



**Ottawa Public Library-Library and Archives Canada
Joint Facility Indigenous Engagement
Report**

August 16 2021

Executive Summary

As a complement to the Algonquin host nation engagement started in 2019, Ottawa Public Library and Library and Archives Canada Joint Facility (OPL-LAC Joint Facility) Project Team implemented additional activities in 2020 to learn how the new OPL-LAC Joint Facility can welcome and serve Indigenous populations. Two Indigenous consultants advised on engagement with local, regional and national Indigenous organizations, urban Indigenous populations in the Ottawa-Gatineau area, and Indigenous community members across Canada.

Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, online technologies were successfully deployed, while respecting Indigenous protocols. This report summarizes the feedback shared by respondents via a national online survey and virtual urban Indigenous engagement event. Both activities included questions related to the internal and external spaces of the Joint Facility, Ottawa Public Library (OPL) and Library and Archives Canada (LAC) programs and services, and Indigenous public art.

The Joint Facility is a generational opportunity to concretize reconciliation and decolonization via the thoughtful placement of Indigenous elements including art throughout the physical space; a reconsideration of Indigenous representation in collaboration with Indigenous communities; and an enhancement of programs, services, and policies in culturally competent ways.

While many aspects of the building will acknowledge its location within unceded Algonquin territory by integrating the vision of the Algonquin host nation, there is room to include other First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation perspectives. A recurring theme among Indigenous respondents is how the work of reconciliation can be advanced by developing wholistic and respectful representations of Indigenous peoples that are true to past Indigenous experiences, and as living, contemporary cultures. Respondents saw opportunities to engage in cultural activities, which can serve as a site and example of reclamation and renewal.

Survey and engagement participants suggested a welcome area to orient visitors to the facility with culturally competent staff (including Indigenous peoples) to assist visitors in accessing OPL/LAC programs/services and initiating research. Respondents recommended that the Indigenous collections of the OPL and LAC be enhanced, visible, and easy to access – with support and training available.

Comments were positive regarding the design of the interior, including the number of meeting spaces, use of natural materials and “green” elements, environmental standards, and accessibility. Respondents saw the atrium (Central Gathering Space) as an open, light-filled space offering Indigenous-inspired design, art, food, and business opportunities. It is expected that Indigenous cultural/educational activities and ceremonies will take place in the auditorium. Both the atrium and auditorium would benefit from flexible seating allowing for a circle configuration as appropriate. It was hoped that spaces would be available for community use for free or at low cost. Signage in Indigenous languages was recommended throughout the facility.

Respondents presented many ways the Creative Spaces could be used for traditional and contemporary Indigenous arts and craft activities, facilitated by Indigenous knowledge keepers. These activities would require specific tools, equipment, and supplies. Audio/video, virtual reality and other technologies would be accessed. It is hoped that these spaces will accommodate cultural practices such as smudging. First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation also recommended that the Joint Facility provide resources to facilitate Indigenous language revitalization and

genealogy research, through access to enhanced collections, archival materials, technology, in-person classes and workshops.

Respondents were strongly interested in the Indigenous Multipurpose Space and envisioned its use for Indigenous-themed activities for all ages. It was noted that the design of the space may need to be flexible to accommodate these activities.

However, confining smudging to the Indigenous Multipurpose Space is a significant limitation. It is recommended that the Joint Facility consider ceremonial practices, such as smudging and lighting the qulliq, as an integral part of Indigenous activities. The Facility should take a decolonial approach by accommodating ceremonial practices within multiple spaces in the building, in particular the auditorium, atrium, creative spaces, kitchen, art gallery, etc. and embed them into the Facility's policies and procedures.

Given that Ottawa is home to a large Inuit population, enhancing indoor and outdoor elements of the Joint Facility can help this community feel welcome. Incorporating Inuktitut language into the signage and including Inuit art would be a good start. As the proposed Indigenous Multipurpose Space was perceived as being mainly First Nations in inspiration, there is an interest in indoor and outdoor Inuit-themed spaces for gathering, sharing of cultural knowledge, and facilitating economic development opportunities. The community kitchen is a potential area for the preparation of country foods. Of note, the examples above include the suggestions offered by participants, however the partners will ensure efforts are made to re-engage with Métis Nation individuals to identify uses for these spaces.

Inuit respondents noted that representations of Inuit culture and history within the building, as well as via the OPL/LAC materials available to the public, must be appropriate and respectful, taking multiple Inuit perspectives into account. This implies a closer look at how archival photographs, audio, video, and histories are displayed either on site or online. Further discussion with the Inuit community is recommended to clarify how the Joint Facility might accommodate Inuit-specific activities and the Inuit representation.

Generally, the Métis Nation respondents envisioned a welcoming space with visual representations of their respective history and culture, as well as services that would facilitate research and access to archival materials.

Respondents acknowledged the exterior building's use of natural materials and shapes that reference the Ottawa River. The exterior landscaping offers opportunities for cultural or ceremonial activities, and enjoyment of natural settings. There is high interest in a firepit or outdoor sacred fire area, which could be enhanced with a tipi. A medicine garden could incorporate Algonquin, Métis Nation and Inuit medicinal plants. Inuit participants suggested an Inuit-themed outdoor area, incorporating northern landscape features and space for group activities. The outdoor areas should incorporate accessibility features and safe access to the Pimisi LRT station.

The Indigenous engagement activities hosted in 2020 reached a diverse segment of Indigenous populations. The construction of this Joint Facility is an opportune time to strengthen relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation communities.

The OPL-LAC Joint Facility project team is grateful for the participation, ideas, and vision shared during these sessions and will draw on this information as it works on facility planning and programming.

