

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Vanderhoof 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](#)
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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).

Vanderhoof is a community of nearly 4,500 people in the centre of BC, supported mainly by forestry and farming. The Vanderhoof Public Library provides services to roughly 10,000 people, this includes those living in surrounding areas.

2021 was another year that presented pandemic related challenges, but we were able to remain open to the public for the full year. Due to COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to host many in-house events and programs, we instead focused on online book clubs, writers club, family take-home kits and online family challenges. Though the lack of in-house programming was disappointing, we were able to keep our presence strong in the community. We offered more home delivery service than we have in the past.

We have formed some new collaborations with other organizations in the community, and that has allowed us to bring more resources to more people.

The library continues to look for ways to reach out to the marginalized within the community and bridge the gaps that have been barriers. Our new ability to teach English as a Second Language has been one of gaps that we are addressing.

The Vanderhoof Public Library strives to create an accessible, safe, and welcoming place for all backgrounds, ages, and interest groups. It is an important community hub, even in these challenging times. We remain committed to offering meaningful services to all and continue to find new ways to meet needs as they arise.

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

Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP)

Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
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The Vanderhoof Public Library was approved for the Community Adult Literacy Grant 2021 and 2022. This has been an enormous learning curve for the library, but it has been rewarding and successful to this point.

This program is for adults 19+ that are newcomers, citizens, work permit holders and refugee claimants.

The services we can provide are the following:

1. Communication skills
2. Essential life skills
3. Networking and conversation practice
4. Job search support
5. One-on-one support with volunteers.

We have hired a program co-ordinator and have many volunteers that work one-on-one with individuals in the desired area of learning. The co-ordinator is responsible to communicate with all the parties and ensure quality of learning, and that Canadian Benchmarks are being met. She is responsible to make sure all learning related materials are provided for free to those that access this resource.

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

The mission of the Vanderhoof Public Library is to provide access to information, education, and recreation in a safe and welcoming environment.

With the addition of the Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP), the library has taken a new approach to providing access to free information and education for adults with low literacy within the community.

English as a Second Language has been lacking in the community for the past 4 years and this has been a wonderful way to meet our Strategic Priority of connecting with the community. We have been meeting the literacy needs of our immigrant community in a safe, fun, and effective way. This project also fits perfectly with our priority to inspire literacy and learning. We started with 11 tutors and 13 students. The numbers are growing daily. We are excited to be able to provide this incredible resource to the community.

This project directly fits with the District's Community Objective of promoting quality of life and well-being for all its residents. By providing this resource, we are seeing the quality of life and well-being improve for these individuals, as they become more confident in their ability to speak and understand the English language and find human connections that inspire and empower.

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>1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>Low literacy is not just reading and writing skills. Low literacy skills often involve a lack of knowledge and ability to utilize computers and related technology efficiently. Here at the library, and with CALP, we also teach digital literacy as well. This improves access for many as they learn to use the computer and internet to connect to the world, see and communicate with those in other areas, do banking, book flights, etcetera.</p> <p>Our library offers online courses and online digital collections. When one becomes comfortable navigating the computer and internet, this opens a whole new world of learning.</p>
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<p>2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>With CALP comes many opportunities to collaborate, train and grow in knowledge surrounding low literacy skills among adults.</p> <p>Our program co-ordinator has taken many opportunities to improve her skills and knowledge and she brings that back to all of us. We have been building capacity here among staff through professional development on an ongoing, regular basis.</p>
<p>3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>As a library, we are a well-known and well-liked community institution that has space, technology and staff that can help people become better informed.</p> <p>The mission of CALP is to improve the accessibility of learning opportunities within the community, especially to individuals with special needs or barriers to learning. To provide opportunities for adults to acquire important foundational skills such as literacy and English as a Second Language. To address education, training and learning gaps, to mobilize community volunteers and other resources in support of learning. To contribute to solving individual and community problems through learning initiatives, in coordination and cooperation with related organizations.</p> <p>Foundational literacy skills can be learned in both written and spoken English, digital literacy, and other basic life skills.</p> <p>The library is a safe place for all ages, interest groups, backgrounds, and lifestyles.</p> <p>We have students accessing help every week and, in some cases, several days a week. These students have been meeting people in the community that have other resources and services that are offered and have been learning how to confidently access the services that they need.</p> <p>Some of the materials our students read to improve their reading skills, include true survival stories of those in Residential Schools. These stories need to be shared with all people as we move towards reconciliation in our country and in our towns.</p>
<p>4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	<p>As our library becomes more involved in the lives of marginalized people within the community, we become more aware of needs and see ways that we may be able to bridge the gaps. This knowledge is useful when the library and board are creating a strategic plan. We see the need, we have the tools, we create a priority that addresses that need and we move forward to improve our community and the lives within it.</p>
<p>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.</p>	

Major Project started in 2021:

The Vanderhoof Public Library went after and received a grant to be able to run a community adult literacy program, we know as CALP. We hired a coordinator to oversee the program and have many volunteers working with the adults accessing the program.

