

PROVINCIAL LIBRARY GRANTS REPORT 2016

VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY



INTRODUCTION

For over one hundred years, the Vancouver Public Library (VPL) has championed the vision of an informed, engaged, and connected city by providing free spaces for everyone to discover, create, and share ideas and information.

VPL serves over 432,355 active cardholders at 21 branches across the city, and online at vpl.ca. We provide everyone in Vancouver with free access to information in digital and physical forms including: books; magazines; periodicals; databases; music; movies; training courses; and programs. We also provide everyone in Vancouver with free access to the tools they need to learn and exchange ideas including: wifi; tablets; computers; digital recording studios; flexible learning spaces, online platforms, and meeting spaces. As the last free, indoor public space in the city, we welcome everyone to gather, stay, learn, create, connect, and share ideas and information.

Our programs and services are popular and heavily used by the community. In 2016, VPL recorded over 6 million in-person visits and an additional 5 million visits to vpl.ca. Patrons borrowed over 9 million digital and physical items, received answers to over 770 thousand reference questions, recorded over 10,000 hours of audio, and attended our learning programs over 100 thousand times. In addition, patrons borrowed from our new 118-piece musical instrument collection over 800 times.

In 2016, VPL paved the way towards our vision of the future of library services through the development of our new strategic plan "VPL 2020". We received input from over 4,000 community members, including the public, our patrons and our staff. Using this feedback, we established the following overarching goal to help us measure the success we achieve with our new strategic plan: "By 2020, we are all connected to the ideas and information we need to be inspired and thrive." This goal will guide us as we roll out our projects and initiatives through to 2020.

While the development of our new VPL 2020 Strategic Plan was a key focus, throughout 2016, we continued to deliver out on our 2013-2015 Strategic Plan. In support of our strategy, this year we: broke ground with the launch of our new musical instrument lending collection; launched a new digital platform to support the creation, sharing, and preservation of local history; expanded our digital literacy programs to support patrons in navigating the specialized audiovisual software and equipment in our Inspiration Lab; and secured an exciting new partnership with Library and Archives Canada. This report highlights a few exemplary projects that VPL delivered in 2016.

More information about the Vancouver Public Library 2013-2015 Strategic Plan can be found at:

[http://www.vpl.ca/about/details/vpls 2013-2015 strategic plan](http://www.vpl.ca/about/details/vpls%202013-2015%20strategic%20plan)

The Strategic Plan is translated into a series of initiatives which are documented in an Operating Plan presented to the Library Board each year. More information about VPL's 2016 Operating Plan can be found at:

[http://www.vpl.ca/images/uploads/file/pdf/10 - 2016 Operating Plan.pdf](http://www.vpl.ca/images/uploads/file/pdf/10_-_2016_Operating_Plan.pdf)

Transparency in reporting is achieved through quarterly update reports to the Vancouver Public Library Board on strategic plan progress and through our annual Operating Report which is available to the public on our website at:

[http://www.vpl.ca/about/details/vpl annual operating report](http://www.vpl.ca/about/details/vpl%20annual%20operating%20report)

GOVERNMENT PRIORITY 1

A focus on equitable access to library services for all British Columbians, including efforts to extend library service to under-represented populations (ex. Aboriginal, print disabled, and immigrants)

Library Goals that support the priority:

1. **VPL Strategic Plan Goal: “Expand the Library’s presence in non-traditional spaces so that all Vancouver residents have access to the Library’s resources and services.”**

VPL Operating Plan Initiative: “Implement library service presence in under-served neighbourhoods.”

Related project highlighted below: Community Librarian Outreach.

2. **VPL Strategic Plan Goal: “Implement more flexible, patron-centered service models to inspire and support a community of learning and a culture of reading.”**

VPL Operating Plan Initiative: “Expand provision of programs that foster social cohesion.”

Related project highlighted below: Aboriginal Storyteller in Residence.

