



Evaluation of Collaboration, Partnerships and Participation (2017–22)

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Accountability, Governance and Corporate Affairs Division

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the collaboration, partnership and participation activities (hereafter referred to as partnership activities) component of the Community Outreach and Support Program (COSP) of Library and Archives Canada (LAC). These activities comprise partnership agreements with Canadian and international institutions, including libraries, archives, museums, Indigenous communities and marginalized communities. This is the first time that these activities have been evaluated.

EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation covered a five-year period, from 2017–18 to 2021–22. It examined the following:

- Whether there are clear objectives for partnership activities, and whether those objectives are understood by internal stakeholders and external partners?
- The extent to which the partnership activities are relevant to LAC’s mandate?
- What criteria guide the choice of partnership activities?
- The extent to which partnership activities have contributed to the achievement of the program’s expected short- and medium-term results, including the following:
 - Sharing of knowledge and practices between memory institutions?
 - Active relationships and collaboration supporting publications and archives?
 - User access to publications and archives?
- What are the lessons learned and best practices resulting from partnership activities?

FINDINGS

The evaluation achieved the following:

- It confirmed that certain partnership agreements contribute to the fulfillment of LAC’s mandate, promote the development of its collections and contribute to making them more accessible to users through partner networks.
- It demonstrated the importance of entering into partnership agreements that provide genuine opportunities for collaboration in support of LAC’s mandate.
- It revealed the important role of the former Governance, Liaison and Partnerships (GLAP)¹ Division, and the need to evolve that role to include strategic coordination, monitoring of expected results and reporting to senior management.
- It showed that there is no formal evaluation process for measuring the satisfaction of external partners. Interviewees suggested a flexible approach to assessing partner satisfaction, where GLAP would be the lead.

¹ GLAP assisted the program areas during the evaluation period (2017–22). This division no longer exists, but it is mentioned in this report because it formed the partnership coordination structure for the evaluation period. It has since been replaced by the Partnerships Unit. However, for the purposes of this evaluation, this report will refer to GLAP.

- It uncovered efficiency issues pertaining to the average time required to sign agreements and the associated costs.
- It demonstrated that partnerships can help LAC to expand its collections by including more publications and archives from diversity groups and Indigenous communities. In so doing, LAC could also contribute to reconciliation efforts.
- It revealed the need to apply lessons learned and best practices in the implementation of partnership activities for greater effectiveness and efficiency.

The evaluation could not confirm that LAC has a policy framework for partnerships, a statement of clear objectives understood by internal stakeholders and external partners, or selection criteria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the spirit of continuous improvement, program management in collaboration with LAC's internal stakeholders should:

1. Develop, disseminate and promote the use of a flexible, user friendly strategic orientation document for partnerships that would:
 - 1.1 include clear objectives and flexible arrangements for establishing partnership agreements;
 - 1.2 clarify the roles and responsibilities of internal stakeholders to ensure a coordinated approach; and
 - 1.3 reinforce the monitoring of expected results, the assessment of partner satisfaction, the preparation of recommendations for the renewal of agreements, and the preparation of reports for senior management.

This policy document should be reviewed periodically to ensure its long-term relevance.

2. Encourage internal stakeholders to consider partnership opportunities as a means of achieving operational objectives, including better representation of the publications and archives of diversity groups and Indigenous communities in LAC collections, by:
 - 2.1 preparing a high-level analysis of key operational areas in which LAC should actively seek partnerships; and
 - 2.2 encouraging the inclusion of partnership opportunities and their implementation in operational plans.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN

Management's response to the recommendations and the proposed action plan are presented in Appendix A.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the collaboration, partnership and participation activities (hereafter referred to as partnership activities) component of the Community Outreach and Support Program (COSP) at Library and Archives Canada (LAC). These activities comprise partnership agreements with Canadian and international institutions, including national archives, libraries, museums, Indigenous communities² and marginalized community groups.³

This evaluation project is included in the Departmental Program Evaluation Plan (DPEP) 2022-27 approved by the Departmental Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation Committee. This is the first time that the activities under this component have been evaluated.

2. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Scope and issues examined

The evaluation covered a five-year period, from 2017–18 to 2021–22. It examined the following:

- Whether there are clear objectives for partnership activities, and whether those objectives are understood by internal stakeholders and external partners?
- The extent to which the partnership activities are relevant to LAC’s mandate?
- What criteria guide the choice of partnership activities?
- The extent to which partnership activities have contributed to the achievement of the program’s expected short- and medium-term results, including the following:
 - Sharing of knowledge and practices between memory institutions?
 - Active relationships and collaboration supporting publications and archives?
 - User access to publications and archives?
- What are the lessons learned and best practices resulting from partnership activities?

2.2. Methodology

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Treasury Board’s Policy on Results⁴ and Directive on Results⁵ (2016).⁶ The methodology was based on a mixed approach, combining sources of qualitative and quantitative data, including a literature and internal document review, interviews with key informants, and an analysis of financial and performance information. The methodology is described in greater detail in Appendix C. As performance data⁷ were limited, the evaluation team mitigated this deficiency by triangulating data from the other sources mentioned above.

² First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation.

³ For example, interviewees mentioned gay and lesbian communities, 2SLGBTQI+ communities and Muslim communities.

⁴ Policy on Results: <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=31300>.

⁵ Directive on Results: <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=31306>.

⁶ The Treasury Board recently conducted a review of the policy and the directive.

