AN LEABHARLANN : THE IRISH LIBRARY

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Guidelines For Contributors

An Leabharlann: The Irish Library publishes articles on libraries, librarianship and related topics of interest to the library and information community on the island of Ireland. The Editorial Board invites original, unpublished articles for publication. Articles should be between **1,500** and **3,000** words. Occasionally, longer articles may be published.

Articles

- Manuscripts will be reviewed by the Editorial Board.
- Authors are asked to submit an informative abstract of not more than 200 words. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of statements and references in their articles.
- Images which visually support the article are welcomed. Authors should also submit a photograph of themselves. Original photographs and/or high-resolution scans (300 dpi) would be most helpful.

Format

- Manuscripts should be submitted by email attachment or on disc as Word document only. Text should be formatted in Times New Roman 12pt, double-spaced, with margins of 2.54cm (i.e. standard A4 margins). Formatting of text (e.g. italics and bold) should be kept to a minimum.
- Authors should provide their name, organization, position and the title of the article at the top of the first page. If the article was presented at a conference, details of the sponsoring organization, the date and title of the conference should be given.

- Book reviews should include the full title, author or editor, publication details and price.
- Conference reports should include details such as the sponsoring organization, the date, place and title of the conference.

Style

- Microsoft Word and other word processing programs allow for a language to be selected. Please ensure that the language selected is either UK or Ireland English (i.e. NOT United States English).
- The Oxford Style Manual should be followed for acronyms, capitalization, captions, punctuation, quotations and tables.
- *An Leabharlann: The Irish Library* uses the Harvard system for references.

Editing

- *An Leabharlann: The Irish Library* reserves the right to make revisions and amendments.
- Substantive changes to articles will be discussed with the author. For consistency, all material submitted will be copy-edited.
- For additional information on style and referencing, please consult: Ritter, R.M. (Ed.). (2003) The Oxford Style Manual. Oxford: OUP

Copy Deadlines

- 31 July 2021 for October 2021 issue
- 31 December 2021 for March 2022 issue

Editorial

This issue comes not just in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic but three months into life with Brexit. It is the second issue covering libraries during the pandemic. Colleagues suggested to me recently that these issues will serve as an archive of COVID- 19 for CILIP Ireland and the Library Association of Ireland.

While the last issue covered the large sectors of the profession- academic, health, public and LibrariesNI there is a veritable cornucopia of articles covering different special libraries and how they responded to COVID-19. Most are from colleagues in the Special Libraries sector, while two articles describe niche services within the public library sector- local history and housebound services. Libraries covered include the Contemporary Music Centre, the Insurance Institute of Ireland, law libraries, National Gallery of Ireland and school libraries.

Recurring topics across several articles include communication, wellbeing, literacy and costs.

The importance of communication is stressed at a time when we have to be socially distant even at work. Coffee breaks? A few words and the latest gossip at the photocopier? They have been consigned, temporarily, to ancient history.

Mental health and wellbeing are topics of concern to individuals, families and workplaces. Colleagues from the HSE libraries describe how they organised keeping in touch with all staff- from virtual coffees to the Christmas party.

Several articles describe how work practices have changed because of the need to follow public health guidelines. Specific benefits include upskilling and the learning of new skills especially digital skills. There is also less reliance on bureaucratic rules that have nothing to do with the facilitation of access to knowledge.

The pandemic has also had implications for library buildings. While newer buildings would have been built to higher standards and with the benefit of Health and Safety regulations, it would seem that older buildings may need to be assessed in terms of separate entrances/exits, good ventilation etc.

Erika Csibi's article on Media literacy is essential in an era of Fake News.   The exhibition The Glass Room-misinformation edition Is described. The role of libraries in the provision of authoritative information and sources is highlighted. Digital literacy, Health literacy and art literacy are also discussed elsewhere.

Items of historical interest are referenced throughout. While the Archbishop Robinson Library, Armagh celebrates 250 years, this year marks the centenary of the death of Sir Charles A. Cameron. A former professor and President of RCSI, his main interest and work was in public health.

The importance of professional networks is mentioned in Robin Stewart's article. Both CILIP Ireland and LAI, in addition to CONUL and SLARI have all provided guidance and support to library staff on an on-going basis. The rising costs of electronic resources has been mentioned. Professional associations and networks are important for advocacy on this topic: https://www.libraryassociation.ie/ irish-librarians-call-for-action-on-the-electronic-content-crisis- facing-libraries-and-library-users/. This is reminiscent of the ACRL campaign in the late 1980s/early 1990s when periodical publishers were attempting to charge exorbitant rates.

The pandemic shines light on the inequalities globally and in Ireland. Brian Galvin suggests that disparities in access to healthcare are mirrored by inequalities in access to digital information. Kathleen Moran's article on JCSP libraries also highlights the inequalities in education which are exacerbated by inequalities in access to digital education. As schools changed to online teaching and learning, the inequalities in terms of technology are striking. Around the country, there are still problems with access to high speed broadband.

Several LAI members have been busy publishing. Details of three books and one report are included. The RIA report compiled by Siobhan Fitzpatrick and Mary O'Dowd is incisive in its description of staffing levels in the National Library of Ireland and the National Archives of Ireland. The authors recommend increasing staffing levels at both cultural institutions in the medium and long-term. They also recommend continued support for the public libraries strategy document: https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/56d1d4- our-public-libraries-2022-inspiring-connecting-and-empowering- commun/

Given that staffing levels have been static and decreasing, it would seem that there is no appreciation that increased services mean change- how we work, what staff are needed? The staffing levels demonstrate a lack of forward planning in this country. The same lack of forward planning is seen in the establishment figures for public health specialists.

Next year we will have the postponed Census. But, we do not need to wait until then to know that the population has risen.

Finally, there is one change to the Editorial Board. Terry O'Brien(WIT) retired at the end of December 2020 having served on the Board for several years. His contribution is acknowledged. Philip Russell (TUDublin—Tallaght) joins the Board.

Marjory Sliney, Editor, editor@libraryassociation.ie

Communication is More Important Than Travel

Blaíthín Hurley

'Flu in Ireland!', screams the headline on an article in the *Freeman's Journal* of 30 October, 1918.[1] The article tells us that as a precaution against the spread of the disease libraries and schools would close with immediate effect and that all public buildings were to be disinfected. History shows us that 2020 was not the first time Ireland experienced a pandemic, nor is it the first time public libraries have been required to close due to a public health issue.

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1   https://archive-irishnewsarchive-com.ucc.idm.oclc.org/Olive/APA/INA.Edu/Default.aspx#panel=document

In an effort to stem the tide of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ireland, the Government, echoing the earlier decision of its predecessor, resolved last March to close all public libraries. In the intervening months, libraries have been unable to fully operate, with physical access severely curtailed. As a Senior Library Assistant with special responsibility for Local Studies in Waterford Libraries, my first thought when we were told to close last March was: did this ever happen in Ireland before? My question was quickly answered and some preliminary searches proved that the 'Spanish Flu' pandemic of 1918 had triggered a similar response from authorities, which resulted in the closure of public libraries for up to 6 weeks.[2] In 1918 when the libraries closed, many thousands of people where immediately shut off from easy access to books, newspapers, magazines and journals. This, is where the comparison ends. In 2020/21 library users not only have full access to e-books, e-newspapers and e-magazines, along with online classes and other learning opportunities; they can also carry out much of the research for which they previously used physical Local Studies resources, online. Working in the areas of history and learning, I decided to look on the temporary closure of the libraries as an opportunity to explore and embrace other methods to enable people to access Local History online resources and, reach out to a wider audience.

With a natural interest in learning and researching, I latched onto the many webinars that began to spring up as 'lockdown' became the norm. One by one universities and educational institutions around the world opened up the doors of their lecture halls and seminar rooms to the wider public, and invited everyone in, albeit in a virtual manner. For me, 2020 was undoubtedly the year of the webinar. Larger institutions such as the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford started the trend by allowing free access to their research seminars.[3] Suddenly speakers were addressing upwards of 300 attendees

2   'What was life in Ireland like during the 1918 flu pandemic?' . Ida Milne and *RTE Brainstorm*, https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2020/0309/1121159-ireland-1918-flu-pandemic/
3   https://www.eua.eu/events/134:eua-webinar-COVID-19-and-changes-in-learning-and-teaching.html

from across the globe, instead of the usual 20-30. Not only were speakers able to disseminate their research faster than ever before but they found that their audience had changed too. Whereas once it had been presumed that only academic colleagues and coerced students would attend these seminars, now everyone from secondary school students to retirees were watching, participating and learning. As the idea of the webinar took hold across the world, it seemed that this would be an ideal medium for Local Studies to use.

The easiest way to exploit the idea of the webinar was to record a series of short introductory pieces telling people how to access the library's online Local Studies resources: http://waterfordlibraries.ie/video-tutorials-online-resources/. These are on the website for anyone to access and you do not have to be a library user to access them. Another great opportunity that presented itself was the ability to substitute the planned in-branch talks for Heritage Week in August 2020 with online versions.

By the late summer I had been attending academic and informative webinars for some months and was very taken by their content, presentation and production styles. While various organisations across the globe tried different ways of presenting their webinars, I watched, listened and learned. Consequently, the libraries' Heritage Week talks were recorded and uploaded onto the libraries' website, and they are still there: http://waterfordlibraries.ie/heritage-week-2020/. That is the beauty of a recorded presentation on a website: it is always there and can be accessed by anyone, anywhere in the world, at any time.

This very useful format was used again in September for Culture Night. Recordings of musical performances and historic-themed talks were made. Again, these recordings were uploaded and are still available: http://waterfordlibraries.ie/culture-night-recordings-2020/.

Building on these virtual successes, Waterford Libraries, has been able to promote itself and its Local Studies resources to a much wider audience than could have been anticipated. This led to my invitation to present a number

of virtual talks, representing Waterford Libraries and the research opportunities which the library offers. The first talk formed part of University College Cork's (UCC) History Department's Research Seminar Series on 17 December 2020: https://ucc-ie.academia.edu/Bl%C3%A1ith%C3%ADnHurley. This was a virtual shop window which offered me the chance to bring together three institutions under one umbrella. These institutions were: Waterford Library Services, UCC and the Cotton Library – Lismore, Co. Waterford. The Cotton Library is a small, private diocesan library, attached to St. Carthage's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Lismore. The Cotton Library purchased a first edition copy of the seventeenth-century *Bedell Bible* (the first Irish translation of the Old Testament), in November 2020. In collaboration

with this library I had been asked to carry out some research on the book and I presented this research in the talk. By extension, Waterford Libraries, and its Local Studies, was showcased to a broad audience and is continuing to be promoted as this talk was recorded and is available online.

Once again, with surprisingly little effort, Waterford Libraries, found itself on a wider stage than would have happened if the paper had been presented in a small seminar room in UCC.

In December, Waterford Libraries' staff and interested members undertook training in podcasting and oral history collection under the title *Diverse Waterford*. This active integration of outreach access and cultural exchange has brought the library service and Local Studies even closer to the community. The skills acquired through this training are currently being put to use, with interviews being uploaded to the Libraries' website where they are accessible to everyone.

As we move into 2021, and find the pandemic is still with us, the time has come to ask ourselves what lessons we can learn from our ancestors who lived through the Spanish Flu outbreak? From my research into the era I learned that the consequences of that pandemic was the establishment of a better public health infrastructure, better housing and changes made in the social support system.[4] These are good lessons and are still relevant today, but what can libraries learn from the COVID-19 pandemic which can be used for the betterment, not just of the library service, but also for society in general? The provision of quality information appears to be the answer to this question.

The easiest, and for the general public (both library users and non-users alike) most accessible option, is the uploading of information onto the library's website. Libraries are places of inclusion and library websites are available for everyone to read. Library buildings have long been used as meeting places and centres of creativity. This engagement and creativity can continue during closure, but online we just have to adjust what our concept of a library is. Regarding Local Studies, research and access to historical information and

4   https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/projectsandcentres/srerc/ColvinMcLaughlin-DeathDemographyDenominator-May2020.pdf

documents are still available to researchers but we have to let people know where to go to find what they are looking for. In this way webinars, online tutorials and well-populated, well-signposted websites are an invaluable resource.

In Waterford Libraries one important lesson we have learned from the past year is that communication is more important than travel. As a researcher I have at times been frustrated by not being able to travel to the libraries and archives to access information, but I have also learned that there is another way to carry out research. More and more is being made available online and Local Studies in public libraries need to stay in touch with their users and provide as much virtual research documentation and information as possible. You might have noticed that all the references in this article are to online resources. Through providing historical and research-themed webinars Local

Studies can reach out to the community and assist in Lifelong Learning programmes, school and university research, and cultural exchange to anyone who is interested. Libraries, schools and public buildings may have had to close and restrict their physical services in 2020/21, just as they did in 1918, but we do not have to restrict our provision of information. The closure and altered work practices we encountered over the past year gave us, in Waterford Libraries Local Studies, the time to step back and think about how best to get our resources out to those who needed them. We had the opportunity to change how we communicate with our users into the future, and this change can only be for the better, no matter what the travel situation.

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ART IN THE PANDEMIC

Mary Clare O'Brien and Grace O'Boyle

Abstract

When the pandemic led to the National Gallery of Ireland's Reading Room closure last year, the Library and Archives team developed ways of continuing outreach initiatives that previously took place on-site. This article focuses on two of those initiatives exploring the positive and negative aspects of delivering them in an online context.

Keywords: *Art libraries, art archives, online outreach, digital services, COVID-19, pandemic, coronavirus.*

Introduction

The Library and Archives of the National Gallery of Ireland provide a range of services for various researchers including engaging talks and workshops about the archival and library collections. Key user groups include the public, students and Gallery staff. The pandemic forced the Library and Archives to improvise in order to continue to provide research services including an outreach programme. The Library and Archives team felt strongly about continuing to reach users in a meaningful way despite the online setting. The following paper explores two outreach projects: 'Collections Café' and a collaborative module with the National College of Art and Design (NCAD). This article addresses the drawbacks and benefits of bringing both initiatives online due to COVID-19 restrictions.


Details from previous NGI Library and Archives event with a display of objects including rare book 'Ireland: its scenery, character, &c.' by Mr. & Mrs. S. C. Hall (left) and watercolour from Frederick William Burton archive collection (right).

Project 1: Collections Café

'**Collections Café'** is an ongoing project with the objective of creating a welcoming space for staff from all departments within the National Gallery to learn about and engage with the Library and Archive collections in an informal manner. When the project began, staff were invited to attend coffee mornings followed by a talk and an activity relating to a themed display of materials. The aim of the event series was to provide an opportunity for staff to connect with collections they may not otherwise have contact with during day-to-day work in the Gallery. The initiative was originally designed by the Library and Archives team in late 2019. A ~~monthly~~ programme of 'Cafés' was planned to coincide

with activities inside and outside the Gallery starting in February 2020 with '**Archives at the Oscars'**. The team decided to make after-hour versions of the events available to the public titled '**Library Lates'**.
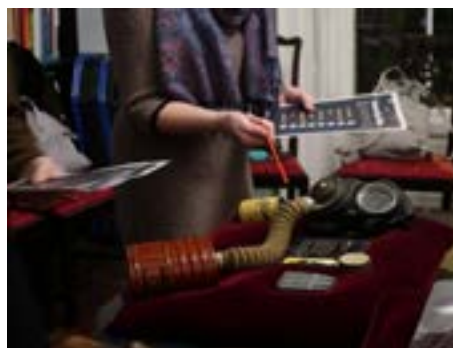
Left: Members of the public taking part in Oscars at the Archives event activity.
Right: National Gallery staff viewing Drawn from Nature-themed Collections Café.

Practical Adaptations

The launch and following workshop proved successful with positive feedback from staff including enquiries about future Collection Café events. However, the programme came to an abrupt halt when the country went into lockdown. Once it became clear that working from home was going to be a long-term arrangement, the Library and Archives team regrouped and decided to continue a version of the outreach project through Zoom. Many aspects of how the events were delivered would need to change.

Firstly, providing a 'Café' (i.e. coffee, tea and biscuits) was no longer a viable option. Instead of reading room displays with library and archival materials, talks would now be formatted as presentations on a shared screen. As the theme of most events had previously been based on exhibitions that were no longer accessible during COVID, the focus shifted to ongoing library and archive projects or seasonally themed talks. Finally, the available places for each event was reduced. While hosting talks online allows for a much larger audience than is possible to fit in the Gallery reading room, the decision was made to reduce the Zoom groups to 10 attendees in order to encourage informal conversation—a core feature of Collections Café.

Recording of Halloween Collections Café featuring Edgar Allan Poe's 'Tales of Mystery and Imagination', illustrated by Harry Clarke.

National Gallery staff in various costumes for the Halloween Collections Café via Zoom.

Obstacles with the Online Experience

Besides the obvious but occasional issues with internet connection, there were certain drawbacks to moving the project from in-person to online. The physical experience of interacting with the library and archival materials was lost which potentially altered the way the objects were interpreted. During lockdown, the items selected for the slideshows were limited to what was already digitised or photographed. When on-site access was possible, digitising material for the purpose of Collections Café was time-consuming compared to when material was simply brought to the reading room for display. Copyright restrictions offered further limitations to what objects were selected for online demonstration. Finally, there were a range of accessibility concerns as a result of the digital adaptations to the project, such as difficulty in lip reading when viewing presenters on zoom (for staff experiencing hearing impairment) and differing computer literacy levels of the zoom attendees.

Unexpected Connections

Despite there being difficulties bringing the programme online, there were also clear benefits. When collections are viewed virtually rather than handled, there is always comfort in the knowledge that no damage occurred in the process. Another important outcome were the connections made. Regular online events created a social space to combat isolation during COVID. While team meetings via Zoom were aimed at reorienting work goals, informal discussions during the Collections Cafés offered a setting similar to a coffee or lunchtime conversation where cross-department engagement could occur. Breakthroughs in engagement with the public also took place. One Library Lates attendee commented in the Zoom chat: "I am Kerry based having lived in London and Dublin for many years, it's always difficult to attend interesting talks and events, so the online access is incredible and is so appreciated". It became evident that the borderless nature of online activity allowed Library and Archives events to become less Dublin-centric.