Programs and/or Services that align with the priority:

1. Community Librarian Outreach

The Community Librarian Outreach positions were created to increase the Library’s presence in non-traditional spaces, extending our reach to marginalized sectors of our city’s population who would otherwise not have access to library services. In 2016, VPL deployed four community librarians who specifically targeted underprivileged groups in different areas of the city to reduce access barriers to our offerings. These community librarians acted as a single point of contact for community outreach and aimed to strengthen relationships with organizations working with vulnerable and isolated individuals. Below are some highlights of our community librarians’ achievements in 2016:

Community librarians regularly worked with New Dawn, a government-licensed, first-stage stabilization program for women in early recovery of drug and alcohol abuse. These clients often face significant access barriers to city services, and community librarians support them by providing literacy development opportunities, such as offering book clubs, promoting reading, exchanging stories, and creative writing. As a result of these visits, residents often receive new library cards and begin borrowing VPL material. In 2016, our community librarians reached over 150 residents through their work with this organization.

Community librarians made regular visits to the Vancouver Resource Society (VRS), an organization that provides adult day services for individuals with developmental disabilities. The purpose of these visits is to foster adult literacy development as well as to instill a sense of belonging among this community. Community librarians lead programs that involve sharing stories, reciting limericks, singing to music CDs, and other dynamic literacy-building

games and activities. During an evaluation of the program's outcomes, the centre coordinator emphasized that for many in the group, these activities represent their only opportunity for literacy development. The relationship between VPL and VRS has now grown to become a routine part of the local library branch's programming.

Another exemplary outreach effort by our community outreach takes place at Britannia Lodge, an assisted living health care facility for adults with mental health challenges. In 2016, community librarians made regular visits to the facility, providing literacy-building programs for residents who are unable to leave Britannia Lodge. Programs offered included facilitating storytelling and hosting book clubs, as well as "show and tell" sessions to promote digital literacy. For example, a community librarian demonstrated how to borrow tablets from the library, as well as how to access VPL's digital resources. As a result, many residents at Britannia Lodge now own a library card, and those who are able to leave the facility regularly visit their local branch together to borrow material. In addition to the outreach program, Britannia Lodge benefits from VPL's book deposit service which delivers library material to the facility on an ongoing basis.

Community Librarians reached over 2,500 people from marginalized and underserved sectors of the population in 2016. The success of the community librarians' engagement with marginalized communities will continue through 2017 to support VPL's core values: access for all, patron-centred services, community-led planning, and community partnerships.

The Community Librarian Outreach aligns with the following strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Public Libraries:

- **Fostering Connected Communities**
 - By engaging with marginalized populations who may otherwise not have access to the library's services and resources, this initiative advances access to information and resources.
- **Working Together**
 - Through regular visits to the community organizations, and through their dedication to providing much-needed library services to people in need, the community librarians are successful at creating lasting and sustainable partnerships.

2. Aboriginal Storyteller In Residence

2016 marked the 7th year for VPL's Aboriginal Storyteller in Residence program. This annual four-month residency promotes intercultural understanding and story sharing between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. The residency has featured writers, oral storytellers, film-makers, carvers, theatre professionals and a stand-up comedian. Storytellers in residence have represented diverse cultural backgrounds, highlighting the wide breadth of Indigenous communities across Canada.

Until recently, Aboriginal topics, performers and people have been underrepresented in public library programs. The Aboriginal Storyteller in Residence has worked to change that by providing an entire stream of offerings focused on Indigenous perspectives, traditions and intercultural communication and understanding. This residency complements the other Indigenous programming offered through VPL.

Renae Morisseau, a musician, actor, writer, producer and director was the 2016 Aboriginal Storyteller in Residence. During her residency, she offered a wide range of programs and interactive opportunities, from individual conversations to large public events; in total, 32 public events and community visits reached over 700

people. The programs were offered across the City of Vancouver in VPL branches and community locations, to ensure ease of access for people in our communities.

As a result of this residency, community members learned about digital Indigenous storytelling and heard from a range of Indigenous poets and artists. These opportunities helped participants to deepen their understanding of the complexities of reconciliation among Aboriginal and settler people. This is a conversation that VPL and the City of Vancouver are committed to furthering.

