

# LiRN Update

2025 Learn with LiRN Annual Conference

Theresa Leitch

Managing Director

# Update Agenda

- Thank you to our sponsors
- LiRN Board of Directors Updates
- 2026 LiRN Budget and Grant News
- Gearing up for the 2027 Budget
- 2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan
- Innovation and Equity of Access to Legal Information Project
- Miscellanea
- Q & A
- New Association Staff and Virtual Attendees Shout Outs
- Icebreaker





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**Thanks to our sponsors!**



LiRN Board of Directors Updates!





# New Board Members!

Welcome to Connie Crosby!

- Connie is a law librarian who has worked in large firms as well as an information management/knowledge management consultant in the legal and related industries. She has served as president of the Canadian Association of Law Libraries (CALL/ACBD) and the Toronto Association of Law Libraries.
- She currently serves on the CALL/ACBD Diversity, Inclusiveness and Decolonization Committee, and on the Steering Committee of the PWA Friends for Life Bike Rally.
- Connie is a member of LiRN's Network Policy Committee.



# New Board Members!

Welcome to Hor Druma!

- Hor is the Senior Manager of AI and Legal Solutions at Fasken, where he leads a team focused on designing and building internal tools that enhance legal service delivery through the strategic use of technology. A former civil and commercial litigator, Hor brings a unique blend of legal insight and technical expertise to his work.
- He holds an MA degree from the University of Cambridge and transitioned from legal practice into technology in 2018. Since then, he has focused on the thoughtful application of emerging technologies—including artificial intelligence—to improve how legal professionals work, collaborate, and serve clients.
- His approach to innovation is strategic and forward-looking, grounded in a belief that the best legal tools are those that are purpose-built and well-integrated into practice. He is a regular speaker on legal tech and the evolving role of AI in the profession.
- Hor serves on LiRN's Audit and Finance Committee.





# New Board Members!

Welcome to Mofola Lyon!

- Mofy is the Executive Director of Finance at Borden Ladner Gervais (BLG) LLP where she provides leadership, oversight and direction with respect to firm-wide finance operations. A Chartered Professional Accountant, she has held a series of finance and administrative positions in firms of varying sizes, and most recently served as National Director of Practice Management for BLG's Corporate and Capital Markets group. Mofy combines expertise in financial reporting, analysis, and organizational performance to support both day-to-day operational excellence and long-term sustainability. She is an advocate for continuous learning, and currently mentors a group of CPA students.
- Beyond her professional commitments, Mofy can be found attempting to crochet, picnicking with her children, or coaxing her dog into long, meandering walks.
- Mofy serves on LiRN's Audit and Finance Committee.



# New Board Members!

Welcome to Heather Ritchie!

- Heather Ritchie is a legal professional with over two decades of experience in knowledge management, legal research, and technology adoption.
- A former practicing lawyer with a Master of Information Studies, Heather has led transformative projects that enhance access to legal information, including implementing enterprise search and knowledge-sharing systems. She has held leadership roles at Hicks Morley and McCarthy Tétrault, where she spearheaded initiatives to improve the organization of research resources and operational efficiency.
- Currently, Heather consults on data and AI initiatives, focusing on evidence-based decision-making and emerging technologies.
- Heather has also contributed to industry standards as a member of the SALI Canadian working group and previously served as a board member and secretary for the Legal Marketing Association (LMA) Canada.
- She is passionate about the role of libraries in providing access to justice and supporting legal professionals in their work.
- Outside of work, Heather is a committed food bank volunteer, an avid skier, a mediocre golfer and an aspiring gardener. She has also been known to participate in, but has yet to win, amateur jigsaw puzzle competitions.
- Heather serves on LiRN's Governance Committee.





