PRINCE OF WALES NORTHERN HERITAGE CENTRE
CONSULTATION 13 September 2013

Aurora Campus Library
Aurora College, Inuvik
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SERVICES

1. How would you describe the services Canadians, including Aboriginal Canadians and new Canadians, are currently receiving from libraries and archives in the North?

Services in many areas of the North are excellent. Public libraries in Yellowknife, Hay River and Inuvik have well-developed collections available, as well as access to interlibrary loan services that give their patrons the ability to borrow from other libraries in Canada. As well, Aurora College students have access to college libraries in Yellowknife, Fort Smith and Inuvik that hold items that are particularly relevant to Inuit and Aboriginal students. Smaller communities, however, do not have access to as many materials and if they have a library at all it is often operating with few staff and on reduced hours.

2. Libraries are currently hybrid operations, constantly pulled toward traditional services by many core users and pulled, equally, by a concern for relevancy from other users and potential users. What issues are libraries facing as they try to make the transition to new service models?

One key issue facing many libraries is to try to find a balance between the electronic resources and more traditional materials. While many patrons still prefer physical items like books and magazines, there is an increasing demand for e-books, access to online resources and to digital subscriptions of periodicals, particularly by younger patrons. Trying to budget for both is challenging, as is keeping library staff familiar with all of the new technologies.

3. How do libraries and archives measure outcomes of their service and community impacts?

One effective way to measure outcomes is through keeping accurate statistics of patron numbers (particularly of people participating in library programs) and tracking circulation data. If the library is delivering services that are effectively meeting the needs of the community, these numbers should reflect this. Surveying community members and library users can also be a way to gage the effectiveness of the library in reaching the community.

4. What needs to be done to facilitate libraries in cataloguing, storing, and providing access to research data? Who would be an appropriate partner in providing these services?

In the North in particular, more training and education for library staff in methods of cataloguing, storing and accessing research data would be helpful. Library and Archives Canada could potentially be a good partner in providing access to or information about appropriate training.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND AWARENESS

1. Would Canadians know of, or understand the contribution you make to library/ archival service in Canada?

Many Canadians (in my opinion) see libraries as public spaces/ locations where books and computers are held and are not always aware of contributions made to library/archival service.

2. Describe the services provided directly to users, and if they are consortial in nature please describe the mechanisms in place to define, refine and measure the impact of the services.

The library at Aurora Campus provides it users (who are exclusively Aurora College students and staff) with access to material, both print and electronic, to assist them in their educational and research needs. Our library holds books, periodicals, DVDs and provides access to electronic resources (such as online journal databases) that are of particular interest to staff and students. In addition, the library provides support to students by providing library orientations, education about conducting research and assistance in locating materials. We assist staff by acquiring materials to supplement the courses they are teaching, by providing assistance with copyright questions and by allowing instructors to reserve collections for their students' use. In addition, the library strives to meet the cultural needs of our population by acquiring material that may be of particular interest to our Aboriginal and Inuit students (books celebrating Inuit art or biographies of inspiring Aboriginal people are some examples).

3. In the digital era, what support for researchers do/should libraries provide?

Many libraries provide access to online databases of journals that can quite useful for researchers. Subscriptions to these electronic resources should be maintained in the interest of supporting researchers. One other possible way for libraries to support researchers would be to make digital copies of archived print materials, such as copying newspapers or community newsletters that have been preserved in the library to an electronic form that may be more user friendly.

4. What in your opinion are the specific roles of libraries and/or archives and/or museums and other heritage institutions in community building and memory building?

A good library can be the heart of a community. By providing materials that educate, entertain and inspire the local library can be a source of great enrichment and

enjoyment to a population. Libraries not only hold books and periodicals, many also contain items in their collections that are unique and of particular interest to their specific area. Libraries should strive for this uniqueness, by preserving, displaying and promoting these items. Special collections dealing with local interests and history, historic pictures, interpretive displays of local handicrafts or archives of local newspapers or community newsletters are just a few ways that a library can meet this goal. By building and promoting collections such as this, a library can help to preserve the memories of a populace as well as create a stronger sense of community spirit.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Digitization

1. What are the main challenges of born-digital material for your institution?

Educating users (students and staff) about the proper way to cite born-digital material can be a challenge. Promoting the use of quality resources and teaching users to be discriminating and to think critically about their choices of materials can also be challenging.

2. What will be the function of a brick-and-mortar library or archive in the future?

In the future, physical libraries will continue to be a location to access print materials. Libraries will also function as learning space for communities, through library programs (such as family literacy programs, children's reading promotions and learning activities for teens and adults) and by serving as a place for individuals to research and learn.

Education

1. What changes, in your judgment, are necessary in the professional education and training of librarians/archivists in the 21st century?

An increased focus on the use of electronic resources as well as training in the technology that accompanies these resources will be essential in the 21st century.

2. What conversations do you think need to take place with library, archival, and information studies programs about staff requirements, and have they begun?

Resources

1. Public libraries are primarily funded by local municipalities, with little funding from any other level of government. Most towns and cities are too small to support needed technology. How do we encourage the creation of library systems (or consortia) that can meet the increasingly sophisticated technology-driven needs and vital digital resources of libraries?

The first step in creating such systems may be to promote increased co-operation and partnerships among diverse libraries. Once these relationships are built, the trust required for libraries to work closely together and share their resources/ build consortia will be more easily established.

2. What percentage increase to your current budget would permit you to realize the aspirations of your users? If you received an increased budget and consistent adequate resources, describe your library/archives in 2020.

It is difficult to say exactly what percentage increase would permit me to realize the aspirations of my users, as almost any amount would be useful and it's difficult to think of what "too much" would be! With an increased budget, more resources (both print and electronic) could be purchased. This would give users a greater variety of learning materials to choose from, which would help to meet the diverse needs of our student/ staff population. As well, equipment that might be of use to students and staff could also be purchased (items such as I pads with language and learning apps installed immediately come to mind). In an ideal world, e-readers could be made available for loan to students and staff, which would enable our library to give users greater access to electronic resources (such as e-books and digital copies of periodicals). E-books could potentially be of great use to our student population as it would be easier to share one high interest item with many users at once; however most of our students do not have e-readers of their own. The purchase of all of these items, particularly the electronic equipment, would require a budget at least 200% higher than what my current budget is! Given this budget, I would describe our library in 2020 as one that is well stocked with diverse items, both print and digital, that are of interest to our population and with easy access to the equipment that would permit users to make use of these materials.