

2025

**STRATEGIC
COMPASS**

**DEUTSCHE
NATIONAL
BIBLIOTHEK**

PREFACE

The German National Library is the central archiving library and national bibliographic centre of the Federal Republic of Germany. It collects, catalogues and stores the media works published in Germany (and works about Germany published abroad) since 1913 and makes these available for use by the general public.

This legal mandate of the German National Library has changed significantly over the last few years: traditional processes have had to be adapted; new tasks have been added. The German National Library continuously has to face new challenges, not only as a result of its collection mandate which was expanded in 2006 to include non-physical media works, but also as a consequence of rapid technological progress, digitisation and the development of new distribution and publication methods. This makes it all the more important to consult the guidelines and objectives when carrying out the individual tasks.

As the result of a process begun in 2012, the German National Library has therefore drawn up the “German National Library 2025. Strategic compass”. This describes the development of the German National Library over the next ten years from the current perspective. The compass is intended not only to set out the medium-term strategic goals of the German National Library, but also to serve as a navigation aid at all steps along the way. Guidelines have been drawn up on the basis of the legal mandate for the four

thematic areas of “Collect & Preserve”, “Document & Disseminate”, “Present & Inspire” and “Integrate & Organise”. Based on the current situation and the changing environment, it identifies the challenges which the German National Library must cope with.

The strategic compass was developed with the participation of the German National Library staff and was discussed in detail by the advisory committees and the Administrative Council of the German National Library; it was then finally approved by the Administrative Council at its meeting on June 13, 2016.

The present strategic compass will serve as important basis for the work of the German National Library and as a starting point for updating the strategic priorities for 2017 to 2020.



Dr. Günter Winands
Chairman of the Administrative Council

FOREWORD

THE GERMAN NATIONAL LIBRARY PRESERVES AND PROVIDES ACCESS TO A MAJOR PART OF GERMANY'S CULTURAL HERITAGE.

The German National Library preserves and provides access to a major part of Germany's written, pictorial and sound-recording cultural heritage in the form of works published since 1913 in Germany and in German. With a total of roughly 30.8 million holdings, an annual budget of €52 million and 629 employees in Leipzig and Frankfurt am Main, it is one of the largest and most important libraries in the world. Many new forms of media and publications have emerged during the course of its history spanning more than one hundred years. At the same time, progress in the field of information technology is developing in increasingly rapid steps which, in turn, is influencing the behaviour of library users. The German National Library has to respond continuously to these changes in order to fulfil its legal mandate. To ensure an adequate response, it must review its objectives and set priorities. It must also draw up a financially viable roadmap for achieving its objectives.

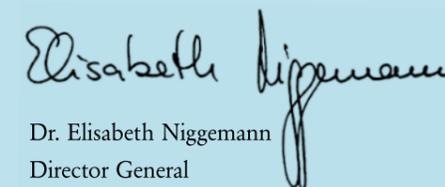
As the first step in this direction, the library developed its “Strategic Priorities 2013–2016” in which it set out its short and medium term objectives for daily operations. This was immediately followed by a process of clarification of the long-term objectives: preparatory analyses, discussions and assessments by both external and internal experts from various fields (taken from interviews, articles and future workshops). This process was accompanied by a dialogue with the advisory committees and the Administrative Council of the German National Library.

All of which provided the basis for formulating the long-term objectives. The result is summarised in this document.

It is intended to serve as a compass which indicates the direction for the next ten years. The actual planning of the stages and the specific topics needing to be addressed along the way can then be based on this. Concepts are developed and priorities set for individual products and processes and for personnel development which can be used to derive the next strategic priorities for 2017 to 2020 and 2021 to 2024.

In a world in which new trends can fundamentally alter society within a matter of years, it may appear questionable to set objectives for a period of ten years. Yet it is crucial to plan for the future if major development steps are to be effective—with the proviso that the result is not a rigid commitment, and that all parties remain in constant dialogue.

