2016 PROGRESS REPORT
MULTI YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2016-2021

INTRODUCTION

Science North strives to provide goods, services and facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities. Our multi-year Accessibility Plan serves as a road map to help us meet our obligations and remove barriers to accessibility. Science North will report annually on the progress of our plan, will review and update the plan at least once every five years and will ensure the plan is posted on our website and made available in alternative formats upon request.

This document provides an update on the work undertaken in 2016 towards meeting the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). This document responds to section 4(3) (a) of the IASR which requires obligated organizations to prepare an annual status report on the progress achieved on their multi-year accessibility plan.

ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Science North Accessibility Compliance Committee is responsible to develop the Centre's multi-year Accessibility Plan and to ensure the actions set out in the Plan are implemented, working in conjunction with the designated individuals or units responsible to lead each initiative.

On an ongoing basis, the Accessibility Compliance Committee monitors legislative changes to the Act and its regulations, and as required, will incorporate those changes into the Science Centre's Accessibility Plan.

IASR COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES FOR 2016

Science North undertook a number of initiatives to respond to the requirements of the IASR. The IASR requirements and the initiatives undertaken to address them are as follows:

PART 1 – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENT	ACTIONS
Develop accessibility policies, including a statement of organizational commitment. Make policies publically available.	✓ Statement of organizational commitment continues to be contained within Science North's multi-year Accessibility Plan. ✓ In response to changes made by the Province of Ontario to the Customer Services Standard Regulation which came into effect as of July 1, 2016 Science North reviewed and updated its Accessibility Policy to ensure compliance with the changes. The updated Accessibility Policy was re-posted on Science North website.
Develop a multi-year	✓ A new five-year Accessibility Plan (2016-2021) was created at

accessibility plan. Report annually on the multi-year accessibility plan.	the beginning of 2016 to replace the 2012-17 Accessibility Plan. The new Accessibility Plan was approved and posted on Science North website. ✓ Science North's progress report for 2016 was posted on its website.
Submit accessibility compliance report in accordance with prescribed schedule	✓ The next required compliance report will be submitted prior to the deadline date of December 31, 2017.
Integrate accessibility in procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities, as well as procuring or acquiring self-serve kiosks.	✓ **Audit**. Random audit of procurement documents is done to ensure compliance with the requirement to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so ✓ **RFx**. The Procurement & Contracts Officer considers and includes appropriate accessibility criteria in all RFx. ✓ **Training**. All new staff responsible for procurement activities receives training on the procurement or acquisition of accessible goods, services or facilities. ✓ **Rental of external facilities.** The venue previously used by Science North for its popular Science Cafés lacked certain accessibility features. Following research into alternate locations a new venue was selected to be the site of all future Science Café events. This venue is better equipped to accommodate persons with disabilities.

Provide training on the IASR and Human Rights Code to employees, volunteers or persons who participate in developing policies, and others who provide goods / services / facilities on behalf of Science North.	✓ **New Employees**. Training and proof of training on IASR requirements is part of Science North's new employee on-boarding process including individual training and formal review at orientation.
	✓ **Additional training**. Additional training was provided to members of Science North's technical services team on the Design of Public Spaces including:
	   o HR Downloads module;
	   o Certification course entitled "Building Accessibility Excellence Advisor" delivered by Excellence Canada, a not-for-profit organization that specializes in the training, implementation, and certification of organizational excellence in Canada.
	✓ **Suppliers**. Suppliers providing services on behalf of Science North are required to submit certification that their staff receive training in accordance with the requirements of the Customer Service and IAS regulations.

PART II – INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

REQUIREMENT	ACTIONS
Upon request, provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports.	✓ On a case-by-case basis Science North continues to respond to requests for accessible formats and communication supports from persons with disabilities.
Ensure any new websites and web content on new websites comply with: • WCAG 2.0 Level A by Jan 1, 2014 • WCAG 2.0 Level AA by Jan 1. 2021	✓ In 2016 Science North acquired the services of an external web design firm to create a new website that will improve website accessibility for persons with disabilities. This new website will be launched live in early 2017. The new website is designed meet the IASR WCAG2.0AA guidelines. Some examples of that include but not limited to: ○ Captions – creating captions for live synchronized media (YouTube videos) ○ Audio descriptions for all pre-recorded video content ○ Visual presentation of text and images of text has a specific contrast ratio that is easy to read ○ Resize text – text can be resized without assistive technology up to 200% without loss of content or functionality (except for captions and images of text) ○ Images of text – if the technologies being used can achieve the visual presentation, text is used to convey information rather than images of text ○ Headings and labels must describe topic of purpose ○ Consistent navigation and identification (components have the same functionality)

PART III – EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

REQUIREMENT	ACTIONS
This section of the Regulation includes requirements related to: • Recruitment, assessment and selection • Accessible formats and communication supports for employees • Workplace emergency response • Return to work processes • Performance management, career development and	✓ Science North continues to ensure its employment practices meet the requirements of Part III of the IASR. This includes: ○ All individuals including job applicants, applicants selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, successful applicants, and employees are all notified that accommodation is available upon request in relation to the recruitment process, materials or processes used therewith, and policies for accommodating employees with disabilities; ○ Accommodation requests from employees with disabilities are addressed on a case-by-case basis. Funds are allocated annually to address these requests. To date all

redeployment	accommodation requests have been addressed;
	o Science North maintains a written process for a) the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities; and b) the return to work of an employee who has been absent from work due to a disability and requires disability-related accommodations;
	o Science North takes into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans when, a) using its performance management process, b) providing career development and advancement to and c) redeploying our employees with disabilities.

PART IV – TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

As Science North provides neither conventional or specialized transportation services this section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation does not apply.

PART V – DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)

REQUIREMENT	ACTIONS
This section of the Regulation applies to public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped on and after the dates set out in the schedule in section 80.5 and that are covered by Part. O. Reg. 413/12, s. 6.	In 2016 Science North undertook two (2) audits of its facilities (one of which related specifically to Part V DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES of the IASR, with a view to compiling a list of improvements to enhance accessibility.
	The improvements were then prioritized over a five (5) year period. In this 2016 reporting period the following work was undertaken towards completion of the 2016/17 fiscal year improvements:
	• Power door openers installed on two (2) public washrooms located in our science exhibit building;
	• Ramps installed at three (3) exterior doors locations;
	• Consultant hired to determine best course of action to provide accessible seating in Science North's popular "Discovery Theatre";
	• Internal work order issued to correct the height and configuration of the Copper Café service counter at Dynamic Earth to ensure it complies with maximum height specifications.

ADDITIONAL ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN IN 2016

While not directly related to the requirements of the IASR, during 2016 other initiatives were undertaken to improve accessibility to Science North's facilities by the Science Centre's staff and visitors.

Exhibit Design Standards: As part of its 2016-21 Accessibility Plan Science North has identified the need to establish accessible design standards for new exhibits created or purchased by the Science Centre. A first draft of these standards was created and shared with individuals involved in the creation of new exhibitry.

Stage ramp: Until recently the stage used by staff and guest presenters for internal and public presentations was accessible only by stairs. To ensure unencumbered access to the stage by individuals with disabilities a TSSA certified ramp was purchased for this use.

Fire Alarm upgrade: The Science Centre's fire alarm system was upgraded to include both audio and visual signals to replace the old audio-only system. This upgrade ensures staff and guests with either a visual or auditory impairment are made aware of a pending building evacuation.