

LIASA -in-Touch



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EDITOR'S NOTE

In this issue the LIASA President's message is a call for members to support initiatives to position LIASA and libraries at the forefront of South Africa's global engagements as host of the G20 and the theme for SA Library Week, "Libraries for sustainable communities", echoes the G20 theme "Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability". How will you answer this call?

The next deadline is 25 April 2025.

See *Call for Articles* via LIASAOnline.

NOHRA MOERAT PL(SA)

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Office Changes

On behalf of the LIASA Board, we are pleased to announce the appointment of Ms Thandolwethu Majozi as the new LIASA Membership and Operations Coordinator as of 2 December 2024. Thandolwethu was the second-ranked candidate during the interviews when Ponani Mhungela was appointed.

Ponani worked with us for a period of five months and was then reappointed permanently in her previous position by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture Limpopo.

Membership renewal:

Head to the LIASA website using this link <https://www.liasa.org.za/>, navigate to *Members* tab on the menu bar and click *Current Membership Renewal* which will prompt you to login and start the renewal process, or you can email the Membership and Operations Coordinator for assistance to membership@liasa.org.za.

LIASA FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES 2025

South African Library Week (SALW) 17-23 March 2025

SALW is celebrated annually to highlight the significance of libraries within South African society, with particular focus on their contribution to literacy, education, and community development. This initiative serves as a key platform for advocating the values of libraries and raising awareness of the services offered. In 2025, SALW will be commemorated from 17 to 22 March, marking its 24th anniversary. LIASA will officially launch the week on Friday, 14 March, at the Dzanani Community Hall in Makhado Municipality, Limpopo. Continue to follow the LIASA website and social media pages for further updates on the exciting activities surrounding this launch.

The 2025 SALW theme "Libraries for Sustainable Communities" underscores the transformative role that libraries play in fostering sustainability, resilience, inclusivity, and accessibility within communities. The current theme aligns with South Africa's dedication to sustainable development and equality, while also reflecting the library's contributions to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 4 (Quality Education). Libraries serve as inclusive spaces, offering equitable access to resources for all members of society. They empower communities

by facilitating education, social support, and opportunities for lifelong learning. LIASA looks forward to the active participation of all its members and the broader South African community in celebrating this milestone. Remember to share your stories on how you celebrated this important week.

South African Librarians' Day (SALD) 10 July 2025

LIASA celebrates South African Librarians' Day (SALD) annually on 10 July, marking the date of its inception in 1997. SALD honours the Library and Information Services (LIS) profession, its services, and the dedicated professionals who often work under challenging conditions to serve their communities. The day also serves to highlight librarianship as a career, challenge misconceptions, and promote the growth of the profession. Librarians are encouraged to contribute short articles that reflect their experiences and insights into the role of a librarian, which will be featured in the *LIASA-In-Touch* magazine.

South African Digital Literacy Day (SADLD) 24 October 2025

This initiative is aimed at advancing digital literacy across South Africa and highlights the critical importance of digital skills in today's society, where access to technology is fundamental for education, employment, and personal development. The inaugural event took place on 25 October 2024 at the National Library of South Africa. In 2025, SADLD will be celebrated from 6-10 October, and LIASA is keen to encourage librarians to share their experiences and activities that illustrate their crucial role in supporting digital literacy within communities. LIASA also looks forward to receiving papers and presentations for the upcoming conference, focusing on how libraries and librarians contribute to this initiative under the theme "Libraries for Sustainable Communities."

LIASA Annual Conference 07-10 October 2025

Since its inception in 1997, LIASA has proudly hosted over 24 annual conferences across various provinces, attracting between 500 and 800 delegates each year. This dynamic event brings together not only local and international delegates but also sponsors, exhibitors, and observers. Our diverse range of speakers includes prominent figures from Africa and around the world, as well as those

who have submitted abstracts on a variety of engaging topics, all aligned with the conference theme. The 2024 conference marked a significant milestone, with LIASA welcoming over 700 delegates for the first time. As we prepare for the 2025 conference in Gqeberha this October, we are excited to set a new record, and deliver yet another exceptional event filled with innovation, insight, and unparalleled opportunities for growth.

