INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS (IFLA)

WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

INFORMATION FOR ALL:
The Key Role of Libraries in the Information Society

Report prepared for:

LIBRARIES @ the HEART of the Information Society
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INFORMATION FOR ALL: The Key Role of Libraries in the Information Society

1. Library and information services are key actors in providing unhindered access to essential resources for economic and cultural advance. In doing so, they contribute effectively to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom, safeguarding democratic values and universal civil rights. They encourage social inclusion, by striving to serve all those in their user communities regardless of age, gender, economic or employment status, literacy or technical skills, cultural or ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability. The communities they serve may be geographically based or, increasingly, linked only by technology and shared interests.

WHAT IS A LIBRARY IN THE 21st CENTURY?

2. A library is a means of access to information, ideas and works of imagination.

3. The library experience may be the key to understanding your place in the world, the pleasure of a children’s story, advice on securing a safe water supply, or the record of the healing wisdom of an elder.

4. The publicly-funded library is one of the most democratic of institutions, serving the needs of the community it serves As a public space it helps define a sense of that community, providing a safe meeting point. At different points in their lives, people see libraries as a:
   - place of wide-eyed discovery
   - tool for life-long learning
   - support for political and social enquiry
   - bank of ideas and inspiration
   - source of answers to factual questions
   - place to acquire new skills
   - community centre
   - local studies resource
   - a place of sheer pleasure and enjoyment.

5. Libraries take many physical forms, ranging from large purpose-built buildings, to rooms in parent institutions, and small temporary structures. Mobile examples include road vehicles, boats, trains, trams and even donkeys and camels. Many libraries are now ‘hybrid’, combining both physical space and collections with a virtual library of electronic materials and services.

6. The term "library" is often taken to equate to "public library". However, there is a huge variety of other kinds of libraries, fulfilling different purposes and serving different client groups. They exist in every country of the world, including the Least Developed Countries.
7. Most countries have a **national library**, which often has the role of coordinating the network of other kinds of libraries throughout that country, in addition to collecting materials and making them available. Countries which are federal in structure often have state or provincial libraries which perform a role similar to that of national libraries in their area.

8. Most countries also have a large network of **public libraries**. In some countries, notably in Africa, the national library acts the coordinator of the network of public libraries. Public libraries range in size from large central libraries to small village centres and mobile libraries.

9. **Educational institutions**, such as universities, colleges and schools all have libraries, serving the educational objectives of their parent bodies. In some countries, it is common for them to be open to the general public. In a small number of countries, notably in Eastern Europe, a large university library also acts as the national library.

10. Libraries also provide vital services in government departments, research institutes, museums, and in many different environments in the private sector. These are sometimes referred to as **special libraries or workplace libraries**.

11. Libraries are needed more than ever in an age in which people and communities desperately need to consider alternative points of view and information, to challenge the spin doctors and the mass media, to take control of their own destinies and make up their own minds.

**HOW MANY LIBRARIES ARE THERE?**

12. It is estimated that in the area of the current member states of the European Union there are 90,000 libraries. On that basis there must be well over 250,000 around the world. A network of libraries large and small is therefore already available. They are in a good position to contribute positively to bridging the digital divide, because they are staffed by people whose business it is to help users obtain the information they need. A relatively modest investment in technology, capacity building and the acquisition of print and electronic materials could dramatically transform the degree of access to information and knowledge. Studies suggest that where this investment has been made, use has increased substantially especially attracting people who otherwise would not have such access.

