Librarians & Library Technicians

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia

skilled immigrant
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Contents

1. Working as a Librarian [NOC 2021: 51100/ NOC 2016: 5111]or Library Technician [NOC 2021: 52100/ NOC 2016: 5211]

Job Description

Librarians select, develop, organize and maintain library collections and provide advisory services for users.

You perform some or all of the following duties:

- Recommend acquisition of books, periodicals and audio-visual, interactive media and other materials for library collections
- Provide reference services
- Select, catalogue and weed library materials
- Prepare bibliographies, indexes, reading lists, guides and other finding aids
- Develop systems to access library collections
- Perform manual, on-line and interactive media reference searches to assist users in accessing library materials and arrange for interlibrary loans
- Provide specialized programs for children, seniors and other groups
- Conduct library information and orientation training programs and tours
- Perform related administrative duties and supervise library technicians, assistants and clerks.

Source: WorkBC Career Profile for Librarians, https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx [search for Librarians]

Library technicians assist users in accessing library resources, assist in describing new acquisitions, participate in processing materials, and conduct reference searches.

You perform some or all of the following duties:

- Assist library users in accessing books, films, photographs, maps, documents, electronic materials and other library materials
- Catalogue new library acquisitions under the direction of a librarian
- Perform manual and on-line reference searches and make interlibrary loans for users
- Assist librarians in giving tours and providing children's and other specialized library programs.

Source: WorkBC Career Profile for Library Technicians, https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx [search for Library Technicians]

Industry Overview

Librarian

Most of the job openings over the next few years will come from the need to replace those who retire.

Technological advances and increasing library computerization mean that librarians must have increasingly advanced computer skills. Familiarity with computerized cataloguing, electronic records management and multimedia services will be increasingly important. As well, familiarity with software that supports chats, wireless networks, blogs and podcasting is becoming a requirement. Other skills that may be increasingly needed include multicultural librarianship, marketing and electronic records management.

Employment for librarians has traditionally been concentrated in public and academic libraries. A new trend is emerging that offers private sector opportunities for those willing to work as information specialists. The fields of information brokering, consulting (information access and validation), and database marketing may provide growth in new employment opportunities for librarians.

Industry sources report that there is currently an insufficient supply of graduates with experience in management, specialized subject background knowledge, technological skills, children's librarians, and multicultural librarians.
Source: WorkBC

Library technician

Most of the new jobs are expected to come from replacing retiring workers.

Advanced technical skills, such as web development and management are now in great demand. There is also a higher demand for workers who have specialized experience that matches a special library. You may have an advantage finding work if you have knowledge or education in fields such as administration, computer science or engineering. Advanced technical skills, such as web development and management are now in great demand.

Related fields, such as information brokering, consulting (information access and validation) and database marketing, offer alternative job opportunities.

Job Outlook for Librarians in BC (2021-2031)

B.C. Labour Market Outlook (2021-2031)

Provincial outlook

Forecasted average employment growth rate

+0.7% 2021 - 2026
+0.6% 2026 - 2031

Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Job openings

10 year expected job openings: 320

+50 2022
+30 2026
+30 2031

Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Composition of job openings

Replacement of retiring workers:
81.8%
270 openings

New jobs due to economic growth:
18.2%
60 openings

Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Chart from WorkBC

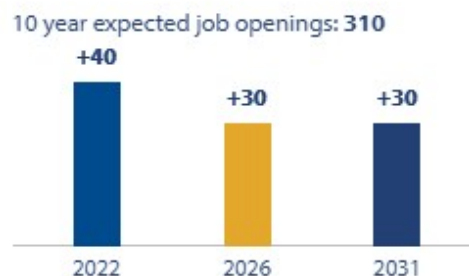### Job Outlook for Library Technicians in BC (2021-20)

Chart from WorkBC

WorkBC provides job openings for **Librarians** in BC regions, 2021-2031:

Region	Employment in 2021	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings 2021-2031
Vancouver Island	80	0.8%	40
Lower Mainland / Southwest	620	0.4%	210
Thompson-Okanagan	90	1.2%	50
Kootenay	30	2.2%	20

WorkBC provides job openings for **Library Technicians** in BC regions, 2021-2031:

Region	Employment in 2021	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings 2021-2031
Vancouver Island	130	0.8%	60
Lower Mainland / Southwest	560	0.8%	230
Thompson-Okanagan	60	0.3%	30

You can learn more about working as a **Librarian or Library Technician** in BC from:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Librarians,** https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx [search for Librarians or Library Technicians]
- **WorkBC Career Profiles** http://workbc.ca/Careers
- **Career Cruising**
  http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising
  [profiles for Librarian and Library Technician]
  Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

Types of Employers

Librarians work for public, school, and university libraries, as well as government, medical, law, and business libraries and more recently corporations and non-profit organizations.

Library technicians frequently work in public and special libraries, including libraries of schools, colleges, universities, law firms, and medical offices.

Salary

Librarians

The median annual salary for librarians in BC is $68,762.
Your earnings depend on a number of factors including the size, location, and type of library. In general, librarians earn in the range of $30,000 to $90,000 a year.

JobBank Canada provides these hourly wages:

Community/Area	Wages ($/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	15.75	39.56	49.45
Cariboo Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kootenay Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	15.75	39.56	49.45
Nechako Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Coast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northeast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thompson–Okanagan Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	15.75	39.56	49.45
Canada	18.01	35.00	49.21

Source: JobBank Canada

http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage

Library Technicians

The median annual salary for Library Technicians in BC is $46,926. Your earnings can vary depending on place of work and responsibilities. Corporate jobs and special libraries generally pay more than public or academic libraries.