⁷ With respect to the indicators mentioned in the program’s performance measurement strategy.

3. PROGRAM PROFILE

3.1 Description

The **Library and Archives of Canada Act**⁸ states that LAC's mission is to acquire and preserve Canada's documentary heritage and make it known and accessible to Canadians and anyone with an interest in Canada. The Act also states that one of the powers of the Librarian and Archivist of Canada is to enter into agreements with other libraries, archives or institutions in or outside Canada. For years, LAC has been actively entering into agreements to carry out various activities with Canadian and international institutions, with the participation of various internal stakeholders. These activities are one way in which LAC pursues its mission, and they cover almost all aspects of its continuum of activities.

Partnership activities were expanded to some extent after 2014 through LAC's efforts to raise public awareness of the value of its collections and fulfill its mandate. This was supported by four commitments⁹ identified in the 2016–2019 Three-Year Plan, including a commitment to be proactive and for LAC to engage in national and international networks through innovative partnerships and active collaboration. This commitment was reiterated in the Three-Year Plan 2019–2022, which indicates that LAC “will continue to engage with our clients and partners to expand Canada's documentary heritage and increase access to our collections—even in the most remote areas of the country.”

This report presents the findings from the evaluation of those partnership agreements¹⁰ as well as recommendations for continuous improvement of the program.

3.2 Partnership management at LAC

The Governance, Liaison and Partnerships (GLAP) Division played a central role in assisting LAC's sectors in negotiating and signing partnership agreements and in implementing other activities under the program component. Specifically, GLAP:

- provides internal stakeholders with strategic advice on creating and maintaining effective collaborative relationships with LAC's external partners;
- provides guidance and coordinates the development of collaborative tools to support projects, including by:
 - developing, drafting, revising, analyzing, and finalizing agreements and letters,
 - consulting with Communications and Corporate Services,

⁸ <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/l-7.7/FullText.html>.

⁹ The four commitments were as follows: (1) to be dedicated to serving all our clients; (2) to be at the leading edge of archival and library science and new technologies; (3) to be proactively engaged in national and international networks; and (4) to have greater public visibility.

¹⁰ LAC entered into a variety of partnership agreements, including 8 partnerships with various industries, 71 domestic partnerships, 6 partnerships with external partners and 5 miscellaneous partnerships. In the coming year (2021–22), the Division's priorities will be to renew or enter into 28 partnership agreements, and 10 more in subsequent years. Collaboration Portal. Library and Archives Canada.

- consulting with Legal Services if necessary,
 - consulting with Global Affairs Canada on agreements with international public sector organizations,
 - maintaining a central repository of collaboration instruments, and
 - monitoring and reporting on the implementation of agreements.
- ensures consistency between LAC’s internal decisions and its external relationships (stakeholders and strategic partners);
 - supports the integration and coordination of horizontal initiatives by developing collaboration instruments (partnership agreements, letters of intent, letters of support, etc.) with the support of internal services (Communications, Finance, IT, Strategic Policy and Research, etc.) and external partners, including Global Affairs Canada for the negotiation of agreements with international organizations; and
 - oversees the development of agreements with organizations and partners in support of strategic partnership activities, including monitoring and reporting to senior management.

3.3 Expected results

According to the logic model, partnership activity outputs include the signing of agreements to participate in national and international forums. For example, LAC entered into agreements domestically with Canadian universities, cultural organizations and knowledge institutions, and internationally with foreign national institutions such as the National Library of Germany and the National Library of South Africa.

Short-term results include the sharing of knowledge and practices between memory institutions. One example is the Ottawa Declaration, which was intended to get members of the library, archive and museum community to commit to finding new ways of working together to increase the visibility and impact of Canadian memory institutions.

With regard to the medium-term result of active relationships and collaboration supporting Canada’s documentary heritage, a number of LAC’s partnership agreements with various organizations are aimed at promoting documentary heritage to client groups that are new for LAC, including youth and certain marginalized communities in Canada. By signing these agreements, LAC gains access to its partners’ clientele and thus broadens its audience and ensures greater visibility for its collections.

4. RESOURCES

Table 1 shows the resources¹¹ allocated to LAC’s COSP, including partnership activities, for the period from 2017–18 to 2021–22.

¹¹ Financial resources appropriated for partnerships are included in LAC’s COSP. Data were extracted to the best of our ability by excluding items such as grants and contributions that are not related in any way to the partnership agreements. “Other operating” amounts were also excluded.

Table 1: Human and financial resources used in the COSP, including collaboration, partnership and participation activities

Funding for collaboration, partnership and participation activities (in Canadian dollars)

Fiscal Year	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22 ¹²
Actual expenditures*	\$1,141,153	\$1,103,893	\$1,177,006	\$1,183,213	\$774,974
Total actual LAC expenditures	\$127,416,749	\$124,630,164	\$134,354,195	\$130,379,206	\$131,803,272
Percentage of expenditures in relation to total LAC expenditures	0.90%	0.89%	0.88%	0.91%	0.59%

*Actual expenditures include salaries and other operating costs.

Source: Financial Services and Procurement Branch, Library and Archives Canada.

Human resources (full-time equivalents [FTEs])

Fiscal Year	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22 ¹³
Actual FTEs ¹⁴	13	13	14	13	8
Actual LAC FTEs	941	955	1,041	959	853
Percentage of FTEs in relation to total LAC FTEs	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%	1.3%	1.0%

Source: Financial Services and Procurement Branch, Library and Archives Canada.