Renae Morisseau's programs also allowed community members to share their stories and to engage with each other on difficult issues. People came away better equipped to understand Aboriginal peoples' experiences in Canada, and to engage in important conversations about reconciliation. "We're at an exciting time for innovative storytelling between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada," said Renae Morisseau. "This is a great opportunity to invigorate Canadian consciousness on reconciliation and understanding what it means to be an Indigenous person in Canada in the 21st century."

The Aboriginal Storyteller in Residence aligns with the following strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Public Libraries:

- **Fostering Connected Communities.**
 - This initiative advances access to information and resources by providing a free, accessible venue for community members to learn more about Aboriginal peoples and methods of storytelling.
- **Building Capacity**
 - By allowing community members to share their stories and to engage with each other on difficult issues, the Aboriginal Storyteller in Residence enabled inspiration.
- **Sustaining Our Success**
 - This initiative demonstrates impact through its successful engagement of over 700 people, including those in underrepresented populations, to improve intercultural understanding.

Partnerships that support the priority

1. Community Librarian Outreach

Below are some of the key organizations with whom the community librarians have developed working relationships:

- Chrysalis Society
 - New Dawn Program
 - New Day/New Day Program
- Vancouver Food Bank
- Cedar Walk Alternative School
- John Howard Society
- ISS of BC
- Britannia Lodge
- Evelyn Saller Centre
- Kettle Friendship Society
- Skeena House
- Coastal Mental Health
- Eaton Cognitive Improvement Centre

- Louis Briar Home & Hospital
- Cityview Church
- Vancouver Resource Society

2. Aboriginal Storyteller In Residence

Renae Morisseau's energetic leadership of many programs across the city helped the library build credibility and connections, and develop relationships with local storytellers, artists, performers. These include, but are not limited to:

- Dancer and choreographer Lorelei Williams
- Squamish elder, singer, and teacher S7aplek/Bob Baker
- Vancouver Moving Theatre Artistic Director Savannah Walling
- Musical ensemble M'Girl (percussive hand drum songs and contemporary gospel style)
- Local actor and intercultural communications scholar Hilary Strang

Outcomes that were identified

1. Community Librarian Outreach

- This program helped to establish and promote library services in under-served communities.
- The outreach efforts resulted in an increase in library cards amongst marginalized communities and in visits to library branches to borrow material of which they were previously unaware.
- In addition to fostering literacy, this program has nurtured a growing sense of belonging and community among groups that have traditionally been more isolated.

2. Aboriginal Storyteller In Residence

- Increased awareness of the library's relationship with Aboriginal people.
- Increase in intercultural understanding, and an increase in exposure to and understanding of Indigenous perspectives, particularly on decolonization, reconciliation, and relationships with land and water.
- From a patron who attended one of Renae Morriseau's events: "this was a beautiful and insightful experience. I learned a lot and was able to connect in a way that I will take with me in my daily life."
- In 2016, this program consisted of 32 public events and community visits and reached over 700 people.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITY 2

Increased supports for education transformation. Libraries, as key partners providing supports to students and parents outside of the classroom, should continue organizing and collaborating on community-based, personalized learning opportunities for all learners which allows them to realize their full potential in reaching personal goals.

Library Goals that support the priority

1. VPL Strategic Plan Goal: "Offer a suite of resources, tools, and services to support the creativity and imagination of Vancouver residents."

VPL Operating Plan Initiative: "Musical Instrument Lending."

Related project highlighted below: Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library.

2. VPL Strategic Plan Goal: “Expand the Library’s commitment to kids, teens, and families so that all are inspired by diverse opportunities for learning, creativity, and community engagement.”

VPL Operating Plan initiative: “Expand services for middle-years kids (ages 7-12) in a broad range of library, school and community settings, with a focus on education and support for parents, caregivers and educators.”

Related project highlighted below: Coding Buddies.

