



## IslandLink Library Federation Provincial Operating Grant Report for 2019

The IslandLink Library Federation was founded in 2008 under the provincial Library Act and includes four member libraries: Alert Bay, Greater Victoria, Powell River and Salt Spring Island.

This report summarizes the IslandLink Library Federation's goals and achievements in 2019, in response to the expectations outlined in:

- the Federation's provincial funding letter dated March 29, 2019
- 2019 Provincial Library Federation Grant Report Instructions (received in January 2020)
- *IslandLink Library Federation Strategic Plan, 2015-2018* (attached).

### **SECTION 1: Introduction:**

The IslandLink Library Federation is based in the south-west coastal area of the province.

#### **Communities:**

This IslandLink Library Federation has four member libraries:

- Alert Bay Public Library
- Greater Victoria Public Library
- Powell River Public Library
- Salt Spring Island Public Library

These communities differ from each other in many ways such as population size, industry, accessibility, and population composition. But they are united by their common aim to provide excellent library service to their communities and to collaborate with each other to accomplish this goal.

The combined population of the IslandLink communities is approximately 353,853.

Greater Victoria Public Library is a large multi-branch system. GVPL serves a mostly urban area that includes the Provincial capital. This library serves the largest population within the IslandLink Library Federation.

Salt Spring Island Public Library is located on the largest and most populous of the southern gulf islands. The Salt Spring Island community is greatly influenced by the arts. The library has a strong volunteer tradition.

Powell River Public Library is the one IslandLink library that is actually on the 'mainland'. Located on the upper Sunshine Coast it is accessible by ferry from Vancouver Island and has close ties to the Island communities.

Alert Bay is the most remote IslandLink community. The Alert Bay Public Library serves the residents of Cormorant Island. There is a large First Nations population as well as the residents of the Village of Alert Bay. Alert Bay is accessible by ferry from the North Island community of Port McNeill.

### **Challenges:**

One of the main challenges for the IslandLink Library Federation is the distances between communities and the difficulty of having to rely on ferry travel. Ferry fares add an extra cost, and the Ferry schedules dictate travel times. The sailing schedules are not always convenient and can require travel delays or even extra overnight stays. These extra costs arise when planning shared programming for the IslandLink communities, and when arranging for the annual in-person IslandLink Board meeting.

### **Strategic Plan:**

The *IslandLink Library Federation Strategic Plan, 2015-2018* document was completed in the Fall of 2015 and was approved by the IslandLink Board on February 3, 2016. At the January 2018 board meeting the IslandLink Board passed a motion to extend this plan for an extra year, 2019. A copy of this Strategic Plan is attached.

The Board and Library Directors felt that, even though most strategic goals had been accomplished or are ongoing, there were some that still required work such as the goal to facilitate a staff sharing and/or exchange program.

IslandLink supports the ministry's strategic vision for BC Public Libraries by incorporating goals into our own plan that reflect the strategies and vision of the Libraries Branch. Some examples of these strategic goals from the IslandLink Library Federation Strategic Plan are:

- Promote the value of Library Federations to all levels of Government
- Develop a funding application process to support collaboration with community partners, other libraries and educational institutions

- Allocate funding for professional development to libraries
- Allocate funding for digital resources
- Research, identify, and/or develop a repository for shared program materials
- Develop a shared programming plan
- Facilitate a staff sharing and/or exchange program

A session to develop a new IslandLink Library Federation Strategic Plan was held in conjunction with the 2019 Fall Board meeting. A new plan was developed for 2020 – 2024.

## **2019 Initiatives**

A full slate of shared programming was planned for 2019 and successfully accomplished.

Programs included:

- Author tour,
- Spring Break programming
- promotion of the Summer Reading Club
- Summer programming

IslandLink Library Federation has developed areas of funding support for member libraries. Support was provided to member libraries for:

- Collaborative Initiatives,
- Professional Development
- Digital Resources Support
- Staff Sharing

## **SECTION 2: Provincial Library Federation Priorities, Discussion and Examples**

### ***Provincial Priority 1: Improving Access***

The IslandLink Library Federation goal to support this priority:

- Allocate funding for digital resources annually

Outputs:

- IslandLink assigned \$15,000.00 from the annual budget to be distributed, according to a formula, to each member library. The formula is based on the one used to determine the initial Provincial Library Federation Grant funding. In 2019 all member libraries applied for and received their allotted Digital Resources funding to support the purchase of online resources.

- At the October 5, 2019 Board meeting, the Board agreed to contribute funds from the IslandLink reserves to assist Alert Bay Public Library to upgrade their computers.

Outcomes:

This program has been especially beneficial for the smaller member libraries. The funding has allowed them to license and offer a wider range of electronic resources to their communities.

The people of Alert Bay and Cormorant Island will have improved access to public library digital services. This was a project that Alert Bay Public Library was not able to undertake without the Federation's support.

