



Workplace Accessibility Planning and Reporting – A Roadmap for Change

Principal Investigator: Emile Tompa (etompa@iwh.on.ca)

Co-Investigators: Shayan Morshedi, Amie Richards, Andrew Dixon, Ashvene Sureshkumar, Don Gallant, W. Francis Fung, Alec Farquhar

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Content Overview

- Overview of IDEA
- APR Background and Context
- Review of Key Concepts
- Study Methodology
- Draft Framework
- Pulse Check Questionnaire
- Next Steps
- Open Discussion

Overview of IDEA

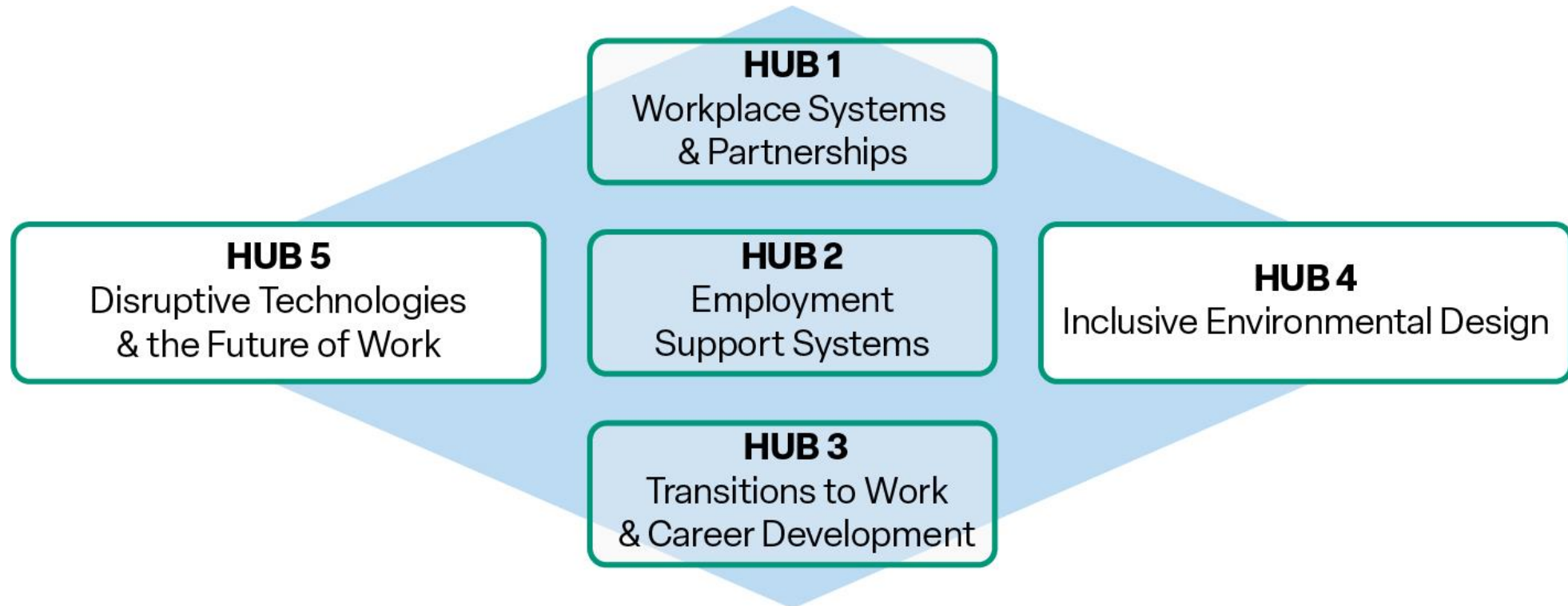
- IDEA is a knowledge-to-practice social innovation laboratory funded by the New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF) Transformation Stream
- Funding envelope is for large/multi-year initiatives that are transdisciplinary, innovative/high risk, and high impact/reward
- We focus on advancing the skills and capacities of workplace parties for inclusive employment
- Our unique approach is to develop evidence-informed tools and resources that support inclusive workplaces through a partnered approach



