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Concordia Library Accessibility Enhancement Internship

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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PREFACE:

In the winter of 2025, Concordia Library initiated a project under Concordia's Doctoral Student Internship Program and hired Balam Kenter, a doctoral candidate at Concordia University's Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Society and Culture. They were tasked with developing recommendations to make the Library's services more accessible to all.

The limited-term internship was short and focused, and as such, the following report is necessarily preliminary and incomplete. It is best understood as a working draft – a provisional, evolving document that is a starting point, not an endpoint, for future accessibility initiatives.

Originally intended as an internal document, any identifying information has been removed, so that we may share this report with other libraries who may find useful insights and/or recommendations in their own contexts.

Concordia University Library

Library Accessibility Enhancement Internship Final Report and Recommendations

Living Territorial Acknowledgement

Concordia University is located on unceded Kanien'kehá:ka land.

Land acknowledgments are necessary, but not sufficient. They remain performative until LAND BACK is a reality. While insufficient, land acknowledgements signal that settler colonialism is not a relic of the past but a present and ongoing structure. They implicate us all in its genocidal, systemic, and unrelenting violence.

Transforming a land acknowledgment into something more than a mere regurgitation of a pre-written paragraph begins with contextualization—of the location, the relationship, and the accountability of the person or institution making it. As a Third World settler scholar and precarious guest on Turtle Island, my presence is entirely mediated by the settler state. I must prove my right to be here to immigration authorities but never to the Kanien'kehá:ka, the rightful custodians of the land. To ask the thief for permission to be on stolen land entrenches the legitimacy of the settler state, implicating me in the colonial project—past, present, and future. Having identified my place within these systems, how do I make my presence and work accountable to this land and the structures that govern access to it? This internship, aimed at enhancing accessibility at Concordia Library, was grounded in Disability Justice. Its first principle—intersectionality—understands that systems like settler colonialism, ableism, white supremacy, patriarchy, imperialism, and capitalism do not merely coexist but mutually co-constitute and reinforce one another, historically and materially. We cannot understand or dismantle one without engaging them all. As such, Disability Justice is conducive for producing decolonial accessibility frameworks, though not a guarantee.

As Stephanie Rosen writes in [Accessibility as a Tool for Promoting Justice in Librarianship](#), accessibility is “a design philosophy that centers the needs and experiences of people with disabilities... accountable to the embodied knowledge of real people even as their/our needs change.” Accessibility should be a value system embedded across every aspect of institutional life—from collections and services to hiring practices. Rosen’s vision of accessibility is also informed by the diversification of disability and debility as well as the intersectionality of disabled people. In a settler colonial context, we must approach access and inclusion even more critically. [Jaffee & John \(2018\)](#) caution us: “Indigenous struggles for national sovereignty challenge the uncritically assumed desirability of access/inclusion,” suggesting that decolonial disability justice may require that Indigenous lands remain inaccessible to settlers, disabled or not (p. 1418). The assumption that spaces should be open to all is rooted in white and imperial logics that ignore the dynamics of power, occupation, and dispossession (Jaffee & John, 2018, p. 1418).

The work we do in challenging and reshaping systems of accessibility must be grounded in a deep understanding of the settler colonial context, critically engaging with the interconnectedness of all forms of oppression, and continually asking whose needs are centered and whose knowledge is valued. This is how we begin the work of making land acknowledgements matter.

-Balam Nedim Kenter, April 2025

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1. Introduction

This final report and recommendations document is presented in partial fulfillment of the responsibilities associated with the Library Accessibility Enhancement Internship at Concordia Library during Winter 2025. The internship is part of the Concordia Doctoral Student Internship Program (DSIP).

The overall objective of the internship is to “support the Library in identifying barriers and developing recommendations to make the Library’s services more accessible to all.” The outlined responsibilities include: reviewing one or more areas of Library services in relation to accessibility; documenting the current state of practices in the identified areas; providing an overview of best practices relevant to the academic library environment; and presenting practical recommendations for improving accessibility in these areas.

This final report documents the work carried out within the internship’s areas of responsibility and offers practical recommendations across several accessibility-related domains. While adhering to the general spirit of the internship’s purpose, observations of the Library from the vantage points of Critical Disability Theory

and Disability Justice paradigms have led to a shift in the overall framework and focus of the internship, taking a broader approach than originally outlined.

It is my understanding that the creation of this internship position reflects the Library's commitment to prioritizing accessibility as a major strategic goal. The Library's commendable initiative calls for a principled approach and a solid understanding of disability theory and accessibility, informed by disability history and the political perspectives arising from the lived experience and expertise of the disability community.

This has at least **two key implications**:

- 1) The Library has a valuable opportunity to draft **an accessibility policy** that articulates both its overarching philosophy, values, and principles regarding accessibility, as well as the concrete responsibilities and commitments that follow. The Library operates under Concordia University's updated 2022 Accessibility Policy, informed by campus-wide accessibility initiatives and data-gathering efforts by the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office and Facilities Management. While this policy, with its commitments to intersectionality and universal design, provides a solid foundation, it lacks library-specific accessibility obligations. Therefore, developing a policy that aligns with relevant international, national, and regional legislation, as well as academic library accessibility guidelines, would be beneficial.

- 2) A truly impactful accessibility initiative must meaningfully and centrally engage the knowledge, leadership, and values of disabled people. Without this engagement, efforts risk being misguided, incomplete or purely rhetorical. To ensure that the Library's accessibility efforts are substantive, the Library has a responsibility to establish an **ongoing dialogue with relevant disability communities** to assess needs and draw on expertise in laying the groundwork for a comprehensive accessibility initiative across the Concordia Library System.

Ideally, community engagement (2) should come first and guide the development of policy (1). However, clearly articulating the Library’s intent, commitment, and aspirations at this stage is equally crucial, as these provide the grounds for meaningful collaboration and accountability. Given the interdependence of these elements, it is reasonable to develop a tentative policy in parallel with a feedback system, with both the policy and the broader accessibility initiative remaining adaptable to ongoing revision. Proposals for developing a policy and instituting a feedback mechanism are outlined in Sections 3 and 5 below.

A Layered Approach

To establish a robust foundation for the Library’s accessibility initiative, I prioritized the development of a comprehensive theoretical and practical framework over focusing solely on one or two specific areas for improvement—though this internship requirement has also been met (see Sections 8 and 9). This framework follows a layered approach, progressing from general principles to specific applications, which is reflected in the structure of this document. The proposed roadmap can be implemented in phases over varying time frames and is designed to be expandable, allowing for further development and refinement in future accessibility initiatives within the Library.

Implementing a comprehensive accessibility plan within a library system is a complex and multifaceted process. Given constraints on funding and staffing, it may not be feasible to address all aspects of accessibility simultaneously. However, as the IFLA notes, “libraries should do what they can and know that whatever that is, will make a difference” (IFLA, 2024, p. 2). The flexibility of the proposed format supports both structural and incremental changes at various levels as circumstances permit, with the exception of developing an accessibility policy and establishing community dialogue, which are indispensable as they provide the theoretical and political foundation for implementing further changes.

The Research Process and the Organization of the Report

In this section, I outline the process undertaken to conduct an environmental scan on library accessibility and how it shaped the contents of this report. My approach included reviewing key research on accessibility in academic libraries, supplemented by my own observations, an examination of university-wide accessibility initiatives, and consultations with key stakeholders, including library staff, the ACSD, and the Liaison librarian at McGill Libraries. I also highlight how each of these elements informed different aspects of the recommendations and the organization of this report.

During my research, I came across the work of [Claire Burrows](#), the 2018 Researcher-in-Residence at Concordia Library. Burrows' dissertation on library accessibility compares two institutions: an Ontario library, which operates under provincial disability legislation, and a Quebec library, which lacks such legislation. The Quebec institution studied was Concordia Library, where Burrows conducted accessibility audits, surveyed students registered with the ACSD and held focused interviews with library staff and disabled students to assess the state of accessibility.

This dissertation has been an invaluable resource in identifying key focus areas for both this internship and the accompanying recommendations. Burrows highlights accessibility challenges at Concordia Library across four key dimensions: physical, digital, informational, and attitudinal barriers. For the physical accessibility component, Burrows conducted an audit, though it was limited to the Webster Library building.

Since the study was completed in 2018, some accessibility features may have changed. Notably, Concordia University has taken a more proactive approach to accessibility in recent years, including the revision of its accessibility policy in 2022, informed by campus-wide EDI and accessibility initiatives. While this shift suggests increased institutional prioritization of accessibility, its practical impact may not yet be fully realized across all areas of the university. Despite these recent

changes, the overall accessibility landscape and many of the challenges Burrows identified align with my own preliminary observations.

Below is a summary of the key accessibility challenges Burrows identified in 2018. The entire dissertation can be consulted in the Teams folder for this internship.

1. Physical Accessibility

- **Limited access to study spaces** – Some study areas require navigating steps, making them inaccessible to wheelchair users.
- **No barrier-free washrooms** – The library and its building lack fully accessible washrooms, and existing ones require passing through multiple doors, making them difficult to use.
- **Elevator access** – Only one elevator provides access to the library, and while it has signage, the lettering blends into the door, making it difficult to notice.
- **Non-wheelchair-accessible stacks** – Some shelves are too tightly spaced, making it difficult for wheelchair users to retrieve materials.
- **Adaptive workstations** – Two adaptive workstations are available, equipped with high-contrast keyboards and magnifiers, but the desks meet only minimum ADA standards, potentially excluding users with larger wheelchairs.

