

Deloitte.



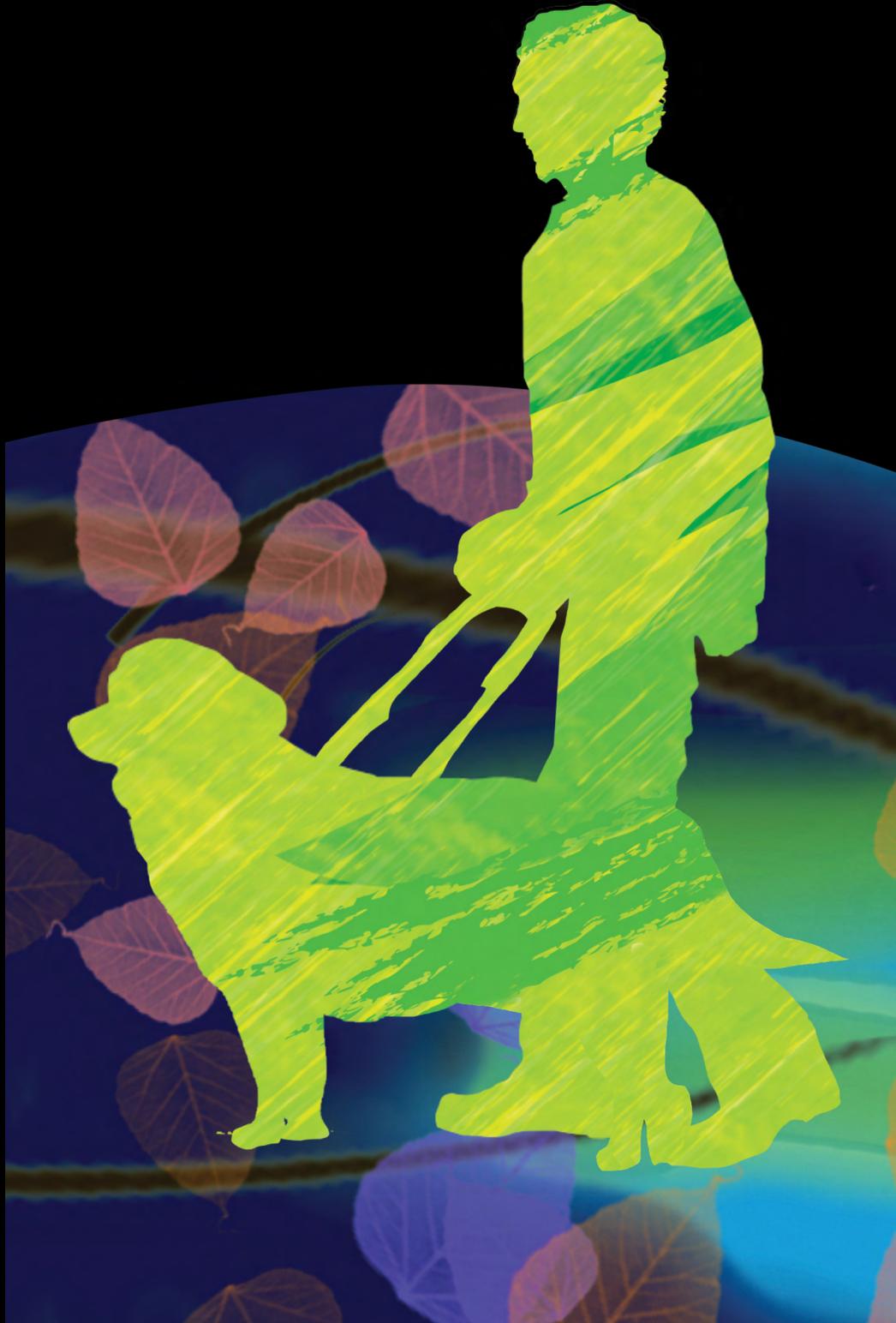
Continuing to
build an accessible
future at Deloitte



MAKING AN
IMPACT THAT
MATTERS
since 1845



Aldo Fierro is a Toronto-based visually impaired graphic artist and designer with experience in a variety of media. He finds inspiration in music, art, and film, with ideas often coming to him on his daily runs. Themes of movement, openness, and nature are essential to the piece depicted here; they represent a fundamental journey in the evolution of accessibility, diversity, equality, and inclusion.



