



MANAGEMENT REPORT

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Meeting Date: January 25, 2017

TO: Library Board

FROM: Chief Librarian

SUBJECT: Final Report: Summit on the Value of Libraries, Archives and Museums in a Changing World

SUMMARY

This report presents a link to the final report of the recent Library and Archives Canada (LAC) Summit on the Value of Libraries, Archives and Museums in a Changing World.

PURPOSE

This report is for information.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

On December 5-6, 2016, LAC invited representatives from libraries, archives and museums to Ottawa to discuss the value of these institutions and the value on collaboration amongst them.

DISCUSSION

The final report can be read at the LAC website: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/events/Pages/2017/final-report-summit-value-libraries.aspx>.

The objective of the Summit was to present the current state of research on the social and economic value of memory institutions, and to highlight examples of innovation – much of which has been made possible by new technologies, of which GLAMs have been and continue to be early adopters. In this regard, the Ottawa Summit was an indisputable success. Some 30 speakers, a quarter of whom were international, gathered to highlight key points about memory institutions in the early twenty-first century:

- Technology is a source of both challenges and opportunities for development. First, in terms of challenges, there is the need to find the financial resources necessary to acquire these technologies, and the corresponding need to secure the human resources capable of imagining how to get the most out of them. And in terms of opportunities, there is of course the formidable democratization of knowledge and culture that is the result of GLAMs reaching citizens in their homes thanks to digital technology. There is also an increased use of GLAM spaces, which follows these virtual visits. Thanks to the paradox described above, increased consultation of resources on the Web is increasing the appetite of the public to visit reading rooms and exhibition spaces;
- Memory institutions are playing new roles – welcoming newcomers, providing much needed access to high speed internet for the less fortunate, making available advanced technology for artists and creators, providing an introduction to financial literacy, delivering mental health initiatives and multiple gateways to the cultural world;
- And finally, the position of memory institutions in the creative ecosystem cannot be reduced to the functions of collecting and preserving works. GLAMs are also present at the beginning of the creative chain, providing inspiration and material to artists of all disciplines – not just authors and poets, but also digital artists, musicians, painters, directors , etc.

But beyond sharing knowledge, the Ottawa Summit also revealed a unity among memory institutions, which had previously tended to focus on what makes them unique rather than look for common denominators. In practice, taxonomic distinctions have been fading for a number of years: all major museums host archives, and even libraries – from the Glenbow Museum in Calgary with its rich archival collection, to the Centre Pompidou whose Bibliothèque publique d'information is the busiest library in France.”