2022 Annual General Meeting Minutes - September 9, 2022

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Land Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge that the work undertaken by CELA and our member libraries takes place on traditional Indigenous territories across Canada and we are grateful for the opportunity to live and work on this land and provide inclusive services to all Canadians.



Attendance

Present

Catherine Biss, Board Chair, CEO Markham Public Libraries

Peter Bailey, CEO, St. Albert Public Library

Grace Dawson, Regional and Community Services Librarian, Prince Edward Island Public Library Service

Mélanie Dumas, Director, Universal Collection, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

Jefferson Gilbert, Executive Director, CULC/CBUC

Teresa Johnson, Director of Research & Planning, New Brunswick Public Library Service

Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian & Chief Executive Officer, Halifax Public Libraries Carolyn Minor, Section Head, Special Services, Winnipeg Public Library Heather Scoular, Director of Customer Experience, Fraser Valley Regional Library

Regrets

Tara Wong, Chief Executive Officer, Oakville Public Library

Also Present

Lindsay Tyler, Senior Manager, Operations, CELA Laurie Davidson, Executive Director, CELA

Call to Order

Catherine Biss, occupied the Chair and Jefferson Gilbert, acted as Secretary of the meeting.

Establishment of Quorum

A quorum of members being present, the Chairperson declared the meeting to have been regularly called and properly constituted for the transaction of business.

Approval of 2022 Annual General Meeting Agenda

MOTION

Moved by Carolyn Minor Seconded by Teresa Johnson

THAT the Agenda for the 2022 Annual General Meeting be approved. CARRIED



Approval of 2021 Annual General Meeting Minutes

MOTION

Moved by Grace Dawson Seconded by Teresa Johnson

THAT the minutes from the 2021 Annual General Meeting on September 10, 2021 be approved.

CARRIED

Annual Reports

Sincere appreciation to Laurie and the CELA Team.

MOTION

Moved by Mélanie Dumas Seconded by Peter Bailey

THAT the Annual Report from the Chair, Treasurer, and Executive Director be received.

CARRIED

Financial Statements

Doug Guyatt, Auditor joined the meeting

Deadline to repay the Government Loan of \$30,000 is extended to next year.
 Some of Doug's other clients have had difficulty because the bank doesn't know how to handle the payment, so it is recommended that CELA contact the bank well before the deadline.

Doug Guyatt left the meeting

MOTION

Moved by Jefferson Gilbert Seconded by Grace Dawson

THAT the financial statements and the report of the public accountant for the Corporation for the fiscal period ending March 31, 2022 be received.

CARRIED

MOTION

THAT Guyatt + Moffatt are appointed the public accountants of the Corporation, to hold office until the close of the next annual meeting of the members or until their successors are appointed, subject to the provisions of the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*, and the directors are authorized to fix their remuneration.

Moved by Jefferson Gilbert Seconded by Carolyn Minor CARRIED



Amendments to By-Law 1

Amendment approved at June Board Meeting

MOTION

Moved by Åsa Kachan Seconded by Mélanie Dumas

THAT the amendments to General Operating By-Law No. 1 be confirmed.

Director Appointments

MOTION

Moved by Teresa Johnson Seconded by Grace Dawson

THAT the following individuals be elected to become directors in accordance with the General Operating By-Law No. 1.

Name	Term	Term Expiry
Amanda Le Page	3 years	September 26, 2023
Tara Wong	3 years	September 26, 2025
Åsa Kachan	3 years	September 26, 2025
Ardis Proux-Chedore	3 years	September 26, 2025

CARRIED

New Directors were welcomed to the meeting:

Amanda Lepage, Director, Collections & Service Infrastructure, Saskatoon Public Library

Ardis Proulx-Chedore, Collection Services Technician, Cochrane Public Library

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Board of Directors Term Expirations

MOTION

Moved by Carolyn Minor Seconded by Peter Bailey

THAT the Board of Directors of the Corporation be confirmed together with expiry dates for each directors' term of office as follows:

Name	Term	Term Expiry
Carolyn Minor	3 years (renewable)	September 26, 2023
Mélanie Dumas	3 years (renewable)	September 26, 2023
Amanda Le Page	3 years (renewable)	September 26, 2023
Jefferson Gilbert	3 years	September 26, 2023
Catherine Biss	3 years	September 26, 2023
Peter Bailey	3 years	September 26, 2024
Grace Dawson	3 years	September 26, 2024
Heather Scoular	3 years (renewable)	September 26, 2024
Tara Wong	3 years (renewable)	September 26, 2025
Åsa Kachan	3 years (renewable)	September 26, 2025
Ardis Proux-Chedore	3 years (renewable)	September 26, 2025

Confirmation of Acts

MOTION

Moved: Åsa Kachan Seconded: Heather Scolar

THAT all acts and proceedings of the directors, officers, and members since the date of the previous Annual General Meeting on September 10, 2021 be approved and confirmed.

CARRIED

Adjournment

There being no further business, on motion the meeting terminated at 2:25 pm.

Moved: Teresa Johnson
Approved unanimously

Carolyn Minor
Chairperson

Vice-Chair



Appendix 1 – Report of CELA Board Chair 2021–2022

Date: September 9, 2022 **To:** Members of the Board **From:** Catherine Biss, Chair

The past year has continued to be challenging for all Canadians and in particular those with print disabilities. I am very proud of the considerable advances CELA has made to enable our users to have access to more collections, through more channels and with more public library partnerships than ever before.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to Laurie Davidson and her team: Lindsay Tyler *Senior Manager*, Theresa Power *Content and Access Librarian*, Rachel Breau *Member Services Manager*, Faline Bobier *Training and Outreach Coordinator*, Karen McKay *Communications Manager* and Christina McNish *Information and Access Specialist*. In addition, we have a new *Metadata Coordinator*, Megan Toye and through our Expanded Delivery Options Project, we welcomed *Project Coordinator* Virginia Sytsma and 3 *Peer Trainers* (Rosalie Best, Yves Seguin and Ioana Gandrabur). Together they have accomplished Board priorities and more. A few examples include a successful pilot review of new audiobook delivery options, expansion of our marketing and communication channels into podcasts and radio appearances, continued collaboration with NNELS on the Equitable Access to Reading Program and current funding from the Federal Government.

To our Board members – Asa Kachan, Grace Dawson, Gwen Schmidt, Jefferson Gilbert, Teresa Johnson, Peter Bailey, Tara Wong, Heather Scoular, Mélanie Dumas and Carolyn Minor, I would like to say thank you for making the right of equal access for Canadians with print disabilities a priority. In particular, I would like to thank the Strategic Planning Committee; Teresa Johnson, Heather Scoular, Carolyn Minor, Laurie Davidson and Rachel Breau for completing the Strategic Priorities Plan July 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024. I would also like to thank Teresa Johnson for her leadership on the CELA Service and Operations Committee and Grace Dawson on the Outreach Committee.

Lastly, I am very pleased that Manitoba has joined our provincial membership group and that all Manitobans will have access to CELA services for the next 5 years.

Sincerely,

Catherine Biss Chair, CELA



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Introduction

Overall, FY21-22 saw growth and change for CELA and I have been honoured to share in the new projects and learnings that have been undertaken. This year, CELA was the recipient of an Accessible Technology Grant through the Government of Canada which allowed us to do a pilot project on new delivery options including a low-cost audiobook player and smart speaker delivery. CELA continued its work with the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) on the AccessibleLibraries.ca project as well as on work around securing federal funding through Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) for our organizations for both FY21-22 and FY22-23. We continued to add many audiobooks from the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) collection and continued collaborative work with various publishers and publishing organizations. CELA staff and Board worked hard on our new Strategic Priorities, which were officially launched in July 2022. We also welcomed the province of Manitoba to CELA services, and we are delighted to be able to serve all Manitobans with print disabilities.