INCLUSIVE DESIGN FOR EMPLOYMENT ACCESS
VISION RADICALE POUR L'ACCÈS INCLUSIF À L'EMPLOI

Our Approach

- Describe the focus of IDEA as organizational/demand-side capacity building
- Multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral, **partner-driven** social innovation laboratory
- Incubator hubs, co-led by a researcher and partner representative, serve as entry points for inquiry



Social Model of Disability

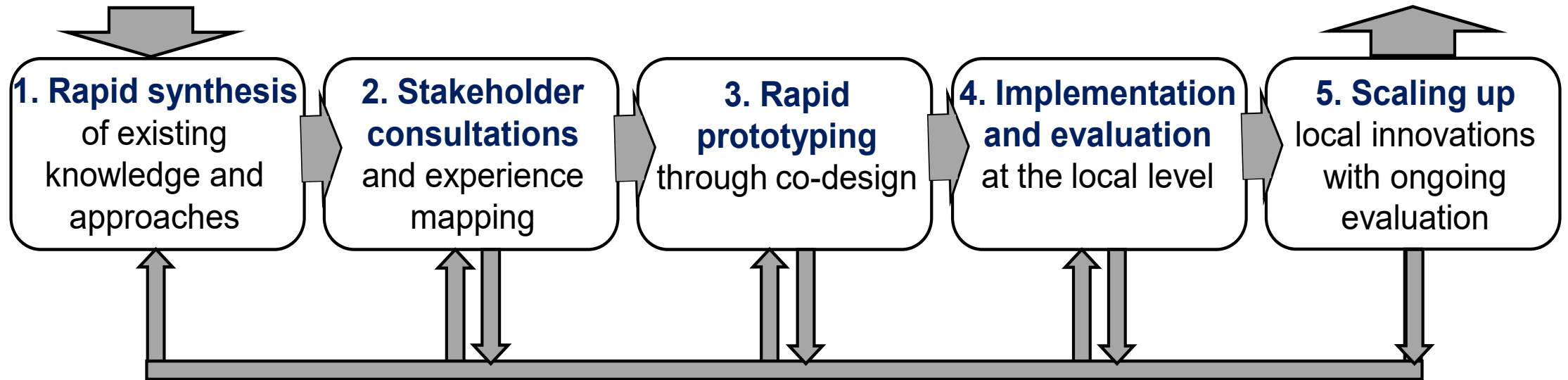
- Explores how disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference.
- Strengthens the idea that disability exists within the relationship between impairment and the surrounding social world
- Helps shift the emphasis from how limited the individual is, to what happened (discrimination?) or what should happen (accommodation, inclusion?) in interaction with the disability (Davis & Sanchez, 2021)
- Explores the the complex web of disadvantages persons living with a disability experience and how negative social attitudes, cultural assumptions and environmental barriers, including policies, services, laws, and structures may result in marginalization (Davis & Sanchez, 2021)

