**Valuing Northern Libraries**

The OLS-North Nordik Institute / Algoma University ***Valuing Northern Libraries*** Toolkit has the pilot report out!  And they’re awesome!

Learn more about the Toolkit here.  It is free to use and works for any library – not just northern ones and focuses on economic and social ROI of public libraries.  Here’s a link to the toolkit:  <http://fopl.ca/news/valuing-northern-libraries-toolkit/>

Here are the first six pilot reports:

1. Valuing Northern Libraries Community Report [Wikwemikong final community report (1)](https://www.slideshare.net/stephenabram1/wikwemiking-final-community-report-1)

Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library  
Social Return on Investment

1. Valuing Northern Libraries Community Report [Kenora final community report](https://www.slideshare.net/stephenabram1/kenora-final-community-report)

Kenora Public Library  
Social Return on Investment

1. Valuing Northern Libraries Community Report [Community report Dryden (2)](https://www.slideshare.net/stephenabram1/community-report-dryden-2)

Social Return on Investment  
Dryden Public Library

1. Valuing Northern Libraries Community Report [Powassan final community report (1)](https://www.slideshare.net/stephenabram1/powassan-final-community-report-1)

Powassan and District Union Public Library  
Social Return on Investment

1. Valuing Northern Libraries Sample Community Report [Temiskaming shores final community report](https://www.slideshare.net/stephenabram1/temiskaming-shores-final-community-report-125900632)

Temiskaming Shores Public Library  
Social Return on Investment

1. Valuing Northern Libraries Sample Community Report  
   Rainy River Public Library  
   Social Return on Investment

**Valuing Northern Libraries Toolkit**

<http://home.olsn.ca/resources/valuing-northern-libraries-toolkit>

Ontario Library Service – North (OLS – North) contracted NORDIK Institute to create a measurement tool to illustrate the value of libraries in rural, Northern, First Nation, and francophone communities. A steering committee consisting of the CEOs of the six pilot communities participated in identifying the measurement topics, the design and testing of the tool.

**The Toolkit and Resources**

This tool is designed to measure the value of public libraries and their role as community hubs, building capacity for healthy, resilient people and places, especially in rural, Northern, First Nation and francophone communities. The toolkit provides a step-by-step process to assess libraries’ social return on investment (SROI) within a holistic, cross-sectoral framework. The Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a term describing the social impact of a business or non-profit’s operations in dollar terms, relative to the investment required to create that impact and exclusive of its financial return to investors.

Based on a review of relevant literature, focus groups, consultation with steering committee members and site visits, NORDIK designed a measurement toolkit to encompass the many diverse and unique roles that public libraries play in the North as community hubs.

This framework identifies seven areas where libraries contribute to building individual, organizational, and community level capacity.

1. Cultural Integrity & Regional Identity
2. Social Inclusion
3. Cognitive & Literacy Development
4. Health & Wellness
5. Engaged Citizens & Safer Communities
6. Entertainment & Enjoyment
7. Economic Development

An indicator is a quantifiable measure used to monitor progress or impact in a given area or sector. In collaboration with the pilot sites, three indicators were chosen that best reflect how libraries’ operations and expenditures contribute to each respective area. The same number of indicators is measured in each of the seven sectors for the purpose of demonstrating the equivalent value of each sector in the overall economic benefit and calculation of its Social Return on Investment.

While many of the services and activities of the libraries could arguably demonstrate benefits in multiple sectors assessed by the measurement tool, this study has relied on the preferences of the pilot sites to identify the placement of indicators most appropriate to each of the seven sectors. The indicators have been selected based on data that is collected by all libraries, or alternatively, can be easily collected during the ‘typical week’ usage survey.

Each library builds a unique mix of resources—collections, programming, services, etc. in response to community needs, enabling diverse people to improve their quality of life and to participate in the life of the community in meaningful ways. In many instances, libraries demonstrate leadership by promoting services that are otherwise non-existent, under developed or under serviced. The library value toolkit can be used in all of Ontario’s small and rural communities to demonstrate how the library contributes to individual, organizational, and community capacity.

