

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Bowen Island 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](#)
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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).

Bowen Island is located in Howe Sound, a 20-minute ferry ride from West Vancouver. We have a population of approximately 4,200 with a recent shift to a higher percentage of year-round residents. Bowen library is a member of the Public Library InterLINK federation and serves the residents of Bowen Island, visitors, temporary workers, and students on the island, as well as public library InterLINK patrons visiting, staying or requesting materials from Bowen Library. The island has a public K-7 community school under School District 45, a private middle school accommodating 50 students in grades 6 – 9, a Distributed Education Program under School District 40, and several private preschools. The majority of secondary school students travel daily, by bus and ferry, to high schools in West Vancouver.

Bowen library is located in an historic building in the heart of our commercial district, just 100 metres from the ferry terminal. The library is a hub for community gathering and a source of information and leisure materials, public computers, Wi-Fi access, lendable medical equipment, as well as a place for study, work and resource sharing. Tutors meet their students at the library, tele-commuters come to our study space to work quietly away from their busy households, and library programs for all ages draw the community to learn, share, and engage with each other. Like all libraries and businesses in 2021, the greatest challenge for Bowen library has been the global COVID-19 pandemic. Bowen library has safely begun increasing opening hours and services through 2021, and by the end of the year we were open more hours than before the pandemic. The community and the library are challenged by a small tax base, no industry, a large percentage of the working population commuting off-island each day, and yet high expectations from community members for island facilities and services that are on par with those found in much larger neighbouring communities. Our municipality struggles with community desire for development of infrastructure and amenities, but an aversion to tax increases. Perhaps not a unique position, but in a small municipality with no industry it is even more of a challenge.

In October 2021 we began working on our next Strategic Plan, and we distributed a survey asking our patrons and community what they wanted from their library over the next few years. Those responses let us know that the community greatly values the library, still counts book collections as their most important priority, but also want more technology assistance and expanded collections and programs that offer learning opportunities for families, youth, and seniors. The 2022-2024 Strategic Plan guides the library out of the COVID-19 pandemic and back into modern services and offerings based on community need.

Strategic Priorities for 2022-2024:

- Being Nimble, Staying Current
- Connecting with the Community
- Access and Learning
- Creating Welcoming Spaces
- Effective Financial Management
- Social Responsibility

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
Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic and safely restarting services.
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
<p>Most library initiatives in 2021 were affected in some way by the COVID-19 pandemic. New services related to the health orders such as helping patrons register for vaccination bookings or printing and laminating vaccine cards were appreciated by the community. The library is the only public place on Bowen Island where community members can print documents, and therefore our facilities were often used in 2021 when the vaccine card program was implemented by Public Health. Additionally, staff guidance was valuable to patrons who needed to access up-to-date and accurate information on travel restrictions and other COVID-related updates.</p> <p>In 2021 the Bowen library focused on safely bringing back the services and programs most highly valued by the community. Through surveys and feedback library staff knew that community connections and library programming were missed, and that patrons were not interested in virtual options as much as events which safely brought people together.</p> <p>Events were organized that minimized the risk of COVID transmission while also providing learning opportunities and social connection. An example of this was the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation book giveaway which library staff ran throughout the entire day on September 30. Nearly 200 books were distributed throughout the day to children and adults; the books supported learning about the Residential School system in Canada, along with booklists and other resources. The event was spread out to encourage social distancing and to adhere to library capacity limits.</p>

Consistent in-person Storytime also returned in 2021 after a hiatus of almost one year. New families were able to connect once again through a registered program with capacity limits and physical distancing markers. The popular Tech Tutor program has shifted back to a model which offers both remote and in-person appointments.

Library services were also diversified to provide for a range of comfort levels and interaction. Take-out services continued throughout 2021 along with remote printing capabilities that allowed patrons to spend little time in the physical library.

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

Bringing back in-person services was highlighted as important to the community in various surveys and feedback tools. The overarching goal for the 2021 Strategic plan was 'to provide stability for our island community as an essential service during this uncertain and challenging time'. Through extended opening hours, a range of services for varying comfort levels, and assistance with Health Order requirements such as the vaccine card, the Library has been a pillar of support for the community in 2021.

