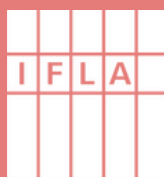


IFLA TREND REPORT 2022 UPDATE

A call for radical hope across our field

Waleed Al Badi, Laurie Alvandian, Anna Au, Louise-Anne Charles, Magdalena Gomulka, Esther Bravo Govea, Fatima Oury Sow Gueye, Jemmimah Maragwa, Michaela Mrázová, Damilare Oyedele, Rabab Shaker, J.M Shalani Dilinika

INSIGHTS FROM THE



TREND
REPORT

IFLA is the Global Voice of the Library and Information Profession

IFLA puts libraries on the global stage and helps them develop.

We are the global voice and the largest brains trust of the library and information profession, with an active network of more than 1,400 Members – leading institutions and players in the library field – in over 150 countries, and well-established relations with the UN and other international organisations.

Together with our Members we work to set the professional agenda and develop standards in library service provision, to improve access to information and cultural heritage resources, and to place this work at the heart of local, national and global policies.

Contributors to the Original Trend Report:

Olivier Crepin-Leblond, Chairman Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) At-large Advisory Committee (ALAC)

Anriette Esterhuysen, CEO, Association for Progressive Communications (APC)

Divina Frau-Meigs, Professor, Université du Paris III: Sorbonne Nouvelle

Melissa Gregg, Principal Investigator, Intel Center for Social Computing

John Houghton, Professorial Fellow, Centre for Strategic Economic Studies, Victoria University

Deborah Jacobs, Director, Global Libraries, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Marième Jamme, CEO, Spot One Global Solutions

Janis Karklins, Assistant Director General for Communication and Information, UNESCO

Alejandro Pisanty, Professor, National Autonomous University of Mexico

Lee Rainie, Director, Internet & American Life Project, Pew Research Center*

Kate Russell, Presenter, BBC Click Online

Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Suneet Singh Tuli, Founder and CEO, DataWind Ltd

Fred Stielow, VP/Dean of Libraries, American Public University System

Fred von Lohmann, Legal Director, Copyright, Google Inc.*

Louis Zacharilla, Co-founder, Global Intelligent Community Forum

*Commenting in a personal capacity

Trend Report updates are available for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021. All are available on the Trend Report website: <https://trends.ifla.org/>.



Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

For press enquiries and further information please contact: Stephen Wyber, IFLA Policy and Advocacy Manager (stephen.wyber@ifla.org)

WHAT IS THE IFLA TREND REPORT?

The original IFLA Trend Report is the result of a dialogue between the library field and experts from a range of disciplines.

By crossing experience and perspectives, it provided a new opportunity to explore and discuss the emerging trends that are shaping the world in which libraries work.

The first Report identified five high-level trends in the global information environment, spanning access to information, education, privacy, civic engagement and technological transformation. It did not seek to predict the future, but rather to explore the forces that will influence it.

Yet the Trend Report is not just a single static publication report, but a dynamic and evolving set of online resources for library and information professionals.

Alongside the original report, there is a range of data and information for libraries to use, share and build on, including a bibliography and literature review of existing trend reports, expert papers and discussion summaries.

Subsequent updates opened up new paths and questions for reflection, bringing in new voices from inside and outside of the library field.

These can all be found on the Trend Report website – trends.ifla.org.

Crucially, these are intended, collectively, as a starting point – a catalyst – for discussion both within the library field, and when talking with external partners. It is a support for thinking about what we need to do to be prepared for what is to come, so that libraries do not only survive, but thrive.

That is where you come in. The goals we set ourselves, and the actions we take to achieve them, will have a decisive influence on how big a role our institutions will play in the evolving information landscape.

We encourage you to use the IFLA Trend Report Update to organise and facilitate creative workshops with your community, network, colleagues or staff.

Join the conversation online using the tag #IFLATrendReport, stay tuned to news from IFLA at ifla.org, and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!



Foreword - Barbara Lison

IFLA President 2021-2023

Welcome to the 2022 IFLA Trend Report Update!

This is the second of the two such Reports that are coming out during my time as IFLA President, and I am happy that both of them are closely linked to my presidential theme – Libraries Building a Sustainable Future.

Taking actively the role of agents of and actors for sustainability depends on our steady resilience – our ability not just to deal with whatever the future can throw at us, but to take a positive, proactive attitude that helps us make the most of it.

Last year's edition looked at that first element – the trends that we saw as being likely to shape our field in the years to come. Covering a wide range of (occasionally even contradictory) developments, it provided a basis for thinking about the different scenarios that could play out.

I've been privileged to bring these ideas about these trends to many different audiences around the world in the last twelve months, and through discussing them I have learned so much from you.

This year's edition now continues down this path, asking what it is we need to do now to maximise resilience, and so build our own sustainability. It contains ideas – challenges even – not only to our field, but also to IFLA itself as a Federation, with a special role in ensuring that our field fulfils its potential.

As IFLA President, these are the issues I am dealing with almost every day, and so I am grateful to our authors for all they have brought to the table here.

Indeed, our authors themselves represent another element of continuity here. Once again, we have relied on the ideas shared by our field's emerging leaders in order to bring this publication into being.

I am particularly happy that, building on the model of last year, this year's edition is in fact written by highly talented emerging leaders who spoke at the relevant sessions at our World Library and Information Congress in Dublin.

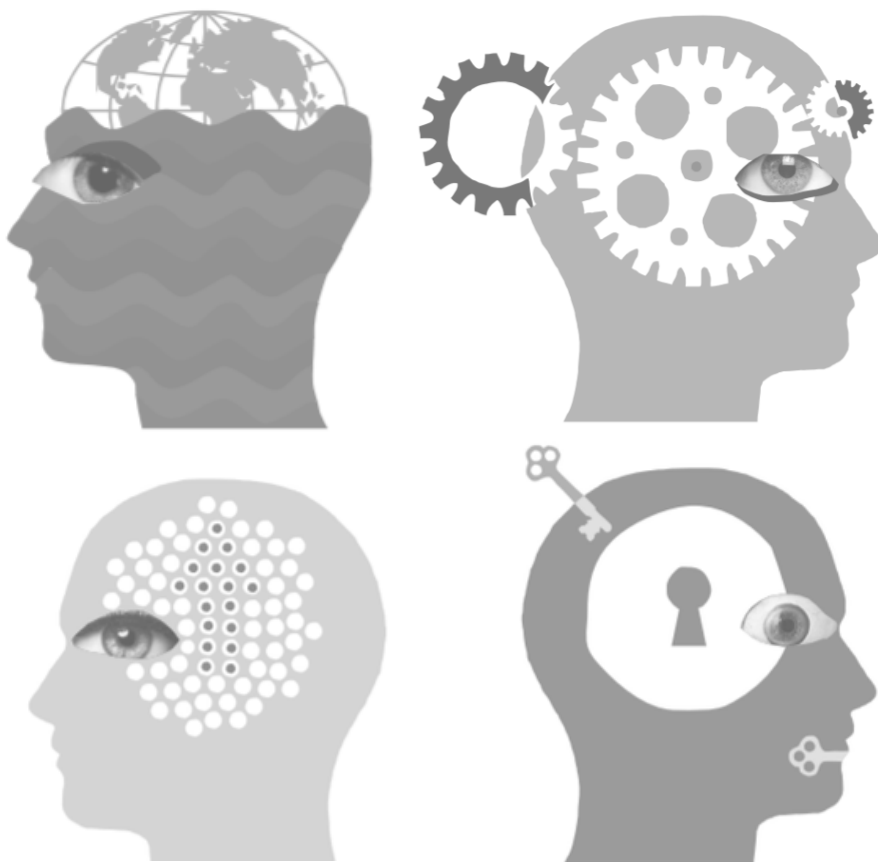
It's always very energising for me to have the opportunity to work with people who are newer to the profession. Indeed, it is a really concrete way of making a reality of my theme, as mentioned above.

