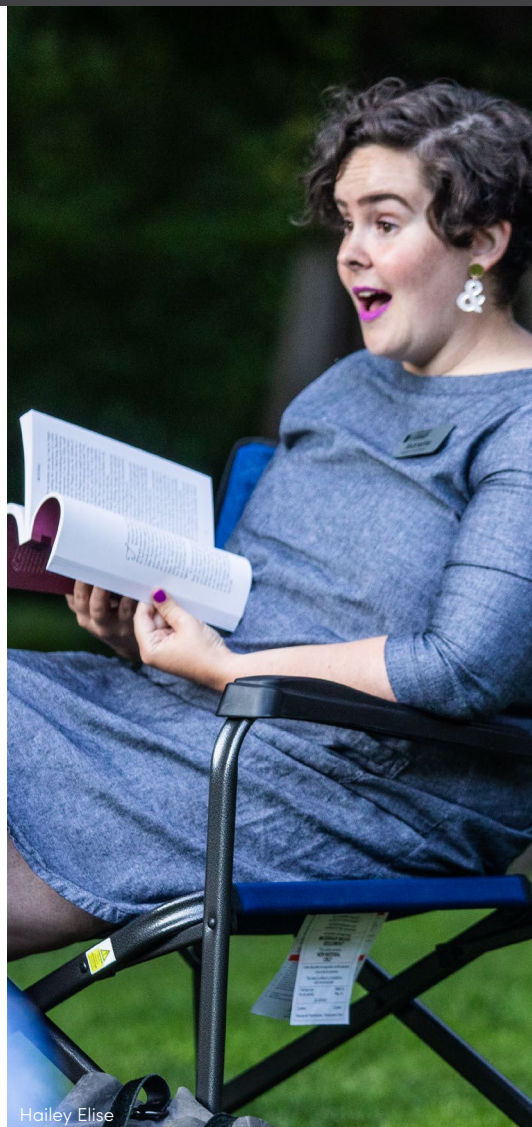


Whistler Public Library

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 – 2029



The next chapter...
for the Whistler Public Library



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Territorial Acknowledgment

The Whistler Public Library is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Lil'wat People, known in their language as Łil'wat7úl, and the Squamish People, known in their language as Skwxwú7mesh. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship, and voice.

Photo: Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre/Logan Swayze

Welcome

From the Library Director & Board Chair

Hello / K'alhwá7alap / Nuuw Whistler,

We are fortunate to live and play in one of the most dynamic mountain communities in the world. As our community has grown and changed, our library has evolved along with it, playing an increasingly important role in providing the vital tools and facilities necessary for our community to thrive.

Over the past several years, our community has experienced change that has prompted the library to look inward and strengthen our organization so that we can adapt to better serve you, our valued patrons.

Our new strategic plan has been informed through extensive engagement with community members, staff, trustees, and partner organizations. Your insights and feedback have been invaluable in shaping our vision for the future. This plan outlines our commitment to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and innovative environment where everyone can access the resources they need for personal and professional growth.

We raise our hands in gratitude for the opportunity to do this work on the shared, unceded territory of the Lil'wat People and the Squamish People. We also extend our sincere thanks to the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), Province of British Columbia, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, and the Friends of the Whistler Public Library for their ongoing support in fostering our community's growth through library programs and services.

We are excited to embark on this journey with you.

Thank you / Kukw'stumc'kalap / Huy Chexw,

Mikale Fenton
Library Director

Sarene Bourdages
Chair, Board of Trustees



Oisín McHugh



Oisín McHugh

At a glance...

Our Vision

*An inspired, informed,
and engaged community*

Our Mission

*Create opportunities for
discovery and connection*

Our Values

- **Connect**
- **Listen**
- **Learn**
- **Innovate**

This plan is supported by
our ongoing commitment
to our principles:

**Access, Collaboration,
Inclusion, Intellectual
Freedom, Privacy,
and Sustainability**

Priorities:



Inspire Learning & Discovery

- Support literacy development and lifelong learning
- Provide access to new and exciting resources and programs



Cultivate Connection

- Create space for community members to connect with each other, service providers, the municipality, and the world at large



Expand Access

- Improve accessibility of our space, services, resources, and programs for all our users



Amplify Impact

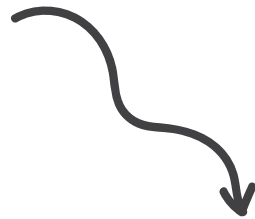
- Increase awareness of library services and resources
- Collaborate with community partners and elevate our shared contributions



Strengthen our Organization

- Support our staff so they can support our community
- Evaluate our internal structure and work to ensure sustainable growth over time

How we got here



Located in the heart of Whistler Village, the library has seen firsthand both the opportunities and challenges community members face as they work to build a life in one of the world's premier mountain resorts.

