

Programming in a Time of Crisis: An All-Virtual Transcribe-a-thon for Spanish Legal Documents at the Library of Congress

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In February 2020, the Law Library of the Library of Congress launched the first ever crowdsourcing project for materials entirely in languages other than English.

This campaign, [Herencia: Centuries of Spanish Legal Documents](#), marks the first [Law Library](#) project in [By the People](#). *By the People* is the Library's crowdsourcing program, launched in the autumn of 2018, that invites the public to volunteer to transcribe, review, and tag documents virtually. Volunteers contribute their valuable time and knowledge to enhance Library collections and in turn learn new skills, like reading cursive and primary source research, while forging a deeper connection to the Library, history, and fellow volunteers. These transcriptions greatly improve search, readability, and access to handwritten and typed documents for many patrons, including those who are not fully sighted or cannot read the handwriting of the original documents.



Image detail from Royal Order of June 26, 1741 Concerning Payment of Annuities by the City of Zaragoza in Compliance with the Regulations on this Matter, Approved and Ratified on October 9, 1734. <http://www.loc.gov/item/2018751786/>

To celebrate this launch, our team planned an on-site and virtual transcribe-a-thon for 19 March 2020. This hybrid event offered a drop-in transcription café at the Library's Great Hall in the Thomas Jefferson Building, where visitors could transcribe documents via the crowdsourcing website, crowd.loc.gov. Event attendees also had the opportunity to view rare collection materials and meet subject matter experts to learn about the collection and the crowdsourcing campaign. Volunteers who were unable to attend the in-person event had the option to register for an all-virtual session. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, plans for the in-person event quickly shifted into an all-virtual initiative.

Formally known as [Spanish Legal Documents \(15th-19th Centuries\)](#), the Library of Congress purchased the *Herencia* collection from a Spanish collector in 1941. The majority of the nearly 2,500 documents were printed using hand-set type on handmade paper and a small portion of the collection consists of manuscripts. The legal documents remained in the Law Library of Congress for over 40 years before the funds were made available to organize,

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All Virtual Transcribe-a-thon, continued

index, and microfilm them in 1983-1984. At that time, English language titles and descriptions were assigned to each of the documents and were divided into six categories: Briefs, Canon Law, Notarial Instruments, Opinions & Judgments, Laws & Statutes, and Miscellaneous. Approximately 70% of the collection is in Spanish, 25% is in Latin, and 5% is in Catalan.

Despite the English titles and descriptions that were provided, there is still much to learn about the topics, individuals, and significant historical moments documented within the collection. The majority of Spanish legal documents in the collection are briefs, i.e., forensic writings related to disputes on inheritance and titles of nobility, taxes, church privilege, and the like. Items of special interest include documents pertaining to the Spanish Inquisition; papal bulls and ecclesiastical concordats; as well as laws, statutes, instructions, and decrees of Spanish kings and government officials. Most names, places, geographical regions, and other details that would be of interest to scholars are still waiting to be discovered.

With the goal of opening this collection to discovery by researchers, the microfilmed documents were digitized in 2017 and published online between 2019 and 2020. Crowdsourced transcription was a logical next step to increase access to the collection. As the first phase of documents was published online in 2019, the team also proposed this collection as the Library's first entirely non-English crowdsourcing campaign in *By the People*. The first phase of [Herencia: Centuries of Spanish Legal Documents](#) launched with roughly 5,000 pages.

The goal of the transcription campaign for this collection is to encourage volunteers to engage with the *Herencia* collection even if they have limited multilingual skills, all while helping make the collection more easily searchable and accessible.

Transcribe-a-thons core to *By the People* program

In-person and virtual transcribe-a-thons have been a part of *By the People* programming from the beginning. This concept is inspired by Wikipedia's edit-a-thons, as well as the experiences of our cultural heritage colleagues at the [Folger Shakespeare Library who coined the term "transcribathon" in 2015](#) to describe a hybrid in-person and virtual transcription event focused on early modern manuscripts (from the same period as our *Herencia* documents!). [The Douglass Day](#) team at Howard University were also inspirations, as early and very successful transcribe-a-thon pioneers. We are grateful to Folger and Douglass Day staff, and others for sharing their knowledge about how to run these events.

On 19 November 2018, just a few weeks after the soft launch of *By the People*, the Library of Congress hosted a launch event for local students and the public, to coincide with the 155th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg Address. [The original Nicolay copy of the Address](#) was displayed by the Manuscript Division. Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden welcomed students, and a local student orator delivered the Address from memory before we broke into small groups to transcribe and explore letters written to Lincoln through our ["Letters to Lincoln" Campaign](#). Laptops and large screens were set up in the Great Hall and hundreds of folks transcribed in-person and from other locations throughout the day. The students asked great questions about historical context, and showed an impressive ability to read cursive. All transcriptions are reviewed by another volunteer, so anyone can contribute, safe in the knowledge that someone else will edit any mistakes!



Dr. Carla Hayden (center) with students at a Library of Congress Transcribe-a-thon. [photo by Shawn Miller]

In February 2019, just four months after the launch of *By the People*, the team partnered with the Washington, D.C., Public Library's Special Collections to celebrate the life and legacy of [hometown hero Mary Church Terrell, the subject of another BTP Campaign](#). This transcribe-a-thon brought together members of the D.C. community, Library of Congress, and D.C.P.L. staff to transcribe on *By the People*, and learn about Terrell's remarkable life by seeing original legal documents from her lawsuit against a segregated lunch counter owner in D.C.

Another aim of this event was to develop how-to documentation for other cultural heritage specialists and educators around the world interested in hosting transcribe-a-thons. The results are available here: <https://crowd.loc.gov/resources/>.

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All Virtual Transcribe-a-thon, continued

Pivoting to an all-virtual Transcribe-a-thon

As described above, transcribe-a-thons are planned as joyful in-person gatherings linked by a shared platform, social media, live chat platforms, and/or live video to connect groups and individuals around the world. Soon after launching *Herencia* and exactly one week before the event, the planning team had to pivot from its original launch concept when COVID-19 forced the Library of Congress to close its doors and cancel public events until further notice.

Thankfully, our original plans for the *Herencia* Transcribe-a-thon were to combine an in-person event with a virtual component for those not in the Washington, DC area. We tabled the in-person plans and focused on making an all-virtual event just as successful with less than a week to restructure, while making the most of the resources we have.

First, we kept our original form of registration in order to keep track of how many people were interested and were planning to attend our virtual event. To promote the event we posted on the Law Library's blog, [In Custodia Legis](#), and posted frequently on the *By the People* and Law Library Twitter accounts. We emailed affinity groups about the change of plans and encouraged them to transcribe a page and share the site with colleagues.

Throughout the day of the event, Library staff live-tweeted progress on the project, fielded questions on [History Hub](#), and shared all of our enthusiastic transcribers progress. We held two office hour sessions via WebEx where volunteers could join and ask questions about the collection and the transcription process, and watch live demonstrations on how to transcribe this unique collection in both English and Spanish.

At the start of the event, there were 45 new pages started and volunteers finished reviewing 19 documents. By the end of the 11 hour Transcribe-a-thon, campaign volunteers completed 104 pages. As of today, there are over 300 completed documents in the collection from over 250 contributors.

