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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

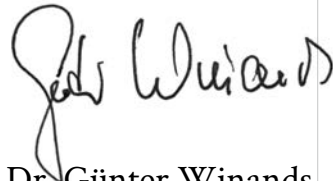
**The German National Library is an active
cultural memory of the past and future**



Foreword

The future is becoming more digital! And everything analogue will be just as important. We hold the proper storage of the physical publications entrusted to us to be self-evident so that this strategy paper does not mention the construction projects in Leipzig and Frankfurt am Main separately. This is because the German National Library's Strategic Priorities for 2021–2024 will focus even more on digital development. Our Strategic Priorities follow the framework paper “German National Library 2025: Strategic Compass”, which was published in 2016. Some of the new goals will have an effect far beyond 2025.

We can only successfully create and implement a strategy if we work together. We would therefore like to thank everyone involved!



Dr. Günter Winands
Chair of the Administrative Council



Frank Scholze
Director General

Preface

This is the third time that the German National Library has published its Strategic Priorities as a focused section of its legal mandate. The motto of the strategy cycle for 2021–2024 is “The German National Library is an active cultural memory of the past and future”. For this, we have defined five fields of action with 25 goals in all.

Our Strategic Priorities are a transparent representation of our medium-term goals for the next four years. They are based on the paper “German National Library 2025: Strategic Compass”, which was published in 2016 and leads the way for a longer period of time. Some of the goals set out below will have an effect beyond 2025.

Our goals are fleshed out and implemented in our catalogue of measures, which is updated and evaluated every year, and in the work programmes derived from it.

Who we are

The German National Library is an active cultural memory of the past and future. It is Germany's central archive library and also – with the German Museum of Books and Writing and the German Exile Archive 1933–1945 – an archive and museum.

Our legal mandate is to collect, catalogue, document, disseminate and preserve all media works in text, image and sound format published in Germany since 1913 along with foreign publications about Germany or in the German language. Whether on paper or other carrier materials or in digital format: we collect books, periodicals, maps, notated music, recorded music and much more – without exception, without bias and in the original. Our services and offerings promote freedom of information and expression while strengthening the core values of our democracy. As part of a number of strong communities, we are integrated into an extensive network.

In order to fulfil our memory function, also with regard to new publication formats, we are expanding our digital collections and developing attractive, user-friendly forms of presentation. We are also investing in digital cataloguing processes and in interdisciplinary networking and communication between the fields of culture and science. Furthermore, we are a learning organisation that is continually developing.

[→ Our fields of action](#)



Our fields of action

→ Expanding our digital collections

→ Expanding our digital indexing processes

→ Presenting collections digitally

→ Linking culture and science

→ Developing the learning organisation

In order to be able to continue functioning as a cultural memory in the future, our aim is to view all processes and workflows through a digital lens. To this end, we are expanding our digital collections and developing attractive, user-friendly forms of presentation. We are investing in digital cataloguing processes and in interdisciplinary networking and communication with the fields of culture and science. In doing so, we are constantly developing further – in accordance with our understanding of ourselves as a learning organisation.

Collecting, cataloguing, educating and integrating while encouraging and enabling in the context of partnerships and networks: this can only function if we work together pragmatically to invent the future while constructing complexity, living it and understanding it as something perfectly natural.

1. Expanding our digital collections

Our long-term goal, which goes far beyond the prospects for 2025 set out in our Strategic Compass, is to make every item in our collections available digitally. Libraries embarked upon this path decades ago when they switched from card catalogues to electronic cataloguing and data processing. We are now continuing down this road and adding a comprehensive, permanent digital layer to our collections.

The first step in this direction is being taken with the ongoing digitisation of tables of contents. The tables of contents of more than 2 million books have been linked with the relevant bibliographic data. We have been scanning the tables of contents of all newly deposited books since 2013. Gaps between 1945 and 2012 and in the years since we started collecting are gradually being closed. 2.7 million tables of contents encompassing around 6 million pages will be digitised in the years to come. More will follow in order to achieve our goal of providing a comprehensive digital representation of all the items in our collections.

In addition, our collection of born digital publications and our web archive will be expanded quantitatively and qualitatively in such a way that the growing number of new publications can be properly integrated into the existing collection and the diversity of the web is reflected in an exemplary manner.

Data partnerships with institutions in the cultural sector are a vital part of these plans.

→ **Our goals**

Our goals

Long-term goal: Our collections are completely and permanently available, also in digital format.

- 1.1 The digital collections have been expanded, particularly our collections of music, single digital publications – such as e-books and e-journals – and digitised works.
- 1.2 The web archive has been qualitatively and quantitatively expanded so as to reflect the diversity of the web in an exemplary manner.
- 1.3 The legal framework conditions have been developed further (e.g. the Law regarding the German National Library, the legal deposit regulation, copyright legislation).
- 1.4 Data partnerships have been set up and expanded.

2. Expanding our digital indexing processes

We are using state-of-the-art technology to expand our indexing processes, for example artificial intelligence or text and data mining. We have set up cooperations with national and international partners to this end.

Cataloguing serves to optimise search processes and the presentation and use of our collections. In the long term, our collections will be made available digitally, regardless of their type and format. Cataloguing data has a key role to play in this respect. Viewing everything through a digital lens also means re-evaluating and structuring the processes used to generate this cataloguing data.