Neither our institutions nor our field as a whole has a future if we are not providing opportunities for the people who will lead our field in the near future to develop the knowledge and skills to match their energy and insights.

I know that I will therefore be drawing on the ideas shared here not only in my engagement with Members, but also in my own work to ensure the sustainability of IFLA's own future.

I wish that this report proves just as useful to you as it will for me!

Barbara



Introduction

Following the focus in the 2021 Trend Report on the key developments which, according to emerging leaders across the field, are most likely to shape the future of the libraries and the communities that we serve over the next ten years, this year takes a look at what we need to do in order to respond.

What should be on our own to-do list in the coming years if we are to be ready to seize the opportunities and face down the threats that lie out there for us?

To do this, we again draw on the insights and ideas of emerging leaders across our field. These are the ones who will be responsible, within their institutions, their associations, and our global Federation, for ensuring that we can not just respond to the new situations we face, but also can take a positive, proactive approach.

This report is therefore a collaborative effort. It is based on the key proposals made by the participants in the three emerging leaders sessions held at the 2022 World Library and Information Congress, and has subsequently been co-drafted by them.

The ideas shared have been structured according to the four pillars of IFLA's mission - to inspire, engage, enable and connect the global library field. In each case, there are recommendations both for libraries in general, and our Federation in particular.

This structure is of course loose, and there are strong overlaps between the different areas of action. This is inevitable. Ensuring the sustainability of our field and the Federation that brings it together cannot ever be just about one particular action in one particular area. Rather, we need a comprehensive programme of actions, the ultimate success of each of which is likely to rely in part on the others.

For example, powerful and inspiring advocacy and materials are unlikely to have full impact unless they can be disseminated through strong connections inside our field and with external partners. Successful advocacy is necessary if we are to have the resources to carry out our work to enable colleagues and communities alike. We will not be able to engage our own field or these same communities if we do

not have something innovative and meaningful that we can offer. There are many links and dependencies that can be drawn between the different actions set out here.

We therefore hope that the ideas set out below provide a useful basis for the work of individuals, institutions and associations alike as they look to the future, as well as food for radical hope in our field.

Happy reading!

Trend Report Update 2022 Authors

Waleed Al Badi

Laurie Alvandian

Anna Au

Louise-Anne Charles

Magdalena Gomulka

Esther Bravo Govea

Fatima Oury Sow Gueye

Jemmimah Maragwa

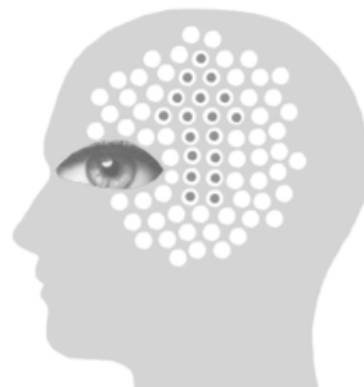
Michaela Mrázová

Damilare Oyedele

Rabab Shaker

J.M Shalani Dilinika

#IFLATrendReport



Recommendations for our field

1. We need to see libraries as players in a wide variety of policy areas
2. We should be more open in where and how we engage in advocacy, making a wider variety of issues our own
3. We should intensify and improve our own advocacy
4. We need to adopt a broad definition of our field, and ensure that being part of it is synonymous with action
5. We must see outreach as key to achieving our missions
6. We need to feel a sense of agency in the face of the future
7. We need to embrace and share innovation
8. We need to see ourselves as a core part of the education infrastructure
9. We need to support emerging leaders as a core plank of sustainability, while also seeing that we all have potential to develop
10. We must make connecting with others in our field an integral part of our practice
11. We should invest seriously in our connections with partners and supporters

#IFLATrendReport



Recommendations for our federation

- A. We need to make links between global issues and individual experience
- B. We should develop inspirational core texts that shape thinking in our field and beyond
- C. We need to be an effective voice for libraries with other stakeholders
- D. We find ways of working that make it easy and attractive for every member of our field to be involved in our work
- E. We engage with emerging library leaders in dialogues and activities to shape the future of libraries
- F. We should understand our field and its needs, and how to support it most effectively
- G. We should provide and encourage opportunities for learning for all that build sustainability and leadership
- H. We should create spaces for emerging leaders to contribute meaningfully to the global library field
- I. We should deliver innovative and attractive ways to build connections within our field
- J. We connect with emerging library leaders and support their professional needs

#IFLATrendReport



Inspire

This section of the Trend Report looks at the key recommendations relating to the need to change the way that people think about libraries, both inside and outside of our field. We do this through providing inspiration - ideas and materials that persuade a reconsideration of what libraries are about, and where we fit in.

Our Field

- 1. We need to see libraries as players in a wide variety of policy areas**
- 2. We should be more open in where and how we engage in advocacy, making a wider variety of issues our own**
- 3. We should intensify and improve our own advocacy**

Our Federation

- A. We need to make links between global issues and individual experience**
- B. We should develop inspirational core texts that shape thinking in our field and beyond**
- C. We need to be an effective voice for libraries with other stakeholders**

#IFLATrendReport



1. We need to see libraries as players in a wide variety of policy areas

One aspect of the stereotype of those who work in the library field is that we can tend to be insulated - or even isolated - from the world around us, preferring the calm of the stacks to the challenges of society as a whole. At the level of the sector as a whole, we risk being seen - and seeing ourselves - as similarly isolated, focusing on one particular area or type of action, be it education, culture or beyond.

However, just as the individual stereotype is (largely) wrong - and certainly something to challenge - so too is the idea that libraries are a 'one-trick pony', only able to deliver on one policy priority. As we have seen through our engagement around the Sustainable Development Goals and in many other areas, the work of libraries is not an end in itself, but rather a means of achieving a wide variety of other policy goals.

Indeed, if we see ourselves as having a mission to improve lives through access to information, we even have a responsibility to engage in these different areas. We need to see ourselves as stakeholders in discussions on a variety of questions and areas of decision-making, from health to urban planning, from agriculture to security.

