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BRITISH COLUMBIA
ELECTRONIC LIBRARY NETWORK

BC Electronic Library Network…
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Burnaby – British Columbians will soon have anytime, anywhere access to research created at BC post-secondary institutions thanks to a new partnership between the British Columbia Electronic Library Network (BC ELN) and Charlottetown, PEI-based software firm discoverygarden, supported by a grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Administrative Services Delivery Transformation (ASDT) Steering Committee.

The BC Shared Digital Resources and Institutional Repository Network (a.k.a. the BC IR Network) will be built on Islandora, a Canadian-developed open-source platform currently in use at over 100 public and private institutions worldwide. This shared platform will provide post-secondary institutions with open-access repositories for research, theses, and any other digital assets they wish to make available to the wider community.

To arrive at this milestone, the BC IR Network Software Selection Committee (SSC), comprised of representatives from five BC post-secondary libraries, devoted themselves to a rigorous evaluation of four shortlisted respondents. Islandora, supported and hosted in Canada by discoverygarden, emerged as the clear choice for the project. The decision was unanimously endorsed by the BC IR Network Advisory Committee and the BC ELN Steering Committee.

"This is a tremendous milestone for the BC IR Network," says Debbie Schachter, Director of Learning Resources at Douglas College in New Westminster, and Chair of the BC IR Network Advisory Committee. "By selecting Islandora as our platform, we are joining a large and growing community of public knowledge institutions that are both using the platform and helping it grow. Islandora offers opportunities to share knowledge and expertise with other institutions around the world, and to provide greater exposure for British Columbian research."

discoverygarden has been contracted to support implementation and to manage Canadian hosting. This partnership allows the BC IR Network to take advantage of a robust open-source platform, without the deep technical resources normally required by open-source adopters.

Participating libraries will share a single repository, with individual customized website interfaces providing portals to their own content. The repository will house a broad variety of institutional knowledge, including scholarly material and digital assets such as administrative documents, newsletters, images, multimedia and audiovisual materials.

"The BC IR Network will create an environment where institutions of all sizes can contribute to provincial knowledge sharing," says Gilbert Bede of Okanagan College, Chair of the Software Selection Committee. "Working together through BC ELN will ensure the best use of resources, including sharing of expertise, best practices and limited funds, while making the results of publicly funded research at our many institutions available to all British Columbians."

This project is made possible by a grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education and the ASDT Steering Committee, which provided $50,000 in 2014 to coordinate development of the BC IR Network, with a portion to support early adopters. Support from the Ministry of Advanced Education will ensure that BC continues to boast a world-class post-secondary system that makes the most of technology to create efficiencies, while delivering high-quality education now and in the future.

About the BC IR Network

The BC IR Network is a collaborative initiative to support the development and implementation of digital repositories at BC post-secondary institutions. Foundational to the creation of the proposed Provincial Digital Library, the BC IR Network will be a province-wide network of institutional repositories, providing access to faculty and student research output across all post-secondary institutions, supporting the management of institutional digital assets, and showcasing BC as a hub for knowledge creation across Canada and around the world. Learn more about the BC IR Network at: http://www.eln.bc.ca/view.php?id=2190.

About BC ELN

The British Columbia Electronic Library Network (BC ELN) is a partnership between the Province of British Columbia and its post-secondary libraries. BC ELN develops, promotes, and maintains system-wide mechanisms that allow post-secondary libraries to meet the expanding information needs of the province's learners, educators, and researchers at the lowest possible cost. Learn more about BC ELN at: http://www.eln.bc.ca.

About Islandora

Islandora is an open-source software framework designed to help institutions and organizations and their audiences collaboratively manage and discover digital assets using a best-practices framework. Islandora was originally developed by the University of Prince Edward Island's Robertson Library, but is now implemented and contributed to by an ever-growing international community.

About discoverygarden

discoverygarden helps all manner of organizations manage and preserve important digital assets with the Open Source Islandora framework. As the primary contributor to the Islandora project, they have developed unparalleled expertise. They boast a mix of librarians, developers and systems engineers who understand the complexities of building digital repositories. They use this experience with their clients around the world, providing installation assistance, content migration, customized development, metadata mapping, training, support and hosting.