National treasures for all:

A focus on services

Strategic plan for the National Library of Finland 2013–2016

Finnish original approved by the Board on 18 January 2012
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Strategic plan for the National Library of Finland 2013–2016


The National Library of Finland’s strategic plan is one of development and renewal. The strategic focus is on digital-age service concepts and on the shared materials and content of our national heritage. Services and customers stand at the core of our objective, which is to provide both customers and society with broad-based digital services that generate value and cost benefits.

While the strategy spans the period 2013–2016, it also maps out a course further into the future. The amendments to the Act on the deposit and preservation of cultural materials as well as the promotion of electronic deposit call for persistent efforts and collaboration among many different players before the results will be seen in practice – with good progress, by 2020.

Strategic framework for the National Library 2013 - 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missio</th>
<th>The National Library ensures the availability of the published national heritage in the community. It disseminates and produces information content for research, education, citizens and the community and develops services jointly with the library network and other players in the information society.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>National treasures for all</td>
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<td>Values</td>
<td>We are competent and keep advancing professionally, we work together, we are explicit and reliable in our work, our national heritage is always present, we promote access to information.</td>
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</table>
| Strategic targets | Offer superior digital-age preservation and service solutions
Promote the success of the Finnish scholarly community
Promote citizens’ access to information |
| Spearheads (focal points)                       | Electronic deposit
Long-term preservation of the national heritage
Transparency and compatibility of information systems
Open metadata for joint use
Open digital user services
Availability of digital services in research environments
Digitisation of unique, nationally significant materials
Availability of digital services in citizens’ usage environments |
| Objectives | Objectives on the road towards strategic spearheads                                                                                                                                              |
| Measures   | Measures taken to achieve the objectives                                                                                                                                                         |
2. Mission and values

The mission of the National Library of Finland is based on its statutory duties as defined in the Universities Act and the Act on the deposit and preservation of cultural materials (Sections 70 and 71 of the Universities Act (558/2009), Act on the deposit and preservation of cultural materials (in Finnish)). The basic mission and values are set for a longer period than the strategic plan.

**Mission**

The National Library ensures the availability of the published national heritage in the community.

The National Library disseminates and produces information content for research, education, citizens and the community and develops services jointly with the library network and other players in the information society.

**Values**

- We are competent and keep advancing professionally.
- We work together.
- We are explicit and reliable in our work.
- Our national heritage is always present.
- We promote access to information.

All of the Library’s values involve three perspectives: that of the customer, the staff and management.
3. Background of the strategy revision

*Analysis of the current state*

The previous strategy period was fruitful. The National Library’s biggest achievements included the amendment of the Act on the deposit and preservation of cultural materials; the creation and establishment of the Finnish Web Archive; the reinforcement of the Library’s status as a research infrastructure; the Library’s strong role in the National Digital Library project; enhanced collaboration among libraries, museums and archives; the increase in digitised materials; the construction of a steering system for joint services; the growth in service use; and the increased international cooperation in digital services.

Ongoing activities are related to the development of a deposit system for electronic materials, the securing of permanent digitising resources (and thus the resolution of questions about shortcomings in digital content production), the development of a long-term preservation system, a user-oriented improvement of the library system and a description of the enterprise architecture for joint services, copyright solutions supporting the use of electronic materials, improvements to the National Digital Library public interface, and general global work involving metadata.

The recommendations resulting from the 2011 international evaluation of the National Library have been taken into account in drawing up the new strategic plan.

*Change factors in the operating environment*

The main change factors affecting the operating environment during the strategy period include threats related to the global and Finnish economies, the steady trend in digitisation and rapid changes in the publishing sector, the rapidly changing usage environments for services and content, the structural changes and decline in the number of libraries, as well as the huge change pressures on competence.

Economic threats put pressure especially on the funding of public services. The National Library must play its part in ensuring that society continues to value the statutory duties related to the preservation of the cultural heritage. Demonstration of the national cost benefits of centralised services is particularly important. Special emphasis must be put on the clarity of work distribution between centralised and local services now that libraries are being closed down and merged, their duties revised, and funding structures renewed.