Outputs:

The ability to offer free, structured learning opportunities to adults in the community that have special needs or barriers to learning.

English as a Second Language, learning how to access necessary information on the computer and internet and other foundational life skills.

Immediate Outcomes:

People with low literacy skills have access to free help in the area that they feel they need the most help. In our community we have many immigrants that wish to improve their written and spoken English. Many of them have a very limited grasp on the language and feel very isolated. These individuals can meet with a tutor that assesses where they are at and spends one-on-one time with each student with learning that matches the need.

Intermediate Outcomes:

People have access to the learning they need to live comfortably in the community. They begin to gain confidence and feel hopeful. The support system they now have, gives them the assurance they need that they will be okay, and things will get better. Tasks that seemed overwhelming are now becoming manageable and life in another country is beginning to feel a bit more like home. Friendships are established and a sense of community is formed.

Ultimate Outcomes/Impact

The ultimate goal of this project is to give individuals the quality of life they deserve and the ability to feel like a contributing part of society, in a community that feels like it has become home to them. For the immigrants, one of the goals they set for themselves is to be able to become comfortable with the language and reach the required Canadian benchmarks in order to gain Canadian Citizenship. Our community has not had official access to this type of resource for over four years and many people were feeling lost, isolated, and afraid. By bringing this resource back to the community we are helping to deliver the provincial strategic goal for public libraries to improve access to all British Columbians. We are meeting our own goal of finding new ways to connect with the community and we are helping to improve the quality of life for people living in Vanderhoof and surrounding areas.

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

Our CALP is run in partnership with the Ministry of Advanced Education as well as the College of New Caledonia. Early 2021 the Ministry of Advanced Education opened up the CALP grant applications for more than just colleges, but any applicants had to apply under the umbrella of a local college. Our local CNC was willing to be the overseeing umbrella for our application. The application was accepted, and CNC received the funding that they funneled down to the Vanderhoof Public Library as they do not have other responsibilities to the program.

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 has continued to be a challenge that our library has faced. We have not been able to run programs like we have in the past and when we have had programs, restrictions such as numbers and vaccine passports make it difficult. Many members of our community do not want to wear masks or get vaccinated, and they have found it frustrating to be told that they cannot come to programs or have their older children in programs. This has been a huge challenge for us because libraries and library programs have always been welcoming to all throughout the years. We are thankful that we were able to remain open for 2021 and that we did not need to require passports for patrons coming in to browse and use the library.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	We have found that our funding continues to be about the same from year to year despite rising costs of everything. Last year our district gave us significantly less financial help than we were asking for. We continue to do the very best we can with all the funding we receive.

Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	<p>Staffing in 2021 was another challenge faced by the Vanderhoof Public Library. We have 3 full-time staff members, and we serve an area of about 10,000 people. We are busy and it works well until someone has a couple symptoms and must stay home. This has made the year very busy as we are covering each others' jobs while one is home sick.</p> <p>Summer of 2021 was very difficult finding summer staff. It seemed that CERB was more popular than finding a job. I usually have at least 30 applicants, but I only had 5 and 1 had too many unavailable dates to even be considered. This has never been an issue before. We pay more than minimum wage, so it was a surprise to run into this challenge.</p>
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	<p>As things become more and more accessible online, people without internet, or knowledge on how to use a computer, are finding it very challenging to access the resources they want. It has been a frustration to some in the community when they are told they need to get their license (or whatever) online. In a small rural community, not everyone has access to the internet, and many have never done so before and it's overwhelming.</p> <p>This is something we are happy to help with but with so few staff, it is easy to feel that there is not enough time or staff to go around for these types of things. Most of these people need help through the whole process.</p>
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	<p>Vanderhoof has many surrounding areas that cannot access the internet. We are happy to provide Wi-Fi and computers to the public.</p> <p>We have laptops and an iPad that can go out to the public but most people that would love these items, cannot get the internet at their place of residence.</p>
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	<p>The Vanderhoof Public Library is steadily outgrowing our building. We have a lovely library but often find that more space would open so much more opportunities for the community. We only have one room that can be used for programs or community rental, and this becomes challenging on a daily basis.</p>
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	<p>In 2021 we faced more homelessness in our community and surrounding communities. This created direct challenges to the library as we are a welcoming, warm space. The library became like a home to these individuals, and we often found them sleeping at our front door, right outside the book drop. People in the community often felt uncomfortable with the homeless people hanging around the library.</p>
Other (please specify)	

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: March 16, 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: March 16, 2022