In 2016 the German National Library and its employees, its various bodies and key partner institutions will begin to implement the newly formulated objectives. All experience gained during the implementation will be used in turn to refine the long-term objectives.



Dr. Elisabeth Niggemann
Director General

THE MANDATE

Under its legal mandate, the German National Library collects the media works issued in Germany since 1913, as well as German media works, translations of German media works into other languages and foreign language media works about Germany. The media works include all text, image and sound recording-based works made available in physical or non-physical form to the public, including musical works. Only cinematic works in which music is not to the fore, as well as works exclusively transmitted by broadcasting services are not included in the collection mandate. The German National Library catalogues each work in a user-friendly manner, indexing them openly, reliably and based on current international standards. This permits them to be retrieved and used worldwide. It deploys appropriate preservation measures to

ensure the permanent usability of its collections. Accordingly it makes a substantial contribution to providing a stable information infrastructure for science and for culture, both in Germany and internationally. Here, it collaborates closely with the relevant specialist institutions in Germany and abroad and participates actively in national and international expert organisations. It also runs the German Exile Archive 1933–1945, the Anne-Frank-Shoah Library and the German Museum of Books and Writing.

The German National Library believes that its mandate includes an obligation to adapt and develop its activities and processes continuously and consistently in response to developments in the forms of media and publication. In the coming years, it will orient itself primarily to the following principles:

1

COLLECT &
PRESERVE

The extensive collections of text, image or sound recording-based publications issued since 1913 in Germany or in German, constitute a comprehensive, objective, unbiased and permanently preserved representation of a major part of the cultural heritage of Germany based on the library's legal mandate.

3

PRESENT &
INSPIRE

It negotiates with rights owners to obtain rights or licenses for the worldwide use of its holdings. It uses innovative methods to explore the diversity of its holdings and makes these available for use within the reading rooms and—where possible—also outside the library.

2

DOCUMENT &
DISSEMINATE

It is a major global centre for bibliographic information. Its reliable, digitally cross-linked, freely and readily usable data promote the visibility of culture and knowledge in the information age.

4

INTEGRATE &
ORGANISE

It cooperates with other conceptually and technologically leading institutions and jointly initiates and coordinates innovations aimed at forging ever closer global cultural, scientific and educational networks.

“The extensive collections of text, image or sound recording–based publications issued since 1913 in Germany or in German, constitute a comprehensive, objective, unbiased and permanently preserved representation of a major part of the cultural heritage of Germany based on the library’s legal mandate.”

Current situation

- Roughly 4,000 publications are added to our holdings every day—a figure which is steadily rising. The collections of the German National Library currently total approximately 28.7 million physical media works as a result of the legal deposit regulation and the additional acquisitions of books, periodicals, maps, sound recordings, sheet music and literary estates.
- Digital media now account for half of the acquisitions. New methods and processes have had to be set up for their collection and archiving. The library has already succeeded in integrating many (but not yet all) publishers and producers of digital media into its new delivery methods. New distribution channels have recently evolved, especially in the field of music, requiring the development of new processes.
- Web archiving is still also in its infancy. Approximately 1,100 selected websites are currently being regularly harvested. Comprehensive crawling of the “.de” domain has also been experimented with. This is restricted, however, by technical and financial limitations.
- The maintenance of books and other carrier-bound materials requires increased preventive activities such as deacidification, collection care, preservation and restoration, or the precautionary creation of secondary forms by means of digitisation.

OUR GUIDELINES

Neutrality and completeness remain the basic principles of collection building.

An open knowledge society requires a cultural memory and thus places where its publications are collected—independently and comprehensively. The way we collect is therefore unbiased and aims at completeness, regardless of the form of the publications or the way in which they are released. The digital revolution has had little or no effect on the goal of completeness in the collecting of physical media. New procedures must be developed for digital publications and the notion of completeness must be redefined, yet we are continuing (and refining) the established practices and procedures for printed works. At the same time we are taking a close look at Web services and new forms of media, while striving to achieve completeness in the medium-term in the collection of commercial and university publications in digital form.

