

## 2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

### FORT ST. JAMES PUBLIC LIBRARY

#### CHECKLIST

For the PLGR to be considered complete, please ensure you have provided information for each of the following sections. Suggested word counts have been included for each question, but text boxes will expand as you type, so if needed, you can provide more detail. Click on a linked title in the list below to jump to that section of the document.

- ☐ [1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE](#)
- ☐ [2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS](#)
- ☐ [3. KEY CHALLENGES](#)
- ☐ [4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL](#)

#### 1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

**Provide a brief description of the community and library, focusing on what has changed in the past year (250-500 words).**

The Fort St. James Public Library acknowledges that our work takes place on the unceded homelands of the Dakelh Nations.

Founded by Simon Fraser in 1806 on the shores of Stuart Lake, Fort St. James is the gateway to a chain of rivers and lakes that traverse 400 kilometres of central British Columbia. The population of the Fort St. James area, including the municipality itself, rural areas, and First Nations, is slightly under 5,000 people. There is an established forest industry, a burgeoning mining sector and a growing tourism industry. The downtown core, near the District of Fort St. James office, hosts restaurants, retail shops, a bank and a government service office. The library is located right beside the downtown core.

In the past year, the Library Director, staff and Board have worked hard to improve and update the library in ways most beneficial to the community. COVID-19 changed how the library was run and some of these changes were carried over into the regular library practices. Late fees, which had been on hold during lockdown, were removed permanently near the beginning of 2021. The library's YouTube channel uploaded the first author reading and Q&A with local author Tim Hanley, and later added three story time videos by Assistant Library Director Jenny Vogelsang. Two new online learning subscriptions, Niche Academy and LinkedIn Learning, were added as free resources for patrons, and the library continued to create passive programming as a way to fill in the gap left by in-person programming, which has been on hold since March 2020. All of these new elements were added in response to COVID-19, as different ways of providing help and entertainment for patrons without breaking pandemic restrictions.

When possible, the library hosted events for the community. In July, Local MP Taylor Bachrach stopped in to do a meet-and-greet with residents before the election. The library book sale returned after being postponed for a year and was a huge success. The sale ended up running two weeks longer than originally planned, and brought in \$2,352.

Behind-the-scenes, staff continued to improve and update their skills and knowledge in the library world by taking professional development courses, including:

- Indigenous Awareness (BC Library Federations)
- Librarian's Guide to Homelessness (Homeless Library Academy)
- How to Fight Misinformation Online (WikiHow)
- Introduction to Excel (GALE)
- Intermediate Word (GALE)

And in the case of the Assistant Library Director, training in the Library Training Certificate Program through Red River College Polytechnic.

The role of the library is an essential one in times like this, when even the smallest communities can find themselves impacted by the pandemic. Those of us at the Fort St. James Public Library hope we have been able to provide help and comfort to our community. Be it in the form of books and movies to take their minds off their troubles, free wifi and public computers to keep them connected to their loved ones, or just a safe space to relax, if only for a short time.

## 2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year. To report on multiple projects/programs, copy and paste the blank table. Use one table per project/program.

Project/Program Name	
1,000 Books Before Kindergarten	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).	
The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program is a free program for any child, from birth until they begin kindergarten (0-5 yrs). The goal is to create lifelong learners through early reading. Children in the program are given a 100 book log sheet for they or their parents/guardians to fill in every time they read a book. Every 100 books read, the family brings in a completed log sheet and are given a new one, along with a colouring sheet and stickers. When the child has read 1,000 books, they are presented with a certificate, special stickers, a free book, and their name is added to the 1,000 BB4K display in the children's area.	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?	
This program is a great way to foster a lifelong love of reading in children, develop early reading skills, and to give parents a fun activity to do with their children. It is also a way to give children activities to do away from the computer. During the pandemic, we have tried to come up with passive programming and at-home activities for families that do not require computers and internet connection, as many families are getting tired of everything being online.	
How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a> ? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?	
1. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	

2. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
3. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	By providing an at-home activity for parents/guardians and their children, we are enhancing citizen engagement and fostering a love of libraries and reading from an early age.
4. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).</b>	
<p>For our short-term outcome, we are mainly interested in encourage reading from an early age. We would like to see an increase in the number of books our youngest patrons are reading, and how much time parents/guardians are spending reading to their children. In their goal to reach 1,000 books, we could also see children branching out to read new genres and authors they had previously ignored, and hopefully finding new areas they enjoy. 1,000 BB4K could also reignite an enjoyment of reading in parents/guardians, increasing the time they devote to their personal reading choices.</p> <p>For the medium-term outcome, we hope to see an increase in younger patrons to the library, even those who outgrow the 1,000 BB4K. If children start reading at an early age, there is a higher likelihood that they will continue to read as they get older. Since the library is fostering such interest in reading, and is providing the books necessary for them to complete the 1,000 books challenge, as well as the prizes, these young readers will hopefully come to associate the library as a great resource for reading. Children with younger siblings can also serve as a way to encourage young patrons to pick up a book when they see how much fun their older siblings are having in the library.</p> <p>For our long-term outcome, we envision that, as the children grow older, they will continue to use the library, increasing our numbers in the juvenile and young adult patrons. In the far-off future, when these patrons have children themselves, we would hope they would pass along their love of reading and libraries to their children too. Children who are read to from a young age develop a larger vocabulary and stronger language skills. This program will help strengthen those prereader skills so that children can thrive when they start kindergarten</p>	
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)</b>	
A literacy subsidy from the North Central Library Federation for \$877.78 allowed us to purchase the stickers for the program.	

<b>Project/Program Name</b>
Late fee removal
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).</b>

When the library temporarily closed in mid-March 2020, all late fees were suspended during this time to allow patrons to self-isolate during lockdown without worrying about returning items. Upon reopening in late June 2020, the fees remained suspended due to the ongoing pandemic. In February 2021, the Library Director put it to the Board that late fees be removed for good. There was no obvious change in the petty cash deposits during the time the fees were suspended, and given that the cost was only 5¢ a day, the money received had rarely added up to anything substantial. Fines for missing and damaged items would remain in place, with multiple notifications and warnings sent to the patrons before the item would be marked as lost on their account. The Board agreed to the change, and on February 17, 2021, late fees were permanently removed.

**How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?**

The community had reacted positively to the fee removal: items got returned more frequently; now that items could be out for six months without fear of penalty, patrons were less concerned with returning the item and having to pay a fee. It was suspected that some patrons, upon realizing how late an item was, would elect to just keep the item and not return to the library, as opposed to returning it and incurring a fee. Patrons also returned who hadn't been seen for months due to the outstanding fees they had on their accounts (any late fees from before the fee change had also been removed).

**How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?**

5. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	
6. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
7. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	By removing late fees, we are making the library more accessible to our patrons. We have removed the stigma attached with late returns, enabling patrons to use the library and to return our items without the shame of owing money to the library.
8. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	

**What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).**

For our short-term outcome, we hope to see patrons returning to the library now that they no longer owe money they cannot pay. We also expect to receive some materials back that have been long overdue now that the late fees are gone.

For the medium-term outcome, we want to see word spread in the community, not just in Fort St. James, but in the surrounding areas whose residents use our library. The more people who know that there are no late fees, the higher chance that the library will see an increase in patron registration and use. We also expect to see a higher volume on returns since we are more lenient with our return times.

For the long-term outcome, we want to see a visible cost reduction on the number of replacement items we purchase each year.

**Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)**

No.

**Project/Program Name**

New computer and computer program purchases

**Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).**

All computers at the library are in need of replacement. As of 2019, the public and staff computers were all at least 10 years old, and this is evident in how they performed. In 2020, the Library Director purchased three new Lenovo mini tower computers for the public, but these proved ineffective and caused more problems than they solved due to memory and performance issues. After more research and advice from other Library Directors, the Library Director realized that the computers needed to be replaced with desktop computers. While the three mini-towers had cost just over \$2,200 total, to purchase new desktop computers would cost significantly more. In December 2021, an Aspire TC Desktop - TC-390-ER11 was purchased for the public, using the revenue brought in from the library book sale. The computer came with a warranty and a 30-day money back guarantee, so the LD thought it would be a good way to test the new computer to see how it would run. The computer did not have any of the problems the previous purchased computer had, and the problems that did arise were easy for the LD to fix. The LD also applied for a grant from the Integris Credit Union Community Foundation for \$12,625 to purchase new computers, ten in total for staff and patrons, which was awarded to the library January 2022. The library also purchased Deep Freeze, a program used for saving the computer in a set state so that it reverts to this state upon restart.

