

2024 Library Federation Grant Report (LFGR)

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Overview

Federation Name

North Central Library Federation

Federation Profile

North Central Library Federation supports ten member libraries: Burns Lake, Cariboo Regional District Libraries (15 branches), Fort St James, Fraser Lake, Granisle, Mackenzie, McBride, Prince George, Valemount and Vanderhoof.

Executive Summary

Please provide an executive summary on the library federation's activities this past year. This should cover key operations supported by annual provincial funding, as well as planning and use of one-time/targeted grants, including the 2022 Grants for COVID-19 Relief & Recovery Grant (CRR), Emergency Planning & Preparedness (EPP) and the 2023 Enhancement Grant. The purpose of this section is not to duplicate the individual projects details, instead provide a short analysis and summary of your overall approach and progress. Please limit to 2 paragraphs and feel free to use bullet points.

Throughout 2024 the North Central Library Federation (NCLF) leveraged its partnerships with other federations and various service providers to accomplish key strategic priorities through a variety of activities, including:

- Building capacity: planned, coordinated and delivered a range of staff and trustee training, and launched a new "Peer-to-Peer" initiative for library directors. The latter initiative was funded by the Enhancement Grant, and has been met with enthusiasm from library directors, who have been able to network, discuss new collaborations and share resources with one another. Online training subsidies, funded by the COVID-19 Relief & Recovery Grant (CRR), have also enabled library directors and staff to feel better equipped for their work, building capacity and supporting libraries' professional development needs.*
- Sharing resources and increasing access: expanded the OverDrive Advantage collection budget and established a library staff-based selection committee; coordinated trials for new databases; contracted a high-profile summer performer to tour all NCLF libraries (funded by the Enhancement grant); provided Ryan Dowd training via InterLINK subscription, and Managing Hostile Interactions training (both funded by the CRR grant). The virtual speaker series programming (BC Libraries Present) this year brought to NCLF libraries an online program of indigenous speakers (also funded by the CRR grant).*
- Strengthening relationships: continued joint monthly online roundtables with the North East Library Federation, and annual in-person board and library director meetings; increased collaboration with other library federations on shared programs and professional development.*
- Governance, leadership and accountability: work has continued this year to ensure the federation is maximising its organisational resources; we promoted training opportunities to trustees provided orientations and consultation for all new NCLF trustees.*
- Emergency Preparedness work in 2024 focused on business continuity training (funded by the Emergency Planning & Preparedness Grant).*

Budget Information

Please outline the current status of your grant spending. This should include: Amounts received under each grant (annual operating, CRR & EPP, Enhancement) for 2022-2024 Amounts of each grant spent to date Operating budget for 2024 Amounts earmarked for upcoming projects Amounts remaining to be allocated

Grant Totals:

Annual Operating grant (2023-2025): \$268,170

CRR & EPP: \$62,000

Enhancement: \$135,000

Portion of Annual Funding Budgeted for 2024:

Annual Operating \$89,390

CRR & EPP: \$25,200

Enhancement: \$22,000

Spending to date:

Annual operating spent: \$178,780; earmarked \$89,390; remaining \$0

CRR & EPP spent: \$25,200; earmarked \$21,500; remaining \$15,300

Enhancement Grant spent: \$22,000; earmarked: \$77,000; remaining: \$36,000

CRR & EPP Grant - earmarked for 2025 projects:

- \$2,000 – NCLF communications, including website updating*
- \$10,500 – Professional development (core library skills; specialised training)*
- \$5,000 – Emergency preparedness initiatives (facilitated training)*
- \$4,000 - Virtual programming*

Total: \$21,500

Enhancement Grant – earmarked for 2025 projects:

- \$6,000 – Access to professional legal and/or HR consultant (year 1 of 2)*
- \$14,000 – Summer touring performer (year 2 of 3)*
- \$15,000 – Staff mental wellness training*
- \$5,000 – Ongoing professional development and training (year 2 of 3)*
- \$10,000 – Library director Peer-to-Peer initiative (year 2 of 3)*
- \$2,000 – Trustee and Board development (year 2 of 3)*
- \$25,000 – Explore NELF/NCLF merger*

Total: \$77,000

Major themes

Use the checkboxes below to indicate which areas your federation primarily focused on this year. These themes should be reflected in the Featured Initiatives section starting on the next page, and/or in the Executive Summary above. We recommend choosing only the top 3 most relevant themes.