An analysis of financial and human resources data indicates that GLAP’s resources were relatively stable during the 2017–18 to 2020–21 period.¹⁵ In comparison with corporate data, the trend in the resources allocated to GLAP was similar to the overall trend for LAC over the same period. The decrease in resources in 2021–22,¹⁶ the year of LAC’s reorganization, was due to the transfer of partnership staff to the new User Experience and Engagement Sector and the transfer of the remaining employees, including governance staff, to the Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer sectors.

¹² The 2021–22 figures reflect the reorganization carried out at LAC that year. GLAP was under LAC’s Corporate Secretariat from 2017–18 to 2020–21 and included the staff responsible for partnerships, the contribution program in support of heritage communities and LAC’s governance team. The decrease in financial resources observed in 2021–22 was therefore due essentially to the reorganization and associated transfer of staff to different sectors, not to a reduction in resources allocated to partnerships.

¹³ The 2021–22 figures reflect the reorganization carried out at LAC that year. GLAP was under LAC’s Corporate Secretariat from 2017–18 to 2020–21 and included the staff responsible for partnerships, the contribution program in support of heritage communities and LAC’s governance team. With the reorganization, the employees were reassigned to different sectors. For example, the staff responsible for partnerships and the contribution program were transferred to the User Experience and Engagement Sector, while the others, notably those responsible for governance, were transferred to the Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer sectors. The decrease in human resources observed in 2021–22 was therefore due essentially to the reorganization and associated transfer of staff to different sectors, not to a reduction in resources allocated to partnerships.

¹⁴ For human resources (FTEs), this is the overall figure for LAC’s COSP, including partnerships.

¹⁵ The GLAP Division was under the Corporate Secretariat.

¹⁶ GLAP’s operations were transferred to the new User Experience and Engagement Sector.

To deepen the analysis, the change in resources allocated to partnership activities was compared with the number of agreements signed per year during the evaluation period. The comparison showed that between 2017–18 and 2021–22, the number of new agreements signed increased overall but fluctuated substantially from year to year. This fluctuating trend confirms the need for better planning of partnership activities, which is difficult in the absence of clear objectives, especially because LAC accepted most requests from potential partners.

Table 2: Number of new partnership agreements signed between 2017–18 and 2021–22¹⁷

Fiscal Year	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
Number of agreements signed	14	10	27	19	27
Change in number of agreements signed (%)	–	–29%/–4	+170%/+17	–30%/–8	+42%/+8

Source: GLAP.

The agreements are for multiple years, and in addition to the new agreements, those already in place have to be managed. Consequently, there were a total of 160¹⁸ partnership agreements in 2022.

5. LIMITS OF THIS EVALUATION

The evaluation team examined the logic model, the performance indicators and associated data, and the degree to which these data provide an understanding of the chain of results and reflect the progress made. As limited performance data were available, the evaluation team mitigated this deficiency by using available information sources, including interviews.

6. KEY FINDINGS

6.1 Existence of a partnership management framework

Finding 1: The evaluation was unable to confirm that there is a policy framework for partnerships at LAC or a statement of clear objectives that are understood by internal stakeholders and external partners.

The evaluation team tried to determine whether LAC had a policy document for the development of partnerships. Most interviewees said they were unaware of the existence of such a document. However, the document search uncovered a 2010 document entitled LAC Framework for Managing Partnering Activities. This document contains a suite of policy statements on managing partnerships that could be of great value to LAC, including a policy, a directive and a governance structure for

¹⁷ This table does not include agreements already in place.

¹⁸ Of 269 agreements, 24 were cancelled, 85 were completed and came to an end, 100 were signed, and 60 were in development between 2017–18 and 2021–22.

partnerships. The document also includes a decision tree to facilitate choices regarding partnership opportunities.

Only a few of the people whom we told about this document indicated that they were aware of its existence. They said that, although well crafted, the document had proven difficult to implement in practice. That may explain the limited success of the document.

In the absence of a policy document, the evaluation team attempted to determine whether LAC had partnership objectives that were clear and understood. Accordingly, the team asked interviewees the following questions:

- What were the objectives of the partnerships?
- To what extent were those objectives known and understood by internal stakeholders and external partners?
- To what extent were they taken into account in identifying, proposing and selecting partnership projects?

The majority of interviewees said they were unaware of the existence of any clear objectives at the corporate level. They also noted that, on a few occasions, in the course of setting up a partnership, they had been in competition with other LAC sectors that were also negotiating with the same partner, and that there had been no prior internal consultations on a coordinated approach to the external partner.

Hence, the evaluation was unable to validate that a strategically oriented document for partnerships between LAC and other institutions was used, or that there were clear objectives understood by internal stakeholders and external partners.

Finding 2: The evaluation was unable to confirm that there were criteria for the selection of partnerships.

Interviewees indicated that LAC accepted all partnership proposals and that refusal was rare. Still, some partnerships are based on a need or necessity for LAC, such as the partnership with Université Laval in an area where expertise was not available internally.

Interviewees also indicated that there were no criteria for partner selection, and that as a result, current partners were not selected on the basis of specific criteria. In addition, agreements did not have goals or expected results, although some agreements might have certain deliverables.

They also said that certain factors should be kept in mind, including the need to identify objectives for each agreement and ensure that the potential partnership would contribute to the fulfillment of LAC's mandate. Another consideration mentioned was whether the partner could contribute human and financial resources or do some of the work required. Also of significance was whether the partnership

would help LAC to make its collections accessible to more users, especially those who were not usual clients, with the aim of increasing the visibility of its collections.