IDEA Signature Methodology

Knowledge to Practice

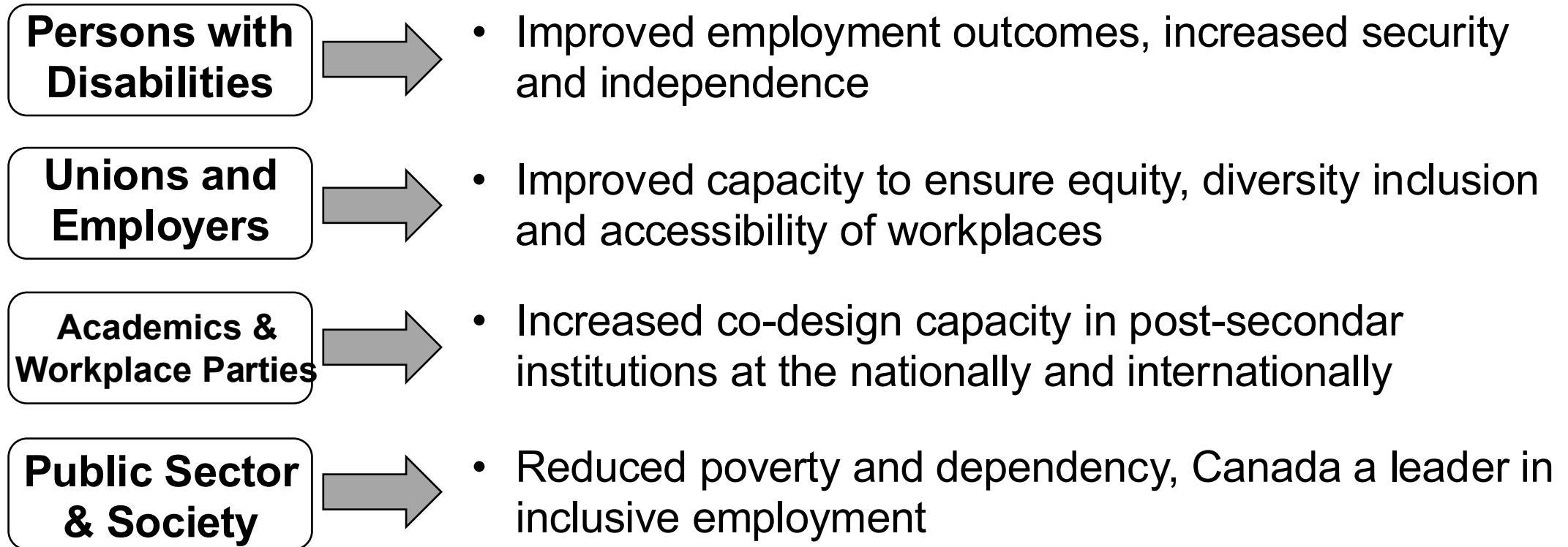
Deliberative process
to identify priority areas

Target setting
to ensure impact



Iterative process that may require return to an early step

IDEA Target Outputs and Impacts



Committed to mobilizing stakeholders to a stretch target of 5% increase in the employment rate across Canada—125,000 more persons employed

Partner Organizations

Research

- McMaster University
- Carleton University, READ Initiative
- Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy (CRWDP)
- Cornell University, Institute on Employment and Disability
- Institute for Work and Health (IWH)
- Lakehead University
- OCAD University, Inclusive Design Research Centre Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, Centre for Implementation Research
- Toronto Metropolitan University
- Saint Mary's University
- State University of New York in Buffalo, Research Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access
- University of Melbourne, Melbourne Disability Institute
- Université de Montréal
- Université du Québec à Montréal
- Université de Sherbrooke
- University of Sydney, Centre for Disability Research and Policy
- University of Tokyo, Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology
- University of Toronto, Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources
- **Queen's University, Employment Relations Studies**
- University of Western Ontario, Ivey Business School
- University of Winnipeg, Department of Business Administration
- York University, Critical Disability Studies Program

Disability Communities

- Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
- Inclusion Canada
- National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)
- Realize

Labour

- **Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)**
- Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)
- UNIFOR
- Provincial Building & Construction Trades Council of Ontario
- United Food and Commercial Workers Canada (UFCW)

Industry

- Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association
- Canadian Chamber of Commerce
- Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC)
- Jazz Aviation

Services

- L'Arrimage
- Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)
- March of Dimes, Rehabilitation and Clinical Services
- Ontario Occupational Health Nurses Association
- Ready, Willing and Able

Government

- Accessibility Standards Canada
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
- Labour Market Information Council



APR Background and Context

- Workplace accessibility barriers are a persistent problem in most organizations
- APR is an essential first step to address the issue through a structured and intentional approach
- Accessible Canada Act (ACA), introduced in 2019, requires federally regulated organizations to address seven priority areas in their APR on a 3 years cycle
- Some provinces in Canada have similar regulatory requirements
- We synthesize knowledge on APR to inform the development of a framework for best practice guidance
- Guidance intended to serve all organizations, regardless of sector, size, and jurisdictional reporting responsibilities
- Focus on a workplace systems-level approach with continual improvement as a centre piece to ensure sustainability



Key Concept: Accessibility

How products, services, operational systems and the physical and social environments in the workplace are designed and organized to be free from barriers for all persons.

