



To: Chair and Members of the Community and Protective Services Committee
From: Mariam Hamou, London Public Library Board
Date: Oct 25, 2019
Subject: London City Council Support of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) e-Content Campaign

LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

That London City Council:

1. Recognize the important role that public libraries play in the community through early literacy programs that are integral to developing proficient readers and ensuring that children succeed in school and digital literacy programs that help ensure that citizens can contribute to the digital world;
2. Recognize that digital content is the fastest growing area of publishing and that public libraries must be able to offer digital publications to their customers as part of their core service offering to the community, particularly given the digital divide and the contemporary rapid pace of digitization of educational and cultural materials;
3. Recognize that for many seniors, low income families, youth, and new Canadians, libraries are a crucial tool for participation in their communities – from education to searching for jobs to consuming Canadian cultural materials, and that barriers to accessing digital publications hamper public libraries' capacity to provide modern, digital services to those demographic groups and to other library customers. This is exacerbated when some publications may only be available to public libraries in digital forms;
4. Indicate its support for London Public Library and the Canadian Urban Libraries Council in efforts to increase access to digital publications for public library customers in the City of Ottawa and across Canada;
5. Call on the Federal government to investigate the barriers faced by public libraries in acquiring digital publications and the problems these barriers pose for vulnerable demographic groups in Canada; and,
6. Further ask the Federal government to develop a solution that increases public library access to digital publications across Canada and assists public libraries in meeting the cost requirements to acquire digital publications.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mariam Hamou".

Mariam Hamou
London Public Library Board Chair

BACKGROUND

The Canadian Urban Libraries Council

CULC advocates for better public library service in Canada's populated urban areas. Its member libraries represent communities in Canada that represent populations of 100,000 or more. London Public Library is an active member of CULC. More than 65% of all Canadians are served by a CULC member library and the activity in CULC libraries comprises more than 80% of Canada's public library activity.

Key e-Content Issues Facing Public Libraries

- To properly service their communities – including vulnerable groups like seniors, lower income individuals, and youth at risk that benefit from library access – CULC member libraries seek to ensure that Canadians have access to e-content through public libraries.
- Publishers, primarily headquartered outside Canada, are limiting Canadian libraries' access to e-content, and, even when a publication is made available, are making it prohibitively expensive to acquire e-content.
- Those restrictions and costs make it difficult for libraries to provide invaluable services that contribute to thriving and engaged communities. Public libraries and the early literacy programs that they run are integral to developing proficient readers and ensuring that children succeed in school. Digital literacy programs also help ensure that citizens can contribute to our digital world.
- Barriers to libraries accessing e-content hamper our capacity to provide modern, digitized services to those demographic groups and to other public library users. This is exacerbated when some publications may only be available to us in digital forms.

CULC e-Content Campaign – Federal

In late 2018 CULC/CBUC hired Temple Scott and Associates – an Ottawa/Toronto Communication and Government Relations firm to assist the organization and the CULC Digital Content Working Group to educate and influence policy makers on potential solutions to improve access conditions for Canadian Public Libraries.

This came after years of Position Statements and collaborative work that was only seeing the access conditions get worse. The goal of the campaign is to achieve a collaborative removal of some of the barriers facilitated by the Federal Government. Failing that, then policy and/or regulatory changes that would recognize the critical role that Canadian public libraries play in society and our democracy which would require changes by publishers.

CULC asked all member libraries to recommend to their boards that letters be addressed to all candidates for federal office informing of the issue. On September 26, 2019, the London Public Library approved the recommendation and letters have been sent (example appended to the end of this recommendation).

CULC e-Content Campaign – Municipal

Another component of the campaign includes coast to coast municipal motions in support of Fair e-Content pricing and access models. Municipalities across Canada have indicated their support for public library users and public libraries across Canada. Those that have passed a motion of support to date:

Barrie
Cambridge
Edmonton
Kitchener
Markham

Mississauga
Okanagan
Ottawa
Pickering
Richmond

St. Catharines
Surrey
Toronto
Vaughan

Sample Letter to Federal Members of Parliament from Council/Mayor

I am writing on behalf of the London Public Library, which provides an essential service and is invaluable to the community of London and its citizens. Libraries and the programs they provide are integral to ensuring a thriving democracy. Public library digital literacy programs help ensure that citizens are able to contribute to our digital world. Additionally, for many seniors, lower income families, youth, and new Canadians, public libraries provide access to resources they may not otherwise be able to obtain. Canadians rely on libraries as an important tool for their participation in the community - from early literacy and education to searching for jobs to consuming Canadian cultural materials.

Members of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC) spend approximately \$1 00 million in public funds annually on library acquisitions. In the City of Edmonton, we are spending close to 3 million dollars every year in an effort to acquire digital content, physical library materials and other resources in demand by library users. Even with this significant expenditure, our public libraries increasingly struggle to obtain digital content from multinational publishers due to cost pressures they face locally and because of the prohibitive licensing limitations applied to digital publications. By way of example, Canadian author Louise Penny's book Kingdom of the Blind is available to libraries for \$13 as a paperback, \$22 in hard cover and \$60 in digital form. The \$60 cost would allow the e-book to be checked out 52 times or for 2 years - whichever happens first, without the library 'owning' the item. A paper edition would be expected to last 3 to 4 years at a substantially reduced cost.

The critical challenge is that multinational publishers are limiting public library access to digital content, and, even when a publication is made available, are making it prohibitively expensive to acquire most digital publications. If libraries cannot appropriately serve the public with timely access to digital publications, our communities will suffer. Governments need to be aware of the lack of access to digital publications, their support is needed in developing solutions - especially as governments seek to identify community tools that can help vulnerable groups grow and reach their potential.