This has an impact on our thinking. When, as a first stage in defining our

priorities and plans for the future, we are assessing the issues and needs in our communities that need to be addressed, we therefore need to keep our horizons broad. We should not exclude questions just because they are not traditionally areas in which libraries are active. Rather, we need the confidence and imagination to imagine how the values and strengths of libraries can contribute in a wider variety of ways.

Subsequently, we may need to look again at how we measure our own success, moving beyond library-centric metrics to wider social indicators - in particular those used by policy-makers, for example to gauge success against the Sustainable Development Goals. This can also, as a side-effect, help us think more broadly about the place of our work in society as a whole.

2. We should be more open in where and how we engage in advocacy, making a wider variety of issues our own

In our own discussions, we often use terms such as 'library policy' or 'library advocacy'. These can risk leading us to think that the ways in which libraries engage with governments or other relevant decision-makers is down to a very simple relationship, in just one area, with just one person, agency or ministry. It also gives the sense that libraries themselves are the unique goal of what we are doing.

However, this is not the case. As set out above, libraries are players wherever access to information can make a difference. Opportunities for libraries to engage with policy-makers and others should therefore not be limited to just the one relationship mentioned above, but potentially with many different agencies, ministries, and stakeholders.

We should therefore look again at broader political programmes, such as the UN 2030 Agenda, from the perspective that we are legitimate actors, with a real potential contribution to make across the board. In short, we should make a wider variety of issues our own.

Internally, we will need to be imaginative in seeing how library services can make a difference, but also of course realistic in terms of looking at the resources we have available to us, and the positive effect that different contributions can make,

in order to maximise our overall impact. We should avoid over-selling ourselves - promising something and then not being able to deliver can damage our credibility - but also be ready to be bold and inventive.

For example, the place of libraries as actors in environmental policy and climate action is a key emerging issue. Our institutions are obviously affected by the changes that face our societies as a whole. But we are not powerless! Having developed our own environmental literacy, we can start incorporating environmental evaluations into our own work and decision-making. But we can also be inventive in drawing on our resources - our collections, our spaces, our people - in stimulating and supporting action in our communities. Libraries have the potential to be a cornerstone of any effort to deliver the behaviour change necessary to respond to climate change effectively.

In talking with others, we will need to be able to draw clear and strong links between these wider policy goals, and libraries' broader agenda of promoting positive change based around the empowerment of all people to realise their own potential. For example, traditional areas of library strength such as information literacy have an obvious application when it comes to issues such as public health or healthy democratic discussion.

3. We should intensify and improve our own advocacy

It is not enough to act to update our own thinking and planning, if we don't also manage to place ourselves at the heart of a wider agenda. As already highlighted above, we need to be able to draw stronger connections both in our heads and in our discourse between what we are doing, and what others are doing.

A lot of this is down to how we advocate. We need to recognise the importance of effective communications, and value this as a skill that is worth investing in and supporting. This includes the ability to talk to users and other stakeholders - including policy-makers - in a convincing way. It is perhaps a cliché, but a first step in this direction is to become better listeners, taking the time to understand fully both what it is that others care about, and what language they use themselves. We cannot expect others to speak 'library' - rather, we need to speak in the terms that they employ in order to maximise the resonance of our arguments.

A second step is to ensure that we are presenting support for libraries as a win-win situation. Almost all those who fund libraries will have other things that they can spend money on. We need to be able to explain why investing in libraries - rather necessarily than something else - is the most effective way for them to achieve their goals.

Beyond these basics, we need also to encourage more innovative, positive approaches, and even be ready to surprise the people we are talking to, in order to engage them fully. There are, as already highlighted, opportunities to make libraries part of a wider narrative, for example built around a 'radically hopeful' view of the world, that has confidence in the ability of individuals, given the skills and information they need, to realise their own potential. As indeed highlighted by Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland, at the opening session of the 2022 World Library and Information Congress, we should be able to promote ourselves as a 'hub for hope'.

Of course one of the best ways of ensuring that we are a profession that advocates for itself and its goals in future is by working with emerging library leaders today. We need to find ways both to inspire them, and to build their confidence and skills in being advocates, with both the broad, ambitious horizons and tactical knowledge highlighted here. Those existing library leaders with experience and connections should therefore look to bring newer colleagues on board, as an investment in our own future.

A. We need to make links between global issues and individual experience

IFLA has a potentially very important role to play as a sort of antenna, listening out for the key (new) ideas, understandings, and even disagreements that are shaping the way in which policies are made. We are well placed to do so, given our status as the main global organisation for libraries, and the observer status we have at the United Nations and a number of UN agencies.



This complements our existing work in projecting messages about libraries and convincing decision-makers outside of our field with a new role as a sort of 'translator'. In this capacity, we should report on and explain this engagement in ways that help colleagues to understand and internalise key themes, making them both part of their action and their communication. This can offer valuable support to delivering on recommendations 1 and 2 above.

Of course, this engagement doesn't need only be carried out by a small group of people. Ensuring that a wider range of people from our sector can also take part in such meetings or processes, in one way or another, can also help a lot, allowing for a more direct link between the work of the profession on the ground and these global issues. It also, of course, makes our own advocacy stronger by drawing on the diversity of our field.

B. We should develop inspirational core texts that shape thinking in our field and beyond

Of course, we shouldn't just take our lead from others. We have the capacity, when we work together, to develop and articulate not only standards and guidelines, but also high-level principles and other materials that can shape our thinking. These can even serve to explain and promote our field with others, encapsulating the value and meaning of our work in a short, powerful way, which can help partners and stakeholders understand why we matter so much.

IFLA is well-placed to lead in such work, insofar as it is able to listen to and understand what the wider library field needs, and bring together volunteers and others with the ability to translate it into an inspiring text. A great recent example is that of the Public Library Manifesto which, now in its third edition, combines both core principles from earlier versions with key contemporary issues identified by librarians around the world. This is a text that is set to form part of the strategies not just of individual libraries, but also of library systems and even laws.

There are plenty of other areas where similar texts exist, created within the context of IFLA, and others where they could potentially be created, generating new energy and activity across the field, as well as offering a

calling card for engagement with potential partners.

In developing this work, we need to be ambitious and visionary, if we want to encourage matching ambition and vision among those reading them. They can - and should - be complemented by more technical materials that provide practical help and support, in ways that adapt to local, national and regional needs.

C. We need to be an effective voice for libraries with other stakeholders

It should perhaps go without saying, but there is also a responsibility on IFLA itself to ensure that it is effective in its own advocacy towards other stakeholders. We should set an example in the way we work to promote our sector, our interests and our values, building up relationships and understanding of the (potential) role of libraries, and finding champions for our work. We need, ourselves, to be imaginative in where we engage, but also strict in allocating our own energies to those areas where we can get the maximum benefit, either in terms of immediate outputs (conventions, recommendations, declarations, research reports relating to libraries), or making links with national decision-

makers that in turn open up new possibilities for our members.