**How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?**

Due to its rural location, internet access is not always a given or reliable in Fort St. James, and there are a lot of residents both in town and on the reserves who do not have wifi or computers. Many residents rely on the free wifi and computer access provided by the library. The current public computers are slow and prone to technological problems. There are no in-town computer repair locations so the Library Director, as the default IT person, has to fix them. The staff computers are

required for the day-to-day library operations and have become less reliable as time has gone on. Through research and consulting other BC Library Directors, the Fort St James Library Director has decided to purchase new Acer computers. By purchasing the same make and model for every computer, the Library Director hopes to make any future problems easier to solve as every computer will operate the same way and thus any troubleshooting experience can be recorded and relied upon should similar problems arise again. The Deep Freeze program is a quick and easy-to-use program for keeping patron's personal information private. Any information, downloads, saves, and changes made to the computer will be reset when the computer is shut down. This not only keeps other people from viewing potentially secure information, but saves staff time in going through the public computers each night to manually remove unwanted information and items before shutdown.

**How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?**

<p>9. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>By improving our computers, we are providing residents with a necessary tool to use in their day-to-day lives. So much is done online these days, from job applications to paying bills to signing up for government services, it can be very difficult to get by without computer access. The public computers are available for free to anyone who needs them, alongside help from knowledgeable staff. The staff computers are required for the successfully daily operations of the library, and whenever there is a technical problem, this can slow down the entire process. Faster staff computers mean faster check in and check out times, and more access for patrons.</p>
<p>10. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	
<p>11. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>Providing access to public computers means providing access to online government programs, documents, and information. So much is done online and less and less is there an offline option provided, and having access to free computers is necessary to perform many basic functions including applying for government benefits, vaccine passports, and applying for jobs.</p>
<p>12. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	

**What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).**

Our short-term outcome is already visibly in effect. With the integration of the new Acer computer, staff have already heard from patrons about how much quicker the new computers are. There have also been much fewer problems following computer updates and printer connectivity.

For our medium-term outcome, once COVID restrictions have lifted, we hope to bring the six public computers out for patron use. Hopefully word-of-mouth as well as advertising will bring in our patrons who used to come in before COVID to use the computers. We would like to see an increase in foot traffic.

For our long-term outcome, by purchasing all the computers and monitors at the same time, when the time comes to replace them, it can be done as a bulk replacement, rather than trying to keep up with which computer needs replacing at which time, and always having to make due with older computer. This will also give us enough advanced notice so that, when the time nears, the LD and Board can plan the budget accordingly, should grant money not be available for another full library computer upgrade.

**Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)**

Thanks to a grant from the Integrus Community Foundation of \$12,625 (applied for in 2021, received in 2022), the library will be able to purchase public and staff computers, as well as bigger monitors.

**Project/Program Name**

Passive Programs

**Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).**

Due to ongoing pandemic restrictions, all in-person programming was on hold for 2021. In order to provide safe activities for patrons, the LD and staff put together a variety of passive programs for patrons to partake in. Passive programs are programs that patrons can do on their own or in their family group without needing to interact closely with library staff and other patrons. For the youngest patrons, the children's area was decorated with an interactive pirate path, a fun trail winding through the area which prompted users to perform actions like spinning, counting, jumping, and spelling. Desk assistant Lyra made the path, as well as two in-house activity books for toddler and pre-school aged children. The activities in the binders use colourful pages and Velcro cut-outs to teach youngsters useful skills like spelling, counting, recycling, and matching. Kids can learn to sort recycling, identify seasons and colours, match animals with their homes, and identify parts of the body. Finally, the LD purchased a drawing board, which children use in-house. This board has them trace over letters, using a magnetized pen to raise or lower metal dots along the surface of the letters as they do so. The board has been very popular with families. All passive programming for children is designed to be easy to wipe down after each use.

For the older kids, the LD and Assistant Library Director put together activity boxes for the young adult section. These boxes held all the necessary items for users to do origami, colour in adult colouring sheets, create found poetry, learn how to draw, and create friendship bracelets. When the numbers went back up and the Omicron variant emerged, these boxes were set aside for a safer time, though adult colouring sheets were still made available.