Contents

Context and Background 5

Survey Methodology and Respondents 5

Engagement Methodology and Participants 6

SUMMARY of FEEDBACK 7

Reasons for Visiting..... 7

Accessibility, Sustainability and Welcoming Elements 7

Common Interior Spaces and Collections at the Joint Facility 9

Central Gathering Space 10

Atrium..... 10

Auditorium 11

Café..... 11

Public Art 11

Interior Spaces and Opportunities in LAC 13

Other Spaces in the Joint Facility 15

Creation Spaces/Makerspaces..... 15

Indigenous-Specific Spaces and Activities 16

Exterior Design and Spaces..... 18

Conclusion 19

APPENDIX 1—Urban Indigenous Engagement Break-out Group Discussion Questions . 20

APPENDIX 2— OPL-LAC Joint Facility Indigenous Questionnaire, Developed by NSights 21

APPENDIX 3— Responses to Q31 of the OPL-LAC Joint Facility Indigenous Questionnaire, Developed by NSights..... 28

“Reconciliation is not just the building; it’s going to be whatever happens in that space, brought to life by the community that it serves... We become responsible for the space made for us.”

Engagement Session Participant

Context and Background

In the fall of 2019, after limited response to urban Indigenous engagement, the OPL-LAC Joint Facility contracted Jennifer David and Lisa Abel as Indigenous advisors to assist in the development of an engagement plan. This included:

- Coordinating a meeting with local, regional and national Indigenous organizations;
- Scheduling and facilitating an in-person urban Indigenous engagement session, originally scheduled for April 2020; and
- An online survey for the Ottawa urban Indigenous community, which was launched in early November 2020.

Plans were altered once the pandemic hit in March 2020. The in-person engagement/meeting with Indigenous organizations became three virtual presentations held on Zoom in October 2020.

The in-person urban Ottawa Indigenous engagement session was also moved online and took place in late November 2020 on Zoom.

The online survey for the Ottawa Urban Indigenous community became a national survey specifically open to all First Nations, Métis Nation and Inuit. It was online for approximately one month and closed on December 4, 2020.

This report includes responses from the Engagement session and the online survey. It was prepared from notes and responses. Most sections of the report are broken down into survey responses and engagement session feedback.

Survey Methodology and Respondents

The OPL-LAC Joint Facility Project Team engaged NVision Insight Group to create a Survey Monkey online survey based on a series of questions related to the internal and external spaces at the Joint Facility, as well as OPL and LAC programs and services.

When the survey closed on December 4, 2020, there were 90 English responses and 6 French responses.¹

¹ Full survey questions are included as Appendix 2, survey data is available upon request.
OPL/LAC Joint Facility Online Survey Report, August 16, 2021

More than 60% of survey respondents identified their location as Ottawa (urban), and together with Ottawa (rural), this amounted to more than 75%.

Nearly 50% of respondents said they were OPL Cardholders, the most of any option. There were no common responses to the question about what would prevent them from visiting the joint facility. Responses to this question ranged from physical distance to accessing books online, lack of time or not aware of nearby branch locations.

“The LAC facility on Wellington was not a welcoming place and always felt highly colonial. I did not enjoy accessing documents at that facility.”

The majority of respondents said their main purpose for visiting OPL is to borrow materials (60%), followed by participation in programming (52%), and research purposes (52%).

Engagement Methodology and Participants

A communications plan using the Inspire555 website, social media, ads with Windspeaker, Nation Talk and ELMNTFM, and direct email with potential participants ensured that advance notice of the urban Indigenous engagement event was shared. Community stakeholders from the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition also shared the event notice.

An online Indigenous Engagement was hosted on November 26th, 2020 via Zoom for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation peoples living in the Ottawa-Gatineau area.

Two Indigenous community members (Lisa Abel and Jennifer David) facilitated the meeting. Indigenous advisors from the City of Ottawa, the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition, and Library and Archives Canada were consulted regarding the agenda, discussion questions, and communications plans for the engagement session. Technical and communications support was provided by the Joint Facility Project Team. Simultaneous translation was available.

Local Indigenous protocols were respected, with the inclusion of an Algonquin Nation Elder who provided the welcome and closing, as well as First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation Elders present in the breakout rooms.

Representatives from the architectural firm, the Algonquin host nation, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa Public Library, and the project’s Curator of Indigenous Public Art gave presentations. Subjects comprised the design plans for the Facility, including community and Indigenous-specific spaces; a summary of Algonquin host nation feedback incorporated into the design; programs and services of interest to Indigenous populations; and opportunities for participation by Indigenous artists.

This was followed by four virtual breakout rooms for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation participants, and an additional room for Francophone participants. These rooms were facilitated by local representatives and Elders from each of these communities, who were selected with the assistance of the above-mentioned Indigenous advisors. The breakout facilitators were provided with a facilitation guide and a PowerPoint presentation with the questions and visual cues from the presentations, including design renderings of the Joint Facility. The meeting presenters were available to answer questions within the breakout rooms on request. Technical support was provided by the Joint Facility Project Team.

Nine discussion questions were presented in each of the breakout rooms.²

Feedback in this report has been summarized from the transcripts of these discussions and the text of the chat from the main presentation room. When referring to “Participants” it is assumed that a mix of First Nations, Inuit, Métis Nation or Francophone participants made similar comments. It has been indicated if a suggestion was particular to a specific group.

Several participants indicated that they were pleased with the format of the engagement, the presentations, and the discussions. Inuit participants specifically said that they appreciated being invited.

It was suggested that the presentations with slides and audio given by the architect, OPL, LAC, and the Indigenous Art Curator be made available online.

Non-Indigenous people were present at the meeting and in the discussion groups as technical support only. There was no mechanism available to verify participant affiliation (FNMI) in the registration process. It may have been easier to ask participants to self-identify when they registered, or when they logged in, so that they could be assigned to breakout rooms in advance. However, it was decided that registration would not be required, to simplify the process for participants.

Finally, it was suggested that an evaluation be developed to measure the effectiveness of the online engagement format. This could be built into the communications plan for future Indigenous engagements as an evaluation template exists.

Presentation used during the engagement session is available upon request.

SUMMARY of FEEDBACK

Reasons for Visiting

Survey Responses

The top three elements of the new Joint Facility that would persuade respondents to visit are: Public Events, readings, lectures, workshops (71%); OPL or LAC Programs and Services (70%); and access to genealogical, historic and archival materials (67%).