Collection Café theme	Date	Attendance	Onsite or Online
Oscars at the Archives	6 Feb 2020	18 (max. 20)	Onsite
Drawn from Nature	5 Mar 2020	19 (max. 20)	Onsite
Sketchbooks of the NGI	6 Aug 2020	8 (max. 10)	Online (Zoom)
Donegal Carpet Factory & the ESB CSIA	10 Sep 2020	9 (max. 10)	Online (Zoom)
Halloween	23 Oct 2020	8 (max. 10)	Online (Zoom)
Denis Mahon's 110th Birthday	6 Nov 2020	8 (max. 10)	Online (Zoom)

Project 2: NCAD Collaboration

The ESB Centre for the Study of Irish Art (CSIA) is home to a vast and diverse collection of library and archival material relating to Irish art and its history held in the National Gallery of Ireland. For the past four years, the CSIA has collaborated with students and staff at NCAD in the development of an academic module that focuses on the research of archival objects from the CSIA collection. The module considers the process of in-depth research and provides the students with the tools necessary to utilise the Gallery's plethora of research resources.

Left: NGI Library and Archive staff and NCAD students attending the launch of the module's publication 'The Forgotten' at the National Gallery of Ireland (2019).

Right: NCAD students curating their chosen objects for display in the Sir Denis Mahon room at the National Gallery of Ireland (2019).

Structure of Module

Originally, the module took place on site in the CSIA Reading Room where students could access the objects, art library and CSIA staff in person. However, in October 2020 this format evolved due to COVID restrictions. The pandemic forced the CSIA team and staff at NCAD to re-imagine the module into an online context and so began the process of navigating through a very new virtual research landscape. The most significant adaptation was bringing the research sessions online to the Virtual Reading Room, which will be discussed in more detail later in this text. The priority was to maintain the integrity of the module and to uphold the project's three initial objectives: for each student to find, analyse and interpret an object from the CSIA collection.

Before the students set out to find an object of interest, the CSIA hosted three online sessions with the students via Zoom. These sessions aimed to contextualise the wider collection of Irish art at the Gallery and introduce the CSIA; to consider methods of 'reading objects' through the lens of material culture; and finally to instruct the students on how to use the various online research resources available. Following this, the students were encouraged to use the online library catalogue to identify record numbers of desired objects such as letters, sketches, photographs and exhibition catalogues. CSIA staff then retrieved digitised copies of the objects from the Gallery's remote network and collated a collection of digital objects for the students' to access in the Virtual Reading Room.

Life-drawing sketch by Irish artist Bea Orpen held in the Centre for the Study of Irish Art Collection at the National Gallery of Ireland (IE/NGI/IA/ORP2/1/3/15).

Virtual Reading Room

The Virtual Reading Room sought to emulate the on-site experience as accurately as possible to ensure that each student had an opportunity to access and consult material whilst being supervised by a member of CSIA staff. There were twenty students in total participating in the course who were divided into four groups. The module consisted of three Virtual Reading Room sessions for each group. Overall, the CSIA hosted 12 Virtual Reading Room sessions and three introductory workshops spread across October, November and December 2020. Each session was a milestone in terms of the students' research development from the initial interest phase to forming original interpretations of the object they chose and then sharing their research with the group and CSIA staff. The research generated in the Virtual Reading Room sessions culminated in a series of presentations given by each student on their chosen object.

Drawbacks

Naturally, there were a few challenges when bringing the module exclusively online. In terms of the archival objects that were used, there was some debate about whether the object could be interpreted as a physical or digital object. This was an exploration for all involved. Another obstacle presented in students requesting access to material that had not yet been digitised and, due to restrictions, it was not possible to capture new images. Therefore, there was some compromise on the student's end when finding alternative objects that suited their interest. Finally, there were also some issues with regards to accessing relevant library material as many texts had not yet been digitised.

Engagement

It was noted that there were higher levels of engagement this year as many students did not face some of the usual obstacles associated with on-site visits such as travel and scheduling. The students were also more concise about their desired subject area and objects. This was perhaps due to the module's transition online thus encouraging students to be specific in order to help facilitate the smooth running of the course. The Virtual Reading Room structure was also helpful in promoting student engagement as it provided a space for informal conversation about the objects and resources leading to a strong rapport between the CSIA staff and the students.

Conclusion

From the learnings acquired throughout these projects, the Library and Archives Department intend to integrate a hybrid model of digital and in-person engagement into future programs in order to facilitate a more diverse range of researchers. The new model seeks to improve accessibility through software such as closed captions on Zoom. Benefits such as decreasing social isolation and increasing engagement with researchers will inform outreach projects going forward. Overall, both experiences were positive and have revealed particular areas that can be improved upon.

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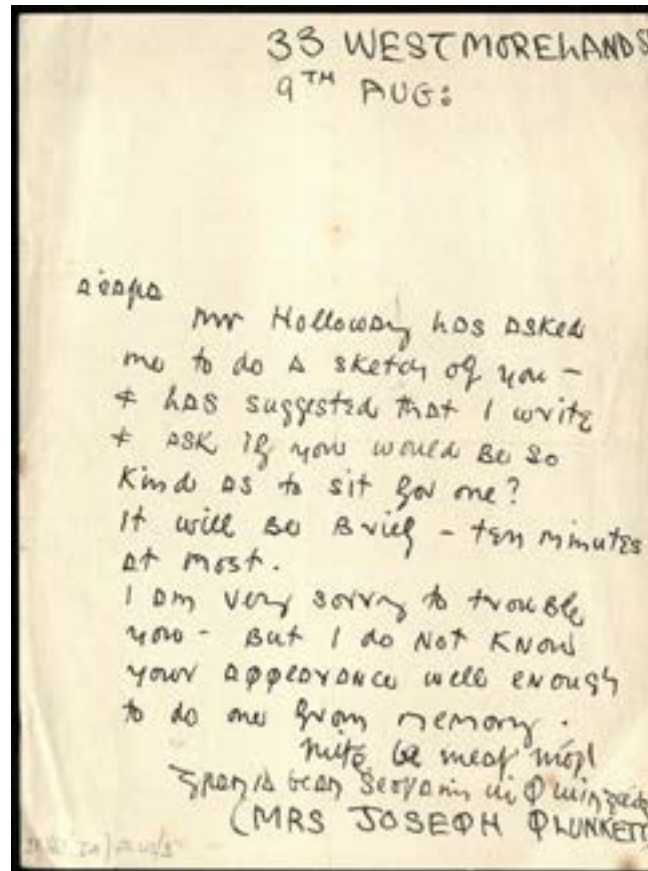
Letter written by artist and revolutionary Grace Gifford Plunkett held in the Centre for the Study of Irish Art Collection at the National Gallery of Ireland (IE/NGI/IA/PLU1/1/1).

Music in the time of COVID-19

Susan Brodigan

The Contemporary Music Centre (CMC) Ireland is the all-island archive and resource centre for new music, supporting the work of composers from the island of Ireland. Our team of six staff document, develop and promote contemporary music, meeting the needs of a wide variety of groups including composers, performers, musicologists, teachers, students and the public. As the Library Coordinator, my priorities lie in the areas of documentation and preservation, as well as liaising with library users.

Based in 19 Fishamble Street in Temple Bar Dublin, CMC library holds a collection of over ten thousand works by over two hundred Irish composers. We hold printed scores in our reference library, available for browsing and consultation (in normal times). The majority of these scores are unpublished, and so CMC's collection is a valuable and unique resource as the only comprehensive collection of contemporary music from Ireland. Our audiovisual archive also holds over ten thousand items, made up of commercial and archival recordings in various formats from LPs and cassettes to CDs and digital items. Some of this collection also includes interviews and talks by composers and performers.

COVID-19 restrictions brought a myriad of challenges. As with most other libraries, our doors closed to the public in March. The live music industry also came to a halt. The contemporary music festival New Music Dublin had just concluded, which had been a fantastic weekend-long celebration of new music from Ireland and around the world. Suddenly, our way of working and the new music scene in Ireland changed overnight.

Now working from home, I was faced with the task of running a library and archive service remotely, and my colleagues generally had to adapt to support our sector now thrown into turmoil. Thankfully, from an IT perspective I was well set up to work from home, with a laptop and VPN to connect me to our usual cataloguing system and servers. However, with live music suddenly suspended and schools and universities closed, I found that the nature of library enquiries also changed, and the library's services also had to adapt to meet these changed needs.

Since March 2020 our library service has operated almost exclusively in a virtual way. Students researching new music for either musicological or performance purposes have continued to engage with the library throughout the academic terms. Maynooth University MA in Musicology students who were on placement in CMC in February and March of last year were able to conclude their research from home. The new music community is an inventive and imaginative one and pivoted quickly to online performances, including our own online CMC Salon. These Salons featured a selection of works by composers from Ireland, showcased by some of Ireland's leading performers of contemporary music, along with insightful contributions about the music from the composers and performers, in conversation with CMC Director Evonne Ferguson.[1] To facilitate these online performances, the library continued to provide our regular service supporting performers researching and choosing new music.

Thanks in part to a recent 2018 major digitisation programme[2], and thanks also to the contemporary nature of our collection, a large percentage of CMC's collection exists in digital form. The majority of scores arriving into the library are now born-digital, with composers preferring to use software such as Sibelius and Finale to compose and engrave their music. Many recordings are also received in digital formats, as composers use platforms such as Bandcamp to release music. CMC received funding from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the

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1   *CMC Salon playlist (2020)* Youtube.com, added by CMCIreland [online]. Available at: https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdxKcfchrYDJeGsUqnee2NP78LT4OCuTL [Accessed 12 January 2021].
2   Brodigan, S. and Fennell, K., 2018. 2018 Digitisation Project. [online] Contemporary Music Centre. Available at: https://www.cmc.ie/news/030918/2018-digitisation-project [Accessed 30 December 2020].

Gaeltacht in 2018, which led to the digitisation of 250 cassettes, over 200 archival CDs and almost 300 scores. Digitised with preservation in mind, as well as forming part of a new collection management system, we never envisaged how vital all our digital collections were to become in 2020.

Composers continued to send new scores into the library throughout the year, with some composers taking the time to update their catalogues, typeset previously handwritten music works and create new editions of works. I developed a new online series to promote the library's collection, called 'Through the Digital Door'. Initially created to focus on works for solo instruments, this series has expanded across the year to highlight a range of works across our collection. Twenty-four editions of 'Through the Digital Door' were published throughout 2020, and explored works for solo instruments, string quartets, trios, electroacoustic works and chamber orchestra. We also celebrated Beethoven's 250th birthday, exploring works in our catalogue related to or inspired by Beethoven, 'Through the Digital Door'

also celebrated the music of composer Eric Sweeney, who passed away in July 2020, and celebrated the City of Derry International Choral Festival through works premiered and performed at this festival. Again, this series would not have been possible without our large digitised collection, with excerpts of scores and recordings included in each feature.

In a usual year, the library usually engages with music departments in universities across the country, where students engage with the library's collections for musicological research, performance materials and for typesetting and editing assignments. Over the autumn semester this year I presented to students via Zoom in Galway, Waterford and Dublin. Though Covid restrictions and working from home have presented various challenges to all libraries, we have continued and developed CMC's engagement with library users throughout the year.

Our digitised audio archive has also been vital in the production of our in-house podcast *amplify*, which is produced and presented by my colleagues
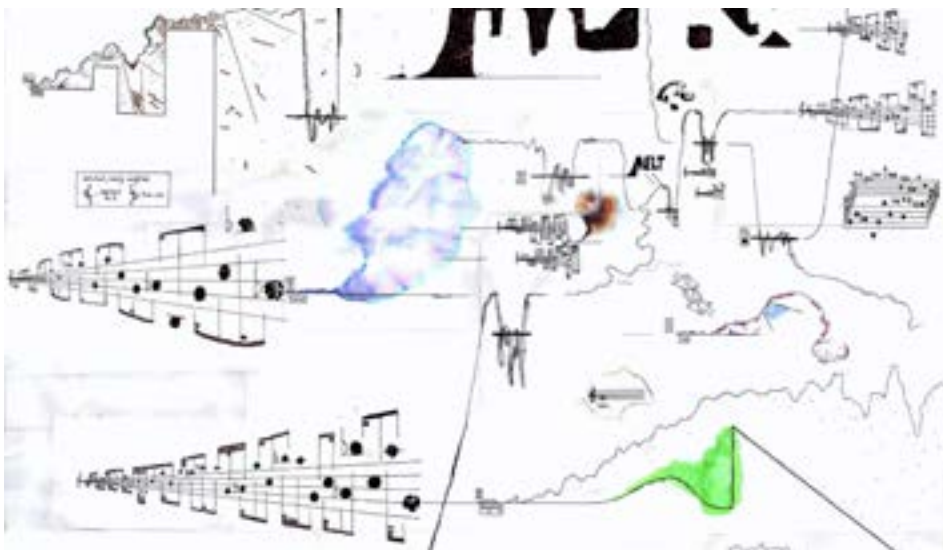
and explores current issues relating to new music in Ireland. Many of the musical examples used in the podcast are sourced from the audio archive.

CMC successfully applied for a Heritage Council /Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Community Heritage Grant in September 2020[3], which allowed us digitise a further tranche of archival recordings held on cassette in our archive. Almost 400 cassettes were digitised in this funded project, which now safeguards these recordings for the future. This newly-digitised collection was the focus of this year's Library Ireland Week exhibition on the CMC website[4], and was promoted across CMC's and the Heritage Council's social media.

As we look towards 2021, which will at least partly look very much like 2020, I hope that CMC's library can continue to provide resources and supports to our library users, either virtually or in our building in 19 Fishamble Street. We will continue to build a new collection management system, which aims to share our digital collections on the CMC website and ensure the long-term preservation of our existing and future data. Though the majority of this year has been spent working from my kitchen table, I am grateful for the team spirit that exists within the CMC, which has enabled us to continue to support our sector. Though library events both in Ireland and internationally have been confined to online formats this year, I have been amazed by the support and kindness that the Irish library community and international music library community has shown throughout this difficult year.

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Welcome to the online Virtual Library

Persevering with professional development: Investigating information literacy and curating information resources for insurance professionals during a global pandemic

Emma Edwards and Shauna Shanahan

Abstract

This paper will summarise the lessons learned from the experience of piloting new information resources while simultaneously investigating the information seeking behaviour of online, distance-learning students pursuing professional qualifications in the Covid era. Shortly after the launch of the library pilot, the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

Keywords: *Professional development, information literacy, Insurance industry, Ireland*

Enter

Persevering with professional development

Introduction

The Insurance Institute of Ireland is the not-for-profit educational and professional membership body for Irish insurance professionals. In early 2020, the Education Team of the Insurance Institute launched a pilot virtual library resource for student members. The library was created using e-learning technologies and its curation was informed by the principles of information retrieval, reflecting the emerging collaboration between e-learning

technologists, instructional designers, and library professionals. The virtual library was made available in the virtual learning environment (VLE) and designed to provide access to up-to-date and relevant market, economic and industry data to meet the information needs of students and, following the pilot phase, the wider professional membership of the Institute.

The information needs of our user population

According to Ernst and Young in in their 2020 *Global Insurance Outlook Report,* the insurance industry requires innovative thinkers that can drive transformation in growth within the context of new technological

deployments, digital transformation and new business models.[1] The information needs of the Irish insurance industry is multi-faceted, with career opportunities in diverse, expertise driven functions such as underwriting, risk management, claims management, broking, legal and compliance, sales, administration, loss adjusting, loss assessing and reinsurance. Insurance professionals must research the economic and commercial contexts in which existing and potential consumers are operating. They must also strive to keep pace with legislative and regulatory requirements, advances in technology and respond to local and global developments impacting the economy such as Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The need for information resources and instruction in information literacy is enhanced among our student members, most particularly our students pursuing our advanced qualification, the Management Diploma in Insurance. The majority of our students work full time and pursue their studies on a part-time basis, with modules delivered online via the VLE.

An e-learning library

Three factors can be regarded as crucial to the integration of information services and the VLE:

1. the sources / collections,

2. the technology,

3. the human intervention in ensuring both are aligned to meet the needs of the information users.[2]

Many information sources relevant to Irish insurance professionals fall into the

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category of "grey literature". Grey literature includes materials and research produced by organisations outside of the traditional academic publishing and distribution channels.[3]
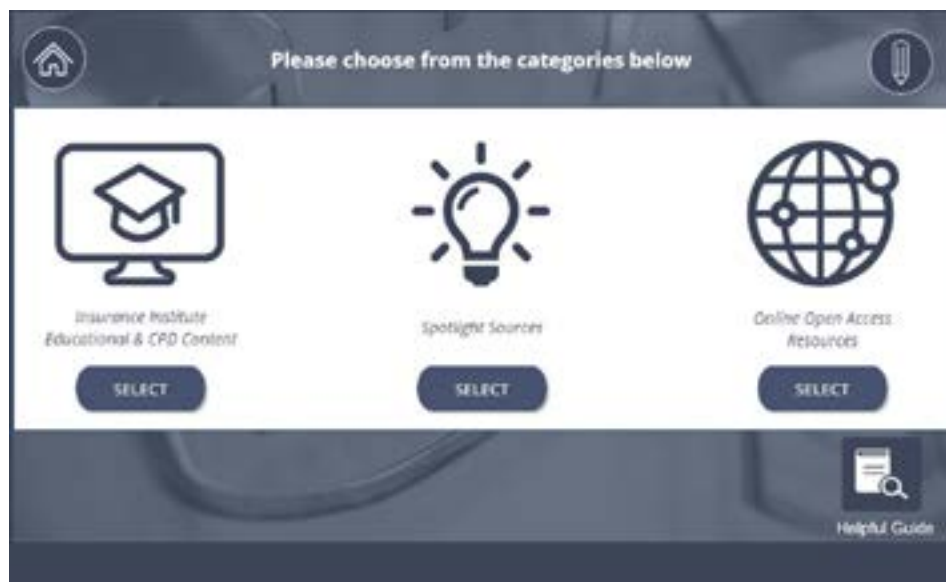
Financial constraints and the dearth of traditional academic journals and databases that relate specifically to the Irish (rather than global) insurance market, mean that students and members are not currently provided with access to academic journals or any database or resource through which a user must pass through a paywall, or an institutional or shibboleth login. Crucially, many insurance organisations generate their own market data which are not widely shared due to commercial sensitivity. Even within these insurance organisations, access to internal information resources are provided on an uneven basis, determined by role and seniority.

