

July 19, 2018

The Honourable Pablo Rodríguez  
Minister of Canadian Heritage  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Email: Pablo.Rodriguez@parl.gc.ca

RE: Congratulations and the National Heritage Digitization Strategy

Dear Minister Rodríguez,

Congratulations on yesterday's appointment as Minister of Canadian Heritage. We welcome you to the position and offer whatever support and collaboration we can. Individually and collectively we are engaged in a number of projects connected to Canadian Heritage and the National Library and Archives.

The Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC) is a national library group dedicated to working collaboratively to build vibrant urban communities by strengthening the capacity of Canada's urban libraries. Our 45 member systems operate almost 700 points of access, and in 2017 were used by citizens more than 385,000,000 times. They represent approximately 80% of the country's public library activity.

Canada's libraries, of all types, hold vast documentary collections that are vitally important and that convey the history of this nation and its people. These collections support research, discovery, and learning.

Your government put forward the National Heritage Digitization Strategy. As a significant public library group, in a unanimous motion, we are encouraging sustained federal investment of \$30,000,000 over the next five years to build this coordinated national digitization program. It is a roadmap for the development of the shared standards, tools and infrastructure so that users from jurisdictions across Canada are able to easily access their documentary heritage, and so that our memory institutions are able to properly preserve it.

A coordinated approach to the digitization of Canadian memory institutions' collections needs to consider access, discovery and preservation of collections, including published and archival materials, and address collections housed in all types of memory institution in all regions.

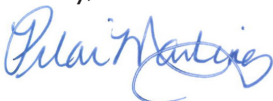
By supporting and providing sustained funding towards a national digitization program, the Government of Canada would:

- Promote cultural literacy by providing increased access to Canadian cultural material;
- Remove barriers to knowledge by providing equal access to heritage content for all Canadians;
- Contribute to a feeling of shared Canadian identity, based on diversity and inclusion;
- Create greater educational opportunities to promote research and understanding of Canadian culture;
- Encourage innovation and creativity by inviting artists and entrepreneurs to engage with Canada's cultural content and to use and reuse it to create new works with value to Canadians and the economy;
- Provide global perspective on Canada's culture by connecting national collections with international ones; and,
- Support democracy by providing easy access to credible information.

To that end we encourage you, your Department and Government to continue to provide leadership, and more importantly provide the needed and necessary funding.

Again, Minister, congratulations and please do not hesitate to request support from CULC/CBUC. We have members in all parts of Canada that invest in the vitality their communities through provision of best practices.

Sincerely,



Pilar Martinez  
Chair, Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC)  
CEO, Edmonton Public Library

CC: Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC) Members