

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA)
Phase 1 Progress Report

Canadian Museum of History and
Canadian War Museum

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 2023, the Canadian Museum of History and the Canadian War Museum (the “Museums”) launched a five-year strategy to make their spaces more equitable, diverse, inclusive and accessible.

The EDIA Strategy’s goal is to ensure that everyone who engages with the Museums feels a true sense of belonging, with opportunities to participate meaningfully and share their unique perspectives and experiences.

This Phase 1 Progress Report highlights what the Museums have achieved so far and where they are going next.

“I’m inspired by all we have achieved so far and look forward to seeing this vital work continue to unfold as we progress into the next phase. Together, we are making the Museums more inclusive and representative of everyone in Canada.”

— Caroline Dromaguet, President and CEO, Canadian Museum of History and Canadian War Museum

II. PILLARS AND THEMES

PILLAR 1 – FOSTERING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The Museums advanced their efforts to embed EDIA across the organization by updating policies, improving communication, and introducing clear guidelines to ensure accountability.

Theme 1.1 – Formalize and communicate the organization’s EDIA commitments

- A new EDIA policy was launched and shared internally and externally, setting clear expectations across all operations, programs and services.
- Based on this EDIA policy, a full review of all Museum policies is underway to ensure they reflect EDIA commitments (completion expected in 2025–2026). New guidelines and checklists help staff apply an inclusion lens whenever policies are created or renewed.
- Staff receive regular EDIA updates through the intranet, staff and leadership meetings, and other communication channels.
- The Digital Museums Canada funding program now applies an equity lens, with a published Equity Statement, defined priority groups, a target of 25 percent of

projects from equity-deserving organizations, and expanded mentorship opportunities.

- Internal communications have been improved to reduce silos, strengthen collaboration, and ensure priorities are consistently highlighted across departments.

Theme 1.2 – Setting the tone from the top through active, committed and representative leadership

- Employee surveys now include questions about EDIA, giving staff a direct voice in shaping future action.
- Directors and managers now set EDIA goals in their annual business plans, building accountability into everyday work.

PILLAR 2 – CREATING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

The Museums are working to reduce barriers for equity-deserving groups by making recruitment more inclusive and supporting Indigenous staff through targeted initiatives.

Theme 2.1 – Strengthening the recruitment, development, promotion and retention of diverse individuals

- Talent acquisition documents were revised to include an EDIA statement, accommodation statements, and truth and reconciliation principles.
- Talent acquisition documents now include statements on EDIA and accommodation, and truth and reconciliation principles.
- Exit forms were updated to identify barriers to retention.
- Recruitment panels are now more diverse, and hiring managers are trained to reduce bias in hiring decisions.
- Promotion decisions now include transparent feedback to support career growth and mobility.
- Applications from equity-deserving groups more than doubled between 2022 and 2024. Representation at the interview stage remains an area for improvement.
- Training sessions were delivered on inclusive leadership, bias-free recruitment, and cultural awareness. A training needs assessment was completed to guide a

three-year EDIA training plan.

Theme 2.2 – Investing in employees to shape a dynamic and inclusive organizational culture

- A Reward and Recognition Working Group is in development to ensure staff achievements are celebrated in line with EDIA values.
- The Museums continue to mark Pride and Black History Month, highlighting and amplifying diverse voices.

Theme 2.3 – Supporting Indigenous staff and fostering cultural awareness throughout the organization

- More than 70 percent of recommendations from the Indigenous Peoples Working Group have been implemented to strengthen partnerships and allyship.
- Indigenous-focused training is building greater cultural awareness across the organization.
- Policies now integrate Indigenous perspectives, and land acknowledgments are included in key documents.
- Reviews of Indigenous training programs showed strong participation and positive feedback, while also highlighting a need for more interactive and flexible formats.
- A report on Indigenous recruitment and advancement identified successes in inclusive hiring and areas for improvement, including stronger cultural competency training and clearer career pathways.

PILLAR 3 – BUILDING COLLECTIONS AND EXHIBITIONS REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA'S DIVERSITY

The Museums are ensuring that the stories they tell reflect Canada's diversity. Inclusive perspectives are being woven into collections and exhibitions through new research, acquisitions, exhibition reviews, and planning processes.