The project charter driving the collection development policy of the new virtual library sought to meet the information needs of students within the

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3   Prosser, D.C (2010) "Business models for Open Access publishing and their effect on the digital library", in Collier, M (ed) *Business Planning for Digital Libraries: International Approaches*, Leuven, Leuven University Press.

challenges and constraints outlined above. The resulting resource had three main collection areas:

- Insurance Institute of Ireland educational content: access to content developed by the academic contributors to the Institutes' education and training mission. These include textbooks, webinars and presentations.

- Spotlight sources: a collection of five of the most topical sources that provide insight into the current state of the Irish insurance industry and the global factors impacting the Irish market. These sources are updated on a bi-monthly basis.

- Open access sources: a gateway to online / web sources relevant to the Irish insurance market and the global and financial context in which it operates.

In terms of the technology, the virtual library is essentially a piece of e-learning that hosts content and is responsive in design which makes it easy to use on any device. These tools are primarily used by e-learning developers to create accessible, engaging and user-friendly content. Its features include an enter page with a welcome message, a home page with navigation buttons, a helpful guide containing useful videos including research support, a search function, a link to a user survey and our three main collection areas. The virtual library has a very simplistic aesthetic with navy and grey pantones. Minimal text is used on the main slides of the design and text is limited for description purposes as it was important to avoid overloading these slides with content. There is a strong use of icons which tie in with the Institute's branding and, where used, they represent the item's description. It was important to differentiate between the three different collection areas on the home page in a simplistic manner with minimal text and icons to represent each. This became the main navigation page to direct users to the different areas.

In terms of the human intervention, scholars have emphasised the importance of instruction in information literacy to those involved in

programmes of distance and professional education.[4] The virtual library was accompanied by a range of on-demand supporting resources providing guidance on referencing, researching, evaluating and synthesising sources. The student population, for whom the virtual library was piloted, must operate in twenty-first century professional workplaces and as such it was hoped that they would be reasonably confident using diverse software applications and operating systems.

Investigating student behaviour and attitudes against the backdrop of COVID-19

The launch of the pilot resource coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Autumn 2020, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), published their report: *The Impact of COVID-19 Modifications to Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Irish Further Education and Training and Higher Education*.[5] The report identified an increased demand for improved access to online information resources with educators compensating for disrupted access to the physical library space with the upload of additional reading materials to the VLE. The student population for whom the new virtual library was piloted, always operated as online, distance learners. However, the insurance industry, like all others, had to be reactive to events and a concerted effort was made to promote topical sources relating to the impact of COVID-19 on the Irish financial services sector. The students were trying to balance their part-time studies with full time work, in many cases from their homes, at a time of increased demand for some sectors of the insurance industry, contending, for example, with the massive increase in travel insurance and business interruption claims. As part of her MA dissertation in Library and Information Studies with Aberystwyth University, one of the authors of this article sought

to investigate if the pilot virtual library resource was meeting the information needs of the user population. It was an interesting opportunity to conduct research into the information seeking behaviour of online, distance learners at a time when this mode of delivery became mainstream due to the unanticipated and unprecedented consequences of the global pandemic.

Evaluating the virtual library resource and student information seeking behaviour

A great advantage to using e-learning technologies and VLEs to house information and library resources is that most have in-built reporting functions to capture if a resource is being accessed, how many were accessing, when they were accessing it and for how long. To gain a deeper insight into student attitudes driving their information seeking behaviour, the 53 students enrolled on the programme were requested to participate in a semi-structured survey. 18 students participated in the survey, providing a response rate of 34%. In the context of user surveys of library resources that a response rate of less than 50% creates the risks that findings are less representative of the population.[6] However, social researchers acknowledge that it can be a challenge to establish an acceptable response rate, with lower response rates acceptable for more homogenous populations.[7] The researcher was satisfied that a degree of homogeneity existed between students facing similar academic challenges and the response rate was relatively evenly spread across the three modules in which the student population were enrolled.

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with five expert stakeholders responsible for the teaching and assessment on the Management Diploma programme. The interviews, lasting approximately 30 minutes, were conducted online via Zoom. The participants were asked to share their views on information literacy and the insurance workplace and to comment on the information needs, challenges and information seeking behaviour of the

4   Rapchak, M. et al., (2015) "Information literacy and adult learners" *Adult Learning*, 26(4): 135-142.
5   QQI (2020) *The impact of COVID-19 modifications to teaching, learning and assessment in Irish further education and training and higher education* [Online]. Available at: https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/The%20Impact%20of%20COVID-19%20Modifications%20to%20Teaching%2C%20Learning%20and%20Assessment%20in%20Irish%20Further%20Education.pdf (Accessed 1 November 2020).

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student population using the virtual library. With an average of 33 years' experience working in the insurance industry, these expert stakeholders could provide meaningful insights into the information resources and skills required for professional development in the Irish insurance industry. The expert stakeholders could also offer well-informed opinions as to whether the virtual library service met these needs.

Lessons learned from the research

The usage reports from the VLE and the results of the student survey confirmed that approximately 80% of students regularly engaged with the virtual library with the topical "spotlight sources" providing the most popular information resource for their research. However, while students engaged with the virtual library, 83% of students surveyed stated they were more reliant on sources accessed *outside* the VLE for the completion of their assignments . Open web searches, newspapers and web pages proving the most popular information sources. This was partly anticipated due to the constraints of the virtual library and the fact that is more of browsable resource with limited search functionality. Students had low awareness of the on-demand research supports uploaded to the VLE and rarely engaged with them. It was significant to note that the majority of the students surveyed stated that they had not received any formal instruction or training in developing their information literacy before enrolling on this particular professional education programme. One third of respondents expressed a lack of confidence in accessing technology, online resources and web tools for the purpose of research. Respondents expressed confidence using search engines for the purpose of research however that degree of confidence diminished when asked about their ability to evaluate such sources. Most respondents did not have access to any additional information / research resources in their workplace.

The expert stakeholders interviewed recognised that a lack of prior instruction in information literacy and research skills negatively impacted a students' performance on the programme and resulted in students requiring different degrees of research support at the outset of their studies. While the interviewees were aware of the time poverty of part-time students, they were antagonistic towards the students' predilection towards an "easy-search" of open web sources, instead expressing a

clear preference for students to access curated accredited sources of the virtual library resource. From their experience of assessing student submissions, the expert stakeholders noticed that where internet sources were cited, they were often suspect and biased with students underperforming when they neglected to critically engage with their sources.

From the above findings, it is clear that while the information sources provided in the virtual library meet their information needs, important improvements should be made to promote usage and in enhancing the level of research support provided. While passive research supports were available in the VLE, students were failing to engage with them. The findings underscore the importance of creating fluid, responsive supports and interventions such as live workshops for instruction in information literacy to meet the information needs of a diverse population of distance learners, as advocated by scholars such as Cooke.[8] Such instruction should take account of the diversity in student prior learning experience and professional experience and should ideally be informed by Kuhlthau's model of inquiry-based information seeking.[9] According to Kuhlthau, in searching for relevant information, seekers pass through six cognitive stages: initiation, selection, exploration, formulation, collection, and presentation.[10] These skills are of fundamental importance for students and professionals engaging in problem-based learning to develop their potential as decision-makers.

Conclusions

From the above findings, it is clear that in the Covid era, when there are increased demands and increased opportunities for online information

resources, the need for human intervention and support from library professionals is undiminished. While e-learning technologies and VLEs offer incredible opportunities for the provision of information services and research support, it is important to avoid making any assumptions about the digital and information literacy skills of the user population. Our efforts to satisfy the appetite of users for virtual library resources should always be accompanied with efforts to instruct and empower users as confident and competent information seekers.

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Media Literacy

Erika Csibi

Introduction

In late February 2020 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Libraries accepted an invitation to host The Glass Room - Misinformation Edition, a media literacy exhibition developed by Tactical Tech, an international NGO that engages with citizens to examine the impact digital technologies have on society and individual autonomy[1]. From a library and information management perspective this is a vital topic. In a world where public service news broadcasting has come under threat, who do we trust? From politics to the pandemic, climate change to celebrity culture, how do we read information and react to it? Are you using your phone, or is it using you? How do we get smart about surveillance? And how safe is our data and privacy?

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1   Tactical Tech: https://tacticaltech.org/

An identified need for our communities in 2021 is digital literacy in its myriad forms, as highlighted in the national public library strategy[2], Producing and promoting programmes, in public libraries, focusing on media literacy, including social media, news literacy and critical thinking, plays a vital role in this, as well as respecting the valued and trusted nature of the library space in the community. In Ireland, there has been a push from media educators and information managers to increase awareness of disinformation and fake news, as can be seen in the recent **Be Media Smart** campaign from Media Literacy Ireland[3], as well as from academic libraries, such as UCD Libraries Libguides on Fake News, and Covid19.[4]

Hosting The Glass Room exhibition in dlr Libraries was part of the lead-in to the major IFLA conference scheduled for August 2020 in Dublin. As the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated however, with it came the cancellation of the IFLA conference, the planned training in The Hague for those curating the exhibition and the prospect of hosting the exhibition in any library in Europe, due to lockdowns.

This article outlines how staff at dlr LexIcon, despite these challenges, were able to attend a five-day online training series organised by Tactical Tech in

June, pivoted from an in-person exhibition to an online platform, and launched virtually on 23rd October 2020. An accompanying media literacy programme was developed entitled **Media Literacy Series: Disinformation, Fake News and Privacy**[5]. This programme created additional awareness and information. It included topics such as disinformation and misinformation. This provides valuable content beyond the run of the exhibition, while maximising on the increased audience reach afforded by the move to the virtual realm.

The Glass Room: Misinformation Edition

Tactical Tech's latest exhibition, '**The Glass Room – Misinformation Edition**'[6], explores misinformation in all its forms. Through a series of eye-catching posters, online videos and digital quizzes, it highlights how social media has changed how we interact and react to news and information, now that we have it constantly at our finger-tips. It outlines how our phones are designed to keep us hooked, and provides visualisation to determine just how much time we spend online. We are shown how easy it is to be hoodwinked by deep fakes and how algorithms are structured to shape and skew the information we receive on social media.

2   Dept of Rural and Community Development: *"Our Public Libraries 2022 – Inspiring, Connecting and Empowering Communities"* https://bit.ly/30inRR0
3   Media Literacy Ireland: *"Be Media Smart"* https://www.bemediasmart.ie/
4   UCD Library: *"Evaluating Information: Fake News "*https://libguides.ucd.ie/evaluating/fakenews

5   Dlr Libraries: *Media Literacy Series: Disinformation, Fake News & Privacy,* https://libraries.dlrcoco.ie/events-and-news/library-news/new-get-hooked-new-video-deep-fake-and-misinformation
6   Tactical Tech: *The Glass Room – Misinformation Edition Exhibition*, https://tacticaltech.org/news/glass-room-misinformation-edition

As part of our support for the proposed IFLA 2020 Conference, dlr Libraries was very interested in hosting the exhibition with dlr LexIcon Lab as the venue. Opened in late 2014, dlr LexIcon is the largest public library in the country with an annual footfall of over 520,000. The LexIcon Lab is a key innovative and well-equipped space, providing learning opportunities in an experimental and creative way through hosting technical workshops, STEM camps and Maker Spaces.[7] Throughout the project, DLR Libraries liaised with Valensiya Dresvyannikova, Policy and Research Officer, IFLA.

The exhibition goes virtual

The original plan was to host the exhibition for two weeks in June, coinciding with Cruinniú na nÓg, the national day of creativity for children and young people, with a weekend of workshops exploring the themes of the exhibition. However, as COVID-19 spread throughout Europe, the decision was made to move the training online, as the wellbeing of staff and the public were paramount. One option put forward was a hybrid exhibition, where library

7   Dlr Libraries Website: https://libraries.dlrcoco.ie/

events would be held digitally, but a share of the exhibition materials, such as the posters, would be placed in the library. The exhibition would also be available in a digital format, hosted by Tactical Tech. This was the option that dlr Libraries ultimately chose, pushing the launch date out to October with the decision to develop an accompanying online media literacy series.

The online training, facilitated by Tactical Tech, took place from June 22-26, for two hours per day, and was attended by librarians from across Europe. It explored the ideas and themes around the exhibition, how best to curate
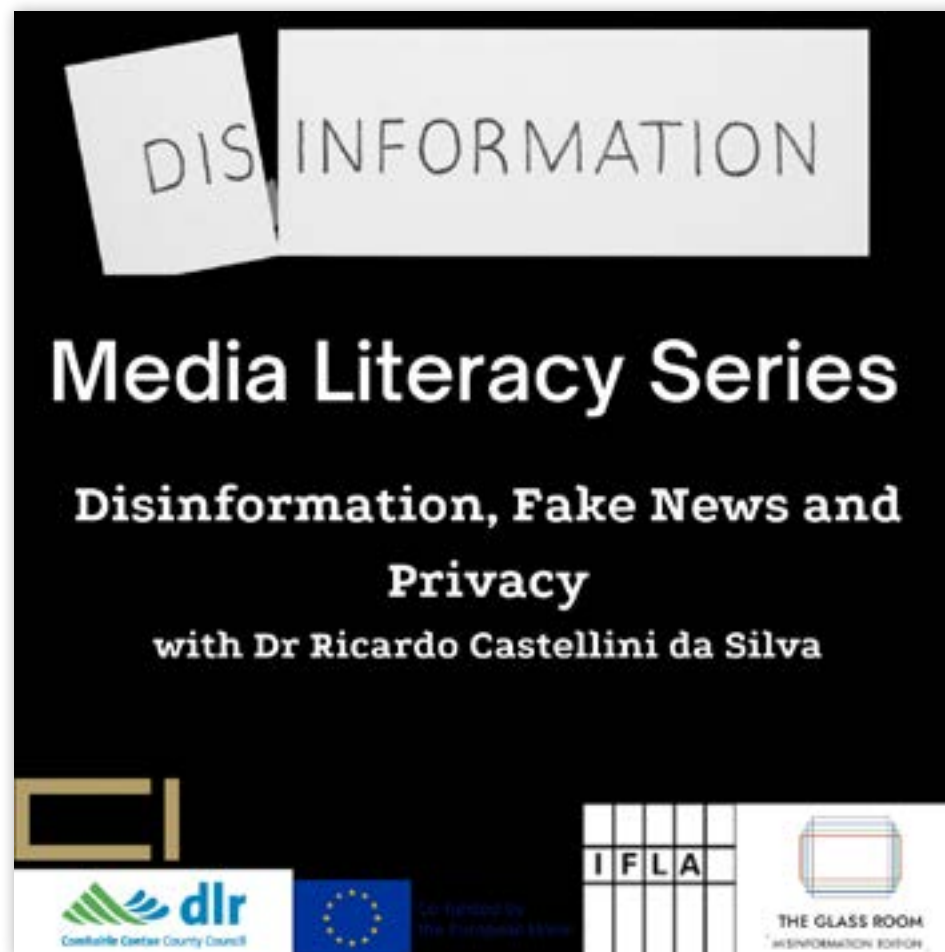
library-led events supporting the exhibition, and how to set-up and host the exhibition.

DLR Libraries Hybrid Programme

To accompany the exhibition, and expand on its themes, dlr Libraries worked with Dr Jake Rowan Byrne, formerly the Tech Curator in the Lab at dlr LexIcon and coordinator of our annual Stem Camp for Transition Year students, and his colleague Dr Ricardo Castellini da Silva, an expert in digital media, media education and new literacies, and member of Media Literacy Ireland[8]. The result was the Media Literacy Series that included six weekly videos, in addition to two webinars with guest speakers and four workshops. The videos were hosted on YouTube and the workshops and webinars on Zoom.

Dr Castellini structured the series as follows: He began with a general overview of how the Age of Information has changed how we access information and news. He then explored how the digital world affects how we think and behave. Topics included how the main Big Tech companies operate their online business models and structure their platforms to keep our attention and also shape what information and content we see. Going further, he highlighted how our confirmation bias, accompanied by this filter bubble can lead to toxic content. Finally, Dr Castellini probed the alarming and widespread use of disinformation and 'fake news' to launch malicious and coordinated attacks to confuse and manipulate people through inaccurate and false information.

The weekly workshops expanded on Dr Castellini's videos/themes, giving further details on how to spot and avoid false information or "fake news". He outlined the current issues surrounding data privacy, and how we can better control how our personal information is used by tech companies. The webinars tackled more specific and relevant issues surrounding disinformation. Dr Eileen Culloty, author of ***Disinformation and Manipulation in Digital Media*** argued how disinformation around COVID-19

had affected best practices and had contributed to the rise of conspiracy theories relating to the pandemic[9]. In the second webinar Ricardo was joined by artist and media researcher Paul O'Neill to discuss data privacy and surveillance.

Phase One:
The Exhibition Launches

The exhibition and media literacy programme was launched virtually on October 23rd, and promoted extensively through the library's social media platforms. Due to the closure of libraries nationwide until early December, the physical exhibition was not a focal point of the programme. However, the display panels were situated in the windows along a walk-way outside the library, to spark the curiosity and interest of the public, with links provided to the virtual exhibition. When dlr LexIcon opened from 2- 23 December, the exhibition could be viewed by visitors to the library and proved a popular addition.

Phase Two:
The Exhibition Walkthrough

Phase two of the series began in December 2020, when Dr Castellini was asked to create a final video, giving a guided tour of the exhibition[10]. Lasting just over 45 minutes, it was specifically aimed at students in secondary schools. This was completed in January 2021. A new press release was prepared and was rolled out to secondary schools in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown area. With schools currently closed again, this was the ideal time to promote these important resources to teachers and tutors.

