



**International
Federation of
Library
Associations and Institutions**



NATIONAL LIBRARIES NEWS JULY 2024

The following stories have been submitted from colleagues in national libraries around the world.

The Newsletter is prepared by the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR).

Royal Library of Belgium (KBR)

The National Expo, in partnership with museumPASSmusée, VRT, visit.brussels and the National Lottery, closed its doors at KBR on 31st July. KBR is proud to announce that this was a success. This edition was the 3rd and paid tribute to James Ensor for the 75th anniversary of his death. A visual arts contest was organized and nearly 3,000 participants submitted their work of art. 70 of them got the chance to see their work exhibited at KBR, including 30 selected by the public, 30 by a professional jury and 10 from the Nationale Ket-Expo children's competition. Moreover, 41 works were sold at auction for a total of €23,780 for the [Kom op tegen Kanker](#) association, which supports research and the fight against cancer. In total, 3,464 visitors brought the exhibition to life at KBR in July.

National Library of France (BnF)

[The NewsEye project honored with the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award 2024 in the Research category](#)

The European project [NewsEye, A Digital Investigator for Historical Newspapers](#) - which brought together the national libraries of Austria, Finland and France, alongside the universities of La Rochelle (project coordinator), Helsinki, Innsbruck, Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, Rostock and Vienna - was awarded a European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards. This project has significantly improved access to and analysis of European historical newspapers from 1850 to 1950 through the use of artificial intelligence.

VOTE FOR NEWSEYE: HELP US WIN THE PUBLIC CHOICE AWARD! Voting is open until 22 September:
<https://vote.europanostra.org/>

Exhibition “À nous les stades ! Une histoire du sport au féminin » (The stadiums are ours! A history of women's sport)

To celebrate the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the BnF is presenting an exhibition on the history of women's sport in France since the end of the 19th century. Considered the poor relation of competitive sport for a long time, women's sport has gained an increasing place over the last century and a half. The “À nous les stades !” exhibition retraces the ups and downs of this eventful history, which also tells the story of the status of women in France. From 22 May to 13 October 2024, François-Mitterrand site (free entry): <https://www.bnf.fr/fr/agenda/nous-les-stades-une-histoire-du-sport-au-feminin>

120 visiting international culture professionals hosted at the BnF in 20 years

Between 2004 and 2024, more than 120 visiting international culture professionals from every continent have been welcomed to the BnF to work on a wide range of subjects relating to collections, digitisation and standardisation issues thanks to the the “Résidence Culture” programme. Initiated by the French Ministry of Culture, this programme allows international culture professionals to be hosted in French public cultural institutions.

More: <https://www.bnf.fr/en/programmes-hosting-visiting-international-professionals>

The BnF’s 2023 activity report

The BnF has published its activity report for 2023 which outlines, in addition to its activities, its strategic orientations and major projects including audiences and dissemination, handling of physical and digital collections, national and international cooperation, governance...

The highlights include:

- public success on the Richelieu site and record overall attendance, with almost 1,500,000 visits to BnF sites
- creation of a user community
- selection of the architectural competition for the future conservation center in Amiens
- 25 years of Gallica and the 10,000,000th document on the digital library

A summary of this report will soon be available in English.

More (in French): <https://www.bnf.fr/fr/rapport-dactivite>

National Library of Ireland

National Library of Ireland Mourns the Passing of Edna O’Brien

The National Library of Ireland (NLI) was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Edna O’Brien, one of Ireland’s most revered and influential writers. In 2021, the NLI was honoured to acquire O’Brien’s most recent archive, covering the period from 2009 to 2021, which is a significant collection of manuscripts, drafts and personal correspondence that offers invaluable insights into her creative process. This collection joined her earlier papers from 2000 to 2009, which are also held at the NLI. Learn more: <https://www.nli.ie/news-stories/news/national-library-mourns-passing-edna-obrien>

Celebrating Cultural Exchange: Chinese-Irish Literary Forum at the National Library of Ireland

The National Library of Ireland (NLI) recently hosted a delegation of 36 Chinese academics led by Professor Jiangnan Xie, the Chinese Director of the UCD Confucius Institute, Renmin University of China. This visit was part of the International Forum on Exchange and Development of Chinese-Irish Literature, which fosters cultural and literary exchange. Read more: <https://www.nli.ie/news-stories/news/celebrating-cultural-exchange-chinese-irish-literary-forum-national-library>

National Diet Library, Japan

[Symposium "Building on the 'Digital Shift' – Implications for the future in the Library of Congress' new strategic plan"](#)

The National Diet Library (NDL) is holding a symposium, "Building on the 'Digital Shift' - Implications for the future in the Library of Congress' new strategic plan" on Tuesday, September 24, 2024, at the Tokyo Main Library of the NDL. Under the vision "[The Digital Shift at the National Diet Library](#)" from 2021 to 2025, the NDL is promoting universal access to information by making a wide range of information resources available to all users and supporting the development of a permanent national digital information infrastructure.

What role is the NDL expected to play amidst the drastic changes in the information environment surrounding us? As we enter the final year of the current vision next year, the NDL has invited J. Mark Sweeney, Principal Deputy Director of the Library of Congress, and other experts to a symposium to consider the direction of the NDL in the next vision, using the new strategy of the U.S. Library of Congress as a guide.

