



GET INTO... GAPMIL

Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy

The Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL) was launched by UNESCO in 2013, and focuses on both raising the profile of media and information literacy as an area of teaching, as well as providing materials and supports for teachers, media and information professionals and others.

It is action-orientated, looking to build partnerships, improve the ability of the Media and Information Literacy (MIL) community to speak with one voice, and provide a platform for further cooperation and development of tools and standards. It is supported by the [Media and Information and Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue \(MILID\) Network](#), which focuses more on research issues.

Over 300 organisations from more than eighty countries are members of GAPMIL, including international bodies such as UNICEF and the European Commission, and agencies such as IREX and the Open Society Foundation. [Read more about GAPMIL.](#)

Why Is This Important for Libraries?



Libraries have long experience of helping people understand how to deal with information, from news media or otherwise. This is not only the best way of ensuring that everyone can realise the potential of increasingly ready access to information, but is also a strong counter-argument to

calls for censorship.

Indeed, at a time that some question the value of libraries, given how easy it is to obtain reference information online, it is through helping their users take a critical, empowered approach to what they read that libraries make a unique contribution. Once people leave formal education, they may even be the only source of help. Evidence underlines that exposure to library-led information literacy courses produce positive results for users, from students in the US to school children in Uganda. It is a fine example of where libraries working together, through exchanging information and ideas, as well as collective action, can make a difference in the world.

How Will Engaging in GAPMIL Help?

Public awareness of the importance of media and information literacy has never been higher, thanks to concern about fake news. The need for coordinated action both to counter calls for censorship, and to ensure that people have the skills they need to navigate an information-rich world, is pressing.

GAPMIL is one of the primary world forums for discussing issues around media and information literacy, and produces a wide range of materials, events and support. Its relevance and success, however, is dependent on how we work together as partners with common goals. More library voices are needed to expand the dialogue and contribute to the development and impact of MIL. These will not only serve to raise awareness of the indispensable role our institutions play, but strengthen the case for ensuring libraries are included in any discussion about MIL policy at the global, regional, national or local level.

How Does it Work?

GAPMIL works through chapters – there are ones for [Europe](#) and [North America](#), Latin America and [Asia Pacific](#). These meet on an annual basis, although some are more active than others. There is also an annual meeting – this year to be focused on Jamaica (<https://en.unesco.org/global-mil-week-2017>), which will see a conference and series of side events. The [UNESCO website](#) offers up to date news on activities in the area.



How is IFLA involved

IFLA is a partner of GAPMIL, and is represented by IFLA members on the International Steering Committee and so far on the European and North American sub-chapters. Given libraries' core role in developing information literacy (both in academic and community settings), this is a natural fit. Libraries are a particularly valued contributor, given the wealth of experience in the network, and the global reach of our institutions. At a time that there has never been better understanding of the need for media and information literate citizens, this is a very good opportunity to underline the contribution of libraries.

What Resources are Available?

The [UNESCO Website](#) contains much relevant information, including background papers and studies, [curricula and assessment frameworks](#). In particular, the [MIL Clicks](#) site provides social media-ready materials on media and information literacy. Librarians have been involved in much of this work.

Get Involved!

- **Join GAPMIL!** Both individuals and organizations can join by submitting [this membership form](#). Membership is free.
- **Engage in GAPMIL Chapters** at a regional level – you may be able to obtain more information via the members of the [International Steering Committee](#) on GAPMIL.
- **Get in touch with local organisations working on MIL Issues** – education charities, media NGOs, academics, law makers – what are they doing? Libraries can help, and build partnerships in order to promote MIL in society, in order to strengthen our arguments.
- **Attend and speak up in the international conference in Jamaica, online or local events** during the annual Global MIL Week.
- **Write to the press and government during GAPMIL week, highlighting what libraries are doing.** If your country is currently discussing reforms to education, press and Internet regulation, digital or communications policy, libraries should be involved!
- **Hold information literacy events during [Global MIL Week](#)** (25 October – 1 November 2017). It is possible to [register your event](#) on the “Events Around the Globe” site, alongside existing and ongoing initiatives, in order to increase awareness of libraries as an active partner in MIL.
- **Let IFLA know what you’ve done!** Send your stories to Stephen.wyber@ifla.org

