

Book Publishers Association of Alberta



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Throughout the year, the BPAA participates in and organizes numerous projects and programs to support a thriving book publishing industry in Alberta, to highlight Alberta book publishers and their titles, as they tell Alberta's Story. Our work is focussed on the following areas: advocacy, industry development, marketing, professional development and member services. We've included more information about these initiatives and how publishers can get involved.

1

ADVOCACY

The BPAA is committed to advocating on behalf of Alberta book publishers with industry and government stakeholders to enhance opportunities for the industry to grow in Alberta.

Government Outreach

To ensure a thriving, sustainable book publishing industry in Alberta, BPAA staff and members maintain regular contact with federal, provincial, and municipal government representatives. Following the 2023 Provincial Election, the BPAA reached out to Alberta MLAs to ensure they were aware of our industry, and we have seven additional communication pieces planned for the rest of the year.

The BPAA worked with government relations consultants to create our government relations implementation plan and key messages. We also work with consultants to increase our access to MLAs and schedule meetings. During these meetings, we showcase BPAA member publisher titles to bring awareness to the work our members are doing. Publishers are encouraged to send two copies of their new releases to the BPAA office, so that we can use them for this purpose.

We have compiled a list of resources on our [Members Only Page](#) for publishers interested in supporting our advocacy work, including the following documents created to support our request for a \$5 million annual investment in the Alberta Book Publishers Fund. Investment in our local industry continues to be both a challenge and a priority for the association.

- [2023 Provincial Budget Submission](#)
- [BPAA Key Messages](#)
- [Alberta Book Publishers Fund Overview](#)
- [Alberta Book Publishing Industry Infographic](#)



Your Alberta Story

During Alberta's 2023 provincial election, the BPAA launched the Your Alberta Story campaign. We asked candidates and Albertans to submit their stories, describing what part they have played in creating the vibrant and diverse province we all call home. We received many excellent submissions, and are continuing the campaign after the election by asking MLAs to submit their stories. More information about the campaign can be found [on our website here](#).

Copyright

In collaboration with colleagues across the country, our association is an active lobbyist for fair compensation for publishers and creators for works that are consumed by the K-12 and post-secondary education sectors. We support the Association of Canadian Publishers and Access Copyright in advocating for significant legislative reform of the *Copyright Act*.

In 2023, the BPAA issued a [written statement](#) to the Government of Canada demanding action to prevent the proposed downsizing and restructuring of Access Copyright. The BPAA advocated on behalf of our publishers that this change would have detrimental impacts for our industry. We are actively monitoring this situation.

MLA/MP Book Mail Out

Each summer, the BPAA sends a copy of an Alberta-published book to every Alberta MLA and MP to highlight the excellent work of Alberta publishers. Messaging accompanies the book, underscoring the depth and breadth of the Alberta book publishing industry and the significant contribution publishers make to Alberta's culture and economy. In 2023, MLAs and MPs will also receive a copy of the 2023/24 Alberta Books for Schools catalogue and 2023 Read Alberta Publisher catalogue.



Alberta Book Day

Alberta Book Day was first declared in 2017 to celebrate the many achievements of Alberta-based book publishers, and the significant contributions they make to the province's cultural and economic landscapes. As part of Alberta Book Day, the BPAA hosts an exhibition, which is an opportunity for BPAA member-publishers to meet MLAs and government staff and to showcase the diverse publishing industry in our province.

Alberta Book Day 2022 was held in-person on November 3, 2022 with over 250 government staff in attendance, over 500 books given away, and over 50 books sold. Alberta Book Day 2023 will take place in-person in November 2023 and will be held in the lower rotunda of the Alberta Legislature.

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

Read Alberta eBooks and Prairie Indigenous eBook Collections

In 2017, the BPAA partnered with the Alberta government to make Alberta-published eBooks available to readers across the province.



THE PRAIRIE INDIGENOUS EBOOK COLLECTION

(PIEC) was launched in 2019, and features over 400 titles from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba-based book publishers. The first of its kind in Canada, the Prairie Indigenous eBook Collection increases access to stories by Indigenous authors, and writings about Indigenous Peoples and Culture. The BPAA works with Indigenous experts who assist with assigning decolonized subject headings to titles.

Patrons of the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS), which delivers content to print-disabled Canadians, have access to the collections as well.



On October 24, 2022, the overall **READ ALBERTA COLLECTION** was expanded and renamed to include titles from Alberta magazine publishers, through a partnership with the Alberta Magazine Publishers Association.

