

## Illume Actions and Achievements 2021

Annual report for the Illume Interlibrary Resource Sharing service.



## Message from the Illume Support Centre

With COVID-19 closures abating in 2021, the Illume Support Centre focused on supporting library staff as they worked to ramp up interlibrary loan (ILL) services once more. Making sure the Illume system runs smoothly is our top priority; in 2021 the Support Centre assisted with over 650 support cases and produced multiple guides, FAQs, and training sessions to help libraries get their patrons the resources they need.

The Support Centre also made excellent strides in 2021 in improving underlying ILL infrastructure. First, we wrapped up a two-year project to clean up the BC Union Catalogue. A considerable task, we collaborated with partner libraries and the vendor Auto-Graphics to fix thousands of records, and weed over a million erroneous records. Second, we produced best practices and load leveling strategies to support the BC ELN decision to eliminate fees among post-secondary libraries for non-returnables.

Thanks to the cooperation of over 100 libraries in the Illume system, British Columbians and Yukoners have access to a broad range of materials far beyond what their home libraries can offer. And by sharing infrastructure, coordination, and administration, Illume libraries avoided \$1.6 million in costs in 2021. I'm proud of the work we do, and I look forward to our ongoing shared success.



*Image 1: Myfanwy (Vaughn) Postgate, Illume Support Centre Coordinator*

## Interlibrary Loans See a Rebound

COVID-19 made a significant impact on interlibrary loan in 2020, as libraries shuttered in-person and ILL services while restrictions were in place. Libraries began re-opening ILL services in late 2020, and the number of filled ILL requests has begun to rise again.

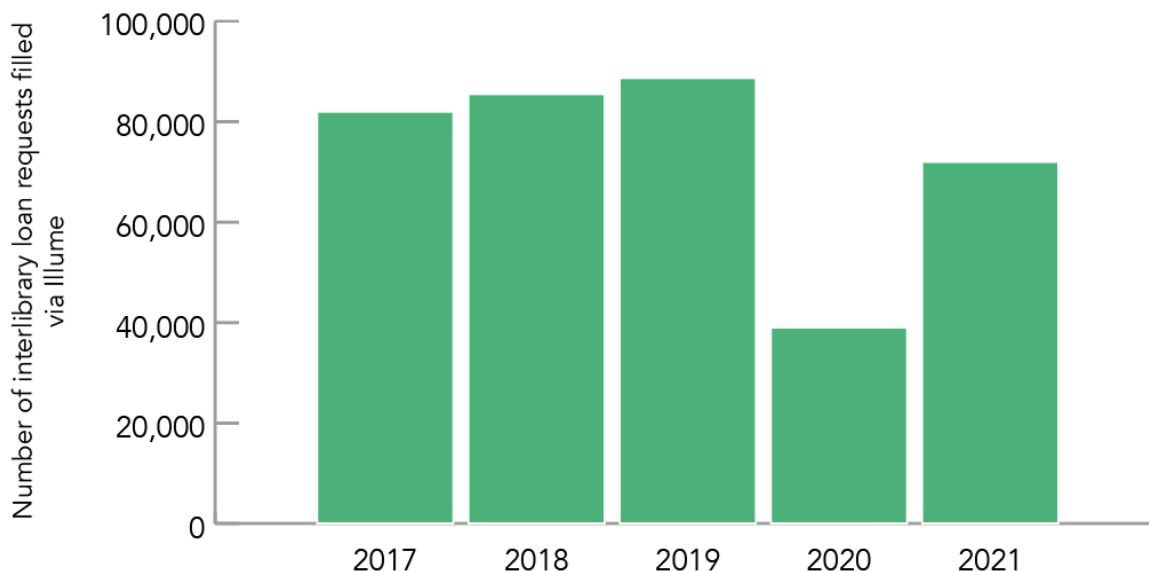


Figure 1: March 2020: COVID-19 restrictions put into place. Interlibrary Loans of physical materials temporarily put on hold until fall 2020; ILL of electronic materials continued.

## 2021 Achievements

### Supported Participating Libraries

- As COVID-19 restrictions further eased in 2021 and libraries more fully resumed interlibrary loans, the Illume Support Centre provided online training to libraries as they re-opened services, included training of new staff, optimizing workflows to include pandemic procedures, and optimizing Illume features in order to assist staff with the increased workflow
- Responded to and managed 658 support cases from public & post-secondary libraries, including brokerage support for multiple public Reading Centres
- Provided multiple one-on-one and group training sessions via webinar or telephone on a wide-variety of topics including Request Workflow, ISO site set-up, Live Shelf Status, Search & requesting, Patron initiated ILLs and more
- Enhanced the Illume Admin Centre support website with new and updated communications; created and updated 41 guides, 28 FAQs, semi-annual reports and multiple news notices of software/server updates, bugs/issues, and software downtime

