

BC ELN Progress Report

BC ELN reports biannually on progress made towards achieving [strategic goals](#).

Highlights

BC ELN resources and services have remained available online to support institutions during COVID-19 disruptions. BC ELN staff are working remotely, and are available to help partner library staff: <https://bceln.ca/about/contact-us>

Licensing Portfolio

In the second half of 2020 BC ELN worked closely with other Canadian consortia to strategize around pricing in light of impending economic challenges exacerbated by COVID-19. In partnership with COPPUL and TAL, BC ELN succeeded at securing low common inflationary renewal rate increases for EBSCO and ProQuest licensed resources. Additionally, BC ELN began a consultative review process to investigate the feasibility of a renewed common suite - a multi-year license for a bundle of fundamental resources - beyond May 2021 when the current license expires.

Online Learning Support

Increased student usage of both Askaway and WriteAway continued through the latter part of 2020. Service coordinators worked closely with Advisory Committees to plan appropriate staffing and expand hours to meet the rising need. Both services focused on bolstering support: AskAway developed responses for students facing stressful circumstances, and WriteAway looked to encouraging tutors by recognizing their work.

Illume Interlibrary Loan Service

As libraries re-opened to varying degrees in the second half of 2020, the Illume Administrative Centre provided guidance around restoring ILL services. A new Illume Service Benefits & Responsibilities document was approved by the BC ELN Steering Committee. The document will serve as a foundational document for libraries participating in the Illume service, and is part of a larger strategy to improve system practices.

Shared Services

The Arca Administrative Centre focused on reinforcing infrastructure as online collections continue to grow. Several improvements were made in the last half of 2020, including added features to ensure Arca's capacity for growth, and implementing Cloudflare, a firewall service, to protect Arca from bot attacks and to improve performance.

Supporting Learning & Research

Strengthen Our Licensing Program

Administration and Infrastructure

- Negotiated low common inflationary renewal rate increases for EBSCO and ProQuest licensed resources through cross-consortial collaboration with the Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPPUL) and the Alberta Library (TAL), resulting in beneficial pricing and system-wide equity for libraries in western Canada
- Negotiated a new offer through cross-consortial collaboration with COPPUL and TAL: The Harvard Business Publishing Student Success Package
- Prepared the Licensing Team's 2021 projects in Asana (project management software) to streamline the upcoming renewals and organize ongoing maintenance and projects
- Updated the licensed resources descriptions, ensuring that information on the BC ELN website is accurate and up-to-date

Licence Renewals

- Renewed 46 resource licences
 - Collaborated with Consortia Canada on 18 national licence renewals; acted as lead consortium on one of the renewals
 - Renewed seven licences in cooperation with other Western Canada consortia, including COPPUL, TAL, the Electronic Health Library of BC (eHLbc), and the Manitoba Library Consortium (MLC)
- Participated in Consortia Canada offer to provide libraries with RDA Toolkit, an online product that allows users to interact with a collection of cataloging-related documents and resources, including RDA: Resource Description and Access

Common Suite Review Process

The common suite is a suite of databases licensed for a multi-year term by all BC ELN partner libraries. The current licence expires in June 2021. The Office initiated a common suite review process via the following actions:

- Sought initial feedback and direction from partner libraries via survey in July 2020
- Shared a timeline of the planned review process with partner libraries, and provided regular updates
- Communicated BC ELN needs to vendor; negotiated an initial proposal (released November)
- Created the "Common Suite Web", a members-only website containing background information, details about the process/negotiation, and information requested by partner libraries.
- Gathered information requested by partner libraries to support decision-making and shared this via the Common Suite Web and emails
- Provided multiple opportunities for partner libraries to discuss and ask questions about the common suite (e.g. watercooler sessions, discussion forum)

- Consulted with an external facilitator who will guide the development of a collaborative decision-making framework in February 2021

Nurture the Virtual Learning Commons

AskAway

- Continued to support AskAway in response to COVID-19 to ensure that students, instructors, and researchers had access to online chat reference while courses remained primarily online and in-person services were limited:
 - Responded to sustained increases in traffic by Increasing participating libraries' Base Staffing Commitments for Section 1 (Sep-Dec) and Section 2 (Jan-Apr), at the direction of the AskAway Advisory Committee
 - Trained over 50 new and returning service providers in four online sessions to prepare them to staff the service in time for September
 - Opened AskAway two weeks early on September 8th to provide students, faculty, and staff with access to online library support when classes began
 - Surveyed partner libraries to determine their chat reference needs in preparation for classes beginning in the new year (January 2021)
 - Extended AskAway service one week in December, with service hours Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm
 - Created and shared online promotional material to help libraries inform users that AskAway would be open an additional week in December
- Hosted a virtual local coordinators meeting to:
 - Discuss the implementation of a patron file-sharing feature;
 - Consider how to support service providers responding to students who are stressed; and
 - Give those present a chance to connect and share updates on AskAway at their institutions
- Released a blog post "Responding to Students in Stressful Circumstances" to share two new suggested scripts with service providers
- Met with Canadian collaborative chat reference services colleagues to share service updates and responses during the pandemic and to learn from one another