The *Herencia* campaign is truly a collaborative effort that involved other Library of Congress departments, including the [Digital Content Management section](#), the [Hispanic Division](#), and the [African, Latin American, and Western European Division](#) of the [Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate](#).

If you are interested in participating in one of our future Transcribe-a-thon or would like to run your own event with help from the [Law Library](#) and *By The People*, send us your questions and suggestions by tweeting at us at [@LawLibCongress](#) or at [@Crowd LOC](#).

Connect with IRRT

Email: ala.intl.leads@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.ala.org/rt/irrt>

Blog: <http://www.alairrt.blogspot.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/alairrt/>

Message from the Editors

What a year 2020 has so far been.

Right now, people are gathering across cities in the USA to protest racism, injustice and police brutality that has been meted on Black people for hundreds of years. We stand in solidarity with those who seek justice, equity and an end to systemic racism. We challenge all, and especially those in positions of privilege to take action to end these injustices forever.

Under normal circumstances, many of us would be readying to gather in Chicago for ALA Annual Conference. Instead, the conference will be virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this issue, we highlight for you IRRT programs that will take place during the ALA Virtual Event as well as webinars planned for after the event. We hope many of you will be able to attend these webinars.

Do you have news about events, projects, initiatives, activities, achievements, grants, conferences? Submit for consideration for publication in IL at: [ala.irrt.leads\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:ala.irrt.leads[at]gmail.com).

Meet the Editors

Rebecca Miller

Rebecca is an independent library consultant, focusing on libraries in developing countries. She specializes in research, strategic planning, outreach, administration/management for libraries. She offers tailored professional development trainings and presentations on these and other topics. Rebecca has over 20 years of experience with libraries, as a practitioner and professor.



Florence Mugambi

Florence is the African Studies Librarian at the Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, USA. She has over 10 years of experience as a librarian. She has a strong interest in literacy & establishment of libraries in rural communities of developing countries. She is the chair-elect of the Africana Librarians Council, coordinate organization of the African Studies Association.



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Message from IRRT Chair



Richard Sapon-White

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Dear IRRT Members,

I write this, my last column as IRRT Chair, in mid-May at a harrowing time for all of us. COVID-19 has shown that everyone on this earth is connected, both for good and ill, although I suspect that anyone reading these pages would never have doubted that for a minute. I have been working from home for nine weeks now – and feeling so fortunate that I can do so, retaining my job (and actually very busy with work), supporting my family, continuing to do the cataloging I love to do, and, yes, still reaching out internationally.

In the past few months, I have contacted colleagues on the other side of the globe to find out how they are coping with the pandemic and, in return, received messages of concern and care. We need those connections as we grapple with the myriad changes to our world. May we work together to keep each other's spirits up and in doing so, support our endeavors to create new and better ways to live here on earth in the future, in spite of the frightening challenges that confront us today.

You probably are well aware of the ALA Virtual Event planned for 24-26 June 2020. The virtual event, in place of the ALA Annual conference, will include IRRT programming that I hope will inform and engage you.

In addition, the IRRT board and committees are planning to deliver programming that did not make it into the virtual conference, through webinars to be offered later in July and August (see page 7). Information about those webinars will be shared widely through various

channels. If you cannot attend any IRRT webinars due to a difference in time zones, be assured that they will be recorded and made available on the IRRT website at <http://www.ala.org/rt/irrt/initiatives>.

The IRRT Executive Board continues to work to improve the round table and advocate for your interests within ALA. Toward this end, we are in the midst of selecting an IRRT liaison to the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC).

IFC's charge is to “recommend such steps as may be necessary to safeguard the rights of library users, libraries, and librarians, in accordance with the first amendment to the United States Constitution and the Library Bill of Rights as adopted by the ALA Council. To work closely with the Office for Intellectual Freedom and with other units and officers of the association in matters touching intellectual freedom and censorship.”

We are also actively involved with the Round Table Coordinating Assembly's efforts to minimize or eliminate negative impacts to round tables by the SCOE/Forward Together report. That report, which will be submitted to ALA Council, reconfigures the governance structure of the association and suggests changes that could result in the elimination of some round tables as they currently exist. IRRT is not likely to be affected, but with our input, the membership requirements for round tables in that report might be modified.

I wish all of you and your loved ones good health, good humor, and the strength to face the future with optimism.

Internationally yours,

Richard

Message from IRRT Chair Elect



Alexandra Houzouri Humphreys
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The ALA Virtual 2020 is just around the corner. Although this year's meetings and networking will be vastly different from what we are used to due to COVID-19, members will be able to profit from and enjoy the virtual programs.

This past year it was my pleasure to serve as IRRT Chair-Elect and as Co-Chair of the Sister Libraries Committee. One responsibility of the chair-elect is to oversee the nomination process for the IRRT committee members and chairs for the following term. IRRT members have shown a high level of interest in serving on these committees. The appointment process is now complete and the committee members and chairs are ready to begin the 2020-2021 term on 1 July 2020.

Unfortunately, some 2019-2020 committees will not have a chance to present their work and activities due to limited event scheduling and the virtual format of the ALA Virtual 2020. However, we are hopeful that in

June 2021 we will return to normalcy and committees - such as the Pre-Conference, International Visitors Center, Reception, and others - will be able to exhibit their yearlong hard work and resourcefulness.

Special thanks to Muzhgan Nazarova, Past IRRT Chair, for her work and guidance with the 2020 Emerging Leaders on international librarians networking. As a result, the IRRT launched the [International Librarian Networking Program](#), which attracted more than 500 applicants. The members of the 2020 IRRT team of ALA Emerging Leaders (Shayla Boyce, Jesse Caldwell, Damiana Fortenberry, Lauren Frazier, Zoe McLaughlin, and Erica Saito) have already identified more than 80 pairs of library employees from various countries who will collaborate for four months and share their library experiences.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Richard Sapon-White for his hard work during his term as IRRT Chair, his representation of IRRT and Round Tables in SCOE meetings, his commitment to international librarianship, and his leadership through these difficult times.

As the incoming IRRT Chair from 1 July, I am looking forward to working with all of you. I also want to take this opportunity to welcome the newly elected Board members: Jim Neal, the incoming IRRT Chair-Elect and former ALA President (2017-18), and Grace Yan Liu, IRRT incoming Member-at-Large and Emerging Leaders team member (2018). Finally, special thanks to Delin Guerra, Program Officer, for her outstanding assistance, support, guidance, and dedication to the IRRT.

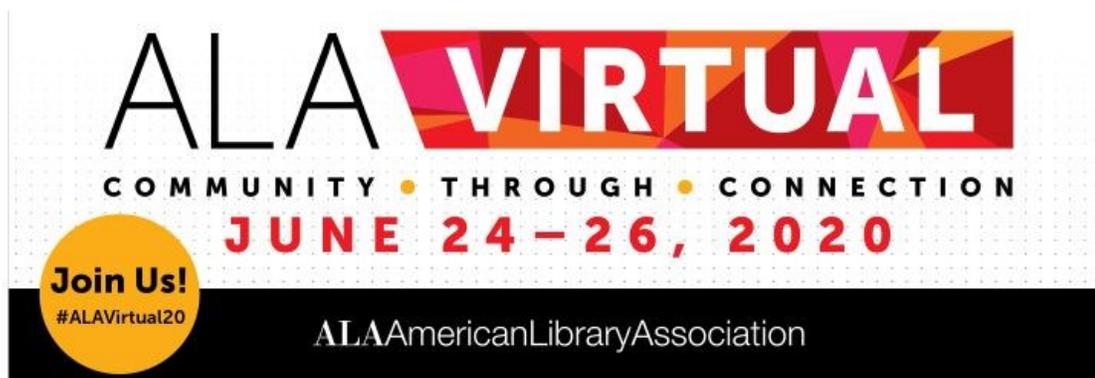
Call for Submissions

Do you have news or stories about ...

