

Innovation, quality and collaboration – assets for libraries

The WLIC 2012 in Helsinki is a historical moment for Finnish libraries. We have collaborated across sectors and worked diligently to make this Congress happen. As a co-chair of the Finnish National Committee (NC), I am pleased and surprised on how well all the preparing work has proceeded. Even though the culmination point of this work takes place in August in Helsinki, the actual conference is just the tip of the iceberg. A lot of planning, hard work and co-operation are needed before, during and even after the actual Congress for everything to go well. The atmosphere in the Finnish NC and in the larger Finnish library community is eager and excited. Now, finally, all this planning and preparing work transforms itself into reality. This is what we have been waiting for the last two years!

Finnish Libraries Now is a new website, which will be published right before the Congress to give an introduction to our library community. I hope that we can give you general outlines of the Finnish library network – and some innovative ideas to bring back home.

Finnish Research Library Association was the first Finnish IFLA member. While we have lobbied and promoted research libraries and their interests for over 80 years, our role has also been important in providing further education for library staff in universities, research institutes and polytechnics. As you can see from the pages of *Signum*, our members and working groups are active in their endeavours.

In this issue, we will present you an inspiring selection of ongoing developments in the Finnish research library field. *Knotworking* gives you an example of a collaboration method between libraries and researchers. You will find out, how information literacy training has been implemented as a part of university degrees. In addition, you will get familiar with the ideas of the father of *Linux*, Linus Torvalds and learn about strategic visions of forthcoming IFLA-president, Sinikka Sipilä.

Together with my colleague Jarmo Saarti I wrote to IFLA journal about the history and state of Finnish libraries (Tuominen & Saarti 2012). The writing process made clear to me that the Finnish library system can be viewed as an on-going project, which is based on the welfare state model. Presently this model has become challenged by the economic and ideological changes, which affect Europe and European Union as a whole. As we know on the basis of user studies, libraries are even more used

during turbulent times than in more stable periods of economy. Thus, I feel that more than ever before we need to provide high-quality library services for our users - and need to have an innovative mindset and collaborate closely with our users in the development of these services.

I hope you all inspiring, surprising and empowering moments in the summer of Finland!

Kimmo Tuominen, president,
The Finnish Research Library Association

References

Finnish Libraries Now. <http://now.libraries.fi/>

Tuominen, K. & Saarti, J. (2012), The Finnish library system: open collaboration for an open society. IFLA Journal 38 (2), pp. 115-136.