

BCALS Annual Report

2023-2024

BCALS EXECUTIVE TEAM FOR 2023-2024

- Chair: David Gill, Alexander College/Vancouver Island University
- Chair-Elect: Roen Janyk, Okanagan College
- Recording Secretary: Cassandra Larose, Royal Roads University
- Continuing Education Coordinators:
 - Year 3: Susie Wilson, University of Northern British Columbia
 - Year 2: Kat Louro, University of Northern British Columbia
 - Year 1: Julie Jones, Simon Fraser University; Katharine Shipley, Douglas College
- Student Representatives: Lauren Wong, UBC School of Information; Drina Doyle, Langara College's Department of Library & Information Technology

SUMMARY

Throughout the past year, the BCALS has been working on addressing the section's [anti-racism implementation plan](#). This includes collaborating with the iSchool Students of the Global Majority (iSGM) on an IBPOC-only library worker and student event, conducting an email interview about climate justice and anti-racism/EDI in academic libraries, drafting and submitting a policy for inclusion of constitution and bylaws to ensure diverse speakers, and highlighting anti-racism/EDI work in BC's academic libraries.

During the 2022-2023 executive term, the Chair-Elect met with the IBPOC student group iSGM (formerly known as IDEAS@UBC) to discuss potential collaboration with BCALS. The conversation included the idea of creating an IBPOC-focused space, possibly at a conference, through a focus group, or within a network. During the current 2023-2024 executive term, the Chair collaborated with iSGM to organize an IBPOC-only meetup at the 2024 BCLA Conference for library workers and students. The session, titled *Let's connect: IBPOC library workers and students build community* was facilitated by the Chair using Liberating Structures to guide the conversation. This allowed library workers and students to engage in difficult conversations about their shared experiences and foster a supportive IBPOC library community within British Columbia. This

session was inclusive, welcoming both conference and non-conference attendees, recognizing that the cost of the conference might be prohibitive for some individuals. The logistics of the event involved several discussions with BCLA, and BCALS is thankful for their support. The session proved successful, with participants expressing appreciation for the opportunity to meet other IBPOC library workers and students. In total, there were 25 participants.

BCALS recently conducted an email interview with Dr. Lisa Nathan from the UBC School of Information, discussing the intersection of climate justice, anti-racism/EDI, and academic libraries for a forthcoming BCLA Perspectives article. Unfortunately, due to a delay in the publication schedule, the article will be published at a later date.

The Speaker Selection Policy aims to ensure that BCALS events feature a diverse range of speakers. Initially drafted in 2021, there was a delay in notifying the membership about BCALS' intention to submit this policy as a change to the constitution and bylaws. The initial draft has since been revised by the current executive. The 2023/2024 executive team is now putting forward a motion to adopt the policy at the BCALS 2024 AGM.

BCALS requested BC academic libraries submit highlights of their anti-racism and EDI work. The intention to share these highlights with the broader academic library community through the forums and Perspectives. The submission sharing may occur in 2024/2025 executive.

BCALS CONTINUING EDUCATION

[BCALS Winter Event](#) - November 17, 2023

The 2023 Winter Event was entitled ***Reimagining academic library practice: Creative and innovative approaches to academic library work***. We invited presentation proposals with the following prompts: How have you re-imagined the work we do in academic libraries? What new or innovative approaches have you brought to your work? BCALS invites presentations, workshops, and lightning talks highlighting initiatives that have sparked joy and excitement in your library spaces.

The event [program](#) was interesting and diverse and discussions throughout the event were insightful, generous, and lively.

BCALS welcomed 83 library workers and students from institutions across BC to the online event.

Library Student Curriculum Vitae and Cover Letter Clinic - March 7-29, 2024

This is a highly valued annual online event that allows future and recently graduated students looking for their first jobs in academic libraries to get feedback from professionals with hiring experience. This opportunity is open to upcoming or recent graduates who have not yet secured their first job in an academic library. Participants are matched with a professional with experience hiring in academic libraries. These matches will review the participant's resume/CV and cover letter, offer constructive feedback, and answer questions they may have about the academic

hiring process. This clinic is fully virtual, allowing for participation from wherever people are located! This year we had 26 student participants and 19 library worker volunteers. BIPOC participants were paired with BIPOC library workers where possible if requested.

This year the CECs added an online job hunting and CV workshop to kick off the event on March 7th. The workshop was entitled, [Your library job search: tips, strategies, and good practices](#). More than half of the CV and Cover Letter Clinic student participants either attended the workshop live or watched the recording afterwards. After the event, the CECs reached out to BCLA colleagues to have the workshop slides posted on the [BCLA website](#).

CV and Cover Letter Clinic participants were surveyed afterwards so BCALS can continue to evolve practices. The response rate of both students and volunteers was excellent. 100 percent of student participants answered that they would recommend participating in the CV and Cover Letter Clinic to peers. Other feedback included:

- *I think it is [a] great clinic! I am planning on keeping in touch with the students/recent grads that I matched with because it's important work for me. But I like that there isn't an expectation for continued connection.*
- *It would be helpful to match based on public services/technical services area of interest. My match couldn't answer some of the questions I had about technical services in an academic library.*
- *I feel like both the students needed more than an hour for feedback. I ended up meeting for 1.5 hours with one student and I offered to meet with both students again if needed (so far that hasn't happened).*
- *It would be useful to have some questions/guidance in advance for students so that they have given some thought to what they want to discuss and if they have particular goals for this clinic.*
- *Perhaps promo? The CV clinic was so much more helpful in my opinion versus WorkBC sessions. So I hope it can be better promoted next time.*

Next Year's Goals:

Re-name Winter Event to something more descriptive. Ideas include: BCALS Winter Skillshare, BCALS Winter Knowledge and Idea Exchange, or BCALS Experimentation Forum.