A key way of doing this is by drawing more of our volunteer base into our advocacy work. Our different units are of course, first and foremost, a space where the global field can come together, discuss, exchange and learn about the key issues that we face, amongst ourselves. But they are also potentially the spokespeople for the library field in their areas of focus, or are able at least to offer a window onto what our profession can deliver. The same of course goes for our regional units, which have a potential to make libraries more of a player in the institutions and processes that work at the regional level.



Engage

This section explores the ideas shared which relate to how we make a reality of the concept of a global library field, ensuring that the widest possible number of colleagues both are, and feel like they are, part of the collective. It also looks at our work to ensure that, in the same way, our institutions are not just physically but also figuratively at the heart of our communities, with everyone who could benefit from our services feeling at home in the library (or on its website!).

Our Field

- 4. We need to adopt a broad definition of our field, and ensure that being part of it is synonymous with activity and engagement**
- 5. We must see outreach as key to achieving our missions**

Our Federation

- D. We find ways of working that make it easy and attractive for every member of our field to be involved in our work**
- E. We engage with emerging library leaders in dialogues and activities to shape the future of libraries**



4. We need to adopt a broad definition of our field, and ensure that being part of it is synonymous with action

Our field is only as strong as the number of people who feel like they are part of it. While it is of course easy to talk in the abstract about a collective of all library and information professionals, this is not the same thing as the millions of people in the sector - and related sectors - having a strong sense of connection to the profession, its values, and its future. This is a precondition for realising the potential that we talk so much about of a global community of people sharing values, experiences and ideas in order to drive progress towards our goals.

This can pay a really crucial dividend in terms of making it easier and simpler for us to serve communities. It is hard to imagine us being able to provide meaningful and impactful services to a diverse population if we are not both supporting diversity within our profession and the associations that bring it together. By amplifying the voices that are less often heard, we may find new ways, for example, of delivering support to people who themselves are at risk of marginalisation.

One key step in this direction is to ensure that we make sure that we recognise and value the importance of volunteer work and broader activism. As highlighted already in the recommendations under the heading of 'Inspire', we need to see ourselves as a proactive profession, always

looking for new and better ways of doing things. Getting involved in the work of associations is a key part of this, with the time invested by individuals in this (ideally) being more than repaid both in personal and professional terms. The importance of such engagement is something that could be promoted already during training, and could be made part of any broader appraisal of professional performance and development.

A second step, linked to the above, is what we can do as a field in terms of ensuring that emerging library leaders feel like they have a place and a perspective in the global library field. The habit of thinking of ourselves as part of something bigger is one that can be promoted right from the beginning of careers, and indeed, it can be a key enabler and even driver of personal development.

Of course to do this, we need to ensure that there are meaningful opportunities for emerging leaders to get involved. It can help to carry out a structured reflection on what it will take to reach out to those who are newer to the profession, as well as to identify the barriers that they may face in engaging and what we can do about them. We should also respect and appreciate those who, having already contributed to the field in leadership roles, are then ready to step up and give their support to others to do the same.

5. We must see outreach as key to achieving our missions

In parallel with work to reach out to members of our own profession, wherever they are, we need also to deliver on our promise to provide excellent library services to all.

We need to see ourselves as community institutions, with the term 'community' understood broadly - i.e. not just people living in a certain area, but also university communities, the community of officials within a ministry or parliament, or the employees of a company. This implies a readiness to look at ourselves from the outside, and reflect on how the way we operate may affect people's willingness or ability to make the most of libraries.

Key factors of success in this can include the way in which we present ourselves. Clearly there is a balance to be found in this, as there is no single type of user we can use as a reference. Just as some will look for the silence of the more stereotypical library, others will need the opportunity to express themselves and create.

Linked to the question of presentation is how we do communication, in both directions. In terms of promoting our own offer, we should be smart about using the tools that reach the people we want to reach. This can also need imagination, especially when it comes to groups which otherwise may be at risk of marginalisation, for example due to language or more broadly a

lack of a sense of belonging.

Yet communication is not broadcasting - it also depends on engagement and active listening to our (potential) users and their needs. We need to be empathetic, and acknowledge the difficulties and challenges they face. Technology offers possibilities to do this, if done well, and of course with full respect for human rights. Crucially, we need to trust in our communities to engage back with us, and not prejudge how they will engage with what libraries have to offer.

There is also, potentially, a shift in thinking needed to move away from thinking of ourselves as serving the needs of individuals to serving the needs of groups. Done well, libraries can through their spaces, collections and services provide a physical common ground which helps build stronger connections. This too, nonetheless, requires thought and planning of course.

Working with children and families has a particular relevance. If library use begins early, there should be a greater readiness to continue throughout life, and even, later on to get their own children into the habit. This is, indeed, an argument for investing in great school, public and community library services as a means of supporting the library field as a whole!

D. We find ways of working that make it easy and attractive for every member of our field to be involved

For IFLA itself to engage the field fully, we need to be able to ensure that everyone can see a place for themselves in our work. This is of course closely linked to recommendation 4 above, with engagement in IFLA being just one manifestation of a sense of belonging to a wider field.

To some extent, this is about reflecting on the existing volunteer roles that we offer. There are already well over a thousand opportunities in different volunteer units, with a thematic or regional focus. These can be great places for people with a global perspective to bring their energy and knowledge together with that of others to create something new.

Maximising the diversity of these groups supports the immediate goal of strengthening the value of the work that they do on behalf of the global field, as well as the future objective both of ensuring that as many people in the field as possible can see themselves as being part of IFLA. It can be valuable to reflect on where barriers may lie to a wider variety of colleagues getting involved, and what we can do to overcome this. Some may be very practical - such as helping great potential volunteers to find nominators during elections, or adopting good practices around multilingualism - while others may be more about presentation - for

example finding ways to make clear that everyone's experience can be valuable.

But it can also be about looking at a wider range of roles that people can take up, if they wish. Some people may not be able to commit for longer periods, or feel that they can best contribute to more specific projects and programmes, rather than the more general agenda of a formal committee. There are possibilities in IFLA's new governance to create working groups and networks which could offer a way forward here, and in particular to address new issues in a more informal way which could suit those who are looking to get their first taste of working within the Federation.

We also need to have the widest possible toolkit available for engagement. This means not just 'one-way' webinars, but also more interactive formats, ranging from master-classes, workshops, and more open discussion sessions. We need to acknowledge that many in our field cannot count on reliable internet connections, and so the content we prepare may need to be available to download, or in formats that can be taken up by local 'ambassadors', and then used in their own, face-to-face activities. This can also help better serve cultures which prioritise the importance of face-to-face communication.

E. We engage with emerging library leaders in dialogues and activities to shape the future of libraries

Just as is the case with the library field as a whole, we need also ensure that emerging leaders see working with IFLA as a key part of their own development. Indeed, as already mentioned in this report, this engagement can in itself be a driver of personal and professional growth!

Part of this is about giving space for such emerging leaders in IFLA's formal structures. Crucially, in these, we need to avoid discounting (or giving the impression of discounting) those people who have fewer years of professional experience, and rather ensure that we also recognise energy, fresh ideas and new perspectives as valuable contributions to the group. Indeed, these can be invaluable complements to the longer experience that others can bring, making for a stronger and more powerful whole.