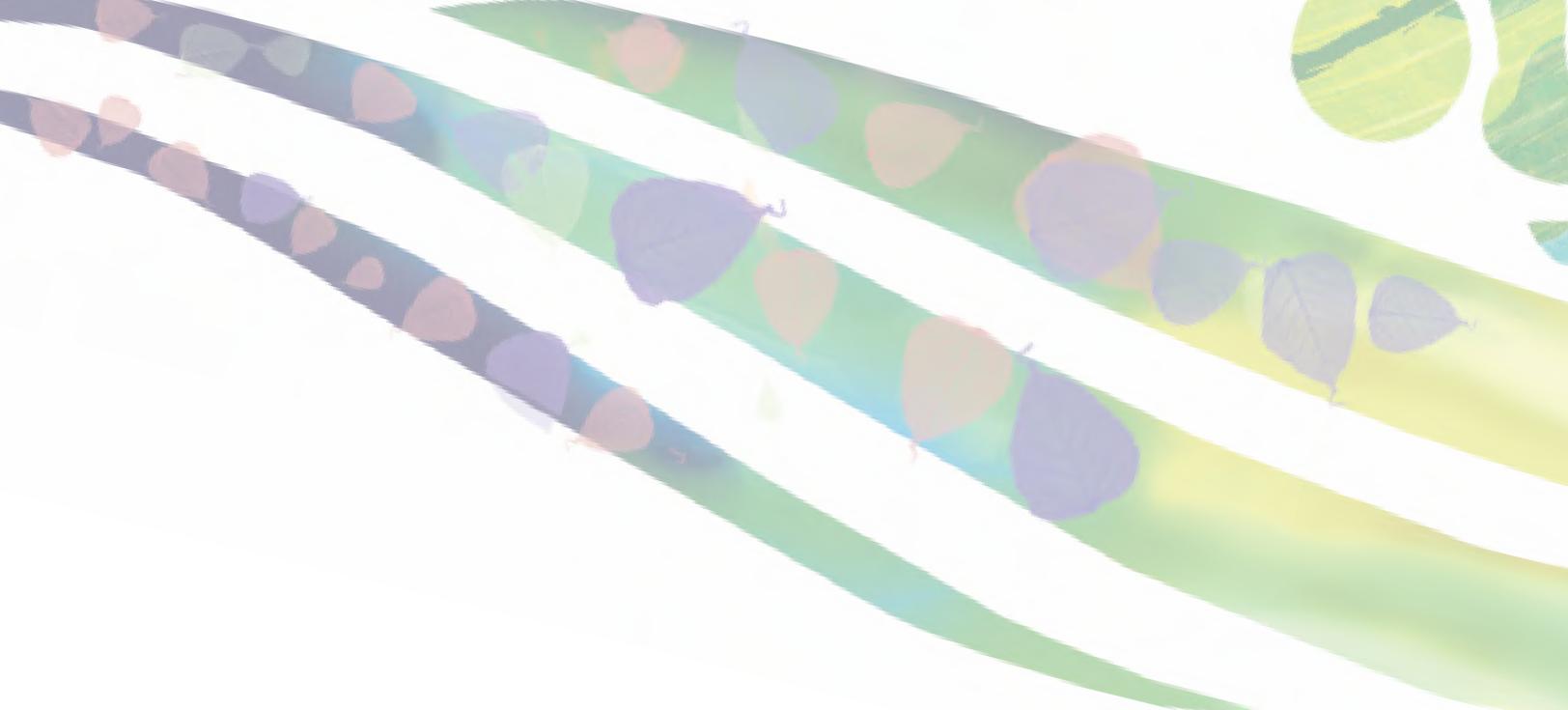


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Messages from our leaders

Building a firm that is truly ready to embrace the future demands that we create a workplace where all our people have the resources and support to reach their full potential. In this regard, taking concrete steps toward accessibility is key to empowering our people and reaching our Category of One aspiration. The way I see it, accessibility goes hand in hand with our Purpose: to make an impact that matters by accelerating access to knowledge and opportunities for all Canadians.

This is why I'm proud to present our AccessAbility Action Plan. This report offers a clear road map for how we can build on our accessibility commitments and lead the way in corporate Canada while also sharing key learnings and celebrating our progress so far. These advances mean hiring more people with disabilities, providing unparalleled opportunities for development, and empowering our professionals at every turn. It also means working alongside stakeholders and like-minded businesses outside our own walls to make a broader impact within communities at large and in Canada.