**WHAT DO LIBRARIES MAKE AVAILABLE?**

13. Traditionally libraries have acquired print-based materials, including newspapers, maps, pamphlets, illustrations and many other items as well as books. Despite the popular misconception, they have never confined themselves to books. Indeed, libraries pre-dated the invention of the book, collecting papyrus scrolls (the original Alexandria library was a good example) and manuscripts (the medieval monastery libraries, for instance). It was therefore no great leap forward to collect new information media as they emerged. All
forms of sound and visual recording (for example, gramophone records, cassettes, CDs, videos, and DVDs) quickly joined the collections in many kinds of libraries as they became available. Computer based sources of information were quickly added to the portfolios and there are now many libraries around the world which have very substantial collections of CD ROMs and electronic journals. Many publications are now "born digital" and a good proportion never appear in print form. Where they do, the digital and print versions are increasingly different in content. As a result, there are some libraries which, to the first-time visitor, do not look like the conventional idea of a "library" at all.

14. It should be noted that there has been a long-term trend towards the creation of global media corporations embracing publications in many different media, created in different countries. Content is much more important than the medium which contains the content. On the other hand for many kinds of media, especially those in the Scientific, Technical and Medical (STM) fields, libraries are a hugely important market segment. An advantage of the application of new technologies recently emerging is the ability to introduce differential pricing in favour of libraries in the developing world. However, there remains substantial cause for concern in the growing concentration of media ownership into fewer, larger corporations. It is increasingly important that libraries collect and make available the output of smaller, more local and specialist publishers. Libraries have an important role in encouraging local and regional publishing and in collecting and preserving oral history and indigenous traditional knowledge

WHAT SERVICES DO LIBRARIES PROVIDE?

15. This depends very much on the kind of library and the client group or groups it serves. National libraries, for example, usually are required to collect and preserve the national publishing output of the country it serves, making sure that it is available not only for current users, but also for future generations. Typically they also compile the national bibliography of publications, and act as the library of last resort for items, which other libraries in the national library network cannot provide. They are usually assisted in their task of collecting by a legal deposit system, whereby publishers have to make copies of their publications available to them free of charge. They frequently have sophisticated preservation and conservation programmes. Electronic publishing provides many challenges to this aspect of their role. They are developing methods of collecting, archiving and making available electronic publications. National libraries also often take on the role of making available material published in other countries, especially scientific and technical publications.

16. Public libraries typically provide services free of charge to anyone who wishes to use them, although lending is often restricted to residents of the locality. Many provide literacy programmes, reader development promotions and act as an information point for the availability of local public services. Typically they collect and preserve a wide range of materials relating to the history and development of the locality. Special services have been developed to serve the needs of particular groups such as children (including storytelling programmes), housebound people, and the visually impaired. Public libraries in particular strive to serve all sections of their communities without discrimination.
17. **Libraries in education institutions** have developed a wide range of services to meet the educational objectives of their parent institutions. School libraries clearly need to support the curriculum, but they also collect books and other materials to encourage reading and spirit of enquiry, as well as to meet the needs of the teachers and administrative staff.

18. **University libraries** are usually among the most advanced in terms of developing electronic based services. Many have large collections of electronic journals, as well as sophisticated searching tools available both to students and faculty. Teaching hospitals are often attached to universities. They require sophisticated library services to make available the latest medical research published in a variety of media.

19. **Libraries in the corporate sector** have been in the forefront of developing services tailored to meet the needs of individuals or small groups of clients. They profile their users (the employees of the firm) and package information and provide alerting systems to ensure they are aware of the latest information relating to their current research or project. Increasingly they are involved in knowledge management, harnessing the totality of the knowledge available in their company.

**HOW ARE LIBRARIES FUNDED?**

20. **National and State Libraries** are typically funded by the government from taxes. But in common with most public services around the world, they need to supplement these funds with money raised from a range of sources, including sponsorship, charging for some services, sales of publications, etc.

21. **Public libraries** typically rely on a combination of national and local government funding, increasingly supplemented by charges for some services and sponsorship or project money.

22. **Educational libraries** often rely primarily on income from their parent institution. But they too are usually encouraged to raise income from a variety of sources. Those in the corporate sector are usually regarded as cost centres contributing to company objectives.

