibility Plan are represented on the Accessibility Plan Working Group and coordinate work as required.

*Action 3.3: Develop and implement an accessibility performance measurement framework (PMF).*

**Key Performance Indicators**

A performance measurement framework is developed and socialized to CIHR employees and communicated to the community.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional Information**

Work is ongoing by the Accessibility Plan Working Group, supported by the Human Resources Branch, to finalize the development of the key performance indicators.

## **Employment**

**Goal 5: CIHR addresses the purpose of self-identification and obtains a current picture of the diversity of accessibility needs in its workforce.**

*Action 5.1: Launch a self-identification campaign.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

CIHR launches a self-identification campaign and promotes it using various communication channels (i.e., weekly .Comm bulletin, Intranet). The participation rate to the self-identification campaign is monitored.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

Work on the self-identification campaign will take place in the fourth quarter of 2023-2024.

## **Goal 6: CIHR addresses gaps in policy/process/tools related to staffing for persons with disabilities.**

*Action 6.1: Establish and communicate how to request accommodation during the hiring process.*

### **Key Performance Indicator**

A process to request accommodation during the hiring process is defined and approved by the Director General, Human Resources. Job posters are modified to include all relevant information, allowing every candidate to be aware of the process.

### **Timeline**

2023-2025

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Additional information**

Consultations will continue to develop an accommodation process, which includes the desired end state, during the hiring process.

*Action 6.2: Adopt the Public Service Resourcing System (PSRS) and barrier-free assessment tools available through PSRS.*

### **Key Performance Indicator**

The Public Service Resourcing System and the barrier-free assessment tools are implemented.

The current recruitment system, Njoyn, is decommissioned.

Barrier-free assessment tools are made available to hiring staff.

### **Timeline**

2023-2025

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Additional information**

The Public Service Resourcing System is implemented, and the Njoyn system has been decommissioned. Barrier-free assessment tools are being developed and integrated to hiring processes.

## **Goal 7: CIHR increases recruitment and promotion of persons with disabilities in its workforce.**

*Action 7.1: Prioritize appointment of qualified employment equity candidates for positions at all levels in the organization.*

### **Key Performance Indicator**

Increase in number of applications from persons with disabilities based on self-declaration in the recruitment process. Increase in opportunities offered to CIHR employees living with disabilities.

Timeline

2023-2024 and ongoing

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Additional information**

Hiring managers are encouraged to work with networks supporting inclusion of diverse candidates in the workplace, and to leverage pools of qualified candidates for persons in designated equity groups.

*Action 7.4: Reflect employment equity recruitment/promotion expectations in performance agreements of CIHR executives.*

### **Key Performance Indicator**

Development and inclusion of a commitment in performance management plan for CIHR executives.

### **Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Additional information**

The 2023-2024 mandatory organizational commitments for managers and executives (grades 12 and above) includes a commitment to “take action to remove barriers to hiring, development and promotion of members of equity deserving groups, including the use of targeted recruitment activities.” Annual mandatory organizational commitments will evolve as progress is made toward equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility and to meet legislated requirements.

*Action 7.5: Support manager/team lead/supervisor awareness and ability to recruit persons with disabilities.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Development and availability of tools and training to support hiring managers/team leads and supervisors in recruiting and hiring persons with disabilities.

**Timeline**

2023-2024 for awareness, centralized tools and inventories, 2024-2026 for training and other supports for hiring managers

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

Tools have been developed, with more being developed to address identified needs. An Intranet page centralizing all of this information is also being developed to increase awareness within CIHR.

**Goal 9: A supportive program for employees and managers is in place for disability management and accommodation needs.**

*Action 9.1: Update the Duty to Accommodate Policy and related business processes.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Review the CIHR Duty to Accommodate Policy and develop related guides and processes

Develop a communications plan and Intranet site to promote the policy, guides, and processes.

**Timeline**

2023-2025

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

The Duty to Accommodate Policy is currently under review. An Accommodation form and Step-by-Step process for accommodations is in development.

*Action 9.3: Formalize the disability management program.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Consultations with various internal and external stakeholders.  
Develop a communication strategy to promote the program.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

## **Built Environment**

### **Goal 10: Current office space includes accessible workstations for persons with mobility disabilities.**

*Action 10.1: Create multiple accessible workstations and closed offices.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Sufficient accessible workstations and closed offices are created for employees with mobility disabilities.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Completed

**Additional information**

The Finance and Administration Branch ensures that the number of accessible workstations available meets the needs of CIHR employees with mobility disabilities.

*Action 10.2: Create workspace with access to natural light and quiet space with dimmable lighting.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Sufficient workspaces with natural light or with dimmable lighting are created for employees.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Completed

**Additional information**

The Finance and Administration Branch ensures that the number of workstations offering natural light or dimmable lighting available meets the needs of CIHR employees.