We therefore need to be clearer about welcoming emerging leaders so that more of them feel like they can stand as candidates. Those voting in IFLA elections should also, when deciding who to support, bear in mind that the Federation's value comes precisely from the diversity of perspectives we can bring together, rather than just voting for what they already know.

This focus should not stop with elections. The way that work is structured within committees can also be more or less favourable to

emerging leaders. There is already the possibility to appoint mentors who have the explicit role of providing guidance and support to newer members. Projects or working groups can be structured in ways that provide appropriate ways for people to engage, learn, and contribute meaningfully. Chairs and other officers can look to identify strengths and potential, and work with them.

These efforts of course don't need to be limited to current committee members. Indeed, a more open structure, allowing current non-members to get involved in work and gain experience can offer a step towards future membership. There may even be merit in more formally measuring engagement of emerging leaders in committee work as an indicator of sustainability. Many of the ideas set out in recommendation D above are of course also applicable here.



Enable

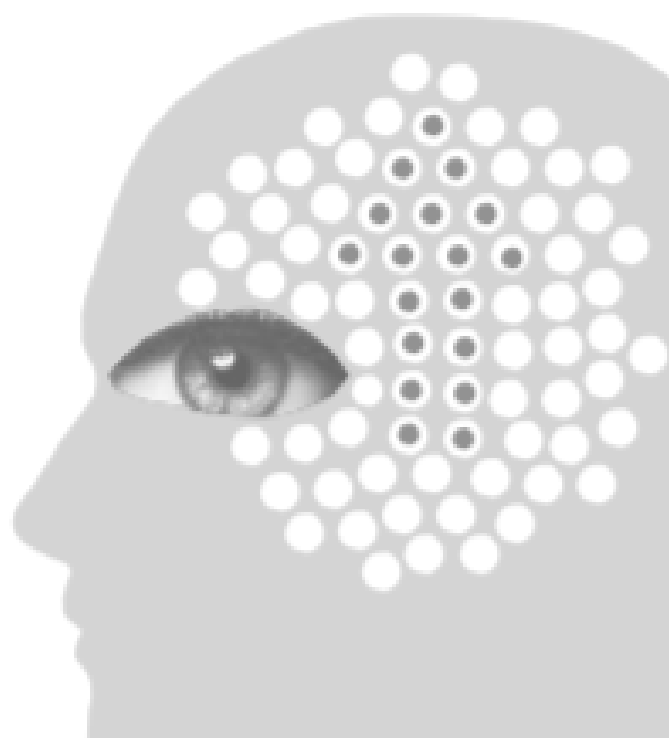
This part of the report brings together ideas that focus on how our field, and our Federation, can make innovating and learning central to our identity and practice. This links strongly to the need to think about sustainability, ensuring that we are giving the future sufficient importance in our own planning, and taking decisions accordingly. Nonetheless, it underlines that we should not see ourselves as victims of the future, but rather actors in it, both in our own right, and for society as a whole.

Our Field

- 6. We need to feel a sense of agency in the face of the future**
- 7. We need to embrace and share innovation**
- 8. We need to see ourselves as a core part of the education infrastructure**
- 9. We need to support emerging leaders as a core plank of sustainability, while also seeing that we all have potential to develop**

Our Federation

- F. We should understand our field and its needs, and how to support it most effectively**
- G. We should provide and encourage opportunities for learning for all that build sustainability and leadership**
- H. We should create spaces for emerging leaders to contribute meaningfully to the global library field**



6. We need to feel a sense of agency in the face of the future

One element of the stereotype of libraries already mentioned in this report is the idea that we are passive, unlikely to take the initiative or change without being forced to do so. This may be explained by our own history - the fact that libraries have been around for so long can encourage a sense of permanence, and even of seeing not changing as a virtue. While this probably does make sense when it comes to our values - the idea that everyone should benefit from access to information as a right in itself and a driver of development - it doesn't when it comes to how we go about doing this.

There can also be a sense of fear - the idea that the future is something that will be done to us, and will inevitably not be as good as the past. It is only

human to be afraid of what is not known or certain, as well as to look back to 'the good old days', especially in a present where libraries (and many others in the book sector and beyond) have been shaken out of their comfort zones by social, economic, technological and political change.

In response, we need to move towards having confidence in what we do and why we do it (our mission and values), rather than just in how we do it (our day-to-day methods). These are far more essential to preserve than specific activities or services. If we feel strong in this, we can also turn the tables on the future, seeing ourselves as being actors in it, rather than victims of it.

This implies a readiness to be realistic about what we do know now - including to deconstruct ourselves and analyse ourselves critically - and a curiosity about what we don't know, plus a willingness to take up new tools and ideas. This also means that we are able to accept reasonable risks, and see that when something doesn't work, this is rather a learning experience that can serve us subsequently.

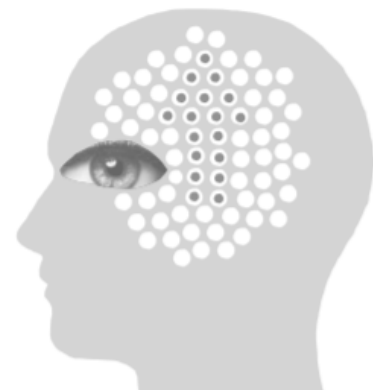
Importantly, once we understand that we have agency in the future, we can integrate it into our thinking, rather

than just treating it as an externality over which we have no influence.

This sense of a connection with what is to come can also of course help us strengthen our action in favour of sustainability too. Once we take the long-term impacts of our actions (or decisions not to act), we can ensure that the way we allocate our effort and resources today brings the maximum benefits tomorrow.

In practical terms, we exercise this sense of agency through a stronger focus on strategy and planning. We should always start with an assessment of the issues we face, based on evidence, as well as of the resources we have available. We need to be smart about allocating effort where it will have most impact, understanding risks and obstacles, and ensuring that we integrate measurement and evaluation from the beginning.

Crucially, we should be open-minded, and not abandon ideas prematurely, for example because they didn't work in the past in different conditions.



7. We need to embrace and share innovation

Closely linked to the idea of a future-focused field is the argument that we should think of ourselves - and be thought of by others - as innovators. As highlighted in Recommendation 6, we should only be rigid in sticking to our values and missions, not our specific activities and services, and this means being restless, and always finding, adopting and sharing new ways of doing things.

This can be uncomfortable. That part of the brain that wants only to deal with the familiar will tend to resist, but we need to overcome this. The sense of agency mentioned above - that we can all make a difference and shape the future - can help in this respect.

At the level of individuals, this means making reflection and innovation part of our practice, ensuring that we always have a part of our minds focused on what we can be doing better, either on our own, or in collaboration with others. At the level of the field as a whole, we can likely do more to celebrate and reward innovation as a professional quality, as well as provide channels for new ideas and tools to spread across the field. Closely linked to this is the importance of incentives and spaces to learn from each others' cultures, and the insights that they can offer us into what we do.