Vicki Whitmell  
Chair of the Board  
Audit and Finance  
Governance



Fernando Garcia  
Vice-Chair



Augustine Krawchenko  
Chair, Network Policy



Ted Chadderton  
Chair, Audit and Finance



Annette Demers  
Network Policy

## Continuing Board Members



## 2026 LiRN Budget and Grant News

# 2026 LiRN Budget and Grant News

Budget will be considered at November's Convocation

27 Nov. 2025

Of necessity, grant letters will therefore be sent in December

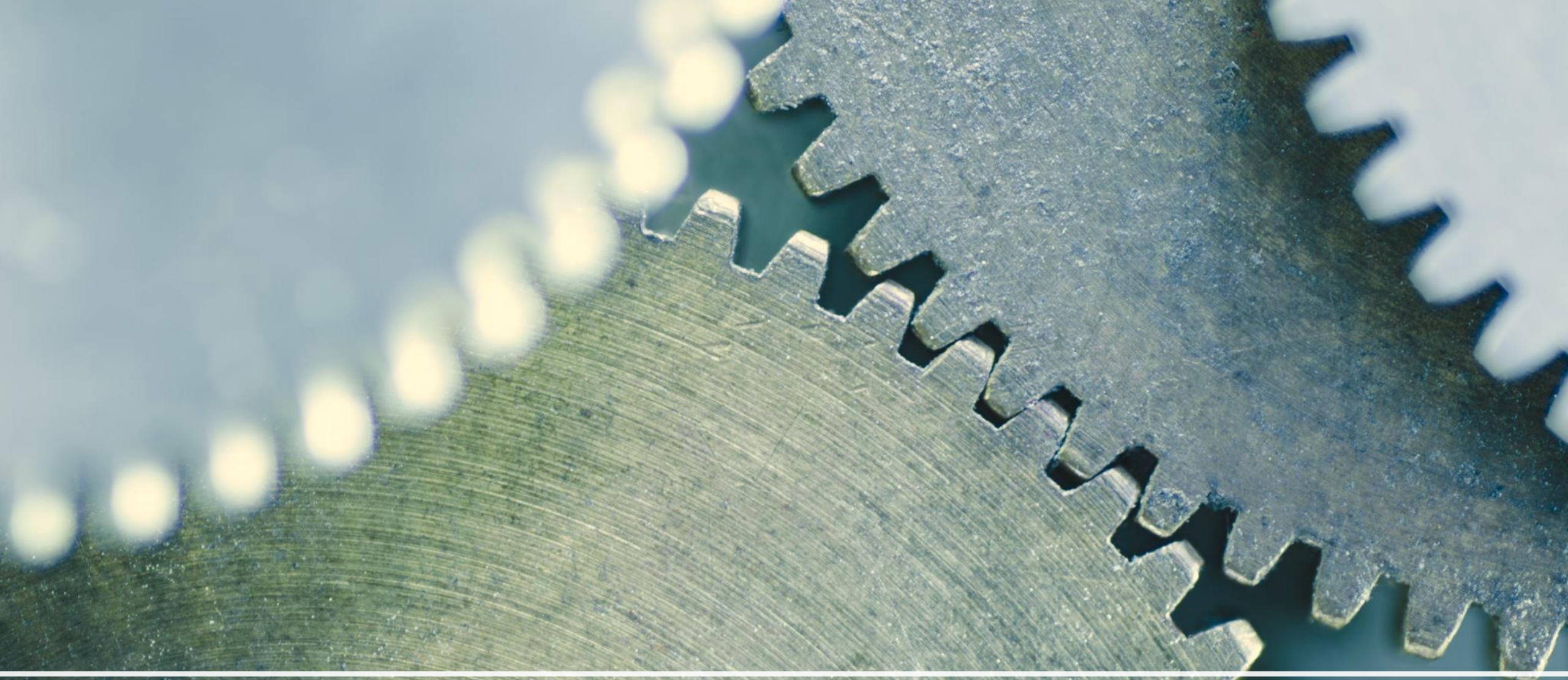
December

We will work to get your letters sent by December 11

11 Dec.







Gearing up for the 2027 Budget



# 2027 Grant and Supporting Budget Submissions

## **The Current Grant Submission Process** *(a.k.a. Why we all feel like this guy)*

- Associations complete an Excel-based template
- Susan manually tracks, reviews, and clarifies submissions
- Data is added to a consolidated spreadsheet
- The template is often unwieldy and difficult to navigate
- The process is time-consuming and highly manual