Rather than making analogue objects in the collection obsolete or less valuable, the formation of a digital layer facilitates all aspects of their use. This is because it will only be possible to address new questions and use text and data mining or machine-based learning to acquire new insights by methodically compiling new sub-collections. The results will then flow back into the collections, provided they can be presented and linked in an appropriately structured manner.

→ **Our goals**

Our goals

- 2.1 Cataloguing processes are based on digital objects.
- 2.2 Our cataloguing processes are open for collaborative projects.
- 2.3 A differentiated, needs-oriented cataloguing policy has been developed and communicated.
- 2.4 A modular system of machine-based cataloguing processes is available.



3. Presenting collections digitally

In line with the principle “digital before print”, we aim to enable digital search and retrieval for all items in our collections, regardless of their type or format, so that they are presented in a legally compliant manner. To this end, we are creating attractive, state-of-the-art, user-friendly methods of access to our data and objects in our reading rooms and – where permitted by law – through the internet. As the nexus for finding, presenting, accessing and legally compliant reuse of digital resources, our catalogue, data services and DNBLab allow users to access our data, object files and full texts through various interfaces.

The education work carried out by the German Exile Archive 1933–1945, the German Music Archive and the German Museum of Books and Writing is also being digitally enhanced, for example, by virtual exhibitions and online tutorials.

Digital presentation also offers far-reaching protection for our physical holdings, which are stored in conditions optimised for preservation. Scientists and interested members of the public still have the option of using the originals.

More than many other libraries, the German National Library is also a physical location in which the entire wealth of the digital and physical collections can only be tapped into and made use of. We will continue adapting the outstanding study and work rooms in Leipzig and Frankfurt am Main in line with changing user requirements.

[→ Our goals](#)

Our goals

Long-term goal: Items and collections are available digitally, regardless of their type and format.

- 3.1** Our digital offerings and services (e.g. text and data mining, catalogue enrichment) have been expanded.
- 3.2** Digital presentations are made available using state-of-the-art technology in a service-oriented manner while exploiting the possibilities authorised by law.
- 3.3** Attractive, up-to-date, user-friendly forms of access to data and objects have been created (catalogue/full-text search/visualisation/interfaces).
- 3.4** Our digital educational formats have been expanded.

4. Linking culture and science

We are committed to linking cultural and scientific disciplines and promoting their close cooperation in open, transparent formats. We are an active, reliable partner and manage a wide variety of cooperative projects. For example, the offices of various networks are located at the German National Library, and we are also a member of various central advisory and decision-making committees.

With our data and services, we are part of an extensive information network of memory institutions and other organisations, because we believe that the challenges of the future can only be overcome by partnerships and alliances. The Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek (German Digital Library) and the Integrated Authority File are blazing a trail in this respect by facilitating conceptual, technological and organisational access.

We are a strong hub in networks. For example, we coordinate the development of a digitisation strategy for the cultural sector on behalf of the federal government. Together with a group of representatives from all disciplines, we use participative formats to define the complex status quo and explore the possibilities available to libraries, archives, museums, memory institutions and other cultural institutions in the future.

→ **Our goals**

Our goals

- 4.1 We moderate dialogues between culture, science and the public.
- 4.2 We organise or are a part of cooperative ventures that address strategic topics (e.g. the Integrated Authority File, the Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek, the competence network for digital preservation nestor, the National Research Data Infrastructure and the German Union Catalogue of Serials).
- 4.3 We enhance the visibility of our institution as a strong hub in various networks.



5. Developing the learning organisation

We are strengthening our work-related, organisational, human resources and IT structures in order to drive the German National Library's development as a learning organisation.

We use sophisticated means of information and communication for both specialised and organisational tasks; these allow us to intensify cooperation both internally and externally and to integrate automated processes. We can work flexibly and seamlessly at various locations. A strategic IT management system ensures that a stable, needs-oriented supply of information and communication technology is guaranteed.

Processes with full electronic support that have been developed on the basis of analyses facilitate efficient, legally compliant and transparent administration. For example, employees can manage their own personal data and initiate approval processes themselves. We are increasing the strategic orientation of our personnel planning and continuing to educate ourselves. New alternative work forms and models (new work) are enhancing our reputation as an attractive employer. We are committed to diversity and will also be offering work opportunities for people with no conventional library or IT training. At the same time, this entails skills training and integration at the workplace, and we are working on overcoming obstacles in this respect.

We wish to focus more strongly on bringing people, topics and resources together in multi-layer overlay structures so that tasks can be dealt with faster and more efficiently.

[→ Our goals](#)

Our goals

- 5.1 We have a consistent IT and communication landscape which allows for integrated, secure, mobile, fast, flexible work forms.
- 5.2 A “new work” workplace concept has been developed and implemented.
- 5.3 Collaborative (internal/external) and supportive (machine-based/automatic) platforms and tools for specialised processes have been developed and implemented in all areas.
- 5.4 A number of streamlined electronic processes including employee self-service functions have been developed.
- 5.5 A continuous strategic human resource planning system has been introduced (transparency, monitoring).
- 5.6 An interdisciplinary, ongoing personnel recruitment and development system has been introduced and expanded as an instrument of digital transformation (also with regard to education and training).
- 5.7 The organisational structure has been enhanced with agile overlay structures: people, topics and resources can be (temporarily) brought together.
- 5.8 A strategic IT management system for the supply of information and communication technologies has been implemented.



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