



BREAKING BARRIERS

**PROGRESS REPORT: 2024-2025
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**



Contents:

<u>General</u>	3
Message from the President and CEO	3
A summary of our progress	4
Feedback and contact information	5
Glossary and abbreviations	6
<u>Priority areas progress and challenges</u>	8
<u>1. Employment</u>	8
Progress made in 2024-2025	8
Our focus for 2025	10
<u>2. Built environment</u>	10
Progress made in 2024-2025	10
Our focus for 2025	12
<u>3. Information and communication technologies (ICT)</u>	13
Progress made in 2024-2025	13
Our focus for 2025	13
<u>4. Communication, other than information and communication technologies</u>	14
Progress made in 2024-2025	14
Our focus for 2025	15
<u>5. Procurement of goods, services and facilities</u>	16
Progress made in 2024-2025	16
Our focus for 2025	17
<u>6. Design and delivery of programs and services</u>	17
Progress made in 2024-2025	18
Our focus in 2025	26
<u>7. Transportation</u>	26
<u>Accessibility requirements under the Broadcasting Act</u>	26
Closed captioning (CC)	27
Described video (DV)	27
Audio description	28
<u>Consultations</u>	28
What we consulted on	29
Who was consulted	31
What we learned	34
<u>Feedback</u>	39
What we heard	39
How we addressed feedback	40
<u>Discover CBC/Radio-Canada content</u>	40



General

Message from the President and CEO

This progress report outlines CBC/Radio-Canada's advancements in accessibility over the past year, building upon our inaugural accessibility plan, *Breaking Barriers*. *Breaking Barriers* set out an ambitious goal: for the public broadcaster to become a world leader in accessibility, propelled by the contributions of people with disabilities.

Removing and preventing barriers to accessibility not only allows for more diverse perspectives, enriching our content — it is also fundamental to ensuring the full participation of people with disabilities as both audience members and employees. From making the built environment accessible to incorporating accessibility needs into our technology purchases, the public broadcaster is taking concrete steps to eliminate and prevent barriers.

I'm particularly proud of how we are making CBC/Radio-Canada content more accessible. We increased the availability of transcripts for CBC and Radio-Canada podcasts and radio shows. Radio-Canada proudly welcomed its first deaf host for a weekly Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) news show, *Les nouvelles en LSQ*. And we significantly improved the accessibility of our coverage of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024. Both CBC and Radio-Canada provided daily sign language recaps of the Games, and more than 350 hours of events were streamed with closed captioning. Entire sporting events and the opening and closing ceremonies were streamed live with American Sign Language, LSQ and described video.

We also made strides in making our workforce more inclusive. The percentage of our employees who identify as having a disability has increased to 11.2%, up from 6.9% in 2024. This growth is linked to our success in improving accessibility awareness and modernizing our process to self-identify as having a disability, with 11.5% of new hires for long-term contract and permanent roles in the past year indicating they have a disability.

As this is the final update for the 2023-2025 National Accessibility Plan, we are now looking ahead to 2026, when we will publish an updated accessibility plan. With this update, we will continue to advance towards our vision of a truly barrier-free media organization where all Canadians can access and enjoy our content and thrive within our inclusive workplaces.

Marie-Philippe Bouchard

President and CEO
CBC/Radio-Canada



A summary of our progress

In 2024-2025, CBC/Radio-Canada continued to work toward meeting many of the commitments made in the 2023-2025 National Accessibility Plan, [Breaking Barriers](#). Here are a few highlights of our actions, which we explain in more detail in this progress report.

- [Employment](#) | We completed our review of the Rule on Accommodation, launching in 2025. We also launched a new allyship program at the CBC—Inclusion and You: Responsible Allyship Starts Within.
- [Built environment](#) | We continued improving the accessibility of some of our stations. These included the Edmonton Broadcast Centre, Vancouver Broadcast Centre, and Fredericton Station.
- [Information and communication technologies \(ICT\)](#) | We created the *2023-2026 Technology & Infrastructure (T&I) Digital Accessibility Strategic Plan*. It outlines a clear vision to guide and structure our technology accessibility efforts.
- [Communication](#) | We fostered accessibility awareness by promoting Disability Awareness training. We also actively supported Employee Resource Group events.
- [Procurement of goods, services and facilities](#) | We developed resources and guidance to incorporate accessibility more effectively when sourcing goods and services.
- [Design and delivery of programs and services](#) | We made significant progress in accessibility in this area. We created and acquired new content that reflects the diversity of people with disabilities living in Canada. We also collaborated with creators with disabilities in the media industry. Furthermore, we improved the accessibility of our digital products and content. Finally, we increased our employees' capacity to build knowledge on accessibility.

Throughout the year, we gathered feedback and consulted on the development of this progress report. These actions helped us identify opportunities to enhance accessibility.



Feedback and contact information

We continue our aim to be a public service media organization that is a world leader in accessibility, propelled by the contributions of people with disabilities.

We invite you to provide feedback in either official language on our progress report or share the barriers you experience when interacting with us. The Accessibility Lead, who is designated to receive feedback on CBC/Radio-Canada's behalf, is responsible for overseeing this plan and the accessibility process.

You can also request a copy of our National Accessibility Plan or progress reports in print, large print, braille, audio format, or electronic format compatible with adaptive technology.

By mail:

Audience Relations, CBC
P.O. Box 500 Station A
Toronto, ON
Canada, M5W 1E6

By toll-free number (Canada only):

1-866-306-4636

By email:

accessibility@cbc.ca

Online:

[CBC accessibility feedback form](#)

Our Application Support Specialists are happy to acknowledge receipt of your feedback. You are welcome to submit comments anonymously. Keep in mind, we are unable to provide an acknowledgement for anonymous submissions.



Glossary and abbreviations

Accessibility

The [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) defines accessibility as "creating communities, workplaces and services that enable everyone to participate fully in society without barriers, as is our human right."