Theme 3.1 – Improving exhibition and collection planning, development practices, resource allocation, and partnerships for inclusive representation of equity-deserving groups

- A new Research Strategy under development will integrate inclusive perspectives in exhibitions.
- Collections include new acquisitions from underrepresented groups, showcased in exhibitions that highlight alternative narratives and overlooked stories.
- Special and ongoing exhibitions feature objects and artifacts from equity-deserving groups, ensuring balanced representation.
- EDIA principles are embedded in the exhibition planning process. The Equity Strategy for exhibitions, programs and services has been updated to ensure alignment with inclusive values.
- A review of the Experience Development Process is underway to identify strengths and gaps in inclusion and diversity practices.
- Permanent galleries at the Canadian War Museum were reviewed to assess representation of equity-deserving groups, creating a reference point for future updates.

PILLAR 4 – CREATING ACCESSIBLE MUSEUMS AND ENGAGING THE CANADIAN PUBLIC

The Museums are making both physical and virtual spaces more accessible. A comprehensive accessibility audit will guide further improvements to ensure the Museums remain welcoming spaces for all. Efforts to create inclusive programs that reflect Canada's diverse communities are ongoing.

Theme 4.1 – Engaging diverse populations in Canada through accessible and inclusive programs and services

- Deliverables from the first two years of the Accessibility Plan are completed, guided by consultations with people with disabilities.
- An Accessibility Advisory Group has been formed, bringing lived experience to help guide improvements.
- The redesigned Museum websites meet WCAG 2.1 AA standards, include dedicated accessibility pages, and provide alt-text for all images. A narrated visitor guide was also added.
- The new websites were tested with people with disabilities, and their feedback will inform future improvements.

- Visitors can now reserve mobility scooters online for easier planning.
- A full building accessibility audit has been completed, with priority upgrades already in progress.
- Guidelines for accessible images have been developed, and content creators have been trained in accessible communication.
- Visitor surveys and program reviews identified barriers faced by disadvantaged groups and are guiding a new Visitor Engagement Strategy.

III. NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE PLANS

As the Museums move into the next phase of their EDIA Strategy, they will build on Phase 1 progress with the following priorities:

- **Strengthening policies and communication**
 - **Building an inclusive workplace culture and leadership**
 - **Expanding inclusive hiring and talent development**
 - **Fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment**
 - **Indigenous inclusion and reconciliation**
 - **Shaping the stories we tell through inclusive exhibitions and collections**
 - **Enhancing accessibility and visitor experience**
 - **Recognizing contributions and diversity**
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- **Strengthening policies and communication**
 - Ensure corporate policies reflect EDIA principles
 - Share the importance of EDIA internally and externally
 - Create regular opportunities for staff feedback to guide the strategy
 - **Building an inclusive workplace culture and leadership**
 - Support and mentor diverse talent
 - Provide training and accountability for leaders
 - Promote transparency and open communication
 - **Expanding inclusive hiring and talent development**
 - Develop Indigenous hiring best practices
 - Strengthen recruitment of diverse talent
 - Support bias-free hiring practices and mentorship programs

- Offer career development resources for long-term growth
- **Fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment**
 - Support employee resource groups and flexible work arrangements
 - Ensure all staff feel welcome through a “Safe Space” approach
 - Improve organizational transparency and awareness of supports
- **Indigenous inclusion and reconciliation**
 - Increase Indigenous representation and partnerships
 - Deliver Indigenous-focused learning opportunities
 - Remove barriers to advancement through targeted support
- **Shaping the stories we tell through inclusive exhibitions and collections**
 - Continue to ensure collections and exhibitions represent diverse communities
 - Continue work with experts to highlight underrepresented voices
 - Implement inclusive curatorial practices
- **Enhancing accessibility and visitor experience**
 - Publish a new Accessibility Plan and engage an advisory group
 - Identify and remove barriers through visitor feedback
 - Train staff in cultural competency and use inclusive communications
- **Recognizing contributions and diversity**
 - Celebrate the achievements and contributions of all employees, highlighting the diverse role models that strengthen the Museums

IV. CONCLUSION – MOVING FORWARD WITH PURPOSE

In just one year, the Museums launched 90 percent of Phase 1 EDIA actions, with many already completed or well underway. The remaining initiatives are well positioned for the next phase. This progress reflects the dedication of Museum staff, leadership, and key committees, and lays a strong foundation for lasting change.

EDIA is an ongoing journey. True transformation means continued engagement, accountability, measuring impact, and ensuring that public spaces and workplaces reflect the diversity of the communities the Museums serve.

Looking ahead, the Museums' vision is clear: Creating spaces where every voice is valued, barriers are removed, and all people feel seen, heard and welcome. By listening, learning and acting, the Museums will continue building spaces where EDIA is part of who they are, leading by example and driving meaningful change in society.