



## **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council

P.O. Box 98

53 Bond Street

Suite 100

St. Johns, NL A1C 1S9, Canada

Telephone:

(709) 726-2212

1-866-726-2212

Email: [info@artsnl.ca](mailto:info@artsnl.ca)

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Advancements to Date.....	3
Accessibility Goals.....	3
Promoting Accessibility Awareness.....	4
<b>Glossary of Terms</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Statement of Commitment</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Focus Areas</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Built Environment.....	8
Information and Communication.....	8
Accommodations.....	8
<b>Actions / Outcomes</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Responsibilities.....	8
Timeline.....	8
Monitoring and Evaluating.....	9
Questions and Complaints.....	9
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>10</b>

# Introduction

---

## Advancements to Date

ArtsNL recognizes the need for inclusivity and accessibility for stakeholders, clients, and staff. To this end, in 2023 the council relocated to a new office space on ground level to allow easier access, including designated accessible parking close to the front door for those with mobility issues.

The Accessibility Support Fund allowing applicants requiring significant assistance to navigate and complete ArtsNL applications and reporting has been a core support for several years. Program Officers are able to recognize the need, recommend and provide this option for support to applicants if required.

## Accessibility Goals

ArtsNL strives to meet all reasonable accessibility goals within programming and communications when and where feasible, working within its allocated resources. The comprehensive list of accessibility goals below will be considered as need is established and resources allow.

ArtsNL is currently located in a rented space so the ability to make any substantial physical change is limited. ArtsNL would advocate for accessibility upgrades to the building space and work with the building owner to support accessibility.

- The use of plain language in all correspondence and forms to ensure easy readability.
- Upgrading website to follow international web accessibility standards.
- Including additional accessibility features on digital platforms such as compatibility with screen readers, keyboard navigation, alternative text for images, and captioning for videos.
- Providing language and communication support such as text-to-speech converters and multilingual support.
- Contracting American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters to facilitate communication with hearing-impaired individuals.
- Removing cultural restrictions such as language barriers for non-English speakers where and when possible.
- Adding Video Remote Interpretation (VRI) and Video Relay Service (VRS) to assist hearing-impaired individuals with communication.
- Assessing workplace safety routinely and ensuring access to first aid.
- Improving bathroom accessibility features following Newfoundland and Labrador's accessible bathroom design blueprints, including a gender-inclusive bathroom.

- Consulting with and supporting the landlord and the other building tenants regarding the feasibility of incorporating a lift within the building to facilitate easy movement between floors.
- Consulting with and supporting the landlord to install visual and audio fire/emergency alarms throughout the building, as well as in the washrooms.

### **Promoting Accessibility Awareness**

Increased awareness of ArtsNL's commitment to accessibility is essential for those requiring services. ArtsNL will educate the community on existing accessibility options and provide updated information and opportunities for feedback through the following channels:

- The ArtsNL *Opportunities Digest* newsletter, as well as through website, and social media.
- Communicating with employees in the work environment to promote general accessibility awareness.
- Creating an accessibility component to ArtsNL's Workplace Health and Safety policy.
- Promoting accessibility awareness internally and to the wider arts community by regularly communicating with accessibility stakeholders.
- Incorporating accessibility considerations into ArtsNL policies and procedures, such as hiring, training, and accommodations for employees with disabilities.
- Collaborating with disability advocacy organizations and community groups to raise awareness and promote best practices for accessibility in all arts workplaces.
- Offering flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and adjustable work schedules, to accommodate the needs of employees with disabilities.
- Working with Inclusion NL to offer guidance on any changes or updates to the ArtsNL Accessibility Policy.
- Encouraging open dialogue and feedback from any employees of ArtsNL and clients with disabilities about accessibility issues at ArtsNL and providing opportunities for their involvement to create a more inclusive work environment.

## Glossary of Terms

### **Accessibility Act**

The provincial law enacted to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities. The **Accessibility Act** defines the role and responsibilities of the Disability Policy Office and the Accessibility Standards Advisory Board, and addresses standards, compliance, and enforcement.

### **Accessibility Plan**

A plan developed to address the prevention, identification, and removal of barriers in the policies, programs, practices, and services of a public body.

### **Accessibility Standard**

Accessibility standards establish clear, specific, and achievable goals to identify, prevent and remove barriers. Each standard will be introduced in stages with a timeline for implementation. The timelines and standards would consider all sectors such as government, business, municipalities, and community organizations.

### **Accommodation**

Any technical aid or device, personal support or disability-related support or other accommodation a person may require. This can include, but is not limited to: accessible meeting rooms, accessible formats such as Braille and plain language; mobility support to attend a meeting; and, sign language interpreters, captioning or ensuring space has sensory sensitive features.

### **Barrier**

Something that makes it harder for people to participate. The **Accessibility Act** defines a barrier as “anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in society, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a barrier established or perpetrated by an Act, regulations, a policy, or a practice.”

### **Disability**

As defined in **Accessibility Act**: “disability includes a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation that is permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, that, in interaction with a barrier, prevents a person from fully participating in society”.

### **Public Body**

As defined in the **Accessibility Act**, public bodies include all provincial government, agencies, boards, commissions and committees, municipalities, public educational institutions and private educational institutions. Part I (o.) of the **Accessibility Act** includes the full list.

**Plain Language**

Clear, conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they need, and use the information.

