



IslandLink Library Federation Provincial Operating Grant Report for 2020

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 2020, in response to the expectations outlined in:

- the Federation's provincial funding letter dated March 31, 2020
- 2020 Provincial Library Federation Grant Report Instructions
- *IslandLink Library Federation Strategic Plan, 2020 to 2024* (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 (ABPL)
- Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL)
- Powell River Public Library (PRPL)
- Salt Spring Island Public Library (SSIPL)

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 358,280.

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, 2020 - 2024* document was completed in the Fall of 2019 and was approved by the IslandLink Board on January 22, 2020. A copy of this Strategic Plan is attached.

Our new Strategic Plan concentrates on three strategic priority areas:

- Capacity Building
- Professional Development
- Program expansion through partnerships

Actions developed at the strategic planning session in October 2019 are listed for each priority area.

Several actions from IslandLink's previous strategic plan are ongoing:

- Allocate funding for professional development to libraries annually
- Facilitate a staff sharing and/or exchange program
- Develop a shared programming plan annually
- Allocate funding for digital resources annually

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

2020 Initiatives

A full slate of shared programming was planned for 2020 but, due to COVID-19 all programs were cancelled or postponed.

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

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

However, also due to COVID-19, activity in these areas was greatly reduced, except for Digital Resources support. All IslandLink libraries received budgeted funds to support their digital resources plus, extra funding was made available in this area for e-book purchases and to assist Alert Bay Public Library with a computer upgrade project.

SECTION 2: Priorities as outlined in the Operating Grant Award Letter

1. Improved Regional and Local Shared Services Delivery

Related IslandLink Strategic Priority: Program expansion through partnerships
Supports Provincial Strategy #1: Improving Access for British Columbians
Supports Provincial Strategy # 3: Advancing Citizen Engagement

IslandLink Strategic Action: 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. In 2020 all member libraries applied for and received their allotted Digital Resources funding to support the purchase of online resources.

Extra funds were made available for the purchase of e-books as, due to COVID-19, member libraries identified an increased need for digital 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. These funds were made available to ABPL in February 2020 for the purchase of upgraded computers and printer.

Outcomes:

This program has allowed member libraries to license and offer a wider range of electronic resources to their communities.

The people of Alert Bay and Cormorant Island have improved access to public library digital services.

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.

IslandLink Strategic Action: Allocate funding to support collaboration with community partners, other libraries, and educational institutions annually.

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.

Outputs:

Funds were 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:

- Multilingual Juvenile Collection: PRPL partnered with the Powell River Organizing Against Racism & Hate Committee, to create a more diverse multilingual collection for the children's area.
- Halloween Spooky Walk: SSIPL partnered with Salt Spring Literacy and 10 local businesses to offer an event that would allow the local community to safely celebrate Halloween during COVID-19.
- Kenneth Oppel Zoom Book Club Reading; SSIPL partnered with a local bookstore to host this virtual author event.

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.

2. Improved Access to Professional Learning Opportunities for the Library Community

Related IslandLink Strategic Priority: Professional Development
Supports Provincial Strategy #2: Building Capacity

IslandLink Strategic Action: Identify a roster of “go-to experts” that members can contact for support and expertise on an informal basis.

Outputs:

GVPL shared their Librarian Portfolio Information document with all IslandLink member libraries. This document describes the areas of responsibility for each portfolio; and names the staff currently assigned to these positions. IslandLink Library staff are encouraged to reach out to these GVPL contacts if they need to consult with a colleague in these areas of library service.

Outcomes:

Expected outcomes are increased consultation between IslandLink Member Libraries, leading to improved services and procedures.

IslandLink Strategic Action: Deliver new distance learning sessions.

Outputs:

Two customer services focused online courses; ace the 3Rs and Moments of Power were shared with the Federations by InterLINK. IslandLink promoted these courses to member libraries and covered the registration fees for any staff who participated in the training.

Outcomes:

Several staff registered and completed these courses. Libraries will benefit from staff improved customer service skills.

IslandLink Strategic Action: Allocate funding for professional development to libraries annually.

Outputs:

Funding for Professional Development was provided to IslandLink member libraries:

- PRPL: Not Myself Today; online program to increase mental health awareness
- SSIPL: Pryor Training subscription; online live seminars and courses useful for administration

- SSIPL: Leadership Conference (Feb. 2020)
- SSIPL: Mental Health First Aid Training

\$1000.00 was granted to help support the Vancouver Island Library Staff Conference. This conference was cancelled due to COVID-19. IslandLink allowed the VILSC planners to keep this funding to be used for the 2021 conference.

Outcomes:

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.

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. IslandLink support for this conference helps to ensure it continued operation.

The IslandLink Strategic Actions: Facilitate a staff sharing and/or exchange program.

Outputs:

Staff from SSIPL offered a virtual training session for ABPL staff on the operation of the Sitka ILS.

Outcomes:

Newly hired staff from Alert Bay Public Library have improved understanding and abilities to use the Sitka ILS due to their training session with SSIPL staff. ABPL and SSIPL are the only member libraries that both use the Sitka ILS.

3. Service Expansion Beyond Community Borders

Related IslandLink Strategic Priority: Capacity Building

IslandLink Strategic Actions: Explore the viability of a new membership category such as “Associate Member” for neighbouring library systems.

Outputs:

IslandLink contacted Pender Island Public Library and Public Libraries Branch, to investigate the possibility of creating an Associate Member category

Outcomes:

IslandLink has established lines of communication and a relationship with Pender Island Public Library.

