

British Columbia Electronic Library Network

Innovation 2021 & Success 2021



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Cover photo: Student staff member Annika Marshall greets UBC Library patrons at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre. Photo credit: UBC Library Communications. All institutional photographs courtesy of the institution. Innovation & Success 2021 released March 2022.



The BC Electronic Library Network is an awardwinning consortium of post-secondary libraries. Learn more at: <u>bceln.ca</u>.

Message from the Chair



Serving students and teaching communities is at the heart of our collaborative work through BC ELN. As partner libraries, we look for innovative and cost-effective ways to reach our shared goal: meeting the evolving information needs of British Columbia's students, educators, and researchers.

While the ongoing pandemic continued to challenge postsecondary libraries in 2021, BC ELN's services provided relief and assistance through:

- Deep discounting on electronic resources necessary for teaching and learning
- Online learner support services AskAway and WriteAway, which have only become more necessary as in-person services had to periodically close due to COVID-19
- Improvements to Illume resource sharing, so that the system which brings together over 100 participating libraries – is more streamlined
- Greater help for smaller GLAM organizations to preserve and provide access to digital assets thanks to Arca's infrastructure and BC ELN's coordination

In addition to these established activities, BC ELN continued to grow and innovate in 2021. New collaborative projects such as the Open Journal Hosting Initiative, and new partnerships with groups like DataBC and the Indigitization Program leveraged BC ELN's existing infrastructure to further benefit the sector.

The consortium also started developing a Strategic Plan in late 2021 that will guide our movement over the next five years. The plan, to be completed in mid 2022, will ensure we continue to make effective progress on our shared goals.

I am proud of the results of our combined efforts, as shown in this Innovation & Success report, and I look forward to seeing what we will achieve next.

Brenda Mathenia

Director of Teaching and Learning Resources, College of the Rockies **BC ELN Steering Committee Chair**

66 2021 was another memorable year for BC ELN. We saw partner libraries continue to respond flexibly to disruptions caused by the ongoing pandemic - for example when the Fall in-person return to campus was put on hold, AskAway institutions pivoted quickly and opened the service early for students seeking help. BC ELN launched new services aimed at filling gaps in the sector, and forged new partnerships that are sure to deepen in the coming years.

> I appreciate BC ELN staff and our partner library colleagues. who demonstrate that even through the challenging times, we are stronger together.



Anita Cocchia Executive Director BC Electronic Library Network

The Student Connection

BC ELN connects 300,000 post-secondary students in British Columbia and the Yukon to library services wherever they may be.





By extending online resources and services to students, BC ELN is:



An open door...

to electronic resources like ebooks, academic journals, digitized primary source materials, and streaming media.



A connection...

to kind, convenient, expert research and writing help via learner services like AskAway and WriteAway.



A place to shine...

with opportunities for students to showcase work in the Arca collaborative repository or via an online journal hosted by BC ELN.



A conduit to more...

materials than are held at a student's home library through interlibrary resource sharing.

Sector Benefits

BC ELN leverages the Ministry's investment of just under \$500,000 to assist the sector in avoiding over \$10 million in costs. Efforts are concentrated in four key areas: group licensing, learner support, resource sharing, and shared services.



BC ELN also delivers many intangible gains...

Innovation through collaboration / Reduction of duplicated efforts / Increased success of end users / Convenience for individual libraries / A place for library staff to get answers / Events that foster cross-library professional development

66 BC ELN was instrumental in helping us license ACM Digital Library, a database that we needed for one of our new Graduate *Programs. This* database will support hundreds of students and Faculty Research.

> University Canada West Library Staff



For years, students have relied on online resources like ebooks, electronic articles, and streaming videos to supplement their learning. Through the pandemic, this online access was crucial. BC ELN's Common Suite, comprised of two databases covering wide-ranging multidisciplinary and business-related topics, is available to post-secondary students at all 33 partner libraries throughout BC and the Yukon. Wherever a student chooses to study, they have access.

Group Licensing

BC ELN achieves superior group discounts for electronic resources on behalf of partner libraries. Resources are more affordable for libraries, and students get 24/7 access to online articles, e-books, streaming media, and more.

2021 Highlights

BC ELN partner libraries collectively renewed the Common Suite, a bundle of databases that supports broad undergraduate-level research. This is the only BC ELN license to use an "all-in" participation model. After the Common Suite license expires in 2024, BC ELN will move away from the all-in approach to explore a modified participation model.

