

**Cologne
Public
Library**

2021/2022





Die Oberbürgermeisterin
Stadtbibliothek

Editing, Layout, Design: Stadtbibliothek Köln
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Printing: Viaprinto.de
Release: January 2022

Foreword

The Cologne Public Library staff was as committed as ever, during this second pandemic year, to providing our patrons reliable information, a safe haven and a bit of hope and joy. We place great importance on being here for our patrons and we strive to provide new and supportive programs. The staff adeptly responded to the constantly changing COVID situation in 2021 with a quickly implemented to-go service and a coronavirus-conform STEM Festival, in addition to much more. We were pleased, once again, to receive a great deal of positive feedback from our patrons. Their comments inspire and motivate us. We are gratified our work is so greatly appreciated, even under adverse conditions. One conclusion that can be drawn from the temporary closures is that it is very difficult to replace all offerings digitally. The library itself is indispensable. We missed our patrons – and they missed us! Where else in this day and age can the entire society come together? Young, old, female, male, third gendered, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, pantheist and atheist; those interested in wide variety of non-fiction topics, those looking for a new novel or a cookbook, or those just longing to be around people, so as not to be alone? Especially now, when the role of community has gained importance in society, libraries are essential places of togetherness and diversity. They offer a space for imagination, as well as facts.

I hope you enjoy reading our annual review and preview of the upcoming year.

Yours,

Hannelore Vogt





The Library Despite COVID

The Cologne Public Library was committed to offering its patrons the best possible service, in spite of the pandemic-related restrictions. The use of digital media offerings skyrocketed during the closures and remained high even after reopening. Alternatives to normal lending operations were found during closure periods. A free, contact-less to-go service was swiftly implemented at all locations. To-go orders placed online were available for pick-up within a day at pick-up windows.

In order to offer online membership registration, a way was found to comply with the legally required in-person registration. It was also possible to move all program registrations to the online event registration system.

When it was not possible on-site, most events, such as baby storytime, Maker Kids, learning circles, crypto parties, lectures and readings took place virtually as livestreams. The research training sessions for term papers, which took place up to eight times a week, also adapted well to an online environment.

The importance of social media for patron communication was even more pronounced than before. Tutorials on digital offerings and book review blogs supplemented the library's online presence. In addition, thousands of Cologne residents once again received free access to the library's services during the closure period.

„I have so far only encountered absolutely friendly, helpful and down to earth staff both at the Central Library and at “my” branch library in Chorweiler. Your to-go service, well as the extensive online offerings are wonderful services, especially in times of coronavirus. I am glad that the city of Cologne is doing such a good job here. Kudos to you and your team!“ (Letter L.S., via e-mail)

Central Library Renovation

Planning for the renovation of the Central Library, which first opened its doors in 1979, is almost complete. The technical infrastructure will be thoroughly overhauled and the building made energy-efficient. The renovation also presented an opportunity to develop an entirely new interior design concept for the building. As illustrated here, the renovated library will be attractive and inviting and something the citizens of Cologne can look forward to with happy anticipation.

Originally slated to remain in operation while undergoing renovation, the library will instead move to an interim location at Hohe Strasse 68-82 (corner of Schildergasse), located just 10 minutes away. Remaining in the original location during the renovation would have led to considerable service restrictions for patrons. The interim location will undergo construction and open in early 2023. The citizens of Cologne will thus have full access to library services during the long renovation period, with the exception of a brief closure during the move to the interim location.



The interim library, located downtown in the heart of the pedestrian zone, will enrich the city centre, which has been distressed during the pandemic. An interior designer will help plan the interim library. The beautiful space will house a café, event and media areas, children's library, music room with grand piano, STEM and Makerspace areas, numerous lounge and workstations and much more. The library will continue to provide cultural and educational offerings for families, professionals and students – all of the city's citizens, seven days a week. During the time in the interim location, (digital) trends will continue to be monitored and future-oriented services and programs developed.



New: the Nippes Branch Library and a New Bookmobile

The Nippes Branch Library has a new look. The enchanting entrance, with colourful and cheerful illustrations by Cologne illustrator Nadine Magner, is visible from afar and magically draws in visitors. The library's interior is also being gradually redesigned with a new look that skilfully combines existing furniture with new elements. Impetus for the changes to the branch came about in 2020 through participation in the Office for Public Libraries in North Rhine-Westphalia's "Strategy Development for District Libraries" project. Using user analysis and customer surveys, a future-oriented concept for the branch is being incrementally implemented.

Germany's first climate-neutral bookmobile will soon be running on biogas from organic and residual waste materials produced by city residents. The Cologne Public Library's contribution to better air quality is made possible by AVG Cologne's new fermentation plant in the city neighbourhood Niehl, which produces biogas from some of Cologne's organic waste. The environmental component is a great and innovative result of this project, which came about through the successful colla-



boration between the city's waste management company and the Cologne Public Library during the bookmobile procurement process. The bookmobile budget was approved at the end of 2021; the bookmobile will be ordered in 2022 and is expected to go on tour in early 2023.

The current bookmobile will be retired at the beginning of 2023; it will, however, be used in the future as a stationary library during branch library renovations.



