



Library and Archives Canada Access Policy Framework



Library and Archives Canada

Access Policy Framework

1. Effective date

The *Access Policy Framework* has been approved by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) Management Board and takes effect on 12 September 2016.

2. Application

The *Access Policy Framework* applies to all activities across LAC undertaken to facilitate access to holdings.

This framework supersedes the former *Access Policy Framework* (2011). The *Access Policy Framework*, and its related suite, are informed by, and must be applied in a manner consistent with other LAC policy frameworks and instruments.

3. Definitions

See Appendix A.

4. Context

As set out in the [Library and Archives of Canada Act](#) (LAC Act), the objects and powers of LAC include facilitating access to Canada's Documentary Heritage and making that heritage known to Canadians and to anyone with an interest in Canada. LAC is responsible for acquiring, processing, preserving, and facilitating access to Canadian documentary heritage, which includes analogue and digital holdings acquired since 1872. This large collection includes published and unpublished material, textual records, maps, photographs, audio records, audiovisual records, medals, musical scores, artifacts, and stamps. LAC aims to render all of its holdings discoverable, available, and accessible to the greatest extent possible.

As both a memory institution and a government institution, LAC must carefully apply national and international professional standards and practices of library and archival science in the context of applicable legislation, regulations, and policies of the Government of Canada. These include, but are not limited to: the [LAC Act](#), the [Access to Information Act](#), the [Privacy Act](#), the [Copyright Act](#), the [Official Languages Act](#), the [Federal Accountability Act](#), the [Policy on Communications and Federal Identity](#) and the [Directive on Open Government](#).

Globally, governments – including the Government of Canada – are seeking ways to expand open and universal access to their holdings, notably through digital means and open data initiatives. In Canada, governments and institutions have increased commitments to provide affordable broadband access, especially in rural areas. Additionally, factors such as the adoption of new technologies (e.g., smartphones, tablets) and new digital formats (e.g., 3D printed files) are revolutionizing how Canadians access, discover, and use content online. These new avenues also improve access to analogue content. Operating in a rapidly evolving digital and networked environment, LAC seeks to leverage these opportunities to enhance access to its collection. Given the vast extent of its holdings – both analogue and digital – LAC must strategically choose access facilitation-related activities that will best serve its clients across Canada, which include government organizations, private donors, universities, researchers, historians, students, librarians, archivists, genealogists, and the general public.

LAC is committed to taking measures proactively to provide maximum access to its holdings within its resources. Within the Government of Canada environment and LAC's policy-centred framework, LAC will continue to:

- Provide and support client-centred programming and services;
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with stakeholders; and
- Endeavour to remove as many legal and policy restrictions as well as technological, geographical, and physical barriers to make holdings discoverable, available, and accessible.

LAC will also explore innovative approaches to render holdings available, as well as leverage its digital presence, to further engage Canadians in viewing, enhancing, using and sharing documentary heritage.

5. Purpose

Under the *LAC Act*, LAC is mandated to facilitate access to Canada's documentary heritage and make that heritage known to its community of clients. The *Access Policy Framework* articulates LAC's principles to fulfill its mandate.

This framework promotes access as an institutional outcome and ensures that LAC's policy approach and the principles underlying access facilitation activities are clear; that those roles and responsibilities within LAC are understood; and that LAC access facilitation activities are consistent with the institution's mandate.

6. Principles

LAC's policy approach is to work toward providing access to all of the documentary heritage in its collection. Access facilitation-related activities are undertaken in a coordinated fashion and in a manner consistent with a set of principles that ensures documentary heritage can be found, identified, viewed, obtained and used.

6.1 Discoverable

LAC continues to work toward making its holdings and associated metadata discoverable, so that Canadians or those with an interest in Canada can view information about their existence, description, location, and availability.

6.2 Available

LAC works, where feasible, toward making its holdings and associated metadata free of legal and policy constraints so that Canadians or those with an interest in Canada can consult and use them.

6.3 Accessible

LAC works toward removing physical, technological and geographical barriers that limit accessibility to its discoverable and available holdings and associated metadata to allow improved access to all digital and analogue content.

6.4 Collaborative

LAC, as part of a larger library and archival community, seeks meaningful collaboration with clients, government institutions, memory institutions, not-for-profit organizations, and/or the private sector, both nationally and internationally.