The digitisation of collections and their provision online pose great challenges. Funding is needed for the costs incurred from both digitisation and copyright solutions. The National Library has made the copyright-free material it has digitised to date available online, but the rest of the material still awaits funding solutions. The sum needed totals several million euros, which would enable libraries to “lend” copyrighted electronic material in the same way as other material. Cooperation with publishers, copyright organisations and the Ministry of Education and Culture is extremely important.
Users operate in rapidly changing environments: both social media and new technologies call for new concepts regarding the usability of digital services.

Customer relations and interest groups

The National Library’s interest group network was depicted in the following way during the strategy process:

The network’s expectations focus on communication, joint development activities and the demonstration of cost benefits resulting from shared services.

The digital-age service strategy places great emphasis on online service users (including the academic community, citizens and other information consumers). Institutional customers (libraries, archives and museums) are other strategic user groups. The Library also stresses solid partnerships with developer networks (such as service and system solution providers, depositors of electronic publications, the book and publishing industry, creators of ontologies and standards) as well as cooperation with funders.
The Library carried out an extensive online survey among its staff and interest groups to collect their opinions about strategic goals and objectives for the purpose of supporting strategy preparations. The survey results were assessed using a two-by-two matrix, which enabled multi-dimensional evaluation. The survey, prepared by Talent Partners using the ZEF method created in Finland, was sent to some 500 interest group and staff members. Around half of them took the survey. The different user groups listed the following as their main objectives:

- The Ministry of Education and Culture and the National Library’s staff and Board: making digital material freely accessible and devising copyright solutions, ensuring the preservation and availability of digital material, developing modular information systems, digitising important material
- Libraries: creating services in cooperation with other libraries, developing modular information systems, making digital material freely accessible, digitising important material
- Partners and the academic community: carrying out development in cooperation with national and international players, making digital material freely accessible, implementing electronic deposits, ensuring an infrastructure of high quality.

**Internal objectives for change**

The National Library of Finland’s operations are under continuous review. The Library renews its organisation and processes as needed and increasingly organises its internal practical activities in a networked fashion. The key processes that influence the entire Library bring together service production and development expertise and help to strengthen internal and external networking. Efficient, first-rate processes will be increasingly important in the future, if services need to be enhanced with fewer resources than are available today.

Change factors place higher expectations on the Library staff’s competence. The fields in which competence must be continuously developed include digital service concepts and productisation; new systems and architectures; finance, communication and marketing; customer relations; and leadership and management. The Library’s human resources strategy defines policies up to 2015, while its skills development policy spans the period 2012–2015.

The National Library will continue to adjust its finances by further reducing the number of vacancies. While the resulting savings are not large, they will offer a degree of internal flexibility. The Library’s main financial challenges are related to development projects, insufficient core funding and continuously increasing facilities expenses. Development activities and new services are financed largely from national lottery funds, which causes uncertainty in terms of operations. The construction and implementation of digital-age service entities call for stable and continuous funding.

The National Library will enhance and diversify its fundraising, supported by its fundraising advocates.

Being a memory institution, the National Library is “facility-intensive”. It cannot relinquish its collections; on the contrary, they keep growing in size. The National Library collections require safe and large enough facilities. Facilities expenses increase at an annual rate of 5–10%, and the need for additional space arises every ten years on average. The Library’s current collection facilities will be completely filled in 2013. Cooperation between the National Library and the National Repository Library will be augmented, as will cooperation with the National Archives.
4. Process and objectives of the strategy revision

Completed in 2005, the National Library of Finland’s previous strategic plan for 2006–2015 was heavily focused on the construction of joint systems and on the new digital library that was beginning to take shape. To carry out its strategy, the Library has drawn up a human resources plan, a collection development policy, a digitisation policy, an information management action programme, a communications policy and a metadata policy, the last of which is pending approval.

The Library felt it necessary to further specify its strategic plan in order to satisfy the service needs spawned by the digital age. In the process, the Library ended up preparing a brand new strategy, though its basic operating policy remained the same.

The strategy work was helmed by a consultant from Talent Partners.

The strategy work consisted of assessing the success of the current strategy and any need for changes, analysing the operating environment, determining the expectations of interest groups, determining the vision and strategic goals, making strategic choices and exclusions and defining strategic objectives, as well as specifying concrete measures and projects.