The conference provides a diverse programme for general participants, comprising opening sessions, plenary and parallel sessions, a large exhibition, cultural events, and the opportunity to recognise and celebrate peers through various awards. Additionally, the conference presents valuable opportunities for members of the LIS sector in South Africa and the SADC region to engage with emerging trends in the profession and to network with colleagues from other countries. The 2025 conference is set to be an unforgettable experience, packed with thrilling surprises and exciting opportunities for all members! Don't miss out, - take advantage of the early bird registration as soon details are released!

International Open Access Week – 20-26 October 2025

Another key programme for LIASA in 2025 is the celebration of International Open Access Week, which serves as a timely reminder to our members about the vital role of open access in advancing knowledge sharing and research accessibility. This important week aligns with the launch of the South African Digital Literacy Programme in October, further enhancing the connection between digital literacy and open access in the evolving information landscape. LIASA encourages all members to actively participate and engage with the events, discussions, and initiatives throughout the week, which will be highlighted on our website and social media pages. Stay tuned for more information as we work together to promote the principles of open access and digital literacy across the sector.

- <https://liasa.org.za>
- <https://web.facebook.com/LIASANews>
- **WhatsApp channel:** scan the QR code and follow the news channels





Charlie Malepo

From the President

As we step into 2025, South Africa embarks on a significant milestone as we host the G20 under the theme **Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability**.

This global event presents an extraordinary opportunity for our country to display its commitment to cultural exchange, innovation, and sustainable development. The Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (GLAM) sector has curated a year-long programme that aligns with South Africa's G20 Presidency, and the library sector is poised to play a crucial role in advancing this agenda.

Grounded in the themes of South African Library Week (SALW) 2025, **Libraries for Sustainable Communities**, and the LIASA Conference 2025, **Libraries as Innovation Hubs: Empowering Communities**, our initiatives will emphasise the vital contributions of libraries in cultural preservation, digital transformation, and community empowerment.

Aligning with the G20 Strategic Priorities, the LIASA Board has identified key priorities that align with South Africa's G20 vision:

1. Promoting Cultural Exchange and Understanding: Libraries serve as custodians of cultural heritage and play a pivotal role in fostering global cultural dialogue. South African libraries will collaborate with G20 countries to host exhibitions, virtual forums, and storytelling initiatives celebrating diversity and shared histories. Leveraging digital platforms, we will facilitate cross-cultural dialogues focusing on indigenous knowledge systems and languages.
2. Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): In alignment with SALW 2025, libraries are committed to driving sustainable community development. We will encourage libraries to share SDG success stories, highlighting their impact on regional and global scales.
3. Empowering Communities

through Innovation: Aligned with LIASA 2025, libraries will continue evolving as innovation hubs that equip communities with skills in digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and STEM. Partnerships with technology innovators will enable libraries to provide maker spaces and hackathons for solving local and global challenges. Collaborations with G20 nations will enhance library technology and service innovations.

Libraries as Cultural Ambassadors

Libraries will curate programmes that highlight African arts, literature, and music, promoting the continent's cultural wealth. We will strengthen partnerships with G20 libraries to facilitate exchange programmes, cultural preservation projects, and collaborative knowledge-sharing initiatives.

Libraries as Drivers of Digital Inclusion

Libraries will play a crucial role in bridging the digital divide by providing free internet access, training, and digital resources. Collaborative efforts with G20 nations will scale these initiatives through technology transfer and funding support.

Libraries as Knowledge Hubs for Policymakers

will support policymakers by offering research, data, and evidence-based resources for informed decision-making. Establishing a G20 library network will enhance shared access to global research on climate change, public health, and economic development.

