

PAST AND PRESENT

15 YEARS OF TRAININGS



Trainings of the Library Institute for Hungarian librarians abroad (2002–2017)

The Library Institute of National Széchényi Library started to build a training network for Hungarian librarians in the neighboring countries in the academic year 2002-2003, upon the initiative of our colleagues abroad. Since 2007, when the cultural government approved the Concept for Development of Hungarian Libraries in the Carpathian Basin (<http://ki.oszk.hu/content/hatarontuli-koncepcio>) until 2011, thanks to the regular and calculable state support, this activity continued according to the plan, with a total of 535 participants from 97 institutions.

In May 2013, the VII. World Conference of Hungarian Librarians, organized by National Széchényi Library, the Library Institute and the Library of the Hungarian Parliament, confirmed the need for trainings in the 6th point of its recommendations: “The professional training for librarians in their Hungarian mother tongue shall be continued in the training centers already created in the neighboring countries, and at the same time, new sites, institutions and training topics shall be involved.”

In the spring of 2014, having these concepts in mind, and with the support of the Hungarian National Cultural Fund, we successfully applied for funds to continue the program *Trainings of the Library Institute for Hungarian librarians abroad* in the second half of 2014 NKA 3504/01405, and completed 13 trainings on 8 sites for 200 participants. The Quality Assurance forms filled in at the end of each course provided answers of what topics the participants wished to study in the future. In view of these suggestions and the capacity of our partner institutions we drew up another plan for 2015/2016, whose implementation was enabled by another successful application for the *Trainings of the Library Institute for Hungarian librarians abroad* program (NKA 3504/01418). We held 15 courses for 266 Hungarian librarians on ten sites, including two new partner libraries in Téglás (Carpathian Region)

and Párkány (Upper Hungary). The funds awarded covered the trainer fees and the costs of travel and accommodation.

In the summer of 2016, with the support of the Cultural State Secretariat of the Ministry of Human Capacities, we could start planning for another two semesters in the 2016/2017 academic year, continuing with the program as per the strategy and the participants' suggestions. Following the recommendations of the World Conference, we added more topics and sites. We selected trainers from among colleagues who had taken part in the accredited courses of the Library Institute, and invited renowned specialists of the librarian profession. The staff at our Department of Education and Human Resources invited the trainers, coordinated the schedules, organized travel and accommodation, and documented and promoted the trainings. The participants were recruited by the partner institutions. In this academic year we once again had ten sites, including new ones in Komárom (Komarno) and Gúta (Kolárovo), and completed 16 courses for 235 librarians. Among the newly suggested topics, the most popular one was children's library education.

Our fall semester started in the library of Selye János University, Komárom (Komarno). The director of the library, Dór Egyházi had been a guest of our Library Institute as a winner of the scholarship *Connecting Library*, and when he learnt about our trainings, chose as a topic the methods of building relations between libraries and their partners. The trainers of this program were Rita Péterfi, the deputy director of the Pest County Library in Szentendre, and Ferenc Vidra Szabó, library expert. The purpose of the training was the development of the organizational culture of the participants, in order they can be more efficient in their workplace. With the help of the new information obtained and the development of their skills, librarians will be able to better communicate the values of their institution to the world, better cooperate with their controlling authority and other organizations, improve the services of their library applying the methods learnt, and measure the expectations and

satisfaction of their clients. As this training is especially tailored for groups of colleagues who work in the same workplace, the purpose was perfectly achieved in the university library.

Our October trainings started in the recently reorganized Library and Cultural Center of Lendva (Lendava). The topic was the use of modern information transfer methods in literary sciences and history, and we invited Tünde Téchy, retired Head of Department of the Budapest Szabó Ervin Library to share experience. Information on literature, literary science, and literary history is one of the most sought for areas of a librarian's work from the client side, and the existing knowledge must be completed with the most advanced sources. The participants of the training were given insight into the newest sources of information available in libraries on paper and online for the areas related to literature; they could see examples of how the readers' requirements can be worded for the electronic databases, how search can be designed and how the tools can be used securely.