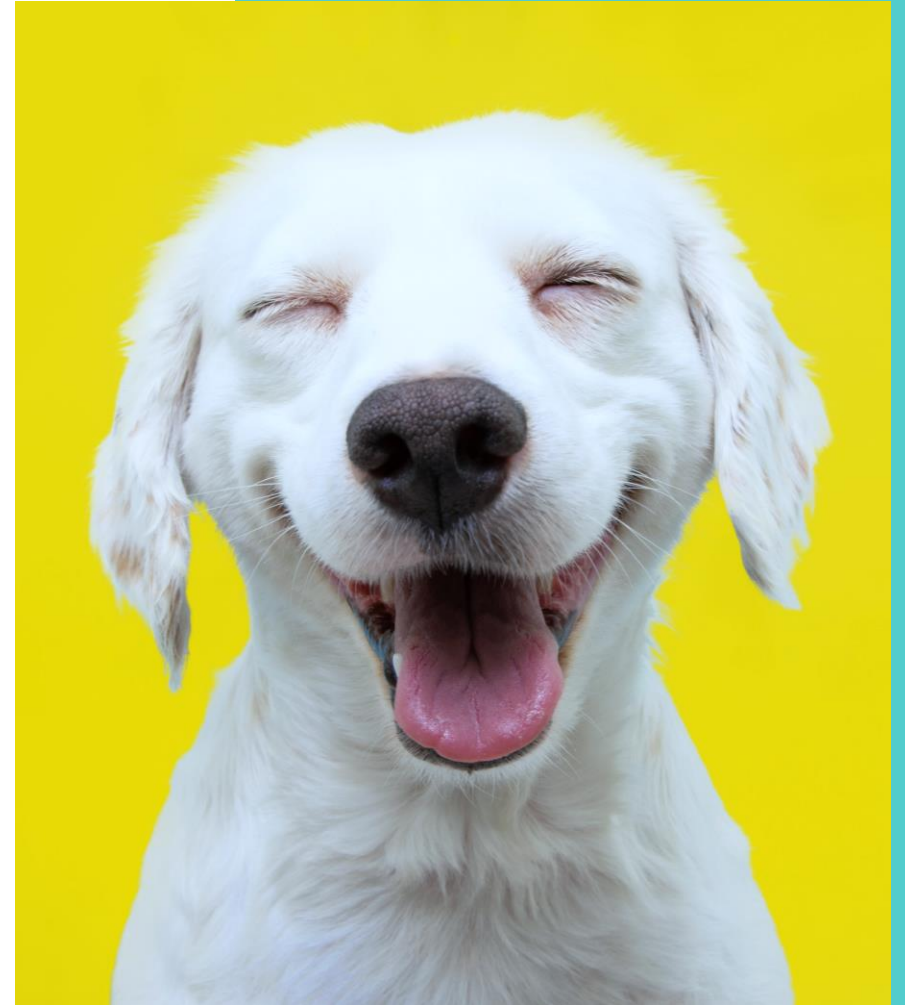


# 2027 Grant and Supporting Budget Submissions

## **The Proposed Submission Process**

*(a.k.a. Why we will feel like this guy next year)*

- Grant management software replaces the Excel template
- You simply enter your budget info and upload your grant request—no more template wrangling!
- The system flags issues and automatically consolidates data
- Time saved on our end means extended submission deadlines for you
- Training will be provided (though it's easier and faster than our current process!)
- Stay tuned—decision coming in November

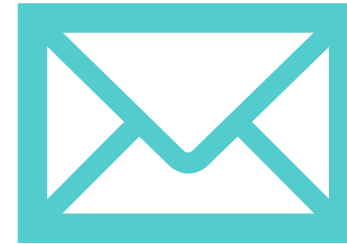




# 2027 Grant and Supporting Budget Submissions: More Information



For more information, please scan the QR code above to visit LiRN's grant request information page online.



