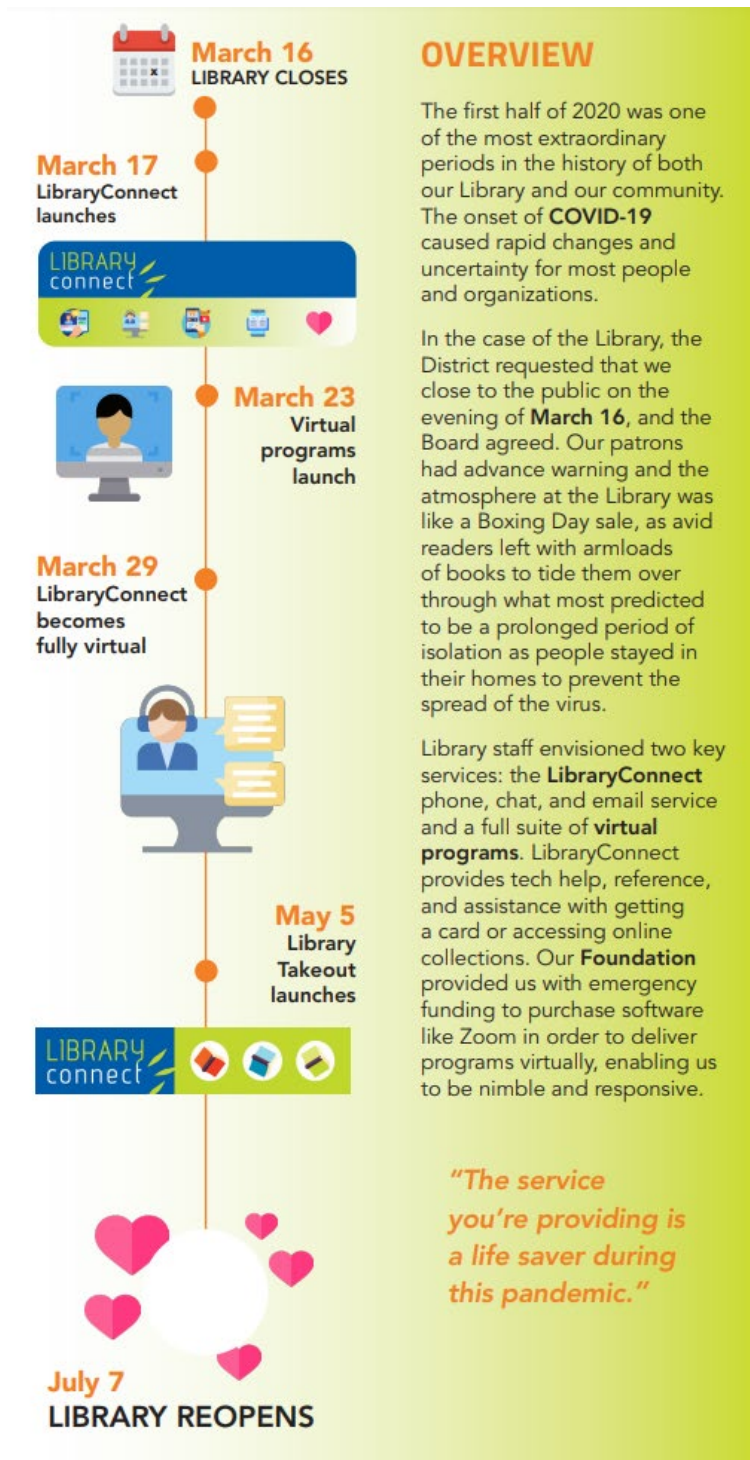


# 2020 Provincial Public Library Grant Report

WEST VANCOUVER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

## Executive Summary

2020 was truly an exceptional year, with public libraries, the WVML among them, demonstrating how **nimble, intelligent, and adaptable** they are, and how very much committed to public service.



With just 24 hours notice of closure, we were able to **resume service virtually the very next day**. This service consisted of online and phone-based help with getting a library card, using library resources, accessing local services, information help, and help using technology and devices.

**Within one week, we had launched virtual programming** – completely new territory for us. However, staff had the technological comfort to take the program design and delivery skills they already had and move them online. Staff fielded calls from around BC and from large urban library systems and were happy to provide support, know-how, and ideas. Youth department staff, in particular, were recognized for this help and their ongoing good work with a **provincial award**.

A key strategy for us in responding to urgent community needs was to work through our robust network of partners. Seeing a need for people who were cut off from services by the sudden need to do everything online, we partnered with Telus and the other North Shore Libraries (see attached report in the appendix) to rapidly get close to **400 devices into the hands of the North Shore's most vulnerable residents**. This was done by using a network of service agencies who work with these clients. The libraries provided ongoing technical support for the device recipients.

We heard from many residents who needed a more robust device, like a laptop. North Shore libraries each put in \$15,000 of the **Provincial Technology Grant**, and the West Vancouver Foundation put in \$45,000 in **matching funds**. This program will roll out in 2021.

We also partnered with a local seniors' centre, **lending them our car when they learned of an urgent need for meal delivery to self-isolating seniors**. In turn, they added book delivery as an option for these residents.

These and many other success stories will come forward from BC's libraries this year. All of this critical support for the public is **made possible by local, regional, and provincial funding**. For your part in this, we thank you!

## Progress on Provincial Priorities

### Improving access

Access became a spotlight issue in 2020 as the pandemic lockdown meant traditional forms of access to service were blocked. As businesses and service agencies struggled to deal with new and changing safety guidelines, services became unpredictable, and in many cases, completely unavailable. Citizens were faced with uncertainty, fear, and isolation, presenting huge challenges for mental health and social well-being.

*"I am a senior, live alone and have to remain somewhat in lockdown... and can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate these virtual sessions the Library offers. Thank you!"*