Programs and/or Services that align with the priority

Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library

Launched in 2016, the Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library was developed as a way to enhance VPL’s role as a sharing institution and to contribute to the Library’s efforts to offer a suite of resources, tools and services to support the creativity and imagination of Vancouver residents.

The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library collection is comprised of 118 musical instruments of 14 different types, including bass guitars, nylon guitars, steel guitars, banjos, bongos, cajones, keyboards, pianos, djembes, doumbeks, mandolins, ukuleles, and xylophones. It is VPL’s most recent non-traditional lending collection. It is only one of two instrument-lending services in BC public libraries, and constitutes a great example of the next wave of innovation and evolution of existing library services.

The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library has been highly successful since it launched in June 2016: patrons borrowed instruments 804 times between launch and year-end. Since launch, the waiting list to borrow a musical instrument has rarely dropped below 400 individuals. Additionally, community members are using our library for other related services to complement their instrument borrowing. For example, 25% of patrons who borrowed musical instruments also borrowed instructional books.

The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library aligns with the following two strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Public Libraries:

- **Fostering Connected Communities**
 - The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library advances access to resources that may otherwise not be available to all Vancouverites.
- **Building Capacity**
 - The practice of playing musical instruments promotes creativity, inspiration, and innovation.

Coding Buddies

Given the importance of engaging with digital technology in non-formal learning environments, and the potential of technology to excite and inspire kids with creative learning opportunities, the Library provided over 50 digital literacy programs for kids aged 8 to 12 throughout 2016. One of our most successful programs was “Coding Buddies,” designed to provide kids aged 9 to 12 the opportunity to discover the world of computer programming.

The program pairs kids with teenagers who act as their mentors and walk them through coding applications. Each Coding Buddies program comprises three sessions: the first is a training session for teens, and the remaining two are sessions where teens mentor and work with younger kids to become familiar with the apps and begin to learn how to code. We first piloted the program at our Champlain Heights branch in March 2016, then fine-tuned the program according to patron feedback and offered it a second time in August 2016 again at our Champlain Heights branch as well as at our Renfrew branch. Given the program's success, we offered it again in the fall at our Oakridge, Kerrisdale, and Mount Pleasant branches. Over 200 kids and teens participated in this program.

VPL is committed to bridging the digital divide and to providing everyone access to information and creativity. Coding Buddies supports these values through the provision of digital literacy programs to kids and teens who may otherwise not have access to the technology or the training needed to thrive. It also provides teenagers with the opportunity to gain leadership skills by mentoring younger kids and facilitating technology training sessions.

Coding Buddies supports the new B.C. Education plan by providing access to technology and programs around the City of Vancouver, allowing students to practice the skills they are acquiring with the new curriculum. This program supports elementary school students and parents in a non-formal learning environment, and by pairing kids with tech-savvy teenagers, kids are able to build a relationship with a mentor, while teenagers gain the opportunity to build their leadership skills by mentoring and coaching younger students. In addition, the time that teens spend mentoring and coaching younger kids may be counted as community service hours, which students need to fulfill requirements of B.C.'s high school curriculum.

This initiative aligns with the following three strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Public Libraries:

- **Fostering Connected Communities**
 - Coding Buddies advances free access to technology and mentorship to kids outside the classroom.
- **Building Capacity**
 - Coding Buddies enables inspiration and innovation by pairing kids and teens in an open and engaging learning environment.
- **Working together**
 - This program promotes collaboration between Vancouver Public Library and the Vancouver School Board.

Partnerships that support the priority

1. Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library

- Sun Life Financial
- Long & McQuade
- Sarah McLachlan School of Music

2. Coding Buddies

- Vancouver School Board
- Neighbourhood Houses throughout Vancouver
- Community Centers throughout Vancouver

Outcomes that were identified:

1. Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library

- Instruments were borrowed 804 times between the project launch (June 7, 2016) and the end of the year.
- The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library has proven to be greatly popular and in high demand since its launch date.

