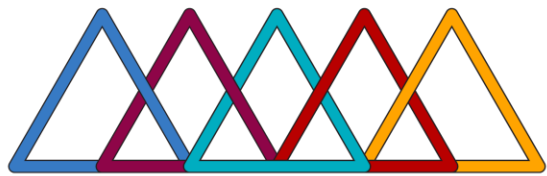


# Accessibility in the Licensing of Digital Resources

**BCLA Webinar, Nov 12, 2024**

**11:00 am – 12:00 pm PT**



Library Accessibility  
Resource Centre



**BCLibraries**  
COOPERATIVE



Centre for Equitable Library Access

# Land Acknowledgement

Our presenters today come from across this land, living and working in what we now know as Canada. We respect and affirm the inherent and Treaty Rights of all Indigenous Peoples and will continue to honour the commitments to self-determination and sovereignty we have made to Indigenous Nations and Peoples.

# Our Presenters

- ▶ Laurie Davidson, Executive Director, Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA)
- ▶ Daniella Levy-Pinto, NNELS Manager, National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS)
- ▶ Tami Setala, Licensing & Business Development Manager, BC Libraries Cooperative

# Outline

- ▶ Background & Overview.
- ▶ User Perspective and Demonstrations.
- ▶ Licensing Approaches to Accessibility.
- ▶ Questions.

# Statistics on Disabilities

- ▶ **27% of Canadians** aged 15 years and older, or 8.0 million people, have one or more disabilities
  - ▶ 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability.
- ▶ **5.2 million Canadians** have difficulty reading print material
  - ▶ Print Material Accessibility in Canada, 2023.

# Diverse Disabilities

## Print Disabilities

- Comprehension/Cognitive/Learning
- Vision Loss/Blindness
- Physical/Mobility

## Other Physical/Mobility

## Intellectual

## Hearing/Speech

## Mental Health

## Invisible

## Multiple disabilities



# Background in Canada

- ▶ Employment and Social Development Services (ESDC)
  - ▶ Has funded NNELS and CELA at federal level for accessible reading services (4 Million per year since 2019).
- ▶ Department of Canadian Heritage Accessible Books Funding: 22.8 Million over 5 years (2019-24).
  - ▶ Administered through the Canada Book Fund.
  - ▶ Support the production and distribution of accessible digital books by Canadian independent publishers. <sup>7</sup>

# Accessibility in Mainstream Public Library Services

- ▶ Encourage born-accessible paradigm within public libraries and to build accessibility into all aspects of service.
- ▶ No one-size fits all solution (rural/urban, large/small etc.).
- ▶ Historically, accessibility has been done as part of a separate service or organization



# Public Library Accessibility Resource Centre (PLARC) Project

- ▶ This collaborative project is funded by the Government of Canada, co-led by NNELS and CELA
- ▶ Create a consolidated resource centre focused on the education and training of library staff across the country on the importance of accessibility.

# PLARC Project

- ▶ Library Advisory Group in 2021.
- ▶ Survey of library staff in Canada in 2021.
  - ▶ Over 500 responses.
  - ▶ 95% say they need training on how to help people with disabilities.
- ▶ Is Your Public Library Accessible? Study 2023

# PLARC Project (cont.)

- ▶ Curation and creation of resources for [AccessibleLibraries.ca](https://www.accessiblelibraries.ca) / [BibliosAccessibles.ca](https://www.bibliosaccessibles.ca).
- ▶ 213 total resources (170 English, 43 French).
  - ▶ 155 curated resources from organizations and websites.
  - ▶ 58 resources created by the project.
  - ▶ 12 learning paths for getting started.

# Resource

- ▶ **Considering Accessibility when Procuring Licensed Digital Resources** - a guide for library staff and libraries.
  - ▶ Includes practical recommended considerations.

# 5 Key Takeaways

1. All libraries have a part to play in the process: whether a library procures individually, through a regional system or through a consortium.
2. Advocate for accessibility with vendor, advocate internally, advocate with your consortium.
3. Be specific about accessibility requirements in RFI/RFPs, informal requests and licenses.

# 5 Key Takeaways (con't)

4. Accessibility includes both content and platform.
5. Hire and consult with people with lived experience with a disability.

# Key Takeaways: Accessibility Metadata

- ▶ Creating and Editing Accessibility Metadata MARC tags for Library Staff
- ▶ Describe accessibility features of digital content during production/creation and retain through lifecycle
- ▶ Expose accessibility metadata for user discoverability – OPACs, Discovery Layers, Ebook Platforms etc.
  - ▶ Finding – searching, sorting, filtering
  - ▶ Identifying - displaying
  - ▶ Selecting – user can choose with confidence

# Displaying Accessibility Metadata using “Shelf Talkers”

Halifax Public Library: [Libby - Title \(libbyapp.com\)](https://libbyapp.com)

Lesley Crewe

Nosy Parker



This eBook is Global Certified Accessible and conforms with the requirements of WCAG 2.0 level AA.  
Format: Reflowable.  
Screen Reader Friendly: Yes.  
Accessibility Details: Table of contents navigation, reading order, print equivalent page numbers.