Along with CULC/CBUC members across Canada, we are asking the Federal government to recognize the critical role that libraries play in serving our communities by providing access to resources that allow community members to learn and grow. The Federal government has a vital role to play in ensuring that Canadian libraries can meet the growing demand for digital publications. We ask you to prioritize finding a solution to the barriers that Canadian libraries face in accessing digital publications.

I would be happy to further discuss at your convenience.



Fair e-content pricing for public libraries

Dear Mrs. Vecchio,

I am writing on behalf of the public libraries in Elgin—Middlesex—London, which provide essential services and are integral parts of our communities, to seek your support on an issue important to providing comprehensive, modern library services.

The Canadian Urban Libraries Council, of which London Public Library is a member, is asking candidates from all political parties in this October's Federal election to commit to working collaboratively to ensure that multinational publishers provide Canada's public libraries with affordable access to e-content, to meet the needs of public library users in our community and across the country.

Public libraries increasingly struggle to obtain e-content from multinational publishers, primarily because of the often-strict licensing limitations and prohibitive prices applied to those publications. For example, Canadian author Louise Penny's novel *Kingdom of the Blind* is available to public libraries for \$13 as a paperback, \$22 in hard cover, and \$60 as an e-Book with a two year limit.

Moreover, some titles, such as *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality* by Robert P.C. Joseph are currently not available to Canadian libraries in any eAudio format due to exclusive licensing models that prevent titles being offered for sale to public libraries. Barriers to public libraries accessing digital content hamper our capacity to provide modern, digitized services to our customers.

Libraries and the programs they provide are integral to ensuring a thriving democracy. Public library digital literacy programs help ensure that citizens are able to contribute to our digital world. Additionally, for many seniors, lower income families, youth, and new Canadians,



public libraries provide access to resources they may not otherwise be able to obtain. Canadians rely on libraries as an important tool for their participation in the community – from early literacy and education to searching for jobs to consuming Canadian cultural materials.

It is essential that we have affordable access to e-content, so that all Canadians can benefit from the growing trend towards digitization. I'd appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience to confirm that you are prepared to commit to working with libraries across Canada to have the access to econtent required to properly serve our communities.

Yours sincerely,

Mariam Hamou
London Public Library Board Chair

On behalf of the London Public Library Board:

Stuart Clark, Michelle Boyce, Brian Gibson, Shawn Lewis, Jeremy McCall, Elizabeth Peloza, James Shelley, Donna Vachon

Please respond at ceo@lpl.ca or contact us through [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

CULC Government Relations Campaign—Accessing E-content FAQ

Why is CULC launching a campaign to improve access to E-Content?

Multinational publishers, including Amazon, primarily headquartered outside Canada, are limiting public library access to e-content, and, even when a publication is made available, are making it prohibitively expensive to acquire. Licensing restrictions, embargoes, and high costs make it difficult for libraries to provide important services that contribute to a thriving and engaged democracy.

Public libraries and the early literacy programs they provide are integral to developing proficient readers and to ensuring that children succeed in school. Digital literacy programs also help ensure that citizens develop capacity to contribute to our digital world. Additionally, for many, including seniors, those with print disabilities, low income families, youth, and new Canadians, public libraries are a crucial tool for participation in their communities.

What digital publications are difficult to access for public libraries?

All types of digital content - including ebooks, eaudio, newspapers, and magazines – have become either prohibitively expensive or not available to public libraries. This is especially true for digital content published by multinational publishers.

Why do libraries feel election candidates can assist in solving this problem?

CULC's goal in reaching out to candidates is to increase understanding of the e-content issue amongst all parties and to ensure those candidates that are successful in being elected are committed to finding a solution. Once elected, we will ensure these allies are provided material to continue raising this issue until an appropriate solution is found.

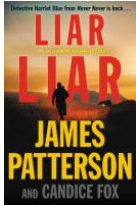
Aren't libraries governed provincially, why is the Federal government being targeted?

The Federal government currently has regulations under the Copyright Act in relation to book importation (which do not currently address e-content) and is best-placed to provide a comprehensive, Canada-wide solution to the e-content issue.

What is CULC's proposed solution?

We are asking the Federal government to help overcome the barriers that Canadian library users face in accessing e-content. We see three options – first, we ask that the federal government initiate discussions with both CULC and multinational publishers to find a collaborative solution; should these efforts be unsuccessful we would ask the federal government to investigate legislative or regulatory options that would address the access to e-content issue.

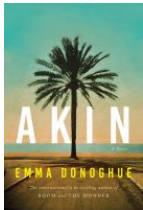
Cost to London Public Library



Hachette

Print cost: \$22.00/copy

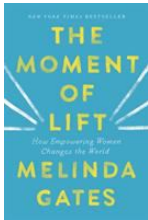
eBook cost:\$65.00/2 year license, One Copy One User



HarperCollins

Print cost: \$20.00/copy

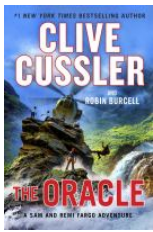
eBook cost:\$32.99/26 circulations ,One Copy One User



MacMillan

Print cost: \$21.00/copy

eBook cost:\$60/first of 2 years or 52 checkouts, One Copy One User,
4-month embargo



Penguin Random House

Print cost: \$23.00/copy

eBook cost:\$57/2 year license, One Copy One User



Simon & Schuster

Print cost: \$24.00/copy

eBook cost:\$83.99/2 year license, One Copy One User