

**BUILDING A BETTER  
BC GAMES FOR  
EVERYONE**

**BE POSITIVE  
BE RESPECTFUL  
BE INCLUSIVE**

# **BC GAMES SOCIETY ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

Prepared by the BC Games Society  
Accessibility Committee



DEVELOPED  
SEPTEMBER 2023





We respectfully acknowledge the Lekwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the BC Games Society office stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSANEC peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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## ABOUT THE BC GAMES SOCIETY

Established in 1977 by the B.C. Government under the Societies Act, the BC Games Society (the Society) oversees the biennial BC Winter Games and BC Summer Games. The Society also supports the participation of Team BC, the provincial team competing at Canada Games, a national multi-sport Games.



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## OUR ACCESSIBILITY STORY

The BC Games Society strives to inspire exceptional experiences for all participants by fostering an accessible, positive, respectful, and inclusive environment for all participants.

The Games Society has developed the [Guide to an Accessible Games](#) document, which outlines the guiding principles and protocols to ensure an inclusive and accessible Games experience for all participants. Along with this guide, BC Games Society staff provide guidance to the Inclusion Awareness Committee, a committee within the Games Host Society, regarding opportunities to improve inclusion and accessibility within the Games structure. Upon conclusion of the Games, the Guide to an Accessible Games document is updated to ensure we are continually aligning ourselves with the requirements of the Accessible BC Act. In addition to the guidelines, the Society has also worked with the Rick Hansen Foundation to fund an accessibility audit for the Greater Vernon 2022 BC Winter Games.

To further enhance inclusion and awareness, the BC Games Society created the Culture of the Games initiative, an online education module that participants must complete before the Games. The module introduces the main pillars of the BC Games Code of Conduct and emphasizes positivity, respect, and inclusivity.

The Society also works with Canada Games Council to ensure all Team BC athletes have the support and resources they need to attend the Games.

In 2023, the BC Games Society Accessibility Committee was formalized.



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## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

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Our mandate at the BC Games Society is to provide experiences that are accessible to participants from every corner of the province regardless of background, identity, or any accessibility challenges they may face.

Many of our participants face barriers to participation that may or may not be visible to others, and our goal is to identify these, solicit feedback, and work towards solutions. A large part of our work involves knowledge transfer to Host Societies through training and guidelines, and we are consistently in the process of updating guidelines to incorporate new practices or learnings from each Games. In recent years, this process has included facilitating accessibility audits in host communities through the Rick Hansen Foundation in order to identify ways that they can update facilities with accessibility in mind.

While our organization has made steps to make the Games more accessible, there is still much work to be done. This plan will be an important living document to track, update, and increase accountability with the goal of working towards a more accessible Games for all participants.

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**Alison Noble, President & CEO**

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## DEFINITIONS

Under the Accessible Canada Act, disability is defined as any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — 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.

A Host Society is formed by the Board of Directors for each BC Winter and BC Summer Games.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are international standards for how to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities.



## FRAMEWORK

The BC Games Society is committed to creating an accessible environment by identifying and removing barriers that may exist within the organization and promote a level of independence for our participants and partners.

BC Games partners include over 30 different Provincial Sport Organizations, B.C. adapted sports organizations, Special Olympics BC and BC Wheelchair Basketball. BC Games Society continually engages with partners with all types of abilities and disabilities to ensure that all elements of our organization meet their needs.

The BC Games Accessibility Committee conducted a survey amongst BC Games staff to gather feedback and identify areas for improvement. The results of the survey concluded that accessible information and communications systems are key to ensuring an inclusive experience.

## ABOUT OUR COMMITTEE

The BC Games Society Accessibility Committee consists of staff and board members. Cumulatively, the committee represents over 50 years of experience working with a variety of sport organizations, including organizations who primarily serve people with a disability.

Along with the committee, the BC Games Society will be seeking assistance from three focus partner organizations: adapted sport organizations in B.C., Special Olympics BC and BC Wheelchair Basketball.





## CONSULTATION CONDUCTED

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The BC Games Society will be seeking consultation from members of the three focus partner organizations. The members will be provided the opportunity to evaluate the current BC Games information and communications systems and provide input on the three priorities that are currently identified for improvement to ensure they align with our partners needs.



## FEEDBACK MECHANISM

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Two feedback mechanisms are implemented by BC Games. A feedback survey is activated at the completion of the Guide to the Games sessions (virtual information sessions providing participants with information regarding the Games) and another survey at the end of the BC Games.

The BC Games Accessibility Committee will be including specific survey questions regarding the BC Games Accessibility Plan. This will provide the Accessibility Committee with valuable information to improve the plan.