I also want to express my gratitude to those who shared their personal stories in this report, from professionals who identify as neurodiverse to parents supporting children with disabilities. These stories offer a snapshot of how our actions and aspirations affect the day-to-day lives of our people while also allowing us to broaden the scope of how we view accessibility. We cannot have progress without understanding, so I'd like to thank each of these people for sharing their unique perspectives.

As we take steps to advance inclusivity at our firm, we know that we cannot make progress without accountability. Reading this report is a strong first step. And I look forward in the future to sharing more updates on our progress and how we're living up to our promise to create a truly accessible workplace.

Anthony Viel

Chief Executive Officer



An inclusive culture in an organization means greater innovation and productivity, and an increase in ROI—all by having people with diverse backgrounds as part of the team. Physical and mental ability, gender, race, sexual orientation, and beliefs all contribute to what makes each of us unique—and drives the Purpose of our organization.

We know that inclusive organizations also drive economic growth, and that business growth is often led by courage. The courage of a leadership team and the courage of an organization to unite to include. Courageous organizations are transparent with their people about both the positive aspects of the company and the areas in which there is still work to do.

This report provides a detailed view of what we should be proud of and where there are more opportunities for courage as we drive toward our long-term AccessAbility goals. As I read through these pages, I was inspired by those profiled—courageous people working every day in their personal and professional lives to make an impact that matters.

For me, the greatness of Canada—and of our organization—is about ordinary people who are prepared to champion a cause that needs championing. Together, we have the power to galvanize our communities, to build a brighter future and a more courageous destiny for all.

To quote Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much!"

Duncan Sinclair

Chair



Accessibility at Deloitte

Inspired by a vision

At Deloitte, we're inspired by a vision—the idea that we can build a stronger, more adept organization and a better world by placing accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities at the centre of everything we do: How we hire and recruit. How we organize our work and workplaces. How we support our colleagues and team members. How we develop our culture and foster inclusion in the clients, business allies, communities, and society we engage.

Bringing our initiative to life

In 2021, Deloitte launched a comprehensive three-year strategy to bring our vision to life. Unlocking the talent confined in under-represented and underemployed labour pools and promoting accessibility in the world beyond our walls, our AccessAbility Action Plan seeks to create a more inclusive Deloitte. It relies on four strong pillars that support more varied environments, greater education and awareness, enhanced employment and career opportunities, and a marketplace in which accessibility figures far more prominently.

Our progress so far

Last year, we set out the contours of our plan in a report that defined our guiding pillars and ascribed specific targets to each. This year's report revisits each of those pillars and details the progress we've thus far made toward achieving our long-term goals. This report includes inspiring stories of Deloitte employees and external stakeholders that illustrate why our pillars matter—and how they can make a real difference in our organization and the world around us.

Our participation

Accessible and inclusive organizations are places where *all* employees can thrive, and where everyone can benefit from specifically designed buildings, policies, and practices.

Since launching Deloitte's AccessAbility Action Plan (AAP) one year ago, we have taken significant steps to create a more accessible and inclusive workplace for people with disabilities. We have doubled down on our digital-accessibility efforts, assessed our built-as-designed environment, hosted education and awareness campaigns, and increased our engagement with the market. In short, we have set a solid foundation to go further, faster.

In our second year of the AAP, we aim to put an even greater focus on education and awareness for our leaders and employees, increase our recruitment efforts to hire top talent, and do more to retain and support employees with disabilities. And because disabilities touch so many of our people, either personally or through their families and friends, we recognize the need to foster more meaningful connections in the workplace—which we'll continue to do by providing our people with opportunities to talk, be seen and heard, and come together to find mutual support and celebration.

Our action plan provides us with a road map wherein each of us at Deloitte has a role to play. We proudly share this plan as our way to demonstrate our commitment publicly, and invite our stakeholders to hold us accountable for continued progress.

As the Executive Sponsor for Deloitte Accessibility, I'm energized by what we've achieved in our first year at Deloitte, with our business allies in the community, and with our clients to help create a better future for people with disabilities in Canada.