We also liaised with Blackrock Education Centre Dublin, who have agreed to

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8   Media Literacy Ireland: https://www.medialiteracyireland.ie/

9   DLR Libraries: "Webinar: Disinformation and Covid19 with Dr. Ricardo Castellini & Dr. Eileen Culloty", https://bit.ly/3rIKiAD,
10   Dlr Libraries: *Get Hooked! The Glass Room: Misinformation Edition Exhibition Walkthrough*, https://youtu.be/oRbeRYtnzJo

share the video and media literacy resources with schools nationwide, in addition to sharing it with their network of Education Centres. This is an important step in promoting the vital material, in particular for students, who have grown up and are immersed in a rapidly evolving world of instant information and misinformation.

In January 2021, an online feedback session was hosted by IFLA and staff from dlr Libraries attended a stocktaking/learning and exchange meeting for library hosts. We met library staff from Lithuania and Ireland who had also hosted the exhibition, and discussed our experiences and ideas for ongoing promotion of the series. One such recommendation was connecting with local Further Education Centres, to promote the exhibition and series beyond our libraries, which, as mentioned, we have done. It was important to have this opportunity to reflect on the programme as a group and to plan for future engagement, and be part of the ongoing training and networking opportunities offered by IFLA, including potential future exhibitions connected to the themes of media literacy and disinformation.

Online Library Resources and Content

With the closing of the physical doors of the libraries' due to pandemic lockdowns, staff quickly adapted to providing resources and programmes online to the public. The virtual doors have never closed, as library staff create original content that will last beyond the pandemic.

Instead of the original plan of hosting the physical exhibition for two weeks, accompanied by a weekend of on-site workshops, we now have a series of original videos on media literacy[11]. In addition, we have created a specific media literacy booklist on our Overdrive subscription service that links in with the series, providing a valuable asset to our e-resources.

The online workshops and webinars proved to be very successful, and were attended by almost 200 people, as well as increasing our audience base

beyond our regular library attendees. The videos have so far attracted over a 1000 views, with the Exhibition Walkthrough video already proving popular in the short time it has been available. With the shift to online content, the reach of our events can be global and our digital archive continues to grow and evolve.

Working on this project, as well as the other online work we have engaged with, has seen significant staff upskill through devising, producing and promoting original content in a relatively short time, on a number of digital platforms, including YouTube and Zoom. We have also expanded our knowledge and experience of promotion through social media platforms, leading to larger engagement and an expanded audience base.

Finally, the media literacy work has also affirmed the key role of the library service in providing access to curated and trusted information sources, which is reflected in dlr Libraries' mission statement: "*to connect and empower people, inspire ideas and support community potential.*", and this initial work on media literacy supports this ambition further. In February and March 2021, we programmed a series of Cyber Safe awareness events, facilitated by CyberSafeIreland, aimed at fostering healthy digital habits in young people and children, and future programming and series' will reflect the essential need for greater awareness around media literacy and information evaluation skills.

Erika Csibi, BA, MPhil, is Library Assistant, dlr Libraries and Project Coordinator for 'Media Literacy Series: Disinformation, Fake News and Privacy'

The exhibition was co-funded by IFLA and the European Union and the dlr programme of events was funded by Creative Ireland.

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11 Dlr Libraries: *Media Literacy Series: Disinformation, Fake News & Privacy* YouTube Playlist: https://bit.ly/3qochhL

Health Research Board information specialists:
Adapting our practice to meet stakeholder needs during a pandemic

Mary Dunne, Ailish Farragher, Louise Farragher, Brian Galvin, Caitriona Lee, Mairea Nelson

Introduction

The Health Research Board (HRB) is a State Agency under the Department of Health which aims to support and fund health research, and to provide evidence to inform policy and practice. The HRB Evidence Centre employs six information specialists (four full-time and two part-time). Three of us work in the HRB National Drugs Library and three in the evidence team, which provides evidence reviews to the Department of Health to support policy decisions. We would like to share how we reacted to the challenges and new demands of 2020, and how, by constantly adapting our practice, we have been able to meet stakeholder needs and demonstrate our value as professionals.

Mary Dunne

Ailish Farragher

Louise Farragher

Brian Galvin

Caitriona Lee

Mairea Nelson

COVID-19 and the Health Research Board response

February 2020 introduced the first COVID-19 related changes to the HRB as international travel for all 90 staff was suspended. But it was the 12th of March when our working-lives were significantly altered. Following the Taoiseach's press conference from New York we were asked to work from home. We were fortunate that management, ICT and facilities staff had prepared for this situation, so the transition was relatively painless. Of course, at that time we were thinking in terms of weeks not months (or years!).

Success in a crisis relies on everyone having clear and accurate information. The HRB had plans in place and we received regular communiques outlining new procedures. For example, management introduced a flexible working arrangement, where staff with caring responsibilities could fulfil their hours when feasible. A COVID-19 office procedure was introduced so only a limited

number of staff could enter the office, by appointment, for essential reasons (and following completion of an online COVID-19 safety course). Once it was known that we were not returning to the office in the short-term, additional equipment (desk, chair and keyboard) was delivered to homes as required to maintain health and safety. An anonymised survey for all staff on well-being and remote working also provided a forum to highlight issues that we faced due to changes in work practice.

With everyone at home, we needed to be able to communicate with each other. The key was technology, making a recently mandated HRB e-course on cyber-security very timely. Our laptops have the facility to connect remotely and securely to folders on our server. The installation of MS Teams and a corporate Zoom account were also designed to enable virtual communication. Of course, this plan assumed that staff had a suitable home internet connection and place they could work: a difficult challenge for many.

So, with the fundamentals in place, we could focus on providing stakeholder services, but with a new question in mind: how do we meet the emerging needs of stakeholders facing a pandemic?

Starting a new role during a pandemic

In March 2020 Caitriona Lee and Louise Farragher, information specialists in the evidence team, began the recruitment process for a new team member. The successful applicant, Ailish Farragher, notes that applying for a new position is an exciting challenge at the best of times, in a pandemic more so.

The application process was straightforward but hit the inevitable technical challenges of interviewing remotely, a relatively new process for us at the time which seems like second nature now. The human resources team facilitated online induction for new recruits who had joined the organisation after the mandate to work from home came into force. The induction via MS Teams provided detail on the HRB mission, how units of the organisation interact with each other, and practical information on processes and procedures. The induction programme also helped put faces to names and explain all the acronyms (so many acronyms!); and the virtual informal coffee

sessions helped foster collegiality. Having the right equipment, a clear IT ticketing system, and supportive colleagues and managers made starting in a new role less stressful. A year ago, we might have balked at a fully online recruitment experience but looking back it is clear that the organisation and the job applicants were more than up to the challenge.

COVID-19 and the evidence team response

Louise Farragher supported the national response to COVID-19 by providing literature searches to various policy units in the Department of Health, our main stakeholder, on a range of policy issues arising from the COVID-19 emergency. Although these literature searches were far less detailed than full evidence summaries, the very short deadlines were a challenge to a team that was already managing a full workload. Subjects spanned a mix of clinical and policy areas addressing the immediate response to COVID-19 and related longer-term issues, as well as the national response.

Building on the work of health librarians across the world and the global network of resources that quickly emerged in those early months of the crisis, the evidence team created Libguides webpages, cataloguing quality resources for use within our organisation. What became evident is the extensive work of information professionals to support and promote evidence-based information and to counter the growth of misinformation. The COVID-19 crisis highlights how necessary and urgent that work continues to be in a fast-changing, information-overloaded environment.

Despite not yet being able to meet in person, our strong team dynamic has enabled us to provide a consistently high-achieving evidence information-service. During 2020 we transitioned to remote working, added a new team member, adapted our way of working from an in-person style to one better suited to virtual communication, increased our evidence review output, attended professional conferences and continued with professional development and external presentations. All with good humour, grace, and a particular kind of librarian determination.

COVID-19 and the HRB National Drugs Library response

Mary Dunne and Mairea Nelson are information specialists in the HRB National Drugs Library[1], which is managed by Brian Galvin. Because it is essentially an online repository of research related to drugs, alcohol and tobacco, we were able to continue our work rather seamlessly. The sources we use for collection development, such as websites and social media were all available and we had access to our library email account so could answer queries. That's not to say that it was business as usual. We cannot take telephone calls and do not have regular access to post. Our meetings now take place on MS Teams or Zoom, and we join monthly virtual coffee mornings with our colleagues.

Our first COVID-19 library project began in February 2020, before the pandemic was declared. As soon as we saw research being published in our subject area, we created a COVID-19 resource on our website and added the new subject 'Coronavirus / COVID-19' for easy searching. This special collection of Irish and international items continues to grow, with over 300 distinct records.

One important service, which we had thought suspended until post-pandemic, was our sessions with students of addiction related courses. We usually go to third-level institutions or classes come to us in the library. These students are key stakeholders as they use the research evidence from our collection both during their studies and in their work. As well as library instruction we include presentations on research methods and tools. The active interaction is the most important element as we can answer questions, challenge misconceptions, and create debate. We offered course providers our sessions via Zoom but worried about the technology (both the platform features and internet connection), and about our ability to engage fully. We have been pleasantly surprised. Students have become used to online classes and are happy to participate. We can now provide live sessions with students wherever they are based, which offers the potential to reach more stakeholders in the future.

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1   www.drugsandalcohol.ie

press releases, ministerial letters, guidelines and reports. We were also involved in report editing and referencing, which proved challenging given the extremely tight deadline.

Working with other health librarians

In addition to continuing her regular day job providing search and screening services for the HRB, Caitriona Lee provided additional support to the HSE National Health Library and Knowledge Service (NHLKS) Evidence Team. At the beginning of our pandemic year, HSE librarians created a summary service[3]. The summaries are compilations of key evidence and reliable sources to assist healthcare professionals stay current with COVID-19 research. As some HSE librarians had been redeployed to assist with public health, a call was made for others to come on board. Caitriona joined this huge national effort and worked on projects to answer clinical queries. The value of providing evidence summaries speaks for itself, but the project also provided opportunities for communication between librarians. Although not the point of the project, the collegiality and contact were of great benefit to librarians working from home and experiencing isolation.

As members of the Health Sciences Libraries Group committee, Mary and Mairea were determined to support health librarians throughout Ireland. The committee developed an email discussion forum, promoted bursaries for virtual events and courses, and produced a special issue of our newsletter HINT with stories of the impact of COVID-19 on the professional lives of members.

Working together in the HRB

A key cross-Evidence Centre project was led by Brian Galvin, with our researcher colleague Deirdre Mongan, Mary and Mairea from the drugs-library, and Louise from the evidence team. In April 2020, the Drug Policy Unit at the Department of Health asked the HRB to prepare a rapid evidence brief that put the Irish response to the COVID-19 crisis in an international context and would assist in identifying initiatives that may be relevant to the drugs situation in Ireland[2]. As information specialists we had some key responsibilities, notably the search for relevant literature from four comparable countries and Ireland. The search for grey literature and contextual material is often more art than science. On this occasion it included information on policy structures, the current situation, legislation,

2   Mongan D, Galvin B, Farragher L, Dunne M & Nelson M (2020) Impact of COVID-19 on drug services in four countries. An evidence brief. Dublin: Health Research Board. https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/32296/

3   Lawton A (2020) HSE Library Response to COVID-19: The pandemic that shook the world, *An Leabharlann*, 29(2): 11-18; Carbery A, Fallon H, Higgins M, Kennedy E, Lawton A & McCauley C (2020) Irish libraries and COVID-19: first reflections, *Insights*, 33: 24, 1–19; https://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.522; NHLKS (2020) Covid19 summaries of evidence. https://hselibrary.ie/COVID19-evidence-summaries/

Summary

Not all librarians and information specialists can work from home, and we are fortunate that we were able to do so. Our organisation played a key role in enabling this. Relevant policies and procedures have ensured effective communication, access to our secure server and the provision of necessary equipment. Of course, there were some issues such as poor internet access and, importantly, the blurred work/life boundaries that mean we sometimes work longer hours. Feeling supported and well informed by management, who recognise the various circumstances we face when balancing personal and professional commitments, has underpinned our ability to continue working. However, the situation has also revealed our dedication to fulfilling our roles as information professionals. Time saved on commuting has often been transferred to new projects and achieving tight deadlines in a fast-changing environment. We have shown how we can work successfully on our own, but also how important it is to stay closely in-touch. Within the Evidence Centre, regular virtual team meetings and coffee mornings keep us up to date with each other both personally and professionally. This was perhaps the key to productivity and good mental health.

The past year has created opportunities to demonstrate the value of our skills and our ability to contribute to essential policy and practice. This impact is enhanced when we work collectively. At the moment it is hard to envisage the future, but we can be confident that when it is safe to do so we will enjoy meeting one another again in-person; and that whatever we face, we will adapt and rise to the challenge.

Mary Dunne, MA, MLIS, MCLIP, ALAI, Information Specialist
Ailish Farragher, BA, MLIS,Information Specialist
Louise Farragher,MSc, MLIS, Information Specialist
Brian Galvin, MA, MLIS Programme Manager for Drug and Alcohol Research
Caitriona Lee, BSc, PgDip, MLIS, Information Specialist
Mairea Nelson, BA, MSc, MCLIP Information Officer

Social Isolation: Mobile Library Service during the Pandemic

Christine Cronin, Denis Tangney, Mary Luttrell and Zillah Ni Loideoin

When the first lockdown was announced by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar on March 12th 2020,[1] the initial priority of Cork County Libraries was our 'cocooning' members. Older and medically vulnerable people were being asked to restrict their movements and social interactions. Where possible, they were to avoid shopping, collecting pharmacy prescriptions. Family visits and attending church services were strongly discouraged. Within hours, all the structures

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1   https://merrionstreet.ie/en/news-room/news/statement_by_an_taoiseach_leo_varadkar_on_measures_to_tackle_COVID-19_washington_12_march_2020.html

which link us to our community, which combat isolation and loneliness, were gone. With all of this in mind, we looked at how we could reallocate resources to deliver a library housebound service to those who found themselves cocooning at home.

The mobile libraries have a unique role within their communities. Cork County has 4 mobiles (North, South, East and West of the county, serving approximately 340 stops). They have provided a tailored service, over the course of decades, to thousands of individuals. The rapport built up between customer and staff member can be incredibly strong and long lasting. This bond was the driving force for ensuring a safe, effective service was rolled out to our customers while their regular mobile library service was off the road. The mobile service contributes to social inclusion all over the world. In this article we describe how feelings of social isolation which were experienced during the pandemic can be addressed through the mobile libraries.

The library service developed a proposal outlining how we could safely deliver a housebound service during the lockdown and approval was secured from management to deliver the service as part of the overall local authority Community Response initiative. Management met and teased out the practicalities of implementation in compliance with Health and Safety protocols. We became very well versed in the Standard Operating Procedures which were finalized and issued to all staff to ensure the highest level of safety standards for staff and service users.

Within two weeks, we were making those first calls to customers and the reaction was one of surprise and delight. Some craved distraction from the constant news stream, some found time dragged without the usual routines of the day. Getting books would certainly fill some of those gaps. But there were others who weren't inclined to get anything, they just wanted to talk. Talk to someone they knew, whom they weren't directly connected to, about their worries, their loneliness, their struggles. As time went on, and the Housebound Service became the norm, the calls and conversations were as vital as the books themselves. Well into the second lockdown a borrower rang from Cork

University Hospital one night as having fallen and broken her hip she was awaiting surgery and felt the need of reassurance from her library friend. One cocooner rang her local radio station to highlight and praise our housebound service and another was responsible for her daughter who lives in another county contacting her library to see if they might offer a similar service.

There was also an initiative whereby postcards with an image from an artwork by Josef Keys, part of the Cork County Council collection, were sent to borrowers of mobiles and branch libraries. The wording was:

**The Staff of your Library are thinking of you
and we look forward
to when we can open our doors
and give you the service you deserve again.**

Mobile Library Number: xxxxxxxx
Staff Members Name: xxxxxxxxx

There was plenty of room for a tailored message of encouragement to the borrower.

The local library staff made the decisions as to who would receive a card from the allocation available, each mobile got 30 cards. These were greatly appreciated and we received many phone calls of thanks and admiration for the beautiful picture. Speaking of phones, the dedicated mobile library smartphone, which is a recent resource, was of vital importance during lockdown particularly for our drivers to locate remote houses via Eircode.

We promoted the online library services during our phone calls to the housebound and helped people set up an account and with any teething problems they had. Many of our non - cocooning borrowers made contact on foot of ads in local media (arranged centrally and nationally) for help in setting up or accessing their online accounts.   People are amazed at the wealth of resources available and most especially that it is free. We've been saying it all along but the pandemic really helped people listen! National statistics show there has been a huge increase in use of Borrowbox, RBdigital and Universal Class and Press Reader. We have one borrower aged 91 who is an avid Borrowbox user. Her only complaint is that since so many others are now using the service (she was using it long before lockdown) there is more competition for the titles she favours!   For those who fancied learning a new instrument during lockdown, the library housebound service was extended to include the delivery of musical instruments to homes across Cork County as part of the library's Sound Initiative project.

Recognizing that both staff and borrowers might need extra help in choosing books while in isolation an online subscription to *Who Else Writes Like*? and *Who Next?* (children's authors) was organized.   It is accessible through the home page of Cork County Library under 'Other Resources'.

A frequent feedback comment from patrons who received boxes was that our choices sometimes introduced them to authors they might never have picked off the shelves for themselves but whom they would now welcome more books from.

Someone came up with the idea of a weekly quiz which we would add to outgoing boxes and a team was duly put together to make this happen.

Sometimes they came back in the boxes untouched but others loved them. One borrower in a nursing home looked for extra questions so she could do quiz sessions with fellow residents and we were happy to oblige.

Rural schools are an important part of our mobile library service schedule - we visit approximately 130 schools fortnightly.   Usually the children each come out to choose their own books from the library, but when our mobile service was back on the road in September 2020 and prior to the second lockdown, we had to adjust our service to schools in line with Health and Safety guidelines during the pandemic and offered schools the following options:

> **1 teacher or SNA to come on the bus to choose for class**
>
> **2 pupils from one room to choose for the class**
>
> **Or a monthly delivery of a box of books per class chosen by the librarian pre-packed as per Covid Protocols. Specific requests from teachers were welcomed with this option too.**

Most schools chose the third option. The main issue with that from our side was we had a huge amount of stock constantly tied up either because it was out in the schools or in boxes awaiting the 3-day quarantine. We had to be very resourceful with rotating stock between branches and mobiles, accessing our extensive back catalogue and purchasing new books to ensure that we kept up with demand.

