

# Joint Statement on Qualities of a Successful Librarian and Archivist of Canada

A new Librarian and Archivist of Canada will be appointed in the near future.

The Librarian and Archivist of Canada will be selected to carry out the legal obligations and responsibilities as outlined in the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*.

## **The *Library and Archives of Canada Act***

The *Library and Archives of Canada Act* (S.C. 2004, c.11), *Loi sur la Bibliothèque et les Archives du Canada* (L.C. 2004, ch. 11) (<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/L-7.7.pdf>)—the *Act*—establishes the Library and Archives of Canada as a branch of the federal public administration that is presided over by the Minister and under the direction of the Librarian and Archivist who is appointed by the Governor in Council, who holds office during pleasure, and who has the rank and powers of a deputy head of a department.

See Appendix A for the mandate and objectives of the Library and Archives of Canada and the powers of the Librarian and Archivist as established by the *Act*.

## **Qualities of a Successful Librarian and Archivist of Canada**

A broad coalition of Canadian stakeholder organizations has developed the following list of qualities we believe the Librarian and Archivist of Canada should have in order to be successful in this critical position of public trust and responsibility. We believe it is essential that the person appointed to this position at this time possess the necessary qualities to meet the tremendous challenges of dealing with the complex issues of the digital environment in an era of limited financial and human resources and the demands of providing increased public access to the irreplaceable treasures of Canadian documentary heritage.

### ***Vision***

- Ability to develop, articulate, and promote a compelling vision for the mission and work of the Library and Archives of Canada and, more broadly, for the library, archives, and records management professions in Canada.
- Ability to envision the stewardship role of the Library and Archives of Canada in preserving Canada's documentary heritage for present and future generations.
- Ability to envision a leadership role for the Library and Archives of Canada in ensuring that our government's record-keeping processes provide for accountability, transparency, and openness.

### ***Values***

- Commitment to the principle of public ownership of government records.

- Commitment to open and equal access to government records by all citizens, as defined by law and custom.
- Commitment to timely and appropriate declassification of historical records and documents.
- Commitment to protect the public's right to privacy, as defined by law and custom.
- Commitment to maintain and enforce legal deposit provisions and regulations.
- Commitment to protect the right to read, as defined by law and custom.
- Commitment to protect the professional integrity and political non-partisanship of the Library and Archives of Canada.
- Commitment to provide public access and service delivery to the vast treasury of the Library and Archives of Canada holdings in all media and formats, while respecting contractual and legal obligations.
- Commitment to further the leadership of the Library and Archives of Canada in the advancement of electronic records management.
- Commitment to open communication and to working creatively in an environment of mutual respect, with the staff and partners of the Library and Archives of Canada.
- Commitment to work creatively with other federal departments, with provincial and municipal governments, and with other library and archival programs, including those in other countries, to identify and address shared responsibilities and concerns.
- Commitment to the ongoing development of the Canadian library and archival networks.
- Commitment to work creatively with the networks of Canadian library and archival institutions to identify and address shared responsibilities and concerns.
- Commitment to ensuring diversity in the documentation of Canada's multi-cultural society.

### ***Competencies***

- Experience and excellence in transformational leadership, program advocacy, and management of a complex organization.
- Expertise and excellence in professional practice relating to libraries, archives, and/or documentary heritage.
- Ability to communicate in English and French.
- Ability to listen, communicate effectively, and partner with a wide range of stakeholders, including archivists, conservation professionals, government officials, historians, genealogists, journalists, librarians, political scientists, politicians, and the general public.
- Understanding of critical issues confronting government records and the archives profession generally, particularly the challenges of emerging information technologies, and the competing demands of access to government records, privacy, and national security.
- Understanding of the issues surrounding historical research and writing as they relate to both government records and private archives.
- Understanding of critical issues confronting libraries and the library profession generally, particularly the challenges of emerging information technologies.
- Ability to provide leadership and advocacy on behalf of the Library and Archives of Canada's roles to the public, government officials, staff, and on behalf of the archives, records management, library, historical, and research communities.

- Ability to participate effectively in international archival and library organizations as they work together to address professional issues, and to promote a Canadian presence in the advancement of library and archival science.

The Stakeholder community is committed to excellence in acquiring, preserving, and making available Canada's unique and precious documentary heritage. We view the opportunity to cooperate and collaborate with the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Governor in Council as an essential step in the successful appointment in this matter of great national significance and we are prepared to assist in any way we can.

***This Document is Endorsed by:***

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## Appendix A

The *Library and Archives of Canada Act* defines the mandate and objectives of the Library and Archives of Canada as follows:

WHEREAS it is necessary that

- (a) the documentary heritage of Canada be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations;
- (b) Canada be served by an institution that is a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society;
- (c) that institution facilitate in Canada cooperation among the communities involved in the acquisition, preservation and diffusion of knowledge; and
- (d) that institution serve as the continuing memory of the government of Canada and its institutions;

NOW, THEREFORE, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*

...

7. The objects of the Library and Archives of Canada are

- (a) to acquire and preserve the documentary heritage;
- (b) to make that heritage known to Canadians and to anyone with an interest in Canada and to facilitate access to it;
- (c) to be the permanent repository of publications of the Government of Canada and of government and ministerial records that are of historical or archival value;
- (d) to facilitate the management of information by government institutions;
- (e) to coordinate the library services of government institutions; and
- (f) to support the development of the library and archival communities.

The *Act* also specifies the powers of the Librarian and Archivist as follows:

8. (1) The Librarian and Archivist may do anything that is conducive to the attainment of the objects of the Library and Archives of Canada, including

- (a) acquire publications and records or obtain the care, custody or control of them;
- (b) take measures to catalogue, classify, identify, preserve and restore publications and records;
- (c) compile and maintain information resources such as a national bibliography and a national union catalogue;
- (d) provide information, consultation, research or lending services, as well as any other services for the purpose of facilitating access to the documentary heritage;
- (e) establish programs and encourage or organize any activities, including exhibitions, publications and performances, to make known and interpret the documentary heritage;
- (f) enter into agreements with other libraries, archives or institutions in and outside Canada;
- (g) advise government institutions concerning the management of information produced or used by them and provide services for that purpose;
- (h) provide leadership and direction for library services of government institutions;

- (i) provide professional, technical and financial support to those involved in the preservation and promotion of the documentary heritage and in providing access to it; and
- (j) carry out such other functions as the Governor in Council may specify.