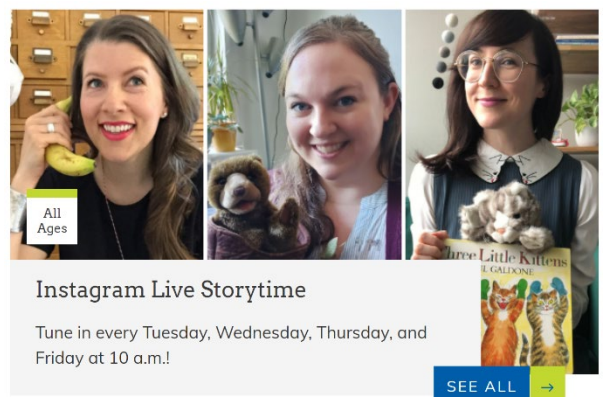


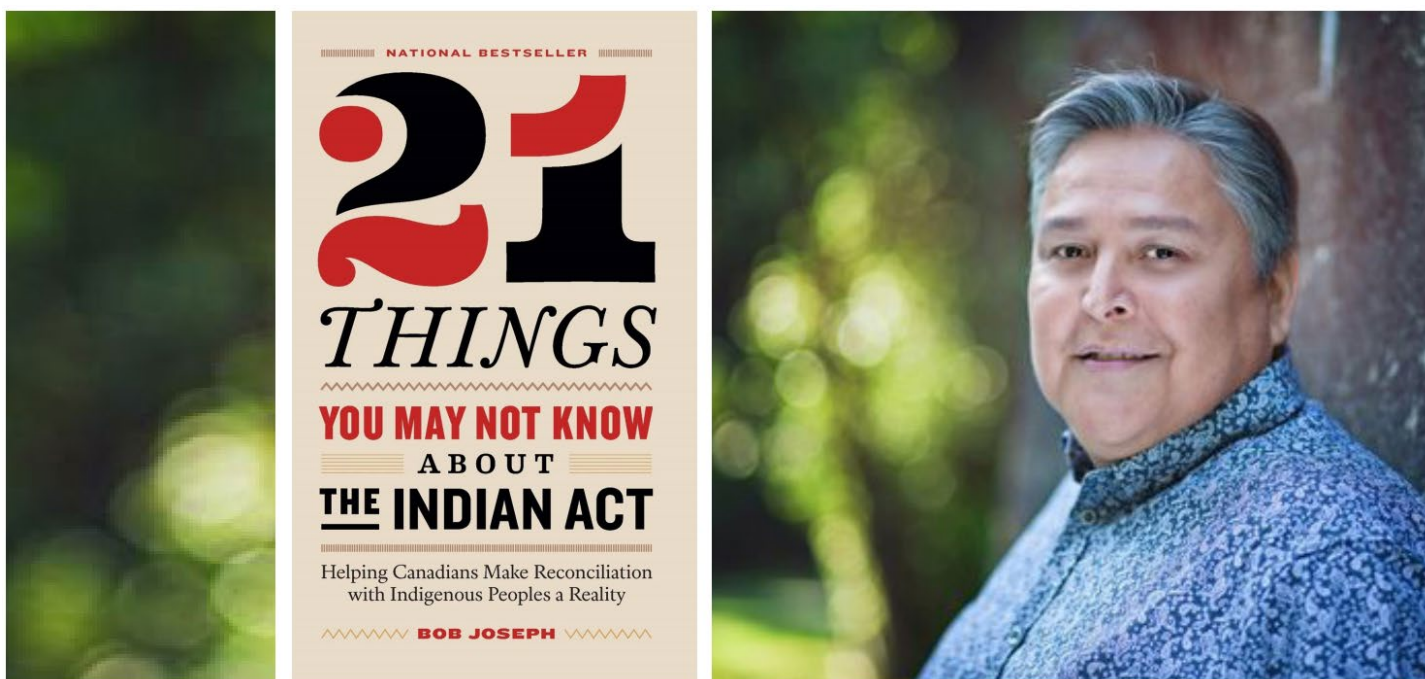
The library prioritized access in a number of ways. First, the day after a municipally-requested closure, we launched a service called **LibraryConnect**. This service provided 7 day per week service by phone and online, providing access to library staff who could assist people in learning how to use technology, in learning how to use library services and online questions, and with the answers to research and referral questions, particularly about accessing government services and funding. In all, more than 86,000 help sessions occurred throughout the year.

Technology help sessions could range from users who had been given a device and didn't know how to turn it on or where the internet comes from, to longtime users with specialized needs. Common comments included *'I can't believe I can talk to a real person'* and *'the library has been a lifeline to me throughout the pandemic'*.

The second major access challenge was our programming. With in person programming no longer an option, and the public cut off from in person gatherings, library staff felt it was an urgent priority to move programs online to give people some kind of mental outlet and social interaction.

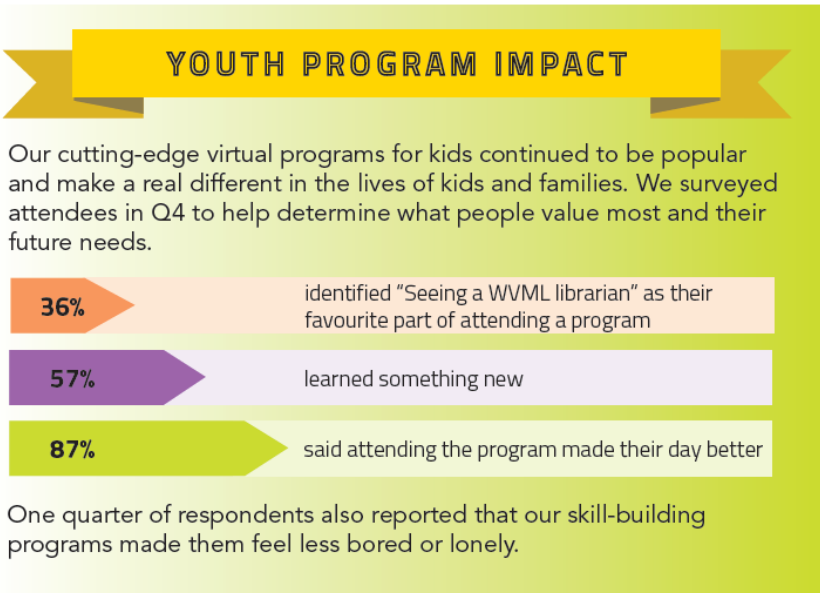
Within one week, our suite of **virtual programs** had moved online, starting with our flagship Instagram Storytime. This daily program provides routine, social interaction, and simple mental health components for children struggling to process this strange new world. A common comment was *'Thank you. You have given us some normalcy in our lives'*. A recent comment told us of two best friends who watch the storytime and then hold a zoom session amongst themselves to discuss the story and re-enact the songs and activities.





Programs for adults range from skills-based (Excel skills, file management, online privacy and safety, etc.) to social (ESL conversation circle, cookbook club, and many more), to arts appreciation (author readings and concerts), to civic engagement (climate futures, citizen advocacy). A joint session hosted by all three North Shore Libraries featured Bob Joseph, educator and author of *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act*. This sold out show had 500 registrants and more on the wait list. Clearly, the public is interested in building their awareness about reconciliation.

For children and teens, staff are continuously creating a wide variety of innovative programs, from virtual escape rooms to AI technology programs to ‘Tell Your Story’, a program where students write mini-novels and publish them as e-books on the library’s catalogue. In all, hundreds of unique programs were hosted in 2020, with over 21,000 live attendances, and many more asynchronous views on our Youtube and other channels.