At the time of writing, Cork County Library's Housebound service has delivered over 4000 boxes. During the first lockdown (March 27th to June 29th) 1931 boxes were delivered to homes of readers by our team of 5 mobile library drivers. When restrictions were imposed again in the autumn, the housebound service which had been so successful in the spring came back into action and between 23rd October and December 4th, we delivered 995 boxes of books. On January 4th, we again resumed the service as lockdown restrictions were imposed for a third time and library staff began preparing boxes for customers who contacted their local branch or mobile library to request the service. We began deliveries on Thursday January 7th and by the end of February had 1135 boxes were delivered.

As we approach the anniversary of the first COVID-19 case in the Republic of Ireland, we reflect on challenges we have endured. Many of us have lost loved ones, been unable to visit or hug family members or friends, felt the emotional strain of constant vigilance and the not-knowing what is yet to come. But we will continue to provide a Housebound Service to the vulnerable and isolated in our community, for as long as it is required. We will make the calls, pack the boxes, arrange deliveries, and we will listen. This is our contribution to providing a library service during the pandemic.

Christine Cronin (Mobile South), Denis Tangney (Mobile North) Mary Luttrell (Mobile East) and Zillah Ni Loideoin (Mobile West) are Senior Library Assistants with Cork County Council Library Service

School Libraries
in a Time of COVID

Case Study 1

The Experience of School Libraries in Ireland during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Robin Stewart

School Libraries in Ireland: Background

Since their initial closure on 12 March 2020, the issue of the pandemic's impact on schools has never been far from the headlines. The fate of school libraries, however, has received little attention. The Department of Education and Skills (DES) does not provide any annual budgetary allowance for school libraries in Ireland, nor does it provide any supervision or governance of school libraries.

SLARI's Position

The School Library Association in the Republic of Ireland (SLARI) has long advocated and lobbied for the establishment of a comprehensive system of school libraries throughout the country. As there is now a focus on self-directed learning, there is a need for access to a wide a wide range of information. The playing field for students in the Irish education system is not level. Available supports and IT infrastructure (access to devices and reliable broadband service) vary widely from school-to-school and depend on geographic location. It has long been noted that the most- and least-privileged Irish schools tend to benefit from the provision of professionally staffed and resourced library services, leaving the majority in the middle underserved.
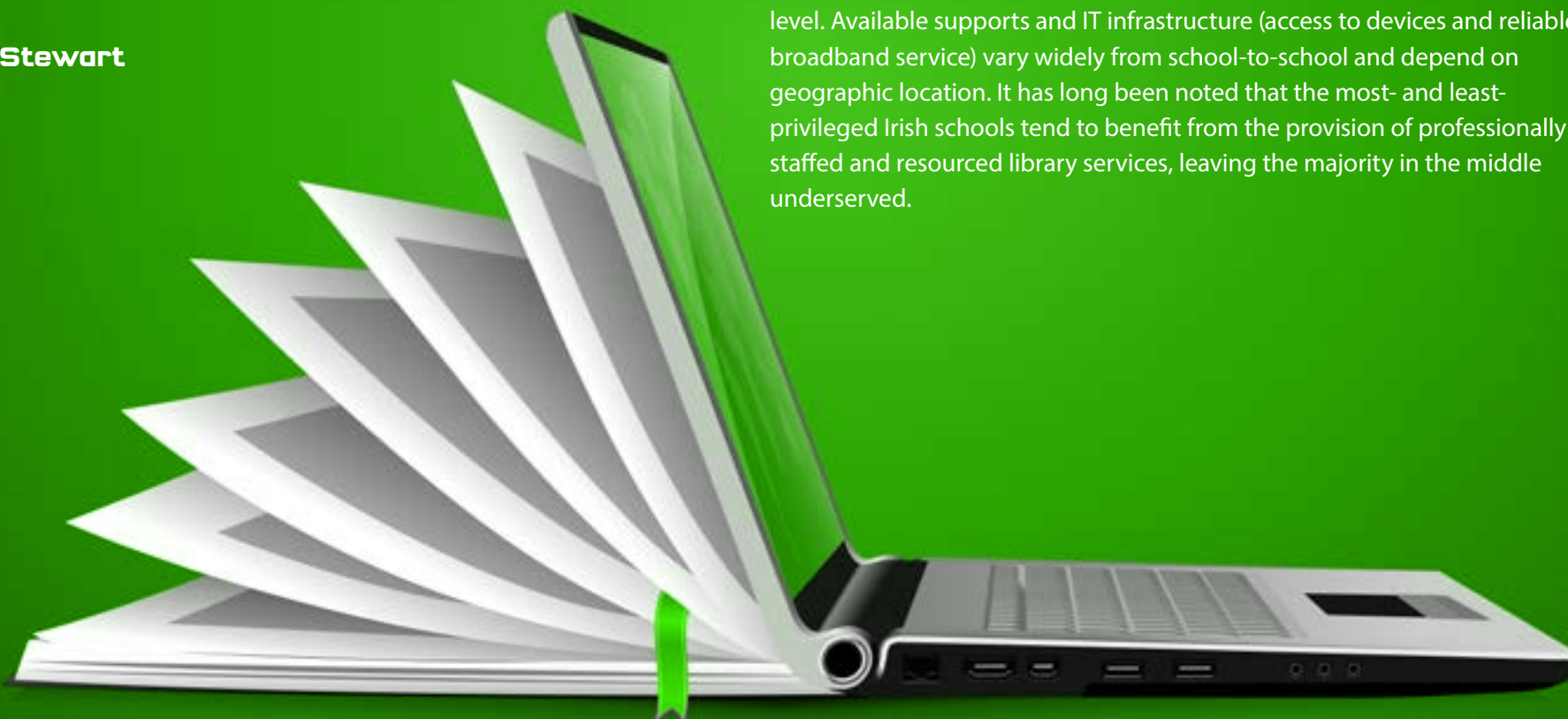
Varied Outcomes

The absence of oversight from the DES led to widely varied outcomes for school libraries during the pandemic, with experiences ranging from libraries moving online to being shut entirely. In some cases, shelves were boarded up to provide additional classroom space, with qualified library staff being redeployed to administrative and support roles. Where libraries moved online, the costs incurred by schools in 'Covid-proofing' for the return to classroom-based learning meant that funding could not be provided to set up additional online resources. JCSP libraries, and DEIS schools generally, have full access to the Overdrive e-book/e-audiobook service and associated SORA app. SLARI have sought the expansion of this service to all second-level schools in Ireland. Although the initial response of funding stakeholders to this proposed expansion has been positive, no move has yet been made to enable it. Librarians tend to be resourceful people, so the relationship between school libraries and the Public Library Service has been enhanced as a result of this need to access online resources. School librarians have encouraged students to join their local public libraries, leading to an upsurge in students engaging more fully with the wonderful range of online resources provided by public libraries.

Case Study 1: The Experience at The Teresian School

The Teresian School, Donnybrook, opted to retain their library and librarian throughout the pandemic, understanding the importance of continuity of library service provision during the periods of enforced school closure. The Victoria Díez school library is a new development for the school, funded by the generosity of the Parents' Councils and a legacy from the late Monsignor Sherry of Donnybrook Parish. Developed over the summer of 2019 with a soft-opening that September, the library was officially opened by broadcaster and writer Ryan Tubridy in December 2019. Working remotely during lockdown has its own unique set of challenges, but being back in school under Covid-19 restrictions also caused big logistical issues. The library serves all three schools on the Teresian campus, pre-school, primary school and secondary school, but is located in the secondary school building. The first challenge was facilitating access.
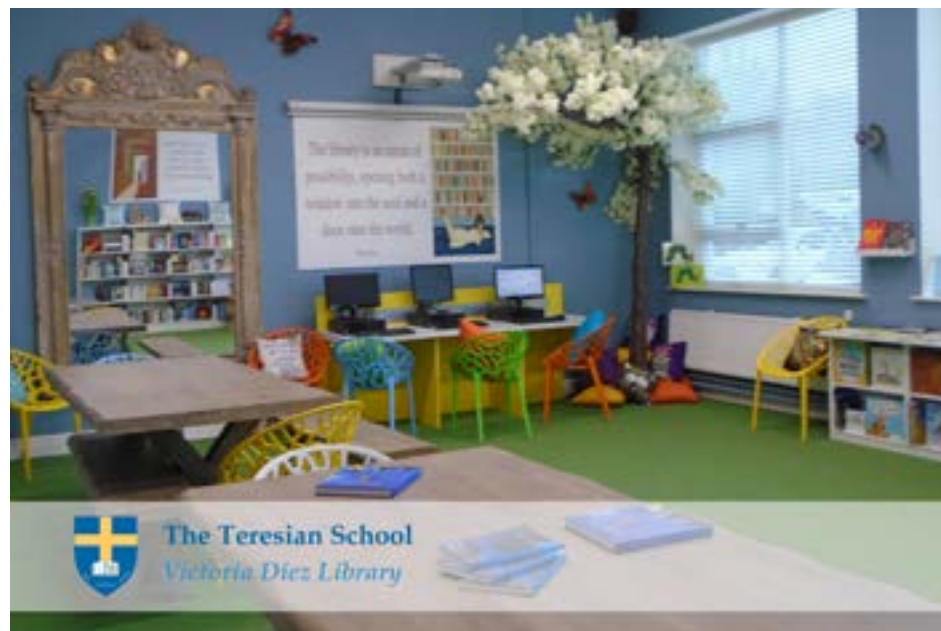
Facilitating Access to the School Library

Health and safety best practice, informed by the School Library Association (UK), LAI, CILIP, HSE and DES guidelines, meant that the primary and pre-school students were unable to access the library. As students at all three levels in the school have been allocated pods, the potential for cross-contamination was too great. By adapting the online catalogue to include a browse and request system, access to book stock could be facilitated. Requested items were retrieved, sanitised or quarantined for 72 hours, then delivered to classrooms during designated library classes. These sessions focused on different themes each week, linking with curricular learning as well as continuing the library's mission of promoting reading for pleasure and encouraging both information and emotional literacy. The handling of picture books by pre-schoolers was still possible and encouraged. Junior 'Book Camps' were organised during holiday periods in order to maintain a positive engagement with reading.

Senior students recording stories in Irish for junior students

In-School Under Restrictions

The secondary school continued to enjoy access to the library itself, but this access was restricted. Limited numbers visited during designated hours, pre-booked to enable contact tracing across year groups. Browsing was not permitted; instead, students used the online catalogue to choose books, which were retrieved for them. Of the schools in Ireland whose libraries remained open, many used improvised physical barriers, such as clear shower curtains, to discourage browsing. This restriction of access could, however, serve to discourage borrowing, so the use of signage and supervision to regulate access was deemed preferable. As a school with a large cohort of international students, promoting representation has always been a central aim of the school library, so allowing for students to see themselves reflected in the collection is important. Our aim of reflecting the diversity and experiences of our students has been greatly helped by the 'School Library Home Language Funding Scheme' provided by Post-Primary Languages Ireland,[1] which funds the purchase of bilingual materials and media in languages students speak at home.

1   https://ppli.ie/

Service Provision in Lockdown

The Teresian School was well prepared for the anticipated closure after Christmas, using blended learning in classrooms from August to December, which allowed for a seamless transition to remote teaching/learning and library service provision. The secondary school engages in online book clubs, with the librarian providing research support and promoting online resources, as well as hosting themed interactive events and activities. An annual highlight of the school year is a week of events and activities centred on World Book Day. Last year's celebrations featured visits by storyteller Niall de Búrca and the author/illustrators Oisín McGann and David Wiesner. The 2021 School Book Festival moved online, and featured a keynote Q&A session with author Louise O'Neill.   All primary school classes have timetabled library sessions on Zoom, with the librarian sharing associated resources via **Seesaw**. **Accelerated Reader** quizzing has moved online, as well as a host of book- and reading- themed interactive events and activities.

Student Experience

The resilience and continued positive engagement of students across all age groups during the pandemic is noteworthy and inspirational. Despite the strangeness of the situation and its potential scariness, and the uncertainty surrounding State Exams, students have rolled up their sleeves and carried on regardless. The virtual experience, as experienced by our students, still gives a sense and structure of being in school, in the classroom or library, and the Teresian School's ethos of 'Joy, Fortitude and Love' is

Case Study 1: The Experience of School Libraries in Ireland during the COVID-19 Pandemic

palpable among students. This has also been achieved through the revival of our School Houses, Áthas, Misneach and Grá, and the associated friendly rivalry involved in gaining house points, which can be awarded for student engagement with the library.

Assessing Impact

A further significant challenge of running a school library remotely is posed by the task of assessing the effectiveness of library services in the absence of the usual key performance indicators such as circulation and footfall. This assessment has shifted fundamentally from quantitative to qualitative measures, requiring more direct interaction with parents than had previously been the case. Feedback from 81 parents[2] surveyed was overwhelmingly positive:

Table 1: Parental Satisfaction Levels	
'Very Satisfied/'Satisfied' with level of adapted service provision during Covid 19 Pandemic/	**92%**
"Would prefer more live sessions"	**4%**
"Would prefer fewer live sessions"	**4%**

The shift online has, unexpectedly, led to a welcome increase in parental involvement with their children's library engagement, and an increase in parents and students reading together and discussing the books they are reading.

Professional Networks

The ability to run the school library service in these difficult times in enhanced by the support and encouragement provided by SLARI members to on another. Sharing resources, comparing notes, or even venting frustrations, there has been a real sense of togetherness afforded by this professional community. School librarians tend to be sole-practitioners supported by student or parent volunteers, so a sense of community in our shared mission is more necessary

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2   Parents of Junior/Primary students

now than ever. Some of the ideas school librarians have shared with one another and implemented in their own services include online book clubs, film clubs, writing competitions, virtual book clinics and recommended reads for students, parents and staff.   The guidance and support of the LAI, CILIP and Children's Books Ireland, as well as the support of management, teaching and administrative colleagues, has proved invaluable.

Back to School: What have we learned?

School Librarians will take much of what has been learned and experienced during the pandemic and apply it to normal service provision when things do settle down. The click-and-collect model is likely to remain a useful tool for students to request and access books, as is the provision of after-hours events and activities such as virtual book and film clubs. Students have developed a resilience and autonomy that will stand them in good stead, and the sense of camaraderie and support in the relationships developed both in-house and inter-agency will be key to the continuing evolution and development of excellence in School Library service provision. Despite the lack of input from the DES, school libraries have benefitted from enhanced involvement and cooperation with the Public Library services provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Local Government Management Agency. The "Ireland Reads" campaign and new national day for reading on Feb. 25th are welcomed, as is the provision of new online resources such as Teen Book Cloud. It is the sincere hope of the School Library sector that resources such as these will continue to be funded and promoted long after the current crisis is over.

Robin Stewart BA MLIS, is Librarian, The Teresian School.

School Libraries in a Time of COVID

Case Study 2

JCSP Demonstration Library Project

Kathleen Moran

Background

The Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP)[1] is a national Department of Education social inclusion programme aimed at students who are identified as being at risk of social or academic isolation or of early school leaving. It is based on the concept that all young people are capable of success in school. The programme provides a curriculum framework which facilitates schools to adopt a whole-school, student-centred approach to education. The programme is currently offered in 224 schools throughout Ireland.

The JCSP Demonstration Library Project was set up as a 3-year pilot research project in 2002, under which school libraries, staffed by professionally qualified librarians were established in 11 JCSP schools across Ireland. Following the very positive research findings of this initial pilot phase (Haslett, 2005)[2], a commitment was made under the 2005 DEIS Action Plan[3] to extend the Project to those 50 DEIS schools 'with the highest concentration of disadvantage'. To date, the Project has expanded into a total of 30 DEIS[4] schools across Ireland.

Since its inception, this innovative, collaborative and creative Project has significantly impacted on teaching and learning in our school communities[2,5]. Warm, bright, comfortable spaces have been developed within Project schools in which students can learn, grow and develop through access to the library resources, through participation in the wide range of library-based, initiatives, activities and events and, very importantly, through the support and guidance of the school librarian.

COVID-19 and the move to remote learning

On March 12th 2020 the Taoiseach announced that schools and colleges would initially close for two weeks until March 29th, followed by a later announcement that closures would continue for the remainder of the school year. This sudden shift to remote teaching and learning and the uncertainty around the duration of school closures plunged teachers and school librarians into uncharted waters. There was a scramble to implement online learning and find appropriate resources for this new mode of education. Uncertainty around the new rules and expectations was rife. Differences in support from parents to provide home learning support for their children, differences in the capacity of different types of schools to support the learning of their students remotely, and differences among students in their resilience, motivation and skills to learn independently and online, all became evident early on.

Having always relied heavily on the physical (print collections, library classes/activities and personal guidance and support of the school librarian), the switch to remote support for teaching and learning was a major challenge for our librarian team. Personal relationships with students and educator colleagues was always at the heart of what we did. Our librarians responded by adapting existing library programmes and by developing a whole new range of online programmes in an effort to continue to support their cohort of (often vulnerable) students in the new and alien learning environment in which they now found themselves. Supporting their teacher colleagues to transition to the online learning environment became another role taken on by many of our librarians as they shared their digital skills with their school communities by helping to set up the new online digital platforms for learning, creating school emails for all students, etc. With their expertise, our librarians have also helped teachers and students to navigate the abundance of digital content available.

Supports for Reading

Membership and usage of our Digital Library service (Sora)[6] has increased significantly over the past year. We provide free library membership to all

JCSP/DEIS schools in Ireland and, with over 50 new schools joining over the past year and with significant investment in stock development, our 200+ member schools now have access to over 17,000 ebooks/audiobooks, including a large range of simultaneous use titles. Following lockdown, login reminders were sent out to all existing member schools and new logins were distributed to new members. As we have over 90,000 student and 9,000 staff members, this was no small undertaking. Over 52,000 books have been checked out over the past year – a 100% increase on the previous year. Time spent reading has increased by over 200% in the same period - from 15,000 to 49,000 hours. To provide reading support to our many non-national students and their families during lockdown and with the support of Post-Primary Languages Ireland[7], we have added over 650 titles across 27 different languages to our collection.

