

**2023 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)**

**LIBRARY NAME:**

Nakusp Public Library Association

**CHECKLIST**

For the PLGR to be considered complete, please ensure you have provided information for each of the following sections. 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](#)
- [2. FEATURED INITIATIVES](#)
- [3. CHALLENGES](#)
- [4. BOARD APPROVAL](#)

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**Library and Community Profile** – provide a brief description of your library and the community it serves (e.g., demographics, local economy, governmental relations, historical context, current issues, etc.).

Nakusp Public Library serves the rural communities of Nakusp and area in the West Kootenay, located in southeastern B.C. We serve a large geographical area which includes citizens within and outside of our special taxation area stretching from Arrow Park to Summit Lake to Galena Bay in Regional District of Central Kootenay Area K, and the Village of Nakusp.

In 2023 we saw a continuation of the trend of the past few years with many new people moving into the library’s service area, many of whom were looking for a more affordable place to buy a house and live. A significant number of new members signed up, in addition to regular renewals of memberships both inside and outside our taxation area; those living outside this taxation area pay a small subscription fee each year.

This year was financially challenging for many people, and we had an increase in the number of under- or unhoused people accessing the library as a warm space of refuge. Along with an increase of library use by under-resourced people there was a need for more skill in de-escalating conflicts among patrons and creative problem-solving to address patron needs. The Library has made training for staff in this area a particular priority. Although we are certainly not in need of social workers like larger libraries, it is important for our staff to be

skilled, knowledgeable of available resources, and to feel supported in their work with the public.

**2023 Year in Review** – Highlight activities and accomplishments that the library has focused on this year. Briefly outline how library funding (local, provincial, annual, one-time/targeted) has been used or earmarked for library services and/or special initiatives to meet community needs.

The Nakusp Public Library continued to see an increase in the use of the library space for a wide variety of activity: musical classes for babies and their parents, homeschooling groups, elementary class visits, several book clubs, writing workshops, chess and other games, Death Cafés, youth groups, writing groups, exam proctoring, knitting club, mindfulness meditation, seed exchange, crafternoons, matinee movies, information seminars like Bear Aware and, of course, library board meetings. Many of these were weekly meetings, in addition to singular library events such as readings by visiting authors, Poetry Night, and Writers’ Coffeehouse. We continue to receive new requests from potential volunteers, and for partnerships with community organizations such as community services and the schools. It is clear that the library is becoming more of a community hub.

We were able to continue to increase our hours of operation, this year thanks to the one-time Covid Relief and Recovery Grant funding. For the sake of the sustainability of the library, we have been prioritizing wages and training to retain our precious skilled staff. Although we had a senior staff member retire at the end of April, we were fortunate enough to hire two young staff people – one in a temporary capacity and the other in a permanent part-time position which has already been a great benefit to supporting staff who need time off work. They bring with them quick minds and technological knowhow inherent in their generation. It is also an exciting opportunity for the young staff to see if they may be interested in continuing in the field of public librarianship as a skilled career.

Thanks to a grant from Columbia Basin Trust and in partnership with the Village of Nakusp, the library was able to contract the replacement of the roof for the library/museum facility. We were also able to purchase LED lightbulbs to replace the energy-intensive halogen bulbs in our library.

In 2023, we were approached by New Denver’s Reading Centre (now North Slokan Community Library) and a council member to explore providing library services to them. That had led to ongoing discussions and to determine if a service agreement between the two organizations would be feasible.

The library staff are proud to be an important part of our thriving and active community. It is a great joy to share our collections as well as host events and programs, and we look forward to introducing more of all of these to our patrons and visitors in the coming year.

## 2. FEATURED INITIATIVES

Please describe any significant initiatives the library has undertaken in the past year, focusing particularly on use of the 2022 COVID-19 Relief & Recovery (CRR) and Emergency Planning & Preparedness (EPP) Grants, and plans to use the 2023 Enhancement Grant. To report on multiple initiatives, “copy” the blank table below and insert additional tables as needed using the “paste” function. Use one table per initiative.

