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\$1M in Federal funding expands the National Network of Equitable Library Service (NNELS)

Today, the BC Libraries Cooperative is very pleased to announce the receipt of \$1Million to dramatically expand the impact of NNELS for readers with print disabilities! This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program - Disability Component, and will deliver the following outcomes:

- Established and strengthened partnerships among organizations active within Canadian print disability and alternate format communities;
- Canadians with print disabilities are provided with access to an increased number of reading materials in alternate formats through public libraries and the nnels.ca website;
- Increased capacity to produce alternate formats of reading materials through: publishers publishing accessible material, volunteers recording books in public libraries and, persons with disabilities trained to produce books in accessible formats;
- Improved access to information in a variety of alternate formats for all Canadians with print disabilities; and,
- Improved participation and integration of persons with disabilities in the library community, and by extension, Canadian society, with respect to social inclusion.

Only four years old, NNELS has successfully modeled and scaled a service built on principles of choice, inclusion, partnerships, capacity building and open-source technology. NNELS not only gets books into the hands of readers who have been traditionally underserved, but actively engages with Canadians with perceptual disabilities to select and produce the titles in its national repository. "We gratefully acknowledge this support from the Government of Canada, and thank the partners, publishers, consumers and students who are working with us to grow NNELS for the benefit of eligible Canadians" said BC Libraries Cooperative Board Chair, Baharak Yousefi.

The BC Libraries Cooperative is a 200-member national cooperative, providing libraries and related organisations the services, cost savings, and support they need to do great work in Canadian communities. An enterprising non-profit and a technology leader, the Co-op is the proud home of NNELS. Please visit bc.libraries.coop for more information.

The National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) is a digital public library of downloadable titles for Canadians with perceptual disabilities, supported and fuelled by a growing network of readers, community organizations, librarians, publishers, and accessible format producers in Canada and abroad. NNELS is funded and supported by the provincial and territorial governments of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon, and is available to any public library user with a print-disability in Canada. Please visit nnels.ca for more information.

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