2. Information & Awareness

- **Limited visibility of accessibility services** – Many students are unaware of the library's accessibility services, and information about them is not always easy to find.
- **Inconsistent staff knowledge of accessibility policies** – Some staff members are unfamiliar with available accommodations, leading to inconsistent support.
- **No comprehensive accessibility policy** – The library lacks a structured policy, resulting in accessibility measures being applied in an ad hoc manner.

3. Digital & Technological Access

- **Limited digitization services** – Students must go through ACSD (Access Centre for Students with Disabilities) rather than the library to request digitized materials, adding an extra bureaucratic step.
- **Underutilization of adaptive technology** – While accessibility software is available on library computers, many students do not use it, either due to lack of awareness or unfamiliarity.

4. Policy & Institutional Priorities

- **Lack of strong legislative enforcement** – Unlike Ontario, Quebec has no provincial accessibility legislation, making accessibility a lower institutional priority.
- **Informal accommodation processes** – Study room reservations for students with disabilities are handled on an informal basis rather than as a structured accommodation.
- **Accessibility is not a central policy concern** – While some librarians advocate for improvements, accessibility is not consistently prioritized in institutional decision-making.

5. Attitudinal & Cultural Factors

- **Library staff uncertainty about disabled students' needs** – Due to limited training and integration of accessibility, staff members may not always anticipate or recognize accessibility barriers.
- **Over-reliance on ACSD** – Accessibility is often seen as the responsibility of ACSD rather than a shared institutional commitment, reinforcing an individualized approach.
- **Student hesitancy in requesting accommodations** – Some students feel uncomfortable advocating for their needs, as accessibility services can feel informal or like a special request rather than a right.

6. Study Environment & Learning Spaces

- **Open-plan library design** – Previous cubicle-style seating, preferred by some for focus, has been replaced with open seating, which can be distracting for users with ADHD or sensory sensitivities.
- **Limited ergonomic seating options** – Students with physical disabilities struggle to find comfortable seating.
- **No designated accessibility room** – Unlike the Ontario institution, this library does not have a dedicated, well-equipped accessibility space.

Scan of Best Practices

In addition to Burrows' comprehensive study, I researched best practices for implementing accessibility initiatives in academic and public libraries. Several of these resources can be accessed in full in the Teams folder assigned to this internship. Two key resources that provide the most detailed and actionable guidance are International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' (IFLA) (2024) [Guidelines for Making Libraries Accessible for People with Disabilities](#) and the [Accessible Libraries Canada](#) website. The global perspective of the IFLA guidelines is complemented by the North American and Canada-specific focus of Accessible Libraries. While the latter resource is designed for public libraries, much of its content is equally applicable to academic libraries. The Accessible Libraries site not only offers best practices and specialized guidelines across various aspects of library accessibility but also includes recently conducted, in-depth research on library accessibility in Canada (also available in the Teams folder). I highly recommend consulting both resources when implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, as well as when developing training materials for library staff.

Drawing on my expertise in disability and accessibility, along with my observations at Concordia Library and insights from library-specific resources, I structured my recommendations around three key priorities: establishing a formal library accessibility policy (Section 5), creating a robust feedback mechanism in collaboration with the disability community (Section 3), and increasing the visibility of existing accessibility features (Section 6). The remaining

recommendations reinforce and expand on these core areas. For example, before promoting accessibility features, it is essential to first conduct a comprehensive audit and compile a detailed inventory. Section 4, Comprehensive Accessibility Audit, addresses this need while emphasizing the importance of centering the expertise of the disability community. Since library staff play a critical role in both establishing and implementing accessibility initiatives, I have also included a brief recommendation on staff training and empowerment (Section 7).

Campuswide Accessibility Initiatives

In addition to research and observations on library accessibility, I examined various campus-wide accessibility initiatives at Concordia University to identify individuals, institutional bodies, and groups with which the Library can collaborate to build and promote a comprehensive accessibility initiative.

- [Equity Office's EDI Action Plan](#) was pivotal in Concordia University's new accessibility policy, especially the [final report of the Working Group on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)—the culmination of a two-year process in which the working group summarized its [consultations with Concordians](#) and created a framework for a coordinated equity strategy across the university. Importantly, the report identifies **disability as one of the six main areas of discrimination** at Concordia along with race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion. The initiative led to the creation of the [Accessibility Change Lead](#) position and then to the creation of the [Accessibility Advisory Committee](#).
- [The Facilities Management Accessibility and Inclusivity Action Plan](#) is another Concordia initiative to enhance accessible and inclusive facilities on campus, based on extensive [community input](#).
- [Accessibility Hub](#) systematically publicizes services and resources for those seeking information on disability and accessibility on campus.

Consultations

Concurrently, I consulted several library staff members, particularly those who work directly with disabled students or liaise with the ACSD. I also spoke with the Disability Accommodations Lead at the ACSD, who additionally served as Accessibility Change Lead at the Equity Office from 2022 to 2024. During my

environmental scan, I discovered that McGill Libraries had already undertaken an accessibility initiative and developed its own [library accessibility policy](#). This policy served as a model for both my proposed policy (Section 5) and the proposal for an Accessibility Working Group (Section 2). To gain insight into McGill's process, I consulted the librarian responsible for creating the McGill Libraries' accessibility website and policy. These consultations and the insights shared with me were instrumental in shaping these recommendations.

To meet the internship requirements and align with the layered approach developed, I have also formulated specific, actionable recommendations for one service area: Default OCR-formatting for Course Reserves (Section 9). Similarly, Section 8, Relatively Quick Accessibility Enhancements, identifies smaller, manageable improvements that can be implemented with relative ease within the broader, more complex process of developing a comprehensive library accessibility plan. Finally, I have included brief recommendations for future directions in accessibility (Section 10), focusing on areas that are rarely considered as accessibility features in a library, such as disability studies and literature content curation.

The rest of this report (Section 2 to 10) consists of recommendations for specific focus areas identified in this introduction.

2. Library Accessibility Working Group

Developing and implementing a comprehensive accessibility strategy within the Concordia Library System is a substantial undertaking. To initiate the necessary workflows for this process and to facilitate the implementation of the short- and mid-term recommendations outlined in this report, establishing a Library Accessibility Working Group would be highly beneficial.

As part of its accessibility initiative, McGill Libraries established the McGill Libraries Accessibility Working Group (MLAWG), which was tasked with "continuously reviewing the Library's policies, services, and resources to

determine whether all users have equitable access to the McGill Library system and to ensure compliance with applicable legislation." MLAWG's projects included improving the descriptions of bookable group study rooms, gathering feedback from the community, and integrating accessibility considerations into building and renovation projects. MLAWG's Chair emphasized that the working group was responsible for achieving the most concrete changes within McGill Libraries' accessibility initiative.

To provide a model for Concordia Library, MLAWG, which met six times a year, comprised the following members: Associate Dean, User Services; Liaison to the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD); Assessment Librarian; three librarians from branch libraries; one library assistant from branch libraries; one representative from Collection Services; one technical staff member; one OSD staff member; and one OSD-registered student.

The collaborative composition of this working group—representing multiple branches and areas of the library, the OSD, and students—reflects a shift from an individualized accommodations model of disability to a disability justice framework, where accessibility is recognized as a collective responsibility.

Burrows' study highlights that while some libraries designate an accessibility librarian, this approach can lead to an overreliance on a single individual rather than fostering a shared commitment to accessibility. This often results in unrealistic expectations that one librarian can address all accessibility-related concerns and resolve systemic issues alone. Meanwhile, other staff members may assume that responsibility lies elsewhere and disengage from accessibility matters. In libraries without an accessibility librarian, accessibility is often perceived as the responsibility of an accessibility office (such as the ACSD) or the university administration.

Establishing a library accessibility working group—not as a replacement for, but possibly in conjunction with, appointing an accessibility librarian and fostering balanced collaborations with accessibility offices—would help ensure that accessibility is recognized as an institutional priority requiring structural change and collective effort. While a working group alone is not sufficient for the task of

collectivizing accessibility without also adequately training and empowering all library staff, it would be a crucial first step. (See Section 7 for recommendations on Staff Training and Empowerment.)

3. Community Needs Assessment and Expertise Procurement

Principles: ‘Nothing about us, without us.’

The most important aspect of any accessibility initiative committed to a social and political understanding of disability, Disability Justice principles, and principles of Universal Design is to make sure that the initiative partners with the disability community from the planning stage onward.

An accessibility initiative that grows out of the aforementioned principles and perspectives operates on the understanding that **disabled people are the experts in assessing accessibility needs, services, and improvements**. As such, this perspective requires a robust commitment to procuring early, often, and ongoing feedback from the community.

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions’ (IFLA) (2024) [Guidelines for Making Libraries Accessible for People with Disabilities](#) provides a very useful general roadmap for this process:

A phrase used by the disability community is “nothing about us, without us.” It grew out of the too frequent development of services from businesses and organizations that purported to serve people with disabilities but missed critical elements.

Library services to any disability group should begin by contacting the relevant disability community or government agency. All library planning should involve extensive input from these groups. Specifically, a library should:

- Include disability organizations in any needs assessment to determine the most appropriate services.
- Ask disability groups to help review library policies for intentional or

unintentional biases.