Everyone in BC and the Yukon will soon have perpetual access to archives of The Vancouver Sun (1912-2010), The Province (1894-2010), and The Times-Colonist (1884-2010), thanks to a one-time purchase agreement brokered between BC ELN, BC Libraries Cooperative, Focused Education Resources, and ProQuest.

Partner libraries contributed to BC ELN's 2021 Resource Forum and Ranking Survey process, and jointly identified four resources of interest for consortial licensing. Guided by this input, the BC ELN Office is investigating licensing options.



Over 1.6 million full text journals, magazines, newspapers, e-books, videos, and additional services are available through BC ELN licensing.



949 electronic resource licences — negotiated and coordinated through BC ELN — were collectively held by 33 partner libraries in 2021.



BC ELN staff bring close to 40 years of **negotiation experience** to vendor relationships; advocating for partner libraries is our priority.

2 Learner Support

BC ELN Learner Support services AskAway and WriteAway continued to see elevated usage throughout 2021. By participating in these collaborative services, institutions are able to offer far more assistance to their students – at an affordable price – than they could alone.

AskAway Chat Research Help

AskAway connects students with real-time research help. Behind the scenes, BC ELN's AskAway Administrative Centre ensures that the system runs smoothly.

2021 Highlights

Anticipating a higher student need for online research help in 2021 as COVID-19 continued to affect in-person services, AskAway institutions strategically increased staffing commitments and opened the service early at key points in the year.

AskAway explored a new way to reach out to students with a Proactive Chat pilot in 2021. Four institutions tested the feature, a timed prompt that invites library website visitors to use the chat function for assistance. After a successful pilot, the Advisory Committee greenlit implementing Proactive Chat system-wide with a phased roll-out slated for 2022.

The AskAway Administrative Centre produced a series of bite-sized, actionable "<u>Visibility Tips of the Month</u>" for institutions to increase AskAway presence on library websites. The end goal: ensure students see AskAway at their point-of-need – as they are searching – so they can easily access help if they are struggling.

The **Student** Connection

"I'm so grateful that this service is available. I have to complete my assignments at strange times because I work full time, and access to this service made me feel like I really am connected to my institution and that I have resources to support me through my education."

University of British Columbia AskAway User

55,000+

questions were answered via AskAway in 2021, a 55% increase over the last prepandemic year (2019).

295

proactive chats came in during the 5-week pilot.

96%

of AskAway users that completed an exit survey say they are likely to return.

12

Visibility Tips were released by the AskAway Office to assist institutions.



WriteAway Online Writing Support

Students at participating WriteAway institutions can send in a draft paper online to receive free, fast, friendly feedback within 48 hours.

2021 Highlights

WriteAway institutions maintained elevated levels of writing support hours, which were implemented when COVID-19 began. Students' strong need for online writing assistance continued through 2021, and the increased staffing ensured students received timely feedback.

The service restructured its scheduling approach to improve the balance of staffing throughout weekdays and weekends, resulting in more consistent response times.

Northern Lights College joined the service in 2021, becoming WriteAway's nineteenth participating institution. "WriteAway has made an incredible difference for student support," shared one Northern Lights College instructor.

The **Student** Connection

"I really like the way the response is provided. I thought that it would be an automated response, but I am glad that it was quite a personalized response. The suggestions are quite clear and helpful and will really help me in improving my assigned tasks."

Northern Lights College WriteAway User



6,729 assignments received constructive writing feedback



80 writing specialists across the province provided assistance



WriteAway receives an average helpfulness rating of 95%

3 Resource Sharing

BC ELN engages in activities that strengthen the entire research cycle from discovery to delivery, including the Illume Interlibrary Resource Sharing Service.

Illume BC

Illume Interlibrary Resource Sharing participants belong to a network of over 100 libraries across BC and the Yukon that share library materials – both physical and digital. BC ELN's Illume Support Centre manages the service.

Illume is jointly supported by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training through BC ELN, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs through the BC Public Libraries Branch.

2021 Highlights

As the ongoing pandemic continued to affect library procedures through 2021, the Illume Support Centre provided consistent assistance to staff navigating shifting protocols. The Centre provided copious training, created multiple guides, and resolved hundreds of support requests.