<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?</b>	
<p>So much has been moved online during the pandemic, from classes to work to afterschool activities. The library staff wanted to provide ways to get younger patrons away from screens while in the library. With the passive programs, staff can easily provide young people with fun activities to do without the need of a computer.</p>	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?</b>	
13. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	
14. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
15. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	We are providing our younger patrons with a place to learn and relax without the need of a computer, laptop, tablet or phone. Our passive programming encourages users to be active both mentally and physically, and work together with those in their family bubble.
16. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).</b>	
<p>For our short-term outcome, we will provide young people with activities away from screens and for the youngest patrons, give them things to do that get them moving.</p> <p>For our medium-term outcome, we would like to continue the passive programming even when the COVID restrictions are lifted. We will bring out the YA kits and will periodically update the floor path with a new theme and design.</p> <p>For our long-term outcome, we hope to see an increase in foot traffic and patron use of our passive programs. If the programming has proven successful, we may set aside funds to purchase more passive programming materials like the letter board.</p>	
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)</b>	
<p>A literacy subsidy from the North Central Library Federation for \$877.78 allowed us to purchase the letter board and the materials needed to create the path.</p>	



<b>Project/Program Name</b>	
LinkedIn and Niche Academy subscriptions	
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).</b>	
<p>In March 2021, the library, through BC Libraries Cooperative, added LinkedIn Learning for Library access to the website. In April 2021, the NCLF covered the cost of 50% for Niche Academy subscriptions for all member libraries.</p> <p>These two additions to the website provided all patrons with an active library card free access to the online learning platforms. Topics include resume writing, job searches, health and wellness, Microsoft office, and basic and intermediate computer use.</p>	
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?</b>	
<p>Having easy access to learning can be difficult in a rural community. With their free library cards, patrons can access thousands of webinars, tutorials, courses, and other online learning opportunities previously inaccessible without spending money. With our 24/7 free wifi and public computers, patrons have everything they need to use LinkedIn and Niche Academy. Some of the tutorials and courses offer a certificate of completion at the end of their training, which looks good on a resume. The 2016 Statistics Canada census showed that 23.8% of the Fort St. James population does not have a high school diploma, 8.3% higher than the BC average, and 31.6% have only a high school diploma. These programs are also very helpful for those who want to continue their education, particularly the working poor population who have the desire but not the finances to continue their education.</p>	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?</b>	
<p>17. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>With their library card and password, patrons can access a wide variety of online learning tutorials, videos, courses, and programs through the library. Sites like LinkedIn and Niche Academy that would usually required a paid subscription, are free to library patrons. They can pick which topics they are interested in and tailor fit them to their needs. They can also plan when to watch the videos, as opposed to scheduling their day around a pre-set viewing schedule as required by some other online options.</p> <p>The LinkedIn courses come in English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish, Mandarin, and Portuguese.</p>
<p>18. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>Niche Academy offers staff access to library-themed courses such as tutorials on homelessness and libraries, how to use GALE, OverDrive, and the Dewey Decimal system, and how to install and use the Libby app. Staff have already taken advantage of the access to improve their skills in Microsoft office.</p>

<p>19. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>A key part of reconciliation making sure the perspectives of traditionally marginalized groups are heard. LinkedIn and Niche Academy, though American-based companies, offer a variety of educational resources about racism and inclusion, which can go towards fostering a better understanding of marginalized groups.</p>
<p>20. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	
<p><b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).</b></p>	
<p>For our short-term outcome, we would like to see the LinkedIn Learning and Niche Academy resources being used by our patrons. We have already seen an uptick in number of views per month for both platforms, and we'd like to get these numbers even higher.</p> <p>For our medium-term outcome, we hope to get feedback from our patrons about what they like and what they want added to the resources. For Niche Academy, the LD has the ability to add more programs and even create their own, so there is no reason to not provide patrons with what they need.</p> <p>For our long-term outcome, if the patron use proves successful, we will continue to subscribe to LinkedIn and Niche Academy, and could even create our own instructional videos on how to use key features in our library.</p>	
<p><b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)</b></p>	
<p>BC Libraries Cooperative provided cost coverage for LinkedIn Learning for two years for all BC libraries, thanks to a grant from the Government of BC.</p> <p>The North Central Library Federation pays 50% for Niche Academy, with each member library paying a portion of the reminder based on population.</p>	