Each of these collections are continually enriched as titles are added on a quarterly basis.

Currently there are over 2,100 eBooks and audiobooks in the collections, along with issues from 42 individual magazines.

We are grateful to Alberta Municipal Affairs' Public Library Services Branch for this much-needed investment in our industry.

[Read more about the Collections here.](#)

How can publishers get involved?

Titles are added quarterly (March, June, September, and December), and BPAA members are notified by eBOUND Canada when submissions are open.



Frankfurt Book Fair (FBM)

The Frankfurt International Book Fair is the largest book fair in the world, bringing together publishers and industry stakeholders from around the world. While the 2021 event was the first in-person fair since 2019, the attendance was very low. In 2022 FBM hosted the first fair that was well attended by publishers, since before COVID-19, including a full complement from Canada and 6 representatives from Alberta.

Kieran Leblanc attended several meetings while in Frankfurt, and discussions included best practices in other countries with regards to ensuring locally published books are included in resources for K-12 schools, current status and activities around copyright legislation, industry standards in different countries in accessible publishing, and overall industry trends that have been emerging since the onset of COVID. These meetings were invaluable in learning about creative ways in which to further the work and projects that the BPAA is engaged in.

The BPAA will be attending the 2023 Frankfurt Book Fair in October and hosting an Alberta Booth on the Canada Stand. We have applied for funding to support publishers that want to attend and will have space on our booth to display titles from publishers that are unable to attend in person.

THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE OF WESTERN CANADA

The Literary Landscape of Western Canada, created in 2018, is a joint catalogue between the BPAA and BC Books which features company profiles and titles with foreign rights for sale from member-publishers. In 2019 the catalogue was updated, a digital version was created, and a website, "Read Western Canada", was dedicated to profiling the catalogue. The catalogue was updated in 2021 to add publishers who have joined the BPAA and BC Books since 2019.

Accessible Digital Publishing Initiative

Because it is a priority to ensure all Canadians, no matter how they read, have access to accessible content, the BPAA has worked with publishers to incorporate accessible publishing practices into their workflows. This has included training in alternative text creation, real-time demos of the experience of print-disabled Canadians in accessing content, and education in the area of standards for the creation of accessible content and accessible metadata.

Through our Accessible Digital Publishing Initiative, the BPAA facilitated the conversion of over 800 member-publishers' titles into quality-assurance-tested EPUB3 files that meet internationally recognized WCAG and EPUB accessibility standards. The accessible eBooks are made available to Canadians with print disabilities through the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) and the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS). The files are added to the two eBook collections in Alberta libraries, and are made available to publishers for distribution.

The BPAA currently has an intake of titles in production, and has also received funding to enhance the availability and discoverability of accessible titles produced through the previous phases of the project.

The Canada Book Fund has now closed the Accessible Digital Books Support for Organizations funding stream, but the BPAA is continually looking for new grants that can support the continuation of this work by our publishers.

Booksellers Fund

The BPAA received funding from the Canada Book Fund to conduct primary research into methods to increase online sales of Canadian-authored books through independent booksellers. The project involved research with booksellers and other industry stakeholders to determine what activities or initiatives would be possible and helpful in achieving the goal of increased online sales of Canadian books. Based on the results of the research, which concluded in March 2023, the BPAA did not apply for another iteration of this grant. We will continue to focus on creative ways to support and engage with Alberta's independent booksellers.

BPAA Audiobook Project

Since 2016, the BPAA, in partnership with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), has produced a selection of Alberta-published books into accessible digital audiobooks. The audiobook files are provided to the publisher for distribution, made available to clients of the CNIB, and added to the Read Alberta eBook Collection.

This project runs when funding allows, and the number of titles produced can vary, depending on the amount of funding received. To date, we have produced over 80 accessible audiobooks of our members' titles. The CNIB is finalizing production on our most recent intake, and we have applied for funding for another intake.



How can publishers get involved?

When a new intake opens, the BPAA will notify publishers to submit titles for consideration.

Alberta Book Publishing Awards

Each year, the Alberta Book Publishing Awards celebrate excellence in publishing in the province. We regularly receive around 100 submissions from Alberta publishers in up to 17 award categories. Juries are selected from across Canada to adjudicate the awards, involving over 30 jurors annually. This year-long project culminates in the much-anticipated Alberta Book Publishing Awards Gala, which draws industry, government, and media attention to the world-class excellence of Alberta's publishing industry.