Some interviewees, however, questioned whether it made sense to apply criteria uniformly to all partnership opportunities. They suggested that excessive bureaucracy should be avoided, as it could interfere with the formation of partnerships and LAC's role in supporting the archival and library community.

6.2 Value of partnership activities

Finding 3: Some partnership agreements contribute to the fulfillment of LAC's mandate, promote the development of its collections, and help to make them more accessible to users through partners' networks.

As noted earlier, the **Library and Archives of Canada Act** states that one of the powers of the Librarian and Archivist of Canada is to enter into agreements with other libraries, archives and similar institutions in and outside Canada.

Over the years, LAC has entered into various types of partnership agreements for collaboration with memory institutions and the culture sector, including libraries, national archives, museums and some Canadian universities, such as Université Laval, with which LAC has a relevant agreement for the development of its collections. Among these agreements are high-level "general" agreements signed by senior managers of LAC and its partners. They usually express the parties' interest in collaborating. General agreements require the involvement of GLAP, which assists the program areas by providing strategic advice and guidance. GLAP coordinates the development of collaboration instruments to support projects, consults with Communications, Corporate Services and Legal Services when necessary, and works with Global Affairs Canada on agreements with international organizations as required.

According to the interviewees, the general agreements serve as calling cards for making contacts and opening doors. They also assist in identifying opportunities, conducting negotiations and developing sub-agreements with external partners for more specific projects. Examples include exhibitions organized in partnership with the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of History.

LAC also has less formal agreements at the operational level. These require little administrative effort and, in general, very little GLAP involvement. Such collaboration agreements make it possible to explore new avenues and more flexible ways of doing business with partners at the operational level, while avoiding long and complex negotiations. Interviewees suggested that these formal and informal approaches should be retained for greater effectiveness and efficiency, and that there was a need for a mechanism for determining whether a formal or informal approach should be used.

According to interviewees, some partnership activities with Canadian and international institutions help LAC to increase the visibility of its collections and, in particular, make them more accessible to users of partners' networks through loans of items or links to the partners' websites. Most interviewees also said that partnership agreements were useful in that they provided LAC with access to resources and expertise not available internally. The most commonly cited example was the partnership with Université Laval for the creation of French subject headings for publication descriptions.

Regarding access to its collections for people living outside the National Capital Region, particularly in official language minority communities, interviewees noted that partnership agreements with local organizations provided access to LAC's collections. Thus, the agreements play an essential role in providing users in the regions with access to their publications and archives.

Finding 4: The existence of genuine, relevant opportunities for collaboration in support of LAC's mandate should be a prerequisite for entering into any partnership agreement. Agreements that would not result in collaboration opportunities that contribute to the fulfillment of LAC's mandate should be avoided.

While interviewees noted the importance of LAC's role in the Canadian and international memory institutions community through cultural diplomacy, they questioned whether it made sense to enter into agreements without first identifying genuine opportunities for collaboration in support of LAC's mandate. They said there was a need to assess the actual opportunities for collaboration beforehand and to make sure that they were relevant to the mandate and mutually beneficial to LAC and its partners. In support of this argument, they stated that many agreements had never resulted in any activities and were more like public relations exercises than expressions of actual interest in collaborating. This was confirmed by the document review, which uncovered agreements that never led to any collaboration at all.

Finding 5: LAC should consider using partnerships to ensure that its collections better reflect the diversity of Canadians. Partnerships are an effective way to achieve this goal.

A number of interviewees said that more work needed to be done to ensure that the collections at LAC reflect the diversity of people living in Canada, including the immigrant and 2SLGBTQI+ communities, which are currently under-represented. It was suggested that LAC should enter into partnership agreements to help those communities preserve their collections and to provide access to them through its website, without the need for LAC to acquire and preserve the collections in its own facilities.

Interviewees noted that, for historical reasons, negotiating such agreements could be difficult and time-consuming, but that such agreements would help LAC to expand its collections efficiently. They

suggested that there is a need to explore new avenues for expanding the collections to include the aforementioned groups.

6.3 GLAP and the coordination of partnership activities

Finding 6: The evaluation revealed the importance of GLAP’s role in supporting internal stakeholders, and the need to evolve that role to ensure strategic coordination of partnership activities, monitoring of expected results, preparation of recommendations for renewal of agreements, and preparation of reports for senior management.

GLAP supported internal stakeholders in negotiating, drafting and signing partnership agreements. The majority of interviewees recognized GLAP’s expertise and appreciated its support, particularly regarding advice, choice of tools, definition of terms of reference, and assistance in drafting and signing partnership agreements. They also said that they appreciated the quality of the forms developed by GLAP and the relevance of the clauses included in the agreements. In other words, GLAP’s work was appreciated by internal stakeholders. They felt that GLAP played an important role but could also do more.

In addition, GLAP created a central repository where LAC’s signed partnership agreements are maintained. It kept track of how many agreements had to be negotiated, how many were coming to an end and how many were up for renewal. It was also responsible for collecting and storing data. The table below shows the number of partnership agreements by category according to data held by GLAP.

General Agreements	Specific Sub-Agreements ¹⁹	Other Agreements ²⁰	Total
76	155	38	269

According to documentation provided by GLAP, LAC has 269 partnership agreements, 160 of which are signed or in development. The others have been cancelled, expired or not renewed. Those agreements cover a wide range of subject areas. Details are provided in Appendix B.