The aim is to capture the diversity of the Web and to document its development.

The collection of every particle of information published on the Web in Germany and its lossless archiving is neither desirable nor possible in terms of capacity and resources. Our goal, however, is to create a representative, unbiased overview of this testimony and its development by collecting “snapshots” of the Web, and to preserve this for the future. Some websites play a particularly important role in the social and academic discourse and should be preserved as models of their kind as completely and authentically as possible. To achieve this, nonspecific mass approaches and special customised solutions need to be found in collaboration with the providers.

Selection and quality assurance are subject to an open and transparent process.

Just as the decision whether printed publications are to be collected is based on formal (and not content-related) criteria, appropriate criteria also need to be defined for digital publications. In cases where there are no publishers and other intermediary agents to act as appraising and regulating institutions between authors and their readers, we need to organise the selection ourselves. Here we seek intensive dialogue with experts, stakeholders and cultural institutions,

openly publicising our approach. We also want to encourage public participation in our collection profiling through a range of digital services.

We create international approaches for international production.

Only through cooperation with other cultural institutions is it possible to work towards standardised procedures for global digital distribution platforms. Ideally we are looking to create international and cross-institutional processes which may help the relevant depositors and memory institutions to perform their respective “legal deposit” roles. We also promote the necessary legislation and technical solutions.

We develop procedures and standards for the preservation of media from the 20th and 21st centuries.

Our goal remains preservation of the original publication and the original use experience. Systematic description of the condition and the usability of the holdings is to be greatly expanded in order to identify which support measures are needed, and to ensure sufficient time for devising and scheduling these. In cooperation with other memory institutions and relevant bodies, we will continue to develop best practices, recommendations and standards for the preservation of digital and physical media.

We are committed to the development of common, trustworthy archive infrastructures.

The permanent preservation of the growing digital heritage can only be ensured in the long term by disparately funded services that are operated by specialised institutions. In the area of Web archiving, cooperation is also the best option from the perspective of usage: no institution by itself is capable of setting up an all-content-embracing Web archive which meets all technical requirements. Here we are committed to shared solutions for Germany and Europe based on distributed responsibilities. This would also allow solutions to be developed on a cooperative and uniform basis for fundamental issues such as the protection of personal rights. For this reason we are continuing to participate in initiatives and projects aimed at paving the way for common and trustworthy technical solutions.

The changing environment

- The proportion of content which is only available in digital form is rising. Such content is online, dynamic, interactive, interlinked and takes advantage of the possibilities offered by mobile devices.
- International platforms for the use and distribution of digital content are gaining in relevance.
- Publications issued without the involvement of traditional music labels and publishers are enjoying increasing popularity. This often results in the loss of established forms of evaluation and selection within the publication process.
- Digital formats come and go within a short space of time, web offerings are becoming more complex, more and more content is only available on access-restricted, proprietary platforms.
- The consequence of all this is that publications are released in a variety of formats, meaning that more agreements need to be made with individual providers, and specific delivery solutions must be found.
- Media boundaries are eroding, historical content is being reissued in digital form. Private lives and everyday culture have entered the public sphere.

Challenges

- Making an appropriate selection: the diversity of the Web is relevant as testimony, but it is not possible to collect everything.
- Finding solutions for handling large amounts of different kinds of data.
- Setting up a legal framework for cooperative collection and archiving.
- Drawing up practicable rules for institutionally and territorially distributed responsibilities.
- Anticipating the ephemeral nature of many Web services and raising awareness among providers and users of the associated problems.
- Ensuring the usability of digital media despite the permanent evolution of formats and the dependency on proprietary devices.
- Devising and applying international standards for the collection and archiving of digital content.
- Protecting personal rights (including the “right to be forgotten”) while still fulfilling the archive mandate.

