

BC ELN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 21, 2026

1:00 – 3:00 PM Pacific
Online via Zoom

In Attendance:

Gohar Ashoughian, Simon Fraser University
Jonathan Bengtson, University of Victoria
Rita Cavaliere, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, *Rural Colleges*
Ben Ferrel, *Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills*
Trina Fyfe, University of Northern British Columbia, *Small Universities*
Mar González Palacios, Simon Fraser University, *Host Site Officer*
Darcy Gullacher, Trinity Western University, *Associate Members*
Shirley Lew, Vancouver Community College, *Urban Colleges*
Christina Neigel, Capilano University, (Chair)
Kenley Neufeld, University of the Fraser Valley, *Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions (Vice-Chair)*
Susan Parker, University of British Columbia

BC ELN Office:

Amber Gallant (recorder)
Sunni Nishimura, BC ELN Executive Director
Cristen Polley (moderator)

Regrets: None.

Welcome

C. Neigel welcomed attendees and provided a territorial acknowledgement.

1. Adoption of Agenda

B. Ferrel requested that the PSFS update on the SFU Service Agreement item be moved to the end of the meeting to allow for an in-camera discussion. Hearing no concerns about this change, C. Neigel asked for further changes to the agenda and heard none. The agenda was adopted as modified.

2. Steering Committee Membership Changes

C. Neigel noted that approved changes to Associate Member criteria recommended by the Associate Member Working Group took effect April 1, upon which 'legacy member' Trinity Western University (TWU) changed from the Small Universities to the Associate Members governance category.

As their representative had been D. Gullacher (TWU), the Small Universities constituency group elected T. Fyfe (UNBC) as their new representative. Simultaneously, due to changes at University

Canada West, B. Mathenia was no longer able to serve as Associate Members representative. D. Gullacher was elected to serve as Associate Member representative. C. Neigel thanked both for stepping forward to serve in these roles.

C. Neigel noted that TWU's move raised a question about the Small Universities group, which now consists of only four members, putting pressure on a small group of library directors to serve on multiple BC ELN governance committees. She reported that members of the BC ELN community have also suggested reviewing governance categories.

D. Gullacher inquired about the rationale for placing Yukon University in the Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions category rather than Small Universities. S. Nishimura responded that this question was raised by the Associate Member Working Group and set aside for future Steering Committee discussion, as Yukon is also a 'legacy member'.

T. Fyfe asked if the forthcoming Avison report might have an impact on some governance categories. B. Ferrel commented that he did not currently have insight to offer, but that it might be time to revisit the governance categories following delivery and publication of the report in case it has an impact on the distribution of institutions. There was agreement that revisiting BC ELN governance categories following delivery of the Avison report made sense.

3. [2026/27 BC ELN Expenditure Plan](#)

S. Nishimura provided context. In 2025-26, BC ELN's operating funds were moved out of SFU's operating account, changing receipt of flow-through funds from SFU, and several other accounts were consolidated into a dedicated BC ELN operating account. The unrestricted carryforward amount accumulated throughout the years has been itemized separately this year. The 2025-26 fiscal year ended with a restricted carryforward, as 2026/27 is planned to.

Revenues

BC ELN's core funding grant remained stable in 2026/27. Illume system partner support only includes service support as Public Libraries Branch (Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs) prepaid the 2025-26 software amount. PSFS Transition Funding for transitioning AskAway and WriteAway into sustainable models flows through into the service area line items.

S. Parker asked whether there are plans for the unrestricted carryforward; S. Nishimura confirmed that it will support staffing in 2026-27/2027-28.

Expenditures

S. Nishimura reminded the Committee that it has been the intention since the 2024/25 Core Funding lift to create an administrative/operations role. However, BC ELN's potential transition to a public sector organization will provide an opportunity to rethink administrative/operations work. In consultation with the Steering Committee Executive and B. Ferrel, the decision was made to defer creation of that role. Instead, BC ELN is now cost-sharing the BCCampus operations manager, who works with BC ELN one day a week, and has hired two project librarians, A. Gallant and K. McCallum, on two-year terms.

PSFS funding for the Removing Barriers project supported hiring Two Worlds Consulting to produce a report, currently under review, and the work of senior BC ELN staff in developing relationships with the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association and the First Nations Education Steering Committee.

Public Libraries Branch (PLB) provided 2025/26 and 2026/27 project funds to partner on a resource sharing environmental scan and a BC resource sharing needs assessment to determine whether the Illume provincial interlibrary loan platform SHAREit is still meeting the province's resource sharing needs. The SHAREit license term is coming to an end March 2028, and there have been many recent changes to the resource-sharing landscape in BC, including uncertainty around Canada Post delivery and exploration of a shared library services platform for BC ELN libraries.

