

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

McBride & District 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 McBride & District Public Library serves 1650 people in the Robson Valley, a region nestled between the Rocky and Cariboo mountain ranges in North-Central British Columbia. Most residents are involved in forestry, farming, public service, and the service industry. Outdoor recreation opportunities are abundant and developing, and our arts community is vibrant.

We continue to face a number of challenges common for rural areas, including:

- ☐ a small population and the resulting impact on business, school class size, and volunteer services;
- ☐ distance from essential services coupled with a lack of public transportation;
- ☐ lack of seniors' long-term care and affordable housing;
- ☐ challenges for rural education based on the current funding model;
- ☐ a decline in the tourist industry due to COVID-19;
- ☐ lack of tourism infrastructure and services; and
- ☐ lack of reliable, affordable Internet access.

Despite our challenges, new residents continue to settle in the Valley because of its affordable housing and the rural lifestyle.

In the past year, we have continued to meet changing Health Orders and guidelines, and have gradually been able to offer more in-person programs, especially necessary given the low number of internet users in our valley.

In 2021 we were successful in applying for grant funding to start planning for our outdoor space; Spring 2022 will see the construction of an outdoor meeting area

for programming and children's outdoor area. Being able to hold more programs and activities outside, with shelter from inclement weather, will increase the number of sessions and programming options we can offer.

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	
Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women Exhibit	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
In May, we held a two- week exhibit in recognition of the Day of Awareness for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women. Our location, on highway 16, made this commemoration feel particularly necessary, given its alternate moniker of "the highway of tears". Dozens of red dresses were suspended from the ceiling, and we screened NFB indigenous documentaries and films throughout the period. The display also included poetry by indigenous poets, and information boards about the geographic spread and estimated number of missing women.	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
Be a community hub for diverse ages and interests: this program supported this particular strategic goal, and also helped reaffirm the diversity of people living in our community. MMIW is our problem here in McBride, just as it is for people living in Prince George, or Burns Lake or Terrace: this fact is sometimes overlooked in McBride's municipal and media publications and portrayals.	
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.	
1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	Documentary screenings allowed patrons to watch screened content in the library when many do not have internet access (or even televisions at home).

2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	Not applicable.
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Supporting reconciliation by initiating conversations and providing facts and information about murdered and missing indigenous women. We were surprised that many community members who came to the library did not know about MMIW. Our exhibit, while humble, provided information on these disappearances, and the connection with colonial legacies still very present. We were honoured to receive several indigenous visitors, who expressed approval of the exhibit and a willingness to create something collaboratively in the future.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	Not applicable.
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.	

Short-term: provide information and create awareness about MMIW.

Mid-term: effect a change in available resources and information for local residents on indigenous-led campaigns and concerns.

Long-term: see a tangible change in local knowledge and attitudes concerning the MMIW campaign and indigeneity more generally. Foster a greater sense of inclusivity for indigenous residents and helping to deliver the provincial strategic goal for public libraries to work towards reconciliation.

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

Some red dresses were borrowed from the Anglican Church thrift store.

[Copy and insert additional tables below for each additional project/program as needed]

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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
National Poetry Month Celebrations
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
On each day in April, a different member of our community was recorded reading a poem in order to mark National Poetry Month. These recordings were then shared on youtube, facebook and instagram and played within the library.
How does this project/program support the library’s strategic goals and/or community?
Be a community hub for diverse interests and ages: at a time when we could not all gather to hear poetry being read, these different community voices brought a much-needed sense of participation, inclusion and community. Be responsive to technology: making use of technology to disseminate poetry readings which otherwise would not be possible.
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.

5. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	Videos of the poetry readings were screened in the library, so those without internet could hear poetry as they browsed for books or used public computers. Since not everyone has internet access, people were able to come to the library to hear the work.
6. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	Not applicable.
7. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Given the number of community volunteers who read poems (some of which were original works), this project helped with community knowledge-sharing.
8. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	Not applicable.
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.	

Short-term: providing online poems read by community members as a celebration of National Poetry Month.