“It is a major global centre for bibliographic information. Its reliable, digitally cross-linked, freely and readily usable data promote the visibility of culture and knowledge in the information age.”

Current situation

- The most important function of our cataloguing work is to provide a national bibliographic reference: our freely accessible data document everything that has been published in Germany, in German or about Germany since 1913. They form the basis of our own search services and are integrated into the retrieval and information systems of our partner institutions around the world.
- We provide services for different systems: our data interfaces and formats can be used by both well-established and newly-developed library systems. We supply user groups inside and outside the library community by applying universal web standards.
- We are working towards the application of international and contemporary standards for cataloguing and for data exchange and coordinate these in the German-speaking countries and together with partner institutions worldwide.
- At present the cataloguing environments and systems are only insufficiently linked to external databases. In addition, there is a lack of coordinated processes between institutions.
- Support in the form of automated processes is on track, but much still needs to be developed.

OUR GUIDELINES

We ensure that the documentation of our holdings is up-to-date, comprehensive and reliable.

Even in times of increasing numbers of digital publications, we fulfil the legal mandate for the bibliographic indexing of our collections without exception and in reliable quality. We will continue to break new ground in the cataloguing and supply of data.

Our cataloguing is geared towards practical use.

The usability of our data is our overriding priority. Therefore, we regularly analyse the use of our data and ensure their suitability for standard applications.

As a data hub, we ensure a permanent supply of up-to-date bibliographic information.

We develop a differentiated data supply programme for our partner institutions in the fields of culture, science and education, and also for information services. We treat bibliographic records not as discrete units, but as containers of information: any basic information, once made available, is gradually enriched by us and our partner institutions with further data. All updates can be understood and used by all.

Our data can be deployed universally and flexibly and can be cooperatively supplemented.

We ensure the expandability and flexible reusability of our data: a universal core of information should be suitable for different scenarios and able to be used outside the library context. This core can be supplemented by technical and application-specific additions which we or our partner institutions provide.

Cataloguing means linking: our data constitute an information network.

With a view to the “Web of data” trend we are committed to producing semantically linked, machine-readable data. We will model the information on our resources as a network of relationships between entities such as works, persons, corporations, events and places.

We link our data nationally and globally.

Based on the principle of linked data we are building more and more bridges to other databases at the national and global level. Through these connections

we are adding our holdings data to the digital knowledge network. The resulting cross-linked information forms the basis for additional access points, improved data and cross-organisation services provided by the German National Library and third parties.

We make use of the possibilities offered by automatic procedures.

Only with machine support is it possible to cope with the growing amount of new publications to be catalogued. Automatic techniques provide technical advantages which we also want to exploit. For example, they allow additional structural levels, such as individual articles, to be rendered accessible in searches. In addition, the processes can be optimised and then reapplied for all digital resources, thus allowing improved results to be obtained. We are also investing in better computer-based support for the intellectual process of cataloguing printed materials. We are working on the development of processes which take into account and combine the different—complementary—strengths of humans and machines.

We are expanding our capabilities in the area of bulk data evaluation and harmonisation.

The ability to evaluate and process large amounts of data is becoming increasingly important for our work: it is necessary for large-scale rectification of errors and inconsistencies in our data and to bring the data up to modern standards. It is also the basis for many automated cataloguing processes and for efficient comparisons with external databases. And it is a precondition for the systematic analysis of the data base for quality assurance and optimisation purposes. For this reason we intend to expand our expertise in this field.

We are pioneers in the field of modern cataloguing.

We apply new procedures, tools and methods for contemporary cataloguing and information provision at an early stage. We contribute to the work of international committees, putting forward ideas and defining requirements in cooperative research projects for sustainable cataloguing. In this role we are also working on the developing of cataloguing codes and formats in international committees for the benefit of libraries in Germany, Austria and the German-speaking parts of Switzerland as well as for other cultural institutions.

