

# building strong library consortia the EIFL approach

Our key mission is to expand access to knowledge in developing and transition countries in a cost-effective and sustainable way.

To achieve this, we support the establishment and development of strong national library consortia.

Why?

Library consortia are groups of libraries that share common goals, and that can speak with one voice to policymakers and funders. They can also share resources and activities across their member libraries, thereby reaching millions of users efficiently.

Over the last 12 years, library consortia in over 45 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe (representing more than 2,300 libraries) have joined the EIFL network – most recently consortia from the Maldives and Uganda.

Many of our consortia partners received start-up grants from EIFL, and all have benefited from our consortium management training, consultancy and support services. We also facilitate communication across our network to ensure that knowledge and experience are shared.

Three EIFL partner consortia celebrated ten years of achievement in 2011.

## LITHUANIA

When libraries in Lithuania first became involved with EIFL in 1999, subscriptions to foreign print journals were rare.



Now, as a result of the efforts of the Lithuanian Research Library Consortium (LMBA), students and researchers have access to the world's top scholarly resources. LMBA is also a powerful advocate, and worked for the adoption of a law requiring online access to publicly funded research.

‘Through EIFL, we have learned so much. We are up-to-date with new technologies. We are empowered advocates, ready and willing to share our knowledge with the academic and library community both at home and abroad. We know how to speak to policymakers and funders, and what to ask for. As a result, the prestige of libraries and trust in librarians are growing in Lithuania.’

EMILIJA BANIONYTE, President of LMBA

‘EIFL helped us to establish our consortium, and to develop our membership and services in order to become sustainable. Being part of the EIFL network has also been invaluable – we have learned new skills, shared knowledge and made many friends.’

SILVIA GHINCULOV, President of REM

## MOLDOVA

Over the last decade, Resurse Electronice pentru Moldova (REM) has developed into a strong and effective library consortium.



It provides members with core services such as access to international e-resources and training. REM's active seminar programme has built local expertise in library technology, open access and copyright, and the Moldovan library community now contributes to debates and discussions at international level.

In addition, thanks to advocacy by REM members, a new copyright law in 2011 contains favourable provisions that will support libraries in their work over the coming years.

## SERBIA

Through advocacy at national level, negotiating effectively with publishers, and by building cooperation in the library community, the Serbian Library Consortium for Coordinated Acquisition (KoBSON) has been very successful in expanding access to knowledge over the last ten years.



‘Everything we know about licensing and consortium management we learnt through EIFL. It's great to be part of the EIFL community, and to be able to share knowledge and ideas with people who are facing the same challenges. It's also nice to know that support and advice are available if necessary.’

BILJANA KOSANOVIC, Head of KoBSON

Serbian students and researchers now benefit from access to a comprehensive range of e-resources, and usage has grown quickly. The visibility of Serbian science, both nationally and internationally, has also increased following a KoBSON initiative that resulted in 20 Serbian journals being indexed by the Web of Science.