For specific questions about your individual association, email [accounting \[at\] lirn.ca](mailto:accounting@lirn.ca)



2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan

# 2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan



Handouts of the new strategic plan available!



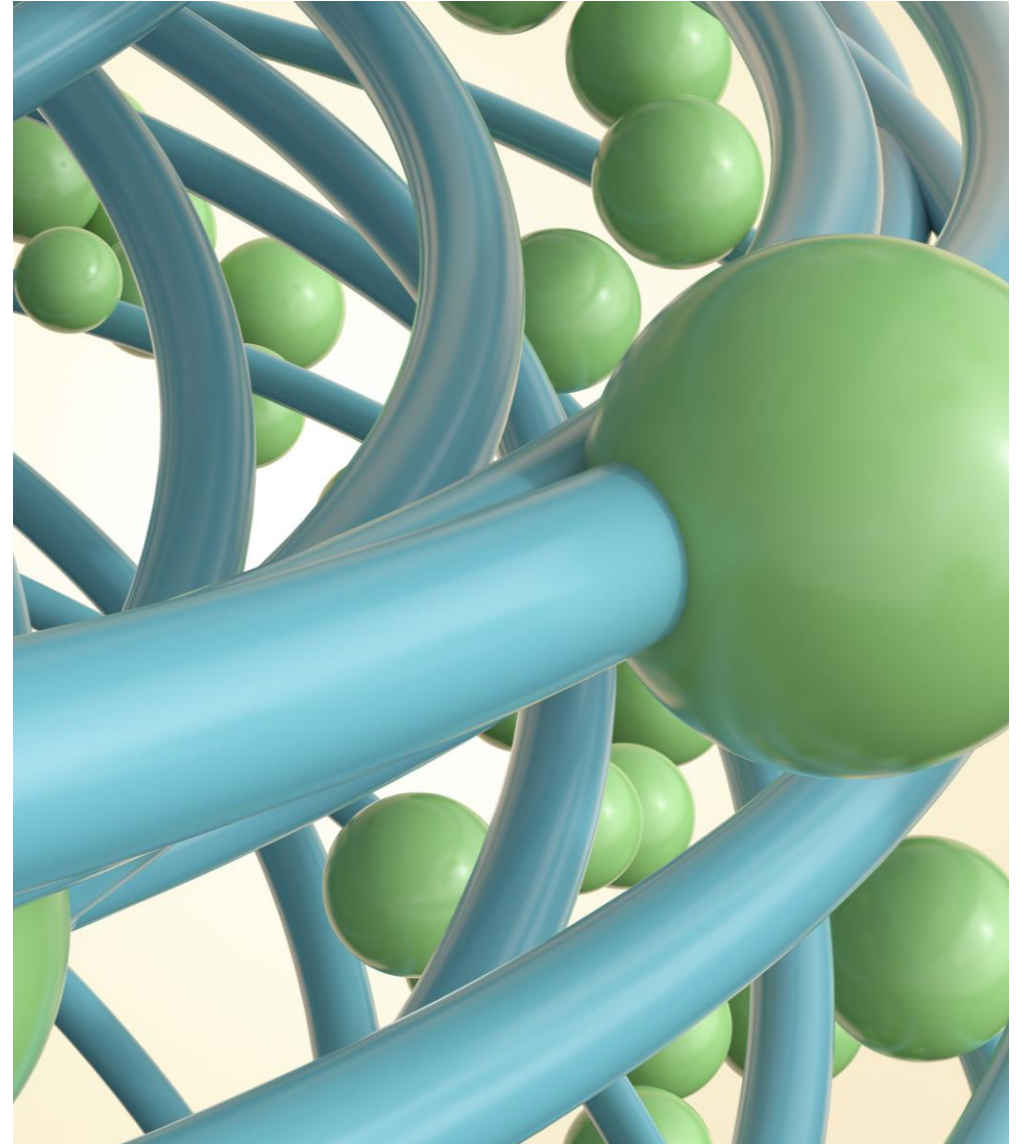
Same strategic priorities with different goals.



