

Recommendations for the design of buildings and interiors of public libraries

Drawn up according to the guideline of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions – IFLA for library buildings

Architecture of libraries and their interiors change and develop in line with social development. Libraries are no longer only book storages. They are changing into busy open spaces offering a place for education, culture, meetings and relaxation for their readers and visitors.

In compliance with the *IFLA Library Building Guidelines: Developments and Reflections*, a modern library and its interior can be defined by several qualities.

- **Functional design** – library premises are equipped with quality furniture specially designed for the library needs
- **Adaptable space** – flexibility and the possibility to modify the library space according to the needs of currently held events and activities belong to the basic conditions of operation in a modern institution. In order to ensure this function partition walls, enabling the division of a space into several parts as well as its fast restoration back into its original state, may be available.
- **Accessible space** – observing the standards of accessibility for the disabled and disadvantaged who can move within the premises without the risk of any barriers. Good orientation within the premises (visible boards and marking, even in Braille). When designing the interior, it is necessary to take into account all age groups of visitors to the premises. There are different chair heights, and shelves for children's books are lower (assuming child visitors are on the premises).
- **Varied space** – furniture in the library space is adaptable to the currently held event or activity. The use of bookshelves on casters, light-weight furniture and seating options that can be changed and moved quickly.
- **Interactive space** – communication with feedback, electronic information boards and also employees prepared to interact with the visitors.
- **Conductive space** – it is closely connected to the functional design; it brings a new and positive perception of the space; staying in this space has a positive impact on e.g. the creativity and learning abilities of people.
- **Safe and secure space** – the building and its premises are safe for everybody. In order to preserve the library collection it is necessary to ensure stable temperature and humidity in the premises.
- **Efficient and sustainable space** – equipment in the premises must be designed in a manner that ensures reduced resource use (water, energy, paper). Paper reduction can be applied within the library services – all the receipts, notification e-mails, reminders may be delivered in an electronic form. Reconstruction of the building shall be carried out with the use of materials that eliminate the negative impact on the environment. Furnishing of the interior shall be made with the use of as many natural materials as possible.

Source: IFLA Library Building Guidelines: Development and Reflections, Spolok slovenských knihovníkov/Slovak Librarians Association Publikácie IFLA edition, Prepared in 2007, Translated in 2012.

https://www.academia.edu/28622012/IFLA_Library_Building_Guidelines_Developments_and_Reflections