

Biblioterre Introduction Package



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**For more information, please contact: coop.biblioterre@gmail.com*

Biblioterre

Biblioterre is an intentional community that aims to offer affordable and low-impact housing, grow healthy food, create permaculture gardens, offer workshops & classes, and support initiatives that bring ecological and social benefits to the greater community. Inspired by the concept of a “land library”, Biblioterre intends to share the land and resources with each other, nature, Indigenous communities, and the wider community.

Individuals may pay to become members of the cooperative, which allows them participation in Biblioterre’s sociocratic governance, as well as access to Biblioterre’s libraries, including the “land library”. In addition, Biblioterre will offer pay-per-use opportunities to members who may want to live, work, or rent space onsite. Operating as a not-for-profit cooperative, Biblioterre will direct 100% of its profits towards its vision-based initiatives.

Vision:

“Biblioterre is a land library cooperative aspiring to demonstrate ecologically sustainable and equitable ways of living, with respect for inherent Indigenous sovereignty and cultural revitalization, and with responsibility towards all life on earth.”

We aim to provide a land base for projects that are aligned with our vision while helping people to explore their role in nature.

Natural Responsibility:

As caretakers of the Earth and all living beings affected by human behaviour, we intend to prioritize the needs of the land by engaging in ecosystem restoration, biodiversity protection and regenerative food production, while providing a venue for people to deepen their relationship with nature.

Equitability:

Through sociocracy, we intend to use non-violent communication while working collaboratively to practice non-hierarchical and consent-based decision-making. We aim to become aware of our individual privileges and biases, and work towards a social

model that considers the nuances of each individual's identities and puts words into actions. Aiming to approach projects and activities through an intersectional Feminist lens, we intend to be inclusive and accessible to outside communities. This includes creating a safe space for all animals and humans, regardless of race, gender, ability, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and age.

Indigenous Allyship:

As non-Indigenous people residing upon traditional Algonquin land, unceded, and without treaty, we intend in our project: to seek consent and listen to the needs and feelings of Indigenous peoples, communities and individuals; to encourage Algonquin-led use of the land; and to seek collaboration and consent to evolve our community practices of Natural Responsibility (while giving respect and recognition). Biblioterre is working to set up a Land Trust that will protect the land in its entirety in perpetuity. The financial responsibility of this land is to be kept by Biblioterre, but the management and care of the land will be 50% Biblioterre, and the other 50% will be managed by and cared for (without interference of Biblioterre) by an Algonquin-led team.

Holistic Health:

We would like to recognize and prioritize the interrelationships between a healthy planet, healthy relationships, a healthy mind, and a healthy body. We seek projects and collaborations that promote healing justice and address how generations of trauma and systemic violence and oppression impact individual and community health.

Foundational Initiatives of Biblioterre

Sovereign Space:

In acknowledgement of unceded Algonquin traditional territory, and in gratitude for the land on which Biblioterre hopes to reside, we intend to make available one half of the land (an equitable division of access to all land and water features) for Algonquin

leadership and use (with openness to people from other Indigenous backgrounds), while Biblioterre provides a supportive role with responsibility for all land fees and taxes.

Ecosystem Restoration:

The Outaouais is a region that includes beautiful forests and stunning landscapes, though much of it has been heavily logged since the early 1800s. The rapid removal of much of the old growth tree population has impacted the overall health of these forests, including the understory species, and the biodiversity supported therein.

Biblioterre aims to create a loving and mutually beneficial relationship with a piece of land, by participating in ecosystem restoration, reforestation, native and endangered plant propagation, advanced succession, and assisted migration. This also includes creating a safe space for all animals. In order to reciprocate the gifts that nature has given us, Biblioterre seeks land in need of nurturing.

Library Program:

To reduce the collective ecological footprint and economic overhead of Biblioterre, libraries of tools, media, and infrastructure will be made available for all members. A land library, consisting of common permaculture gardens and ecological restoration sites, will provide a venue for members and outside groups to engage and experiment with regenerative agriculture and climate change mitigation techniques, in a low-risk and low-cost environment.

Agriculture Incubator Program:

To remedy the high-land prices and low-income realities of modern day agriculture, Biblioterre intends to offer affordable and supportive access to land and shared farming equipment for the establishment of new and innovative agricultural businesses.