The 2022 awards gala was our first in-person event since 2019, and was held on September 16, 2022 at the Hotel Arts in Calgary, Alberta. Over 80 people attended the awards gala, which featured performances by Wakefield Brewster and Nisha Patel.

In addition to the Book of the Year awards, we presented the Emerging Publisher of the Year Award and the Lifetime Achievement in Publishing Award. A recording of the 2022 Awards Gala is available on our [YouTube channel](#).



The 2023 awards gala will take place at the Matrix Hotel in Edmonton, Alberta on September 21, 2023.

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LIBRARY OUTREACH

Outreach to Alberta libraries remains a priority for the BPAA. We have developed meaningful relationships with librarians across the province and keep in regular contact with them about our various programs and initiatives.

Library Conferences

The BPAA attends library conferences in-person and virtually to increase awareness of Alberta published books. We also donate door prizes to regional library conferences. We are happy to be rejoining these conferences in person where it makes sense for our association.

Library Communications

We have regularly scheduled communication with libraries to update them about additions to the eBook collections, creation and distribution of MARC records, bestseller lists, and other BPAA events.

MARKETING

Alberta Books for Schools

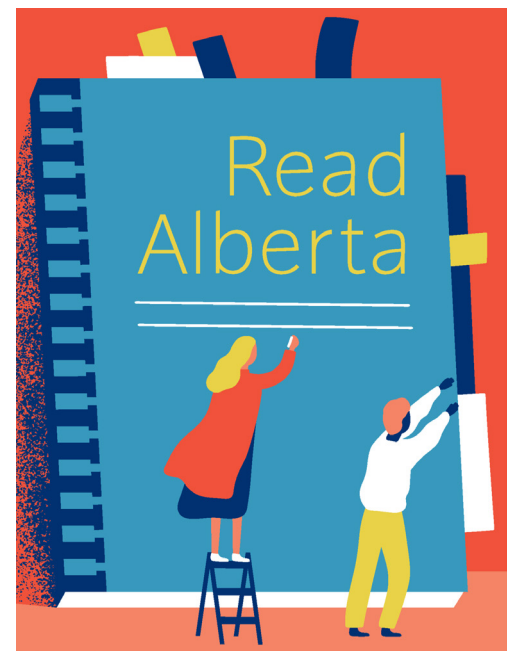
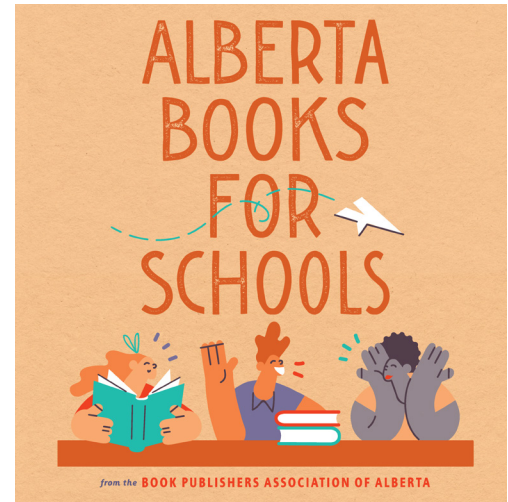
Launched in September 2022, the Alberta Books for Schools project is a catalogue, website, and digital database featuring Alberta books that can be used as supplementary resources in Alberta classrooms. Undergoing curriculum mapping by The Alberta Library, the submitted titles include curriculum connections that make it easy for Alberta K-12 educators to find the perfect Alberta book for their classroom.

Each year, the BPAA updates and distributes the Alberta Books for Schools catalogue to Alberta K-12 schools, independent and chain bookstores, public libraries, and MLAs and MPs, as well as to Canadian library wholesalers, school boards and teachers' associations. Copies of the catalogue are also distributed to clients of United Library Services and other industry stakeholders, and an extensive email distribution list is notified when the catalogue is released.

The 2023/24 Alberta Books for Schools catalogue is available as a [digital PDF here](#), and the digital database is accessible through the [Educators Tab](#) on the Read Alberta website.

Read Alberta Publisher Catalogue

The Read Alberta Publisher catalogue is an annual catalogue, curated by the BPAA, featuring frontlist titles from Alberta publishers. It is distributed in print to Alberta libraries and bookstores, Canadian library wholesalers, BPAA members, funders, and other industry contacts. The third edition of the Read Alberta Publisher Catalogue will be published and distributed in late 2023. [View the 2022 catalogue here.](#)



How can publishers get involved? *The Alberta Books for Schools and Read Alberta catalogues are both annual projects, and BPAA members will be notified by email when submissions open.*

Read Alberta Website

Read Alberta is a hub where Alberta's readers, authors, publishers, booksellers, educators, and libraries can connect, support, and learn more about one another.