Shared service delivery (e.g. consortium licensing, resource sharing)

Professional learning (e.g. training opportunities, conference planning)

Streamlining financial, administrative, legal support, human resources, shared services

Featured Initiatives

Use this section to provide detail on up to four significant initiatives the federation has undertaken in the past year. Use one page per initiative. To add more pages, select Yes for "I have more initiatives to report" at the bottom of this page.

Initiative Title #1

Enter a brief, descriptive title for your initiative.

Peer-to-Peer Initiative

Summary

Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.

The Peer-to-Peer initiative, funded by the Enhancement Grant, has enabled library directors to travel to meet with one another to network, share resources, and collaborate on shared goals and outcomes – further strengthening NCLF as a federation and building capacity. While some library directors conducted one-to-one visits with another member library, at Burns Lake Public Library a peer-to-peer mini-conference brought together library directors from across the federation for knowledge exchange, professional development and peer support. Peer-to-Peer funding reimburses travel, accommodation and wage replacement, as required.

Timeline and Progress Report

What is the expected timeline for this initiative? What is the current status (e.g. planning, implementation, complete, ongoing). If you have reported on this initiative previously, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?

The Peer-to-Peer initiative is ongoing and will continue until the exhaustion of the funding. It has so far been a resounding success - we have heard nothing but positive feedback from library directors, who feel better equipped for the challenge of public library directorship from their experience of networking with peers. The only obstacle will be in the future; namely, how to continue this initiative if the federation does not receive further additional funding.

Rationale

Why was this initiative prioritized? Comment on how this supports core operational functions, specified strategic goals, priorities identified in your grant award letter, and/or emerging member library needs.

Library directors expressed a need to build stronger connections with one another. The Peer-to-Peer initiative expands library director knowledge in all aspects of leadership and library management, and strengthens the regional network of 'go-to' colleagues for support and advice. This initiative supports a strategic priority shared by both NCLF and the PLB, which is to build capacity.

What impacts does/will this initiative have on the federation, member libraries, and/or communities?

Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.

Feedback from library directors suggests this initiative meets its stated goal of building capacity. Supported by monthly roundtable discussions with the North East Library Federation, the Peer-to-Peer initiative has increased regular communication between library directors both within the federation and between NCLF and NELF. Library directors have reported feeling better supported and more confident in their abilities and decision making following these peer meetings.

I have more initiatives to report

Yes

Featured Initiatives

Use this section to provide detail on up to four significant initiatives the federation has undertaken in the past year. Use one page per initiative. To add more pages, select Yes for "I have more initiatives to report" at the bottom of this page.

Initiative Title #2
Enter a brief, descriptive title for your initiative.

Summer Reading Club Tour

Summary
Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.

Using CRR funding, in 2024 the North Central Library Federation brought in popular children's magician and entertainer Leif David for performances at 12 NCLF library branches. Each performance generated record numbers of attending children and their families, and encouraged active participation in the BC Summer Reading Club. This initiative was a collaboration with the North East Library Federation.

Timeline and Progress Report
What is the expected timeline for this initiative? What is the current status (e.g. planning, implementation, complete, ongoing). If you have reported on this initiative previously, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?

This project is ongoing. We are bringing in another high-calibre performer (Pico's Puppet Palace) for a summer tour in 2025 (once again, funded by CRR). This tour will visit 12 NCLF library branches and will also be a collaboration with the North East Library Federation.

Rationale
Why was this initiative prioritized? Comment on how this supports core operational functions, specified strategic goals, priorities identified in your grant award letter, and/or emerging member library needs.

To strengthen interest and engagement in libraries during the summer through special events. Building capacity, by providing quality children's programming for libraries. This initiative supports a strategic priority of the NCLF to share resources and strengthen access, as well as the shared NCLF/PLB strategic priority of building capacity.

What impacts does/will this initiative have on the federation, member libraries, and/or communities?
Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.

Hundreds of children attended the performances across the federation's libraries. The impact of these shows includes a heightened library profile in local communities and media, increased customer perception of library services, and promotion of libraries. One of Leif's tricks involves "magic" library cards, which encouraged children without library cards to join their local libraries. The BC Summer Reading Club was also endorsed as part of the performance, which directly increased participation for 2024.

