

ANNUAL REPORT TO CENL 2020



Name of country: Armenia

Name of library: National Library of Armenia / Հայաստանի ազգային գրադարան

Name of Chief Executive: Anna Chulyan, Director

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1. General overview of recent major developments at the reporting library:

Like all libraries, the National Library of Armenia spent much of 2020 dealing with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to ensure the safety of its patrons and employees, the library closed for several months, moving all operations and programming online. It still remained a busy year for NLA, as it received a number of impressive book donations, implemented new online programs in response to the pandemic, and boosted its social media presence.



The biggest news came in August, when the library announced the selection of a new director, Anna Chulyan, previously Head of Library at Brusov State University, where she is also a Candidate of Philological Sciences and Associate Professor at World Literature and Culture Chair. Anna Chulyan is also President of the Association of Digital Libraries of Armenia and serves as the Country Coordinator and Licensing Coordinator in Armenia for EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries).

The library also celebrated its 101st birthday on July 4th.

2. New developments in creating and building collections

The library's collections were strengthened in a number of ways this past year. In February 2020, the National Library received a generous book donation from famed art critic Shahen Khachatryan, who gifted his personal library to NLA's Art Department. Additionally, accomplished bibliographer and linguist Artashes Der-Khachatryan gifted his personal book collection to the library, which includes the new Latin testament published in 1550, "Novvm Testamentvm Graece et Latine" and Arakel Davrizhetsi's "Book of History," published in 1669 in Amsterdam.

On "Book Giving Day," which is annually celebrated in Armenia on February 19th, coinciding with beloved Armenian writer Hovhannes Tumanyan's birthday, several staff members travelled to Tumanyan's house-museum in Lori region to donate more than 100 books. Additionally, an exhibition of literature and album editions entitled "Hovhannes Tumanyan's Literary Heritage" opened, as well as a corner of Uruguayan literature, which was the first of a series of donations by the Consul General of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay to Armenia Eduardo Rosenbrock.

During the months in which the library was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all events, meetings and workshops were held online. This included the library's monthly movie screenings, from which an online Movie Club was formed.

The library also expanded its collections with the publication of a new book, "Hovhannes Tumanyan: Bio-Bibliography (2001-2020)," which is the third part of a Tumanyan bio-bibliography series compiled by the Bibliography and Literature Department of the National Library.

3. New developments in managing collections.

In 2020, the library announced that the Publications Registration and Indexing Division will begin providing DOI Standard Numbers in addition to the ISBN, ISMN, and ISSN International Standard Numbers. Publishers International Linking Association, Inc. (PILA), which, as the official registered company of PILA, will provide CrossRef international bibliographic information services to provide cross-linking between the publications of world scientific journals through Digital Object Identification (DOI). CrossRef, the official digital object identification agency of the International DOI Foundation, brings together publishers of academic publications (journals, monographs, collections of conference materials). The purpose of the agency is to create a reliable system of bibliographic references in articles.

4. New developments in providing access to collections.

NLA announced a very exciting new partnership with VLUME, a mobile application that offers the largest collection of ebooks and audio books in Armenian. Library members have a unique opportunity to have free access to a wide range of electronic fiction and non-fiction titles all from the convenience of their everyday devices, greatly expanding users' access to new titles and opportunities for learning.

Additionally, the library began work on developing a concept for a new large-scale project that would provide a special reading space for soldiers wounded from the 2020 Artsakh War. The Assistive Technology Lab would be fully accessible by people with physical disabilities and would set an example for other libraries in Armenia of how they can expand their services and physical spaces to those with disabilities.

5. Examples of collaboration between the reporting library and other national collecting institutions (libraries, archives and museums).

The National Library of Armenia cooperates with 160 organizations, libraries and individuals in 40 countries around the world. On the national level, NLA cooperates with 21 embassies in Armenia. It's also home to the Museum of Printing, established in 2017 to introduce the public to prominent Armenian printers and to present the evolution of Armenian printing in different parts of the world.