

## 2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

### LIBRARY NAME

Nelson Public Library

### CHECKLIST

For the PLGR to be considered complete, please ensure you have provided information for each of the following sections. Suggested word counts have been included for each question, but feel free to include more or less text as needed – text boxes will expand as you type. Click on a title in the list below to jump to that section of the document.

- ☐ [1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE](#)
- ☐ [2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS](#)
- ☐ [3. KEY CHALLENGES](#)
- ☐ [4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL](#)

### 1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

**Provide a brief description of the community and library, focusing on what has changed in the past year (up to 500 words).**

The Nelson Public Library (NPL) is located in the Central Kootenay and serves the City of Nelson, as well as three adjacent Regional District Areas (RDCK Areas F, H, & E), one (Area E) does not contribute to library service through taxation. Residents of this area who wish to use the library pay a yearly membership fee. The total population of this region is just over 19,000 and is comprised of a vibrant mix of people ranging from seniors and families and youth. Nelson has a national and international reputation as a cultural artistic community which creates a thriving tourist industry. The economy is based on tourism, a post-secondary College, and provincial government offices. Nelson's technology sector is growing due to its best practices in broadband deployment, workforce development and innovation; attracting professionals who work remotely.

NPL's biggest ongoing challenge is providing service to the RDCK Area E that does not pay into the library tax base. This is a significant barrier for many people who cannot afford the membership fee. It creates problems with being able to provide school programming as school staff are reluctant to bring students to a program where everyone cannot participate fully. The Library addressed this to some extent through a grant from the RDCK Area Director that allowed us to issue a library card to every student in the region, however this remains an ongoing long-term challenge. There have been four library service referenda in the last 20 years, one which resulted in Library services to RDCK Areas F & H, but Area E continued to vote no

As this report illustrates NPL services continued to adapt and adjust responding to the needs of the community during the second year of the pandemic. The Library's Strategic Plan continued to guide us and helped us explore how our services intersect and assist the City of Nelson and province's priorities. Similar to local, regional and provincial governments, our Library serves all; young and old from all socio, economic and cultural backgrounds. We serve newcomers, Indigenous people, families, seniors, job seekers, small business owners and the underhoused. The Library is an integral piece of community Social Infrastructure: those foundational services that support the quality of life of a

community. Our library is one of the few resources that provide public space: a space where everyone is welcome, where you don't need to be a member or spend money to access the services.

The second year of the pandemic continued to put our strategic priorities to the test, through support from the NPL Board, and provincial library agencies (BC Lib.Co-op, ABCPLD, BCLTA, BCLA, KLF), NPL not only managed to continue delivering on those priorities but excelled by quickly adapting and expanding its service delivery model. 2021 was the final year of NPL's five-year strategic plan. The strategic planning process is underway for 2022 with a focus on Library values and incorporating Indigenization and de-colonization.

## 2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year. To report on multiple projects/programs, "copy" the blank table below and insert additional tables as needed using the "paste" function. Use one table per project/program.

Project/Program Name
Library Tech Hub
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
<p>In late 2019, the Library received an \$85,000 Columbia Basin Trust grant (along with additional support from the City of Nelson &amp; RDCK areas F, H &amp; E) to support access and training to technology. The pandemic slowed the project in 2020 (which included facility renovations), in 2021 the Tech Hub opened to the public. Three rooms in the library are dedicated to equipment and software for digital art and media creation, editing, recording and digitization. The project also includes a set of learning laptops loaded with Adobe creative suite (to be used for training in the library) and 10 chromebooks for patrons to borrow and use remotely.</p> <p>Video introduction to Tech Hub: <a href="https://nelson.bc.libraries.coop/explore/tech-hub/">https://nelson.bc.libraries.coop/explore/tech-hub/</a></p> <p>Chromebook info: <a href="https://nelson.bc.libraries.coop/explore/library-of-things/chromebooks/">https://nelson.bc.libraries.coop/explore/library-of-things/chromebooks/</a></p>
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to the development and support of the City of Nelson as a leading technology centre by ensuring access to and training of technology to all residents.</li> <li>• NPL Strategic Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community Needs: support literacy and lifelong learning, discovery of technologies and training on digital resources &amp; inspire creativity and knowledge creation.</li> <li>○ Spaces to connect: build the Library facility as a community hub</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a> ? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

1. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	<p>The Tech Hub project increases community's access to technology, both hardware and software and digital literacy training.</p> <p>Improved access provides an opportunity for residents to strengthen technology skills and participate in the online economy. Residents can use the recording studio to create pod-casts and videos. The media studio provides software to create and edit digital media. Chromebooks provide residents without equipment to access the Internet, and use word processing software from their homes.</p>
2. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	<p>Library staff are using library online resources (Linkedin Learning, Gale Courses) to learn how to use the Tech Hub resources. A library staff member is using the recording studio for a podcast in collaboration with the City of Nelson.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kSNYC6Uh9E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kSNYC6Uh9E</a></p>
3. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
4. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<p><b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b></p>	

## Outcomes

In the spring of 2018 the Nelson and Area Economic Development Partnership brought together a number of community organizations to discuss digital equality and learn how the community was addressing the issue, the gaps and challenges. Some of those challenges included:

- Access to technology and broadband Internet, especially for individuals in rural communities.
- Capacity for agencies to deliver training.

The Tech Hub project focused on addressing the community challenges of access to technology and training capacity.

### Short term outcomes:

#### Barrier free access to

- new technology (including those living in rural areas) such as audio and video recording, digital editing and digitization.
- Loanable equipment: chromebooks for residents to borrow and use remotely
- Online training tools: LinkedIn Learning & Gale Courses

### Intermediate Outcomes:

- Residents: improved digital literacy skills
- Library staff: improved and expanded technology skills
- Increased learning resources developed by library staff i.e. training manuals, curated lists & videos

### Longer-term Outcomes

- By offering training opportunities for staff, volunteers and community members the project provides a foundation to build a team of knowledgeable community members and support a train-the-trainer model.
- Researching the project deepened community connections and the Library's understanding of community needs, opportunities and the challenges of technology needs in the community.

### **Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?**

Funding partners: Columbia Basin Trust, RDCK areas F, H & E, City of Nelson and Friends of the Nelson Library.

As COVID restrictions ease, there are plans to collaborate with local employment training organizations and seniors learning groups to deliver training programs.

### **Project/Program Name**

Kootenay Teen News

### **Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.**

Kootenay Teen News (KTN) is a library-published teen newspaper, aiming to be a community engagement tool and to provide a platform for fostering local youth voices. The purpose of this initiative is to connect a community of inquisitive and expressive teens, support media & information literacy, and increase the relevancy of library services among the teen population.

1<sup>st</sup> KTN issue:

<https://klf.bc.libraries.coop/files/2022/01/Kootenay-Teen-News-January-2022.pdf>

**How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?**

Community needs:

- Support literacy and lifelong learning
- Foster community connections to inspire creativity and knowledge creation

Spaces to Connect

- Build Library as a community hub (online & in-person)

**How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.**

<p>5. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>This project was developed by the NPL Teen Librarian and is a collaborative effort amongst the Kootenay Library Federation, member libraries and teens in the twenty communities the Federation serves. This project would not be successful without the collaboration due to the limited capacity of individual libraries and the small number of teens in many of the communities; their participation is needed in order for it to be successful.</p>
<p>6. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	
<p>7. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>While learning interviewing and writing skills teens are also learning about media and information literacy and expanding their citizen engagement by gaining deeper understandings of community issues. Bringing teens together across the Kootenays builds connections and supports knowledge sharing.</p>