While GLAP’s expertise and usefulness in negotiating partnership agreements were recognized, interviewees noted that there were instances where GLAP had entered into agreements without involving internal stakeholders in the negotiations. They said that GLAP should not usurp the role of internal stakeholders in negotiating agreements, nor should it unilaterally initiate or negotiate new agreements without consulting these stakeholders first. If internal stakeholders are involved in the discussions, they will be able to determine whether the agreement is of value and whether the resources required for successful implementation are available. Interviewees also noted the need for

¹⁹ Specific sub-agreements (123) include sub-agreements (32).

²⁰ The other agreements are addenda (16), commercial licensing agreements (1), letters of intent (4), support letters (12), transfer letters (3) and service agreements (2).

a flexible, efficient approach in the negotiating process to facilitate the implementation of agreements.

They said there were challenges with partnership agreements, particularly with regards to planning. As mentioned above, there were instances where one sector was in discussions with a potential partner while another was trying to make contact with the same partner, unaware that negotiations were already in progress. It was noted that such situations could undermine LAC's credibility and that clarification of the roles of GLAP and internal stakeholders was needed to prevent such situations in the future. Interviewees also mentioned the need to strengthen GLAP's role to improve coordination and communication regarding ongoing agreement negotiations and avoid duplication of effort.

These suggestions are consistent with LAC's statement of intent in the Three-Year Plan 2019–2022, which is to expand and improve opportunities for interactions that will increase awareness of its collections, and to develop a strategy for taking advantage of any opportunities that the joint facility may offer in the coming years.

It was also noted that an evaluation of the results achieved was needed to assess the relevance of renewing expiring agreements. To that end, it was suggested that GLAP's reports to strategic governance committees should highlight what results had been achieved by existing partnerships and whether or not these partnerships should be renewed. It was also suggested that there should be a mechanism for reviewing and cancelling partnerships if the expected results had not materialized.

Finding 7: There is no formal evaluation process for measuring the satisfaction of external partners. Interviewees suggested a flexible approach to measuring partner satisfaction. GLAP would be responsible for this measurement.

The evaluation revealed an absence of mechanisms for collecting and analyzing data on external partner satisfaction. Interviewees noted that there were individual initiatives, but that they were rather informal and anecdotal.

While some interviewees felt that the satisfaction rate was probably low, others thought that the fact that no partner had ever pulled out of an agreement before the expiry date indicated that partners were quite satisfied. It was also noted that the automatic renewal of agreements when they expired indicated that partners were satisfied with their collaboration with LAC.

Some interviewees indicated that external partner satisfaction was assessed throughout the duration of an agreement, including at meetings held to resolve issues. As a number of meetings were held during the term of an agreement, LAC was able to determine the partner's satisfaction.

However, for many interviewees, formalizing the assessment of partner satisfaction was not important. Instead, they felt it was necessary that at the end of each partnership agreement, whether formal or informal, an analysis be conducted to determine whether the expected results had been

achieved; something that GLAP could do. Hence if an agreement does not achieve the expected results, it should not be renewed.

6.4 Efficiency of partnership activities

Finding 8: The evaluation found efficiency issues related to the average time required to sign agreements and the associated costs.

To assess the issue of efficiency,²¹ the evaluation team looked at what portion of the costs was borne by LAC and how long it took, on average, to conclude an agreement.

The evaluation team attempted to determine what portion of the partnership costs was borne by LAC. Interviewees said that they did not know, but they noted that in many cases, the costs were not monetary but rather took the form of time spent by LAC staff on partnerships. LAC allows its archivists to spend time to assist partners with preservation, an area where LAC's expertise is a definite asset.

However, according to program data, LAC made monetary contributions to some partnership activities during the evaluation period, for a total commitment of \$216,843, and received contributions from partners totalling approximately \$209,823, which is almost equal to the contributions made by LAC to its partners. The amounts involved are relatively small, which corroborates the statements made by interviewees.

Regarding the average time needed to negotiate and sign an agreement, interviewees said that it varied substantially, depending on the complexity of the agreement. They noted that negotiating and signing an agreement could take anywhere from a few weeks to a few months and, in some cases, up to two years for a general agreement. In other words, there are straightforward agreements that can be put in place very quickly, and there are much more complex agreements that require consultation with various LAC internal stakeholders and, in some cases, external partners such as Global Affairs Canada or Canadian Heritage.

6.5 Partnerships, diversity and reconciliation

Finding 9: The implementation of partnership agreements may help LAC to expand its collections by including more publications and archives from diversity groups and Indigenous communities. In so doing, LAC may also contribute to reconciliation efforts.

Consideration of diversity and reconciliation issues is of great importance to the development of inclusive partnership agreements that reflect the diversity of Canadian society and contribute to reconciliation efforts. Accordingly, the evaluation team examined the extent to which the partnership

²¹ According to the Policy on Results, "effectiveness" refers to the impacts of a program or policy and the extent to which it is achieving its expected outcomes, while "efficiency" refers to the extent to which resources were used to produce the expected outcomes.

agreements signed by LAC during the evaluation period addressed the needs of diversity groups and Indigenous communities and contributed to reconciliation.

According to interviewees, there was a clear desire at LAC to take an interest in diversity groups and Indigenous communities and especially to serve them better. They said that LAC's primary goal was not to acquire the communities' publications and archives or to rewrite the past, but rather to make a contribution by helping them preserve their collections or offering support in LAC's various areas of expertise.

