

Horizon Europe Prospective Partner Introduction

Dr. Boris Vukovic

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Dr. Boris Vukovic is Director of the Accessibility Institute at Carleton University, Director of the Canadian Accessibility Network, Adjunct Research Professor of Industrial Design at Carleton, and Adjunct Professor of Educational and Counselling Psychology at McGill University. A member of the American Educational Research Association, he has over 20 years of experience supporting the success of students with disabilities. He specializes and publishes on accessibility in higher education, disability attitudes and practices of faculty, and Universal Design for Learning. Since 2018, Dr. Vukovic has acted as the Principal/Co-Principal Investigator, Collaborator, or Director on 20 funded projects related to accessibility for persons with disabilities in areas as diverse as employment and employability, standards and policy development, acoustics in the built environment, assistive technologies, independent living, housing, finance and banking, disability assessments, and artificial intelligence. He is currently the Principal Investigator on a project funded through Canada's Tri-Agency NFRF-Exploration program for high-risk/high-reward research, developing an AI prototype for use within SADS in higher education. Boris is a native of Bosnia and is fluent in Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian.

Carleton University

Carleton University is an independent, collegial institution dedicated to the advancement of learning through disciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching, study and research, the creation and dissemination of knowledge, and the betterment of its community. Carleton is centered in Ottawa and serves the people of Ontario, Canada, and the world. Our institution has outstanding experience administering large projects, currently managing several multi-million dollar and multi-donor initiatives contributing to the University's three-year average annual research revenue of over \$120 million. Carleton ranks first in Canada in not-for-profit research income growth. Our co-op program is now the fastest growing in Canada, with over 3,500 work placements and 156 new experiential projects delivered in 2024-25.

The Stanford-Elsevier list rated Carleton researchers in the world's top 2% most-cited scholars in 2025. Carleton was ranked in the top 10 per cent of engineering programs in Canada by the US News & World Report, and ShanghaiRankings placed Carleton in the top 7 in Canada for computer science and engineering. The university's output of AI-related publications grew by over 200% between 2018 and 2022 and continues to increase, ranking first in Canada for international AI collaboration.

Accessibility is one of Carleton's key strategic goals. We have a proven track record of serving the needs of students with disabilities and successfully undertaking accessibility projects. With over 5,000 students registered with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities and 29% of the undergraduate population self-identifying with a disability, Carleton continues to develop innovative programs that support students with disabilities and is committed to being the

most accessible campus in Canada. Our academic programs include courses and concentrations dedicated to disabilities, including the Disability Studies Minor and the MA Collaborative Specialization in Accessibility.

Accessibility Institute at Carleton University

The Accessibility Institute at Carleton University is a unique cross-portfolio leader in accessibility in Canada specializing in research and development, training and consulting, and community engagement focused on accessibility for persons with disabilities regionally, nationally, and globally. Since 2012, the Institute has brought together faculty, staff, and students with community partners to support accessibility and disability related activities at the university and beyond.

The Accessibility Institute leads the implementation of Carleton's Coordinated Accessibility Strategy (CAS), which coordinates the university's accessibility services, programs, and initiatives, and serves as a framework to guide the university's proactive ongoing commitment to campus accessibility. We also serve as the national office of the Canadian Accessibility Network (CAN). CAN is a pan-Canadian partnership advancing accessibility for persons with disabilities through research, design and innovation, education and training, policy, employment, and community engagement. The Institute's leadership of CAN provides access to 144 organizations and 298 individual members representing public, private, not-for-profit, community service and advocacy groups from across Canada.

The Accessibility Institute has successfully led a range of externally funded accessibility projects, including *Career Transitions and Accessibility in the Federal Public Service* (Accessibility Standards Canada), *AbleTo Tap Into Talent* (Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development), *Neuroinclusivity in Housing* (The Sinneave Family Foundation), *Accessible Vehicles in Taxi and Shared Mobility Services in Canada* (Transport Canada), *AI in Assessment of Functional Limitations and Disability Services for Postsecondary Education* (Canadian Tri-Agency New Frontiers in Research Fund), *Enabling Independence: Assessing activities of daily living to inform safety standards for built environments* (Accessibility Standards Canada), and the *David C. Onley Initiative for Employment and Enterprise Development* (Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities). Since 2018, the Accessibility Institute has partnered on projects totaling over \$17 million in grant funding, \$12.6 million of which as the lead/primary organization. The Institute manages \$2.1 million in annual research expenses spread across several simultaneous projects.