Affordable Worker's Housing:

Biblioterre intends to offer access to affordable worker housing for its onsite members. While adhering to municipal and provincial by-laws and building codes, Biblioterre strives to offer a variety of worker housing options, from private rooms and apartments, to mobile and tiny homes, to leasable building plots for members who wish to construct their own dwelling.

Get involved with Biblioterre!

Do you resonate with the values of Biblioterre? Would you like to take part in a project that helps people to manifest these values? If so, please consider these various ways of becoming involved:

Membership

To become a member of Biblioterre, applicants must complete the application process, beginning with reading through the documents in this Introductory Package, followed by the Governance and Initiatives Package, the Policies Package, and information on our website: <https://www.biblioterre.ca/copy-of-how-it-works-2>. Once the applicant has read through all essential reading material, and watched the video on sociocracy, they may fill in a Member Interest Form and work with a sponsor member to complete their application. Please note, that onsite priority will be given to members who hold a minimum amount of shares and/or people who face systemic oppression (especially people of colour and people who are trans-gendered).

All members are required to hold a social share in the cooperative, which is a one-time, reimbursable fee of **\$160**.

To maintain membership, all members are required to pay dues of **\$25/month** +tax (\$300/year +tax; non-reimbursable) which supports common-use spaces of Biblioterre.

Members who wish to live onsite are required to pay additional dues of **\$55/month** +tax (\$660/year; non-reimbursable) and a **2.5% Income Contribution**, which further support common-use spaces of Biblioterre. In addition, onsite members are asked to contribute a privilege share (a no-interest loan) to Biblioterre in the case of any difference between the expenses and income of Biblioterre.

Lastly, members who wish to engage in leaseholds and/or space rentals will pay fees according to their contract with Biblioterre, which will be unique to each member.

Leaseholds & Rentals (See Leaseholds & Rentals Fees for more information)

- Agriculture incubator space: acreage, greenhouse space, tool libraries
- Affordable worker's housing, storage, private greenspace, building plots
- Studio, office and event spaces

Purchases

- CSA participation
- Attending events and workshops
- goods and services from member and coop-run businesses

Donations*

- One-time or monthly
- Crowdfunding w/ tiered donor privileges
- Donations to specific initiatives
- Contributions to library catalogue

We operate as a not-for-profit cooperative, which means that 100% of Biblioterre's profits will be directed toward its vision. However, we are not a charity and therefore donations made to Coopérative Biblioterre are **not yet tax-deductible.*

Volunteering

- WWOOFing
- Internships
- WorkerBee days
- Assistance with grant applications, repairs or other special skills

Although several years into formal planning, Biblioterre is considered a starting project in the eyes of most lending institutions. Therefore, we must rely on a diverse portfolio of

financial support in order to get off the ground, get on to the land, and bring Biblioterre through its first year of establishment.

Member Types

Member Type Overview:

As a solidarity cooperative, Biblioterre offers a few different choices for membership, and these are based on a member's *primary link* to the co-op. A member may change their membership class over time to reflect their changing link to Biblioterre. Every member has a voice in the governance, a vote in the coop, and an equal ownership of Biblioterre.

Worker Members

Workers members are distinguished by their foundational commitment to Biblioterre. Worker members are relied upon to establish the leasable onsite spaces for the benefit of user members, as well as common spaces for the benefit of all members.

Worker members also hold *annual operations shares* that proactively finance the costs of operations during the co-op's establishment years. They may also choose to hold *start-up shares* that finance part of the initial land purchase.

Features and Benefits of Worker membership:

- Hiring priority, once Biblioterre is able to offer paid positions;
- More representation on the Board of Directors (3 of the 5 directors must be worker members);
- If worker-housing is created (additional housing on agriculture- zoned land), worker members may have access to these housing options.
- By subscribing to 5 sets of AO Shares for 5 years, (\$5000/year over 5 years) worker members are immediately entitled to live onsite in a moveable dwelling or in other temporary accommodations, and have 24/7 access rights to the land;
- Worker members (as well as user members, or pods), who have bought \$25,000 or more in Start-up Shares, will have on-site living priority once leasable

residential spaces become available (on-site consideration will otherwise prioritize our diversity and inclusion policy, and will be decided sociocratically, taking into account a given member's demonstrated commitment to the cooperative);

User Members

Users are members who will link with the coop mainly through leaseholds, rentals, and other contracts once these spaces and resources are available. Users may also hold Start-up and Annual Operations (AO) shares in order to reserve spaces that will become available for lease at a later time.

