

Hosting Initiative Expands Access to Province's Historical Treasures

Burnaby, B.C., August 24, 2020 – Past, present, and future BC History Digitization Program (BCHDP) grant recipients have access to free, sustainable, standards-based hosting for their online collections into 2025 thanks to an extension of the BCHDP-Arca Hosting Initiative. A renewed 5-year commitment by the British Columbia Electronic Library Network (BC ELN) and the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKBLC) at the University of British Columbia Library builds on an established 3-year partnership that has allowed BCHDP grant recipients to host their digitized material on Arca, BC's collaborative digital repository, at no cost.

Ten GLAM sector (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums) organizations – groups like the Potters Guild of BC and grunt gallery – have taken part in this initiative over the preliminary 3-year pilot period, and several more are in discussions to add their collections to Arca. They join a growing number of post-secondary institutions and GLAM organizations that are making their local digital assets openly available via the Arca website (arcabc.ca).

IKBLC's continued funding, along with BC ELN's dedicated administration of the initiative and of the award-winning Arca platform, ensures that the BCHDP-Arca Hosting Initiative remains an ongoing and sustainable option for grant recipients. The successful partnership advances both BCHDP's goal of promoting access to British Columbia's unique historical materials and Arca's vision of sharing digital scholarship and heritage and building communities in British Columbia and beyond.

"UBC Library's IKBLC is pleased to continue our partnership with BC ELN on the BCHDP-Arca Hosting Initiative. This initiative effectively supports the BC History Digitization Program's primary objective of enhancing online access to the province's unique historical materials," said Julie Mitchell, Associate University Librarian and Director, Irving K. Barber Learning Centre.

"The strong interest and solid participation rate we've seen over the pilot period of the BCHDP-Arca Hosting Initiative tells us there is need for this barrier-free hosting option. With a long history of working collaboratively on shared services that benefit all participants, BC ELN is proud to maintain its support for this initiative," said BC ELN Executive Director Anita Cocchia.

About BC ELN and the Arca Collaborative Digital Repository

BC ELN is a partnership between the Province of British Columbia and its post-secondary libraries. BC ELN's purpose is to develop, promote, and maintain systemwide solutions and services to BC's learners, educators, and researchers at the best cost. Arca, made possible by a partnership between BC ELN and its partner libraries and initiated with seed funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education, is a shared service that supports the development and implementation of digital repositories at BC post-secondary institutions. With the success of the BCHDP-Arca Hosting Initiative, this focus is expanding to include support for public library, museum, gallery, and archives sectors across BC.

About Irving K. Barber Learning Centre and the BC History Digitization Program

The Irving K. Barber Learning Centre is an interdisciplinary environment dedicated to integrating people, knowledge, and innovation to develop solutions for the challenges of life in the new millennium and

beyond. The British Columbia History Digitization Program is a Learning Centre program designed to promote increased access to British Columbia's historical resources by providing matching funds to undertake digitization projects that will result in free online access to unique historical material from around the province.

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