- Ask disability groups representing different disabilities to examine and provide an honest evaluation of the library's physical organization and facilities, communications, and services.
- Include people from the disability community in any planning efforts.
- Include people with disabilities in any community user or advisory groups.

(IFLA, 2024, p.7)

However, it is essential to strike a delicate balance here in order to **prevent overtaxing people with disabilities**. Experiencing systemic discrimination can be a major source of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion for disabled people and **advocacy burnout** is a specific form [disability burnout](#) takes. When disabled people participate in accessibility consultations, there should be ample **compensation** for and public recognition/acknowledgement of disabled people's labor.

Current Practice

The Concordia Library currently lacks a robust system for obtaining specific feedback from relevant communities regarding the state of accessibility.

Establishing a comprehensive and continuous feedback mechanism to enhance accessibility should be the top priority of the Library's accessibility initiative.

Ideally, this mechanism would be implemented before the development of any formal library accessibility policy and would serve to inform it. However, it is equally important to communicate the library's intent, commitment, and aspirations at this early stage, as these form the foundation for meaningful community engagement.

Since these elements are interdependent, it is reasonable to develop a tentative policy alongside the feedback system (See Section 5 below for a Provisional

Accessibility Policy). The policy—like the library’s broader accessibility initiative—should remain open to ongoing revision.

Relevant Communities

The Concordia Library system primarily serves Concordia University students, faculty, and staff. Since the library is open to the public as well, the larger Montréal community is also relevant.

According to past surveys on the library’s webpage, the largest community served by the library is currently Concordia undergraduates. As such, in the first instance, disabled users within this constituency might be prioritized for procuring feedback on library accessibility. Students registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) represent but one part of this population. The library should find ways to reach out to students who are not registered with the ACSD, or do not identify as disabled, but might have access needs.

The library also serves faculty and staff, who categorically cannot register with the ACSD, and should set up a way to reach out to them for accessibility feedback.

The library should also assume that there are disabled library staff, whether disclosed or nondisclosed, working at Concordia Library and should actively seek their feedback. Library workers constantly navigate the library, its facilities, and services, not only as service providers but also as users.

Note that the surveys and questions, as well as the framing of such surveys, might need to be modified to best communicate with these various communities who might have differing conceptions of disability and accessibility.

Finally, the library should reach out to Montréal organizations representing and centralizing the expertise of disabled people for regular independent audits and evaluations of the library’s state of accessibility.

Recommendation: A Layered and Continuous Feedback System

Based on the communities served, I recommend a layered approach to needs assessment and expertise procurement, designed to gather feedback from all

relevant constituencies and communities. Input from diverse sources will provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of community access needs and demands, ensuring a wide range of perspectives is represented.

Recognizing that accessibility is an ongoing and evolving process requiring continuous review and improvement, this feedback mechanism is structured to solicit input from various communities at regular intervals. Additionally, a live survey link—along with offline, in-person methods—will remain accessible at all times to facilitate ongoing participation.

A continuous feedback system is uniquely suited for an academic library setting where the make up of the student body is continuously changing with new needs emerging with the entrance of each new cohort. It is also important to acknowledge the gradual changes in technology, as well as library services and spaces over time which require refreshed assessment of these aspects from an accessibility perspective.

Important Note: The layers are *not* organized hierarchically in the order of importance but are instead intended to differentiate areas of focus and isolate actionable elements within each.

For example, outreach to Montréal organizations is not merely an effort to serve the non-academic public and should not be deprioritized. The types of data generated by audits and evaluations significantly differ from those produced by surveys. While surveys capture individual user experience (although of course, in an ableist society individual experience thereof is of a political and generalizable character), audits are conducted by experts trained in best practices, offering a more systematic evaluation. I specifically recommend starting with the independent audits in Layer 4 to establish a foundational understanding of what must be done to improve accessibility throughout the library. Additionally, while students registered with the ACSD primarily represent neurominoritized, cognitive, and sensory disabilities—understandably so, given ACSD’s primary focus on academic accommodations—independent audit organizations can complement this data by assessing aspects of physical accessibility.

In short, **each layer is essential both in its own right and in conjunction with the others.**

Finally, it is paramount to acknowledge that **these methods of gathering community needs data and expertise are not exhaustive but merely a starting point.** The process of implementing these layers itself should ideally produce various other and more comprehensive avenues and methods for seeking and processing accessibility feedback.

Layer 1 - Online accessibility Survey on the new Library Accessibility Webpage: The survey questions can be modeled on several examples I provide and analyze in the relevant Teams folder.

All accessibility surveys that circulate should be designed in an accessible way with large accessible fonts, accessible navigation design, suitable for text-to-speech applications, etc.

Layer 1.1 - Survey posters with QR link featured in physical library spaces, and possibly in other buildings around campus to reach more users. These physical posters should be in accessible format—designed for print disabilities, etc. Other survey formats can also be generated: e.g., a completely print-based survey, rather than just QR link, with all the questions printed out.

Layer 2 - Collaboration with Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD). Building on Claire Burrows' collaboration with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD), the library can partner with ACSD to distribute annual or semesterly surveys to the approximately 4,000 students registered with the center. This survey may need to be designed or framed differently from the general survey available on the website and the poster circulated in physical spaces to ensure it effectively captures relevant accessibility concerns.

Preliminary discussions with ACSD indicate that the Centre is open to such a collaboration. To formally initiate this process, the library should contact the manager at ACSD.

Layer 2.1 - Student Accessibility Advisory Committee. This student-led disability committee could be consulted on accessibility improvements within the library. The manager of ACSD, chairs this group. I have initiated preliminary discussions regarding this collaboration, though a formal meeting has yet to take place.

The library could consider sending a representative to one of the group's annual meetings to provide updates on the Library's accessibility initiative, solicit feedback, and potentially arrange for a review tour or evaluation of the library's facilities and services by the group in the future.

Layer 3 - A survey designed to reach all Concordia library users on a yearly/semesterly basis to get feedback from student, faculty, and staff who are not, or categorically cannot be, registered with ACSD. Note that getting feedback from students versus faculty and staff might require different mechanisms and methods.

Considerations: The library currently does not have a way to reach all library users (e.g., mass email). The library's main communication channels are social media posts and news items on the library website. The library occasionally works with University Communication Services (UCS) to have news items more widely distributed, e.g., in the staff Carrefour portal or NOW newsletter as well as student email newsletters.

- **Collaboration with Facilities Management:** Facilities Management appears to have mechanisms for reaching the entire university community, possibly through the UCS. The representative from Facilities Management, who was also on Concordia's [Accessibility Advisory Committee](#), may be consulted regarding potential outreach strategies.
- **University Communications Services:** The university's communication service may provide additional avenues for disseminating accessibility-related surveys and gathering feedback.
- **Collaboration with ACSD and the Accessibility Hub:** In discussions with ACSD, the Communications Manager in the Provost's Office was recommended as the primary contact for registering accessibility initiatives and services with the Accessibility Hub. The manager may also be a valuable resource for identifying

ways to engage the broader university community in providing accessibility feedback.

- **Promotion via the Accessibility Hub:** It may also be possible to advertise accessibility surveys and/or place a survey link/widget on the Accessibility Hub's website to facilitate broader participation.

Layer 3.1 – Library Staff. As previously noted, it is essential to recognize that there are likely disabled library staff working within the Concordia Library system. Their feedback and expertise should be sought not only as service providers but also as users of library spaces, facilities, technologies, and services. As highlighted in Burrows' (2018) study, disabled library workers are often overlooked both as users of and experts in accessibility. To effectively gather input from library staff, a different methodology may be required, such as internally circulated surveys with tailored questions specific to their experiences and needs.

Layer 4 - Independent audits and evaluations by local organizations representing and centralizing the expertise of disabled people on a continuous basis. I recommend Altergo and/or Kéroutl for this task. You can find my detailed recommendation below in Section 4 titled Recommendation for a Comprehensive Accessibility Audit.

Logistical, Technical, and Budgetary Challenges

As with other aspects of the library's accessibility initiative, instituting this feedback mechanism presents logistical, technical, and budgetary challenges:

- **Community Access:** As noted in Layer 3, the library does not have access to the entire university community. Even if such access is attained, it may not be regularly utilized due to privacy concerns. Additional obstacles may include survey messages being filtered into spam folders and general lack of interest.
- **Sample Size:** Surveys of this nature often receive low participation rates. For instance, Claire Burrows contacted the 2,000–3,000 students registered with disability services at two institutions and received approximately 67 responses from each. How can participation be encouraged? How can individuals be made aware that accessibility concerns are relevant to them? These are fundamental challenges that should be considered when designing and promoting the surveys.

- **Survey Design Workflow:** Who will be responsible for designing a survey or multiple customized surveys for this purpose? While I have provided sample surveys and general directions, the final version must be synthesized into an effective format that maximizes data accuracy. Ideally, this task should be assigned to someone with expertise in both accessibility issues and survey design within the social sciences.
- **Survey Accessibility Workflow:** Who will ensure that all survey formats and their methods of distribution are fully accessible?
- **Data Processing Workflow:** Who will collect and analyze the survey and audit data, particularly given varying timeframes? In what format will the findings be processed and transformed into actionable recommendations for the library and informative updates for its users? For example, publishing the survey results on the library's webpage—outlining key findings and planned actions—would demonstrate accountability and a commitment to follow-through.
- **Budget Considerations:** While the surveys and their promotion may not require a substantial budget, they will necessitate a dedicated team and significant working hours, thereby incurring indirect costs. Additionally, disability organizations charge fees for their services, so budgetary decisions will need to account for which service(s) to engage and whether multiple organizations will be utilized.