<p>8. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b></p>	
<p>Since September 2021, a group of teens lead by the NPL Teen Librarian, have been meeting regularly for training and to brainstorm article ideas. They worked through the fall to complete the first issue that was published and printed in January 2022.</p> <p>Short term outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 48 teens involved.</li> <li>• 10 teens submitted work for the first issue, representing Nelson, Cranbrook, Invermere, Queen's Bay, and Kaslo.</li> <li>• 6 workshops from respected journalists who are currently working in the field.</li> <li>• 200 copies of issue #1 printed and distributed to the different KLF libraries.</li> <li>• To date, digital copy has 282 views (though this represents a low number as this just tracks the webpage that hosts the PDF. In reality, the PDF has most likely been shared much more, but there is no way to track it.)</li> <li>• KLF librarian sub-committee developed to support project and teens</li> </ul> <p>Intermediate Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge of media and information literacy. Developed knowledge and introduced to tools on how to evaluate information.</li> <li>• Improved writing skills. Workshops from journalists emphasised writing techniques.</li> <li>• Increased connection amongst teens in the Kootenays.</li> <li>• Researching topics for the newspaper increased teens awareness of community and teen issues.</li> <li>• Increased Libraries' profiles with local newspapers and journalists: grew libraries' community connections and partnerships.</li> <li>• Provided volunteer experience for teens college applications and work resumes.</li> <li>• Exposed teens in rural communities with limited resources to experts working in the field through workshops.</li> </ul> <p>Longer-term Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The experience provided teens an opportunity to contemplate future job prospects.</li> <li>• Heightened curiosity about community issues: creating more engaged citizens.</li> </ul>	

**Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?**

- KLF supported the printing of the publication
- KLF member library staff
- Community partners: Kootenay Mountain Culture, Valley Voice, Cranbrook Townsman, and the Nelson Star.

**Project/Program Name**

From the Heart

**Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.**

From the Heart Learning Circle meets twice monthly to learn from Indigenous writers, knowledge keeper, artists and thinkers. The circle reads books, shares resources and has respectful dialogue about responsibilities and actions to advance Truth & Reconciliation and decolonization. Library staff hosts the circle, provides the resources and helps facilitate discussions with community volunteers.

More info: <https://nelson.bc.libraries.coop/event/from-the-heart-learning-circle-4/>

**How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?**

Community needs:

- support literacy and life-long learning through collections and programs
- facilitate community connections to inspire creativity and knowledge creation

Spaces to connect:

- build the library facility as a community hub

**How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.**

9. **Improving Access** for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)

10. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
11. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	From the Heart supports reconciliation at a community level. Providing space, resources and facilitated discussions to learn from Indigenous writers, artists and storytellers.
12. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b>	



### Outcomes

The group met 21 times in 2021 (online and in-person) with 215 attendees and discussed 6 bodies of work including books, music, film & poetry.

#### Short Term outcomes

- Participants gain a better understanding of the affects of colonization
- Participants have a better understanding of Indigenous history and culture
- Participants share learnings and questions with other community members interested in advancing Truth & Reconciliation

#### Intermediate Outcomes:

- The learning circle model builds trust and allows for respectful deeper reflection and difficult conversations.
- Provides space for participants to explore and discover actions they can take personally to help undo the wrongs of colonization.
- The Library has book club sets and discussion resources for other community groups to borrow.

#### Longer-term Outcomes

- Participants feel a responsibility to take their knowledge and experience outward into the community. Heightened curiosity: creating more engaged citizens.
- Resources collected and library staff experience gained from facilitating the circles can be shared with other Libraries to replicate and adapt in their communities.

#### **Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?**

From the Heart youth program: students from local school district meet to explore Indigenous history, culture and discuss colonisation and Truth & Reconciliation.

#### **Project/Program Name**

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Project

#### **Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.**

NPL's provincial Technology Grant and other community grants were used to support this project. The Library's collection was tagged with RFID tags, two self-check stations installed with RFID technology, staff RFID stations installed used for check-out and check-in of materials and a people counter installed. RFID technology replaced the Library's barcode system and the limited and outdated self-check system. RFID technology is simple to use, provides patrons with additional self-serve options such as automatic emailed due dates, renewing items and managing accounts. For staff, RFID technology reduces the risks of repetitive stress because more than one item can be checked in or out at once, reducing several steps.