LAC collections could therefore complement the communities' collections. Interviewees indicated that LAC had begun to change its practices, more specifically there is an interest in adapting descriptions to be more respectful that could be supported by establishing relevant partnerships. However, they suggested that LAC should develop a strategy for working with those communities and set priorities for this work given its limited resources.

With regard to reconciliation, interviewees said that LAC could make a greater contribution to the Government of Canada's agenda for reconciliation with Indigenous communities. They said that LAC had an action plan for reconciliation that was aligned with the Government of Canada's plan. There was broad internal consensus on the action plan, which included deliverables. The plan was to be updated on a regular basis, but it was not clear who was responsible for tracking it and ensuring that the deliverables were produced. The plan would ensure that LAC makes a significant contribution to reconciliation. In addition, LAC collaborates with various organizations, such as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, the residential schools commission, and Canadian Heritage, on various Indigenous issues.

However, interviewees felt that much remained to be done to rebuild trust, not only with Canada's Indigenous communities, but also with diversity groups. Interviewees emphasized LAC's efforts in that regard but acknowledged that it will take time. For example, they pointed out that from now on, before LAC lends out an Indigenous item or image, the requesting organization must first discuss the request with the Indigenous community and obtain its permission.

Interviewees also noted that LAC's role was no longer just to acquire materials, as was the case in the past, but to learn more about the communities in a culturally sensitive manner. Hence, through partnerships, LAC can play an important role in the long-term preservation of publications and archives of diversity groups and Indigenous communities. If the communities ask for LAC's assistance in preserving their publications and archives, it will be an important act of reconciliation for LAC to support them in a way that respects their needs and priorities. LAC's support for the communities could usher in a new era of reconciliation and collaboration, ensuring that their publications and archives, no matter where they are located, can be accessed by users through LAC's website.

6.6 Lessons learned

The evaluation identified lessons learned that could contribute to greater flexibility, effectiveness and efficiency in partnership activities.

According to interviewees, the first lesson learned from partnership activities is that agreements should not be renewed automatically, but should instead be evaluated to determine whether they have achieved the expected results. Another lesson is not to bureaucratize the process of entering into agreements. Interviewees agreed that certain types of formal agreements could take time to implement. However, they hoped that this would not be the case for all agreements, and even suggested that formal agreements were not always necessary to establish a relationship with a partner.

Another lesson learned is that agreements should not be negotiated without prior consultation with the internal stakeholders who may be involved in implementing them. Some interviewees said that it was frustrating to discover that they were bound by an agreement that they had not been involved in negotiating, and for which they had had no opportunity to determine its feasibility.

It was suggested that when a sector enters into negotiations with a potential partner, GLAP should be informed so that the information can be centralized and made available to any other sector interested in undertaking negotiations with the same partner.

It was also suggested that GLAP's role needed to evolve. While all interviewees recognized GLAP's expertise, they felt that it should not usurp the role of internal stakeholders and that information needed to be better organized and disseminated. Beyond the numbers, there is a need to understand what purpose partnerships serve and to showcase the successful ones. The roles of all LAC internal stakeholders need to be clarified.

A number of interviewees noted that LAC does not need to go it alone. In fact, a good partner could be very complementary and help LAC to achieve its goals.

6.7 Best practices

The evaluation also identified some best practices that may help to improve the management of partnership agreements.

One such best practice is to ensure that every partnership agreement has an end date and that all partnership agreements are centralized. Some partnerships are very useful for LAC. They help to fill a gap in expertise in certain areas, compensate for a lack of financial or human resources, or address the needs of diversity groups and Indigenous communities.

LAC cannot change the past, but it can help various partners ensure that their existing publications and archives are well preserved for future generations. In fact, certain clauses have been added to partnership agreements to ensure greater transparency regarding diversity and commitment to various Indigenous communities, marginalized communities and new immigrant communities.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of the evaluation of COSP partnership agreements are as follows:

- Partnership agreements with Canadian or international organizations are appropriate as long as they provide genuine opportunities for collaboration in support of LAC's mandate.
- LAC needs a practical, easy-to-use strategic orientation document, with clear goals, for the management of partnership agreements. The document should be circulated to internal stakeholders and to external partners interested in partnering with LAC, and it should specify which circumstances require a formal agreement.
- Entering into and implementing partnership agreements can help ensure that LAC's collections better reflect the diversity of the population.
- GLAP plays an important role in supporting program sectors throughout then negotiation and signing of partnership agreements. This role should evolve to include better monitoring of the achievement of expected results, assessment of external partners' satisfaction and preparation of reports for decision-making purposes when agreements are renewed.
- Applying the lessons learned and best practices arising from the implementation of agreements may help to make partnership activities more effective and efficient.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the spirit of continuous improvement, program management in collaboration with LAC's internal stakeholders should:

1. Develop, disseminate and promote the use of a flexible, user friendly strategic orientation document for partnerships that would:
 - 1.1 include clear objectives and flexible arrangements for establishing partnership agreements;
 - 1.2 clarify the roles and responsibilities of internal stakeholders to ensure a coordinated approach; and
 - 1.3 reinforce the monitoring of expected results, the assessment of partner satisfaction, the preparation of recommendations for the renewal of agreements, and the preparation of reports for senior management.

The policy document should be reviewed periodically to ensure its long-term relevance.