Features and Benefits of User Membership:

- No minimum share purchase requirements (aside from the \$160 membership fee);
- Representation on the Board of Directors (1 of the 5 directors must be a User member);
- By holding AO shares for a given year (or longer), or by leasing available residential or agriculture spaces for a given year (or longer), user members may have 24/7 access rights to the land for this period of time (availability not guaranteed, priority given to Worker members and members from communities facing systemic oppression - as per Biblioterre's Diversity and Inclusion Policy);
- By subscribing to 5 sets of AO Shares for a given year (or longer), (\$5000/year for 1 year or more) user members are immediately entitled to live onsite in a moveable dwelling or in other temporary accommodations, and have 24/7 access rights to the land for this period of time;
- User members (or pods) who have bought \$25,000 or more in Start-up Shares, will have on-site living priority once leasable residential spaces become available (On-site consideration will otherwise prioritize our diversity and inclusion policy, and will be decided sociocratically, taking into account a given member's demonstrated commitment to the cooperative);

Support Members

Supporters link with Biblioterre mainly in an off-site capacity through monthly due payments, and by helping to govern Biblioterre towards its long-term aspirations. They may also be volunteers and visitors to the land.

Supporters may also hold Start-up and Annual Operations shares, and may lease spaces and resources from Biblioterre, though they do not live onsite and so are required to respect Biblioterre's hours of operation.

Features and Benefits of Support Membership:

- The membership class with the most flexible commitment expectations;
- Representation on the Board of Directors (1 of the 5 directors must be a support member);
- By subscribing to sets of Start-up or Annual Operations shares, support members can *pay their shareholder benefits forward* to other members/member classes who wish to reserve space to live and/or work onsite;

Member Benefits

By becoming a Member of Coopérative Biblioterre, you will be contributing to an innovative project that is committed to taking actions toward: Natural Responsibility, Indigenous Allyship, Equitability, and Holistic Health. You will have access to opportunities to build skills and strengthen your relationships. Help us to create a future worth living in!

All Member Benefits:

- Equal voice in decision-making/Biblioterre governance
- One vote in our Annual General Meeting
- Access to all *libraries*¹ (tool, media, art supplies, kitchen supplies, etc.)
- Most leasehold opportunities
- 25% discount on space rentals
- 10% discount on Biblioterre-run events
- Advance notice of events, trainings, and workshops
- Access to *commons*² during open hours
- Access to opt-in clubs, shares, initiatives, and volunteer opportunities
- May bank *surplus volunteer hours*³ to put toward applicable events, workshops, and products

Onsite-only Benefits:

- Access to Onsite-only spaces and circles
- Full leasehold opportunities, all rental opportunities
- Full-time access to *commons*²
- May host non-members and off-site members

¹ What entails a “library” is defined by Biblioterre in [this document](#). Some shared resources may be shared only by a specific group (ie, a “vehicle share”), and may not be considered part of a library.

² Commons include facilities and trails operated by Biblioterre. Some onsite spaces may be considered private spaces and are not part of the Commons.

³ Surplus volunteer hours are hours in excess of regular member volunteer duties, and are bankable only when offered by Biblioterre on a case-by-case basis.

Member Duties

Biblioterre uses Sociocracy (see Governance and Initiatives Package), a consent-driven governance system, to explore ideas and make decisions. Members of Biblioterre are required to participate in sociocratic circles, which also entitles them to one-vote in the Annual General Meeting.

Circles

Though most circles meet approximately once per month for one to three hours, each circle is responsible for making its own decisions regarding frequency and length of meetings, and its own expectations/regulations for circle membership.

Offsite members are expected to participate in **at least one** of the sub-circles of the Top Circle **or** the General Circle. Through the Top Circle, offsite members have access to the Offsite Member Circle, Board of Directors Circle (if elected), and the Land Trust

Circle. Through the General Circle, offsite members have access to all of the day-to-day operation circles of Biblioterre.

Onsite Members are required to serve on **at least one of each** of the sub-circles of the Top Circle **and** the General Circle. From the Top Circle, onsite members have access to Onsite Member Circle, Board of Directors Circle (if elected) and the Land Trust Circle. From the General Circle, onsite members have access to all of the day-to-day operation circles of Biblioterre.

Retreat

Once a year Biblioterre hosts a weekend-long retreat for all members. During this retreat, time is allotted for the Annual General Meeting, for worker-bee volunteering, and for a festival consisting of workshops, tours, speakers, art, music, dancing and food!