- ◇ **International library activities?**
- ◇ **People in international librarianship?**
- ◇ **Upcoming international conferences?**

Submit to International Leads?

Email us at ala.intl.leads@gmail.com



The American Library Association (ALA) is excited to announce its first Virtual Event: **Community Through Connection**, an online event that will offer educational programming, special author events, and social networking on 24-26 June 2020. ALA looks forward to this unique opportunity for members and library supporters to stay connected as we move forward to empower our profession and support our communities.

The event will feature a portfolio of more than [50 educational sessions](#), including COVID-19 related information pertinent to libraries; [international programs](#); live chat opportunities with [authors and speakers](#); an exhibitor showcase with more than [500 participating exhibitors](#); and presentations in an on-demand format from book publishers on forthcoming book titles. Registrants will be able to access all the programs and presentations for one year. Be part of this virtual community and [register today!](#)

IRRT Programs

The Chair's Program, titled "[Libraries as Social Change Engines Around the World](#)," will be held Wednesday, 24 June from 2:30 pm to 3:15 pm Central Daylight Time. The speakers are Christine MacKenzie, President, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, and Merve Yavuzdemir, Branch Man-

ager of Foreign Relations, Turkish Republic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, General Directorate of Libraries and Publications / Turkish National Library.

International Papers and Projects Program's theme for 2020 is "[Expanding Worldviews: How Libraries Create Awareness of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Inspire Change](#)". It will be held Friday, 26 June from 11:15 am to 12:00 pm Central Daylight Time. The International Papers and Projects Program provides librarians with an opportunity to exchange information about library services, collections and projects throughout the world.

The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals that are key to making the world a better place for everyone. Libraries play an important role in helping societies achieve these goals, with IFLA's position being that access to information is a key starting point.

Many of the issues that these goals address have become critical in recent years, such as climate change, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice, civil society and more. The session will feature library projects from Kazakhstan, Central America and Singapore.

IRRT Preconference to be offered as webinars

In light of the shift to a virtual conference, the IRRT Preconference has moved to virtual delivery as well.

- 14 July at 11 am Eastern Daylight Time: Role of Libraries in Addressing Terrorism Through Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with Dorothy Njiraine & Nche Che
- 4 August at 1 pm Eastern Daylight Time: Including the Most Excluded with Digital Skills, with Jane Kinney Meyers
- 13 August at 1 pm Eastern Daylight Time: Creating Social Change through Library Education, with Julie Ann Winkelstein

More details will be forthcoming.

Upcoming webinars: COVID-19, UN SDGs and Refugees

The IRRT Webinar committee has organized an informative and timely series of five free webinars on the topic of libraries response to COVID-19. The webinar series is titled “Libraries Reopening: A Perspective of Best Practices from around the World in the Time of COVID-19.”

Presenters are addressing the following issues:

- Expected risks associated with reopening
- Libraries strategies to protect users, staff and collections
- Safety measures that libraries are putting in place
- Staff training needs
- Communication channels in use or plan to be used to communicate staff safety

Libraries have had to act fast in addressing the impact of COVID-19 in their communities. Reopening during a global pandemic requires extensive planning that includes safe reopening policies and practices to best protect library employees and patrons.

The series includes participants from libraries in Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Mexico, Qatar, Netherlands, Sweden, and Australia.

- **4 June:** UIN Sunan Kalijaga Library, Indonesia, Latin America and the Caribbean Section of IFLA, and Libraries ACT, Australia
- **5 June:** Qatar National Library and IFLA
- **11 June:** Helsingborg City Libraries and Mjölby Public Library, Sweden
- **16 June:** Leipzig University Library, Germany
- **17 June:** University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong



In addition to this series, the Webinar Committee is offering two other webinars.

8 June: “Libraries Contributing to Meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals”

The webinar will highlight inspiring stories from leaders of library associations in Australia, France, and Germany as they discuss how libraries are helping communities meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the websites created to share these stories.

18 June: “From Refugee to Librarian: In our own words”

To commemorate World Refugee Day, the Mortensen Center for International Library Programs and the ALA will host a webinar to give voice to refugees who became librarians or library educators.

Moderator: Clara M. Chu, Director, Mortenson Center for International Library Programs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library

Panelists: Constantia Constantinou, H. Carton Rogers III Vice Provost and Director, Penn Libraries; and Touger Vang, Director, Montgomery Community College Library.

Visit the [IRRT Webinar Series](#) page to register for free to attend the webinars, or view recordings of past webinars.

Information and Digital Skills of Migrants at Mexico's Southern Border

Máximo Domínguez, National Newspaper Library of Mexico, Bibliographic Research Institute, UNAM (m.romandl@gmail.com)

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The migratory crisis phenomenon in Mexico is not new; its presence has been related to different historical contexts ranging from geographical, economic, political, social and environmental perspectives, which have brought changes in the conceptualization of world migration. Currently, migration has great relevance in the political agenda of several countries, such as Mexico, the United States, the Northern Triangle countries (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador), Nicaragua, and Haiti due to the exodus that has come about in the last few years.

This complex synergy of human streams has had an accelerated rush since 2018, starting with migrants from the Northern Triangle and with the subsequent integration of other Central American countries, the Caribbean and Africa. It was not until March 2019 when news media began covering this story due to the alleged “mother caravan.” However, it is important to highlight that this first went viral on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter—the impact of which was so great that it remained rooted in the collective imagination of Mexican society.

From the library science point of view, this information became a major mobilizing force in the migrants' countries of origin, since groups of people were organized by the exchange of information and content from social networks, particularly Facebook and WhatsApp.

These events elicited different interventions from the countries involved. The United States' response was more restrictive immigration policy, forcing Mexico to stop human migration. In agreement with the Washington Office for Latin American Affairs (WOLA), Mexico promised to contain the largest flow of migrants in exchange for receiving a remission of import tariffs on products from Mexico.

Field investigation

A field investigation was carried out in the city of Tapachula, Chiapas, Mexico which is the epicenter of this

Habilidades informativas y digitales de los migrantes de la Frontera Sur

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El fenómeno de la crisis migratoria en México no es nuevo, la presencia de este se ha relacionado con diferentes contextos históricos que van desde perspectivas geográficas, económicas, políticas, sociales y ambientales, las cuales han traído cambios en la conceptualización de la migración en el mundo. Actualmente, la migración tiene gran relevancia en la agenda política de países, como: México, Estados Unidos de América, los países del Triángulo Norte (Guatemala, Honduras y El Salvador), Nicaragua y Haití, debido al éxodo migratorio que se ha presentado en los últimos años.

