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The Librarian's Code of Conduct: Fundamental Principles

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Italian Library Association / Associazione italiana biblioteche (AIB):

The Librarian's Code of Conduct: Fundamental Principles

Approved by the Association's General Meeting held in Naples on 30 October 1997.

The Code of Conduct is a code of ethics; it commits the librarian as a professional and is a not a code of legal provisions.

The members of the Italian Library Association, the professional guide and guarantor for both librarians and other parties, are obliged to conform to the Code. The Librarian's Code of Conduct embodies the foundations of the profession's independence.

The Code of Conduct lays down the librarian's duties toward the user and the profession.

1. Duties toward the user

1.1 The librarian guarantees the user access to publicly available information and to documents without any restriction that is not explicitly and previously stated in laws or regulations.

1.2 The information supplied by the librarian shall be complete, objective and impartial, i.e., unconditioned by the librarian's personal viewpoints, ideas and values, neither by external political and economic bodies.

1.3 The librarian, in managing the library and its services for the public, shall not accept any conditioning as regards sex, ethnic group, nationality, social condition, religion or political opinions.

1.4 The librarian shall reject and oppose any form of censorship of the documents gathered and organised and of the information supplied.

1.5 The librarian guarantees the confidentiality of the user, of the information he requested or received and of the information sources used.

1.6 In carrying out his professional duties, the librarian should not place himself in a position of conflict of interest and shall not use the information and resources available to him by virtue of his position for his personal interest.

1.7 It is the duty of the librarian to promote, both individually and collectively, the efficiency and the independence of the library service as an instrument of democracy.

2. Duties toward the profession

2.1 The librarian shall honour the profession, profoundly aware of its social usefulness.

2.2 The librarian shall possess a broad and in-depth professional knowledge which enable him to provide a high-quality service, according to definite performance indicators and pursuing the optimal use of resources.

2.3 The professional knowledge should be continuously and constantly up-dated, also through participation in library associations and organisations.

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2.4 In his professional activity, the librarian's relations toward his work colleagues shall be based on the principles of correctness, respect and spirit of collaboration.

3. Duties toward documents and information

3.1 The librarian undertakes to promote the enhancement and preservation of documents and information.

3.2 The librarian undertakes to guarantee the transmission of knowledge through the rational organisation of documents and by acting impartially and professionally.

3.3 The librarian, conscious of the global context in which he operates, undertakes to promote both individually and in cooperation the integration of information systems and the removal of the organisational and geographical obstacles which hinder the circulation of information and documents.