<p><b>Project/Program Name</b></p>
<p>Improving Library Collection for Seniors</p>
<p><b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).</b></p>
<p>In October 2021, the Library Director applied for a grant from the Kimberley Foundation to go towards purchasing more audiobooks and Large Print books for the collection. The library was allocated \$1,750 to go towards the project from the Foundation. The Library Director was able to purchase over 60 large print books and over 30 audiobooks, many only a few years old.</p>

<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?</b>	
<p>The Fort St. James Public Library serves as one of the main sources of entertainment and education for our small community, including for a large number of senior residents. The audiobooks and large print are of great value to those who have difficulty reading our regular print books. However, due to the cost of these books, which can be double what a regular print book would cost, the library rarely purchased new releases of large print books and audiobooks, and could only add one or two a month. Thanks to the grant money, we were able to grow our audiobook and large print book collection within a month, in the case of our audiobook collection, nearly tripling what we had available.</p>	
<b>How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a>? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?</b>	
<b>21. Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	By increasing access to a variety of physical large print and audiobooks, we are providing many of our patrons with the kind of materials they need to continue using and enjoying the library.
<b>22. Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	
<b>23. Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	The large print and audiobooks have received the kind of attention normally reserved for the regular print books. In seeing how we continue to grow and update our collection, patrons who are visually impaired will know that they have not been forgotten by the library, and that we are doing our part to ensure they can use our services.
<b>24. Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).</b>	
<p>For our short-term outcome, we hope to see an increase in large print and audiobook users, not just through those who require these books due to visual impairment, but from all patrons.</p> <p>For our medium-term outcome, we would like to continue purchasing new large print and audiobooks, including some more new releases.</p> <p>For our long-term outcome, we would like to expand the large print and audiobook section if it proves popular enough, which will likely involve reorganizing the library to accommodate the growing collection. We may even include portable CD players for patrons to take out.</p>	
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)</b>	

Thanks to the generous grant from the Kimberley Foundation, through their Pat Morris Communities Matter initiative, the library was able to purchase over 60 large print books and over 30 audiobooks for the collection. The library put up signs thanking the Kimberley Foundation, and each book and audiobook purchased with grant money was adorned with a sticker thanking the Kimberley Foundation.

Project/Program Name	
Virtual Story Time	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).	
<p>When the pandemic was first declared in March 2020, the LD and staff put in a lot of work coming up with ways to make the library accessible even during shutdown and stay-at-home orders. Many libraries started doing virtual story times, but staff were concerned with two issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The copyright problems that could arise from reading stories online. Many authors gave permission for virtual story times to use their stories during lockdown, but with the understanding that the videos would be removed after so many months.</li> <li>- Staff did not want to present a live virtual story time, due to accessibility issues for those without reliable internet access, and for working parents who might not be able to be online for the story time with their children.</li> </ul> <p>It was decided that we would instead create a more permanent online story time that could be accessed at any time and would have no risk of being taken down for copyright. Using the library's YouTube channel, the Assistant Library Director filmed three videos for children, featuring songs, sign language, finger rhymes, movement, felt stories, and a read aloud of a storybook. All books featured are by local authors. Copyright permission was granted from the publishers for us to use the books in our videos.</p>	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?	
<p>Through our virtual story times, children have access to the kind of interactive and fun story times made unavailable due to the pandemic. Using books by local authors not only means we don't have to worry about copyright complaints and takedown notices, but it creates an interest for homegrown talent. In 2021, our most popular children's book was <i>A Unicorn's Alphabet</i> by April Hilland, the book read in our first story time video. The videos also help foster a connection between our children's librarian and the younger patrons, even when they can't be together in person.</p>	
How does this project/program support the <a href="#">B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service</a> ? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?	
25. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	All of our videos are available on YouTube, so there is no need for parents to plan their schedules around a live event, or to depend on an unreliable internet connection for their children's story time. We provide cards with the URL of our video page to parents who would have an interest in sharing the videos with their young children.
26. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	

27. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	By presenting interactive and engaging videos to the youngest patrons of the library, a bond can be formed between the children and the children's librarian, even when they are part. Local authors benefit from a boost in popularity when their books are featured in our videos.
28. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	
<b>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).</b>	
<p>For our short-term outcome, we want to provide children and their families with an easy-to-access, entertaining and educational set of story time videos to partake in during the pandemic.</p> <p>For our medium-term outcome, we would like to create more videos for children, and get our viewer numbers up. When in-person programming can take place, it would be great to record the in-person story times for children who can't attend for various reasons; we will just need to get parents' permission to have their children on film.</p> <p>For our long-term outcome, if the videos prove popular enough and the wifi in and around town becomes more reliable, we would like to have live events, but ones we would also record for those who miss them. These live events could include more interaction with online patrons, and may even venture outside of just children's videos.</p>	
<b>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)</b>	
Two local authors, April Hilland and Kristen Cooper, gave us permission to use their self-published books for our read aloud stories. Big Heart Publishing gave permission for the use of Jeanie Vant's book.	

<b>Project/Program Name</b>
Professional Development
<b>Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program (250-500 words).</b>
This year, the staff and Board took part in various professional development opportunities. Staff learned about Indigenous Awareness from Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., Introduction to Diversity & Inclusion from Safe Harbour, Introduction to Microsoft Excel and Intermediate Microsoft Word GALE, and How to Respond to Prejudicial Comments from Customers from the NCLF/NELF. The Assistant Library Director Jenny Vogelsang has begun training in the Library Training Certificate Program through Red River College Polytechnic. And the Library Board have continued to attend BCLTA, BCLA, and NCLF meetings and conferences.
<b>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community (250-500 words)?</b>

The library staff continue to improve their abilities through taking professional development courses. The programs they pick are chosen because of their relevance to the Fort St. James Public Library's needs; for example, Indigenous Awareness eTraining helps with our connection to the large Indigenous population and surrounding reserves, Microsoft programs help in record keeping and data management. The Assistant Library Director's certificate program ties into the library's goal (as outlined in the letter of offer) to have the ALD develop all the necessary skills that are required to be competent in all tasks associated with the job. And the Library Board's continued involvement in the library association meetings and conferences keeps them up-to-date on the events, changes, and other issues happening in the broader library community.

**How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please list as many goals as needed (250-500 words per goal)?**

29. <b>Improving Access</b> for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	Through the Introduction to Diversity & Inclusion, the LD learned of various ways to make the library, including the computers and website, more inviting to those with visual and auditory disabilities.
30. <b>Building Capacity</b> for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	The ALD is learning new skills and improving the ones she already has through her training in the certificate program. The Indigenous Awareness and Introduction to Diversity & Inclusion training, staff are becoming aware of areas of the library that had previously been overlooked or underserved.
31. <b>Advancing Citizen Engagement</b> (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Through the Indigenous Awareness eTraining, staff began the process of learning about Canada's history with Indigenous peoples and how we can be a more inclusive space for our Indigenous patrons.
32. <b>Enhancing Governance</b> of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	The Board's participation in the various conferences and meetings has increased their understanding and commitment to the library and the community it serves.

**What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for information on short, medium, and long-term outcomes (500-1000 words).**

For our short-term outcome, staff and Board members will continue to take training courses and attend meetings and conferences.

For our medium-term and long-term outcomes, staff and Board will have the opportunity to attend more in-person training events and conferences, and staff will be able to further their educational opportunities with certificate programs. This will depend of course on COVID protocols and the overall state of the pandemic in the next few years.

**Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)? (Maximum 100 words.)**

The Kootenay Library Federation generously paid for up to 2 staff to take the Indigenous Awareness eTraining.

### 3. KEY CHALLENGES

The following topics have been identified as recurring themes in previous years' PLGRs. The intent of this section is to collect detailed information in a structured, consistent format.

Please select the most significant challenges that the library has faced in the past year and provide a description of how the library addressed them. Leave any other listed topics blank if they did not significantly impact the library.

Use the 'Other' row to include any ongoing or past challenges that are not included in this list. If you have more than one 'Other' item to add, please insert additional rows into the table.