This document is the result of extensive engagement with our community, board, staff, and partners. The plan is designed to be flexible, concise, and memorable, serving as a tool for future decision-making. **Our goal is to ensure that this plan will guide the library toward success over the next five years.**

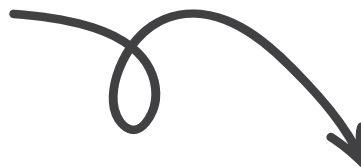


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Our process

In fall 2023, we began our strategic plan process by conducting research to support the library's planning, engagement, and priority setting. The resulting research report provided Whistler community statistics, context, and insights into emerging library trends.

In a one-month time span, we engaged with nearly 600 participants from across the community.



At the start of 2024, we then hosted pre-engagement workshops with library staff and trustees to evaluate our research, identify central themes, and to determine the best methods to reach target audiences. We interviewed staff and leaders from key community organizations, including the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, Whistler Pemberton Newcomer Services, Mature Action Committee, RMOW's Accessibility Coordinator, Whistler Blackcomb's Community Liaison, Whistler Community Services Society, Whistler Multicultural Society, and Whistler Youth Centre staff.

Using this information, we created a Community Engagement Plan—a multi-pronged framework to gather feedback from diverse voices in our community. Our goal was to connect with those historically underserved by the library and gather specific feedback to inform our vision, mission, and priorities.

Your Library, Your Voice

In spring 2024, we launched the *Your Library, Your Voice* Community Engagement campaign. Over one-month, the library engaged nearly 600 participants through various activities, including passive engagements in the library, in-person interviews, focus groups, pop-up activities across Whistler, walkabout interviews on the village stroll, a community event on the library plaza, and both digital and paper surveys.

This engagement connected us with library users and non users, allowing us to explore priority themes and identify barriers to accessing library services. We also asked participants to share their goals for the next five years to inspire our programming, displays, and collections.