4. Recommendation for a Comprehensive Accessibility Audit

Timeline: Short- to Mid-Term

One of the recommendations in this report is to initiate the compilation of a comprehensive list of all accessibility features available at Concordia Library and integrate this information into a newly created, highly visible webpage detailing "Accessibility at Concordia Library."

Either in tandem with this initiative or prior to it, **it is strongly recommended that one or more independent audits of the library be conducted as soon as possible by institutions that represent and centralize disabled people as accessibility experts.** While Facilities Management has performed an audit, this constitutes an

internal review and does not qualify as an independent evaluation. Furthermore, the Library does not appear to have access to the results of this audit.

The Library's new accessibility webpage can be developed based on currently available information, with regular updates incorporating new findings and the results of external audits. The overarching goal for the library's new accessibility page, as well as for the library's accessibility services and approach, is to establish a framework of continual review and expansion. The Library can initially list the known accessibility features while explicitly outlining its commitment and concrete plans to obtain independent evaluations. The evaluation process appears to require several weeks, making it feasible to complete these audits over the summer semester.

Based on independent research and recommendations from the Canadian Public Library Accessibility study, **I recommend the following two organizations for this task: K roul and AlterGo.** Their inclusion in the aforementioned research further substantiates their credibility as qualified auditors.

A Comparative Analysis of AlterGo and K roul

AlterGo offers a range of services, including evaluations, training, and user testing of services. Several of these services have been highlighted in a separate file within the Teams internship folder, although additional options are available. One notable limitation, which applies to both AlterGo and K roul, is that their evaluations and training programs appear to primarily focus on accessibility for physical and sensory disabilities. While this represents an important and necessary step, the library should also consider seeking additional auditing services to address other forms of disability in the future.

While [K roul](#) has an English-language webpage, [AlterGo](#)'s website is exclusively in French. To facilitate review, I have used an automatic browser translation for several AlterGo pages, which can be found in the related file within the Teams folder.

Despite the limitations of the rudimentary translation, I found AlterGo's terminology particularly insightful, notably the phrase "resource persons" in the

[Exploratory Walks](#) section, which appropriately acknowledges disabled people as experts in accessibility. If a decision had to be made between these two services, my recommendation would be AlterGo. Its services are significantly more comprehensive, highly customizable, and better suited to a library setting. Additionally, given AlterGo’s flexibility, it may have the capacity to assess for a broader range of disabilities.

Kéroul appears to be more focused on commercial institutions, whereas AlterGo primarily serves public institutions. Additionally, AlterGo’s detailed explanations of various [past projects with public institutions](#) provide insight into possible customization options for the library’s needs.

While Kéroul offers only one type of evaluation, AlterGo provides multiple assessment options as well as [training services](#). One potential advantage of Kéroul—if this is a consideration for the library—is its recognition by the Ministry of Tourism, which includes certification upon completion of the evaluation.

If budget constraints are not a concern, it would be advisable for the library to engage both institutions to maximize the breadth and depth of accessibility assessment. However, if resources are limited, AlterGo appears to be the more comprehensive and suitable choice for the library’s specific context.

5. Provisional Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Webpage Content

As noted in the introduction, it is essential for the Library to develop an accessibility policy that articulates its philosophy, values, and principles regarding accessibility, along with the concrete responsibilities and commitments that follow from these principles. To draft a policy prototype for inclusion on the Concordia Library accessibility webpage, I studied [McGill Library’s policy](#). A sentence-by-sentence analysis of this policy—examining its thoughtful conceptualization of disability and its well-structured organization—can be found in the relevant Teams folder.

While modeled on the McGill policy, the prototype I produced is quite different from the clear and concise text of that document. Rather than prescribing a finalized policy, the version below should be understood as generative and aspirational. It introduces forward-looking concepts and possibilities intended to provoke reflection and dialogue. Its purpose is to offer the Library a starting point for considering which elements align with its institutional goals and capacities.

Library Accessibility Webpage Content Prototype

(Alternatives for the webpage main title: Library Accessibility; Accessibility at Concordia Library; Concordia Library's Policy on Accessibility; Concordia Library's Accessibility Policy and Action Plan)

Commitment

Concordia Library is committed to providing an accessible, inclusive, and equitable library experience to users with physical, sensory, cognitive, and mental disabilities, chronic health conditions or other disabling conditions (whether temporary, permanent, or episodic).

Philosophy

The library is informed by a social and political understanding of disability which locates disability in society rather than in capacitations of bodies and minds.

A [social model of disability](#) advocates the view that disablement is a process that results from ableist and discriminatory social structures (including but not limited to institutional policies, practices and services, built environments, dominant attitudes and conceptions about disability) which present barriers to accessing buildings, activities, and other resources designed for normatively nondisabled bodyminds.

In this view, disability is not inherently negative or limiting. Rather it is ableist structures, environments, and attitudes that generate negative disability experiences through disabling limitations. Following from this, accessibility is a basic collective right which should be integrated to all institutions, resources, and

services from the beginning rather than retroactively extended as special accommodations for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

The library's social understanding of disability and accessibility is further enriched by an intersectional [Disability Justice](#) outlook which emphasizes the diversity and intersectionality of disability experience and exceeds the rights framework of the social model as well as legalistic compliance frameworks operating with limited definitions of disability and accessibility. (Learn the [Ten Principles of Disability Justice](#)).

Informed by both social and justice conceptions of disability and access, the Library approaches accessibility as an ongoing, emerging, and emergent process, to be continuously reviewed and assessed through an active feedback mechanism that centralizes disability experience and expertise. (Learn more about our feedback process and take our accessibility survey here: [insert relevant links](#)).

Background

Concordia Library's accessibility policy operates under [Concordia University's 2022 Policy for Accessibility](#), which urges all members and elements of the University to participate and engage in creating an accessible and inclusive University environment in accordance with principles of [Intersectionality](#) and [Universal Design](#).

In order to implement and expand upon the specific implications of University accessibility policy, as well as relevant international, national, and regional legislation and guidelines (e.g., [UNCRPD](#); [Accessible Canada act](#); [Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms](#); [Quebec Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration](#); [IFLA Guidelines for Making Libraries Accessible for People with Disabilities](#); [Accessible Libraries Canada](#)) in the academic library environment, Concordia University Library has launched a comprehensive accessibility enhancement initiative as a priority goal in Concordia Library's 2025 Strategic Goals.

The Library is further informed by other campuswide accessibility, equity, and inclusivity efforts and initiatives (e.g., [Accessibility Hub](#); [Facilities Management Accessibility and Inclusivity Action Plan](#); [Concordia Equity Office EDI Action Plan](#); [Working Group on EDI](#)). We are committed to engaging with this emerging work in a variety of ways with the aim of building deep and meaningful change.

Current Collaborations

Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD)

[The mission of ACSD](#) is to reduce barriers to academic participation in the University, raise awareness about students with disabilities, and engage in community-building to further promote an inclusive environment at Concordia.

Concordia Library collaborates with the [Access Centre for Students with Disabilities](#) (ACSD) in several areas to provide accessible service (e.g., implementing accessibility software on public workstations in the library, ensuring students receive accessible copies of library materials). Concordia Library seeks to deepen this collaboration whilst simultaneously developing a plan to make accessibility a priority responsibility area for the library, taking a more proactive role in enhancing accessibility in infrastructure and services.

Current State of Accessibility

List what the library currently offers, i.e., a more comprehensive version of the [Students with Disabilities](#) page content, including services, catalogue, as well as features of the physical environment. (See the next section below for a prototype of what this page can look like). [Add the survey link again and ask for feedback here].

Future Plans for Development

Layered Feedback Mechanism

We operate on the understanding that disabled people are the experts in assessing accessibility needs, services, and improvements. As such, we are committed to procuring ongoing feedback from the community.

One layer of this feedback mechanism is the accessibility survey on this page (insert relevant link). We also have physical surveys in accessible format in all library locations.

Another layer is a yearly survey to be circulated in collaboration with ACSD to students registered with them.

A further layer is a survey designed to reach all Concordia library users on our own database on a yearly/semesterly basis to get feedback from student, faculty, and staff who are not registered with ACSD, or who may not identify as disabled but may have access needs.

A final layer is comprehensive audits and evaluations by independent organizations centralizing disability expertise in Montréal.

Through these multiple layers, the Library aims to get robust, comprehensive, and ongoing feedback to improve accessibility in the library.

Independent Comprehensive Audit

Concordia Library is in the process of organizing independent audits and evaluations of library buildings, services, and resources by organizations that represent disabled people and that centralize and utilize disability experience and expertise in evaluating accessibility of institutions. The library will enact short-, mid-, and long-term plans to implement necessary changes and improvements that result from these evaluations.

Concordia Library Accessibility Working Group

Concordia Library is in the process of forming an Accessibility Working Group with a mandate to continuously review the Library's policies, services and resources to determine whether all users have equitable access to the Concordia Library system and to ensure that the Library is following applicable legislation.

Staff Training

Concordia Library is in the process of organizing numerous yearly trainings to empower and inform library staff on library and university policies on accessibility,

as well as practical and theoretical information on implementing accessibility in all areas and services of the library in a manner that aligns with principles of Universal Design and Disability Justice.