THOUGHT

Halifax Public  
Libraries



Borrow





# User Perspective & Demonstrations

- ▶ Daniella Levy-Pinto, NNELS Manager
- ▶ Screen reader user

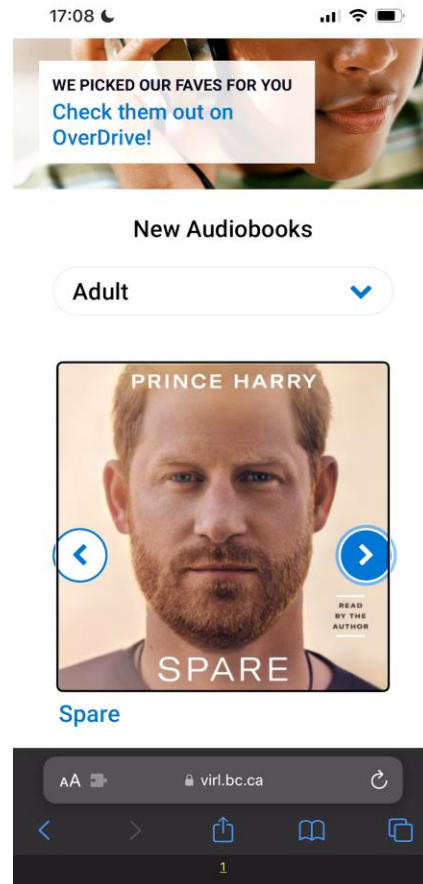
# Assistive Technologies and Diversity of Reading Needs

- ▶ Readers with print disabilities access digital content on computers or mobile devices using various assistive technologies (e.g. screen readers, refreshable Braille displays, screen enhancement software, voice controls or switches).
- ▶ Developers often make choices that are visually appealing without adding code to ensure apps and websites work with assistive technologies.
- ▶ Example: An image without a text description (alt-text) to tell the user what it is (including controls).

# Full Ecosystem Needs to be Accessible

1. Accessible content
2. An accessible platform/interface from which to find and borrow that content, and
3. An accessible way in which to consume the content.

# Demo 1: Browsing a Library Website



# Full Accessibility in Licensed Digital Resources

- ▶ Accessibility standards enable anyone to use websites/apps with assistive technologies, in the way that works best for them.
- ▶ The entire process to find and use content should work with assistive technologies.
- ▶ All features of a library (website or app) like searching, browsing the catalogue, creating an account, finding and downloading content) should be informed by accessibility standards.

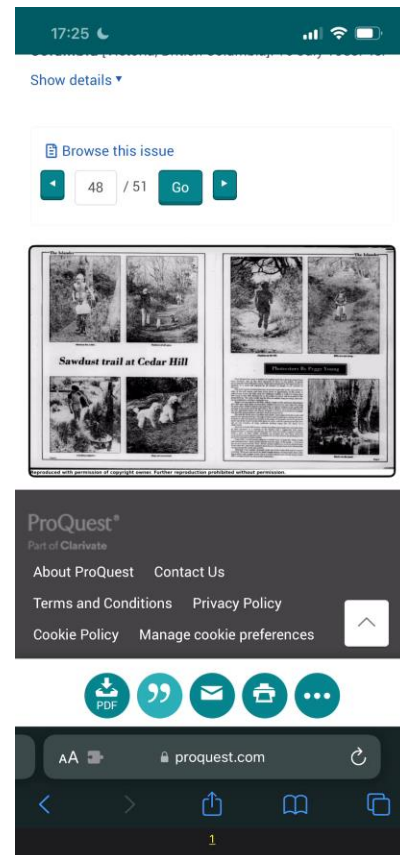
# Accessibility Barriers

- ▶ The full search and discovery experience is not always available to all devices or assistive technologies.
- ▶ Lack of accessibility features (e.g. unlabeled buttons or the requirement to use a mouse) can render an app or website unusable for assistive technologies.

# Combined Barriers 1/2

- ▶ The content itself is not always fully accessible (e.g. images of text).

# Demo 2: Inaccessible Content Proquest

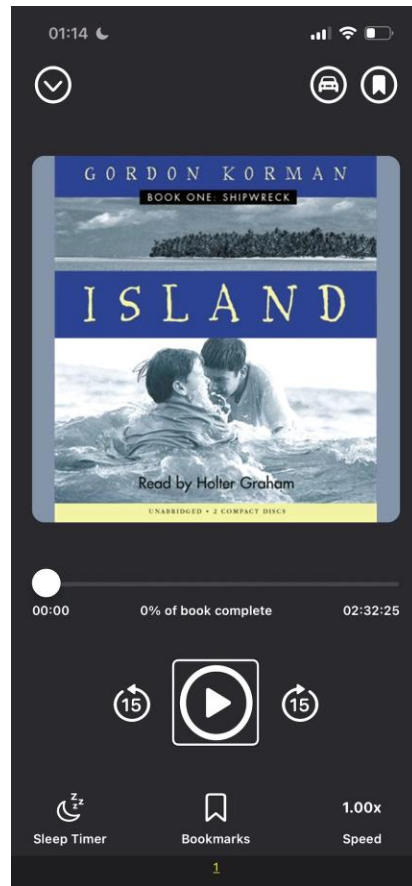




# Combined Barriers 2/2

- ▶ Sometimes, both the content and the platform have accessibility barriers.