Universal design

(noun)

A design that works for everyone in all scenarios and with every contingency

Accessibility

(adjective)

An attribute; a quality that makes an experience open to all

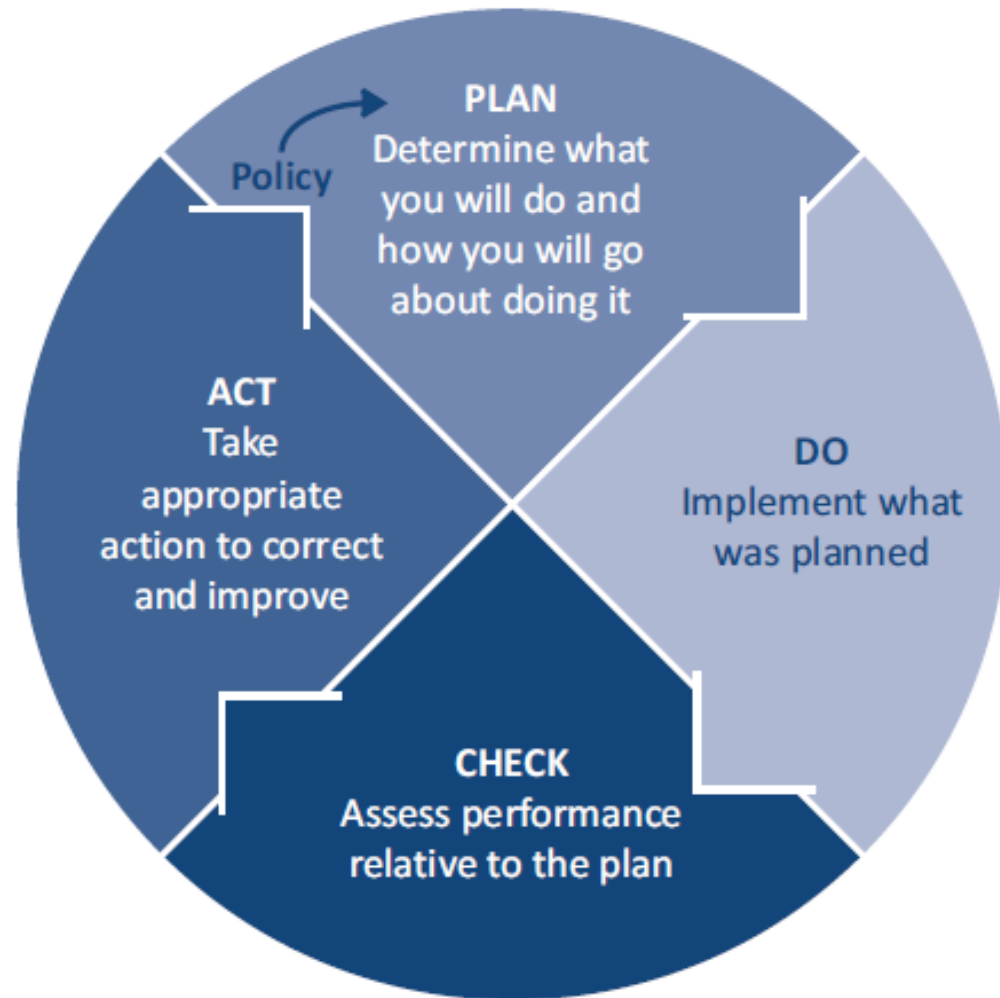
Inclusive design

(verb)

A human-centered design process that embraces diversity

<https://uxplanet.org/designing-for-humanity-going-beyond-accessibility-to-create-inclusive-designs-709fb791c145>