Illume made excellent progress in 2021 towards a more balanced system, i.e. distributing loan requests more equally across Illume so that individual libraries aren't over-taxed as lenders. The Support Centre introduced best practices and policy pages, and provided training and assistance to encourage compliance with these optimized procedures.

In 2021 the BC ELN Steering Committee approved Associate Members for membership in Illume. The Support Centre created a participation action plan for eligible Associate Members, and worked to onboard Alexander College. BC ELN's first Associate Member to join illume.

The Union Database Clean Up Project

The BC Union Catalogue (BCUC) is the combined library catalogue of Illume libraries across BC. Over two years and with the assistance from Illume libraries and the software vendor Auto-Graphics, the Support Centre removed over one million erroneous or incomplete records and holdings. As part of this clean up project, two union databases (ELN Media and ELN Serials) were successfully retired, leaving just the BCUC. This reduces record duplication and makes it possible to search provincial library records all in one convenient place.



When a post-secondary student in BC discovers an electronic article or book chapter of interest is not available at their library, interlibrary loan can connect them with what they need in a few simple clicks. Most articles and chapters are delivered to the student's inbox within a week.

Joining Illume is something Alexander College has wanted for a very long time. and it's hard to overestimate the level of excitement this inspires in our College community. This brings another level of support to our students as they seek information to complete their studies. We are thrilled to be a part of the service.

> Scott Marsden Director of Student Affairs Alexander College

Arca has been an excellent platform for iSchool students to develop practical skills to design and create digital collections for real clients. I now maintain an iSchool Sandbox for class activities that scaffold students' development of skills necessary for their final collections.

 Professor Richard Arias-Hernandez, UBC School of Information



Arca has an ever-growing number of digital "treasures" available for viewing and downloading, including student research papers, photographs, newspapers, videos, oral histories, and more. As of 2021 there were over 160,000 items in 1,285 collections, with more items being added daily.

4 Shared Services

BC ELN works with partner libraries and stakeholders in British Columbia and beyond to coordinate, develop, and implement shared services that benefit all participants.

Arca Digital Repository

Managed by BC ELN, Arca is a province-wide network of institutional repositories. Arca fills a gap for smaller GLAM organizations (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums) that may lack the human or financial resources to preserve and provide access to their digital objects.

2021 Highlights

Arca's infrastructure was improved and made more secure through multiple added features and enhancements. One notable enhancement was the introduction of Traditional Knowledge (TK) Labels, which allow sites to add usage notices to objects with Indigenous community connections.

With a substantial migration projected for Arca, the Admin Centre completed foundational preparation work, including selecting a vendor and approving funding for a Migration Assessment Project.

Arca staff joined the DataCite Canada Coordinating Committee to guide national efforts to promote DOIs and make them accessible to all Canadian institutions, as well as the National Heritage Digitization Strategy Advisory Committee to facilitate knowledge exchange between BC and other national and provincial initiatives.



British Columbia History Digitization Program – Hosting and Support

Leveraging Arca's technical infrastructure and BC ELN's expertise in advancing cross-sector initiatives, BC ELN and the British Columbia History Digitization Program (BCHDP) at UBC have partnered on two services:

BCHDP-Arca Hosting Service

Through this service, BC's GLAM organizations with BCHDP grant-funded materials are eligible for no-cost, fully supported hosting of those digital materials in Arca.

BC ELN-BCHDP Support Service

This new service allows small GLAM organizations to access a range of support services provided by BC ELN to help them prepare and apply for BCHDP grant funding.

2021 Highlights

As of 2021, 14 sites are hosting their materials in the BCHDP section of Arca. BC ELN assisted organizations with migrating content to the platform, and created best practice guides and instruction for applying TK Labels and Cultural Institution Notices to Arca collections.

BC ELN staff met with 24 small GLAM organizations intending to apply for a BCHDP grant. Staff ascertained needs and provided various types of aid, including one-on-one consulting, developing a website, and creating project workflow frameworks to guide BCHDP grant applications.

Open Access Publishing Service

In 2021 BC ELN launched a pilot service that allows post-secondary institutions to host their student, faculty, or staff-led open journals at no cost on BC ELN's installation of Open Journal Systems (OJS). BC ELN has partnered with the University of Alberta Library to provide free hosting and maintenance.

In this first year, six institutions are participating in the pilot: Douglas College, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Justice Institute of BC, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Thompson Rivers University, and University of the Fraser Valley. Three libraries are currently hosting 10 live journals.