Esta compleja sinergia de flujos humanos ha tenido una acelerada precipitación desde el 2018, comenzando con los migrantes provenientes del Triángulo Norte y posteriormente integrándose otros países de Centroamérica, el Caribe y África. Fue hasta marzo de 2019 cuando los medios de comunicación prestaron interés a esta noticia por



The border between Mexico and Guatemala

la supuesta caravana madre. Es importante destacar que la viralización de esta, se realizó a través de Facebook, Youtube y Twitter, el impacto de esta noticia fue tan grande que quedó arraigada en el imaginario colectivo de la sociedad mexicana.

Desde el punto de vista bibliotecológico la información cobró una principal fuerza movilizadora en los países de origen, ya que los grupos humanos fueron organizándose por el intercambio de información y contenidos a partir de las redes sociales, específicamente por Facebook y WhatsApp.

Los anteriores hechos, provocaron distintas intervenciones de los países involucrados; sin embargo, la respuesta de Estados Unidos fue una política migratoria de mayor restricción, obligando a México a detener la migración humana. Con el acuerdo para la Oficina en

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Information and Digital Skills, cont

mass human displacement phenomenon. Four hundred sixty surveys were administered to people from Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, Guatemala, and Cuba. The aim of the investigation was to find the level of information skills of the migrant community in Tapachula. Considering the cultural diversity among the Tapachula migrants, the survey was designed in Spanish, English, and French.

The survey consisted of 22 questions and was divided into three parts:

- Data on a person's nationality, gender, age, and education.
- Use of technologies, the internet, social networks, and information consumption.
- Information needs and information seeking behavior (activities undertaken by a subject to meet their information needs).



A researcher takes a survey

Findings

The findings are presented in the following infographics.

Habilidades informativas y digitales

Washington para Asuntos Latinoamericanos (WOLA), México se comprometió a contener el mayor flujo de migrantes a cambio de recibir una condonación de los aranceles a la importación de los productos provenientes de México.

Esta investigación

Esta investigación se llevó a cabo en la ciudad de Tapachula, Chiapas, la cual es el epicentro de este fenómeno de desplazamiento masivo de seres humanos. Es una investigación de campo en la que se realizaron 460 encuestas a personas de: Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haití, Guatemala y Cuba. Se utilizó una encuesta como instrumento, con el objetivo de identificar el nivel de habilidades informativas que posee la comunidad de migrantes en la ciudad anteriormente mencionada. Finalmente, este instrumento se diseñó en tres idiomas: español, inglés y francés, esto por la diversidad cultural que existe entre las personas migrantes que se encuentran en Tapachula.

Está conformada por 22 reactivos y está dividida en tres partes que contienen:

- Datos sobre la nacionalidad de la persona, género, edad y escolaridad.
- Uso de las tecnologías, internet, redes sociales y el consumo de información.
- Necesidades de información y el comportamiento en la búsqueda de información, entendido este como las actividades que realiza un sujeto para satisfacer las necesidades de información.

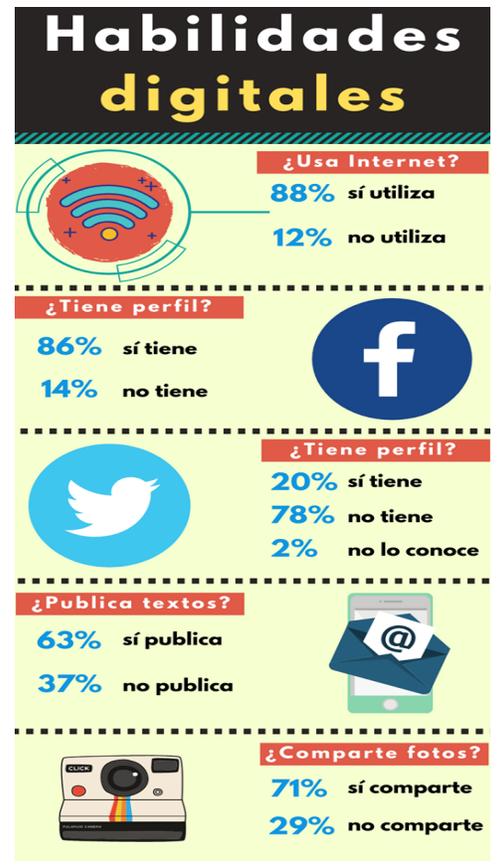
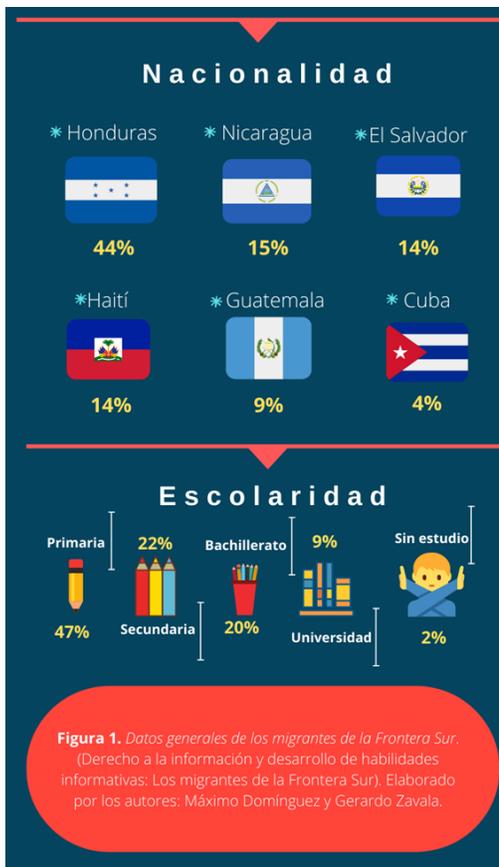
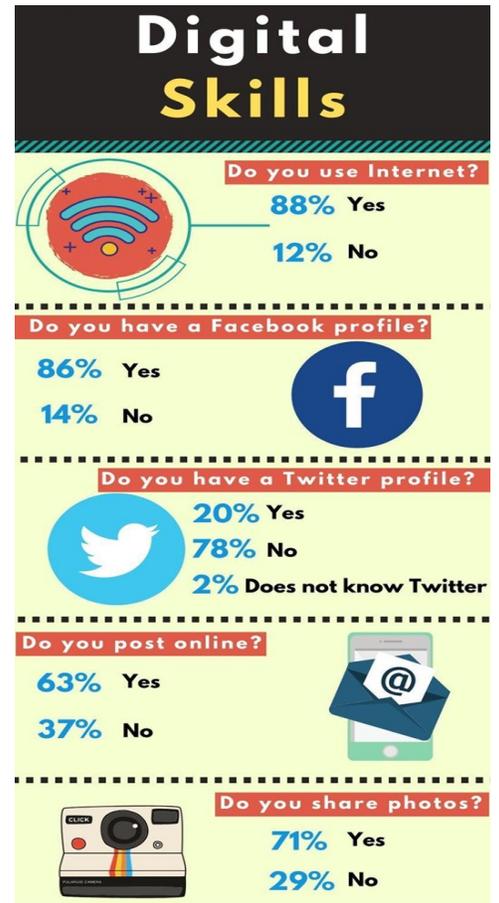
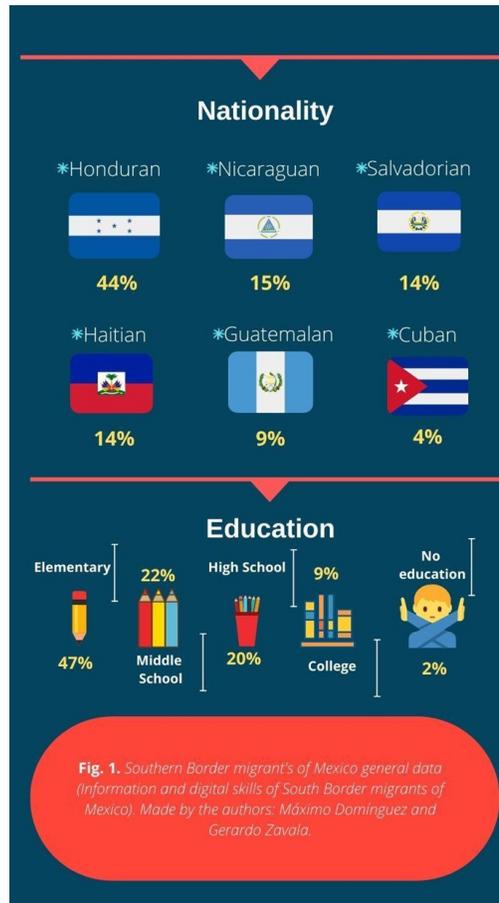