2. Coding Buddies

- Parents, kids and teens were enthusiastic about this program. When asked his opinion of the program, a parent responded: "This... is just excellent. Teens sharing what they know with younger kids!"
- When asked about the impact the program had on their child, a parent said that their child "uses the local library more to borrow books to learn about computer programming."
- Due to the success of the program in 2016, VPL is now offering Coding Buddies at 10 library branches in 2017, with a Coding Buddies expansion for younger school aged kids 7 – 9 years.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITY 3

Support for the BC Jobs Plan by improving outcomes for job seekers in BC. Specifically, libraries should focus on tools, programs and essential literacy supports that help your community explore new skills and employment options, leading them to be successfully "first in line" for job opportunities for today and tomorrow.

Library Goals that support the priority:

1. **VPL Strategic Plan Goal: "Support the development of Vancouver residents' technology, information, and digital literacy skills so they can participate more effectively in the digital world."**

VPL Operating Plan Initiative: "Develop audio recording/editing programs."

Related project highlighted below: Inspiration Lab Audio Expert Program.

2. **VPL Strategic Plan Goal: "Implement more flexible, patron-centred service models to inspire and support a community of learning and a culture of reading."**

VPL Operating Plan Initiative: "Develop mechanisms to facilitate connections between community members for sharing information and ideas."

Related project highlighted below: Skilled Immigrant Information Centre Networking Nights.

Programs and/or Services that align with the priority

1. Inspiration Lab Audio Expert Program

The City of Vancouver's 2013-2016 Digital Strategy successfully increased access to creative technology and supported growth in the technology sector of Vancouver's digital economy. In the spirit of this commitment, VPL launched the Inspiration Lab in 2015, Vancouver's free digital media hub dedicated to digital creativity, collaboration, and storytelling. The Inspiration Lab features recording studios and audio editing software, both of which have proven to be highly popular and heavily used. VPL provides basic instruction and support for community members to learn new skills in the lab. Recognizing an opportunity to enhance our instruction, we partnered with Telus Optik to engage a local audio expert in the lab.

Between April and July of 2016, VPL engaged audio professional Pietro Sammarco to provide in-depth sound-recording and audio-editing instruction as well as project consultations to community members. Pietro Sammarco developed a 20 hour instructional workshop series on how to improve audio quality for video. The series covered everything from basic audio recording to sound effects to advanced editing techniques. He also offered individual consultations. 137 community members participated in these offerings during this initial pilot.

The Audio Expert's workshop series and consultation sessions supported community members to develop audio and video production skills that not only fuelled their personal creativity but also allowed them with new skill sets for the workplace. Film and television are among the fastest growing industries in BC, and the Audio Expert program provided many local residents with enhanced skills. These skills also demonstrate to employers a general technology literacy and proficiency that is in high demand with the fast pace of changing technology.

The Inspiration Lab Audio Expert Program aligns with the following strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Libraries:

- **Building Capacity:**
 - By facilitating use of the Inspiration Lab, this program enables inspiration and innovation.
- **Fostering Connected Communities:**
 - By providing an audio expert to Inspiration Lab users, this program advances access to information and resources.

2. Skilled Immigrant Information Centre Networking Nights

The Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre (SIIC) is funded through the Government of Canada's Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and exists to provide employment information to newcomers to Canada. Additional funding is provided by the Government of B.C. Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training for clients not eligible through the IRCC funding. SIIC supports patrons in their efforts to find employment that aligns with their skills and experience. Through in-person assistance, online information, programs, and events, patrons have access to labour market information, career exploration, and information on job search with a particular focus on high needs groups such as women, seniors, and youth.

The Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre Networking Nights project was developed from feedback provided by patrons who attended other SIIC programs. We also conducted our own research on job-seeking behaviour and identified networking as a key component to thriving in the workforce. We created the program to supplement the services

that VPL already provides, such as information resources and assistance with career exploration and researching job options, employment opportunities, and work place skills. The intention of networking nights is to provide patrons with an opportunity to meet others in their field and have an opportunity to not only hear about their industry in B.C. but also to build connections and practice networking.