Key Concept: Continual Improvement

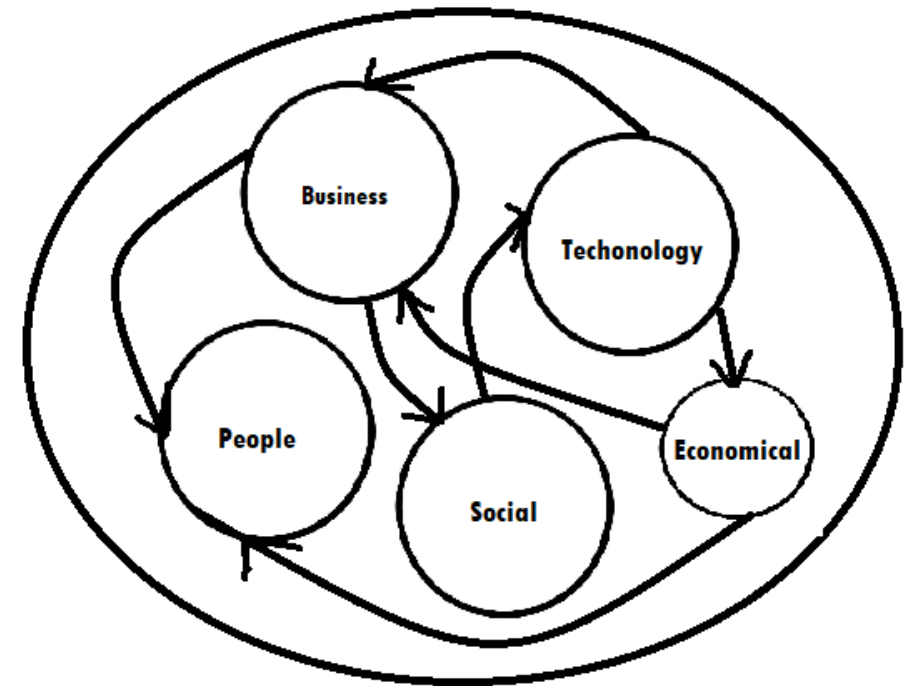


- The process of enhancing a system to achieve ongoing improvement in targeted areas of activity and desired outcomes
- In workplace systems best practices (i.e., management systems standards), it is often associated with the framework of plan-do-check-act (PDCA)

Key Concept: Systems Thinking

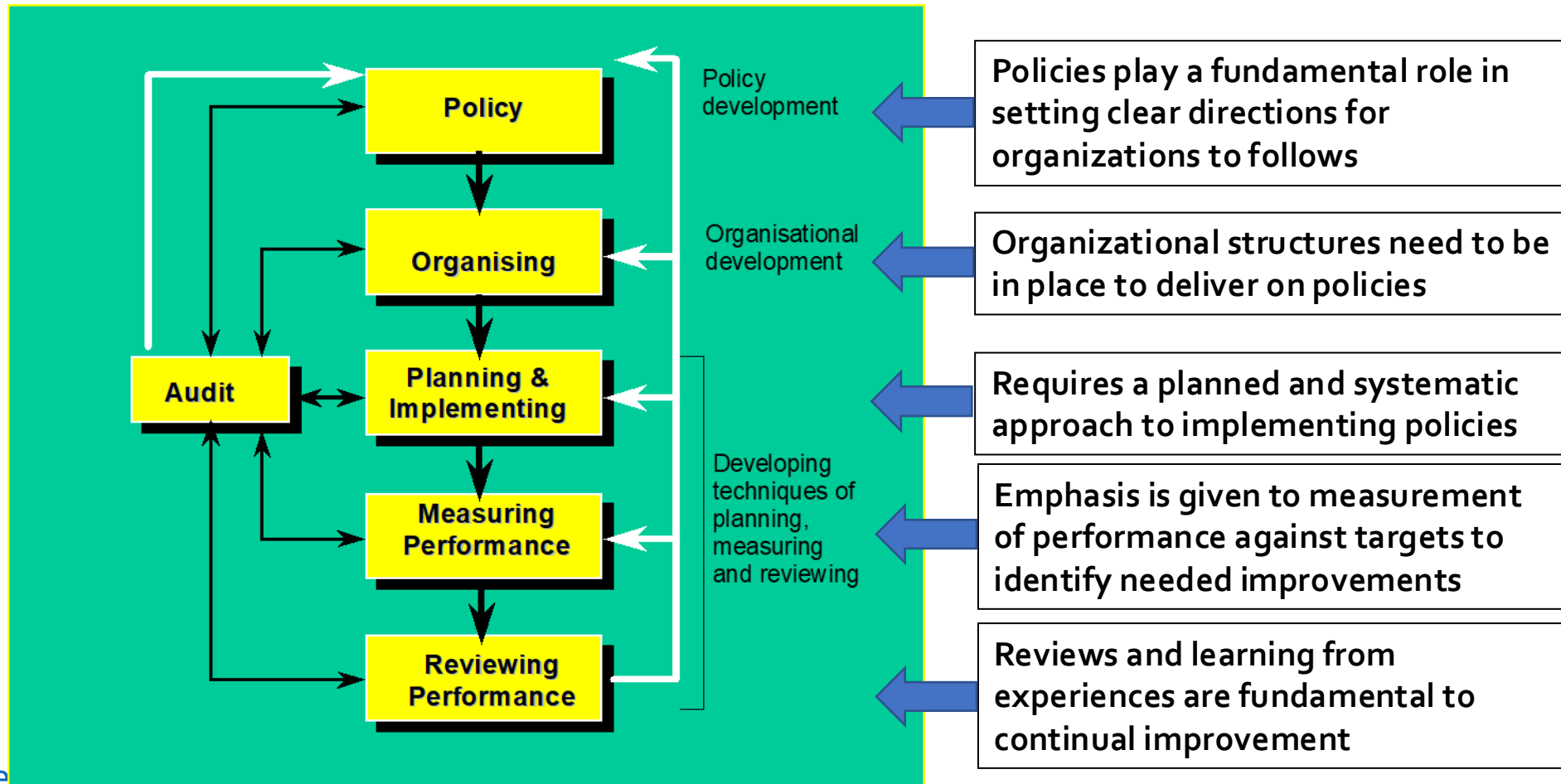
- A way to make sense of the complexity of the world by **looking at it in terms of wholes and relationships** rather than by splitting it down into its parts
- Used to exploring and **developing effective action in complex contexts**, enabling systems change.
- A **holistic way to investigate factors and interactions** that contribute to outcome
- A **comprehensive approach to introducing organizational change** and development