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>Access to services such as early literacy programming, resources, printing, and the many other library offerings were missed in 2020 due to COVID-19. Throughout 2021 library staff worked hard to provide these services for the community once again.</p> <p>Bowen Island often has power and internet outages, and access to the island for Hydro crews can be delayed due to ferry service disruptions during storms. The library is located in Snug Cove which rarely loses power due to the proximity of the Cove to the underwater power lines that supply the Island. As more folks are working from home due to the pandemic, the library was a space they could go to if the power was out at their home. In fall of 2021 the library increased the opening hours for the public, and over the course of the year patrons began using the library more to study, meet, and work online.</p>
<p>2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>Library staff were trained on how to navigate public health portals and websites in order to find accurate information. Throughout the pandemic information changed very quickly, from updated health orders to rising and falling case counts. Staff at all levels have become proficient in locating provincial and federal information on COVID-19 and showing patrons how to find that information themselves.</p> <p>Opportunities for staff development shifted online due to the pandemic, which allowed more staff to access training webinars than ever before. In 2021 staff took online workshops on Indigenous awareness, diversity and inclusion, customer conflict management, and more.</p>

3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Throughout 2021 library staff were given guidance and training on how to navigate public health information and registration systems. Staff were then able to support patrons in accessing the services that they needed in response to the pandemic. Library staff showed patrons various ways to present the vaccine card, including printed and laminated versions for community members without smartphones. Staff also guided patrons through the health requirements necessary for travelling outside the country as mandated by the federal government.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	The Library Board and Director worked together to keep the library operational and responsive during the pandemic. The 2021 Strategic Plan highlighted the need to provide stability and services to the community throughout the year, and the Library Board responded by addressing new challenges together as a leadership team. New policies and plans were developed and implemented throughout the year that adapted services and offerings to provide maximum benefit to the community while also keeping staff and patrons safe.
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>As a result of library services, community members were able to access and save their vaccination cards which allowed them to support local shops, restaurants, and businesses that required proof of vaccination. Patrons were also supported by staff in booking vaccination appointments and were guided by staff in accessing public health information on the pandemic. As a result of library services some seniors were able to book vaccination appointments at their earliest possible date and were supported in the process by staff which resulted in less stress throughout the registration.</p> <p>As staff worked hard to safely bring back library services in 2021, the community was welcomed back to early literacy programs, book clubs, and Teen Advisory Group, to name a few. We have seen a great uptake in registration for in-person events, and look forward to providing even more opportunities for community connection in the future.</p>	
Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?	

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

Project/Program Name
Snug Cove Cultural Corner
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
<p>The Bowen Island Public Library Foundation, in partnership with the Bowen Island Arts Council, was awarded a Provincial CERIP (Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program) grant for the creation and landscaping of outdoor community space on the library grounds. The library and Arts Council worked together in 2021 to hire architects, engineers, and coordinate the construction which will begin early 2022. Both organizations are excited to expand the outdoor community space in Snug Cove (our island commercial centre) and provide a sheltered structure for library and Arts Council events such as art demonstrations, live performances, and author readings. South facing and with delightful views of Snug Cove Marina, the new space will be an aesthetically beautiful gathering place for all members of the community to relax, learn, share, and connect.</p>

How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
<p>Part of the library's 2021 strategic plan was to develop and deliver COVID-safe services. By expanding the useable outdoor space, the library will be able to offer community programming outside, thereby keeping attendees safe as we transition out of the pandemic. Through consultation and surveys, the library and Arts Council identified public priorities for cultural events and gathering spaces in Snug Cove. The Cultural Corner is a direct result of community need and fulfills the library's vision of connecting Islanders to each other and the world.</p>	
How does this project/program support the B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.	
<p>5. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	
<p>6. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>Overseeing this large project has built capacity for the Library Director in areas of project management, grant reporting, budgeting, and oversight of communications and community awareness.</p>

<p>7. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>Through the Snug Cove Cultural Corner, Bowen Islanders will have access to more events and programs that promote learning, connection, and engagement.</p>
<p>8. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</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>	
<p>The Snug Cove Cultural Corner will impact the community positively for many years to come. The Bowen Island Public Library will be able to offer events and programs in the new space that further the library's mandate, and the community will have more opportunities to gather and learn together.</p>	
<p>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?</p>	
<p>The grant application and project coordination were done in partnership with the Bowen Island Arts Council. The grant was awarded to the Bowen Island Public Library Foundation by the province as part of the Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program.</p>	

