

Adapting public collections and libraries through 21st century strategies and solutions: Adapt, manage or perish

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The presentation builds on three key pillars, focusing on the evolving role of librarians in the era of artificial intelligence (AI). The first pillar emphasises the importance of identifying effective strategies for navigating this transformative period. These strategies include digital transformation, digitisation and accessibility, intelligent cataloguing and search, community engagement, and the integration of advanced technologies into library operations. The second pillar highlights the critical roles and tasks that librarians are expected to undertake in this context. These tasks encompass staff training to enhance digital and AI competencies, upgrading infrastructure to support technological advancements, and implementing outreach programmes to engage communities and promote digital literacy. Practical recommendations are also provided, such as advocating for increased financial support through grant applications and lobbying efforts.

Privacy and security emerge as significant concerns, necessitating measures to protect patron data.

Recommended actions include the development of transparent policies, implementing threat detection and prevention systems, utilising data encryption and anonymisation techniques, and ensuring robust access control and authentication mechanisms. Continuous data monitoring, reporting, automatic updates, and patch management further enhance security protocols. The presentation also stresses the need for user-centred design in library services. This involves incorporating feedback mechanisms and offering inclusive services tailored to diverse user needs, ensuring accessibility and relevance for all patrons. The third pillar explores the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and its contributions to the intersection of AI and libraries. Key initiatives include the work of the Artificial Intelligence and Libraries Working Group, which addresses topics such as AI ethics and provides valuable publications and reports to guide libraries in adopting AI responsibly.

In addition, the presentation introduces the pioneering work of MEF University and the MEF Library in Türkiye, both leaders in integrating AI within the academic and library sectors. MEF University achieved a significant milestone in November 2023 by publishing the first book on higher education and artificial intelligence applications on a global scale. It also became the first university in Türkiye to publish its AI policy, issuing two versions to address the evolving landscape.