



IFLA Section  
**Environment,  
Sustainability and Libraries**

# **ENSULIB Newsletter**



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## Message from the Chair



Having served for the past four years on the ENSULIB Standing Committee, and for the Section's Information Coordinator for the past two, I am delighted to have accepted the role of Chair for the ENSULIB Standing Committee for 2026-2027. I am passionate about leading progress towards green and sustainable libraries and look forward to finding new opportunities for our section to provide resources and facilitate conversations and learning about library sustainability. I took up the Chair role after the 2025 World Congress in Astana, Kazakhstan in August this year. This timing provides an opportunity both to look back on a successful year, and to have started planning for next year.

My deepest gratitude goes to the outgoing Chair, Dr Harri Sahavirta, who has led ENSULIB since it became a section, and has played a key role in its success.

Harri continues to lead the IFLA Green Library Awards, which are coordinated by ENSULIB. The Awards marking a milestone at the World Congress in Astana, where they were delivered for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. The results of the 2025 Award can be found [here](#) – congratulations to the inspirational winners. We are grateful to our longstanding sponsor de Gruyter Brill, and our new sponsor Library Juice Academy for making the Awards possible. The call for submissions for the 2026 Green Library Award are open, and we encourage libraries of all kinds and sizes world-over to [apply](#).

The ENSULIB Standing Committee is also proud to have received the [2025 IFLA Dynamic Unit and Impact Award](#) for Effective Communication on 21 August at the World Congress. The ENSULIB Secretary, Priscilla Pun received the Award for our Section. The Award reflects the breadth, reach and impact of ENSULIB's ongoing communications work on the important topic of library sustainability.

Of particular note among ENSULIB's [communications projects](#) this year is the publication of our most recent book, Libraries Driving Education for Sustainable Development, which is [available open access](#) through de Gruyter. The book brings together successful initiatives on ESD sustainable development from libraries across the world to provide exemplars and inspiration for others. The development of the IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries were also led by ENSULIB in collaboration with other IFLA Sections and Special Interest Groups. The objective of this document is to provide a tool for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of green libraries, and is applicable to all libraries wishing to implement sustainable measures, regardless of their size, focus, or location, and can be adapted to reflect local circumstances and needs. The Guidelines are currently with IFLA HQ for final editing and expected to be published in early 2026.

Our re-invigorated Standing Committee including new and returning members, met in September to start planning for 2026 and beyond. In addition to continuing initiatives such as the Green Library Award, the ENSULIB webinar series, and newsletter, new projects include developing a framework for green library certification, and a series of short videos to serve as inspiration on libraries' journeys towards becoming green and sustainable. Work has already started on our important projects, and I am grateful to be working with the motivated and knowledgeable members of the ENSULIB Standing Committee to deliver our new ideas.

**Antonia Mocatta, Chair of ENSULIB Standing Committee**

# A Tribute to Harri Sahavirta, Departing Chair of IFLA's Environment, Sustainability and Libraries Section (ENSULIB)

On behalf of all members of the ENSULIB Section, we extend our deepest gratitude to Harri Sahavirta as he steps down from his role as Chair. Harri's journey with ENSULIB is, in fact, inseparable from the history of ENSULIB itself: from its beginnings as a small Special Interest Group to its establishment as a full IFLA Section.

Harri joined the ENSULIB Special Interest Group (SIG) in 2011 at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) in San Juan, Puerto Rico—already then contributing to the field by delivering a paper. A year later, during the Helsinki WLIC, he welcomed the group to his own library, a gesture that many of us still remember as a turning point. It was the moment ENSULIB gained momentum. Harri's vision, collaborative spirit, and conviction that environmental sustainability would become central to the future of libraries set us on an ambitious and successful trajectory.

His leadership since then has been remarkable. Harri served as SIG Convenor (2015–2019), Secretary (2020), and, from 2021 onward, Chair of the newly established ENSULIB Section, elected again for 2023–2025. Throughout these years, Harri proved to be the driving force behind ENSULIB's action plans, annual reports, conference presence, and international outreach. Thanks to his commitment, ENSULIB consistently contributed to successive IFLA World Congresses through business meetings, open sessions, joint sessions, lightning talks, book publications (IFLA Series No. 177 and 180), and continuous promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals.

One of Harri's most lasting contributions has been his stewardship of the IFLA Green Library Award since 2016. His dedication to a diverse, fair, and globally representative reviewing process established a model of excellence that continues to inspire the international green library movement. We are grateful that Harri will continue to support ENSULIB through selected projects, including this award.

Harri's vision expanded the conversation on green libraries beyond energy-efficient buildings. His insight—that libraries must model sustainable practices even when buildings cannot be rebuilt—helped ENSULIB embrace a holistic sustainability framework that incorporates environmental, social, and economic dimensions. His work strongly aligned ENSULIB with IFLA's advocacy for the UN 2030 Agenda.

Harri has also been a steadfast ambassador for IFLA and ENSULIB at events worldwide, including the 1st and 2nd "Let's Go Green!" International Green Library Conferences in Zagreb, Croatia. His leadership helped ENSULIB gain recognitions as Runner-up of the 2018 IFLA Dynamic Unit and Impact Award (DUIA), a milestone that reflected the Group's transformation under his guidance, as well as 2022 the DUIA Special Mention, 2023 the DUIA Overall Achievement, and 2025 the DUIA Effective Communication.

In his professional role as Chief Librarian and later as head of sustainable development in Helsinki City Library, Harri has contributed to national sustainability projects such as *Sustainability@libraries* (2012), *Changing Soundscapes of Public Libraries* (2017), *Public Libraries as Promoters for Adult Reading* (2017–2018), and *Environmental Sustainability into the 2020s in Public Libraries* (2020–2021). His scholarly work and publications further strengthened ENSULIB's global impact.

Harri's exceptional commitment was recognized in 2023 with the IFLA Scroll of Appreciation – a well-deserved honor that acknowledges his extraordinary service to IFLA and his inspirational role in the international green library movement.

As Chair, Harri fostered an atmosphere of openness, constructive dialogue, and mutual respect. He encouraged innovation and welcomed new ideas, empowering members from all world regions to participate and lead. ENSULIB would not be what it is today without his energy, wisdom, and personal dedication.

**Harri, on behalf of the entire ENSULIB Section: thank you.**

Thank you for your leadership, for your optimism, for your years of hard work, and for the inspiration you have given to colleagues around the world. We are grateful that your journey with ENSULIB will continue in new forms – and we look forward to the ongoing collaboration as we carry your vision forward.





## About the Editorial Committee

*The ENSULIB Newsletter is published twice a year (June & December). This edition's managing editor is Sheril Hook. Please contact any of our editors for contributions:*



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## Introducing incoming ENSULIB Standing Committee Members

There are 20 Standing Committee members in IFLA's ENSULIB Section. In this issue, we introduce five incoming members in August 2025. Names are listed in no particular order:



**Catherine Ross,**  
British Library, UK

Catherine is the Head of Sustainability at the British Library. She works with colleagues across the Library to report and reduce the

environmental impact of the Library itself (electricity, gas, transport, water, and materials), including major decarbonisation projects on both sites; integrate work on sustainability and climate change into all six purposes of the Library (Custodianship, Learning, Culture, International, Research, and Business), including leading the involvement of the Library in Green Libraries Week each year, and; embedding sustainability within the working of the Library, through induction, training, business cases, procurement, risk management, and more. As part of this work, the Library has achieved accreditation as a Carbon Literate Bronze organisation.



**Ana Bogdanić,**  
Gradska knjižnica  
Rijeka/Rijeka City  
Library, Croatia

Ana is qualified with an MA in Political Science and BA in Philosophy and History, BA in Librarianship and

Information Science. She is Head of the "Green corner" in Rijeka City Library with a recent focus on developing "Seed library" in international cooperation with Slovenian library Goriška knjižnica Franceta Bevka, Nova Gorica. Ana has been active in green librarianship since 2012, working on environmental issues with local community, kindergartens, schools and NGOs. She serves on the Croatian Commission for Green Libraries and as a member of Supervisor Committee of Rijeka's Librarian Society and as representative of City Rijeka in the Croatian Reading Association. Following IFLA's 2025 elections she is a standing committee member of its Environment, Sustainability and Libraries Section.



**Sheril Hook,** York  
University Libraries,  
Canada;

Sheril serves as Associate Dean, Teaching & Learning and is committed to advocating for access to information at a global level – which is something IFLA strives to achieve

through its advocacy work and global network, particularly through the WLIC. She is active in several local, national, and international committees that are taking an active role in information and digital literacy education and sustainability. She has held leadership positions at research intensive academic libraries in both the United States and Canada.





**Sherine Eid,**  
Bibliotheca  
Alexandrina, Egypt

Sherine is Acting Head of the Quality Improvement Unit in the Library Sector at Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt.

She has served as a member of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Statistics and Evaluation Standing Committee and the LD4 Steering Group, and she is currently a board member of the Open Access eBook Usage Data Trust.

She is a reviewer for international journals and conferences and has contributed to numerous publications issued by the IFLA, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and Taylor & Francis. Sherine has also delivered workshops sponsored by the University of Lille, the American Library Association, and IFLA, and has presented posters at the Open Repositories Conference, the Sharjah International Book Fair/ American Library Association Library Conference, and the International Council on Archives.

She holds a Master of Business Administration in Global Marketing from the École Supérieure Libre des Sciences Commerciales Appliquées (ESLSCA) Business School in Paris, and a certificate from the Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance.



**Najmeh Shaghaei,**  
The University  
Library of Southern  
Denmark, Denmark

Najmeh currently works at the University Library of Southern Denmark as Head of

Innovation, Library Impact, and Internationalisation. In addition, she is an affiliated Assistant Professor at the Center for Organizing Social Sustainability in the Institute of Design, Media, and Educational Science at the University. Najmeh additionally plays a multifaceted role within LIBER. She serves as the Chair of the Leadership Programme Working Group, where she helps shape strategic thinking and leadership development across European research libraries. In addition, she is a member of the Conference Programme Committee, contributing to the design and delivery of LIBER's flagship annual event. Najmeh also brings her expertise to the Editorial Board of LIBER Quarterly, supporting the advancement of scholarly communication and open access publishing in the library and information science field. Najmeh has a background as a researcher in Change Management and working on several international projects and doing research related to leadership, Knowledge Management, Open Science and Sustainability.



**Summer Liu,** Yantian  
Library, ShenZhen, China

Summer Liu currently serves as the Director of the Yantian Library in Shenzhen, China. The library network under her leadership includes one central library, four sub-

district branches, ten "Sea Libraries," nineteen community libraries, and several cooperative libraries located in schools and enterprises.

With over a decade of experience in innovative public library management, she has developed numerous community-centered transformative projects that integrate culture, technology, and ecology. Her major achievements in promoting sustainable library services and cross-disciplinary innovation include: leading the "Growth Library" project, which brings eco-friendly ideas into library spaces through the concept of "Reading without borders, Growth with sustainability"; initiating the "Yantian Initiative for the Green Development of Community Libraries," which has mobilized 141 cities and over 2,700 community libraries across China to join the green cause.

## Kazakhstan – ENSULIB report on the 89th World Library and Information Congress August 18-22, 2025 in Astana

*Priscilla Nga Ian Pun & Rosario Toril Moreno*

IFLA held its 89<sup>th</sup> World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) in the Congress Centre in Astana, Kazakhstan from August 18th-22nd, 2025, bringing together over 1,600 delegates from more than 110 countries. This year's Congress with the theme "United Knowledge, Building the Future" focused on the transformative power of libraries in an era of rapid technological and social change. This Congress became a true melting pot of cultures, where the experiences of the international library community were shared and mutually enriched. It was a historic congress, as for the first time the Federation organised its main event in Central Asia, underlining the growing importance of the region in the global library field.

