

Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) International Federation of Library Associations

The outline of this plan is based on IFLA's recommendations for the organization of a strategic plan

Strategic Plan 2014-2019

Introduction

In late 2008, IFLA approved a proposal by the Libraries Serving Disadvantage Persons Section (LSDP) to rename it Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN). As was the case with previous name changes, this one was felt necessary, not only because it better reflected the Section's current work, but also because the terminology surrounding its areas of concern had again significantly changed.

Vision

The vision of the Library Services to People with Special Needs Section is that libraries and the related institutions develop knowledge, policies and practices to provide access to information for people with special needs including emphasizing the right of people with special needs to obtain quality library services.

Mission

In 2012 the Standing Committee commenced discussions as to how to best forward the Mission of the Library Services to Persons with Special Needs Section by extending its reach to include a segment of populations oftentimes marginalized by hardships and life circumstances; and therefore unable to adequately make use of their community's library services and resources. And at their October 2013 Professional Committee Meeting, the PC Board granted permission for LSN to add 'homeless persons' to its mission.

The Section for Library Services to People with Special Needs provides an International forum for the discussion of ideas, sharing of experiences and development of tools designed to promote and improve the effectiveness of library and information services to special needs groups, and the promotion of national and international cooperation at all levels.

The Section focuses on those persons who because of their living conditions and/or physical, mental or cognitive disabilities cannot access current library services. These groups can include, but are not necessarily limited to, people in hospitals and prisons, homeless people, persons in nursing homes and other care facilities, the deaf and people with dyslexia and dementia.

Need

People with special needs face many barriers to using libraries and getting access to information such as:

- facility not accessible in all or part of its environment
- resources not designed for meeting the needs of the specific disability in format or content
- special equipment not available
- staff members lack an understanding of the characteristics of people with a disability
- staff feel unsure communicating or serving these people

In responding to these barriers, LSN aims for

- equal and inclusive access to information and library services

- successful practices in the provision of library and information services
- approved tools and methods that facilitate access to information, services, and resources,
- awareness and adoption of the UN convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities amongst librarians
- effective and cooperation with potential partners in and outside of the library community
- use of universal design by libraries to better serve people with special needs

GOALS

Goal 1: Advocacy

Advocate for and promote equal and inclusive access to information and library service for people with special needs.

Goal 2: Develop Guidelines

Develop and promote guidelines, tools, and methods to assist libraries to promote equal access to people with special needs.

Goal 3: Cooperation

Cooperate with potential partners in and outside of the library profession to advance library service to people with special needs.

Goal 4: LSN contribution to IFLA

Build LSN into an IFLA Section with diverse and international representation and that is recognized as a contribution to the success of IFLA.

Strategic Action Plan Focus with delineated activities/goals by Year

Goal 1: Advocacy

Advocate for and promote equal and inclusive access to information and library service for people with special needs.

- 1.1 Encourage the development of national strategies and legislation for library services to people with disabilities (ongoing)
- 1.2 Research existing programs and methods with demonstrated success and post as report on the LSN website and IFLA Library. (ongoing)
- 1.3 Develop conference programs at IFLA annual conference that demonstrate and inform about model services. (ongoing)
- 1.4 Provide forums or conference programs at IFLA annual conference on the importance of serving people with special needs and how to implement successful practices in the field. (ongoing)
- 1.5 Provide technical assistance and consultation services to libraries and other agencies. (ongoing)

Goal 2: Develop Guidelines

Develop and promote guidelines, tools, and methods to assist libraries to promote equal access to people with special needs.

- 2.1 Complete the translations of the Section's publications into all IFLA languages, and where possible, other languages. (ongoing)
- 2.2 Provide training on the development and adoption of national guidelines and standards. (ongoing)

- 2.3 Develop guidelines for services to persons who are homeless (2014-2016)
- 2.4 Develop guidelines for services to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing (2016-18)
- 2.5 Develop guidelines for people who are in nursing homes and long term care (2017 -2019)

Goal 3: Cooperation

Cooperate with potential partners in and outside of the library profession to advance library service to people with special needs.

- 3.1 Cooperate with other IFLA units in providing programs and workshops. (ongoing)
- 3.2 Establish relationships and partnerships in order to inform about library resources and services. (ongoing)
- 3.3 Identify national and international organizations that focus on the Section's target populations post on the LSN website. (ongoing)
- 3.4 Continue to encourage joint programs between libraries and other organizations. (ongoing)
- 3.5 Identify appropriate IFLA units and other bodies to work to remove copyright restrictions that prevent equal access and promote passage of the Marrakesh treaty.

Goal 4: LSN contribution to IFLA

Build LSN into an IFLA Section with diverse and international representation and that is recognized as a contribution to the success of IFLA.

- 4.1 Put all of the Section's guidelines and translations on the LSN Section's website.
- 4.2 Report on Section activities to the Division III: Library Services, and make available on the LSN website. (ongoing)
- 4.3 Provide information for publication in IFLA Journal and LSN website and IFLA Library (ongoing)
- 4.4 Maintain the LSN Section history (ongoing)
- 4.5 Represent the LSN Section in as many venues as possible. (ongoing)
- 4.6 Partner with other Sections of Division III to carry out joint projects and programmes. (ongoing)
- 4.7 Expand membership in the Section, seeking broad international representation in Section membership and on the Section Standing Committee. (ongoing)