

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



**Manitoba League
of Persons with
Disabilities**



**909-294 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 0B9**

Ph: 204-943-6099 (Voice/TTY)
Toll Free: 1-888-330-1932
Email: contact@mlpd.mb.ca

Table of Contents

<i>Mission Statement</i>	2
<i>Philosophy</i>	2
<i>Supporters</i>	3
<i>Message from the Chair</i>	4
<i>Operations Report: Submitted by Kaye Grant</i>	5
<i>Projects with Partners</i>	6
<i>Accessibility Program Report: Submitted by Rosalie Best</i>	7
<i>Accessibility for Manitoban’s Act Awareness Project</i>	7
<i>Accessible Employment</i>	8
<i>Community Town Hall Funded by Assiniboine Credit Union</i>	8
<i>Accessibility Consulting Services (Social Enterprise/Fee for service work): Submitted by Jennifer Sande</i>	9
<i>Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) Report for 2020-21- submitted by April D’Aubin, CCD Research Analyst</i>	10
<i>Community Committees</i>	11
<i>Support Accessibility in Manitoba</i>	12



MLPD – Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities
Annual Report 2019-20

Mission Statement

MLPD is a united cross-disability voice promoting a fully accessible and inclusive Manitoba.

Philosophy

1. Manitobans with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as any other person.
2. All persons, regardless of abilities, must have access to opportunities in order to exercise these rights.
3. An accessible and inclusive society benefits everyone.

Supporters

The work of MLPD to increase accessibility in Manitoba is made possible by the following:

Foundations and Community Organizations

Michael John Rosner Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba
Gail Asper, O.C., O.M., LL.D and Michael Paterson.
Waterfront Foundation

Governments

Manitoba Government, Department of Families
Manitoba Government, Economic Development and Training (Skills and Employment Partnerships)
Manitoba Government, Manitoba Bridge Grant

Corporations

Assiniboine Credit Union

Private Donations

From Individual Supporters like YOU

Council Members (as of March 31, 2021)

Whitney Hodgins, Chair	Ebenezer Ayim, Council Member
Joelle Robinson, First Vice Chair	Nohamed Behi, Council Member
Funmi Afolabi, Treasurer	Olubunmi Aregbesola, Council Member
Alexandra Nadeau, Secretary	Pat Locken, Council Member
Alan Levy, Council Member	Robert P. (Phil) Graham, Council Member
Andrew Boryakavich, Council Member	

Thank You!



Message from the Chair

The 2020/2021 fiscal year proved to be another difficult year for us at MLPD. In September 2020, we had notified the membership at our last AGM of our financial situation and that if nothing was done to rectify it, we would ultimately have to shut the organization down via referendum. This came from multiple years of struggling financially without core funding from the province, not having a strong strategic plan to fundraise the money needed to function, as well as having very little organizational capacity to fulfill these needs.

Despite these challenges, we have strived as a council to proactively take steps so that we can come back at this annual general meeting where instead of having our membership vote for us to shut down in a referendum, we could come back stronger and that is exactly what we did.

In fall 2020, we created two new subcommittees and filled them with individuals consisting of provincial board members as well as members at large to focus on two things, downsizing and fundraising. Downsizing was a committee designed to look at ways by which we can cut expenses, while the fundraising committee focused on increasing unrestricted revenue streams.

In winter 2020 we saw the first of our fundraising successes with reaching 65% of our fundraising donation goal in the Season of Giving. We also were successful in obtaining some community grants. We also saw the addition of Jennifer Sande who has partnered up with Rosalie Best to deliver the workshops for the employment standard virtually. In addition, we worked with community partners to push for vaccine priority for people living with disabilities in the covid-19 pandemic, put on a town hall to engage our members, and have gone from a 5-person council to now a full provincial council, two sub-committees and staff totaling 16 people working to promote the vision of MLPD.

This past spring, we had our second fundraising push as well as held an information session with financial advisors from Assiniboine Credit Union to discuss the Disability Registered Savings Plan and the Disability Tax Credit. Our biggest success over the entirety of the year however was being able to eliminate the projected deficit for our year ending March 31, 2021, and instead ended our 2021/2022 fiscal year with a surplus!

This work could not have been possible without a number of individuals and as outgoing Chairperson for 2020-2021, I wish to take a moment to acknowledge these important individuals within the organization that without them, our success would not be possible.

- Thank you to the 2020-2021 Council for representing our members, additionally many thanks to the executives for their additional service.
- Thank you to the staff and contractors for their many hours of work that carry out the vision that MLPD stands for. We could not have achieved these things without you.



