



European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018

Opportunities for Libraries

KEY POINTS

- 1) *2018 is the European Year of Cultural Heritage, and so an opportunity to raise awareness of the work of libraries in this area.*
- 2) *There are many ways to get involved, from following the news to participating in, or even organising your own events.*
- 3) *This briefing offers ideas on how to do this, and get your work recognised.*

2018 has been declared the Year of Cultural Heritage in Europe, creating a welcome opportunity to draw attention to the work of our libraries in the field.

Clearly our institutions are protecting, preserving and celebrating cultural heritage every day of every year. Libraries are involved in heritage from the oldest manuscripts to the newest born-digital materials. However, the chance to draw attention to and celebrate this work is welcome, especially at the highest political levels. This opportunity should be seized if libraries are to receive the support – both legally and financially – that they need to continue to undertake this work effectively.

The year has four themes, around which activities are being built:

- **Engagement**
- **Sustainability**
- **Protection**
- **Innovation**

Engagement: *libraries are Europe's most visited cultural attraction, with over 100M users in the EU. Thanks to the wide range of services offered, libraries have something to offer to all members of the community.*

Innovation: *libraries were among the first institutions to use networked computers, and are now taking advantage of the Internet to maximise access to culture and knowledge for all. Librarians are active across Europe in finding new ways to help people engage with – and create – knowledge and culture.*

Sustainability: *libraries are active in promoting more sustainable societies. Through providing access to information, they help people to improve their lives. IFLA in particular has emphasised the Sustainable Development Goals as a framework that underlines the role of libraries.*

Protection: *libraries are at the forefront of efforts to preserve Europe's documentary heritage, from legal deposit policies – both digital and analogue – to the work of local libraries in preserving local history and safeguarding individual collections.*

These offer a broad opportunity to talk about the work of libraries in their communities, in safeguarding heritage for the future, and in finding new and creative ways to provide access to heritage.

In addition to the profile that the Year of Cultural Heritage will offer, there are also more practical opportunities. Here are five things you can do to make the most of the Year:

- 1) **Find out what's going on in your country:** there is an extensive list of activities being organised around the European Union, a number of which involve libraries. Participate, and pick up good ideas for things you might want to do yourself. [The list is here.](#)
- 2) **Use materials from the toolkit:** the European Union has produced a [range of materials](#) that you can use, subject to terms and conditions in order to promote the year. These can be used in libraries to draw attention to all that is going on, and, potentially, to brand your own events.
- 3) **Get in touch with your local coordinator to identify opportunities:** each member state has appointed a National Coordinator to implement the Year of Cultural Heritage in their country. There are [websites](#) for each country which not only present the event taking place in their country, but also explains the funding available.
- 4) **Hold an event:** given how much libraries have to offer in the context of the European Year, hold your own celebration or event. If you follow the rules, you can use the European Year label and get it included on the website. [Here's how.](#)
- 5) **Bid for support:** keep an eye on possibilities for funding under the EU Creative Europe platform. Other possibilities are also open, for example [Europeana's initiative on EdTech.](#)

For more information, please [contact us](#).