Migrants from Haiti on the outskirts of the National Migration

Recomendaciones

Los hallazgos se presentan en las siguientes infografías.

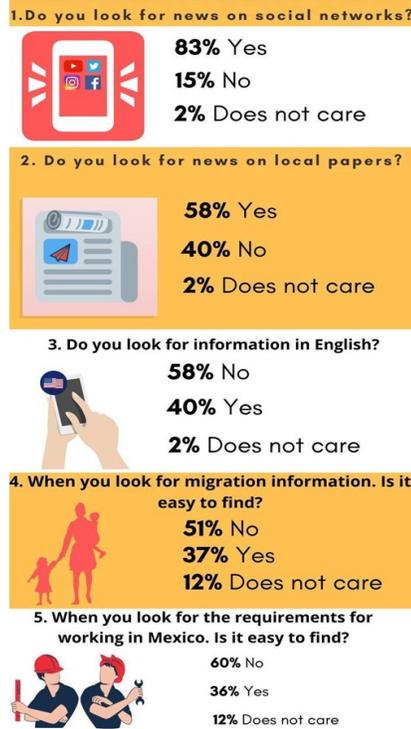
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Information Skills



6. When you don't find the information you are looking for. Do you feel frustrated?



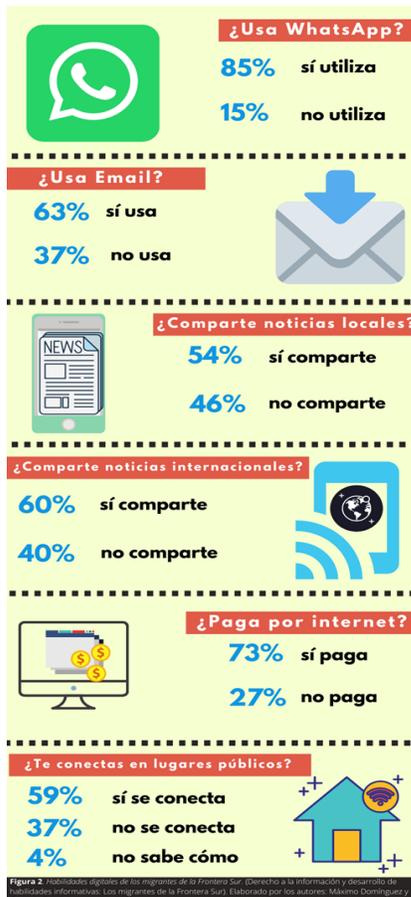
65% Yes
 23% No
 12% Does not care

7. Do you doubt the information that you find on social networks?



71% Yes
 20% No
 9% Does not care

Fig. 3 Southern Border migrant's digital skills. (Information and digital skills of South Border migrants of Mexico). Made by the authors: Máximo Domínguez and Gerardo Zavala.



Habilidades Informativas



6.- ¿Se siente frustrado cuando no encuentra información que necesita?



65% se siente frustrado
 23% no se siente frustrado
 12% es indiferente

7.- ¿Pones en duda la información que encuentras en las redes sociales?



71% sí lo pone en duda
 20% no lo pone en duda
 9% es indiferente

Figura 3 Habilidades informativas de la Frontera Sur. (Derecho a la información y desarrollo de habilidades informativas. Los migrantes de la Frontera Sur). Elaborado por los autores: Máximo Domínguez y Gerardo Zavala.

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Conclusion

In conclusion, it is imperative to collect information in the chronology of the migratory flow where there is no “mother” caravan, when in fact, all this was due to misinformation that went viral on social networks and was then reinforced by the Mexican government. However, the impact of social networks is recognized as the main engine for the 2018 caravan’s mobilization. The problems that were detected could be grouped into two main axes.

Infraestructura

Lack of neutral connection spaces without greater barriers than the migrants’ needs, and that is the position that libraries must have, whether public or private. Libraries must not only be book depositories but must also have a greater technological infrastructure capable of providing migrants with information that guarantees the exercise of their rights and obligations.

Professional library staff

The presence of professional library personnel who can understand the migrant situation and face the challenges that this new scenario implies come as a vital need. In addition to the need for knowing the national and international rights of migrants, the language barrier makes it more difficult, as in the case of Haitians, to access information where the contents are in a language different from their own.

Conclusión

A manera de conclusión es perentorio retomar información en la cronología del flujo migratorio en donde no existe una caravana “madre”, todo eso se debió a la desinformación que se viralizó en las redes sociales y reforzado por el gobierno mexicano. Sin embargo, se reconoce el impacto de las redes sociales como principal motor movilizado de las caravanas desde el 2018. Los problemas que se detectaron podrían agruparse en dos grandes ejes.

Infraestructura

Falta de espacios neutros para conectarse sin mayor impedimento que la del requerimiento que necesite el migrante, y es ahí el posicionamiento que deben tener las bibliotecas ya sean públicas o privadas. Las bibliotecas no deben ser sólo depositarias de libros, sino que deben contar con una mayor infraestructura tecnológica, capaz de brindar al migrante información que garantice el ejercicio de sus derechos y obligaciones.

Personal bibliotecario profesional

Es de vital importancia la presencia de personal bibliotecario profesional que sea capaz comprender la situación migrante y enfrentar los desafíos que este nuevo escenario implica. Además de conocer los derechos relacionados con los migrantes a nivel nacional e internacional, la barrera idiomática hace que sea más difícil, en el caso de los haitianos acceder a la información, donde los contenidos están en un idioma diferente al suyo.



Surveys administered to Migrants living in shelters

From Austria to the USA

Susanne List-Tretthahn, Austrian Library Association, Austria (list-tretthahn@bvoe.at)

In 2017 the Austrian Library Association (BVÖ) and the American Library Association (ALA) agreed on a new cooperation. The aim of the cooperation is to give Austrian librarians the opportunity to get to know the work and projects of librarians in public libraries in the USA.