I have more initiatives to report

Yes

Featured Initiatives

Use this section to provide detail on up to four significant initiatives the federation has undertaken in the past year. Use one page per initiative. To add more pages, select Yes for "I have more initiatives to report" at the bottom of this page.

Initiative Title #3

Enter a brief, descriptive title for your initiative.

BC Libraries Present

Summary

Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.

A collaboration of BC's Library Federations, the initiative provides all BC libraries access to readings from high-profile authors. The virtual speakers series is modelled on the Illinois Libraries Presents program. The federation directors met regularly to identify vision, goals, and ways to adapt the ILP initiative to a BC library landscape, to establish the working committees, and to determine the budget. Federations sought committee volunteers through their own member libraries to ensure regional representation.

Timeline and Progress Report

What is the expected timeline for this initiative? What is the current status (e.g. planning, implementation, complete, ongoing). If you have reported on this initiative previously, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?

The first series took place in fall, 2023, featuring three well-known authors speaking on the theme of climate change. The 2024 program featured conversations with, and readings from, three leading indigenous authors (Alicia Elliott, Katherine Vermette and Jessica Johns). For some rural northern libraries, the lack of reliable internet prevents interested patrons from participating in online programs.

Rationale

Why was this initiative prioritized? Comment on how this supports core operational functions, specified strategic goals, priorities identified in your grant award letter, and/or emerging member library needs.

The series was identified as a priority because of the growing prevalence of online programming stemming since the pandemic. It creates an equal programming opportunity for libraries regardless of size or budget, and as a virtual program it allows libraries to extend their reach to more rural areas and patrons. The initiative fostered collaboration on the steering and programming committees, and creating a new and innovative program that highlights the importance of libraries. This initiative also supports the shared NCLF/PLB strategic priority of building capacity, as well as the NCLF strategic priority of increasing access, since in many smaller northern communities, opportunities to hear authors speak about their work are not often forthcoming.

What impacts does/will this initiative have on the federation, member libraries, and/or communities?

Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.

For northern libraries, and particularly those in smaller communities, the initiative provides access to authors who would otherwise be cost prohibitive. The program raises the profile of the library in the community, attracts new audiences, and allows each library to extend the experience through such in-person programming as themed book group discussions.

I have more initiatives to report

Yes

Featured Initiatives

Use this section to provide detail on up to four significant initiatives the federation has undertaken in the past year. Use one page per initiative. You have reached the maximum number of reportable initiatives.

Initiative Title #4

Enter a brief, descriptive title for your initiative.

Core Library Skills (Ongoing Professional Development)

Summary

Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.

Federation directors have been collaborating on building a suite of core skills courses available to library staff and trustees on an ongoing basis. Work has included developing administrative processes, researching vendors, and negotiating rates.

Timeline and Progress Report

What is the expected timeline for this initiative? What is the current status (e.g. planning, implementation, complete, ongoing). If you have reported on this initiative previously, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?

The COVID grant supports the streamlining of professional development to encourage stronger participation by library staff. All registrations are covered by the grant, a registration portal has been set up on the Kootenay Library Federation website, and all administrative functions take place between InterLINK as the registrar and each federation.

New courses and training content are continually added. The initiative will be part of province-wide discussions in 2025 on creating a professional development framework for BC public libraries.

Rationale

Why was this initiative prioritized? Comment on how this supports core operational functions, specified strategic goals, priorities identified in your grant award letter, and/or emerging member library needs.

The NCLF Strategic Plan 2024-2026 includes the goal of ongoing professional development under its priority of building capacity. The courses support new staff onboarding in libraries, addressing ongoing training needs in response to current service trends. Courses currently offered include:

- Indigenous Awareness and Indigenous Relations*
- Safe Harbour Diversity and Inclusion*
- Customer Service Training*
- Privacy Guidelines Training*
- Autism*
- Ryan Dowd's Homeless Training*

What impacts does/will this initiative have on the federation, member libraries, and/or communities?

Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.

Since its launch, more than 60 NCLF learners, including staff, library directors and trustees, have taken a variety of courses through this initiative. The Indigenous Awareness course has been especially well-received by participants. These courses will continue to be promoted to NCLF libraries.

You have reached the maximum number of reportable initiatives. Click Previous Page to edit your initiatives, or Next Page to proceed to the following section.

Board Approval

Download the board approval signature form from the Public Libraries Branch website here: <LINK>

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Upload Board Approval Signature Form

Board Approval NCLF LFGR 2024 signed.pdf

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