Other elements mentioned: ceremonial space, free parking, materials and support specifically for Indigenous researchers; Indigenous programming; ability to rent out space/host community events.

Accessibility, Sustainability and Welcoming Elements

Survey Responses

While there was a survey question directly related to accessibility, most responses mentioned cultural elements that could be incorporated to make Indigenous peoples feel more welcome.

² Breakout questions are included as Appendix 1.

Looking at the comments for both questions and the question on sustainability, here are the main areas of interest:

- Visual cues throughout the facility that indicate Indigenous presence (large selection of Indigenous books, artwork, sculptures, murals and art exhibitions by Indigenous artists, ceremonial spaces, presentations and workshops with Indigenous speakers and presenters);
- Signage in Indigenous languages, particularly Anishinabemowin/Algonquin;
- Elder-in-Residence program;
- Indigenous-inspired food in cafeteria/restaurant;
- Algonquin history/stories/land acknowledgement displayed prominently, use of architectural and other elements that reference connection to land and water;
- Outdoor elements to enhance Indigenous programming.

One respondent suggested using the library's geographical location to highlight Indigenous peoples (e.g., on the 'north' side of the building, show displays of Inuit culture, on the 'west' side of the building, show Northwest coast art and perspectives).

Specific accessibility needs: open lobby area, bicycle parking, outdoor patio space.

Several respondents specifically mentioned the desire for a room that would allow for ceremonies such as smudging (this capability should be available in all meeting rooms and the auditorium), as well as drumming and singing. This means a need for proper ventilation and sound proofing.

Ensure there are Indigenous, Black, People of Colour greeting visitors as they come in (not security guards), and staff members throughout.

One respondent is concerned about the distance from the LRT to the Joint Facility and their safety.

A few respondents urged the Joint Facility to include the perspectives of Indigenous peoples, including Elders, and to continue to engage and consult with Indigenous communities to build and maintain relationships, and also invite Indigenous people to participate (e.g., human library events) and bring knowledge and wisdom.

“Include Indigenous people in every stage of the project. Listen to what they have to say in what they would like to see as an inclusive space.”

A few respondents said that the Joint Facility must have literary resources on all First Nations, Inuit, Métis Nation histories and stories to break down 'Pan-Indigeneity'.

There was a theme throughout many of the comments to respect Anishinaabe Algonquin direction, stories and art, while also elevating other First Nations, Métis Nation and Inuit perspectives (as one respondent pointed out that Ottawa has the largest Inuit population outside of Nunavut).

Regarding sustainability, several respondents said the Joint Facility could incorporate all of the features listed. The top five options all garnered between 45 and 57% agreement: Renewable materials, green roofs, use of native plants, water conservation methods and solar panels on the roof (57% of respondents chose this).

Engagement Session Discussion

Indigenous community members will feel welcome by seeing themselves represented in the Joint Facility. This could include visual representations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultures inside and outside the building:

- Signage in Indigenous languages, including directional signs in Inuktitut
- Indigenous nation flags flying alongside others outside of the building
- Indigenous art from this area and across Canada
- Respectful displays about Indigenous histories and cultures that avoid stereotypes or misconceptions

Participants noted the importance of having Indigenous people hired and working at OPL/LAC. Previous iterations of Library and Archives Canada have felt intimidating to some. A small, staffed welcoming area could help orient visitors to the new Joint Facility and its many services. An awareness campaign letting community members know that the Facility will offer 'more than just books' could also be beneficial.

Participants were interested in spaces for Indigenous communities to gather and do a wide range of cultural activities. Further discussion with community members is recommended to determine how the spaces should be configured for suggested activities that may not have been hosted by the library before, such as hide preparation and tanning, preparing country foods.

It was also noted that the building should recognize the proximity to Chaudière Falls, an important gathering area where First Nation protocols and ceremonies took place. Further, the Facility has the potential to be an international destination to learn about Indigenous cultures.

Common Interior Spaces and Collections at the Joint Facility

Indigenous Engagement Discussion

Participants appreciated the natural light and use of natural materials in the building design; several were interested in having plants inside the building, including a green wall; the choice of interior colours could also extend a feeling of 'earthly warmth'.

Some participants wanted assurances that the building would meet high environmental standards and incorporate LEED certification, zero carbon emissions and recycling facilities, as well as assurances that the design would be adapted for the new COVID-19 reality, with better ventilation, air filtration and sanitization.

The building design seemed to be accessible for populations with various needs; it was suggested that multiple parking spots close to an elevator could be reserved for Elders, to facilitate access the building.

Participants appreciated the number of spaces available for group activities, as well as the mix of areas available for talking and socializing, along with smaller, quieter areas for other activities that would balance out the larger, open concept spaces.

Several participants expressed an interest in smudging or lighting the qulliq in areas other than the Indigenous space, such as the theatre and the atrium (Central Gathering Space). They

emphasized that these practices are not performative but integral to how these activities are conducted:

- Allows for embedding of Indigenous cultures and honouring Indigenous protocols;
- Breaks with colonial practices;
- Sets the right tone, particularly when events and activities involve learning about difficult subjects;
- Allows for reconciliation and healing;
- Respects our connections between culture and spirituality;
- Most likely does not require extensive air filtration.

It was suggested that there be access to ceremonial objects at the Facility, such as a community qulliq, smudge bowls, medicines (e.g., Sweetgrass, Sage, Tobacco, Cedar), etc. The responsibility for taking care of and replenishing the supplies can be done in partnership with Indigenous communities. Of note, the examples above include the suggestions offered by participants, however the partners will ensure efforts are made to identify Métis Nation ceremonial objects as well.

Central Gathering Space

It was suggested that the atrium (also referred to as the Central Gathering Space) could host fairs for local Indigenous artisans or offer an important economic opportunity by having an Indigenous gift shop/boutique featuring products by local Indigenous artists and businesses. The cafe or restaurant could serve Indigenous foods. The interior walls of the gathering space (including the balconies or stairway railings/edges) might include Indigenous motifs, and warm colors. This area might also include the green wall or plants. It was also suggested that the open space could be used for conferences.