Accommodation

Reasonable and appropriate measures to provide a diverse and inclusive workplace environment, free of discrimination against individuals or groups based on a prohibited group under the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#), and in accordance with legislated obligations such as those under the [Employment Equity Act](#) and the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA). Although often associated with removing physical barriers or providing technical devices, accommodation is not restricted to persons with disabilities.

American Sign Language (ASL)

ASL is the predominant sign language of Deaf communities in most of anglophone Canada.

Barrier

The [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) defines a barrier as "anything that hinders the full and equal participation of a person in Canadian life. Barriers can be physical, architectural, technological, informational or attitudinal."

Disability

The [Accessible Canada Act \(ACA\)](#) defines disability as "any impairment ... whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society."

Employee Resource Group (ERG)

ERGs are employee-led and organizationally supported groups that are drawn together by shared values and identities. CBC's AbiliCrew is an ERG formed for and by employees with apparent and non-apparent disabilities. Radio-Canada's *Cap* is an ERG for



employees with disabilities and allies. Both are dedicated to making CBC/Radio-Canada a more accessible and inclusive workplace.

Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ)

Quebec Sign Language (LSQ in French) is the predominant sign language of Deaf communities used in francophone Canada.

"Nothing Without Us"

This principle recognizes that persons with disabilities are equal participants in all areas of life and should contribute to all decision-making on policies, programs, practices and service delivery. ([Consulting Person with Disabilities | Government of Canada](#))



Priority areas progress and challenges

1. Employment



CBC Entertains created a peer support network with a first cohort of 10 employees trained to listen and talk confidentially with colleagues about work-related challenges impacting their mental health and well-being.

Progress made in 2024-2025

Objective: Improve the inclusion of employees with disabilities in our workplace

- In 2024, the review of the Rule on Accommodation was completed. Implementation of the changes is expected to launch in 2025-2026. Self-directed training for managers and employees is being developed. It is expected to launch in 2025.
- In March 2025, CBC launched a new allyship program—Inclusion and You: Responsible Allyship Starts Within. It provides employees with the tools and frameworks to challenge inequities in the workplace. The series of seven workshops will empower allies to make CBC a more inclusive space.



Measuring impact

As of March 31, 2025, 2,070 employees have completed the Disability Awareness training. This shows a 35% year-over-year increase in participation.

Measuring impact

In 2024, and for the second year in a row, employees with disabilities had a general engagement score higher than or equal to employees who do not self-identify as being part of an underrepresented group.

Objective: Increase the recruitment, retention and promotion of people with disabilities in our workforce

The Corporation's financial position and funding affected the hiring volume over the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Despite this, we are committed to reflecting diversity in our workforce. We will continue to support our employees with disabilities and invest in their career growth.

- Employee development continues to be a key priority. We especially want to increase the participation of employees with disabilities in career growth initiatives. These include the Developing Emerging Leaders (DEL) program, the INSPIRE mentorship program, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Development Fund.

Measuring impact

CBC/Radio-Canada tracks the representation of new hires with disabilities as part of our employment key performance indicator. We continue to see a moderate increase in new hires in long-term contract and permanent roles who self-identified with a disability:

- 2022-2023 (March 31, 2023): 6.2%¹
- 2023-2024 (March 31, 2024): 11.5%
- 2024-2025 (March 31, 2025): 12.0%

¹ Following the transition to our new human resources information system in February 2023, we have actual results to Q3 2022-2023. The final quarter and year results are projections based on the results observed in the past three years.



Measuring impact

Percentage of CBC/Radio-Canada workforce that self-identified as having a disability:

- 2022-2023 (March 31, 2023): —²
- 2023-2024 (March 31, 2024): 6.9%
- 2024-2025 (March 31, 2025): 11.18%

Our focus for 2025

The financial pressures in the 2024-2025 fiscal year continue to create uncertainty in our hiring. Yet, our commitment to increasing disability representation in our workforce remains strong.

Inclusion goes beyond hiring. It requires professional development, promotions and closing the representation gap at senior levels.

A key issue we're addressing is the need to improve disability awareness among our employees. We will do this by working with our Learning and Development teams on a targeted engagement plan. With the support of new departmental ambassadors, this plan will make disability awareness a part of our company culture.

Another focus for 2025-2026 will be the implementation of our new Rule on Accommodation. Approved in 2024, the modernized policy will enhance inclusion and strengthen our appeal to future hires. In 2025, we will launch training for managers and those who support employees and job candidates.

2. Built environment

Progress made in 2024-2025

Objective: Improve the accessibility of our technology and infrastructure

- New universal washrooms were built at our Edmonton and Vancouver facilities, an accessible shower was added to the washroom in our Whitehorse station, and automatic sensor/push door openers were installed in our Calgary and Vancouver washrooms. These changes will ensure accessibility and inclusivity for all users.

² Data unavailable during transition to new human resources information system in February 2023.



- Studio Grandé in Montreal installed a new platform lift to provide access to the upper floor of the facility.
- A kitchenette in the Toronto Broadcast Centre was renovated to ensure that it meets all relevant accessibility standards.
- New height-adjustable workstations were integrated into existing workspaces in Edmonton, Sherbrooke and St. John's, improving the overall workflow and ergonomics for employees.
- The Sept-Îles newsroom was renovated to include more accessible and inclusive spaces. We optimized clearances, removed barriers, and incorporated flexible and adjustable furniture solutions.
- We modernized our Fredericton newsroom radio production spaces and workspaces. Changes included updated ergonomic furniture, lighting, kitchenette and collaboration spaces, as well as access to natural light. Creating a flexible working environment allows for accessible spaces and enhances employee well-being.
- Based on feedback from our internal ERG, we worked to improve accessibility in our Toronto Broadcast Centre. We installed high-contrast elevator screen buttons and visual strips on security portals to improve accessibility for employees with low vision.
- External subject matter experts have completed two built environment audits. The reports will allow our internal teams to incorporate them into their Accessibility Program and future optimization projects.



The new set for Power & Politics removed the need for a plateau/platform around the main desk. A similar effect was created by painting a circle on the floor, creating barrier-free access to the main table.