Overall Collection Statistics and Usage

The selection and offering of materials to CELA users through public libraries is guided by the <u>CELA Collections Policy</u>. In FY21-22 we reached the 1,000,000th book milestone; the total number of items available to CELA users totaled 1,078,588 (as of March 31, 2022). Collection statistics are as follows:

- CELA continues to provide access to a collection now totalling 104,576 titles available in multiple digital and physical accessible formats, including humannarrated audio, braille, and eText. 31,477 new items were added to the collection in FY21-22.
- As of March 31, 2022, Bookshare offered 974,012 accessible books in eText, Braille, and synthetic voice to CELA users – 143,376 of which were added in the previous year.
- CELA has an agreement with Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) that provides additional French material and support. As of March 31, 2022, 10,045 BAnQ French DAISY Audio titles and 4,803 French Braille titles have been added to the CELA collection, with 622 new titles added in FY21-22.
- In this year, CELA circulated 604,028 physical items (DAISY CD books/magazines and Braille) and had 952,739 online circulations.
- At the end of the year, CELA had 22,497 users, with 2,256 new users added throughout the year.

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Marrakesh, ABC and NLS

The Government of Canada officially acceded to the treaty in June of 2016, becoming the 20th country to do so and reaching the minimum number needed for the treaty to take effect. It officially went into effect on September 30, 2016.

CELA has access to materials through WIPO's Accessible Books Consortium's (ABC) Global Exchange, which provides a mechanism to share accessible materials with copyright stipulations for each country integrated within the process. As a result, CELA is able to increase the depth and breadth of its collection by sharing resources with other countries.

From January to December 2021, CELA users have accessed ABC-supplied titles 11,443 times for a total of over 120,000 titles accessed since 2014. CELA continues to work closely with ABC and CELA is offering our Marrakesh eligible collection to users worldwide participating in the ABC pilot for direct user access.

CELA continues to load titles from NLS (National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled) through an agreement which allows for the exchange of Marrakesh eligible titles between the two countries. CELA has received 80,000+ titles in braille and human-narrated audio from NLS and CELA is working to process and add these titles over the coming years. In FY21-22, CELA added 25,639 audio titles from the NLS collection. NLS has also received and is loading titles from CELA's collection, particularly French language titles. These exchanges greatly enhance the breadth of our collection and offers a diversity of choice to our users. As a part of loading the NLS audiobooks, CELA is converting the titles into the standard DAISY format (NLS uses a different standard for their audiobooks) and is sharing these converted titles back with ABC.

Other Collection Partnerships

- We continue our work with CNIB, who provide original production of accessible material in human-narrated DAISY audio, braille and epub format. Original production by CNIB is reserved primarily for books that are not available commercially in an accessible format. The books are generally new and most often Canadian publications— books that would not be available to Canadians with print disabilities if not produced by CNIB on behalf of CELA. CNIB also provides 11 human-narrated audio magazines and magazines in braille.
- We continue to offer Bookshare titles that provide an ever-expanding depth to the collection, offering over 900,000 books in accessible formats in a variety of languages, including current bestsellers and an impressive collection of educational resources.

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- Through an agreement with Zinio, nearly 150 magazines in DAISY Text are made available on or near the date of publication.
- We have agreements in place with Overdrive and Blackstone Audio that allow CELA to purchase commercial audiobooks and ebooks. CELA then adds functionality to improve accessibility, and provides them to CELA users simultaneously to the commercial release at substantially less cost than full original audio production.
- CELA provides access to approximately 45 national, international and regional newspapers, which are updated daily and available online in accessible HTML.
- CELA continues its partnership with Penguin Random House Canada (PRHC), whereby PRHC is generously contributing Canadian-produced audiobooks with Canadian distribution rights to CELA's collection. Additional new titles are being added on an ongoing basis to the CELA collection at the same time they are available through commercial channels.
- CELA continues its work with Audible.ca. Audible.ca contributed an initial selection of 125 audiobooks to the CELA collection and we will now be loading titles every quarter. The titles include a cross section of Audible's offerings with titles in both French and English.
- CELA works with individual publishers and publisher associations to get accessible formats of books in braille, epub and audio. With the born accessible publishing movement and more Canadian publishers becoming accessibility certified, CELA expects these relationships to grow.
- CELA has an ongoing agreement with NNELS (National Network for Equitable Library Service) to exchange up to 150 titles per year between the two organizations.
- An agreement exists between CELA and the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) that ensures access to CELA services for residents of Québec and reciprocal access to the BAnQ French-language collection for Canadians outside Québec.