Planning for and participation at the retreat (AGM and festival) is **expected for onsite** members and **encouraged for offsite** members.

Trainings

All Members are expected to take part in the following trainings/workshops within the first year of their Membership:

- Indigenous Cultural Competency
- Non Violent Communication
- Introduction to Sociocracy (free, online)
- Anti-oppression

Onsite Members are also expected to participate in ongoing onsite training. Onsite training sessions happen at least once/year, but may happen up to once/month.

Chores

Offsite Members are not expected to participate in chores, but may volunteer to do so when onsite, or if staying onsite for an extended period of time.

Onsite Members are expected to participate in chores for the upkeep of the community building and other community spaces. Tasks will rotate on either a weekly or monthly basis and might range from 1-3h/week. Chores may evolve over time.

Additionally, Biblioterre will have Spring and Fall cleaning days when onsite members will spend half the day preparing common outdoor spaces for summer use or to close down for winter.

Some examples of cleaning responsibilities:

- Community dishes and kitchen maintenance
- Washroom clean-up (including taking out and cleaning humanure buckets)
- Community laundry, dusting, windows
- Sweeping and washing common room floors
- Maintaining pathways/driveways (sweeping, shoveling)
- Organizing & dealing with garbage/recycling/compost

Those who live in the Common House may have additional cleaning tasks.

Donor Benefits:

Donations are a vital part of the success of Coopérative Biblioterre. 100% of all contributions go toward our innovative project that is committed to taking actions toward: Natural Responsibility, Indigenous Allyship, Equitability, and Holistic Health. This may include (but is not limited to): helping to pay for the land on which our initiatives take place; ecosystem restoration projects; and general overhead costs. If you

would like to know more about how exactly your contribution is being spent, or if you would like to direct it to a specific project.

Please note that we are in the process of updating these benefits. If you have suggestions, contact us at coop.biblioterre@gmail.com

Regular Donor Benefits¹:

For every \$5/month donation, you will receive a ticket for our annual raffle. Donations may be made on a monthly or annual basis

\$5-25/month:

- A monthly newsletter which includes updates and advance notice of events, trainings, and workshops
- An annual guided tour of Biblioterre
- Our gratitude expressed in our newsletter

\$25-50/month:

- All of the benefits from the previous category
- Q&A

\$50-100/month:

- All of the benefits from the previous categories
- A year-end special gift from Biblioterre and/or a member-ran business

\$100+/month:

- All of the benefits from the previous categories
- A weekend of camping in a private scenic location where we supply the gear

¹As we do not yet have land, a significant amount of your donation will go toward purchasing land. This also means that a significant amount of Regular Donor Benefits will either be unavailable or will take on a different form until the land exists. We have a piece of land in mind, but have not yet secured the financing we need for purchase.

Become a Shareholder!

Shares allow members to have a place in the launch and operation of Biblioterre. Some

members may invest simply to help Biblioterre bring its initiatives into fruition, while others may wish to live onsite and run projects or land-based businesses within a creative community.

Biblioterre will offer two types of Investment Shares to Members, in order to help us gain the financing we need to get started.

- 1. Start-up Shares @ \$1000/set.** These shares will finance all start-up costs, including the down payment of the land purchase, as well as building and infrastructure repairs. They have a term of 5 years, or until Biblioterre is determined to be in its Participation Phase.
- 2. Annual Operations Shares @ \$1000/set.** These shares will finance Biblioterre's annual operations expenses, and have a term of 1 year. At each year's end, Biblioterre will use its annual profit to reimburse its A.O. shareholders to a maximum of 100% share cost. Shareholders may also receive partial reimbursement in the form of Biblioterre's services (usage fees and dues). The remaining balance at year's end is converted into Start-up Shares with the same respective terms.

To address the shareholder's need for security and to promote the principles of equitability, inclusivity and diversity, Biblioterre is introducing new Shareholder Benefits, as follows:

A commitment of 5 sets of AO shares per year for 5 years (\$5000/year or \$417/month for 5 years) = rights to be onsite (camping or offgrid moveable) for Year 0, for the duration of the 4-season land study, and until residential spaces are designated and available for lease, as well as priority for future onsite living in shared or moveable dwellings.

A commitment of 5 sets of AO shares per year for 5 years (\$5000/year or \$417/month for 5 years) plus 5 sets of Start-up shares (\$5000) = the above rights + priority rights to lease 1 acre of agricultural land, once available.