Open on Sundays

Sunday open hours are a success! For Cologne residents, visiting the library on Sunday has become a regular family routine, as demonstrated by the patron who shared, „When I go to the Central Library with my children, it’s like going on a fun excursion, like going to the zoo or the swimming pool.“ Students of all ages appreciate the quiet, yet vibrant, atmosphere. Most of the study tables are full shortly after the library opens at 1 p.m. The three-hour experimental workshops on smart homes, maker and STEM topics by the Fachstelle für Jugendmedienkultur North Rhine-Westphalia (Office of Youth Media Education) also attract an interested audience.

At 3 p.m., the stage events on the ground floor offer wonderful entertainment for children and families. In 2021, events included puppet and mask theatre, circus shows and concerts with music ranging from bossa nova and cabaret, to rock, tango and and rock in Kölsch (local dialect). There were also readings and interactive lectures on subjects ranging from astronomy and marine biology to physics and satellite photography. All of the offerings were low-threshold, free of charge and without advance registration, while being compliance with all COVID rules and regulations.



Fritzi Bender’s „Zwergenlala“ broke the attendance record at the beginning of October. Another highlight was author Elvira Santos, who read from her book „Flügelschläge – eine Kindheit in Rio de Janeiro“ (Wingbeats – A Childhood in Rio de Janeiro) in August. The reading, accompanied by Brazilian music from pianist Wolfram Fuchs, was part of the 10th anniversary celebrations of the city partnership between Cologne and Rio de Janeiro. At the end of November, a dual reading by Cologne children’s book authors Gerlis Zillgens and Christina Bacher was a pre-Christmas highlight.

Finally, the stage programs also make a small contribution to promoting local artists. Stand-up magician Timo Brecht, who enchanted an audience of 120 youngsters and adults during two performances, emphasized this when he stated, „Thank you so much for hosting programs like this. It helps us artists so much, also because it makes us realize that interest is very high, despite coronavirus.

The pilot phase of Sunday opening runs until the end of 2022. The library is working to make the hours a permanent fixture. Sunday open hours also help revitalize the city centre.



Culture – Events and Activities

The year included many highlights, despite the lockdown, events having to move online and restricted attendance due to coronavirus. The Hans Mayer event, part of the anniversary celebration „1700 Years of Jewish Life in Cologne and the Rhineland,” took place online as well. In the fall, the Literature in Cologne (LiK) and Heinrich Böll archives were once again able to host numerous in-person book presentations and discussions with a live audience. Guests included Andrea Heuser and Terry Albrecht, Petra Reategui and Dorothea Renckhoff, Denis Scheck and Christina Schenk, Rudolf Rach and Rainer Weiss.

The second annual Cologne Literature Night with Erasmus Schöfer, Melanie Raabe and Mona Ameziane featured insightful book presentations and gave a glimpse behind the scenes of the literary business. A highlight of the year was the presentation of the Heinrich Böll Prize 2021 to José F. A. Oliver, who held a workshop discussion with Beate Tröger in the Central Library the day before the official award ceremony.

The series „Wissenswert – Gespräche am Puls der Zeit“ (Worth Knowing– Topical Discussions) also took place. Wolfram Eilenberger, Mithu

Sanyal and Gert Scobel discussed the relationship between literature and philosophy, while Wolfgang Streeck’s book „Zwischen Globalismus und Demokratie“ (Between Globalism and Democracy) provided for lively discussions. The third part of the NEUVERORTUNG (Reorientation – Urban Society in Dialog) series was again dedicated to “third places,” in light of the upcoming library renovation. The Kingdom of the Netherlands, in cooperation with the Haus der Architektur Köln (House of Architecture) provided support for the series. The STEM festival featured an interactive introduction to the timely topic of artificial intelligence by Jacob Beutemps. ARD (public broadcasting service) weatherman Sven Plöger addressed climate change in his talk, “Zieht euch warm an, es wird heiß!” (Dress warmly, it’s getting hot!)

An interactive map of Cologne’s literary history was successfully launched on the online portal literaturinkoeln.de. Various other events took place, as well. The Heinrich Böll and LiK archives publication series issued a volume featuring Cologne Author Ulla Hahn.