**Alternative Text**

A line or a paragraph which is attached to an image or video and narrated upon request. Alternative text is primarily used to remove accessibility barriers assist visually impaired individuals in receiving information related to images.

**Tactile Indicators**

Textured plates installed into the ground to assist vision-impaired pedestrians with orientation and navigation of public spaces.

**Newsletter**

A periodically sent out email or message that informs the audience of the latest news, tips, or updates related to products or services.

**Webinar**

An online event where a group of participants listen to a speaker who delivers a presentation or similar by sharing their remote screen.

**Advocacy**

Public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

**Telecommuting**

The practice of working from home, making use of the internet, email, and telephone.

**Audit**

An official inspection of an individual's or organization's accounts, typically by an independent body.

## Statement of Commitment

---

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's **Accessibility Act** became law on December 3, 2021. This enabling legislation allows the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and its agencies, boards and corporations to outline their principles and goals for an accessible province.

Under the guidelines of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's **Accessibility Act**, ArtsNL has developed its organizational Accessibility Plan. This is a living document that will be reassessed every three years as accessibility standards evolve and are approved by the Minister responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities. New standards will be incorporated into the ArtsNL Accessibility Plan where and if feasible, published and updated in employee information packages.

With the development of the Accessibility Plan, ArtsNL is committed to being responsive to the needs of clients, stakeholders, and employees, where and if possible, as well as adhere to the requirements of the **Accessibility Act** that are achievable within ArtsNL's fiscal resources and mandate. ArtsNL will undertake to identify, mitigate and prevent barriers that impede persons with disabilities from equitable access to programs, practices and services. The goals outlined in this plan promote and foster inclusion for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

This Accessibility Plan is a dynamic process that will continue to evolve as the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador progresses toward full inclusion and accessibility.



## Focus Areas

---

### Built Environment

Consulting with and supporting the landlord and other tenants to explore the feasibility of desired upgrades to the building that increase accessibility for persons with varying levels of disability.

### Information and Communication

Ensuring all platforms for communication for public release are clear and accessible.

### Accommodations

Working with employees to provide flexible work schedules and adjustable workstations to decrease stress and potential for injury.

## Actions / Outcomes

---

### Responsibilities:

- Developing and implementing an Accessibility Policy that outlines the organization's commitment to accessibility.
- Setting clear goals and timelines for improvement of accessibility features.
- Collaborating with Inclusion NL and other stakeholder groups to educate and train staff on accessibility best practices.
- Collaborating with community disability advocacy organizations and individuals with disabilities to gather feedback and input on accessibility issues and solutions.
- Advocating for and promoting accessibility within the organization and the arts community, including participating in public events and awareness campaigns when feasible.
- Providing a point of contact for individuals with disabilities who have accessibility concerns and feedback to share with the organization.
- Liaising with the Department of Tourism, Culture and Arts and Recreation's policy division to remain informed and current with accessibility legislation, regulations, expectations, and best practices to ensure the organization is in compliance with the province's **Accessibility Act**.

### Timeline:

ArtsNL acknowledges that increasing accessibility is paramount, and the desired enhancements are divided into two main milestones: immediate and ongoing. Both heavily depend on the availability of resources and the landlord's ability and resources to make building upgrades and enhancements when and if possible.

### **Immediate:**

- Consideration of different abilities when developing marketing and communications including plain language and text across ArtsNL online platforms, social media and print materials.
- Addition of a permanent accessibility component to the existing occupational Workplace Health and Safety Committee
- A vehicle for reporting will be developed.
- Designate a section in the weekly ArtsNL Opportunities Digest (newsletter) with information about our commitment to accessibility and email address to encourage feedback from employees, clients, and other stakeholders to gauge the impacts of accessibility efforts.

### **Ongoing:**

- Provision of adjustable workstations for employees, when and if necessary.
- Provision of multilingual communication support.
- Monitoring of the provincial **Accessibility Act** for updated requirements and considerations.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating:**

- Working with the Disability Policy Office to establish a system for monitoring accessibility compliance against the legislation.
- Implementing mechanisms for reporting and addressing accessibility concerns or issues in a timely manner.
- Engaging in continuous improvement efforts to enhance accessibility and ensure a welcoming environment for all individuals.
- Soliciting feedback from employees, the artists and arts community, and other stakeholders to gauge the impacts of accessibility efforts.

### **Questions and Complaints:**

- Questions and complaints regarding accessibility will be taken seriously to ensure all individuals have equal access to facilities and services.
- Suggestions for potential accessibility improvements will be considered for implementation by ArtsNL. Various methods of contact will be established and made available on our website.

## Conclusion

---

Under the guidance of the **Accessibility Act**, ArtsNL has developed this accessibility plan with the goal of removing accessibility barriers in the workplace and creating a more inclusive environment, where feasible. The plan will be available online on the ArtsNL website ([artsnl.ca](https://artsnl.ca)) and will be updated every three years following the standards and guidelines highlighted in the **Accessibility Act**.

ArtsNL recognizes the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and strives to remove barriers preventing disabled individuals from participating as part of the community. This Accessibility Plan is a living document that highlights those barriers and the ways ArtsNL will strive to eliminate them over the next three years, where feasible.

Suggestions for further improvements from clients and stakeholders are welcomed and will be considered in future iterations of the Accessibility Plan. ArtsNL is committed to being responsive as possible to people from all communities and ensuring an accessible, inclusive and barrier-free environment.