<p>Project/Program Name</p>
<p>Adoption of Bibliocommons catalogue</p>
<p>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</p>
<p>The library website integrated a new public facing catalogue, replacing the older search function provided by the BC Libraries Cooperative. This new catalogue system increases findability of our items, and creates a more user friendly, intuitive experience for community members looking for items.</p>

How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
<p>The Bibliocommons catalogue allows patrons to find digital eBooks, print resources, audiobooks, and other formats more easily. This change supported patrons in accessing library services from home during the pandemic, and made it more intuitive to find digital copies of items so that they did not have to physically come into the library.</p>	
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)	<p>The upgrades to our catalogue result in better search functionality for patrons and a more seamless transition between the library website and the search page. Shared digital resources such as eBooks are purchased through the library consortium, and are displayed clearly with options to access the material and place holds.</p>
10. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	<p>Staff were provided with in-house training as well as access to the Bibliocommons Learning Portal. Many of the large library systems in BC use Bibliocommons, and adoption of this catalogue brings Bowen Library in alignment with the larger library landscape and ensures staff are competent in searching across other library systems as well.</p>
11. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
12. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
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.	

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

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)	The implementation of the vaccine passport system was difficult for some members of the community who struggle with technology. The library played a key role in guiding patrons through the process to access their vaccine verification, and to then print out the QR code so they could continue to visit local restaurants and establishments and support the local community. Public Health Orders changed quickly and often during 2021, and staff were trained on how to find the most up to date resources from the provincial and federal government.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	During the June heatwave the Bowen Island library took on the role of emergency cooling centre for the Island. The library had extended opening hours and supplied staff in order to provide a safe, cool space for the community during the extreme weather event. This service was used by some of the most vulnerable members of the community. In the fall we extended our opening hours on Thursday evenings, and when the weather shifted those patrons also stayed longer in the heated and comfortable library spaces.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	Rising costs for software subscriptions, necessary supplies, and services such as accounting and courier have all impacted the library in 2021. The library also saw reduced revenue for room rentals and library fees due to limited in-person use. As part of the 2021 strategic planning process, the library Board will be prioritizing initiatives based on required funding and delaying other projects not possible with current revenues.

Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	The current housing crisis on Bowen Island has resulted in rapidly inflating rental prices. Library staff have had to move off-island, and are therefore subject to longer commutes and ferry delays in order to get to work. Staff mental health has also been impacted by the pandemic and the rapidly changing health orders that have guided services over the past two years. The library continued to offer a remote work policy and provides sick time for all staff.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	As a small island with few local services, Bowen Islanders often have to travel in order to get the health and community services they need. A local business that offered printing and office services closed down in 2020, and the library is now the only place for islanders to print, scan, and fax. In response to this need we have increased our printing capabilities by implementing remote printing.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	Internet services on Bowen Island are often interrupted, with some neighbourhoods out of service many days per year. With recent wind and snow storms many islanders were without internet for days. As pandemic restrictions ease, patrons are increasingly spending more time in the library to work and study. Library meeting room numbers have risen and many patrons are using the space to engage in online meetings, webinars, and other video calls. Simultaneous zoom calls put pressure on the library bandwidth.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	The main library building was constructed in 1926, and the single-paned windows and doors have not been upgraded. Throughout colder months staff rely on portable heaters at workstations, as the building is near impossible to heat effectively with the current electric baseboards. The library is looking for grants in order to make the main library building more energy efficient, as funding for upgrades will most likely not be available from the municipality.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	Although located in the heart of Bowen's commercial district, the library has limited parking and bus service. The building is wheelchair accessible but does not have accessible doors. The library applied for and was successful in receiving an Enabling Accessibility grant from the federal government in order to install accessible doors, a project which will be completed in 2022.
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	The Bowen library continues to be the only indoor space on the island that is freely open to all community members. Some patrons spend the majority of the day in the library reading newspapers, chatting with locals, and enjoying the library facilities. There are very few resources available to community members who are affected by homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues. It was challenging to enforce the Provincial Mask Mandate with some patrons who spent a lot of time at the library; however, staff did an excellent job at ensuring health orders were followed.

Other (please specify)	
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4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: March 25, 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: March 25, 2022