

INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC COLLABORATIONS



The national library participates in a wide range of institutional collaborations each year, these including long-term as well as short-term, or even one-time partnerships in the fields of academic or library sciences, book publishing with national and cross-border or foreign institutions. With regard to these institutional academic collaborations, we should first mention the permanent ones that are determined and documented by a framework agreement or active membership.

The national library is the representative of Hungary within CERL (Consortium of European Research Libraries) – and since 2018 is partly EKE (Association of the Ecclesiastical Libraries) –, but a proposal has been currently formulated according to which the NSZL would initiate collaborations regarding CERL material with other university libraries, because this would serve as an important manifestation of representation of our country. We have already contacted the major university libraries along with the LIC HAS (Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) in order to make our data visible in the European databases in the long run, which partly affects the MKDNY (Heritage Library Documents Register) programme as well. In September 2018, the traditional annual CERL General Meeting was held in Venice where, in the light of the events mentioned above, the scientific director representing the institution was already accompanied by the new leader of EKE, Róbert Oláh. In May 2019, an English thematic work-

shop greeted and supported by the conference was held in the NSZL entitled *Digital Technologies in the Investigation of Printed Heritage* with the participation of several CERL leaders and representatives of many national institutions. Unfortunately, in the autumn of 2019 – due to the institution's unstable financial background – the national library could not be represented in person at the annual meeting.

Just like in the previous years, at the CDNL (Conference of Directors of National Libraries), a conference for the directors of the national libraries, organized in 2019 in Athens within the framework of the annual IFLA Congress (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), the NSZL was represented by László Boka, head of the NSZL's Scientific Directorate. The annual meeting began on 27 August and the main topic was "The next generation and knowledge transfer". At the end of the meeting, the leaders of the national libraries and their delegates have formulated in a mutual statement their observations of aims of professional disciplines regarding the sustainable development programme of UN running until 2030. Thanks to its European location, many of the NSZL's colleagues participated in both the IFLA World Congress of 2019 and the following work of the group of standardization supervision.

We also have to mention it here as a long-term international and cross-border collaboration the various researcher



exchange programmes within the framework of which the national libraries of two countries receive researchers from the other institutions. These researcher exchange programmes provide possibility to explore, collect and scrutinise documents of Hungarians relevance in the libraries of different (especially neighbouring) countries. Given that it is a basic principle of the national library to compile the national retrospective bibliography (15th–18th centuries) and based on the criteria of modern scholarship it is indispensable the description of hungarikums to happen based on autopsy. Currently, the NSZL takes part in active collaborations with libraries of several countries, which support this project (based on reciprocity and correlation) and make regular professional dialogues possible and the presentation of mutual research results at academic conferences.

The long-term bilateral partnerships are often supplemented with occasional (even medium-term) collaborations that serve for the materialization of a certain event, conference, project, publication, joint webpage (these sometimes taking up even years).

Among the national institutions, in December 2018 the director-general of the national library signed a cooperation agreement with the rector of PPKE (Pázmány Péter Catholic University). It is of high priority for both institutions to treasure the surviving memories of handwritten book culture of enduring value found in Hungary, to process and research this material professionally, and to ensure the quality of accurate and modern study-aids of knowledge transfer. In order to promote this, the NSZL and the International Canon Law History Research Centre of PPKE has undertaken within the frameworks of a cooperation agreement to publish – in Hungarian and foreign languages – through professional catalogues, academic publications, online media and professional events (Hungarian and international exhibitions and symposiums) the findings and knowledge resulting from or connected to the professional processing of the source and academic history materials of medieval canon law.

Since 2017, but starting from 2019 strengthened by a framework contract, the national library collaborates with the HAA (Hungarian Academy of Arts) and its certain departments. This collaboration is primarily of academic nature, including the organization of conferences and the publication of joint books, often on different memorial years. The success of this collaboration is underpinned by the volume of studies delivered at the Aladár Kuncz conference, and the illustrated album published in honour of Endre Ady's death anniversary: both were published in 2019 as a joint publication of the NSZL and HAA Publishing House.

In 2020, a theoretic agreement of cooperation was born between the two institutions regarding the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon and a conference on interwar period.

Book publishing collaborations and joint publications could be listed at length. Apart from the long list of works published jointly with various publishers, it is worth mentioning (without being exhaustive) among our partners the Hungarian Order of Saint Paul the First Hermit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Székely National Museum, the Teleki-Bolyai Library, the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Institute for Literary Studies and for Musicology. In 2019, we collaborated on an ad hoc basis with the Transylvanian Museum Society, the Department of Romanian Philology of Eötvös Loránd Science University and the Embassy of Romania in Budapest.

