

Zeitschrift: Annual report / Swiss National Library
Herausgeber: Swiss National Library
Band: 106 (2019)

Artikel: Towards the future : the NL's strategy 2020-2028
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-880868>

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Towards the future: the NL's strategy 2020–2028

The NL's strategy for the years 2020–2028 is aligned with the strategic priorities set out in the Federal Office of Culture's Culture Dispatch. It focuses on the challenges of digital transformation and the role of Switzerland's digital memory, incorporates the expectations of the players concerned, and takes a broad range of perspectives into account.

A participatory process in which the NL concentrates on its strengths

In 2019 the NL, in agreement with the Directorate of the FOC, decided to develop its new strategy by means of an interactive, iterative process moderated by external parties. The aim was to enhance consistency and relevance by incorporating numerous outside perspectives as well as the hopes and expectations of our partners. Representatives of university and cantonal libraries, Bibliomedia, Bibliosuisse and the NL Commission, as well as representatives of all age groups and disciplines, attended themed workshops at which they worked together with NL staff from all levels of the hierarchy. The main focus of the discussions was the role of memory institutions today and the digital transformation.

Many areas that are among the NL's strengths were emphasised and will be at the heart of our activities in future: trust in the institution thanks to the reliability of its sources, the quality of its work, and the richness and breadth of its analogue and digital collections; preserving and securing the digital and digitised collection; large-scale archiving of Swiss websites; providing tools to allow the population to participate in expanding the collections; national coordination on issues of library science; access to the collections both on site at the NL and by facilitating digital availability; and cultural mediation with partners both established and new.

The building context: strategic objectives for an initial period up to 2023

In addition to this input and an analysis of the key trends shaping the social, political and economic realities of the 21st century – such as digital transformation and globalisation – the NL also considered the building context within which it operates.

As mentioned in the 2018 report, a complete renovation of the NL has proven to be necessary. This major project will extend over a number of years (from 2023 to 2027/8) and will involve relocating the entire NL and FOC, including all the workplaces and infrastructure. Only the collections will remain in the two underground stacks. The NL and FOC will move for a number of years to the building currently occupied by the Federal Office of Information Technology at Monbijoustrasse 74, in Bern.

Consultations on renovation of the building have also commenced with the Federal Office of Construction and Logistics (FOCL). This major project for a library of the future to meet the needs and expectations of its users will require funding from Parliament. As far as possible, thinking on the vision for a museum quarter in Bern that is currently under development will be integrated into our project.

In view of the constraints imposed by our building situation, we decided to define a strategy for the period 2020–2028. However, our strategic objectives are limited to the years 2020–2023. Beyond that date, we will have to formulate new objectives that take account of the choices made regarding renovation of the future building which will, inevitably, have an impact on the achievement of our strategic objectives.

A new strategy: continuity and some new priorities

Our mission is based on our existing legal mandate and remains unchanged:



Marie-Christine Doffey,
Director

The Swiss National Library: sources from Switzerland for the world – accessible anywhere and to everyone

Our vision is then subdivided into three main areas, each corresponding to a strategic objective.

Collecting today what is important for tomorrow

Switzerland's cultural, political and social life is mirrored in a wide variety of publications, whose forms are changing rapidly with the digital transformation. The NL aims to acquire today the documents that will remain important tomorrow. As a reliable, durable and representative heritage institution, it is the global centre of reference for documents relating to Switzerland. Its collections reflect the nation's diversity. Alongside texts, images and audio documents in traditional formats, the NL welcomes selected other forms of publication. It swiftly integrates digital and analogue documents into its collections and databases, so that information producers can easily deliver their products.

Facilitating access to the collections and enabling the population to participate

The NL serves the entire Swiss population. It encourages reflection on Switzerland and enables an appreciation and understanding of the nation's diversity. Its offering aims to encourage the broadest and most sophisticated participation possible in Switzerland's documentary heritage. Its content is easy to find and simple to use. It adds value to its collections by placing them in the relevant contexts.

A society lives from exchanges and encounters. The NL's collections and premises combine the analogue and digital worlds while creating space for inspiration and innovation. The NL's collections bring people together. Its premises and virtual spaces are venues for research, exchange, training, leisure and knowledge transfer. To foster an ongoing process of reflection on the nation's memory, it creates novel experiences and encourages new discoveries. The NL is at home throughout Switzerland: at its emblematic and easily accessible site in Bern, at the Centre Dürrenmatt Neuchâtel and at the National Sound Archives in Lugano.

Developing the library of the future, promoting coordination and sharing knowledge

The digital transformation is changing users' needs and opening up new ways of exploiting content. To meet the demands of our age, the NL enters into targeted partnerships and values flexibility. It develops new mediation offerings that make use of state-of-the-art technology and well-matched partnerships. It strengthens interactions with users and partner organisations. In so doing, it grasps the opportunities of the digital transformation and responds proactively to the needs and expectations arising from it. It actively involves users. In all its main areas of activity, it maintains and develops valuable relationships with actors both established and new. Switzerland's memory is founded on close cooperation between libraries, archives, museums and research institutions. The NL therefore supports effective national and international coordination among the various actors concerned.

To continue systematically developing Switzerland's memory and conserve it for the long term, the NL assumes a coordinating role in the general interest of the country, acting as a reliable and dedicated partner. In certain selected areas, it also takes on a leadership role. The NL operates as part of a network with its international partners and shares its expertise. It also brings a Swiss perspective to the drafting of international standards in the sector.

The complete text of the strategy, which also includes the strategic objectives, can be viewed on our website <https://www.nb.admin.ch/snl/en/home/about-us/mandate/tasks.html>.

Marie-Christine Doffey
Director