

Global Vision

Report Summary

Top 10 Highlights and Opportunities



190



UN Member States
on 7 continents

469,152



years of
library experience

ALL



generations and
library types

9,291



workshop participants

185



workshops

21,772



online votes



IFLA
Global Vision

Key Finding

We are united globally in our goals and values

The most important finding is that across all regions, library types, and lengths of library experience, we share a deep commitment to the enduring value and role of libraries.

We must connect global and local actions effectively

Acknowledging regional characteristics and requirements will be essential in our future efforts to unite the library field in addressing common challenges.

10 Highlights

1. We are dedicated to equal and free access to information and knowledge

Across the library field, no value was more highly rated than a commitment to equal and free access to information and knowledge.

2. We remain deeply committed to supporting literacy, learning and reading

Our traditional areas of strength – supporting learning, literacy, and reading – are universally recognised as central to the achievement of libraries' missions.

3. We are focused on serving our communities

Regardless of how we define community, we share a deep commitment to meeting users' needs. We value diversity, inclusion and the importance of providing a non-commercial public space.

4. We embrace digital innovation

The field strongly agrees on the essential role of digital innovations in realising libraries' potential to enrich society, regardless of how extensively they already can and do use technology.

10 Opportunities

1. We must be champions of intellectual freedom

Equal and free access to information and knowledge depends on freedom of expression. Libraries' role in ensuring this needs to be better understood.

2. We must update our traditional roles in the digital age

To support learning, literacy and reading meaningfully in a digital age, libraries must adapt continuously. Services, collections and practices must develop to meet changing user expectations.

3. We need to understand community needs better and design services for impact

Expanding library outreach will help link with local partners, engage new and underserved sections of our communities, and have a measurable impact on peoples' lives.

4. We must keep up with ongoing technological changes

Ensuring all libraries have the right tools, infrastructure, funding, and skills to seize the opportunities provided by digital innovations is a pressing need.

5. We have leaders who see the need for strong advocacy

Those in a leadership position consistently identify the need to advocate with leaders, influencers and the wider community as a high priority.

6. We see funding as one of our biggest challenges

Securing resources and allocating them towards impact is an important part of providing services that effectively respond to community needs.

7. We see the need to build collaboration and partnerships

We recognise working collaboratively amongst ourselves, and in partnership with those outside, as essential for creating a strong, united library field.

8. We want to be less bureaucratic, inflexible and resistant to change

The field shares a desire to be more proactive in its approach, open to innovation and ready to let go of out-dated or restrictive practices.

9. We are the guardians of the memory of the world

Libraries are the primary repositories of the world's documentary heritage, and the ideas and creativity they contain. We are uniquely good at preserving and organising knowledge for future generations.

10. Our young professionals are deeply committed and eager to lead

The high engagement in this process of those who are newer to the field is evidence of a desire to get involved in shaping the library field of the future.

5. We need more and better advocates at all levels

Everyone in the field needs a deeper understanding of the need for advocacy to improve perceptions and ultimately achieve our goals. Every librarian an advocate!

6. We need to ensure stakeholders understand our value and impact

Making a stronger case for the ability of libraries to provide value will build recognition and support among decision-makers.

7. We need to develop a spirit of collaboration

Understanding and addressing actual and perceived barriers to collaboration will help end a tendency to work in isolation, and realise the vision of a united library field.

8. We need to challenge current structures and behaviours

Overcoming our passive mindset and embracing innovation and change will allow us to tackle the challenges facing the library field.

9. We need to maximise access to the world's documentary heritage

As a united field we must apply innovative practices and tools, share expertise and resources, and advocate for solutions to legal and funding challenges, to give access to the works we safeguard.

10. We must give young professionals effective opportunities to learn, develop and lead

The field's capacity to develop and connect young library professionals has to keep up with changing needs and allow them to become the leaders of the future.

Our vision, Our future:

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

The challenges facing the library field from ever-increasing globalisation can only be met and overcome by an inclusive, global response from a united library field. This is why IFLA started the Global Vision discussion – a venture that will generate a united library field roadmap for the future.

Never before has there been such an initiative, which gives every single librarian in the world the chance to contribute – and never before have so many librarians from so many parts of the world contributed to one global conversation.

In 2017, IFLA started to explore the challenges and opportunities for the library field around the world. The contributions from 190 UN Member States across all seven continents show we are united globally in our goals and values. But we must connect global and local actions effectively. Acknowledging regional characteristics and requirements will be essential in our future efforts to unite the library field in addressing common challenges.

Now, in 2018, IFLA is creating the biggest idea store for actions, a source of inspiration for all librarians and for IFLA in planning for the future. Through a series of workshops and an online platform we want to gather ideas from librarians from all over the world. These will allow us to identify how all regions and library types can play their part. With your ideas IFLA will create a strategy and action plans that will turn our vision into reality: a strong and united library field powering literate, informed and participative societies.



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