



Centre for Equitable Library Access

In celebration of Freedom to Read Week and on the eve of the release of the next year's federal budget, CELA would like to gratefully acknowledge the federal government's ongoing commitment to public library services by highlighting the \$2.5 million allocated for the production of accessible reading materials in the current budget. These funds, awarded to our main production partner, CNIB, are used to produce accessible materials for the estimated 3 million Canadians with print disabilities.

CELA's mandate to provide equitable library services through Canada's public libraries is supported by a combination of provincial, territorial, and municipal funding. Our efforts focus on acquiring and curating library materials, facilitating and coordinating production and delivery, maintaining the CELA web site and catalogue, and supporting patron and member libraries at a national level.

CELA contracts with CNIB to perform two functions related to public library services for persons with print disabilities, both which are supported by federal funding. The first is original production based on selections by CELA staff - human-narrated audio titles that are not available commercially, braille, and accessible text files.

The second is the physical production and shipping of items directly to the patron's home – either on DAISY CD or embossed braille. As a service that reflects the values of Canadian public libraries, CELA believes this to be an essential component of our commitment to patrons that may lack the necessary Internet access, equipment or comfort level using online services.

By the end of the current budget year, we anticipate that:



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- Patrons using CELA services will have borrowed, downloaded or accessed over 2.1 million items
- Over 1 million DAISY CDs and close to 20,000 braille volumes will be delivered directly to the patron's home
- Over 450 libraries across Canada will carry CELA DAISY CD deposit collections so that patrons can borrow accessible collections locally or for libraries to deliver via their visiting library service
- Nearly 7,000 new books, a majority of which are human-narrated audio, will be added to the CELA collection and close 100,000 additional titles will be made available through Bookshare
- Close to 8,000 new titles in French will be made available through our partnership with Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) to bolster our collection of French titles
- Over 2,300 new patrons will have signed up for CELA services through their local public library
- Nearly 500 library staff across the country will have attended webinars and other training opportunities provided by CELA staff.

For more interesting statistics about how government funding supports CELA services, watch our social media over the next few days and consider sharing to educate your patrons about the importance of accessibility.

CELA is incredibly grateful for the annual funding support we received from government at all levels. Canadians with print disabilities would see a dramatic



decrease in the quantity and quality of materials available in accessible formats without it. We are also grateful to literacy partners for providing opportunities for Canadians with print disabilities to engage with our national stories and in our national conversations, and our organizational partners for supporting our funding efforts, helping to spread the word about CELA and lending their expertise to the evolution of our services. Thanks also to our colleagues in CELA member libraries for the incredible work they do in providing CELA services. We look forward to continuing to work with all funders and partners to make the dream of equitable library service a reality.

Sincerely,

Catherine Biss
Chair, Board of Directors
Centre for Equitable Library Access