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Professional Code of ethics of Hungarian librarians

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IFLA/FAIFE

Professional Code of ethics of Hungarian librarians

Issued by the Board of the Association of Hungarian Librarians and the Board of the Federation of Libraries and Information Centres

January 17, 2006

The Code of ethics of Hungarian librarians was ceremonially accepted by the General Assembly of the Association of Hungarian Librarians on January 17, 2006.

It took two years to prepare the code and to reach professional consensus. The Code was co-issued by the Board of the Association of Hungarian Librarians and the Board of the Federation of Libraries and Information Centres.

The materials related to the Code are arranged in a pyramid structure, with the Code itself being on the top.

The Code consists of two, closely related parts: the one with Roman numbers can be interpreted as a set of moral commands; they are complemented by a second part of textual explanations.

The pyramid's second level is planned to include further codes of ethics pertaining to various bodies, associations, organisations, types of libraries, jobs etc.

The third level contains all the explanations, commentaries and additions related to the Code (these materials are published together with the Code, in a summarised form).

A bibliography, as the last part (representing the fourth level), provides a list of relevant - published and manuscript - materials having appeared or having been used during the process of editing.

I. The ethics of librarians

The activities of librarians are guided - in addition to professional knowledge, procedures and attitudes, legal regulations and guidelines - by ethical norms as well.

II. Main values

Librarians respect and are committed to human rights, democracy, the legal state, equal social opportunities, intellectual freedom and the freedom of information.

III. The library profession

The library profession requires from librarians that they should respect and be devoted to users, and improve their own professional knowledge and skills on a continuous basis. Librarians are expected to make their professional decisions autonomously, with integrity, excluding any personal gains or other unjustified advantages or profit.

IV. Collection care

Librarians are responsible for preserving the cultural

IV. Collection care

Librarians are responsible for preserving the cultural heritage of mankind, including that of Hungary, national and ethnic minorities, as well as local communities. They base their collection building activities on user needs and human values. Nevertheless, they acquire also works that are controversial to public opinion or to their own views. They reject censorship and do not exercise it themselves. By cataloguing they facilitate access to the entire collection of the library.

V. Serving library users

The relationship between librarians and users relies on equal partnership and mutual confidence. Librarians provide assistance to all without any discrimination in order to enable the best use of library services. They protect users' privacy regarding their personal data. Users are entitled to the best library services possible under the given circumstances and to impartial treatment. In this spirit librarians strive to balance different chances.

VI. Transmitting information

Librarians make their best to provide free and unlimited access to information. They provide assistance to using information sources and tools. With their full strength they strive to supply authentic, reliable, full and adequate information, tailored to personal needs.

VII. Librarians as a professional community

Librarians safeguard the prestige of the library profession, take part in the activities of the professional community and co-operate with their colleagues. They readily share their knowledge and experience with others.

VIII. The library workplace

Librarians are loyal to their library, respect the objectives and interests of the library's maintaining body. Either as members or as managers of staff they make their best to contribute to implementing the library's objectives and to strengthening the workplace community.

IX. Relations with society

The librarians' relationship with members, groups and organisations of society should be free of bias and prejudice. Librarians respect other professions and their representatives, and are ready for co-operation with them. They protect both the right of intellectual property and that of access to the products of human creativity.

X. Implementing the Code

The fulfilment of the requirements included in this Code of ethics needs the active involvement of librarians. The Association of Hungarian Librarians and the Federation of Libraries and Information Centres will facilitate this process by setting up an Ethical Committee.

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Klára Bakos, President
Association of Hungarian Librarians

Péter Fodor, President
Federation of Libraries and Information Centres

Confirmed by their signature, the following organisations declare that they accept the values and requirements formulated in the Code of ethics of Hungarian librarians, will act in their spirit and advocate their implementation:

Márta Virágos, President
Council of University Librarians

Zsuzsa Vad-Kokovay, President
Council of College Librarians

Ilona Ásványi, President
Association of Church Librarians

Erika Bondor, President
Association of Teacher-Librarians

Lívia Vasas, President
Federation of Hungarian Medical Librarians

Ádám Horváth, President
Hungarian Shared Catalogue Association MOKKA