IFLA ENSULIB section held a series of events during the Congress in Astana, with the aim to encourage librarians to

inspire their communities into a more environmentally sustainable way of action.

A pre-WLIC business meeting of ENSULIB was held in the Astana Hall in the Hilton Hotel from on August 17, 2025 to discuss the progress of the current projects and ENSULIB's future plans. Ten Standing ENSULIB Committee members attended the meeting, including 2 members in person and 8 members online. There were also 6 observers from Finland, France, Hungary, Nigeria and South Africa.



*The ENSULIB Business Meeting on August 17, 2025 in Astana. ©IFLA*

### A PARTNERSHIP: ORGANISING TWO SESSIONS

Two co-organised sessions took place at the WLIC. The first, titled Building the future together to support the SDGs: Collaboration beyond library borders, was held in collaboration with the Science and

Technology Section and the Knowledge Management and Information Technology Section. Three case studies were presented. Joelle Pitts, from Carnegie Mellon University Libraries in the United States, described their partnerships with local, national, and international organisations, including the United Nations, to promote the SDGs. Anar Dautova, from Coventry University in Kazakhstan, demonstrated how library staff can contribute to healthcare innovation and the SDGs. Finally, Marta Anducas, from the Lisbon Council in Belgium, presented LibrarIN, an initiative funded by Horizon Europe that supports library staff and policymakers in policy formulation and advocacy, resource negotiation, comparative analysis and the development of innovative services and strategies.

The second session, Building Sustainability and Preservation, was organised in collaboration with the Preservation and Conservation Section and the Library Buildings and Equipment Section. Mark Ormsby from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in the United States shared how they improved their storage, saving millions of dollars in utility costs and reducing energy consumption by over 40%. Zhuldyz Orazymbetova and Yelizaveta Kamilova from Nazarbayev

University Library in Kazakhstan discussed the architectural design challenges they faced. Nadia Perigaud from the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF) reported on the National Press Conservatory project and the conservation centre for the National Library collections in Amiens, set to open in 2029 and aiming to achieve HQE (High Environmental Quality) certification. Finally, Petra Vávrová from the National Library of the Czech Republic emphasised the importance of preventative conservation in caring for collections.



*The speakers and the organising section members from the at the session "Building, Sustainability and Preservation" © (Helen) Hong Xu*

### THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE IFLA GREEN LIBRARY AWARD

The celebration of the tenth annual [IFLA Green Library Award](#), sponsored by Library Juice Academy and De Gruyter

Publishing, was exciting and well attended by an audience interested in sustainable best practice. Ms. Vicki McDonald, the President of IFLA and Ms. Claudia Heyer from De Gruyter Publishing were invited to attend the Ceremony and presented the prizes to the winners.

In the Best Green Library/Grand Scale Project category, the first prize was awarded to the [James Baldwin Library](#) in Paris, France. Based in a facility that is also used as a refugee centre, their project is an emblematic example of sustainable urban renewal and inclusion. In the category of Best Green Library Project, the winner was the [Thammasat University Library](#) from Bangkok, Thailand. Their project, titled "From Waste to Wealth", applies principles of the circular economy. The initiative highlights sustainable practices focused on transforming waste into valuable resources, aligning with global efforts to promote environmental responsibility in libraries. In the Special Mention category for low-cost projects with high impact, the [Ivan Goran Kovačić Municipal Library](#) in Karlovac, Croatia, was recognised. This library received the award for its environmental festival called "Green Festival – Karlovac Green Story". The festival includes volunteer work, sustainable infrastructure and community activities such as agricultural fairs focused on ecological themes.



*Winners of the 10th Green Library Award, Ms. Vicki McDonald the President of IFLA (left 5), Ms. Claudia Heyer of De Gruyter Publishing (right 3) and ENSULIB SC members ©IFLA*

### BOOK LAUNCH: DE GRUYTER SAUR IFLA PUBLICATIONS SERIES

A book launch session was held by De Gruyter Publishing to introduce the new IFLA Publication Series editor Ms. Debbie Schachter, outline the purpose and process of the Series, and promote recent publications. ENSULIB's new book *Libraries Driving Education for Sustainable Development* edited by Petra Hauke, Antonia Mocatta, and Priscilla Nga Ian Pun, numbered 186 in the IFLA Publication Series was launched in the session. Priscilla Pun, one of the book editors and the Secretary of ENSULIB introduced this book, which brings together successful initiatives on ESD sustainable development from libraries across the world to provide exemplars and inspiration for others. The other two new books presented in the session were *New*



*Horizons in Artificial Intelligence in Libraries* by Edmund Balnaves and *Libraries Empowering Society through Digital Literacy* by Luisa Marquardt.



The speakers and book editors of De Gruyter Publishing ©De Gruyter Publishing

### ENSULIB'S WORK WAS RECOGNIZED WITH THE IFLA 2025 DYNAMIC UNIT AND IMPACT AWARDS

ENSULIB was honoured to be awarded the IFLA 2025 Dynamic Unit and Impact Awards (DUIA) for Effective Communication on August 21 at the WLIC in Astana. The ENSULIB Secretary, Priscilla Pun received the Award for the Section.

Ms. Te Paea Paringatai, IFLA 2023-2025 Professional Council Chair announced that the DUIA Award was presented to ENSULIB “for its outstanding contributions to advancing green and sustainable library practices. In the past year, ENSULIB

managed its 2025 Green Library Award, submitted a draft for the first global Guidelines for Green Libraries, and initiated a book project on Education for Sustainable Development. Their active communications team, regular webinars, and biannual newsletter have strengthened global engagement. Through collaborations, translations, and global representation at conferences, ENSULIB continues to inspire the library field to act on climate, equity, and sustainability”.



ENSULIB was awarded the 2025 DUIA for Effective Communication ©IFLA

### CONCLUSION

The 89th IFLA World Congress held in Kazakhstan in August 2025 was a historic milestone. It emphasised the relevance of sharing knowledge, experiences, and projects to build a more inclusive and sustainable world, highlighting the role of technology, sustainability, and interdisciplinary collaboration. A series of

new projects will be announced and implemented by ENSULIB in the year to come. These will include the official launch and promotion of the IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries, events related to the celebration of the IFLA 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and a Green Libraries Certification project.



Looking ahead to the next World Congress, which is to be held in Busan, South Korea in August 2026, the prospects are very promising. As the host city, Busan offers a setting with great infrastructure and a rich culture. The Congress will enhance the global dialogue on emerging topics such as artificial intelligence, the metaverse, sustainability, open access and digital equity. We look forward to the 2026 WLIC in Busan.

# Green, Sustainable Libraries and Projects Around the World

## CROATIA | Turn Off the Light, Turn On Curiosity: Education on Light Pollution

*Ana Sudarević, Elementary school Dubovac, Karlovac*

Light pollution refers to the modification of natural light levels in nighttime conditions caused by the use of artificial light produced by human activity, thereby endangering the natural balance, as defined in the . Today, light pollution is a global problem that can cause various undesirable consequences for humans, plants, and animals alike. This serious issue should not be ignored; in fact, there are numerous relevant sources that offer advice and recommendations on how to reduce light pollution – starting with individuals and extending to society as a whole.

It is therefore logical that light pollution is included in school curricula, primarily in subjects such as Science, Biology, and Physics, as well as in cross-curricular topics like Sustainable Development and Health. By learning about this topic, pupils are expected to better understand and distinguish between the positive and negative impacts of human activity on the environment, to develop a positive attitude toward themselves and the world around them, to take responsibility for their own actions, and to cultivate the ability to engage with scientific topics and ideas. The knowledge gained will help pupils by encouraging their action on issues relating to safety, health preservation, biodiversity, and the environment. In this way, scientific literacy is fostered even among the youngest participants in the educational process. In addition to formal classroom instruction, pupils can also explore this topic through extracurricular activities, which allows them to broaden and deepen their knowledge.

One such example is a series of interdisciplinary workshops that integrated content school subjects, along with Art Education and cross-curricular topics such as Learning to Learn and the Use of Information and Communication Technology. All activities were designed and delivered in partnership with the school library, which played a key role as

a source of reliable information and knowledge, and as a space for collaborative learning and knowledge exchange among students of different ages. The workshops aim to develop commitment to information and scientific literacy, while also encouraging the ability to interpret and communicate knowledge through visual media.

In the initial workshops, pupils analyzed relevant popular science texts which they found online with the help of the school librarian. Their task was to identify problems caused by light pollution and explain its impact on living beings. Through research, they also considered possible solutions, developing ecological awareness and a sense of personal responsibility. A particularly valuable aspect of these workshops was the active peer and intergenerational collaboration – pupils of different ages participated in all activities and older pupils took on a mentoring role, sharing their knowledge and experience with younger ones.

The results of their research were presented in creative ways designed to inspire other pupils to learn more about light pollution and possible solutions. For example, they created an educational puzzle – an interactive tool that highlights the problems and solutions associated with light pollution. When assembled in the

correct order, each problem reveals its corresponding solution. Pupils independently designed the puzzle pieces, visually emphasizing the importance of “darkness.” In another art-based workshop, students created a 3D object titled On/Off, offering a unique proposal for reducing light pollution that also addressed the role of bats, one of the most affected animal species.

The final outputs – the educational puzzle and the 3D object – were initially exhibited in the school library to celebrate World Environment Day, and later presented to the wider community at the 6th Green Festival “[Green Story](#)”, a symposium hosted by Karlovac City Library, which, for the past six years, has aimed to inform the public about sustainable society and the necessity of environmental protection.

All the materials produced during these workshops will serve future generations of pupils and teachers as additional resources for learning, reflection, and the creation of new activities related to reducing light pollution.



*Pupils learning by solving the puzzle. Photo credit: Ana Sudarević*

Ultimately, our goal is to educate young people so they can critically apply scientific knowledge and competencies beyond the classroom in real life. Preserving human health, protecting plant and animal life, and preventing unnecessary light pollution are of utmost importance – not only for individuals but also for the health and prosperity of society as a whole.

## **SINGAPORE | Playing Our Part in Campus Sustainability: How NUS Libraries Support NUS' Sustainability Efforts**

*National University of Singapore Libraries (NUS Libraries)*

The National University of Singapore (NUS) Libraries has actively championed sustainability in every aspect of their operations. Supporting NUS' [Green Roadmap](#), NUS Libraries aims to accelerate sustainability in teaching, learning and research by connecting communities with a curated blend of information, knowledge networks, platforms and programmes.

NUS Libraries recently had the opportunity to showcase its green efforts through a partnership with [NUS Sustainability CONNECT](#), NUS' flagship annual sustainability festival. Spanning 40 different events in September 2025, this festival celebrates NUS' sustainability efforts, featuring talks, workshops, panel discussions and tours.



## “WALKING THE WALK” ON SUSTAINABILITY... LITERALLY!

Organising walking tours seemed appropriate for the occasion, and that's what NUS Libraries did, organising two tours that showcased sustainability efforts within the Libraries, and how the Libraries supported sustainability work across the wider NUS campus.

The first was a [guided tour of NUS Central Library](#) on 17 September 2025, which gave participants insights into key sustainable changes, such as eco-friendly construction materials, creative re-thinking of library spaces, utilisation of re-configurable spaces, and consolidation of library offices aimed at reducing the carbon footprint in daily operations.

The second tour, held on 24 September 2025, took participants to the Department of Biological Sciences Garden. Participants had the rare opportunity to discover this 4-decade-old garden, featuring plants such as cycads, cocoa and coffee trees. They also learned about biodiversity on campus, sustainability and overcoming “plant blindness”. The tour was complemented by a selection of NUS Libraries collection on botany and sustainability.