Implementation plan will depend on funding



2027 priorities will be established after all funding applications decided.





# 2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan

## Empower. Collaborate. Deliver.

### Vision

To advance knowledge and access to justice across Ontario through innovative and collaborative legal information services.

### Mission

LiRN empowers Ontario's courthouse libraries. We collaborate to deliver responsive, high-value services that support legal professionals and the public.

### Priorities

1. LiRN is focused on the needs of courthouse library users, both now and in the future

2. LiRN supports libraries and librarians

3. LiRN collaborates to provide legal information and library service prioritizing excellent and equitable service

4. LiRN makes evidence-based decisions

### Goals

- Improve board contributions
- Ascertain legal professional needs
- Support training and development of

- Support hiring & competency of library staff
- Raise the profile of LiRN and e-LiRN
- Improve services to the public / access to justice
- Improve communications in network

- Collaborate on content development (including migration of existing content) for open access dissemination
- Collaborate on legal resource tool development

- Improve data collection from funded libraries

### *Empowering Courthouse Libraries. Elevating Legal Practice.*

The Legal Information and Resource Network (LiRN) administers funding and sets strategic direction for Ontario's courthouse law libraries. Our mandate is to modernize and strengthen the courthouse law library network by funding, evaluating, and evolving services to ensure efficient, cost-effective access to legal information.



Innovation and Equity of Access to Legal Information Project

# Innovation and Equity of Access to Legal Information Project



- This project has concluded
- Thank you to all who participated!
- We will make a report on the project available on our website by the end of November.
- Sneak Peek ...



# Stream One: Innovation Sandbox

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# Overview of Innovation Sandbox

## **Empowering Courthouse Libraries**

The initiative enabled courthouse libraries to explore innovative service models beyond traditional methods.

## **Pilot Testing New Technologies**

Libraries piloted new technologies, equipment, and service delivery approaches to improve library services.

## **Proposal Submission and Selection**

28 applications were received, with two declined due to exclusivity and unrealistic scope.

## **Focus on Community Needs**

Libraries were encouraged to create tailored solutions addressing specific community needs creatively.

# Accessibility and Quiet Spaces

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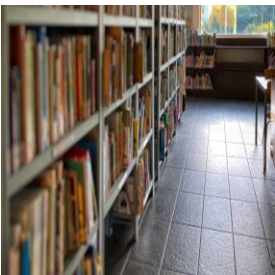
## **Enhanced Accessibility Tools**

Peel Law Association introduced advanced tools aiding patrons with visual and hearing impairments.



## **Zen Zone for Relaxation**

Dufferin Law Association created a tranquil 'Zen Zone' for stress relief and personal care.



## **Quiet Space Implementation**

Algoma Law Association established a 'Quiet Space' inspired by Peel's 'Slow Zone' concept.

# Privacy Booths and Digital Signage

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## **Privacy Booths for Confidentiality**

Libraries installed privacy booths providing quiet spaces for calls, virtual hearings, and client meetings.

## **Digital Signage for Information**

Digital signage pilots help disseminate important information and improve courthouse library communication.

## **Association Participation**

Multiple legal associations adopt privacy booths and digital signage to enhance user experience and support legal practice.





# Technology and Infrastructure Upgrades

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## **Innovative Legal Tools**

TLA piloted tools like LexisNexis Pleadings, Motions, and Facta and IRIS to access precedents and searchable court documents.

