

IFLA STRATEGY 2019-2024



**Our vision is a strong and united
library field powering literate,
informed and participative societies**

We are IFLA

Introduction: The Global Voice of Libraries

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions is unique. Thanks to the reach of its membership, the breadth of its mission, and its ability to inspire, engage, enable and connect, it has a special role in the global library field.

IFLA works both to represent libraries on the world stage, and to strengthen the ability of our member associations, institutions, and individuals to advocate for and deliver library and information services that improve lives.

We do this by bringing together the biggest brains trust in the library field – the 1200 volunteers drawn from our members who participate in IFLA's Professional Units – as well as a dedicated team at IFLA Headquarters, and a network of regional offices and language centres which allow us to operate in seven languages.

Our Strategy: A Roadmap for the Future

This document represents a milestone in IFLA's journey from Vision to Strategy to Action. It is the result of a uniquely inclusive process – the IFLA Global Vision – launched in March 2017.

By engaging tens of thousands of library and information workers from over 190 countries in a conversation about the strengths and opportunities of the library field, the Vision has provided the energy, and represented the guiding star for this Strategy.

On this basis, IFLA's Professional Units and Governing Board, working with the Headquarters Team, have developed this document, drawing also on an assessment of IFLA's existing strengths, and its commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It was approved by the IFLA Governing Board on 12 April 2019.

Structure: A Framework for Actions

The IFLA Strategy 2019-24 is a document for the library field, by the library field.

It is designed to be a reference point, not only for IFLA's own Professional Units, headquarters and regional and languages offices, but also for our membership and the library field as a whole. It should be the catalyst for a new energy and a new alignment in our efforts.

Our Strategic Directions highlight four areas of focus in delivering our mission:

- 1. Strengthen the Global Voice of Libraries**
- 2. Inspire and Enhance Professional Practice**
- 3. Connect and Empower the Field**
- 4. Optimise our Organisation**

In each Strategic Direction, four Key Initiatives provide a framework around which we can all develop actions to strengthen our field and achieve our vision.

Our Vision

A strong and united library field powering literate, informed and participative societies

Our Mission

To inspire, engage, enable and connect the global library field

Our Values

- The endorsement of the principles of freedom of access to information, ideas and works of imagination and freedom of expression embodied in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The belief that people, communities and organisations need universal and equitable access to information, ideas and works of imagination for their social, educational, cultural, democratic and economic well-being
- The conviction that delivery of high-quality library and information services helps guarantee that access
- The commitment to enable all Members of the Federation to engage in, and benefit from, its activities without regard to citizenship, disability, ethnic origin, gender, geographical location, language, political philosophy, race or religion

A Call to Action

This Strategy has been made possible by the ideas and energy of the global library field.

Yet it is a milestone, not a destination. It is not only a document to be read, but to be used, because everyone has a role in building our future. Its success will be our success, but it depends on each of us to play our part.

The four Strategic Directions and sixteen Key Initiatives are therefore a framework for the thousands, if not the millions of individual actions which will be necessary to transform our field and achieve our vision.

We need you to reflect on what actions you can take that contribute to the goals of the Strategy, both individually and collectively. What can you do to share its message, and to inspire and engage others, just as you have been inspired and engaged?

Share your actions, build your connections, and spread the word.

Together, we can build a strong and united library field, powering literate, informed and participatory societies.

We are IFLA



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

STRENGTHEN THE GLOBAL VOICE OF LIBRARIES

We listen to and understand the priorities of the whole field, and amplify the message through advocating for libraries and their values on a global and regional level. We speak with insight, confidence and authority on relevant policies, ensuring that libraries are recognised and supported as critical community assets essential to achieving development agendas. We build a strong presence in international organisations and meetings as a valued partner.

KEY INITIATIVES

1.1 Show the power of libraries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

As a basis for effective library advocacy, we will produce high quality, high impact tools that demonstrate to external audiences the contribution of libraries to development in all of its dimensions.

1.2 Build a strong presence in international organizations and meetings as a valued partner

We will strengthen our links with key international institutions, in order to shape laws, guidance and programmes which benefit libraries. We will adopt a strategic, long-term approach, and build our reputation as an essential partner.

1.3 Work with library associations and libraries to identify key legal and funding challenges to their work, and advocate for action

Collaborating closely with members, we will strengthen our understanding and ability to deliver support for advocacy in priority areas at national and regional levels, including literacy, learning, reading, innovation, and access to knowledge and heritage. We will deliver on this through direct engagement, guidance, and high-quality advocacy materials.

