



GLOBAL VISION DISCUSSION

Report of the IFLA section Libraries for
Children and Young Adults meeting
*How a united library field can tackle the
challenges of the future*

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Index

| | |
|--|---|
| Contributors | 3 |
| Index | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| A vision for libraries | 5 |
| The core values of libraries (Q4): | 5 |
| Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5): | 5 |
| Libraries should do more of (Q6): | 6 |
| Libraries should do less of (Q7): | 6 |
| Challenges and solutions | 6 |
| The main challenges to society (Q8): | 6 |
| The main challenges to libraries (Q9): | 7 |
| The main professional challenges (Q10): | 7 |
| How a united library field can make a difference | 7 |
| How should a united library field help meet the challenges identified (Q11)? | 7 |
| The characteristics of a united library field (Q12): | 8 |
| The focus of a united library field (Q13): | 8 |

Introduction

Between June 15 and 20 members of Section Libraries for Children and Young Adults participated in a conversation about how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future. Only 9 answered to the question about years in library field, these 9 represent 197 years of library experience. Altogether 22 of total of 22 participated in some phase of the process, though!

The members of SC represent different library fields: public libraries, national libraries, associations, individual members...

The workshop was conducted via online survey and discussion tools, such as Webropol, surveyMonkey and Google Drive.

A vision for libraries

Libraries enable literate, informed and participative societies. When we look at the future, according to the debates online, this means that [QUOTES FROM THE STATE OF THE LIBRARY GAME].

The core values of libraries (Q4):

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| 1. <i>Easy Access and no fees for children and YA</i> |
| 2. <i>Democracy, freedom of reading, speech, thinking and expression</i> |
| 3. <i>Open access to information and literature</i> |
| 4. <i>Open space for equality, safety and knowledge</i> |
| 5. <i>Lifelong learning</i> |

Comments:

See the word cloud about the core values!

Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):

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| 1. <i>Fostering and promoting literacy</i> |
| 2. <i>Being open to everyone</i> |
| 3. <i>Giving free access and education for all</i> |
| 4. <i>Providing and organising information (eg. providing materials and resources, providing bibliographical control and storage of media, preserving and organising knowledge)</i> |
| 5. <i>Being active, ready to adapt for future, responding to user needs</i> |

Comments:

Also popular topics/answers:

Provide assistance, give recommendations, break information, give good service

A safe third place
Partnerships (with community centers etc.)
Outreach programs

Libraries should do more of (Q6):

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| 1. <i>Promote library services for children and YA</i> |
| 2. <i>Collaborate, cooperate with partners in the society and young people</i> |
| 3. <i>Whatever the communities need</i> |
| 4. <i>...Promote activities for tolerance, multiculturalism and gender equality</i> |
| 5. <i>...Reading promotion</i> |

Comments:

Other topics: PR and advocacy, providing digital security to children

Libraries should do less of (Q7):

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| 1. <i>Refuse to change</i> |
| 2. <i>Being isolated, passive, silent</i> |
| 3. <i>Focus on library software that are not convenient for users</i> |
| 4. <i>Things that other do better</i> |
| 5. <i>Focus on number of books and collections (instead of literacy)</i> |

Comments:

Other topics: stop whining, not focusing on digitization but community user needs

Challenges and solutions

The main challenges to society (Q8):

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| 1. <i>Integration, Migration</i> |
| 2. <i>Disinformation and too much information</i> |
| 3. <i>Changes of climate, ecology and environment</i> |
| 4. <i>Extremism, racism, nationalism, terrorism</i> |
| 5. <i>Poverty, corruption and economy</i> |

Comments:

Others: inequality, intolerance of divergent values, education challenges

The main challenges to libraries (Q9):

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| 1. <i>Staff skills, professional learning and education</i> |
| 2. <i>Funding, budgeting, financial support</i> |
| 3. <i>Stay accurate in reality, stay relevant and more forward</i> |
| 4. <i>To meet the need of the local society</i> |
| 5. <i>Attract more users, especially teenagers</i> |

Comments:

Other: outdated infrastructure, public image of libraries, media changes and fake news

The main professional challenges (Q10):

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| 1. <i>Training, motivation staff</i> |
| 2. <i>Stay relevant, knowledge of technology, on top of technical skills</i> |
| 3. <i>Funding, budgeting</i> |
| 4. <i>Time management</i> |
| 5. <i>Stay relevant with trends</i> |

Comments:

Other: *cooperation and networking with local society*

How a united library field can make a difference

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

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| 1. <i>Share experiences and information and learn from each other</i> |
| 2. <i>Advocacy</i> |
| 3. <i>Mobile professionals ready for cooperation, flexibility</i> |
| 4. <i>Joint programs</i> |
| 5. <i>Decide a theme together and work with it</i> |

Comments:

The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):

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| 1. <i>E.g. sound advocacy skills</i> |
| 2. <i>E.g. use the potential of social media</i> |
| 3. <i>Sharing the experiences and knowledge</i> |
| 4. <i>Focusing on users</i> |
| 5. ... |

Comments:

The focus of a united library field (Q13):

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| [LIST ANSWERS Q13: Remove text in italics] |
| 1. <i>Focus on user needs</i> |
| 2. <i>Find more ways to connect and share</i> |
| 3. <i>Promote free access to information</i> |
| 4. <i>Librarian as lifelong learners</i> |
| 5. ... <i>Promote democracy and tolerance</i> |

Comments on future challenges and possibilities:

Challenges and possibilities are different depending on the country. Support from the government and institutions is the key to the future of libraries in many countries.

Off all kinds of inequality and discriminations against librarianship

LIS professionals may need to move beyond accumulation knowledge to actually sharing it. Well-thought-out-community-specific ideals should be identified and actively promoted, one borough or small town at a time. A lot of the challenges we face are due to the inadequate resource distribution, the worst being education.

The librarians and library staff should reflect the diversity of their communities

More focus on making big events, programs etc.

Grants to learn more about libraries