While access to physical library collections has been very restricted, we are very much aware that digital access is problematic for many students and their families. A mixture of click and collect services, book post outs, personal delivery to students' homes and inclusion of books in family welfare packages, are just a few of the ways that our librarians have continued to get physical books into the hands of students and their families. Online book clubs, virtual reading classes, Accelerated Reader Programme, reading challenges, book review competitions and Kahoot quizzes have all been moved online in an effort to keep students engaged in reading.

Library Classes and Resources

During all periods of school closure our librarians have transitioned to working from home. Where possible, library lessons have moved online and every effort is made to engage with students on a regular basis. Virtual library classes have taken over from the physical and student, staff and parent book clubs and library homework and creative writing clubs now take place online. Presentations and workshops by authors, poets, storytellers, etc. are now facilitated through Zoom, MS Teams or Google Classroom. Our librarians had to quickly learn how to work with these platforms – from setting up virtual classes or events, agreeing proposed activities with school management,

sending invitations to students, preparing and distributing resources, gathering feedback, etc. Direct contact (email or telephone) is regularly made with disengaged students or their parents, to ensure that the students have everything they need to participate. Librarians follow-up with non-attending students to encourage and support them to re-engage. The process is relentless, but very necessary to ensure that students stay connected.

A comprehensive list of free resources for distance learning has been compiled and made available on our website[8]. Topics covered include: Online reading, Teaching and Learning, Subject supports, Revision, EAL, Wellbeing, Links to Workshops, Links to Competitions, etc. A Padlet Wall[9] of Project activities, events and updates has also been developed. These resources, together with our recommended reading lists are continually updated and have proved to be invaluable supports to schools.

Each of our librarians has set up a 'Virtual Library' for their school community. This facilitates easy remote access to the range of digital resources and supports that are provided through the library - Library Catalogue, Accelerated Reader, Digital Library, educational games, events, competitions and much more.

It became evident very early on that there were major challenges in terms of access and equity in the new remote learning environment. For some students, even the basics for learning are not available at home. OECD PISA research shows that there is a significant digital divide for students in disadvantaged schools[10]. Lockdown has resulted in many students losing out because they do not have access to the necessary digital supports. They may have to share a single computer or laptop with their siblings and/or parents; they may only have internet access via their phones; they may not have access to printing facilities, etc. In addition, these students are much less likely to have a quiet place to study or even a desk to work on.

Our librarians have been pro-active in tackling these problems. Library laptops and tablet devices have been loaned to students and families, phone credit has been purchased for students to allow them to access online classes on their phones, librarians have been liaising with subject teachers and getting hard copies of texts and worksheets into students hands – through school pick-ups, post-outs and personal delivery to students homes. In many cases our libraries have been stripped of their technology in an effort to support online learning. While by no means a solution to all access problems, these efforts cannot be ignored and they have certainly helped individual students to stay engaged.

Wellbeing and Creativity

JCSP librarians have always played an important role in the area of pastoral care and student wellbeing in their schools. Our school libraries are the 'safe space' for many students, places of learning but also places of relaxation where students can explore their interests and talents beyond the curriculum through participation in the wide range of creative and artistic opportunities offered. As part of continuing to provide these supports following school closure, we have rolled out a range of creative initiatives and competitions for our students under the general heading of **#CreateToEscape**. These include:

Life Under Lockdown – A Living History Project: students, staff and whole school communities invited to document their lockdown experiences through the written word, poetry, diary entries, art, sketches and photographs. We are collecting, collating, and editing a selection of eclectic responses which we hope to publish with the support of the Dublin City Arts Office.

National Drop Everything and Read Challenge: With over 342,000 registered participants in our April 2020 National DEAR Challenge, it was the biggest participation level to date – making it a truly national reading for pleasure initiative. We plan to ask the whole country to once again 'Drop Everything and Read' at 12 noon on Friday April 30th 2021.

EIRSAT-1 Space Poetry Project: A very exciting, collaborative project with the Departments of Astrophysics and English in UCD and the Museum of Literature Ireland, this project facilitated students from across our schools to participate in online poetry workshops with poets and creative writers. A collaborative poem has been produced which will be etched onto EIRSAT-1 (Ireland's first space satellite) due to be launched next year.

EIRSAT-1 Space Art Challenge: Continuing our collaboration with the EIRSAT-1 team in UCD, we have launched a student art competition open to all students in all 224 JCSP schools. Five artists have been engaged to produce video tutorials and art tips across a range of artistic forms.

2KM Photo Challenge: an exciting home photography challenge designed to promote visual literacy and creative thinking. Students are invited to take and submit photographs of people, places and things, based on the daily prompts provided – all within 2km of their home

SprINK20: students were invited to create and submit drawings based on a daily prompt. All prompts related to Spring.

Broadcasting Challenge: Under this initiative, students were invited to record a two/three-minute interview with a friend or relative discussing a positive story of Life in Lockdown.
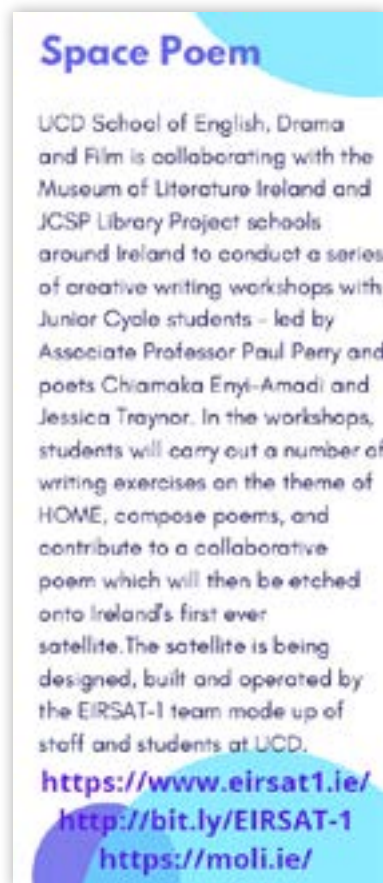
Details of all of the above, and many more, lockdown initiatives can be found on our website https://jcsplibraries.com/

In addition to the above, our librarians have assisted with food parcel distribution, with online baking challenges, graduation ceremonies, school policies development, IT and information skills training, school yearbook editing and teachers' information and resources queries. They have attended staff meetings and played a very important role in supporting students and parents through ongoing direct telephone and email contact. In addition, they have worked on developing a wide range of new library workbooks and other resources and have availed of a range of online training opportunities for their own professional development.

Conclusion

While the provision of library service beyond the school day has always been a feature of our Project, this became a much more important aspect of our work following the closure of our schools in March 2020. The JCSP Library Project has always used the lens of student needs to develop appropriate interventions which allow for engagement and build positive learning experiences. This has not changed with the switch to online learning. Only the form and delivery method of our interventions has changed. Indeed, virtual learning has highlighted the value and necessity of school librarians as collaborators in the education system.

All educators, particularly those working in DEIS schools, are concerned that the educational attainment gap will have widened considerably over the period of school closure. Disadvantaged students who may already have been dealing with major challenges are at particular risk of falling behind even further. It is incumbent on our decision makers to ensure that, when schools reopen, the necessary intensive supports are put in place to meet the educational needs of these young people and allow them to get back on track to reach their potential. Sufficient ongoing resourcing must be made available to support new ambitious targets to mitigate the impact of school closures and the digital divide on students in DEIS schools and those disadvantaged students in non-DEIS schools. COVID-19 has, without doubt, exacerbated existing inequalities within our education system and we must work to mitigate against this by ensuring that those who are impacted the most will be supported the most when schools reopen. This requires investment. If we don't make the required investment the impact of COVID-19 on the educational system will be felt for generations to come. The positive impact of having access to a school library and librarian on students' educational attainment and experience has been proven. The commitment in the 2005 DEIS Action Plan to expand the JCSP Library Project into a total of 50 DEIS schools, with further expansion thereafter, has still not been met. Now is the time to get back on track. Our young people deserve it.

Kathleen Moran, MA, DipLis is Senior Librarian, Junior Certificate School Programme Demonstration Library Project

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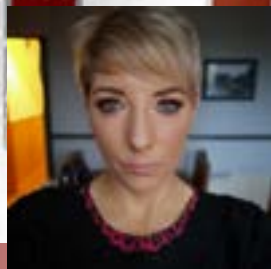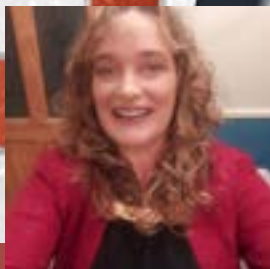
Staying Connected:
Supporting NHLKS remote workers during COVID-19

Caroline O Driscoll, Marguerite Farrell and Natasha Smith

Abstract

This article explores the delivery of virtual wellbeing events to staff working remotely during COVID-19. The changed working environment could have a negative impact on workers mental health. It is important now more than ever to develop team bonding and enhance communication.

Keywords: *Mental wellbeing, virtual events, team building, HSE Library staff*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented numbers of HSE Library employees working remotely from home or closed Libraries due to level 5 restrictions. Lack of social interaction and workplace engagement can lead to an increase in feelings of isolation, loneliness and poor mental health. It is important now more than ever to collaborate and interact virtually.

Aoife Lawton National HSE Librarian contacted us with a view to organising and facilitating virtual events which would allow staff to interact together virtually. Aoife`s vision was to make the events informal so staff could relax and take a breather from work while catching up with each other and having some fun.

This was a new learning curve for the authors as we had never organised anything like this before. The professional challenge increased as we had never met each other and were working remotely in different parts of the country, Westmeath, Cork and Drogheda. We communicated initially via Slack[1] (a cloud-based team interaction tool used by staff of the HSE National Health Library & Knowledge Service (NHLKS) to communicate across the entire organisation) to make acquaintances and a brainstorming Zoom meeting was arranged.

Following extensive research and brainstorming it was decided to host

Virtual Coffee Mornings

Virtual Staff Wellness Day (to replace our annual staff engagement day where we would meet in person)

Virtual Staff Christmas Party.

We identified our individual strengths when deciding on the allocation of tasks, but primarily communication and team work played a major part in the success of the events.

Objectives

■ Work as a team to successfully develop, organise and facilitate virtual online events for HSE Library staff via Zoom and Cisco WebEx[2] platforms within a designated time frame, while adhering to HSE ICT guidelines.

■ Compile and distribute to all Library staff a virtual events etiquette document for virtual online events. Identify what activities staff would prefer by encouraging suggestions and inspire active staff participation in the events.

1   https://slack.com/intl/en-ie/
2   https://www.webex.com/

■ Promote the virtual events to HSE Library staff via online platforms and e-mail to maximise attendance.

Methodology

Initially it was decided to hold the virtual coffee breaks over Zoom and a subscription to Zoom was organised by NHLKS. As our knowledge of Zoom was limited, training on its operations and functionality was arranged .The first virtual coffee break was scheduled for 3rd June 2020. A poster was created promoting the virtual coffee breaks and including the timetable and login details. This was circulated via Slack and Outlook together with a "Ground Rules and Virtual Coffee Break Etiquette" document, which had been compiled in advance.

In July 2020 we moved over to the Cisco Webex platform as Zoom was no longer supported by HSE ICT guidelines. Further training ensued on the functionality and operation of Cisco Webex enabling a smooth transition. Staff were notified of the move via Slack and new login details were issued.

The initial task in organising the **Staff Wellness Day** for the 30th June 2020 was to hold a brainstorming session to decide a format and Agenda. The central theme was wellness, but we also wanted a fun element and staff participation.

Our first Zoom brainstorming session took place on the 11th June 2020 allowing a timeframe of two and a half weeks to organise the event. A notification was posted on Slack to save the date and staff were encouraged to offer suggestions and volunteer to participate in the event. A number of staff with particular talents were identified and approached privately. They were enthusiastic to contribute to the event and share their expertise. After consultation with the volunteers it was decided a pre-recorded video would be more appropriate. This eliminated the risk that a staff member might not be available on the day of the event due to unforeseen circumstances. The videos consisted of a Yoga session, a gardening demonstration and a cooking demonstration.

For the **Christmas** Party a staff member wrote a Limerick titled "A Christmas Telecarol". Using Canva the Limerick was converted to an MP4 video to permit sharing on the day. To add a twist another staff member recorded themselves singing the Limerick on WhatsApp to the tune of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. We also had a pre-recorded meditation video, Korean cooking demonstration and Sing-a-Long to Christmas music.

A member of staff suggested we play an Irish Blessing video. The video was put together by over 300 Churches and Christian organisations from every county in Ireland who joined together virtually to sing an ancient Irish

Blessing to protect frontline workers. This was very appropriate as we were currently living under the cloud of COVID-19 and patients hospitalised, as a result of the virus, were receiving exceptional care from HSE staff. Following the Irish Blessing we had a Library Comedy Parody(which was compiled by Library staff in the United States.) They used one of Lady Gaga's songs to record a song about cataloguing. It was topical, light- hearted and brought the attendees back to the main event in an upbeat mood.

Numerous technical difficulties including low sound and low image resolution were experienced with the videos submitted by staff. This was due to the fact that the videos were created using different formats i.e. WhatsApp, MP4 and YouTube. We identified YouTube as a universal platform which permitted video share in the chat function in Zoom. Attendees could watch the videos in chat then return to Zoom for the next event. On Cisco Webex we were able to play the videos without converting them to YouTube links. However, the sound caused a problem as the volume was very low. After various attempts we resolved the issue by playing the videos using VLC Media Player, which allows the volume to be increased to 200% whilst screen sharing.

To set the tone for the day we needed an event that would put everyone at ease and encourage relaxation. The icebreaker can create a positive atmosphere and drive engagement. When deciding on the icebreaker for the staff wellness day we had to accommodate staff both at work in the Library and at home. After some online research we agreed on a scavenger hunt. This enabled everyone to participate and join in the fun. A list of items was

compiled to which everyone would have access, both at home and in the library. Staff were encouraged by the hosts in a race to retrieve the items.

For the virtual staff Christmas party we wanted an original fun icebreaker. We decided to do our own version of Dictionary and called the event Festive Fictionary. Eight unusual Christmas related words were chosen with four possible definitions listed under each word in a festive themed PowerPoint presentation. Staff were challenged to choose the right definition. This icebreaker involved creative thinking as all the definitions had to sound feasible. It proved to be a great success on the day.

To retain interest the Agenda was structured with an equal mix of videos and staff activities. Each video was followed by an activity that involved staff participation, for example bingo and a quiz. A coffee break was also incorporated where participants were allocated separate break out rooms where they could chat and get to know each other. Each room was allocated a topic which staff could use as an icebreaker to get the conversation going if they so wished. A timer alerted staff when to return to the main event.

The staff quiz comprised of two parts. In the first part the participants would answer four rounds of multiple choice questions and the second part consisted of a picture round. Research was undertaken to see if it was possible to hold a quiz on Zoom and we discovered this could be achieved by using the Zoom polling function. A poll was created into which the questions and answers were manually inputted. Participants would answer the questions on screen and save their answers. At the end of each round the answers were given and the participants could see a percentage poll of how many people picked 1, 2 or 3 for their answer. A report was compiled from the saved answers to ascertain the total correct answers for each participant.

For the picture round we secured a PowerPoint presentation of a quiz, which was previously used at another online event and adapted it. The PowerPoint presentation was shared on screen and each participant privately messaged their answer to the host in chat. This ensured that everybody's answers remained private. Careful consideration was given to the content of the quiz questions to ensure they included a variety of themes, including Library and Christmas themed questions at varying degrees of difficulty. This involved extensive research online.

The answers for both rounds were totalled and the person with the most correct answers declared the winner. Totalling the scores took an inordinate amount of time as the answers in the picture round had to be manually separated out in chat, counted and crosschecked. When holding the quiz on Cisco WebEx for the virtual Staff Christmas Party further research was carried out to see if the quiz could be conducted by poll. We ascertained it could not. We needed to download WebEx Poll Questionnaire Editor to enable us to launch the quiz through the WebEx poll function. As a back-up measure we created a PowerPoint presentation of the poll quiz questions and answers in anticipation of technical problems. We had a similar back-up of the quiz for the virtual Staff Wellness Day. Thankfully it was not needed on either occasion. Library Babble Bingo was created for our Wellness Day and a Christmas themed Bingo for the Christmas Party. A series of preparations were carried out to ensure a successful event. Each Library staff member was sent an individual bingo card with instructions via Slack prior to the virtual event. The individual bingo cards were created using Microsoft Excel and a random number generator. During the live event a PowerPoint presentation was shared on screen with a slideshow of words, which had to be ticked off the bingo sheet. Prizes were given for one line, two lines and a full house.

Prizes for the quiz and bingo winners were organised through Aoife Lawton. For the Christmas party we also had a prize for the best Christmas outfit. This encouraged staff to dress up and created a festive atmosphere.

Given the potential unreliability of broadband strength all PowerPoint presentations were shared allowing each host access to all of the presentations. This proved fortuitous on the day of the virtual Staff Christmas party when Marguerite lost her connection just as she was ready to present Festive Fictionary. Natasha was able to smoothly take over in her stead.

A number of trial runs were scheduled in advance of each live event to ensure that everything would run smoothly on the day. Live events were recorded,

> *Thank you Natasha, Caroline, Marguerite & Aoife, it was a great fun morning, I enjoyed it all. It was brill and it was good to see our colleagues even if at a distance.*

> *Huge thanks to all involved in making our virtual Christmas party with lots of fun and frolics, it was so good to see everyone again.*

> *Very many thanks and well done. My connection was giving me trouble this morning but I was there.*

> *Thanks everyone, the wellness day was so much fun and it was great to get to meet everyone.*

> *Thanks to all for arranging this morning. I got disconnected just as the Bingo was starting and couldn't get back in so missed the opportunity to say thank you. Great fun and well done to all involved.*

edited on PowerDirector and the video posted in Slack. This facilitated staff who were redeployed due to COVID-19 or were unable to join us on the day.

