

Forestry Innovation Investment

# Accessibility plan

2026–2029

Photo: Brudder Productions, courtesy naturallywood.com



Forestry Innovation  
Investment®

# Land acknowledgement

Our work involves natural resources which are connected to many First Nations communities located in or closely associated with forests across the Province of British Columbia. We recognize their connection to the forests and are grateful to those on whose traditional lands we reside, work, or visit.

In the spirit of reconciliation, FII acknowledges that its head office is situated in the traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh), and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Nations.



# Table of contents

- Introduction ..... 1
  - Frameworks guiding FII’s accessibility work..... 2
  - FII Accessibility Committee ..... 2
  - Definitions..... 3
  - Key accessibility barriers ..... 4
- Accessibility priorities ..... 5
  - Foster a culture of accessibility ..... 5
  - Promote inclusive program delivery ..... 6
  - Create an accessible physical environment..... 6
  - Improve accessible information and communications ..... 7
- 2026–2029 key priorities..... 8
  - Action items ..... 8
  - Reporting framework ..... 10
- Appendix 1 ..... 11
  - FII Accessibility Plan – 2024/25-2025/26 Progress ..... 11

# Introduction

Forestry Innovation Investment (FII) is a Crown agency of the Government of British Columbia. Our mandate is to develop and diversify markets for B.C. forest products. In doing our work, FII works with a wide range of stakeholders, including the forest industry, research institutions, governments, and Indigenous organizations. Together, we help ensure the forest sector continues to support jobs and contribute to the provincial economy. For further information on FII and its programs, visit [bcfii.ca](http://bcfii.ca).

FII recognizes that our work impacts our stakeholders in different ways. We also recognize that stakeholders have diverse needs, resources and capacities. In response, we consider these differences when delivering our services. We work to reduce any barriers that may limit access to our information, programs and services. We believe in encouraging innovation and making a positive impact—socially, economically and environmentally.

This document outlines FII’s commitments to accessibility. It outlines how we will expand our knowledge and reduce barriers in our workplace culture, policies, programs and activities. It summarizes our work to date and lists our forward-looking priorities. We recognize that as an organization we are still learning and, therefore, this Accessibility Plan (the “Plan”) may need updates as we progress forward.

FII welcomes feedback on this Plan as well as on our general programs and operations. Should you wish to provide feedback, please contact [accessibility@bcfii.ca](mailto:accessibility@bcfii.ca).

## Frameworks guiding FII’s accessibility work

FII activities are guided, in part, by the [Accessible BC Act](#) (the “Act”). The Act applies to government as a whole and Crown agencies like FII. To improve accessibility, the Act requires that FII:

- establishes an accessibility committee,
- develops an accessibility plan, and
- creates a tool to receive public feedback on accessibility.<sup>1</sup>

Further guidance is provided by the [B.C. Government’s Accessibility Plan](#). The Plan lists barriers (see Appendix 1) that those with disabilities may face and how the government and Crown agencies will respond over the 2025-2028 period.

FII’s [Standard of Conduct policy](#) (the “Policy”) is based in part on the Province of B.C.’s Standards of Conduct. The policy aligns with the B.C. Human Rights Code and the Canadian Human Rights Act. FII staff receive annual training on the Policy, which includes respectful workplace behaviour.

## FII Accessibility Committee

In 2021, FII set up a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Working Group of employees. The working group covers 25 percent of current staffing levels and reflects the diversity of FII staff. It works to help address barriers/concerns and advance DEI objectives.

In 2024, FII established an Accessibility Committee to work with the DEI working group on accessibility-related goals and priorities within FII. As prescribed by the Accessible BC Act, more than half of the committee is made of persons with disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Further details related to these requirements can be found within the [Accessible BC Act](#).

## Definitions

Note: FII has drawn these definitions from a variety of sources and acknowledges that there are multiple ways to explain different terms.

**Barrier:** anything that hinders full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment. Barriers can be caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies, and can be affected by intersecting forms of discrimination or bias.

**Disability:** broadly defined as an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.

**Diversity:** the presence of “difference”, such as in identities, thoughts or lived experiences of people. Diversity of identity refers to the factors that make up who we are, including our gender identity or expression, sexual identity, race, ethnicity, ancestry, place of origin, political beliefs, religion, marital status, family status, physical capacity, mental capacity, age, and socio-economic conditions, as examples.

**Equity:** the fair treatment of all people. Being equitable recognizes that measures may be required to address the disparities associated with social and historical disadvantages. In other words, people are treated fairly but different measures or actions may be necessary to reduce gaps between different groups of people.