<b>Initiative Title</b>	
Expanded hours	
<b>What is the nature of this initiative?</b> (both may apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> New targeted initiatives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting/enhancing existing operations
<b>Area of Operations</b> (select as many as apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basic operations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salaries & benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Lease & utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Collections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-house patron software/hardware <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loanable hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Staff software/hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Connectivity
<input type="checkbox"/> Facility upgrades	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Library programming
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic planning and governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff development
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Community outreach
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):	
<b>Social Impact</b> (select as many as apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental sustainability, climate action
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mental health and wellness	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation and Indigenous relations
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):	
<b>What is the status of this initiative?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning/research stage	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation in progress
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ongoing as part of operations
<b>Is this a multi-year initiative?</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Summary</b> – Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.	

Public hours were extended this year so that the library was open every second and fourth Wednesday until 7 p.m. Last year, the library was open Tuesday – Saturday 12-5, and the year before that hours were Tuesday – Saturday 12-4.

**Progress Report** – If you have reported on this initiative in a previous year's PLGR, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?

We continue to make expansion of our hours of service a priority, while ensuring the safety and mental health of staff and therefore ensure no one works alone; we have two staff working during open hours at all times.  
Due to the additional hours being supported by one-time grant funds, at this juncture we are unsure how we will sustain this level of service, much less increase it. We know there will be a point in the future when we may not have the financial resources to staff more open hours, or to hire, train, and retain additional library staff unless we secure an increase in annual funding.

**Budgetary Information** – please outline whether/how provincial funding (annual or one-time/targeted e.g., CRR, EPP, Enhancement Grants) contributes to the estimated cost of this initiative.

This year, Covid money was used to support more hours, and the Enhancement Grant has enabled the Library to make the decision to open every Wednesday until 7 p.m. in 2024. However, whether these hours will continue once the one-time funding is gone is unlikely unless there is an increase to the annual funding the library receives. In order to somewhat support increased service levels going forward, interest earned from bequests will be rolled into staffing as was decided before the current Provincial grants were received.

**Rationale** – Why was this initiative prioritized? (e.g. fulfilling commitments under strategic plan, responding to emergent community need, availability of funding, etc.)

The library wanted to offer hours for people who work a Monday-Friday schedule, a sector which would have only been able to access the library during our Saturday hours.

**What impacts does/will this initiative have on the library and/or the community?** Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.

These hours give an evening option for patrons, taking into consideration usage during evening hours offered in previous years. In years past, staff found patron traffic dropped off steeply after 7 p.m. If we receive requests for more public hours, we will have to determine how to offer them with the health and safety of staff as first priority, and within our limited budget.

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

<b>Initiative Title</b>	
Training, retention and support of staff	
<b>What is the nature of this initiative?</b> (both may apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> New targeted initiatives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting/enhancing existing operations
<b>Area of Operations</b> (select as many as apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basic operations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salaries & benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Lease & utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Collections	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology <input type="checkbox"/> In-house patron software/hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Loanable hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Staff software/hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Connectivity
<input type="checkbox"/> Facility upgrades	<input type="checkbox"/> Library programming
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic planning and governance	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff development
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Community outreach
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):	
<b>Social Impact</b> (select as many as apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental sustainability, climate action
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mental health and wellness	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation and Indigenous relations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): wage equity, worker sustainability	
<b>What is the status of this initiative?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning/research stage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation in progress
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete	<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing as part of operations
<b>Is this a multi-year initiative?</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Summary</b> – Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.	
<p>In response to the KLF wage survey and rising cost of living, the Library has increased wages for all employees. As our positions are highly skilled, we need to ensure we are retaining our precious staff by paying a fair wage.</p> <p>Also, funding was used to train and retain an on-call staff member. Professional development was offered to ensure well-trained and current staff.</p> <p>The Province's one-time COVID/Emergency Preparedness Grant has been very helpful in terms of enabling us to train staff and keep them current in their skills. We would love to rely upon small, regular increases each year to keep up with the cost of living and ensure our skills are up to date.</p> <p>Staff are taking advantage of webinars when they are able, and know they will be paid to be trained for their position. It would be fantastic to send staff to more in-person professional development events (training, conferences, etc), however we do not have a budget that would</p>	

allow for much travel or other expenses. I very much appreciated being able to attend the training in Trail and meet with staff from other libraries.

The Nakusp Public Library is honoured to be hosting the KLF Spring 2024 meeting, and it will likely prove to be a valuable meeting of library and federation directors and staff, once again. The exchange of information at these meetings is incredibly important and useful, and we are grateful for what the KLF provides.