*Action 10.3: Communicate with employees when new accessibility measures are implemented and remind employees how to submit built environment accessibility questions.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Employees are informed of changes to work environment as appropriate, given CIHR's forthcoming move.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

The Finance and Administration Branch continues to keep employees informed of changes to the workplace as changes arise using regular internal communication channels (i.e., the weekly .Comm bulletin).

**Goal 11: CIHR future office space meets accessibility requirements.**

*Action 11.1: Design future office space based on the CSA-B651-18.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

The new space plan will meet the built environment accessibility standards established in the Canadian Standards Association's (CSA) Accessible Design for the Built Environment that were in place at time of design.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Completed

***Additional information***

The Finance and Administration Branch ensures that the latest CSA Accessible Design for the Built Environment standards are respected as the new office space is being designed.

**Goal 12: Employee engagement is part of managing the change to the new office location.**

*Action 12.1: Engage internal committees and the Employee Accessibility Forum as part of the accessibility work underway at CIHR's future office space.*

***Key Performance Indicator***

Internal committees/forum are briefed on accessibility measures.

***Timeline***

2023-2025

***Status***

Ongoing

***Additional information***

Internal committees have been engaged, and the Employee Accessibility Forum will be engaged following its establishment.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

**Goal 13: Access to CIHR information (information management) is increased.**

*Action 13.1: Complete project to digitize CIHR paper records.*

***Key Performance Indicator***

CIHR's paper records are digitalized in accessible format in the Electronic Document and Records Management system.

***Timeline***

2023-2025

***Status***

Ongoing



**Goal 14: Existing technology is adapted, where possible, and updated to improve accessibility. New digital systems and technology purchased best meet accessibility requirements.**

*Action 14.1: Seek out emerging advancements in accessible technology.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

New tools to test accessibility are identified and procured to support CIHR's accessibility efforts.

**Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

The Digital and Security Services Branch monitors advancements in accessible technologies and assess the feasibility to include new accessible technologies where possible to CIHR's tools as required.

*Action 14.2: Continue to review existing CIHR systems for accessibility compliance.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

CIHR systems are reviewed for accessibility and a plan is developed to address gaps in existing systems.

**Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

Systems are being reviewed for accessibility. This analysis will inform the development of a plan to address gaps in existing systems in the coming years.

**Goal 15: Websites and Web-related tools and templates meet technical/functional accessibility requirements for use by employees and external users.**

*Action 15.1: Conduct an accessibility review of websites and templates.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

A workplan is developed to review CIHR's website and communication templates to ensure compliance to accessibility standards. Guidance documents are also prepared to support CIHR employees in developing accessible products.

**Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

The Communications Branch is reviewing CIHR's website and communications template to improve accessibility. Some guidance documents are being developed to help employees in the integration of accessibility best practices in their day-to-day work.

*Action 15.2: Review and update accessibility testing and web content accessibility guidance documents.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Guidance documents to test software and Web content accessibility are developed and communicated to the employees concerned.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

## **Goal 16: Users of assistive technologies and IT employees are trained to make full use of assistive software and technologies.**

*Action 16.1: Identify and deliver training for users of assistive technologies. Identify and deliver training for IT employees who implement/support users of assistive technologies.*

### **Key Performance Indicator**

Dedicated training opportunities are identified and delivered for employees requiring or supporting assistive technologies.

### **Timeline**

2023-2024 to identify training opportunities

2024-2025 to deliver training

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Additional information**

The following training is already available:

- CIHR's collaboration tools (Microsoft suite of tools) have built-in accessibility tools (with training available as required through CIHR's Intranet and Microsoft's training website).
- Training for the Dragon speech recognition software is provided by Shared Services Canada through the Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) program.
- CIHR's Enterprise Resource Planning systems (SAP and MyGCHR) abide by the Government of Canada's accessibility principles and are maintained by the Treasury Board Secretariat and Public Services and Procurement Canada.

The Digital and Security Services Branch continues to assess CIHR systems to identify any further accessibility training opportunities.

Additionally, employees requiring the use of adaptive hardware and software are provided with individualized training by subject matter experts as well as ongoing support by a Disability Management Advisor. Training is available for technical staff to support adaptive computer technology.

## **Communications**

### **Goal 17: Readability of CIHR documents is improved across internal and external communications.**

*Action 17.1: Develop and implement a Plain Language Strategy to raise awareness among all employees.*

#### **Key Performance Indicator**

A Plain Language Strategy is developed with tools to support employees in adopting this new approach. The strategy is socialized with employees

Reduced number of assistance request or complaints regarding the readability of CIHR documents.