- Thank you to Kaye Grant, Operations Manager for her unwavering dedication to the success of MLPD; and
- Thank you to the membership who continue to support the work that we are doing as an organization. Whether through word of mouth or by making donations, everyone is doing their part to support MLPD and we could not thank you enough for that.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your Chairperson for the last nine months and I feel that we have strived over that time to make sure that MLPD is strong financially moving forward for long term stability and growth.

Sincerely,

Whitney Hodgins, Chairperson 2020-2021

Operations Report: Submitted by Kaye Grant

Over the past year MLPD continued to experience challenges but with some successes.

Our financial challenges came to a head in September when the Council became fully aware of the extent of the financial struggle ahead. At that time Council and staff took immediate action to reduce overhead costs by downsizing staffing obligations and reducing other expenses that are not covered by direct project funding.

As with everyone else, the pandemic has posed both opportunities and challenges for MLPD. Given that MLPD staff were already working remotely most of the time, it wasn't a significant shift for everyone to work from home. Staff only visit the office for retrieving the mail and doing basic on-site maintenance. With much of the transitional non-profit/charitable funding being directed to organizations that are providing direct client services, MLPD struggled to access core funding that it had expected to obtain to support a new Executive Director. However, MLPD was able to access the Manitoba Bridge Grant which along with a more recent Covid related grant from the City of Winnipeg have helped stabilize finances for this past year.

The council has set-up two committees to oversee some essential tasks towards a more sustainable organization.

- Downsizing committee – as noted above, staffing was reduced to those staff working directly on funded projects and overhead expenses have been reviewed and reduced when possible. Additional actions will be possible after the main threat of the pandemic.
- Fundraising Committee – is responsible for seeking out funding to support MLPD's core funding. This committee identified a list of funding opportunities and applied to many of them. As noted earlier the Manitoba Bridge Grant has provided three grants of \$5000 with a fourth \$5000 provided in our current fiscal year. There is one grant application pending decision.



There was also a shift to council membership as the council became aware of the need for a working council rather than strictly governance due to the limited staff resources. Council members now participate in fundraising activities, preparing funding applications, preparing materials for the board meeting, assembling mail out materials to members, office downsizing, advocacy work and media relations. We have also retained a volunteer bookkeeper who also brings significant expertise in non-profit and charity accounting.

Projects with Partners

Over the past year MLPD has been able to work with like-minded partners in Canada on projects related to disability awareness. Two projects were in progress this year which are reported below.

1. [Supporting Mid-Career Workers with Disabilities through Community-building, Education, and Career-Progression Resources \(MCWD\) Project](#)

This is a project funded by Future Skills Center and led by a team consisting of researchers from four post-secondary institutions (Ontario Tech University, Nipissing University, Durham College, and York University) and four not-for-profit provincial and national organizations (Quebec Association for Equity and Inclusion in Post-Secondary Education (AQEIPS), Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities (MLPD), National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS). The main project lead is Dr. Sue Coffey with the Ontario Tech University.

This project is a three-year project which started in July 2019, but it had a slow start and with the pandemic it has had further delays. They got a one-year extension to May 2022.

It seeks to develop resources to help mid-career workers with disabilities. MLPD is participating on the steering committee and is responsible for developing two resources.

We completed the first resource which is an online self paced tool focused on the lived experience of people with disabilities and their employment experiences. Our second tool is a video relaying some experiences both positive and negative in a role-played scenario. This is in progress with a target completion date by the end of June.

1. [Canadian Council for Rehabilitation and Work \(CCRW\) – DCIF \(Disability Confidence Impacts on Finance\)](#)

This project will develop tools and resources specific to the Canadian financial sector and focus on the priority areas of accessible service design/delivery and accessible workplaces.



MLPD's main responsibility is to commit a minimum of 4 hours per week to the project, which may include various activities such as attending regularly scheduled General Partner and Advisory Committee meetings, reviewing materials, contributing to project objectives, providing constructive feedback, and supporting and promoting the final Toolkit. And participate in key knowledge translation activities as they relate to the foundational research, dissemination, implementation, and evaluation plans for the DCIF Toolkit.

