

## 2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

### LIBRARY NAME

Okanagan Regional Library District

### 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](#)
- ☐ [4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL](#)

### 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).**

The Okanagan Regional Library (ORL), is one of the largest public library systems in Canada. The ORL is a Regional Library situated in the southern interior of BC, created in 1936, currently serving just over 400,000 people in a diverse geographic area the size of Ireland. The administration center/ head office is centrally located in Kelowna. The ORL provides service on-line, and via 30 physical branch locations. Our communities include some of the fastest growing urban areas of Canada such as those in the central Okanagan, as well as very rural and sparsely settled regions. Because of our natural beauty, thriving economy, and favorable climate our citizens include an above average percentage of retirees, and a rapidly growing number of college age and young entrepreneurs and families drawn by UBCO and thriving hi tech or other business start-ups particularly in the Central Okanagan.

Each year we deliver millions of service transactions thru providing access to physical and online material, connecting people to the web, providing community space, delivering programs and learning sessions, offering public use of and training on tech equipment, and referral to other resources and services.

We are governed by a 24 member board entirely comprised of elected councillors, mayors, regional district directors and elected first nation leaders. We have a staff of just under 275 employees totalling approximately 115 FTE. Our direct service points include 30 full service branches ranging in size from just a few hundred square ft to close to 40,000 square feet, one small pocket unstaffed location within UBCO Library, 2 active book deposits run by volunteer organizations, and of course our website.

2021 continued to be a challenging year during which we had to constantly adapt our operations to outside forces – particularly covid 19 but also forest fire threats in several communities and the impact of flooding in the Similkameen. In spite of these challenges, we were able to adjust to serve our communities with physical and virtual resources and even some in person programming.

Our annual operating budget is approximately \$20 million dollars. Approximately 92% of our funding comes from local tax revenues. Provincial grant funding has dropped to only about 5% over the past several years as the base grant funding has been frozen by the province for over a decade. The remainder comes from minor other sources such as fines and lost book charges or room rentals.

### 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.

<b>Project/Program Name</b>	
Peer Navigator program Kelowna partnership.	
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>	
Peer Navigator Pilot project which is based out of the Kelowna Downtown Library Branch in partnership with Urban Matters and the People Employment Agency. The navigators assist and interact with marginalized members of the community by providing a wide variety of services. Navigators are individuals with lived experiences on the streets. A large proportion of those they assist come from indigenous backgrounds and they assist them in connecting to resources that they need for connecting to government or other community services	
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>	
This is all about community and in particular being able to assist some of the most marginalized in our community in a manner that they feel comfortable with. It also is a partnership with other community organizations, so it helps connect various charitable and government social service groups to each other and the members of the community they are all trying to serve.	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>	
1. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	It is designed to connect marginalized citizens to Library services as well as other services in the community, This includes library collections and digital products.
2. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	

<p>3. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>This program assists individuals who are most marginalized, via working with folks coming from similar backgrounds, with determining services available to them and helping them as they work to access these services. It also helps them connect with other individuals who share a similar background so that they can find the supports that are needed.</p>
<p>4. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>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.</b></p>	

This was a pilot program. Several outcomes were noted including:

- We noticed marginalized individuals that previously were hesitant to come into the library or found it difficult to find assistance felt free to come to the library
- Partnerships with the various agencies were strengthened
- Peer navigators were able to develop skills, knowledge and confidence and they were able to strengthen their resume to help them get better jobs
- Some of those on the streets were able to get assistance finding accommodation or other supports that they required

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

Yes – the partners hired and trained the peer navigators and supervised them. The library’s role was to provide space and for Library staff to support them as needed. The funding was via federal grants to pilot the program in various places and with various groups in the community.

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<b>Project/Program Name</b>	
Access Services for Print Challenged Individuals (System wide)	
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>	
<p>ORL staff assist members of the public who have difficulties finding and using written materials to access resources in formats that they can work with. This includes working with CELA and NELS to source formats such as braille, daisy, or other spoken word options.</p>	
<b>How does this project/program support the library’s strategic goals and/or community?</b>	
<p>There is a significant proportion of the public who have difficulty with written materials. This could be because they were born with a congenital deficit, they lost their sight as they got older, or they had some sort of accident. There are also those who have difficulty reading for other reasons. All these folk can be very isolated and have often been marginalized or not served through regular programs and resources</p>	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.’s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>	
<p>5. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>This allows citizens who cannot access or have difficulty using written materials the chance to find materials in a format that they are able to access – including government services and also for learning and pleasure. It also connects them to others with similar challenges so that they can find support and companionship. One example was using our conference telephone line for them to have book-club meetings, as a telephone is something that they find simple to use.</p>
<p>6. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	