Suzanne Thomas



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What you told us

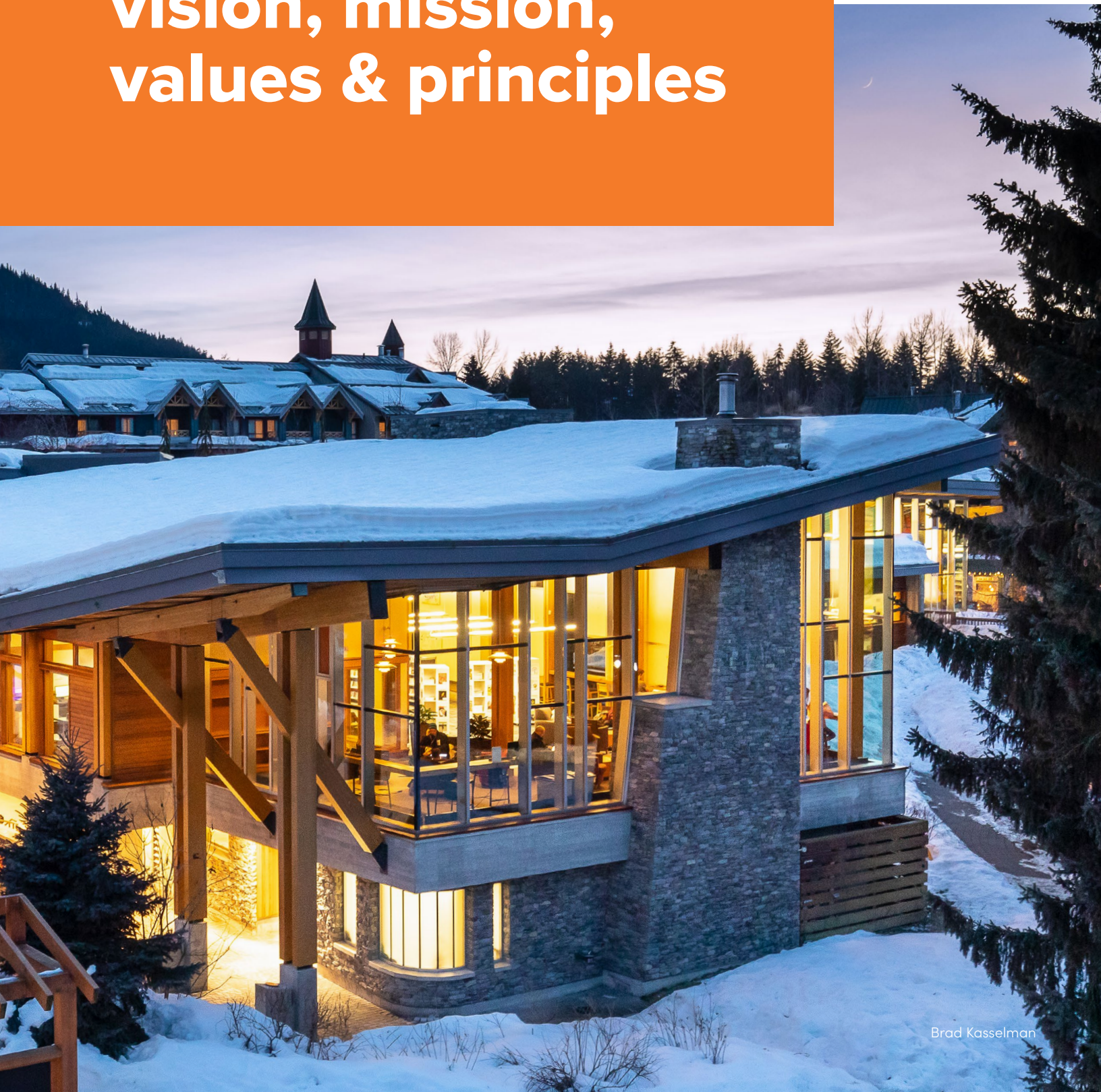


Overall, participants expressed strong appreciation for the library and a desire for it to grow as a dynamic community hub offering diverse programs, resources, and support. They praised our staff, facility, programming, and community engagement efforts. We also received valuable suggestions for improvement, learned more about the barriers patrons face and how we can better communicate our offerings to the entire community.

Following this feedback, we hosted workshops with trustees and staff to refine our vision, mission, and values, aligning them with the community's expressed needs and interests.

This document is designed to be flexible, concise, and memorable, guiding the library toward success over the next five years.

Understanding our vision, mission, values & principles



Vision

Our vision is our aspiration for the future of Whistler, and the desired outcomes resulting from our efforts. It sets a clear roadmap of who we serve and how we do it.

An inspired, informed and engaged community.



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Mission

Our mission is our purpose and reason for being. At Whistler Public Library, we exist to:

Create opportunities for discovery and connection.

Values

Our values are actions that represent the core beliefs and standards of our organization. They provide clear guidance on how we can embody our vision, mission, and principles in everyday activities, ensuring that these values are actively lived rather than just passively acknowledged. These values are the framework for how we monitor our work and measure our success. They are designed to be memorable, observable, and achievable.

As we pursue initiatives to achieve each strategic goal, we will do so by connecting with partners and community members, actively listening to their experiences, goals, and perspectives—learning along the way how we can continue to improve and excel. With this information, our library strives to innovate by delivering responsive, reliable, and inspirational services, spaces, and programs.

In short, we:

Connect, listen, learn, innovate

Principles

Our principles are our foundational beliefs based on the core principles of the library sector which inform our decision-making, govern our behavior, and support our values. Every action we take to achieve our strategic vision, mission, and priorities is evaluated through the lens of these principles.

Access

Collaboration

Inclusion

**Intellectual
Freedom**

Privacy

Sustainability





Priorities

Our priorities represent the most critical goals, initiatives, or tasks to achieve our long-term objectives, allocate resources, and to maximize our impact.





Priority 1:

Inspire Learning & Discovery

Libraries are unique community spaces that provide patrons with free access to services, resources, and programs that can support their learning journey, spark their creativity, and help them discover new ideas and passions.

Aspiration:

We are well known in our community as a space where anyone can come to learn, grow, play, and discover something new. The Whistler Public Library will be the first place community members know they can turn to when they need to learn new skills, understand evolving technology, and access otherwise unavailable tools.

We will:

- ✓ Provide library services and collections that encourage curiosity, learning and imagination
- ✓ Be a hub for growing life skills, developing early and digital literacy skills, and accessing diverse technologies
- ✓ Be a centre for life-long, self-directed, and self-paced learning
- ✓ Create programs and experiences for all ages that inspire and motivate
- ✓ Actively engage our community to ensure we are providing the resources and learning opportunities that they need most



This could look like...