Our focus for 2025

CBC/Radio-Canada's internal teams are dedicated to designing spaces that reflect our mission, culture and goals as we adapt to today's work environments. Through strategic planning, innovative design, and a focus on sustainability, inclusivity and accessibility, we are setting new standards for broadcasting workplaces.

In January 2025, CBC launched the English News Local Service Expansion Program. This initiative will add new sites to our built environment. For these new sites to be inclusive, they will require accessible entrances, services, amenities and workspaces. If a site doesn't meet these requirements, journalists will meet with people with accessibility needs at a nearby location.

In 2025-2026, we will continue to audit our built environments and integrate the results into our Accessibility Program. This will enable us to prioritize and implement necessary design enhancements to improve accessibility.



3. Information and communication technologies (ICT)

This section addresses ICT related to our corporate website and the technology we use internally. Information about ICT related to our content and programming can be found in [Design and delivery of programs and services](#).

Progress made in 2024-2025

Objective: Improve the accessibility of our technology and infrastructure

- We developed the *2023-2026 Technology & Infrastructure (T&I) Digital Accessibility Strategic Plan*. It outlines a clear vision to guide and structure our technology accessibility efforts. This plan will help break down barriers and make accessibility a core value of our organizational culture.
- The *Accessibility Hub* was launched in May 2024. This knowledge resource makes accessibility best practices on various topics, including ICT, available to all employees. New topics continue to be added to support accessibility knowledge sharing.
- In June 2024, we created a page with tips on making Google Docs, Sheets and Slides more accessible. It is available to all employees through our intranet.
- IT support teams now have access to *Essential Accessibility Tools for an Inclusive Workplace—A Comprehensive Guide*, a dynamic resource that will evolve as tools and technology change.
- In collaboration with Procurement, we are introducing a consistent new method to make sure accessibility needs are considered in all important technology purchases. This initiative will raise vendor awareness of the importance of accessibility. It will also ensure greater compliance with accessibility standards.

Our focus for 2025

In April 2025, CBC/Radio-Canada added a new Senior Specialist role in its Technology & Infrastructure (T&I) team. This individual will work with Procurement to incorporate accessibility best practices into the technology procurement process. In turn, this will make our tech purchases more accessible to all users.

As part of the T&I team, the Senior Specialist will also play a key role in updating the three-year National Accessibility Plan, to be published in June 2026.



Artificial intelligence (AI) represents a potential tool to further reduce technological barriers for people with disabilities. We will explore AI-driven solutions for improving closed captioning, optimizing descriptive audio and creating more inclusive user experiences on our platforms.

4. Communication, other than information and communication technologies

This section addresses communication for employment and the built environment. Communication for the procurement of goods, services and facilities can be found in [Procurement of goods, services and facilities](#). Communication for the design and delivery of programs and services (content on television, radio and/or digital platforms) can be found in [Design and delivery of programs and services](#).

Progress made in 2024-2025

Objective: Improve the inclusion of employees with disabilities in our workplace

- The *Accessibility Hub* was launched in May 2024. This knowledge resource makes accessibility best practices on various topics, including communications, available within the organization. New topics will continue to be added in 2025 to support the creation of more accessible communications.
- Our colleagues in communications departments across the organization continue to play a vital role in implementing the National Accessibility Plan. With their help, we have been able to drive increased participation in our Disability Awareness training. They have also helped organize and promote events, such as those from our *Cap* ERG (Radio-Canada) and AbiliCrew ERG (CBC).
- In January 2025, our hybrid town hall was included real-time closed captioning for those participating virtually, and bilingual live closed captioning. Those viewing on demand were able to access transcripts of the event.



Our first bilingual town hall with CBC/Radio-Canada's new President and CEO, Marie-Philippe Bouchard, was held at the Toronto Broadcast Centre with live captions. An on-demand video with captions, as well as written transcripts in both official languages, were available.

Our focus for 2025

A key focus for 2025 will be to continue making our workplace more inclusive for people with disabilities by sharing information and training. Our main goals are:

1. **Making our online resource, the Accessibility Hub, easier to use:** We want more employees to find and use this knowledge repository. We will try new ways to promote and share the information, such as audio and using AI.
2. **Promoting awareness around disability inclusion:** We'll leverage internal communications to raise awareness and encourage employees to take part in Disability Awareness training.
3. **Ensure internal visibility and awareness for our new Rule on Accommodation:** Ensure the launch of the new Rule on Accommodation has national impact and encourages managers and employees to complete the related training modules.
4. **Sharing information about building accessibility:** We'll continue letting our employees and visitors know how to access our buildings easily.



5. Procurement of goods, services and facilities

Progress made in 2024-2025



CBC/Radio-Canada promoted its new vendor portal with promotional cards in both English and French that included Braille and a scannable QR code.

Objective: Improve the accessibility of our technology and infrastructure

- To develop an accessible procurement strategy, we surveyed our key technology suppliers. We learned more about the maturity of the market and our suppliers' knowledge of accessibility.
- We created an accessible procurement working group. That group collaboratively designed the process for including accessibility in ICT, as well as the tools that will facilitate it.
- We developed a training plan around accessible documents. It is being delivered to Procurement team members. This training will continue in 2025 with the rest of the Procurement team. The goal is to improve the accessibility of procurement documents.
- In September 2024, CBC/Radio-Canada presented a webinar to accessibility startups at Access to Success. In the sessions, we told them about our new accessibility initiative for procurement and invited them to sign up for our



vendor portal.

- In June 2024, CBC/Radio-Canada participated in a conference on supplier diversity. At this event, we met underrepresented suppliers, including those companies owned, managed and controlled by people with disabilities.
- In November 2024, a procurement searching tool was added for navigating the vendor database and quickly identifying suppliers owned by people with disabilities.

The actions above identify initiatives to increase the diversity of suppliers, including those owned, managed and controlled by people with disabilities, excluding content creators. For initiatives related to increasing opportunities for content creators in the media industry, see [Design and delivery of programs and services](#).

