



GLOBAL VISION DISCUSSION

Report of the IFLA Serials and Other Resources meeting

How a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future

September 22-28, 2017

This meeting was held over email.



Contributors

This report is created by:

Meg Mering, Chair, SOCRS (University of Nebraska-Lincoln, USA)

Ted Westervelt, Information Coordinator, SOCRS (Library of Congress, USA)

Sharon Dyas-Correia (University of Oxford, UK)

Matylda Filas (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Smita Joshipure (Arizona State University, USA)

Beata Katrineova (University Library in Bratislava, Slovakia)

Christina McCawley (West Chester University, USA)

Andrea Wirth (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA)

Index

Contributors	2
Index	2
Introduction	3
A vision for libraries	3
The core values of libraries (Q4):	3
Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):	3
Libraries should do more of (Q6):	3
Libraries should do less of (Q7):	4
Challenges and solutions	4
The main challenges to society (Q8):	4
The main challenges to libraries (Q9):	4
The main professional challenges (Q10):	4
How a united library field can make a difference	5
How should a united library field help meet the challenges identified (Q11)?	5
The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):	5
The focus of a united library field (Q13):	5
A global conversation	5

Introduction

On September 22-28, 2017, over email, 8 librarians participated in a conversation about how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future. Together we represent 226 years of library experience.

The librarians were from four different countries: Poland, Slovakia, United Kingdom, and the United Kingdom. 7 work at university libraries. One works at the Library of Congress.

A vision for libraries

Libraries enable literate, informed and participative societies. When we look at the future, according to the debates during our email discussions.

E.g. Libraries are an accessible source of factual information, where people come to find the truth. Libraries are inclusive community centres where all voices are represented. To make this vision reality, librarians feel part of a global community where they exchange ideas and help each other overcome challenges.

The core values of libraries (Q4):

-
1. Free and equal access to information for all -
 2. Encouraging reading -
 3. Supporting the lifelong education process
 4. Diversity and inclusion
 5. Preservation
-

Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):

-
1. Metadata/description
 2. Preservation
 3. Providing access to information, knowledge and many services
 4. Supporting research, learning and reading
 5. Outreach and community building
-

Comments:

Libraries should do more of (Q6):

-
1. Advocacy for libraries
 2. Monitoring users' needs
 3. Fundraising
 4. Supporting Open Access and Open Education Resources
-

5. **Collaboration**

Libraries should do less of (Q7):

1. Working in isolation
 2. Licensing and buying expensive and little used databases
 3. Duplication in acquisition (e.g., buying the same resource in print and electronically)
 4. Licensing resources in a vacuum
 5. Relying on collection needs instead of community needs
-

Challenges and solutions

The main challenges to society (Q8):

1. Poverty & hunger
 2. War
 3. Economic inequity/class divide
 4. Racism...
 5. Climate change and other human caused environmental problems... I
-

The main challenges to libraries (Q9):

1. Insufficient funding for libraries and perceived lack of library relevance by those that allocate budgets
 2. Anti-intellectualism
 3. Overreliance on the private sector
 4. Managing change
 5. Shifting from a passive to an active role to influence the commercial information industry...
-

The main professional challenges (Q10):

1. Lack of succession planning
 2. Risk aversion
 3. Too much bureaucracy in libraries and library organizations to get things done quickly
 4. Keeping up with our workloads and new technologies
-

-
5. Keeping current on topics relevant to our jobs and professional interests vs. amount of time to read
-

How a united library field can make a difference

How should a united library field help meet the challenges identified (Q11)?

-
1. Supporting educational programs
 2. Partner with other professional organizations and units on campus
 3. Use eye-catching library activities to acquire funds for more fundamental needs
 4. Work with publishing community as partners and stakeholders
 5. Rethink what a collection is and reorient organization
-

The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):

-
1. Collaboration and partnerships
 2. Standards and guidelines
 3. Commitment to worldwide preservation and access
 4. Commitment to open source tools
 5. Players at the table with publishing community
-

The focus of a united library field (Q13):

-
1. Scholarly Communications
 2. Open Access
 3. Collaborative collection sharing/building, embracing change
 4. Communication and promotion of activities by publishing, social networks, etc....
 5. Strengthen professional partnerships
-

A global conversation

This report is created in an interactive process, held over email September 22-28. It is part of a global conversation initiated by IFLA on how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future.

Over the course of two years (2017-2018), IFLA will involve as many librarians and others as possible in this global conversation. Participants are encouraged to continue the conversation in their own networks and organization and share the results with IFLA. At the end of 2017, the first results of all the workshops and online discussions will be turned into a *Global Vision Report*, which in turn will be adapted into concrete strategies, processes and work programmes in 2018.

To learn more about the global conversation, and download supporting materials to support your own activities, visit globalvision.ifla.org.

Stay tuned for news about the IFLA Global Vision discussion following [#iflaGlobalVision](https://twitter.com/iflaGlobalVision) and make sure to cast your vote in August when the online voting platform is available on <https://globalvision.ifla.org/>.