Contact

If possible, it would be good to have a specific person as contact. This ensures direct contact with a designated individual rather than a generic email address, fostering accountability. Clarifying the contact person's role could prevent the unintended concentration of accessibility responsibilities. This approach also balances the impersonal nature of surveys, contributing to a multi-layered communication strategy. Offering multiple feedback channels accommodates different preferences and access needs.

Accessibility Survey

Take our accessibility survey! [insert relevant link]

Other relevant links or info

Users can be directed to a campus accessibility map, information about current construction projects on campus that may interfere with the accessibility of the building, links to the Accessibility Hub, ACSD, and other relevant pages.

Current State of Accessibility Page Prototype

Overview of the extant “Students with Disabilities” Page

The Library currently has a webpage titled [Students with Disabilities](#) that outlines available accessibility services, assistive technologies, hardware, and software. If the Library introduces a dedicated Accessibility in the Library webpage with its accessibility policy, the content of the existing page could be incorporated into the Current State of Accessibility section.

Currently, this page is buried several layers under the Help menu, making it difficult to find. As detailed in Section 6 below, Burrows’ research suggests that this information is not reaching users effectively, leading to unawareness and

underutilization of accessibility services. To address this, **the page should be more prominently placed in the main navigation menu. Additionally, its title should be revised** to reflect accessibility rather than focusing on “disabled students.” This shift would move the emphasis away from individuals as problems to be accommodated and instead highlight the Library’s commitment to providing accessible, equitable services. Language plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions and is one of the easiest aspects to change, particularly in text-based environments like a webpage. However, if the existing content is integrated into the new accessibility policy page, renaming may no longer be necessary as it will come under Current State of Accessibility.

Most of the listed accessibility features currently depend on the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD). Either students must be registered with ACSD to receive these services through the Library, or they must access them directly via ACSD.

The requirement for ACSD registration presents multiple challenges. Not everyone with access needs is registered with ACSD, nor does every person with access needs identify as disabled. Furthermore, not all disabled individuals can obtain the official documentation required for ACSD registration. This documentation is typically a medical assessment, which is not universally accessible, as some disabilities are difficult or impossible to diagnose through medical means. Others may reject a medical framing of their disability and choose not to seek a diagnosis, even if this limits their access to accommodations. Additionally, obtaining medical documentation can be prohibitively expensive and, in some cases, an inaccessible or even disabling process. For example, neurominoritized conditions such as ADHD often require long, complex, and costly diagnostic procedures that many cannot afford or endure.

More critically, the Library’s reliance on ACSD excludes faculty and staff, who are ineligible for ACSD registration. This approach not only ties library accessibility to student status but also reinforces a medicalized model of disability by requiring official documentation. While [workplace accessibility for Concordia employees is organized through Human Resources](#), with similar medical documentation

requirements, University policy on employee accommodations does not include any library-specific procedures and obligations regarding the accessibility of the library and its services for faculty and staff. Hence, it is the Library's responsibility to specify these obligations in its accessibility initiatives.

If the Library aims to take a more proactive role in accessibility, it should explicitly acknowledge both its current reliance on ACSD and its plans to assume greater responsibility in this area. A brief note such as the following could be added: "While the Library currently collaborates with ACSD on many accessibility services, we are working toward a model that ensures accessibility for a wider range of users based on Universal Design principles, without requiring self-identification."

Proposed content addition to the extant content: Physical Accessibility

Burrows' study at Concordia indicates that students use the library primarily as a study space. Hence, listing the access features of the physical space is crucial. Below I list some physical accessibility features that can be added to the Current State of Accessibility section in the new webpage and what kind of content could go with each feature. **The list and its content should be adjusted after a full inventory and accessibility evaluation.**

Parking (Information on accessible parking around LB and Vanier if any. Provide maps as well as textual descriptions)

Entrance to LB (list of accessible doors and their locations)

List of accessible doors: - West entrance on De Maisonneuve Boulevard West (near 4TH SPACE); - Entrance at 1453 Mackay St.; - East entrance in the Ste. Catherine Street West alleyway (near SHIFT)

The entrance doors are currently [under renovation to improve accessibility](#).

Entrance to Vanier (The inner entrance door has an automatic button and ramp but the entrance to the main building is inaccessible. Unless users can teleport and materialize at the accessible inner entrance, the library remains physically inaccessible. The Library should consider contacting Facilities management for renovation of these doors which are out of the Library's jurisdiction.)

Elevators (List locations, use and accessibility info (e.g., braille buttons, sound alerts) for both WB and Vanier)

Signage (Assess and report on how accessible the wayfinding signage is in the library buildings. It is a good idea to advertise the interactive wayfinding kiosks as potential accessibility features.)

Lighting (Assess and report on the lighting options in the buildings, general areas, reading rooms, study rooms, etc., whether there is any lighting that is adjustable for need. Therapy lamp borrowing option could be mentioned here.)

Sound (Sound policy in the library, silent reading rooms, their locations and accessibility status, etc. This is important information for people with sensory sensitivities, and people using speech apps. I mentioned below, but maybe you can point out in this section too that noise-cancelling headsets are available to borrow).

Washrooms (list of accessible washrooms, list specific accessibility information for each washroom, list of their locations. List gender neutral washrooms as an accessibility feature. For instance, if I only feel safe in a gender-neutral washroom, a building without gender neutral washrooms is inaccessible to me.)

Water fountains (list locations of water fountains, assess if these are wheelchair accessible. Are there water fountains with different heights? Could someone with limited use of hands or grip use them? Etc.)

Reading rooms with pushbutton doors (currently only one in LB. I am unaware of the pushbutton situation at Vanier) (May announce plan to add pushbuttons to more doors in both buildings, if/when they are under way).

Wheelchair accessible reading and study rooms (some of those rooms are accessible only via steps or there are steps inside them, so maybe list those without steps/stairs.) (Announce plan to add ramps to the ones with steps if/when it is under way).

Stacks (stacks in Vanier are moveable and might be wheelchair accessible, but stacks in LB do not seem physically accessible. You may mention that books can be

retrieved to the course reserve room of the chosen library building. The course reserve rooms are potentially accessible but this needs to be assessed. Additionally, the books stacked there to be picked up might not be reachable for all, so may need to be stacked in a middle shelf).

Self-check-out kiosks (The new self-checkout kiosks, provided that enough space is left around them are potentially wheel-chair accessible. The height should be assessed to ascertain this. The new kiosks are also better in terms of usability. Assess for whether sound alerts or braille can be added to these to further accessibility.)

Hight Adjustable desks (If you have any in any of the buildings, list them. It is a good idea to plan to get some, because this is one of the most requested access needs).

Various accessible seating and desk options and their locations (for instance Vanier has an area with different types of chairs and desks with various heights in an area on the ground floor with an accessibility sign. Similar features, if the Library has more, should be listed in detail.)

Note: You might consider moving study rooms and portable standing desks from the section below up to this section since they pertain to the physical space as well.

Analysis of Existing Content and Proposed Additions and Modifications

Below I focus on some sections of the current [Students with Disabilities](#) page and comment on some of the features (e.g., suggestions to clarify their precise function and their relevance to accessibility). I also proposed adding existing potential accessibility features that are not mentioned in the current page but offered. The Library can add at least two other main accessibility items to this list, perhaps under the heading of “digital accessibility”. **While both currently adhere to accessibility standards, they should be user-tested** in audits for actual usability:

Library Webpage - (The Library webpage, like all other Concordia University webpages, conforms to the Web accessibility standards of the Government of Quebec. For more information, refer to [Concordia University's Web Accessibility Statement](#)).

Library Catalogue - (Sofia conforms to Level AA of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ([WCAG 2.2 guidelines](#)). For more information, see [provider's accessibility statement](#).)

The current **Overview** section states that: “To be eligible for extended library services for users with disabilities, students must be registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities.”

Commentary: If this page is integrated to the new accessibility page and placed under the library accessibility policy, then this Overview section might become redundant. But if this page is revised before drafting the policy and making the new page, then the ACSD registration requirement should be clarified, as some of the services or aspects of services explained below do not require registration with ACSD.

Loans & Returns section states that: “Users registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities are eligible to request renewals and to check on the status of their loans by telephone or email. This can also be done online”.

Commentary: It could be useful to clarify why precisely this is an access feature, possibly by pointing out that this service is available to students who are not registered to ACSD only online. Explain what might make the options of telephone and email more accessible than using the webpage alone.

Book Chapter and Journal article scans section states that: “Articles and chapters from Concordia's collection of books and print or microform periodicals (e.g., journals, magazines, newspapers and conferences), as well as the front and back matter from print books, can be scanned and emailed to you as a PDF attachment. Please note that bound periodicals and periodicals on microform cannot be transferred to Vanier Library or Webster Library for pickup at this time.”

Commentary: As it stands, any student can benefit from the scanning service. Since the page is prefaced by a statement that makes these services conditional upon ACSD registration, it could be useful to reiterate that this is a service open to all students regardless of ACSD status. I would classify this as an accessibility feature. But it could also be useful to add information about what kind of pdfs result from this process. Are these accessible pdfs? Will the Library OCR format them? To make it a truly accessible feature, the documents produced should be in accessible formats as well—suitable for screen readers, text-to-speech software, copyable, highlightable, searchable, etc.

