

LANGUAGE PORTAL OF CANADA

Inclusive Writing – Guidelines and Resources

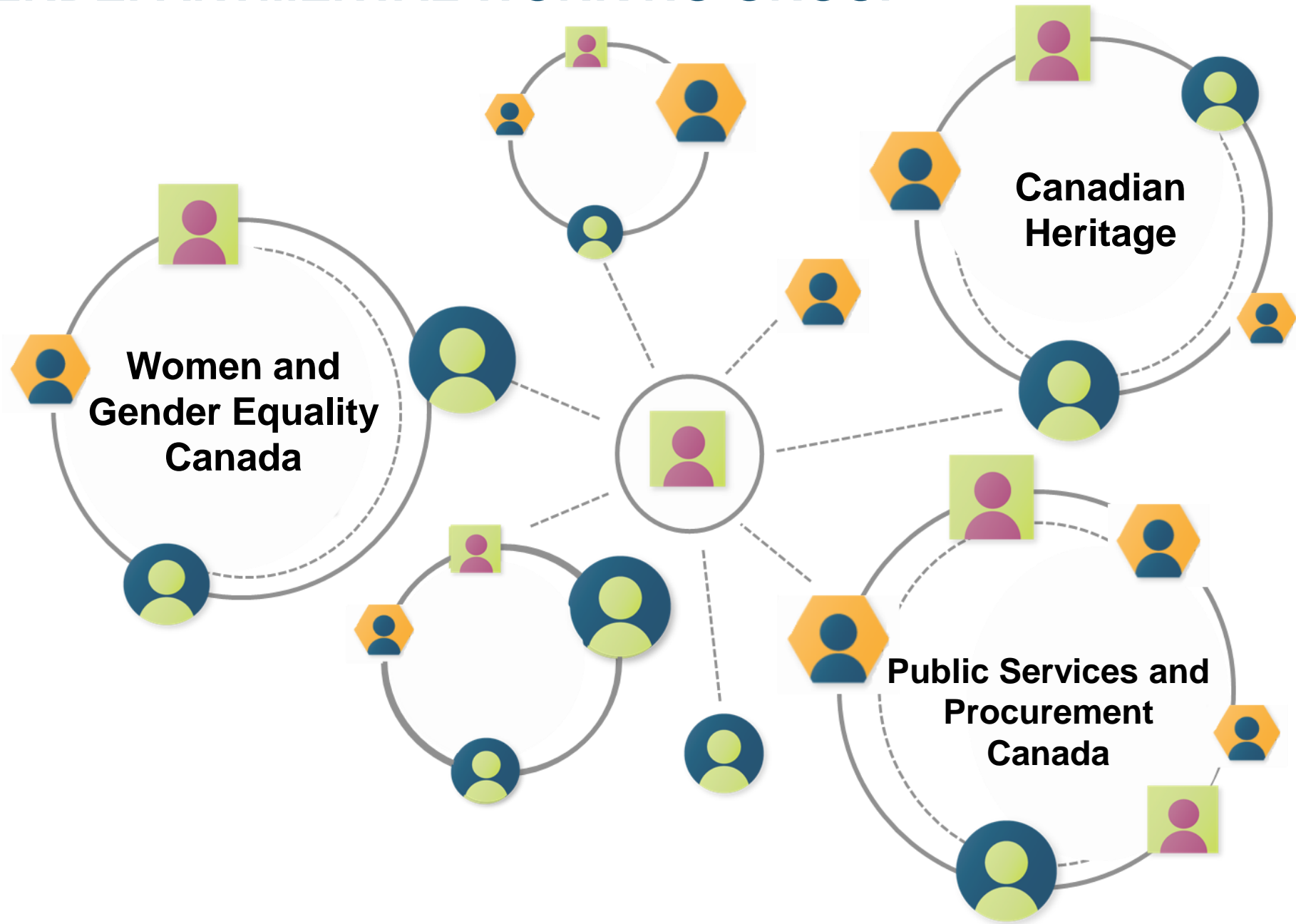


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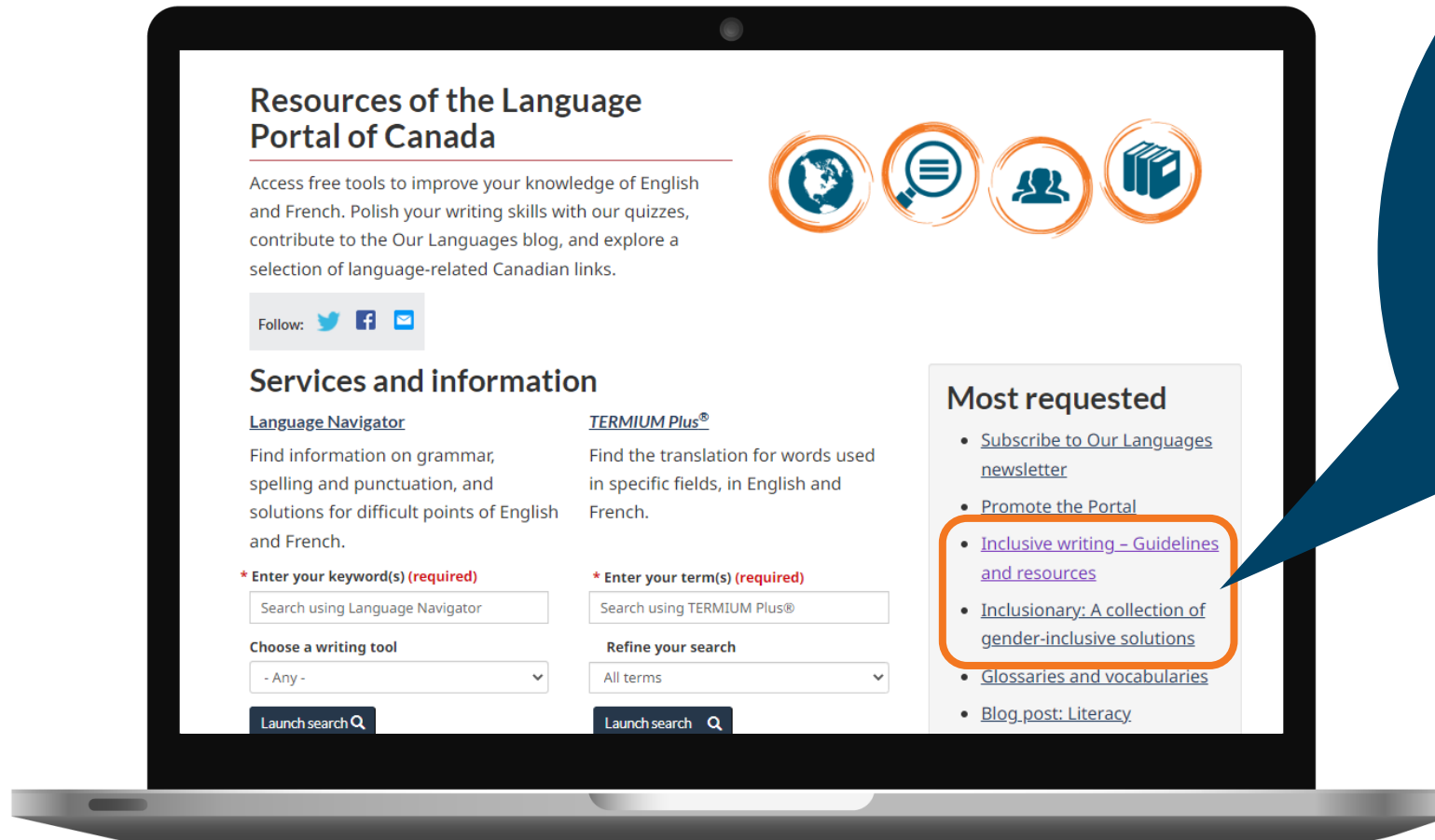
INTERDEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP – MANDATE



Develop guidelines and resources on inclusive writing for the federal government and any other interested organizations, in consultation with federal, provincial and territorial institutions.

