

Q1 Executive Director Report

February 2025



PUBLIC LIBRARY
inter
LINK

mission

Vibrant communities supported
by strong public libraries

vision

Supporting public libraries
through resource sharing &
collaborative programs



values

We Are ...

Collaborative. We believe that working together strengthens the collective impact of public libraries in our region.

Adaptable. We are attuned to shifting trends in our sector & responsive to the changing needs of our members.

Inclusive & Equitable. We celebrate the unique regional & cultural differences across our membership & the communities they serve. We ensure every voice is heard & respected, regardless of size and resources.

Supportive. We are a welcoming community that shares resources, advances knowledge & lifts each other up.

Accountable. We are good stewards of our resources - open, transparent, & committed to demonstrating our impact to members & funders.

strong services

BC Libraries Present

BC Libraries Present held a conversation with Jessica Johns, author of *Bad Cress* in November. ~150 people attended virtually or watched the recording; with more participating in groups, in person at libraries.

Collaborative Virtual Programming Needs Assessment & Business Case

A needs assessment to determine continued interest in collaborative virtual programming was completed in late 2024. 12 InterLINK libraries participated.

- Approximately 80% of those libraries viewed virtual programming as either necessary or nice to have
- The majority of InterLINK libraries were interested in continuing to collaborate on virtual programming
- Approximately 75% of InterLINK libraries that participated were open to contributing monetarily to an ongoing virtual programming initiative

A business case is under development, exploring prospective models, identifying the most viable and sustainable funding options for a future collaboration, and supporting further discussion with decision makers and potential funders.

“I am so grateful to our libraries for providing the opportunity to experience authors in person. I learn so much & come away from feeling enriched.”



accessibility

Accessibility Audits

To support member libraries comply with the Accessible BC Act and to help them make their spaces & organizations more welcome to all, InterLINK is offering a accessibility audit shared services. InterLINK has engaged SPARC BC to provide opt-in accessibility audits for the following areas of library operations:

- Built Environments
- Human Resources
- Technology / IT

InterLINK's sponsored shared audits on Organizational Attitudes and Programs and Services are now complete. The outcomes report is available and learnings will support identifying shared opportunities for improvement.

Public Library Accessibility Working Group

As a member of the Public Library Accessibility Working Group, InterLINK has been working with other sector organizations to create a low-tech assessment tool that libraries can print or complete digitally to help them undertake barrier identification. Such a framework will provide structure for engaging Accessibility Committees and processing feedback in addition to bolstering barrier literacy.

The PLAWG brings together sector leaders to discuss shared provincial opportunities and challenges. It also represents the sector in conversations with the Disability Alliance of BC and the Accessibility Directorate.

InterLINK Federated Accessibility Committee

The Federated Accessibility Advisory Committee is nearing completion of a draft Accessibility Plan for participating libraries. This shared plan will provide a framework to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility at their organizations.



NewToBC

In 2024, InterLINK submitted a proposal for continued federal funding for NewToBC (NTBC) through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. In late November, InterLINK learned that the proposal was not successful due to significant reductions to targets for newcomer arrivals and cuts to federal funding for settlement programming.

InterLINK is working with member libraries to identify a sustainable service delivery model and stable funding to allow NTBC to continue to deliver innovative and impactful services that support newcomers, libraries, and BC communities.

Library Champions Project (LCP)

In Fall 2024, NTBC delivered 9 cycles of the LCP. In Winter 2024, NTBC will deliver 4 cycles of LCP supported by Fraser Valley Regional Library (Maple Ridge and Terry Fox libraries), New Westminster Public Library, VPL, 1 regional collaboration.

By March, more than 300 newcomers will have participated in 23 cycles of LCP. These Library Champions will have connected with 10,000+ newcomers in their communities.

Website and Social Media

The NewToBC website and social media presence is a source of accurate, relevant, and up-to-date library, settlement, and community information.

- Over 6,300 users visit the website every month.
- NewToBC Facebook page has a remarkable 74,000+ followers after picking up 6,000 new followers in December 2024.

strong member libraries ...

consortial purchasing

Multilingual Collections

The InterLINK Multilingual Consortial program grew from 6 participating libraries, spending approximately \$32,000, to 8 participating libraries, spending approximately \$71,600. If your library is interested in learning more about the benefits of participating in this service, contact us for more details.

Library Cards

15 libraries participated in the bulk purchasing order of library cards in Q42024. 218,550 total cards were ordered resulting in a discount of approximately 20%.

eAudio for Patrons with Print Disabilities

The InterLINK Audiobook program continues to play a vital role in member libraries' accessible services departments, providing hours of entertainment and engagement for print disabled patrons.

- 2,036 patrons are registered for the service.
- 15,554 titles are in the collection, with 790 titles added in 2024.
- Materials were circulated 32,294 times.

Playaway

InterLINK has negotiated preferential pricing for Playaway. Focusing on children's materials and accessible formats, "Playaway Products' pre-loaded edutainment devices give libraries everything they need to promote literacy, bridge the digital divide, and make technology accessible to everyone."

Discounts apply to Wonderbooks, Launchpads, and Playaways:

- Wonderbooks - 10%
- Launchpads - 15%
- Playaways - 20-25%

* Larger orders may be eligible for steeper discounts. If you have a significant order, make sure to reach out to InterLINK prior to ordering *

strong member libraries ...

staff development

InterLINK believes that well trained staff can better support vibrant communities. InterLINK continues to invest in supporting training across the library community - from board members to book shelveers.

