

Report of Five-Day Online Librarian Development Programme on Empowering Librarians for the Digital Future

The **Librarian Development Programme** was organised from **10th August to 14th August 2026** on the occasion of **National Librarians' Day**. The programme was designed with the central objective of exploring how libraries can become more **visible, relevant, innovative, and closely connected with their users** in the changing academic environment.

The programme received an encouraging response, with a total of **62 participants registered from 12 states across India**. The diverse participation provided an opportunity for librarians and library professionals from different regions to share perspectives, experiences, and practices related to contemporary library management and services.

The programme began with an important question: **How can we make our libraries more visible, more relevant, and more connected to our users?** Over five days, the sessions addressed various dimensions of contemporary librarianship, including library visibility, user engagement, leadership and change management, artificial intelligence, and documentation.

Day 1: Enhancing Library Visibility, Innovation and User Engagement

The programme commenced with a keynote session by **Dr. Vrushali Rane**, focusing on *Enhancing Library Visibility, Innovation and User Engagement in the Changing Academic Environment*. The session emphasised the need for libraries to adopt creative, innovative, and user-centric approaches to strengthen the relevance and reach of library services.

This was followed by a session by **Dr. Madhura Deodhar** on *Enhancing Library Visibility*. The session highlighted that libraries should not simply wait for users to discover their services and resources. Instead, librarians need to actively communicate the services, resources, facilities, and value offered by the library.

The session reinforced the understanding that **library visibility is not merely about promotion**; it is about positioning the library as an active and integral part of the academic community.

Day 2: User Engagement Beyond Books

On the second day, **Dr. Ramakant Navghare** conducted a session on *User Engagement Beyond Books*. The session explored the changing expectations of today's library users, who seek services and experiences beyond traditional books and physical library spaces.

Various approaches to enhancing user engagement were discussed, including **user orientation programmes, digital library services, social media communication, feedback mechanisms, events, research support, and meaningful interactions with users**.

A key takeaway from the session was the importance of understanding **what users need and expect**, rather than focusing solely on the services and resources that the library currently provides. User needs should therefore remain at the centre of library planning and service development.

Day 3: Library Leadership and Change Management

The third day focused on **Library Leadership and Change Management**, with a session conducted by **Dr. Appasaheb Naikal**.

The session highlighted that change is inevitable in the contemporary academic and information environment. However, successful implementation of change requires effective leadership, clear communication, participation, collaboration, and involvement of people at different levels.

The session provided an important perspective on the changing role of librarians. Librarians are not only responsible for managing collections and providing services but are also required to **lead change, manage people, encourage innovation, and guide their libraries towards future-oriented practices**.

Day 4: Artificial Intelligence and Its Applications for Librarians

The fourth day introduced participants to the emerging field of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and its applications in library and information services. The session was conducted by **Dr. Sonali Karekar**.

The session explored how AI tools can support various aspects of everyday library work, including **content creation, communication, research assistance, information support, and productivity enhancement**.

An important aspect of the session was understanding AI as a supportive technology rather than a replacement for librarians. AI can assist librarians in performing tasks more efficiently and creatively, allowing them to focus greater attention on user needs, professional services, innovation, and decision-making.

The session therefore highlighted the importance of developing AI awareness and skills to make librarians **more efficient, creative, adaptable, and future-ready**.

Day 5: Essential Documentation for Libraries

The fifth day focused on **Essential Documentation for Libraries**, with a session conducted by **Ms. Chinmayee Bhang**.

The session highlighted the importance of documentation as a fundamental component of an organised, systematic, and accountable library. Although documentation may sometimes be

viewed as a routine administrative activity, it plays a significant role in demonstrating the library's activities, achievements, services, and development.

The session covered the importance of maintaining appropriate **policies, statistics, reports, records, feedback, and digital documentation**. Proper documentation enables libraries to demonstrate their work, measure progress, maintain accountability, support decision-making, and plan future activities effectively.

Overall Learning and Outcomes

When the five days of the programme are considered together, a clear and interconnected picture of contemporary librarianship emerges. The programme highlighted that the role of a librarian is no longer limited to **managing books, collections, and traditional library services**.

A modern librarian needs to be a **communicator, user-engagement facilitator, leader, change manager, technology adopter, and information professional**. Visibility ensures that users are aware of the library and its services; user engagement ensures that those services respond to actual needs; leadership enables successful change; AI provides opportunities for greater efficiency and innovation; and documentation ensures accountability, continuity, and evidence-based planning.

The programme therefore provided valuable insights into how libraries can become more **visible, user-focused, innovative, technology-enabled, and strategically connected with the academic community**.

Geotagged Photos

