

00:00:02.100 Fantastic.

00:00:04.390 Okay, so first question is: you and your organization won the Social Impact Sector Accessibility Leadership Award. How does accessibility show up in your organization's mission and values?

00:00:18.780 Accessibility is at the core of ISANS's mission in supporting newcomers to build a future in Nova Scotia. It's not just about accessing services but also empowering people through skill building, confidence, and tailored programming.

00:00:36.600 We believe employment information is a right, not a privilege, especially in a system that's complex and has a lot of norms and codes.

00:00:48.550 In my role, I use a strength-based approach to meet clients where they are with their language skills, digital skills, and life constraints. The values of care, empathy, diversity, and inclusion guide our service delivery.

00:01:09.790 Accessibility is essential to ensuring newcomers participate fully in community and economic life. It's a foundation that helps people belong and grow.

00:01:24.540 Fantastic answer, thank you so much.

00:01:27.850 The next question is: can you share an example of how you reduced barriers for staff, clients, or community within your organization?

00:01:46.770 Okay.

00:01:47.730 We've addressed language barriers through interpretation services and by providing multilingual orientation sessions on important topics such as taxes.

00:02:02.030 In my role, I've redesigned feedback templates and written communication in plain language to make sure more clients can access it.

00:02:14.940 Whenever possible, I provide different formats for documents, like step-by-step instructions, screenshots, or one-on-one meetings, always with the goal of meeting clients where they are.

00:02:29.850 These changes reduce friction points that often prevent newcomers from engaging confidently with services, strengthening their ability to participate fully in employment and settlement pathways.

00:02:47.960 Thank you, that's incredible.

00:03:01.790 Next question: what helped make accessibility part of everyday practice and not just an add-on?

00:03:09.670 Okay. I've taken several trainings with Sea Change CoLab, and that really helped shift my mindset from accommodation to design.

00:03:19.440 Now I use a proactive accessibility lens. I ask how this information will be received and who might be excluded.

00:03:30.740 I think about what assumptions I'm making regarding time, technology, or prior knowledge.

00:03:43.560 The long-term goal is to embed accessibility into templates, facilitation plans, evaluation, and cross-team systems so it becomes routine in our day-to-day work and doesn't rely on individual effort.

00:04:05.499 Incredible, thank you so much. Next question: how has ACE programming influenced your approach or decisions in your work?

00:04:07.840 Okay.

00:04:08.670 ACE programming broadened my understanding of how diverse clients engage with learning.

00:04:28.429 It helped me slow down and design with intention, especially in online spaces where exclusion can be easy to miss.

00:04:36.870 It also reinforced that accessibility benefits everyone, not just people who disclose their needs.

00:04:40.250 Accessibility can be invisible, but when we design programs with accessibility in mind, more clients are able to succeed.

00:05:00.800 One example I love is plain language. Everyone can understand a message written in plain language.

00:05:19.770 It doesn't exclude people who may not understand jargon or technical language, but the opposite is not true.

00:05:19.770 ACE programming reinforced the importance of designing for real-world constraints like time, bandwidth, confidence, and competing responsibilities.

00:05:23.539 This directly improves newcomer engagement and outcomes.

00:05:37.960 Next question: why is accessibility essential to meaningful social impact?

00:06:00.030 If people cannot fully access our services, the impact only reaches those who already have advantages and it reinforces systemic barriers that we're trying to reduce.

00:06:12.930 In employment services, lack of accessibility can waste talent and increase inequities for newcomers.

00:06:32.529 Finding a job is more than employment. It's empowerment, financial independence, stability, and growth.

00:06:47.249 True impact depends on whether people can actually use our services to change their lives.

00:06:49.610 Thank you. Last question: what's one thing you wish more people understood about accessibility?

00:06:58.300 Okay.

00:06:59.660 One thing I didn't know before these trainings is that accessibility removes unnecessary barriers, but it doesn't lower standards.

00:07:24.739 It benefits everyone, not only people who request accommodations. Because most barriers are systemic, they can be redesigned.

00:07:24.870 When organizations design with accessibility in mind, they unlock talent, strengthen equity, and expand who gets to participate in economic and community life.

00:07:42.120 Well said. I really appreciate this.

00:07:52.300 Thank you again for engaging with the work. We actually received an extension for another year of the project.

00:07:59.110 We're expanding into job■matching events and a job board, and we'll have the ACE Awards again in October.

00:08:13.730 Thank you so much. And thank you for creating the project and continuing to grow it.

00:08:34.439 Did you receive your certificate in the mail?

00:08:35.419 I did.

00:08:39.870 Great. Thank you again for participating. We'll let you know when we start sharing the interviews.

00:08:54.749 Thank you so much. Good luck with the rest of the interviews.

00:08:58.370 Bye!