The BC Electronic Library Network
Innovation & Success 2022

Photo 1: Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Langley Campus

The BC Electronic Library Network is an award-winning consortium of post-secondary libraries. Learn more at: bceln.ca.

BCELN
BRITISH COLUMBIA
ELECTRONIC LIBRARY NETWORK

Message from the Chair

Looking back on BC ELN's progress in 2022, the word stability comes to mind. Acute challenges brought on by the pandemic are subsiding, and while adversities continue to exist in the post-secondary sector, we can see signs of recovery. For BC ELN, the past year has brought several improvements to infrastructure that further stabilize the consortium's work. BC ELN transitioned to a new licensing management software, replacing an outdated system and introducing convenience, transparency, and greater efficiency. Ministry bridge funding for both AskAway and WriteAway enabled each to hire additional support to steady the services through increased usage. Partner libraries worked together to strengthen the Illume resource sharing service and eliminate transaction fees. The Arca community laid groundwork for a software migration. And through collaborative effort, BC ELN finalized a new Strategic Framework that outlines three key directions for the coming years:

- Develop Responsive, Inclusive, and Sustainable Services
- Empower and Engage our Community
- Pursue Meaningful, Reciprocal Partnerships

These many investments in infrastructure position BC ELN well for the future. Together, BC ELN partner libraries set a clear path forward and are prepared to adapt if circumstances change. I am very pleased to share the many accomplishments BC ELN achieved in 2022 in this Innovation & Success report. Enjoy.

Photo 2: Darcy Gullacher, University Librarian, Trinity Western University Library, BC ELN Steering Committee Chair

Quote from Anita Cocchia, BC ELN Executive Director:

"Many of the improvements we implemented this year were only possible because of the active involvement and contributions of BC ELN partner libraries. As ever, I am incredibly proud of what we are able to achieve together."

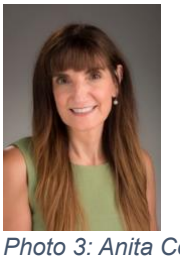
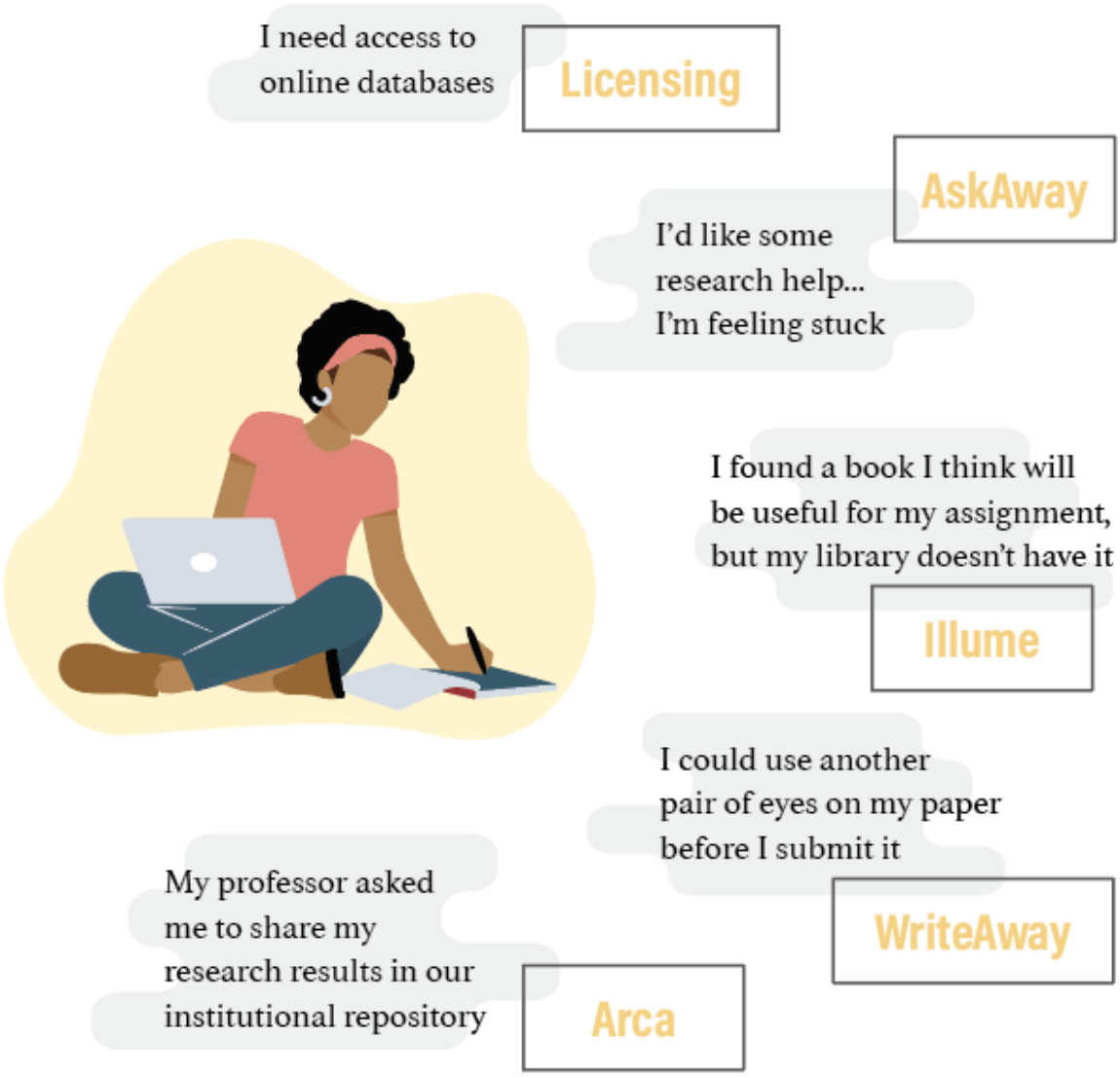