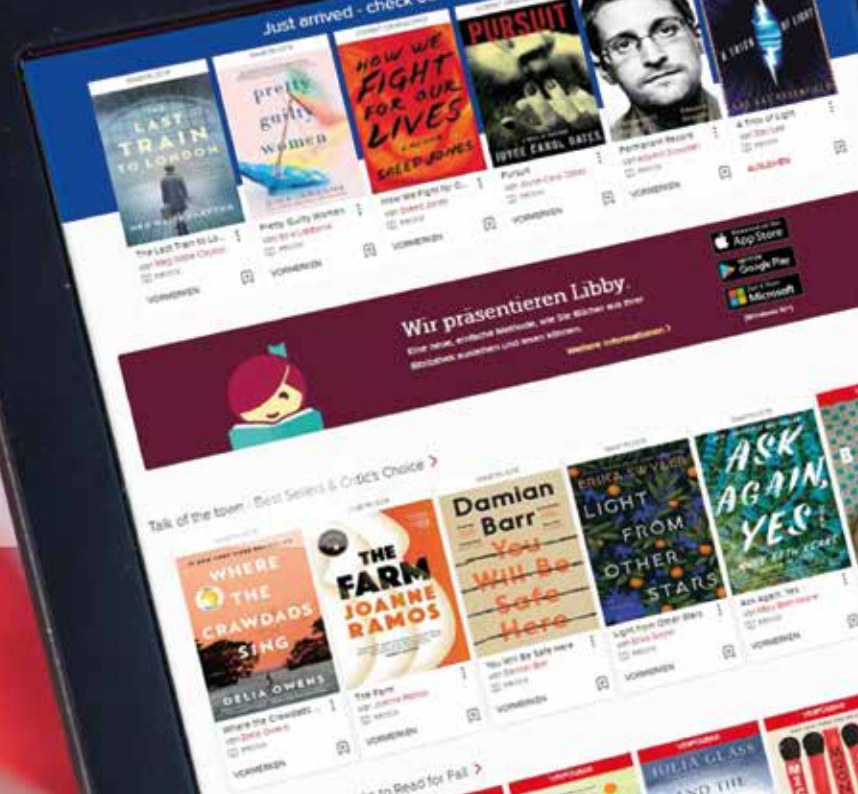
As part of the Heinrich Böll Award ceremony, the fourth volume of award speeches will be published this year, as well as a LiK volume focusing on the Cologne illustrator and author Nikolaus Heidelberg.



Reading and Learning English

The Overdrive platform offers a carefully selected cross-section of current English-language literature. The diverse selection includes novels, mysteries, thrillers and young adult literature. Most notably, it contains New York Times bestsellers, before they have been published in German. The content, as well as the technology, is top-notch. To date, there has not been a single support request for “Libby,” the multiple award-winning Overdrive app!

Everyone who wants to (or needs to...) learn and practice vocabulary can now do so with phase6. The interactive vocabulary-training tool is designed for use with all regular textbooks. Funding was provided by WissensWandel, the digital program for libraries, as part of the federal funding program „Neustart Kultur“ (Relaunching Culture).



„I wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you for Libby. It’s great! Not only is it convenient to use, but the selection is terrific. It has so many books that I’ve been meaning to read, or that have been recommended to me on Goodreads. It also has many that I’ve never heard of that I can now discover. I have been reading less and less the past few years. However, thanks to Libby, I am once again reading a lot more, not just on screen, but on paper as well. The ability to just grab my phone and read a few pages via Libby has gotten me back into the habit of reading, and I can tell that it’s good for me. Especially since now there’s always a book I’m super excited about.“ (Desirée Löffler, via email)

Additional project funds have been secured to expand the popular Overdrive and Onleihe e-audio collections in 2022.



Music Library

The Music Library's cultural and educational offerings are unique in Cologne. The combination of analogue and digital media, film and music streaming, low-threshold access to high-quality instruments and varied programs confirm this.

Jazz fans were thrilled by the addition of a jazz section to the video streaming service medici.tv. Among the instruments added to the collection were an accordion and a mobile e-drum set. Several branch libraries, including those in Porz and Ehrenfeld, now offer an extensive range of instruments via the library's internal lending service. The ukuleles are a big hit and the ukulele workshops are in great demand. The table harp is frequently borrowed for use with senior citizens, as it can be played without having to read music. Instruments from other cultures or eras, such as the saz, doumbek and psaltery are also popular. The sounds of drumming and rain are frequently heard, when patrons try out the drum sets and rainmakers on the spot.



100 Years of the Music Library: In cooperation with various partners, including the Cologne Philharmonic Orchestra, the Music Library's centennial celebration in 2022 will feature numerous events, programs and new service offerings. Music workshops for children and adults, various stage programs, such as a sing-along concert op Kölsch (in dialect), readings and interactive family concerts will take place throughout the year, in addition to an exhibition as part of the Acht Brücken music festival.



Social Media Studio

In recent years, there has been a tremendous surge of interest in podcasts and self-produced film content on media channels such as YouTube. The Cologne Public Library seized upon this trend and created a technical production studio in the Central Library, with funding from cultural development planning. Patrons can create their own social media content using equipment that is professional and high quality, yet nonetheless easy to operate. This is in line with the library's fundamental and sustainable strategy of making expensive or seldom used items easily available to as many people as possible. Patrons age 16 and older can reserve the studio free of charge!

„Putting the Social into Social Media“ was the theme of two-day workshops in August and September. With media education support from the Office of Youth Media Education North Rhine-Westphalia, participants addressed socially relevant issues in modern formats such as YouTube videos and podcasts.

Workshops providing recording tips and compact introductions to the operating equipment are well attended. Additional workshops on pro-

fessionally editing material at home or at the studio will take place in early 2022.

The staff tested out the studio's space and technology by producing videos. In the spring of 2021, the studio was used for the library's first live-stream event, the premier of the library's cultural program series with former Berlinale director Dieter Kosslick.

“I found out about the library's new social media studio today from an ad on the tram station. Wonderful idea. Signed up for 3 hours right away and already know how I will use the time productively to create content. A great initiative!” (Social Media Studio user, via email)



Four Years of MINTkoeln, our STEM Festival

After four years, there is still so much to discover! With activities on climate, sustainability, digitization, coding and artificial intelligence, the STEM festival once again incorporated the latest trends. The festival offered over 100 events throughout the library system during the two weeks of fall break, most of which were fully booked within a few days. Young and old alike were able to discover new things, experience technology, solve puzzles, learn coding and much more.