For the staff members of the Bod Péter County Library in Sepsiszentgyörgy (Sfântu Gheorghe), upon their own request, we organized a three-day course of library quality assurance with library expert Ferenc Vidra Szabó. The training introduced the participants to planning, organizing and implementing library assessment and self-assessment processes in line with the requirements of the Common Assessment Framework approved by the member states of the European Union. Ferenc Vidra Szabó presented the assessment of the features and results of a library, and brought practical exercises for planning the management, strategy, and resources of process implementation, and the assessment of the results of these, relevant for the users and society.

With the cooperation of the Library Institute's training partner in Nyíregyháza, we organized a two-day training entitled *Color-Space/Collection-Library* in another new site of the Carpathian Region, the District Library of Nagyszőlős (Vynohradiv). The purpose was to show librarians how to build a space that represents unity for a community diverse in language and religion, with members who have different concepts of majority and minority. The training brought specific examples of libraries becoming sites of strengthening, renewing and transferring culture, workshops of identity, places for cooperation, partnership, integration and knowledge transfer (reading and inviting

to read, plays, presentations, lectures, competitions, exhibitions, concerts, craftsmanship, clubs, etc.); sites for user training and off-school education; places for building databases of local information and recording local knowledge; and meeting points for generations. The program presented how to assess requirements, and bring them into harmony with possibilities; how to enhance spaces both physically and virtually; and how to create the conditions for the projects and keep them on track. The trainers were researcher Ilona Vraukóné Lukács PhD and Enikő Gosztonyi Head of Department, both delegated from the Nyíregyháza County Library.

The October trainings continued in the Fórum Minority Research Institution of Somorja (Šamorín), where Barbara Payer, staff member of the HAS Library led a one-day training for our local colleagues with the title *Promoting Libraries on the Internet*. Online social media is one of the popular surfaces for promoting libraries today. In order libraries can address all generations, and reach everyone via the best suited channel, librarians must be acquainted with the different user generations from digital natives to digital immigrants. The training presented the online surfaces useful for libraries, and the role social media plays in the world of culture. Some specific cases of Hungarian and international good practices helped participants to adjust the function of their library to the changing use of the internet.

At the end of October, a series of trainings extending to the whole academic year was dedicated to children's library education. The first site for this project was the Kájoni János County Library of Csíkszereda (Miercurea Ciuc), where the course was led by Klára Budavári, retired children's librarian of the Budapest Szabó Ervin Library. Librarians play an essential role, and they can do a lot for children's enjoying reading and becoming frequent users of the library. The training presented the long decades' successful work of children's libraries in Hungary, and involved the participants in educational plays that they will be able to teach the children who visit their library. The course included an array of methods and useful ideas to be applied in the everyday practice. The participants were given guides to low-budget educational activities of crafts, and they themselves could prepare small gifts and promotional material on the spot.

A detailed report of the training can be found on the Kájoni János County Library's website: <http://>

konyvtar.hargitamegye.ro/hu/nd/430/gyerekek-a-konyvtarban--szakmai-kepzes-hargita-megyei-konyvtarosoknak.

The last event of October took place in Pélmonostor (Beli Manastir), with the topic of library marketing and focusing on the relation between libraries and tourism. The training was led by Judit Kóródy, the director of the library at Hungarian Telekom. The program intended to transfer marketing techniques that work well in the business life, so that participants can design and promote the services of their own library, and apply these techniques in the development of the services and communication with controlling authorities and clients. During the training, participants were shown possibilities of adapting marketing approach, methods of customizing services, tools for enhancing client experience, and were introduced into the importance of client feedback analysis.

The last training of the fall semester was held in the town library of Ipolyság (Šahy), another new site of our program, under the title *Libraries and Bibliotherapy*. The trainer was bibliotherapist Éva Bartos PhD, retired director of the Library Institute. To strengthen and develop the culture of reading, the training inserted in the librarians' work a procedure that has been present in the international practice for long. It offered a brief theory and history of bibliotherapy, prepared the participants to lead bibliotherapy groups, and invited them to gain more competence in mental hygiene by including practices of self-knowledge, group leadership, communication and empathy.

A report of the training was published in the felvidek.ma website, on the page (<http://felvidek.ma/2016/11/fo-cel-hogy-egy-szakmai-nyelvet-beszeljunk/>).