## CATALYSTS FOR IMMERSIVE LEARNING

Immersive experiences like these tours underscore how university libraries are evolving beyond traditional roles, serving as community collaborators and catalysts for sustainability.



*Screening of “Roots to Reefs” at 360imax - an example of how immersive tool is used to support quality education and increase awareness on sustainability efforts by both faculty and NUS Libraries. © NUS Libraries, 2025, All Rights Reserved.*



*Sharing on the use of solar panels to harness energy for the buildings in the area. © NUS Libraries, 2025, All Rights Reserved.*

First, university libraries serve as catalysts for sustainability awareness. The tour of NUS Library included a viewing of Roots to Reefs, rooftop solar panels, and the Solar Energising Heritage exhibition. The latter is an example of NUS Libraries as a catalyst - enabling student projects to be publicly showcased, thereby increasing awareness of sustainability. This is a collaborative project with the Solar Energy Research Institute of Singapore (SERIS), NUS Museum and NUS Baba House featured custom-designed coloured Building-Integrated Photovoltaics (BIPV) panels developed for NUS Baba House, using SERIS' unique dotlism pattern technology.



*NUS librarian Jamila Osman (second from right, pointing) explains the Solar Energising Heritage exhibition to tour participants. © NUS Libraries, 2025, All Rights Reserved.*

Second, libraries are also community collaborators. The tour of the Biological Sciences garden was a collaboration between the Library and the Department of Biological Sciences. Librarians co-led the tour alongside faculty, with Dr Amy Choong sharing her expert knowledge on flora and fauna, while the librarians shared the rich botany and sustainability collections curated and preserved by the NUS Libraries. The librarians served as sustainability catalysts through initiation, planning and publicity of this collaborative sustainability effort.



*Dr Amy Choong and fellow guides sharing information and anecdotes of the plants near and at Department of Biological Sciences Garden. © NUS Libraries, 2025, All Rights Reserved.*



*NUS librarians leading groups and sharing more about the plants in the garden. © NUS Libraries, 2025, All Rights Reserved.*

NUS Libraries hopes to organise more green programmes that leverage NUS Libraries' unique collections, spaces and expertise to create a sustainable and meaningful impact on our environment!

Learn more about our NUS Libraries' sustainability efforts here:

- Building Sustainable Libraries at NUS: <https://nus.edu.sg/nuslibraries/sustainability>
- Webinar: [https://ala-events.zoom.us/rec/share/gAbCdw tFo7Orv89oj0KvdCEbuujSSa90wiq pM2TUvWYWu3kxlnGfoldw7iodJl W.4DfeN4Z\\_uJTsn66N](https://ala-events.zoom.us/rec/share/gAbCdw tFo7Orv89oj0KvdCEbuujSSa90wiq pM2TUvWYWu3kxlnGfoldw7iodJl W.4DfeN4Z_uJTsn66N)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NUS Libraries would like to thank all collaborators and partners in this project including Sustainability CONNECT, Solar Energy Research Institute of Singapore (SERIS), NUS Museum and NUS Baba House and the Department of Biological Sciences.

*This work was primarily human-created. MS-Copilot was used to review the draft and article structure. The final work was edited by humans without further AI assistance.*

## CROATIA | The Development of Green Libraries in Croatia Began in Pula

*Ivan Kraljević, Librarian Advisor and Head of the University Library in Pula, Croatia*



### INTRODUCTION

In the last fifty years, human activity has caused serious environmental damage, from unsustainable production to climate change. These challenges threaten

biodiversity and human society alike. Education and awareness are key to changing our relationship with nature, and libraries, as centers of knowledge, have proven to be vital actors. Croatia's Green Library movement demonstrates how libraries can inspire sustainability.

### THE BIRTH OF THE GREEN LIBRARY

The Green Library project was launched in 2011 in Pula by the Association of Istria Librarians. The project's author, Ivan Kraljević, then president of the Association and later head of the University Library of Pula, was inspired by the success of a 2010 screening of the documentary *Home*. He envisioned a program linking ecology with librarianship. Soon, libraries across Istria – including those in Pula, Pazin, Umag, Rovinj, Labin, Novigrad, Buzet and Poreč – joined, together with schools, cultural institutions, and civic associations.

From the beginning, the project combined lectures, film screenings, and book promotions on environmental themes. Its logo, a tree growing from an open book, symbolizes knowledge, life, and sustainability.

### ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

In 14 years, the Green Library has organized over 200 events involving

around 8,500 participants, mostly students and teachers but also the wider public.

Key activities include:

- Lectures on biodiversity, renewable energy, organic farming, permaculture, and climate change.
- Film screenings, some in local cinemas, drawing large audiences.
- Panel discussions on energy, food security, waste, and fossil fuels.

Most activities in Pula took place at the University Library of Pula, the project's central venue. The initiative later spread to the National and University Library in Zagreb, faculty libraries, and many public libraries across Croatia.

### FROM LOCAL TO NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

In 2014, the Croatian Library Association formed a Working Group on Green Libraries, later upgraded to a Commission. Through campaigns like *Let's Start Green Libraries*, more than 270 libraries joined the movement.

Larger events followed: the Green Festival in Zagreb (2017), attended by 1,000 visitors, and two International Conferences on Green Libraries (2018 and 2023). These gatherings connected librarians,



researchers, and activists from around the world, confirming Croatia's leading role in the field.

### LIBRARIES AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

Green Libraries prove that libraries are more than book repositories: they are beacons of sustainable knowledge and community engagement. They encourage critical thinking, promote ecological literacy, and strengthen social responsibility.

As Gandhi once said: "Be the change you wish to see in the world." Through this movement, Croatian librarians embody that change and invite their communities to join.

### CONCLUSION

Founded in Pula by Ivan Kraljević and the Association of Istria Librarians, the Green Library has grown from a local idea into a national movement with international recognition. With the University Library of Pula at its heart, the initiative shows how knowledge and culture can drive environmental transformation. At a time of climate urgency, Green Libraries remind us that education, collaboration, and community are essential for a sustainable future.



*Green Library Lecture at the University Library in Pula" (from the library archives).*

## SLOVENIA | GOLDEN YEARS: A Healthy Mind and Green Fingers for Sustainable Living

Marinka Vnuk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwX2WC0eino> (video in Slovenian)

The international project GOLDEN YEARS, implemented by partner libraries, Slovenian green library Franc Ksaver Meško Ormož Library and Croatian "Nikola Zrinski" Čakovec Library, took place in the form of two cross-border events from 1 April to 30 July 2025. The project was part of the Interreg programme Slovenia-Croatia 2021-2027, aiming to improve the quality of life of the elderly, helping to maintain mental and physical health, social inclusion, teaching healthy habits and obtaining new skills.



Project manager Željka Hatvalić Strahija, director of the "Nikola Zrinski" Library in Čakovec, Ljiljana Križan, director of the Ormož Library, Milica Šavora, and project manager, Marijana Korotaj. Photo credit: Ciril Ambrož

The first part of the project was delivered on May 7, with the Rhythm of Knitting event organized by the "Nikola Zrinski" Čakovec Library. Slovenian readers traveled to nearby Čakovec, where they learned about the benefits of therapeutic knitting, and a practical knitting workshop was also organized. Cross-border cooperation continued on May 27 in Ormož with the event Healthy Mind and Green Fingers for Sustainable Living, when more than a hundred participants from Croatia and Slovenia visited the library.



Morning workout with School of Health – Book

The School of Health organized a morning workout called 1,000 movements, which is held on the library's summer terrace every weekday morning, and was open to all visitors. This was followed by three lectures on the topic of health and healthy living: *Caring for plants is caring for yourself: the positive effects of pattering in the soil* by social gerontologist Dr. Tanja Žmauc, *Healthy nutrition for the golden years*, which was delivered together with short physical exercises by dietitians Valerija Rotar and Maruša Motaln from the Ormož Health Promotion Center, and *Miracle plants that we all need*, by Ddr. Ana Vovk. The lectures were held in Slovenian, but the lecturers also provided Croatian translations of the material they presented.



Green Fingers Corner. Photo credit: Ciril Ambrož



Green Fingers of Čakovec and Ormož. Photo credit: Ciril Ambrož

Lectures were followed by workshops in the library garden. In the Green Fingers corner the golden donor of the Ormož Seed Library presented the participants with numerous plants and a set of seeds from his garden, which the participants took home and sowed in their own gardens. Numerous seedlings grown in the library beds also planted in Slovenian and Croatian gardens. Visitors transplanted the seedlings into pots with the help of librarians.



In the Health and Wellbeing corner, employees of the Ormož Health Promotion Center measured the motor and physical abilities of visitors, performed memory training exercises and provided numerous useful information about health care. A corner for Living with Dementia and related lecture were delivered by the Ormož Forget-me-not Association; the Ormož library is a dementia-friendly location, and it hosts monthly expert-led self-help groups for relatives. Participants also visited the library apiary and learned about bees and the work of a beekeeper with the president of the Ormož Beekeeping Association.

As part of the cross-border project, a Recipe Booklet was created based on the recommendations of the Ormož Health Promotion Center and the TKD Kog Farmers' Women's Association, which we translated into Croatian. We wanted the contacts between Čakovec and Ormož to continue even after the end of the project, so a Facebook group called *Zeleni prsti Čakovca in Ormoža* was created for this purpose, to build a better future for all. The event ended with a guided tour of the city of Ormož, where Croatian colleagues learned about the beauty and sustainable practices of the city.



*Franc Ksaver Meško Ormož Library Team.  
Photo credit: Ciril Ambrož*

The project perfectly demonstrated the power of cooperation and networking between public libraries. It proved that borders are not an obstacle – they can often be an advantage, a challenge, and an opportunity for the creation of something bigger and better.

## **CROATIA | The Green Library for a Green Zagreb**

*Ana Bakarić, Voltino Library, The City of Zagreb Libraries*

The City of Zagreb Libraries are the largest organized network of public libraries in Zagreb, including 42 libraries in various locations and a library bus. *The Green Library for a Green Zagreb* project has been in place since January 2017.

The Green Library for a Green Zagreb project includes 28 libraries that carry out activities focused on ecology and sustainability. The program content includes various topics related to sustainable development, environmental conservation, protection of flora and fauna, climate change, urban permaculture and urban gardening. The project is aimed at strengthening awareness and information about a sustainable society and environment, developing the ability to think critically about environmental issues, as well as acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the quality of one's own life and the life of the entire community. The programs are designed for all age groups, library users and members, and the wider community. Activities are held inside libraries, in outdoor library spaces and public areas,



and in a virtual environment, and are carried out by library staff in cooperation with institutions, associations and individuals who are professionally involved in the field of ecology or their activism in the community. The programs are implemented through lectures, ecological workshops, art workshops, documentary film screenings, book presentations, collections of selected materials, thematic and traveling exhibitions, and other content.



*Workshop for Kids: Young Scientists. Photo credit: Zagreb City Libraries*

This summer we started a new initiative within the project: the Seed Library, which allows people to borrow seeds along with books. The Seed Library operates on the

principle of borrow, grow, share. This means that when you grow plants from borrowed seeds and collect new seeds, you can return some of them to the library. This way, you are not only renewing the seed supply, but also contributing to the preservation of local varieties. Anyone can participate, even those with no previous experience in growing plants, because libraries provide support with advice and educational content. This service calls for active participation in creating a supportive environment that shares knowledge, builds mutual trust and fosters sustainability. By borrowing, planting, returning and sharing seeds, you are not only growing plants but also a new awareness of nature, cooperation and shared care for the future. The plan includes introducing the project in a dozen Zagreb City Libraries to cover all parts of the city.