Publish these guidelines and resources on the Language Portal of Canada, a website managed and maintained by Public Services and Procurement Canada's Translation Bureau

GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSIVE WRITING



Most requested

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- [Inclusive writing – Guidelines and resources](#)
- [Inclusionary: A collection of gender-inclusive solutions](#)
- [Glossaries and vocabularies](#)

Inclusive writing – Guidelines and resources

Consult in-depth articles on the principles and techniques of inclusive writing in English, and access other resources on the topic.

On this page

- [Guidelines for inclusive writing](#)
 - [Principles of inclusive writing](#)
 - [Gender-inclusive writing techniques](#)
 - [Representation of non-binary gender in written communications](#)
- [Resources for inclusive and respectful language](#)
- [Quick reference sheet on inclusive writing](#)
- [Additional information](#)

Guidelines for inclusive writing

The Guidelines for Inclusive Writing are designed to help the federal public service and any other organization produce writing that is free of discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability or any other identity factor.

To learn how this content was developed, read the page [History of the Guidelines for Inclusive Writing](#).

Not everyone will agree with all the options presented in the Guidelines. The Guidelines were developed to provide a variety of possible solutions to issues you might encounter in drafting an inclusive text. They are not designed to be



Principles of inclusive writing

This part of the Guidelines will help you understand the purpose of inclusive writing and will outline principles for writing respectful and non-discriminatory text.

Show all

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▼ Background and principles

The article [Inclusive writing: Background and principles](#) provides a definition of inclusive writing and lists five major principles to help you write more inclusively. It includes the following sections:

- [Background](#)
- [Definition of inclusive writing](#)
- [Principles of inclusive writing](#)
 - [Principle 1: Choose what works best](#)
 - [Principle 2: Respect people's wishes](#)
 - [Principle 3: Make choices that are respectful of diversity](#)
 - [Principle 4: Write clearly and effectively](#)
 - [Principle 5: Be consistent](#)

Gender-inclusive writing techniques

It's important to be aware of unnecessary references to gender in your writing and to strive to be gender-inclusive: that is, inclusive of men, women, and individuals of other genders. This section provides a variety of techniques and solutions for producing gender-inclusive texts.

Show all

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► [Replacing or omitting a gendered pronoun](#)

► [Making correspondence gender-inclusive](#)

► [Tailoring your message](#)

Representation of non-binary gender in written communications

Sexually and gender diverse individuals, along with other persons concerned about gender inclusivity, have recommended various techniques for producing gender-inclusive texts. The articles below present some of these techniques (including the use of gender-neutral pronouns) and examine issues related to translating gender-inclusive

BACKGROUND AND PRINCIPLES



Use what works best

Respect people's wishes

Make choices that are respectful of diversity

Write clearly and effectively

Be consistent

Gender-inclusive writing techniques

It's important to be aware of unnecessary references to gender in your writing and to strive to be gender-inclusive: that is, inclusive of men, women, and individuals of other genders. This section provides a variety of techniques and solutions for producing gender-inclusive texts.

