Official Languages Policy

1.   Introduction

The Vector Institute is an independent not-for-profit corporation that drives excellence and leadership in Canada's knowledge, creation, and use of artificial intelligence (AI) to foster economic growth and improve lives.

It is Vector's policy to offer official communications to the public in both English and French to accommodate stakeholders and partners we work with across Canada in accordance with accountability agreements and the federal *Official Languages Act* and provincial *French Language Services Act*.

2.   Policy

The Vector Institute's Official Languages Policy ("Policy") outlines guidelines for the utilization of both English and French in all public communications and how Vector provides communications, programs, and services in both Official Languages of Canada.

The Policy also provides guidance on communications and documents being made available to Vector stakeholders, including the general public, in both English and French.

3.   Accountability Agreements

In addition to legislative requirements, Vector is subject to Official Languages requirements in its accountability agreements.

Section 12 of Vector's *Contribution Agreement* with the Government of Canada reads as follows:

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

12.1 Official Languages Policy

The Recipient shall provide to the Minister an official languages policy (hereinafter referred to as the **"Official Languages Policy"**), to the Minister's satisfaction, which outlines how the Recipient will support access to the Eligible Activities in English and French, including active offers of service and cooperation on official languages with other recipients under the Program, by a date agreed upon by the Parties.

12.2 Public Communication

The Recipient agrees that communications or announcements in respect of the Project intended for the general public including the Annual Report, websites, publications, and news releases will be expressed in both English and French.

12.3 Public Recognition

The Recipient agrees that any public recognition or acknowledgement of the Contribution will be expressed in both English and French.

12.4 Reporting

The Recipient agrees to provide the Annual Report, the Impact Report, and the audited annual financial statements to the Minister in both English and French.

Similarly, Section 19 of the *Funding Agreement* with the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR) reads as follows:

Article XIX – Official Languages

19.1 Communications and Services

The Vector Institute shall provide communications and services to the public in both English and French, in accordance with the spirit and intent of the *Official Languages Act*, including:

(a)   making announcements or documents for Ultimate Recipients concerning the Program available in Ultimate Recipients' official language of choice;

(b)   making active offers of service, meaning open invitations to use either English or French, to Ultimate Recipients;

(c)   ensuring communications or announcements aimed at the general public, including the audited annual financial statements, are provided in both English and French; and

(d)   ensuring that agreements with Ultimate Recipients provide for terms and conditions regarding communications and services to the public where a significant demand exists for services to the public from Ultimate Recipients in English or French.

19. 2 Public Recognition

The Vector Institute shall make any public recognition or acknowledgement of the Funding in both English and French.

3.   Communications, Programs, and Services

Public Communication

Vector provides announcements, public communications, reports, and other materials in both English and French.

Select examples of this capability include, but are not limited to:

- Annual reports and audited financial statements as well as other official publications e.g., blog posts, AI ecosystem reports, and whitepapers hosted on Vector's website;

- Google and LinkedIn advertising targeted at Canadian audiences;

- Email marketing campaigns targeted at Canadian audiences;

- News releases;

- Vector-authored social media posts; and,

- Vector's website at www.vectorinstitute.ai including associated websites such as the *Digital Talent Hub*;

As part of its commitment to make active offers of service and cooperation using both Official Languages, each of the Vector Institute's digital and written communications either have seamless functionality in both Official Languages or provide French language versions of documents alongside English versions.

Items described in this section fulfill, in addition to legislative requirements, sections 12.1, 12.2, and 12.4 of the *Contribution Agreement* with the Government of Canada and section 19.1 of the *Funding Agreement* with CIFAR.

Individual Inquiries

When any communication or information request is received, it is Vector's policy to reply in the preferred language indicated in the request.

For example, if an email inquiry is received in French regarding an upcoming Vector workshop, Vector's response will be provided in French and vice-versa.

This seamless transition between both Official Languages both responds to the requirements to support access to offers of service and cooperation in both Official Languages and best practices for client

services i.e., clients should feel welcomed and included by communicating in either of Canada's two Official Languages.

Processes described in this section fulfill, in addition to legislative requirements, sections 12.1, and 12.2 of the *Contribution Agreement* with the Government of Canada and section 19.1 of the *Funding Agreement* with CIFAR.

Programs

In all public communications, this Policy requires that the Vector Institute's focus is on making active offers of service in both Official Languages.

Vector program events include signage in both Official Languages as part of the Vector Institute's commitment to provide active offers of service and cooperation on Official Languages.

The Vector Institute's events and programs also make capability and resources decisions to ensure that an inquiry can be received in either of Canada's both Official Languages e.g., at a public event, a program participant can receive a response in either of Canada's Official Languages.

These decisions cover event planning, public signage, staff coverage at Vector events and workshops.

Processes described in this section fulfill, in addition to legislative requirements, sections 12.1, and 12.2 of the *Contribution Agreement* with the Government of Canada and section 19.1 of the *Funding Agreement* with CIFAR.

Capability and Resources

In cases where a Vector employee is not proficient in the official language of an incoming request, employees should seek assistance from bilingual personnel within the organization to maintain the compliance with the *Official Languages Policy*.

The Vector Institute uses third party translation services both to supplement existing resources and ensure that proper grammar and technical terms are accurately translated between both Official Languages.

Examples where such third party services may be applied include longer technical documents where specialized terms and syntax must be translated accurately to maintain equivalency in both Official Languages.

If an employee needs additional assistance with a particular inquiry, they should refer the request to both the appropriate work stream leader and the Director, Marketing & Communications.

As part of the Vector Institute's commitment to increase cooperation in both Official Languages, the Vector Institute allows employees to undertake French language training in accordance with its *Professional Development Policy*.

The Vector Institute may also hire contractors and teaching assistants to provide specific program services in French where the program services require a high degree of technical sophistication and accuracy across both Official Languages.

Having such internal processes and training available supplements the resources necessary to fulfill Vector's *Contribution Agreement* with the Government of Canada and section 19.1 of the *Funding Agreement* with CIFAR, in addition to legislative requirements.

Public Acknowledgements

Vector's brand guidelines provide for recognition of Vector's funding partners including the Government of Canada, Province of Ontario, and industry sponsors (currently 30 enterprise-level industry sponsors and 26 bronze-level industry sponsors as at March 31, 2023).

Each funding partner has specific requirements for the display of its branding, logo, and trademarks according to its agreements.

Processes described in this section fulfill, in addition to legislative requirements, sections 12.3, of the *Contribution Agreement* with the Government of Canada, section 19.2 of the *Funding Agreement* with CIFAR, and trademarks requirements for Vector's enterprise-level and bronze-level industry sponsors.

Exceptions

No French language services are provided where there is no English equivalent service provided.

For example, the Vector Institute does not have a public-facing French-speaking receptionist because the Vector Institute does not have a public-facing English-speaking receptionist i.e., as a national AI institute, the Vector Institute is not open to the general public, and access to the Vector Institute's lab is restricted to Vector personnel with visitors by appointment only.

Program-level documents available only to Vector's AI community members i.e., private technical documents that are not publicly accessible, are made available in the preferred language indicated by the program participant(s).

Where necessary e.g., for longer technical documents, Vector uses third party translation services both to supplement existing resources and ensure that proper grammar and technical terms are accurately translated between both Official Languages.

4.   Policy Approval Date

Policy Approved By:
Chief Operations and Financial Officer, and Director of Marketing and Communications

Last Updated: October 13, 2023