The changing environment

- More and more data are being produced, combined and analysed worldwide (“big data”, “data mining”).
- The ability to evaluate the constantly increasing masses of data is becoming increasingly important. Related technologies and professions are evolving (“data analysts”).
- Information which is not featured prominently in the results of large search engines loses visibility and importance.
- A virtual network of information (“semantic Web”, “Web of data”) is superimposed on the real world.
- “Stand-alone” specialist databases are merging on the Internet (“linked data”).

Challenges

- Tackling the sharp increase in the amount of media to be catalogued.
- Ensuring that the data created are suitable both for traditional and new applications.
- Reconciling the freshness and reliability of the data.
- Achieving visibility despite the growing flood of data.
- Setting up a cultural data network between the various sectors and improving access to the global heritage.
- Establishing international and cross-system cataloguing processes.
- Incorporating external expertise in our cataloguing work.
- Creating sustainable work environments and processes for cataloguing.
- Expanding the expertise and infrastructure in the areas of data analysis and automatic cataloguing.

“It negotiates with rights owners to obtain rights or licenses for the worldwide use of its holdings. It uses innovative methods to explore the diversity of its holdings and makes these available for use within the reading rooms and—where possible—also outside the library.”

Current situation

- As a reference library we offer access to the entire collection on our premises. Use of the digital resources is growing rapidly. Specially equipped media workstations are required for this.
- Rights permitting, we allow use of digital publications outside of the library premises. We make use of the possibility to license out-of-commerce works and publications issued prior to 1966 in Germany ourselves and provide a central service to other libraries for the licensing of such works.
- People searching for information via the Internet can launch catalogue searches around the clock and retrieve growing amounts of extra information such as tables of contents and book covers in addition to cataloguing data. This service is popular and there is rising demand for it, however it needs to be continuously modernised, both technically and functionally.
- We offer special presentations of selected topics such as exile and book history. Virtual and physical exhibitions, educational media, events and publications provide an opportunity to discuss current events and developments on the basis of historical testimony.

OUR GUIDELINES

We know our users' requirements.

We put our users at the heart of our access services. To meet their needs more effectively, we remain in close contact with the users themselves and with partner institutions, and seek to intensify the contact with the various groups.

We create places for encounters, for research, for learning and inspiration.

Within our financial and architectural possibilities we continuously modernise the premises of both sites. In response to changing usage patterns and the growing amount of digital resources, we are creating better opportunities for working with digital content. We want to take greater account of the communication and movement needs of our users in addition to meeting the continuing demand for spaces devoted to quiet working. The extension spaces at both locations create the option for establishing library areas with flexible architecture which can adapt to changing ways of working in research and education in addition to new dedicated stack areas. As a cultural location, we offer a forum for social debate.

Digitisation, licensing, open access: The access we provide to our resources is as open as is legally possible.

We also endeavour to make our digital collections accessible outside the rooms of the library, copyright and other intellectual property rights permitting. To this end, within our financial limits and where appropriate, we are investing in the digitisation and the licensing of out-of-commerce works. Our digitisation projects should have a thematic focus and therefore support research, cultural projects, and social debate in a targeted manner. The financial resources required for this should be raised as third-party funding.

We are involved in copyright discussions, as we attach a great deal of importance to the protection of intellectual property rights. At the same time we point out gaps and contradictions in existing regulations and formulate suggestions for changes on the basis of our practical experience as an archive library.

We take active part in the discussions on contemporary copyright regulations that protect the rights of creators, and draw attention to regulations that represent a source of legal uncertainty for archive libraries or restrict access for cultural, academic and educational purposes. We support

pragmatic regulations which respect the interests of the copyright holders for the use of archived free Web content and text fragments, in particular in the context of research and education.

Up-to-date and complete, any time, anywhere: we are modernising online access to the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie.

It will remain crucial for future generations to be able to use a neutral service to search for published materials. The distribution of national bibliographic information via commercial third-party providers is not sufficient for this. We are therefore modernising our search services and offering state-of-the-art, barrier-free direct access to the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie. The intention is for this complex bibliographic information to be used increasingly in the background to support intelligent searches, thereby making user-unfriendly expert searches increasingly superfluous.