## **Connectivity Enhancements**

Dufferin Law Association installed Wi-Fi hotspots to improve internet access inside courthouses.

## **Content Management Platforms**

Renfrew and Waterloo Law Associations adopted LibGuides for curated research and knowledge management.

## **Infrastructure and Website Upgrades**

Hamilton and Peterborough Law Associations improved digital infrastructure and websites for better engagement and hybrid programming.



# Network-Wide Projects

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## **Marketing and Outreach Expansion**

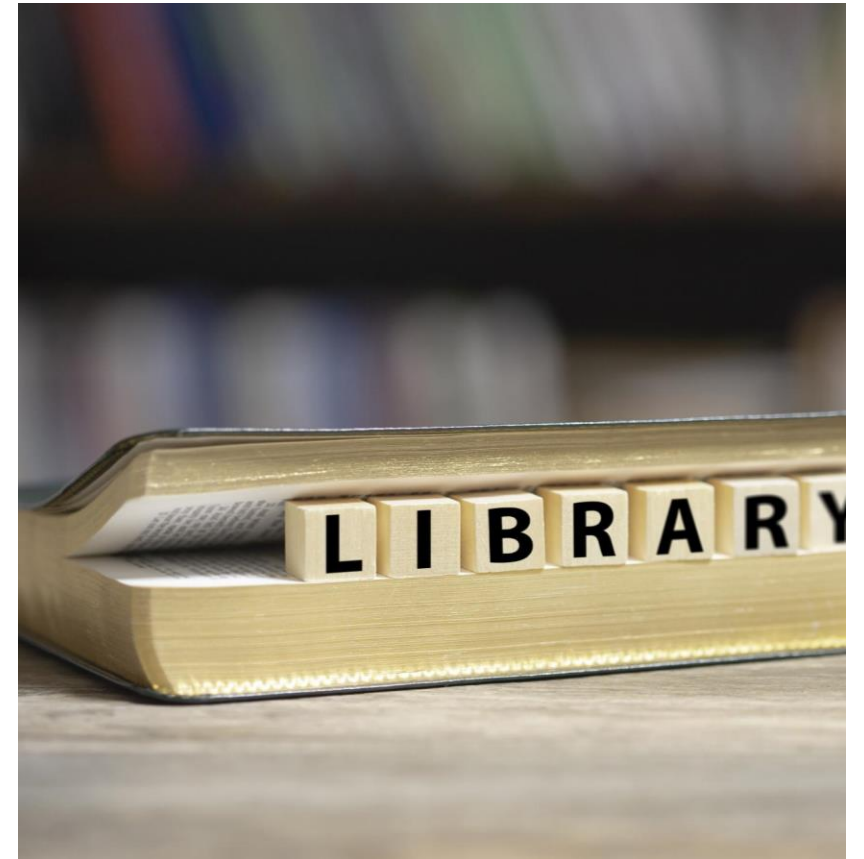
A marketing partnership improved outreach through newsletters and social media, increasing subscribers and engagement rates.


## **Library Use Protocol**

A protocol was created to define behavioral expectations in courthouse libraries, promoting a cohesive service environment.

## **Real-Time Librarian Assistance**

LibAnswers with LibChat was investigated to provide live librarian support and build a comprehensive FAQ system. Delays in the project meant that we could not launch during the project, but it is not shelved yet!





# Stream Two: Equity of Access

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# Overview and Outcomes

PRACTICE AREA	BOOKS ACQUIRED
Criminal Law	200
Civil Procedure	150
Wills, Estates & Trusts Law	100
Family Law	100
General Practice	79

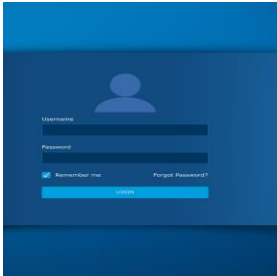
# rangefindr.ca Pilot Project

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## Purpose of rangefindr.ca

rangefindr.ca streamlines criminal sentencing research by allowing users to filter cases with specific attributes for quick results.