**SROI Indicator Template (the library value calculation spreadsheet)**

The SROI Indicator Template will require some of the data submitted for the 2017 Annual Survey of Public Libraries, the Typical Week Survey, plus other commonly collected information.

Download the template and sample reports:

1. [The SROI Indicator Template](http://home.olsn.ca/images/Resources/March-29-SROI-template-in-English--French.zip)
2. [Community Report Template](http://home.olsn.ca/images/Resources/EN/FINAL-Template-for-Community-Report.zip)
3. [Sample Community Report](http://home.olsn.ca/images/Resources/FINAL-Sample-Community-Report-Temiskaming-Shores.pdf)
4. [Sample Completed Indicator Template](http://home.olsn.ca/images/Resources/EN/FINAL-Sample-SROI-Indicator-Template-Temiskaming-Shores_EN.pdf)

**Training Resources**

**COMING SOON** – The Valuing Northern Libraries Toolkit online course will be made available on LearnHQ for Ontario public libraries to access.

**Valuing Northern Libraries Community Reports: Social Return on Investment**

The Ontario Library Services - North contracted NORDIK Institute, at Algoma University, to evaluate the impact that the 121 Libraries of Northern Ontario provide to their communities. Six diverse pilot sites volunteered to participate in the design and testing of a tool for measuring the Social Return on Investment (SROI), including Dryden, Rainy River, Kenora, Temiskaming Shores, Powassan and Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve. These studies were accomplished under a grant from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport through the Ontario Library Capacity Fund. We thank the Ministry for this funding.

Based on a review of relevant literature, focus groups, consultation with Steering Committee members and site visits, NORDIK designed a Measurement Toolkit to encompass the many diverse and unique roles that public libraries play in the North as Community Hubs. Seven key areas, or sectors, were identified as components of libraries’ benefit to their communities, namely: Cultural Integrity and Regional Identity; Social Inclusion; Cognitive and Literacy; Health and Wellness; Engaged Citizens and Safer Communities; Entertainment and Enjoyment; and Economic Development. In collaboration with the pilot sites, three indicators were chosen within each sector that best reflect how libraries’ operations and expenditures contribute to each respective area. The data for each is typically already collected by most libraries or is otherwise easily accessible.

Kudos to Rainy River Public Library for the fine entry below.   Libraries that are measuring their results, impact, economic impact, outcomes etc. report on using PLA’s Project Outcomes, OLS-North’s Valuing Northern Libraries Toolkit, and other library values and economic impact models.  Others report they prefer data and written accolades attesting to their service impact, or that they plan to measure outcomes soon.   This report is posted on the FOPL website <http://fopl.ca/news/special-reports-from-the-2017-ontario-public-library-operating-data/> and  <http://fopl.ca/news/2017-ontario-public-library-statistics/>.

**Rainy River Public Library**

Rainy River Public Library was one of six pilot sites for the Valuing Northern Libraries Toolkit project of OLS-North: <http://home.olsn.ca/resources/valuing-northern-libraries-toolkit>.

Based on the Toolkit indicators, and using our 2017 data, preliminary results for the Social Return on Investment for all programs and services delivered by our library is as follows:

1. Raw Economic Benefit, $882,913.02.

2. Total Economic Benefit, adjusted by the cost differential between Toronto and our region (as calculated by the annual Nutritious Food Basket report of Ontario Public Health Units): $1,196,434.01.

3. Benefit per Resident of our catchment area, $602.43.

4. Benefit per Household in our catchment area, $808.95.

5. Economic Impact of one Library Public Service Hour, $251.59.

6. Total Social Return in Investment, based on local operating funding from our appointing council: 3,474%. We would be glad to share full results.

**Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library**In 2015, Wikwemikong’s contribution to the library was $15,000. Application of the SROI Measurement Tool to 2015 data demonstrated this investment resulted in $259.45 of economic benefit per resident, and $714.08 per household. The library is open 1,569 hours per year for the year evaluated, yielding a minimum impact of $80.05 for each open hour in 2015. Through the application of these calculations it is apparent that the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library yields at minimum $844,753.70 in total economic benefit and a $56.32 social return on investment for each dollar of its base band funding. Expressed as a percentage, this amounts to 5,632%. These calculations demonstrate the monetary value of the library’s cultural, social, cognitive, health, and economic applications as well as its contributions to community cohesion and an improved overall quality of life.

**Kenora Public Library**In 2015, Kenora’s municipal contribution to the library was $614,634. Application of the SROI Measurement Tool to 2015 data demonstrated this investment resulted in $972 of economic benefit per resident, and $1,988 per household. The library was open 3,700 hours per year for the year evaluated, yielding a minimum impact of $2,331 for each open hour in 2015. Through the application of these calculations it is apparent that the Kenora Public Library yields at minimum $14,665,861 in total economic benefit and a $23.86 return for each dollar of its base municipal funding. Expressed as a percentage, this amounts to 2,386%. These calculations demonstrate the monetary value of the library’s cultural, social, cognitive, health, and economic applications as well as its contributions to community cohesion and an improved overall quality of life.

**Dryden Public Library**

In 2016, The City of Dryden’s municipal contribution to the library was $301,347. Application of the SROI Measurement Tool to 2016 data demonstrated this investment resulted in a $726.78 of impact per resident, and $1590 per household. The Library is open 2,700 hours per year yielding a minimum impact of $931.80 for each open hour. Through the application of these calculations it is apparent that the Dryden Public Library yields at minimum $5,631,828.80 in total economic impact and a $18.68 return on its base municipal funding. Expressed as a percentage, this amounts to is 1868%. These calculations demonstrate the monetary value of the library’s cultural, social, cognitive, health and economic applications, as well as its contributions to fostering community cohesion and an improved overall quality of life.

**Powassan and District Union Public Library**In 2016, Powassan’s municipal contribution to the library was $151,930. Application of the SROI Measurement Tool to 2016 data demonstrated this investment resulted in $361.09 of economic benefit per resident, and $694.05 per household. The library is open 3,594 hours per year for the year evaluated, yielding a minimum impact of $344.45 for each open hour in 2016. Through the application of these calculations it is apparent that the Powassan & District Union Public Library yields at minimum $2,494,398.75 in total economic benefit and a $16.42 return for each dollar of its base municipal funding. Expressed as a percentage, this amounts to 1,642%. These calculations demonstrate the monetary value of the library’s cultural, social, cognitive, health, and economic applications as well as its contributions to community cohesion and an improved overall quality of life.

**Temiskaming Shores Public Library**In 2016, Temiskaming Shores’ municipal contribution to the library was $392,262. Application of the Social Return on Investment (SROI) measurement tool to 2016 data demonstrated this investment resulted in $400 of economic benefit per resident and $858 per household. Collectively the branches are open 4,200 hours per year. Based on the library’s programs and services for the year evaluated, these yielded a minimum benefit of $436 for each open hour in 2016. Through the application of these calculations, it is apparent that the Temiskaming Shores Public Library yields a minimum $4,680.190 in total economic benefit and an $11.93 return for each dollar of its base municipal funding. Expressed as a percentage, this amounts to is 1193%. These calculations demonstrate the monetary value of the library’s cultural, social, cognitive, health, and economic applications as well as its contributions to community cohesion and an improved overall quality of life.