The seed library is being implemented in collaboration with the ZMAG association (a green network of activist groups), which donated the first seeds and trained librarians. An interactive computer application was adopted from the Franceta Bevko Library in Nova Gorica, to enable libraries and users to connect and exchange seeds within the region.



*Čitam biljke, sadim knjige (I read plants, I plant books) by Uroš Živanović. Photo credit: Zagreb City Libraries*

The seed library in Zagreb is part of a wider wave of similar initiatives that have taken place around the world, but also in Croatia – for example, in the Rijeka City Library, where the first such library opened in March 2025.

The Green Library for Green Zagreb program is supported by the City Office for Culture and Civil Society of the City of Zagreb and the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia.

## ITALY | Biblecò, the Green Library

*Sveva Barbera, Director of the Ludovico Quaroni Library – Department of Planning, Design, Technology of Architecture (PDTA) – Sapienza University of Rome*

The program “Biblecò, the Green Library”, conceived and promoted by Sveva Barbera, director of the Ludovico Quaroni Library at the PDTA department (Planning, Design, Architecture Technology) of Sapienza University of Rome, was created for two reasons. The first, because libraries are the ideal place to foster and spread new forms of culture, taking an active role in environmental education; the second, because various areas of the PDTA department have a long-standing tradition expressed in the studies and research of environmental architectural design, industrial design, and planning. It was therefore a natural fit for the department’s library to be assigned the task of interpretively evolving, in an environmental – “Green” – sense, its institutional responsibilities. The Ludovico Quaroni Library is committed to seeking clear coherence between its daily management and the department's themes, and to developing a specific innovative research effort in the field of Sapienza's library traditions.

As a result, new managerial initiatives and services have been implemented in addition to those already established and specific to a university library. Below are some of the environmentally friendly and practically feasible experimental projects put into action:

### DESIGN COMPETITION “FREE A BOOK. ECO-FRIENDLY CARDBOARD PRODUCTS FOR BOOKCROSSING IN LIBRARIES.”

The 2017 competition was conceived, organized, and promoted by the Ludovico Quaroni Library (Dr. Arch. Sveva Barbera) and the Industrial Design Laboratory of the BA program in Industrial Design, Prof. Vincenzo Cristallo, in collaboration with Unicoop Tirreno and the company Adaptivepack and sponsored by COMIECO (National Consortium for the Recovery and Recycling of Cellulose-based Packaging) and SBS (Sapienza Library System). The project gave rise to an eco-design competition, a workshop, the creation of 15 eco-friendly cardboard prototypes, the awarding of three projects, the publication of a book, and the setup of three exhibitions.



## DESIGN COMPETITION “CARDBOARD BOOKCASE. ECO-FRIENDLY CARDBOARD PRODUCTS FOR LIBRARIES.”

The 2018 competition was conceived, promoted, and organized by the Ludovico Quaroni Library (Dr. Arch. Sveva Barbera) and the Bachelor’s program in Industrial Design at Sapienza – Design Atelier III, Prof. Vincenzo Cristallo, with the contribution and participation of COMIECO (National Consortium for the Recovery and Recycling of Cellulose-based Packaging), Unicoop Tirreno, Adaptivepack, and the Library and Cultural Centers System of the Municipality of Rome (ISBCC). The project led to an eco-design competition, a workshop, the creation of eco-friendly cardboard prototypes, the awarding of three projects, the publication of a book, and the setup of two exhibitions

## WASTE RECYCLING

Since 2016, we have participated in the “Green Library” initiative promoted by CNBA, practicing waste separation in the library.

## REDUCTION OF CONSUMPTION (PAPER, ELECTRICITY)

We print and photocopy double-sided, reuse paper, purchase recyclable paper,

use energy-saving light bulbs. We also ensure to turn off electrical and lighting devices when the rooms are not in use.

## SETTING UP “THE LIBRARY OF THINGS”

This service will allow library users to borrow tools and equipment they occasionally need, but whose purchase would entail a high cost. It promotes the use of local resources and reduces unnecessary consumption.



## CHINA | The Green Energy Technology Project at Suzhou Library

*Hu Qijing, Suzhou Library*

Energy conservation and efficient utilization of resources are pivotal components in an eco-aware society. Suzhou Library has proactively optimized its energy consumption by fully harnessing solar energy. A solar photovoltaic (PV) power generation project has been constructed on the roof of the North Library, ensuring that nearly all energy utilized by the library is generated there. This initiative not only provides clean and green energy for library operations but also carries significant social impact, serving as an exemplary model.

## INVESTMENT AND SPECIFICATIONS

The total investment for the project amounted to 1.08 million yuan. It employs a distributed photovoltaic power generation system, with approximately 1,800 square meters of PV panels installed on the roof. The project boasts an installed capacity of around 300 kW and generates approximately 350,000 kWh of electricity annually. Commissioned in 2024, the project is designed for a 25-year operational lifespan. Over this period, it is



projected to save 2,522 tonnes of standard coal, reduce carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 6,521 tonnes, and decrease sulfur dioxide emissions by 1,539.4 tonnes – equivalent to planting 1.496 million trees.



*The photovoltaic panels installed on the roof.*  
©Hu Qijing

### PHYSICAL SUSTAINABILITY

Located adjacent to parks and highways, the project has no negative impact on residential areas. The project maximizes the use of idle roof space while ensuring safety and reliability. During summer, the PV panels help reduce the building's internal temperature, enhancing indoor comfort and lowering cooling costs. The power generation process is noise-free and does not pollute the air or water. The library building adheres to the "Green Building Evaluation Standard" and has

been certified as a "Two-Star Green Building."



*The library the project location.* ©Suzhou Library

### INNOVATIVENESS AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The distributed photovoltaic power generation system employed in this project represents a cutting-edge and promising approach to energy generation and utilization. It effectively harnesses local solar energy resources to minimize fossil fuel consumption. The project utilizes 550W monocrystalline silicon PV modules, which offer higher conversion efficiency compared to polycrystalline silicon modules.

The project optimally utilizes roof space for PV power generation, with surplus

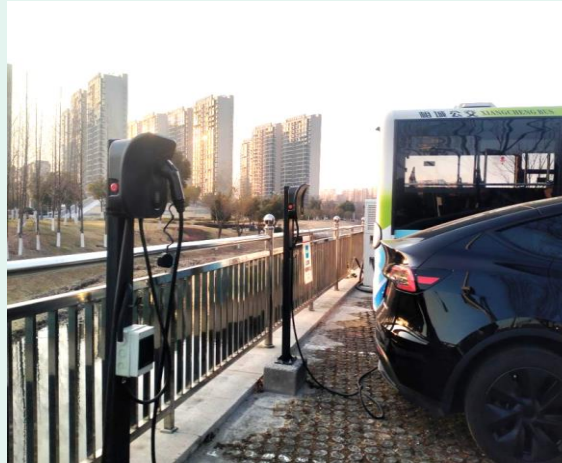
electricity generation being fed into the local grid and consumed locally. This eliminates the need for long-distance transportation and avoids losses associated with long-distance transmission lines. Unlike centralized power stations, this project has a relatively small generation output, exerting minimal impact on the surrounding power grid and featuring a lower unit investment cost. Implemented under an "Energy Performance Contracting" (EPC) model, Suzhou Library avoids initial capital investment for the project's construction and benefits from preferential electricity pricing. After installation and grid connection, professional personnel entrusted by the investor handle the project's operation and maintenance.



*The Solar Photovoltaic Inverter.* ©Hu Qijing

## SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The project's implementation contributes to achieving the government's energy-saving and emission-reduction targets, enhancing the library's social image and sense of environmental responsibility. The library has installed charging stations for electric vehicles, bicycles, and buses, actively encouraging the adoption of clean energy. Additionally, it engages in popular science activities to educate the public on green energy technologies, fostering greater awareness and more skills in addressing climate change. In summary, the green energy project at Suzhou Library stands as a testament to sustainable energy practices, showcasing economic viability, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility. Its successful operation serves as an inspiration and model for energy conservation and emission reduction in public institutions.



*New energy vehicle charging facilities equipped next to the library. ©Hu Qijing*

## CHINA | Turning Bookstore Failures into Measurable Library Resilience

*Li Rende, Associate Research Librarian  
Library, University of Shanghai for  
Science and Technology*



*A reader took photos of all the books in the bookstore that was about to close and made a heartfelt poster*

<https://www.163.com/dy/article/HADSE74Q052582BB.html>

## EARLY WARNING: SPECIALTY BOOKSTORE CONTRACTION

The closures of several specialty themed bookstores across China function as an environmental and governance early warning rather than a niche retail obituary. Three intertwined pressures converged: supplier concentration squeezed already

thin core book margins; platformized discovery (short-video streams, super-app micro-stores, influencer listicles) siphoned content upstream; accelerating AI mediation (summaries, conversational recommenders, synthetic quote feeds) compressed on-site dwell time and advisory interaction. These forces produced cumulative fragility: stranded experiential capital (high-embodied-carbon décor), inventory aging raising waste and transport emissions, and erosion of locally contextual knowledge services. The resulting closures signal how cultural spaces lose resilience when ecological, social, and governance metrics are not embedded in strategy. Framed through an ESEG lens (environmental, social, economic, governance), the collapse reveals neglected levers: circular fit-out design, diversified revenue aligned with mission, transparent data stewardship, and community co-creation. Libraries, though mission-driven, face homologous vectors likely to accelerate under tightening public budgets and rising digital expectation baselines and scrutiny.

### PARALLEL LIBRARY VULNERABILITIES

Parallel library vulnerabilities mirror the triad while adding environmental externalities often hidden in digitization narratives. Supplier concentration manifests in bundled e-resource, analytics,

and authentication stacks whose opaque pricing escalations impede budget predictability and can entrench energy-intensive vendor infrastructures beyond local influence. Platformized discovery displaces patron intent into commercial search gateways, social reading feeds, and proprietary academic recommender APIs that rarely surface community oral histories, minority language materials, or climate adaptation grey literature, thereby diminishing bibliodiversity and inclusive resilience. Accelerating AI mediation risks shallow answer satisfaction, provenance opacity, dataset geographic bias, and unmeasured carbon per query; reference interactions may shrink before evaluative literacies evolve. Additionally, data exhaust from circulation, learning analytics, and Wi-Fi sensing is funnelled into third-party silos, raising governance and privacy risk. Absent corrective design, these vectors converge to erode local distinctiveness, increase lifecycle emissions, and shift cost structures from capital to recurring operational dependencies, reducing adaptive fiscal sovereignty overall.

### INTEGRATED SUSTAINABILITY RESPONSE

Action requires inverting each destabilizing vector through integrated environmental, social, economic, and governance levers

that remain proportionate for varying library scales. For supplier concentration: negotiate unbundled clauses, phased exit triggers, machine-readable price escalation disclosures, and local rights for controlled AI training; monitor a Dependency Ratio (top five vendors' share of total digital spend) with annual reduction targets and publish embodied carbon of contracted data centers. For platformized discovery displacement: syndicate enriched multilingual, community-generated, climate adaptation, and minority language metadata outward under open licenses while deploying transparent relevance algorithms and green design (efficient queries, caching) inward. For accelerating AI: operate a human-in-the-loop reference studio auditing hallucination, bias, latency, and carbon per response; prefer regionally powered renewable hosting; embed provenance watermarks and ethics notes into outputs. Cross-cutting indicators include Collections Diversity Index, Algorithmic Transparency Score, Carbon Intensity per Digital Inquiry, and Advisory Depth Ratio, published on open dashboards quarterly for stakeholder accountability.