Retrieval of Material section states that: “Users registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities can provide a list of up to 10 items including call numbers for retrieval. Requests are accepted by telephone, e-mail and in-person via the Ask A Librarian service. Note that requests to retrieve library items can also be achieved online via the Sofia Discovery tool. The items that are available will be retrieved within 48 hours and placed on hold for you for up to 3 days, in the case of undergraduate students, or 5 days, in the case of graduate students.”

Commentary: The Retrieval section begins with alerting the user that this is a service available to students registered with ACSD. But retrieval is also available, via Sofia, to students who are not registered with the ACSD. It could be helpful to use clearer language. I would consider the Sofia retrieval to be an access feature in itself. Perhaps the section can begin with this, and then specify what ACSD registration adds *on top of* this feature (more items, more channels--up to 10 items, accepted by phone, email, and in person, etc.)

Study Rooms section states that: “Group study rooms are available at both libraries. A group study room may be booked by one person with disabilities for individual or group use. Apart from that exception, the reservation policy for study rooms applies to students registered with the ACSD.”

Commentary: This language is unclear. What is the exception? What additional service does registration with the ACSD bring? Is there a distinction being made between booking versus reserving the room? Is one on the spot and the other done in advance? It could be helpful to clarify. The choice of the word ‘exception’ makes it sound like it’s an ad hoc favor done on the spot rather than reflecting institutional commitment to accessibility.

Photocopying and printing section states that: “All users are responsible for making or arranging their own photocopying in the Library. Here is more information about DPrint. If you require assistance in using the photocopiers, you may arrange for help through the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities.”

Commentary: It would be helpful to clarify that photocopying and printing are out of the jurisdiction of the Library even though there are copiers and printers located in the library spaces. Otherwise, it sounds odd that students are directed to the ACSD for photocopying and printing assistance in location at the library.

Software section states that: “The following software applications are available on all public workstations at Vanier and Webster Library (with the exception of the Express Workstations).

- Fusion2022
- ClaroRead Plus for text-to-speech and writing help.”

Commentary: It would be useful to add what Fusion2022 is for as well, since this is helpfully explained for ClaroRead Plus. It would also help to add 'accessible' or 'accessibility' before the word 'software' within body text.

Special Equipment section states that: "Smart View magnifiers allow you to enlarge a variety of documents and are available in LB-285 (Ireland Reading Room) of the Webster Library and on the 2nd floor at the Vanier Library. Other equipment available to borrow at the Vanier Library Circulation desk and Webster Library Loans & Returns desk that might be of interest include: Visual aid keyboard (Vanier Library only), Portable standing desks."

Commentary: Please make sure to change the title of this section to Accessibility Hardware (or just Hardware to be consistent with Software above). Accessibility is not 'special', it is a basic need. I recommend adding the following hardware to the available-to-borrow list after portable standing desks:

- [Noise cancelling headsets](#)
 - [Light therapy lamps](#)
-

6. Recommendation for Publicizing and Advertising Accessibility Policies and Services

The Importance of Publicizing Accessibility Features

Developing accessible spaces, equipment, software, and services is only one component of creating an accessible library. Equally important is the effective publicization of the library's accessibility policies and services. If individuals are unaware that an event, space, program, facility, or service is accessible, they may not attend, utilize the service, or participate in activities. **The library should take a proactive approach in promoting its accessibility features, as well as its future plans and initiatives for enhancing accessibility.**

Because accessibility is not the status quo, disabled people may assume that a space, resource, or activity is inaccessible unless accessibility features are explicitly publicized. Navigating an ableist society and self-advocating for accommodations is an exhausting, full-time job. Disabled people should not have to continuously inquire about, request, or justify their need for accessibility. This information should be publicly and widely available without requiring individuals to ask, disclose, or prove their disability status.

Furthermore, insufficient information about accessibility features often leads to their underuse. This, in turn, may result in the mistaken assumption that these services are unnecessary or that there are no disabled individuals in the communities served by the institution—sometimes leading to the discontinuation of accessibility programs.

Impact of Limited Accessibility Information

Survey and interview findings by Burrows (2018) regarding disabled student users of the Concordia Library indicate that information about library accessibility "was limited, and many of the students said that they did not know what options and services were available" (p. 230). A lack of awareness about library accessibility, accommodations, and available services directly discourages disabled patrons from utilizing the library. As one student from Burrows' study stated, "I was not even aware that I had the option to have accommodations for the library. I wish they made that knowledge more known; I maybe would have been more likely to use the library" (Burrows, 2018, p. 214). Several students made similar remarks, with many indicating that they were "unaware of being able to extend loans of course reserves upon request or of being able to use group study rooms on an individual basis, although they suggested that these services would have been useful" (Burrows, 2018, p. 230).

Although some accessibility information is available on the library webpage, Burrows' research suggests that it is not reaching users effectively. Currently, the accessibility page is buried several layers under the help section of the website. The path goes from Help & How-To menu on the main bar with a dropdown menu featuring General Guides for Users as sixth link from top. General Guides for Users

page includes a button link to Students with Disabilities on the second row of other button links. While creating a dedicated **Accessibility at Concordia Library** page—including the library’s accessibility policy and a detailed list of available features—is a separate recommendation in this report, it is crucial to emphasize that this page must be made highly visible on the main navigation page of the library’s website. Burrows’ interviews also support this approach: “Including a highlighted tab about accessibility on the website was also suggested as a way to make this information stand out to those who required it” (2018, p. 231).

Strategies for Publicizing Accessibility Information

While online visibility is essential, relying solely on the website to disseminate information about accessibility is insufficient. A hybrid approach, combining online, offline, and on-site methods, would ensure that information about the library’s policies and services is widely accessible to all users.

Online Strategies

Online avenues for publicizing accessibility initiatives include the library’s social media accounts, promotion through the **Accessibility Hub**, and dissemination via university communication channels, such as newsletters like **Concordia University NOW**. Additionally, all promotional materials for the library’s instructional programming, including workshops, should consistently include accessibility information—both about the event itself and the library more broadly—along with a permanent link to the library’s accessibility page.

Offline and On-Site Strategies

Beyond online methods, the library could also develop printed materials to raise awareness. Informational posters could be displayed in visible locations within both library buildings, providing a brief overview of the library’s accessibility policy along with a QR code linking to the accessibility webpage. In addition to posters with limited information, detailed brochures could be made available in various spaces, including reading rooms, study rooms, and leisure areas. These brochures could detail the full policy and all available accessibility features (See Section 5). The brochures should be produced in accessible formats, such as in large, non-

serif fonts and high contrast for readability. Furthermore, public-facing library staff could wear badges or display signs at their desks stating, **“Ask me about library accessibility”** and have these brochures readily available for distribution. Burrows’ interviews at the Ontario institution suggest that some students would benefit from a physical handout that detailed the library’s state of accessibility.

It would also be beneficial to include **specific signage highlighting physical accessibility features**, similar to the existing signs on accessible and gender-neutral bathrooms that indicate their inclusivity. For instance, public workstations with accessibility software could have signs next to the computers specifying which software is available. Likewise, study rooms with accessible equipment could have clear signage both leading to and at the entrance of the room. These are examples of how physical signage can inform users about accessibility features they might otherwise overlook. Such signage also serves as a visible reminder that accessibility is a priority for the Library.

The library could also collaborate with **student-led print publications**, such as *The Link* and *The Concordian*, to feature stories and news reports on the library’s accessibility initiatives, policies, and services. Alternatively, these publications could reserve space to print the library’s accessibility poster, further broadening awareness of available resources.

7. Staff Training and Empowerment

To adapt a slogan from Concordia’s student labour union CREW to the library setting: Concordia Library works because library staff works. Library staff are the most important component of an accessibility initiative because they are the key actors who will translate the initiative to concrete action. Burrows’ dissertation highlights several key challenges library workers encounter in making academic libraries more accessible. These obstacles primarily stem from lack of resources, limited institutional support, and gaps in knowledge about accessibility best practices. Below, I have extracted several general challenges from Burrows’ research that apply to many library settings, not specifically to Concordia Library.

Obstacles Library Staff Face in Implementing Accessibility

1. Limited Resources (Budget, Time, Staffing)

- Budget constraints limit investments in accessibility upgrades, including adaptive technology, accessible study spaces, and digitization services.
- Staff shortages mean that accessibility improvements compete with other priorities, making them difficult to sustain.
- Time limitations prevent staff from undergoing specialized accessibility training or conducting research on best practices.

2. Institutional Barriers & Bureaucracy

- Library staff lack decision-making power to implement accessibility changes, relying on higher administration for approval.
- Even when staff report accessibility issues, there is no guarantee the institution will act.
- Accessibility improvements are often deprioritized in favor of other institutional goals, such as cost-cutting measures or general infrastructure projects.

3. Lack of Clear Information & Guidance

- Library staff struggle with a lack of institutional guidelines on how to implement accessible services.
- There is no standardized definition of accessibility across institutions, leaving staff uncertain about best practices.
- Staff rely heavily on Disability Support Services (DSS) for guidance, reinforcing an individualized (rather than systemic) approach to accessibility.

4. Over-Reliance on a Single Accessibility Expert

- Many libraries have one designated accessibility librarian, creating an overdependence on a single person rather than making accessibility a shared responsibility.

- This leads to unrealistic expectations that one librarian can answer all accessibility questions and solve systemic issues alone.
- Other staff members may avoid engaging with accessibility issues, assuming it is someone else's responsibility.