National Library of Singapore

[Laws of Our Land: Foundations of a New Nation](#)

This exhibition, located at the National Gallery Singapore, puts a spotlight on the Citizenship Ordinance, the Women's Charter, and the Employment Act. These laws have been pivotal in shaping modern-day Singapore, moulding the identity of the country and its people.

The 37 artefacts on display are from the collections of the National Library Singapore, the National Archives of Singapore and partner institutions. The exhibition also showcases new interactive features allowing visitors to engage with characters such as a girl servant also known as *mui tsai* and a citizen voter in the 1959 general elections. Other digital elements include interactive games, a digital rack of union magazines, and video screenings of key moments in Singapore's journey to nationhood.

[ChatBook Featuring S. Rajaratnam](#)

The ChatBook Featuring S. Rajaratnam is the first public version of National Library Board (NLB)'s ChatBook prototype. The generative AI-powered interactive showcase is open to visitors at the National Library Building from 23 July to 21 October 2024. It offers a unique multi-modal experience for learning about one of Singapore's founding fathers, Mr S. Rajaratnam.

Visitors can pose questions to the ChatBook by speaking into a microphone or typing on a typewriter at the writing desk situated in front of the installation. They can then learn more through the generative AI-powered responses drawn from the rich resources from the National Archives of Singapore (NAS), NLB's collections, and the authorised biography written by Ms Irene Ng. Additionally, visitors can discover more about Mr Rajaratnam's contributions through write-ups accompanying replica archival materials on the bookshelves, explore online resources and e-books, and browse a selection of physical books.

National Library of South Africa

More books, better books, for all our children in all our languages: Children's literature catalogues in South Africa indigenous languages

Submitted by

Nokuthula Musa (Executive Director: Core Programmes - National Library of South Africa) and Elinor Sisulu (Executive Director - Puku Children's Literature Foundation)

A significantly high number of children in South Africa performed poorly in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). As an intervention to this national challenge, the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) partnered with University of South Africa (UNISA), Puku Children's Literature Foundation, BiBLIONEF SA and IBBY SA to develop catalogues of 100 recommended children's books.

The collaborative catalogue project aims to make it easier for our communities to identify and access the best books for early childhood and foundation phases in all official South African languages. Through this collaboration, a catalogue of 100 recommended books in isiXhosa was produced in 2021. Since then, the collaborating partners have been mobilising resources to develop catalogues in the other languages. A grant by the National Arts Council has enabled the development of the Setswana catalogue. It is inspiring and meaningful to note that the project undertaken in 2024 was to produce a Sesotho Catalogue as we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Sesotho language in print.

It was appropriate that the NLSA and its reading promotion partners launched the Collaborative Catalogue Project during the opening months of the United Nation's Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022 - 2032). The NLSA is determined to move beyond promises and platitudes about our languages and instead produce enduring and memorable content so that by 2032, all our children will have access to books in the languages they best understand.

In the words of our beloved Nelson Mandela:

"It is my wish that the voice of the storyteller will never die in Africa, that all the children in the world may experience the wonder of books, and that they will never lose the capacity to enlarge their earthly dwelling place with the magic of stories."

(From "Favorite African Folktales" edited by Mr. Mandela. (W W Norton & Company, New York, London, 2002, ISBN: 0-393-32624-1).



Figure 1: (Far left) Mr Kepi Madumo, National Librarian and CEO of the NLSA handing over isiXhosa children's books selected from the catalogue during the official opening of a library in the Eastern Cape Province

[Library of Congress](#)

[Copyright Office Releases Part 1 of Artificial Intelligence Report, Recommends Federal Digital Replica Law](#)

The U.S. Copyright Office has released [Part 1](#) of its report on the legal and policy issues related to copyright and artificial intelligence, addressing the topic of digital replicas. This part of the report responds to the proliferation of videos, images or audio recordings that have been digitally created or manipulated to realistically but falsely depict an individual. Given the gaps in existing legal protections, the Copyright Office recommends that Congress enact a new federal law that protects all individuals from the knowing distribution of unauthorized digital replicas. The Copyright Office also offers recommendations on the elements to be included in crafting such a law.

[Library of Congress Honors Libraries in Maryland and Michigan for Outstanding Service to Readers with Disabilities](#)

The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled at the Library of Congress recognized two of its cooperating libraries in Maryland and Michigan for their outstanding service to readers with visual, physical or print disabilities.

The Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled in Baltimore received the 2024 Regional Library of the Year Award, while the Larry Gorton Talking Book Library at the Traverse Area District Library in Traverse City, Michigan, received the Sub-regional Library/Advisory and Outreach Center of the Year Award.

[Library of Congress National Book Festival Partners with PBS Books to Amplify New and Beloved Literary Voices from the 2024 Festival](#)

Beginning July 10, bookworms across the country can get a glimpse of the 2024 Library of Congress National Book Festival on PBS Books as it hosts a series of virtual interviews with some of the festival's featured authors.

This marks the ninth collaboration between the Library of Congress National Book Festival and PBS Books, a national programming initiative produced by Detroit PBS. The 2024 series highlights seven books with some of the festival's featured authors including **Sandra Cisneros, Max Greenfield, Susan and Lexi Haas, James McBride, Abby Jimenez, Tiya Miles and Renée Fleming.**

Free to the public, the 24th annual Library of Congress National Book Festival will be held on Aug. 24, **from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. (Doors open at 8:30 a.m.)