IslandLink member libraries reached out to share knowledge and best practices with ABPL to help with the planning of their computer upgrade project

Support of digital resources in member libraries is an ongoing initiative for the Federation.

***Provincial Priority 2: Developing skills***

The IslandLink Library Federation has three goals that support this priority.

- Allocate funding for professional development
- Identify opportunities for ILLF supported knowledge sharing
- Facilitate a staff sharing and/or exchange program

Outputs:

- \$3000.00 was granted to Federation members to assist sending staff to library conferences
- \$1500.00 was granted to GVPL to support their in-house Staff Development Day
- \$1000.00 was granted to help support the Vancouver Island Library Staff Conference
- \$1841.28 was granted to Federation member libraries to allow on-site staff sharing opportunities

Outcomes:

This IslandLink initiative allows the staff of our smaller member libraries to travel to attend library conferences. They would not be able to access these professional development opportunities without the Federation's support.

Library staff were able to connect, communicate and share ideas with librarians and other professionals from across BC. Attendance at conferences allow staff to remain

connected with developments in other libraries, meet vendors and view the newest library products and technologies, and attend workshops with knowledgeable speakers featuring current initiatives in libraries today.

Approximately 200 GVPL staff members attended the All Staff Development Day on June 19, 2019. GVPL reported that the event met the objectives to provide time for staff to be together to:

- learn something new that can be applied on the job;
- continue to build camaraderie and understanding in a fun and informative way; and
- gain knowledge of the social climate and impact of the work done by GVPL in the community.

IslandLink has identified the annual Vancouver Island Library Staff Conference as an opportunity for knowledge sharing and as an event that is available for all staff of IslandLink member libraries to attend without any registration fee.

Newly hired staff from Alert Bay Public Library were able to travel to Salt Spring Island to receive training on the Sitka ILS. ABPL and SSIPL are the only member libraries that both use the Sitka ILS. ABPL staff were able to learn new skills and observe other library procedures and practices.

The Directors of Salt Spring Island Public Library and Powell River Public Library were able to meet in person to exchange ideas, knowledge and best practices regarding various library issues such as human resources, policies, services, and building care and maintenance. SSIPL and PRPL are the two Federation members that are closest in size and are both single building libraries serving remote communities.

### ***Provincial Priority 3: Collaborating on shared goals***

The IslandLink Library Federation is always mindful of the need to watch for, and take advantage of, resource sharing opportunities. IslandLink accomplishes this by communicating with our member libraries, other federations, other libraries, and the ministry

The IslandLink Library Federation has three goals that supports this priority:

- Develop a funding application process to support collaboration with community partners, other libraries and educational institutions
- Develop a shared programming plan annually

IslandLink also supports this provincial priority by working with the other Library Federations to benefit all BC libraries by providing a province wide Books for Babies program and negotiating preferred pricing contracts for library supplies.

## Outputs:

- \$3750.00 was granted to Federation members to assist them with programs for their communities that have been planned and presented in cooperation with other partners. These programs were:
  - For the love of stories: author readings for students; GVPL partnered with Surrounded By Cedar, School Districts 61 & 63
  - Write on the Rock, Salt Spring Island Children's Book Festival; SSIPL partnered with Theatre Alive
  - Patrick Taylor book launch; SSIPL partnered with Raincoast Books and Salt Spring Books
  - Death Tech: digital legacy planning; SSIPL partnered with Salt Spring Island Hospice
  - Victoria Festival of Authors; GVPL partnered with the Victoria Festival of Authors Society
  - Spring Break Comic Camp; PRPL partnered with the Powell River Literacy Office
- A slate of programs to be presented at all IslandLink member library locations is developed each year.
- IslandLink and the other Library Federations have established preferred pricing agreements for library supplies with LibraryPrint and Barmy Tech. Pricing agreements are made available to BC libraries for items such as: barcode labels, label protectors, EM security strips and overlays, and borrow cards, interlibrary loan mailbags. The IslandLink Manager has taken on the role of liaison for this project.
- The Federations negotiate a bulk purchase price for the Books for Babies materials and IslandLink coordinates the purchase of these materials for the member libraries. The IslandLink Manager has taken on the coordination of this project.

## Outcomes:

The libraries gain relationships with other organizations. A successful collaboration will lead to other opportunities to work together to share ideas and resources to the benefit of each organization and the communities they serve.

Member libraries can offer programming in their communities that they might otherwise not be able to make available.

The literature focused programs increase public appreciation and awareness of local authors and their understanding of the creative process. They also develop creativity in others and allow opportunities for advice and encouragement from published authors.

The Death Tech program was an opportunity for the public to be educated on an important issue that is not often understood or discussed.

Federation member libraries, and libraries beyond the Federation borders, all benefit consortium negotiated prices.

Federation member libraries, and libraries beyond the Federation borders, are able to offer the Books for Babies service to their communities. Families can expose their young children to books and music; and develop an appreciation for reading, the arts, and their local libraries.

