

# AERO

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION  
RESOURCES FOR ONTARIO



FOR PUBLISHERS

**T**extbooks are a critical part of a student's success. Most students simply get their textbook list, go to the student bookstore and buy their texts. But for students who have a perceptual disability, it's not that simple. They often need to take an extra step to get their textbooks in a format they can use.

AERO – Alternative Education Resources for Ontario – makes it easier for everyone. This service helps students get their textbooks in the alternative format they need – faster and in better quality than ever before.

*It [AERO] definitely has contributed to my success... especially getting my textbooks as early as I did last term. I was able... to get myself set up for success later in the term. The mp3s capitalize on one of my strengths. I have very high percentile verbal memory so hearing the textbooks helps to compensate for my weaknesses and capitalizes on my strength.*

Alex, McMaster University

## What is AERO?

AERO is a secure web-based online service that provides alternative-format textbooks. For example, students who are blind or have low vision can have their textbooks converted to Braille, large print or digital audio. If a textbook is not available, AERO approaches you, the publisher, to streamline the process and provide the student with the text in the format he or she needs.

## You can help.

Ontario invites you to participate in this important service.

*As a Canadian Higher Education Publisher, we are pleased and privileged to play an active role in the AERO project. Excellent customer service for all students continues to be a top priority for McGraw-Hill Ryerson and this initiative enables us to evolve and align our digital strategies and priorities in an efficient, cost-effective and secure environment.*

Kim Brewster, Publisher, Higher Education,  
McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.

## Why should you participate?

There are many good reasons to join AERO.

- There are no costs for publishers to participate in AERO.
- AERO is easy to use and has minimum impact on your current business processes.
- AERO provides a single point of contact for publishers. Instead of many educational institutions contacting a publisher with the same request for a specific textbook, there is one point of contact for all publicly funded college and universities in Ontario, saving your business time and money.
- AERO is a secure IT environment for long-term digital file storage, ensuring that titles are traceable.
- Your participation will help improve customer service, as students get high-quality textbooks that meet their needs within a shorter period of time than was previously possible.

## How does AERO work?

### STEP 1

A student buys a hard copy of a textbook. He or she then takes the receipt and textbook to the college or university student disabilities services office or library and asks for the book in an alternative format. To qualify for this service, the student must:

- meet eligibility requirements for perceptual disability
- sign an agreement that confirms the electronic copy will be used only for their own academic purpose and will not be copied or shared.

### STEP 2

The college or university checks the AERO database to see if the textbook is available. If it is, the file can be downloaded immediately and/or mailed to the institution. If not, AERO asks the publisher for a digital copy.

### STEP 3

The textbook is converted to the appropriate alternative format and the student is notified by email when the textbook is ready.

## Security and Copyright

Ontario takes copyright and security seriously. That's why AERO uses the highest level of security possible to ensure the protection of files transferred to and stored in the database – the same high standards used by financial institutions. All digital files are safely housed on government servers.

*The members of the Canadian Publishers' Council are pleased to be part of the AERO project. Ensuring alternate format textbooks are accessible in a timely fashion for students with perceptual disabilities is our collective goal. AERO has been diligent in developing a program that protects the intellectual property content necessary for the students while working with each publisher to make the transfer of content as seamless as possible.*

Colleen M. O'Neill, Executive Director,  
Higher Education & Trade Groups, Canadian  
Publishers' Council

**AERO** has been providing transcription service to perceptually impaired students in Ontario since 1982. It is a partnership between the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

For more information or to join AERO, please contact:

**AERO@alternativeresources.ca**

**519-759-2522**

Or visit **www.alternativeresources.ca**