Nudging providence in the right direction: we provide access for explorers.

Modern services make it possible to browse and forage for hidden thematic connections across collections, media types and time frames. By setting up a personal interest profile, users should also be able to gain personalised access to our holdings and new acquisitions. A varying selection of theme-based showcases will be designed to highlight selected parts of the collection.

We develop services for the automated analysis of the digital resources and all metadata.

We create new services that support modern, data-based research approaches. In expanding this area, we are collaborating with research partners on “digital humanities” support projects.

We develop long-term presentation concepts for our collections and topics.

The presentation methods for the German Exile Archive, the German Museum of Books and Writing and special collections are being developed. Our exhibitions at the Leipzig and Frankfurt sites display special exhibits as originals. And, they also supplement our virtual exhibitions which can be accessed from anywhere in the world. We always address current issues in order to stimulate public interest and to bring history to life. Here, we cooperate with universities, schools and other educational and cultural institutions.

The changing environment

- The advances in the field of artificial intelligence mean that algorithms are taking over the processing and presentation of information in more and more areas.
- Information searches are increasingly being conducted by a handful of market leaders. Their algorithms determine the visibility of cultural objects in everyday life.
- Content which is not accessible at any time and from anywhere loses visibility and importance.
- Data and media are increasingly being used via mobile devices and in interaction with the actual environment (“augmented reality”).
- The automatic analysability of digital resources is giving rise to new research areas and approaches (“digital humanities”).
- The trend is moving away from conventional reading rooms towards different learning and research rooms containing equipment that permits computer-assisted analysis of the resources.

Challenges

- Providing up-to-date and modern access to our collections and their topics.
- Maintaining and increasing the visibility of our collections and services.
- Continuing to reach our various user groups.
- Adapting rooms and services to the changing user requirements.
- Searching for better ways to use our resources, while respecting the rights of authors and other rights holders.
- Making more content available (including outside the premises) through digitisation and licensing, and providing the necessary technical, organisational and financial framework for this.
- Providing services and tools for analysis of the resources.
- Keeping pace with technical progress.

“It cooperates with other conceptually and technologically leading institutions and jointly initiates and coordinates innovations aimed at forging ever closer global cultural, scientific and educational networks.”

Current situation

- Engaging in activities which extend beyond the confines of our own library is explicitly enshrined in our legal mandate. To this end, we have been working successfully together with a variety of specialist cultural, academic and educational institutions for many years at the national and international level on a basis of trust.
- We define the main areas of standardisation work and function as a competence centre (and are regarded as such) in the fields of cataloguing, collection care, licensing, data formats, data interfaces and long-term preservation.
- We also offer central services and free software, such as a central national service for the licensing of out-of-commerce works (VW-LiS), a cooperation platform for digital preservation (AREDO) and a service for the allocation of stable web addresses for the reliable quotation of digital sources (URN-Service).
- Our authority data and linking services have allowed us and our partner institutions to set up a collective data base. The service is in great demand from museums and archives, although it is currently still primarily focused on library interests.
- As coordinator of the competence network and service centre for the joint „Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek“ project, we contribute to its further development in coordination with the relevant bodies and support cultural and knowledge institutions in integrating their collections. Furthermore, one of the two project managers is based in the German National Library.

OUR GUIDELINES

Our central services promote collaboration.

More than ever we are dependent on close cooperation with our partner institutions. At the same time, IT progress is providing better options for organising the cooperation and integrating it into our daily operations. For this reason we are developing our range of central services for other cultural and scientific institutions so that we in turn can benefit from their work. Where possible, we will use existing services already provided by third parties and integrate them into our own. Our partner institutions should be able to collaborate even more closely in the environment we provide. In return, we benefit from the expertise they contribute and the growing knowledge base.