JobBank Canada provides these hourly wages:

Community/Area	Wages ($/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	18.00	22.50	29.85
Cariboo Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kootenay Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	22.50	22.50	29.85
Nechako Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Coast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northeast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thompson–Okanagan Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Canada	15.00	24.00	32.44

Source: JobBank Canada

http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage

Full-time **Librarians** and **Library Technicians** usually also receive employee benefits such as dental coverage, paid vacation time, and retirement benefits.

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising

Working Hours

Librarians: Most public and academic libraries are open evenings and weekends, so librarians may work at those times. Librarians working in government and corporate libraries typically work daytime business hours. Full-time librarians generally work 35 to 40 hours a week. Managers and directors, however, may work up to 50 hours a week. Corporate librarians in fast-paced industries, such as advertising or legal services, may work longer hours during peak times.

Library Technician work schedules often depend on the type of library they work in. Public libraries are usually open evenings and weekends, and some library technicians will be expected to work these shifts. Many school libraries are open only during school hours. Some law firms have legal libraries that stay open late, while most government libraries are open only during business hours.

Source: Career Cruising

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- good instructional, communication, organizational and computer skills
- must have the ability to understand research methods
- problem solving
- critical thinking
- must enjoy working with others
- task planning and organizing
- able to work independently
- significant use of memory

- attention to detail

- customer service oriented

- patient

- cultural sensitivity

Education and Experience

Librarian:

A Master's degree in library science or its equivalent from an institution accredited by the **American Library Association (ALA)** is usually required for employment. Employment is subject to demand, and qualification requirements are set by individual employers.

Library Technicians:

Library technicians usually require completion of a two year college program in library and information technology.

For both librarians and library technicians, computer literacy is an essential skill. Experience with technology will increase prospects for employment.

Qualifications

This occupation is not regulated in British Columbia.

The occupations of **Librarian** and **Library Technician** are not regulated professions in Canada or BC.

CFLA/FCAB (Canadian Federation of Library Associations) recognises, on a reciprocal basis, professional qualifications at the master's level from library schools in Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain.

Internationally trained Librarians from other countries should contact the **Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC)** to determine the equivalency of your credentials: https://www.cicic.ca/

Source: Canadian Federation of Library Associations – Foreign Credentials

http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/guidelines-and-position-papers/foreign-credentials-position-statement/

3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, trade journals, and electronic sources, as well as through professional associations' publications.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and in *The Province* on Sundays.

Online Job Postings

- **Indeed.com**
  https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
  Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards
- **UBC School of Library, Archival and Information**
  https://slais.ubc.ca/news/student-jobs/
  Employment and placement opportunities in libraries

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **The Partnership Job Board**
  https://partnershipjobs.ca/
- **Vancouver Association of Law Libraries**
  http://vall.vancouver.bc.ca/category/job-postings/
- **Special Libraries Association Canada – SLA Canada**
  https://www.sla.org/career-center/

For additional tips on job hunting see:

- **Networking for Employment**

  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca [Search Networking for Employment]

Identifying the Right Position

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a range of different job titles that are relevant.

For **Librarians**, look for these related job titles :

- Associate Librarian
- Bibliographier
- Cataloguer
- Classifier – Library

- Iconographer
- Information Specialist
- Library Co-co-coordinator
- Library Consultant

For **Library Technicians**, look for these related job titles:

- Assistant Librarian
- Assistant, Library
- Library Aide
- Library Supervisor
- Library Technical Assistant
- Records Management

- Technician
- Records Technician
- Reference Aide
- Reference Assistant
- Technical Indexer - Library

Creating a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of libraries and library-related businesses in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Public Libraries in BC**

  https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/sports-culture/arts-culture/public-libraries/find-your-public
- **BC Electronic Library Network**

  https://bceln.ca/partner-libraries

  Directory of post-secondary libraries in BC

- **CivicInfoBC**

  https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/municipalities

  Includes links to government agencies and Crown corporations in BC, many which have libraries

- **Reference Canada**

  http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada

  Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "[library]" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

  Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

NOTE: *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

4. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume (curriculum vitae) and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/ to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following pathfinders which are available in print at the Central Library or online at http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/.

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca

  [Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**

  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca

  [Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

- **Networking for Employment**

  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca

  [Search Networking for Employment]

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca

  [Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

Industry Associations

Library associations in BC and Canada provide information and assistance.
Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **BC Library Association (BCLA)**

  https://bclaconnect.ca/

  The British Columbia Library Association is a non-profit, independent, voluntary association representing Librarians and Library Technicians from all types of libraries

- **Library Technicians and Assistants Section [LTAS], BC Library Association**

  https://bclaconnect.ca/ltas/

  Provides relevant professional development, networking opportunities, and advocacy for library technicians and assistants in B.C.

- **Vancouver Association of Law Libraries**

  http://vall.vancouver.bc.ca/

- **Canadian Federation of Library Associations**

  http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/home-page/

- **Special Libraries Association – SLA Canada – Career Centre**

  https://www.sla.org/career-center/

- **Health Libraries Association of BC**

  https://hlabc.chla-absc.ca/

- **Visible Minority Librarians of Canada**

  https://vimloc.wordpress.com/

  A collaborative network to connect, engage and support visible minority librarians of Canada. Provides a mentorship program for new librarians and new immigrant librarians.

Industry Journals

Search for journals related to your profession. Examples include:

- **BCLA (BC Library Association) Perspectives**

  https://bclaconnect.ca/perspectives/

- **Library Journal**

  https://www.libraryjournal.com/

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/.