WriteAway

- Continued to support WriteAway in response to COVID-19 to ensure that students and instructors had access to online writing support while tutoring services remained primarily online and in-person services were limited
- Met increased student demand for WriteAway during the pandemic by implementing additional tutoring hours for the September-December semester at the direction of the WriteAway Advisory Committee
- Held regular institutional coordinator meetings to share information on supporting tutors, WriteAway promotional strategies, and resource sharing within the service:
 - Shared strategies to acknowledge tutors personally at the department level and by senior administration; the WriteAway Administrative Centre recognized tutors during International Tutor Appreciation Week (Oct 5-9)
 - Fostered understanding of WriteAway's value at the institutional level by circulating student feedback that made particular mention of WriteAway support during the pandemic
 - Spotlighted commonly used resources, including Open Educational Resources
- Trained 18 tutors for the September-December 2020 semester
- Supported institutions using the Flexible Contribution Plan by providing Administrative Centre tutoring hours
- Developed "grab and go" social media promotional kits for institutions to broaden marketing of the service and reach more students
- Surveyed institutions to plan dates for Jan-Apr 2021; Created a collaborative schedule that accommodated widely diverse needs of all 18 participating institutions
- Wrote about WriteAway's value as an online student support service during the pandemic for the Canadian Writing Centre Association: <https://cwcaaccr.com/2020/11/23/asynchronous-affordances/>

Building Library Infrastructure

Nurture Resource Sharing

Provide a Clearinghouse for System Created Metadata

- Posted and communicated updates to BC Legislative Library MARC records and BC Open Textbook MARC records hosted on the BC ELN website

Sustain the BC Union Database

- Coordinated monthly meetings with Auto-Graphics regarding progress, issues, and next steps for the 2020 Union Database Clean-up Project, an initiative to refresh all BC Union Catalogue records and holdings:
 - Coordinated with Auto-Graphics on extracting all UDB records to strip fields identified as confusing for patrons or staff, deleting these, and restoring 'cleaned' records back into the BC Union Catalogue
 - Communicated multiple updates with Illume partner libraries and reminders to submit a complete refresh of their records by the end of 2020
 - Communicated with libraries to identify members with OCLC records for the next step of cleanup of unnecessary fields related to OCLC identification

Optimize Interlibrary Loan Management

- Supported libraries through COVID-19 disruptions:
 - Developed and communicated multiple tips and procedures related to managing during COVID-19, including re-opening workflows for both public and post-secondary libraries
 - Developed and maintained a list of academic libraries restoring ILL services and updated as libraries announced re-openings; communicated information on public library re-openings provided by Libraries Branch
 - Created and communicated videos specific to re-opening Illume (SHAREit V6) including UX Admin updates and managing patron expectations of ILL slowdowns related to COVID-19
 - Enhanced the Illume Admin Centre support website with new and updated communications, many related to COVID-19 support; Created and updated 10 guides, 7 FAQs, semi-annual reports and multiple news notices of software/server updates and downtime
- Provided multiple one-on-one training sessions via webinar or telephone on a wide-variety of topics including Re-Opening the Library tips & workflow, ISO site set-up, Z39.50 configuration, Search Resources/Targets, and more
- Created and updated multiple guides on Union Database submissions, UX Admin, Patron-initiated Interlibrary loan requesting and more
- Contributed enhancement suggestions to the vendor Auto-Graphics and voted on BCUC priorities for the software; submitted suggestions received top votes, including the number one enhancement request submitted by BCUC members to allow the ability to "undo" more statuses

- Supported the work of eliminating ILL fees for non-returnable items between partner libraries:
 - Adjusted timelines to account for impacts of COVID-19 on library lending and on BC ELN project work
 - Developed and released Illume Service Benefits & Responsibilities, a foundational document that formalizes expectations for institutions participating and partnering in Illume
 - Began developing best practices for use of the Illume Service, to be released in early 2021

Identify & Develop Shared Services Opportunities

Administer Illume

- Responded to and managed 249 support cases from public & post-secondary libraries, including brokerage support for multiple public Reading Centres; questions were predominantly related to Holidays/Closures related to COVID-19, Training Support, ILL Request Support, UX & Settings Customization, Patron-Initiated ILLs and Union Database records
- Launched the brand new Illume newsletter Spark in December 2020: <https://illumebc.ca/news-updates/newsletter>
- Issued the January - June 2020 Illume Administrative Centre Progress Report: <https://illumebc.ca/about-us/reports/progress>

Identify Opportunities for Cooperative or Shared Post-secondary Library Infrastructure

