

AskAway Research Help: Actions & Achievements 2025



Photo 1: Elders at Nicola Valley Institute of Technology's (NVIT) monthly photo sharing session. Photo courtesy of NVIT Library.

By the Numbers:

- \$2,180,000 in costs avoided for the sector
- \$82,900 in costs avoided for a medium-sized institution
- 27 participating libraries; 327 service providers
- 29,981 questions asked by students across the province*
- 253 days open in 2025
- 95% of patrons likely or very likely to return

* Assumes each chat session has an average 1.5 questions

AskAway Student Quotes

"The librarian helping me was very patient and made me feel comfortable asking questions." - Capilano University Student

"I am thrilled to have quick access to support through AskAway. This is rare and makes a student feel truly supported in the learning process. This is a must keep tool for online students." - Thompson Rivers University Student

2025 Accomplishments

Reviewed AskAway's funding and staffing models to prioritize long-term

sustainability. The review was led by participating library members and grounded in principles of equity and a shared recognition of AskAway's value for libraries and students who use the service. The representative Commitment Models Review Working Group developed recommendations for sustainability-focused changes, which were unanimously approved by the AskAway Advisory Committee and the BC ELN Steering Committee. To keep sustainability work moving forward, the Recommendations Implementation Team began the process of developing new commitment models in consultation with libraries.

Explored new technologies to improve the experience for students and workflow for service providers.

The [Emerging Technologies Working Group](#) explored, tested, and assessed features including automated traffic balancing software, language localization, and artificial intelligence tools. In 2025, they met on a regular basis, provided updates to the community, surveyed service providers, met with the vendor, and tested features. Based on what is learned throughout this process, they will make recommendations for implementation to the Advisory Committee in early 2026.

Engaged the community to inform service development and keep AskAway running smoothly. Throughout 2025, local coordinators provided key input into sustainability and emerging technology initiatives, met online to share institutional updates with one another, and informed chat reference policies and practices. In September 2025, AskAway hosted its second Prep-a-Palooza, bringing local coordinators together for a fun and casual online work party, to prepare for the Fall term ahead.

Moving Forward

- Strengthen service sustainability by implementing a new commitment model and supporting participating libraries through the transition.

- Deliver and implement emerging technologies recommendations to enhance the service for students and those staffing.
- Develop and implement GenAI literacy best practices to provide guidance to service providers who are supporting students with their questions about GenAI tools.

2025-26 Financials

The AskAway budget is approved by the [Advisory Committee](#).

Revenue:

- Start of year balance: \$10,815
- Total Revenue: \$115,499
 - Participating libraries service support fees & flexible contributions: \$88,346
 - PSFS Year 2 Removing Barriers Funding: \$15,000
 - BC ELN contribution: \$12,000
 - Miscellaneous: \$153

Expenses:

- End of year balance: (\$4,940)*
- Total Expenses: \$131,254
 - Staffing & Coordination: \$113,323
 - Software & Technology Infrastructure: \$16,423
 - Extenuating Circumstances: \$1,000
 - Admin, Communications, & Governance: \$508

About and Contact

About: [AskAway Research Help](#)

Contact: askaway@bceln.ca

* AskAway has submitted a request for transition funding to the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills and is completing sustainability work to offset the deficit.