After a pause due to the pandemic, the popular STEM Activity Day could once again take place in 2021, not only in the event space on the ground floor as in previous years, but this time throughout the Central Library. Large humanoid robots and small, mobile robots invited participants to look, touch and try out the controls. The walking, dancing, talking NAO, whose graphical programming system encourages early programming, was a big hit. In keeping with the “hand-on” motto of STEM, children also researched and experimented on their own. For example, they tried to figure out how to best adjust a windmill to generate as much electricity as possible. While math questions and puzzles engaged the children’s minds, manual skills were not forgotten.

New items could be soldered together right next to old items that were repaired. The laser cutter once again produced the event give-away, a small keychain. Building a video game with building blocks or getting a new view of traffic with VR goggles – analogue and digital worlds were once again linked in 2021.

The library was a lead participant in the City of Cologne’s project linking sustainability goals with the city budget. Fittingly, sustainable development will be the theme of the upcoming STEM Festival. The Porz Branch Library’s newly inaugurated Makerspace invites everyone to “Kumm Erin! “ (Come In!). It will offer a variety of primarily technical activities. 3D printing workshops, gaming activities and digital and media workshops involving music, movement and programming. With this service, the Porz Branch Library strengthens STEM competencies and helps meet the demands of digital revolution.





„Especially good: making the rocket. Not good: that we didn't go into space.“

„Totally super. My daughter is really having a lot of fun and was not particularly interested in technology before, but she is now. Thank you!“

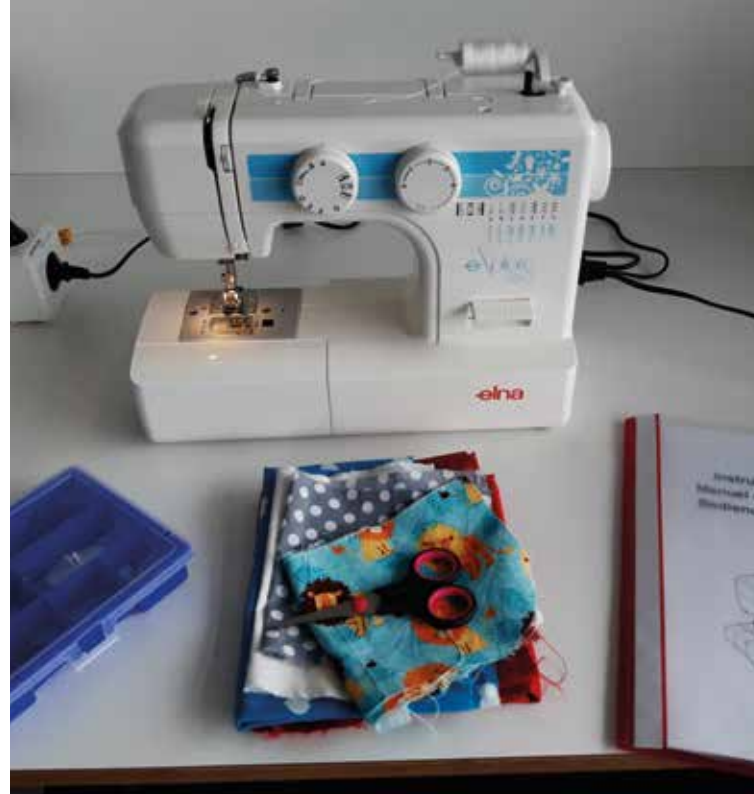
“Our son was thrilled. Direct quote: “Best workshop ever.” He was thrilled with the workshop leader, who charmed the children with his didactic and personal skills. Many thanks.”

“Super! My child has internalized the motto „Don't waste, reuse“. Thank you so much, great ideas.“

The Library of Things

Sustainability is a priority for the Cologne Public Library. In recent years, libraries have extended the aspect of sharing to other objects. In addition to the „traditional“ library collection, there is the „Library of Things“ – a rapidly growing collection of items focused on STEM and music that can be borrowed just like books and other media. The target audience for these items is strikingly broad. Raspberry Pi and the environmental data measuring device senseBox are used for teaching purposes and workshops.

The 50 different instruments and pieces of technical equipment are very popular with children, parents, and educators. Many amateur musicians prefer to try out an instrument before buying. Even professionals do not always have everything at home. The sewing machines are also frequently borrowed.



