

IFLA Social Science Libraries Section support for the Lyon Declaration

A Statement from the IFLA Social Science Libraries Section, International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)

The IFLA Social Science Libraries Section recognizes the crucial role of libraries in providing access to information, and in that context supports research and practice in the broad domain of the social sciences. The Section promotes the collection of social science resources and outreach to users of social science information.

The Section endorses the principles and actions articulated in the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development and aligns its activities accordingly. Recent Social Science Libraries Section programs demonstrate the Section's commitment to building the change agenda advocated in the Lyon Declaration by identifying practices that provide access to information and knowledge across society based on a human rights framework and assisted by information technologies.

Libraries and National Development

The 2015 IFLA Satellite Conference in Namibia sponsored by the Social Science Libraries Section Standing Committee, the Namibia National Library and Archives, the Namibia Information Workers Association, and the Human Rights & Documentation Centre, Faculty of Law, University of Namibia explored the theme "The Role of Libraries and Information Centers in Supporting National Development." The papers presented discuss among other things issues of ICT and its role in promoting national development, ways to measure the impact and value of information centers on socio-economic development, and the relationship between access to information, education and literacy and good governance.

The Section's 2015 IFLA World Library and Information Congress program, co-sponsored by the Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section, expanded the above discussion with the program "How Libraries Support Social Economic Policy and Program Development for Societal Improvements: Assessment, Products, Marketing and Access" and considered the issues libraries face in the digital age. The intended outcome from both programs is to encourage libraries to advocate for national development through broader and more open access to information.

Libraries, Human Rights and Capacity Building

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is built on a platform in which all users have rights to information, regardless of their gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, mobility, class, economic status, religion, or nationality. The impact of this framework is that the libraries must examine access to the collections and facility for all people, including those living with disability.

Another requirement of the Human Rights framework is collecting, archiving and preserving cultural heritage and ephemera, including materials created by activist organizations from all social political perspectives.

The Social Science Libraries Section, Religious Libraries in Dialogue Special Interest Group created a unique and rich intellectual forum that enables the sharing viewpoints of different religions in dialog. This dialog contributes to a broader understanding of religious practices around the world including their diversity and shared values.

The Section utilizes various techniques such as the world café discussion forum, documentary film viewing and discussion to stimulate interactivity with participants and to promote global sharing of information.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Social Science Libraries Section fully supports and endorses the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development.