Survey Responses

Respondents were asked about specific spaces within the Joint Facility and elements that would make them feel welcome. The following lists are elements that were mentioned by at least two respondents, with the most responses listed first as well as a few individual responses that warrant further consideration.

Atrium

- Circular designed space/s with cultural designs, northern and Indigenous-themed flora and fauna
- Lots of seating (perhaps on exterior or interior walls, benches, easy passage for wheelchairs)
- Lots of natural light, open concept, good ventilation and airflow
- Plants
- Extensive use of art and murals by Indigenous artists

- Café
- Comfortable for conversations (no need to be silent)

Auditorium

- Ceremonies and teachings from Elders (including language learning), pow wows, throat singing, traditional games, men’s and women’s circles and cultural performances
- Indigenous performers/artists/musicians/theatre/authors/dancers/lecturers/storytellers
- Film screenings (coordinate with Asinabka Film and Media festival). Opportunities with other festivals could also be explored.
- Workshops and presentations (for example, specialists from OPL/LAC on collections, archival material, debates on topics relevant to Indigenous peoples, historical education

“This is a very western design where there is a focus person and everyone is listening, whereas in my culture we like to be in a circle all equal and able to see one another.”

One respondent asked if there is a way to incorporate circular processes (setting up the space in circle) for better interaction.

One respondent said theatre-style seating is very cramped and not comfortable when the room is full. If there are arm rests, they should be movable or removed altogether.

Several respondents would like to see this space available for use for free or at low cost to Indigenous individuals and organizations

Café

Three-quarters of respondents said they want to see areas where they can bring in their own food, followed by environmental sustainability in operations and products (71%). Only 16% want to see an establishment that serves alcohol.

Other suggestions:

- Water bottle filling stations
- Outdoor patio
- Indigenous food, drinks, Indigenous chef-inspired food, local and organic, country food

Public Art³

Survey Responses

There was a wide variety of responses to the question about the purpose of public art by Indigenous artists. The following are the main comments.

Public art by Indigenous artists should:

³ All responses to survey Q31 about the Public Art Program and ideas for Indigenous artwork are available as Appendix 3.

- Evoke emotion, inspire people, ‘a feeling of connection and awe’
- Educate, teach about Indigenous history
- Showcase Indigenous culture
- Start conversations
- Create sense of national unity
- Promote and amplify less-known Indigenous artists
- Extensive use of natural elements
- Celebrate creativity and inclusion
- Include digital art
- Express Indigenous perspectives on Indigenous reality and histories
- Include sculpture and carvings and a wide range of media and sizes
- Tell the Indigenous history of the Ottawa region
- Showcase Indigenous artists in exhibitions

“The art should display the pride, resiliency, and diversity of Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island.”

Indigenous Engagement Discussion

Participants agreed that including Indigenous art inside and outside the Facility is important, either as part of the building, and within the art gallery and Indigenous space.

Several ideas were shared for the inclusion of Indigenous-themed art, such as an Inuit-themed nighttime light show on the outside of the building (similar to the one on Parliament Hill), incorporating northern lights and audio (throat singing, blizzards), as well as artwork on the building’s exterior pillars, depicting the Seven Grandfather teachings.

Collections and other Content

Survey Responses

When asked how OPL should highlight Indigenous content throughout the facility, the highest percentage of responses (80%) is for posters and bookmarks of suggested reads by Indigenous authors, followed by programs and series on Indigenous authors.

Regarding Indigenous-specific materials to include in the OPL space, respondents said books, Indigenous-specific resources, language books and audio recordings/oral stories, movies, documentaries and videos, pre-European contact stories and music, newspapers, and magazines.

“It would great if OPL made an effort to have the most complete collection of Indigenous authors (fiction and non-fiction books) and films in Canada.”

Interior Spaces and Opportunities in LAC

Survey Responses

Nearly 74% of respondents said they go to LAC to consult archival documents. Visiting and exhibition; seeking assistance and guidance on research; and accessing on-site resources each accounted for about 50% of the responses.

41% indicated that an orientation tour of LAC would be very useful; only 5% said it would not be very useful.

The top two types of materials most likely accessed at LAC are: genealogy/ancestry research (75%), and archival photos, maps, and films (68%).

Engaging displays and demonstrations in the entrance space for LAC have had more than 50% response rate: exhibitions featuring original, historical documents (59%); historical photographs (53%) and workshops on Indigenous genealogy or LAC's collections (52%).

Respondents were asked for other ideas to make LAC a space that reflects Indigenous identity, heritage, and history. The following are suggestions, grouped by theme:

- Workshops (language learning, art, crafts such as weaving, beading, basketry, sewing)
- Audio and video recordings (history of residential schools, interviews with Elders)
- Ensure there are Indigenous staff at LAC, including access to a traditional knowledge keeper
- Support to access sensitive and restricted documents (e.g., on residential schools or Sixties Scoop), as well as research and viewing rooms large enough to accommodate families
- Space for Indigenous artisans to sell items

“Just be cautious that presentations of archival materials don't portray Indigenous people as something from past history, or cement narrow representations of who we are.”

Several respondents said they would like tools and resources that are easy to understand and use while doing archival research.

One respondent said that LAC must be sensitive to Indigenous material on display in order to respect cultural protocols or the trauma that seeing some objects may trigger in Indigenous peoples. As well, ensure that exhibitions or displays do not perpetuate stereotypes of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Engagement Discussion

Some participants reported feeling intimidated by the entrance of the current LAC Facility on Wellington Street (particularly the presence of security guards) and overwhelmed and discouraged when trying to access its services. They suggested an area shared by the LAC and OPL where a staff guide (including Indigenous staff) could welcome people to the building, find

out what people are looking for, and offer suggestions, assistance, and an orientation to the multiple services in the building, if requested. This space might also include a central registration area to access room bookings, programs and services, etc. Some indicated it would be helpful if this area was quiet and comfortable - away from the more open concept spaces in the Facility.

It was recommended that Library and Archives Canada explore ways to simplify access for all. Understanding how to access information was described as intimidating, and that Indigenous community members perceive that information has been hidden from them. At times the technology itself (for example, microfiches), makes access difficult and time consuming. Perhaps a training opportunity, (a “welcome to archival research 101”) could help people start their journey in research.

