



Canadian Federation of Library Associations  
Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques

## Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2020 Budget

Libraries supporting **Canada's Sustainable Development  
Goals**

Submitted by the Canadian Federation of Library  
Associations/Fédération canadienne des associations de  
bibliothèques.

August, 2019

## Recommendations

- 1) CFLA-FCAB recommends that the next government commit to \$800M over the next 4 years to support a targeted library upgrade investment fund. Supporting Canada's libraries supports the circular economy and Canada's Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.
- 2) CFLA-FCAB recommends that the next government invest \$280M over the next 5 years to support Indigenous knowledge and protocols education in library services that will result in respectful protection and preservation of all types of Indigenous knowledge.
- 3) CFLA-FCAB recommends that the next government commit to sustained, increased funding of \$30M over the next five years to support the coordinated national initiative to digitize content and to build the digital infrastructure required to make Canada's rich documentary heritage available to all Canadians.

## LIBRARY UPGRADE INVESTMENT FUND

Libraries have been a part of sustainable development long before the term “circular economy” was coined, and as such, Canada's libraries offer considerable support to Canada's Sustainable Development Goals and to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy<sup>1</sup>.

First, libraries support the Strategy through their role in educating the public on the issues and solutions. In 2016, there were more than 145 million visits to libraries in Canada, and this continues to grow. This is a significant physical and digital network across the country that represents an opportunity to educate Canadians.

Secondly, efforts by the Edmonton Public Library<sup>2</sup> and Prince George Public Library<sup>3</sup> demonstrate that libraries have roles in mitigating disasters by providing respite and communication opportunities for displaced families and contribute to the health and welfare of Canadians in crisis.

Third, Canada's libraries support a circular and sustainable economy by providing access to shared resources, tools, and services that unlock creativity and empower progress. The benefits of this new economy are not felt equally in all communities across Canada and we need to prioritize access to Canada's libraries, which serve communities directly in building human capital, enabling progress, and closing persistent inequality gaps.

However, in many communities, especially those that are smaller, remote, or Indigenous, access to adequate library space is often compromised by inadequate infrastructure, both digital and physical. Canadians, especially those who face socio-economic barriers, need and expect libraries to provide equitable access to spaces that facilitate digital literacy, collaboration, innovation, and community gathering as well as access to technology. But facilities that were founded decades ago are seeing demands for services and collections exponentially increase while remaining critically underfunded.

Investing in library infrastructure will bring real social and economic benefits to the people who need it most while supporting sustainable economic, cultural, and intellectual progress. A fund such as this could be used, for example, to position a library as a community anchor institution in order to attract investment in broadband infrastructure. For example, in Olds, Alberta, when the locally owned O-Net network was being developed, the Olds Municipal Library served as a showcase for the possibilities of the new 1 Gbps fibre optic service.

---

<sup>1</sup> Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy. website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/sustainability/federal-sustainable-development-strategy.html>. Last accessed July 24, 2019.

Report: [http://www.fsds-sfdd.ca/downloads/FSDS\\_2019-2022.pdf](http://www.fsds-sfdd.ca/downloads/FSDS_2019-2022.pdf). Last accessed July 24, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Libraries Help Fort McMurray Fire Evacuees (LJ June 2, 2016)

<https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=canadian-libraries-help-fort-mcmurray-fire-evacuees>. Last accessed July 25, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Prince George Public Library <http://www.pgpl.ca/evacuation>. Last accessed July 25, 2019.

***CFLA-FCAB recommends that the next government commit to \$800M over the next 4 years to support a targeted library upgrade investment fund. Supporting Canada's libraries supports the circular economy and the Canada Sustainable Development Strategy.***

## **INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND PROTOCOLS EDUCATION**

An additional means to supporting Canada's Sustainable Development Goals and creating stronger communities is to commit to supporting Indigenous ways of knowing and language preservation. Indigenous knowledge should be available through all types of media ensuring it is preserved, protected and accessed in a culturally respectful and sensitive manner for use by current and future generations. This can be achieved by enabling public policy that activates the revitalization, use and preservation of Indigenous knowledge and languages and ensuring Indigenous peoples are trained in library services and archival methods to equip them with the skills to retrieve and store information and materials for the community's use and enjoyment.

We strongly believe Indigenous people should be supported to train as professionals in all areas that control the interpretation and preservation of their tradition, history, language and arts.<sup>4</sup> Much of the historical, cultural, linguistic and material knowledge of Indigenous peoples has been held by libraries, archives, museums, and records centers. Consulting Indigenous communities with respect for proper protocols to access and care for their culturally sensitive records is paramount to preserving knowledge and language. By providing support for Indigenous people through scholarships and internship opportunities to train in library services, and for education on Indigenous knowledge and cultural protocols within the library and information community in collaboration, this measure will help the federal government to act on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action #7. This process will have implications for copyright policies but will inevitably create opportunities for employment for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples at library and archival facilities across Canada.

***CFLA-FCAB recommends that the next government invest \$280M over the next 5 years to support Indigenous knowledge and protocols education in library services that will result in respectful protection and preservation of all types of Indigenous knowledge.***

## **SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL HERITAGE DIGITIZATION STRATEGY**

The National Heritage Digitization Strategy (NHDS) is a cross-sectorial coalition of memory institutions working together to leverage expertise and resources to support the digitization, preservation, and discovery of Canadian documentary heritage. The NHDS

---

<sup>4</sup><http://cfla-fcab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Truth-and-Reconciliation-Committee-Report-and-Recommendations.pdf>. Accessed July 10, 2018.

was launched by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and endorsed by the Minister of Heritage and a wide variety of memory institutions. The mandate of LAC is to preserve the documentary heritage of Canada for the benefit of present and future generations, and to be a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, thereby contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada. LAC also facilitates cooperation among communities involved in the acquisition, preservation, and diffusion of knowledge, and serves as the continuing memory of the Government of Canada and its institutions.

By supporting a national digitization program, the Government of Canada would:

- Promote cultural literacy by providing increased access to Canadian cultural material;
- Remove barriers to knowledge by providing equal access to heritage content for all Canadians;
- Contribute to a feeling of shared Canadian identity;
- Increase digitized cultural heritage material to accelerate research via machine learning and artificial intelligence applications;
- Create greater educational opportunities to promote research and understanding of Canadian culture;
- Provide global perspective on Canada's culture by connecting national collections with international ones;
- Encourage innovation and creativity by inviting artists and entrepreneurs to engage with Canada's cultural content and to use and reuse it to create new works with value to Canadians and the economy;
- Provide global perspective on Canada's culture by connecting national collections with international ones; and,
- Support sound democracy by providing easy access to credible information.

***CFLA-FCAB recommends that the next government commit to sustained, increased funding of \$30M over the next five years to support this coordinated national initiative to digitize content and to build the digital infrastructure required to make Canada's rich documentary heritage available to all Canadians.***