**Summary Table**

*(Detailed statistics are available in the published community reports)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Library** | **Funding** | **Per-resident economic benefit** | **Per-household economic benefit** | **Economic Impact per open hour** | **EROI & SROI**  **Total** | **EROI & SROI**  **Per dollar** | **EROI & SROI**  **percentage** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dryden PL | $301,347 | $1,590.00 | $726.78 | $931.80 | $5,631,828 | $18.68 | 1,868% |
| Kenora PL | $614,634 | $972.00 | $1,988 | $2,331 | $14,665,861 | $23.86 | 2,386% |
| Powassan & District Union PL | $151,930 | $361.09 | $694.05 | $344.45 | $2,494,398 | $16.42 | 1,642% |
| Rainy River PL | $35,002 | $505.36 | $678.60 | $276.23 | $1,003,440 | $17.16 | 3,474% |
| Temiskaming Shores PL | $392,262 | $400.00 | $858 | $436 | $4,680,190 | $11.93 | 2,867% |
| Wikwemikong FN PL | $15,000 | $259.45 | $714.08 | $80.05 | $844,753 | $56.32 | 5,632% |
| Fort Frances PL | $4384,216 | $969.00 | $2,269.00 | $1,303 |  | $17.16 | 632% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Measuring the Impact of Digital Services in Ontario’s Public Libraries**

The BRIDGE Toolkit for assessing technology impact in Ontario Public Libraries!

For the past two years, Toronto Public Library has been leading a team of all sizes of libraries – including First Nation Public Libraries. These include Innisfil public library, Kitchener public library, Mattawa public library, Naotkamegwanning first nations public library, Perth & District Union public library, Toronto public library, Wikwemikong first nation library, and Windsor public library.

They received a $200,000 Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport (OLCF) Ontario Library Capacity grant for the study. Funding for this project has been provided by the Government of Ontario. These partner libraries generously provided input during the research and design phases of the project, and the pilot implementation of the Technology Assessment Toolkit in their communities.

To support Ontario public libraries’ ability to deliver technology services more efficiently and with greater impact, Toronto Public Library engaged Nordicity to conduct a study on technology access in public libraries and its outcomes for Ontario Communities. As part of the study, Nordicity developed a Technology Services Assessment Toolkit for libraries to capture and analyze performance and outcome data on library systems’ technology services.

The toolkit has the ability to effectively support data-driven and evidence-based decisions around technology services and it enables libraries to understand and remain responsive to the specific needs of the populations it serves.

Additionally, the toolkit has the potential to position the public library sector as a leader in outcome-based analysis, serving as a leading example of advanced outcome measurement for peers in other jurisdictions, as well as across the culture sector and beyond.

The Technology Services Assessment Toolkit aims to enable public library systems across Ontario to:

* Measure the outputs (i.e., availability and usage) and outcomes of their technology services;
* Identify priorities for technology services based on evidence;
* Benchmark their technology service levels with other public libraries in Ontario; and,
* Understand how prepared frontline staff are to support technology services.

One of the primary objectives of the research and consultation conducted in the first phase of the project was to determine outcomes that would reflect the range of technology services offered by public libraries across Ontario and how these services benefit Ontarians.

The framework developed is two-tiered. It suggests that digital inclusion and digital literacy are the primary outcomes of the technology services offered by public libraries. These outcomes in turn, enable a range of secondary outcomes. Together, these two primary and four secondary outcomes create a framework to measure and benchmark how technology access in public libraries improves the lives of residence across Ontario while advancing the broader impact of government strategies and programs.

The Project Report is available here:

<http://fopl.ca/news/pleased-to-share-with-you-the-results-of-a-two-year-study-to-assess-the-impact-of-technology-services-offered-in-ontario-libraries/>

**Highlights of the Study in Ontario Public Libraries:**

**The ROI of Investment in 21st Century Public Library Digital Innovation Hubs**

Digital literacy and digital inclusion are two of the social ROI measures in the 2018 study *Technology Access in Public Libraries: Outcomes and Impacts for Ontario Communities*.  Key to come of these strategies is the movement towards cost-saving through e-government initiatives.  25% of Ontarians report not having internet access at home or work and this number increases when needed peripherals and assistance are included.  Some sample data include:

* 56% of respondents reported using technology at the public library.
* 68% of respondents reporting using technology at the public library were over age 55.
* 63% of respondents reporting using technology at the public library identified as low income.
* 44% of respondents reporting using technology at the public library were introduced to a new technology.
* 52% of those introduced to a new technology were over age 55.
* 92% of those introduced to a new technology continued to use it.
* 84% respondents reporting using technology at the public library reported increased digital comfort with using one or more services.
* 91% of those were identifying as a visible minority.