C. Neigel asked what led to the 2026/27 decrease in administrative costs and staff development. S. Nishimura answered that BC ELN has decreased costs in many ways, e.g. hosting the December All Partner Meeting at a post-secondary institution instead of a hotel, hosting the July Steering Committee meeting online, and reducing staff travel.

S. Nishimura noted the \$50,000 planned expenditure in 2026/27 for the shared LSP project is the amount needed to hire a consultant to conduct a planned feasibility study. A portion of the amount is being crowd-sourced from the BC ELN community; the Executive approved bringing a request to the Steering Committee for the remainder. G. Ashoughian, Chair of the Shared Library Services Platform Leadership & Advisory Group, noted that \$16,525 in actual funding has been collected from the BC ELN community for the initiative and requested that the Steering Committee support the remaining balance \$33,475 using unrestricted carryforward. There was agreement to support this request and a motion was called for.

Motion: To use the \$33,475 to add to member contributions of \$16,525 to bring the shared LSP feasibility study funding to \$50,000 in the 2026/27 expenditure plan.

Moved: G. Ashoughian

Seconded: S. Lew

Motion carried.

S. Nishimura reviewed the Arca, AskAway and WriteAway service area budgets which have all been approved by their respective Advisory Committees. K. Neufeld asked about the increase to AskAway's extenuating circumstances fund. S. Nishimura noted that this fund is for situations including sudden staffing changes at small institutions that interrupt AskAway service provision. The AskAway Advisory Committee had previously voted to raise this. C. Neigel asked S to clarify that this amount has been accounted for in the new sustainable fee schedules, and S. Nishimura affirmed that it has. There were no more questions.

Motion: To approve the 26-27 BC ELN Expenditure Plan as presented.

Moved: K. Neufeld

Seconded: T. Fyfe

Motion carried.

4. [BCCampus Pressbooks Proposal](#)

S. Nishimura reviewed a proposal brought forward by BCCampus. BCCampus has provided Pressbooks as a free OER service and is planning to migrate the service from a self-hosted, self-managed instance to a vendor-hosted cloud-architecture supported model. To ensure future sustainability, BCCampus plans to examine the feasibility of Pressbooks as a shared service and has funding from the Hewlett Foundation to support transition to a sustainable model. They have asked for

consultation with BC ELN around developing a shared service, a service support model, a governance model, and advice in contract negotiations with Pressbooks, leveraging BC ELN's experience in these areas. Should a shared service approach seem feasible, a separate BC ELN – BCCampus agreement may be developed to collaborate on the shared service.

Discussion highlights included:

- Many partner libraries currently support faculty members using Pressbooks.
- B. Ferrel noted this proposal was tabled at the BCCampus Steering Committee Meeting, with good conversation about leveraging BC ELN's expertise in setting up shared service models. It is a positive example of leveraging respective strengths.
- K. Neufeld asked if BC ELN has the capacity to lead a contract negotiation. S. Nishimura responded that B. Weigel will be the initial project lead and will have increased capacity due to recent approval of a different vendor support model for Arca; B. Weigel also has previous experience working with open-source communities and on complex contract negotiations.
- S. Lew asked whether analogues already exist for this model of collaboration. B. Ferrel noted that WriteAway is an early example of BC ELN and BCCampus collaboration.
- C. Neigel noted an opportunity to think about enhancing or leveraging this in a beneficial way for the sector; looking at the number of users of open textbooks, and the number of books, there is a lot of potential for growth.

Motion: That the BC ELN Steering Committee approve the proposal to explore setting up a Pressbooks partnership with BCCampus.

Moved: T. Fyfe

Seconded: S. Lew

Motion carried.

5. New Business

C. Neigel asked for new business. Hearing none, she noted that this would be S. Parker's last Steering Committee meeting and extended appreciation to S. Parker for contributions to the sector. S. Parker noted that this has been a unique engagement. Her substitute will be Julie Mitchell, the acting UBC University Librarian until Dale Askey begins in the role on September 1.

6. Wrap Up

C. Neigel put forward the motion to move the meeting to an in-camera session to discuss the PSFS Update on the SFU Service Agreement.

Motion: To move the meeting in-camera.

Moved: D. Gullacher

Seconded: R. Cavaliere

Motion carried.

7. PSFS Update on SFU Service Agreement [in-camera]