We attach importance to joint cataloguing processes.

We intend to further develop the existing approaches for collaborative cataloguing in cooperation projects. Only by means of jointly used and maintained databases and interconnected processes is it possible to conduct contemporary cataloguing which is based more on the linking of data than on multiple storage. In addition, we will redouble our efforts to evaluate external data sources (so-called third-party data)—for example, publisher announcements, factual databases, online encyclopaedias or dictionaries and bibliographic data from international sources—and make this additional information available to our partner institutions in the form of a central data pool.

Our authority data service builds bridges between the data of the different cultural sectors.

Our range of authority data will play an important role in the area of data linking: our bibliographic information is linked via authority data to the databases of other libraries and cultural institutions. The cooperatively maintained entities constitute key points of connection for establishing a cultural data network. Therefore, together with our partners, we are planning to open up the service to all sectors in the cultural domain, while ensuring that all library-related concerns continue to be taken into account. This will also benefit interdisciplinary projects such as the Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek and Europeana.

We are committed to the Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek. Cross-discipline collaborations prevent gaps in the “cultural memory”.

Extended cooperation in the area of collecting will carry special weight in the future. This is because

the overlapping of Web collection mandates is likely to result in some objects being collected several times over and others not at all. Our commitment to the Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek (DDB) illustrates our approach: to us and all other cultural institutions, the DDB represents a key strategic platform for putting our own mandates onto a more efficient and user-oriented basis. The cooperation with the DDB will help preserve and guarantee the availability of digital services offered by German cultural institutions, and to make these available to users in a comprehensive service. We will therefore continue to support the development of the DDB in our current roles, with our services and with our expertise.

We are committed to supporting innovative developments.

Our mandate requires ongoing and intensive exploration of new forms of publication and developments in media technologies and user habits. We regularly collaborate on research in this field and share our experience and developments with our partner institutions.

We participate in socio-political debates on legal and cultural policy issues.

We seek dialogue with a variety of stakeholders from government, culture, academia, the creative industries and the media in informal talks, workshops and conferences to discuss the role of memory institutions in the age of the Internet and to promote a contemporary legal, financial and organisational framework.

We are committed to building a cooperative network for culture, science and education.

Networks do not create themselves. Cultural and academic institutions are required for their development and functionality. They organise the interaction in clearly distributed roles at the national and global level, assume responsibility and help create an environment of trustworthiness, confidence and stability. Dispensing with coordinators would weaken the networks and ultimately make their tasks the responsibility of a handful of multinational, profit-oriented companies. This represents an ideal position for the German National Library to responsibly fulfil its legal mandate and, together with its partners, to establish and play a significant role in the preservation of and access to significant parts of the German cultural heritage since 1913.

- Given the great complexity and major challenges involved, the organisation of collaboration with many partner institutions is an important prerequisite for fulfilling our legal mandate.

The changing environment

- Services and infrastructures which have hitherto been run on a local or regional basis are increasingly being replaced by Web services provided by central providers (“cloud computing”, “Internet of Services”).
- European integration and the powerful waves of immigration to Europe are giving rise to a growing need for cross-border cultural services.
- Major historical holdings are being given a second home on the Web through digitisation projects. However, their long-term preservation is generally not included in the project financing.
- The technical infrastructure requirements of cultural institutions are converging.

Challenges

- Improving the legal, financial and organisational framework for ongoing cooperation.
- Taking advantage of synergies and organising cooperation between cultural and academic institutions worldwide.
- Defining collection areas and responsibilities.
- Establishing common infrastructures and developing coordinated processes.
- Combining individual collections from various institutions through digitisation and data linking to create a global, digital, cultural memory.

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(Leipzig, Frankfurt am Main)

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Project coordination

Jürgen Kett

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Raufeld Medien GmbH

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Marketing und Kommunikation

Adickesallee 1, 60322 Frankfurt am Main

b.fischer@dnb.de

www.dnb.de