4. Insufficient Accessibility Training

- Mandatory accessibility training, where available, is often broad and ineffective, failing to provide library staff with practical skills.
- There is a disconnect between training content and real-world applications, making it difficult for staff to translate knowledge into meaningful accessibility improvements.

5. Perceptions of Accessibility as a "Service" Rather Than a Right

- Most library workers see their role as "helping" disabled students rather than advocating for systemic change.
- This service-oriented mindset can be patronizing and ableist, reinforcing a charity model rather than a justice-based approach.
- Some staff members worry that accessibility services could be "abused" by students who don't "really" need them, reflecting deep-seated ableist assumptions.

6. Lack of Awareness About Disability & Student Needs

- Library staff do not always recognize the full spectrum of disabilities, often prioritizing visible disabilities over invisible ones.
- Some assume that students must self-identify as disabled to receive accommodations, discouraging those who fear stigma.

Overall, library staff are well-intentioned but constrained by structural, informational, and institutional barriers that limit their ability to create fully accessible environments. To achieve meaningful accessibility, libraries need clearer policies, better training, sufficient funding, and a systemic shift toward accessibility as an integrated priority rather than an afterthought.

Since some of these challenges have been addressed in other recommendations above, this section focuses on staff training and empowerment. This includes not only direct training (as outlined in item 4 in the bullet list above) but also instituting broader cultural shifts in how disability and accessibility are understood in the Library. Further, a comprehensive accessibility initiative should go beyond training to ensure practical applications, bridging the disconnect between theory and practice. By embedding accessibility into all library services and facilities, staff can be empowered to take responsibility and develop expertise, rather than viewing accessibility as an added burden.

Additionally, an often-overlooked aspect of empowerment is addressing the access needs of disabled library staff and recognizing their expertise. As noted in earlier sections, disabled people—whether disclosed or undisclosed—are present in every workplace, comprising at least 20% of the population. Any accessibility training initiative should take this into account, ensuring that all staff members are supported and valued as key contributors to accessibility efforts.

Recommendations for Developing a Library Staff Training Program

Shifting from an individualized accommodations model to a social and political model of disability and accessibility requires a paradigm shift that challenges dominant attitudes, perceptions, and conceptions of disability as an individual tragedy or a medical problem. Burrows' thesis indicates that disability theory is not well integrated into Library and Information Science as a field or into university and library policies. A staff training program must go beyond simple "sensitivity training" and instead incorporate both disability theory and history, alongside practical techniques for implementing accessibility. But where can the Library procure such a substantial training program? More pertinently, how can the Library develop one? I suggest a **phased approach, starting internally and expanding outward**:

1. Leverage Internal Expertise:

Library staff who are already knowledgeable about accessibility issues can be consulted. For example, the Web Services Librarian, who created [an excellent library page on accessible documents](#), is a potential resource within Concordia Library. This is just one example demonstrating the importance of first turning to internal resources.

2. Collaborate with Campus Accessibility Initiatives:

ACSD, the Equity Office, and other accessibility experts on campus can be consulted to help develop training programs or deliver presentations. ACSD has previously provided presentations to library staff, and future collaborations could include co-created courses—such as a Moodle course that staff complete annually—through the Accessibility Working Group and ACSD.

3. Engage Concordia Faculty and Graduate Students:

Faculty and graduate students with expertise in disability theory can contribute to training development or deliver presentations. Since Concordia does not have a Disability Studies department, many scholars working on disability are dispersed across various disciplines. Connecting with the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Society and Culture might be a pathway into identifying relevant scholars.

4. Integrate Accessibility Training into Future Internships:

Future iterations of this Accessibility Enhancement Internship could focus on developing a robust staff accessibility training program, soliciting specific expertise from doctoral applicants.

5. Partner with External Disability Organizations:

Disability organizations mentioned in previous sections, such as AlterGo, can also be approached to provide various forms of training.

8. (Relatively) Quick Accessibility Enhancements for the Library

The purpose of these accessibility enhancement suggestions is to identify smaller, more manageable areas for improvement that can be implemented with relative

ease. Developing and executing a comprehensive accessibility plan within a library system is an extensive and complex undertaking. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) acknowledges this challenge in its library accessibility guidelines, which advocate for a practical and incremental approach. Given the constraints of funding and staffing, addressing all aspects of accessibility at once may be aspirational. However, as the IFLA notes, “libraries should do what they can and know that whatever that is, will make a difference” (IFLA, 2024, p. 2).

This perspective is not one of resignation but of pragmatism. Taking small, deliberate steps toward accessibility is more effective than attempting to resolve all issues simultaneously. For example, committing to introducing a single accessibility improvement each month—whether in a service, a physical space, or an activity—can lead to meaningful, long-term progress.

Sound Alerts for Library Elevators

The elevators in the LB building are equipped with sound alerts that indicate the floor reached; however, the internal library elevators lack this feature. The floor numbers displayed at the top are positioned very high and in a small font, while the raised numbers on the right-hand side are not easily legible. This makes it challenging for individuals to determine their current floor.

While the technical feasibility of this modification requires assessment, sound alerts serve as a valuable accessibility feature. They benefit individuals with sensory disabilities as well as neurominoritized individuals who experience challenges with attention regulation, spatial orientation, and related anxieties. The implementation of this feature aligns with principles of universal accessibility and is justified on multiple fronts.

Historically, accessibility enhancements designed for specific communities have ultimately benefited a broader range of communities. For example, closed captioning was originally developed for Deaf communities but is now widely utilized for various purposes. Similarly, text-to-speech technology, initially

designed for blind individuals, is now commonly used by neurominoritized communities for concentration support.

Note: Vanier Library also has internal elevators which I have not used. If there are no sound alerts in these elevators, the suggestion also applies to the Vanier building.

Push-Button Doors for All Reading and Study Rooms

Currently, only one reading room in the Webster Library is equipped with push-button doors. Installing push-button mechanisms for all reading and study rooms would enhance accessibility. While this architectural modification may require permissions and budgetary allocations beyond the library's immediate jurisdiction, it remains a feasible and impactful improvement that should be prioritized for future planning.

Ramps for Reading and Study Rooms with Stairs

Some reading and study rooms at Webster Library are only reachable by stairs. Similar to the recommendation regarding push-button doors, the installation of ramps is an architectural modification that warrants consideration. The presence of stairs within or leading to otherwise accessible study spaces creates unnecessary barriers. Addressing this issue would significantly improve accessibility.

Masking in the Library

(Easiest yet most challenging "quick enhancement" due to prevailing post-pandemic norms)

Although masking can no longer be mandated, encouraging its use in the library would enhance accessibility and safety for individuals with disabilities, chronic illnesses, and immunocompromised conditions. Moreover, it would contribute to a healthier environment for all users.

A suggestion from the chronic illness community proposes establishing designated “masks-required” hours, particularly in the early mornings, to accommodate immunocompromised individuals, who cannot safely visit public spaces otherwise.

This recommendation poses a unique challenge. In my disability and feminism course, I was unable to require students to wear masks, despite being able to enforce other academic expectations, such as attendance, coursework completion, and engagement with readings. Instead, I modeled the behavior, facilitated discussions on the topic, and included the following statement in my syllabus:

Under current epidemiological conditions, (contrary to mainstream public health messaging and the [sociological production of post-pandemic normality](#)), I will be wearing an N95 mask in class for the foreseeable future to reduce spread of Covid-19 and other respiratory diseases in solidarity with disabled and immunocompromised community members. More information about the [urgency of normal](#) , [pandemic ableism](#), and [equitable approaches to public health](#) .

Similarly, while the library may not be able to enforce mask-wearing, staff can set an example by consistently wearing [N95, FFP2 or equivalent respirators](#) (with [clear panels to facilitate lip-reading](#)) during public-facing interactions (e.g., at circulation and information desks, during presentations). Additionally, relevant educational materials could be made available through infographics placed in visible locations. Distributing free masks, similar to how hand sanitizers are provided, would further normalize this protective measure. Masking remains one of the simplest and most effective methods to prevent the spread of illness, and support disabled and immunocompromised library users.

For further information I recommend [Harm Reduction for In-person Workers](#) which provides clear and accessible information about Covid and [Resist Covid Eugenics](#) for more specific masking information.

Ventilation and Filtration

This recommendation aligns with the masking initiative. Enhancing ventilation and air filtration systems represents a subtle yet effective means of reducing infection risks and creating a safer library environment for immunocompromised, sick, and disabled users.

While this may not be an immediately actionable solution, it warrants exploration. On the other hand, if the library already possesses a high-quality ventilation system, publicizing this information as part of its accessibility features would be beneficial.

Investing in ventilation improvements exemplifies an infrastructural change that yields significant impact without necessitating mass behavioral adjustments. This approach parallels public health interventions such as water fluoridation, which dramatically improved dental health without relying solely on behavioral changes like increased tooth brushing.

Potential challenges include funding and administrative approval.

For reference:

- [Concordia's efforts to mitigate COVID-19 in small rooms](#)
- [Concordia's web-based tool to reduce indoor SARS-CoV-2 transmission risk](#)

Ultraviolet Light Disinfection

(Unevaluated but potentially worth investigating)

Research suggests that ultraviolet (UV) light may serve as an additional disinfection method. However, this technology requires further assessment regarding its effectiveness and feasibility in library settings.

