



## AskAway Advisory Committee

Friday, March 1, 2019

11:00AM – 12:00PM

Teleconference

### **In Attendance:**

Lin Brander, BCIT, *Member-at-Large*

Gregg Currie, Selkirk College, *Chair / Rural Colleges*

Lynette Gallant, North Island College, *Member-at-Large*

Justin Harrison, *University of Victoria (Alternate)*

Sybil Harrison, Camosun College, *Urban Colleges*

Scott Marsden, Alexander College, *Member-at-Large*

Suzanne Rackover, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, *Small Universities*

Debbie Schachter, Capilano University, *Regional Universities & Institutes with 4 Yr. Programs*

Lea Starr, *University of British Columbia*

Jenna Thomson, *Simon Fraser University*

### **BC ELN Office:**

Anita Cocchia

Cristen Polley (recorder)

## **1. Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted as tabled.

## **2. AskAway Software Recommendation**

The Committee reviewed the Software Evaluation Committee's recommendation to license LibraryH3lp, developed and supported by Nub Games, for the operation of AskAway.

The Committee heard an overview of the Software Evaluation Committee's background and work. The Committee was formed in October 2018 with the mandate to evaluate and recommend a software platform for AskAway by early 2019. The Committee members are Tina Bebbington (UVic), Michel Castagné (CAP), Roën Janyk (OC), Ken Laing (SC), Kealin McCabe (UNBC), and Cristen Polley (BC ELN).

### *Evaluation Process*

The Software Evaluation Committee finalized platform functional requirements, issued an RFQ to three software providers, and finalized a weighting and scoring system for evaluating RFQ responses. The Committee also arranged demonstrations and trials for the broader AskAway community and collected feedback.

### *Scoring Process*

The Committee focused on scoring the functional requirements, which were grouped into weighted categories. Committee members submitted their own scores for each software platform, and these were averaged for a Committee score. A separate Pricing and References

Committee (A. Cocchia and G. Currie) scored pricing and references for each platform and their scores were weighted and added to the final tally.

#### *Results*

The Software Evaluation Committee unanimously agreed that LibraryH3lp is the preferred solution. LibraryH3lp is a flexible and affordable software option that is currently in use by three Canadian collaborative chat reference services.

**MOTION:** To endorse LibraryH3lp as the software platform for the operation of AskAway.

**Moved:** D. Schachter

**Seconded:** L. Starr

**Motion carried unanimously.**

#### *Next Steps*

As next steps, the Admin Centre will complete negotiations with LibraryH3lp and announce the decision to the AskAway community. A Privacy Impact Assessment will be completed. The Admin Centre will develop an implementation and training plan and work together with local coordinators and service providers to go live with the new software for the start of the May 2019 term.

### **3. Service Support Fees 2019/20**

A. Cocchia presented Service Support Fees for 2019/20. The Admin Centre is proposing a modest increase of 2%. The annual increase (usually 2-5%) varies year to year, and the Committee has previously established that regular small increases are preferable to large jumps. Last year, the Committee set a 2% increase. This year's 2% increase is sufficient as the service remains financially healthy. A. Cocchia reminded the Committee that annual increases are applied only to the base support fee, which is capped at \$10,000; flexible support contributions are not increasing.

It was noted that any cost savings for the new software will not significantly impact service costs for 2019/20, as there are one-time costs for software implementation including additional training and staffing.

A detailed Expenditure Plan for 2019/20 will be presented at the next meeting.

**MOTION:** To approve an increase of 2% for the 2019/20 Service Support fees.

**Moved:** S. Marsden

**Seconded:** S. Harrison

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **4. Admin Centre Update**

C. Polley provided an update from the Admin Centre:

- Quest University Canada was granted temporary relief from one of their AskAway shifts in the current Section 2 schedule (January – April) due to significant staffing shortages.
- Several institutions experienced recent snow closures:

- During the February 12<sup>th</sup> closures, AskAway service providers at ten institutions stepped up to either cover shifts or offer coverage.
  - Thanks to this amazing response, AskAway stayed open throughout the day and operated at full capacity.
- The Admin Centre will develop practical steps to take when snow closures occur and will bring a draft document back to the Committee.

## **5. New Business**

There was no new business.

## **6. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place in the spring, probably in June and will be via teleconference. At this meeting, the Expenditure Plan for 2019/20 will be presented. An exact date is to be determined, and the Admin Centre will send out a Doodle poll.

The next in-person meeting will likely be in the fall, when the new software launch has wrapped up. At this meeting, the Committee can begin to move forward on other priorities for the service, such as investigating proactive chat.