Photo 3: Anita Cocchia, BC ELN Executive Director

BC ELN Benefits Students

BC ELN helps libraries meet the information needs of students, instructors, and researchers. By participating in BC ELN services, libraries extend their offerings to support students at multiple points in their academic journeys.



Online can mean anywhere: BC ELN connects post-secondary students to critical online library services wherever they might be studying. In the library, on the road, or late at night when campus is closed — BC ELN is there.

BC ELN Benefits Libraries

BC ELN's collaborative approach enables the post-secondary sectors in B.C. and the Yukon to collectively avoid over ten million dollars in costs.

Partner libraries have autonomy to choose which BC ELN services to participate in. Benefits to participation include:

- Financial savings and avoided costs
- Reducing duplicated efforts, saving staff time
- Ability to offer more to students
- Support from an experienced team
- A stronger voice in concert with others
- Learning from communities of practice
- Professional networking opportunities
- Joining innovative services that meet institutional needs
- Centralized training for staff

Group Licensing

BC ELN seeks out top-quality electronic resources and negotiates the best possible price 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.

2022 Achievements:

Streamlined Licence Management

In 2022, BC ELN successfully transitioned its outdated licensing and invoicing infrastructure to ConsortiaManager, a platform designed specifically for managing consortial workflows. Partner library staff can now explore and manage licence offers, renewals, and invoices in one convenient location. Library and BC ELN staff alike benefit from the streamlined process and time savings.

Low Inflationary Increases

BC ELN partner libraries benefit from low inflationary increases on renewals of ProQuest- and EBSCO-licensed resources. This lower rate was achieved by negotiating in partnership with fellow western consortia Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPPUL) and The Alberta Library (TAL). Together, we are stronger!

A New Resource Bundle

With the Common Suite sunsetting in 2024, the BC ELN Office reached out to gauge partner library interest in a new multi-year bundle of academic databases called the Undergraduate Resource Bundle (URB). BC ELN staff held a series of information sessions with partner library staff to explain the process and held preliminary discussions with the vendor. With most libraries expressing interest, BC ELN is negotiating a URB offer in 2023 for interested libraries.

BC Historical Newspapers Collection

More than a Century of news, features, editorials, ads, and images are open to anyone with a computer or mobile device located in B.C. or the Yukon with the BC Historical Newspapers Collection. Launched in 2022, this open collection was secured through the collaborative efforts of library members at BC ELN, the BC Libraries Cooperative, and Focused Education Resources.

- BC ELN offers 145 consortially-licensed products, services, and add-ons to partner libraries
- BC ELN achieves an average discount of 33% on opt-in resources.
- Partner libraries collectively subscribe to 1011 products, services, and add-ons through BC ELN. This is a 33% increase since 2019.

Photo 4: Vancouver Community College Library, Broadway Campus

Resource Sharing

BC ELN manages Illume, the interlibrary loan (ILL) resource sharing service for public and post-secondary libraries in B.C. and the Yukon. With Illume, patrons can request and access items held outside their home libraries.