The strategy process was launched in June 2011, and the Board approved the new strategic plan on 18 January 2012.

The directors of different functions were in charge of the strategy work. Themes and broader concepts were discussed with the Board, superiors and all staff members at different stages of the process. The action programme was drafted by a small group of key players in November. The results of the different stages were published on internal webpages created specifically for this purpose and which also contained a strategy blog for the exchange of ideas.

The Library carried out an extensive online survey among its staff and interest groups to collect their opinions about strategic goals and objectives for the purpose of supporting strategy preparations. The survey was sent to university libraries, libraries of universities of applied sciences, specialist libraries, public libraries and legal deposit libraries. It was also submitted to representatives of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the University of Helsinki, the Board, representatives of the academic community, as well as the Library’s partners and its entire staff.

The National Library’s strategy consists of both strategic policies and concrete measures. The goal is to clearly link the strategy to practical activities and make it as natural a part of annual operations as possible.

The position of the new strategy period

The National Library’s strategy periods in the first two decades of the 21st century form an internal continuum. In the long term, the Library aims to construct a digital library whose ease of use and versatile content enable the provision
of information to different types of users. During the current and previous strategy periods, the National Library has focused on setting up the related structures and systems.

The 2013–2016 period will concentrate on creating and providing digital library content and services jointly with the National Library’s partners, customers and users.

In addition to developing digital library services, the National Library functions as Finland’s largest research library in the humanities and in fulfilling this duty provides library and collection services in the disciplines it represents. The Library offers joint library network services and is in charge of legal deposits in compliance with the Act on the deposit and preservation of cultural materials. Its service range is also spreading to archives and museums. The National Library actively participates in international cooperation in the sector.

**Strategic criteria**

The National Library has defined the following criteria for its strategic focal areas: the areas must provide added value to customers, partners, funders and the Library itself; the service concepts must be dynamic and suitable for different kinds of customers and uses; and the service benefits generated to users must be broad in scope and have a wide-ranging influence.

The goals and development targets of the University of Helsinki’s new strategic plan were also taken into account when drawing up the strategy for the National Library. Special attention was given to the University’s goal to develop a world-class research and teaching infrastructure, to make multiculturalism and multilingualism clearly visible, to offer research results and competence for the benefit of society, to ensure effective structures and clear practices, as well as to make versatile use of funding models.

5. **Strategic intent of the National Library**

The strategic intent of the National Library is depicted by the Library’s vision.

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The new strategy puts the focus on services and the value they offer customers. The strategic objectives emphasise dynamic and flexible digital service and production concepts which ensure the availability of services. Solutions must be customer-oriented and increase the value provided to users. Moreover, they must be increasingly easier to access by researchers and other citizens in their own environments.
“Treasures” refer to the Library’s diverse – in some cases unique – collections and the content offered to information users in various ways. In the new strategy period, this will be done especially through digital service concepts. The treasures belong to the entire nation. In line with the Library’s mission, “all” encompasses every kind of information user and time of use, both now and in the future. In the strategy period, the National Library will dynamically seek service forms with which shared content can be made available to a variety of users in their own environment. This will be done with both collection- and technology-related infrastructure.

Strategic choices

The National Library of Finland’s strategic choices are based on the wish to increase the Library’s social influence, to provide customer value using new digital service concepts, as well as to ensure that a customer orientation permeates all operations. These objectives are crystallised in the slogan “Focus on services”.

The strategic themes relate to discussions about the Library’s national status and role in the future, the online accessibility of collections and the capacity for strategic renewal.

Strategic objectives of the National Library of Finland

1. Offer superior digital-age repository and service solutions
2. Promote the success of the Finnish scholarly community
3. Enable citizens’ access to information (national content).

The new strategic plan focuses on:

1. The creation of digital content and services
2. The design and implementation of first-rate, economic national preservation and system solutions
3. The provision of comprehensive digital collections to researchers and citizens in general
4. The Library’s increasing importance as a national and international metadata developer
5. Service marketing and the provision of service-related information.