#### **How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?**

Sustainability: ensure library services are delivered efficiently and effectively.	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>	
13. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	The introduction of two self-check stations provides a simple to use solution for patrons to wanting to check items out, renew items and check their accounts. More people using self-check options reduces the amount of time staff spend on menial task, freeing up time to help patrons with value-added services such as how to access digital library resources and support with library public computers or personal tech devices.
14. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
15. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
16. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</b>	

## Outcomes

The project is being introduced in phases:

1. Tagging items (volunteers and staff are tagging the 40,000 plus library items)
2. Installation of people counter
3. Installation of Self Check stations
4. Installation of Staff RFID work stations (scheduled for April 2022)

### Short Term outcomes

- Close to 30,000 items tagged with RFID tags
- People counter installed providing accurate statistics of number of people in the Library
- Self-check stations installed: patrons are using the stations in the kids and adult areas to check out materials, renew items and manage their accounts.

### Intermediate Outcomes:

- More individuals using self-check, freeing up time for staff to help people with more complex tasks such as accessing library online resources (downloading ebooks, eaudio, and accessing online learning platforms like Lynda and Gale courses) and support at public computers and on personal tech devices at the public service desk.
- Elimination of staff dedicated to monitoring the number of people in the library.

### Longer-term Outcomes

- Improved ergonomics and reduced risk of repetitive stress for staff. RFID technology reduces several steps for staff: a stack of items can be checked in or out by simply placing them on an RFID pad, rather than scanning items individually.
- Improved scheduling and determining library hours using detailed statistics and data from the people counter.
- Improved technology infrastructure: implementation of RFID provides a foundation to build increased efficiencies.

### **Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?**

In addition to the provincial Tech Grant funding to support this project was provided by Columbia Basin Trust, Friends of the Nelson Library, City of Nelson, Regional District of the Central Kootenays Area F, H & E.

## 3. KEY CHALLENGES

The following topics have been identified as recurring themes in previous years' PLGRs. The intent of this section is to collect detailed information in a structured, consistent format.

Please select the most significant challenges that the library has faced in the past year that you wish to comment on. Leave any other listed topics blank.

Use the 'Other' row to include any ongoing or past challenges that are not included in this list. If you have more than one 'Other' item to add, please insert additional rows into the table.

Challenge	Briefly describe how this challenge has impacted the library/community, and what steps the library took to address it in 2021. Please specify if any provincial funding was used, e.g., annual library funding, the technology grant, other non-PLB provincial grants (up to 250 words per topic).
COVID-19 (e.g., safety protocols, proof of vaccination)	
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	During the heat dome in July and smoky skies in August, the library replaced seating that was removed because of the pandemic to allow people to sit in the library, cool off and get a reprieve from the extreme heat and smoke.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	<p>The Library's digital (ebooks &amp; audio) circulation has increased by 35% since the beginning of the pandemic. Physical circulation, though it dropped in 2020 when the library facility was closed, is returning to pre-COVID levels. With the costs of digital materials 3 to 5 times higher than physical items, trying to meet the demands of our patrons for both physical and digital materials is unattainable due to frozen budgets.</p> <p>Increased janitorial and other costs (masks, cleaning materials, physical barriers) associated to the pandemic have put an additional strain on limited budgets. Without increased funding to cover these costs, non-fixed library expenses like programming and collections are cut to pay for these items.</p>
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	<p>Like many public service sectors Library staff are feeling the strain of serving the public during a pandemic. Reminding patrons on a daily bases to wear masks, to social distance and at the same time be challenged by those that do not want to follow pandemic health orders, is difficult and extremely fatiguing.</p> <p>This is in addition to the ongoing changes in work requirements and schedules due to the introduction and rescinding of health orders.</p>
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	With the closure of or reduced social services for vulnerable populations during the pandemic the library is seeing more homeless people in the library. Library staff that are untrained to manage social issues (drug use, behavioural issues, homelessness) are feeling the strain.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	We serve rural communities that do not have access to broadband internet. The library is one of the only free public space where those residents can access broadband internet.

Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	NPL library building is approximately 20% smaller than industry standards for a community serving a population of 19,000. It was renovated 11 years ago and has not had any updates since. Adding new services or additional seating is not an option without taking something away.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	The library serves a number of rural communities that have minimum access to public transit: once or twice a day depending on the area.
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	See reduction of community services section.
Other (please specify)	

#### 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

*Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.*