**Progress Report** – If you have reported on this initiative in a previous year's PLGR, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?

**Budgetary Information** – please outline whether/how provincial funding (annual or one-time/targeted e.g., CRR, EPP, Enhancement Grants) contributes to the estimated cost of this initiative.

Employees received roughly a 5% increase to their wages in June, and wages were still low in comparison to similar positions in the Kootenay Library Federation, particularly the Library Director wage. Due to the retirement of a senior staff member in spring, the total increase was not much, with the amount being roughly \$1355. However, another increase in 2024 to bring all positions in line with the KLF wage survey was approved by the Board, so there will be continuing investment in staff.

This increase was made thanks to the Enhancement Grant, and we are hoping to have an increase in some annual funding which will make it possible to support this increase into the future. We are currently also using interest from a few major bequests to support wage increases. If we encounter major projects which require the capital, that money will no longer be available for this purpose.

**Rationale** – Why was this initiative prioritized? (e.g. fulfilling commitments under strategic plan, responding to emergent community need, availability of funding, etc.)

The Library prioritized training and retaining knowledgeable and skilled staff. Two priorities were identified:

1. Funding was used to train and retain an on-call staff member. The on-call staff member provides necessary support to regular staff by filling in during illness or leave. The on-call staff person is given consistent hours each month to ensure their knowledge and skills are up to date. If we had the financial capability, we would offer more hours and increase our public hours of operation.
2. Professional development was seen as critical for knowledgeable and confident staff. In 2023 we were able to take part in an in-person anti-racist training offered through

Trail Library and in several pro-D webinars, thanks to the grant which provided funds for staff hours and training expenses.

Retaining highly skilled and knowledgeable staff is a priority for the library as training requires a huge investment of time and wages. Ensuring staff are properly compensated so they can afford to live and also feel appreciated is crucial.

**What impacts does/will this initiative have on the library and/or the community?** Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.

Training the on-call employee gives the staff backup for when someone is sick or away from work. Investing in training and professional development ensures all staff are competent in their work assisting patrons and completing library tasks. This ensures our library has staff who are skilled, knowledgeable, not stressed by financial worries, and who feel appreciated and happy, which reflects in their work with patrons and other stakeholders. This in turn serves the sustainability of the library.

<b>Initiative Title</b>	
Nakusp-New Denver service agreement research	
<b>What is the nature of this initiative?</b> (both may apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New targeted initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting/enhancing existing operations
<b>Area of Operations</b> (select as many as apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic operations <input type="checkbox"/> Salaries & benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Lease & utilities <input type="checkbox"/> Collections	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology <input type="checkbox"/> In-house patron software/hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Loanable hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Staff software/hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Connectivity
<input type="checkbox"/> Facility upgrades	<input type="checkbox"/> Library programming
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic planning and governance	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff development
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Community outreach
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Feasibility of service agreement with New Denver's North Slokan Community Library	
<b>Social Impact</b> (select as many as apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility and inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental sustainability, climate action
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health and wellness	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation and Indigenous relations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Connecting small rural/remote communities	
<b>What is the status of this initiative?</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning/research stage	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation in progress
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete	<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing as part of operations
<b>Is this a multi-year initiative?</b>	

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Summary</b> – Provide a brief description of the activities undertaken this year. Please include details such as any partnerships or resources leveraged to accomplish this initiative.	
<p>The Nakusp Library was approached by the New Denver Reading Centre (now the North Slokan Community Library) about providing library services in New Denver. The library now is working with the New Denver organization to determine if a service agreement between the two would be feasible.</p>	
<b>Progress Report</b> – If you have reported on this initiative in a previous year's PLGR, what has changed since then? What progress has been made, or what obstacles have you encountered?	
<b>Budgetary Information</b> – please outline whether/how provincial funding (annual or one-time/targeted e.g., CRR, EPP, Enhancement Grants) contributes to the estimated cost of this initiative.	
<p>No funds have been accessed to date.</p>	
<b>Rationale</b> – Why was this initiative prioritized? (e.g. fulfilling commitments under strategic plan, responding to emergent community need, availability of funding, etc.)	
<p>Responding to emergent community need. The initiative may make accessing library services, such as e-books and summer library programs, easier for people living between Silverton and Nakusp.</p>	
<b>What impacts does/will this initiative have on the library and/or the community?</b> Please include any applicable metrics or quantitative data to demonstrate impact.	
<p>To be determined.</p>	



### 3. CHALLENGES

The following topics have been identified as recurrent themes in prior years' PLGRs, along with challenges that have surfaced throughout the current year. Use the 'Other' row at the bottom of the table 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 "copy" the last row and use the "paste" function to insert additional rows as needed.