Relationship with National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS)

In FY21-22 there continued to be many collaborative projects and initiatives with the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS). Some of these projects included:

 CELA participated in the Accessible Publishing Summit, hosted by NNELS, in February of 2022, which saw over 80 experts and stakeholders from publishing, government, education, accessibility, and related industries gather together to share information, network and plan next steps in advancing accessible publishing in Canada.



- In January, CELA was part of team of organizations to celebrate World Braille Month including NNELS, Braille Literacy Canada, Canadian Council of the Blind, CNIB, and PRCVI.
- With support from the Canada Book Fund, NNELS (National Network for Equitable Library Service) and CELA (Centre for Equitable Library Access) continued to co-lead the Public Libraries Accessibility Resource Centre (PLARC) project, to engage with library staff to develop awareness and training in accessibility in all areas of the library, and help ensure the availability, procurement and delivery of accessible books and resources across Canada.

CELA staff also worked with colleagues at NNELS to coordinate joint purchasing and further reduce duplication of effort between the two organizations:

- NNELS and CELA made joint purchases of commercially produced audiobooks and coordination of braille production continued as in past years, including shared purchased from Overdrive.
- NNELS and CELA renewed our MOU for the exchanging and sharing of accessible books between the two organizations.

CELA and NNELS also worked collaboratively on federal funding issues, including jointly contracting for lobbying services to ensure our immediate and long-term sustainable funding including the new Equitable Access to Reading Program which was announced in Budget 2022 in April 2022.

Other Partnerships

In addition to relationships in collection development, CELA continues to seek partnerships with consumer groups, library organizations, technology organizations and literary organizations that serve to strengthen the relationship between people with print disabilities in Canada and CELA member libraries. Examples are as follows:

Accessible Media Inc.

CELA has always had a strong relationship with AMI, providing interviews and insights on topics affecting Canadians with print disabilities. AMI and CELA have partnered to promote CELA services and collections in an ongoing segment that broadcasts every other Friday on their *Live at 5* radio program.

Braille Literacy Canada

CELA has a mutually beneficial partnership with BLC, promoting both organizations' services to each other's respective audiences. BLC promotes the availability of CELA's braille collection, including music, via newsletter and other avenues. In turn CELA promotes BLC programs to CELA users via



newsletter. This partnership also offers CELA another avenue for feedback from users.

Canadian Council of the Blind (GGT and Visionaries Groups)

CELA has a strong relationship with the Getting Together with Technology (GTT) group. Started by the Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) the GTT "helps blind and partially sighted residents to explore and integrate assistive devices in their home and work lives. The groups meet monthly to discuss new and updated devices, and participants teach each other how to include assistive technology in their daily lives.

Canadian Urban Libraries Council

CELA has the support of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council/ Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC), an organization consisting of public libraries representing communities or regions with populations exceeding 100,000.

Dolphin

In the last year, CELA has offered joint webinars with Dolphin, an assistive technology developer, on the use of their EasyReader app, which allows the seamless delivery of CELA books to a user's iOS or Android devices.

EDRLab

As a part of the expanded delivery options project, CELA is partnering with EDRLab to deliver a smart speaker solution to users. EDRLab is an international, non-profit development laboratory, working on the deployment of an open, interoperable and accessible digital publishing ecosystem, worldwide.

Indigenous Literary Partnerships

CELA continues to seek opportunities to support literary programs for Indigenous works, including the Indigenous Voices Award, First Nation Communities Read and the Burt Award for First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

Literary Award Programs

CELA continues providing accessible versions of books for major Canadian literary awards and programs such as the Giller Prize, the Governor General's awards and Canada Reads. Collaboration with these high-profile awards programs brings an increased awareness within the literary and publishing community about the need for developing and providing accessible materials to ensure all Canadians have the opportunity to take part in national cultural conversations. Through these collaborations, CELA is able to produce accessible versions of the short-listed books – based on confidential advance knowledge of the lists – and make them available at the



moment the organizations announce their short lists, ensuring CELA patrons have the same opportunity as all Canadians to read and participate in the process.