- Diverse workshops ranging from bicycle repair to gardening
- STEAM* programming for all ages *(Science Technology Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics)
- Content creator workshops, meet-ups, and opportunities to showcase talent in our community





Priority 2: **Cultivate Connection**

Libraries provide space to interact, connect, learn, and share. To counteract the negative impacts of social isolation, the library plays an important role by providing free space and programs that encourage patrons to connect with each other, service providers, and the municipality, to build a stronger, more engaged community.

Aspiration:

We provide patrons of all ages space to connect with each other, service providers, and the municipality in ways that are most meaningful to them. We create opportunities to connect through a wide variety of programs catering to different interests and encouraging dialogue and understanding.

We will:

- ✓ Assess our facility through the lens of collaboration, conversation, and connection
- ✓ Promote dialogue about issues that matter to our community
- ✓ Create opportunities for library users to learn from and feel more connected to each other through our spaces and programming



This could look like...

- Expanded Indigenous-led program offerings in collaboration with local Nations
- Facilitated community conversations on challenging topics that encourage open dialogue, build understanding, and help bridge divisions in our community
- Improved program evaluation to enhance their effectiveness in reducing social isolation





Priority 3: **Expand Access**

Access is a core value of libraries worldwide and remains a priority for us as our community continues to grow and change. Survey responses confirmed that many community members experience one or more barriers to accessing our services, collections, programs, and building. By addressing these barriers to access we will be able to better serve everyone.

Aspiration:

We maximize our potential by assessing our spaces, programs, services, and operating hours to ensure our diverse community has equal opportunity to access these resources.

We will:

- ✓ Audit and improve accessibility in library spaces, technology, programs, and services
- ✓ Explore alternative library hours to expand community access to our facility and services
- ✓ Listen to and amplify the voices and perspectives of people marginalized based on sexual orientation, religion, gender identity, socioeconomic background, racialization, age, abilities, and other discriminatory grounds



This could look like...

- Increased holds pick up and book drop off locations outside of library walls
- Improved program and space design focused on supporting neurodivergent families and youth
- Adapted operating hours to try to meet the changing needs of our community





Priority 4: **Amplify Impact**

Libraries provide access to so many resources, services, and programs. It is important that we effectively promote everything our community can access for free at the library. Survey responses showed that many people are unaware of, or have trouble understanding, the breadth of what is available to them at the library.

Aspiration:

Whistler residents and visitors know about the library and what we offer. We successfully promote our work to the community and spread the word about our partners and collaborations.

We will:

- ✓ Seek opportunities to expand the reach of library communications and marketing efforts through data driven initiatives
- ✓ Enhance the library's communication strategy to make our resources, services, and programs more visible
- ✓ Analyze the library programming schedule in partnership with other social service providers to avoid duplicated programs, address gaps, and channel resources more effectively



This could look like...

- A simplified and polished library newsletter
- Upgraded social media and marketing strategy
- Formalized advocacy program to increase awareness of library's impact, and our potential to amplify the collective impact of Whistler's social service providers



Oisín McHugh



Jessie Morden



Priority 5: **Strengthen our Organization**

The library and all the wonderful things we do would not exist without the people who work here. To continue providing excellent service and pushing the boundaries of what patrons can expect from their library, it is important that we support the heart of the library by creating an organizational structure and culture where staff can thrive.

Aspiration:

The library's services and programs grow at the same pace as the needs of our community. Staff are supported in their work and have the time and resources to get things done. We have analyzed our organizational structure and made changes to ensure we are operating in the most effective way possible. We are responsive and resilient to the changes and challenges the future holds.

We will:

- ✓ Examine our current staffing structure and seek opportunities for improvement and efficiency
- ✓ Improve workplace accessibility
- ✓ Expand learning opportunities for staff and trustees
- ✓ Develop the necessary business continuity and emergency preparedness plans to prepare our team accordingly
- ✓ Work with the library's Board of Trustees to establish a comprehensive fundraising strategy



This could look like...

- ➔ Formalized approach to staff succession planning
- ➔ Streamlined onboarding process and training plan
- ➔ Clear plan for celebrating milestones and success
- ➔ Enhanced volunteer and donor recognition program



Measuring our impact



Measuring and reporting our performance is essential to maintaining accountability to our municipality, partners, and the public. At WPL, we collaborate with our Board of Trustees to ensure a transparent reporting process, using both quantitative and qualitative metrics. This approach provides a holistic view of our efforts to fulfill our vision of an inspired, informed, and engaged community.