Since virtual programs were completely new territory for the library in 2020, we began to evaluate the impact, starting with Youth programs. Highlights are included here, and the full evaluation is included in an appendix.

Youth programming made a difference at a time when students were coping with sudden limits to their social world. One teen revealed in a program that *'this is the first time I've spoken to someone other than my Mother in a month'*. Others mentioned enjoying it when we hosted a sequence of programs and they could get to know other kids and see them again later in the day.



At the height of the first wave of Covid, Youth staff helped teachers and families navigate the many supports we could offer as they transitioned to online learning, hosting a pro-D day session for educators, and even launching a once per term newsletter for the school audience.

Library staff also worked with libraries across Canada (several with populations more than 10 times our size) to share WVML's approach to online programs and provide advice and support as they launched their own.

## Building Capacity

One key strategy we employed from the start of the pandemic was working with partners. We proposed a tri-municipal network to support non-profit and faith based agencies throughout the North Shore, coordinated through North Shore Emergency Management (NSEM), and loaned library staff to this group to help facilitate emergency activities.

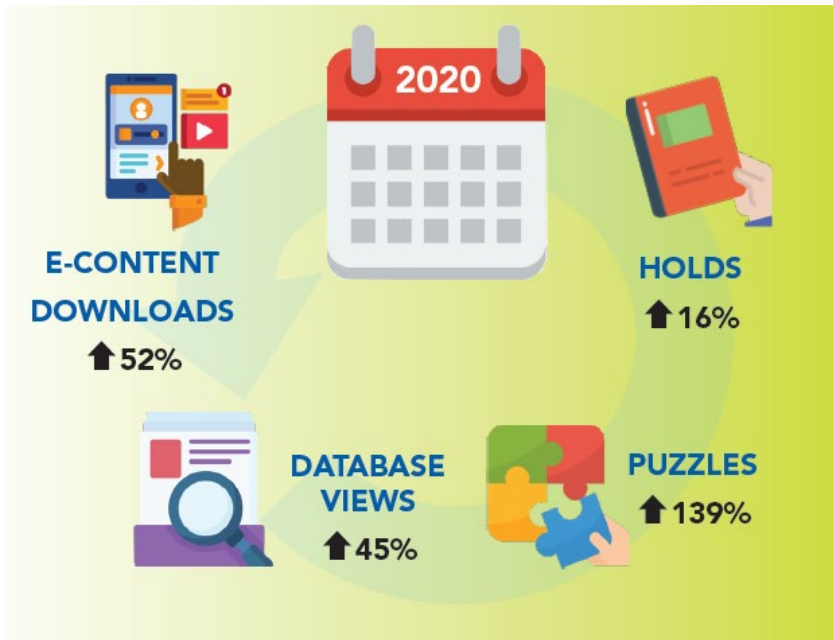
*"I am so grateful to TELUS and the library for giving me this tablet and hope to be learning more on how to use it to its full capacity. Being able to send an email to my granddaughter and receiving messages from her is invaluable to me."*



We applied for a grant for tablets and phones through Telus, then worked with the NSEM network of non-profits to get the devices into the hands of those who needed them most – without delay. This ranged from stroke survivors to an Elders group of Squamish nation, to residents of a women's shelter and seniors' groups. In all, close to **400 devices** reached people in need within weeks.

Libraries formatted the devices, provided start-up materials, and provided unlimited phone and online tech support as brand new users got up and running.

Our full report to Telus from the North Shore Libraries is included in the appendix. Coming up in 2021 will be a second phase of the project which will see wifi hotspots and chromebooks provided on long-term loan for residents with specific needs. This phase will be jointly funded by the Province of BC and the West Vancouver Foundation.

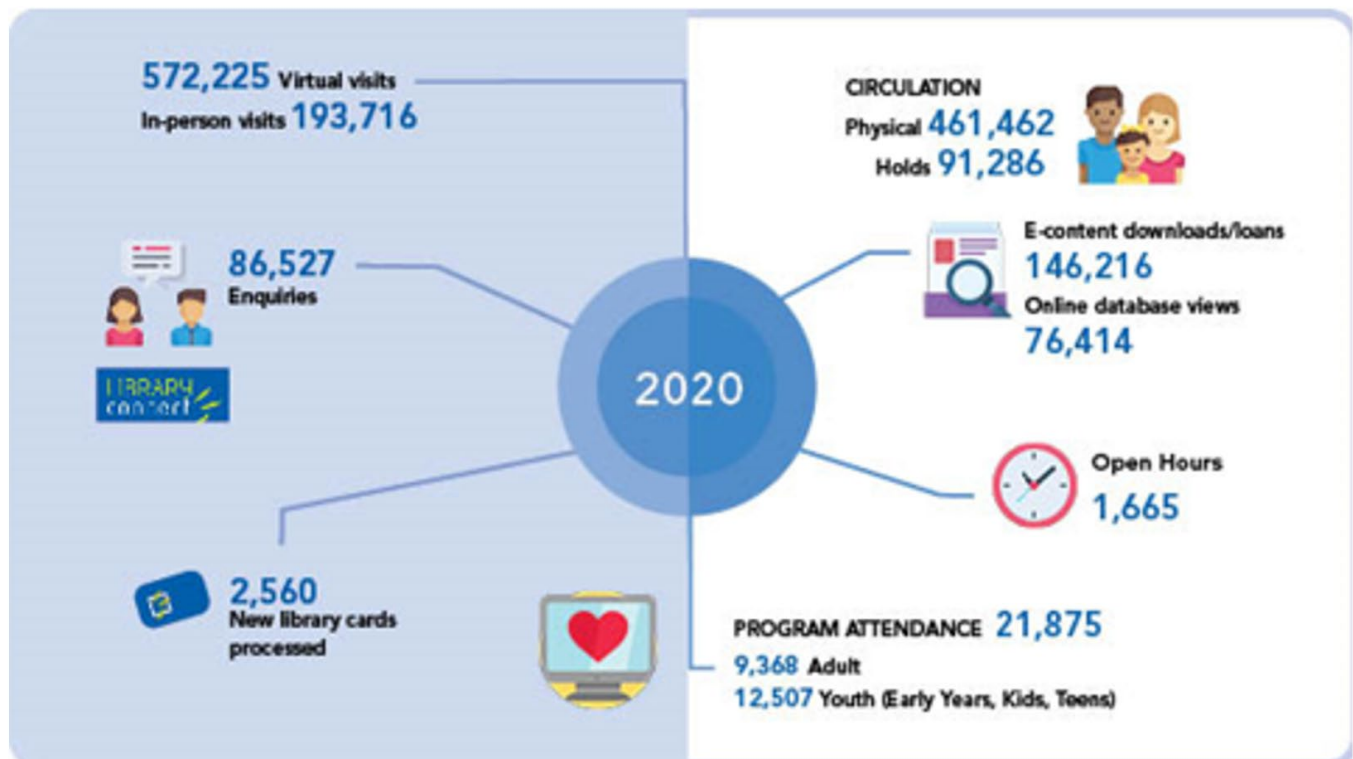


As described above, the library moved quickly to provide people with the communication tools and training they needed to cope with the many changes they were experiencing. We helped them connect with family and loved ones, access government services and funding, build the skills they needed for job transitions (including a multipart series presented by staff from Vancouver Public Library's Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre), and keep up to date with public health orders and the changing parameters of the pandemic.