Clearly, digital tools can play a very significant role in enabling this. Despite the insecurities that many felt

about using technology pre-pandemic, the last few years have shown that our field as a whole is more than able to make such tools our own, and use them to fulfil our missions. Clearly, there are still gaps which we should address as a key step towards ensuring that we are all able to make best use of what's available, as well as to serve an increasingly digitally native user base.

However, once again, it is not just a case of libraries being 'takers' of technology. We can also be at the heart of shaping it - just as indeed we have been in many ways in the past. There may even be scope to promote a stronger library vision of how the internet should work, built around the rights and development needs of all people.

Closely linked to this is libraries' role as a cornerstone of the broader 'open' movement, contributing not only their collections, but also their skills and values. Open access, open science, open GLAM and more - all offer a more positive, more public-spirited version of the internet than that driven by purely private interests, and all have libraries at their heart. Integrating the logic of open, supporting its development, and finding solutions to its challenges, can represent a key contribution of libraries to the future, and a way of cementing our place, in the minds of others, as essential to innovation.

8. We need to see ourselves as a core part of the education infrastructure

Recommendation 7 underlines how we should be supporters of innovation as much in our own field as in the wider world. The same should go for education. We should act - and market - ourselves as being an essential part of the education infrastructure, an indispensable actor that is not just part of the delivery of policies, but that can also help shape them, drawing on our experience and knowledge of the needs of our users.

We see too often that libraries are simply forgotten when relevant policies are put together, from early years education to adult learning. This is not to say that librarians themselves are unaware of their ability to contribute here. Indeed, so many already see themselves as trainers and supporters, running programmes and activities which bring real benefits to those involved, leaving no-one behind when it comes to using all available forms of media to empower universal access to information. This universality is particularly important. Libraries are so often - or should be - a second (or first) chance for those who may have been passed by, insufficiently served by the formal education system, or otherwise are at risk of marginalisation.

However, these efforts are rarely part of - or supported by - wider policies or strategies. We too often end up with parallel initiatives - those led by

libraries and those by other actors - which are uncoordinated, making it much more difficult to realise synergies.

Nonetheless, as the importance of informal and nonformal learning is recognised as a complement to more formal learning, there are opportunities for libraries. Public and community libraries in particular were often created as part of such education initiatives, even if the terms 'informal' and 'non-formal' may not have been used at the time. They were seen as a way of improving or maintaining literacy levels, especially for people beyond school age.





Many libraries have of course not just owned but transformed this role, providing new services that influence users to learn new skills and take on new challenges. They are becoming multi-functional centres for adapted learning, going way beyond basic literacy, building on their understanding of what users need. As education policies expand to give a more equal role to informal and nonformal learning, we should aim to ensure that libraries are seen as key players and delivery partners, alongside schools, universities and beyond.

This also implies that we should also be part of the policy-making process, given the expertise and insight that libraries can bring. Any serious evidence-based policy process should draw on available experience from those involved in implementation. An immediate step is for libraries, potentially, to be more vocal and active in consultations or reviews about education policy, in order to show how essential we are.

Finally, it is important to mention that in many countries there is not a school or university without a library. Indeed it is hard to imagine an educational institution without a library, with the best universities typically having great libraries. In this way, in the education infrastructure, teachers work alongside librarians, with a scholarly environment connecting teachers, students, information, and librarians.

9. We need to support emerging leaders to ensure sustainability, while also seeing that we can all develop

In parallel with our work to make education a part of every citizen's life, we need to make it part of our own professional lives. This is perhaps inevitable if we take on Recommendation 6 - that we see ourselves as actors in our own futures - and make it part of our planning. By definition, learning today gives us the possibility to do things differently, and ideally better, tomorrow.

The maximum gains come from helping new and emerging leaders develop the habit of learning, given that the pay-off is likely to come over a longer period.

Of course, learning needs investment. This is not just about buying courses, but also allowing time off to study or take part in developmental activities, such as exchanges, job-shadowing, or work with associations, understanding that the gains are likely to outweigh the costs. It may require those with more experience to give up roles or opportunities in favour of others.

We also should provide support that helps prepare emerging leaders for the tasks that they are likely to face. We need to reflect on the skills that our field needs in a changing world, including of course an ability to advocate effectively, and build partnerships and collaborations with others.

In line with the logic that 10% of learning comes from formal

opportunities, 20% from informal ones (such as shadowing or conferences) and 70% from simply doing things on the job, we should also give such leaders opportunities in their work to put into practice what they have picked up, and so develop both their knowledge and skills. This also clearly requires a readiness to let go of control and increase trust.

It is worth underlining, of course, that 'leadership' should be interpreted broadly. You do not need to be a director to be a leader. Anyone who changes things arguably shows leadership. It is also not the case that library and information workers can only lead within the sector - we also have the potential to be leaders in our communities! We should, therefore, support and celebrate a wide variety of forms of leadership.

Clearly, this section focuses a lot on emerging leaders. However, it is not the case that once someone has 'emerged', or has worked for a certain period of time, that they stop learning and developing. As a result, many of the issues raised above of course also apply across the board, for example around making time for learning, recognising and celebrating development and leadership. To support this, we need to ensure that, as a field, we have our own infrastructure for learning, responding both to what people need to learn, and the way in which they learn best.

F. We should understand our field and its needs, and how to support it most effectively

The sorts of cultural change highlighted in the Recommendations above concerning the library field do imply that there is a responsibility for associations - including of course IFLA - to provide leadership. We need to show that we ourselves value innovation and learning, and use our own resources both to support these.

Crucially, doing this will rely on an ability to build up a deep understanding of our field and its needs. As highlighted in particular in the section on Engage, the library field is marked by many forms of diversity. This includes diversity in the opportunities available to individual library and information workers and institutions to draw on national or regional infrastructures to support their own development. It also includes very different levels of

resources available, as well as cultures of learning.

Understanding this diversity needs to be a dynamic process, and one that is owned by the group, rather than any one individual. We need to couple reflective practice and self-evaluation at the individual or local level with structures for gathering this information and turning it into actions at the regional and global levels. It will be important, also, to be smart about how we go about assessing what is required - not all needs are necessarily explicit or known from the start, and may only show up through their symptoms. This is potentially a responsibility for all of IFLA's volunteer groups, each in their own areas of expertise.

Similarly, and to repeat a point made in the Engage section of this report, we also need to make sure that we have a wide range of types of material available to support learning, development and innovation. The format that works in one place, with one group, may not work elsewhere. It is our responsibility to do all we can to adapt, rather than to expect the field to adapt to us.



G. We should provide and encourage opportunities for learning for all that build sustainability and leadership

A specific focus of the learning that we offer should be around sustainability and leadership. These are relatively clear as cross-cutting themes that are of relevance to all, at least if they are approached in ways that allow respect for, and adaptation to, local circumstances.

In many ways, a focus on sustainability can be a logical follow-on from Recommendation A, concerning IFLA's role in 'translating' global issues for the library field. The concept is certainly high on the agenda in the work of the UN and others, and has been for over 30 years. In the case of the library field, ensuring an understanding not just of definitions, but also of how they apply in the way that we take decisions could be a valuable role for IFLA.