<p>7. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	
<p>8. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>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.</b></p>	

The key outcomes of this program are to allow previously isolated or unserved members of the public to have access to services and find information and they are encouraged to reengage in the community. They also are able to engage with staff and others with similar challenges

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

We do work in partnership with NELS and CELA – two national organizations that we support and are members of and have collections from who help provide braille and spoken word resources.	
<b>Project/Program Name</b>	
Creating virtual programming	
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>	
Because of covid 19 restrictions on events and meetings, very little in person programming could happen. ORL staff pivoted some of their time and energy to creating virtual programming instead, so that community members could still be engaged	
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>	
These virtual programs allowed community members to still engage in things like children story-times, book clubs, and other programming, and to remain connected to each other and to the library. This helps aid in learning and also in literacy, depending upon the program.	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>	
9. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	This allowed community members to still participate in programs that promote literacy and community and connectedness during a time that many were feeling very isolated and alone. It also allowed young children the chance to engage with ORL staff and with literature.
10. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	This also allowed ORL staff to increase their knowledge and skills in creating and delivering programming virtually



11. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
12. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>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.</b>	

The key outcomes for this project was to promote ongoing connectedness to the community when in person meeting was not allowed. It also allowed all members of the community regardless of vaccination status to participate. It ensured that supporting literacy of young children continued and that other literacy strengthening of adults as well as personal connections could continue. It also increased the outreach into our more rural communities where distance or size had not allowed in person programming to happen or to happen very seldom. During 2021 we measured a total of 2,194 views spanning 90 days from the date of a video being published using Google analytics (Youtube).

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

There were no partnerships involved in this

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

Project/Program Name	
Virtual Certification (system)	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
<p>This program allowed members of the public to undertake virtual training and certification so that they could have the skills and qualifications to utilize some of the new technology that we have in our makerspaces. Over the past 3-4 years the ORL has been creating makerspaces in several of its branches so that residents have access and exposure to new technology. This includes things like 3-D printers, sound booths/whisper rooms for audio recording and editing, and things like special computers with adobe suite for video editing and creation. Several of these pieces of equipment required completion of training and certification before the public were allowed to use them on their own. During covid, our staff were not able to provide this training in person, so alternate means of training needed to be developed so that this equipment could still be used.</p>	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
<p>The modern world requires that citizens have virtual literacy skills as well as the normal literacy of reading and writing. Learning how to use this equipment allows individuals of all backgrounds and socio economic status to become aware of this technology and to develop skills. It also helps to engage young people and those with other skills and interests who may otherwise not be able to learn in by traditional means</p>	
How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a> ? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.	
<p>13. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>This allows the public and staff to gain skills in using new technology to explore and create digital and audio materials. It also assists small entrepreneurs who may not have the funds necessary to purchase their own equipment.</p>

14. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
15. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
16. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>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.</b>	

This allows individuals, even those who do not live close to one of our makerspaces, to be able to do the orientation and to use or be ready to safely use equipment in our makerspaces. It allows them to be able to learn and complete the necessary testing on their own schedule. It makes it more available to others and we hope will increase the utilization of this equipment as things reopen following covid. We recorded a total of 162 cases of virtual certification happening in 2021.

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

No – though the creation of our makerspaces was generally done using donated money from friends of the library, or other community donors and partners.

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

Project/Program Name
Creation of Library of Things collection
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>
During 2021 we created and started to roll out late in the year a special collection for the public to borrow that we have named "Library of Things". To date, this includes Snap Circuit kits, birding backpacks, Sphero bolt and ipad kit, Ozobot ebo (small robot for learning how to code), Code and Go Robot Mouse, Microscope kit, Home energy kit (thermal imaging camera), and radon detector kits.
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>
These kits allow citizens to explore things such as learning how to code and learning about local birds or the microscopic world, to finding where homes can be energy improved or have high radon levels that need addressing. Although not all inclusive, the objective include: <b>Objective</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make STEAM technology accessible to all 31 branches and its customers</li><li>• Add a new and exciting circulating collection for all ages</li><li>• Foster digital literacy and learning</li></ul> <b>Opportunity for Impact</b> Learning – Learning for a variety of ages and skill levels with kits that are popular, durable and user friendly  Digital Literacy – Provide an opportunity for digital literacy accessible for all our card holders  Accessibility – Get STEAM tech out of Makerspaces and into the hands of our customers in the comfort of their own homes
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>

17. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	This collection broadens what is available to our citizens beyond simply the traditional books and virtual materials. These collections provide educational packages for increasing virtual literacy and programming skills, as well as tools to assist in identifying home efficiency weaknesses such as infra red cameras and radon detectors. Each package normally comes with instruction materials, books, and other guides.
18. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
19. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
20. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>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.</b>	

This project only started to be rolled out the last few months of the year, one item at a time so it is difficult to determine the outcomes until it has been running for longer. Because the number of items in each collection is very small relative to our system size, we only did a soft launch with little promotion so as to avoid large holds. We hope to start doing additional promotion in 2022 now that we have several items available and staff are getting more familiar with managing this different type of collection.

### Objective

- Make STEAM technology accessible to all 31 branches and its customers
- Add a new and exciting circulating collection for all ages
- Foster digital literacy and learning

### Opportunity for Impact

Learning – Learning for a variety of ages and skill levels with kits that are popular, durable and user friendly

Digital Literacy – Provide an opportunity for digital literacy accessible for all our card holders

Accessibility – Get STEAM tech out of Makerspaces and into the hands of our customers in the comfort of their own homes

### Evaluation

- Microsoft Forms Survey specific for each kit
- #ORLMakes campaign with social media which encourages the borrow to take pictures of them using the kits and share them with us!

Title of Kit	Launch Date	2021 Circulation Count	# Of Items in Circulation
Snap Circuits Jr	September	116	33
Birding Backpack	October	50	20
Sphero Bolt & iPad	October	27	10
Ozobot Evo	November	54	32
Code & Go Robot Mouse	November	22	19
Microscope	December	9	24
	<b>Total</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>138</b>

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



The radon detectors were supplied through a partnership with the BC Lung Foundation and the infra red cameras were a partnership with the City of Kelowna and Fortis BC

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

Project/Program Name	
Branch programming for Adults	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
For 2021 our adult programming had to be varied as covid restrictions varied. Limited programs were offered in person under strict protocols. Many more were offered via methods such as take aways (to be picked up in branch and done on own), and through virtual programs.	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
A significant goal of our system and a part of our mission is to connect curious minds and have learning, innovation, creativity, and a connected community. While this was challenged during the covid period, pivoting to new and diverse ways helped to keep these goals alive. In this sense, it also helped our goal of innovation and responsiveness. It required new skills and fresh thinking to pivot and adapt and embrace change that covid necessitated.	
How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a> ? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.	
21. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	Most of our adult programs supported allowing citizens to connect to resources and shared services. Some increased their ability to use digital collections. All assisted in them maintaining their connections to others and to the Library and their communities during a challenging period of time.
22. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	

<p>23. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	
<p>24. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>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.</b></p>	

For adult programs, in spite of covid, our branches were able to offer the following:

276 In person adult programs with 1,827 adults attending  
39 out of branch programs with 989 adults attending  
321 online live programs with 2,947 adults attending  
142 take away programs with 2,321 adults  
192 makerspace training programs with 203 adults attending

While attendance figures do not by themselves represent outcomes, they do indicate significant engagement with community members during a time when many were feeling very isolated and vulnerable. Feedback from residents included the fact that the library was a lifeline to them during a difficult time and often were the most significant interaction with others in their community that they were able to have since many of their other connections were restricted due to covid restrictions or concerns. We did do some surveys to start to collect qualitative data to help measure and improve our services, assess them and support planning, and determine what should be continued or developed and funded going forward. An example of several comments included:

Cyber Security Awareness - More virtual sessions like this - easier to access with busy workloads/schedules.

Summerland Adult Virtual Book Club - the small group discussions, i like hearing other people's perspectives, views and thoughts, the very welcoming staff hosting.  
I love having Book discussions with the library group. Zoom has been wonderful to keep this going during Covid - great job!

Virtual Mobile Meetup - By providing a handout prior to each session, I was able to explore the topic being presented that week and be better prepared. The information Bill presented was basic enough for me to follow and yet thorough enough that he touched on areas I could pursue after the session ended. The pace of the session was good, which enabled me to follow along on my tablet as he did his screen-sharing.

Board Game Design Workshop - the homework and links you sent out. So many are just a video and that's it, but I learned a TON from you and rethought my entire design strategy.

Make It: Designing for 3D Printing - I have really appreciated being able to do things like this with the library through Zoom because I live rurally and would not have been able to participate in it otherwise. So I hope the library will continue with virtual programs even after covid restrictions are a thing of the past.