Systems Thinking



Combining Systems Thinking with Continual Improvement

Continual Improvement in Workplace Systems



Key concept: Disability Confidence

- A lot of people involved in disability justice have started to use the term “disability confidence”.
- Describes the confidence that workplace parties – employers and unions – have in their capacity to fully include persons with disabilities in the workplace.
- A disability confident workplace puts policies into practice to ensure persons with disabilities are included, belong and do not have barriers to employment or promotion.

Key Concept: Equity Diversity Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Maturity

- Like disability confidence but includes all equity deserving groups and the journey that an organization takes to become a leader
- Five stage model – 1) aware, 2) compliant, 3) tactical, 4) integrated, 5) sustainable
- EDIA maturity may vary in different aspects of an organization's areas of activity (e.g., human resources, procurement, communications, technology use, customer/client/community relations)
- Acknowledges the need to take an inclusivity lens in all aspects of an organization

Methodology

The study has six modules:

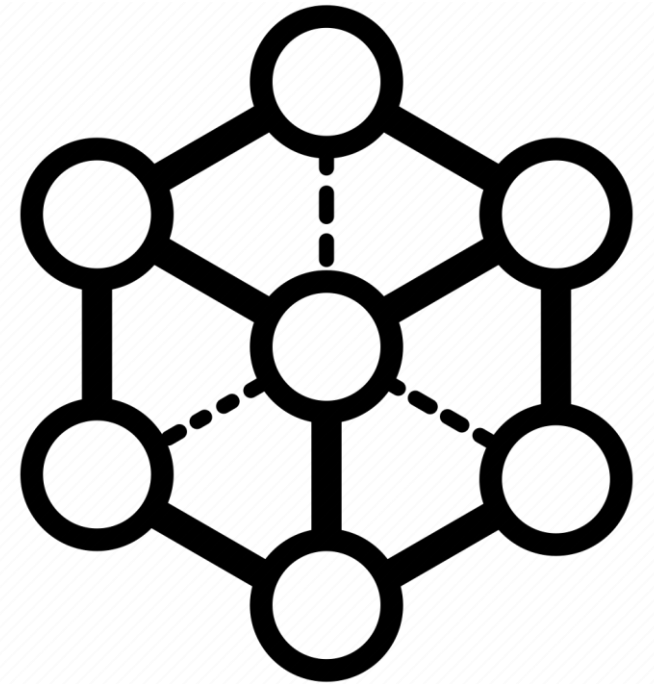
1. Rapid review of peer-reviewed literature to inform development of a framework for accessibility planning and reporting
2. Rapid environmental scan of grey literature to identify existing resources and tools
3. Field study of current practices and needs that involves semi-structured in-depth interviews with stakeholders
4. Synthesis of knowledge and evidence gathered to develop guidance on accessibility planning and reporting
5. Focus group/workshop sessions with different stakeholders to get feedback on the synthesis document
6. Pilot testing of practice guidance with several organizations of different sizes and in different sectors

