

Shanghai Library: A Brief Introduction

By WU Jianming, Shanghai Library

Shanghai Library, set up in 1952, is the second largest public library in China. The new library building was open to public on December 20, 1996 and covers a total area of 3.1 hectares with the floor space of 83,000 square meters. It has 40 million copies/pieces of books, journals, international patents and standards and technical reports as well.

Shanghai Library now owns 32 reading and specialized rooms, over 3,000 study seats, and 20 personal research rooms. Additionally it has two exhibition halls covering an area of 1,100 and 650 square meters respectively, and auditorium seating capacity of 764, a multi-purpose hall seating capacity of 300 and 4 seminar rooms equipped with simultaneous interpretation facilities.

Shanghai Library is open from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. every day and seven days a week. It receives about 8,000 people every day and over 10,000 people at weekend.

The mission of the Library is to build itself a City Classroom. It organizes the lecture courses once every two days on the subjects of science & technology, culture, and education. A series of reading activities were held every year. Hundreds of customers were attracted to join the activities. As the first cooperative online reference services in China, the Library, together with other academic libraries, research libraries and related institutions in Shanghai, provides the general public with high quality professional reference services and knowledge navigation to help improve online public services.

In Shanghai, even in China, there are 3 main different library systems. They are public library system, university library system and academic library system. All these libraries are independent and funded by the different local government. Since the year of 2000, the Library launched the Shanghai Central Library System as a cooperative project. So far there are 25 libraries from different library systems joining the Central Library System as branch libraries. It enables the customers easily access the information resources and borrow and return books with “one card through” to achieve the resource sharing within the System.

jmwu@libnet.sh.cn