

Canadian Library Association Position Statement on Access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Approved by Executive Council – 18 June 1994; amended – 29 May 2012 and affirmed at CLA AGM – 1 June 2012

Preamble

CLA views the Internet and other publicly available ICT networks as public goods essential to participation in a democratic and information-driven society. Therefore, CLA recognizes that access to ICT is an essential part of the universal access to information that Canadian libraries provide and support.

CLA and its members will co-operate with governments, agencies, industry and other organizations to ensure that these fundamental rights are represented in all policies and laws governing access to and dissemination of information via ICT.

All Canadians have the right to:

1. Universal, Equitable, and Affordable Access to Robust ICT networks

1.1. Access to high-speed ICT networks should be available and affordable to all regardless of factors such as age, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, social and political views, national origin, economic status, location and level of information literacy.

1.2. Special efforts should be made to ensure equity of access in rural and remote areas and access to inclusive technologies for people with disabilities.

1.3. A public policy framework should support the development of ICT infrastructure that meets high standards of speed, reliability and universality.

2. Access to Information Literacy

2.1. Everyone should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to find and use information using ICT.

3. Open Access to Information

3.1. Open access to information should be encouraged at all levels of government and in all publicly-funded institutions. This information should be available free of charge with as little restriction on re-use and modification as possible

3.2. Government and public institutions should take responsibility for archiving information in order to preserve collective memory.

4. Freedom of Expression

4.1. Individuals have the right to create, share, exchange, access and receive the widest range of ideas, information and images.

4. 2. Public policy should encourage neutrality of traffic flow on ICT networks, neither privileging nor restricting information based on content or type. Libraries and other knowledge organizations should encourage the development and use of neutral search and retrieval mechanisms.

5. Privacy

5.1. Privacy of personal information on ICT networks should be carefully protected by legislation.

5.2. In all situations, there should be a written statement outlining the purpose for which personal data is collected. The collection of personal information should be limited to that which is necessary for the purposes identified by the organization. Consent should be required for the collection of personal information and the subsequent use or disclosure of this information.

5.3. This data should not be traded or sold without the express written permission of the individual affected. Information about privacy policies and mechanisms should be easily accessible and all changes to these should be made on an "opt-in" basis.

5.4. Individuals should have the right to examine their own personal information collected by government, public bodies and corporations and to have mistakes corrected, both without charge.