Show all

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▼ Replacing or omitting a gendered pronoun

These articles provide a range of useful techniques to help you avoid the use of the gendered singular pronouns "he" and "she" and their different forms:

- [Pluralize the noun](#)
- [Use the singular "they"](#)
- [Use an article](#)
- [Omit the pronoun](#)
- [Repeat the noun](#)
- [Address the reader directly](#)
- [Use the imperative](#)
- [Use the pronoun "who"](#)
- [Use the pronoun "one"](#)
- [Use the passive voice](#)
- [Use sentence fragments](#)
- [Rewrite the sentence](#)

▼ Making correspondence gender-inclusive

The article [Gender-inclusive writing: Letters and emails](#) explains how you can ensure that the parts of a letter or email are gender-inclusive. It includes the following sections:

- [Introduction](#)
- [Inside address](#)
- [Salutation](#)

▼ Tailoring your message

The article [Inclusive writing: Tailoring your message](#) discusses how to tailor your message to make it inclusive, that is, how to adapt a text to meet the needs of a target audience or to take other factors into account. It includes the following sections:

- [General information about tailoring your message](#)
- [Tailoring to recipients](#)

GENDER-INCLUSIVE WRITING IN ENGLISH

English does have some gender-specific elements:

PRONOUNS

he and she



GENDER-SPECIFIC NOUNS

*chairman,
waitress*



COURTESY TITLES

Mr., Mrs., Ms.



GENDER - INCLUSIVE WRITING TECHNIQUES



Pluralize the noun

“Supervisors must give feedback to **their** employees monthly.”

instead of

“The supervisor must give feedback to **her** employees monthly.”

Use the singular “they”

“Everyone should bring **their** access card.”

instead of

“Everyone should bring **his** or **her** access card.”

Use an article

“A band chief must submit a governance improvement plan for band council review.”

instead of

“A band chief must submit **his** or **her** governance improvement plan for band council review.”

GENDER - INCLUSIVE WRITING TECHNIQUES



Omit the pronoun

Repeat the noun

**Address the
reader directly**

Use the imperative

Use the pronoun “who”

Use the passive voice

GUIDELINES - Writing to or about a non-binary individual

When you know an individual is non-binary, it's important to follow their lead with regard to the following:



Pronouns

- singular *they*
- neopronoun (e.g. *ze*, *zie*, *hir*, *hirs*, *hirsself*)



Courtesy titles

- if you don't know their title, omit it
- they may use a gender-inclusive title such as *Mx*.

Also, be careful to use gender-inclusive nouns (**chair, parental leave, sibling**).



neopronoun *iel*

- ◆ If possible, find out **what pronouns the individual uses in English.**
- ◆ When the English pronoun is unknown, **the safest approach is singular “they.”**

INCLUSIONARY: A COLLECTION OF GENDER-INCLUSIVE SOLUTIONS

▼ craftsmanship (noun)

Examples and solutions

Gendered sentence

The **craftsmanship** displayed in this carving is exceptional.

Inclusive solutions

- The **artisanship** displayed in this carving is exceptional.
- The **artistry** displayed in this carving is exceptional.
- The **expertise** displayed in this carving is exceptional.
- The **skill** displayed in this carving is exceptional.
- The **technique** displayed in this carving is exceptional.

YOUR TURN

Use the techniques for inclusive writing to create gender-inclusive sentences.

1

When an employee works on a holiday, he or she shall be paid time and one half for all hours worked.

2

For the purpose of this clause, family is defined as the spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister or grandparents of the employee.



YOUR TURN- ANSWERS

1

When an employee works on a holiday, **he** or **she** shall be paid time and one half for all hours worked.

- ◆ When **employees** work on a holiday, **they** shall be paid time and one half for all hours worked.
- ◆ When an employee works on a holiday, **they** shall be paid time and one half for all hours worked.
- ◆ An employee **who** works on a holiday shall be paid time and one half for all hours worked.

YOUR TURN- ANSWERS

2

For the purpose of this clause, family is defined as the spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, **father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister** or grandparents of the employee.

- ◆ For the purpose of this clause, family is defined as the spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, **parents-in-law, siblings, stepsiblings** or grandparents of the employee.



LIGNES DIRECTRICES et ressources
sur l'**écriture inclusive**



GUIDELINES and resources
for **inclusive writing**



Don't hesitate to contact us!
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