Peter Graham

Partner and Executive Sponsor
for Deloitte Accessibility



On reflection, I'm proud to see how much Deloitte has accomplished over the past year to create a more accessible and inclusive work environment. The goal of launching our AccessAbility Action Plan was to initiate conversations that would transform the way we act, think, and do business. It was meant to set the foundation internally for a more accessible future and enable us to act as a catalyst for others to follow our journey.

While tapping into this incredible workforce makes sound business sense, it also helps improve the lives of many of our employees and clients that are personally affected. Persons with disabilities bring unique skill sets and perspectives to society and, when provided opportunities, can strengthen our workforce. It has been a privilege to lead this plan and work toward removing existing and future barriers so we can continue to create an environment where everyone can thrive.

I am passionate about this important work, and to have others join me on this journey as we continue to create meaningful and purposeful change for persons with disabilities. We are only at the beginning—I look forward to the path ahead.

Carole Mendonca

Senior Manager, Accessibility



Our AccessAbility pillars



Inclusive environment

Deloitte seeks to create a safe and welcoming workplace for people with disabilities. We are committed to building an inclusive culture for everything we do.



Education and awareness

Deloitte understands the importance of education about the barriers faced by people with disabilities. We seek to provide learning opportunities to educate our employees at all levels.



Employment

Deloitte intends to continue to hire employees with disabilities, and to carry on in engaging and empowering these staff members so they can achieve their full potential.



Marketplace

Deloitte will work to continue to create a positive change in the current state of accessibility and inclusion in the workplace by helping and inspiring both our clients and other businesses, especially those owned by people with disabilities.

Inclusive environment

What's an inclusive environment?

It's a workplace that's safe and welcoming, and a culture that positions you to succeed. We see building inclusion as broadly based. Our AAP commitments encompass how we organize our workspaces, as well as how we design our digital platforms; how we focus our processes, as well as how we comply with regulations; how we provide accommodations, as well as how we create leadership, mentorship, and event-sponsorship opportunities.

Strengthening our supports

In 2021, Deloitte internal teams worked with subject-matter experts to evaluate the accessibility inherent in the infrastructure of our offices across the country. Based on the findings and recommendations of these audits, a long-term plan is being developed to help meet the accessibility needs of all our people and clients.

It aims to ensure a positive, unobstructed experience for everyone—including those with hidden and visible disabilities—entering, exiting, and using our spaces.

We've already succeeded in realizing these aims at our new office in Halifax, which has achieved a Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) in recognition of the physical site's exceptional accessibility.

With the move toward working digitally becoming increasingly prominent in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, driving the required improvements to accessibility at Deloitte remains a top priority. We've hired a dedicated digital-accessibility and accommodation specialist to lead initiatives that can help ensure those of our people who need them receive the specialized technologies and supports intended to help them thrive. This is in addition to work Deloitte had already undertaken to enhance the accessibility of our digital tools. We've selected and engaged with a digital-accessibility vendor who can support our efforts going forward.

We have also created a centralized accessibility-accommodation fund to help ensure appropriate financing of assistive technologies, job support, interpreters, and other specialized accommodations for people across the firm with specific challenges and needs.





Accessibility story

Chriss speaks up

Chriss O'Toole herself never hesitated. An executive assistant with Deloitte's Risk Advisory group in Calgary who describes herself as having "a pretty good grab bag of neurodiversity things," Chriss remembers saying at the end of her very positive job interview at Deloitte, "Hey, I want to disclose that I am autistic." She knew this carried a risk. Describing her similar revelations in other contexts, she says, "some people immediately revert to treating me like a seven-year-old." But she also understood from her past work experience that people knowing about her neurodiversity could "definitely make it easier."

Chriss's story is as informative about the merits of building an inclusive environment for people with disabilities as it is fascinating. Diagnosed with autism and ADHD at age 43, only a month before her Deloitte interview, Chriss found that her personal and work lives suddenly made new sense to her. Before this new self-understanding and her engagement at Deloitte, she was, she says, "constantly butting heads with people" with whom she worked. Like "a lot of autistic people," she explains, she could find working in a "hierarchical setting" a challenge: "I would get written up a lot for being too abrupt," she confides.

At Deloitte, things changed. She and the people who worked with her embarked on a journey of discovery about the nature of her requirements: "No one was, like, 'This is too much. I can't handle this.' From the beginning, the management team were incredibly supportive." In practical terms, she and those around her came to understand that she can find sounds and light distracting, which means that she needs to see your lips when you're talking with her, that she can be thrown off by interruptions and surprises, and that affording her the flexibility to work from home for part of the week can boost her productivity. In these and other ways, she and her team have forged successful working relationships and routines. "I'm a good administrator," she says simply yet firmly.