A commitment of 5 sets of AO shares per year for 5 years (\$5000/year or \$417/month for 5 years) plus 25 sets of Start-up shares (\$25,000) = priority rights to lease 1 acre of residential land, including the right to build within Biblioterre's policies.

As onsite space will be limited to approximately 30 onsite members, members who are not purchasing the above shares and/or who are not people of colour and/or people from the transgendered community may not be prioritized for onsite membership.

Leasehold and Rental Fees

Leaseholds are reserved for members only (some leaseholds, such as “Building Plots” will be limited to onsite members: shareholders holding a minimum amount of shares as identified above, people of colour, and people from the transgendered community), whereas rentals may be available for non-members, with a possible administration fee. All fees are for reference only and may have subtle changes upon purchase of land.

FEES FOR LEASEHOLDS AND RENTALS							
Leaseholds					Conversions		
	Yearly	Monthly	Income Fee		Square metre:Square foot	1:10.76391	
Type	\$/m 2/year	\$/m 2/month	one-time		Square metre:Square acre	1:0.000247	
Room Rentals	\$200.00	\$25.00	Leaseholds require an additional fee of 1.5% net of all income made onsite (enforced by the honour system)		Square acre: Square metre	1:4046.85642	
Building Plot (includes tents)	\$20.00	\$2.50			Square foot: Square metre	1:0.0929	
Land Rentals (Farming, Gardening, Trees, etc.)	\$0.10	\$0.01					
Shared Space (storage, office space in a shared room, shared studio, etc.)	\$50.00	\$6.25					
Outbuilding	\$25.00	\$3.13					
Additional Fees and Considerations: 1. For Buildings owned by Biblioterre, leasehold fees include utilities; members who own their own dwelling pay their own utilities. 2. For installing a foundation, there is a one time fee of \$20/m2, additional fees may apply depending on Municipal taxing and licensing 3. Setup and cleanup are to be included in rental hours. Any mess/damages will be billed in addition to rental fees (damages +25\$/hour) 4. Onsite members paying the Income Contribution are not required to pay the Income Fee for leaseholds. 5. Discounts may apply for re-occurring monthly rentals (ie. a member who rents a room for 3 months every year)							
Space Rentals						Conversions	
	Weekly	Daily	Hourly	Income Fee		Square metre:Square foot	1:10.76391
Type	\$/m 2/Week	\$/m 2/Day	\$/m 2/hour	one-time		Square metre:Square acre	1:0.000247
Room Rentals	\$11.75000	\$2.50000	\$0.30000	Rentals require an additional fee of 1.5% of gross income made onsite		Square acre: Square metre	1:4046.85642
Building Plot (includes tents)	\$1.20000	\$0.25000	\$0.04000			Square foot: Square metre	1:0.0929
Land Rentals (Farming, Gardening, Trees, etc.)	\$0.00800	\$0.00125	\$0.00015				
Shared Space (storage, office space in a shared room, shared studio, etc.)	\$3.00000	\$0.65000	\$0.07500				
Outbuilding	\$1.50000	\$0.30000	\$0.07500				
Additional Fees and Considerations 1. Setup and cleanup are to be included in rental hours. Any mess/damages will be billed in addition to rental fees (damages +25\$/hour) 2. Discounts may apply for regular, re-occurring rentals. 3. Members receive a 25% discount on Space Rentals							

Common Examples of Leaseholds and Rentals						
Type	Yearly <i>\$/year</i>	Monthly <i>\$/month</i>	Weekly <i>\$/Week</i>	Daily <i>\$/Day</i>	Hourly <i>\$/hour</i>	Examples in Square Feet
Room Rentals	\$1,860.00	\$232.50	\$87.19	\$18.68	\$3.50	100 sq ft
Building Plot	\$558.00	\$69.75	\$26.16	\$5.60	\$1.05	300 sq ft
Land Rentals	\$101.20	\$12.65	\$4.74	\$1.02	\$0.19	1/4 acre
Shared Space (office, studio, etc.)	\$232.50	\$29.06	\$10.90	\$2.34	\$0.44	50 sq ft
Outbuilding	\$250.00	\$31.25	\$11.72	\$2.51	\$0.47	100 sq ft

Thank you for giving your time to understand this project and contribute to the discussion! All suggestions and criticisms are welcome and encouraged.

If you would like more information, please contact coop.biblioterre@gmail.com.