

**London Public Library Accessibility Plan, 2019-2023**

**Statement of Purpose**

**LPL strengthens people and neighbourhoods by creating connections that enrich lives, inspire discovery, foster creativity, and expand possibilities.**

**Values**

**We believe in the community values of**: access, community engagement, diversity & inclusiveness, open to all & non-judgmental, intellectual freedom, privacy, respect and service excellence

**We believe in the corporate values of:** innovation, leadership, stewardship and transparency

**Commitment to Accessibility**

We understand the diversity of the communities we serve and provide responsive Library services that meet unique community needs.

We make our services accessible by recognizing and removing barriers for individuals with disabilities. We will meet or exceed the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards as part of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Universal access is our goal.

**DEFINITION OF DISABILITY**

Disability, in relation to a person, means:

* Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, including diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide or service dog or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
* an intellectual development disability,
* a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
* a mental disorder, or
* an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Our shared values apply to all members of the community including people with disabilities.

A person with a disability has the right to expect services in all the ways the Library offers them: through lending of collections, information provision and programming, support for technological literacy, providing a variety of spaces in which the community may gather for their purposes and our commitment to community development.

The London Public Library’s ***User First Philosophy*** ensures that all members of the community can use library services in person, by telephone, or remotely through technology such as the Library web site, WIFI and social media platforms. Everyone’s participation is important.

Our definition of **Library Service** states:

* Service is relevant, inclusive and responsive for all. Each member of the community has an equal right to public library and information services.
* Service is accessible to all people regardless of age, race, gender identity or expression, religion, nationality, language, ability, social status, economic status and educational attainment.
* Specific services and materials are provided for those users who need them to participate.
* A person with a disability has the right to be treated with the same respect, consideration and consistency as any other.

We have adopted a ***Policy for Accessibility for Library Users with Disabilities***:

* Library services will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
* When communicating with a person with a disability, we shall do so in a manner is sensitive to the person’s disability.
* Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from library services.
* The provision of library services to persons with disabilities and others will be integrated into our overall service model.
* Library facilities will meet the City of London accessibility requirements for the design and construction of new facilities and the retrofit, alteration or addition to existing library facilities.

**Organizational Commitments**

1. To ensure our continued compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and its regulations and by exploring the possibilities for benefits to patrons under the *Marrakesh Treaty.*
2. To continue to devote staff resources towards the consideration of accessibility as a fundamental component of our organization by ensuring the broadest participation across units.
3. To ensure library patrons have a voice by inviting persons with diverse abilities to share their lived experience and suggestions for improved services, processes and spaces.
4. To use the 5-year *Accessibility Plan* as a mechanism to examine all our areas of service for ways to continually improve, simplify and expand services in a way that benefits everyone who uses the Library.