For others contemplating disclosing their neurodiversity but perhaps hesitating, Chriss offers this advice: "If you do not have a diagnosis, get one. That's really key." Then, because you may "not like surprises," she says, "plan, plan, plan." Script a conversation, practise it, and prepare for all eventualities. As Chriss's own story shows, the results are worth the effort—for everybody.

Education and awareness

Why does awareness matter?

Creating a truly accessible and inclusive organization requires contributions from everyone. But how can this be achieved if we don't understand one another? We've made raising the awareness of Deloitte people at all levels and of all abilities a central pillar of our plan. Our AAP commitments include creating accessibility-training opportunities; providing easy, centralized access to educational resources; supporting participation in accessibility events, workshops, mentorship programs, and volunteer opportunities; and communicating AAP progress in reports such as this one.

Spreading the word

In 2021, we followed through on our commitment to provide ready access to resources by launching our internal AccessAbility Hub, a platform hosting educational materials (including information on regulatory requirements) and event information, as well as by supporting panel discussions and easing the path to establishing accommodations.

Our AccessAbility Network employee-resource group led awareness campaigns during April, which is Neurodiversity Awareness Month. In alliance with Auticon Canada, the team hosted virtual panel discussions on autism in the workplace and on parenting children with autism.

We launched education and awareness-training initiatives throughout the year, allowing a variety of teams the opportunity to learn about the practical workplace ramifications of vision loss, autism, and intellectual challenges, as well as providing insight on how to support colleagues who are affected by these conditions.





Accessibility story

Greg puts his best self forward

When Greg MacQuarrie talks about his children, a level of emotion reveals itself in his voice that one might expect of any parent, but that hints at something more: “They have this funniness and incredible imagination. They’re incredible human beings. They’ve fundamentally shifted how I see the world.”

Greg is a consulting partner in Deloitte’s Halifax office. A few years back, he and his wife adopted three children with developmental disabilities that Greg ties to their early experiences prior to adoption. His kids, as he describes them, “process their environment differently and react differently to common situations, like lining up for recess, lining up at lunchtime, and just sitting in one spot for more than five minutes.” They face significant educational and social challenges, he explains. “My kids struggle to make friends; they’re very isolated at school, on weekends, and in life generally.”

For Greg and his wife, the task of caring for their children, advocating for them, and helping them grow is all-consuming: “There’s rarely a day that we’re not called to schools, or in some type of therapy, or in some type of professional session for their betterment.” The family live an unpredictable life in constant motion.

Greg’s wife left her job to devote herself to their children full-time. For his part, Greg depends on the understanding and flexibility of his clients, and of his colleagues and others at the Halifax firm.

Greg speaks eloquently about the practical and emotional support he has received in balancing professional and family commitments. He begins work very early in the morning and continues to late in the evening. Saturdays are also important workdays for Greg. The point is, he can’t always be sure of his availability during the heart of the day, when he might be needed at home. As Greg describes it, the way he works, the hours he keeps, and the flexibility he is permitted to build into his schedule ensure that he is able to bring his “full self to work—and to home.” Deloitte’s support for “diverse ways of thinking and working,” he explains, serves to “enhance the energy, engagement, and productivity” with which he and others serve clients.

Greg’s story is a powerful illustration of how accessibility can be as vitally important for people without a disability as for people with one. And regarding the formal development of Deloitte’s AccessAbility Action Plan, he says, “it’s incredibly energizing for us and for families that are associated with Deloitte.”

Employment

Where does employment fit?

Without hiring, engaging, retaining, developing, and empowering employees with disabilities, there is no accessibility and inclusion—no matter how many initiatives are launched. Our plan commits us to recruiting, retaining, and developing the skills of more people with special requirements at the national and local levels. We've undertaken to diversify our talent pipeline by working with organizations that employ people with challenges. We're also committed to tracking the development of such employees and keeping them on meaningful career paths.

Engaging new talent

Working closely with disability-employment organizations Ready, Willing & Able (RWA), Canadian National Institute for the Blind Foundation (CNIB), and Auticon Canada, we continue to make concerted efforts to identify and recruit highly talented people with physical and intellectual challenges.