## CANADA | York University Libraries' Casita Azul Community Recycling Efforts in Costa Rica

*Andrea Kosavic & Dana Craig*

A community-based recycling program supported by York University Libraries' Casita Azul is transforming waste management practices in the Alexander Skutch Biological Corridor of southern Costa Rica. Since its launch in 2020, the initiative has helped local communities divert **more than 19 metric tonnes of recyclable materials** from landfills – strengthening environmental stewardship and advancing the goals of York's Las Nubes EcoCampus.

The initiative emerged from the Environmental Coalition of the Alexander Skutch Biological Corridor, formed in 2019 to foster collaboration among local organizations promoting conservation and environmental education. Casita Azul, the community library and outreach hub of York University's Las Nubes EcoCampus, is a founding member of the Coalition, along with the Los Cusingos Biological Reserve and the water associations (ASADA) of Santa Elena and Quizarra, joined later by the Brigada Alexander

Skutch, a youth environmental organization.

During an early Coalition meeting at Los Cusingos, members identified the absence of recycling infrastructure as a key environmental challenge in the region. Many residents were eager to recycle but lacked equitable access to facilities: residents of Pérez Zeledón could bring their recyclable materials to the city of San Isidro, but cars are owned by only a portion of the population, gas is very expensive, and the Municipality spans over 1901km<sup>2</sup>.

To address this, Casita Azul established a partnership between the Coalition and the Municipality of Pérez Zeledón, whose Environmental Office oversees recycling efforts across the region. The collaboration combined municipal resources with community leadership. The Municipality provided a truck, staff support, and recycling incentives such as glassware and organic fertilizer, while the Coalition organized local drives, secured community halls, and documented materials collected.

The first campaign, held in Quizarra in 2020, drew wide participation from households, local businesses, and neighbouring communities. Local businesses recycled glass bottles and paper. Residents contributed glass bottles,

cardboard, paper, and plastics that had been accumulating for years, finally finding a sustainable outlet for recyclable materials.

Following the success of the initial campaign, the program expanded to a rotating schedule of recycling drives across the seven corridor communities, held approximately every two months. The events were promoted through community Facebook pages and WhatsApp networks, reaching nearly a thousand residents. Participation extended beyond the corridor to include nearby areas such as Peñas Blancas and La Hermosa. The frequency of these recycling campaigns is limited to the limited availability of the single truck owned by the region.

The impact has been significant. By facilitating the collection and processing of 19 tonnes of recyclables, the Coalition and its partners have reduced local waste, strengthened inter-community cooperation, and inspired broader engagement in environmental education. They have diverted recycling that would otherwise be buried, stockpiled or burned on residential properties.

Looking ahead, the Casita Azul Library will continue to support these recycling campaigns and offer community workshops that promote the creative reuse

of recycled materials. Together, Casita Azul, the Coalition, and their local partners are demonstrating how research, education, and community engagement can come together to create lasting, positive environmental change.



*Campaign for clearing roadside garbage.  
Photo Credit: Diandra Arias, 2021-2023*



*Campaign for clearing roadside garbage.  
Photo Credit: Diandra Arias, 2021-2023*



*Casita Azul Library workshop on re-using recycled materials for art projects. Photo Credit: Diandra Arias, 2018.*



*Campaign for clearing roadside garbage.  
Photo Credit: Diandra Arias, 2021-2023*



*Recycled material collected at a recycled campaign. Photo Credit: Diandra Arias, 2021*



*Campaign for clearing roadside garbage.  
Photo Credit: Diandra Arias, 2021-2023*

## CROATIA | Conversations on Sustainability at Public Library “Petar Preradović” Bjelovar

*Neda Adamović, Public Library “Petar Preradović” Bjelovar, Croatia*

### CONTEXT AND GOALS

Public libraries are becoming key civic spaces for climate awareness and lifelong learning. In Bjelovar, central Croatia, the Public Library “Petar Preradović” serves as the county’s central library, supporting a regional network of public and school libraries. Within its broader Go Green programme, in 2024 the library launched Knowledge to Sustainability – a series of interviews designed to strengthen green literacy together with information literacy.

### EXPERT INTERVIEWS LINKED TO INTERNATIONAL DAYS

The series features expert-led interviews published on the library’s website and Facebook page, each anchored to a relevant international day to create timely, relatable entry points. To date, 16 interviews have been produced, covering topics such as clean energy and climate action; collective responsibility for our planet; sustainable cities and healthier

food systems (including the role of pulses, such as dried beans); biodiversity and ecological stewardship (from wildlife protection to bees and migratory birds); gender equality and safety (ending violence against women, empowering girls, and advancing women in science); sport as a driver of peaceful, inclusive communities; the development of youth skills; and the right to health. Curated reading lists accompany every interview to support further exploration.

Project page: <https://knjiznica-bjelovar.hr/vodic-za-korisnike/projekti/zazeleni-se/>

### YOUTH SKILLS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

One notable conversation marked World Youth Skills Day and brought together the leader of a local Scouts association and the young Scouts themselves. They described how hands-on learning, teamwork, outdoor stewardship, problem-solving, and practical resilience gives them a meaningful advantage over peers. This perspective places youth skills at the heart of sustainability, linking personal agency with community-minded action.

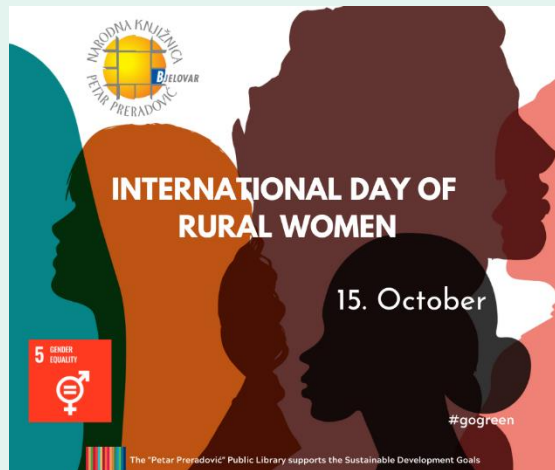
### WHAT WE LEARNED: FROM TEXT TO AUDIO/VIDEO

While long-form written interviews offer depth, online audiences often prefer quick, accessible formats. In retrospect, recording audio or video from the outset would likely have increased reach and engagement. Looking ahead to 2026, we are exploring video storytelling, subject to the time available and the team’s competencies. The goal remains clear: to connect citizens with reliable knowledge, cultivate critical thinking, and support practical, local action for a greener future.

### BEHIND THE SCENES: PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND SKILLS

The project was coordinated in Trello, a application that supports task structuring, progress tracking, responsibility assignment, and internal document storage across departments. Beyond logistics, the work calls for a broad skill set from librarians: topic scoping and research, editorial preparation, interviewing and moderation, public communication, and platform adaptation. Building basic subject knowledge in sustainability and understanding the nuances of public discourse have proven essential for credible, inclusive conversations.





Example of visuals used to unify the “Knowledge to Sustainability” interviews

## LATVIA | Join the Global Dialogue: Write a Letter to the Sea

*Anna Iltnere*

The Sea Library in the seaside city of Jūrmala, Latvia, has been active for seven years as a small, private initiative. It curates a collection of books about the sea and fosters a global conversation among ocean enthusiasts. The library has support from the blue humanities community, including scholar Steve Mentz, who coined the term, as well as writers, scientists, readers, and media outlets such as BBC Radio 4.

Through the participatory project “Write a Letter to the Sea,” anyone can send a handwritten letter – sharing reflections, memories, questions, or hopes – in any language. Each letter becomes part of a collection that bridges cultures, sparks dialogue, and strengthens connections between people and the ocean.

All letters are received, digitized, and shared online, creating a platform for intercultural and intergenerational exchange. Contributors also receive an illustrated postcard by Latvian artist Katrīna Ģelze, celebrating creativity,

gratitude, and the partly forgotten culture of postcards and letters.

This initiative supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 14 – Life Below Water, by promoting ocean awareness. It also fosters sustainable communities (SDG 11) and encourages global partnerships (SDG 17).

To participate, request the postal address at [sealibrarybooks@gmail.com](mailto:sealibrarybooks@gmail.com). Read letters at [sea-library.com](http://sea-library.com)



Illustration: Postcard by Katrīna Ģelze

## INDIA | Green Minds, Green Libraries: Empowering Learners for a Sustainable Future

*Dr. Payel Saha, KIIT Deemed to be University, Odisha, India*

### ABOUT KIIT DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY

Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Deemed to be University (DU), in Bhubaneswar, India is one of India's top Universities for its excellence in education, research, and innovation.

Established by Dr. Achyuta Samanta, KIIT-DU has grown into an Institution of Eminence, with NAAC accreditation of 'A++' and a QS 5-Star rating. The University also has a wide range of programs, and it specifically collaborates with over 200 Universities in 50 countries.

KIIT-DU's green campus and commitment to sustainability reflect its concern for the environment and commitment to social responsibility. As a sister institution of KISS-D, KIIT subscribes to the value of "Education with Humanity" by enabling disadvantaged communities and working to contribute to the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals by fostering inclusive and sustainable growth.



*Aerial view of KIIT-DU University*

### WHY GREEN LIBRARIES MATTER

In addition to infrastructure, the green libraries at KIIT-DU University emphasize education and community engagement, such as through sustainability workshops, green literacy programs, and eco-awareness campaigns.

They also work collaboratively with KISS-DU University students and tribal communities to engage in environmental education and protect indigenous knowledge.

By aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals – Quality Education, Clean Energy, Sustainable Cities, and Climate Action – these libraries are excellent examples of how educational institutions can blend innovation with

social responsibility and environmental stewardship to create lasting social impact.



*Kiit-DU University Central Library*

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN KIIT DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY, INDIA

KIIT-DU University Libraries promote sustainable development through eco-friendly infrastructure, digital innovation, and community engagement.

Designed with green building principles – solar panels, rainwater harvesting, and energy-efficient systems – the libraries also implement waste recycling and e-resource initiatives to reduce environmental impact.

Smart technologies like RFID, IoT, and TinyML optimize energy use and services, creating a modern, sustainable learning space.

Alongside infrastructure, KIIT libraries conduct green education programs. Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, they exemplify how innovation and sustainability can coexist in higher education.

## **SRI LANKA | The library's role in promoting Environmental Sustainability: Celebrating World Environment Day at SLIIT Libraries.**

*Sandun Weerasinghe, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology Library, Sri Lanka.*

*All photo credits: Sandun Weerasinghe*

Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT) is a leading non-state higher education institute in Sri Lanka. Its main library, which is known as SLIIT Library Learning Commons, is situated in Malabe, Sri Lanka, within SLIIT's main campus premises, and there are also 3 branch libraries in various parts of the country.

SLIIT Library organises regular activities in keeping with current needs and trends to keep its users engaged and active. Thus, in alignment with World Environment Day 2025, the SLIIT Libraries organised several activities throughout the week to celebrate and raise awareness of environmental sustainability, as well as to emphasise the library's role in such topics.



*Creative ideas by the library staff*

The celebration started on Environment Day, and during the day, we donated a plant to each patron who borrowed books. When choosing plants, we focused on their impact rather than just making a donation. So, we selected medicinal plants which are unique to the Sri Lankan

ecosystem, and some indoor plants such as Sansevieria, which are known for purifying the air throughout the day.



*Happy patrons with their plants*

As the theme of World Environment Day 2025 is "Beat Plastic Pollution", we designed unique and creative eco-friendly containers for the plants without using plastic, by upcycling used wastepaper and cardboard materials.

The staff of all four SLIIT branch Libraries actively engaged in these activities, and some members came up with more creative ideas, like attaching handmade paper tags to the decorative containers with handwritten short messages on them.