Accessibility Program Report: Submitted by Rosalie Best

[Accessibility for Manitoban's Act Awareness Project](#)

With funding from the province, MLPD is delivering webinars on the Accessible Employment Standard to employers throughout Manitoba. We started delivering presentations in October 2020. Since then, we have delivered 10 workshops. Five workshops were open to the public, the first was in October for Disability Employment Awareness Month. We presented the webinar to members of the human resources team at Manitoba Public Insurance, Elections Manitoba, and the University of Winnipeg. We presented a webinar for members of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network and to members of the Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union. Our public presentations saw attendees from the non-profit sector, City of Winnipeg and Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries. Overall, we presented to 65 people.

We have been receiving good feedback with most attendees telling us they were satisfied with the information received. We have found that most questions that were asked relate the material we send out after our presentation, which is what prompted us to send these information packages out. Questions usually relate to how to draft an accommodation plan, where an accommodation specialist be found and who can help with revision of accessibility measures.

After the first presentation, we incorporated a video of a community member detailing one of their accommodation experiences into the webinar. This testimonial is a good example of accommodation gone wrong and it reinforces the points being made in the presentation. Rosalie uses a lot of personal examples from her own lived experience and from her experience working as a career counselor for people with disabilities.

We have been marketing the webinars via social media, our quarterly newsletter and sending emails to our network. Manitoba Accessibility Office (MAO) has also included our webinars in their newsletters and added our dates to their events calendar. We are attending the MAO's resource advisory team meetings which has led to connections with various employers, most notably, City of Winnipeg who we plan to present to in April or May and Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries who are interested in our self-paced online training tool.



Accessible Employment

Over the past year, MLPD has been working on an online training tool for employers focused on the Accessible Employment Standard. The tool is self-paced and teaches those who need to comply with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act how to do so. We plan to add community voices to the tool via video and audio clips.

Community Town Hall Funded by Assiniboine Credit Union

MLPD hosted a town hall on February 23, 2021, with an attendance of approximately 40 people. This town hall was held to give voice to issues in the disability community. Due to COVID-19, the topics chosen had a focus on the pandemic.

Four topics were discussed:

- Access to income supports
- Access to services
- Vaccine roll-out
- Lack of proper training for workers in group homes

Access to income supports

The main takeaway from this topic was that members of the community felt like the \$2,000 CERB benefit offered to those who were laid off due to the pandemic highlighted how little people with disabilities are valued. The comparison was made to monthly EIA benefits not even coming close to that amount. The total monthly tax-free Income as of July 1, 2020 including both the provincial plus federal benefits for persons with a disability is \$1,093 (single) or \$1,418 (two adults) compared with \$2,000 CERB per adult. If the CERB amount of \$2,000 is what was deemed as the necessary amount to live on by the federal government, why is this not reflected in the amount people receive on disability EIA?

There was also a point made about people with intellectual disabilities losing their jobs and being the first to be let go and the last rehired. This loss of a place to go and work created great isolation but the loss of income and therefore loss of internet made the isolation far greater.

Accessing services

Day programs being closed was the biggest issue for our attendees. There was also discussion around day programs offering services to those who were on a critical level. Some people were mentioning that it was unclear what the barometer was for being deemed critical.

Another point that was brought up was allowing families to access respite dollars while community respite services were on hold.



Vaccine Roll-Out

People were very vocal on this subject, so it is best summarized in point form.

- Staff in group homes were not being prioritized for immunization despite working in a congregate setting with those who may be immunocompromised.
- People with disabilities were left off of the priority list, leaving community members at risk and extending isolation.
- The issue of restaurants not seating people from different households at the same table was making it impossible for someone with a disability who needs assistance to go to a restaurant, once again furthering isolation.
- It was suggested that Dr. Roussin be contacted directly as a potential solution to the disability community not being heard.

Lack of training for care staff

One attendee brought up the poor care her son was receiving in his group home leading to severe injuries and infections. Other attendees agreed that training for care staff is often inadequate due to lack of funding.

Outcomes

Multiple issues were raised, the main takeaway from the event was that people feel at a loss as to what to do to be heard. MLPD is looking at creating an advocacy plan to help the community be heard, funding permitting.

Submitted by Rosalie Best

Accessibility Consulting Services (Social Enterprise/Fee for service work): Submitted by Jennifer Sande

Since the implementation of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA), MLPD has worked with crown corporations and government departments to develop accessibility plans. These organizations were required to consult with disability organizations under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. Unfortunately, there are not many Manitoba organizations who require these services.

MLPD also offers an auditing-type service through the Accessibility Reviewers Program. Reviewers are hired to provide feedback on the accessibility of products or services of public, private or not-for-profit organizations. This year we have engaged our Reviewers to test the accessibility of resources we developed in-house, like the online Accessible Employment course. We were able to identify ways to make it easier for people using screen readers to navigate through the material, and present the information using Plain Language.