BC ELN will use this free journal hosting period to assess partner libraries' needs in terms of support, customization, and staff time required for coordination, in order to determine a reasonable cost structure for an official consortial service.

When Sunni Nishimura, BC ELN Manager, went on study leave in 2020, she set out to answer the question: "What support is missing for small GLAM organizations at the early stages of digitization planning?"

Nishimura's investigations led to the creation of the <u>BC ELN-BCHDP</u>
<u>Support Service</u>, which provides crucial support to prospective BCHDP grant applicants.

The assistance is a boon to smaller GLAM organizations like the BC Society for the Museum of Original Costume (SMOC). As a test case, Nishimura worked with the group to address challenges that SMOC faced in digitizing an archive of innovative dress designs by German-Canadian couturier Lore Maria Wiener.

Speaking of the new service, SMOC president Denise Jacques says: "Support like this is essential for small museums and archives."





BC ELN acts as the Electronic Health Library of BC's (eHLbc) Administrative Centre, providing project management, negotiation, and technical support on a cost-recovery basis. This long-standing partnership creates a fertile ground for cross collaboration. Staff expertise is shared between the two, and both consortia take active roles in national negotiations for electronic resources that benefit many Consortia Canada members.

Partnerships

BC ELN's broad network of cross-sector relationships constantly fuels innovation. In 2021, BC ELN developed new partnerships with external organizations to leverage established infrastructure, generate new opportunities, and bring lessons back to the consortium.

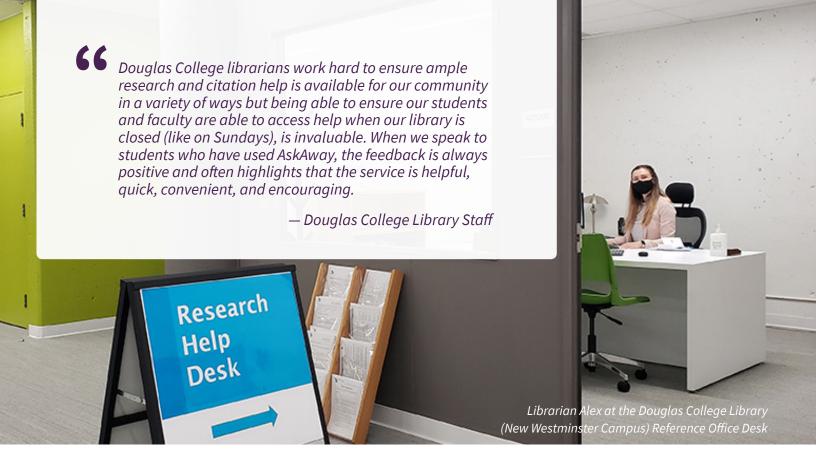
DataBC: Enhancing Access to BC Data

BC ELN entered into a partnership with DataBC to make BC Assessment data sets available at partner libraries. BC ELN is supporting the development of workflows, training for designated data librarians, and a communications infrastructure. British Columbia Institute of Technology and University of British Columbia are the first institutions to pilot this access. Next steps include bringing on additional pilot sites and building a web page to share details.

Indigitization Program: Hosting Indigenous Materials Online

A new pilot project initiated by BC ELN and the <u>Indigitization Program</u> will enable Program participants to store their digitized materials securely online in the Arca digital repository. The project upholds Program goals of addressing issues around conservation and management of Indigenous community knowledge. Arca's responsive access controls and Traditional Knowledge Label functionality empower communities to determine if and how their content is accessible once preserved on the platform.





Advancing Ministry Priorities

BC ELN's work aligns with and supports Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST) goals and priorities.

Putting People First

Post-secondary education empowers British Columbians to effectively contribute to our economy and society. But admission in an academic program is just the first step. Throughout post-secondary programs, students need access to resources and assistance to achieve their educational and personal goals.

BC ELN helps institutions provide access to the critical electronic resources that students need to complete their studies. AskAway and WriteAway boost students' learning and confidence by answering research and writing questions. By bolstering student success, BC ELN plays an important role in the BC government's 'people first' approach.

2021 Highlights

BC ELN welcomed a new AEST representative to the Steering Committee. BC ELN's Executive Director met regularly with the AEST representative to provide information and seek opportunities for collaborative innovation and development.

