# **What you need to know about Accessible Procurement at Carleton University**

This document is a supporting resource to the FACTS Accessible Procurement video for staff and faculty who use a screen reader or otherwise require a non-video format. It is not an exact transcript of all text seen on-screen in the video, however it does contain all of the same information.

If you need more help with accessible procurement, please contact Procurement Services at procurementservices@carleton.ca or 613-520-3622.

In this document we'll review the procurement policy's new accessible procurement section, the two steps for considering accessibility in day-to-day purchases, and what to do if you need help.

## **Introduction**

The university recently added accessibility considerations to the procurement policy. In this document we'll review the procurement policy's new accessible procurement section, the two steps for considering accessibility in day-to-day purchases, and what to do if you need help. You can read the new accessible procurement section of the policy online (https://carleton.ca/secretariat/policies/).

## **The Procurement Policy’s New ‘Accessible Procurement’ Section**

Did you know that approximately 1 in 5 Canadians aged 15 and older have a disability (2017 Canadian Survey on Disability)? Carleton University recognizes the importance of ensuring accessible goods and services are readily available to our community. We are committed to helping create environments that remove barriers to individuals living with visible or invisible disabilities by ensuring accessibility is considered for purchases of all sizes.

With the addition of accessible procurement to Carleton's Procurement Policy, we remain aligned with the university's Coordinated Accessibility Strategy (https://carleton.ca/accessibility-institute/accessibility-strategy/), as well as the requirements set out by the Province of Ontario. In a nutshell, anyone making a purchase on behalf of the university should think about the needs of those with visible and or invisible disabilities.

For many of us, considering both visible and invisible disabilities will require a shift in how we think. Let's take a closer look at how we start thinking about accessible procurement in a meaningful way day-to-day.

## **The two Steps for Considering Accessibility in Day-to-Day Purchases**

Accessible procurement has two steps, consider and document. Let's begin with 'consider'.

Regardless of how your purchase is made, for example eShop, procurement card, or RFP, accessibility should be considered in a meaningful way. For instance, imagine that you have been tasked with making a purchase for an office. What if, in addition to considering the needs of people in the office with visible disabilities, you considered the needs of current and future users of the space with visible or invisible disabilities? Consider, for example, restricted mobility, blind or low vision, chronic medical, deaf or hard of hearing, learning disability, mental health, ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, and many others. This could mean, for example, considering height adjustable desks when purchasing furniture, considering appropriate screen reader technology for electronic devices, considering instrument grips for writing utensils, or considering task lamps for work spaces.

The next step is ‘document’. Beginning in May 2023, you will be asked to voluntarily disclose whether you considered accessibility in your purchase through different procedural mechanisms, such as when checking out in eShop. If you have not considered accessibility, you should document why.

## **What to Do If You Need Help**

Don’t worry! Our Procurement Services’ website (https://carleton.ca/procurement/) contains resources that may help. You'll find some questions here that you could ask yourself when considering accessibility for different types of products.

Still have questions? Procurement Services can help you incorporate accessibility considerations into the procurement process. Contact them early in the process by phone (613-520-3622) or email (procurementservices@carleton.ca) to help ensure you are on the right path.