British Columbia Electronic Library Network
"Post-secondary Leader in Library Learning & Community Networking"

Steering Committee Terms of Reference and Procedures

Last Updated August 2020

The British Columbia Electronic Library Network (BC ELN) is a partnership between the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education (the Ministry) and its post-secondary libraries (partner libraries). BC ELN exists to promote, develop and maintain system- wide mechanisms that enable post-secondary libraries to effectively meet the expanding information needs of the province's learners, educators, and researchers at the lowest possible cost.

1. Mandate:

The BC ELN Steering Committee is charged with determining the overall strategic direction of BC ELN, identifying specific strategic initiatives, and monitoring and evaluating the progress of BC ELN.

2. Accountabilities:

The Steering Committee is directly accountable to partner libraries for the services and operations of the BC ELN partnership.

The Steering Committee is directly accountable to the Ministry responsible for advanced education for cost effective use of BC ELN's core funding.

3. Scope and Authority:

The BC ELN Steering Committee is a representative body drawn from the greater membership of the BC ELN partner libraries. Partner library types are outlined at: https://bceln.ca/partner-libraries/membership

Individual members of the Steering Committee represent the interests of their constituency group or institution, and collectively work toward the best interests and success of the entire BC ELN partnership.

As the leadership group of the BC ELN partner libraries, the BC ELN Steering Committee aims to:

1. Position the BC ELN as a viable and sustainable initiative responsive to current, and future needs and opportunities by:
    a. Planning, prioritizing, monitoring, and evaluating the achievement of its Strategic Plan;

      b. Securing sustained funding and provincial support by effectively communicating the value of BC ELN's services to ministry officials, post- secondary administrators, partner libraries, and related organizations

      c. Ensuring BC ELN business stability, continuity, and growth;

2. Provide leadership that reflects the core values and principles articulated in the strategic plan: collaboration, trust, innovation, leadership, and sustainability;

3. Operate a governance structure that promotes accountability and transparency in planning and decision making;

4. Support and model a philosophy of authentic partner engagement as essential to BC ELN' s success;

5. Recognize and celebrate BC ELN's achievements with all partners.

4. Membership

The Steering Committee membership includes the Chair and the following 11 members. One member in group 1 or 2 will also serve as Vice-Chair[1].

Voting:

1. There shall be one Library Director elected to represent each of the following five constituencies:

      a. Associate Members

      b. Teaching Universities and Technical Institutions

      c. Rural Colleges

      d. Small Universities

      e. Urban Colleges

2. There shall be one Library Director ex-officio or their designate from each of the following institutions:

      a. Simon Fraser University

      b. University of British Columbia

      c. University of Victoria

Non-Voting:

3. There shall be one Host Site Officer (ex-officio officer appointed by the institution hosting the administrative functions of BC ELN)

4. There shall be an ex-officio officer appointed by the ministry

5. The Executive Director of BC ELN

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[1] Partner library membership in BC ELN Steering Committee Governance Categories can be viewed at: http://bceln.ca/about/steering-committee/governance-categories

5. Roles and Responsibilities

A. *The BC ELN Steering Committee, as a collective, is responsible for:*

- Approving the annual Budget Request and Expenditure Plan

- Developing the strategic plan, including setting new priorities and deciding new initiatives

- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of BC ELN's products and services

- Developing and approving BC ELN service policies

- Ensuring that constituents' needs are represented and considered in planning and decision-making

- Monitoring and managing risks and mitigating threats to the viability of BC ELN

- Determining terms of reference and membership of subcommittees

B. *The Committee Chair is responsible for:*

- Providing leadership to the Steering Committee

- Advocating on behalf of the overall initiative to external stakeholders and others

- Establishing meeting agendas and conducting meetings

- Demonstrating and supporting committee rules of engagement that reflect core principles and values

- Approving communications for distribution to constituents, stakeholders, and others

- Completing the evaluation of the Executive Director with the University Librarian of the administrative host institution of the BC ELN

- Initiating the cyclical review of the Steering Committee's Terms of Reference

- Organizing a transition meeting with the Vice-Chair to ensure a smooth knowledge transfer between terms

C. *The Vice-Chair is responsible for:*

- Assisting the Chair in ensuring that the agreed tasks and functions of the Steering Committee are carried out

- Working closely with the Chair and the Executive Director to liaise as necessary with committee members and constituents

- Carrying out the Chair's responsibilities in the absence of the Chair

D. *Individual Committee Members are responsible for:*

- Engaging their constituents for input, feedback, and communication of needs and interests at the Steering Committee

- Disseminating information and decisions to constituents in a consistent and timely manner

- Responding in a timely manner on items for which their input is required

- Demonstrating and supporting committee rules of engagement that reflect core principles and values

E. *In support of the Steering Committee, the BC ELN Office is responsible for:*

- Working with the Chair to establish meeting agendas

- Distributing meeting agendas to all partner libraries in advance of the Steering Committee meetings

- Circulating meeting minutes to all partner libraries

- Providing administrative and infrastructure support for meetings

- Supporting Steering Committee membership turnover and orientation by:
  - Notifying partner libraries when representative terms are up for renewal
  - Developing and distributing best practice documents and orientation materials
  - Maintaining pertinent information on the BC ELN website

6. Key Steering Committee Relationships

A) *Administrative Host Site and BC ELN Staff*

Simon Fraser University Library currently serves as BC ELN's Host Site, providing administrative, financial, and organizational infrastructure. While the Steering Committee has the responsibilities listed in this document, the BC ELN Office exists as a unit in the Simon Fraser University Library and is subject to SFU policies in areas such as human resources, salaries, and financial management. An officer of the SFU Library sits on the Steering Committee to monitor issues affecting these areas.