The ALA is acting as the connection institution in the USA. In addition, the Association contacts the libraries Austrian colleagues have listed as their preference for visits and ensures that an agreement is made with the host library for the duration of the stay.

The costs of the stay abroad, such as travel expenses or daily meals are covered by the Austrian Library Association, up to a certain amount. The libraries in which the participants work are requested to credit the time spent in the USA as working days. The period of stay is about four weeks. A scholarship is awarded annually.

Procedure

Interested colleagues contact BVÖ and send an application for scholarship for a stay in the USA. A CV, a letter of motivation and the answers to seven questions - including what the main focus of the trip should be and the motivation behind it - is sent. A jury meets after the closing date and decides on the award.

Once the scholarship has been awarded, BVÖ contacts ALA and forwards the application documents. The ALA determines the fields of activity that are interesting for the respective colleagues—these are usually stated in the application. In addition, ALA contacts those libraries that are eligible for the programme and informs the Austrians about the results. Once the partner library has been determined, the scholarship holder contacts the library to clarify any formalities. Arrangements for the programme can also be made at this point.

During their stay in the USA, the scholarship holders report

Auf in die USA

2017 vereinbarten der BÜCHEREIVERBAND ÖSTERREICHS (BVÖ) und die American Library Association (ALA) eine neue Kooperation. Ziel dieser Zusammenarbeit ist es, österreichischen Bibliothekarinnen und Bibliothekaren die Möglichkeit zu geben, die bibliothekarische Arbeit in öffentlichen Bibliotheken in den USA kennenzulernen.

Die ALA steht hierbei als vermittelnde Institution in den USA zur Verfügung. Darüber hinaus kontaktiert der Verband auch jene Bibliotheken, die von österreichischen Kolleginnen und Kollegen als Präferenz für die Besuche angegeben werden und stellt sicher, dass mit der gastgebende Bibliothek eine Vereinbarung für die Aufenthaltszeit geschlossen wird.

Die Kosten des Auslandsaufenthalts, etwa Reisekosten oder Tagesdiäten werden vom BÜCHEREIVERBAND ÖSTERREICHS – bis zu einer bestimmten Höhe – übernommen. Die Bibliotheken, in denen die TeilnehmerInnen tätig sind, werden ersucht, die Zeit des Aufenthalts in den USA als Arbeitstage anzuerkennen.

Der vorgesehene Zeitraum für den Aufenthalt sind etwa vier Wochen. Jährlich wird ein Stipendium vergeben.

Ablauf

Interessierte Kolleginnen und Kollegen wenden sich an den BVÖ und senden eine Bewerbung für das Stipendium für den USA-Aufenthalt. Hierbei wird ein Lebenslauf, ein Motivationsschreiben und die Beantwortung von sieben Fragestellungen – unter anderem was die Schwerpunkte der Reise sein sollen und welche Motivation dahinter steht – geschickt. Eine Jury tritt nach Einsendeschluss zusammen und entscheidet über die Vergabe.

Ist das Stipendium vergeben, nimmt der BVÖ mit der ALA Kontakt auf und gibt die Bewerbungsunterlagen weiter. Die ALA ermittelt die Tätigkeitsfelder, die für die jeweiligen KollegInnen interessant sind— diese gehen in der Regel aus der Bewerbung hervor. Außerdem kontaktiert die ALA jene Bibliotheken, die für das Programm in Frage kommen und informiert die ÖsterreicherInnen über die Ergebnisse. Steht die Partnerbibliothek fest, so nimmt der Stipendiat/die Stipendiatin Kontakt mit der Bibliothek auf um allfällige Formalitäten zu klären. Auch Vereinbarungen zur Programmgestaltung können hier bereits



Karin Valasek with Fred Gitner (Asst. Director New Americans Program) / Karin Valasek mit Fred Gitner.

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From Austria to the USA /Auf in die USA, continued

on their experiences via blog (blog.bvoe.at). After the trip they write reports for BVÖ's magazine "Büchereiperspektiven" and declare their willingness to report on their trip at library events, such as meetings or conferences, in advance. The aim is to make the experience available to as many librarians as possible.

Following are experiences of the first two scholarship holders to the USA in 2018 and 2019.

Martina Lammel (Libraries Vienna, Vienna, 2018)

Martina Lammel spent four weeks at the Boston Public Library (BPL).

Her main focus was the children and youth library including reading promotion and events. She reports that she was particularly impressed by the children's library and describes it as colorful, inviting and cozy.

In addition, a comprehensive programme of events is offered: from traditional readings to drag queen and drag king readings, movement songs, sign language, STEM programmes etc.; they can be described as very varied.

The youth library also impresses with gaming and video lounges, "open labs," makerspaces and a wide range of events. With its motto "free to all" the BPL is available as a meeting place for different generations. Its focus on "lifelong learning" is evident from the range of events.

Karin Valasek (Montafon Library, Vorarlberg, 2019)

Karin Valasek spent her stay in the USA at the Queens Public Library (QPL). Her focus was on events, especially summer reading activities and working with target groups.

She had the opportunity to experience events in several branches of the QPL and could see some parallels to the work in Austria, but also explore new possibilities.

getroffen werden.

Während des Aufenthalts in den USA berichten die Stipendiatinnen und Stipendiaten über ihre Erfahrungen durch Blogbeiträge (zum Nachlesen unter: blog.bvoe.at). Nach der Reise schreiben sie Berichte für die Fachzeitschrift des BVÖ „Büchereiperspektiven“ und berichten bei bibliothekarischen Veranstaltungen, etwa Tagungen oder Konferenzen, von ihrer Reise. Ziel ist es, die Erfahrungen einer möglichst großen bibliothekarischen Öffentlichkeit zugänglich zu machen.

Die ersten beiden Stipendiatinnen, die 2018 und 2019 in die USA gereist sind, haben folgende Erfahrungen

gemacht.

Martina Lammel (Büchereien Wien, Wien, 2018)

Martina Lammel verbrachte vier Wochen in der Boston Public Library (BPL).

Ihr Schwerpunkt war die Arbeit in der Kinder- und Jugendbücherei inkl. Leseförderung und Veranstaltungen. Sie berichtet, dass sie besonders von der Kinderbücherei beeindruckt war und beschreibt diese als bunt, einladend und gemütlich.

Außerdem wird ein umfassendes Veranstaltungsprogramm geboten: von Lesungen über Dragqueen- und Dragking-Lesungen, Bewegungsliedern, Gebärdensprache, MINT-Programme usw. kann dieses als sehr abwechslungsreich beschrieben werden.

Auch die Jugendbücherei beeindruckt durch Gaming- und Video-Lounges, „Open-Labs“, Makerspaces und einem großen Veranstaltungsangebot. Die BPL

steht mit ihrem Leitspruch „free to all“ als Treffpunkt für verschiedene Generationen zur Verfügung – der Schwerpunkt zum Thema „Lebenslanges Lernen“ lässt sich auch am Veranstaltungsangebot ablesen.

Karin Valasek (Bücherei Montafon, Vorarlberg, 2019)

Karin Valasek verbrachte ihren bibliothekarischen USA-Aufenthalt an der Queens Public Library (QPL). Ihre



Martina Lammel (2nd from right) at the Drag Queen Story Time, Boston Public Library / Martina Lammel (2e von rechts) bei der Drag Queen Story Time, Boston Public Library.