The program was piloted twice in 2016 and was attended by 148 people. Participants received a thorough overview of the advantages of networking, and engaged in individual and group discussions with human resources experts. Patrons were able to practice and improve their communication skills, and build connections with each other and potential employers. Given the success of the SIIC Networking Nights program, we will continue to offer it throughout 2017 and will do so more frequently.

The SIIC Networking Nights Program aligns with the following strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Libraries:

- **Fostering Connected Communities**
 - The SIIC Networking Nights expose participants to a wealth of career-building information and resources.
- **Working Together**
 - Professional networking events contribute to the creation of lasting and sustainable partnerships.

Partnerships that support the priority

1. Inspiration Lab Audio Expert Program

TELUS Optik Local provided the grant funding for the Audio Expert through their Community Television grant program. They were listed as a partner for all programs. VPL has continued a successful partnership with TELUS Optik, with another grant received for an expert to develop and teach workshops on developing ideas and skills in documentary film and video creation in the Inspiration Lab in 2017.

2. Skilled Immigrant Information Centre Networking Nights

Community engagement and collaboration is integral to development and delivery of this program at the Vancouver Public Library. Staff at VPL have forged and fostered a strong working relationship with Canada's Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. The Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre Networking Nights program partnered with the Immigrant Services Society of BC, Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC, and with the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of B.C.

Outcomes that were identified:

1. Inspiration Lab Audio Expert Program

- A total of 77 participants attended the Audio Expert's workshops; these workshops were typically pre-registered to capacity.

- The consultations were also highly successful, with more than 60 community members coming to the library to participate in the individual consultations.
- Participant comments indicate that the program helped them to increase their skills and helped them with their project goals.

2. Skilled Immigrant Information Centre Networking Nights

- The SIIC Networking Nights reached over 140 participants.
- Through this program, attendees improved their communication and networking skills and built connections with each other and prospective employers.
- Participants increased their knowledge, skills and connections related to the Canadian work environment, thereby improving their employment prospects.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITY 4

A focus on collaboration between libraries and other partners. For example, the development of shared service models and resources which extend or improve seamless access.

Library Goals that support the priority

1. VPL Strategic Plan Foundational Element: “Diverse and Accessible Collections and Programs.”

Related project highlighted below: Library and Archives Canada Partnership.

2. VPL Strategic Plan Vision: “An informed, engaged, and connected city.”

VPL Operating Plan Initiative: “Strategic Plan & Public Consultation.”

Related project highlighted below: VPL 2020.

Programs and/or Services that align with the priority:

Library and Archives Canada Partnership

The partnership between Vancouver Public Library (VPL) and Library and Archives Canada (LAC) represents an important opportunity to support our national heritage institution’s reach, and to provide full documentary heritage services to the local community and communities across B.C.

Library and Archives Canada is Canada’s national heritage institution that provides access to both federal government records and an extensive collection of Canadian heritage materials specific research pursuits, such as genealogy and Aboriginal heritage. With its primary location in Ottawa, Library and Archives Canada’s staff and collections may be inaccessible to most local residents. Their intention to partner with VPL is twofold: to relocate their Burnaby records management office to a more central, accessible and public facing Vancouver location; and to realign the organization’s focus to provide greater public service by providing the community with access to its entire collection.

Vancouver Public Library and Library and Archives Canada both serve the public by providing information and reference services; access to digital resources and documentary heritage; public programming, and often collaborate with other institutions in order to develop content, leverage opportunities, and support program delivery so that their respective mandates can be maximized. Given that LAC and VPL share such important priorities, we have established a partnership whereby LAC will open a public service point at Vancouver Public

Library's Central Library, and both organizations will engage in ongoing collaboration on programming and exhibits. This partnership is for the benefit of both institutions and the people who use them, particularly given the frequently overlapping goals and responsibilities for libraries and archives; it will also serve to proactively facilitate outreach in order to promote Canadian documentary heritage.

As a result of this partnership, LAC will offer reference and consultation services to the public in the Special Collections area of the Central Library. Their objectives are to provide more comprehensive client services, improve access to documentary heritage and increase opportunities for collaboration with partners.