2022 Achievements:

Elimination of Fees

Partner libraries successfully eliminated ILL fees for non-returnable items (e.g., articles) between BC ELN libraries. This achievement required significant effort; the Illume Support Centre created best practices for load leveling and delivered training, while partner library staff adjusted their workflows. The entire Illume system is stronger thanks to this work.

New Members Join Illume

Collections available to all Illume members expanded this year with the addition of Trinity Western University and University Canada West to the service.

Reliable Support

The Illume Support Centre provides front-line support to participating libraries when questions or issues arise, and acts as a liaison with Auto-Graphics the Illume platform (SHAREit) provider. The Support Centre resolved 536 support cases in 2022, fielding questions ranging from training support to software issues.

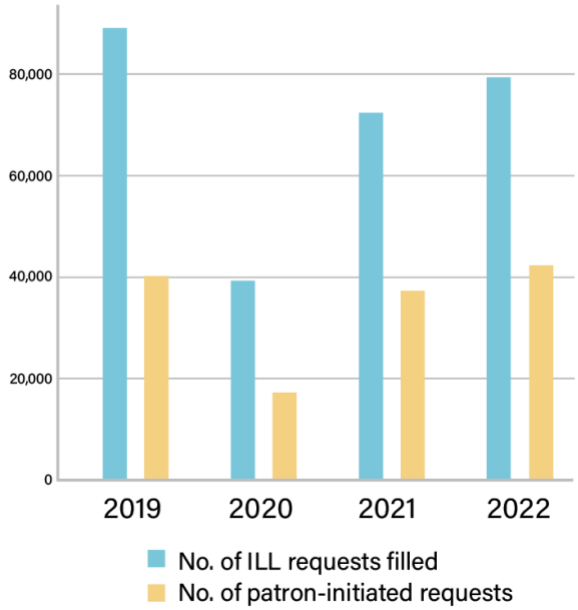


Figure 1: On the Rebound: Statistics show interlibrary loan activity is returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Quote from Winnie Li, Librarian at University Canada West: “Thank you so much for your advice, guidance and support throughout our implementation journey. We are excited to join Illume.”

Learner Support

BC ELN coordinates AskAway and WriteAway, two critical learner support services. 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 and instructors with real-time research help via live chat. Behind the scenes, BC ELN's AskAway Administrative Centre ensures that the service runs smoothly.

2022 Achievements:

Proactive Chat Rolls Out
Six more institutions rolled out proactive chat in 2022. The software feature invites library website visitors to chat with an AskAway service provider when they've lingered on a page for a set amount of time. It's another way institutions are seeking to "go where students are" and assist at their point of need.

Groundwork for Action Planning
In preparation for action planning, several activities were completed in 2022 including an environmental scan of comparable chat reference services and the development of two surveys to gather AskAway participant feedback on current and future states of the service.

Improved Service Provider Training
Based on feedback from local coordinators and service providers, AskAway revised service provider training in 2022. The training now includes an initial self-paced online webinar that orients providers to service philosophy, logistics, and best practices. Providers then attend a live online training session.

Quote from Camosun College AskAway User: "The librarian was truly helpful, educated, and inspiring. [They] offered great suggestions, and most importantly, offered guidance on how to best and efficiently find resources."

- Service providers responded to 48,000 questions in 2022
- 95% of AskAway users* said they were satisfied with their experience.
- 97% of AskAway users* said they would return to the service.

* Based on students that complete an exit survey.

AskAway and WriteAway both get a Boost in 2022!
The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills provided AskAway and WriteAway with two-year bridge funding in 2022 to bolster the services in response to higher student usage during the pandemic.

The funding enabled AskAway to hire a student librarian to staff the service, reducing pressure on participating institutions and permitting them to return to pre-pandemic staffing contributions. WriteAway hired a part-time writing tutor to bridge gaps in staffing hours over the weekends and reduce the demand for auxiliary hours during peak submission periods. WriteAway funding was also used to assist institutions that were close to joining but were unable to initially meet staffing expectations onto the service.

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. There are currently twenty institutions offering WriteAway to their students.

2022 Achievements:

Writing Support for the Yukon
The WriteAway community welcomed Yukon University to the service in 2022. The inclusion of Yukon University brings critical academic support to students “North of 60”.

Refreshed Training
Guided by feedback from service providers, WriteAway training was improved in 2022. Ready-made scripts for tutors to reply to common student issues were updated, and new video resources were added.

Self-Serve Statistics
WriteAway transitioned to a self-serve model for institutions to retrieve student usage statistics. Institutional coordinators are able to retrieve data that will best suit their needs. Student usage rates and tutor response data are accessible with customized filters.