Results

All virtual events were well received and well attended by Library staff. Over thirty staff attended the staff wellness day and the attendance increased to forty one for the Christmas party. Interaction and engagement was positive. The events enabled staff to connect while working remotely. When hosting an online event for staff working remotely it is inevitable that some technical/broadband difficulties will be encountered which is outside our control. Some of the more common technical difficulties experienced during the live events included cameras freezing and staff getting logged out of the event. The problems occurred more frequently in the Christmas event when a larger volume of staff attended. We advised anyone that encountered problems to re-join the event. Overall this did not appear to impede the enjoyment for staff as illustrated in some of the feedback received. The most common theme in the feedback received was that Library staff enjoyed interacting with colleagues again.

Counting the quiz results was laborious and time consuming. An automated system that calculated the results would have been preferable. This would involve using a cloud based quiz solution integrated into your web conferencing platform.

Conclusion

Teamwork and communication played a key part in the planning and preparation of the virtual events. Anticipating problems in advance and having back-up solutions in place are absolutely essential. Enabling staff to participate on the day also proved successful. As virtual events and working remotely are new concepts for Library staff it was encouraging to see the increase in numbers attending the second event. There were a number of staff new to the Library service and the events enabled them to meet and interact with their colleagues. All attendees expressed delight at seeing and interacting with their colleagues again. A number of staff requested the

Festive Fictionary, quiz and bingo presentations to share with their families during the Christmas holidays. Three enjoyable virtual staff events were planned, organised and orchestrated in a specific time frame through positive thinking, good communication and fantastic teamwork. New skills were developed and challenges overcome. We are now identified as "The Events Team". As remote working becomes more common due to COVID-19 virtual staff events are vital to keep the channels of communication open, prevent staff burn out and combat feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Marguerite Farrell, Senior Library Assistant, NHLKS, Regional Hospital, Mullingar, Caroline O Driscoll, Library Assistant, NHLKS, Cork University Hospital and Natasha Smith, Library Assistant, NHLKS, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda

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The Government Librarians'[1] response to COVID-19

Amy Bond, Marie Caffrey, Joe Donnelly, Orla Gillen, Paula Murphy and Noleen Murtagh

Abstract

GLS librarians discuss how their Library has been affected by the pandemic and the delivery of library services to their respective and disparate user groups. The pandemic has required this group of information professionals to pivot services and resources within a new remote working environment to ensure their client base has access to the range of resources required. Some libraries have resorted to a fully remote environment while others provide a hybrid variation of remote/ online and onsite resources, reflecting of the needs of the particular organisations.

Keywords: *government; information services; Ireland*

1   More details at: https://www.libraryassociation.ie/government-libraries-section/

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Introduction

The Government Libraries Section of the LAI is composed of Librarians, Information Managers and Knowledge Managers across Government departments, bodies and organisations. Six GLS librarians showcase across two subject areas – food and law – their respective libraries, identifying end-users, content and range of resources on offer. The range of subjects covered by the group of librarians listed here include food and food safety, law and agriculture; users of GLS library resources include Supreme Court judges, prosecution solicitors, legal researchers, food companies and agricultural science researchers.

Food

Given the varied roles in the food lifecycle at Teagasc, Bord Bia and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, each of their respective libraries has dealt with technology access and end-user issues during the transition to remote working arising from COVID-19. Licensing and copyright issues, accessing the parent organisation networks and IP connections, these issues all impacted the delivery of library services and accessibility of resources. As is evident in the following contributions, Library staff, while getting to grips with a new remote working environment, continued to make available all of the necessary resources so that end-users could carry out their own respective roles.

Bord Bia

Bord Bia[2] showcases Ireland's outstanding food, drink and horticulture, thus enabling growth and sustainability of producers. The Library provides access to information resources for Bord Bia colleagues but also client companies of its Proprietary Consumer, Cultural and Market Insight studies. This information allows for improved decision-making based on good information, thus helping to drive the growth of the Irish food, drink and horticulture industries.

The majority of Bord Bia Library's collection consists of online databases and these continued to be accessed once the organisation moved to a working from home environment. While traditionally the team of three librarians have performed searches for Bord Bia colleagues, in recent years there has been a move towards a

2 http://www.bordbia.ie

more self-sufficient access to resources. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Library has increased the promotion of these resources, through marketing emails and training webinars.

However, access to resources for client companies was not straightforward. Pre-COVID-19 and with copyright limitations on what could be shared with food and drink companies the majority of suppliers permitted the Bord Bia Library to provide access to resources on two iPads in the library where clients could access the full-text of Market Information reports. Following the closure of the Bord Bia building the inaccessibility of these resources was a point of frustration for clients.

Bord Bia Librarians have had to highlight the importance of adhering to copyright legislation and successfully negotiated increased sharing privileges with suppliers for the duration of the pandemic.

Although the physical book collection is smaller than other Libraries within the GLS group, bibliotherapy titles are some of the most popular within the hardcopy collection. Now more than ever we felt people would need these titles. With limited finances we were able to negotiate a trial period for access to the Harvard Business Review eBook collection from EBSCO which had a strong range of business and personal development titles.

Improving information literacy has been a particular focus for the Bord Bia Library in recent years. Previously this has been done through in-person workshops with colleagues and members of our graduate programmes. Recent sessions moved to online platforms. Feedback has been very positive, participants producing very strong work as part of the assessments. As reflective practitioners, we have taken valued feedback on board with the virtual delivery, improving training sessions as we move forward.

At the start of the pandemic there was a huge need for reliable information and how the crisis might impact on industry. The Library used the monthly newsletter, *Your Library News,* to highlight COVID-19 specific resources in databases and produced an infographic highlighting free to use COVID-19

information resources that could be shared with client companies. A presentation based on WHO information tackling COVID-19 disinformation was also produced by the Library. All of these resources were hosted on our internal knowledge sharing platform, and received positive feedback and engagement.

Teagasc

Teagasc[3] is the national body providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities. The Teagasc Library is structured within Research Operations. While the Library service is available to all staff the primary focus of the solo-librarian is to support researchers. Research is conducted across a wide range of scientific disciplines relating to food and agriculture, as well as economics and social sciences. The range of services offered includes:

- Journal subscriptions
- Research databases
- Market Research Intelligence
- Library Catalogue
- Document Supply Service, book purchasing and Inter Library Loans
- Bibliometric Analysis
- Training, advice, and assistance with queries

The Library is also responsible for managing Teagasc's open access repository, **T-Stór** and related services. All the services are heavily used and essential for the important research conducted by Teagasc, which is of national significance and vital to the Agri-Food industry.

In mid-March 2020, the Librarian packed up her computer and her office chair (her best idea!) and started to work from home (WFH), along with so many

3   http://www.teagasc.ie

others. Initial teething problems stemmed from access to Library resources, or more accurately their inaccessibility. Teagasc staff can access Library resources using a VPN and IP address recognition, but the VPN was not initially available to all, and there were other ICT problems, so alternative access arrangements had to be provided quickly.

Training and instruction documents were required outlining "offsite" access. New servers and IP addresses were also set up by the local ICT team. This had significant impact on online journals and databases and access to their content, requiring considerable time to resolve.

As the pandemic struck, the Teagasc Library was migrating to a new Soutron Library Management System, the support and assistance from the Soutron Team was invaluable during this stressful transition period.

Inter Library Loans were not available as most of the source libraries were also closed and so, the Library had to acquire more new books than planned. Teagasc researchers are heavy users of the document supply service. Articles supplied with embedded DRM software, or requiring passwords to download, were a problem. Normally, these could be printed in the Library and hardcopies given to the user. The risk surrounding home printing prevented such printing.

While on the agenda for some time, the decision to acquire an eBook collection was accelerated by the move to remote working. Additional budget funds have been allocated for 2021 to extend this further. New skills were developed during the online delivery of training and support to Library users. Another important lesson learned in all of this is how important person-to-person interactions are to our well-being.

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

The principal function of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)[4] is to protect consumers and raise compliance through partnership, science and food law enforcement. It is a statutory, independent and science-based body, dedicated to protecting public health and consumer interests in the area of food safety and hygiene.

The FSAI Library Service supports and partners with staff to:

- Enable immediate, seamless access to evidence-based resources
- Keep up to date with current and emerging literature through the supply of journal updates / library newsletter, *FSAI Library News*.
- Provide expert information in a timely manner to inform evidence-based decision making
- Manage a physical library space making it fit for purpose
- Ensure users know how to access and use information resources.

While food safety is the principal subject matter, there are other resources available in management, information technology and statistics. There is also a collection of bibliotherapy books to support staff wellbeing.

As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in March 2020, many FSAI staff including the Librarian did not have access to a work laptop or the FSAI network. All scientific journal subscriptions had previously been available online and accessed via the FSAI IP address; contact with all publishers was initiated by the Librarian who was then provided with remote log in details for staff. Within a few months all staff had laptops and were connected to the network, but remote access is still beneficial. Long-term book loans from the hardcopy collection were permitted and staff could bring these home. The cloud based SirsiDynix LMS was set up on the Librarian's personal computer, with significant support from SirsiDynix.

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4   http://www.fsai.ie

Continued communication from the Library via email and the intranet highlighting the range of resources and services available proved invaluable to staff.

Prior to COVID-19 the FSAI Library had not engaged with eBooks in any meaningful way. Following a review of Library resources, a number of years ago, staff indicated a preference for hardcopy books. The higher cost of many e-books, restrictive publisher licensing practices and limited availability of eBooks in the food safety area were also factors in staying with the traditional print book. In 2020, staff requests for new books were dealt with on a case by case basis, both electronic and hardcopy books were purchased during this period.

This year, with staff continuing to work remotely , the Library will conduct a review of its resources and services. This will look at the need for a physical library space and the provision of more online resources.

Law

Law librarians offer a unique insight into their law libraries and the delivery of library and information services to judges, prosecution solicitors and legal researchers. Although law is the shared subject matter, what is notable is the wide-ranging focus each librarian had as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold.

Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP)[5] enforces the criminal law in the courts on behalf of the people of Ireland, directs and supervises public prosecutions on indictment in the courts, and gives general direction and advice to the Garda Síochána in relation to summary cases and specific direction in such cases where requested.

As part of the Policy & Research Unit, the Library supports the work of legal staff through the delivery of a library and information service that is timely, effective and efficient which meets their information and know-how needs.

While observing Government public health guidelines, the ODPP put measures in place to ensure the continued delivery of a prosecution service. As an essential service the building remained open, albeit with restricted

5   http://www.dpp.ie

access. In order to meet the evolving needs of users, the Library adopted a fusion of "on premise" and a virtual Library service.

The Library, comprising one librarian and two administrative support staff, continues to offer and maintain the expected level of service required by legal staff. This includes:

- Access to **Inform,** the Soutron library management platform, which serves as the gateway to the book, judgments archive, conference papers and external know-how collections

- Access to all legal resources and subscription databases continued in the trusted and familiar way

- Swift response to telephone and email queries

- Library doors remain open albeit with restricted access to the physical collection

- *Inside Knowledge,* the internal current awareness and knowledge management bulletin was published each month.

- Expanding the content and subject range of the eBook collection

The Library plays a critical role in the knowledge management (KM) landscape at the ODPP and is a lead member of the KM Team. As the pandemic took hold, the KM Team was in the midst of a federated search and SharePoint intranet re-development project. The project involved the incorporation of Thomson Reuters Legal Search Connect software within an existing SharePoint intranet. In June a redeveloped Legal Portal was launched as a bespoke repository of internally generated and commissioned legal know-how material. Solas Search sits alongside the Legal Portal, it is a single yet simple search, retrieving for legal staff the most relevant and up to date internal and external information. Following launch and an initial bedding in period, significant virtual training of the Legal Portal and Solas Search took place, culminating in KNOWvember, a month long KM marketing initiative.

Post COVID-19 it is envisaged that the Library will retain a hybrid approach to

the delivery of library, information and knowledge management services. Key areas to focus on are training and engagement with legal staff, this will ensure relationships fostered in the Library can transfer across the new virtual working environment.

The Judges' Library [6]

The Judges' Library is part of The Courts Service, providing support services to the judiciary. It is positioned within the broader Legal Research and Library Services team, and provides a library and information service to judges at all levels of jurisdiction in Ireland, to various categories of judicial research assistants and other support staff, and to certain offices of the Courts Service.

The Judges' Library provides access to a range of subscription-based online databases, as well as a large hard-copy collection. Most of this relates to the laws of Ireland, England and Wales, and the EU, with some material on other countries. Alongside the loan collection, the Library supplies judges with some "Chambers" books that are retained for regular day-to-day use.

With the initial "lockdown" at the end of March 2020, the work of the courts was categorised as essential, and so the library service continued. However, the library closed to readers and new procedures were introduced for requesting books and subsequent collection. Likewise, procedures for quarantining returned loans were established.

The Judges' Library already had a suite of online databases, and before the emergence of COVID-19 it had also substantially increased its collections of electronic textbooks, a process that has been extended a little further during the coronavirus pandemic. However, online sources have not provided a complete alternative to the problem of restricted, and slower, access to hard-copy. Technical difficulties arose on a number of occasions with online services, and much time was spent in having those addressed. In addition, there is still a demand for print items, even when the equivalent is available online.

6   www.courts.i/content/

Meticulous attention is given to negotiating terms of licences for electronic resources: content, search- and other features, price, termination-formalities, modes of access (individual or shared accounts, IP recognition, etc.), users covered, and permitted uses. The fact that the library serves staff as well as judges (who are not "employees"), and a few others who are not strictly staff, means that licences must be negotiated so as to ensure that all groups are covered and in all appropriate locations. The fact that the library has paid close attention to these licensing details has proved very important in the working conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many of our readers are very keen users of electronic sources, with all the advantages of digital content in terms of searching, hyper-linking, copying quotations, space-saving, speed of updates etc. Nevertheless, print publications continue to be valued. Many readers have a preference for them, especially for extended reading (or indeed a quick reference while also listening to counsel or using a computer for other things).

Undoubtedly, greater reliance has been placed on electronic resources, which have proved invaluable, while print holdings are still supplied to readers, albeit in a slower and more cumbersome way. No doubt particular lessons learnt during the pandemic will be useful in the future. In particular we have seen the importance of being prepared to change plans in order to cope with unexpected developments.

Law Reform Commission[7]

The Law Reform Commission is an independent body established under the *Law Reform Commission Act 1975*. Our purpose is to keep the law under independent, objective and expert review, to make recommendations for law reform and to make current law accessible for all.

Staffed by a solo librarian since 2013, the Library and Information Service's role is to enable and support the work of the Commission. It does so by adopting a "digital first" approach when regularly reviewing information

resources and organising, as appropriate, for their evaluation, acquisition and access. Services provided include:

- daily current awareness bulletin
- assisting staff with *ad hoc* reference queries
- regular training to ensure that staff continue to be in the best place to leverage new resources as they become available.

For external stakeholders, the Library currently provides browse and searchable access to all of the Commission's law reform projects as well as corporate publications via the 'search our publications' area on the website. The catalogue entry for each publication provides access to the full text and also allows readers to see whether reform has actually resulted e.g. the catalogue record for the 2016 Report on Harmful Communications and Digital Safety. The library also helps coordinate new publication launches.

Working as part of a small, close-knit team has meant that the value and importance of interdependency has been highlighted during lockdown with particularly appreciated support coming from the administrative support unit.

In the 'beforetimes', LRC staff enjoyed the benefits of being located on a single floor, with interacting and meeting face-to-face with colleagues effectively being a pleasant daily occurrence. The unfortunate invisibility of colleagues has meant that maximising the use of video conferencing facilities to provide induction, training and updates has become vital to the library on a week-to-week basis.

Changed working arrangements brought on by the pandemic meant that some Library users could no longer rely on IP-authentication to facilitate access to many online resources. As such the library worked closely with suppliers to find ways to ensure that all staff who need to have easy access to all the information resources they require to enable them to work from home.

Requirements to quarantine material and 5km travel restrictions led to limited

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7 www.lawreform.ie

access to the print collection; this in turn led to a pivot towards more eBooks than the Library would normally be in a position to provide, although pricing for these resources continues to be a challenge.

As to the future, libraries are used to uncertain ones. There is no doubt that librarians will adapt, innovate and professionally serve with or without pandemic.

Conclusion

This expert group of librarians have successfully adapted to a new remote working environment ensuring end-users have access to essential resources. While government librarians are a versatile group, core professional librarian skills of negotiation, communication, and critical thinking continued to be keenly exercised for the benefit of our users as the COVID19 pandemic evolved and continues to evolve.

The Government Libraries Section is an important sounding board and support network for the government librarian; lively debate ensues at monthly virtual meetings. Common concerns include COVID-19 and issues arising, licensing and copyright, ICT technology access and virtual information literacy training. During the pandemic, this pooling of information was invaluable in terms of consistency, safety, and saving precious time had every library been obliged to do its own research in isolation.

As a united group, government librarians are well placed to tackle issues such as eBooks pricing and licensing, information literacy skills and the threat posed by disinformation. While it has been to forefront of the GLS group for some time, the importance of a professionally resourced physical and virtual library is now more evident than ever.

