



# Strengthening Connections

InterLINK Strategic Plan 2024–2029



## **Territorial Acknowledgement**

InterLINK operates on the ancestral and unceded territories of the hə́n̓qəmi̓nəh and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Sníchim speaking peoples. We recognize the profound privilege of working on these lands. Additionally, we collaborate with our member libraries throughout British Columbia and honor the traditional owners, stewards, and caretakers of these lands across the province.



It has been said that libraries are “cathedrals of the mind, hospitals of the soul and theme parks of the imagination.” But no one library can meet such high expectations alone. Since its founding in 1975, InterLINK’s collaborative federation has demonstrated the importance of sharing knowledge and resources to facilitate quality public library service across southern B.C. As needs and demands on local libraries have changed, so have we. As we embark on our 50th year serving our members, we commit to remaining adaptive and response to the needs of our 18 member libraries. In turn, this will enable them to remain vibrant and vital assets to the communities they serve.

This new strategic plan reaffirms our commitment to being a member-driven, member-led organization. It seeks to strengthen our federation as a whole, while supporting the unique needs of each library. Importantly, this plan also outlines how we intend to invest in our own organizational growth—from streamlining governance to modernizing business practices—to optimizing service delivery and enhancing value for member libraries. Finally, this plan includes thoughtful updates to our values, aligning how we describe ourselves with how we’ve evolved as an organization.

Our strategic planning process comprised in-depth research into library sector trends, as well as the current priorities of our member libraries and peer organizations. It also included an engagement to gather valuable input from key interest holders, including the Administrators’ Advisory Group, the Board of Directors and InterLINK staff. **Ultimately, this plan articulates our intentions for the coming years: working to deliver strong services, to support strong member libraries, and to ensure a strong federation, for years to come.**

To everyone who contributed their time and insights to this process: Thank you. We look forward to continued collaboration, not just for the next five years, but for the next 50!

*See this plan’s back cover for Caitlin Moran’s complete reflection on the value of public libraries.*



## Mission

Supporting public libraries through resource sharing and collaborative programs.

## Values

We are collaborative. We are inclusive and equitable. We are adaptable. We are accountable. We are supportive.

## Vision

Vibrant communities supported by strong public libraries.



# Goals and priorities

## A strong federation that benefits InterLINK and all members

### Create Stronger, Sustainable Systems

- Update the governance model to ensure effective oversight while respecting member library and organizational capacity.
- Assess existing business practices, infrastructure, and communication methods to identify opportunities for improvement and ensure the long-term sustainability and enhanced value of services.

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### EXISTING SERVICES

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### Sharing & Networking for Public Library Leadership

- InterLINK provides dependable spaces and opportunities for member library Boards and CEOs to share experiences in order to learn, generate ideas, find common solutions to challenges, and celebrate successes.

### Sector Connection & Leadership

- As the largest federation in the Province, InterLINK plays the leadership role with the other five B.C. regional federations and participates in provincial conversations with associations and sector partners on topics of high importance and impact to B.C. libraries and communities.

### Federation Operations Hub

- With a lean staff and minimal overhead, InterLINK's business office coordinates services, resources, and processes required to meet members' needs. Operations staff strive for excellence in order to deliver quality service effectively and affordably.



# Goals and priorities

## Strong member libraries that benefit their staff, leaders and boards

### Deepen Connections Across Libraries

- Strengthen relationships among library leaders in order to support collaboration and tackle shared challenges.
- Investigate the feasibility of shared legal services, assessing interest, cost-effectiveness and financial viability.
- Conduct an audit of current consortial purchasing to identify material gaps and opportunities for cost efficiencies.

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### EXISTING SERVICES

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#### Resource Sharing / ILL

- InterLINK's core Resource Sharing and Delivery service enables member libraries to work together to increase customer access to collections. Through maintaining its long-standing delivery service and providing financial support for the IllumeBC system, InterLINK helps members provide a greater variety of collections to customers without straining collections budgets.

#### Staff Training & Development

- InterLINK's Staff Training and Development program provides opportunities for staff to learn, build, and strengthen professional skills and knowledge in areas ranging from customer service to reconciliation. Training is offered through a mix of both live online sessions and recorded workshops that can be completed at their own pace. Programming is available to members and frequently extended to all B.C. public libraries.

#### Collective Purchasing

- InterLINK provides cost-effective, shared purchasing opportunities for resources. From library cards, multilingual collections, to books for babies, InterLINK provides member libraries and other B.C. federations deep discounts to stretch dollars farther.



# Goals and priorities

## Strong member libraries that benefit their staff, leaders and boards cont'd...

### Youth Services Committee

- InterLINK's Youth Services Committee provides a forum for Youth Services staff collaboration. Budgeted dollars support shared events and material development for customers, training opportunities for staff, and shared best practices to ensure service excellence.

### Federated Accessibility Advisory Committee

- To support member libraries' compliance with the Accessible BC Act, InterLINK hosts a federated Accessibility Advisory Committee. Taking a collaborative approach enables libraries to share expertise and costs, minimize demands on the disability community, and learn from each other about how to become more accessible organizations.





# Goals and priorities

## Strong services that benefit customers of member libraries

### Nurture Collaboration

- Identify and develop shared program curriculum and plans on priority topics.
- Investigate sustained interest in collaborative virtual programming and strategic opportunities for shared in-person programming.

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### EXISTING SERVICES

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### Patron Reciprocal Borrowing

- Acknowledging that our region is connected and customers want to borrow and return materials where and when it is convenient, InterLINK supports reciprocal borrowing across member libraries; materials may be returned at any location.

### Accessible Audiobooks

- The long running InterLINK Audiobook Program provides shelf-ready, accessible titles in physical and digital formats to member libraries and their print disabled customers. In addition, InterLINK partners with NNELS to provide on-demand copies of audio books. Both services enhance the accessibility of collections and support members' efforts to provide services that are responsive to all customers' needs.



# Goals and priorities

## Strong services that benefit customers of member libraries cont'd...

### NewToBC

- NewToBC connects new immigrants to the information they need to settle in B.C. Using public libraries as hubs, newcomer library champions learn about library and settlement services; build communication and presentation skills; and gain invaluable local volunteer experience. Trained Library Champions share this knowledge and help other newcomers access services, building awareness of public libraries across B.C. communities.

### Virtual Collaborative Programming Pilot (BC Libraries Present)

- BC Libraries Present makes the same high-quality, virtual programming available to all public libraries in the province. Using a collaborative approach, the program promotes equity among libraries big and small, supports service efficiency, and builds capacity through hosting important author conversations critical to B.C. communities.



A background image showing a group of students in a library or classroom setting, with a teal overlay. The students are engaged in various activities, some looking at books or laptops.

# Revised values

## **We are collaborative.**

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

## **We are inclusive and equitable.**

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

## **We are adaptable.**

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

## **We are accountable.**

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

## **We are supportive.**

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



*"A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life-raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead."*

– Caitlin Moran

## Our member libraries

Bowen Island  
Burnaby  
Coquitlam  
Fraser Valley Regional  
Gibsons and District  
Lillooet Area  
New Westminster  
North Vancouver City  
North Vancouver District

Pemberton and District  
Port Moody  
Richmond  
Sechelt  
Squamish  
Surrey  
Vancouver  
West Vancouver  
Whistler

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