- Nurtured the BC History Digitization Program (BCHDP) – Arca Hosting Initiative:
 - Created customized Arca support site pages for BCHDP grant applicants interested in Arca hosting: <https://arca.bcelnapps.ca/bchdp/about>
 - Met with Société Historique de la Francophonie Columbie Britannique (SHFCB) and the Society for the Museum of Original Costume (SMOC) to determine collection suitability for BCHDP Arca hosting; provided BCHDP grant writing support
 - Liaised with SFU Digitization Centre on behalf of SMOC and SFHCB on requirements and costs for digitising collections optimised for Arca hosting
 - Progressed on ingesting BCHDP collections: Karen Jamieson Dance Society performance videos; historic photographs from the North Pacific Cannery; performance videos from the Grunt Gallery

Build Arca

Develop & Enhance Arca's Customised Platform

- Built new features in various Islandora modules to ensure their capacity to support Arca's large amount of content
- Contributed upgrades to the Islandora Datastream CRUD module to help Arca sites better manage their storage
- Implemented Cloudflare, a web-based firewall service, to protect Arca from Distributed Denial of Service (DDOS) attacks and bot activity while improving performance
- Expanded server architecture to improve stability and increase Arca's capacity for further growth

Expand Membership Within & Beyond BC

- Built a teaching and learning environment for the UFV Library Technician program to support hands-on learning

Support Knowledge Exchange & Create Communities of Practice

- Provided support to the online Islandora Conference; assisted with planning, session convening and technical support
- Launched the Arca Newsletter "The Arc" to keep all Arca partners and the BC ELN community at large informed as the service progresses

Connecting Partners

Administer Electronic Health Library of BC (e-HLbc)

- Supported the creation of a new newsletter template, including branding and release of inaugural issue; see Vital Signs <https://ehlbc.ca/news-events/newsletter>
- For a complete list of completed action items, please see eHLbc progress reports available at: <https://ehlbc.ca/about/ehlbc-reports/progress-reports>

Engage with Consortial Communities

Grow & Maintain Relationships with Provincial System Partners

- Joined the DataCite Canada Consortium Governing Committee; DataCite Canada Consortium is a collective of organizations and institutions minting DOIs in Canada through DataCite <https://www.crkn-rcdr.ca/en/datacite-canada-consortium>
- Held ongoing discussions with BC Libraries Cooperative on provincial purchase of BC Historical Newspapers; collection will be open for provincial access if target revenue met

Assume a Leadership Role in the Canadian Consortial Landscape

- Participated in ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) Open Discussions with other Canadian consortia (2 meetings, online discussion)
- Met with Cambridge University Press and Ontario Colleges Library Service (OCLS) to provide feedback on a two-year academic pricing model

Contribute to International Consortial Dialogue

- Attended 4 meetings of the International Coalition of Library Consortia Coordinating Committee

Sustaining our Organization

Promote Good Governance

Enhance External Communications

- Held BC ELN orientation session for new library directors at North Island College and Yukon University; shared customized dashboards highlighting BC ELN value for institutions
- Created new social media marketing materials for AskAway Chat Reference and WriteAway Online Tutoring to improve promotion of the services

Support Governance Committees

- Implemented refreshed communications processes to engage all partner libraries in Steering Committee new term changeover
- Created and distributed a new orientation package for Steering Committee members; documentation provides background, member responsibilities, and instructions on connecting with constituents
- Hosted first-ever online All Partner Meeting in December 2020; special theme was “Collaborating through Challenge”

Strengthen Consortial Operations & Infrastructure

Cultivate Staff Expertise & Capacity

- Staff members attended workshops and conferences to further learning and improve practices around equity, diversity and inclusion, as well as reconciliation and decolonization; learning experiences included:
 - 2-day “But Where are you Really From? Exploring Anti-Racism, Allyship, and Belonging” offered through SFU Human Resources
 - BCCampus Studio 20: Three days of experiential and interactive sessions with an emphasis on creative approaches to representation and inclusion through visual notetaking, storytelling, and active learning
 - Indigenous Paradigms in Practice: Relationships, Story and Academic Integrity seminar led by Keeta Gladue
 - Indigenous Canada, a 12-week MOOC from the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta
 - BC Academic Libraries Annual Winter Event 2020: Combating Racism in Academic Libraries

Maintain and Improve Communication Systems

- Conducted a clean-up of internal communications including the BC ELN intranet, staff shared drive, and staff Google documents; recorded new protocols for storing and organizing internal information

Sustain Healthy Funding

Champion our Work through Annual Reports etc.

- Issued multiple electronic newsletters to keep BC ELN and broader community informed; publications highlighted COVID-19 response and continued support, alongside newsworthy service updates
 - Arca: A Bridge to Arca (August); Inaugural issue, produced by UBC iSchool professional experience librarian
 - AskAway Chat Box (August, December)
 - BC ELN Connect (August, December)
 - Illume Spark (December)
 - WriteAway Next Draft (December)