Colonization has impacted Indigenous people intergenerationally and in personal ways, resulting in changed names, disconnections from family and community, etc. A trained, culturally competent Indigenous liaison who understands these contexts would be a valuable support to help Indigenous community members feel comfortable in sharing their stories and embarking on their archival research.

Participants also saw the new Library and Archives Canada facility as an opportunity to reengage with a shared history in a way that is truthful and takes into account Indigenous perspectives and experiences. Doing so is part of reconciliation and reparation, helps to address racism and stereotypes, and strengthens future generations.

- Representations of Canadian historic figures should include Indigenous, wholistic perspectives on their impacts and legacies - both positive and negative.
- Show an evolving story of Indigenous peoples and their relationship to Canada, that is updated often - not only based in the past. For example, an Indigenous wall of recognition can show Indigenous people involved in current events.
- Display Indigenous artifacts that have been found within the Ottawa-Gatineau area, including archaeological finds, and archival photos of Algonquin community members that lived here.
- Incorporate knowledge about wampum belts, as they are an important tool for diplomacy and negotiations.
- Acknowledge that Indian Day Schools existed, in addition to relocations, residential schools and the Sixties Scoop. Staff should understand the intergenerational effects of these policies.

Inuit community members shared several concerns and suggestions regarding how they should be represented.

- Ensure that displays of Inuit are inclusive of Inuit populations across Canada and capture untold and unseen histories that non-Indigenous populations are not aware of, such as forced relocations.
- Recognize Inuit achievements, including contributions of community members across their territory.

- Archival audio and video recordings are a sensitive topic, as many historical events have been a source of shame and guilt and are not spoken about
- Great care must be taken with photos of Inuit people and communities. Participants expressed concerns, based on oral histories, that some archival photographs may have been staged or manipulated, or may have additional contexts of which outside archivists/curators/historians are not aware. Permission should be sought from families before photographs are displayed, as some continue to be hurtful.
- There are generational gaps in knowledge of Inuit histories and cultures due to western and Christian influences, residential schools, relocations, the child welfare system, etc. Cultural practices have been suppressed and there can be opportunities to reclaim them. Representations should take into account the various Inuit populations (Northern, urban, remote), as well as being inclusive of Inuit who are LGBTQ2S+, or who have been adopted out of their communities.
- Many Inuit items are in the Smithsonian or other museums and are inaccessible to Inuit in Canada. At the very least, photographs of these items could be made available at LAC in Ottawa.
- Partner with the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation to make their archives of over 18,000 Inuktituk-language videos easily accessible for viewing and research.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation participants also expressed an interest in the genealogy resources at LAC. Suggestions for enhanced services included:

- Workshops on how to write biographies or family histories; invite community members to contribute their family genealogies and stories to the archives.
- Working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous genealogists conducting research into Indigenous family lineages; recognizing that some Indigenous nations trace kinship matrilineally.
- Making accessible information related to families, communities, and treaties.

Other suggestions about LAC programs and services included:

- Training for Indigenous community members on how to restore old photographs, etc.
- Assisting with accessing and preserving old technologies (audio cylinders, cassettes, vinyl disk) without damaging them, as well as creating digital archives of these items
- Ensuring that access to all information is free.

Other Spaces in the Joint Facility

Creation Spaces/Makerspaces

Nearly 64% of respondents would use the makerspaces to attend seminars and workshops. Other choices that received more than 40% response rate include: access to tools (51%), free

workshop space (44%), new technologies (42%), art and craft related spaces with supplies and equipment (42%).

Other ideas for the creation spaces:

- Indigenous artists and crafts people/knowledgeable staff members
- Artists talks and teachings
- Elders and youth
- Ensure space can accommodate cultural practices (e.g., smudging)
- Get input from Indigenous Elders for use of the space
- Movie and short film creation
- Traditional life skills programs
- Woodcarving
- Photography and video, virtual reality
- Traditional food cooking demonstrations
- Traditional art and craft (sewing, beading, carving, canoe building, stone carving, basket weaving, drum making, leather work, caribou tufting)

Indigenous-Specific Spaces and Activities

Survey Responses

Nearly every option on the list received more than 50% so there is strong interest in all of the ways that this space could be used.

When asked about the Indigenous Multipurpose Space, some respondents reiterated suggestions mentioned for the Creation Spaces. The following are other common suggestions:

- Indigenous guest speakers, Elders, storytellers
- Sharing circles, men's and women's circles
- Indigenous book clubs
- Workshops, traditional/cultural teachings (about culture, ceremony, healing, drumming)
- Youth- and child-specific events and multigeneration events
- Several respondents said to ensure that this space is accessible to all First Nations, Inuit, Métis Nation individuals and groups (and that it is not taken over by non-Indigenous groups)
- Celebrations and ceremonies (including ability to smudge)
- Maps/star maps on ceiling with Indigenous stories of the constellations
- Flexible, adjustable spaces for different uses

Every option listed for Indigenous-specific activities received more than 50% of responses, with Indigenous cultural workshops at 81% and Opportunities to meet Elders and Knowledge Keepers at 80%.

Indigenous Engagement Discussion

Comments were positive about the Indigenous space, though some expressed concerns about its capacity of 30 people. If this is the only place that smudging will be permitted in the facility, the small capacity of this space would be a limitation. It was also noted that the acoustic design of the Indigenous space should take into account that community members would expect to drum, sing, fiddle and dance there, and how this sound would echo in the room, or carry over into adjacent spaces.

Participants were interested in the spaces - either the planned maker spaces, or Indigenous-specific spaces - for the rediscovery and sharing of Indigenous oral traditions, with invited Elders, Knowledge Keepers, storytellers, and hands-on workshops with artisans and skilled people. This was seen as an important reconciliation effort to engage those who kept our cultures alive and in memory during the times they were suppressed, and to facilitate the transmission of knowledge and skills to future generations.

Several participants suggested that the Indigenous space and other meeting spaces be made available for free or at a low cost for community members and Indigenous organizations.