The first training of the spring semester took place in March, in Nagyszőlős (Vynohradiv), and was led once again by our colleagues from Nyíregyháza, researcher Ilona Vraukóné Lukács PhD and Head of Department Enikő Gosztonyi. The title *How Librarians Shape Their Library* refers to that the training offered our colleagues of the Carpathian Region a presentation of the personality traits usually expected from a librarian. The training started with a self-knowledge test and its assessment. Participants with the same traits then formed small groups to find out the level where they place themselves compared to the basic requirements towards a librarian, and presented specific situations of the librarian-librarian and librarian-user relation.

After the first occasion in the fall semester, we returned in April to our second Transylvanian site, Sepsiszentgyörgy (Sfântu Gheorghe), with our presentation of children's library education, once again with Klára Budavári.

As our lecturer was invited to the Day of Hungarian Librarians in Romania, on her way back she stopped in Csíkszereda (Miercurea Ciuc), where she taught the librarian colleagues how to make a giant soap bubble.

The next site for our training of children's library education was the Town Library of Pélmonostor (Beli Manastir), at the beginning of May. As a beautiful example of cross-border cooperation, colleagues from the Mohácsi Jenő Town Library of Mohács also attended the program.



The one-day training in Lendva (Lendava) held in May, focused on equal opportunities in the library, with the lead of Éva Bartos PhD, retired director of the Library Institute. The program prepared the colleagues for the implementation of conditions for equal opportunity access to the library. Colleagues reviewed the problems raised by physical disability and disadvantages resulting from social, ethnic and minority status. They studied the causes and consequences of the situation of the affected groups and social strata, and worded the professional and quality requirements for ensuring library services for them. The program emphasized the need for cooperation with government and civil organizations, societies and foundations.

The spring session of the bibliotherapy training was held in the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute of Zenta (Senta), with Éva Bartos PhD and psychologist Judit Horváth. The one-day training of preparation, with its special methods, was linked to the Cultural

Institute's accredited vocational course in Serbia that provides assistance in the education of both disadvantaged and highly talented children.

Children's library education, the most popular topic of this academic year, was brought also to Muzsla (Mužla) of the historical Upper Hungary, with Margó Luzsi, the children's librarian at the Bródy Sándor County and Town Library of Eger. During the training, participants learnt how to create a delightful environment for children in the library with tales, rhymes, plays and the librarian's friendly personality. The numerous participants of the group performed the plays, tales and rhymes as their own experience, and at the end of the day returned home refreshed in soul.

This event was also characterized by cross-border cooperation, as the group included colleagues from the Helischer József Town Library of Esztergom.



Another training site in the historical Upper Hungary was Gúta (Kolárovo), where we reviewed a new aspect of the library marketing topic of the previous semester: the design of promotion material for a library. The lecturer was once again Judit Kóródy, the director of the library at Hungarian Telekom.

A detailed report of the training was broadcast by the Gúta Town Television: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOhmZcHZcec&feature=youtu.be>.

The last training of 2017 spring took place in Csíkszereda (Miercurea Ciuc), where Tibor Sándor, director of the Budapest Szabó Ervin Library and Béla Takáts, deputy director of the Verseggy Ferenc County Library and Public Cultural Institute of Szolnok held a two-and-a-half-day course on how to publish local culture and history information on websites. The program was dedicated to the broadly interpreted method of writing local history and the role of libraries in disseminating local information. Participants got acquainted with the most frequently used methods and tools, and could see various types of publications on local news and history. Particular emphasis was given to the publication in print and online of the bibliographies of local culture and history as well as the factual databases with special role among library services.

With the use of the funds awarded, the Library Institute renewed its website that presents with multiple search options the training program in the neighboring countries: <https://konyvtarakhataroknelkul.hu/>; the participants of the trainings were given notepads in a folder, calendar cards and leaflets with the help of the organizers at the local partner institutions.

As shown by this article, the Training Network of Hungarian Librarians in the Carpathian Basin, thanks to the support of the Cultural State Secretariat of the Ministry of Human Capacities and as a continuation of the previous tenders of the National Cultural Fund, not only remained, but also expanded. According to the answers we received on the Quality Assurance forms, Hungarian librarians in the neighboring countries find professional and moral support in the trainings provided in their mother tongue. We are optimistic regarding the future: in August, we were awarded once again the support of the Ministry to organize trainings including our program for Hungarian librarians abroad.

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