Key performance indicators include:

In-person and website visits

Collection use

Number of active cardholders

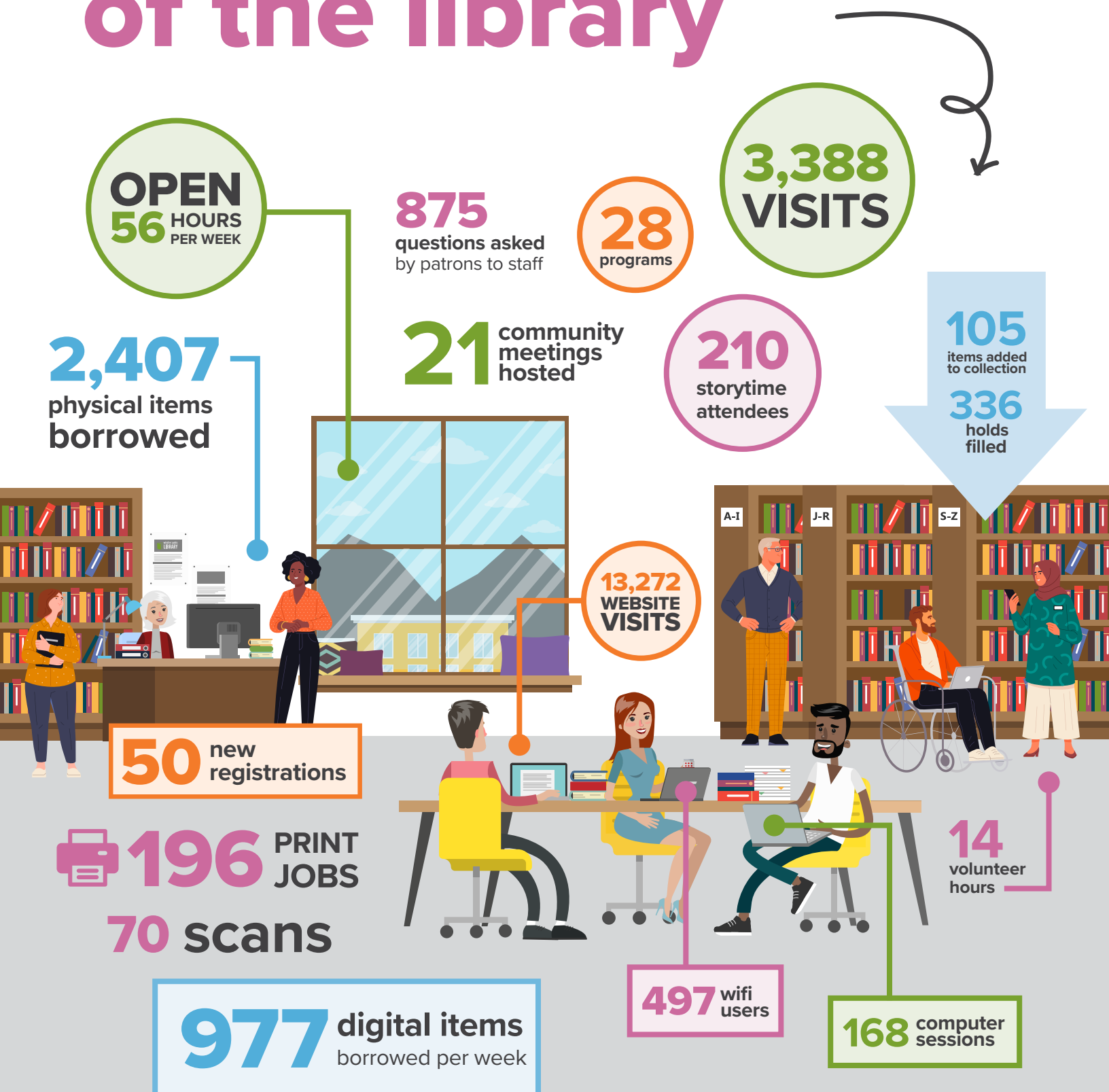
Program attendance

Patron satisfaction*

*From 2024 to 2029, we will continue to develop specific metrics to measure key strategic priority performance indicators, including an annual community feedback survey. This information will be made available to the public through our Annual Report.

Oisín McHugh

A week in the life of the library



Gratitude

Thank you / Kukw'stunc'kalap / Huy Chexw

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the organizations and community partners that play a crucial role in the success of the Whistler Public Library. A special acknowledgment goes to the Resort Municipality of Whistler for its ongoing support and dedication to enriching our community. We also wish to thank the Province of British Columbia, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, and the Friends of the Whistler Public Library for their invaluable contributions. Most of all we'd like to thank you - the public - for inspiring our work, sharing your feedback, and for using *your library*.



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