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:

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 is the 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 is the coordinator of this project.

Outcomes:

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.

4. Provincial Strategy # 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.

Outputs:

- January 22, 2020 IslandLink Board meeting by teleconference
- October 15, 2020 IslandLink Board meeting, by Zoom
- Performance Review of IslandLink Manager

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.

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.

Performance reviews of employees is key to good governance and results in many benefits to the organization. This process promotes and enhances the relationship between the Federation Manager and the Board, which ensures a productive collaboration.

SECTION 3: Summary

2020 has been an unusual year for the IslandLink Library Federation, our member libraries, and our communities.

We were unable to carry out many of our plans for shared programming, professional development, and collaboration as we were quickly learning to adapt to online alternatives.

However, Member libraries were able to take advantage of the IslandLink project funding for Digital Support, including funding support for Alert Bay Public Library computer upgrade project.

ABPL and SSIPL did a staff sharing virtual training session.

There were two meeting of the IslandLink Board of Trustees. A teleconference meeting on January 22, and a Zoom meeting on October 15.

The IslandLink Library Federation is grateful to the Libraries Branch for our continued funding. 2021 is expected to be a year of planning and adapting, but also exciting as we explore new opportunities and new methods of service delivery.

Please contact the IslandLink Library Federation for additional information.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Beswick, Manager
IslandLink Library Federation

Approved by:
Judy Nurse, Chair
IslandLink Library Federation



Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024

Approved January 22, 2020

Updated September 2020

Vision

Libraries linking to lead, learn and collaborate to benefit our communities.

Mission

To strengthen local libraries to provide services, resources and opportunities.

Strategic Priority Areas

1. Capacity Building
2. Professional Development
3. Program expansion through partnerships

Strategic Priority Area: 1. Capacity Building

Goal: increase the capacity of the federation to serve its members by creating new reciprocal relationships

Actions:

a) Explore the viability of a new membership category such as “Associate Member” for neighbouring library systems

Timeframe: to be discussed at Fall Board Meeting 2020

Success: New reciprocal relationships created

Status:

b) Collaborate with libraries on and adjacent to Vancouver Island to webcast or podcast segments of the annual Vancouver Island Library Staff Conference

Timeframe: 2020-2021

Success: Collective contributions extend the learning experience for federation members and neighbouring libraries

Status: This project was not supported by the VILSC committee as they felt in-person conference was important and central to their purpose. Also, they made presentations available online following the conference.

Since COVID 19 the VILSC committee has decided to do the 2021 conference online.

Strategic Priority Area: 2. Professional Development

Goal: create new professional development opportunities that are timely, cost-effective, and convenient to access for library staff.

Actions:

- a) Identify a roster of “go-to experts” that members can contact for support and expertise on an informal basis.

Timeframe: 2020; ongoing with annual updating

Success: list created and circulated by 2021

Status: Discussed at LDAG meeting. Decision that formal list was not needed as it would be an echo of staff directories. GVPL will make available a breakdown of their staff portfolios as they have the most specialists.

- b) Deliver new distance learning sessions (e.g. “ask a staff expert” by teleconference or Skype).

Timeframe: First session in 2021; ongoing

Success: a minimum of 1 session per year presented by staff from IslandLink member libraries

Status: Working with other Federation Managers to offer Online training sessions in 2021

- c) Capture key learning from (a) and (b) and circulate the results.

Timeframe: 2021; ongoing

Success: Survey library staff on an annual basis to determine perceived value of PD opportunities.

Status: To be developed with each distance learning session

Ongoing Actions from Previous Strategic Plan

- d) Allocate funding for professional development to libraries annually

Timeframe: ongoing

Success: Member libraries can increase the amount of professional development they can make available to staff and Board members.

Status: Funding is an established part of IslandLink annual budget and is accessed by member libraries

e) Facilitate a staff sharing and/or exchange program

Timeframe: ongoing

Success: Member libraries exchange ideas and learn from each other

Status: Funding for staff sharing/exchanges has been established in the IslandLink annual budget and has been accessed by member libraries.

Currently on hold due to COVID 19

Strategic Priority Area: 3. Program expansion through partnerships

Goal: increase the number of programs offered by IslandLink to its member libraries by expanding partnerships at no additional operating cost

Actions:

a) Coordinate access to high-quality exhibits and learning opportunities offered by BC GLAM sector (i.e. The Maritime Museum of British Columbia and the Royal BC Museum travelling exhibits, University of Victoria speaker series)

Timeframe: 2022

Success: More people served by IslandLink libraries have greater access to existing educational resources

Status: Not yet started

b) Contact local publishers in the IslandLink catchment area and request local author programs for IslandLink members

Timeframe: 2022; ongoing

Success: Member libraries have more opportunities to connect readers with BC authors and illustrators

Status: Not yet started

Ongoing Actions from Previous Strategic Plan

c) Develop a funding application process to support collaboration with community partners, other libraries and educational institutions.

Timeframe: ongoing

Success: Member libraries can increase the programs they can offer, take advantage of cost sharing, and establish partnerships with other agencies.

Status: Funding is an established part of IslandLink annual budget and is accessed by member libraries

d) Develop a shared programming plan annually

Timeframe: ongoing

Success: Member libraries can offer programs to their communities at reduced costs

Status: Programs are planned annually with input from member libraries. Costs are covered by IslandLink budget.

e) Allocate funding for digital resources annually

Timeframe: ongoing

Success: Member libraries can increase their digital resources to benefit their communities

Status: Funding is an established part of IslandLink annual budget and is accessed by member libraries.