#### *Provincial Priority 4: Enhancing governance*

The IslandLink Library Federation recognizes that clear and open communication between Board Directors, Library staff and the IslandLink Manager is key to good governance.

The IslandLink goal that supports this priority is:

- Increase ILLF communication by adding two meetings of Directors and ILLF Manager per year

#### Outputs:

- January 15, 2019 IslandLink Board meeting by teleconference
- October 5, 2019 IslandLink Board meeting, in person in Victoria
- The IslandLink Manager made on-site visits to Alert Bay Public Library, Powell River Public Library and Salt Spring Island Public Library to meet in person with staff and Board members.
- Strategic Planning workshop was held October 4 to develop a new strategic plan for the IslandLink Federation

#### Outcomes:

The Board meetings satisfy the requirement for 2 meetings a year as specified in the IslandLink Library Federation agreement. The Board reviews the ongoing work of the Federation and plans for the future to ensure that IslandLink continues to be a successful, well managed Federation. The Board meetings also provide an opportunity for Board members and Library Directors to network, exchange ideas and build relationships.

The onsite visits provide an opportunity for the IslandLink Manager to receive direct feedback from the Directors of the member libraries, the programming staff and the Board member. This feedback is imperative for budget planning, shared program planning and strategic planning.

IslandLink also recognizes the importance of maintaining a Strategic Plan. The strategic planning workshop, held in conjunction with the Fall Board meeting, resulted in the development of a new Strategic Plan that will provide guidance to the IslandLink Library Federation for the next five years.

### **SECTION 3: Summary**

2019 has been an exciting and successful year for the IslandLink Library Federation.

A successful slate of shared programming was made available to all member libraries.

Member libraries took advantage of the IslandLink project funding for Digital Support, Professional Development, and Collaborative Initiatives.

Three staff sharing events were planned by IslandLink member libraries. This staff sharing allows for the exchange of ideas and experiences, and to build relationships with colleagues.

There were two meetings of the IslandLink Board of Trustees. A teleconference meeting on January 15, and an in-person meeting in Victoria on October 5.

The IslandLink Manager made visits to all IslandLink locations during the year to meet in person with Board members, Library Directors and local programming staff.

A strategic planning workshop, held on October 4, was deemed to be a rewarding and positive experience, and resulted in the development of a draft Strategic Plan to guide IslandLink Library Federation for the next 5 years.

However, the IslandLink Library Federation does face challenges. Our member libraries are distant from each other and most require ferry travel. This adds costs to shared programming tours and to the in-person board meetings. There is not only the cost of the mileage and the ferry travel, but also travel is dictated by the ferry schedules which often restricts the ability to travel, so requiring an overnight stay that could otherwise be avoided.

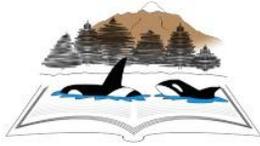
The IslandLink Library Federation is grateful to the Libraries Branch for our continued funding. 2020 is expected to be an exciting and successful year for IslandLink Library Federation. This year will be the start of the new Strategic Plan. A full slate of programming, projects and initiatives are also planned for the year.

Please contact the IslandLink Library Federation for additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Beswick, Manager  
IslandLink Library Federation

Approved by:  
Linda Rosen, Chair  
IslandLink Library Federation



IslandLink Library Federation Strategic Plan 2015-2018

**V i s i o n   S t a t e m e n t**  
**Libraries linking to lead, learn and collaborate to benefit our communities.**

**M i s s i o n   S t a t e m e n t**  
**To strengthen local libraries to provide services, resources and opportunities.**

**S t r a t e g i c   P r i o r i t i e s**

**Communications**  
 We believe that strong communication links between ourselves and with our communities can provide collaboration opportunities.

**Advocacy**  
 We believe that speaking with a strong united focused voice can enhance our collective ability to be successful.

**Training and Professional Development**  
 We believe that combining training resources can enhance learning and knowledge transfer across the federation

**Resource Sharing**  
 We believe that economies of scale and savings can be achieved by sharing resources.

**S t r a t e g i c   G o a l s**

Increase ILLF communication by adding two meetings of Directors and ILLF Manager per year; one in-person, one virtual.

Help libraries coordinate programs by holding two program planning meetings per year.

Develop a funding application process to support collaboration with community partners, other libraries and educational institutions by Dec. 2015.

Promote value of our libraries during BC Libraries Month through print and online media by Oct. 31, 2015.

Request support for continuous funding for summer literacy programs by Oct. 30, 2016.

Promote the value of Library Federations to all levels of government by March 2017.

Allocate funding for professional development to libraries annually by Jan. 15.

Conduct a needs assessment to determine future training priorities by Oct. 2016.

Identify opportunities for ILLF-supported knowledge sharing by June. 2016.

Allocate funding for digital resources annually by Jan. 15.

Research, Identify, and/or develop a repository for shared program materials by June 30, 2016.

Develop a shared programming plan annually by Nov. 15.

Facilitate a staff sharing and /or exchange program by June 30, 2018.