Our focus for 2025

Accessibility Standards Canada has adopted the European harmonized standard on ICT for Canada. Released under the code CAN/ASC EN 301 549:2024,³ the national standard defines accessibility requirements for ICT products and services. It also incorporates accessibility best practices in use by over 30 countries. Although the legislation doesn't currently require this standard, CBC/Radio-Canada is taking a proactive approach to the strategic planning of accessibility in procurement.

For 2025, our key focus is to enhance the accessibility of our goods and services by identifying and applying the most suitable procurement strategies, where applicable. By asking our suppliers to aim toward the standard, CBC/Radio-Canada will further remove barriers to accessibility and reinforce our commitment to inclusivity.

6. Design and delivery of programs and services

CBC/Radio-Canada produces a high volume of content across many platforms in Canada's two official languages (English and French) and eight Indigenous languages: Dëne Sųłíné, Dene Kədé, Dene Zhatié, Eastern Cree, Dinjii Zhu' Ginjik, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun and Tłıchq.

This means that increasing the accessibility of our content requires a coordinated effort across teams: those who manage the platforms (e.g., development teams, schedulers,

³ [CAN/ASC - EN 301 549:2024 Accessibility requirements for ICT products and services \(EN 301 549:2021, IDT\) - Accessibility Standards Canada](#)



technical teams), those who create the content (e.g. producers, reporters), and those involved in acquisitions and independent productions.

Progress made in 2024-2025

Fostering an inclusive world with the transformative power of sport



Wheelchair racer Brent Lakatos of Dorval, Quebec, is interviewed by Devin Heroux from the CBC at the Paris 2024 Paralympics. (Michel Aspirot/CBC)

Over 12 days, more than 11 million Canadians tuned into CBC/Radio-Canada's coverage of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. We significantly increased the accessibility of the broadcast and digital content on all our platforms. Some highlights:

- Leading up to the Paralympic Games, CBC/Radio-Canada and the Canadian Paralympic Committee (PCP) launched the collaborative *Greatness Moves Us* campaign. It celebrated the journey of seven



diverse Canadian Para athletes from their earliest dreams to their place at the pinnacle of the world stage.

- We provided our most accessible coverage with the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Entire events, as well as the opening and closing ceremonies, were streamed live with [LSQ](#), [ASL](#) and described video. Closed captions were included in over 350 hours of high-profile streamed events.
- Audiences were able to tune into daily summaries of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in LSQ with [Radio-Canada Sports Facebook Reels](#) and in ASL with *ASL / Rise and Stream* on YouTube and [Facebook](#).

"Thank you for your commitment and consideration for the Deaf community. We particularly appreciated the access to the Olympics thanks to your summary videos in Quebec Sign Language. We are deeply grateful!" - public feedback

Objective: Create and promote content that reflects the diversity of people with disabilities living in Canada

We have been actively working on including more representation of people with disabilities in our content. A few projects we are particularly proud of:

Measuring impact

CBC tracks the representation of people with disabilities in its content. Data is collected using a perception-based approach, meaning representation is analyzed based on how individuals are perceived rather than self-reported identity. This data is used to drive and implement change. Since its inception over three years ago, this perception-based self-monitoring practice has been steadily growing:

- Participation in the program increased from 85 teams in 2022 to over 136 teams in 2024.
- Overall, the percentage of guests perceived with disabilities increased by 2.1% in 2024 compared to 2022.

- **Podcasts and audio** | Radio-Canada's [Les proches : l'accompagnement en santé mentale](#) is a four-part podcast on mental health. CBC's [Short Sighted](#) podcast is hosted by storyteller Graham Isador, who has a degenerative eye disease. He uses personal narrative, interviews, and experimental sound design to convey the experience of vision loss.



- **Kids and youth** | CBC GEM's [Hop](#) is a preschool show that follows the adventures of a little frog with one that is leg shorter than the other. On ICI TOU.TV, viewers can follow the adventures of Professor Henry, a wheelchair user, in [Mini-Jean et Mini-Bulle](#).
- **Broadcast** | Season 2 of the CBC Gem original comedy series [You're My Hero](#) launched on March 14, 2025, in honour of National Cerebral Palsy Awareness



Month. The program focuses on Ian, an angsty 20-something with cerebral palsy, dealing with the pressure of adult life in a world not designed for wheels. On ICI TOU.TV, [Vestiaires](#) features a near-complete cast of individuals living with disabilities—a first on French language television.

- **Social media** | Radio-Canada hired its first Deaf host for [Les nouvelles en LSQ](#), a digital weekly recap of national news in LSQ. The pilot was so successful that it was renewed. It also inspired [a similar recap for the Olympics](#) and [Paralympics](#) with a second Deaf host. CBC created ASL videos promoting live events broadcast with sign language interpretation, such as the [Junos](#) and [Today's Play videos with ASL](#) for International Day of Sign Languages on September 23.
- **Local and national news** | We aired Radio-Canada ICI Saskatchewan's story on [accessibility during the 2024 election](#), and CBC New Brunswick's story about [academic accommodations in Maritime universities](#).
- **Partnerships** | Thanks to a partnership with Canal M, Radio-Canada expanded the reach of podcasts related to the realities of people with disabilities. We now have two of our podcasts as part of their [Canal M selection](#) and we offer a selection of their content on OHdio. Thanks to CBC's ongoing collaboration with Accessible Media Inc. (AMI), viewers can watch the third season of [You Can't Ask That](#) on CBC Gem, focusing on breaking down stereotypes and offering genuine insight into the lives of people living with labels.



CBC Gem's You're My Hero focuses on Ian, an angsty 20-something with cerebral palsy, dealing with the pressure of adult life in a world not designed for wheels.

Objective: Increase opportunities for creators with disabilities in the media industry

CBC/Radio-Canada has been actively working to increase opportunities for creators with disabilities in the media industry:

- **Mentorships** | [AccessCBC 2.0](#), CBC's national program for Deaf and disabled creators, continued to provide practical, hands-on mentorship to participants to help them develop scripted and unscripted content. Participants received additional industry knowledge and skills through a new partnership established with the Disability Screen Office (DSO). Short-form content created through the program can be found on the newly launched [AccessCBC Playlist](#).