LAC and VPL are currently exploring joint public programming initiatives including exhibitions, events, workshops, seminars, and outreach to launch in the fall of 2017.

This initiative aligns with two strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Public Libraries as follows:

- **Fostering Connected Communities**
 - This partnership will advance access to extensive research resources for the benefit of the public.
- **Working Together**
 - VPL's working relationship with Library and Archives Canada is expected to generate collaborative initiatives to inspire and inform our community.

2. VPL 2020

As VPL delivered out on the final remaining initiatives for our Strategic Plan 2013-2015, we also spent 2016 crafting a new strategy that reflects our community's changing needs and aspirations. To ensure that our new Strategic Plan reflects the collective vision that Vancouver residents have for the Library, we consulted extensively with the public, our patrons, and our staff, in addition to conducting in-depth research and analysis.

Our conversations with over 4,000 Vancouver residents generated 16,000 ideas and helped us to identify one overarching goal for our new strategy: "By 2020, we are all connected to the ideas and information we need to be inspired and thrive." The extensive consultation process also helped us to identify four core outcomes that the Library can focus on to meet the changing needs of our residents:

- **Learning, Creativity, and Innovation:** By 2020 VPL will be recognized as a go-to venue for learning, creativity and innovation in Vancouver.
- **Access & Equity:** By 2020 VPL will be accessible and inviting to everyone.
- **Sharing & Collaboration:** By 2020 VPL will be at the centre of a community that shares information, ideas, and stories.
- **Organizational Strength:** By 2020 VPL will be seen as a vital civic service and will be adaptable in the face of change.

Each outcome is associated with specific goals and actions that we will deliver from January 1, 2017 to January 1, 2020. You can read the VPL 2020 Strategic Plan here: www.vpl.ca/strategicplan

The VPL 2020 Strategic Plan is aligned with the four strategies outlined in the Provincial Strategic Plan for Libraries, as follows:

- **Fostering Connected Communities**

- Our VPL 2020 Strategic Plan focuses on facilitating access to our spaces and resources, as well as on expanding our collections to meet changing community needs.
- **Building Capacity**
 - Our first outcome captures VPL's commitment to becoming a go-to venue for learning, creativity, and innovation in Vancouver and providing residents with the resources they need to be inspired and thrive.
- **Working Together**
 - Our third outcome, Sharing and Collaboration, is focused on supporting community groups and enabling civic dialogue to nurture formal and informal knowledge sharing.
- **Sustaining Our Success**
 - Our fourth outcome, Organizational Strength, focuses in part on measuring and reporting on the economic and social impact that VPL has on the community in order to better demonstrate the difference that our services make within the communities we serve.

Partnerships that support the priority:

1. Library and Archives Canada Partnership

Library and Archives Canada and VPL signed a Memorandum of Understanding on October 5, 2016.

2. VPL 2020

The development of VPL 2020 leveraged strong and trusting relationships with the public, patrons, and staff.

Outcomes that were identified:

1. Library and Archives Canada Partnership

- Although this initiative is still in development, with an opening of the new service point planned for mid- 2017, the partnership with LAC has opened up discussions on a range of opportunities for VPL to showcase unique heritage resources which have not been available in Vancouver previously.
- The LAC service point will provide reference service and expertise in LAC's holdings, increased access to LAC online resources and access to LAC materials.
- Increased access to heritage collections is a substantial benefit to the broader Vancouver community.

2. VPL 2020

- The public's feedback throughout the engagement sessions was integral to creating a plan that addresses our community's concerns, expectations, and aspirations.
- Staff involvement in the process resulted in a strengthened sense of ownership of the Plan, its outcomes, goals, and actions.
- The VPL 2020 Strategic Plan was officially launched to the public on February 22nd, 2017.

The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library

Throughout North America, public libraries are using their established infrastructure and their position as a platform for sharing to expand the breadth of their collections, and keep pace with the emerging needs of their communities. Vancouver Public Library is committed to fostering the creativity and imagination of all Vancouver residents reducing barriers and promoting access to a wide range of materials. One of the goals in our Strategic Plan for 2013-2015 was to “offer a suite of resources, tools, and services to support the creativity and imagination of Vancouver residents” and the Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library initiative is a paramount example of VPL’s delivery of this goal.