In order to build this sustainability, a variety of tools and materials could be valuable, for example around how we can assess the needs and circumstances we face, the resources we have and the opportunities we have in front of us. They could also help us build up a better idea of our wider environment, both in terms of how libraries fit into a broader ecosystem, or how different issues influence (and can be influenced by) us. IFLA should also continue in its drive to embed the habit of building evaluation into the work of libraries everywhere, with a view to focusing

our resources where they will have the most impact.

Similarly, we can be leaders in leadership. All of the points set out in Recommendation 9 are valid here. We should make it clear that there are many ways of being a leader, although at its core, this is about taking responsibility and making change happen. How we do this could range from providing practical examples that spark new thinking or simply showing what is possible to more active work (or networks) to provide ongoing guidance, pointers, and even simply moral support for those willing to step up.

As highlighted at the beginning of this Recommendation, clearly, we need to be able to deliver this support in ways that give everyone the opportunity to engage. Of course, IFLA's resources will always be limited, and so the greatest impact may in the end come from what we can do to encourage and inspire others also to become providers or supporters of learning, at all levels of our field.

H. We should create spaces for emerging leaders to contribute meaningfully to the global library field

IFLA does have a particular opportunity to show the way when it comes to allowing emerging library leaders to build their experience and profiles. In line with what is highlighted above, our existing structures offer plenty of possibilities to develop and demonstrate leadership ability.

This can be either in a more formal role (such as as an officer, convenor, or perhaps as a Governing Board member), through coordinating or otherwise advancing a specific project, or even simply by acting as an ambassador for a committee's work within other national, regional or professional networks. Emerging leaders can be supported in this by mentors, or other deliberate efforts to create openings and to draw on what they can contribute.

However, we can also look at more targeted programming, complementing (or even acting as a feeder for) IFLA's more formal committee structures. The Federation could look at the experience of its own past leaders programmes, both to evaluate the impact that they had, and to consider how an IFLA initiative could add value or complement offers from elsewhere. Clearly, the international nature of the Federation's work as well as our emphasis on themes around advocacy and evaluation provide a potential area of focus. There is also a pay-off

for the Federation in terms of having cohorts of exciting new talents able to support our work in influencing international organisations, as well as in spreading good practice, hopefully for decades to come.

We should also keep working to ensure that our conference offers opportunities tailored to the needs of emerging leaders. Specific grants should continue to be available to emerging leaders, with particular consideration given to those who would otherwise have no other option to attend. The conference programme itself should include ways to overcome any sense of being overwhelmed by the size of the event, and indeed include chances for emerging leaders to speak, either on the stage, or by having their questions from the floor prioritised. This not only about the experience that this offers the speaker, but also the example it provides.

Throughout these efforts, we will need to make sure that our offer is meaningful. We are talking about busy professionals or students, and cannot expect them to get involved in purely theoretical exercises. It would also be a waste to do so, given their potential to make a difference. The ways we offer emerging leaders to engage should always be connected with our ongoing work, and lead to real outputs, and ideally real-world outcomes.

Connect

This final section of the report is about the ideas shared about how we build connections both amongst ourselves, and with others. As highlighted in the introduction, this is very closely integrated with the other themes here, not least of course engagement. Connections arguably also underpin our ability to achieve things - indeed anything that we cannot do on our own - giving us access to new tools and knowledge, as well as providing the basic building material of the global library field we are looking to make a reality.

Our Field

10. We must make connecting with others in our field an integral part of our practice

11. We should invest seriously in our connections with partners and supporters

Our Federation

I. We should deliver innovative and attractive ways to build connections within our field

J. We connect with emerging library leaders and support their professional needs



10. We must make connecting with others in our field an integral part of our practice

Already above, in Recommendation 4, we highlighted the need to ensure that we don't just say that we are a field, but that as many people as possible feel like they are part of it. Clearly a decisive way of helping people to think this way is through the experience of connecting with others, professionally or personally.

Looking beyond the sense that we just don't have the time to do anything more than our day jobs, there can be other barriers, however, that we need to overcome. One example is the diversity of types of work in our field. Clearly, there can seem to be a big gap between the work of a conservation specialist in a national library and the multi-tasking school or community librarian. Literacy trainers in public libraries may also feel a long way away from a subject-specialist in a research or company library.

But we are part of the same field, and indeed the pandemic shone a new light on many existing collaborations, for example through making digitised heritage materials available to support learning in schools, or through encouraging citizen science in public libraries linked with universities and research centres. As mentioned previously, getting people into the habit of library use (usually through school, public or community libraries) can potentially make them into lifelong library users too.

As such, we should not see differences between our institutions and roles as a barrier, but rather an opportunity to use complementary skills and resources to create something new and exciting. The same goes for differences in culture, in experience, and even in geography - it is because of our diversity that there is the possibility of synergy. This needs to be core to our way of working and thinking, and not an optional extra.

In building these connections, we should also think about permanence. Links between institutions, for example, should not be dependent on just one (or two) people - but rather allow for wider and more sustainable connections. The same goes for links between associations. Individual relationships can be a great way of starting things off, but we need to be ready to share networks, and broaden our links, otherwise there is a risk of becoming a bottleneck, or otherwise missing out on opportunities that there might be.

11. We should invest seriously in our connections with partners and supporters

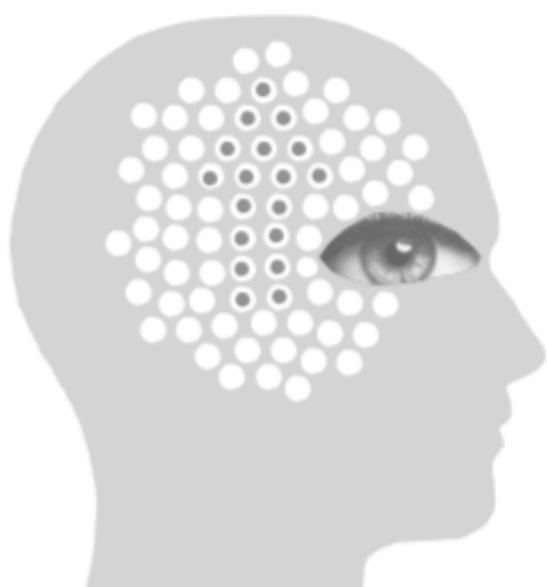
Recommendations under Inspire and Engage above highlight the need to make ourselves - both in the imagination and in reality - part of wider policy fields. While we are unique in the combination of values, resources and skills that we bring, we are not alone in the outcomes that we look to bring about among our users in terms of the fulfilment of rights and personal and community development.

Just as we need, therefore, to be imaginative about thinking through all the different ways in which we can have a positive impact, we should be just as open-minded when it comes to who we work with. We may also need to be proactive, given that we cannot take for granted that these other

actors will have thought about us as partners - indeed, they will often not be aware of how much libraries have transformed in recent years.