"AccessCBC was an incredible learning experience that helped me craft a strong show idea and build a supportive creative community. With insightful mentorship, I gained the skills and confidence to refine and pitch my work." - participant feedback

- **Partnerships** | CBC and the Documentary Organization of Canada launched a joint pilot, the [Mental Health Initiative for Documentary Filmmakers](#). The new program aims to support Canadian documentary filmmakers with their mental health as they create documentaries for CBC.



- **Training and experience** | In September 2024, CBC launched the On-Air Talent Accelerator Program for broadcast professionals living with a disability who graduated from the On-Air Talent Development Program. It expanded their opportunity to continue to learn, create and hone their on-air audio production skills. CBC also delivered free, industry-wide [Trauma Awareness training](#) for documentary filmmakers with a focus on strategies to protect psychological health and safety.
- **Showcases** | In 2025, CBC expanded [AccessWorks](#) into a free, industry-wide, professional development event that celebrates accessibility and inclusion in our content. It featured a great lineup of speakers from CBC, the Disability Screen Office, the National Screen Institute, AMI and more on [YouTube](#).

Objective: Increase the accessibility of our content, with a focus on digital



CBC's research on the most effective closed-captioning for children included karaoke style.

While many projects are still underway, here is a selection of work from this past year:

- **Text-based content** | Users can now choose an option to listen to news articles, particularly those with large amounts of text. This feature is available on Radio-Canada's news content, and it will be available on CBC News starting summer 2025.
- **Audio content** | CBC has been adding to its [podcast transcripts](#) page and now has over 65 podcasts available for reading online or printing out. Users can also



provide feedback for each transcript to help improve quality. Radio shows [Les grands entretiens](#), [Les années Lumières](#) and [Réfléchir à voix haute](#) have been added to the catalogue of radio shows and podcasts already offered with transcripts at Radio-Canada.

- **Video content** | CBC received funding from the Broadcasting Accessibility Fund to study the most effective captioning for children. We collaborated with CanChild, part of the School of Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University, on this project. The [results of our research](#) were presented at the [Quant UX conference](#) in June 2024 and also [published](#) in August 2024. CBC has also been exploring auto-generated closed captioning and will have it available on most web video on demand in 2025.

"Thank you so much for the captions. I am a senior and deaf. Without the captions, I would be excluded and unable to hear the news." - public feedback

- **Alternative formats** | In partnership with the Disability Screen Office and the Canada Media Fund, CBC offered ASL interpretation to audiences streaming the Junos on [CBC Gem](#) and [YouTube](#), in addition to live described video and closed captioning.
- **Image-based content** | CBC has made alternative text (alt text) mandatory for all informative images on CBC News, publishing approximately 150k images with alt text between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025. CBC is also exploring how AI can help journalists create more descriptive alt text. Radio-Canada partnered with Polytechnique Montréal and *Le Devoir* on a research project aimed at making online graphs and data visualizations accessible to people who are blind. In December 2024, the results of this research [were presented at a conference](#) to raise awareness among our employees and the industry about the importance of digital accessibility.

Objective: Develop accessibility knowledge and ability among our employees

- CBC provided trauma awareness training for its programmers who work with the documentary community.
- To strengthen accessibility knowledge and skills, accessibility-related responsibilities have been shared between all equity, diversity and inclusion advisors in Radio-Canada's Diversity & Inclusion team. This has fostered a collaborative and integrated approach. This sharing of responsibilities also helps us to better support the organization in identifying, removing and preventing barriers.

- The *Accessibility Hub* was launched in May 2024. It provides accessibility best practices on various topics, with sections of particular interest and usefulness to content creators and digital teams. New topics will continue to be added in 2025 to support the creation of more accessible content.
- Five new role-specific accessibility training offerings have been created. These include Accessibility for iOS Developers and Accessibility Management for Product Leaders. This training is available on-demand and is recommended as part of new employee onboarding. A training video on Audio Descriptions has also been created for CBC newsrooms.
- In 2024-2025, the Accessibility Champions group at CBC organized 15 education sessions on topics related to accessibility. The group is a peer-led network of employees that organizes regular presentations, runs an internal accessibility Slack channel and promotes knowledge sharing within the organization. Radio-Canada's *Cap* ERG held virtual events to help employees cultivate an inclusive approach to invisible disabilities and learn about ADHD in the workplace.



Radio-Canada presented digital accessibility research findings at a conference to raise awareness about making online graphs and data visualizations accessible to blind individuals.



Our focus in 2025

CBC/Radio-Canada is committed to ensuring all Canadians can access our content, in English or French, across our diverse digital landscape. Our platforms include mobile apps, connected televisions, streaming services and the web. We aim to break down barriers, providing a truly inclusive experience for everyone.

In 2025, we're prioritizing the accessibility of our digital platforms. This involves a thorough review of our current platforms to identify specific areas where we can enhance usability.

To achieve our accessibility goals, we'll implement a two-part approach:

1. Continue building on ongoing efforts by prioritizing opportunities that are easy to implement in the short term. For example, enhancing captioning across our digital platforms.
2. We also see significant potential in exploring AI-generated alt text, transcripts and text-to-speech generation.

We recognize that improvements designed to benefit people with disabilities ultimately enhance usability for everyone. This creates a more seamless and inclusive digital environment.

7. Transportation

Transportation is not a key area of activity for CBC/Radio-Canada.

Accessibility requirements under the *Broadcasting Act*

CBC/Radio-Canada's licensed audiovisual services⁴ are subject to several conditions issued under section 9.1 of the *Broadcasting Act* that relate to accessibility, specifically concerning the provision of closed captioning, described video and audio description in its programming. The conditions that relate to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers are explained below, along with their references.

⁴ CBC/Radio-Canada's licensed audiovisual services consist of ICI TÉLÉ (network and stations), CBC Television (network and stations), ICI ARTV, ICI EXPLORA, ICI RDI, CBC News Network and documentary Channel.



No orders or regulations are made under subsections 9(4) or 10(1) of the *Broadcasting Act* that apply to CBC/Radio-Canada that relate to the identification, removal or prevention of barriers.

