

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

Lillooet Area Library Association

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 Lillooet Area Library Association (LALA) provides public library services to residents of the District of Lillooet, Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) Areas A and B, and the six Northern St'át'imc communities T'it'q'et, Ts'al'áh, Se'kelwas, Xwisten, Xaxli'p and Ts'k'way'laxw. We operate three branches in Lillooet, Gold Bridge and Shalalth (Ts'al'áh) at the Bridge River Power Site. We provide outreach services to communities without a branch. Our service area extends through a large rugged territory with a population of approximately 4250 people.

LALA operates on unceded St'át'imc Territory. The St'át'imc people compose approximately 50% of the population. The Lillooet Tribal Council, St'át'imc Government Services and the Band Councils of the six communities are important local government bodies. LALA works with diverse St'át'imc organizations to offer relevant programming. One of the four goals of our current Strategic Plan is "Action on Reconciliation". This means: nurturing relationship with St'át'imc communities and learning from St'át'imc culture by; practicing humility; seeking connections and partnerships with St'át'imc governments and service providers; honouring St'át'imc culture in LALA's programs, services and spaces; identifying and removing barriers to St'át'imc representation in LALA's staff and board.

The spring and summer of 2021 was a season of rolling crisis. Everyone in this area was affected by the announcement that ground penetrating radar had confirmed what was an open secret to many; there are unmarked graves at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. Many St'át'imc people attended this school and the news hit the community like a freight train. For people in the non-indigenous community this was a shared experience of intense grief, which brought home the reality of this recent history. There were days of open mourning. Now it is a slow process of continued uncovering and the work of healing and restoring justice.

The heat dome was terrifying. Shelter from the heat was a serious issue, LALA staff provided support for the cooling centre. The existential weather culminated in the destruction of the neighboring village of Lytton and sparked unprecedented forest fires that threatened all summer. LALA staff assisted in the spontaneous community support that arose immediately upon the refugees arriving in Lillooet. We provided access to residents and travellers who were stranded by the fires, and later by the autumn flooding.

The biggest change is that everything is changing. LALA continues to serve through pandemic, fire and flood. We strive to help the people and communities we serve to develop resilience and find new ways to respond to changing political, ecological and social conditions as they evolve.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year.

Project/Program Name	
Art on Loan Program	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
Eighteen prints of unique works of art donated by diverse local artists are available for patrons to borrow. View the collection here: https://lillooet.bc.libraries.coop/art-on-loan/	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
This original project took the idea of providing art for loan to a higher level. By engaging the creative talent of local artists this project makes a new space for these artists to highlight their work, it encourages patrons to be creative and consider putting their own work into the public sphere and it brings art into homes that would not otherwise be able to afford it. Art on loan hits multiple points in the LALA Strategic Plan; accessibility, creativity, inclusivity, responsive service, honouring St'at'imc culture and enhancing patron experience.	
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.	
1. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Access to original art helps foster joy and curiosity. Each work includes an artist statement which invites the borrower to reflect on their own relationship to place, history and creativity. The works include a wide range of images and styles that reflects the diverse visions and voices of this area.
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.	
The program was launched at the very end of 2021. The works are being borrowed by different kinds of patrons. Appreciation has been expressed for making art available to everyone. Other artists have approached the Library offering their works for future expansion of the collection.	
Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?	
Local artists donated their work free of charge and collaborated with staff to design the format for reproduction. Cataloguing work was completed by a professional cataloguing librarian from an academic library, also as a donation. The project was a core budget expense.	

Project/Program Name

Gold Bridge Public Library renovations	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
The Gold Bridge Public Library received a new floor and paint job. The project provided the opportunity for thorough weeding and careful re-shelving of the entire collection. A letter of understanding has been signed with the Bridge River Valley Community Society Heritage Committee to create a heritage display in the newly opened space.	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
The LALA goal of providing welcoming community space was moved miles with this project. The Gold Bridge Public Library was graced with a 25-year-old industrial carpet that had seen many better days. The space was crowded and cluttered. The renovations have brightened the room and made space to feature the collection, have a comfortable reading nook and feature a heritage display. There is more space available for public use, and a new TV for public events. In the tiny community of Gold Bridge, the Library is one of the only free public spaces, it is important that it be a clean, safe environment that welcomes everyone who walks through the doors.	
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.	
2. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	The Gold Bridge Library is the only public access point to the internet in the village.
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	The heritage display will help locals and visitors learn more about the area, new AV equipment enables residents to access library events, reading nook welcomes patrons, and is a space for groups to meet and library programs to take place.
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.	
Patrons are happy with the new look; as pandemic restrictions ease the community looks forward to finding new ways to use their Public Library.	
Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?	
The building is owned by the Squamish Lillooet Regional District, who paid all expenses for the floor. School District 74 donated the Gold Bridge Community School to house the Library articles while the renovation was happening. Local people volunteered to cart boxes and furniture, make lunch and provided other support to help complete the work.	
Project/Program Name	