Just two examples of areas where we can look to build up stronger links are around urban development and public health. In the case of the former, the role of libraries as multifunctional centres focused on meeting individuals' needs sits very closely with that of the Fifteen-Minute City which has been enthusiastically adopted by Paris amongst other global centres. Yet currently, it appears that the urban studies literature pays little attention to what libraries can do, while library and information science publications looking at libraries and urban development do not necessarily cross-over.

In the case of public health, there is clearly a major information component, for example as concerns raising awareness of risks and looking to make positive changes to behaviours. The open, welcoming nature of libraries, and the presence of staff and collections can play a very valuable role. There are already some very strong examples of libraries working with public health agencies and even primary healthcare providers in order to support healthier living, or enable engagement with eHealth solutions.



But given the huge investments that many governments make in health, more could and should be done to link up with libraries, and so ensure greater value for money.

Beyond any one policy area, we could be doing more to support stronger connections between libraries and policy-makers in general.

Campaigning for the role of government and parliamentary libraries - as well as the role of library and information professionals in governments and parliaments - is a key way of doing this. However, there may be interest also in working with parts of government that don't have their own library services, such as specialised agencies or local government. Through building up partnerships there, we can facilitate the 'science-policy interface', and deliver directly on our mission to turn access to information into positive change.



I. We should deliver innovative and attractive ways to build connections within our field

As the peak organisation for the library field, IFLA has a relatively obvious role to play as a connector. As an initial step, this is about building our membership and volunteer base, so that as many individual library and information workers, as well as their institutions and organisations, have a direct link to IFLA itself. Already in this report, we have talked extensively about the different ways in which we can engage the field, and the need to take a flexible, imaginative approach to do this.

However, the next step must be to move away from a pure 'hub and spokes' model, to one where IFLA becomes an incubator of direct connections on the ground. While it is engagement in the Federation that can catalyse these links, they do not then rely on IFLA to continue, and we do not insist on being present in every conversation or cooperative project.

Providing these places is something that we already do, of course, through our conferences, and volunteer groups, but we can certainly do more in terms of offering opportunities for people with shared interests and ambitions to come together and start developing collaborations. IFLA should provide a safe, semi-structured space for such initiatives, that is accessible for all who have the commitment and energy to make positive things happen for our field.

To do this, we can learn from other networks in terms of finding a balance between structure and freedom (both are necessary to some extent), between offering guidance, and leaving people to try their own things, and in providing the sort of support that helps overcome the transaction costs that can exist when creating new connections.

J. We connect with emerging library leaders and support their professional needs

A recurring theme in this Report is the importance of working with emerging leaders, in order to support advocacy, to engage them in our activities and to drive their development. A number of other sections have already addressed the importance of working to provide opportunities that respond to emerging leaders' needs, in ways that work for them.

Yet to do all of this, we need to make sure that we connect with them in the first place. For IFLA, this is both a case of delivering on a valuable goal in the short term, and also a way of building engagement in our Federation that will, we can hope, literally last a lifetime.

How we do this nonetheless takes reflection. We already count many library and information science schools and departments amongst our members, providing a forum for them to exchange and collaborate.

However, there is more scope for us to work with colleagues who are still studying, for example by promoting discounted membership rates, and running activities - such as competitions or collaborative initiatives - which give a first taste of international engagement.

We also need to connect with those emerging leaders who are no longer - or who never were - enrolled in a library school. Smart use of social media - and in particular working through other people's networks - could play a useful role here, as could better ways of articulating what IFLA can be about. It is a point already made a few times in this report, but we should also use imagination here in order to reach out to those with a library and information background, but who are no longer working (or never worked) in libraries themselves. Such people can be great bridges for us to other sectors in due course.



Conclusions

As set out in the introduction, this report is all about the steps we can take in order to build a sustainable future for our field, based on the ideas of the people who will be leading it.

Readers can use this report to get acquainted with the potential that IFLA offers to our institutions and each librarian of the world. It is also a tool that is designed to inspire librarians and young librarians to engage, enable and connect the global library field. It encourages building communities and connecting librarians with librarians, and librarians with decision makers to solve local and global issues.

Importantly, this represents a valuable effort to listen to new voices to promote an intergenerational dialogue for the librarians of the world and our federation.

The recommendations of the report come from a multicultural, multi-local and intersectional approach and this fact adds value to the document because it includes different perspectives and realities. The report calls on readers to think outside of the box and reminds us that there are crises and challenges to face, for this reason it is necessary to add new voices and ideas.

Over to you!

This edition of the Trend Report is - like all others - intended as just the start of a conversation. There is no single way in which it can be read or used, and we encourage you to be imaginative!

Each of the recommendations set out here remains quite broad, with plenty of work required to define specific actions that could be taken. Moreover, and especially as concerns the numbered recommendations (those focused on the library field as a whole), they will not necessarily all be of the same priority for all.

As a result, one exercise could be a current-state analysis, looking at how well national library fields are already doing in each of these eleven areas. You could start by looking at them individually and assigning a score, before having a group discussion where you compare assessments, and then discuss where you have differing views.

A further step could be to assign weightings to each of the recommendations from your perspective in terms of how important

they are in guaranteeing the future sustainability of our field - i.e. our ability to keep bringing in the resources (people, money and more) that we need, and then to continue to fulfil our fundamental missions in a changing world. For example, you may feel that it is more important to focus on engaging in a wider range of policy processes (Recommendation 2) than on changing our own perceptions of how we fit in (Recommendation 1), and so assign this a stronger weighting.

Multiplying the scores by the weightings would make it possible to come up with an index of sustainability, which in turn would make it possible to identify in which areas you could be focusing effort in order to boost your overall performance. Areas which you have decided are very important but where your current performance is low could be priorities.

Of course, in this, you may choose to add in further recommendations or themes - you should not feel constrained to the ones set out here!

Another type of exercise could be to take an individual recommendation here, and then think (individually and/or collectively) about the specific actions that could be taken to deliver. These could then be shared, and the group could analyse how each one relates to the other in terms of effort required and the impact that they would have. There may also be questions about complementarity

between different activities, or sequencing, which you can work through.

We'd be glad to hear more from you about how you have used the report!



Our authors

meet the people who made this report possible! Authors are marked with an *.
Fatima Oury Sow Gueye joined us remotely

(left to right)
Rabab Shaker*
J.M Shalani Dilinika*
:Louise-Anne Charles*
Anna Au*
Christine Mackenzie



(left to right)
Victoria Okojie
Damilare Oyedele*
Agnes Hajdu-Barat
Waleed Al Badi*
Esther Bravo Govea*
Barbara Lison

(left to right)
Jemmimah Maragwa*
Magdalenda Gomulka*
Jonathan Hernandez-Perez
Laurie Alvandian*
Michaela Mrázová*





TREND
REPORT

IFLA Headquarters
Prins Willem-Alexanderhof 5,
2595 BE The Hague
The Netherlands
+ 31-70-3140884
ifla@ifla.org
www.ifla.org