



August 23, 2011

Ms. Jocelyne Thompson  
President  
Atlantic Provinces Library Association  
University of New Brunswick  
P.O. Box 7500,5 Macaulay Lane  
Fredericton, NB  
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Re: Sustainable library services for Canadians with print disabilities.

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I am writing to you today to ask for your support and input into the next stage in the development and implementation of a sustainable model for delivering equitable library services for Canadians with print disabilities.

As you may be aware, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) announced at the recent Canadian Library Association annual conference that their responsibility for the Initiative for Equitable Library Access (IELA) is complete.

From *Opening the Book* in 2005 to meetings held by LAC in 2009 with libraries and consumers, the concept of a central "Hub" as a necessary part of an equitable network has stood out as an area of agreement at the conceptual level for many stakeholders including CNIB.

As we move forward, CNIB remains committed to a "Hub" concept with a mandate to support libraries serving people with a print disability. The time to translate this conceptual model into a functioning equitable network is long overdue. As a key stakeholder, CNIB is starting where LAC has left off in leading the multi sectored consultations necessary to develop a service that will in the end provide equitable access to library material for all Canadians with print disabilities. To get there CNIB has hired a Project Leader, Lori Sutej, and is launching a project with a two year time frame and the following mandate:

***To create an accessible, national, independent and sustainable library and information service organization ("the Hub") that will support equitable services to the print disabled community***



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This service organization must meet the needs of end users, public and educational libraries, publishers and private sector partners. The project will be divided into three phases:

**Phase 1: July – December, 2011: Business Plan Development with stakeholder input and validation**

**A preliminary Business Plan will be developed by the end of October.**

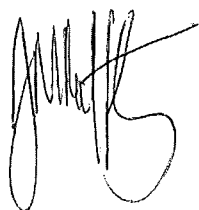
Input will be requested from an initial group of sector representatives, thought leaders and potential 3<sup>rd</sup> party partners. The plan will then be reviewed, refined and finalized with the broader stakeholder group by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011.

**Phase 2: January to September, 2012** – Ongoing negotiations to secure commitment with Federal, Provincial and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party partners. Detailed costing and implementation plans finalized. Funding secured and all 3<sup>rd</sup> party agreements in place by April 1<sup>st</sup>. We are cognisant of the September 2012 deadline for most 2013 government funding so time is of the essence.

**Phase 3: October, 2012- March, 2013** – Implementation planning including web portal detailed design and implementation plans, organizational structure/recruitment, office space, and governance structure.

In the coming months we will be asking representatives from the public library sector to describe public library requirements for a central hub serving persons with print disabilities. What services and access to resources that a Hub could provide, would leverage a library system's ability to serve this population? Are there synergies with the public library sectors future plans on e-delivery to the general public? If you have comments or suggestions please contact myself at [John.Rafferty@cnib.ca](mailto:John.Rafferty@cnib.ca) or our project lead [Lori.Sutej@cnib.ca](mailto:Lori.Sutej@cnib.ca)

Sincerely,



John Rafferty  
President and CEO  
CNIB