**Impairment:** a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary or episodic.

**Inclusion:** creating conditions where those who have historically felt excluded feel like they can bring their authentic selves to work and participate fully. Inclusion means everyone feels valued and respected for their unique identities.

**Neurodiversity:** the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioral traits, realizing that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways. Neurodiversity is categorized as neurotypical and neurodivergent, including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Autism and ADHD.

For other commonly used definitions, visit the [BC Accessibility Hub](#).

## Key accessibility barriers

**Attitudinal:** When people think and act based upon false assumptions, such as making decisions about people with disabilities without including them, or not believing that a person with a disability can contribute to the workforce.

**Physical:** When obstacles in an environment make access difficult, such as hosting inaccessible events or meeting spaces, or a washroom with an accessible stall but no automatic door opener.

**Information or communication:** When disabled people are excluded because they use other ways to communicate, such as using small print or not providing large-print versions of material, or videos, events, or meetings that do not have closed captions.

**Systemic:** When an organization's policies, practices, or procedures result in exclusion, such as not providing an American Sign Language interpreter or requiring a driver's license for a job that could be reorganized to use another form of transportation.

**Technology:** When technology can't be accessed by people with disabilities, such as websites, documents, or databases that are not accessible for screen readers, or graphs and charts that are posted without text to explain them.

**Sensory:** When sensory information such as lights, sounds, and smells prevent participation in the environment, such as co-workers wearing perfume in the workplace or the use of fluorescent lighting in the workplace.

# Accessibility priorities

## Foster a culture of accessibility

FII fosters a culture of inclusivity and equity, with a strong commitment to continuous improvement and learning. This commitment is highlighted in the “People” value of the [Mission and Values statement](#). This value is cultivated and demonstrated through FII policies and programs and the active participation of FII leadership and staff in advancing DEI-related topics.

### Priorities

- Review Accessibility Plans to assess progress and establish forward-looking priorities.
- Undertake regular internal and external assessments of FII programs and policies with a DEI/accessibility lens.
- Review recruitment practices to ensure they are inclusive and to audit for potential biases.
- Conduct confidential, voluntary and anonymous staff surveys on a recurring basis to collect diversity disaggregated data.
- Raise awareness and understanding of accessibility-related topics amongst staff and stakeholders. This includes:
  - Ensuring FII’s annual DEI staff training calendar includes accessibility-related topics.
  - Recognizing key accessibility dates of importance and provide further resources to staff, including accessibility-related training options. Key days/weeks of recognition include World Mental Health Day, Neurodiversity Week and Global Accessibility Awareness Day.
- Review other public sector organizations’ accessibility plans to identify gaps and improve FII’s Accessibility Plan.

## Promote inclusive program delivery

Working with stakeholders to identify and understand the barriers that underrepresented groups face is important to improving accessibility and achieving DEI goals.

### Priorities

- Engage with government, Crown agencies and industry partners on accessibility topics.
- Review the accessibility of FII's programs for diverse groups.
- Continue to include DEI requirements in FII's Call for Proposals for funding programs and provide resources on DEI to proponents to aid in their submissions.

## Create an accessible physical environment

Creating a more accessible workspace is a first step for many accessibility initiatives. Doing so provides a tangible example of the organization's commitment to accessibility.

### Priorities

- Assess and make upgrades as required to improve the accessibility of FII's physical office space.
- Support the workspace needs of those with disabilities to make their work environment more accessible.
- Consider the accessibility requirement of external stakeholders participating in FII-led meetings/events.
- Ensure staff are using ergonomics guidelines and assessments to be able to work efficiently in a safe and comfortable environment.
- Train staff on FII's Emergency Response Plan, including how to assist people with accessibility needs during emergencies.
- Communicate physical office space recommendations to FII's landlord, for common areas/facilities outside of FII's office but within the building.

## Improve accessible information and communications

Communication accessibility is crucial for ensuring that everyone, regardless of ability or disability, can access and use documents and other information sources effectively.

### Priorities

- Assess and make improvements to FII websites and corporate documents to ensure accessibility and strive to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (2.2), level A standards.
- Enhance and build staff knowledge of document accessibility and technology.
- Establish best practices for creating accessible documents.
- Ensure accessible meeting options are available for staff and stakeholders, including virtual meeting options.
- Update FII's recruitment materials and job descriptions, as well as FII's Policy Manual using B.C.'s [plain language guidelines](#).
- Create accessible brand standards for FII and guidelines for staff and contractors.