[**http://fopl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WEB-Nordicity-Full-Report.pdf**](http://fopl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WEB-Nordicity-Full-Report.pdf)

**Economic Return on Investment**

The following is a list of Canadian public libraries who have conducted an economic impact study applying this cost-benefit analysis (CBA) model first used by Toronto Public Library in 2013.  CBA is a commonly used approach to estimate the economic impact of public institutions. Please read “[**Understanding Economic Impact and Public Libraries**](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/understanding-economic-impact-and-public-libraries/)” for a more detailed explanation of how CBA is applied to public libraries.

This CBA model is open and available for public use. [Ottawa Public Library’s spreadsheet of calculations and data is open for others to use to calculate their own economic impact.](https://biblioottawalibrary.ca/en/impact)

This list is maintained by [Brightsail Research](https://brightsail.com/) partner [Kimberly Silk](mailto:kim@brightsail.com).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Library** | **Year Published** | **2011 Census Population** | **# Branches (at time of study)** | **Return on $1 Invested** |
| [Toronto Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/much-economic-impact-toronto-public-library-city-toronto-2013/) | 2013 | 2,615,060 | 98 | $5.63 |
| [Halton Hills Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/halton-hills-public-library-creates-over-18-million-in-total-economic-impact/) | 2014 | 59,008 | 2 | $3.96 |
| [Milton Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/milton-public-library-creates-nearly-30-million-in-total-economic-impact/) | 2014 | 84,362 | 2 | $5.67 |
| [Pickering Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/pickering-public-library-creates-over-32-million-in-total-economic-impact/) | 2014 | 88,721 | 3 | $5.85 |
| [Stratford Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/stratford-public-library-generates-14-91-million-in-total-economic-impact/) | 2015 | 30,886 | 1 | $5.63 |
| [Sault Ste.-Marie Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/sault-ste-marie-public-library-generates-more-than-6-million-in-economic-benefits/) | 2015 | 75,000 | 3 | $2.36 |
| [Kawartha Lakes Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/kawartha-lakes-demonstrates-the-value-of-local-libraries/) | 2015 | 73,214 | 15 | $7.05 |
| [London Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/london-public-library-generates-yearly-economic-impact-of-102-million/) | 2015 | 366,151 | 16 | $6.68 |
| [Vancouver Island Regional Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/vancouver-island-regional-library-generated-a-total-economic-impact-of-94783558-in-2015/) | 2016 | 430,000 | 38 | $5.36 |
| [Ottawa Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/ottawa-public-library-delivers-5-17-in-benefits-for-every-1-invested/) | 2016 | 883,391 | 33 | $5.17 |
| [Newmarket Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/newmarket-public-library-creates-over-20-million-in-total-economic-impact-for-the-town-of-newmarket/) | 2016 | 79,978 | 1 | $7.85 |
| [Edmonton Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/edmonton-public-librarys-economic-impact-is-187-million-annually/) | 2016 | 812,200 | 22 | $3.11 |
| [Burlington Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/burlington-public-library-creates-over-57-million-in-total-economic-impact-to-the-city-of-burlington/) | 2017 | 175,780 | 7 | $5.64 |
| [Hamilton Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/hamilton-public-library-generates-5-59-in-value-for-every-1-invested/) | 2017 | 519,950 | 22 | $5.59 |
| [Vaughan Public Library](https://libraryresearchnetwork.org/vaughan-public-libraries-delivers-approximately-315-of-economic-impact-for-every-citizen/) | 2017 | 288,300 | 9 | $5.57 |