

CENL NETWORK GROUP APPLICATION FORM

1. Applicant Personal Details

Title: Dr (please delete as appropriate)

Forename: Pauls

Surname (family name): Daija

2. Applicant Current work

Job Title: Senior Researcher

Department / Library: National Library of Latvia

Address: Mūkusalas iela 3, Rīga LV1423

Country: Latvia

3. Applicant Contact Information

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Work address: Mūkusalas iela 3, Rīga LV1423 Latvia

4. Network Group Topic

4.1) Please describe your proposed group topic in less than 300 words.

Reading History & Reading Habits Network Group

Reading History & Reading Habits network group intend to enable the library researchers who are interested in these phenomena to come together, with an emphasis on eliminating the gap between historical and modern reading research. Missions of national libraries specifically highlight the availability of library resources and their openness to the user. This is achieved through a variety of solutions, such as the digitization of the collection, the creation of exhibitions, and the organisation of events.

However, when thinking about a library, it is essential to keep track of the changes that happen to the user. In today's changing world, under the influence of the fourth industrial revolution, the change in reading habits is the topic of interest. National libraries must not remain passive observers of these developments. Therefore, the creation of a networking group for reading practices and reading history will contribute to an in-depth study of this problem at the cross-disciplinary and cross-border cooperation level. The challenges cast by both the technology and the COVID-19 pandemic make us return to the historic reading crises and revolutions. Not all of the challenges we face today are new, so we believe that historical analysis can give a critical dimension to today's discussions.

Reading history is one of the most challenging and dynamic areas of book history. It looks at reading as a historical phenomenon subject to change, asking not only traditional questions – who read and what they read, but also – how and why they read. National libraries as research centres are ideal for conducting reading history research. The need for them is determined by several

considerations: the need to deepen critical awareness of changes in modern reading habits; promote the relevance and visibility of research work carried out in libraries.

4.2) Please describe the main aims of this group. Describe how this topic will align with the priorities and objectives under the CENL Strategy 2018-2023, and what its impact will be.

Main purposes of the group:

- Promoting the establishment of a secure and stable communication space for library researchers to encourage talks, the exchange of knowledge on transformations in reading history and their impact on the perception of text by the modern reader;
- Performing preliminary work for participation in large-scale international research projects;
- Bridging the gap between historical research and research of modern reading habits, building a bridge from the past to today, and promoting synergies between historians and researchers of current processes. Establishing a single base of research materials on the transformation of reading habits in response to the need for European integration in understanding and addressing these challenges;
- Improving the capability of communities to adapt to change (under the influence of artificial intelligence, digital technology) by involving national libraries as active agents whose expertise can help promote these capabilities.
- Making the results of the group's work open and accessible to the wider audience by organising annual seminars and/or creating digital content (digital exhibition and/or annual online publications)

The CENL strategy repeatedly highlights the importance of libraries in changing times when changes occur both in the surrounding environment and in library users. Changes in reading habits are becoming a reason for introducing new functions in libraries. National libraries are responsible for compliance with these changes, so in the work of the group of researchers, *it is essential to strengthen the professional expertise of the library industry, to develop and offer users new and high-quality services*. Both networking of researchers and joint work on research projects and later publication of the results of the work raise the importance of cross-border cooperation by raising awareness of the common European identity.

5. Membership

5.1) Please list CENL member libraries which have expressed an interest in joining this group:

National Library of Latvia
National Library of Poland
National Library of Estonia
National Library of the Czech Republic
Lithuanian National Martynas Mažvydas Library

5.2) Please confirm names and affiliation for the following roles:

A Group Chair: Pauls Daija, National Library of Latvia

B Group Treasurer: Maria Magdalena Przewozinska, National Library of Poland

C Group Secretary: Maria Magdalena Przewozinska, National Library of Poland

5.3) Please describe in less than 300 words interest and expertise of CENL libraries which have expressed an interest in joining this group.

The initiative is run by **National Library of Latvia** and **National Library of Poland**. Three more CENL members have joined the network.

The **National Library of Estonia** is the only institution in Estonia that has been systematically publishing research on Estonian book culture in its Acta series (since 2008). The proposed working group would provide an opportunity to study the impact of reading habits on the society in a comparative and broader context. What has influenced Estonians' reading habits in different historical periods? Is the process of change in reading habits uniform across Europe? What role has the library played in shaping people's reading habits? These are among the questions that are eagerly waiting to be studied and discussed.

The **National Library of the Czech Republic** and the Institute for Czech Literature have been conducting regular readership research and surveys since 2007. Five surveys of the adult population "Readers and Reading" were conducted in 2007, 2010, 2013, 2018 and 2021. Children and young people are also the subject of research - "Czech children as readers", so far three of them took place in 2013, 2017 and 2021. In 2021, surveys of both children and adults were focused on the impact of the pandemic on reading habits. In 2016, a special research "Internet Czechs as Readers" was conducted, focusing mainly on e-book and digital reading.

The **Lithuanian National Martynas Mažvydas Library** is a scientific library. Its employees carry out research on documentary heritage, librarianship, bibliography, book studies, children's literature, and prepare normative documents and standards in their field. The National Library of Lithuania pays a lot of attention to the processes of children's literature and reading. Main research activities and research directions: reading habits and motivation of schoolchildren, factors determining children's reading; the most read books by children and teenagers.