In addition, we added to online connections, provided online and phone support for using them, and made physical collections available as soon as possible, first through a Library Takeout service, then through opening the

library itself for a grab and go service, and also through the reinstatement of home delivery and care home delivery.

With a multi-month closure, reduced budgets, and user behaviour changes related to public health orders, physical circulation is down year over year. Electronic circulation is up, and overall we can see that library use remained strong all year, keeping our users connected, informed, and engaged. We retained our strong focus on inclusion, featuring programs for new immigrants, non-English programs, such as Farsi Storytime, and our popular ESL conversation circles.



## Enhancing Governance

In 2020, we concluded our strategic plan and moved to a new strategic framework, included below. Our new business plan is included in an appendix. In addition, several board members attended development workshops through BCLTA, and Director Stephanie Hall co-presented a session on the Director-Board relationship through ABCPLD. A focus for Board development in 2021 will be inclusion and diversity.



# 2021 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



## VISION

Where wonder sparks, possibilities emerge, and minds thrive. Our Library inspires people to grow in a dynamic world.

## MISSION

Our Library connects people with ideas, the world of imagination and each other.

## PRIORITIES

Our values are the foundation of our work.

### Inclusion

**Our library's mandate is to support everyone in our community through our services. We will actively work to:**

- Create equity of access and a safe space for all as a baseline for our services
- Celebrate diversity and a respectful exchange of diverse ideas
- Connect with underserved and marginalized communities, learn about their needs, and find solutions and opportunities
- Identify and address systemic barriers to Library participation
- Help people thrive as active and engaged citizens of our community and the world
- Inspire a feeling of belonging for all in the Library's spaces, whether physical or virtual

### Integrity

**We will maintain a high standard of integrity and quality in our practices and services, including:**

- Excellence in our service offerings
- Honouring reconciliation
- Environmental sustainability
- Honesty and trust
- Providing information that is credible and trustworthy
- Fiscal accountability

### Community

**Community needs are at the centre of all we do. We will tailor our services and spaces to those needs through:**

- An evidence-based approach and community engagement
- Empathy and caring
- A willingness to innovate and be nimble and responsive
- Meaningful community partnerships
- Supporting community resilience, including economic resilience and social well-being

### A Learning Culture

**We will foster the joy of learning and growth, both in our community and within our staff. To do so, we will:**

- Help people of all ages learn and grow, at home, school, and work
- Help people develop their own creative voices
- Continue to emphasize
  - The love of reading and the world of imagination
  - Developing digital skills
  - Joy and playful ways of learning
  - Appreciation of art and music



## Significant challenges and lessons learned

Libraries around the province fared differently depending on local circumstances, and there was a potential for municipalities to identify library service as a 'nice-to-have', not an essential service. However, for those libraries who were allowed the budget and staff to function and serve the public, the value of the service quickly became clear.

Connection to a whole range of services and information was possible through the public library. In fact, the public library was one of the civic services most suited to continue under pandemic conditions, providing remote assistance and both physical and electronic collection which could provide hours of education and enjoyment at home, safely within each person's own bubble.

Lessons learned included a sudden realization of **capacity challenges** – a library closely entwined with a municipality may depend on them for IT support, HR support, funding, and various other things. In our case, **District IT were instantly overwhelmed** with District priorities, and could not provide any assistance to the library as we moved to a remote service model. WVML is fortunate to have highly skilled staff who could push through this challenge, independently setting up a remote call centre in under two weeks. However, not all libraries can do the same. This is a **business continuity challenge**, to say the least. **Funding** is a similar challenge. We can see at a provincial scale the immense value of public library service continuing during an emergency. Yet, if municipal funding is withdrawn, the provincial funding component would not be enough to ensure continued operation.

Even beyond the ongoing question of long-frozen provincial operating grants, something to consider is the need for fast, fluid emergency funding at a transitional time. This is very hard to achieve, but in our case, due to our Library Foundation, we had the advantage of a **transitional fund** that was extended to us almost immediately. This meant that we had the confidence in funding to purchase Zoom licences, remote call centre license, Plexiglas, PPE, and any other required items. This played a key role in our rapid response. Ultimately, some of these expenses were eligible for other funding, which was much appreciated. From our perspective, the key lesson would be that in order to pivot quickly in a crisis, some of those administrative questions of 'where is the money coming from' need to be answered as soon as possible.

One challenge, which certainly was not insurmountable, but took time, was the number of different bodies wanting to provide libraries with **guidelines**. The Province itself provided a number of guidelines through PHO updates, WorkSafe BC provided guidelines, the Municipal Safety Authority provided more, regional health authorities provided letters and other guidance, CULC and the BC Library directors provided best practices, and the Libraries Branch also provided a guidance document. These various and at times conflicting guidelines had to be ranked in terms of pre-eminence, then digested before creating opening safety plans.

Finally, we observed that **networks** can play a critical role in effectiveness. Our partners – whether fellow libraries, municipal colleagues, or the local non-profit sector – made a huge difference for us. Because of our early work with NSEM, they included us in update calls and on the Sitrep distribution list. This was critical to our ongoing understanding of community capacity, emerging advice, and risk assessment.

## Closing thanks

In a year of crisis and change, we were grateful for the calm leadership of those in government and the support of our library community, including the staff at the Libraries Branch. Your work helped those of us on the front lines provide urgently needed services to so many British Columbians. Thank you!

## Appendix – Supplementary reports

### Reports included:

- Take Home Technology – joint North Shore libraries report to Telus
- Report on youth virtual program evaluation outcomes – this tool was piloted on Youth programs, but similar evaluations will be conducted on all virtual programs in 2021
- 2021 Business plan

### Not included

- (forthcoming) Annual Community Report - we will forward when complete
- Quarterly reports – available on our website at: <https://westvanlibrary.ca/about/plans-reports/>



# TAKE-HOME TECHNOLOGY

October 23, 2020

**Attn: Neda Alizadeh, Manager – Field Support, CSD, North Shore Home Team**

Re: Success of the Take Home Technology initiative

Dear Neda,

With all devices safely delivered and compelling stories coming back, the North Shore Libraries wanted to take stock of this initiative and reflect on what it has meant to our communities.

