

Shared Library Services Platforms (LSP) Feasibility Study: Request for Proposals

RFP# 2026-001

BC ELN, hosted at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, is situated on the unceded, traditional territories of the səłilwətaʔł (Tsleil-Waututh), kʷikwəłəm (Kwkwetlem), Słwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam) Nations. BC ELN recognizes that its work and the work of member libraries take place on traditional Indigenous territories across BC and the Yukon. We are thankful to the First Nations, Métis and Inuit people who have cared for these territories since time immemorial.

INTRODUCTION

BC Electronic Library Network

[BC ELN](#) is an award-winning consortium of 35 public and private post-secondary libraries across British Columbia and the Yukon. BC ELN's mandate is to develop, promote, and maintain system-wide mechanisms that allow post-secondary libraries to equitably meet the expanding information needs of learners, educators, and researchers at the lowest possible cost.

Shared LSP: Project Background and Goals

The purpose of the feasibility study is to provide the BC ELN community with the evidence and analysis needed to determine whether a coordinated approach to shared LSP is a viable, beneficial, and sustainable option for BC post-secondary libraries. The study will consider both the potential advantages of shared infrastructure and the associated risks and challenges, with particular attention to institutional diversity, autonomy, and privacy requirements.

Currently, the 35 BC ELN post-secondary institutions (PSIs) each use one of approximately 8 LSP to deliver services to their students and researchers. This fragmentation results in an inconsistent user experience across PSIs, inefficient and redundant delivery of shared information resources, and siloed contractual relationships with LSP vendors. A coordinated approach to shared LSP for BC post-secondary institutions will mitigate and, in many cases, eliminate these inefficiencies and better support the priorities of BC's Post-secondary Digital Learning Strategy, particularly enhancing digital equity and reducing the costs related to digital technologies across B.C.'s post-secondary system.

BC ELN has developed governance groups to carry forward a shared LSP feasibility study. The Shared LSP Leadership and Advisory Group's purpose is to lead the study and

ultimately make a recommendation to the BC ELN Steering Committee on the feasibility of moving forward with a coordinated approach to shared LSP through BC ELN. The Feasibility Study Resource Group is composed of library practitioners and subject-matter experts who will work alongside a consultant to ensure that the feasibility study findings are grounded in the operational realities, sector context, and diverse needs of BC ELN partner libraries.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

BC ELN is seeking a consultant or consultancy to conduct the shared LSP feasibility study, with an anticipated start date in early October.

Scope of Services

The scope of work will include:

- Assessing the LSP landscape and systems currently used by BC ELN partner libraries, including:
 - The total cost of ownership across B.C.
 - The state of both open-source and proprietary LSP product offerings that may meet the needs of the initiative
- Conducting an environmental scan to review similar projects in North America, which outlines:
 - Funding, governance models and implementation scenarios used
 - Best practices and lessons learned by the consortia
 - Approaches to long-term sustainability
- Analysing the current operations and needs of partner libraries and evaluating where LSP functionalities should be positioned along the spectrum between shared consortial services and local autonomous control, ensuring an appropriate balance between standardization and local flexibility.
- Outlining challenges and opportunities for coordinated policies across participating institutions, with particular attention to FOIPPA compliance
- Identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) that could be used to guide the implementation of a coordinated approach to LSP

Deliverables

Deliverable 1: A project plan that provides a timeline of activities and tasks.

Deliverable 2: Preliminary findings from an environmental scan.

Deliverable 3: A final report presented to the BC ELN Steering Committee.

The final report must include a summary of findings from the investigation and recommendations that address:

- Whether a coordinated approach to shared LSP is viable and desirable for a subset or all BC ELN members
- Whether to proceed to a pilot phase, a procurement process, or further scoping
- Minimum conditions required for success (e.g., funding model, governance structure, vendor fit)
- Potential funding and governance models to promote long-term sustainability and equity in cost-sharing and decision-making
- Potential implementation scenarios that outline institutional and sector-wide implications for each, with mitigation strategies for anticipated challenges

Timeline

The timeline is based on an anticipated start date of early October. Dates are estimates only and are subject to modification.

Request for proposals posted: August 7, 2026

Deadline for submission of proposals: September 25, 2026

Selection of consultant or consultancy: Early October 2026

Consultant/consultancy starts work: Early October 2026

Deliverable 1 due: Early November 2026

Deliverable 2 due: February 2027

Draft of Deliverable 3 (final report) due: April 2027

Presentation of final report to the BC ELN Steering Committee: May 2027

Budget

The budget for this project is up to \$45,000 CAD.

Experience and Qualifications

BC ELN is seeking a qualified consultant or consultancy to conduct the shared LSP feasibility study. The individual consultant or consultancy must have:

- Demonstrated previous experience conducting a platform feasibility study in a consortial environment;
- A solid understanding of the current library services platform landscape;
- An understanding of key audiences and knowledge of what engagement, consultation, and cooperation looks like;
- Excellent project management skills;

- Demonstrated communications skills, including the ability to work with a diverse range of post-secondary libraries/individuals;
- An understanding, or willingness to learn about, BC ELN and consortial ways of working together;
- An ability to synthesize complex issues in a clear and concise manner.

Preferred qualifications include:

- Experience working in a library consortia environment.
- Experience managing or administering a library service platform.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Submission Requirements

Responses must include the following elements:

- A resume and cover letter highlighting related experience and qualifications.
- The cover letter should address the consultant's experience in relation to the work outlined in this RFP, including where the applicant has previously successfully conducted a technical feasibility study in a consortial environment.
- If the applicant is a consultancy, it should describe its organization, location, size, structure, relationships, experience, and areas of particular expertise.
- Names and contact information for three references for whom similar work has been completed.
- A short proposal (no more than 4 pages), outlining approach and timelines for completing project deliverables.
- Notice of subcontractors (if applicable).
- Applicants must clearly identify any and all subcontractors that they intend to use in supplying services to meet the obligations of the RFP. Applicants are responsible for all work performed by subcontractors.
- Cost proposal:
 - All proposals should clearly demonstrate their value proposition and provide a detailed breakdown of proposed project costs against outlined deliverables.
 - Detail any other additional costs.
- Proposals that are significantly outside the budget should clearly identify why.

Application deadline

Proposals are due by September 25, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Please submit proposals to office@bceln.ca, quoting 'RFP# 2026-001 Shared LSP Feasibility Study' in the subject line.

Questions can be submitted via email to the BC ELN Office (office@bceln.ca). BC ELN reserves the right to seek clarification on any proposal submitted by a proponent to assist in making its evaluation, without notifying any other proponent of such. BC ELN reserves the right to not award the contract.