Better Communication - With so many offerings, InterLINK is seeking better ways to communicate learning opportunities available. Improvements have been made to our website; a [catalogue](#) has been created to expose all InterLINK has to offer; and a more fulsome listserv is being developed to better communicate with staff and administration.

Open Training - Register Now!

Managing Hostile Interactions

Learn proven strategies for managing hostile interactions in a manner that dramatically increases the likelihood of a constructive resolution. Fall sessions:

- March 5 & 6 | 1-4:30 pm
- April 23 & 24 | 1-4:30 pm
- June 3 & 4 | 1-4:30 pm

Foundations of Coaching & Advanced Coaching

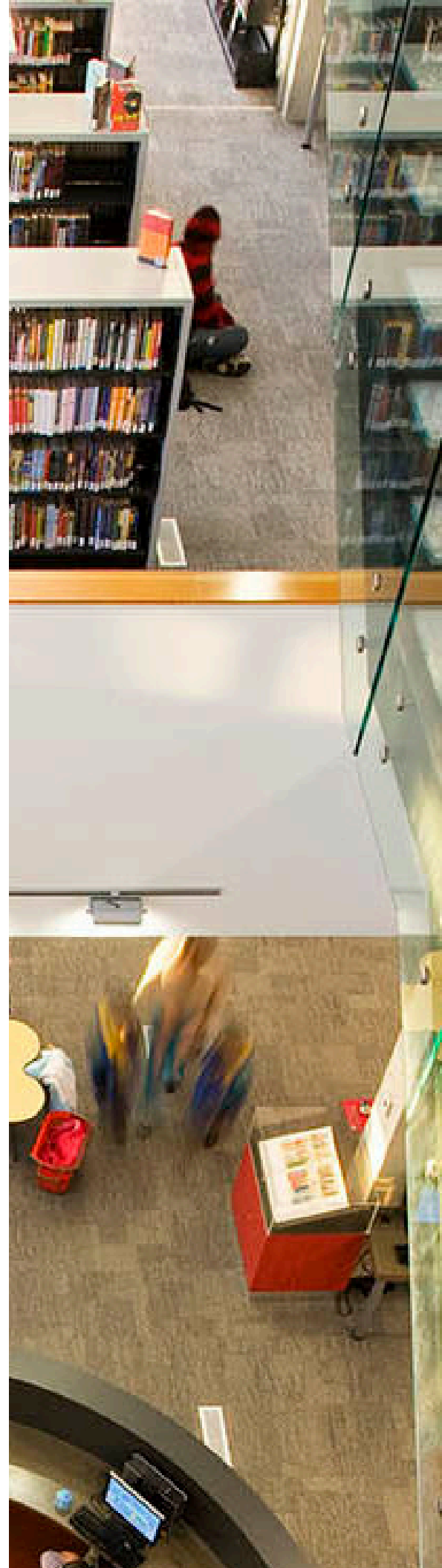
These coaching courses focus on understanding what coaching is (and is not), and ways it can apply for leaders and managers.

Coaching Foundations:

- May 6, 9, 13, 27 & 30 and June 3 | 1-3 pm
- Oct 7, 10 & 14 and Nov 4, 7 & 12 | 1-3 pm

Advanced Coaching:

- Workshops: Oct 21, 24 & 28 and Nov 18, 21 & 25



strong member libraries ...

Emerging Staff Development:



Boundary Practice for Staff and Managers

Building on the popularity of the 2024 Spring mental wellness workshop on setting boundaries in the workplace, InterLINK will be hosting 2 workshops on establishing and communicating boundaries: one for staff and another for managers. Sessions will be held in late Spring / early Summer.



Ryan Dowd Homelessness Training

In 2023, InterLINK negotiated provincial access to Ryan Dowd training. The focus now is supporting registration to all libraries. Access is free through 2025. If your staff haven't registered, reach out today!

A few of the skills addressed include verbal and nonverbal tools to eliminate conflict and how to manage your emotions;



Library Juice Academy

InterLINK has negotiated preferential pricing for Library Juice Academy courses. LJA offers a range of online professional development courses for librarians, archivists, and other staff, focusing on practical topics to build new skills. Libraries registering through InterLINK will receive a 20% discount. For a full list of courses, go to <https://libraryjuiceacademy.com/all-courses>

strong federation



InterLINK's strategic engagement is now complete. In November 2024 the AAG endorsed and the Board approved the new strategic plan. The plan focuses on directions and incorporates updates to organizational values to better reflect who we are and what we do.



As established in our new strategic plan, InterLINK will be engaging in a governance review. The project goal is to update the governance model to ensure effective oversight while respecting member library and organizational capacity. Babs Kelley, an expert in governance and knowledgeable of the BC Public Library system, has been engaged to facilitate this work. Consultations will begin in Q1/Q2 2025.



InterLINK's website continues to be an important point of connection for members and staff. In November and December 2024, there were approximately 2,800 visitors.

The Investigation phase of InterLINK's website redevelopment project is complete and the project is now moving into a procurement phase where project needs will be solidified and web developers contacted.