Relevant studies and resources:

- [Public Health Ontario's assessment](#)
- [University of California, Irvine's investigation](#)
- [Columbia University's research on UV light for indoor air safety](#)
- [Study on UV-C light efficacy](#)

- [National Library of Medicine study](#)
- [2023 study on UV light disinfection](#)
- [University of Toronto's findings on UV LED technology](#)

While UV light disinfection is not a universally accepted solution, further research may reveal its potential as a supplementary measure for enhancing library safety and accessibility.

9. Focused Recommendation:

Default OCR-Formatting as an Accessibility Enhancement Measure in the Course Reserve Process

Summary:

Default OCR-formatting for Course Reserves involves two key considerations: technical implementation and political and copyright constraints.

1. Technical

OCR-formatting enhances accessibility by making digital documents readable with text-to-speech tools, searchable, highlightable, and copyable. Currently, accessible text is primarily provided on an individual basis by the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD), while the library offers this service on a more limited scale.

Implementing default OCR-formatting would ensure universal access without requiring users to self-identify and request accommodations. This applies not only to scanned book chapters but also to already-digital documents that lack accessibility features.

2. Political

Copyright laws and digital rights management (DRM) protections present challenges. While agreements like the Marrakesh Treaty help circumvent certain restrictions for accessible formats, some digital publications impose barriers such as copy restrictions, lack of text-to-speech functionality, and disallowing highlighting. Addressing these barriers requires negotiations with publishers, which might be beyond the library's immediate control.

Additionally, these concerns extend beyond Course Reserves to the entire electronic collection. The issue is **multifaceted**: about **access to content** on the one hand, about restrictive digital controls that limit **usability**, on the other.

Detailed Analysis

While the following analysis and suggestions are grounded in my experience as an instructor, enhancing accessibility of the Course Reserves process ultimately serves students who are the users of Course Reserves materials. Instructors, like the library staff, share roles of procurement and are both responsible for making these materials accessible to the students.

The Case for Default OCR-Formatting in Course Reserves

Currently, when a document is available in digital format, the library uploads it to the Course Reserves system. If only a physical copy exists, the library scans it and posts the digital version.

I had my own electronic versions of most of the readings for my course, some of which the library directly uploaded to the Course Reserves or alternately provided links for the particular digital resource the library possessed. The OCR-formatting question first came up for physical documents.

I specifically requested OCR-formatted scans to ensure compatibility with text-to-speech apps, screen readers, and other accessibility tools. These features can serve students with various print disabilities, neurominorities, as well as other communities. OCR also makes it possible to copy paste text from a pdf. Some pdf documents are readable but if you copy from them, they'll paste gibberish. OCR-formatted documents allow word searching and highlighting functions as well.

These are all extremely useful cognitive aids in an academic setting. More importantly, they make an electronic document accessible to a wide variety of users. Thus, it is advisable to **make OCR-formatting default for scanned documents for Course Reserves**.

Secondly, I did not have a chance to ensure that all the electronic documents I provided to Course Reserves were OCR-formatted. An instructor may lack the technical expertise, time, or resources to ensure accessibility. Making a course and its materials accessible takes significant extra work. Without this effort, accessibility simply is not achieved. Ensuring all course readings are in an accessible electronic format is essential, yet only one aspect of overall accessibility. If this process were automated and standardized, instructors could dedicate more time to other accessibility features of their courses. Hence, **the second suggestion is to automatically OCR-format documents before posting them on Course Reserves** even when Course Reserves uses the instructor's own digital documents.

Universal Design Principles emphasize making materials accessible from the outset. While OCR-formatting is not a comprehensive accessibility solution, it is a significant step toward inclusivity.

Making OCR-formatting the default would eliminate the need for individual requests, reducing the burden on instructors who may lack the technical expertise or time to manually ensure accessibility. However, **implementing this as a standard practice requires addressing logistical concerns:**

- Who will be responsible for OCR-formatting?
- Will there be dedicated staff or training provided?
- How will this process be integrated into the library's existing workflows?

Given the increasing reliance on digital course materials, this is a substantial but necessary undertaking. The benefits extend beyond students to instructors, who may also require accessible materials.

OCR-Formatting Beyond Course Reserves

The need for accessible formatting extends beyond Course Reserves to the library's entire digital collection. Many digital texts, particularly eBooks, are not inherently accessible due to publisher-imposed restrictions. While the library has control over how it scans physical documents, it has limited influence over publisher-provided digital formats.

Addressing these limitations involves **advocating for accessibility in publisher agreements and exploring long-term solutions**.

In the short term, implementing **automatic OCR-formatting for Course Reserves can serve as a model for broader accessibility improvements** regarding the entire digital collection.

Resources

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Sannwald, W. W. (2024). *Checklist of library building design considerations* (7th edition). ALA Editions. Includes a chapter on compliance with accessibility standards.

Accessible Libraries. (28 March 2024). **Considering Accessibility when Procuring Licensed Digital Resources**. <https://accessiblelibraries.ca/resources/considering-accessibility-procuring-licensed-digital-resources/> . (This resource by Accessible Libraries recommends best practices on accessibility with regards to procuring licensed digital resources. Intended for a Canadian *public library audience* but applies to academic libraries too.)

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Benetech. (2023, December 19). **Certified Publishers**. Born Accessible. <https://bornaccessible.benetech.org/certified-publishers/> [The Global Certified

Accessible (GCA) program assists publishers and vendors in creating content accessible to all readers by adjusting workflows and ensuring compliance with accessibility standards. Various publishers globally are listed:

<https://bornaccessible.benetech.org/certified-publishers/>]

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities Section. IFLA-Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities Section, from <https://www.ifla.org/units/lpd/>

Coates, Jessica et al. IFLA, Getting Started: Implementing the Marrakesh Treaty for persons with print disabilities – A practical guide for librarians:

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McMaster University, Library Accessibility Services. What is an Accessible pdf? <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/accessibledigitalcontenttraining/chapter/what-is-an-accessible-pdf/> (Video resource on remediating pdfs for various levels of accessibility with OCR-formatting and tagging.)

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National Network for Equitable Library Service. (2020). A Crash Course in Ebook Accessibility. YouTube.

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQHK1Nw6GF4vnhgPLRxMbOIs-xv0IS8JG&feature=shared> (This playlist of videos produced by the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) provides a comprehensive introduction to ebook accessibility.)

Accessible Publishing. (2023). Ebook Accessibility Features Checklist.

<https://accessiblelibraries.ca/resources/accessibility-features-checklist/> (A comprehensive list of the accessibility features that can and should be present in ebooks to ensure they are accessible. Primarily for publishers, but useful for libraries.)

Centre for Equitable Library Access (August 5, 2021). **What is an accessible book?**

YouTube video. Retrieved from:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PihRANrP9o8&t=2s>

University of Wisconsin (2021). **Digital Library Accessibility and Usability Guidelines** (DLAUG) to Support Blind and Visually Impaired Users. Web page.

Retrieved from: <https://sites.uwm.edu/guidelines/>

Accessible Libraries .(2023). **Checklist: Evaluating the Accessibility of E-Resources**.

<https://accessiblelibraries.ca/resources/checklist-evaluating-the-accessibility-of-e-resources/#text-access-tech>

10. Future Directions

There are many aspects of library accessibility that this report has not addressed (e.g., hiring practices, instructional programming, event accessibility, and the accessibility of communications). For a comprehensive overview of areas that can be addressed in terms of library accessibility, please refer to the long-form resources available in the Teams folder. In this final section, I identify two areas that are seldom addressed in most library accessibility guidelines and offer brief suggestions for future development.

Disability Content Curation

Accessibility also pertains to the kinds of content made available. The content curation of an academic library often reflects the academic priorities of the parent institution, which—like other relevant areas—may be shaped by the interests of dominant groups. Expanding the Library’s disability-related content signals to users that their concerns, experiences, interests, and knowledge are valued and prioritized within the institution.

The Library may consider consulting faculty and graduate students specializing in disability studies to support high-quality content curation. It is essential to draw

on appropriate expertise to avoid the inclusion of medicalized or sensationalized narratives and instead prioritize critical, rigorous, and cutting-edge materials. In addition to scholarly works, the Library could consider curating a collection of fiction authored by and featuring disabled people and their stories.

The Library currently includes themed book displays in its common areas—for example, there is currently a shelf featuring fiction and nonfiction titles on the theme of peace. In a similar vein, rotating displays themed around disability could be introduced. The gallery-style shelves that host mini exhibitions—featuring items such as prints and ephemera—could also be used to spotlight materials related to disability politics. A curated mini-exhibition could, for instance, coincide with Disability Pride Month. As with all accessibility initiatives, it is important that the Library actively promote and publicize these curated materials to ensure users are aware of their availability.

Emergency Protocols

Due to pervasive ableism, which frames disabled lives as less valuable, disabled people are often treated as expendable and are left behind during emergencies. This is also reflected in the design of most existing emergency protocols, which typically assume young, non-disabled bodies as the default. Concordia University Campus Safety and Prevention Services has [evacuation procedures for persons with reduced mobility](#) which mainly address mobility related disabilities in fire scenarios. I recommend that the Library assess its current emergency procedures to determine how well they accommodate disabled users, beyond physical disabilities in limited scenarios, and—if deficiencies are found—take immediate steps to implement accessible emergency protocols. Government of Canada’s [Creating an Accessible Emergency Response Plan](#) can be a place to start.