The Read Alberta team works with contributors to develop content, publish a monthly newsletter, and keep the site fresh and interesting.

In April 2022, the BPAA and the Alberta Magazine Publishers Association received a joint grant from the Alberta Media Fund to include Alberta magazine publishers on Read Alberta. Alberta magazine publishers joined the site during July 2023, and we are excited to see the Read Alberta website evolve to include all of Alberta's publishers and increase awareness of the work they do.

Read Alberta content currently includes reviews and articles about Alberta-published books, author interviews, themed book lists, publisher submitted features, and editorial cartoons. We are excited to see this content continue to expand!

For a more in-depth exploration of the Read Alberta website, please see our Read Alberta: Telling Alberta's Story session recording from June 2021 or the Read Alberta panel moderated by Kieran Leblanc at the Writers' Guild of Alberta's 2023 conference.

Both videos are available through the Members Only Page on our website.



How can publishers get involved with Read Alberta?

Reach out to the Read Alberta team (iheartbooknews@readalberta.ca) and pitch your books and authors for feature articles. We have a series of ongoing articles (Sunday Shorts, Crow Reads, author interviews) that you can suggest titles/authors for.

BPAA members will be notified by email when submissions for themed book lists are open, and we encourage you to submit titles!

Read Alberta's monthly new releases article is created using data from Bookmanager. If you do not have your title information available through Bookmanager, please send your title info to Megan Bishop (mbishop@bookpublishers.ab.ca).

Continue to send two copies of your new releases to the BPAA office. When curating book lists and articles, the Read Alberta team prioritizes titles that are available through the BPAA office, as these copies are used to create the featured images.

Subscribe to the Read Alberta newsletter and follow them on social media (@WeReadAB).

Share articles and the newsletter with friends, family, and authors!

Read Alberta Books Ads in Alberta Views

Read Alberta Books is a program through which BPAA members can participate in a collective advertising feature in *Alberta Views* magazine. Currently the advertising feature appears in the April, September, and December editions of the magazine, as well as a one-page ad in the November issue announcing the Alberta Book Publishing Award winners. [You can view the previous ads here.](#) Read Alberta Books ads are funded in part by the Canada Book Fund.

How can publishers get involved? BPAA staff will notify publishers when submissions open. Each publisher is encouraged to submit up to 8 titles in any given ad, and submissions are subject to a \$125 / title fee.



Edmonton Bestseller List

In cooperation with [Audreys Books](#) and [Glass Bookshop](#), the BPAA produces a weekly summary of the [bestselling books in Edmonton](#). Titles on the list from Alberta book publishers and Alberta authors are highlighted.



Calgary Bestseller List

In November, 2022, we launched the [Calgary Bestseller list](#). This list is compiled with data from [Shelf Life Books](#) and [Owl's Nest Books](#), and titles from Alberta book publishers and Alberta authors are highlighted.



Alberta Bestseller List

With sales data provided by [BookNet Canada](#), the BPAA produces a weekly summary of the [bestselling books in Alberta](#). Similar to the Edmonton bestseller list, titles on the list from Alberta book publishers and Alberta authors are highlighted.

All of these lists are distributed to BPAA members, library and bookstore contacts, members of the media, and posted on the BPAA's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Taproot Edmonton features the Edmonton Bestseller list in their weekly Arts Roundup newsletter. BPAA member-publishers are tagged in these posts when their titles are featured on a bestseller list.

How can publishers get involved? Reshare/retweet our social media posts and tag your authors to increase the reach and visibility of the bestseller lists!

Edmonton Arts Council Shop & Services

The BPAA regularly works with Edmonton Arts Council Shop & Services, formerly TIX on the Square, in Edmonton to restock their store with titles from our member publishers. If titles are requested by the EAC shop that the BPAA does not have in stock, we will follow-up with publishers individually. BPAA office stock is used wherever possible for this initiative.



MEMBER SERVICES

Website

The [BPAA website](#) has resources for publishers and the general public:

Resources for the Public

PUBLISHING RESOURCES

The [Publishing Resources page](#) includes general resources about book publishing. Podcasts on Publishing, a podcast series produced and hosted by Jerome Martin of Spotted Cow Press, is available on this page. This series focuses on book publishing — from manuscript to marketing. The eBook, *Alternative Futures for Publishing* is also available through this page. Published by the BPAA in 2012, this digital book provides collective perspectives on the future of book publishing.

