# Transcription: Accessible Publishing in Canada\_October 2021

## Slide 1

Accessible Publishing in Canada

## Slide 2: Outline

* Background on Accessible Publishing
* Publishers/Publishing Industry
* Libraries
* CELA

## Slide 3: What is accessible publishing?

* Accessible publishing as always been done by ‘alternate format’ producers
  + CELA (Centre for Equitable Library Access), NNELS (National Network for Equitable Library Service), K-12 sector, post-secondary sector among others
  + CELA produces and distributes material in alternate formats, both physically and digitally, including audio, braille and ebooks
* World-wide trend now is publishing sector making accessibility a priority in publishing – mainstream
  + In the past, this has included physical format: large print
  + In current context, most often refers to digital – ebooks and audio
  + Output is usually EPUB3 (for ebooks) – international standard

## Slide 4: What is born-accessible publishing?

* Goal to enhance publisher capacity so that books are “born-accessible” as part of the digital production process.
  + Shift from print-first -> digital-first
* Born-accessible content can be accessed and consumed with assistive technologies, including screen readers and braille displays
  + no need for remediation
* The initiative is market focused
  + shift the supply of accessible books to a system where accessible books are commercially available at the time of publication
  + accessible books are commercially viable
* Born-accessible publishing benefits all

## Slide 5: International Context

* EU Accessibility Act – legislates accessible books through the entire production and consumption chain by June 2025
* Fondazione LIA - group of 76 publishers in Italy working towards accessible publishing:
  + Published paper on accessible publishing ecosystem
* DAISY consortium and inclusive publishing - international organization working with over 150 partners all around the world to improve access to reading for people with print disabilities
* Benetech and its “Global Certified Accessible” for publishers
* WIPO – ABC (Accessible Books Consortium)
  + Marrakesh Treaty – as of January 2021 – 105 countries have ratified or acceded the treaty; international exchange of materials for people with print disabilities around the world

## Slide 6: Background in Canada

* Alternate Format Materials Working Group (report produced in 2018)
  + Representatives from libraries, publishing, federal government, and consumer organizations for people with print disabilities, CELA and NNELS
* Department of Canadian Heritage Accessible Books Funding: 22.8 Million over 5 years (2019-24)
  + Administered through the Canada Book Fund
  + Support the production and distribution of accessible digital books by Canadian independent publishers
  + Supporting the born-accessible paradigm
* ESDC (Employment and Social Development Canada) - funding $4 million annually for CELA/NNELS for alternate format production (also includes some work for accessible publishing)

## Slide 7: Accessible Publishing Research Project

* In 2019/20, Government of Canada funded an overview research project for accessible books – NNELS and CELA were key contributors
* Sponsored by eBOUND and ACP
  + ACP - Association of Canadian Publishers
  + eBOUND - enables independent Canadian publishers to engage in the digital marketplace
* Report released in April 2020 -
  + Landscape Review – publisher marketplace & reader perspective
  + Standards and Certification – national publishing industry
  + Training & Awareness – publishers & public libraries

## Slide 8: Publishers and Accessibility

## Slide 9: Examples of Accessible Publishing Projects

* Independent publishers, associations and related organizations in Canada
  + Incorporating accessibility into epub production
    - Outsourcing
    - Inhouse production
  + Image descriptions
  + File remediation
  + Born accessible workflow (no longer print-based workflow)
  + Accessibility training
  + Picture books, fixed layout
  + Audiobooks

## Slide 10: Accessible Publishing Summit

* Organized by NNELS – a Canadian wide event
* Brings together key stakeholders
  + publishing community (e.g. ACP and eBOUND)
  + alternate format producers (e.g. NNELS and CELA)
  + industry players (e.g.Rakuten Kobo)
  + DAISY
  + international publishing such as LIA, IPA
  + government representatives (Heritage and ESDC)
  + libraries
  + and more

## Slide 11: Accessible Publishing Summit Working Groups

* Working groups/discussion groups
  + Search & Discoverability / Metadata
  + Publishers’ Needs & Accessibility Certification
  + Audiobooks
  + Digital Literacy / Training & Social Inclusion
  + Reading Systems
  + File Remediation
  + Publishing School / Education & Instruction

## Slide 12: Libraries and Accessibility

## Slide 13: Awareness and Strategy for Public Libraries in Canada

* Focused on how public libraries can work towards ensuring all aspects of mainstream library services, both physical and digital, are inclusive and accessible
* Explore the accessibility training needs of public libraries, including how to include accessible books in all aspects of their workflows

## Slide 14: Accessibility in Mainstream Public Library Services

* No one-size fits all solution (rural/urban, large/small etc.)
* Historically, accessibility has been done as part of a separate service or organization, distinct from library service to the general population (homebound services, CELA and NNELS)
* Accessibility is often an afterthought in the development and offering of the mainstream services of the library
* Challenge is to envision new ways to provide inclusive, mainstream service for people with print disabilities that has accessibility built into it

## Slide 15: Report identified 7 key areas

Report outlined a multi-year training and awareness strategy for library staff in the following 7 areas:

1) Training for Public Services Staff

2) Hardware/Software/Assistive Technology

3) Accessibility of Websites, Catalogues and/or Apps

4) Legislation and Accessibility Requirements

5) Shared Repository of Training Resources

6) Guidelines for Selection, Acquisition and Licensing

7) Accessibility Metadata

## Slide 16: Public Library Accessibility Resource Centre (PLARC) Project

* This collaborative project is funded by the Government of Canada, co-led by CELA and NNELS in partnership with eBOUND.
* The goal of the project is to create a consolidated resource centre focused on education and training library staff across the country on the importance of accessibility.

## Slide 17: PLARC – Phase 1

NNELS and CELA have just completed first phase of the project - (Feb 2021 – Sept 2021)

* + Formation of a Library Advisory Committee (12 members + 4 NNELS/CELA staff)
  + Nation-wide survey on accessibility in public libraries
  + Begin building the website and creating resources

## Slide 18: Creation of the Resource Centre

English: accessiblelibraries.ca

Français: bibliosaccessibles.ca

* End goal of the project is to build a consolidated nation-wide resource centre to provide information on accessibility for Canadian public libraries
* We are pursuing multi-year funding to continue to build the resource centre
* Please visit us and join our mailing list

## Slide 19: Where does CELA fit into this landscape?

* Collaboration between born-accessible and alternate format producers
  + Mainstream and specialized stream
  + All hands-on deck to help end the book famine
  + Only 7% of published content worldwide is available in accessible format
* Born-accessible and market forces and public service/exception in Copyright Act
  + Industry and public service – build an equitable reading landscape
  + Marrakesh Treaty – international exchange of materials
* What does an inclusive model of library service look like going forward?