Proposed G20 Collaboration Initiatives

Global Cultural Heritage Digitisation Project partners with the G20 nations to digitise and preserve cultural artifacts, making them globally accessible thus amplifying African indigenous knowledge and traditions in the global discourse.

Innovation for All

Library Innovation Hubs Programme: Establish innovation hubs in South African libraries, supported by G20 partners in technology, funding, and training. Focus on digital entrepreneurship, renewable energy solutions, and agricultural innovations.

Libraries for Climate Action:

Implement community programmes that educate the

public on climate change and sustainable practices. Collaborate with G20 nations on eco-friendly library infrastructure and renewable energy initiatives.

Global Reading Campaign:

Connecting communities through literature launches and international reading initiative to promote literacy and cultural understanding through book discussions and translations.

Strengthening LIASA's Foundations

Beyond the G20 collaboration, LIASA continues strengthening its governance and accreditation processes. The LIASA accreditation review, initially scheduled for November 2024, faced delays and was completed in January. Since our accreditation expired on 23 October 2024, the SAQA Board extended it until 31 March 2025, giving us time to finalise the re-accreditation process. At the time of this publication, we eagerly await the review results.

Additionally, we have appointed Mr. Patrick Kubai as the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. His extensive auditing and risk management expertise will be invaluable in strengthening LIASA's governance framework.

South African Library Week 2025 – A Celebration in Makhado

This year, we are excited to launch SALW in Makhado, a municipality known for its commitment to celebrating this important event. The theme Libraries for Sustainable Communities (#SALW2025 #WeAreSustainable) highlights the transformative role of libraries in promoting sustainability, resilience, inclusivity, and accessibility. This theme aligns with South Africa's sustainable development goals, specifically SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 4 (Quality Education), reinforcing the role of libraries in providing lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Strategic Partnerships for Literacy Advancement

We actively engage with stakeholders who share our vision for literacy and education. Our collaboration with the South African Higher Education Trust (SACHED) is particularly exciting. This project will pilot a reading and writing model in ten libraries, targeting young people in public schools and Community Education and Training Colleges. SACHED will provide essential

literacy resources, while libraries will serve as safe spaces for reading and writing engagement. This initiative holds the potential to make a significant impact on literacy development in our country.

We have joined ReCreate as friends of the court to argue that the President must sign the Copyright Amendment Bill (CAB). We will be joining Section 27, which represents BlindSA. We recently had a conference that was organised by IFLA's Advisory Committee on Copyright and Other Legal Matters (CLM); I had the privilege of joining the IFLA Africa office and Unisa Executive to chat with Stephen Wyber. Among the concerns raised by LIASA is the organising of meetings and events without the knowledge of the country association; this undermines the IFLA initiative of creating a strong library association.

Furthermore, LIASA remains a committed participant in the National Reading Barometer project. We attended the first Steering Committee meeting on 26 February 2025 and look forward to contributing meaningfully to bridging literacy gaps in South Africa.

Strengthening LIASA's Governance

In an effort to improve our institutional framework, we have set up an ad hoc committee to review and refine our constitution. The committee, comprising a mix of experienced and young professionals, will draft the initial version four months before the LIASA Conference. This draft will be shared with members for feedback before being finalised and sent to the Board to recommend for its approval at the AGM.

Looking Ahead

As we navigate 2025, our focus remains steadfast on using the power of libraries to advance cultural exchange, community development, and innovation. With the G20 Presidency as a catalyst, we have a unique opportunity to position libraries at the forefront of South Africa's global engagements. We call on all members to actively participate in these initiatives and help shape the future of our sector.

Let us reaffirm our commitment to libraries as engines of progress and sustainability.

CHARLIE MAPHUNTSHANE MOLEPO PL(SA)
LIASA PRESIDENT (2024-27)



**Library and Information
Association of South Africa**

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