**DO LIBRARIES WORK TOGETHER?**

23. Yes. Libraries have a long tradition of networking both within countries and across national boundaries. Most countries have inter-library lending systems whereby books and other documents not in stock may be borrowed to satisfy the needs of a local user. These systems expanded into document delivery systems once photocopying became generally available and electronic document delivery is becoming the norm in some subject areas.
24. Libraries also collaborate in such areas as collection development to avoid the duplication of expensive works and to ensure comprehensive collections in a region, and in staff training. **Consortia of libraries**, either of a particular type or in a particular region, are developing primarily to negotiate licences for the purchase and use of electronic publications.

**THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY**

25. Libraries have grasped the opportunities presented by the application of new technologies to revolutionise the technical processes required to deliver services. Examples include shared cataloguing, whereby many libraries share the task of preparing catalogue records so that duplication of effort is avoided. Other examples include self-issue and return systems, and security measures. The most dramatic impacts have been in the expansion of the range of materials collected and made available, together with the ability to reach users regardless of geography. The ‘Library without Walls’, once a dream is now emerging as a reality. The role of the library as a place for people to gain ICT skills in a welcoming atmosphere is becoming a decisive element in capacity building. Technology is gradually transforming the lives of library users who have been largely excluded from using traditional library materials, for example the visually impaired.

26. A recent trend is the convergence of the so-called **memory institutions**, including some kinds of libraries, archives and museums. One objective is to take advantage of new technologies to make available the collection of all three types of institutions to users in one of them, or indeed remotely from all of them.

**HOW ARE LIBRARIANS TRAINED?**

27. In most countries librarians are educated in universities in what used to be called "library schools" at undergraduate, masters and doctorate level, depending largely on the overall educational tradition in the country or region. This is supplemented by periods of practical training and experience. In some countries this leads to a licence to practise. In others, the courses themselves are accredited by the professional body. The curriculum includes studies of information science, computer based information systems, electronic publishing, legal considerations, including intellectual property laws and understanding user needs, as well as the more traditional subjects such as reference sources, cataloguing, indexing and classification. Specialist, optional programmes treat serving user groups such as children, the visually impaired, those with learning disabilities, and specific industries, etc. The rapid application of technology in libraries emphasise the urgent need for continuing professional development of library staff to enable them to help their users exploit the facilities available.

28. In many countries the training of technical and para-professional library staff is now carried out on a systematic basis. A combination of college-based courses and in-service training is usually employed. Web-based education and training and other forms of distance learning are increasingly being used both for professional and para-professional staff.
DO WE NEED LIBRARIES NOW THAT WE HAVE THE INTERNET?

29. Yes. Although a great deal of information is available on the desk top of anyone with a computer linked to the Internet, much of it is spurious and ill-organized. Some of it is of course dangerous. Much of the information that is authoritative is available only in return for payment. Thus users need to access materials through libraries which have skilled staff to search efficiently, are able to identify authentic sites and can obtain access to paid-for sources through site licences. Individuals, even in developed countries do not have the resources to access all the authoritative, authentic information they need. Just as libraries traditionally made available for loan or consultation a wide range of print publications way beyond the means of most private individuals, so they can now make available electronic publications. But only if they are funded at a appropriate level, and only if pricing mechanisms and copyright regulations are designed to allow this.

IFLA

30. IFLA, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions is the international NGO representing the interests of library and information services and their users. It is the global voice of the library and information profession. In 2001 we celebrated our 75th anniversary.

31. The international cooperation of libraries in the context of this worldwide Federation has resulted in an impressive number of agreements, standard and guidelines to support professional workers in their work for the benefit of their users. Also a series of Manifestos have been produced, some of which have been adopted by UNESCO. The most relevant for our purposes here are:

32. The IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto highlights the public library as the local gateway to knowledge, which provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups. The full text is attached as annex 1.

33. The IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto stipulates how school libraries offers learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media. School Libraries link to the wider library and information network in accord with the principles in the above mentioned IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto. The full text is attached as annex 2.