Building on the initial plan, SLIIT Metro Library staff created handmade ornaments using wooden ice-cream sticks and jute twine as giveaway gifts for their users.

Throughout the week, the SLIIT main library had a poster display aligned with this year's theme, and posters were donated by the Central Environmental Authority Library of Sri Lanka.

To further amplify the week, the library organised two awareness sessions. One was on *Embracing a greener workplace and lifestyle*. This session gave insight into sustainable living practices, eco-friendly product choices and green workspace solutions. The second was on *Reducing your carbon footprint*. Both were conducted by experts and we invited our own community and other libraries to attend.

The feedback on this range of activities showed we had achieved our goals; educating and raising awareness among the community and beyond about sustainable environmental practices, whilst showing the library's wider role in promoting Environmental Sustainability.



Informative poster display

## TURKEY | Rami Library's Rainwater Harvesting Experience: A Case Study on Libraries and SDG 6

Vildan Turan, Sustainability Coordinator – Rami Library, Istanbul, Türkiye

### INTRODUCTION

Rami Library, Turkey's first sustainable library, has embraced ecological responsibility by integrating

environmentally friendly practices into its daily operations. Among these, the rainwater harvesting system stands out as a pioneering initiative that contributes to water efficiency and climate resilience.

This brief report summarizes the system's outcomes between 2023 and 2025, its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals particularly SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and its role in fostering environmental awareness.



Rami Library Garden – Sustainable landscape design. Photo credit: Rami Library Archive

### RAMI'S JOURNEY FROM PAST TO PRESENT

Sustainability and environmental awareness have become defining global priorities. As Turkey's first sustainable library, Rami Library transcends the traditional role of an information center, serving as a green sanctuary that

integrates environmental responsibility into cultural life.

Originally built in the mid-18th century as the Rami Barracks and reopened in 2023 after a decade-long restoration, it now stands as a model of heritage preservation and sustainable transformation. Awarded Biosphere Certification in 2023, Rami Library exemplifies holistic sustainability through initiatives such as its rainwater harvesting system, which ensures water efficiency and self-sufficiency while inspiring broader ecological awareness.



*Rami's Journey from Past to Present: From a Historic Barracks to a Sustainable Library.*  
Photo credit: Rami Library Archive

### SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Commissioned in 2023, the rainwater harvesting system began its initial trials with high efficiency during winter, though contributions were limited in summer due to low rainfall.

By 2024, it had reached full capacity, meeting much of the library's demand for water. The 2025 data clearly demonstrates its ability to adapt to varying climatic conditions: despite high yields in winter, moderate yields in spring, and low yields in summer, the annual total surpassed the average consumption of a public library.

These findings confirm the system's maturity and resilience to climate variability while emphasizing the growing importance of water conservation in an era of scarcity.

### RAINWATER HARVESTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Roof rain and snow are collected and directed into the reservoir, where the stored water is reused for toilet flushing and landscape irrigation.

The pond located in Rami Library's garden is designed as a visible element of the rainwater harvesting system, where the integration of architecture and ecology is harmoniously reflected.



*Roof rain and snow flow into the reservoir; landscape water is reused for toilets and irrigation. Photo credit: Rami Library Archive*



*Rami Library roof: the starting point of rainwater harvesting. Photo credit: Rami Library Archive*



*The pond in Rami Library's garden serves as a visible part of the rainwater harvesting system.*

### WATER CONSUMPTION COMPARISON (2025)

While an average public library consumes 300–350 m<sup>3</sup> of water monthly, Rami Library largely meets and often exceeds this demand through rainwater harvesting alone.

In 2025, the system collected 780 m<sup>3</sup> in January and 720 m<sup>3</sup> in February, compared to average consumptions of around 300 m<sup>3</sup>. Although yields dropped to just 25 m<sup>3</sup> in July due to low rainfall, the total annual harvest still surpassed overall usage, affirming Rami Library's status as a self-sufficient and exemplary model of sustainable water management.

**Table 1.** *Rami Rainwater Harvesting (2025) vs. Average consumption for Public Library*

Month	<i>Rami Rainwater Harvesting (m<sup>3</sup>)</i>	Average Public Library Water Consumption (m <sup>3</sup> )
January	780	310
February	720	300
March	650	315
April	600	320
May	450	330
June	200	340
July	25	350
August	40	355
September	150	345

### CONCLUSIONS

Through its rainwater harvesting system, Rami Library has preserved natural resources and emerged as a leading advocate for sustainability within its community.

Over three years, the system has matured, proving its ability to adapt to diverse climatic conditions while ensuring efficient water management. This progress shows how libraries can evolve into living examples of environmental responsibility.

The water savings achieved have made Rami Library largely self-sufficient, transforming it into a model of resilience and innovation.

The initiative highlights the vital importance of water in a world facing increasing scarcity and conveys a powerful message about the role of culture in climate action. By supporting **SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)** and **SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)**, Rami Library demonstrates that libraries are not only centers of knowledge but also active agents of sustainable transformation where learning and care for the planet thrive together.



## **CROATIA | Public Library “Ivan Goran Kovačić” Karlovac – A Model of a Green Library**

*Kristina Čunović, Anita Malkoč Bišćan,  
Sanja Graša, Public Library “Ivan Goran  
Kovačić” Karlovac*

Public Library “Ivan Goran Kovačić” Karlovac was founded in 1838, and in 1976 it moved into its own building – the first purpose-built library building in Croatia and the region.

An extension, completed on 15 October 2007, added around 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> of new space. At that time, a green roof was added, making the library a fully “green library.” Until then, its ecological aspect had been reflected only through occasional environmentally themed events.

Energy improvements to the older part of the library were carried out between 2018 and 2020, including roof insulation and replacement of interior lighting with energy-efficient systems.

The project cost over 900,000 Euros, co-financed by the European Union and national funds. It made the building more energy-efficient, reduced energy

consumption and emissions, and improved conditions for users and staff. The library now serves a dual role: a venue for sustainable “green” programmes and an energy-efficient building.

In 2025, within the EU Interreg INFIRE project, Karlovac selected the library as a pilot site for integrating a green and solar roof – the first biosolar roof on a public building in Croatia. Solar panels will be installed directly above the existing vegetation, combining energy production and the ecological functions of greenery. The project is planned for completion by the end of June 2026.

In 2023, the Green Library – a department of the Public Library, was opened in partnership with Aquatika – Freshwater Aquarium Karlovac. It is the first department of its kind in Croatia, dedicated to raising awareness of sustainable development through green literature and activities. The collaboration highlights the importance of partnerships between libraries and institutions involved in environmental protection and the development of high-quality environmental programmes.

The Green Library educates the public through lectures, storytelling sessions, workshops, and literature on environmental protection, sustainable

food, and biodiversity, while also focusing on green business practices and energy-efficient buildings. Its significance was recognised internationally – in 2024 it was listed among the seven best green libraries in the world as part of the [IFLA Green Library Award](#).

In May 2025, another successful project, “Green Festival – Karlovac Green Story,” received the [same prestigious IFLA recognition](#), ranking among the four best green library projects worldwide, and earning a Special Recognition Award for achieving great impact with minimal resources, sponsored by the publishing house De Gruyter Brill.

The festival, now in its sixth year, promotes multidisciplinary collaboration and ecological awareness among the local community. It consists of four segments: a professional conference, book exhibition and promotion, children’s workshops, and a local producers’ fair in front of the library. Sponsors include the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, the City of Karlovac, and local business donors.

Through these projects and activities, the Public Library “Ivan Goran Kovačić” Karlovac has become a model of sustainability: an educational centre, and an energy-efficient building that

demonstrates the importance of resource conservation and reducing the carbon footprint.



Archive of the Public Library "Ivan Goran Kovačić" Karlovac

## CHINA | A Green Library Network for Sustainability: The Nanhai Reading Station Project

*Du Yanxia and Chen Zhang, Foshan Nanhai Library*

*Project Photos: ©Foshan Nanhai Library*

Since its inception in 2013, the Nanhai Reading Station Project has gained wide popularity with the concept of green development. The glass-walled reading rooms, scattered on the streets of villages,

parks, scenic spots, lakesides, communities, commercial districts, and schools across the district, feature prefabricated and energy-efficient structures.

With a collection of over 2,500 printed books and 3,000 e-books, each station provides 24-hour free and unmanned services to the public including book borrowing and returning, e-book borrowing, inquiry and reservation, wireless internet access, and event organization.

The green and sustainability concepts of the project can be reflected in many ways:

- the sophisticated architectural style is characterized by environmentally friendly building materials, allowing for maximum natural light, minimal construction impact, as well as enhanced safety and protection against typhoon and rainstorm;
- to lower the construction and labor costs, the buildings can be easily disassembled and assembled without occupying excessive land area, and have achieved remote monitoring and unmanned operation;

- to avoid land waste, the libraries fit into parks, community green spaces, scenic spots, and vacant buildings;
- to improve management efficiency, intelligent technology is adopted to realize optimized resource allocation by integrating online operation with day-to-day offline maintenance;
- to ensure community participation, residents are involved in site selection of libraries and regular training and green-themed activities are carried out to disseminate the idea of green development.

Currently, a total of 280 green and smart reading stations have been deployed throughout the district, with each library serving 12,400 people.

The service efficiency has been boosted with an average borrowing rate of 195.6%, three times that of traditional small libraries.



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

**Green Building:** Compared to traditional small libraries, the reading stations featuring environmentally friendly building materials and prefabricated structures offer greater flexibility and convenience. Moreover, the construction period is shorter, and costs are less than 30% of traditional small libraries. On average, each station reduces carbon emissions by over 50 tons, significantly lowering the carbon footprint.

**Smart Management:** Thanks to a cloud-based central monitoring center, real-time monitoring covers all reading stations across the district, and the intercom system ensures the solution of enquiries on a timely basis. In addition, the technology has made it possible for over 3 million books to circulate freely among all reading stations, benefiting the citizens at

a lower costs, and big data analysis can provide scientific decision-making support for station location selection, book procurement, and reading services.

**Energy-Saving Operation:** Automatic power shut-off during closing hours of the libraries has saved electricity costs, unmanned operation has significantly reduced labor costs, and the introduction of a third-party operator has enabled centralized and standardized management of equipment, books, and maintenance, achieving both economic and environmental sustainability.



**Community Co-creation:** The books in the reading stations are updated on a monthly basis to meet the varying demands of community residents. Themed events such as "Nature Notes" and used book fairs are organized to transform the stations into a base for cultivating "green

citizens", highlighting the project's role in promoting community cohesion and sustainable development.



**Social Equity:** Requesting the presentation of ID cards, the reading stations provides disadvantaged groups including the elderly, disabled, and children equal access to library services right in their neighborhoods.





**Project Achievements:** After over ten years of development, the Nanhai Reading Station Project has established a robust service network with 280 stations housing over 800,000 books, spanning 17,000 square meters and covering 234 communities (villages) across the district. Its service efficiency has been boosted, with annual visitor numbers climbing from 210,000 at the very beginning to over 2.7 million, and cumulative visitor numbers exceeding 21 million; a total of 352,000 library cards were issued, and over 9 million books borrowed.



This district-wide library network for sustainability has significantly improved resource efficiency and reduced repeated book purchases.

More importantly, owing to its green philosophy, energy-efficient operation, and resource sharing, the project has

generated considerable ecological and economic benefits. It is estimated that the energy-saving efforts have cumulatively reduced carbon emissions by approximately 140,000 tons, testifying to the positive role of libraries in their contribution to the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 4, 10, and 11).



## FUTURE OUTLOOK

While developing a smart management platform to monitor and visualize data at the reading stations concerning electricity savings, book circulation, and carbon emission reductions, we look forward to sharing the practices of this "Library Network for Sustainability" model with colleagues in the international library community. Let's jointly advance the global library system towards a smarter and more sustainable future.