Library of Things Collection Available for Borrowing

3D Macroscope • Animation Praxinoscope • Arduino Starter Kit • Asteroid Alarm • Astro Telescope • Banjo • Bass Boost Cajon • Bee-Bot • Bee-Bot-Floor Mat • BlueBot Robot • BlueBot TacTile Reader • Blu-ray Player • Book and Jigsaw Periodic Table • Bongo • Boomwhackers Basic School Set und Boomophone • Brain Teasers • Braintwisters • Cajon for Children • Calliope mini • Children's Guitar • Colorama • Cozmo • Cube Puzzler PRO • Cubetto Directional Blocks, Logic Blocks und Playset • Cue • Daf Frame Drum • Dash Robot • Deine 5 Sinne • Die drei ??? : Geheimcode, Mobiles Alarmsystem, Sicherheitssystem • Die Zwickmühle • Digitalwerkstattbox • Djembe • Dot Roboter • Doumbek • Droid Inventor Kit • Easy Coding • Easy Electronic • Easy Elektro Einsteiger-Set • Eco Toys Experimentierset • Electric Guitar with Amplifier • Electronic Master • Electronic Start – Experimentierkasten • Electricity from Fruits and Vegetables • Elektro Profi • Elektro-Alarm • Energy Meter Test Equipment • eReader Tolino Vision 4 HD and 5 • Electric Violin • Color Identifier • Floor Piano Mat • Forgotten Piece • Garagekey mini • Guitars • Gizmos & Gadgets • GPS Navigation Systems • Horchkiste • iPads • IQ Blox • IQ Puzzler Pro • IQ Twist • Kaleidoscope • Kalimba • KidzLabs • Kikeribumm • King Cobra Cube • Concertina • Headphones • KosmoBits – Learn Programming • Krabbeltier-Safari • Laser Maze • Launcher Catapult Dash Robot • Lego Boost - Build Code Play • Think & Learn Smart Scan Color Chameleon • Think & Learn Code-a-Pillar Twist • Reading Aids • Leuchtschrift • Licht & Schatten • Licht und Farben • Looky Periscope • Lighted Magnifying Glass • Magischer Wald • Magnet Box with Tangram • Magnetic Tangram Cube • Magnet-Spaß: entdecke unsichtbare Kräfte • Magnetic Cube • Maker Boxes Vol. 1 -15: Dash, LEGO Technik, Sphero BOLT, Monster Maker, Windenergy, Bee-Bot Starter, Robot-Control, LEGO Education, Easy Electro Start, Electro & Co, 3D Pen und Ozobot • MaKey MaKey • Mandolin • Mein erstes Forscher-Set • Kosmos Telescope • Mental Blox Critical Thinking Game • Metallophon • Microphone und Looper Pedal • Microscope • Mobile Drum • Moog Theremini • Nataraj – Steel Drum • Notebooks • Oculus go • OrCam My Reader • Osmo • Ozobot Bit Starter Pack • Pepper Mint • Percussion Sets – also for Children • Planetarium • Populele • Primo Books 1 -4: Ancient Egypt, Big City, Blue Ocean, Deep Space • Psalter • Quadrillion • Raspberry Pi Starter Kit • Rainmaker • Robot Mouse • Rule Your Room Kit • Rubik's Cube Box 1 und 2 • Saz • Sewing Machine Elna 160 eXplore • Slit Drum • Science X Smartscope • Smart Zoom • Sound Booster - Mache alles zum Lautsprecher • Spaß am Entdecken - Elektronik • Spaß am Entdecken - Magnete • SpecDrums • Spring Drum • Star Wars BB -8 • Star Wars R2 -D2 • Super-Sinne • Tambourine • Tauchen und Schwimmen • Theremin • Temple Connection Thymio • Table Harp • Wooden Drum Boxes (small, medium, large with snare wires) • Sound Recorder • Trickfilm -Studio • Ukuleles • Umbrellas • USB -Microphone • Vibrations Metronome • Viola • Violin • Volca Bass • Volca Keys Analog Loop Synthesizer • Volca Sample New Generation • Weather Station • Zowi



Lightyears Ahead

It is rare to get this close to space! The German Aerospace Center (DLR) offered an exclusive insight into the exciting questions and findings of space research in its ninth appearance at the geeks@cologne program series.

Ulrich Köhler, from the DLR Institute of Planetary Research in Berlin-Adlershof, spoke about past and future lunar missions; Volker Schmid from DLR Space Management in Bonn reported on Cosmic Kiss, the first ISS mission by Matthias Maurer. The very large and extremely inquisitive online audience flooded the chat with questions and demonstrated its passion for space and space travel during the space quiz.

Although not light-years ahead of its time, the library was somewhat ahead of the curve when, in 2018, Matthias Maurer reported live on his upcoming stay in the International Space Station.

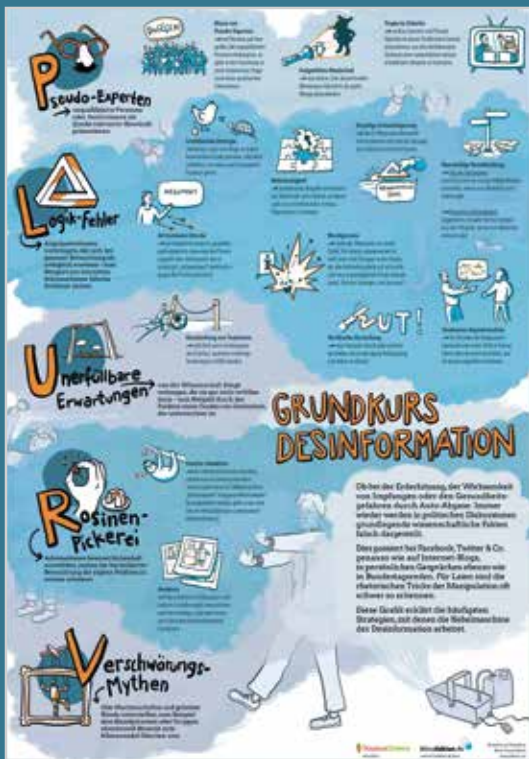


Nature and Science Programs: Healthy, Sustainable and Informative

The Library's programming reflects its focus on health, ecology and science. The lectures on genome editing (Bernhard Schermer, University of Cologne), mindfulness (Ralf Maria Hölker) and nature-based nutrition (Kerstin Wolf and Rudolf Bolzius) were very well received. The events, offered either on-site or online, depending on the pandemic situation, provided participants the chance to ask many questions and leave inspired with new ideas.