Summerland Film Club - This is not a "learning" program, rather its intent is to pre-watch and then discuss movies. We find it very enjoyable and sometimes educational, depending on the movie that is selected. It's great to be able to share our views with others, and hear their opinions, which sometimes differ from ours! Using Zoom enables us to take part in programs that we wouldn't normally be able to, due to the traveling distances between each library in the system.

ORL is doing a fabulous job, with a wide variety of different programs being offered which we are all able to participate in, regardless of where we live. We sincerely hope that the Zoom option will continue to be offered when life “returns to normal”.

Paint the Okanagan Sky - It was very fun seeing other people on their videos. Appreciate that the video links are sometimes hard to work with, but Kaylee did a nice job overcoming the video issues at the start. I liked the short time commitment (1 hr). I joined from Summerland and my daughter joined from Victoria which was also fun! Thanks for this fun little program!

A Reading by Ivan Coyote - I liked the ability to participate from my home. I do not think I would have attended the event if I had to attend in person. The zoom platform worked well. The audio & visual from the presenter worked well. The topic was interesting & informative.

Ivan’s honesty. Although Zoom is not typically an intimate medium, they overcame that and it felt as though we were all present and together.

The intimacy of the reading was amazing - like the author is speaking directly to you. I have never done anything like this and was very impressed. I thought it was very well run. I was happy with everything and would love to be notified of other readings or similar like put forward by the library.

Online Coding Club - It is very nice to have the online resources and learning opportunities offered through the Okanagan Regional Library.  
Please keep them in the future.

H.O.W. 2 Get Organized with Eleanor Deckert - I really liked meeting other people who are interested in the same things I am interested in. It was very stimulating to know that we are all learning together... trying, mistakes, hesitating, and succeeding.

Suggested Summer Reading - Seeing friends of the library and getting a list of some interesting future reads. Thank you.

Mission Reads Book Club - The Book Club program is very interesting. I enjoy having a format to discuss what I have read. Especially during this time when my social circle is restricted. I will continue to participate once we can meet in person.

It takes me out of my comfort zone, and I’ve been introduced to many great books that I might not have picked myself. I enjoy being part of this program. I’ve been reading more than ever and appreciate the library being there for me. This certainly gave us something to do in the time of the pandemic.

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

Some programs were operated in partnership with other organizations in the community but most were just with the ORL.

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

**Project/Program Name**

Newcomers and English Language Learning

**Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.**

A few of our branches offered programming specifically for newcomers to our communities. Keremeos and Oliver branches offered space in the library at scheduled times for a community service worker to meet with community members who needed assistance (primarily in Punjabi), to find and access government or community services

Our Vernon branch operated other services to support newcomers and English learning. We specifically supported newcomers/ ESL community members in 2021 by:

- co-sponsoring an English Conversation Circle. This was held in the library and virtually and was facilitated by an ESL teacher from Vernon and District Immigrant and Community Services. This was held twice per week, every week in November and December and was aimed at adults.
- co-sponsoring a homework club for ESL/ new immigrant children in the community, ages 5 - 12 years old. It was facilitated by VDICS and teen volunteers and held in the library space weekly October - December.

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

Our strategic plan includes seeing the Library as the community living room, where community members can meet and access resources and services and just "be". This assists us in our goal of equity and community – serving diverse members of our community who may have difficulty with English.

**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.**

25. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	This helps newcomers to Canada and BC to be able to learn language skills and to also have assistance in integrating into the community and find needed information and resources.
26. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
27. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	This program assisted citizens who otherwise have difficulty accessing government resources have a safe and trusted place where they could come together and meet at scheduled times. This reached many members of our communities who otherwise were very challenged to understand how to navigate and access necessary services and resources.
28. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>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.</b>	

Key outcomes were that through a total of 88 programs, 706 attendees were able to get assistance through a community worker or were able to increase their English skills. This is critical for those in our communities who would otherwise be marginalized or would struggle to access the supports that they need to get integrated into Canada.

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

A key part of the program was partnerships with community services workers and organizations in the communities who could provide many of the services. The library assisted with offering space and material resources or access to the internet via our wi fi and/or computers.