Through 2021, BC ELN joined with other post-secondary sector organizations (<u>BCcampus</u>, <u>BCCAT</u>, and <u>EducationPlannerBC</u>) in quarterly meetings to improve how services and information are provided to learners and institutions.

BC ELN began meeting with AEST's Indigenous Policy and Engagement Branch to learn about the draft Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, and to discuss how BC ELN might advance framework goals and support reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.



To guide the strategic planning process, BC ELN asked the following focus question:

How do we, over the next five years, position BC ELN as a catalyst for flexible, solutions-based, equity-focused services for partner libraries and their students while taking advantage of growth opportunities on the horizon?

Moving Forward

BC's recovery from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will take many years. BC ELN will continue to help institutions weather challenges by delivering the best possible discounts on electronic resources, and providing students with valuable online services as they navigate uncertain times. Looking to early 2022, key work for BC ELN includes:

Strategic Planning

BC ELN will conclude the strategic planning process it began in late 2021 to collectively determine the consortium's core areas of focus for the next 3-5 years.

Migrating Licensing Infrastructure

BC ELN will transition its licensing infrastructure - the tools and processes that underpin license management and invoicing - to ConsortiaManager. The move will bring greater efficiencies to the system.

Nurturing Partnerships

BC ELN will continue to nurture the new partnerships that it forged in 2021 to create meaningful processes and services that benefit BC's students, educators, and researchers.

BC ELN Steering Committee

as of December 2021

Brenda Mathenia

College of the Rockies *Chair*

Jonathan Bengtson

University of Victoria

Gwen Bird

Simon Fraser University

Camille Callison

Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions

Anita Cocchia

BC ELN Executive Director

Gregg Currie

Rural Colleges

Ben Ferrel

Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Natalie Gick

Simon Fraser University Officer

Darcy Gullacher

Small Universities

Ali de Haan

Associate Members

Susan Parker

University of British Columbia

Ross Tyner

Urban Colleges



Financials

BC ELN is a partnership between British Columbia's post-secondary libraries and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training. BC ELN leverages the Ministry's investment of just under \$500,000 to deliver equitable services and incredible savings to the post-secondary sector and beyond.

Core Administration and Illume

Includes core and licensing staff, Illume, and partnership activities.

	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Projected
	Revenue	Revenue
Core Funding (Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training)	485,417	485,417
Host Site (SFU) Contribution (Progress through ranks & general wage increases)	240,008	260,326
Illume Interlibrary Loan Service (including Support Centre, etc.)*	66,584	199,995
Miscellaneous Revenue (Associate Membership Fees, Carryforward, Prepayments, Resource Sharing support, etc.)	246,220	141,562
Total	1,038,229	1,087,300
	Expenses	Expenses
Salaries & Benefits	629,187	669,831
Host Support (SFU)	56,000	56,000
AskAway Chat Reference Contribution	10,000	10,000
Arca Digital Repository Contribution	10,000	10,000
WriteAway Online Support Contribution	10,000	10,000
Illume InterLibrary Loan Service (BCUC hosting, Support Centre)	219,751	224,264
Arca Partnership Contributions (Indigitization Program, BCHDP-Arca Hosting/Support, etc.)	8,360	30,702
Strategic Planning	n/a	14,089
Administration/Communication/Governance	4,132	12,330
Technical Infrastructure	12,286	8,362
Total	959,716	1,045,578
Revenue - Expenses (Carryforward)	78,513	41,722

^{*}Note: Public Libraries Illume software payment for 2020/21 was received in 2019/20.

AskAway Chat Research Help

	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Projected
	Revenue	Revenue
Partner Library Support (Service Support Fee & Flexible Contribution)	96,569	97,873
BC ELN Contribution	10,000	10,000
Miscellaneous Revenue (Carryforward, Marketing, etc.)	2,152	3,833
Total	108,721	111,706
Total	108,721 Expenses	111,706 Expenses
Total Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure	·	•
	Expenses	Expenses
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure	Expenses 89,118	Expenses 94,325
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure Administration/Communication/Governance	Expenses 89,118 1,233	Expenses 94,325 602

WriteAway Online Writing Support

	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Projected
	Revenue	Revenue
Partner Institution Support Fee (Service & Infrastructure)	54,274	57,021
BC ELN Contribution	10,000	10,000
Miscellaneous Revenue (Carryforward, Marketing, etc.)	1,603	9,897
Total	65,877	76,918
	Expenses	Expenses
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure	50,986	55,506
Administration/Communication/Governance	352	490
Software & Technical Infrastructure	8,842	8,850
Total	60,180	64,846
Revenue - Expenses (Carryforward)	5,697	12,072*

^{*}Note: Carryforward due to delay in hiring replacement WriteAway Coordinator; expected to be fully expended in 2022/23.