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From Austria to the USA / Auf in die USA, continued

Access to information and offering services is of high priority at the QPL. The library as a place to stay is actively promoted, for example: when it gets very hot in New York in the summer the library points out that the library buildings are air-conditioned and people should



Queens Public Library, 2019. © Karin Valasek

come to stay, meet there to read, talk or play chess.

Thank you!

Both scholarship recipients talked about their experiences as opportunities they would not want to miss. The results include learning from and with each other and networking with colleagues.

The newly acquired specialist knowledge finds its way into their own libraries and is shared with colleagues throughout Austria.

Our thanks go to ALA and especially to Michael Dowling and his team, who made this cooperation possible.

Schwerpunkte waren Veranstaltungen, besonders Sommer-Lese-Aktionen und Zielgruppenarbeit.

Sie hatte die Möglichkeit, Veranstaltungen in mehreren Zweigstellen der QPL mitzuerleben und konnte einige Parallelen zur Arbeit in Österreich erkennen und auch neue Möglichkeiten erkunden.

Eine hohe Priorität hat der Zugang zu Informationen und zu Serviceangeboten an der QPL. Auch die Bibliothek als Aufenthaltsort wird aktiv beworben, etwa wenn es im Sommer in New York sehr heiß wird und die Bibliothek darauf hinweist, dass die Bibliotheksgebäude klimatisiert sind und man sich gerne dort aufhalten und treffen kann, etwa um zu lesen, sich zu unterhalten oder auch beispielsweise Schach zu spielen.

Vielen Dank!

Beide Stipendiatinnen berichteten von ihren Erlebnissen als Erfahrungen, die sie nicht missen möchten. Als Ergebnisse werden unter anderem das voneinander und miteinander Lernen und die Vernetzung mit Kolleginnen und Kollegen beschrieben. Das neu erworbene Fachwissen findet Eingang in die eigene Bibliotheksarbeit und wird österreichweit mit Kolleginnen und Kollegen geteilt.



Boston Public Library, 2018. © Martina Lammel

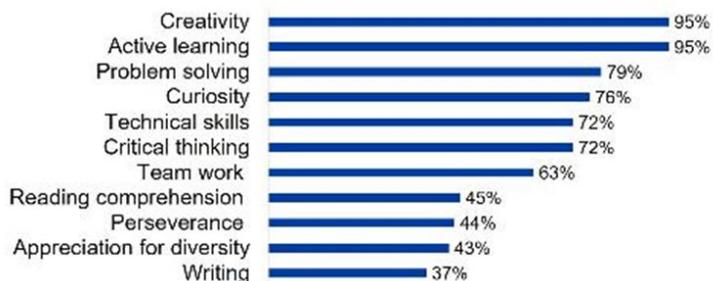
Creativity and Active Learning in Libraries: Variations on “STEM” in the United Kingdom and Ireland

Keliann LaConte, 2018-2019 Fulbright Global Scholar
(keliann.lacont@alumni.caltech.edu)

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning is a key part of conversations about education, policy, the economy, and our future. As our communities continue to evolve in the 21st century, what are possible directions for libraries and their collaborators to bring STEM experiences to diverse learners? Library professionals from various communities across the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland participated in research to describe creative STEM events and collaborations, as well as how limited staff time and funding and lack of other support hinder this important work.

This article presents an overview and recommendations based on input from 89 survey respondents and 17 interviewees from public libraries, who provided their anonymous responses in August-December 2019. The majority (95%) of research participants have offered STEM events, and over half of respondents (52%) offer STEM events frequently, so their responses illustrate what can be done in the library setting. The full results are available as a slide-set to help foster discussions between library professionals and potential collaborators: [Libraries & STEM Learning: Results from a Survey of Libraries Across the UK and Ireland](#).

“STEM” in British and Irish libraries vary in format and topic, but has creativity and active learning at its heart. The majority of research participants, (95%), selected creativity and active learning as a skill they would like their customers to put into practice during STEM events, with other skills ranked in the chart below.



Skills to practice during STEM events.

STEM events are primarily targeted toward the 6-12 years old group. According to research participants, by offering STEM, library staff can provide new experiences for youth and adults in a “fun, informal way.”

STEM learning is a technical literacy for today's citizens to com-

plement the information, digital and reading literacy skills built by public libraries for children, families, adults and hard-to-reach groups. – Research participant

Public libraries can offer a more community approach to STEM education and be the centre for STEM development in rural areas where access to STEM isn't available

– Research participant

Coding and Beyond

Coding is the top STEM-rich learning experience offered in libraries across the UK and Ireland. Digital literacy or digital inclusion are more commonly used terms than STEM.

Most research participants were interested in a broader range of STEM-related events and services for the future, including hands-on activities (96%), arts-based STEM, (82%), and more. Many libraries have a current or future interest in offering makerspaces/creative spaces, STEM kits circulated to customers, tech classes, or robotics, although all these are less popular.

The great thing about libraries is that they help people realise that they are interested in something that they didn't know they were interested in. [STEM learning in libraries] is the opportunity to do a bit of coding or try something different, the serendipity of finding something, like an exhibit...[and] finding something about their potential.

– Research participant

Promising Collaborations

Most research participants are developing and facilitating STEM-related events themselves, but many libraries have developed promising relationships with external supporters. For some libraries, these collaborations are essential to their STEM programs. Libraries are collaborating with coding education franchises or charities and volunteer ambassadors of STEM subjects. Others have built long-lasting relationships with universities. Several library systems partner with community organisations to offer science festivals, where events are held at various venues over multiple weeks and target different age groups. Universities, industries, museums, and others can help stretch limited library resources for the benefit of the communities served.

I think public libraries are an absolute perfect location for short courses, practical activity... [and] potentially take-up of STEM by young people.

– STEM ambassador

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STEM in the UK and Ireland, continued

Some libraries have had success collaborating with other libraries. For example, BBC micro:bit, a small computer used for coding education, was [distributed for free](#) to early secondary schoolchildren across the UK in 2016, and many libraries have received sets of micro:bits. One library staff member described how having micro:bits all at the same time led to “unity and voice across the whole country.”



Challenges and Opportunities

While many libraries in the UK and Ireland are offering STEM in creative and varied ways, research participants report significant challenges. Most research participants (83%) struggle with lack of staff time and funding above other capacity issues. British libraries continue to grapple with the impact of [10 years of austerity measures](#). Most (86%) rely on the library budget, as opposed to external sources, to fund STEM-related events and services. Over half of research participants are limited by capacity in terms of staff knowledge about STEM topics (57%) or equipment and supplies (51%).

...[T]here is also a distinct reluctance from library staff to learn more about STEAM subjects as 'it's not my job'....[L]ibrary staff attitude (and ambivalence) towards STEAM subjects has a profound impact on STEAM learning in libraries.