Framework of APR Domains

- Framework of domains develop via the review and scan
- A domain within the framework identifies a system within an organization rather than a specific task, activity, or role
- A domain is meant to be reasonably mutually exclusive from other domains within the framework
- A domain lend itself to efforts by workplace parties to improve how policies, program and practices within the domain can be leveraged to advance accessibility
- All domains together should be reasonably comprehensive of the core areas of organizational activities relevant to accessibility

Draft Framework of Domains

1. Leadership [and Culture] System
2. Employment/Human Resources System
3. Built Environment System
4. Information & Communication Technology (ICT) System
5. Communications System other than ICT
6. Operations System
7. Procurement System
8. Management/Workplace Information System (MIS)
9. Social Responsibility System



Descriptions of a Few Key Domains (1)

Leadership [and Culture] System

This is the central organizing system that must deliver on all functions within the organization. These functions include and require that leadership to become cohesive, define the future vision, set direction, create and execute strategy, ensure alignment, communicate clarity, engage stakeholders, develop talent, manage performance, build accountability, ensure succession, allocate resources, craft the culture, and deliver results.

Employment/Human Resources System

This includes recruitment, hiring, onboarding, retention and career advancement through accommodation, training, and mentorship. As a system it is more than just the human resources department role that exists within some organizations, as it needs to include the roles and responsibilities for inclusive human resources practices across the organization.

Descriptions of a Few Key Domains (2)

Operations System

This refers to the design and performance of the system within an organization that is central to the development and delivery of goods and services for customers/clients. It is sometimes referred to as operational performance management (OPM). OPM is focused on the organization's ability to improve the responsiveness, throughput, quality, cost, and efficiency of production or service systems.

Procurement System

This refers to activities related to the procurement of goods, services and facilities. It includes how the system is set up, its principles and how it is operationalized. It includes consideration of supplier diversity, and social responsibilities as they pertain to supply chain partners.

A Starting Point for Implementation– Pulse Checks and Audits

- For each domain, we have crafted pulse-check questions to gauge perceptions of workplace stakeholders on the organization's disability confidence/ EDIA maturity in that domain
- Responses to questions are on a 5-point Likert Scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”
- Questionnaire intended to help identify strength and weaknesses to help set priorities

Leadership [and Culture] System

- a) Senior leadership in our organization champions the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- b) People managers in our organization are knowledgeable and responsive to disability inclusion.
- c) The importance of disability inclusion is communicated effectively throughout our organization.

Next Steps



- Undertake semi-structured in-depth interviews and workshops with stakeholders to validate framework, pulse check questions and learn about current practices related to accessibility planning
- Develop guidance base on knowledge gathered from various sources— consider formal standard development with the CSA Group or Accessibility Standards Canada
- Pilot test guidance with stakeholders
- Prepare peer-review manuscripts from the various modules of research activities
- **Use the framework as a basis for integrating other outputs (tools and resources) developed within and beyond the initiative**

[Home](#) / Tools and Resources Portal

IDEA's multidisciplinary teams work with partners to identify, develop, and evaluate knowledge-informed tools and resources. Our tools and resources address the critical needs of organizations in their efforts to be inclusive workplaces. Browse our inventory below and check back regularly as we update our offerings on an ongoing basis.

Latest Tools and Resources



Report

Culture change towards accessibility and...