Neda, you and your team at Telus have made a big difference in the lives of people in need on the North Shore. The isolating effects of Covid are so much harder for people without connectivity, and we certainly saw some very challenging situations for our most vulnerable residents. For each recipient of a device, it made a tangible difference to their ability to cope with isolation and the transition of many services to an online world.

The attached report provides a summary of the project and its results.

From all three North Shore Libraries, thank you so very much for this generous donation, your enthusiasm, and your community spirit. We loved working with you on this.

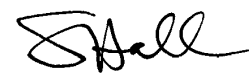
Sincerely,



Deb Hutchison Koep



Jacqueline Van Dyk



Stephanie Hall



North Vancouver City Library

NORTH VANCOUVER DISTRICT Public Library

west vancouver MEMORIAL LIBRARY

# TAKE-HOME TECHNOLOGY

A Partnership to Bridge the Digital Divide

October 8, 2020

## INTRODUCTION

Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library) closed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they were deeply concerned about community members who depend on local libraries to access Wi-Fi, computers, and technology support.

Like libraries, many critical services closed and moved to digital and telephone service delivery as a result of the pandemic. With this change, people without access to a computer or smartphone, including many seniors and other vulnerable individuals, were no longer able to make important connections with services and loved ones—a devastating blow during a time of crisis.

In April 2020, staff from the three libraries connected with TELUS to request a donation of devices to help support our most vulnerable residents. TELUS came through generously with a donation of 200 tablets and 200 mobile phones and the **Take Home Tech** initiative was born. Libraries then worked through the tri-municipal North Shore Emergency Operations Centre and community partners to distribute devices to those who needed them the most. The libraries also developed a package of training materials for new users, and provided one-on-one help for those who were new to the technology.

The impact was immediate and profound for those who received devices. They were able to connect with loved ones and service providers, access online learning, order groceries online and much more.

North Vancouver City Library, North Vancouver District Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library are grateful for the support of TELUS and North Shore Emergency Management and their partnership in providing connectivity to those in need as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response.

## GENESIS

After closing their doors, immediately recognizing the importance of helping seniors stay virtually connected with family and friends, the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre (SAC) began soliciting

donations of new and gently used tablets to distribute to isolated seniors.

While this was a quick response and a great initiative, many of the seniors receiving tablets through this program lacked the Internet access and in-depth technology support they needed to use them.

Public libraries, as trusted and welcoming public institutions, were well positioned to offer the wrap-around services needed to support a device distribution program. With dedicated technology staff, experience providing technology support and instruction as part of their core business, and strong partnerships in the community, the three libraries worked through community partners to ensure the right devices found their way into the right hands, with the right amount of initial and ongoing help.

## **RATIONALE**

Studies conducted by North Shore public libraries have consistently found that 15% of the North Shore's 181,000+ residents lack access to home Internet service. A survey conducted by West Vancouver Memorial Library in 2019 showed that this number rose to 32% for customers 80 years of age or older. (The 80-plus demographic represents over 10,000 individuals on the North Shore.)

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, individuals who found themselves suddenly without access to the Internet and confined to their homes, experienced extreme social isolation. While many of these individuals were seniors, there were other vulnerable people on the North Shore including the unhoused, low-income youth and families, and newcomers to Canada, facing similar challenges.

## **DISTRIBUTION**

Working through the tri-municipal North Shore Emergency Operations Centre, staff at the three North Shore Libraries reached out to nearly 90 agencies on the North Shore who had identified the need for tablets and mobile phones to connect with their clients in a previous survey of service providers. The goal was to package and distribute the 400 devices with supporting materials through libraries and local service providers.

As anticipated, the demand for devices, especially tablets, was greater than the supply. Following recommendations from the EOC's Community and Social Impact Team, the difficult decision was made to distribute a maximum of 25 tablets per organization, based on needs across a broad spectrum of vulnerabilities, including:

- people in financial need
- isolated seniors
- people with multiple vulnerabilities

### **Service providers who received and distributed devices included:**

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| • Canadian Mental Health Association        | • North Vancouver School District     |
| • Capilano National Institute for the Blind | ◦ Key Program                         |
| • Capilano Community Services Society       | • Parkgate Community Services Society |
| • District of West Vancouver                | • Silver Harbour Seniors' Centre      |
| ◦ Seniors' Activity Centre                  | • Squamish Nation                     |
| ◦ Youth Services                            | ◦ Elder's Centre                      |
| • Family Services of the North Shore        | ◦ Eslha7an Learning Centre            |



- North Shore Alliance Church
- North Shore Community Resources
- North Shore Crisis Services Society
- North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership
- North Shore Multicultural Society
- North Shore Neighbourhood House
- North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre
- North Shore Women's Centre
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation
- Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)
  - Concurrent Disorders Services
  - Health Connection Clinic
  - Overdose Outreach Team
  - Supported Housing Program
- YWCA Employment Programs

## ABOUT THE DEVICES

The tablets and smartphones provided by TELUS were simple and inexpensive. Staff from North Vancouver City Library, North Vancouver District Public Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library configured the devices and pre-loaded them with key apps, to make them as easy to use as possible.

Library staff also collaborated to develop a handout package, which was included with the tablets and mobile phones. Packages included information about the Take Home Tech Program and instructional handouts customized for the specific devices, including how to get started and how to access and use the Internet.

Tablets were provided as gifts to recipients. Although they did not come with built-in Internet access, they could be used with Wi-Fi or the recipient could purchase a SIM card if they desired.

Information about inexpensive Internet plans for low-income individuals from TELUS and other communications service providers was included with these devices.

Smartphones came equipped with a SIM card for Internet access and a plan allowing for in-Canada calling and 3GB of data per month. The plan is currently in place until December 31, 2020. At the time of distribution, TELUS expected phones to be returned to them at the conclusion of the program for future redistribution.

Following distribution of the devices, library staff were available for one-on-one help and tech support via phone, email and chat. For many recipients, this was the first time they had used such a device or connected to they could connect with family, friends and service providers.



TELUS staff drop off devices at the West Vancouver Memorial Library



Recipients from North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre (left) and the Squamish Nation Elders Centre (right) enjoy their new devices.



## IMPACT

As a result of this program, all 400 devices were distributed through 20 partner organizations.

Time was of the essence in getting these devices into the hands of those who needed them. This was deemed more important than developing a robust assessment tool in advance and gathering additional data; however, feedback and stories were forwarded by partner organizations and from the individuals who received phones and tablets. Here are some examples:

“We, and more importantly a number of our marginalized clients, have been the recipients of your generous donation of cell phones. It has truly benefitted our clients, and enhanced the care that we have been able to provide. During this very isolating time, our clients have been able to maintain communication with their families and care communities, and to seek safety, connection, and care when they need it.”