Meeting areas or studios should have internet access and online videoconferencing technology available for small or large groups - from local to international.

Some participants imagined an Inuit-specific space, where community members would have the proper tools and space to do raw skin preparation and hide tanning, sewing (parkas, amautis), beadwork and other activities. A place for stone carving with the necessary tools could also help with economic development. The space might also be decorated with Inuit items, but it was noted that any displays should reflect living cultures (as opposed to museum-like, or tokenistic approaches). A mentorship program for Inuit writers that honours Inuit ways of communicating (vs. western literary conventions) could help foster written histories from Inuit perspectives.

The lending library could include Inuit drums and sewing machines, as well as other Indigenous musical instruments.

First Nation, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities would benefit from access to audio/video production facilities to record oral histories and aid in Indigenous language preservation.

Additional Indigenous language resources could include a safe place where people can learn Indigenous languages.

Another concern was that outside foods be permitted to be brought into the building. Regarding the community kitchen, Inuit community members suggested developing a space and protocols for raw food to be served, with an understanding that the food provided is ethically harvested. Ensure there is a space to store frozen food, with large pots (consult on the size requested), big trays for communal sharing, culturally specific eating/gathering areas. For example, at the Winnipeg Inuit Centre the kitchen floor is concrete because the meal preparation involves hammering frozen food, and seating is closer to the floor.

It was recommended that OPL develop a broader mandate as a community hub that will be used beyond its traditional sense as a library. As a community experiencing homelessness will access the facility, it should have a welcoming area for people looking for a safe, warm space to be, where they won't be asked to leave for staying too long. Create overtures to the population to be involved in the activities taking place at the library. Many Indigenous service providers are currently located in the east end of Ottawa; the new facility is centrally located and could provide Indigenous outreach and support, such as mental health professionals, and/or social workers to help connect people with services. In the entry area, make available a card-sized listing of local Indigenous services.

Inuit Elements

As noted earlier, some participants imagined an Inuit-specific space inside the building. Either within this proposed space, or elsewhere in the Facility, the following Inuit elements might be considered:

- Include Inuktitut signage (welcome, bathroom, exit, etc.)
- An Inuit syllabics chart
- A floor or carpet with images of a northern 'groundscape' (e.g., ice floes, seals under water, caribou tracks)
- Wall hangings by Inuit artists, and full-wall images of their home landscapes: "no trees; land and sky" and familiar sounds of the north.
- A display of the [Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles](#)
- Ensure that Inuit elements and art are appropriate and respectful. It was noted that Inukshuks in the north "do not look like men", and that the ulu is often used as an Inuit symbol, even though it is a common, everyday item.

Other suggestions and observations:

- Establish an Impact Hub type of co-working space, to foster team building, social media savvy, and entrepreneurship.
- Strengthen the connection between Indigenous peoples in Canada and new immigrants by having accurate and up-to-date materials about Indigenous peoples available in languages other than English and French. These materials can help integrate newcomers into Canadian society while helping them understand the histories, cultures, and languages of Indigenous peoples.
- Make it easier for community members to get a library card and renew it (or make them without expiry dates).

Exterior Design and Spaces

Survey Responses

The most popular use of the outdoor space is for a firepit/outdoor sacred fire area (82%).

Respondents also mentioned the use of natural elements like cedar and other trees from traditional Algonquin territory as well as plants native to this area.

Art and other designs, such as circular motif, should be prominent.

Indigenous Engagement Discussion

Participants appreciated how elements of the land were considered and incorporated into the building.

Some participants noted that the exterior design seemed reminiscent of the Museum of History in Gatineau. It was suggested that more Algonquin-themed elements be added to the exterior of the building, such as a tipi or wigwam-type shapes within the architecture.

The outdoor space has potential to be used for Indigenous programming, gatherings, or ceremonial purposes. The exterior fire pit is important for ceremonial uses, as there are no public areas in Ottawa for such use since access to nearby Victoria Island is restricted. The area should be large enough to accommodate groups and include an accessible path to the facility doors.

An outdoor area could be designated for installation of a tipi as needed, with semi-permanent hardware built in. The tipi offers a space to gather and share teachings. Procedures to accommodate putting up a tipi safely should be embedded into the policies of the facility. There should also be safe storage at the facility for the canvas and poles, etc. It was also suggested that a tipi large enough to accommodate a fire pit could be beneficial.

The planned medicine garden was well-received, with requests that it include Indigenous medicines, as well as Inuit berries, Labrador tea and other plants familiar to Inuit.

Inuit participants suggested an Inuit-themed outdoor space would be appreciated by Inuit community members, especially those unable to return to the North regularly. This space might contain an igloo-type structure; northern-inspired landscaping including gravel, moss, lichen, and rocks - no trees.

A covered passageway between Pimisi LRT station and the library facility would help with accessibility.

Conclusion

The Ottawa Public Library-Library and Archives Canada Joint Facility offers an important opportunity to put reconciliation into practice through the building's interior and exterior design, the use of space, the collections, programs and services available, the supports offered to Indigenous community members, the inclusion of Indigenous art, and the integration of Indigenous perspectives and worldviews.

Reconciliation can be advanced by developing policies and procedures that are respectful of Indigenous protocols. Developing a venue for continued engagement with representatives of First Nation, Inuit and Métis Nation communities can ensure that these elements are implemented 'in a good way.'

The OPL-LAC Joint Facility project team is grateful for the participation, ideas, and vision shared during these sessions and will draw on this information as it works on facility planning and programming.

APPENDIX 1—Urban Indigenous Engagement Break-out Group Discussion Questions

1. What would make you feel most welcome (as an Inuk, urban FN, Métis Nation person) in this new facility? (Prompt: are there barriers, issues, concerns?)

Programs and Services at Ottawa Public Library:

2. What interests you about the programs and services that Ottawa Public Library are planning to offer at its new central library?
3. Are there other First Nations/Inuit/Métis Nation specific programs and services that you want to see in the new central library?