GETTING PUBLISHED

This [page](#) answers some general questions about how to get published.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION READING LIST

In an effort to stand in solidarity with the people all across North America opposing racism against black people in the summer of 2020, the BPAA and the Writers' Guild of Alberta assembled a [Diversity and Inclusion Reading List](#) of relevant books, articles, and essays. We continue to update the list with titles from our members. We are committed to working towards greater inclusivity within our industries through fair representation of Black, Indigenous, and other racialized people, and to amplifying and listening to voices that have too often been silenced.

READ ALBERTA BOOKS CATALOGUE

The BPAA regularly updates the [Read Alberta Books Catalogue](#) on our website with BPAA member-published new releases. In general, new titles are added when office copies are received. We also add titles based on submissions to our other projects, e.g. Read Alberta Books ads and the Alberta Book Publishing Awards. The catalogue is searchable and filterable by genre. Each title page includes a link to the publisher's website, [ReadAlbertaeBooks.ca](#), and a "Shop Local" button.

Resources for Publishers

EVENT LISTINGS

Upcoming events hosted by the BPAA, including professional development sessions and more, are highlighted on the website homepage. When events are submitted through the [events submission form](#), they are also added to the full [events calendar](#) on our website, which is accessible through the "view all events" link under the Upcoming Events section.

ACCESSIBLE DIGITAL PUBLISHING RESOURCES

This [page](#) includes resources for publishers about accessible digital publishing and born-accessible books.

MEMBERS ONLY PAGE

The [Members Only Page](#) hosts resources geared towards BPAA members, including distribution and purchasing opportunities, advocacy tools, terminology, and editing resources, webinar recordings, and much more. Members can contact BPAA staff for the password if needed.

Annual Conference and AGM

The BPAA welcomed publishers and their staff, and industry professionals from across Canada to Calgary, Alberta for the 2022 Book Publishers Association of Alberta Conference and AGM.

We were excited to return to an in-person conference, after it was cancelled for two years due to the COVID pandemic. There were more than 30 people in attendance to learn about the latest industry developments and network with their peers.

Professional development sessions focused on Indigenous advocacy through storytelling, accessible format production, creating revised publishing plans, and more.

The 2023 Conference will take place in Edmonton, Alberta at the Matrix Hotel, and we are excited to connect with publishers in-person again!



Books — Bi-Weekly Newsletter

Every two weeks, the BPAA publishes a newsletter to approximately 250 subscribers. Subscribers include BPAA members, librarians, booksellers, authors, media contacts, government staff, and the general public. The newsletter includes industry updates, association business, employment opportunities, program and awards deadlines, and other relevant information for the Alberta book publishing community. BPAA member-publisher accomplishments and events are also highlighted in the newsletter.



How can publishers get involved?

Submit your events to our [Events submission form](#) so we can advertise it in the newsletter.

Do you have something you want us to highlight in the newsletter, for example a job posting or award news? Send us an email with the details.

Professional Development Program

The BPAA continues to provide professional development opportunities to our members throughout the year. To increase the reach and accessibility of our PD sessions, the BPAA will continue to offer PD sessions as Zoom webinars, in addition to in-person PD sessions at our Annual Conference. Recent PD sessions have covered a wide variety of topics, including accessible metadata, decolonizing subject headings, and social media marketing. Beginning in 2023, the BPAA began facilitating themed Member Roundtables which serve as an opportunity for our members to connect on topics of interest. Recent roundtables have focused on book acquisitions and marketing.

A full list of past PD sessions, and the recorded webinars, slide decks, and additional resources, are available through the [Members Only Page](#) on the BPAA website.

How can publishers get involved?

Register for upcoming PD webinars. BPAA staff announce new webinars by email and a list of upcoming webinars can also be found in our newsletter.

If you have a topic you would like covered with a PD webinar, send us an email.

Archive Program



PROVINCIAL
ARCHIVES
OF ALBERTA

The BPAA archives our members' front-list titles with the Provincial Archives of Alberta to ensure Alberta-published books are preserved in perpetuity.

How can publishers get involved? As titles are published, publishers are encouraged to send two copies to the BPAA office. One copy is used in the archive program, and the other is displayed in our office and used when we attend conferences. Read Alberta also uses the office copies to create content for website graphics.

At the end of the year, BPAA staff will perform an audit to ensure an accurate account of our members' titles is recorded and archived. Starting in 2023, titles will be archived every two years.