– **VCH’s Health Connection Clinic**

“Fantastic, I don’t know what to say. Thank you. It has really upped my level of communication, just opens so many more doors from staying in touch, to finding information faster and easier. Everything at your fingertips. When I first received the cell phone I called the North Vancouver City Library – and the librarian walked you through the set-up – she was really good – since then I haven’t had a problem. It’s my first cell phone.”

– **Senior in VCH’s Supported Housing Program**

“I really needed a phone as I lost mine and could not afford to replace it. This cell phone is really working well. [ ] Thank you so much.”

– **Senior in VCH’s Supported Housing Program**

“I was able to provide a phone to a gentleman in his late twenties. This young man has endured significant hardship including the tragic death of his mother but continues to push on for the sake of his younger sibling. He tells us that he thinks it’s important to be a positive role model for his sibling and wants [others] to know that people who endure challenges can also have success. As a result of the trauma he’s enduring, this young man struggles with significant mental health and substance use issues. He’s now connecting regularly with healthcare services and is planning to attend residential treatment for the first time. Having a phone has allowed him to stay in contact with his doctor who is doing phone appointments only as well as call/text supportive members of his extended family. It’s also allowed myself and his other case manager at VCH the ability to call/text with him on the regular – super helpful for engagement, safety checks, care-planning, etc. Both [I] and this client are so grateful for this generous donation!”

– **VCH’s Overdose Outreach Team**

“Thank you so much for your email. Actually the tablet helps me a lot for learning English. It works very well to expedite my learning skills. I am very thankful for the donation. Before this tablet, it was very difficult for me for e-learning.”

– **English Language Learner at North Shore Multicultural Society**

“Thanks for giving me a tablet. I can study whenever I want. My daughter has her own computer and I have my own tablet. I study everyday on my bed, in the kitchen and in the park. I am happy.”

– **English Language Learner at North Shore Multicultural Society**

“I would like to thank you for supporting students. I can easily join online English class everyday. The tablet has helped me to do [the] exercises much faster and easier. We appreciate your support.”

– **English Language Learner at North Shore Multicultural Society**

“Kudos to the libraries for being there for us and our seniors over and over and over again!!”

– **North Shore Community Resources**

“This device provides a life-line for me and I am so grateful for having received it.”

– **Senior at Capilano House (subsidized housing)**

“I am so grateful to TELUS and the library for giving me this tablet and hope to be learning more on how to use it to its full capacity. Being able to send an email to my granddaughter and receiving messages from her is invaluable to me. Thank you so much.”

– **Senior at Capilano House (subsidized housing)**

“One of the tablets was given to a [senior] resident at Capilano House (subsidized housing). He used it to connect online with friends and also to check out grocery store deliveries and prices. Having this device has made him feel more connected and also valued as a senior in the community. He feels that somebody cares about him and he appreciates being able to connect with others.”

– **Parkgate Community Services Society**

“Another tablet was given to a [senior] resident at a mental health facility. Due to the pandemic, he could not meet with his daughter and granddaughter in person but now he learns to use email and soon he will install skype to communicate with his relatives. This is his first introduction to an electronic device and he feels a little bit overwhelmed by what there is to learn and by the capabilities of the device but also by the generosity of the folks who made this available to him so he can virtually connect with loved ones.”

– **Parkgate Community Services Society**

“Another tablet was given to a [senior] resident at Capilano House; she gave it to a friend of hers who recently broke her arm, but is now using the device to connect virtually with her friend. The two friends are both grateful for having the means to communicate in this manner and would like to thank both TELUS and the library for their generosity.”

– **Parkgate Community Services Society**

**There were also Facebook pictures and videos posted:**

“I want to express my deepest gratitude for providing these devices to our Elders. I delivered them yesterday and everyone was delighted! Here is a link to a post I shared with one of our Elders: <https://www.facebook.com/101356728107841/posts/155115442731969/?d=n>  
Many thanks to you and your team for making it so seamless!”

-- **Squamish Nation Elder's Centre**

“Take Home Technology Success!”

[https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=2667076940171986&external\\_log\\_id=d016f51a-75f7-4bf7-a9f2-2fdf6706fa1e&q=north%20shore%20stroke%20recovery](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=2667076940171986&external_log_id=d016f51a-75f7-4bf7-a9f2-2fdf6706fa1e&q=north%20shore%20stroke%20recovery)

-- **North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre**



## CONCLUSION

The three North Shore libraries continue to provide support to Take Home Tech device recipients as part of their ongoing core business of supporting digital literacy and access.

This program demonstrates the value of robust community support networks, which the libraries and their partners leveraged to ensure TELUS's generous donation was distributed without delay. The speed of delivery and ability to quickly pinpoint those who needed them most made the program highly effective at a time of crisis.

The devices are continuing to combat isolation by connecting people with family, friends, service providers, their libraries and more. Recipients are not only able to get the ongoing support they need, but are able to access a wide array of free downloadable books, movies, music and online classes.

North Vancouver City Library, North Vancouver District Library and West Vancouver Memorial Library are grateful for the support of TELUS and their partnership in providing connectivity to those in need as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response.



**Read more here:**

*North Shore libraries distributing tablets and phones to those in need*

<https://www.nsnews.com/community/north-shore-libraries-distributing-tablets-and-phones-to-those-in-need-1.24123926>

*North Shore libraries & TELUS partner to distribute free tech to those in need*

<https://www.nvcl.ca/about/news-and-media/news-listing/2020/4/21/take-home-tech>

## Fall 2020 Youth Virtual Program Report (abridged)

From September 19 – December 17, 2020, the Youth and Technology Departments ran **75** virtual programs for young people with **1041 attendees**. These numbers do *not* include live views or playbacks for the approximately 56 Instagram storytimes and 5 Youtube Fun in Farsi storytimes Youth Librarians also facilitated.