# Educational Resources

## New Guide Helps Libraries Lead the Way in Digital Sustainability

Libraries are going green in the digital realm. A new *Digital Sustainability* topic guide by Dr Adi Keinan-Schoonbaert from the British Library invites library professionals to explore how their digital choices – from cloud storage to website design – affect the planet, and how small changes can make a big environmental difference.

The guide highlights technology's hidden costs: data centres, streaming, and everyday digital activity now generate more carbon emissions than aviation. For libraries, whose work increasingly depends on digital collections, preservation, and online services, this presents both a challenge and an opportunity.

Packed with examples and case studies from institutions such as The Box Plymouth and Oldham Heritage Libraries, the guide showcases practical actions like:

- using renewable-powered hosting,
- reducing storage waste, and
- building energy-efficient websites.

It also features learning resources, carbon calculators, and examples of greener digitisation practices.

From rethinking AI use to joining communities such as IFLA's ENSULIB or Jisc's Digital Sustainability Network, the guide helps libraries align their values of stewardship and access with climate-conscious ways of working.



Explore the topic guide here:

<https://libereurope.github.io/ds-topic-guides/sustainability.html>

## Libraries in symphony: The Green Librarian Handbook as a guide to sustainable change

In September 2025, EBLIDA and ELAN launched *The Green Librarian Handbook: A Guide for Libraries to Lead Sustainable Change in Europe. Symphony in Sustainability Major* (García, Lapardina, Mercadal, Peña & Toril, 2025), developed by the Association RECIDA.

More than a manual, this work is a call to action: a comprehensive and practical framework for libraries to take an active role in Europe's ecological and social transition.



*Handbook work team. © Alfonso Peña. Hybrid composition: real portraits of people integrated into a background and layout generated with AI (Nano Banana).*

## A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE LIBRARIES

The publication highlights the figure of the green librarian as a driver of change, capable of leading, forging local alliances, and designing programs that combine environmental sustainability with social inclusion.

The handbook offers a clear and rigorous overview of how libraries can align their missions with global and European sustainability agendas. From the *Agenda 2030* and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the *European Green Deal* and the *8th Environmental Action Programme*, it situates libraries within the international policy landscape, highlighting their potential as trusted institutions rooted in local communities.

Libraries are presented not only as repositories of knowledge, but as agents of change. They have the capacity to model sustainable practices, whether through eco-friendly buildings, circular economy initiatives, or inclusive programmes, and to engage citizens in dialogue, education, and collective action for a greener future.

## POLICIES, TOOLS, AND BEST PRACTICES

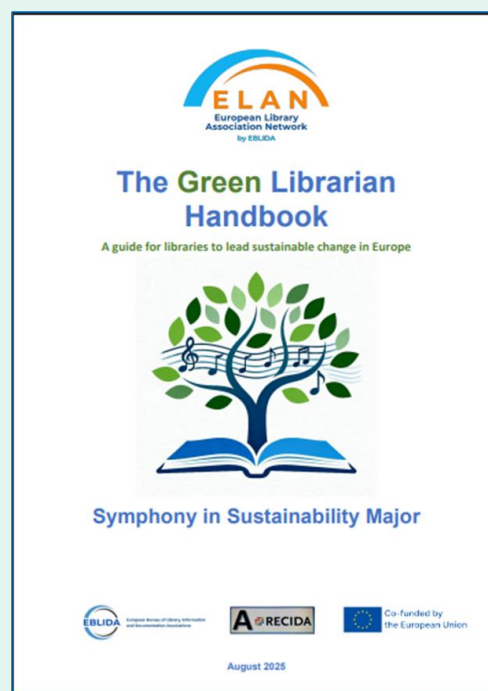
The publication is structured like a symphony in four movements:

**Movement I** explores international and European environmental policies, showing how global frameworks—from the Rio Declaration to the European Green Deal—set the rhythm for sustainable action in the library sector.

**Movement II** compiles awards and recognitions, funding programmes, work methodologies, and resources. Libraries can draw on *Horizon Europe*, the *LIFE Programme*, or *Erasmus+ Green Priority* to finance ambitious projects, while tested models such as *Hexagonal Libraries* guide participatory planning and evaluation.

**Movement III** presents an inspiring repertoire of best practices: from green infrastructures and “libraries of things” to projects in art, advocacy, rural development, and social justice. These examples show that every library, large or small, can find creative ways to contribute.

**Movement IV** recommends further readings and resources, ensuring continuous professional development and inspiration.



Handbook Cover

The “Bonus Tracks” section offers a *Green Librarian Playlist*, reminding readers that cultural transformation is also about imagination and collective spirit. This connects music and environment in an innovative way.

## LIBRARIES AS AGENTS OF ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL TRANSITION

The handbook insists that sustainability is inseparable from inclusion. A truly green

library is one that amplifies voices, strengthens community resilience, and integrates ecological awareness into its educational and cultural mission. This perspective resonates with the European vision of a just transition, where no person or territory is left behind.

Across Europe, libraries are already demonstrating leadership, through community gardens, tool-lending schemes, exhibitions on climate change, or partnerships with schools. These initiatives embody the library’s capacity to act locally while contributing to continental and global goals.

## AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE SYMPHONY

The *Green Librarian Handbook* is not a static manual, but a living score. It invites professionals to take the first (or the next) step in their sustainability journey, to learn from colleagues, and to contribute their own notes to the European symphony of green libraries.

As EBLIDA and ELAN underline, collaboration is key. Through shared resources, capacity-building, and networks such as E-PANEMA, the library sector can amplify its impact and accelerate the transition toward resilient, inclusive, and sustainable societies.



Every library has a role to play. Whether by reducing its environmental footprint, fostering climate literacy, or creating spaces of dialogue and solidarity, each action contributes to a larger harmony.

[Download the handbook](#), let it inspire you, and join the growing movement of green libraries. Together, we can ensure that libraries not only preserve knowledge, but also safeguard the planet and empower communities for generations to come.

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## What is the Role of Academic Libraries in Sustainable Development?

Gerald Beasley<sup>i,ii</sup>

Academic libraries were originally created to support the research and teaching/learning needs of faculty and students. But they are also uniquely well-suited to help humanity achieve sustainable solutions to its economic, social, and environmental challenges. Therefore, academic library leaders should explicitly add supporting sustainable development to their library's mission statement.

### HOW CAN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SD)?

Some academic libraries are already acting: they reduce waste to a minimum, they share resources widely, they partner with charitable organizations, etc. However, although not all these actions have been designed and developed with sustainability in mind, it is striking how far they have taken academic libraries down this path.

A list of 13 Top Action Tips for academic librarians has been developed and made

available by the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) SDG Publishers Compact Fellows Action Group, of which I am a member (see <https://www.sdgcompactfellows.org/to-p-action-tips/academic-librarians>).

They are not only intended for library leaders: they also address issues such as collection development, curation, metadata, and assessment methodologies that require the expertise at all levels. Some that can be done more or less immediately include:

- identify and promote the library's SDG-related collection strengths
- publish a LibGuide to the library's SDG-related content
- contact campus and/or community members to help curate and publicize SDG-related collections

I believe actively supporting the UN's 17 SDGs is currently the most practical and effective way for academic libraries to support SD. As Gro Harlem Brundtland, the leader of the UN's so-called Brundtland Commission, has recently put it: "*The Sustainable Development Goals themselves are the chart to see us through the storm*".<sup>iii</sup>

An academic library can support "*ending poverty in all its forms everywhere*"

(Goal 1), for example, by identifying and filling gaps in its collection; by publishing guides to its holdings; by adding “poverty” to the catalogue’s searchable keywords; by helping to curate appropriate teaching materials; by eliminating financial barriers to collections access; by reaching out to local, national, and international poverty action groups; etc.

One way to help “*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*” (Goal 4) would be to negotiate contracts with publishers that allowed for remote alumni/community access to scholarly resources. And academic libraries can encourage “*peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development*” (Goal 16) by providing access to non-affiliated local charities and not-for-profits.

Measuring the impact of such initiatives may not be easy; but explicitly making support of SD a new role for academic libraries will enable them to be reported as mission-specific achievements.

*Independent scholar. Formerly University Librarian at Concordia University, Montreal (2008-13); Chief Librarian and Vice-Provost, University of Alberta (2013-17); Carl A. Kroch University Librarian, Cornell University (2017-22).*

<sup>ii</sup> *This is an edited version of an article previously published in magazine Katina:* <https://katinamagazine.org/content/article/future-of-work/2024/role-of-academic-libraries-in-sustainable-development>

<sup>iii</sup> United Nations. (2019). *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now – Science for Achieving Sustainable Development*, p.x  
<sup>vi</sup>. [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/24797GSDR\\_report\\_2019.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/24797GSDR_report_2019.pdf)

## Green Library Conferences and Seminars Around the World in 2025

### Planting Seeds of Change: The Green Libraries Conference 2025



Baroness Twycross, DCMS Minister. Photo credit CILIP

The third Green Libraries Conference in the United Kingdom took place on Monday October 27<sup>th</sup> at Kings Place in London and attracted over 180 delegates.

Organised by CILIP and their Green Libraries Campaign partners, this year's theme – '*Planting Seeds of Change*' – encouraged libraries at all stages in their sustainability journey to celebrate their climate action – no matter how big or small.

The conference opened with a keynote address from Baroness Twycross, the government minister responsible for Public Libraries and Member of the House of Lords. Her description of libraries as central to green growth and places of trusted information about sustainability set the tone for the day.

Amina Shah, National Librarian and Chief Executive at the National Library of Scotland, followed. Amina's inspiring speech focused on the sector's greatest strengths and challenges when we're talking about the climate and our carbon footprint.

Sustainable AI was the theme of our afternoon keynote, delivered by Gordon Johnstone from the Scottish AI Alliance and chaired by Piers Torday, Society of Authors. A thought-provoking presentation about the environmental costs of AI (including water and power consumption, rare minerals extraction), which also questioned its social sustainability and ethics.

In the first plenary panel discussion, chaired by Georgina Wilson-Powell from Pebble Magazine, attendees heard perspectives from three different sectors about a range of actions that can go into a climate action plan. The second panel heard Kirsten MacQuarrie, Sector Development Manager for CILIP Scotland, in conversation with Alan Brine and Elizabeth Tilley from CILIP's Professional Qualifications Assessment Panel bringing insights into the Professional Registration process and its intersections with climate ethics.

Yvonne Morris, Projects and Programmes Manager at CILIP, announced the launch of a pilot Green Libraries Self-Assessment Framework, developed to enable libraries to audit their climate actions in the seven areas covered by the Green Libraries Manifesto.

The Conference was held on the first day of Green Libraries Week and Hinna Vayani, Associate Project Manager at CILIP, introduced this year's theme: '*Seeds of change – make a difference with your library*'. She was joined by Katie Plant from Camden Libraries who highlighted some of the activities they had planned, which included the launch of a seed bank.

This year's conference included three breakout sessions in the morning and

again in the afternoon, with delegates choosing between sessions on sustainable exhibitions and displays, climate fiction and climate book clubs, green procurement, 'Culture Nature' (a collaboration between Libraries Connected and Natural England), tackling climate misinformation and disinformation, or working towards Net Zero in higher education.

Dr Maja Maricevic, Director of Science and Innovation at the British Library and current Chair of the Green Libraries Campaign, wrapped up proceedings with her reflections on the future of green libraries. Maja announced that, from January 2026, the Campaign will have a new Chair, Lisa McLaren, Head of Library and Archive Services at the University of Westminster.