34. The IFLA Internet Manifesto was proclaimed by the IFLA Governing Board and approved by the IFLA Council in 2002. Unhindered access to information is essential to freedom, equality, global understanding and peace. Libraries and information services provide essential gateways to the Internet. For some they offer convenience, guidance, and assistance, while for others they are the only available access points. They provide a
mechanism to overcome the barriers created by differences in resources, technology, and training. The full text is attached as annex 3.

35. In The IFLA Glasgow Declaration, proclaimed on the occasion of IFLA’s 75th anniversary in 2002, IFLA and its worldwide membership state that they support, defend and promote intellectual freedom as expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This intellectual freedom encompasses the wealth of human knowledge, opinion, creative thought and intellectual activity. The full text is attached as annex 4.

**LIBRARIES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD**

36. Libraries in developing countries have an important role to play in the development and maintenance of a democratic society. They provide the conditions by which people achieve free access to information and knowledge. They provide opportunities to participate actively in the country's further development into a democratic society. The strengthening of libraries in developing countries forms the most efficient weapon in the struggle against the digital divide. Libraries can provide access to global information via Internet. Libraries at all levels are tools for people to obtain better living conditions.

37. Reading print and electronic documents whether for business or pleasure, is fundamental for any society in the modern world. It is the foundation of democracy, capacity building, and modernization. It is an important method for development as it offers visions and dreams, learning, skills and a creative impetus to the individual. In order to protect the world against ignorance, disease and poverty access to information via libraries is essential.
Annex 1

IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (1994)

Prosperity and the development of society and of individuals are fundamental human values. They will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information.

The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups.

This Manifesto proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women.

UNESCO therefore encourages national and local governments to support and actively engage in the development of public libraries.

The Public Library

The public library is the local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users.

The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those users who cannot, for whatever reason, use the regular services and materials, for example linguistic minorities, people with disabilities or people in hospital or prison.

All age groups must find material relevant to their needs. Collections and services have to include all types of appropriate media and modern technologies as well as traditional materials. High quality and relevance to local needs and conditions are fundamental. Material must reflect current trends and the evolution of society, as well as the memory of human endeavour and imagination.

Collections and services should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor commercial pressures.
**Missions of the Public Library**
The following key missions which relate to information, literacy, education and culture should be at the core of public library services:

1. creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age;
2. supporting both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels;
3. providing opportunities for personal creative development;
4. stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people;
5. promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations;
6. providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts;
7. fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity;
8. supporting the oral tradition;
9. ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information;
10. providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups;
11. facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills;
12. supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary.

**Funding, legislation and networks**
The public library shall in principle be free of charge. The public library is the responsibility of local and national authorities. It must be supported by specific legislation and financed by national and local governments. It has to be an essential component of any long-term strategy for culture, information provision, literacy and education.

To ensure nationwide library coordination and cooperation, legislation and strategic plans must also define and promote a national library network based on agreed standards of service.

The public library network must be designed in relation to national, regional, research and special libraries as well as libraries in schools, colleges and universities.

**Operation and management**
A clear policy must be formulated, defining objectives, priorities and services in relation to the local community needs. The public library has to be organized effectively and professional standards of operation must be maintained.

Cooperation with relevant partners - for example, user groups and other professionals at local, regional, national as well as international level- has to be ensured.

Services have to be physically accessible to all members of the community. This requires well situated library buildings, good reading and study facilities, as well as relevant technologies and sufficient opening hours convenient to the users. It equally implies outreach services for those unable to visit the library.
The library services must be adapted to the different needs of communities in rural and urban areas.

The librarian is an active intermediary between users and resources. Professional and continuing education of the librarian is indispensable to ensure adequate services.

Outreach and user education programmes have to be provided to help users benefit from all the resources.