Closed captioning (CC)

Captioning is the on-screen textual representation of the audio component of a program. It is represented as a banner, usually at the bottom of the screen, and provides a text rendition of all significant audio content, including on-screen dialogue, sound effects and non-speech information, such as the identity of speakers and their manner of speaking.⁵

CBC/Radio-Canada's licensed audiovisual services are required to:

- Caption 100% of the English- and French-language programs broadcast over the broadcast day.
- Ensure that advertising, sponsorship messages and promos in the English and French languages are captioned.
- Implement a monitoring system to ensure that, for any signal that is closed captioned, the correct signal is captioned, the captioning is included in its broadcast signal, and this captioning reaches the distributor of that signal, in its original form.
- Adhere to the CRTC's quality standards for English- and French-language closed captioning.⁶

Described video (DV)

Described video (also referred to as videodescription or described narrative) consists of a narrated description of a program's main visual elements, such as settings, costumes and body language.⁷

⁵ Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC [2007-54](#), paragraph 1.

⁶ Appendix 1 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2016-436](#), conditions 9-11; Appendix 1 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2023-306](#), conditions 11-14; Appendix 2 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2023-306](#), conditions 7-9.

⁷ Appendix 1 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2023-306](#), definition of “described video.”



ICI TÉLÉ, CBC Television, ICI ARTV and documentary Channel are required to provide described video for all English- and French-language programming that is broadcast during prime time (i.e., from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.) and that is drawn from program categories 2(b) Long-form documentary, 7 Drama and comedy, 9 Variety, 11(a) General entertainment and human interest, and 11 (b) Reality television, and/or is programming targeting preschool children (0-5 years of age) and children (6-12 years of age).⁸

ICI EXPLORA, ICI RDI and CBC News Network are required, by September 1, 2025, to provide a minimum of four hours of described video per broadcast week, if the service broadcasts four hours or more per broadcast week in English- or French-language programming that is drawn from any of the program categories listed above.

Audio description

Audio description refers to announcers reading aloud the key textual and graphic information that is displayed on the screen during information programs.⁹

CBC/Radio-Canada's licensed audiovisual services are required to provide audio description for all the key elements of Canadian information programs, including news programming.¹⁰

Consultations

In the spirit of "Nothing Without Us," CBC/Radio-Canada continues to consult directly with people with disabilities to inform the development of our progress report. Between April 2024 and March 2025, we held consultations to identify successes and areas for improvement. We will use these learnings to shape our actions for 2025-2026.

⁸ Appendix 3 to Broadcasting Decision CRTC [2022-165](#), condition 38.

⁹ Appendix 1 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2023-306](#), definition of "audio description."

¹⁰ Appendix 1 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2016-436](#), condition 13; Appendix 1 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2023-306](#), condition 16; Appendix 2 to Broadcasting Regulatory Policy CRTC [2023-306](#), condition 10.



What we consulted on

Our approach to consultations at CBC/Radio-Canada is to gather information on questions of strategic importance. These questions help guide the implementation of our Plan.

Between January and March 2025, CBC/Radio-Canada collaborated with the [Return on Disability Group](#) (RoDG) to conduct focus groups and surveys to answer the following questions:

1. Does **synthetic voice described video (SVDV)** meet the needs of people with disabilities as effectively as traditional described video (DV)?
2. Do **auto-generated closed captions** meet the needs of people with disabilities as effectively as traditional, human-generated closed captions?
3. Do **auto-generated transcriptions** meet the needs of people with disabilities as effectively as traditional, human-generated transcriptions?

Throughout the year, CBC/Radio-Canada also collaborated on an ongoing basis with the accessibility and research testing group [Fable](#) on their digital platforms.

CBC also held consultations with independent producers with a disability as part of our CRTC conditions of license. Radio-Canada's consultations with independent producers with a disability are in progress and will be completed in May 2025. We asked two key questions:

1. How can CBC make sure that Deaf and disabled audiences feel a greater connection to our independently produced content?
2. How can CBC cultivate better relationships with Canadian Deaf and disabled independent producers?

Radio-Canada sent a survey to communities of francophones with disabilities as part of their CRTC conditions of license. They asked about:

1. Accessibility of CBC/Radio-Canada's content.
2. Quality and relevance of the content to people with disabilities.
3. What Radio-Canada does well in regards to representation and delivery of digital services to people with disabilities.
4. Areas for improvement.



Insights from these consultations will be incorporated into our next Accessibility Plan. These consultations provide an incredibly valuable opportunity to hear from these communities.

Synthetic voice described video (survey)

An online survey was created by RoDG, CBC and Radio-Canada and sent to 150 people with disabilities across Canada (75 anglophone and 75 francophone) to provide quantitative feedback on how well SVDV performs relative to traditional, human voice DV. The surveys were available in both English and French.

Auto-generated closed captions (survey and focus groups)

An online survey was created by RoDG and Radio-Canada and sent to 75 people with disabilities across Canada to provide quantitative feedback on the viability of auto-generated closed captioning by benchmarking against traditional captioning methods. Of those respondents, 11 were asked to participate in focus groups to provide qualitative feedback. The surveys were available in French, and the focus groups were led in French.

Auto-generated transcripts (survey and focus groups)

An online survey was created by RoDG and CBC and sent to 75 people with disabilities across Canada to provide quantitative feedback on the viability of auto-generated transcripts by benchmarking against transcripts that were partially or wholly edited. Of those respondents, 10 were asked to participate in a focus group to provide qualitative feedback. The surveys were available in English, and the focus group was led in English.

Digital platforms (ongoing usability testing)

CBC/Radio-Canada uses [Fable Engage](#) to conduct usability testing on its digital platforms (websites, mobile apps and connected TV apps) with assistive technology users. The testing has two purposes:

- To design new features inclusively with users.
- To ensure that CBC/Radio-Canada's platforms remain accessible over time.



CRTC consultations

CBC invited independent producers and content creators from the Deaf and disabled community to provide feedback through either or all of these three channels:

- Completing a short anonymous poll between January 27 and February 28, 2025.
- Attending a live feedback session on February 19, 2025, moderated by award-winning disabled writer and performer Ophira Calof.
- Sending an email with an audio file or ASL video.