Mid-term: Helping combat loneliness and isolation, both for participant reader and audience member through sharing of literary content.

Long-term: Working towards alternate methods of togetherness at times when physical gatherings are not possible. Encouraging interest in newer technologies as a point of access for literacy and helping to deliver the provincial strategic goal for public libraries to improve access for those in BC.

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

30 volunteers from the community (ages 3-83) stepped forward to read poems.

[Copy and insert additional tables below for each additional project/program as needed]

Project/Program Name	
Stories with Skidboot and Simon	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
Over the summer months, we ran an indoor/outdoor literacy program, where a registered therapy dog (Skidboot) and his handler (Birgit) visited the library to read stories with children. Simon the lamb stepped in to continue the program when Skidboot was away, and more than 30 children came to hear sheep-themed stories and pet Simon.	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
Be a community hub for diverse interests and ages: we have always endeavoured to offer library programs to appeal to a diverse range of community members and ages; this program, of course, was aimed at children. Given that we are in a rural farming area, the inclusion of a farm animal in story time was well received.	
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)	N/A

10. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	N/A
11. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Not applicable for adult patrons, though stories with children help grow a new generation of engaged and community-focussed citizens.
12. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	N/A
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.	

Short-term: Providing summer children's programming entertainment and storytelling.

Mid-term: Raising literacy levels through animals as therapy for children.

Long-term: growing a literate community and raising awareness of the use of animals in supporting literacy targets and therapy models.

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

Volunteer dog handler from the community.

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)	COVID-19 necessitated the continued purchase of PPE for staff and patrons. Printing and laminating of 42 vaccine cards for community members required additional resources. We also helped the local Health Clinic publicise vaccination dates, and even hosted a pop-up vaccination clinic in the library outdoor space.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	In 2021 we were lucky enough to not have any serious fires close to our valley, though flooding was an issue for many local residents close to rivers. Many of those affected used our public computers to access support/make insurance claims, etc.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	A lack of financial resources of course affects us; most notably in terms of open hours and number of staff working. Low library salaries mean we lose good, trained staff members to other employers. Like other libraries, we aim to be creative in cutting costs where possible, e.g. building craft programs around donated materials.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	Many have felt exhausted over the past year, and have made use of personal health hours and vacations to rest and recharge. We actively encourage and support staff in their health and wellness, and have open discussions and check-ins.

Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	This is often an issue for us, here in a rural village. We do have one bank, but during COVID it has had very irregular and short hours, so we have seen an uptake in patrons requiring help from us with online and telephone banking. We have helped patrons complete government forms online (from property taxes to citizenship applications) on a daily basis. Our computer lab provides the only free public computers in the village.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	We are unable to get high-speed internet in McBride, and struggle from slow response times both on our staff and public computers. We upgraded our Telus internet to the highest possible option, of 75mbps. We purchased a series of iPads for patrons to borrow, so that those with internet but without suitable devices could participate in Zoom classes/medical appointments, etc.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	From time to time we have had to make repairs to our building, and have made use of volunteer teams when possible in order to save on contracting costs. Last summer, we built a storage unit outside – this was built entirely by two Library Trustees (one of whom is a retired building contractor) and the Library Director.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	Particularly in winter, it can be hard for those out of town to reach the library. With the loss of the greyhound bus, there are no public buses between us and neighbouring towns and cities, aside from the BC Health Bus, which ferries seniors to hospital appointments in Prince George. We have offered programs online, for those that have internet, dropped off lending materials with those unable to visit, extended loan periods and forgiven fines for those physically unable to come into town. People have signed up for library cards over the phone, and gained access to e-books when they were unable to come in.
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	In our small community, we are lucky to not have some of the problems facing larger, urban libraries and centres. We work with the local Food Bank, collecting food and donations every February (as Fine-Free February). We also work closely with our local Health Unit and mental health professionals to support community members as best we can.
Other (please specify)	

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature:



Date: 17 March 2022

Board Chair Signature:



Date: 17 March 2022