## User Access and Engagement

Since September 2024, 351 licensees accessed the tool, leading to over 3,500 logins and 14,700 searches by April 2025.



## Pilot Project Impact

The pilot runs until December 2026 and shows promising engagement. We expect continued growth.



Miscellanea



# LiRN

Legal Information and Resource Network



## We've Expanded Remote Access!

Ontario lawyers in 37 rural counties and districts now have remote access to vLex through e-LiRN!

We know that lawyers working in rural and Northern Ontario can find it difficult and time-consuming to visit a courthouse library, so we've **expanded remote access** to vLex to 37 counties and districts!

# LiRN Newsletter

- **Spotlight on Courthouse Libraries**  
Each edition of our newsletter highlights a different courthouse library, showcasing the valuable resources and services available across the province.
- **Upcoming Education Events**  
We feature a section dedicated to upcoming CPD opportunities. If you're offering any continuing professional development sessions, let us know — we'd be happy to include them!
- **Sharing the Newsletter**  
Please share the newsletter widely!  
**Important:** If you're forwarding the newsletter email directly to your members, they may unsubscribe you!. To avoid this, we recommend attaching the newsletter email to a new message before sending it out — and encouraging them to subscribe in their own name.



"A unified voice for  
all County and  
District law library  
staff in Ontario"

## News From OCLA

- The OCLA Core List Committee (Kelly Elliott, Derek Drake & John Kerr) is pleased to share the 2025 Core Titles List.
- The updated list will be shared on our website as well as OCLA's.
- Speaking of ... Have you seen OCLA's updated website? It's awesome!



# Benefits

- Reminder to send updated benefits advice forms if there has been a change of employment status, including salary changes!
- Send directly to Carole Lanthier from Gallagher ([carole\\_lanthier@ajg.com](mailto:carole_lanthier@ajg.com))
- Cc [admin@lirn.ca](mailto:admin@lirn.ca) so we can double-check the benefits invoices





# New Stats Form

- Reminder of the new stats form!
- We have implemented some changes to work better with LibInsight, our data collection and reporting tool