**Implementing the Manifesto**

Decision makers at national and local levels and the library community at large, around the world, are hereby urged to implement the principles expressed in this Manifesto.
IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto

The School Library in Teaching and Learning for All
The school library provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today’s information and knowledge-based society. The school library equips students with life-long learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling them to live as responsible citizens.

The Mission of the School Library

The school library offers learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media. School Libraries link to the wider library and information network in accord with the principles in the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto.

The library staff support the use of books and other information sources, ranging from the fictional to the documentary, from print to electronic, both on-site and remote. The materials complement and enrich textbooks, teaching materials and methodologies.

It has been demonstrated that, when librarians and teachers work together, students achieve higher levels of literacy, reading, learning, problem-solving and information and communication technology skills.

School library services must be provided equally to all members of the school community, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, nationality, language, professional or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those who are unable to use mainstream library services and materials.

Access to services and collections should be based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms, and should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, or to commercial pressures.

Funding, legislation and networks

The school library is essential to every long-term strategy for literacy, education, information provision and economic, social and cultural development. As the responsibility of local, regional and national authorities, it must be supported by specific legislation and policies. School Libraries must have adequate and sustained funding for trained staff, materials, technologies and facilities. They must be free of charge.

The school library is an essential partner in the local, regional and national library and information network.
Where the school library shares facilities and/or resources with another type of library, such as a public library, the unique aims of the school library must be acknowledged and maintained.

**Goals of the school library**

The school library is integral to the educational process.

The following are essential to the development of literacy, information literacy, teaching, learning and culture and are core school library services:

* supporting and enhancing educational goals as outlined in the school's mission and curriculum;
* developing and sustaining in children the habit and enjoyment of reading and learning, and the use of libraries throughout their lives;
* offering opportunities for experiences in creating and using information for knowledge, understanding, imagination and enjoyment;
* supporting all students in learning and practising skills for evaluating and using information, regardless of form, format or medium, including sensitivity to the modes of communication within the community;
* providing access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions;
* organizing activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity;
* working with students, teachers, administrators and parents to achieve the mission of the school;
* proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy;
* promoting reading and the resources and services of the school library to the whole school community and beyond.

The school library fulfils these functions by developing policies and services, selecting and acquiring resources, providing physical and intellectual access to appropriate sources of information, providing instructional facilities, and employing trained staff.

**Staff**

The school librarian is the professionally qualified staff member responsible for planning and managing the school library, supported by as adequate staffing as possible, working together with all members of the school community, and liaising with the public library and others.

The role of school librarians will vary according to the budget and the curriculum and teaching methodology of the schools, within the national legal and financial framework. Within specific contexts, there are general areas of knowledge that are vital if school librarians are to develop and operate effective school library services: resource, library, and information management and teaching.
In an increasingly networked environment, school librarians must be competent in planning and teaching different information-handling skills to both teachers and students. Therefore they must continue their professional training and development.

**Operation and Management**

To ensure effective and accountable operations:

- the policy on school library services must be formulated to define goals, priorities and services in relation to the school's curriculum;
- the school library must be organized and maintained according to professional standards;
- services must be accessible to all members of the school community and operate within the context of the local community;
- co-operation with teachers, senior school management, administrators, parents, other librarians and information professionals, and community groups must be encouraged.

**Implementing the Manifesto**

Governments, through their ministries responsible for education, are urged to develop strategies, policies and plans which implement the principles of this Manifesto. Plans should include the dissemination of the Manifesto to initial and continuing training programmes for librarians and teachers.
The IFLA Internet Manifesto

Unhindered access to information is essential to freedom, equality, global understanding and peace. Therefore, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) asserts that:

* Intellectual freedom is the right of every individual both to hold and express opinions and to seek and receive information; it is the basis of democracy; and it is at the core of library service.
* Freedom of access to information, regardless of medium and frontiers, is a central responsibility of the library and information profession.
* The provision of unhindered access to the Internet by libraries and information services supports communities and individuals to attain freedom, prosperity and development.
* Barriers to the flow of information should be removed, especially those that promote inequality, poverty, and despair.