# 2026–2029 key priorities

## Action items

### Organizational culture

- Recognize key accessibility dates and provide further resources to staff through FII's internal DEI hub, including accessibility-related content.
- Continue to address accessibility-related recommendations identified in the 2023/24 DEI assessment and staff survey.
- Conduct an analysis of recruitment practices to ensure they are inclusive.
- Review other public sector organizations' accessibility plans to identify gaps and improve FII's Accessibility Plan

### Promote inclusive program delivery

- Continue to include DEI in FII's Call for Proposals (CFP) requirements.
- Address recommendations from the accessibility assessment of FII's funding management system.
- Further engage with government agencies on accessibility-related topics through the Crown DEI conferences and with industry through the [Forestry Together](#) initiative.

### Physical environment

- Make improvements to FII's physical office space to improve accessibility, including labeling rooms/offices, higher contrast frosting on glass and ensuring quiet space is available.
- Communicate physical office space recommendations to FII's landlord, for common areas/facilities outside of FII's office but within the building.
- Provide guidance to FII's overseas staff on best practices for creating an accessible office space.

## Information and communications

- Update FII's recruitment materials and job descriptions, as well as FII's Policy Manual using B.C.'s [plain language guidelines](#).
- Create accessible brand standards for FII and guidelines for staff and contractors.
- Make final required adjustments to its bcfii.ca website to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (2.2), level A standards.
- Provide training to FII's overseas staff on website accessibility guidelines and best practices.

## Reporting framework

The DEI Working Group, including Accessibility Committee representatives, meet quarterly to review progress and priorities. Updates are provided to FII executive and all staff at monthly staff meetings. At the end of each year, a report on all outcomes against priorities is completed alongside the development of the next annual Plan.

A summary of FII progress on accessibility priorities set out over the 2024/25-2025/26 period is detailed in Appendix 1.

# Appendix 1

## FII Accessibility Plan – 2024/25-2025/26 Progress

### Organizational culture

Action	Progress to date
Identify and deliver accessibility-related training to FII staff.	FII staff have received training on the following accessibility-related topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plain language</li><li>• Mental health</li><li>• Neurodiversity</li><li>• Creating accessible digital documents</li><li>• Unconscious bias</li></ul>
Identify and prioritize accessibility resources, expertise and contractors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessibility added to DEI Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process.</li><li>• Ability to create accessible documents/websites has been added as a desirable criterion in FII’s Design Services.</li><li>• Utilized accessibility consultants for delivery of the above training as well as the DEI assessment of FII’s policies and programs.</li></ul>
Recognize key accessibility dates of importance and provide further resources to staff.	FII continues to share dates of importance with staff, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• World Mental Health Day</li><li>• International Day of Persons with Disabilities</li><li>• Neurodiversity Week</li></ul>

## Promote inclusive program delivery

Action	Progress to date
Engage with government, Crown and industry partners on accessibility-related topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FII has engaged with industry on accessibility-related topics through the Forestry Together initiative.</li> <li>• FII regularly participates in the annual Crowns DEIA conference and engages directly with other Crowns to share best practices.</li> </ul>
Include Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) requirements in FII's Call for Proposals (CFP) Process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FII lists DEI requirements in its Call for Proposals for funding programs.</li> <li>• Resources and training on DEI have been provided to proponents to aid in their submissions.</li> </ul>
Assess and remediate as required the accessibility of FII's CFP documentation for proponents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CFP proposal documents (Investment Plans and Application Guides) have been updated for accessibility considerations.</li> <li>• FII's funding management system (used for the CFP application process) was assessed for accessibility and a list of recommendations were developed.</li> </ul>

## Physical environment

Action	Progress to date
Adjust FII's physical office space to improve accessibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2023/24, FII conducted an office accessibility audit through the Rick Hansen Foundation to determine suggested/needed upgrades.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An automatic door has been installed at FII’s entrance.</li> <li>• Frosting has been added to glass around doorways to ensure contrast.</li> <li>• FII’s lunchroom was expanded to create more space for those with accessibility needs.</li> </ul>
Develop accessibility guidelines for on- and off-site meetings/events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed and to be reviewed annually.</li> </ul>

**Information and communications**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>
Adjust FII’s websites, bcpii.ca and naturallywood.com, to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (2.2), level A standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FII updated its naturallywood.com website to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (2.2), level A standard requirements.</li> <li>• FII’s bcpii.ca website is near compliance with final items being addressed.</li> <li>• This work is ongoing alongside website changes.</li> </ul>
Create accessible corporate templates for staff use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility tips are now included in FII’s PowerPoint and Word templates.</li> </ul>
Review and update FII corporate materials using B.C.’s plain language guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FII corporate documents have been reviewed and adjusted. This work is ongoing as materials are produced/updated.</li> </ul>