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

<b>Project/Program Name</b>
Children summer reading club
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>
<p>Summer reading club has traditionally been a strong in-person program. Because of covid, we joined with the provincial virtual SRC programming but also supplemented with ORL special virtual programming, branch take aways and a few branch in-person events (using careful protocols and venues). The program involves children reading throughout the summer to keep up their literacy skills. This includes keeping a reading log, doing many activities, and achieving awards including medals and other prizes. There were also some special guest presenters and in person activities and takeaways to maintain interest</p> <p><b>Programs</b></p> <p>The Youth Services Committee recognized the need to provide online programs for all branches across the system. They worked diligently to create a rich and diverse offering of programs for our families. Branch staff supplemented the online programs with branch contests, displays and take-and-make activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All programs were online, allowing them to be delivered system wide. Every branch received posters, the Summer Program Guide and they were publicized through social media.</li> <li>• The programs were a combination of ORL Staff created and hired outside performers. There was always an ORL Staff present during programs.</li> <li>• The online programs were delivered using Microsoft Teams. Families registered through the ORL Events Calendar and then were emailed the link. This ensured an extra measure of security.</li> <li>• We offered 39 online system-wide programs with topics ranging from, ASL, Rainforest in a Bottle, Astronomy, Computer Coding, Puppet Shows, Engineering, Author &amp; Illustrator Visits and Dusting for Fingerprints!</li> <li>• Programs were offered June 19-August 19, 2021.</li> <li>• Program attendance was steady throughout the summer. Our best attended program was Magician Leif David with 205 in attendance!</li> </ul>
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>
<p>A key goal of the library and community is literacy. Statistics show that child literacy levels can fall off when they are not in school over extended breaks like summer. This program helps keep children learning and reading, having fun, and staying connected. It supports the work of the schools, and keeps children learning, discovering, creating and connecting which is one of the main goals of our strategic plan.</p>
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>



<p>29. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>This program helps children continue to access resources, maintain their reading skills which are all critical throughout life in being able to access services and participate in society.</p>
<p>30. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	
<p>31. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	
<p>32. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>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.</b></p>	

During this program, children were continuing to read and learn and thus avoid a loss in literacy skills. They also were able to have fun.

The ORL SRC offered 15 in branch programs which had 348 attend

There were 5 out of the branch programs with 636 attending

The primary programs were 150 online live programs with 5523 attendees, and 261 self directed activities which involved 4290 attending.

Including the passive the overall numbers were 434 programs with an attendance of 10,797.

As far as registered attendees are concerned, there were a total of 5,979 SRC registrations online and in person for summer 2021.

Considering the challenges of covid and little to no in branch programming allowed due to covid, this was a remarkable achievement which continued to have a positive affect on the literacy of the children who participated. It also represented a significant improvement from the first summer of covid in 2020 that was only online and had only 1,579 online and in person registrations.

This year we conducted a system-wide survey of Summer Reading Club participants. We received 176 responses. We asked customers to rate or answer:

1. My child/I learned something new from what we read or experienced

93% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree they learned something new.

2. My child/I enjoy(s) reading more

83% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree they enjoyed reading more.

3. My child/I read(s) more often

76% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree they read more often.

4. My child/I use(s) the library more often

78% of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree they use the library more often.

5. Did Summer Reading Club help your child/you reconnect with other people?

41%\* of respondents Strongly Agree or Agree they reconnected with people at the library.

\*COVID Restrictions were mentioned regularly by respondents as an obstacle to reconnecting.

*"Maybe not with other families like years past but it was so wonderful to see all the library staff!*

*We all loved seeing familiar faces 😊."*

6. What did your child/you like most about the program/service?

*"That it offered incentive for you. She felt a sense of accomplishment every time she finished a book."*

*"The bags of crafts and projects were a big hit for my 7 grand children who participated. Thank you!"*

*"Parent/child connection to read together was improved!"*

*"We liked that it was an excuse for us to read more."*

7. What could the library do to help your child/you continue to learn more?

*"More programs maybe, but you all have done an amazing job during the pandemic. I cannot thank you enough for all the crafts and the wonderful summer program. Thank you!"*

*"Once COVID restrictions end bring back in person programs/activities."*

*"Run the reading club year round, base it on holidays/seasons."*

*"Not much! We love the programs and the inter library loans. We are so lucky to have this space and library staff. They are very helpful and kind. Thank you!"*

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

The project was a partnership of the ORL with BCLA and the province, with support for some of the performers and prizes from friends of the library groups or local donations, and CUPE BC funded the reading medals.