#### **Timeline**

2023-2025

#### **Status**

Ongoing

#### **General Information**

As part of its ongoing work, the Communications Branch advises branches and Institutes on the use of plain language in their communications products. The branch also provides editing, proofreading, and translation services in support of plain language in both official languages. The Communications Branch expects to begin development of a more formal Plain Language Strategy in the fourth quarter of 2023-2024

### **Goal 18: Departmental events are planned to be inclusive and accessible by design.**

*Action 18.1: Promote and socialize guidance on accessibility best practices for events.*

#### **Key Performance Indicator**

Guidance documents are prepared to help event organizers in creating accessible events.

Positive feedback received from attendees regarding the accessibility of CIHR events.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

**General Information**

The Communications Branch is currently developing an event toolkit that will address accessibility best practices. This is expected to be completed and promoted in Q4 2023-2024

**Goal 19: Resources and tips are available to support the creation and dissemination of accessible content.**

*Action 19.1: Promote the use of accessibility resources and tips.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Guidance documents are prepared to promote the creation of accessible content.

**Timeline**

2023-2025

**Status**

Not initiated

**General Information**

The Communications Branch has updated its Intranet resources and will continue to promote existing guidance documents on the creation of accessible content. Future work will identify gaps in the existing guidance documents.

**Design and Delivery of Programs and Services****Goal 20: CIHR will become a leader in identifying and addressing barriers to accessibility and issues of ableism in the health research funding system.**

*Action 20.1: Conduct surveys with people who interact with the health research funding system on barriers and potential solutions.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Number of surveys completed by persons with disability.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Completed

**Additional information**

Two surveys were conducted, one for persons with disabilities and one for allies of persons with disabilities. A total of 104 people responded to the first survey, and a total of 18 people responded to the second.

*Action 20.2: Conduct engagements with relevant organizations on common barriers, lessons learned and potential solutions.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Number of engagements (e.g., presentations, consultation sessions) with relevant organizations.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Completed

**Additional information**

Three engagements (e.g., presentations and consultation sessions) were held with health charities, other research funders, and representatives from post-secondary institutions in 2023-2024.

*Action 20.3: Conduct consultations with CIHR staff responsible for the design and delivery of programs and services.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Description of engagements with staff (e.g., meetings, electronic communications).

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

Engagement activities have started and are ongoing.

*Action 20.4: Co-develop an in-depth action plan that goes beyond barriers at CIHR.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

The in-depth action plan is developed.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

Engagements on common barriers, lessons learned, and potential solutions to inform an in-depth anti-ableism action plan will be completed as of the end of December 2023.

**Goal 21: CIHR will integrate principles of universal design and value diverse lived, learned, and professional experiences throughout all our programs, processes, and policies.**

*Action 21.7: Integrate alternate ways of demonstrating knowledge and scholarship in the application and peer review processes.*

**Key Performance Indicator**

Development of a new Research Excellence Framework set to be released in 2024.

**Timeline**

2023-2024

**Status**

Ongoing

**Additional information**

CIHR is currently in the process of finalizing a new Research Excellence Framework, aiming to publish in Spring 2024.

## **Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities**

**Goal 22: Subject matter experts help with identifying industry standards, market research/analysis of specialized goods and services as needed.**

*Action 22.1: Continue to expand collaboration with Government of Canada (GoC) subject matter experts and the GoC procurement community of practice.*

### **Key Performance Indicator**

Resources and best practices used in other GoC departments are identified and integrated into CIHR practices.

### **Timeline**

2023-2024 and ongoing

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Additional information**

The Finance and Administration Branch is participating in various communities of practices and exchanging tools and procedures with other Departments to improve existing practices.

**Goal 23: Documented business processes/tools are in place for including accessibility considerations when obtaining goods and services.**

*Action 23.1: Update the procurement business process.*

### **Key Performance Indicator**

Guidance documents are prepared to help responsibility centre managers and procurement specialists with the inclusion of accessibility considerations in their procurement processes.

### **Timeline**

2023-2024

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Additional information**

The Finance and Administration Branch has initiated the development of these tools and are discussing accessibility considerations with their clients.



**Goal 24: Procurement measures are in place for prompt access to accessible format goods and services, e.g., sign language services and CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) captioning.**

*Action 24.1: Simplify low dollar value purchases.*

***Key Performance Indicator***

Best practices are identified and new procurement processes are developed for procurement of low dollar value purchases of accessible format goods and services.

***Timeline***

2023-2024

***Status***

Ongoing

***Additional information***

The Finance and Administration Branch is working to simplify procurement processes for low dollar value purchases and is integrating best practices based on their findings in the communities of practice in which they participate.