# Initiatives

1. **Organizational Processes**
	1. **Explore the implications of the Marrakesh Treaty on the collections and services of the Library.**
		1. Explore what other libraries are doing related to the Treaty, learn their best practices and implement them at LPL, where appropriate.
		2. Have discussions with communities of use to determine needs and processes.
	2. **Continue to review all services and processes to identify barriers for patrons.**
		1. Ensure the Accessibility Champions Team (Act!) continues to represent all departments and locations in order to have regular conversations about the practical application of policies and procedures.
		2. Ensure organizational support for the objectives and work of the Act! Team.
		3. Continue to use the cognitive walkthrough process to identify obstacles and simplify tasks for the public.
		4. Communicate to all staff problems and solutions as a means of keeping up to date.
	3. **Ensure all internal processes reflect the Library’s commitment to accessible spaces and services.**
		1. Embed accessibility reviews into Strategic initiatives, project management and project team tools.
		2. In order to give priority to the profile, move existing information and create a knowledge bank of accessibility information and decisions on the library’s intranet.
		3. Continue to provide training to staff related to appropriate service processes.
		4. Provide volunteer opportunities suitable for persons with diverse abilities.
	4. **Strengthen direct communication between the Library and patrons in order that patrons are aware of pop-up activities of interest.**
		1. Create a process for patrons to receive a list of activities and where to find them at the Central Library.
		2. Map spaces at Central and branches for wayfinding.
		3. Develop a process for communicating via the web site and social media when accessibility concerns which require third party intervention have been addressed, such as updates to downloadable collections.
		4. Develop a process to send forward comments staff hear from the public about accessibility.
		5. Publish Board Minutes and policies in Word and HTML formats.
		6. Highlight one accessibility feature every quarter in the Library’s ***Access*** magazine.
		7. Prepare an electronic pamphlet listing public clubs with contact information.
		8. Ensure communications to the public provide both images and text, where possible.
2. **Collections and Lending**
	1. **In keeping with the Library’s community-led approach, develop a public advisory group to discuss format purchasing and market fluctuations.**
	2. **Develop a marketing program to bring awareness of the CELA partnership and its benefit to patrons.**
		1. Develop mobile displays and tools for use at branches.
		2. Provide staff training.
		3. Plan a system-wide program launch.
		4. Refresh staff on the mandate of Visiting Library Service.
	3. **Maintain relationships with publishers which support the Library to remain current with emerging formats for patrons with print disabilities.**
		1. Work with local agencies to identify materials and formats of benefit to their clients.
		2. Examine options for formats of particular benefit to adults with intellectual disabilities.
	4. **Review Library card account and Borrower’s card format for simplicity of use.**
		1. Consider the use of technology to make the Borrower’s Card more accessible.
		2. Review information on the card for easy display and use when logging into library systems.
		3. Consider lengthening the expiry of Borrower’s Cards beyond 2 years.
	5. **Improve instructions at Self Checkout kiosks.**
	6. **Examine Service Desks for clutter that inhibits accessibility and provide guidelines to staff.**
3. **Information and Programming**
	1. **Explore programming for intellectually challenged adults and adults with dementia.**
		1. Work with agencies to identify particular audiences and their interests.
		2. Develop a database of programmers who can offer their content in appropriate formats for adults.
		3. Engage members of the public to provide direction for the development and evaluation of the programming.
	2. **Build upon current children and youth programming initiatives to continue to develop inclusive programming.**
	3. **Offer regular public tours highlighting accessible services and equipment.**
		1. Provide orientation to the library’s web site, catalogue and programs page.
		2. Provide a consistent area for broadcasting of podcasts.
		3. Develop materials and provide orientation to accessibility as part of community outreach.
	4. **Coach staff to consider how a patron’s learning disability changes their approach to the provision of information services.**
		1. Engage further with community partners to gain insight into how we unconsciously create barriers for someone with a learning disability.
		2. Provide training to staff to recognize when someone with a learning disability is having difficulty with our systems and processes and to provide appropriate assistance.
	5. **Ensure that programming related to Creative Spaces is structured in a manner that allows for the full participation of persons with disabilities.**
		1. Develop volunteer supports for programs to ensure one-on-one assistance is available.
		2. Expand services, such as Memory Labs, into neighbourhoods, to ensure patrons who are not mobile can make use of new technologies.
	6. **Explore new alternatives for people with hearing-related disabilities in order to attend and participate in programs.**
		1. Update assisted listening systems in the Wolf Performance Hall and meeting spaces.
		2. Work with community partners to inform the public of the library’s commitment to accessible programming.
	7. **Develop staff training and processes to incorporate the *Guide to Accessible Events* into all program planning.**
	8. **Provide an HTML version of Access for those reading at home.**
	9. **Provide more programming in general use areas to encourage people to attend.**
4. **Technology**
	1. **Expand assistive devices, such as Optelec readers, to all locations.**
	2. **Explore the feasibility of “reading kiosks”: specific kiosks set up to assist patrons using wheelchairs or scooters to operate a device remotely to read a newspaper or magazine.**
		1. Explore the use of two-sided monitors to facilitate conversations.
	3. **Explore whether touch screen monitors would improve access for persons with low vision or physical disabilities.**
		1. Build touch screen monitors into the large print workstations.
	4. **Continue to make use of new functionality in the integrated library system to improve accessibility to the catalogue and patron record.**
		1. Ensure that Customer Service and Branch Operations Coordinators and Managers, supervisors and staff work with I/T to remain up to date on new Integrated Library System features.
	5. **Promote the use of Book a Librarian to provide one-on-one support for people who need to use the library differently.**
	6. **Improve the LPL web site to provide simplified access to corporate information, links to standard services such as the accessible catalogue or OverDrive, a link to simplified program page and links to external resources.**
	7. **Make device charging stations more accessible to persons at different heights.**
	8. **Update current inventory of accessible hardware;**
		1. Seek grant or fund development dollars to make hardware available system wide.
		2. Work with community agencies/those with lived experience to ensure hardware is appropriate and helpful.
	9. **Review and add accessible work stations on main floor at Central to avoid extra trips to and from elevators.**
5. **Community Meeting Space**
	1. **Review all meeting room doors for suitability of automatic door openers or assisted door systems.**
	2. **Review family washrooms for automatic door openers.**
	3. **Ensure a person with a disability can participate in all processes related to renting a space.**
		1. Update processes to ensure Space Use Agreements are accessible with a screen reader.
		2. Update processes to include people with a hearing disability.
		3. Work with Facilities Services staff to ensure that all room set ups provide sufficient space for wheelchair and scooters to operate.