Our processes have included filling the newly created position of national program lead of disability recruitment to strengthen our business alliances and to diversify and extend our search to include talented people who may not know about Deloitte or picture themselves working for us. As part of their goals, the new lead will also focus on helping to ensure that there are no barriers to learning about Deloitte opportunities, regardless of one's ability, and that recruitment processes are inclusive by design.

In a complementary development, we've also recently hired an accessibility and employee-relations manager whose role is to optimize accessible-accommodation processes and disability-awareness training.

As well as taking practical steps to employ more differently abled people, we have contributed to efforts to re-examine disability employment. Deloitte was the national sponsor of CNIB's Connecting the Dots—a conference exploring technology, employment, and the future of work—and our national lead of workforce strategy was a keynote speaker at the event.





Accessibility story

Isma perseveres

After graduating from university with a commerce degree and an HR major, Isma Nasim was led to believe that her job search would likely prove easy. Reasonable expectation, however, soon met complicated reality. When Isma revealed that she is a person with low vision during a recruitment-firm interview that had thus far been going swimmingly, her recruiter briefly left the room to speak with a manager. Since the door was left slightly ajar, Isma couldn't help but overhear the conversation.

"She's a really smart candidate," said the recruiter. "The only problem is, she has a disability."

"Why would you open that can of worms," replied the manager, "when there are so many other candidates in the pool?"

Isma laughs about the experience now, but remembers thinking, "I've just been compared to a worm!" Today, more than a decade after the event, it's clear the recruiters were the ones with the worm's-eye view of Isma's potential: She is currently Deloitte's National Program Lead for Disability Recruitment and living proof that hiring smart people, whatever their individual circumstances, is usually a pretty good idea. Along with strong HR and recruitment prowess, Isma brings to her role a wealth of personal experience as a person who has faced and overcome multiple barriers.

Some of those hurdles can involve doubts regarding someone's ability to perform and worries about the cost of providing necessary supports. Obstacles can involve technology—for example, the introduction of a new platform that may not be compatible with a person's existing adaptive software—or they can simply touch upon the physical environment. Isma recalls some of her early challenges at Deloitte, including finding the right elevator (one of six) to get to her office and, as she says, navigating the workplace's "beautiful all-glass doors," which, to those with low vision, might look, confusingly, fully open and fully closed all at once. Technology that added voiced announcements and other helpful verbal information to the elevators' functioning, as well as the addition of small yet highly visible zebra stripes to the bottom of the glass doors, reduced the visual challenges for her.

Isma has learned, she says, that if people are "accommodated and provided with what they need to work effectively and efficiently, there are really no barriers." Even though she herself recalls having "shied away from speaking up" at other places of employment ("Would I be asking for too much?"), she now encourages anybody with a disability to step forward. The goal, after all, is to have a workplace where everybody can work better.

Isma mentions two ways in which the experience of overcoming barriers has made her "a better version of [her]self." It's made her more empathetic and has allowed her to realize even greater powers of perseverance—valuable qualities in any productive workplace.

Marketplace

Why is accessibility needed in the marketplace?

As individual people or individual organizations, we are not, nor can we ever be, islands—that is, not if we truly wish to create a more accessible and inclusive world. At Deloitte, we understand that building real accessibility requires us to reach out beyond our walls to engage all interested stakeholders. Our action plan commits us to working with clients who might wish to benefit from our accessibility specialty in pursuing their own such goals; with suppliers and allied businesses that are owned or operated by people with disabilities; and with like-minded organizations ready to help us navigate the intricacies of the disability job market or otherwise to support Canada's accessibility journey.

Going beyond

Following through on our commitments, we've continued to grow our footprint in the marketplace by delivering accessibility consulting services to our clients.

Additionally, in a first-of-its-kind thought-leadership initiative, we collaborated with Auticon Canada and the Future of Canada Centre to create a report exploring the impact that autism unemployment and underemployment in tech-related jobs across Canada has had on corporate productivity and the economy.

Putting our thought leadership into practice, we teamed with SAP and Auticon Canada to pioneer a pilot certification-training program in which Auticon employees were trained to work on SAP-related projects at Deloitte.





Accessibility story

Radha doesn't like guessing

When asked about the advantages of organizations combining their forces to advance accessibility and inclusion, Radha MacCulloch replies, "Without working in partnership, we're all just guessing."