Examples of these programs include:

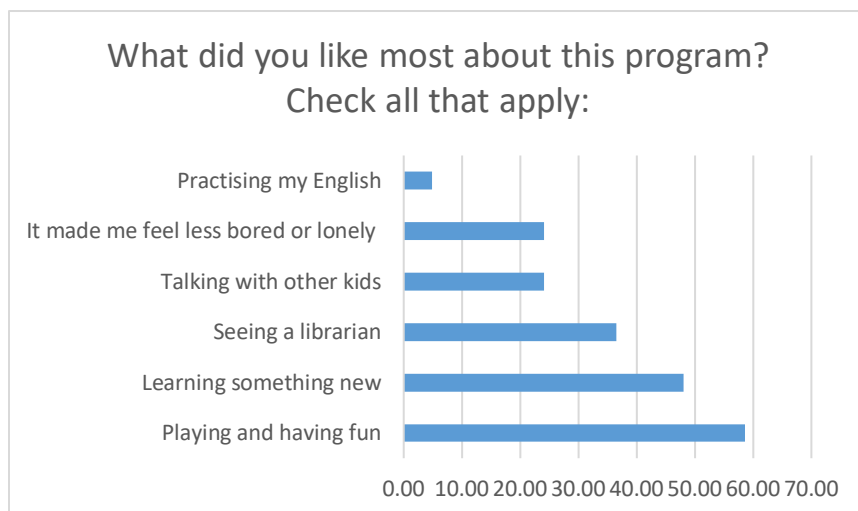
- Weekly Afterschool Kids Club: for 9-12 year olds to socialize, engage in group activities and interactive discussions
- Weekly Babytime: for infants and parents/caregivers to connect and learn new songs/rhymes/fingerplays to foster language development
- Weekly Saturday Tech programs: a wide range of opportunities for kids and families to build skills with coding (including Python), video storytelling, design, encryption, problem-solving and more

Starting in March, Digital Access Librarians (DALs) wrote or adapted a staggering 58 youth programs for the virtual environment in 2020. Many libraries would have felt lucky to be offer this wide range of youth technology in person in the best of times, let alone virtually in the midst of a pandemic.

### Evaluating Our Programs

- We received 103 evaluation forms
- Goal of evaluations:
  - Virtual programming is a brand new service implemented quickly in response to the pandemic: evaluations help determine what people want in the future, what's working and what could be changed to provide better service
  - Guide operational work: prioritization, future program scheduling, numbers of programs to run, topics, etc.
  - Determine impacts of the Foundation funding + needs for potential future funding

### The Impact



### Learning + Skill-Building

- Our programs provide meaningful, educational opportunities: 81% reported learning something new in a program



- More than just learning something new, kids *enjoyed* the learning; it was actually their second favourite thing about our virtual programs.
- Coding (including advanced coding) was the number one most requested topic for future programs
- Specific, notable areas of learning that kids mentioned:
  - “i learnd about small detalse and that you should allways absorve the room or page befor speaking”
  - “The challenge of doing something completely outside of normal.”
  - “Training our brains to think in diffrent ways”
  - “I learned to be observant and cooperate with others”
  - “finding new books to read”
  - “Wood bugs drink from their butt”

### *Social-Emotional*

- Attending a WVML virtual program made an overwhelmingly positive difference in the lives of kid and families: 91% said participating in a program made their day better
- We are supporting isolated kids: 24% said that attending the program made them feel less bored or lonely
- Respondents listed some takeaways of the program as:
  - “to take could care of each other!
  - “getting to public speak with otter kids who like solving ridles
  - “Be love be thankful”
  - “Even during a pandemic love shines through music”

### *Staying Connected*

- Sometimes we get asked “Why does WVML have to provide programming? Can’t kids get that elsewhere on the internet?” 36% of respondents said that specifically “seeing a WVML librarian” was their favourite part of attending a program
- Programs also supported family bonding and quality time:
  - “...it was a special time for our family when we can’t go to many places during the pandemic”
  - “Nice activity during covid”
  - “It was family friendly, great for my children and all of us together.”

### **Future Planning**

*When do families want to attend programs? Respondents could check all that apply:*

- Saturday afternoons (46%)\*
- Afterschool @ 4pm (38%)
- Asynchronous; pre-made programs kids complete independently and on their own time (33%)

Sundays were not given as an option in the evaluation due to being open Tuesday-Saturday.

We also did not include Friday after school as an option, but three respondents mentioned this in the “Other” category.

*How did families learn about programs?*

- Library Website (31%)
- Social media (16%)
- Word of mouth (16%)
- School: likely via school e-newsletter, a new pandemic initiative (12%)

# WVML Business Plan 2021

Our business plan for 2021 reflects the first year of a new Strategic Framework, which is a slightly different take on strategic planning, creating longer term guiding priorities, but allowing for a shorter term planning focus. Our previous Strategic Plan was a finite, four year plan. It developed specific organizational strengths which helped prepare us for a nimble response to the phenomenal year that was 2020.

In a time of continuous change, the move to a Strategic Framework model roots our decision making in our enduring values, provides ongoing priorities that flow directly from those values, and enables a more agile response to emerging community needs by moving the primary planning focus to a 12-18 month planning cycle, while recognizing that some projects will require a multi-year plan. The Strategic Framework itself will be reviewed annually to determine its ongoing relevance.

For 2021, we know that changing conditions and health guidelines will continue to emerge, and our number one priority will be the safe reintroduction of services as circumstances permit. This will occupy a significant portion of planning and staffing resources, but the timing of changes will be unpredictable.

Other themes identified for 2021 are the need to respond to community interest in Climate, Anti-racism, and social and economic recovery from the pandemic. We also identified the need to objectively evaluate our own capacity and performance in each of the priority areas of our Strategic Framework. So, for this planning year, you will see a special emphasis on assessment and addressing the findings of our assessments.

## Inclusion

***Our library's mandate is to support all people in our community through our services.***

### Assess

- Space planning – inclusion and accessibility aspects
- Conduct a self-assessment on systemic barriers to participation and inclusion

### Address & Progress

- Address findings of self-assessment on systemic barriers – possible examples could be:
  - the creation of a low-barrier library card
  - re-examination of library fines
  - an increase in non-English programming or signage
  - accessibility improvements
  - plan for outreach needs for 2022 and/or additional internal or external assessment requirements
- Develop programming and partnerships to address the challenges of social isolation and mental health
- Work to address the digital divide through innovative training and tech lending programs (Chromebooks, iPod Load and Go, Wireless Hotspot)
  - Offer at least 2 tech-related programs in languages other than English (staffing dependant)
- Partner on the West Vancouver Schools DPAC (District Parent Advisory Council) Committee on Anti-Racism/Tolerance; will be working actively with them on education for parents, families and the wider community
  - Booktopia 2020/2021 has a diverse roster and at least one speaker presenting specifically on stereotypes (at the request of WVS Admin and teacher-librarians)

## Integrity

***We will maintain a high standard of integrity and quality in our practices and services.***

### Assess

- Internal staffing allocation review – are we deploying staff the best way possible?
- Space planning – efficiency, environmental, and safety aspects
- Update our Service Models

### Address & Progress

- Safe reintroduction of services
- Optimization of online platform
- Climate Futures Campaign
- Honouring Reconciliation – NS Libraries partnership activities