2. Encourage internal stakeholders to consider partnership opportunities as a means of achieving operational objectives, including better representation of the publications and archives of diversity groups and Indigenous communities in LAC collections, by:
 - 2.1 preparing a high-level analysis of key operational areas in which LAC should actively seek partnerships; and
 - 2.2 encouraging the inclusion of partnership opportunities and their implementation in operational plans.

APPENDIX A: MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Recommendations	Management's Response	Actions	Planned Completion Date	Lead
<p>1. Develop, disseminate and promote the use of a flexible, user friendly strategic orientation document for partnerships that would:</p> <p>1.1 include clear objectives and flexible arrangements for establishing partnership agreements;</p> <p>1.2 clarify the roles and responsibilities of internal stakeholders to ensure a coordinated approach; and</p> <p>1.3 reinforce the monitoring of expected results, the assessment of partner satisfaction, the preparation of recommendations for the renewal of agreements, and the preparation of reports for senior management.</p>	Accepted	<p>1.1 A corporate partnership strategy for LAC will be developed, with objectives linked to its mandate and Vision 2030.</p> <p>1.2 The partnership strategy will define roles, responsibilities and the approval process.</p> <p>1.3 The Partnerships Unit will submit an annual report to the management team so that the results of active partnerships (successes, identification of problems, etc.) can be reviewed.</p>	<p>1. Q4 2023–24</p> <p>1.1 Q4 2023–24</p> <p>1.2 Q4 2023–24</p> <p>1.3 Q4 2023–24</p>	DG, Outreach and Engagement

Recommendations	Management's Response	Actions	Planned Completion Date	Lead
<p>2. Encourage internal stakeholders to consider partnership opportunities as a means of achieving operational objectives, including better representation of the publications and archives of diversity groups and Indigenous communities in LAC collections, by</p> <p>2.1 preparing a high-level analysis of key operational areas in which LAC should actively seek partnerships; and</p> <p>2.2 encouraging the inclusion of partnership opportunities and their implementation in operational plans.</p>	Accepted	<p>2. The overall partnership strategy will support corporate planning activities through the following:</p> <p>2.1 It will ensure that all LAC operational action plans take into account the partnership option in their implementation.</p> <p>2.2 The partnerships sector will prepare a high-level analysis of key operational areas in which LAC should actively seek partnerships.</p>	<p>2. Fall 2024</p> <p>2.1 Fall 2024</p> <p>2.2 Fall 2024</p>	DG, Outreach and Engagement, and all operational DGs

APPENDIX B: TYPES OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

- Protocol agreements signed at meetings with foreign VIPs or dignitaries, or at international meetings, including the National Library of Israel, the National Library of Mexico and the Rwanda Archives
- Agreements to address the lack of expertise at LAC in certain areas, such as the agreement with Université Laval to produce French subject headings for publication descriptions
- Agreements to share financial or human resources in areas such as the digitization of analog records
- Agreements with private partners, such as TD Bank (for the TD Summer Reading Club), Air Canada and *The Globe and Mail*
- Agreements with federal departments, including Veterans Affairs Canada and Parks Canada
- Agreements with Métis and other Indigenous communities
- Agreements with knowledge institutions such as libraries, universities, the Bibliothèque nationale du Québec, Canadian Heritage and the University of Ottawa (for the STEM project and other projects)
- Agreements for the loan of items for exhibitions and events organized by partners such as the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of History
- Agreements with institutions, organizations or groups in Canada or abroad to undertake and continue discussions in new fields of expertise or activity

APPENDIX C: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND QUESTIONS

Various qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used in conducting this evaluation. The performance measurement indicators and the potential data sources are presented below. An evaluation matrix was prepared to guide the evaluation process.

Methodology	Description
Documentation review	A review was conducted of the administrative and financial documents of the Communications Branch and the Public Services Branch. Performance statistics and other internal documents were also consulted.
Interviews	Between July and October 2022, 14 interviews were conducted with COSP managers and staff, and internal stakeholders.
Performance data	The performance data from the Performance Information Profile were collected, analyzed and used in the evaluation report, when these data were available.

The use of multiple collection methods and data triangulation helped to corroborate the findings. This methodology is consistent with the Treasury Board's Policy on Results (2016).

EVALUATION MATRIX

The following table presents the various data sources used by the team responsible for the evaluation to answer the evaluation questions.

Evaluation Questions	Data Sources		
	Literature and Internal Document Review	Interviews with Managers and Employees	Performance Data
What are the objectives of LAC's partnership, collaboration and participation activities?	x	x	–
To what extent are those activities relevant to the fulfillment of LAC's mandate?	x	x	–
What criteria guide the selection of partnership, collaboration and participation activities at LAC?	x	x	–
Are there best practices that could help improve LAC's approach to public programming?	x	x	–
To what extent have partnership, collaboration and participation activities contributed to the achievement of results?	x	–	x
What are the lessons learned from LAC's partnership, collaboration and participation activities?	–	x	–