Challenge	Briefly describe how this challenge has impacted the library/community, and what steps the library took to address it in 2021. Including examples or stories (optional) may also illustrate how service changes helped addressed this challenge. Please specify if any provincial funding was used (e.g., annual library funding, the technology grant, other provincial grants, or local grants). (Maximum 500 words per topic.)
COVID-19 (e.g., safety protocols, proof of vaccination)	<p>When it seemed like the province was heading into Phase 3 of the pandemic restart plan, the Fort St. James Public Library changed some of the COVID-19 restrictions starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Materials were no longer quarantined for three days, though staff continued to wipe down every return for sanitary reasons. Patrons were no longer required to sanitize their hands upon entering, to wear masks, or to check in at the front counter. The 8-person capacity limit and 30-minute time limit was also halted. Plans were made for in-person programming to begin in September 7, 2021, when the province was expected to enter Phase 4 of the pandemic Restart Plan.</p> <p>Then the numbers started going up, and following the government's lead, the library postponed all in-person programming indefinitely. With the mask mandate back in place, patrons 5 and older were required to wear masks in the library, and asked to sanitize their hands if they were going to use a computer or any of our passive programming materials like our children's activity binders. The library provided free disposable masks to patrons who needed them. The capacity limit was reinstated, and alternatives were made available for patrons who wished to use the library without wearing a mask; these included visiting during closed hours or participating in our curbside delivery service.</p> <p>The library does not require proof of vaccination for patrons, and currently does not have a policy in place for staff. Staff is available to help patrons register on the online health portal and print the vaccinate passport; printing fees are waived for this matter. There have been several instances of patrons wearing their masks incorrectly, which staff politely correct. The Safety Plan was updated with a three strike per visit rule for improper mask usage. After receiving a third warning, patrons who continue to wear their masks improperly (e.g., below the nose, under the chin, taking it off) are asked to leave for the day. In some cases, at staff discretion, patrons who have been repeatedly warned on multiple visits are given only one warning before being asked to leave for the day.</p>
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	In the summer of 2021, there was a threat of wildfires once more forcing an evacuation of the library. The LD regularly checked the online wildfire map, and the library computer files are already backed up each night on an external hard drive which goes home with the LD.
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	

Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	We have had trouble attracting much attention when posting job positions online. In 2021, we only received two applications for our last job post, despite advertising online, on job boards both physical and digital, and having signs up all over town. Part of the problem could have been with the hours being offered; due to COVID restrictions and low foot traffic, the library did not require a full-time Desk Assistant. Those looking for work were looking for full-time work and thus would not apply. Hopefully when COVID restrictions have permanently lifted, our foot traffic will increase and we will have enough work to justify hiring another full-time position or at least offering more hours.
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	There is an ongoing problem with poor internet quality in town. The library internet has been upgraded as of 2019, and is available 24/7 and can be accessed outside the building.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	We are currently in the process of having our vents and geothermal system repaired and cleaned. Our lift receives annual maintenance checks. We have purchased a new vacuum to better clean our carpets.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	We had to postpone plans to have class visits, and when we reinstated the 8-patron capacity, we had to request that the local daycare call ahead before visiting with their kids.
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	<p>The community has seen an increase in alcohol and drug use and hospitalizations and deaths from overdoses. The library continues to be a safe and welcoming space for all, but we do not allow alcohol or drug use on premises. We have had to ask people to leave the property when caught with drugs or alcohol, and in some cases call the RCMP when they refuse to leave. We have also requested that the RCMP do drop-ins while we are open, and drive-bys when we are closed, with particular attention paid to the back of the building, where we have found drug and alcohol paraphernalia in the mornings.</p> <p>The library mitten tree came back out in December 2021, as always, adorned with mittens, hats, gloves, and other winter gear free for anyone to take with them.</p> <p>A security camera was added to the upstairs mezzanine to allow for staff to keep an eye on that area while downstairs. The security camera in the downstairs corner of the library was replaced with an newer, easier to use</p>

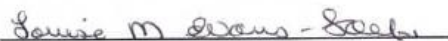
	camera. Signs have been posted in both areas to alert patrons when they are on camera.
Other (please specify)	In late May of 2021, the remains of 215 children were found in unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Residential School. In memory of the children, the library lowered our Canadian flag to half-mast for over 6 months; however, after the flag was stolen for the second time, it was decided by staff to raise the flag back to full-staff and to instead purchase an "Every Child Matters" flag, to be hung prominently in the library building. The staff also set out a display of adult non-fiction books about residential school. LD contacted Nak'azdli about our resources. Nathan Thomas, the Communications Manager at Nak'azdli, visited the library and took photos of the display for their Facebook page.

#### 4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

*Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.*

Library Director Signature: 

Date: March 17, 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: March 17, 2022