Freedom of Access to Information, the Internet and Libraries and Information Services

Libraries and information services are vibrant institutions that connect people with global information resources and the ideas and creative works they seek. Libraries and information services make available the richness of human expression and cultural diversity in all media.

The global Internet enables individuals and communities throughout the world, whether in the smallest and most remote villages or the largest cities, to have equality of access to information for personal development, education, stimulation, cultural enrichment, economic activity and informed participation in democracy. All can present their interests, knowledge and culture for the world to visit.

Libraries and information services provide essential gateways to the Internet. For some they offer convenience, guidance, and assistance, while for others they are the only available access points. They provide a mechanism to overcome the barriers created by differences in resources, technology, and training.

Principles of Freedom of Access to Information via the Internet

Access to the Internet and all of its resources should be consistent with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and especially Article 19:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
The global interconnectedness of the Internet provides a medium through which this right may be enjoyed by all. Consequently, access should neither be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor to economic barriers.

Libraries and information services also have a responsibility to serve all of the members of their communities, regardless of age, race, nationality, religion, culture, political affiliation, physical or other disabilities, gender or sexual orientation, or any other status.

Libraries and information services should support the right of users to seek information of their choice.

Libraries and information services should respect the privacy of their users and recognize that the resources they use should remain confidential.

Libraries and information services have a responsibility to facilitate and promote public access to quality information and communication. Users should be assisted with the necessary skills and a suitable environment in which to use their chosen information sources and services freely and confidently.

In addition to the many valuable resources available on the Internet, some are incorrect, misleading and may be offensive. Librarians should provide the information and resources for library users to learn to use the Internet and electronic information efficiently and effectively. They should proactively promote and facilitate responsible access to quality networked information for all their users, including children and young people.

In common with other core services, access to the Internet in libraries and information services should be without charge.

**Implementing the Manifesto**

IFLA encourages the international community to support the development of Internet accessibility worldwide, and especially in developing countries, to thus obtain the global benefits of information for all offered by the Internet.

IFLA encourages national governments to develop a national information infrastructure which will deliver Internet access to all the nation's population.

IFLA encourages all governments to support the unhindered flow of Internet accessible information via libraries and information services and to oppose any attempts to censor or inhibit access.

IFLA urges the library community and decision makers at national and local levels to develop strategies, policies, and plans that implement the principles expressed in this Manifesto.

Meeting in Glasgow on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of its formation, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) declares that:

IFLA proclaims the fundamental right of human beings both to access and to express information without restriction.

IFLA and its worldwide membership support, defend and promote intellectual freedom as expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This intellectual freedom encompasses the wealth of human knowledge, opinion, creative thought and intellectual activity.

IFLA asserts that a commitment to intellectual freedom is a core responsibility of the library and information profession worldwide, expressed through codes of ethics and demonstrated through practice.

IFLA affirms that:

* Libraries and information services provide access to information, ideas and works of imagination in any medium and regardless of frontiers. They serve as gateways to knowledge, thought and culture, offering essential support for independent decision-making, cultural development, research and lifelong learning by both individuals and groups.

* Libraries and information services contribute to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom and help to safeguard democratic values and universal civil rights. Consequently, they are committed to offering their clients access to relevant resources and services without restriction and to opposing any form of censorship.

* Libraries and information services shall acquire, preserve and make available the widest variety of materials, reflecting the plurality and diversity of society. The selection and availability of library materials and services shall be governed by professional considerations and not by political, moral and religious views.

* Libraries and information services shall make materials, facilities and services equally accessible to all users. There shall be no discrimination for any reason including race, national or ethnic origin, gender or sexual preference, age, disability, religion, or political beliefs.

* Libraries and information services shall protect each user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.

IFLA therefore calls upon libraries and information services and their staff to uphold and promote the principles of intellectual freedom and to provide uninhibited access to information.