What do Students do with WriteAway feedback?

- 88% revise their assignment
- 75% Apply feedback to a new assignment
- 55% Have a better understanding of a writing concept
- 44% Learn about online resources

(Respondents could select more than one option)

Based on students that complete an exit survey, on average, students give their WriteAway experience a 4.6 out of 5 for helpfulness (0= not helpful, 5= very helpful).

Shared Services

BC ELN works with partner libraries and external groups 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 digital 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 collections.

2022 Achievements:

Groundwork for Islandora 2.0
Arca continued to lay the groundwork in 2022 for a major migration to Islandora 2.0. In addition to hiring discoverygarden, a P.E.I.-based vendor, to create a migration plan, a thorough analysis of collections, metadata, and future needs was completed to prepare for the migration. On behalf of Arca, BC ELN began exploring external funding options to support the migration.

Expanded Membership
Two new institutions confirmed participation in Arca in 2022: Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and the North Vancouver District Public Library. The Admin Centre began working with each to support their collections being brought into repositories.

New Shared Site
With approval from the Arca Advisory Committee, a shared member site called Loupe was created to accommodate smaller partner libraries that face barriers to participation such as having fewer resources or a limited amount of content.

- 27 members belong to Arca, bringing together and making accessible collections from 90 contributing galleries, libraries, archives, and museums.
- 213,000 items are available in Arca, from historic photos to oral histories.

Photo 5: Selkirk College Library

Arca Partnerships

BC ELN fosters partnerships between Arca and external groups to address gaps in digitization and digital preservation.

BCHDP-Arca Hosting Service
BC ELN and the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKBLC) at the University of British Columbia Library have partnered to allow successful past and future British Columbia History Digitization Program (BCHDP) grant recipients the option of hosting their digitized material on Arca via the BCHDP-Arca Hosting Service.

In 2022, BC ELN facilitated the preparation and batch uploading of new collections from the City of Port Coquitlam, the BC Society for the Museum of Original Costume, and the Société historique francophone de la Colombie-Britannique.

BC ELN–BCHDP Support Service
The BC ELN-BCHDP Support Service is a partnership between BC ELN and IKBLC at the University of British Columbia Library. Through this service, BC ELN reduces barriers by offering vital support to prospective BCHDP grant applicants. Assistance could include: guidance in completing the BCHDP grant application, digitization project management, help with copyright, or help preparing metadata.

The BC ELN-BCHDP Support Service is now in its second year. After issuing the BCHDP Early Notice survey in July 2022, BC ELN committed to helping eight small BC GLAM organizations and three BC ELN partner libraries that indicated their intent to apply for a BCHDP grant.

Photo 6: Thompson Rivers University Library

Indigitization Program Partnership

Indigitization Program participants have a secure and affordable repository to store and provide community access to their digitized materials: the Indigitization Community Portal, a shared Arca site. This initiative to support the preservation, management, and sharing of Indigitization Program materials is made possible by a partnership between the Indigitization Program, IKBLC at the University of British Columbia, and BC ELN. The Indigitization Program's investment extends their existing suite of supports, seeing digitized collections through to being preserved and shared.

In 2022, BC ELN added features into the Community Portal such as Traditional Knowledge Labels and Cultural Notices that enable groups to indicate Indigenous cultural heritage protocols and permissions. BC ELN also facilitated the digitization and upload of First Nations House of Learning 30th Anniversary content.

BC ELN Partnerships

DataBC

Over the last two years BC ELN has forged a partnership with DataBC to make BC Assessment data sets available at partner libraries. There are currently four pilot sites (BCIT, UBC, SFU, UVic). This year BC ELN supported the development of workflows, training for designated data librarians, and a communications infrastructure.

Open Access Journal Hosting

This service provides Open Journal System (OJS) journal hosting and support to BC ELN partner libraries. BC ELN has partnered with the University of Alberta Library to provide free hosting and maintenance. BC ELN provides coordination and support to six BC ELN partner libraries. Ten publications (open journals and conference proceedings) are currently hosted on the BC ELN OJS instance.

Photo 7: Trinity Western University Library and Learning Commons

Advancing Ministry Priorities

BC ELN has a role in supporting and advancing Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills' objectives. BC ELN contributes to the quality education that B.C.'s post-secondary institutions provide and ensures students have equitable access to academic materials and support regardless of their location of study. Appropriate training and education prepare students to be active contributors to a strong, sustainable economy — a Ministry priority. In concert with other post-secondary sector organizations (BCcampus, BCCAT, and EducationPlannerBC), BC ELN works to improve how services and information are provided to learners and institutions. BC ELN partners wherever possible with Ministry to learn about and assist with activities that support reconciliation.