The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library was initially conceived by Mr. Shaw Salzberg, President of Next Stage Entertainment and a champion of the arts and community engagement. Mr. Salzberg approached VPL and through his industry network, secured Sun Life Financial as the donor for our musical instrument collection. Sun Life Financial provided 100 instruments as a foundation for the collection, and since then, VPL has received over 150 additional instruments through a series of donation drives, which are being assessed for quality and suitability for the collection.

The Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library officially launched in June 2016 and was met with instant, resounding success. VPL now offers a total of 118 musical instruments, including: bass, nylon guitar, steel guitar, banjo, bongos, cajones, keyboard, piano, djembe, doumbek, mandolin, ukulele, violin, and xylophone. As of December 2016, patrons have borrowed instruments a total of 804 times. Our most popular instruments are the ukulele, which has been borrowed 132 times; the acoustic guitar, borrowed 68 times; and the keyboard, which has been borrowed 59 times. Our musical library collection not only serves to inspire our patrons, it also allows residents to experience a broad range of musical instruments free of charge, many of whom may not have the opportunity to do so otherwise.

Our patrons’ reaction to the Sun Life Musical Instrument Lending Library has been overwhelmingly positive. Below are some of our most memorable testimonials:

- “Thank you so much for your kindness in letting me borrow the guitar. I was telling my doctor about the program and told her how having the opportunity to borrow a musical instrument was a great gift. I struggle a lot with pain and anxiety. It seemed to help to be able to focus attention on the instrument.”
- “Thank you very much to all involved in the program. It allowed my kids to try out an instrument they couldn’t have experienced otherwise.”
- “I’m so happy you have this program! Thank you! It’s been a long time since I last played an instrument and it’s a very good way to get some music back in my life!”
- “Great service. Definitely inspired me to buy my own guitar and keep learning to play.”
- “It is fantastic, fabulous for people who want to learn and cannot afford an instrument. Thank you!!”
- “Wonderful idea. Expands what the library is and how it impacts and affects community spirit. Bravo!”
- “Great program, especially for children exploring music.”
- “Thank you for making this service available. I think it is extremely important for children to have access to a music library.” “I really appreciate it! My son is really enjoying the djembe (drum). We wouldn’t have discovered it if we didn’t borrow it from you...thanks!”

SUMMARY

Vancouver Public Library continues to be a thriving, vibrant, and relevant community hub providing core learning, knowledge and social infrastructure to City of Vancouver residents.

In 2016, VPL delivered out on BC Government priorities through the successful delivery of key programs.

We expanded access to library services. The work of the community librarians has resulted in deeper relationships with community organizations in areas of the city with underserved, often vulnerable residents. The Aboriginal Storyteller In Residence provided Vancouver residents an opportunity for increased intercultural understanding and an exposure to Indigenous perspectives.

We provided increased support for education transformation. The Coding Buddies Program engaged over 200 kids and teens across the city, providing them with digital and leadership skills they need to thrive. VPL's Sun Life Financial Musical Instrument Lending Library provided learners of all ages with the opportunity to learn and experience playing music.

We supported the BC Jobs Plan by improving outcomes for job seekers in BC. The workshops and mentorship provided by VPL's Inspiration Lab Audio Expert provided residents with the opportunity to build the digital skills they need to participate in B.C.'s digital and creative economy. The Skilled Immigrant Information Centre Networking Nights supports BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint and #BCTECH Strategy by providing newcomers with resources and networking opportunities with people in their field so that they may more easily enter the workforce.

We focused on increasing collaboration with partners. The new partnership between Vancouver Public Library and Library and Archives Canada will provide the public with enhanced access to heritage resources, promote more comprehensive client services, and increase opportunities for partner collaboration. In developing the VPL 2020 Strategic Plan, we engaged with over 4,000 members of the community, including our key partners, to collaboratively shape the future of our library.