

Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) is commencing a 3-year pilot project for the creation of an Open Library at the Cyril Ward Memorial Library in Guysborough. This will be the first truly Open Public Library in Nova Scotia. ECRL received \$88,000 in funding for this project and would like to acknowledge the support of the Province of Nova Scotia. We are pleased to work in partnership with the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage to develop and promote our cultural resources for all Nova Scotians.

## What is an Open Library?

An Open Library is one that offers extended open hours, in addition to the regular hours when staff are present and available to help customers. An Open Library uses technology to deliver an individualized and customized on-demand service to its users, providing community members with expanded access to the cultural, technological and educational resources held at the Library.

## How will this affect service at the Cyril Ward Memorial Library?

Library staff will continue to be available during the same hours you are accustomed to, and will continue to help those who need assistance or prefer a personal interaction at the Library. Before and after those regular hours, Library customers will be able to help themselves to the Library – to check out and return books and movies, use our free Wi-Fi, or enjoy a quiet and creative space to meet or study. Customers will be able to use the Library at times most convenient for them, keeping the Library relevant to their daily lives.

## Are Open Libraries intended to replace Library staff?

No. The personal service and assistance that Library staff provide to our customers cannot be replaced by technology. An Open Library **increases access** to library resources, without decreasing the availability of existing services. An Open Library is **not** a staff-less library. The addition of extended open hours will allow us to continue to serve our existing customers, while also reaching out to our community members who are currently under-served by their Library.

## How will the Open Library Pilot Project work?

ECRL is working with Bibliotheca, a Library technology company who will supply their Open+™ system to operate the Open Library during extended hours, and a self-service kiosk that will allow customers to check out and return materials without the help of Library staff. There are over 500 libraries in the world that have successfully extended their service with Bibliotheca's Open+™ system since 2004. Open+™ includes:

- A secure entrance which can be unlocked by scanning a Library card and entering a PIN
- A security system including CCTV cameras that will record activity in the Library during extended hours
- A control system that regulates the lights, announcements, and the surveillance system.

## Will the Open Library be accessible 24/7?

No. The intent is to make the Library available when people are most likely to use it. The extended hours will depend on the needs of the community, and will provide Library access to people who cannot get to the Library during the current daytime and limited weekend hours. We will try to accommodate the needs of more community members with the extended hours, including young families, people who commute to work, and those who do work shift work.

## What about theft and vandalism in the Library?

The general experience in existing Open Libraries is that customers do genuinely care for their Library and respect and appreciate the additional opening hours. However, CCTV cameras record images and video of each customer as they enter and leave the Library and while they are in the Library space, for added security measures. Radio frequency identification (RFID) tracking of all Library items enhances the security of the Library collection itself.

## When will this pilot project start?

We expect to install the self-service kiosk at Cyril Ward Memorial Library in the Fall of 2018. Customers will have plenty of time to familiarize themselves with the self-check process before the launch of the Open Library which is expected in late Winter 2019.

## How will ECRL define success of this Pilot Project?

We will consider the Open Library Pilot Project a success if:

- The Open+ system works reliably in Guysborough, and
- People use the Open Library during extended hours.

ECRL Project Team		
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Public and stakeholder engagement, publicity, financial oversight	IT guidance, RFID implementation lead	Project Manager, point-of-contact for contractors and suppliers

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