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

Project/Program Name	
American Sign Language programming	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
<p>This program was run in conjunction with a local partner and funded by the central Okanagan foundation. There are 4 types of programs. There is a basics for youth and adults course, which during covid was run virtually from our library space. The deaf facilitator used a white Board and camera and computer to assist her in teaching ASL to those who are deaf or have hearing difficulties, and also those who are wanting to learn ASL. There is also a monthly ASL storytime which is run for both those with hearing challenges, family members of those with challenges, and community members who are trying to learn and improve their ASL skills. ASL Basics for Children and ASL conversations are the other two.</p>	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
<p>Serving individuals and families who have deaf or hearing impairments obviously assists them in being involved in and contributing to society. Sign language allows them to participate in conversations with others, to get basic information, and to feel much less isolated and alone. It is service in another language.</p>	
How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a> ? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.	
<p>33. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>The entire goal of this program is to assist hearing challenged British Columbians of all ages to be able to participate in the community and communicate with others.</p>
<p>34. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>Some staff were also able to assist and participate in the program to develop skills in ASL and relationships with families and individuals with hearing impairments or deafness.</p>

<p>35. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>ASL knowledge does provide an additional means of hearing impaired individuals to communicate with others to access services and resources and participate in the community.</p>
<p>36. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>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.</b></p>	

The outcomes of this program are increased knowledge and skills of participants in ASL – both for those who are hearing impaired, and for family members and other community members and staff who may interact with the hearing impaired.

During 2021 Rutland branch hosted 68 programs with 399 participants in spite of the challenges of covid-19.

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

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

<b>Project/Program Name</b>	
Circulation, computer access and internet connection and other statistics summary	
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.</b>	
Providing ORL ebooks and eaudio books, as well as physical books, magazines and other materials	
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</b>	
This is the basic service that the library continues to offer to our community. It is the basis of how we service the community to access diverse resources for learning, for pleasure, and for access to needed services.	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</b>	
37. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	Our wi-fi and books and materials even in covid were a focus of our services. In 2021 we were able to continue browse and borrow and virtual programs and services and continued to strengthen our wi-fi and internet connections
38. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	

39. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	
40. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>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.</b>	



Our key outcomes include

- ORL ebook and eaudiobook checkouts totalled 947,772 (2020 was 858,496)
- Books, magazines and other materials borrowed 2,239,467 (2020 was 1,628,760)
- Hours spent learning new languages via Rosetta Stone 1,673 (2020 1,540)
- Number of patron sessions using ORL wi-fi 327,090 (2020 296,271)
- Number of ORL use computers 355 (2020 358)
- Number of patrons walking thru doors 893,265 (2020 632,224)

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

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

### 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)	In 2021 covid 19 and the constantly changing protocols and regulations and the divisions within some of our communities over restrictions such as masking and vaccination status was one of our most challenging issues. In programming, it forced us to keep postponing plans for in person programs, and primarily do take aways, and create virtual methods. It took a lot of senior management time to constantly review and amend protocols and adjust health and safety for our facilities. And our staff were constantly challenged in enforcing the protocols by relatively small but very vocal groups of the public
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	During the summer, our communities were full of smoke and surrounded by fires. We were fortunate in that none of our branches were damaged, but we did have many of our residents whose homes were lost or impacted and many displaced people who we served in our communities. In the fall the floods affected our Princeton services. The building itself was spared, but staff had difficulty getting to and from the community safely, and the building was impacted without heat and water for quite some time
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	The library has continued to waive fines for late fees and been very tolerant with other fees. Meeting rooms have also not been rentable due to covid. The continued frozen funding from the province continues to put the pressure on the local governments to fund inflation and new services. Over the past 25 years provincial share of funding has moved from about 25% or our budget to only around 5%

Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	Staff mental health and wellness has been a challenge. Dealing with covid related issues (for staff personally, at home in families, and with stressed and angry people we serve in our communities) has led to staff stress. A few staff have had to resign or take leaves although most have soldiered on. We have created an active mental health task force who have tried to identify the largest issues and offer some resources. We continue to have challenges in filling key vacancies, particularly at the librarian level and see this increasing over the next couple of years, which puts stress on the remaining staff as we are very lean in our structure. We were largely fortunate in that though a large number of our staff did get sick with covid, it did seem to originate from the community and not from work. There were only a few occasions where we had to actually close branches due to lack of staffing, though we were operating very thin and close to it many times.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	Our community needs and challenges continue to increase. Homelessness and those challenged to find housing or meet their basic living needs is a huge concern. The opioid crisis continues to plague all communities but is especially noticeable in our larger urban centers in the central and north Okanagan.
Other (please specify)	

#### 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

*Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.*

Library Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 17-March-22

Board Chair Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 17-March-22