Strengthening St'át'imc Education Through Community and Culture	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
Community focussed life skills training provided in contemporary St'át'imc cultural context. Informal cultural and language teaching programs offered to all community members, healing conference to address the ongoing effects of the residential school era and to support community members educational and healing journeys.	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
This project has helped the Lillooet community take action on reconciliation and brought St'át'imc culture into LALA programs and spaces.	
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.	
Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Activities like the outdoor medicinal plant walks, physically distant drumming circles, paint your own orange shirt workshop provided opportunities to learn, practice St'át'imcs and develop shared understandings of what reconciliation means.
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.	
Over 800 people from both Indigenous and non-indigenous backgrounds participated in teaching and healing workshops. Handmade Orange Shirt designs are seen around the community. The project had a positive impact on the community and individuals by creating diverse opportunities for individuals and families to come together and share their stories and knowledge, to celebrate and honour St'át'imc educational traditions and process the past. Elders from 5 of the 6 Northern St'át'imc communities provided workshops and sharing circles for their communities. All healing and culture workshops incorporated language and cultural elements.	
Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?	
This project was fully funded by the Native Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund. It was conceived and delivered in partnership with the Lillooet Tribal Council, Community Adult Learning Centre (CALC). The Lillooet Friendship Centre Society Food Bank worked with the CALC Camp Cook Program to deliver two community drive through meals to celebrate National Indigenous People's Day.	

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.

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
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	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)	Staff burnt out on organizing in person events, as protocols changed so often and each time an effort was made the outcome was either cancelling, or making last minute changes. We focussed on out-door and virtual programming.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	The heat-dome, fire season and autumn flooding affected everyone on multiple levels. More than ever we are aware of the different kinds of lifeboats people are sailing in, and that the Public Library has a crucial role to play in connecting people to the help and information they need to survive and thrive.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	LALA is in a fairly comfortable financial position, but careful future planning is required to ensure we stay healthy in light of increasing inflation.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	Staff are tired, the team agreed to strive for maintenance of core service while meeting the extenuating challenges of the year in a conscious effort to make space for contemplation and restoration. It has helped over all mental wellness to avoid big innovative goals and new learning curves. Recruitment for a part-time permanent Children's services position at the Lillooet Branch has been difficult, and the position remains vacant.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	The Lillooet Health Clinic nearly closed in 2021 when the physician owner retired. Interior Health has been working with local government to create a new model for primary health care delivery.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	Connectivity continues to be an issue at all three branches. Both Gold Bridge and Lillooet are expecting upgrades to community infrastructure that will improve connectivity. Many patrons do not have internet at home due to either poverty, or technical limitations due to geography.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	All three of LALA's branches are housed in aging buildings. We have three landlords; the District of Lillooet at the REC Centre (Lillooet Branch); Squamish Lillooet Regional District (Gold Bridge) and B.C. Hydro (Bridge River). At the two outlying branches the space is provided gratis, in Lillooet LALA has a five-year lease expiring on Dec. 31, 2023.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	The only public transportation in the LALA service area is a twice weekly health bus to Kamloops. At the Bridge River Library, the Community Librarian regularly delivers materials to housebound patrons.

Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	There is a serious affordable housing crisis in our area, increasing numbers of people camp in the bush around Lillooet and use the Library as their main communication access. We provide 24/7 Wifi access at the Gold Bridge and Lillooet Branches in order to help people access free internet when they need it.
Other (please specify) Residential School Legacy	As more people understand the history of Residential Schools there are increasing efforts to address the injustice, and heal the on-going harms which are direct outcomes of a history of systemic racism. LALA continues to work with community partners to develop services and programs which serve this process.

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: Copy - Original signed by Director

Date: March 31, 2022

Board Chair Signature: Copy - Original signed by Chair

Date: March 31, 2022