Daniel Baer and Diego Gardón from Kräuterkauf provided practical information on various plant identification apps, and Birgit Scherer-Bouharroun from the Association for the Preservation of Crop Diversity (VEN) explained how to harvest seeds. The library supports the association's venture with seed libraries at the Central Library, Kalk and Chorweiler Branch Libraries. All three locations experienced a run on seed packets. The "Angelique" Muscat pumpkin, grown in the library's raised bed garden, produced around 100 seeds that can be planted next year.





Fighting Fake News Together

Conspiracy theories and misrepresentation are booming. The library offers guidance and assistance with its campaign „Fighting Fake News Together.“

The website www.stbib-koeln.de/fakenews lists recommended fact checkers, topic pages, research tools and fake news games for young people and adults. Library trainees offered workshops for seventh graders on the State of North Rhine-Westphalia’s adventure game „Leon’s Identity.“ The interactive, realistic game depicts how Leon drifts into the right-wing extremist scene due to fake news.

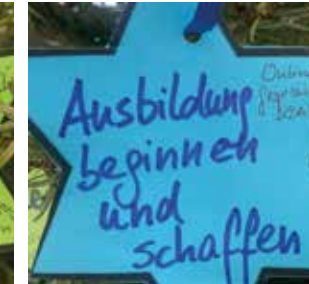
An integral part of the library’s highly popular research methods workshop is learning how to apply source evaluation and comparison when using professional databases. In addition to class workshops and individual consultations, a digital fact-checking scavenger hunt and self-paced tutorial via app are offered. Among the regular events offered in cooperation with the Cologne-Bonn Cryptoparty were programs on WhatsApp alternatives, encryption, video conferencing systems and password management.

Intercultural Services for Adults

Programs supporting language acquisition and social integration are not only central components of reading promotion, but also an important service for adults. The sprachraum, in particular, continues to be an inviting venue for anyone who wants to learn German. Volunteers help with homework, assist with filling out job applications and are simply there when someone wants to practice speaking German.

The sprachraum discussion groups in 2021, both on-site and online, once again covered an impressive variety of topics: freedom of the press, federal elections, cannabis legalization, carnival and the relationship between men and women – even Christmas wishes could be shared. The participants in the many integration courses particularly enjoy the interactive iPad scavenger hunts at the Central Library using the Actionbound app.

The feedback from the course instructors is always extremely positive: „Many participants were in the Central Library for the first time, and their fears about visiting the library were reduced.“ „Everyone now knows these programs are excellent building blocks for learning/spending time.“





Multicultural, of Course – Diversity in Children’s Books

As part of the „360°- Fund for Cultures of the New Urban Society“ program of the German Federal Cultural Foundation, library staff have been intensively studying diversity in children’s books and gained in-depth insights during online in-house training sessions.

This specially produced video provides more information about the topic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWJsK4aIDgQ>. Diversity was also taught hands-on. In a four-week series of events entitled „Multicultural, of Course – Diversity in Children’s Books,“ there were workshops and events at multiple library locations including multilingual readings, kamishibai storytimes, children’s book cinema, tours by daycare centres and crafts.

Accompanying displays further highlighted the diverse range of children’s books and media available.

Promoting Reading and Writing

Promoting reading is a key library function. The annual „Cologne Children’s Book“ events with Britta Weyers delighted a great many children in the branch libraries. Some of the storytimes and fairy tale comic events took place online. Author readings, including one by Barbara Zoschke featuring her book “Sonnengelb und Tintenblau” at the Rodenkirchen Branch Library, were financed by the „Neustart Kultur“ funding program. In a subsequent writing workshop, children produced and presented their own texts.

Even during library closures, interactive literature education took place, with scavenger hunts via app for the 5th and 6th grades. Literamus, the Rodenkirchen Branch Library Friends of the Library group, provided programming for adults during the closures with online literature puzzles and a literary competition.

The baby storytimes remain among the most popular children’s programs, even when offered online. Songs, finger plays, picture books and hands-on activities for the very young can all be presented online.

Participants clapped and danced, or just watched and listened. Parents received book suggestions and ideas on how to share picture books, even with very young children. Finally, an online discussion forum provided an opportunity to exchange ideas with participants from across the country.



The Perfect Sound

Schoolchildren from Ehrenfeld did not want to miss the opportunity to play, touch and explore musical instruments. Accompanied by their fathers and teacher, 22 children created a very special kind of sound: experimental, breath taking and deafening! Under the guidance of professional musician Jochen Börner, everyone had an incredible time singing and making music together.