Arca Digital Repository

	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Projected
	Revenue	Revenue
Member Service SupportService Support FeesAdditional Support FeesAdditional Storage Fees	129,838	144,620
BC ELN Contribution	10,000	10,000
Miscellaneous (Unrestricted and targeted carryforward, etc.)	19,661	21,714
Total	159,499	176,333
	Expenses	Expenses
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure	Expenses 94,047	Expenses 99,334
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure Islandora Foundation Membership	•	•
	94,047	99,334
Islandora Foundation Membership	94,047 4,000	99,334
Islandora Foundation Membership Security Service (Cloudflare) Implementation	94,047 4,000 6,335	99,334 4,000 n/a
Islandora Foundation Membership Security Service (Cloudflare) Implementation Migration Assessment Report	94,047 4,000 6,335 n/a	99,334 4,000 n/a 20,493
Islandora Foundation Membership Security Service (Cloudflare) Implementation Migration Assessment Report Administration/Communication/Governance	94,047 4,000 6,335 n/a 848	99,334 4,000 n/a 20,493 1,668

^{*}Note: Carryforward amounts are earmarked for migration to Islandora version 2.

Licensing Programme

Flow-through finances for licensing activities.

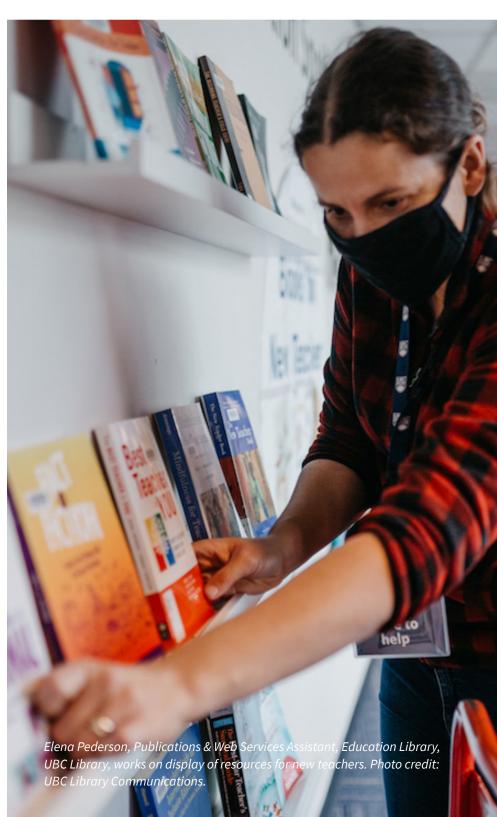
	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Projected
	Revenue	Revenue
Carryforward	(53,227)	(92,242)
Partner Library Contributions	5,436,619	5,509,336
Total	5,385,392	5,417,094
	Expenses	Expenses
Payments to Vendors	5,477,632	5,382,123
Total	5,447,632	5,382,123
Revenue - Expenses (Carryforward)	(92,240)	34,972†

†Note: Includes prepayments.

Partner Libraries

BC ELN brings post-secondary libraries together to collaboratively meet the expanding information needs of learners, educators, and researchers in BC, Yukon, and beyond. This collaborative approach creates multiple opportunities for cost savings and results in equitable, affordable access to educational resources and services for the province.

Acsenda School of Management Alexander College British Columbia Institute of Technology Camosun College Capilano University Coast Mountain College College of New Caledonia College of the Rockies Columbia Bible College Columbia College **Douglas College** Emily Carr University of Art + Design Justice Institute of British Columbia Kwantlen Polytechnic University Langara College Nicola Valley Institute of Technology North Island College Northern Lights College Okanagan College Quest University Canada **Royal Roads University** Selkirk College Simon Fraser University Thompson Rivers University **Trinity Western University University Canada West** University of British Columbia University of Northern British Columbia University of the Fraser Valley University of Victoria Vancouver Community College Vancouver Island University Yukon University





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