

Canadian Accessibility Network

Disability Confidence Resource

Disability Confidence

Disability Confidence refers to knowledge and inclusion of people with disabilities. The phrase “disability confident” originates for a campaign by the UK Government and UK Department for Work and Pensions that promoted the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and removing barriers.

The Canadian Accessibility Network (CAN) created this resource to help employers in Canada find out more about being disability confident.

Disability confident employers know the value of employing people with disabilities. They are aware of the barriers that individuals with disabilities face and take actionable steps to remove these barriers and provide equal access and opportunity for people with disabilities. Disability confident employers use inclusive practices throughout the entire employment process from talent seeking, hiring and interview practices, to on-the-job training and retention.

To embody the “confidence”, disability confident employers do not stop at meeting minimum standards for accessibility, providing accommodations and making adjustments only when they are required. Their organizations go above and beyond to create inclusive and accessible environments for all employees.

Examples of definitions of disability confidence can be found at:

[Disability Confident Campaign \(UK\)](#)

[Disabled World Disability Confident: Definition and Information](#)

[Australian Federation of Disability Organisations](#)

Resources

There are a number of resources in Canada and abroad for employers to increase their disability confidence. Here are some resources in alphabetical order by name of organization.

#Able To

#AbleTo is working on closing the employment gap in Ottawa. Able To encourages employers to make workplaces accessible and support students and graduates with disabilities on entering the workforce. #AbleTo’s website has a [learning series](#) and

[resources](#) for promoting disability confidence in the workplace and supporting an inclusive environment.

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) is a national not-for-profit organization that exists to promote and support meaningful employment of persons with disabilities. [CCRW's Employment Services program](#) supports people with disabilities seeking work and businesses looking to hire people with disabilities. The organization shares resources, experiences, and reports that reflect their pan-Canadian work to remove barriers from employment. Their website also contains information about the [Disability and Work in Canada \(DWC\) Initiative](#) and the [Pan-Canadian Strategy on Disability and Work](#).

Community of Accessible Employers through Presidents Group BC

The [Community of Accessible Employers](#) is an initiative of the Small Business BC Presidents Group, a team of 25 business leaders in the accessible and inclusive employment movement in British Columbia. The Community of Accessible Employers services as an expanded network of this core team and provides employer-focused tools, resources, and access to training and events for BC employers on how to effectively recruit, hire, and retain employees with disabilities. They have a variety of [resources available on the Accessible Employers website](#) including an [accessibility strategy report](#).

David C. Onley Initiative for Employment and Enterprise Development (DCOI)

The David C. Onley Initiative for Employment and Enterprise Development (DCOI) was an applied research project from the Accessibility Institute at Carleton University (then READ Initiative). The DCOI team published a comprehensive final report that outlines how to actively foster the growth and opportunities for students with disabilities in the context of career preparation and development of employability skills. The [DCOI resources page](#) includes tools for employers, students, service providers, videos, and links to external resources.

Disability Confidence Campaign (UK)

The [Disability Confidence Campaign](#) is a free voluntary program for UK based businesses and organizations to increase disability confidence and change culture and behaviour to be more inclusive for people with disabilities. Visit the [Disability Confidence Campaign website](#) for more information.

Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN)

The [Employment Accessibility Resource Network \(EARN\)](#) is a community wide initiative that brings together employers and service providers with the goal of increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities and promoting inclusive and accessible workplaces. EARN offers a four-part [Virtual Workshop Series](#) that focuses on enhancing skills and building confidence in shaping accessible recruitment and job

retention practices. EARN's website also lists various [tools and resources](#) for employers related to employment, disability, and accommodation.

Eviance

[Eviance](#), formally known as the Canadian Centre for Disabilities Studies, and its partners are advancing inclusive, high quality postsecondary education and work for young adults with disabilities, guided by the United Nations' and Government of Canada's Sustainable Development Goals Program. Eviance approaches its work through intersectional, community-based research committed to sustainable solutions rooted in action and addresses individual behavioural and system level change for people with disabilities on a local, national and global scale for cross-disability issues.

Government of Canada

The [Government of Canada website](#) has resources about hiring persons with disabilities and fostering an inclusive work environment. These were gathered under Employment and Social Development Canada campaigns and include facts about hiring people with disabilities, inclusive workplace tools, and supports available for creating an accessible workplace.

Nunavummi Disabilities Makinnasuaqtiit Society

Nunavummi Disabilities Makinnasuaqtiit Society (NDMS) is the only cross-disability organization in Nunavut, Canada. The organization's website provides a [list of resources for inclusive employment practices](#). Some of these materials are available in English, French, and Inuktitut.

Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)

The Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN) is a province-wide organization that brings together businesses and Employment Service Providers to increase employment opportunities for job seekers who have a disability. ODEN's website has resources for [Businesses](#) and [Employment Service Providers](#) covering a variety of topics. These include [article series](#) and [video series](#) for businesses and both [training](#) and [consulting](#) resources for employment service providers.

Training and Workshops

A list of training and workshop resources offered by recommended organizations.