The eKidz app, developed by speech therapists, will be available in January. It helps children learn to read in a natural and entertaining way and is an excellent supplement to the highly popular digital children's book app Tigerbooks, with its 8,000 titles. eKidz is funded by the "Neustart Kultur" program of the German Literature Fund.



Summer Vacation Programs

After a long pandemic-induced pause, programming for children of all ages resumed in the summer in all library locations. From STEM and gaming events, to musical storytimes and tours – there was something for everyone. The summer was filled with reading, crafting, playing, making music and experimenting.

The program on gravity was introduced with a story of a penguin who wants to fly. The highlight of the event was the coaster experiment – after being placed on full glass of water and turned upside down, the coaster seemed to float in the air.

Programs and activities are offered for children who stay at home during vacations: Maker Kids workshops during spring break, the STEM festival during fall break and multiple activities during the summer holiday.



Children Welcome

As part of the “Children Welcome” initiative of the Office for Children, Youth and Families, all parents of newborns in Cologne receive a colourfully designed suitcase containing a picture book, a brochure for parents about reading aloud and a voucher for a trial membership.

The program is supported by the Friends of the Cologne Public Library, Sparkasse KölnBonn and the German Federal Cultural Foundation 360° Fund for Cultures of the New Urban Society program.



© Jörn Neumann

Gaming and E-Sports

The Library's Gaming Team scored with many special events, such as the now traditional Gamescom Warm-Up in August, online events for the multiplayer game Among US and an escape room during the STEM festival. At the Gaming Day on July 24 at the Mülheim Branch Library, children put their skills to the test with Mario Kart Home Live Circuit. Also featured were competitions and speeches streamed from German-American institutes. At the end, there were great prizes for everyone.

The Amerikahaus NRW e.V. collaborated with the Mülheim Library not only for Gaming Day, but also for the branch's e-sports team. The team, for young adults ages 12 and up, is supervised by the Office of Youth Media Education North Rhine-Westphalia.

The building of a new gaming area at the Mülheim Branch Library is in the works. The e-sports team will participate in national tournaments this year. Other branch libraries will soon offer the Kuti gaming console.

Learning Circles: Learning Together, Learning from One Another

Learning circles, small facilitated groups of people who meet regularly in-person or online to learn something together, support the goal of lifelong learning. Learning circles at the Cologne Public Library have taken place on subjects such as stress management and Sketchnotes.

The Cologne Public Library was part of the Erasmus+ EU project „Learning Circles in Libraries“, along with libraries and educational institutions in Finland, Poland, Portugal, Romania and the U.S. non-profit organization Peer 2 Peer University. Manuals and resources were developed and translated into German and other languages. They are freely available for use by all here: <https://koeln.p2pu.org>.

The library's online workshops on learning circles, including one offered at re:publica 21, were attended by more than 80 educational pro-

fessionals. Library staff from across the country were trained as facilitators, and now offer learning circles at their libraries. The facilitator group continues to meet regularly online to share experiences.



New learning circles on a number of topics are planned for 2022. Particularly noteworthy is the participant who, after experiencing several learning circles as a participant, came on board to help moderate a learning circle herself.



International Guests

Library staff were once again active on the international stage. They participated in library exchanges with colleagues from countries such as India, Egypt, Slovakia and the USA. They served as speakers – often online – at professional conferences. Librarians from the Gelderland and Overijssel regions of the Netherlands spent two days in Cologne. They learned about the library's work and services and contributed many new ideas.

The four meetings of the EU project NEWCOMER (building a NEtWork COmmunity cEntred librarianship), which focuses on international best practice exchange, had to take place online, due to the pandemic. Only in Milan, Italy were the NEWCOMER participants able to meet in-person. One of the project goals is to study professional skills essential for future-oriented library development at an international level and to create a sustainable network of global librarianship. To this end, interesting locally developed solutions in the field of adult education and for combating social exclusion have been exchanged



Agile Working – Change Doesn't Have to Hurt

The Cologne Public Library fulfils many roles today: It is an innovation and information hub, a mediator for social justice and a municipal repository of knowledge. It is also a place to experiment, to contemplate and to learn with and from each other. This brings with it different challenges and responsibilities for the staff. They must react quickly to new developments in the social, media and technology fields, in addition to proactively developing the library's services and offerings. There is no large budget and very little additional staff to support the ongoing process of change. Creative approaches were therefore used: project funds were secured, exciting funds reallocated, new collaborations and unconventional partnerships sought and civic engagement harnessed. New methods, such as design thinking, were tried. Staff with different professional backgrounds such as media pedagogy and project management were hired. However, the changes primarily affected the staff members themselves.

Long before the term became popular, the Cologne Public Library was employing agile working. Staff members interested in particular topics such as Makerspace, gaming, diversity, virtual reality, STEM, YouTube

and social media serve as trend scouts in fourteen different cross-departmental teams, comprised of all levels of staff. The teams are think tanks for innovation and self-generate change. The teams develop many different programs and manage their own budgets. All of this is crucial, because the more and the earlier staff are involved, the greater the courage to make changes and the greater their success. As innovators, they are allowed to try out new things, make mistakes and take detours, before deciding whether to add something to the portfolio. The key is to be bold and remain curious. As Nelson Mandela once said, „It always seems impossible until it's done.“

*IT ALWAYS SEEMS
IMPOSSIBLE
UNTIL IT'S DONE.*

NELSON MANDELA

Patron feedback

The library is always open to feedback, suggestions and criticism from patrons. These are a valuable resource for the library's day-to-day work – and there is nothing better to motivate the staff.