Programs and Services at Library and Archives Canada:

4. What interests you about programs and services that Library and Archives Canada are planning to offer at this new facility?
5. Are there other First Nations/Inuit/Métis Nation specific programs and services that LAC could offer in this new building?

Interior

6. Are there other First Nations/Inuit/Métis Nation specific elements that you'd like to see in the look and design of the interior of the building? (Prompt: are there barriers, issues, concerns?)

Exterior

7. Are there other First Nations/Inuit/Métis Nation specific elements that you'd like to see in the look and design of the exterior of the building or landscape? (Prompt: are there barriers, issues, concerns?)

Public Art

8. After hearing the presentation from the facility's Curator of Indigenous Art, do you have any ideas for Indigenous artwork and that would reflect First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation culture and traditions or have any other suggestions for the Curator of Indigenous Art Program?

Conclusion

9. Is there anything else that you haven't said that you want to add about this new joint facility?

APPENDIX 2— OPL-LAC Joint Facility Indigenous Questionnaire, Developed by NSights

Q1 With which of the following communities do you personally identify?

- First Nations
- Inuit
- Métis Nation
- More than one
- Non-Indigenous
- Prefer not to answer

Q2 Which of the following age categories do you fall into?

- Under 16 years
- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-59
- 60-74
- 75+
- Prefer not to answer

Q3 Which region do you live in?

- Ottawa (Urban)
- Ottawa (Rural)
- Gatineau
- Elsewhere in Ontario
- Elsewhere in Quebec
- In another province
- Prefer not to answer

Q4 With which gender do you most identify?

- Female
- Male
- Two-spirited
- Non-binary, gender variant/non-conforming, transgender

Prefer not to answer

Q5 Please tell us about your association with OPL and LAC (pick all that apply):

I am an OPL cardholder

I am not an OPL cardholder, but I use OPL services (e.g. branches, programs, website)

I am not an OPL cardholder, and I do not use any OPL services

I have a LAC researcher card

I don't have a LAC researcher card, but I have attended a LAC event, tour, workshop or exhibition in the last 2 years

I have never visited a LAC facility

Q6 If you have never visited or accessed OPL or LAC services, why not? What prevents you from visiting?

Q7 Nearly 5,000 people are expected to go in and out of this new building and use the meeting rooms each day. What might persuade you to visit the new facility? (Pick all that apply)

Indoor public spaces (to lounge, socialize)

Outdoor public spaces (to lounge, socialize)

OPL or LAC programs and services

Access community services

Access genealogical, historic and archival materials

Art on display and other exhibits

Typical public library offerings (borrowing materials, access to technology)

New public library offerings (creation spaces, new technologies)

Public events, readings, lectures, workshops, etc.

Convenient location (near where I live/work, on the LRT/bus route, on the way to other destination points, etc.)

Café or gift shop

Other (please describe)

Q8 The joint facility is designed to be universally accessible, reducing barriers and increasing inclusivity. Here are some of the features we will be incorporating: Large and inviting elevators; All gender washrooms; Multiple building entrances; Meditation Room (multi-faith) Sensory Room (quiet, darkened rooms for people with sensory sensitivities); Interior Ramps; Close proximity to LRT station and cycling networks. How can we make this facility more accessible and welcoming to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation citizens/community members?

Q9 While being respectful of the fact that this joint facility sits on the territory of the Algonquin Nation and Algonquin cultural elements will be incorporated into the design,

how can we weave other First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation cultural elements into the design of the joint facility to make it welcoming, respectful and inclusive?

Q10 What sustainable features would you like to see inside and outside of the building? Pick your top three from the options below.

Green roofs

Use of native plants

Solar panels on the roof

Green walls

Water conservation methods

Renewable materials used in the building's construction

Low waste policy

Other (Please describe)

Q11 The interior atrium is a central gathering space in the facility where people can come together. Do you have any suggestions to make this space feel welcoming and useful to you?

Q12 There will be an auditorium located in the facility. This large multipurpose space will be a focus of community, social, educational, and cultural activity. It will include performance, program, event and meeting space. The current architectural drawing of the space is below. What activities would you like to see hosted in this space?

Q13 There are plans for a café on the ground floor and a restaurant on the fifth floor in the new facility. In terms of accessing food and beverages, what would be important to you in this facility?

Quick snacks and beverages such as coffee/tea (limited menu items)

A restaurant with a full menu

An establishment that serves alcohol such as a wine bar

A cafeteria similar to what one might expect at a museum

Multile food and drink options throughout the facility

Country food or Indigenous-inspired food and drinks

Areas where I can bring my own food

Environmental sustainability in operations and products (e.g., no plastic, biodegradable containers)

Other (please describe)

Q14 There will be public art throughout the Joint Facility including a series of works by Indigenous artists. What would you like public art to achieve or accomplish inside and outside this building?

Q15 What would you like to do in the LAC spaces? Pick your top three.

To visit and exhibition

To seek assistance and guidance on research

To access on-site resources

To consult archival documents

To consult published heritage documents (books, newspapers, magazines, publications of the Government of Canada)

A quiet place to study or work

Q16 How important would it be for you to attend an orientation tour and workshop on some of LAC's services and collections? For example, how to use historical documents to conduct genealogy research. Pick from a scale of 1 to 5, where "1" means "very useful" and "5" means "not very useful".

Q17 What types of materials would entice you to come visit the facility? Pick your top 3:

Genealogy/ancestry research (such as archival documents, census records, photos on my personal and family history)

Materials that are part of a research project

Published heritage documents (books, newspapers, etc.)

Music collection (sheet music, recordings)

Materialize I can digitize myself in the Digitization Lab

Materials presented to me in the form of an exhibition

Archival photos, maps, films

Other (please describe)

Q18 What kind of displays or demonstrations would be engaging to see at the entrance space for LAC? Pick your top 3:

Exhibitions featuring original, historical documents

Touch screens with orientation information

Information about LAC's most popular collections

Information about LAC's work including acquisition, preservation and access services

Digital kiosks featuring catalogues, databases and research guides

Workshops on Indigenous genealogy or LAC's collections

LAC staff members who can answer basic/general questions

A glimpse into LAC's preservation and conservation laboratories

Historical photographs

Video projections

Other (please describe)

Q19 Do you have any other ideas to make LAC a space that reflects Indigenous identity, heritage and history?