## Community

***Community needs are at the centre of all we do. We will tailor our services and spaces to those needs.***

### Assess

- Community participation – who is using the library and who is not? Why?
- Update environmental scan and identify community needs as new data and community engagement opportunities become available
- Space planning – engage community to determine needs
- Examine potential partnerships to broaden the reach of library programs (example: working with caregivers)

### Address & Progress

- Identify and approach potential strategic partners to find ways to improve inclusion of low-participating sectors of the community
- Support community economic resilience and rebuilding through partnerships, skills training, and other needs-based responses.
- Create opportunities to interact with new technology (examples: pilot AR display at the library; guest speakers on Emerging Technologies)
- Lift up community voices through NS Author's Collection, Tell Your Story expansion, and development of a community recording studio
- Create community discussion program
- Create new **virtual volunteer opportunities** for teens to meet demand as expressed by WVS and other community agencies
- Fully virtualize cornerstone Youth partnership initiatives: Reading Link Challenge, Booktopia and Summer Reading Club (and **improve on virtualization done quickly in 2020**)
- Fall 2021 Kindergarten Library Card project



## Learning

***We will foster the joy of learning and growth, both in our community and within our staff.***

### Assess

- Virtual program evaluations
- Space planning – learning and play elements
- Plan for offering technology programming outreach
- Create Digital Learning Framework for Youth programs
- Assess needs for specific learning offerings, collections and e-licenses, and online readers advisory

### Address & Progress

- Refine virtual programs based on evaluation findings
- New Signature Series
- Develop adult programming that provides basic digital literacy skills, online safety and security, job re-skilling, and programs around emerging technologies
- Provide live and asynchronous learning options
- Offer one-on-one device clinics for learners
- Build staff expertise in ILS, SQL, and Municipal IT tools
- Community partner on West Vancouver Schools' SEY2K (Successful Early Years Transitions to Kindergarten) group, part of a provincial initiative; will be working with this group to develop free play kits for families and offering professional development on the Early Learning Framework to Early Childhood Educators
- Pilot/introduce outdoor programming for families



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October 15, 2020

Dear Mari;

I'm pleased to report on our plans for using the provincial technology grant to support the provincial goals of improving access and building capacity. To maximize the use of this one time funding, we have selected two projects that leverage existing resources and partnerships, and in one case, matching federal funds:

### Take Home Technology: Phase II

At the height of the first wave of Covid, North Shore Libraries applied for a grant from Telus and received close to 400 devices (tablets and cell phones) to supply to vulnerable people who were cut off from family and services by the rapid shutdown of the services (like libraries) they depended on. Because the number of devices was much smaller than the demand, libraries worked through local non-profit agencies and the North Shore Emergency Management Operations Centre to distribute the devices to those most in need. Many users were brand new to technology and needed to be shown how to turn devices on, or how to find and connect to wifi. NS libraries provide tech support and classes as part of their core business, so each device was sent out with instructions on how to reach us, and they were all configured for easy onboarding.

Through this work, we learned that an outstanding additional need is for laptops or chromebooks in addition to internet connectivity. Phase II of the Take Home Technology project, as supported by the province and matching federal ECSF funds, will provide chromebooks and mobile wifi hotspots for loan. We will again work with our non-profit partners to advertise the new service to those who need it most. By providing these devices as term loans (about the length of a school semester), we can get people up and running on a temporary basis until they buy or receive a donated device.

While we anticipate Chromebook lending could be ongoing (depending on the success of the program and available resources), for the mobile hotspots, we see this most likely being a temporary bridging service during the Covid period. Data line charges and device replacement would require ongoing funding of some kind in order to continue beyond 2021. However, the value of providing these devices during the Covid period is extremely



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high, as without access to internet, many are cut off from needed services, whether government or otherwise.

As with Phase I, the libraries will configure devices for ease of onboarding and offer both one-on-one device help and classroom sessions for skill building.

### Enhanced meeting rooms for public connectivity

This project will equip two meeting rooms with camera and sound equipment for virtual meetings. These features are increasingly important in the Covid reality, and will be used by both individuals for private meetings (example, telehealth or connecting with family) and groups for blended in person/virtual meetings. We will connect with partners such as Vancouver Coastal Health to understand priority use cases for those who need the service most.

### Closing remarks

Thank you for this strategic and timely grant, which will make a tangible difference for our community.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you'd like any additional information.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Hall  
Library Director  
West Vancouver Memorial Library

## 2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT REPORTING FORM: WEST VANCOUVER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Total Technology Grant Amount: \$21,931

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind/Leveraged funds	Comments
<b>Connectivity (internet speed, connection capacity, etc.)</b>  <b>Lending devices and hotspots</b>	Bridge digital divide by sharing devices and mobile internet hotspots, enabling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- connectivity</li> <li>- participation in online communities, classes, and forums</li> <li>- access to digital services, including government services</li> </ul> In addition to the loan of devices and hotspots, the NS libraries provide ongoing tech training and support for new users – a critical component to their success. We offer both one-on-one help and classes.	# of devices for loan  # of checkouts  # loans to individuals who are vulnerable  % who feel better connected to family or friends  % who report learning new technology skills  % who are better able to access supports and services	Accessible, loanable devices support the provincial strategic priority to improve access for all British Columbians	Purchase tablets, laptops and hotspots. Complete PIAs. Configure for use. Develop policies and procedures. Process and circulate items. Work with partners to ensure we are connecting with vulnerable residents.	We are partnering with the other two North Shore library systems to seek matching funding, and to collaboratively plan and implement these programs across all three systems.  We will work with community-based service providers (ex. Vancouver Coastal Health, Canadian Mental Health Association, North Shore Family Services, School District 44, North Shore Multicultural Society) to ensure devices reach vulnerable residents.	July- September 2020: Research devices and test.  October 2020: launch tablets  November 2020: Launch hotspots  January 2021: Launch laptops (back ordered)	\$15,000 (BC) \$15,000 (matching funds from ECSF)	\$15,000 (matching funds from ECSF) In kind - \$4,000 (staff time – program delivery and administration)	
<b>Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.)</b>  <b>Public meeting room camera and sound</b>	Existing meeting rooms will be optimized for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- participants who wish to participate in online meetings (example, telehealth, family</li> </ul>	# of meetings using features  # type of use (self-reported)	Enhanced public facility supports the provincial strategic priority to improve access for all British Columbians	Purchase/install camera and sound equipment. Develop policies and procedures. Provide support for meeting room bookings as needed.	Connect with partner networks to prioritize users who need the service most.	2020 – installation 2021 – service launch	\$6,931	\$500 in-kind (project oversight and initial administration)	



enhancements for blended meetings	events) but do not have the technology or private space at home - participants who wish to host blended in person/virtual meetings								
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