Accessibrand – Accessible Training Services

[Accessibrand](#) is a disability collective that consists of skilled designers, writers, marketers, communicators and strategists, who all have lived experience of disability. They offer [workshops](#) that help companies and individuals make their internal and external communications accessible and inclusive. They also help employers reach people with disabilities as customers and potential employees.

Cost: For a cost

Creating Accessible Neighbourhoods – Disability Awareness Workshop

Creating Accessible Neighbourhoods is an organization based in British Columbia with a range of goals shaped by its members, communities, and advocates. Originally focused on accessibility in transit, they now offer consulting on accessibility, equity, and diversity through public and private workshops. Their workshop catalogue includes three workshops centered on disability: [Breaking Barriers, Disability Awareness, and Disability Justice](#).

Cost: For a cost

Disability Awareness Australia

Disability Awareness offers five free [e-learning training courses](#) on the subject of disability. The series was developed by the National Disability Co-ordination Officer (NDCO) Program and the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET). The programs are open to anyone wishing to expand their knowledge of disability and three of the programs are specifically targeted for educators and staff who work with people with disabilities.

Cost: Free

Government of Canada – Accessible Learning Series E-course

Government of Canada Accessibility Learning Series offers the course [Addressing Disability Inclusion and Barriers to Accessibility \(INC115\)](#) to government employees as part of the Canada School of Public Service. This course is offered online in English and French with an expected duration of two hours. Note: Access to this course is currently limited to employees of the Government of Canada.

Cost: Free for employees

The Education People – Disability Confident Training

These [Disability Confident Training Courses](#) are available for hire for employers and organizations. The objective of the training is to build confidence and awareness regarding colleagues and customers with a disability. As the Education People is based in the UK, some of the content is specific to UK policy while other topics are applicable internationally.

Cost: For a cost

Enhance the UK – Disability Awareness – Virtual Training

[Enhance the UK](#) offers interactive Zoom-based training on disability awareness which can be customized to meet the needs and knowledge levels of participants. Their website also offers free resources for subscribers to their newsletter.

Cost: Free for subscribers to the Enhance the UK Newsletter

Rick Hansen Foundation – Training and Certifications

The [Rick Hansen Foundation](#) is a Canadian based organization with a mission to create and deliver innovative solutions that lead to a global movement to remove barriers and liberate the potential of people with disabilities and a vision of an inclusive world where people with disabilities are living to their full potential. The Rick Hansen Foundation offers a variety of [programs](#) including training courses and certifications for businesses, buildings, and facilities to evaluate their current level of accessibility and help them commit to improving their accessibility.

Cost: For a cost

Toolkits and Guides

In addition to the trainings, there are toolkits and guides for employers to increase disability confidence and accessibility. Below is a list of recommended toolkits and guides for employers at any level of disability confidence seeking to improve.

The Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) – Remote Work Employer Guide and HR Inclusive Policy Toolkit

The Canadian Association for Supported Employment offers a [Remote Work Employer Guide](#) free for download on their website that outlines the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and how to create a more accessible workplace. They also have an [HR Inclusive Policy Toolkit](#) for small to medium sized employers to become more familiar with inclusive policies and procedures. The toolkit is a starting point for learning about inclusive frameworks and creating accessible workplaces.

Disability Inclusive Employer Self-Assessment

The [Disability Inclusive Employer Self-Assessment](#) is a tool to assess a business's disability inclusion efforts and provide tailored recommendations for improvement. The tool was developed by the [Open Door Group](#) and [Presidents Group](#), two Canadian organizations focused on improving employment for people with disabilities. The free assessment is estimated to take fifteen minutes. After submitting the assessment, the organization will receive a report with recommendations and areas to improve.

Employers in BC can reach out to Open Door Group at info@opendoorgroup.org for free support in creating an implementation plan.

PEATworks – Digital Accessibility Toolkits

The [Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology \(PEAT\)](#) is funded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labour and managed by Wheelhouse Group. PEAT provides toolkits and resources to support workplaces in engaging employees with disabilities using emerging and inclusive technologies. PEAT offers a number of [toolkits](#) including [IT purchasing](#), [recruiting materials](#), and [accessibility training specific to employee roles](#).

Sask Abilities

[Sask Abilities](#) offers free services to Saskatchewan businesses through their Partners in Employment services. Supports encompass the entire hiring and employment process from identifying and providing suitable candidates, providing interview support, addressing questions about hiring a person experiencing disability, offering training strategies and support, and providing ongoing support to the employer and employee to ensure employment retention.

Saskatchewan Human Rights Coalition

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Coalition provides a [Guide to Applications and Forms](#) that helps employers avoid discriminatory practices rooted in misconceptions and stereotypes. The guide includes recommendation for when and how employers can ask about protected classes such as disability and information on creating their own anti-discrimination policy.

More Information and Support

The Canadian Accessibility Network (CAN) includes organizations and individuals from across Canada with lived experience of disability and expertise in disability confidence. If you would like to connect with the Network and learn more, reach out to the CAN National Office at can@carleton.ca.