TD Summer Reading Club

CELA continues to be a member of the TD Summer Reading Club (TDSRC) National Committee. In addition to an accessibility advisory role, CELA usually distributes an accessible version of the notebook in both English and French to children via libraries that participate in TDSRC. Since 2017, CELA also has offered an accessibility award to a French and English library for outstanding accessible practices for offering children's library services.

Vision Australia

As a part of the expanded delivery options project, CELA has partnered with Vision Australia, to adapt their software and workflow for the Envoy Connect, the low-cost audiobook player to deliver audiobooks to our users. Vision Australia is a not-for-profit organisation and Australia's largest provider of services for people with blindness and low vision.

Vues et Voix

CELA and Canal M, a radio show on the French Vues et Voix network, have conducted a series of interviews about books in the CELA collection, broadcast in French and available online.

Support, Training and Outreach

- CELA makes it a priority to respond as quickly as possible to questions, concerns and title requests from users and libraries. We can report that nationwide we handled 27,383 user queries either by phone or email in FY21-22. Member Services staff at CELA handled 1,563 questions from member libraries and their staff.
- CELA also provides a broad and continually evolving range of information and resources on our website about accessibility, print disabilities, compatible devices and apps, and information about the Marrakesh Treaty and other external influences on the service we provide.
- CELA staff participated in as many online conferences and tradeshows as
 possible given the changing environment of COVID-19. Overall, CELA staff
 participated in 26 virtual conference and presentation events across the
 country reaching over 1300 people. CELA also had a virtual booth at 3
 different conferences: BC Library Conference, OLA Superconference, and the
 MLA/SLA joint conference.



 Overall, CELA offered 40 webinars in FY21-22 and these webinars reached 1744 participants. These training opportunities and engagement will improve the ability of public library staff in member libraries across Canada to deliver accessible services to their users with print disabilities and will also improve the knowledge of CELA services for users, families, and friends.

Digital Platform

CELA's platform uses underlying Bookshare technology with a Drupal-based front-end for search and discovery services. The platform provides the following:

Accessibility

The interface is accessible to patrons, librarians, and CELA staff and provides an optimized experience for mobile devices, screen-readers and magnifiers.

Discovery

CELA and Bookshare Collections are integrated into one catalogue with a clear user interface focused on search & discovery. An advanced search option was introduced in the past year.

Functionality

All patron and transaction data is kept on servers located in Canada, granular reporting is available, and there is a simple automatic registration process.

Choice

In addition to the human-narrated audiobook content and human-transcribed braille from the CELA collection, there is also an increase in the volume of braille and synthetic audio from Bookshare, created on-the-fly and available via multiple content delivery options. This allows for a breadth of content and format choice.

Copyright Protection

Each file created through the platform is digitally watermarked – a method that provides protection against piracy without limiting the file to certain applications or readers – and fingerprinted to identify the user while protecting their privacy. The increased copyright protection is allowing positive partnership conversations with publishers that will result in increased content for CELA users.

CELA continues to gather feedback from users and libraries to refine and improve our platform.



Newsletters

Monthly newsletters to users and libraries, delivered in both English and French, provide a vehicle for CELA to share information about services and collections, educate users and member libraries about technology and accessibility options and offer an easy way for users and libraries to engage with CELA staff. In addition to Open Book and Open Book for libraries, CELA also publishes Open Book for Educators, a biannual newsletter aimed at educators who use CELA service to support their students. Total subscribers are:

- Open Book and Livre ouvert: over 9,800 users
- Open Book for Libraries and Livre ouvert pour Bibliothèques: over 1,200 library staff
- Open Book for Educators and Livre ouvert pour enseignants: over 1100 educators

Staff Development

CELA continues with its Annual Development and Learning Plans, as a way of ensuring staff identify areas of growth and receive opportunities for further development and training. In addition, in January, we changed our Tea/Lunch 'n' Learn sessions to once-a-month 'Deep Dive' sessions, where different staff members present on various topics. This new structure is going well.