Amy Bond (Bord Bia), BA, MSc, Marie Caffrey, BSc, DipLIS (Teagasc), Joe Donnelly, BA, DipLIS (Judges' Library), Orla Gillen, BA, MLIS (Law Reform Commission), Paula Murphy, BA, BSc, MLIS (ODPP) and Noleen Murtagh, MSc (Agric), DipLIS (Wales) (FSAI)
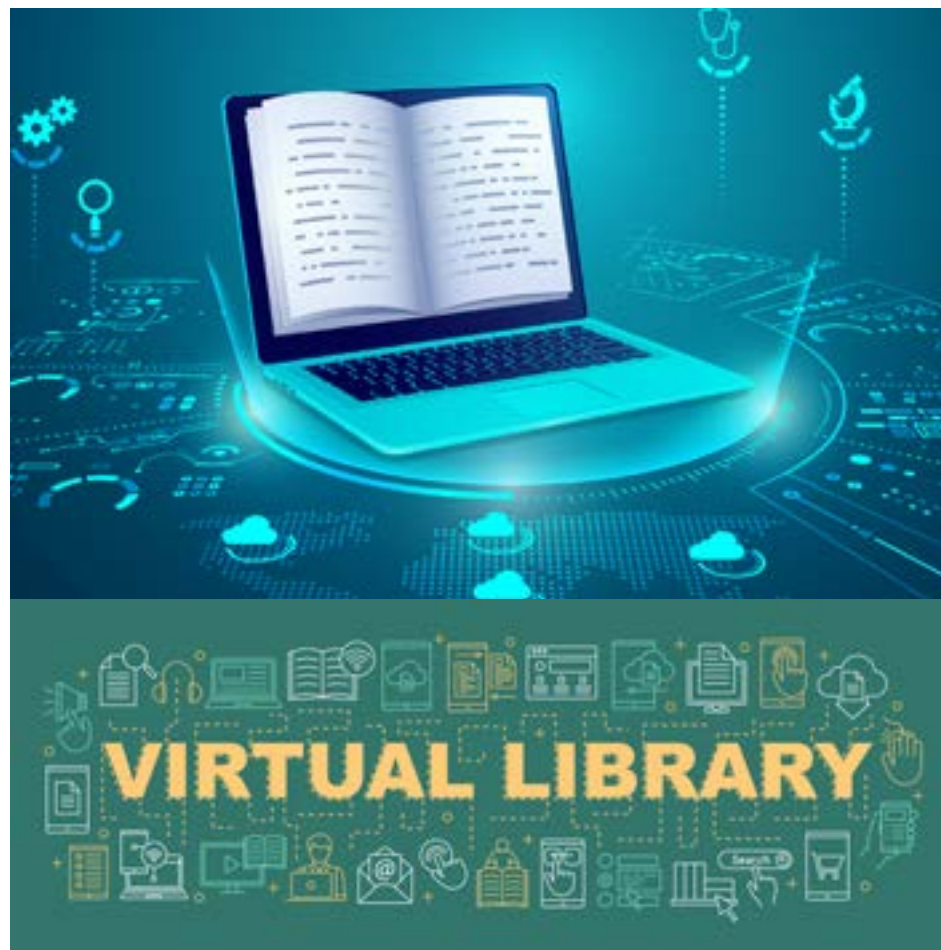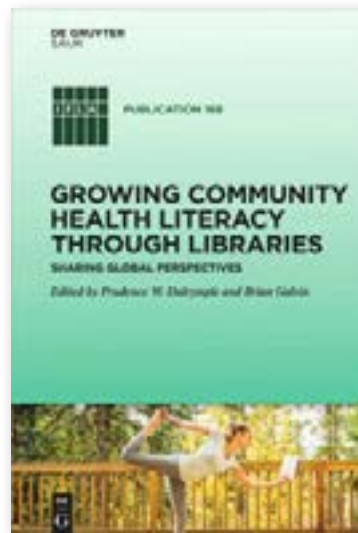
IFLA publishes book on librarians work in health literacy

Library practitioners and academics have made insightful contributions to the theory of health literacy and the development of health literacy interventions. This collection of essays, case studies, theoretical analysis, and personal reflections from ten different countries provides examples of librarians' health literacy work in clinical, social care and educational settings. The emphasis on community involvement in the title of this volume is apparent in the collaborative and socially engaged projects described in many of the case studies presented. Theoretical pieces provide evidence that librarians are tracking the evolving definition of health literacy and grasp its conceptual complexity. The idea for this book came about through discussions between members of the International Federation of Library Association's (IFLA) Health and Biosciences Section. Health literacy was a theme in one the section's open sessions at IFLA Congress, and it was decided to compile a collection that would demonstrate how librarians are contributing to the knowledge base on health literacy and actively participating in health literacy projects.

In the foreword Jean Shipman, former President of America's Medical Library Association, recounts what she describes as her 'crusade to engage librarians with health literacy roles.' This work was rooted in Jean's personal experience of helping her father to manage serious illness and the realisation both that people were often confused and ill-informed when faced with a health emergency, and that librarians could make a difference. In collaboration with MLA colleagues she established the Health Information Literacy Research Project, which resulted in librarians taking leading roles in health literacy in their own institutions.

The opening section of the book describes the context in which librarians engage with health literacy. There is an emphasis on the social determinants of health and the role that access to information plays in personal health management. A number of chapters explain the evolving definition of health literacy from its early conception as an individual capacity to seek and understand health information, to a broader community-focused outlook that emphasises the social context of low health literacy. Dalrymple traces the gradual change in the understanding of health literacy as basic skills acquisition to a more recent envisioning of better social conditions and personal empowerment. This contemporary understanding allows space for librarians to participate in and lead health literacy projects in their communities.

This conceptual evolution in health literacy maps its emergence from its origins in clinical medicine and the recognition by physicians that communication with patients needs to be improved to provide for better informed self-management of personal health. During this period tools to

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measure health literacy were developed and the basics of assessments systems were established. The public health perspective, with its emphasis on healthcare equity and availability, extended the definition of health literacy to include the individual's capacity to act on information and move beyond passive acceptance. Theoretical work on health literacy and its application in healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion has established health literacy as a component within the greater healthcare system, for which society as a whole takes responsibility. The disparities in access to healthcare are mirrored in inequalities in access to digital information further exacerbating the problem by undermining citizens' capacity to use electronic sources of health information. This is a domain in which librarians are prominent and in which there are opportunities to make important contributions to enhancing health literacy.

Verhaaren and colleagues use a different schema to trace the conceptual development of health literacy as it is applied to children and young adults. They describe the disease-centred approach, less relevant now as few children face life-threatening diseases, the health-centred approach, used by public health institutions, and the emergence of the education-centred approach, where the emphasis is on children's social and intellectual development. Health literacy is an education attribute and the capacity to make informed choices is supported by structures within the social and economic spheres.   The authors note the conflicting definitions of health literacy that have emerged over the years and propose that a more nuanced sustainable definition will emerge through focus on its educational aspect. By understanding the cultural environment in which health literacy is developed, we broaden our understanding of it and provide more opportunity to measure it in a meaningful way.

This understanding of the social and community dimension of health literacy underpins Cocchi *et al's* contribution. They emphasise the practical aspects of librarians' involvement in multi-disciplinary programmes designed to provide access to high quality health information, especially for more vulnerable populations.   This chapter echoes Verhaaren's stress on the role of education in optimising citizens' engagement using activities that empower them to manage their health. The authors describe librarians' extensive experience in developing consumer health information and how their role as trusted and recognisable sources of information makes them essential partners in this sphere. Librarians' skills in assessing information quality is especially important given the increasing frequency with which online sources of information are consulted. The information professional's ability to weed out harmful or unreliable information through a variety of assessment tools, their expertise in evaluating the accessibility of documents, and their knowledge management skills are valuable communication resources in consumer health work. De Br**ú**n also deals with the librarian's part in implementing consumer health programmes. She describes how both medical librarians and public librarians in the United Kingdom are working with others to encourage informed decision-making and give people greater control over their own health.

Ritchie *et al.* provide an illustration of the practical application of both health-focused education and consumer health programmes through a number of case studies of Australian hospital libraries. The case studies were undertaken as part of a national hospital accreditation process and demonstrates how health librarians' work in consumer health literacy is embedded in systems with a strong health literacy focus. The case studies describe an initiative guiding paediatric patients material related to their condition, a public lecture series, a mental health-focussed bibliotherapy initiative and a training programme for volunteers working in consumer health projects in their

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communities.   Hannon presents the findings from her Irish survey of Irish general practitioners and information professionals working in health science libraries. The study describes both of these groups' understanding of health literacy, the activities in which they were engaged, the barriers to becoming involved in health literary and the potential contribution of health sciences libraries in Ireland to health literacy, particularly in collaboration with primary health professionals.

A number of case studies and accounts of collaborative projects describe how librarians are implementing health principles and empowering people to learn about their own health and that of the communities the live in. There are studies of this type of community of engagement from public librarians in Croatia and Columbia and an account of the inspiring Free Library of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.   Academic librarians in Uganda engage in health projects in remote areas far from the university, and in Anchorage, Alaska university librarians work as health navigators among immigrant populations in one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the world.

Galvin and Lee undertook a scoping review of the research literature of evaluations of health literacy in which librarians played a leading or prominent role. There is evidence that librarians are actively involved in supporting health literarcy either through initiatives within their own public or medical libraries or through cooperation with others. Librarians rely heavily on surveys as the primary data collection tool and case studies are invariaby the research design used. This limits the opportunity to contribute in a systematic way to the evidence base on health literacy.

Health literacy is a relatively new field of research in the health sciences. If we want to enable librarians to contribute to the growth of knowledge on this topic, it would be useful to identify roles within each stage in the public

health response to health problems: describing the problem and measuring its prevalence in a particular population; identifying appropriate interventions through a systematic study of the literature; and, implementing and evaluating these interventions to improve practice and inform policy development. Librarians provide information services across the full range of disciplines in academic environments. They are active at each stage of the research and data generation cycles and are increasingly taking on new roles in data management. Information specialists' skills in searching are an essential part of the systematic review process. These are real advantages that, when leveraged, present opportunities to contribute to advances in our understanding of health literacy.

Successful health literacy programmes are by necessity complex, multi-faceted interventions involving cooperation across a range of disciplines and actors in public health, clinical setting, education, and research.   The work described in this book clearly demonstrates that librarians have the necessary networking, analytical, communication and public service skills to collaborate successfully with health professionals, policymakers, educators, and others in this vital part of our health system.

Prudence W. Dalrymple and Brian Galvin (eds.)[1] (2020) *Growing Community Health Literacy through Libraries: Sharing Global Perspectives.* IFLA Publications, 168. Berlin: De Gruyter Saur ISBN: 9783110362510

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1   Former Chair, Biosciences and Health Libraries Section, IFLA

Book Review

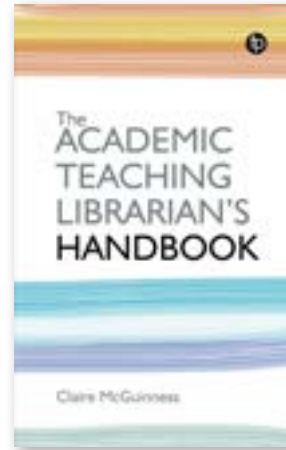## The Academic Teaching Librarian's Handbook
Claire McGuinness

London: Facet, 2021). ISBN 9781783304622, £55.

The Academic Teaching Librarian's Handbook explores the current landscape of teaching librarianship and highlights the important developments shaping current and future practice. It is aimed at academic library professionals, and students on LIS programmes interested in undertaking a teaching role. McGuinness successfully equips librarians with practical tools to engage in professional development and career planning.

Part one of this book focuses on evolving conceptions of information literacy (IL) from a set of prescribed skills, towards a relational view of IL, defined by context. Critical trends such as learning analytics and datafied scholarship are examined, giving the reader an understanding of these emerging areas (chapter 1). The reader is encouraged to consider their professional identity as an academic teaching librarian by engaging in reflective practice and developing a personal teaching philosophy (chapter 2) and to consider their suitability for a teaching role by reflecting on their skills, personality, values and motivators (chapter 3). This is useful for LIS students embarking on a library career, and for mid-career professionals in a teaching role deciding on their future direction. The teaching portfolio template will be well received by those currently teaching as it provides a means of strategically demonstrating teaching value.

Part two is about excelling as an academic teaching librarian. Digital transformation in Higher Education is discussed and the benefits for equality, diversity and inclusion are outlined. The reader is encouraged to reflect on their role in digital learning. The author helpfully includes digital learning knowledge domains and competence frameworks whilst the suggestions around technology use in teaching will be of particular interest to librarians delivering or preparing to deliver teaching (chapter 4).

The managerial and strategic aspects of academic teaching librarianship are examined. Takeaways include how to create an IL culture in an organisation and the support that can be gained from engaging with peers by joining professional groups, associations and committees (chapter 5). Practical strategies for advocacy are outlined with a focus on writing for academic publication, encouraging teaching librarians to communicate their value and the importance of IL at a local and national level (chapter 6).

Personal reflection points are included at regular intervals throughout the book, encouraging the reader to pause and reflect on what they have read and how it relates to their experience. Exercises are included at the end of each chapter enabling the reader to actively engage with the content, resulting in a more meaningful learning experience.

The Academic Teaching Librarian's Handbook highlights the essential commitment to lifelong learning that teaching librarians must make in order to progress and stay relevant in the field and provides practical tools to support this.

Eimear Evans, Faculty Library (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences), Queen's University Belfast.
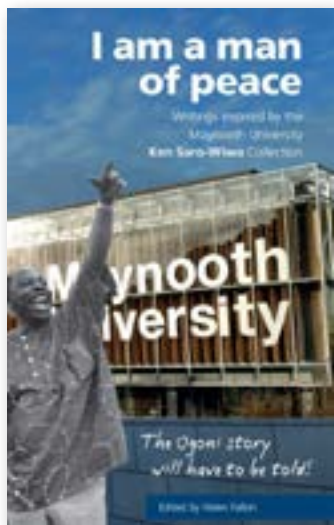
Maynooth University Library launches new book on International Human Rights Day, 10th December 2020

On the 10th of December 2020, Dr Gemma Irvine, Vice-President, Equality & Diversity at Maynooth University, launched the book *I am a Man of Peace: Writings Inspired by the Maynooth University Ken Saro-Wiwa Collection* edited by Deputy Librarian Helen Fallon.

In keeping with Maynooth University's commitment to Open Access an online version of the book is available to download
https://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/13526/

The book marked the 25th anniversary of the execution of Nigerian writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, whose death-row correspondence was donated to the University Library in 2011. The 2] essays and 42 poems included in the book are inspired by Saro-Wiwa's ideals and activism. This diverse international collection include contributions on integrating the Saro-Wiwa letters into the postgraduate curriculum by archivists Ciara Joyce and Roisin Berry, an essay by Hugh Murphy, Head of Collections and content, on issues of colonialism in library collections and an essay by Helen Fallon, Laura Connaughton and Edel Cosgrave on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) training for library staff. The book also includes contributions by Saro-Wiwa's brother and his daughter, the renowned travel writer Noo Saro-Wiwa, who has visited the Library and viewed her father's letters.

The 42 poems in the collection are from the Maynooth Library Ken Saro-Wiwa Poetry Competition. On the 10th of November 2020, the Library hosted a poetry evening with readings from poets included in the collection. The recording is available on the Library YouTube Channel https://bit.ly/KSWPoetry

A podcast of the winning poems in the school category of the competition is available at
https://soundcloud.com/maynooth-university-library/sets/school-poetry-podcast

Copies of the print version (€10) are available to buy via Maynooth University Bookshop university.bookshop.@mu.ie

Proceeds from the sale of the book go to the Maynooth University Ken Saro-Wiwa Bursary for Postgraduate Research.

Libraries and Archives: 'Guardians of the word hoard'

To download your copy visit:
https://www.ria.ie/sites/default/files/libraries_and_archives_1.pdf

NEWS from the STACKS

People

Recent Appointments:

Congratulations to the following:

Jane Burns, Director, Regional University Network, Athlone

Monica Crump, Deputy Librarian, NUIG

Lorna Dodd, Associate Director, UCD Library

Orlaith McBride, Director, National Archives of Ireland

Niamh Walker Headon, Library Resouces Manager, HSE

Recent Retirements:

Mary Clarke, Dublin City Archivist

LIS Association appointments:

EAHIL - **Aoife Lawton**, Deputy Treasurer, 2021-2024; Council - **Louise Farragher** (HRB), **Donna O'Doibhlin** (UCC) and **Caroline Rowan** (SVUH)

Awards

Aoife Doherty, TU Dublin, winner of Allen and Ovary 2020 Award at Ulster University

Booksellers Award

https://www.booksellers.org.uk/industryinfo/industryinfo/latestnews/Independent-Bookshop-of-the-Year-Regional-Countr

Literary Awards

https://carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/cilip-carnegie-and-kate-greenaway-medals-2021-shortlists-announced/#:~:text=2021%20CILIP%20Carnegie%20Medal%20shortlist,Milner%20(Otter%2DBarry%20Books)

International Booker Prize 2021 Shortlist: **22 April**	International Dublin Literary Award 2021 Shortlist: **25 March**	Women's Prize for Fiction 2021 Shortlist: **28 April**

Forthcoming Conferences

http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2021/03/2021-annual-conference-exhibition-virtual-registration-opens

http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2021/02/acrl-2021-virtual-conference-registration-opens

https://www.iaml.info/congresses/2021-online

https://www.ifla.org/wlic2021

https://liberconference.eu/liber-annual-conference-2021-update/

https://www.lilacconference.com/festivil-by-lilac

https://www.uksg.org/event/uksgconference2021

2022

http://conference.conul.ie/

https://www.iaml.info/congresses/2022-prague

IFLA WLIC 2022, Dublin. Details later

https://www.lilacconference.com/lilac-2022/call-for-presentations

Online Exhibitions of Interest

https://www.marshlibrary.ie/digi2/exhibits/show/maps/#exhibit/

https://www.nationalarchives.ie/article/singing-sedition-ballads-verse-age-oconnell/

https://www.nli.ie/en/udlist/programme-and-events-online-exhibitions.aspx

https://www.nationalgallery.ie/art-and-artists/exhibitions/murillo-prodigal-son-restored

https://www.rcsi.com/cameron/index.html

Copyright News

http://www.eblida.org/activities/

https://www.ifla.org/clm

https://www.wipo.int/policy/en/sccr/

Library News

Armagh Robinson Library celebrates 250 years:

https://armaghrobinsonlibrary.co.uk/armagh-robinson-library/

Linen Hall Library:

https://linenhall.com/linen-hall-awarded-57000-from-shared-history-fund/

https://linenhall.com/linen-hall-awarded-166200-from-heritage-recovery-fund/

NUIG:

https://www.rte.ie/news/regional/2021/0316/1204296-archive-emigrant-letters-nui-galway/

University of Limerick:

https://www.ul.ie/library/about/news-events/marie-curie-fellowship-bolton-library

Libraries Ireland:

https://www.librariesireland.ie/news/ireland-reads

https://www.librariesireland.ie/news/grow-it-forward-with-free-seeds-from-your-local-library

Annual CILIP NI/LAI Conference 2021

https://www.libraryassociation.ie/cilip-ireland-library-association-of-ireland-lai-annual-joint-conference-2021-2/

Library Association of Ireland AGM:

https://www.libraryassociation.ie/notice-of-lai-agm-27th-april-2021-and-nomination-forms/