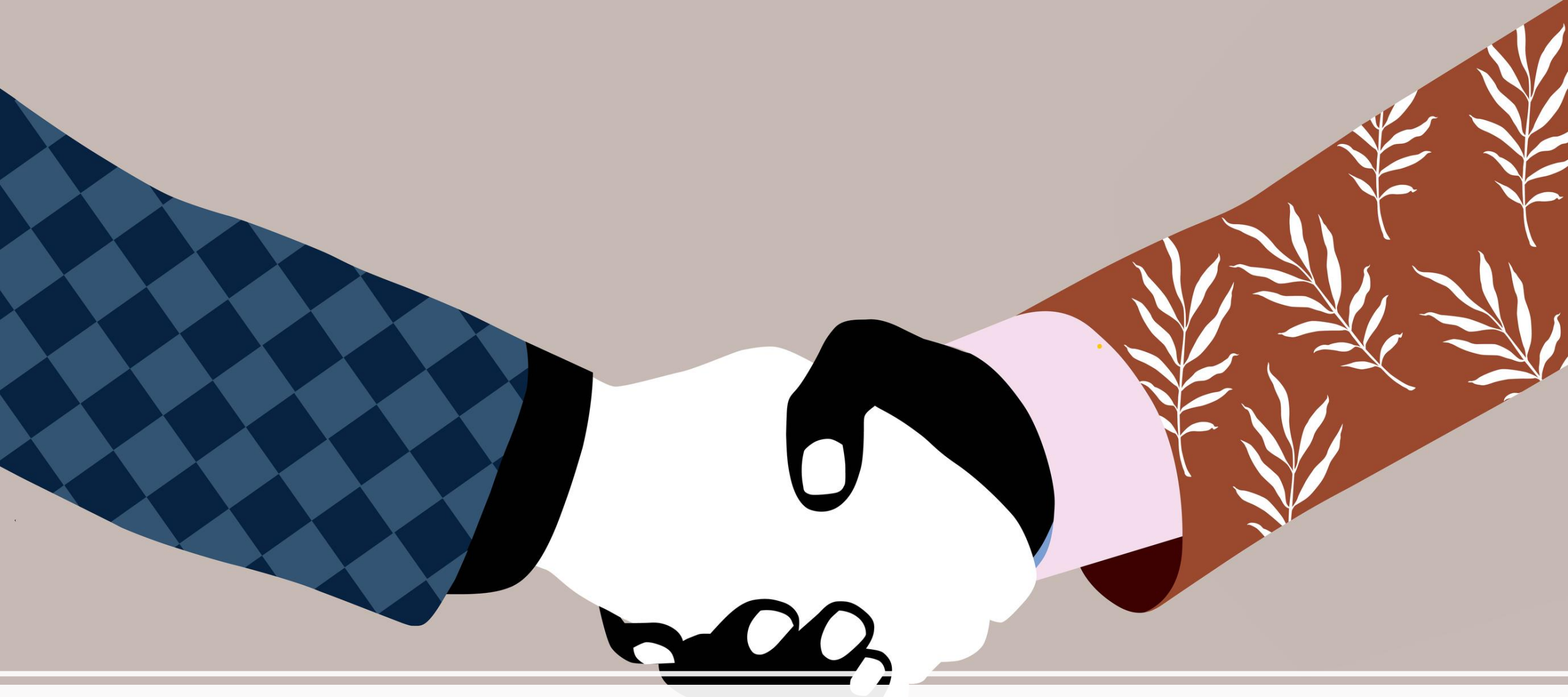
# Feedback on the Draft Library Operations Policy

- Following the valuable discussions and feedback received from law association presidents and staff at FOLA's Spring Plenary, we've taken steps to streamline and strengthen our approach to library services across Ontario. We're pleased to share a new [draft Library Operations Policy](#), which consolidates and updates the previous **Core Library Services and Management Responsibilities Policy** and the **Additional Library Services and Responsibilities Policy** into a single, comprehensive document.
- This new draft reflects the priorities and concerns raised during the Plenary — most notably, the removal of the previous 15% threshold for association-related duties. In its place, we've adopted a **principled approach**: Law Associations are expected to contribute to salaries when association duties form a **meaningful portion** of a staff member's role.
- We are now seeking input from you to ensure the policy is both practical and aligned with your operational realities.



Questions





New Association Staff and Virtual Attendees Shout Outs

# New Association Staff

- Deb Harper (Bruce Law Association)
- Thea McCallum (Grey County Law Association)
- Jane Klementti and Emily Winter (Simcoe Law Association)
- Richard Bee (Thunder Bay Law Association)
- Haley O'Halloran (Toronto Lawyers' Association)
- Elizabeth Bryan (Dufferin Law Association, parental leave contract)
- Jo Chiahotny (Hamilton Law Association)



# Hello to Zoom Participants!

- Amanda Elliott (County of Carleton Law Association)
- Amelia Columbus (Cochrane Law Association)
- Jennie Clarke (Durham Region Law Association)
- Cathleen Croshaw and Kemala Vranjes (Essex Law Association)
- Rebecca Radevski (Great Library)
- Shega Berisha (Hamilton Law Association)
- Liz Mitchell (County of Lanark Law Association)
- Peter Klein (Nipissing Law Association)
- Julie Dobson (Peel Law Association)
- Justin Ball (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Law Association)
- Bruce Cowan (Temiskaming Law Association)
- Joan Rataic-Lang (Toronto Lawyers' Association)







Icebreakers