FY21-22 also saw our team grow. We contracted Megan Toye as CELA's new Metadata Coordinator who has made a significant difference already in improving our metadata workflows. We also brought on a team of contractors to help us with the Expanded Delivery Options Project consisting of a Project Coordinator (Virginia Sytsma), and 3 Peer Trainers (Rosalie Best, Yves Séguin, and Ioana Gandrabur). All our contractors for this project have lived experience with a print disability. We were lucky enough to be able to keep both Yves and Ioana on board after the end of March.

Expanded Delivery Options Project

Since its inception, CELA has been committed to providing users real choice in the materials they read and how they access those materials. As part of that commitment, this year we are excited to announce the Expanded Delivery Options Pilot Project. Through this project we will explore new technologies and options for service delivery which will give our users additional ways to access the CELA content they love. CELA's goal has always been to remove the barriers that people with print disabilities face in accessing reading. As new and developing technologies are expanding the ways our users can access reading materials, we need to ensure that our systems enable all our users have choices to meet their reading needs now, and in the future.



The pilot program is focused on testing new options for audiobook delivery to supplement the digital options already available. Starting in December 2021, selected CELA users will participate in providing feedback on one of three options: a low cost, portable and easy-to-use audiobook called the Envoy Connect; a DAISY player test model that uses a reloadable storage device and which provides excellent sound quality and large buttons for easy navigation; and a voice assistant application for smart speakers.

The three options were selected for the pilot based on a number of criteria, with a focus on ensuring there would be options to meet the needs of the diversity of CELA users. CELA has hired peer trainers who, along with the project coordinator, will support users participating in the pilot.

With COVID and other external events like postal service interruptions, we have seen how important it is for our users to have variety of service options. As some technology, like CDs, become less available and more expensive, our team has been working on finding new options which can meet the needs of all our users. In choosing which options to pilot, we've been careful to consider criteria like cost, access to reliable internet, and comfort levels with newer technology. The feedback gathered in the pilot will give us the information we need to assess these options, and if they're successful, to have supportive resources available which have been developed with input from our users.

This project has been funded through the federal government by a generous grant from Innovation Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED). We are grateful for the grant from ISED and their support of our efforts to bring new accessible reading options to our users.

Impact of COVID-19

With the ongoing challenges of offering services through the pandemic, CELA continues to ensure libraries and users are well supported. This includes:

- Creation of a COVID-19 updates page on the CELA website
- Enhanced cleaning and safety processes for physical materials production and distribution
- The option of temporary account creation so that lack of a library card would not be a barrier to new users

During the pandemic, CELA is also receiving a higher volume of inquiries than usual from family members and others in users' lives, asking how they could better support CELA users. This led to the creation of a new page on the CELA website about this role of those who support users, called designates: https://celalibrary.ca/designates. It includes information on how one becomes a designate, role and responsibility of a designate, FAQs and provides a recorded



webinar walking designates through how to use CELA and how they can support their loved one/friend/client.

Welcome to the Province of Manitoba

In FY21-22, CELA welcomed the Province of Manitoba. We have a 5-year funding agreement in place which enables CELA to offer services to all Manitobans with print disabilities. We will be training and onboarding libraries in the early part of FY22-23.

Strategic Priorities

In FY21-22, CELA staff and Board began work on our new strategic priorities starting in January of 2022. Building on the previous strategic plan from 2017-2021 (and extended until June 2022), CELA's new strategic priorities have been built on our existing strategic plan and have been modified and updated to reflect changes in the current landscape, particularly in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion. As a part of our process, we have done consultation sessions with our key stakeholders including CELA staff and Board, public libraries, educators, users, and strategic partners. These sessions have provided valuable feedback that have informed our refreshed strategic priorities.

While our mission remains the same - to support public libraries in the provision of accessible collections for Canadians with print disabilities and to champion the fundamental right of Canadians with print disabilities to access media and reading materials in the format of their choice - our updated priorities will allow us to grow and expand our work from July 2022 until March 2024.

Our refreshed strategic priorities focus on 5 main areas:

- Leverage Advances in Digital Technology
- Grow a Robust Equitable & Accessible Collection Emphasizing Format Choice
- Champion Excellence in Accessibility
- Strengthen Relationships with Partners Related to the Equitable Reading Ecosystem
- Build an Inclusive and Diverse Organization



Appendix 3 – Financial Statements