Radio-Canada surveyed people from the disability community between the ages of 18 to 65+. We received 122 responses.

Who was consulted

Focus groups and surveys (2024-2025 participants)

The numbers below reflect all 300 participants.

Province	% of total participants
Ontario	32%
Quebec	50%
Western Canada ¹¹	13%
Atlantic Canada ¹²	5%

¹¹ British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba

¹² Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador



Type of disability	% of total participants ¹³
Physical	23%
Vision	52%
Hearing	16%
Cognitive	45%

Digital platforms (ongoing usability testing)

The following data is for April 2024 to March 2025. CBC/Radio-Canada used Fable Engage to conduct 222 usability testing activities with 63 different participants.

Type of assistive technology	% of total participants
Screen reader	49%
Screen magnification	25%
Alternative navigation	26%

¹³ Note: The total exceeds 100% because some users self-identified as having more than one type of disability.



CRTC consultations

Independent producers with a disability

Type of consultation	Total number of participants
Online poll	71
Live feedback session	22
Follow-up conversations	3

The disability community

Type of consultation	Total number of participants
Physical disability (mobility, pain, flexibility)	30
Blindness or low vision)	21
Health condition or chronic illness	21
Mental health disorder (e.g., depression, anxiety)	18
Neurodiversity (e.g., autism, Tourette syndrome)	14
Learning disability (e.g., learning, memorization, concentration)	10
Deafness or hearing impairment	7
Other	5



What we learned

Survey on SVDV

Participants reviewed four different clips in English from CBC and four in French from Radio-Canada and answered both quantitative and qualitative questions for each. Their comments were reviewed and grouped into themes.

Synthetic voice

When asked if SVDV would meet their needs if human voice DV was unavailable:

- Just over 50% of English viewers indicated that it probably or definitely would.
- Around half of French viewers indicated that it probably or definitely would.

This suggests a growing acceptance of SVDV among DV users.

"While I could tell the voice was not a real person, I appreciated the fact that it was still clear and sounded natural."

Children's programming

Participants were also asked to review a children's program with SVDV. Both English and French participants:

- Found the voice robotic and less energetic and engaging relative to the content type.
- Ranked the content more poorly for ease of understanding, clarity of described voice, naturalness and engagement of voice.

"If it's a show for kids, why not have a young person voice the description?"

"Since this program is geared to children, I think the voice should have had more emotion in it."

Ideas for improvement

Survey participants encouraged us to:

- Explore ways to describe more of the details in the video.



- Explore ways to give users more choice in the narrator's voice and tone.
- Be consistent in the pacing of the SVDV to ensure it appears with its associated dialogue.
- Identify speakers for better comprehension of the scene.

"A choice of male or female narrator would be great."

"There was a lot of music playing at the beginning and it overshadowed the voice."

Focus group and survey on automated closed captions

Key findings

- Factors that affect the readability of closed captions include font size, font colour and contrast, location on screen and synchronization.
- Closed-captioning synchronization issues impact comprehension, increase cognitive load, and can spoil key moments in the content.
- Audio alternative use cases for closed captions go beyond consumers with limited hearing. Participants also used them for avoiding fluctuations in volume, watching videos in public places, learning languages or because it is a habit.
- Closed captions are very rarely used for sports broadcasts where the focus is on the action in the game.
- Traditionally-generated captions outperform those that are auto-generated in speed, clarity and overall satisfaction. Auto-generated captions are preferred over no captions.
- The accuracy of closed captioning is preferred over speed. However, minor typos are preferable to inaccuracies in word choices.

"It's become such an established habit that without closed captions, I'm missing part of my listening experience."

Ideas for improvement

- Explore the option to set the amount of text on screen within closed captioning preferences.



- Explore ways to make users more aware of their closed-captioning preferences, such as font size and colour.
- Improve the time lag in live captioning to increase quality and comprehension. One recommendation was to increase text density to make content easier to follow and make it flow more naturally.
- Monitor for improved language error corrections in the AI technology used.
- Improve the placement of closed captions so as not to obscure existing subtitles or informational content.
- Ensure AI technology accounts for Québécois French and regional dialects.

"Sometimes there's a character speaking Québécois, but the closed captions are written in perfect French. I'd like to be able to read them the way I hear them. I find the little expressions interesting to read as they're said."

Focus group and survey on automated transcripts

Key findings

- While editing just the speaker names increases readability and the perception of usability, it has no measurable effect on the comprehension of content.
- Use cases for transcripts go far beyond consumers with hearing disabilities. Participants with cognitive disabilities and/or neurodiversity use them as a focus aid, some use them for research or to go back and find critical information that they could not recall, and some use them as an alternative format.
- Suggestions were made for further formatting enhancements to enhance readability. These included using bold or italics for speaker names, breaking down large paragraphs and adding spacing.
- Following speakers in cross-talk transcripts is challenging, even if the transcripts are edited.
- Requests were made for transcripts that resemble a screenplay or script. Suggestions were made to include a brief summary at the beginning of the transcript, more context, timelines, clear separation between speakers through formatting, and clear and consistent speaker identification.



"I also use transcripts whenever I possibly can. I am deaf in one ear so I often cannot hear the differences in people's speech."

Ideas for improvement

- Continue to monitor advances in AI technology for improvements that will reduce, if not eliminate, the need for human editing. Until then, continue to edit transcripts to improve quality.
- Improve readability and comprehension and reduce the cognitive load of transcripts by clearly and correctly identifying speakers.
- Explore the formatting of transcripts to help with understanding.
- Improve transcript availability for audio and video content on apps and platforms.
- Explore ways to add more description to transcripts, such as with described video.

"If the broadcaster doesn't do a basic edit and format, then they are expecting US to do it for free. It requires doing, regardless."

Digital platforms (ongoing usability testing)

Key projects

CBC engaged with Fable during the following:

- Design and development of the 2024 Paris Olympics and Paralympics content.
- Redesign of the CBC.ca homepage.
- Design and development of live news story pages.