According to the National Library’s strategic intent, the Library will be a leading social and cultural player in its field in 2020.
6. Strategic spearheads

The National Library’s strategic focal points, the spearheading elements with which the strategic intent described in the vision and objectives will be achieved, include:

- Electronic deposit
- Long-term preservation of the national publication heritage
- Transparency and compatibility of information systems
- Open metadata for joint use
- Open digital user services
- Availability of digital services in research environments
- Digitisation of unique, nationally significant materials
- Availability of digital services in citizens’ environments.
STRATEGY MAP 2013–2016

**Strategic target 1:** Offer superior digital-age preservation and service solutions

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<tr>
<th>Strategic focus</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electronic deposit</td>
<td>Devise policies with other legal deposit libraries and the Ministry of Education and Culture.</td>
<td>1. Appoint an agent to draw up a plan for amendments to the Act on the deposit and preservation of cultural materials to ensure that digital deposits are emphasised.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term preservation of the national publication heritage</td>
<td>Aim at the position of administrative coordinator for the National Digital Library’s long-term preservation.</td>
<td>2. Draw up a plan for the deposit of digital versions of physical materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information system development in compliance with the Act on data administration (openness and compatibility)</td>
<td>Aim for cost-effective permanent preservation of physical material.</td>
<td>3. Offer digital preservation services to publishers.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide open, compatible and expandable modular solutions.</td>
<td>4. Create a temporary storage system for the National Library of Finland in cooperation with national long-term preservation activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open and compatible metadata that increases the efficiency and social influence of the library network/memory institutions</td>
<td>Introduce a new information model suitable for structured and linked metadata.</td>
<td>5. Develop the permanent preservation of original materials in a more cost-effective direction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production of open digital user services</td>
<td>Renew copyright solutions and licence practices.</td>
<td>6. Develop and implement open-source solutions (e.g., a public interface).</td>
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<td>7. Revise back-end system for digital materials.</td>
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<td>Develop and implement improved procedures and practices for satisfying customer needs.</td>
<td>8. Implement the RDA project.</td>
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<td>9. Design and implement a national metadata repository.</td>
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<td>10. Actively influence the development of legislation at the level of the EU and Finland, while supporting the objectives of libraries.</td>
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<td>11. Engage in decidedly goal-oriented cooperation with copyright organisations.</td>
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<td>12. Engage in a stage-wise programme primarily for the purpose of digitising core corpora and making collections available online with international partners.</td>
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<td>13. Create extended collective licence mechanisms for the use of newspapers and magazines.</td>
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<td>14. Develop customer satisfaction indicators for digital services (services/content) and use them for continuous service improvement.</td>
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Strategic target 2: **Promote the success of the Finnish scholarly community**

**Strategic focus**
Digital services to be made available in research environments

**Objectives**
- Develop academic library services in active cooperation with the academic community.
- Offer digital services, especially those needed in research in the humanities.
- Provide a competitive research infrastructure to top researchers at the University of Helsinki.

**Measures**
- Create new cooperation approaches with research and education institutions.
- Use service design to renew digital and local services.
- Develop the Library’s digital information materials to make them flexibly available in research environments.
- Cooperate with key national memory institutions to develop joint digital corpora and services based on them (e.g., the Middle Ages, Russian Studies).
- Licence digitised national materials for research use and arrange funding.
- Decide on the licensing and user rights of rare electronic materials in the field of the humanities.
- The centralised service of the Finnish Electronic Library will acquire the bulk of the licensed material needed by the library network.
- Secure appropriate and comprehensive material acquisitions (analogue and digital).
- Provide efficient and user-friendly research facilities.

Strategic target 3: **Promote citizens’ access to information**

**Strategic focus**
Digitisation of unique and nationally significant collection materials

**Objectives**
- Provide channels and tools that enable communities to participate in the selection of content.
- Digitise collections based on different customers and needs.
- Create a business model for digitisation to produce a variety of materials based on digitised content.
- Create operating methods that enable citizens to participate in the editing of digital content.
- Improve the methods and channels used to market library services to citizens.

**Measures**
- Finland 100 years project: publish core material from the years of independence online.
- Create a multi-channel model for citizen participation that enables fundraising.
- Create a service concept for the provision of digital materials.
- Determine eBooks on Demand options.
- Image bank/Real Case Lab.
- Create a business model for digitisation to produce a variety of materials based on digitised content.
- Award a prize to the one millionth customer.
- Online events
- Book fair
- Social media.