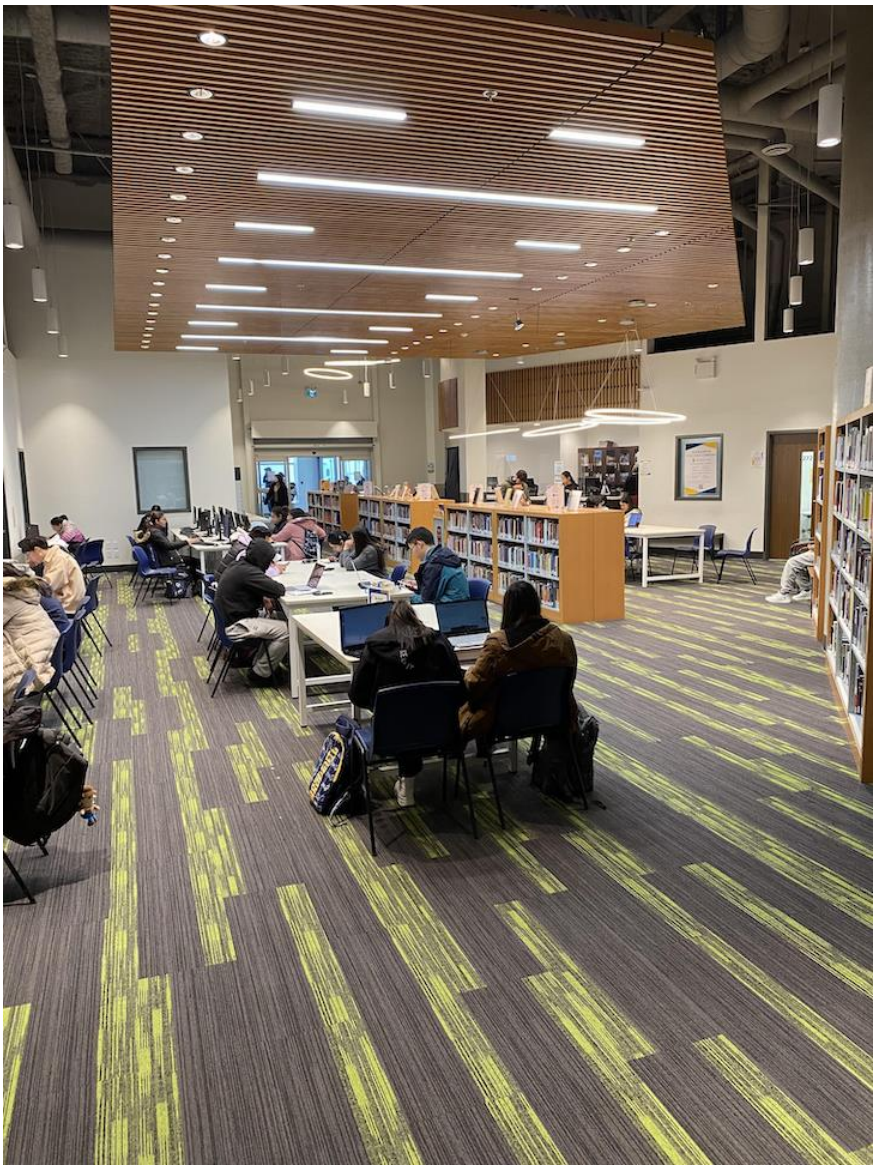


Photo 8: Alexander College Library

Moving Forward

BC ELN's new strategic framework sets out three directions that will drive BC ELN's momentum over the next five-year period:

- Develop Responsive, Inclusive, and Sustainable Services
- Empower and Engage our Community
- Pursue Meaningful, Reciprocal Partnerships

The framework is intended to flex and adapt as circumstances in the environment change. While the three overarching directions guide BC ELN's forward momentum and inform how the community will concentrate its energies in the next five years, shorter-term, adjustable goals will be set under each direction. Ongoing reporting and regular checkpoints will allow BC ELN to assess how progress is meeting partners' needs, and the consortium will have the option to adjust goals as needed. Service Advisory Committees will also develop action plans that align with BC ELN's broader directions.

Financials

BC ELN is a partnership between British Columbia's post-secondary libraries and the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills. 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.