Culture, broadly defined as a collection of attitudes, values, and behaviours, plays a critical role in shaping how societies interact with and support persons with disabilities.



Report

Addressing knowledge gaps about skills of...

The current understanding of foundational and transferable skills of persons with disabilities is limited, and there is a need to address knowledge gaps.



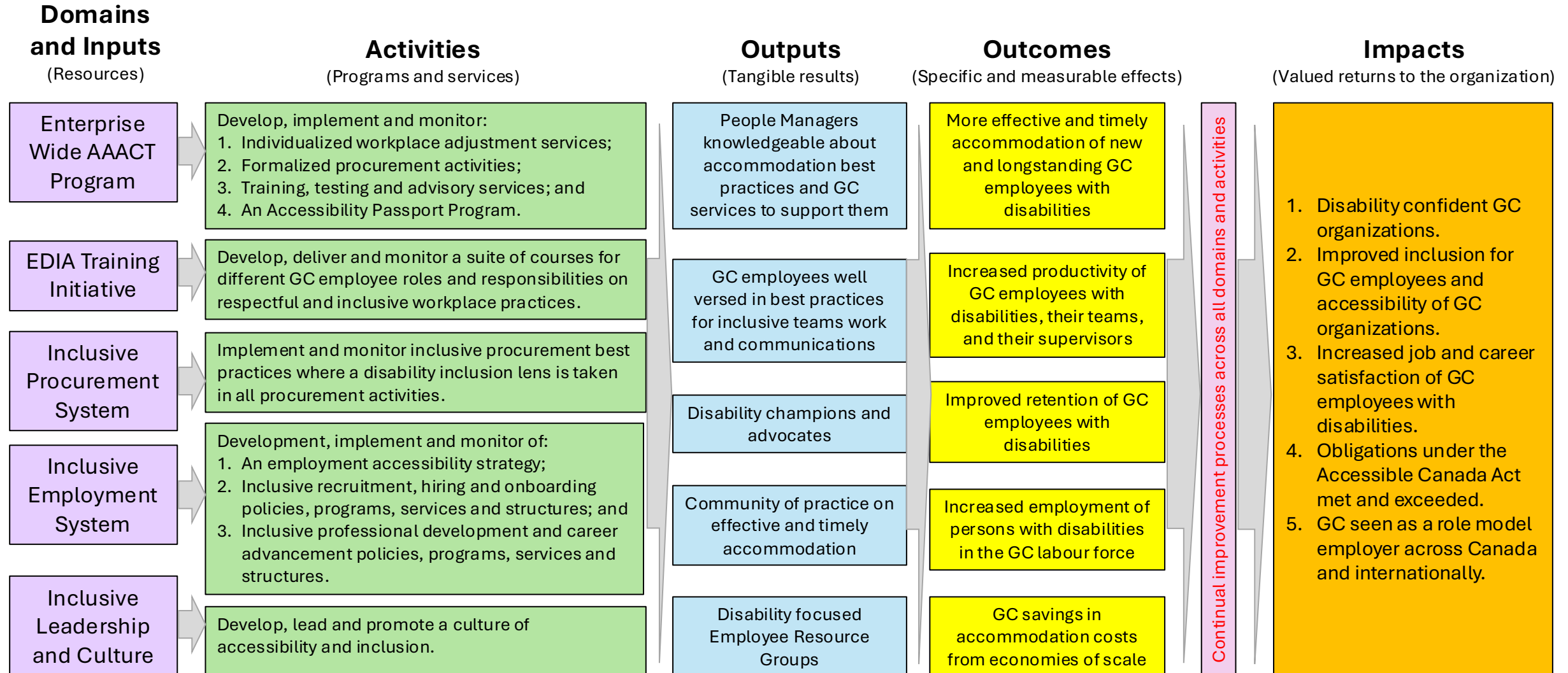
Report

The Disability Tax Credit program: A review of...

The Disability Tax Credit (DTC) is an integral part of Canadian income benefits for persons with disabilities that is intended to address the income insecurity and poverty...

Logic Model/Theory of Change for Investing in Accessibility

Government of Canada Technology Lending Library Program (AAACT)



Developed by the IDEA Team