Explore creating a dedicated academic library stream of presentations and professional development workshops at the BCLA Annual Conference to increase the presence of academic library workers and build more community at the event.

BCALS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Student Representatives were: Lauren Wong and Drina Doyle. In response to the introduction of the use of the BCALS forum as well as a turnover in the student representative position at the beginning of this executive term of 2023/24, a new approach was adopted. Rather than rotating responsibilities among representatives as done in previous years, each student representative

was assigned a single platform to manage, ensuring more consistent updates on social media channels.

X (Twitter)

In light of significant developments in X's recent evolution, student representatives and other executive members engaged in discussions regarding the potential discontinuation of its use during regular meetings. However, following thorough considerations, the Committee determined that maintaining our presence on the platform remained advantageous and opted to refine our content strategy instead.

Previously, the BCALS social media content strategy was centered around both reposting and creating original content exclusively on X. To overcome the platform's limitations, the Committee decided to increase the utilization of the BCALS forum. Under the revised strategy, original content would be exclusively posted on the BCALS forum, while reposting and announcement-making activities would be on X. This strategic shift was motivated by the forum's suitability for longer posts and its ability to reach our targeted audiences directly.

The results of this shift, as evidenced by the X analytics, have shown some degree of success, with announcement posts receiving the most attention. The X analytics report provides insights into our platform's performance over the past year. Our posts collectively garnered almost 1000 impressions, with noteworthy engagement rates observed in posts related to events promotion and events registration announcements.

However, the efficacy of this approach remains debatable. One notable challenge has been finding content from other university libraries for reposting, as many are inactive on X. Some institutions have migrated to platforms like Instagram, while others have phased out their X presence altogether.

BCALS Forum

As mentioned, this year along with using the social media platform X, the student representatives along with the rest of the executive made the decision to utilize the BCALS forum to help increase engagement and directly connect with our targeted audience.

In one of the meetings, multiple members of the executive brought up the fact that they don't use or aren't as active on social media as they are on the forums. This sparked a discussion that led to the executive acknowledging that many members of the BCLA are of a demographic that doesn't use social media and that it would be worthwhile to find a solution that would allow all members to access and engage with the information being posted. Using the BCALS forum would also allow the student representatives to post original and longer content that is normally limited by the word count on X (Twitter).

The analytics report of the BCALS forum provides an overview of the platform's performance over the past year. This marks the first time that student representatives have gained a deeper understanding of the engagement of our target audience through a platform not affiliated with social media. Our posts primarily focused on events within the BCLA, as well as promoting and encouraging members to invite their colleagues to join the BCLA and forums. While our posts garnered significant views, we observed a lower level of interaction in terms of replies and commentaries from members. This aspect is crucial to consider as we reassess our social media efforts for the 2024-2025 year.

Notes for Next Year

In preparation for the upcoming year, a couple of key considerations have emerged from our reflections. First and foremost, exploring other platforms presents an opportunity for broader outreach and engagement with our audience.

Furthermore, it is recommended that student representatives explore the option of making event announcements directly through channels at the BC institutions with relevant programs (e.g., UBC, Langara College, University of the Fraser Valley). This approach has proven to be more effective, as evidenced by the promotion of this year's BCLA IBPOC meetup event in UBC's iSchool digest.

BCALS OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARD

The winners of the BCALS 2024 Outstanding Contribution award are Stephanie Savage, University of British Columbia, and Jennier Zerkee, Simon Fraser University. This award is given to library workers whose professional achievements have made a real difference to students, faculty, and colleagues in British Columbia. More information about the award can be found through the [BCALS website](#).

Stephanie and Jennifer collaborated with each other on a research project, supported by a CARL Research in Librarianship Grant, looking at the key issues and recommendations from the 2017 Parliamentary review of Canada's Copyright Act. They undertook a qualitative analysis of 192 written briefs from the review, with a focus on using these findings to support future advocacy for copyright and user rights in higher education and libraries. They also actively contribute to a network of college and university employees with copyright responsibilities that includes larger and smaller post-secondaries. Through their research and contributions, Stephanie and Jennifer have empowered post-secondary specialists provincially and nationally.

BCALS would also like to recognize the work of the volunteers who gave their time to serve on the awards committee:

David Gill, Vancouver Island University

Jenna Thomson, Simon Fraser University

Susie Wilson, University of Northern British Columbia

Melisa Bergeron, Vancouver Island University

Jenn Bolstler, Vancouver Island University

BCALS FINANCES

Funds are typically collected for the annual Winter Event. For the third year in a row, BCALS partnered with Keeping it ReAL; since they sponsored the honorariums for BCALS speakers there is no financial report for 2023/24.

BCALS MEMBERSHIP

BCALS has a total of 238 members which is 29% of the total BCLA membership. Additionally, BCALS has 98 online forum subscribers.

GETTING INVOLVED WITH BCALS

New members are welcome! There are a variety of ways to participate, such as: events, online discussions, CV clinics, and more. You can also:

- Follow us on X (formerly Twitter) [here](#)
- Check out our YouTube channel [here](#)
- Learn more about BCALS on our website found [here](#)
- Contact us at bcals@bcla.bc.ca

BCALS communication occurs through the [BCLA Online Forum](#), to freely access the BCLA Forum (and BCALS communications) see [here](#); subscribe to the BCALS online forum [here](#).