SFU receives and manages BC ELN's base funding from the ministry but its budget is kept separate from that of the University Library. BC ELN pays an annual administrative support fee to Simon Fraser University.

Staff of the BC ELN office are employed by Simon Fraser University. The BC ELN Executive Director is at the level of Associate University Librarian within the SFU Library, and oversees and evaluates the work of BC ELN Office staff in accordance with appropriate human resources policies.

The University Librarian of Simon Fraser University with the participation of the Steering Committee Chair carries out evaluation of the Executive Director in accordance with Simon

Fraser University Policy A 12.03. The Steering Committee Chair determines how partner libraries engage in the evaluation process.

The Relationship clause will be reviewed and amended in the event of a change of host site.

7. Decision Making

Partner libraries as members of BC ELN are autonomous organizations with full authority over their own budgetary decisions. The business of the Steering Committee must always strike a balance between the interests of individual libraries, the representative groupings, and of BC ELN as a whole.

To do so decision-making shall be determined by consensus. If consensus is not achievable, or it is inappropriate to the question, Robert's Rules of Order will apply.

To Promote consensus decision-making there must be:

- Balanced representation from all partner libraries
- Agreement by Steering Committee members to a transparent process of decision-making
- Active member participation in committee deliberations and decisions
- Access to relevant, reliable, and timely information for decision-making
- Member support for committee decisions
- Timely communication with constituents, collecting input for decision- making, and communication of final decisions

Procedures

1. Meetings

There shall be at least three meetings per year, generally in May, July, and December. Other than the All Partner meeting, meetings may be held in person or virtually as appropriate.

Quorum shall be set at 60% of voting members.

If a Steering Committee member representing a constituency is unable to attend the meeting, they may appoint a designate from their constituent group to attend and act in their place.

From time to time, the Chair may invite representatives from external stakeholder organizations in the library and post-secondary communities to attend meetings for the purpose of information exchange and communications.
Expense claim policies and procedures will follow those of the host institution, Simon Fraser University.

2. All Partners Meeting

The winter meeting will consist of an All Partner meeting to which all partner library directors or their designate will be invited to attend, followed immediately by a Business Meeting of the Steering Committee. The purpose of the All Partner meeting is to bring partner libraries together to discuss issues of importance for the group. Generally, a central theme is chosen for this meeting and is explored in depth. Should a situation arise requiring input from all partner libraries, the All Partner meeting would be an opportunity to discuss and/or endorse recommendations from the Steering Committee.

The All Partner meeting is chaired by the Steering Committee Chair.

3. Election and term of office of Steering Committee members

Steering Committee members representing a constituency shall be elected by that constituency for a two-year term, and may be re-elected for an additional one-year term, to a total maximum of three years in a row on the committee. Elections are carried out by the constituency each September, and the member's term commences October 1.

4. Election and term of office of the Chair, and Vice-Chair

The Chair shall serve for a term of one year commencing October 1. At the end of the Chair's term, the Vice-Chair shall become the new Chair.

The Vice-Chair will be elected by voting members of the Steering Committee at the winter meeting each year. Their term shall commence immediately.

A constituency representative may only be elected to the Vice-Chair position in the first or second years of their first term, which ensures that no representative serves more than three years in a row on the committee.

The Committee will monitor start dates of new and renewing members to maintain staggering of terms and to ensure appropriate continuity of committee knowledge.

All voting members are eligible to hold the Chair position.

The Vice-Chair will continue to represent their constituency or institution during that first year. The Chair will serve at-large and will not carry other representational duties.

If a University representative is elected Chair, a designate will replace them on the Steering Committee.

5. Subcommittees

From time to time the Steering Committee may delegate oversight of an initiative to a subcommittee under terms of reference endorsed by the Steering Committee. The subcommittee will:

- Present progress reports at each Steering Committee meeting

- Make recommendations to the Steering Committee for final decision on strategic, financial, or operational matters.

- Dissolve once their mandate has been achieved or by decision of the Steering Committee.

6. Executive Committee

In order to execute urgent business or seek advice between regularly scheduled meetings of the Steering Committee, the Executive Director may consult with or receive advice from the Past-Chair, Chair, and the Vice-Chair collectively as the Executive of the Steering Committee. This advice is not meant to pre-empt or circumvent the deliberations of the Steering Committee but to advance business in a timely manner.

When the Vice-Chair position is empty – in the time period between the October 1st Member Changeover and the winter meeting when a new Vice-Chair is elected – the Past-Chair will serve on the Executive Committee to ensure continuity. When the new Vice-Chair's term begins, the Past-Chair leaves the Executive Committee.

7. Term of Reference Review

The Steering Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed at least every five years or earlier if there are substantive changes in the nature of the BC ELN or its partner libraries.