Q20 What would be your primary purpose for visiting the OPL spaces in the facility? Pick up to 5 from the following list:

To borrow materials

To access public computers and the free Internet /Wi-fi

To access affordable community meeting spaces

To use technology to create projects – 3D printers, film studios, etc.

To access services that will help advance my career or employment prospects

To receive help with digital resources (e.g., databases, e-books, etc.)

To access children and/or teen materials and programs

A quiet place to reflect, read, study or work

A social gathering spot to connect with friends and acquaintances

To borrow musical instruments and/or access a recording studio for music and performing arts

To participate in programming (e.g., author visits, cooking demonstrations, etc.)

For research purposes

Q21 There will be spaces dedicated to creativity and hands-on learning—often called creation spaces or makerspaces. What would entice you to use these spaces? Choose your top 3:

Free workshop spaces

Access to tools I need to create that I don't have at home

New technologies like 3D printers and laser cutters

Seminars and workshops

Access to computer software and programs that I don't have at home

Networking with other creative people

Art and craft related workshop spaces, with supplies and equipment (with sewing machines and other craft-making equipment)

A recording studio

A demonstration kitchen

Q22 How could the maker spaces be more welcoming and enticing for you and other Indigenous peoples?

Q23 Would any of the following Indigenous-designated indoor spaces encourage you to visit the facility? Please select all that apply.

- Circular gathering room
- Terrace with Indigenous plants
- Indigenous artwork around the facility
- Indigenous books, DVDs, material displays
- Exhibits and/or videos on Algonquin tradition and culture
- Indigenous languages resource area
- A space to meet with Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Children's spaces with Indigenous designs

Q24 The new facility will feature a unique Indigenous multi-purpose space, a round room located on the second level that intended to be a space where Indigenous peoples feel comfortable, respected, welcome, and at home. The current architectural drawing of the space is below. How would you like to use this space? What types of programs or activities would you like here?

Q25 How should OPL highlight Indigenous content throughout the Joint Facility?

- Displays of Indigenous books
- Posters, bookmarks of suggested reads by Indigenous authors
- Programs and series on Indigenous authors
- Indigenous language books in Indigenous Space and in language collection
- Other (please specify)

Q26 The facility has a large creative space for hands on learning in both digital and traditional maker programs. What types of programs or tools would you like to see in the creative space?

Q27 Would any of the following Indigenous-designated outdoor spaces encourage you to visit the facility?

- Circular gathering space in the landscape plaza
- Firepit/outdoor sacred fire area
- Plaques or markers with Algonquin points of interest/landmarks/history
- Terrace with Indigenous plants
- Other (please specify)

Q28 How could the design of the Indigenous spaces inside and outside the building be welcoming and inclusive for Indigenous peoples?

Q29 Would any of the following Indigenous-specific activities encourage you to visit the new facility? (Check all that apply).

Accessing Indigenous language resources

Indigenous-specific archival and genealogical materials

An Indigenous-inspired gathering space

Indigenous cultural workshops (moccasin-making, beading, sewing, drum-making, etc.)

Visiting Indigenous authors, musicians, storytellers, creators

First Nations, Inuit, Métis Nation cultural performances

Opportunities to meet Elders and Knowledge Keepers

Q30 What about OPL's collections—what types of Indigenous-specific materials do you think should be included? (books by certain authors, DVDs, magazines, etc.)

Q31 The City of Ottawa's Public Art program has engaged an Indigenous Art Curator. Do you have any ideas for Indigenous artwork and that would reflect First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation culture and traditions?

APPENDIX 3— Responses to Q31 of the OPL-LAC Joint Facility Indigenous Questionnaire, Developed by NSights

“The City of Ottawa’s Public Art program has engaged an Indigenous Art Curator. Do you have any ideas for Indigenous artwork and that would reflect First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation culture and traditions?”

1. Big time.
2. Louis Riel
3. Totem pole, Inuit carvings, Métis dot art, etc
4. This is super cool! I think should have an emphasis on Algonquin art and culture due to the territory.
5. Teaching native painting carving etc
6. Chief Lady Bird, Monique Aura
7. photography, installation work, prints, drawing, fashion, paintings, etc.
8. Mixture of old and new generations while maintaining space for digital artwork.
9. Beading!! Soapstone carving. Moccasin and drum making.
10. bead work, sewing work, carvings
11. Variety of all types from all over Canada
12. Sculptures, carvings. Beadworks. Artists in action.
13. Create a board or advisory committee made of local Indigenous artists and curators for input and support
14. Have guest co-curators from different FN, I, M communities. Have annual Indigenous Student art competition.
15. Depict a variety of styles.
16. Turtle. A flag that represents all Indigenous peoples of the world. A meeting to make this flag of unity...
17. Focus on local Algonquin artists and local resident visitors. Ensure that the multiplicity of Nations, communities, and cultures is represented.
18. Clothing, traditional woodworking, modern influences too
19. Nothing specific, but I think that it would be good to be open to both traditional as well as contemporary designs and materials, showcasing the innovation as well as grounding of the diverse nature of Canada's First Nations
20. If LAC/OPL had engaged an Indigenous Art Curator, that would have been the best! Not sure if City of Ottawa is sharing that person with OPL or not? This question is a bit confusing and not worded well.
21. Is there a cost to the taxpayer for displaying Indigenous art work? If it is minimal then I say display all Indigenous artwork. Does the Indigenous Art Curator have a university education in this field? If so, then they should be able to answer this question fully - I say display all Indigenous artwork.
22. Someone offering medicine to sacred fire? Someone or people setting out to fish? Gathering berries or medicine?
23. Make something that lists chronologically Treaties from first contact to current and with a map to show location; textual information and where to access additional information.

Readings, papers, journals. There is also a Treaty week for Ontario the first week of November that can be highlighted with events.

24. Engage with young, contemporary Indigenous artists who create art about the Indigenous present and future, not just the Indigenous past