“We're thrilled with the research training webinars: Down to the last detail, all tasks were organically put together and transparent in their flow. Even though I have been attending the events as a teacher for years, it is instructive every time and I am never bored, due to the well-presented tools and the wonderful learning atmosphere.” Karolin Küpper-Popp, Gymnasium Kreuzgasse

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

... entspannendes
gut organisiert
An Siebe ...
16.3.2021

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

W: Sehr netter, hilfsbereiter
Service und interessante
Bücher
Kritik: Die Ausleihautomaten sind
manchmal defekt d.h. drucken
keinen Bon, daher nehmen

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Vielen Dank für die
nette Unterstützung
von Fr. Randermann und
Marie

Anregung • Lob • Kritik

Liebe Bibliothekskundin, lieber Bibliothekskunde, sagen Sie uns bitte Ihre Meinung, damit unser Service für Sie noch besser wird!

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

3 G. der
Stadtbibliothek
- geliehen
- gelesen
- geliebt

☐ Antwort erwünscht (Bitte in Druckbuchstaben)

E-Mail: _____
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Wohnort: _____
Tel.: _____
Datum: _____

Danke für Ihre Mithilfe! Ihr Stadtbibliotheks-Team

Ihr seid Super!

Vielen Dank für Ihr
Angebot gerade in Zeiten
der Pandemie!

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Sehr große Auswahl an Ausleihmöglichkeiten
Ich finde es mega cool, dass man
Instrumente ausleihen kann
😊

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Ich freue mich immer wieder
über die Freundlichkeit und
Hilfsbereitschaft des
Personals (seit 35 Jahren)

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Ich bin froh, dass es bei gibt,
die Stadtbibliothek.
Die Ansprache ist toll, dass sie
die kritischen Mitarbeiterinnen

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Vielen Dank für Ihr
Angebot gerade in Zeiten
der Pandemie!

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Der Support in der Blinden Hörbereich
ist einfach unfabulous!!
Vielen herzlichen Dank!

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Liebes Zentralbibliotheks-Team!
Ich bin Mutter einer 7-jährigen Tochter und
habe für sie einen Ausweis beantragt.
So herzlich und freundlich bin ich lange
nicht behandelt worden. Echt toll. Bitte
weiter so!!

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Ich finde es toll, wieviel
Hilfe und Hilfe aufgewendet
wird, um bei der Suche nach
Büchern zu helfen!!!

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Wie immer sehr nette
Mitarbeiter von Europapark
bis Boarburg.
Vielen Dank!

☐ Anregung ☒ Lob ☐ Kritik

Ich bin heute sehr glücklich
und äußerst zufrieden mit
dem das Personal der
Kunden Service leisten werden.
Herzlichen Dank dafür!



Facts, Figures, Data

Despite the pandemic-related closures and access restrictions, the Cologne Public Library once again had millions of visitors. In 2021, the virtual visits once again increased, this time by 5%. The STEM Festival was again almost fully booked in 2021, with events taking place on-site and online. Digital offerings were further expanded, thanks in part to funding from the „Neustart Kultur“ program, and continue to prove very popular. The Sunday open hours, with their cultural programs, will remain in place for 2022. The Sunday hours will be evaluated again in 2022, with the goal of making them a permanent fixture.

The Library System

The Central Library	Children’s Library, Music Library, Makerspace, MINT Space, sprachraum, Heinrich-Böll-Archive, Literature in Cologne Archive (LiK), Library for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Germania Judaica e.V. Library
Branch Libraries	11 branch libraries
Bookmobile	18 stops
minibibs (minilibraries)	the Watertower in Kalk; the Book Kiosk in Chorweiler

Total number of visitors	4,4 million
Number of virtual visitors from total	3 million

2021 Most Popular Checkouts

Fiction	Alena Schröder: „Junge Frau, am Fenster stehend, Abendlicht, blaues Kleid“
Non-Fiction	Mai-Thi Nguyen-Kim: „Die kleinste gemeinsame Wirklichkeit“
Audiobook	Juli Zeh: „Über Menschen“
Children’s Book	Jeff Kinney: „Gregs Tagebuch 15: Halt mal die Luft an“
Film	Tenet
Children’s Film	Soul
Music CD	Deep Purple: „Whoosh!“

Programs and Events

Events	1,264 with 18,000 Attendees
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Social Media

Instagram	4.400 followers
Twitter	5.900 followers
Facebook	6.200 followers

Instragram still has the strongest growth, with about 900 new followers. The newly produced reels for Star Wars Day, Halloween, and the #fitbib challenge, among others, received a tremendous amount of feedback. Facebook and Twitter follow with circa 300 and 400 new followers respectively.

Staff

Staff positions	161
Number of staff	253 (including trainees, interns and weekend staff)

Media Highlight

The library director reported on the library’s digital strategy in a livestream interview of the series „Digital vor Ort,“ from the North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry of Economics.



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Stadt Köln



Die Oberbürgermeisterin