In case of various exhibitions and salons, the range of cooperating partners is even wider, be it different public and private collections, libraries, museums, archives and various scientific institutes. Among the exhibitions realised in 2018 and 2019 – without being exhaustive – we should mention the exhibition entitled *Comics as Narrative* created in cooperation with the Hungarian Comics Association or the exhibition *Graphig* organized together with the CAFE Budapest Contemporary Arts Festival. The exhibition dedicated to the oeuvre of Júlia Szendrey featured installations by the students of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design. Moreover, the exhibition *Unity and Variety – The Armenian Bible and Religious Tradition* was organized by the NSZL, with the cooperation of the Institute for Armenian Studies of Pázmány Péter Catholic University and the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO). In addition to the chamber exhibition entitled *The Image of Hungary in European Fiction (16th–20th Centuries)*, organized jointly with the Institute for Literary Studies of the HAS Research Centre for the Humanities, it is worth highlighting the Beautiful Hungarian Map competition, a chamber exhibition organized annually since 1996 by the Department of Cartography and Geoinformatics of the Eötvös Loránd Science University and the Map Collection of the NSZL in order to raise the standard of Hungarian map culture.

Among the events, it is worth mentioning that the presidency of the IAML (International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres with more than one and a half thousand members) held its regular mid-year meeting in February 2018 at the National Széchényi Library. In addition to drawing conclusions from last year's congress, the agenda included the development of

the organization's electronic archive, the further operation of international repertoires under the aegis of IAML, and the discussion of the organization's strategy for the coming years.

In 2019, as a member of a consortium of ten countries, the Photo Collection of the National Széchényi Library participated in a research and education project. Its aim was to present the way of life of the time by researching the shared things and differences in the content, artistic compositions and visual structures of the photographs of societies built around different political ideologies. In addition to the Italian, Dutch, Belgian, German, Greek, Spanish and British partners, the only Central and Eastern European participant in the research was the Hungarian national library.

Among the occasional collaborations, the joint project of the PLM (Petőfi Literary Museum) and the national library launched in 2017 should be highlighted, the aim of which was to save the document collection found in Nagyszalonta (Salonta) consisting of about four thousand items and to set up a new exhibition in the Truncated Tower. Within the framework of the cooperation, the museum's specialists carried out the tasks related to the exhibition, while the NSZL restored the collection of documents consisting of books, manuscripts and other documents. After the restoration, the documents were ceremonially returned to Nagyszalonta in June 2018, where those interested were welcomed to explore them through a temporary exhibition (a bilingual album of the documents edited by Zsuzsanna Rózsafalvi was also published for this occasion). In addition to the NSZL and PLM, the cooperation expanded to a broader scientific framework and, through a joint consortium of the LIC HAS (Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) and the Institute for Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, János Arany's autographs (beyond his literary works) were collected into a single academic website. The website was completed by 2019, for which, in addition to its own manuscript documents, the NSZL also took care of the manuscripts of Nagyszalonta.

The renewed MKDNY (Heritage Library Documents Register) was created as the first completed module of the HNLP (Hungarian National Library Platform), which was presented by the national library at a full-house professional event on 31 October 2019, and which will be able to unite Hungary's treasured historical documents in one single online space. The system already contains more than 243,000 records and it will expand further. Gábor Farkas Farkas explained at the presentation that they are working to map out where heritage books, manuscripts, maps, sheet music and other documents are to be found in the country, how many of them are in each institution, what condition these are in and how much they are worth. In addition, it is of the utmost importance to exhibit these treasures and make them accessible to all via the new system. This new system can be accessed at the following internet address: <http://mkdny.oszk.hu/>.

In parallel with institutional scientific collaborations, the national library has also established digitization collaborations with cross-border libraries and museums and in the last two years NSZL staff members and researchers have participated in – and held presentations at – many academic and library science conferences abroad and at home.

Finally, it is worth noting that within the framework of the Mikes Programme, the NSZL was able to enrich its general collection with thousands of volumes. This consisted of offerings of Hungarians living in the overseas diaspora, and thousands of documents were added to the special collections – especially the Manuscript Collection, the Music Collection and the Collection of Posters and Small Prints. Within the framework of the programme, it was also possible to register and provide access to documents of Hungarian relevance that were previously unknown to Hungarian readers and researchers.

László Boka, Franciska Dede
boka.at.oszk.hu, dede.franciska.at.oszk.hu