Revenue	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Core Funding (Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills)	$485,417	$485,417
Host Site (SFU) Flow-Through Contribution (Progress through ranks and general wage increases)	$274,897	$356,389
Bridge Funding for AskAway and WriteAway (Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills)	$60,000	n/a
Illume InterLibrary Loan Service (including Support Centre, etc.)	$182,903	$196,264
Miscellaneous Revenue (Associate Membership Fees, Carryforward, Prepayments, Arca Partnerships, etc.)	$124,562	$158,425
Total	**$1,127,779**	**$1,196,495**

Expenses	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Salaries and Benefits (Continuing, Limited Term, and Contract)	$664,238	$720,225
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)	$224,264	$228,359
Arca Partnership Expenses (Indigitization, BCHDP-Arca Hosting/Support, etc.)	$30,702	$23,920
Strategic Planning	$14,089	n/a
Administration/Communication/Governance	$13,687	$26,312
Technical Infrastructure (including ConsortiaManager, etc.)	$8,730	$22,054
Total	**$1,041,710**	**$1,106,870**

BC ELN Administration and Illume Revenue minus Expenditure (Carryforward):

- 2021/22 Actual Carryforward: $86,069

- 2022/23 Projected Carryforward: $89,625 (Includes prepayments and unexpended funds for projects and Arca partnerships.)

AskAway Chat Research Help

Revenue	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Partner Library Support (Service Support Fee and Flexible Contribution)	$97,873	$96,113
BC ELN Contribution	$10,000	$10,000
Ministry Bridge Funding - Year One	n/a	15,000
Miscellaneous (Carryforward, marketing, etc.)	$3,833	$416
Total	**$111,706**	**$121,529**

Expenses	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure	$95,250	$103,386
Administration/Communication/Governance/Marketing	$595	$839
Software and Technical Infrastructure	$15,778	$13,597
Total	**$111,623**	**$117,822**

AskAway Revenue minus Expenditure (Carryforward):

- 2021/22 Actual Carryforward: $83
- 2022/23 Projected Carryforward: $3,707

WriteAway Online Writing Support

Revenue	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Partner Institution Support Fee	$57,021	$65,307
BC ELN Contribution	$10,000	$10,000
Ministry Bridge Funding - Year One	n/a	$15,000
Miscellaneous (Carryforward, marketing, etc.)	$9,897	$12,494
Total	**$76,918**	**$102,801**

Expenses	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure	$55,217	$66,270
Administration/Communication/Governance/Marketing	$490	$1,107
Software and Technical Infrastructure	$8,850	$11,538
Total	**$64,557**	**$78,914**

WriteAway Revenue minus Expenditure (Carryforward):

- 2021/22 Actual Carryforward: $12,361
- 2022/23 Projected Carryforward: $23,887 (Carryforward due to delay in hiring replacement WriteAway Coordinator.)

Arca Digital Repository

Revenue	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Member Service Support (includes additional storage and support fees)	$144,620	$151,935
BC ELN Contribution	$10,000	$10,000
Miscellaneous (Unrestricted and targeted carryforward, etc.)	$21,714	$24,662
Total	**$176,334**	**$186,597**

Expenses	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Staffing and Coordination Infrastructure	$99,422	$122,389
Islandora Foundation Membership	$4,000	$4,000
Migration Assessment Report	$20,493	n/a
External Funding Exploration for Migration	n/a	$307
Administration/Communication/Governance	$1,661	$2,940
Vendor Support and Technology Infrastructure	$26,096	$28,441
Total	**$151,672**	**$158,077**

Arca Revenue minus Expenditure (Carryforward):

- 2021/22 Actual Carryforward: $24,662
- 2022/23 Projected Carryforward: $28,520 (Targeted carryforward for migration to Islandora version 2.)

Licensing Programme
Flow-through finances for licensing activities.

Revenue	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Carryforward	$(92,242)	$(186,657)
Partner Library Contribution	$5,489,659	$5,303,696
Miscellaneous Revenue (Prepayments, etc.)	$24,975	$9,204
Total	**$5,422,392**	**$5,126,243**

Expenses	**2021/22 Actual**	**2022/23 Projected**
Payment to vendors	$5,609,049	$5,117,040
Total	**$5,609,049**	**$5,117,040**

Licensing Programme Revenue minus Expenditure (Carryforward):

- 2021/22 Actual Carryforward: $(186,657)
- 2022/23 Projected Carryforward: $9,203

BC ELN Contact Information:

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