We have found that many organizations are interested in becoming more accessible, and in having community members test their accessibility, but budgeting for the cost of these services remains a problem. However, both the government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba have announced some funding for these activities which we hope that will bring more opportunities to MLPD.

Elections Canada

This fall MLPD will deliver six workshops, on behalf of Elections Canada's Inspire Democracy Program. We will partner with community organizations such as St. Amant and share the information with Disability Support Workers (DSW). The DSWs will use the information to support their clients to make a plan to vote and to ensure they have access to any accommodations needed.

Elections Canada (EC) has been building its partnerships with community organizations in an effort to spread accessibility information about three areas: Running in an Election, Voting in an Election, and Working in an election. They have also asked for feedback about how accessibility can be improved. This is the second time MLPD has partnered with EC and the Inspire Democracy program, and we are impressed to their commitment to accessibility. Visit the website for information here for more information: <http://www.inspirerlademocratie-inspiredemocracy.ca/index-eng.asp>.

Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) Report for 2020-21- submitted by April D'Aubin, CCD Research Analyst

At the June 2020 Annual General Meeting, the CCD Council elected a new Executive Committee: Chairperson Roxana Jahani Aval, 1st Vice Chair Heather Walkus, 2nd Vice Chair Tracy Odell, Secretary Ian Young, Treasurer Pat Danforth, and Member-at-Large Frank Folino. Jewelles Smith was serving as the Past Chair on the Executive Committee but during the year, she resigned her position.

During the 2020-21 fiscal year, CCD added a number of staff: Joanne Grant, Comptroller; Jewelles Smith, Communications and Government Relations Coordinator, Melissa Jameson, System Navigator Project Manager.

The CCD Council has adopted a number of new policies: a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Policy, an Anti-Harassment Policy. It also approved a Business Plan. An Anti-Oppression Policy is being worked on.

Ending of Life Ethics Committee – This Committee continues to focus on Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD). On November 10, 2020, Heidi Janz and Taylor Hyatt testified before the House of Commons' Justice Committee when it was studying Bill C-7, which was amending the law concerning MAiD. Amy Hasbrouck and Heidi Janz also testified



before the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs when it was studying Bill C-7. The *Toujours Vivant Not Dead Yet* project continues.

BC Mental Health Act Case Sub-Committee - In 2016, CCD began a Charter challenge to BC's mental health law, because people who are held involuntarily under this law have no right to give or refuse consent to any type of psychiatric treatment. In 2018, the Attorney General of BC challenged CCD's right to bring the case forward and applied to have the case thrown out before it got to trial. The Supreme Court of Canada will be deciding this matter.

Human Rights Committee - CCD has been funded by the Court Challenges Program to undertake a Charter challenge that has a goal of making palliative care a service insured under the Canada Health Act. The availability of MAiD as an insured health service has heightened concern about the lack of coverage of palliative care.

International Committee – It will be contributing to the second review of Canada by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Transportation Committee - The Transportation Committee has focused on the impact of the Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR), which were developed in consultation with the disability community, industry and then drafted by the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA). CCD contributed to a joint submission to the Canadian Transportation Agency about the draft Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations, developed in response to the Accessible Canada Act. The Committee is developing working groups that will focus on specific transportation issues.

Governance Committee – CCD now established a Governance Committee, which is developing documents outlining CCD's governance policies and procedures.

Community Committees

MLPD has also been active on community committees and events which further our mission of increasing accessibility through education.

- Winnipeg Transit Plus Policy Advisory Committee
- Disability Matters Vote
- Resource Advisory Team (hosted by MAO)

Support Accessibility in Manitoba

- 1) In Memoriam - you can donate to MLPD in memory, honour or celebration of a loved one.
- 2) United Way programs - you can identify MLPD as your charity of choice through your United Way contribution.
- 3) A bequeath - you can designate MLPD as a benefactor in your Will or Insurance Policy.
- 4) All Charities Campaign – Available to all Employees of the Province of Manitoba and its affiliates. Please request that your donation or a portion thereof, be directed to the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities Inc.
- 5) Designate funds to MLPD from a social or other fundraising event.

The Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities (MLPD) is a registered charity and tax receipts will be issued. We accept donations by cheque, Visa or MasterCard or on the MLPD website.

Charitable Business Registration No. 889197448RR0001

Money raised is used in Manitoba