1.4 Shape public opinion and debate around open access and library values, including intellectual freedom and human rights

We will provide practical and intellectual leadership to support open access and the broader values of our field. We aim to facilitate an understanding of libraries' role as champions of intellectual freedom, encourage reflection, coordinate action, and advocate externally.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

INSPIRE AND ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

We inspire the profession through future thinking and by encouraging new and promising approaches. We drive the development of libraries through standards, guidelines and best practices. We provide the tools and resources necessary to foster community, facilitate shared action, and support innovative programs and actions. We work to safeguard, strengthen and elevate the world's cultural heritage in all of its diverse forms, including traditional, historical, indigenous and contemporary expression.

KEY INITIATIVES

2.1 Produce, communicate and distribute key resources and materials that inspire the profession

We will consolidate our position as a hub for authoritative and original research and sources about the library and information landscape. We will provide up-to-date data, insights and innovative ideas which provide an essential foundation for thinking about libraries, and key reports which catalyse innovation.

2.2 Deliver high quality campaigns, information and other communications products on a regular basis to engage and energise libraries

Our regular communications foster an active mindset in the profession, challenging current structures and behaviours, and giving libraries globally the understanding, enthusiasm and tools to take action.

2.3 Develop standards, guidelines, and other materials that foster best professional practice

As the most representative global library organisation, we will develop standards, guidelines and other documents that allow all types of libraries, everywhere, to improve practice and adapt to a changing world, keep up with and adopt new technologies, to meet user expectations.

2.4 Provide tools and infrastructure that support the work of libraries

We will support the work of the profession worldwide, through well-designed practical tools and platforms in areas of unique IFLA strength, which contribute to the effective delivery of services and library missions.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

CONNECT AND EMPOWER THE FIELD

We are a hub for dialogue and action. We are the motor of a connected and aligned library field, characterised by a true spirit of collaboration, in which no librarian is left behind. We unite passions, provide platforms, and enable innovation, learning, and professional development at all levels. Through this, we respond to current challenges and opportunities, and empower the library field to deliver high quality services that meet community needs, and foster literacy, innovation, heritage preservation and access to information for all users.

KEY INITIATIVES

3.1 Provide excellent opportunities for face-to-face networking and learning

We will maximise the potential of physical meetings as venues for uniting the library field and breaking down the barriers to collaboration, enabling access to new insights and knowledge, and promoting the sharing of ideas.

3.2 Support virtual networking and connections

We will develop a spirit of continuous collaboration in the library field through virtual networking tools that enable every librarian to be involved and engaged in a global conversation.

3.3 Empower the field at the national and regional levels

We will enhance the capacity of the library field to deliver actions tailored to regional and national characteristics and requirements by strengthening library associations, institutions and networks at all levels.

3.4 Provide targeted learning and professional development

We will provide a variety of learning opportunities that update current practices. We will build capacity to undertake community engagement and evaluation, make every librarian an advocate, and develop and connect the leaders of the future.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4

OPTIMISE OUR ORGANISATION

We maximise our ability to deliver on our missions in the present and future. We prepare for the long term through the development of ambitious yet realistic plans for ongoing stability and sustainability. Key to this are efforts to grow and diversify our membership, strengthen our regional presence, and actively engage members through an effective professional structure and a wide variety of volunteering possibilities. We will increase our visibility, and provide efficient, effective, and innovative services and support.

KEY INITIATIVES

4.1 Foster the long-term financial continuity and stability of the organisation

We will plan for the future, developing financial strategies and options for long-term sustainability, based on a strong understanding of potential partnerships and a capacity to seize new opportunities.

4.2 Effectively mobilise our human resources and networks

We will maximise the potential of all of our people and encourage change and innovation through dynamic units and structures, a high-performing headquarters team, effective regional offices, language centres and attractive and varied volunteering opportunities.

4.3 Increase, diversify and engage our membership

We will reinforce our position as the most representative global library organisation through a membership strategy that promotes diversity, engagement and action. We are recognised as an organisation that listens and responds to its members' expectations.

4.4 Increase our visibility through excellent and innovative communications

We will strengthen our brand and ability to deliver high quality, high impact and engaging communications tailored to the needs of the global library and information community.

**You have been the key to the development
of our Strategy – and you are the key to its success.
Take action!**



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