5.4) Please describe in less than 300 words the interest and expertise of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

The **National Library of Latvia** has devoted in-depth attention to the research of reading practices. In the collected articles "Reading Pandemic" published in 2020, a group of interdisciplinary researchers was brought together who analysed historical changes in reading habits in Latvia from medieval times to the 21st century. Researchers' findings were initially published in the form of an online blog on a popular web portal, then those became scientific articles. Based on a regional approach, this research made it possible to review many traditional assumptions, such as relations between intensive and extensive, quiet and loud reading. Particular attention was paid to the diversification of reading communities by highlighting social stratification aspects and women's reading. At the same time, the research on the increase of the role of reading under the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic was conducted. NLL is currently continuing quantitative and qualitative research of today's readers in the context of switching from analogue to digital reading.

The **National Library of Poland** has devoted attention to the research of reading practices in several directions: (1) The Sociology Research understood as the entirety of interrelated phenomena determining the place of books and reading in the broader contemporary culture. It includes research on the social reach of the reading practices: youth reading, the social function of a book in the context of the digitization as well as print culture in the context of the functioning of the Internet. (2) Historical research: history of the book, the press, the book market, libraries, library collections and reading in Poland and among emigrants. (3) Bibliology research: The research focuses on the socio-cultural conditions of the functioning of public libraries, changes in

public librarianship, which are a consequence of civilizational, technological and political transformations and their impact on library-related processes.

5.4) Please describe the group's early thoughts on a proposed way of working.

During the initial work phase, a secure and dialogue-promoting platform should be established to organise talks, and symposiums, exchange opinions and identify universal challenges to create a picture of the developments within the common European area. The preferred frequency of group meetings is twice a year.

In parallel, it is essential to create an internal base of materials and resources that can be used for large-scale project applications at later stages. Depending on the research interest of each institution represented, two parallel working groups may be considered: focusing on reading history and reading trends today. As an interdisciplinary industry that studies the subject of ephemera, reading history involves a broad range of methods (extra- and intratextual methods, micro-and macroscopic approaches) and sources used (property lists, entries in books, court records, autobiographical documents, etc.). To achieve this, the intention of reading history network is to focus on three dimensions: (1) reading geographies – historically defined regional differences in reading practices, (2) reading communities – the formation of different groups of readers ('interpretative communities') within society, their expectations and motivation, and their relationship with emancipation (e.g. women and reading), (3) reading revolutions and crises – historical milestones in reading practices.

Publishing and promoting the results of the cooperation will be achieved through the creation of digital content (regular publications in the e-journal using the CENL platform, publications every six months) or the creation of a digital exhibition and the publication of blogs on the Europeana platform.

Signature:



Date:

30.11.2022.

Please email this form to the CENL Secretariat at cenl@dnb.de

CENL NETWORK GROUP OFFICERS' APPLICATION FORM

1. Applicant Personal Details

Title: Dr (please delete as appropriate; if nothing is appropriate, delete all)

Forename: Pauls

Surname (family name): Daija

2. Applicant Current work

Job Title: Senior Researcher

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4. Network Group Name

4.1) Please indicate the Network Group for which you want to take over an official role:

Reading History & Reading Habits Network Group

4.2) Please indicate which role you are willing to take over:

Group Chair

4.3) Please describe in less than 300 words your interest and expertise for the role chosen.

PAULS DAIJA, Dr. philol., is Senior Researcher at the National Library of Latvia (since 2017). His interests include history of reading, social history of literature, Baltic German culture and history of Enlightenment. He has published articles on Baltic German and Latvian literary culture of the 18th and 19th centuries, has curated several historical exhibitions and translated scholarly literature. Daija has worked as lecturer at the University of Latvia (2008–2012) and Senior Researcher at the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia, Riga (2006–2022). He has co-edited several books in Latvian and is author of *Literary History and Popular Enlightenment in Latvian Culture* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2017). Daija has researched history of reading in the Baltic littoral, and his publications on this topic include:

- The Reading Revolution. In: *A New History of Latvian Literature: the Long Nineteenth Century*. Ed. by Pauls Daija and Benedikts Kalnačs. Berlin: Peter Lang, 2022, pp. 89–105.
- The Development of Peasants' Reading Habits in Courland and Livonia in the 18th Century. *Knygotyra*, 2021, No. 76, pp. 27–50.
- Lasīšanas pieredzes 18. gadsimtā [Reading Experiences in the 18th Century]. In: *Lasīšanas pandēmija: esejas par lasīšanas vēsturi Latvijā*. Ed. by Maija Treile. Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka, 2020, 66.–79. lpp.
- Rationalist Hymnbooks in the Latvian Early 19th Century Literature: An Episode in the History of Reading in Livonia and Courland. *Knygotyra*, Nr. 70, 2018, p. 78–93.

- The Discourse on Dangerous Reading in Nineteenth-Century Latvia. Literature and Medicine, Nr. 34/2, 2016, p. 468–483. (Together with Eva Eglāja-Kristsonsone)

In his publications, Daija has focused on reading as an emancipation, including women reading and the role reading played in the emancipation of small nations.

Signature:



Date:

30. 11. 2022.

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