LAC works with stakeholders and users to find innovative approaches to increase access to documentary heritage, as well as to enhance the democratization of knowledge through effective engagement of citizens.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The *Librarian and Archivist of Canada* is accountable for facilitating access to holdings and providing corporate leadership for the coordination, alignment, and integration of policy frameworks.

The *Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Operating Officer (COO)* is responsible for the overall management of LAC's activities for facilitating access to its holdings. The COO also advises the Librarian and Archivist on access policies, strategies, and approaches.

The *Corporate Secretary* is responsible for ensuring the development of the policy instruments at the framework, policy and directive levels and for ensuring that access facilitation activities undertaken in his/her sector align with this framework.

The *Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer* works closely with other sector heads to ensure the successful implementation of this Framework, including through providing the appropriate technical and physical infrastructure to support access facilitation activities.

The *Director General, Communications Branch* is responsible for the communications aspects of access facilitation activities at LAC, and for ensuring adherence to the Treasury Board Secretariat's *Policy on Communications and Federal Identity*, and *Standard on Web Accessibility*. He/she works closely with other sector heads to ensure successful implementation of this Framework.

The *Director, Strategic Research and Policy* is responsible for providing advice to support corporate leadership on the coordination, alignment, integration and monitoring of strategic policy and planning directions at LAC, including access facilitation policies and plans.

Managers are responsible for raising awareness, developing and ensuring that procedures, guidelines, as well as processes, align with this *framework* and related instruments.

Staff influence, develop and implement access facilitation development activities and processes aligned with this *framework* and related instruments.

8. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Director, Corporate Planning and Accountability will examine or evaluate the *Access Policy Framework* to measure its compliance, progress, effectiveness and the attainment of its objectives.

The review and monitoring of the *Access Policy Framework* and related policy instruments is the responsibility of the Director, Strategic Research and Policy with support from the operational areas responsible for access facilitation activities at LAC.

9. Consequences

Consequences for non-compliance with the *Access Policy Framework* may include corrective measures from the Librarian and Archivist of Canada, Management Board, or the Chief Operating Officer.

10. Information

Please address any questions about the *Access Policy Framework* to:

Director, Strategic Research and Policy
Library and Archives Canada
550 de la Cité Boulevard
Gatineau, Québec
K1A 0N4

bac.politiques-policy.lac@canada.ca

Appendix A: Definitions

Access [Accès]

Access occurs when clients can find, identify, view, obtain and use holdings.

Accessible [Accessible]

Holdings are accessible when physical, technological and geographical barriers to the content are removed and they can be used by as many people as possible.

Available [Disponible]

Holdings are available when they are free of legal and policy constraints and clients can consult and use them.

Content [Contenu]

Content is that which conveys information, e.g. text, data, symbols, numerals, images, sound and vision.

Discoverable [Découvrable]

Holdings are discoverable when information about their existence, description, location and availability can be viewed.

Documentary Heritage [Patrimoine documentaire]

Documentary heritage consists of publications and records of interest to Canada.

Holdings [Collection]

All documentary heritage brought under the control of LAC through the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* and the *Legal Deposit of Publications Regulations*, and any master copies generated thereof.

Service [Service]

An activity is considered a service when all four of the following components are present: 1. Client; 2. Product; 3. Process; and 4. Authority.

Stakeholders [Intervenants]

Stakeholders are individuals, groups or organizations that have an interest or share in an undertaking or relationship and its outcome – they may be affected by it, impact or influence it, and in some way be accountable for it.

Appendix B: Related Documents

1. [*Access to Information Act*](#)
2. [*Canadian Human Rights Act*](#)
3. [*Copyright Act*](#)
4. [*Federal Accountability Act*](#)
5. [*Jodhan v. Canada Federal Court Decision*](#)
6. [*Library and Archives of Canada Act*](#)
7. [*Marrakesh Treaty*](#)
8. [*Official Languages Act*](#)
9. [*Privacy Act*](#)
10. [*Privacy Regulations*](#)
11. [*TBS Directive on Open Government*](#)
12. [*TBS Policy on Communications and Federal Identity*](#)
13. [*TBS Policy on Service*](#)
14. [*TBS Security Organization and Administration Standard*](#)
15. [*TBS Standard on Web Accessibility*](#)
16. [*Third Biennial Plan to the Open Government Partnership*](#)
17. [*United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*](#)