# Demo 3: Hoopla Audiobook Player



# Accessibility and Usability Testing

- ▶ NNELS' Accessibility experts have assessed various digital resources using different assistive technologies.
- ▶ Visit [AccessiblePublishing.ca](https://www.accessiblepublishing.ca) to access reports for several library apps that have been assessed for accessibility by experienced accessibility consultants with disabilities.

# Determining Accessibility of Vendor Products 1/3

- ▶ All controls are accessible without a mouse.
- ▶ The content is readable using assistive technologies.
- ▶ Visual customization options are available.

# Determining Accessibility of Vendor Products 2/3

- ▶ There are non-colour alternatives for information conveyed only through colour.
- ▶ Images have descriptive text.
- ▶ There are multiple options for accessing multimedia (e.g. captions, transcripts, audio descriptions).

# Determining Accessibility of Vendor Products 3/3

- ▶ The resource does not prescribe how users use it.
- ▶ The digital resource (reading platform, website, or app) has navigational skip links.
- ▶ Users can determine where they are in the digital content or interface.

# Questions to Ask

- ▶ Ask the vendor to do their own accessibility audit/testing of the digital resource and provide a report and explanation of their process
- ▶ Ask the vendor for testing access to the digital resource so the library can do their own accessibility testing.

# Licensing Approaches to Accessibility

- ▶ Tami Setala, Licensing & Business Development Manager, BC Libraries Cooperative



# Licensing Approaches to Accessibility: Outline

1. Overview of the processes for engaging with vendors.
  - ▶ Formal vs informal processes.
2. Accessibility Impact Assessments.
3. Model License Agreements.
4. Advocacy.

# Processes For Engaging with Vendors

- ▶ Formal vs informal.
  - ▶ Requests for Proposal (RFP).
  - ▶ Informal processes.
    - ▶ What has the vendor already done?
    - ▶ What more do we need from them?

# Request for Proposal (RFP)

- ▶ Used for identifying options for a specific project
- ▶ Includes specific criteria that a product must meet
- ▶ Outlines a bidding process

# Informal Processes

- ▶ Accessibility Conformance Reports (ACR):
  - ▶ Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).
  - ▶ An assessment of how well their product conforms to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

# Informal Processes (con't)

- ▶ Accessibility Impact Assessments
  - ▶ Compliance with legislation:
    - ▶ Accessible British Columbia Act
    - ▶ Accessibility standards for procurement
  - ▶ Hire or contract accessibility testers with lived experience to evaluate the resource.
- ▶ Accessibility Considerations for E-Resources Procurement in Libraries:  
[AccessibleLibraries.ca/Resources/Procurement-in-libraries/](https://www.accessiblelibraries.ca/Resources/Procurement-in-libraries/)

# Model License Agreements

## BC Libraries Cooperative Model License

### 2.2 Usage Rights

**b.** ...the Licensee may permit the Authorized Users (and permit the Participants to permit the Authorized Users), to:

**f.** Alter or modify the Licensed Materials as necessary to provide an equivalent level of access to Authorized Users with disabilities if the Licensed Materials are not already provided in Accessible Formats.

**e.** The licensor shall comply with applicable Canadian laws relating to accessibility to ensure the Licensed Materials are accessible and may be used by all Authorized Users including those with visual, perceptual, physical, or other print disabilities and is compatible with assistive devices.

# Advocacy

- ▶ Once licenses are signed.
- ▶ Quarterly meetings with vendors.
  - ▶ Standing agenda item to address outstanding accessibility issues.
  - ▶ Following up on development promises.
- ▶ When apps are updated.
  - ▶ Repeat accessibility testing as needed.

# Questions

▶ PLARC:

▶ [info@AccessibleLibraries.ca](mailto:info@AccessibleLibraries.ca)

▶ BC Libraries Cooperative:

▶ [tami.setala@bc.libraries.ca](mailto:tami.setala@bc.libraries.ca)

▶ NNELS:

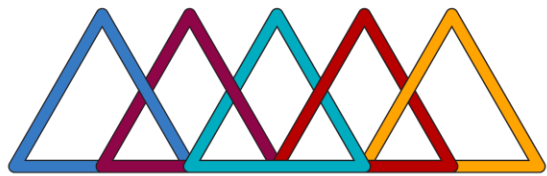
▶ [daniella.levy-pinto@bc.libraries.coop](mailto:daniella.levy-pinto@bc.libraries.coop)

▶ CELA:

▶ [laurie.davidson@celalibrary.ca](mailto:laurie.davidson@celalibrary.ca)



# Thank you!



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