# GLOBAL VISION DISCUSSION

# Report of the Government Information and Official Publications meeting:
## *How a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future.*

*July 5, 2017*

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# Introduction

On July 5, 2017 seven government information librarians participated in an international teleconference about how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future. Together we represent 158 years of library experience. These government information library leaders hail from across the academic, governmental, intergovernmental, and non-profit sectors in three continents. They are government information experts with a passion for the public good, capacity building, and unfettered, no-fee, public access to government information and data.

# A vision for libraries

Libraries enable literate, informed and participative societies. When we look at the future, according to the debates in our teleconference, libraries will be trustworthy information brokers; will do more with new technology; provide universal access to information and scholarly works, whether it be media or information we already know or new media; preserving and providing access to information in all formats, and providing trusted and effective support for political and social engagement. Libraries will be advocates for and facilitators of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, where people create their own devices and objects.

## The core values of libraries (Q4):

1. *Public access to information*
2. *Cultural Heritage*
3. *Innovation*
4. *Privacy*
5. *Community Service and capacity building*
6. *Pursuit of knowledge*

**Comments:**

From the viewpoint of government information librarians, public no-fee access to government information stood out as a particular value of great importance. Another was capacity building and library alignment with the sustainable development goals.

## Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):

1. *Providing equal treatment and information to users regardless of their background.*
2. *Collecting information people will need in the future*
3. *Tailoring and sharing information resources according to the needs of an individual*
4. *Serving constituents to the best of their ability*
5. *Customer needs assessment and embedding services within constituent programs*

**Comments:**

Libraries are egalitarian organizations and believe in equal access to information regardless of customer background. We serve all users to the best of our collective ability.

## Libraries should do more of (Q6):

1. *Be more in tune with their user's interests*
2. *More engaging with their users to find out how they do research.*
3. *Contribute more to scholarly communication*
4. *Integrate social media into library services*
5. *Take part in research consultations*
6. *Adopt the UN Development Goals in their missions, especially literacy & access to information.*
7. *Increase income generating activities*

**Comments:**

Social media, new trends in scholarly communication, open access, and innovative approaches to budgeting and fundraising will need to be pursued in order for libraries to thrive and prosper. Engaging directly with uses and outreach is key.

## Libraries should do less of (Q7):

1. *Not be preoccupied with their own interests*
2. *Not sit and wait for people to come to them*
3. *Focus less on traditional collection development models*
4. *Be less time-constrained*

**Comments:**

Traditional libraries were havens of peace and tranquillity.  In the current era libraries need to be less preoccupied with our own rules, ideals and collections, and reach out more to our communities.

# Challenges and solutions

## The main challenges to society (Q8):

1. *New technologies are expanding and limiting access to information at the same time*
2. *Most citizens do not have access to big data. There is a gap between the information rich and the information poor*
3. *Preserving culture and acknowledging the value of wisdom.*

4. *Many resources are being privatized, there is too much attention on economic growth and other material sources in developing countries*

5. *User privacy is violated, because data is being sold by companies*

6. *Global companies in the social media sector are a challenge*

**Comments:**

## The main challenges to libraries (Q9):

1. *Creating effective services for big data and data sciences*

2. *Increase social media literacy and financial literacy*

3. *Budget cuts and fundraising, especially public libraries.*

4. *Reconciling open access models with collection budgets*

5. *Access to resources through consortial deals*

6. *Costs of journal subscriptions and databases*

**Comments:**

The neoliberal trend to defund public goods as well as the increasing costs and quantity of scholarly resources results in libraries spending more time on fundraising.

## The main professional challenges (Q10):

1. *Costs of attending professional conferences*

2. *Ever changing trends in the ICT fields affect service delivery*

3. *Weak professional associations (mostly in developing countries) do not voice concerns of the professionals to national governments*

4. *Competition from information providers, e.g. Amazon, Google, Youtube puts libraries at risk of getting squeezed out*

5.

**Comments:**

The rapid pace of technological change and the speed via which libraries and librarians need to adapt to technological change and user expectations is an enormous challenge.

# How a united library field can make a difference

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

1. *Reach out to under-privileged public libraries and school libraries*
2. *Create relationships in communities built upon common interests in local settings*
3. *Celebrate our diversity as well as our commonality*
4. *Interface and network  with international organizations*
5. *Representation of all  library professionals in professional associations*

**Comments:**

## The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):

1. *A common code of library values*
2. *One stop shop via the IFLA web site or other platform as an alternative to SciHub*
3. *A united federation of libraries*
4. *A global code of library values and ethics*
5. *Strong and all-inclusive library professional associations*

**Comments:**

IFLA should consider positioning itself as a unifying library organization – a united federation of libraries and a common core of ethics.  It should consider creating a common code of library values and serving as global information portal.

## The focus of a united library field (Q13):

1. *Intellectual freedom and intellectual property*
2. *Access to information*
3. *Knowledge preservation and digitization*
4. *Privacy and freedom of expression*
5. *Sustainable development, universal literacy, capacity building*

**Comments:**

# A global conversation

This report was created in an interactive process via teleconference on July 5, 2017. 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 and make sure to cast your vote in August when the online voting platform is available on https://globalvision.ifla.org/.