Radha is the National Program Manager of Policy and Resource Development at Ready, Willing & Able (RWA), a not-for-profit national initiative that promotes workplace accessibility and inclusion by connecting businesses with prospective employees who live with autism or an intellectual disability. Businesses understand their own workplace and workforce needs; RWA understands the talent pools they represent and the benefits accessibility and inclusion can bring to businesses. Combining these two perspectives removes the guesswork from the process and helps build both productive employer-employee relationships and highly accessible workplaces. This is Radha's point.

For the last several years, Radha has been working with her counterparts at Deloitte to remove the guesswork. She has not only supported our efforts to hire inclusively in all Deloitte service lines, but has also contributed to developing and executing training and awareness initiatives for various groups at Deloitte. As she readily points out, however, our business relationship is mutually rewarding.

Deloitte people have participated in RWA webinars (titles have included "What's the employer's perspective?") that have been broadcast across the country. We've written letters supporting RWA's application for renewed federal-government funding. We've done pro bono work supporting, for example, the development of new RWA marketing tools.

Radha began her career in social work, helping young people complete their schooling and explore future possibilities. She soon realized, however, that "access to meaningful, paid employment was not always available" to those she was supporting. Aware of the implications for their material security as well as their sense of self-worth, she joined RWA, determined, she says, to break down "those very persistent structural barriers that get in the way of someone reaching their full potential."

At Deloitte, we understand that building more accessible workplaces and societies is in many hands. With Radha MacCulloch and RWA, we've found an exceptional ally more than ready, willing, and able to work toward our common goals. For her part, Radha notes our "open lines of communication" and "mutual respect." She explains: "If I could bottle that and recreate that with new business allies..." she says, trailing off as if to imagine the possibilities.

Reaching out

Our unique collaborations

Deloitte's approach to promoting accessibility and inclusion across our people, clients, and communities involves close collaboration with a number of employment organizations, including CNIB Foundation, Auticon Canada, and RWA. The unique relationships we have formed with these organizations have led to several hiring initiatives responsible for bringing exciting new talent into the firm. They've also led to joint research projects and awareness campaigns that have deepened our understanding of accessibility and inclusion, as well as of the promise these paired goals hold for creating a better organization, economy, and society.

How we worked together in 2021



With Auticon Canada: By employing people with autism on large, complex IT projects, and by focusing research on the unemployment and underemployment of people with autism in tech-related jobs nationwide



With RWA: By recruiting people with autism and intellectual disabilities, and by developing awareness-training and job-support programs for this particular sector of the talent pool



With CNIB: By training our own recruiters, continuing to participate in the foundation's Come to Work program, and by sponsoring their conference on technology, employment, and the future of work

The path forward for accessibility

At Deloitte Canada, we have formally articulated five shared values that are central to everything we do. Along with “Foster inclusion,” they include “Serve with integrity,” “Take care of each other,” and “Collaborate for measurable impact.” In this report, we’ve attempted to show these shared values in action.

Our fifth declared value, “Lead the way,” provides perhaps the best note on which to conclude this report. For 2022, we’re committing ourselves to providing leadership regarding the following six initiatives:



Increase

efforts to educate and inform by providing continuous learning opportunities to address accessibility and inclusion



Focus

on attracting practitioners, professionals, and clients with disabilities to Deloitte for future collaborations, community initiatives, and employment opportunities



Create

a more inclusive, hybrid workplace environment that prioritizes accessibility for our people, clients, and communities



Support

our clients on their accessibility journeys and provide accessible customer service



Engage

with suppliers owned by or comprised of persons with disabilities



Encourage

our internal community to foster open conversations about disability inclusion in order to help reach an accessible future

These initiatives tell only part of the story. Our final aim is larger. We seek nothing less than to lead the way in realizing a vision of accessibility that is transformative not only for our firm but for business in general and the world at large. In future reports, we look forward to detailing our leadership role in achieving our aim and reinventing our common future.



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Our global Purpose is making an impact that matters. At Deloitte Canada, that translates into building a better future by accelerating and expanding access to knowledge. We believe we can achieve this Purpose by living our shared values to lead the way, serve with integrity, take care of each other, foster inclusion, and collaborate for measurable impact.

To learn more about Deloitte's approximately 312,000 professionals, over 12,000 of whom are part of the Canadian firm, please connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [Facebook](#).