

## **Accessibility Policy – Art Windsor-Essex**

### **Approved at the September 2022 Board Meeting**

#### **Intent Statement:**

The accessibility policy serves to ensure AWE's programs and activities are welcoming and accessible, and that people with disabilities can participate in AWE's activities in a manner that respects their dignity, and that is equitable in relation to the broader public.

#### **Section 1. Goal of the Policy:**

The goal of this policy is to provide an overarching framework for accessibility at AWE. The policy defines the scope, practice and standards of accessibility at AWE in both physical spaces and virtual/remote settings. The policy also articulates how AWE approaches developing, implementing and monitoring accessibility standards, as AWE provides services to members of the public, including those with disabilities. The commitments in this policy extend to people who engage with AWE who have visible and/or non-visible disabilities.

#### **Section 2. Accessibility Philosophy:**

AWE offers numerous interactive forms of engagement, and promotes enjoyment and learning through all its activities. AWE creates and maintains an inclusive environment that values and supports the presence and participation of all community members, and seeks to break down barriers that would prevent or limit access to AWE's activities. AWE understands that disability is experienced in unique ways by all individuals, and that these experiences are formed by how individuals interact with barriers. Through a person-centred approach to accessibility, the gallery will respond accordingly to individual needs.

#### **Section 3. General Regulations:**

1. AWE will comply with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) and any other relevant legislation introduced federally, provincially, or municipally, which may be relevant to this policy.
2. AWE takes access into consideration in the design and execution of activities offered, and uses inclusive design and universal design principles as a tool to support access for staff, Board Members, volunteers, and the public.
3. AWE activities will be hosted in physical spaces that are accessible to people who use mobility devices or other assistive technologies or who face other accessibility barriers.
4. AWE provides multiple points of access into its exhibitions and programs. Examples may include, but are not limited to: closed captioning for digital programs; digital exhibition guides offering interpretive materials in audio and text formats; providing ASL translation upon request for in-person public programs.
5. AWE communicates its accessibility policy to parties who may be using AWE's facilities to host third party events not directly managed by the gallery.
6. AWE's accessibility policy also applies to offsite programs and initiatives carried out by AWE in partnership with external stakeholders.
7. AWE encourages and welcomes visitors requiring additional accommodations to contact Visitor Services by phone, electronically, or in person in advance of their visits to

exhibitions and participation in programs. AWE will provide accommodations for guests to the best of its ability.

8. AWE provides community members with a clear channel for receiving feedback on accessibility, by phone, electronically, and other means. AWE welcomes groups and individuals to raise accessibility concerns and request AWE be responsive to potential needs for accommodation as they arise.
9. AWE consults with community members who have lived experience of disability on changes and updates to AWE's accessibility policies and procedures.
10. On the rare occasion that an activity is proposed to be held in an inaccessible location, it will be subject to prior approval of the Board.

### **Section 9. Policy Application**

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by Art Windsor-Essex at its facility and, when and where feasible, with its partners.

### **Section 10. Review of the Policy**

The Accessibility Policy shall be reviewed annually by the Governance Committee and biennially by the Board of Directors. Any recommended changes shall be presented to the Board by the Governance Committee for their approval in a revised policies document.