## **Advanced Software Improvements**

- Completed the Union Database Clean-up Project, an initiative to refresh all BC Union Catalogue records and holdings, resulting in more streamlined service (read more on page 4)
- Continued to support the BC ELN elimination of ILL Fees for non-returnable items between partner libraries by assisting libraries to implement best practices (read more on page 5)
- Liaised with the vendor, Auto-Graphics, to advocate for member needs; facilitated a session on Academic Initiatives in SHAREit for all Auto-Graphics customers at the Auto-Graphics User Group Conference to create a dialogue and promote software enhancements for all post-secondary libraries within the Illume system

## **Laid Groundwork for New Institutions**

- Worked closely with Trinity Western University in order to onboard the institution as an Illume participating library in 2022; completed configuration, and set-up and testing of ISO communications between Relais and SHAREit
- Following the BC ELN Steering Committee decision to allow BC ELN associate members that meet Illume criteria to join the service, the Support Centre:
  - Developed a 10-Step Action Plan for BC ELN Associate members approved for participation in Illume
  - Worked closely with associate member Alexander College to provide training and onboarding, including an in-person session with Administrators and Staff regarding Illume workflow, best practices, and benefits & responsibilities

## A Cleaner Catalogue Equals a Better Experience

In collaboration with partners, the Illume Support Centre completed a major clean up of the BC Union Catalogue (BCUC) in 2021.

The BCUC is the combined library catalogue of Illume libraries across British Columbia. With approx. 3.7 million records in the database, problematic records build-up over time, and can slow down staff workflows and patron ILL requests. With assistance from Illume libraries and Auto-Graphics, the Support Centre weeded records with erroneous or incomplete information, removing a total of 1 million records.

Additionally, as part of this project, two union databases (ELN Media and ELN Serials) were successfully retired, leaving one centralized union catalogue, the BCUC. This reduces record duplication and makes it possible to search provincial library records all in one convenient place.

To support the upkeep of the BCUC, a new automated notification system is in place: if a library uploads a record containing an error, they will be notified via email, so they can take further action.

The cleaner catalogue means patrons and staff will experience streamlined item search and requesting, refined shelf-availability checks, and improved fulfilment times.



### The Union Database Clean up Project: By the Numbers

- 2 years of work
- 10,000s of records fixed
- 1 million erroneous records removed
- 2 databases retired (ELN Media + ELN Serials)
- 1 centralized union catalogue remaining
- 3.7 million records are now maintained in the shared catalogue

## Update on the BC ELN Elimination of ILL Fees Initiative

In 2019 BC ELN partner libraries agreed to remove fees for non-returnables (e.g. articles) among post-secondary libraries, with the understanding that certain considerations would be addressed. The Illume Support Centre is leading this work and has made significant progress in addressing considerations:

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Status</b>
Establish formalized system expectations for those participating in Illume.	In 2021, the Steering Committee endorsed expectations for those participating in Illume. These are the Illume Service Partner Benefits & Responsibilities.
Create best practices for equitable sharing, including load leveling.	Best practices, including load levelling strategies, for SHAREit Illume users were launched in 2021. Best practices were also created for libraries that use alternate ILL management software.
Train and educate ILL staff on best practices/load levelling strategies.	The Support Centre conducted multiple training sessions and offered online guides and tutorials through 2020 and 2021.
Assess impacts of these changes on the system.	The Support Centre will begin assessment of ILL traffic in 2022.

Assessment of progress is iterative: the Support Centre will analyze statistics and initiate actions to improve load-leveling for the system, and after interventions, further assessment will occur. The Support Centre is providing updates to the BC ELN Steering Committee as the project progresses.

## A Look Ahead to 2022

In 2022, the Illume Support Centre will:

- Continue to support the BC ELN decision to eliminate ILL fees for non-returnable items between academic partner libraries with an assessment report on the efficacy of Illume Best Practices and load-leveling assessment.
- Explore additional software enhancements to improve patron experience, e.g. initiating a pilot project to investigate patron requesting via permanent patron accounts (rather than temporary guest patron requesting) to provide more request options as well as the ability to easily update patron information.
- Complete the onboarding of new Illume participating libraries at Alexander College, Trinity Western University, and University Canada West.
- Work with SHAREit vendor Auto-Graphics to establish another multi-year license for Illume software.

## Illume Essential Partners

- The BC Electronic Library Network hosts and staffs the Illume Support Centre, and negotiates contracts that support both post-secondary and public libraries.
- Libraries Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs funding ensures all BC public libraries have equitable access to Illume.
- Simon Fraser University IT Services provides local, state-of-the-art cloud hosting for Illume.
- Public Library InterLINK provides funding for Canadian hosting of Illume.
- Auto-Graphics Inc. is the provider of British Columbia's interlibrary loan management system and union database.

---

If you have comments or feedback about this accessible PDF, please email [leahh@bceln.ca](mailto:leahh@bceln.ca). Your suggestions are welcome.