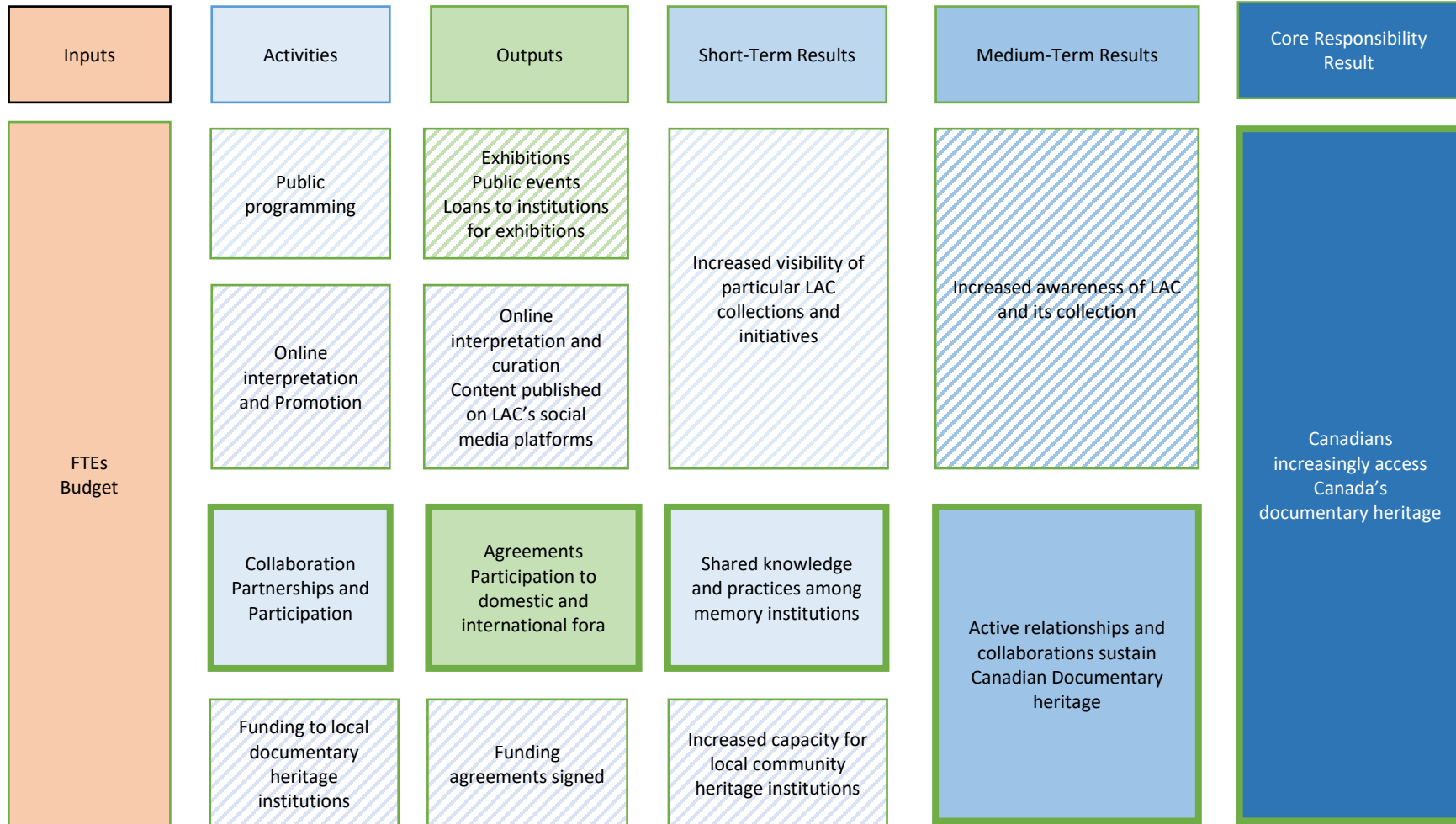
APPENDIX D: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT STRATEGY

The evaluation used data collected during the review period for the targeted indicators from the Performance Information Profile. The data were examined when they were available.

Logic Model Element	Indicator	Definition/Source	Data Collection Frequency	Data Collection Lead
Outputs				
Agreements	Number of agreements signed	List of LAC's active partnership agreements	Annual	Director, Outreach and Support to Communities
Participation in domestic and international forums	Number of national and international forums in which LAC was involved (includes participation and hosting activities)	Participation in partner conferences and forums; National, Provincial and Territorial Archivists Conference and Steering Committee on Canada's Archives meetings; records of decision	Annual	Director, Stakeholder Relations and International Affairs
Short-term results				
Knowledge and good practices are shared among memory institutions	Number of collaboration activities completed	List of LAC's active partnership agreements, with tracking of related projects and events	Annual	Director, Outreach and Support to Communities
Medium-term results				
Active relationships and collaborations sustain Canadian documentary heritage	Number of LAC representatives on international documentary heritage committees	To be developed	Annual	Director, Outreach and Support to Communities
Active relationships and collaborations sustain Canadian documentary heritage	Number of items preserved, digitized and made accessible to Canadians	Documentary Heritage Communities Program project evaluation tool	Annual	Director, Outreach and Support to Communities
Core responsibility results (ultimate results)				
Canadians are more aware of their documentary heritage	Number of participants who attended exhibitions and events organized by LAC or with other organizations	For public events: 2,500 participants per year (based on 25 events)	Quarterly	Director, Outreach and Support to Communities

APPENDIX E: LOGIC MODEL

Logic Model for the Public Programming Activity,²² 2016–17 to 2020–21
(shaded items not reviewed in this evaluation)



²² The evaluation team used the logic model for the Acquisition and Processing of Published Heritage Program, established for the Performance Information Profile. It also used the key activities, outputs and indicators in the Program Alignment Architecture, under “Documentation of Canadian society” (2.1), which were in place in the period prior to April 2018. Details for the indicators are provided in Appendix C.

APPENDIX F: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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