Find out more about the Green Libraries Campaign and view slides from the conference at [www.cilip.org.uk/greenlibraries](http://www.cilip.org.uk/greenlibraries).

Follow us on social #GreenLibraries



## Library Leadership for a Sustainable Future” Insights from the Emerging Leaders Programme, the IFLA Trend Report, and Green Library Practice

*Merve YAVUZDEMİR, Head of Foreign Relations, Directorate General for Libraries and Publications, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Republic of Türkiye*

The IFLA Trend Report 2024 is a strategic tool designed to help library and information professionals prepare for an increasingly complex and uncertain future.

Rather than attempting to predict the future with certainty, the report addresses the fundamental dynamics shaping the transformation of information, technology, and society within a systematic framework. By outlining seven interconnected trends and scenario-based assessments, it encourages libraries to plan their future thinking processes today.

What truly adds value is not only its identification of emerging trends, but also its provision of opportunities for professionals to recognize early signals of

change, assess their impact, and strengthen organizational resilience.

As emphasized by IFLA, the Trend Report guides the global library community from observing the future to shaping it.



*IFLA WLIC 2025 Session ID: 094: Become a Climate Empowerment Champion; Photo credit: Merve Yavuzdemir*

Fourteen emerging leaders selected from different regions of the world came together thanks to the support provided by the Gates Foundation through Stichting IFLA Global Libraries as part of the 2025 IFLA World Library and Information Congress (WLIC).

This support aimed not only to facilitate the participation of professionals in a major global event, but also to enable the selected leaders to contribute to the development of the IFLA Trend Report and discover the “weak signals” that could shape the future of libraries.



©IFLA: <https://2025.ifla.org/day-one-highlight/>

During the session “Leaders in Libraries: Boosting Leadership Provision for All”, Emerging Leaders shared their views on what leadership means in today’s librarianship. These contributions were transformed into a shared congress takeaway.

Effective leadership is based not on authority, but on the ability to create a shared vision, open paths, listen carefully, and motivate others. A strong library leader works through networks, manages uncertainty, takes calculated risks, makes connections that others cannot see, and grounds their actions in both purpose and human values.

This shared definition presents a concise and forward-looking understanding of library leadership in a rapidly changing global environment.

Being selected as an Emerging Leader at WLIC 2025 as a member of the ENSULIB Standing Committee held special meaning for my professional journey. I, Merve Yavuzdemir, am Head of Foreign Relations at the Directorate General for Libraries and Publications in Türkiye. Throughout my years working in the library field, I have been involved in many sustainability-based initiatives ranging from early childhood literacy to community empowerment, from green library advocacy to climate-focused applications. My work has positioned libraries as key actors in environmental awareness, social resilience, and societal well-being, not only within my institution or country but also on a global scale. Therefore, it felt natural to be representing the environment and sustainability field within the Emerging Leader team.



IFLA WLIC 2025 Session ID: 116  
Leaders in Libraries: Boosting Leadership  
Provision for All. Photo credit: Merve  
Yavuzdemir

When I evaluated the IFLA Trend Report from an ENSULIB perspective, I noticed that certain trends stood out in particular.

- *Trend 6: Information systems are using more resources* highlights the growing environmental cost of digital infrastructures and the need for resource-efficient information practices—an area where green library principles are essential.
- *Trend 3: Trust is being renegotiated* resonates strongly with climate information literacy, emphasising libraries' role in providing reliable, community-rooted knowledge in an era of misinformation.
- *Trend 7: People are seeking community connection* reinforces the idea—well established within ENSULIB—that libraries serve as vital community anchors where environmental learning, dialogue, and collective resilience can take place.

Together, these trends provide meaningful signals for how sustainability should be embedded in the future of library leadership and service design.

Guided by these insights, I saw the Emerging Leaders program as an important opportunity to discover new

signals related to environmental responsibility in libraries.

At WLIC, I not only contributed to these discussions, but also had the opportunity to take an active role in the sustainability-oriented sessions. In the “Become a Climate Empowerment Champion” session, I shared my views on how libraries can support local climate adaptation and presented the Agro Library model from Türkiye as an example. I also had the chance to closely evaluate inspiring sustainable library practices from around the world and make these successes visible by serving as co-moderator in the Green Library Award session.

These experiences further reinforced my belief that sustainability should not be an additional theme, but a fundamental component of library leadership. When the Emerging Leaders Program, ENSULIB's mission, and the Trend Report's forward-looking approach come together, it becomes clear that the future of libraries depends on leaders who can recognize early signals, possess environmental responsibility awareness, and translate global insights into local applications.

Although environmental issues, climate change, and sustainability challenges are experienced on a global scale, meaningful

solutions begin at the smallest and most local levels. As trusted, accessible, and community-rooted institutions, libraries bear a special responsibility in this transformation.

Sustainability is and should remain the core responsibility of libraries. When library leaders act with this awareness and incorporate sustainable thinking into their decision-making processes, they create an impact that transforms not only their communities, but also their cities, countries, and ultimately the world. In this sense, the foundation for a sustainable future will be shaped by the leadership approach demonstrated in libraries today.

## **National and University Library “St. Clement of Ohrid” – Skopje Hosts the First International Conference on Cultural Heritage**

*Maja Micevska*

The National and University Library St. Clement of Ohrid – Skopje, proudly hosted its First International Conference

on Cultural Heritage: Innovation, Sustainability, and Legal Framework for Preservation and Engagement, held from 29–30 September 2025 in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia.

Bringing together 20 distinguished experts and speakers from across Europe and beyond, the event served as a vibrant platform for sharing knowledge, ideas, and experiences on how cultural heritage institutions can innovate, collaborate, and adapt in the face of global challenges.

Discussions spanned from digital transformation and AI in preservation to sustainability practices, community engagement and policy development – all centered on safeguarding the cultural memory that defines our shared identity.

The conference fostered new partnerships, cross-border dialogue, and a collective vision for the future of libraries and heritage institutions in an evolving world.

With this landmark event, the National and University Library “St. Clement of Ohrid” – Skopje affirmed its role as a regional hub for innovation and cultural cooperation, opening new horizons for international collaboration. For more information, see <https://heritageskopje.mk>

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS: Honours, Courses, Travelling Exhibits**

### **AfreLib Online Course Module and Upcoming Architecture Challenge**

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AfreLib is pleased to announce the launch of its [Sustainable Libraries Africa Network course](#), which commenced in July 2025. The open online course is designed to strengthen knowledge and skills in sustainable library and information practices.

The course remains accessible to participants worldwide, offering flexible, self-paced learning and a certificate of completion upon request.

This initiative reflects AfreLib's commitment to advancing environmental



sustainability and professional development in the library and information field.

The course will also be featured in the new IFLA Guidelines for Green and Sustainable Libraries:

<https://www.ifla.org/the-ifla-guidelines-for-green-and-sustainable-libraries/>

Preparations are also underway for the **AfreLib Architecture & Design Challenge**, to be introduced in 2026. The challenge will invite innovative and sustainable design ideas for green library spaces across Africa from:

- Students
- Designers & architects
- Researchers & planners
- Library professionals
- Community innovators

The Challenge seeks creative, practical, and locally grounded solutions that can shape the future of libraries in Africa.

Libraries are more than buildings – they're hubs of opportunity, knowledge, and community. This challenge is about rethinking space, resources, and sustainability to match the needs and dreams of African communities.

We're finalizing the details and can't wait to share more with you. The official launch is coming soon – and we'll be calling on changemakers like you to take part.

For more details, please visit

<https://www.afrelib.org>

## WORDS IN FLAME: Ukrainian Libraries in Wartime



The traveling photo exhibition “Words in Flame” documents the destruction and resilience of Ukrainian libraries during the ongoing Russian invasion. Through 83 powerful photographs, it depicts burned, looted, and shattered libraries – from frontline towns to major cities –

highlighting both the immense cultural loss and the determination to rebuild.

According to official data (July 2025), **214 libraries have been destroyed, 904 damaged, 561 lost all equipment, and 492 lost their entire book collections.** Despite this, **211 libraries have resumed work,** supported by local communities, volunteers, and donors.

Ukrainian librarians continue to serve as cultural guardians – rescuing books from rubble, reopening reading spaces, and offering safety, hope, and continuity to their communities. Their work embodies resilience and a deep commitment to knowledge and memory in the face of war.

The exhibition, available in English, Ukrainian, German and French, is free to host in embassies, universities, cultural centers, and libraries worldwide. It is offered in a print-ready format, allowing easy installation anywhere.

More information and materials:

<https://artistssupportukraine.today/eng/words-in-flame/>

## Kraubath Public Library wins Austria's "Library of the Year 2026" award

Markus Oberländer, Öffentliche Bücherei  
Kraubath, Kraubath Public Library  
[www.kraubath.at/buecherei](http://www.kraubath.at/buecherei)

When the announcement was made that Kraubath Public Library had been named *Library of the Year 2026*, the news resonated far beyond the small Austrian municipality of just 1,350 inhabitants. What began in 1999 as a modest local initiative within a project on ecological rural development has grown into an internationally recognized example of how sustainability, community engagement and education can be successfully combined in a rural library setting.

Located in the municipal building, the library has evolved steadily over the past 25 years. The library now welcomes more than 2,400 visits per year and records over 6,000 loans from a collection of just over 5,000 media items – impressive figures for a community of its size. A strong focus lies on children and young readers, with more than half of the collection being dedicated to this demographic, including picture books and early readers. More than 120 annual cardholders and close cooperation with regional and national library networks

further extend access to knowledge and culture.



*The team of the Kraubath Public Library at the ceremony for Austria's "Library of the Year award 2026" together with the heads of the Austrian Library Association. Photo Credit: Kraubath Public Library / Markus Oberlaender*

### WHAT SETS KRAUBATH PUBLIC LIBRARY APART, AND ULTIMATELY CONVINCED THE AWARD JURY, IS ITS HOLISTIC GREEN LIBRARY STRATEGY?

Sustainability is not treated as a single project, but as a guiding principle embedded across all operations and services.

The library aligns its work with all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UNESCO framework for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Administration and communication are fully paperless, digital media and e-books are actively promoted, and collection development follows clear ecological criteria.

Energy supply is another cornerstone of the library's climate-conscious approach. Heating is provided by a local district biomass plant using sustainably sourced wood, while electricity comes from a regional renewable energy company, largely based on hydropower and solar energy. This locally rooted model not only reduces carbon emissions, but also strengthens regional partnerships and economic resilience.



*Our library in the municipal building. Photo Credit: Kraubath Public Library / Markus Oberlaender*

Equally central to the award-winning concept is the library's role as an educational and social hub.

In close cooperation with the local primary school, kindergarten and childcare facilities, the library offers regular workshops and reading activities focused on environmental awareness, biodiversity and sustainable everyday practices. Partnerships with supported living facilities and a senior care home foster inclusion, with wellbeing and intergenerational exchange reinforcing the library's function as a meeting place for all generations.



*Kids of our primary school enjoying a book project with Burgi Friess, the head of our library. Photo Credit: Kraubath Public Library / Markus Oberlaender*

The library is run by a dedicated team of nine volunteers who contribute around 2,000 hours of unpaid work each year. Their commitment – from cataloguing and lending to organizing events – underlines the strong civic engagement that forms the

backbone of the institution. All books are purchased exclusively through regional Austrian bookshops, supporting local economies and sustainable supply chains.

**By awarding Kraubath Public Library the title Library of the Year 2026, the jury highlights a powerful message: size is no barrier to impact.**

Through long-term, measurable actions and deep community involvement, this small rural library demonstrates how libraries can actively contribute to sustainability, social cohesion and lifelong learning. Kraubath stands as a model – and an inspiration – for green and resilient libraries worldwide.