Please use the check boxes in the 'Rating' column to specify how severely your library has been impacted by each challenge in the past year. If a listed challenge does not affect your library, you may leave that row blank.

Use the 'Response' column to briefly describe how the challenge has affected your library in the past year, and what actions your library has taken to address it, referring to the Featured Initiatives section above where applicable. If no action was taken, explain what the barriers are.

Challenge	Rating	Response
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues, forecasting uncertainty, local budget)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	Rising costs are a real concern, both for the library and staff. As stated above, Provincial one-time grants have moderated concerns by contributing to raising wages, although now we are concerned with how to sustain the library and its staff into the future.
Governance (e.g., changes on the library board, relationship/conversations with local government)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	Board recruitment is always a concern, particularly ensuring we represent the communities we serve on our board.
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	Wildfires, heat and smoke are a major concern, and we do find people use the library to cool down. We have also found people coming to the library to stay warm in cold weather as well.
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health, and wellness)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	Staff face challenges with stressed and traumatized patrons, which in turn

		<p>negatively affects their mental health. Patrons definitely look to the library as a place to connect with other people, and this can sometimes be stressful for staff when they are already busy with library work. We are hoping recruitment and retention of staff will improve with increases in wages. We would like to increase hours to our on-call staff in order alleviate the workload on our regular staff.</p>
<p>Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High concern  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern  <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern</p>	<p>We have many people regularly accessing our wifi because they do not have internet at home, or the quality is so poor that they cannot use it for what they need (e.g. online meetings, etc). We have more demand on our internet the more technology we offer, such as virtual reality headsets, online gaming, and virtual meetings.</p>
<p>Infrastructure/facilities (e.g., aging/damaged, renovations, new builds/upgrades/expansions)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High concern  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern  <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern</p>	<p>In 2023 the library won a grant to replace the roof, in partnership with the Village of Nakusp, as it was far beyond its replacement date. No one could remember when it had last been replaced, so likely more than 30 years ago. Our library is in a beautiful building that is over 100 years old, and is in need of upgrades, particularly to the electrical and heating system. These upgrades will need to be done through fundraising,</p>

		in partnership with the Village of Nakusp, owner of the building.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	<p>We have a lift for people to access the building, but we are limited in the amount of space we have, and we are finding we are a community meeting place for many groups. Some uses of the library overlap or clash, occasionally and there is not enough space. We would like to expand in some way in future, if possible.</p> <p>We would love to offer services on days when we are not currently open and more evening hours, but this would mean we would need funding for staff for expanded hours.</p>
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	The library is a warm and safe place to spend time while they wait for services in Nakusp, a hub for medical, government, banking, and other services. Many people, members or not, wait at the library while their tires are being changed or until their medical appointment or until their bus is scheduled to take them home.
Public health (e.g., COVID-19, vaccinations, access to Telehealth)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	Many people come to the library in order to access medical information, and require the assistance of staff – who would benefit from training in this area!
Regulatory impacts (e.g., accessibility, privacy, employment standards)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High concern <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	We currently do not have staffing levels to adequately address the increase in

		requirements in privacy, accessibility, etc.
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	We have had several incidents involving people who are experiencing homelessness, mental health issues, and addictions spend significant time in the library. And unfortunately there are very few services for them to draw upon in the community. These incidents can be very stressful for staff.
Sociopolitical tensions (e.g. intellectual freedom, protests, global events, racism, homophobia)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	We do have patrons and staff who report their mental health are negatively impacted by global events, and definitely have patrons who rely upon the library as a place to connect and share their worries.
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> High concern <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate concern <input type="checkbox"/> Least concern	

**4. BOARD APPROVAL**

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

Library Director Signature:  Date: Feb. 16, 2024

Board Chair Signature:  Date: Feb. 16, 2024