Users are also consulted each quarter on key products, with goals for benchmarking usability over time.



CRTC consultations with independent producers with a disability

Key findings

- A desire for CBC to provide more training, mentorship and professional development opportunities for disabled creators and producers.
- Would like to see ongoing consultations and communication with creators/producers from the disabled community.
- Better accessibility when it comes to the pitch process.
- Keep accessibility needs in mind when developing budgets.
- Aggregate accessibility- and disability-related content into one section of CBC's website.

CRTC consultations with the disability community

Key findings

- What Radio-Canada does well regarding its programming reflecting underrepresented communities:
 - Accessibility efforts (audio description and closed captions).
 - Representation of people with disabilities.
 - Diversity in content offered.
 - Accessibility of platforms (streaming and on-demand).
- What Radio-Canada can do to improve its programming to reflect underrepresented communities:
 - Increase the representation of underrepresented communities.
 - Diversify creative teams and the range of on-screen talent.
 - Make content more accessible.
 - Develop more inclusive youth programming.

"In terms of disability, having more characters with disabilities, without it being the theme of the show."



Feedback

CBC/Radio-Canada welcomes feedback from employees and the public so that we can continuously address accessibility issues and improve our platforms and services.

[Feedback can be submitted in both official languages](#) online, by phone or by mail.

Between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, CBC resolved and closed 422 pieces of feedback that were tagged as accessibility requests through our accessibility feedback mechanism and by our Audience Relations teams.

Of these, 22% (94) were for technical issues related to assistive technology, account login and FAST channels, as well as editorial issues related to content and general comments. The total amount of actual accessibility-related requests amounted to 78% (328) of all incoming requests.

Radio-Canada received 433 pieces of feedback regarding accessibility through our accessibility feedback system and our Audience Relations teams.

Almost two-thirds of the feedback (331) was about a functionality issue in our smart TV applications, where subtitles and video descriptions automatically turned on when episodes play one after the other. Although this bug was resolved after an update in December 2024, it appears to have resurfaced since last March. Our technical teams are working to fix this.

What we heard

The majority of the comments we received were in the [Design and delivery of programs and services](#) focus area of the Accessibility Plan. Below is some of the feedback:

- **Closed captions**
 - Accuracy, lag and placement of closed captions.
 - Requests for closed-captioning on news clips.
 - Concerns regarding the absence of closed captioning on content available on ICI TOU.TV.
- **Sign language interpretation**
 - ASL interpreters cut off onscreen.
 - Requests for ASL interpretation at live event coverage, such as press conferences.



- **Audio**
 - Loud background noise and music are obscuring audio in news programming.
 - Hard to understand fast talking.
- **Described video / audio description**
 - Issues finding out which videos have described video using a screen reader.
 - Incorrect labelling of shows with/without audio description on Gem.
- **Transcripts**
 - Requests for transcripts for podcasts and other audio programs.
 - Requests for transcripts for videos.
- **Functionality**
 - Inability to skip or hide the “shorts” video section on the home page.
 - Home page design changes break standard keyboard navigation.

How we addressed feedback

CBC/Radio-Canada carefully documents and acknowledges, where possible, the receipt of all feedback. Every effort is made to pass the feedback on to the appropriate operational teams to resolve issues or for strategic consideration, as relevant.

Discover CBC/Radio-Canada content

We have put together examples of content from CBC/Radio-Canada's different services to help you sample some of what we have to offer:

CBC Arts

Surprising, relevant and provocative stories featuring artists from diverse communities across Canada.

- Watch the docu-series [Canada's A Drag's episode about Hot Wheelz](#), the first person who uses a wheelchair to perform drag in Edmonton.



CBC Corner

A digital space developed only for public libraries that brings together the wide variety of CBC and Radio-Canada digital offers and resources.

- Explore the [Disability & Accessibility](#) subject for a selection of content across our platforms.

CBC GEM

Original and acquired scripted and unscripted programming in all genres for all audiences.

- Watch [Is There Anybody Out There?](#), a documentary that follows Ella Glendining's search for someone with a body that looks like hers.

CBC Kids

Safe and entertaining content — including news, videos and games — for children and youth.

- Play [Echo Hunter](#), a game designed to be suitable for kids with visual impairments. You can play the entire game with your eyes closed

CBC Kids News

English-language news and popular culture geared to young people.

- Watch some of [Canada's top Para athletes](#) share the advice they would give their younger selves.

CBC Listen

Full podcast catalogue, live CBC Radio One and CBC Music, and select shows on-demand.

- Check out the *Personally* podcast's [Season 3: Short Sighted](#). The five-part series situates listeners in the everyday experience of a Blind or low vision person for an intimate and irreverent look at accessibility and its personal impact.



Empreintes

- Check out this long-form story about [the birth of theatrical description](#), making theatre accessible to people who cannot see the stage.

ICI TOU.TV

Canada's largest French-language digital television platform, offering a variety of video content.

- Explore [Un monde accessible et inclusif](#) for a collection of content that celebrates diversity and inclusion.

L'espace Radio-Canada

French-language digital space developed only for public libraries that brings together the wide variety of Radio-Canada and CBC digital offers and resources.

- Explore the [Accessibilité et handicaps](#) category for a collection of French-language content from Radio-Canada's many platforms.

OHdio

The best French-language podcasts, audiobooks, and ICI PREMIÈRE and ICI MUSIQUE programs and playlists.

- Check out [Ces animaux qui nous veulent du bien](#), a docu-series about exceptional animals – dogs, cats, horses and rabbits – who come to the aid of human beings in spectacular ways.

Radio-Canada Sports

Amateur and elite sports in Canada and internationally.

- Check out this [interview with Thomas Jolly](#), the artistic director of the opening ceremonies of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.



Zone Jeunesse

French-language content in audio, video and text format, as well as video games geared to children and youth.

- Check out their blog post [that teaches grade school children about different disabilities and assistive devices](#) they may encounter in school, and the importance of treating their friends with disabilities with respect.