There is also an email address ([accessibility@bcgames.org](mailto:accessibility@bcgames.org)) listed on the BC Games Society's website under the Contact Us section for the purpose of public feedback. Anyone who wishes to provide their feedback on improvements or progress is encouraged to use this email to connect with the BC Games Society's Accessibility Committee.



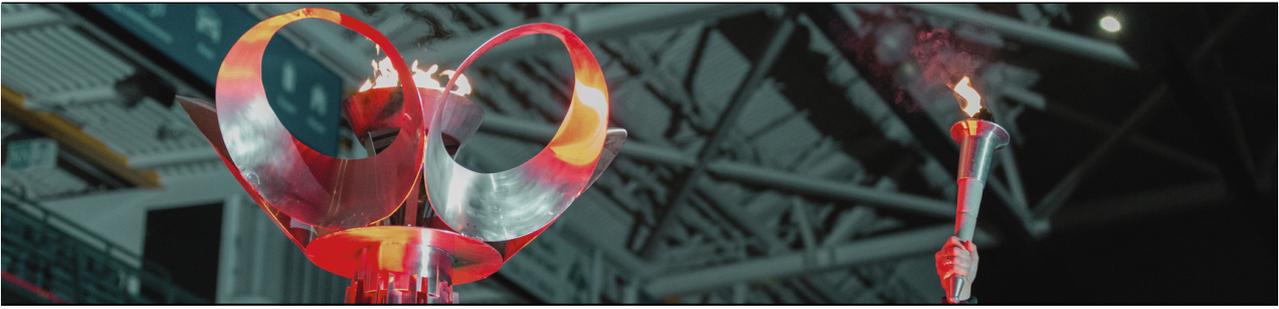
# PLAN AND TIMELINE

The BC Games Society information and communications systems were assessed as our primary focus for the BC Games Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Committee will take steps to ensure persons with disabilities can receive and understand information and communications delivered from the BC Games Society website and BC Games communications. The three priorities for information and communications are:

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Priority #1	Update the BC Games Website to make it more streamlined, accessible, and meet <u>Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA</u> .
Priority #2	Improve the BC Games Participant Website and Registration Portal to meet the <u>Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA</u> .
Priority #3	Re-design the Participant and Volunteer Communications to meet the <u>Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA</u> .

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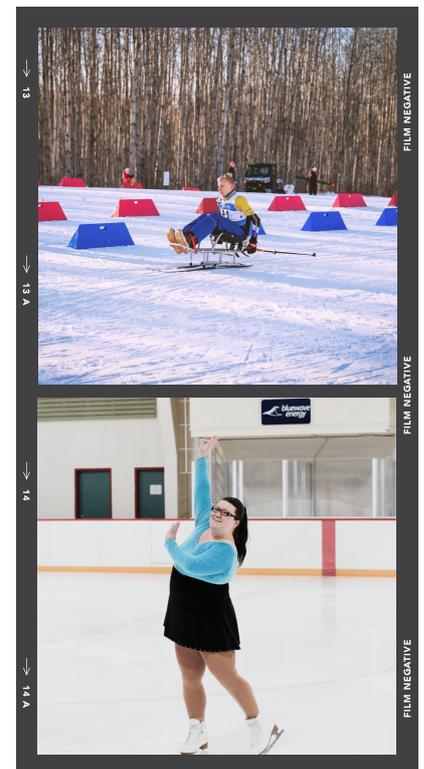


## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring of progress will be done in the form of an annual report presented to the BC Games Society Board of Directors. This report will include work that has been completed, work that is underway but not yet complete, next steps and any significant challenges that have been identified. As feedback is a crucial element of this process, there is an email listed on the BC Games Society website Contact Us page ([info@bcgames.org](mailto:info@bcgames.org)) where any insight, advice or feedback can be provided by the public.

As previously mentioned, at the conclusion of the Games there is a feedback survey circulated to all participants, this survey is another great mechanism for gathering accessibility feedback and input from Games participants.

The BC Games Society will conduct a review and evaluation of this accessibility plan and its progress every three years. The first version of this plan will be posted on the BC Games Society website in September 2023 and on-going monitoring of progress will be done through 2024. The first three organizational priorities are likely achievable within a two-year timeline and although the plan will be reevaluated every three years, there is an option for that timeline to be adjusted based on speed of progress. Progress will be determined by the completion of the listed deliverables. These deliverables will be evaluated and will either require additional fine tuning or a new subsequent set of priorities to be established.





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## HOW TO GIVE US FEEDBACK

If you have feedback on accessibility for the BC Games Society please send your thoughts to [accessibility@bcgames.org](mailto:accessibility@bcgames.org).

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