– Research participant

Research participants described the challenge of learning new STEM skills and building the confidence and knowledge to deliver STEM activities. They noted that face-to-face formal training and how-to procedures for

facilitating hands-on STEM learning could help, but emphasized that these must resonate with the realities of the library and its community. Libraries work with diverse community members who bring varying education levels and backgrounds to any given STEM event. Library staff need training to address what one research participant described as the “dynamics of some who are really lagging, others who are very advanced.” Library staff need STEM resources that are practical to deliver more informally than in other types of teaching. One library staff member remarked, “Our library’s workshops don’t have a beginning, middle, and end, and robotics and coding workshops would have to mould to what the library already does”. One experienced STEM facilitator recommended incorporating technology into traditional arts and crafts activities so that library staff don’t feel that they are being asked to do something extra.

There are lots of teacher activities online, but not much for libraries.

– Research participant

These findings suggest that a central STEM communication hub is essential for addressing the challenges. Research participants in the UK and Ireland voiced concerns about the communication landscape, and even identified a sense of isolation in their STEM efforts. They need a consolidated source of information about STEM activities, opportunities, and resources, as well as advice from library staff who have experience facilitating STEM learning.

Generally, there's no expectation or standards set around the fact that libraries could be/ should be offering STEM. – Research participant

International and Local Collaborations

STEM learning complements so much of what forms the core of librarianship. We can share our challenges and successes even across national borders. We have much to offer each other as our communities grapple with the advances of the 21st century. In the UK and Ireland, library staff offer experience in coding events for youth and adults. They demonstrate the potential of local collaborations with STEM and education organizations. See examples of this work in [STEAM up your library: a guide to energizing your offer](#).

Libraries in the U.S. have much to share from offering a variety of approaches to STEM learning, [integrating crafts into science explorations](#) to deeper learning through [STEM collaborations](#) and [citizen science](#). Some

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STEM in the UK and Ireland, continued

libraries are [hosting “Community Dialogues”](#) to hear from community members about science and technology learning. Learn more about these approaches to STEM learning through the [Science-Technology Activities and Resources Library Network \(STAR Net\)](#), which is led by the Space Science Institute’s National Center for Interactive Learning.

Acknowledgements

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Staff in a library in Scotland try STEAM activities like [Levers at Play](#). Photo by Keliann LaConte.

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A check in with Librarians from around the world

Raymond Pun is an IRRT member and an instruction/research librarian at Alder Graduate School of Education, where he coordinates collection development and provides distance-learning services for graduate students in education. He is an active member of ALA, ACRL, SLA and IFLA. He coordinates interviews with international librarians for *International Leads*.

Interview with Simon Burton of CB Resourcing, United Kingdom

Ray: Thanks for interviewing with us! Can you briefly tell us about your role in the library/information center?

Simon: My day job is Managing Director of [CB Resourcing](#). We're the leading recruiter for knowledge and information professionals here in the United Kingdom. We work across law, consulting, government, academia and the corporate sector filling positions across knowledge management, records, libraries, business research and related technology.

I am also 2019 President of the Special Libraries Association's European Chapter. This is a voluntary post working with a team of fantastic volunteers both in SLA Europe as well as the broader SLA to deliver a programme of events and activities to add value to our information professional members.

Ray: How did you get into librarianship and (if any) formal education or training did you receive?

Simon: My first position in the information sector was with a market research platform called Profound. Following that I worked for a couple of other research firms before founding CB Resourcing.

Ray: What is a library/information trend/hot topic in your country currently?

Simon: There are so many, as the profession in its broadest sense has different issues depending on which sector you look at. Offshoring has massively impacted financial services for example. Also, technology, particularly automation. This is nothing new, but the pace of change is accelerating. This in turn creates new demands for skills, which is an opportunity for many information professionals. The RPA (robotic process automation) and AI (artificial intelligence) world needs robust underlying data in order to function, which is in the information professionals core competency. There is also an ethical dimension to AI and automation in terms of how data is used, which again is a core information competency.

Ray: Why is international librarianship important in your work as a librarian/information specialist?

Simon: A large majority of the clients we serve are international in focus and operate teams that serve a wide range of countries. This international focus is a fact of life for a large majority of the work we do.

Ray: Thanks for speaking with us! One last question: if you working on any research projects, can you tell us more?

Simon: I'm not working on anything right now, but last year my firm did a study on skills in legal information, which the readers might find interesting.

<https://www.cbresourcing.com/about/case-studies/future-skills-development-in-the-legal-libraries-and-information-sector>



Simon Burton, CB Resourcing

Interview with Hasitha Koralage, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology, Sri Lanka

Ray: Thanks for interviewing with us! Can you briefly tell us about your role in the library?

Hasitha: Serving as the Assistant Librarian in the [Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology \(SLIIT\)](#), the largest, most well-established, non-state university in Sri Lanka gives me numerous and novel professional experiences. I serve as the medium of communication between the Head of the Library and the students and faculty. I mainly direct the students and faculty members to the right sources of information and guide them on finding the right information.

Ray: How did you get into librarianship and (if any) formal education or training did you receive?

Hasitha: I started my career in 1999 as an Information Assistant at Royal Institute of Colombo where they conduct University of London Degree and Diploma programs. I have completed a three-year professional diploma in Library and Information Science in English medium, conducted by the Sri Lanka Library Association while I was working. Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA), a member of IFLA, conducts workshops, seminars at local and international levels for Sri Lankan library professionals for their professional development. SLLA awards Chartered Librarianship for qualified library professionals in Sri Lanka, which helps to show professional strength. SLLA diploma program directs students to obtain undergraduate and postgraduate library qualifications provided by the Open University of Sri Lanka and the National Institute of Library and Information Sciences at the University of Colombo (NILIS). I have achieved majority of my professional qualifications and experiences thanks to SLLA and NILIS.

Ray: What is a library trend/library hot topic in your country currently?

Hasitha: Automating libraries in Sri Lanka. Libraries are extending their hours of availability and new forms of self-service solutions are becoming much popular. Though the library automation has become an old topic in developed countries, it is still a new for Sri Lanka. However, high costs of library software and hardware are main barriers in implementing such projects in most of the libraries in rural areas.

Ray: Why is international librarianship important in your work as a librarian?

Hasitha: I witnessed how Internationalism influences our profession when I attended IFLA World library and

Information Congress held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2018. It was my very first attendance to IFLA conference and it has greatly impacted my professional life. I had an opportunity to exchange professional experiences with library professionals around the world and was able to build very strong networks with library professionals. International Librarianship is not only based on common, universal goals, or understanding differences, but also being able to apply methods from one culture to another effectively, or to use input from several cultures to create new methods of solving problems.



Hasitha Koralage, SLIIT

Ray: Thanks for speaking with us! One last question: if you are working on research projects, can you tell us more about it?

Hasitha: I am continuing with my research project that I started in early 2018 on 'Use of Supplementary Reading Materials to Reduce Spelling Errors Among Sri Lankan Second Language Learners'. English is taught as a second language in Sri Lankan government schools. Consequently, many children make a lot of spelling errors when they write. To compensate for this weakness, a language project has been conducted over the period of six months to identify the type of spelling errors commonly made and to introduce a remedial teaching method. Also, I am interested in assisting in differently-abled students, especially those who are visually impaired, with their information needs. Unfortunately, resources and facilities provided for visually impaired persons are inadequate in Sri Lankan libraries. I have already initiated the research on this and am planning to present my findings to relevant authorities soon. The guidance and support provided by the Chief Librarian of SLIIT, Mrs. Pushpamala Perera has been invaluable.