

Bursaries and Grants Update

Actions required:

- The EC is asked to take note of the Bursaries and Grants update.

I. Erland Kolding Nielsen Grant

In January 2017 CENL introduced a grant to celebrate the enormous contribution Erland Kolding Nielsen made to the development of European libraries throughout his long and distinguished career as Director General of the Royal Library, Denmark. The annual grant awards up to €5,000 to a CENL library project which promotes international collaboration and strengthens bonds between CENL libraries. Two grants were awarded each year in 2017 and 2018, three in 2019, one in 2020, two in 2021, and three in 2022 and 2023.

Grants awarded in 2023

The Executive Committee selected three out of five applications for funding on 17th April 2023:

CENL Member	Overview of application	Status
Hungary	The aim of the cooperation is to improve the web archiving infrastructure of the National Széchényi Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale du Luxembourg, to renew certain workflows and to share knowledge	Project is still ongoing
France	Three major CENL member libraries, which are carrying out projects to build high-rise, robotic, hypoxic storage facilities (BL, BnF, KB) want to organize two knowledge-exchange seminars involving the staff of the respective institutions (one before summer 2023, one after).	Completed, report on website
Moldova	Organization of an international conference "Social resilience and stronger professional networks as a precondition for peace" in September 2023 with participants from Moldova, Ukraine, Lithuania and Latvia, with follow-up webinars and informal sessions at each participating library.	Completed, report on website

All EKN projects from the previous years are completed. Reports can be found on the [website](#).

II. Covid-19 Support Fund and Hidden Stories Fund

Covid-19 Support Fund

The Covid-19 Support Fund was a grant to provide funding to help CENL members respond to immediate challenges connected to the Covid-19 crisis, and offer support to adapt and reimagine ways of working together for the longer-term future. The fund was terminated by the end of 2022.

With the “Establishment of a virtual Book Club” in North Macedonia, the last open Covid-19 project has been completed. The fund is still listed on the CENL bursaries website, with a notice that it has been closed.

Changes in status of open Covid-19 Support Funds since last EC meeting

Year	CENL Member	Details	Status
2022	North Macedonia	Establishment of a virtual "Book Club"	Completed, report on website

Hidden Stories Fund

In 2020, CENL supported IFLA’s dedication to inclusion and to actively work against racial discrimination of all kinds. The Hidden Stories Fund aims to support projects to collect, preserve, research and highlight the stories from, by and related to underrepresented communities in our national collections.

In 2020, one grant was awarded for 2,500 EUR, two grants for 5,000 EUR each in 2021, and two grants for 2,000 EUR each in 2022. On 28 September 2022, the Executive Committee agreed to continue the Hidden Stories Fund for another year, and in 2023, three grants were awarded for 2,000 EUR each. On 18 September 2023 the EC confirmed that the HSF shall not be continued. The fund was closed at the end of 2023.

Year	CENL Member	Overview of application	Status
2023	Greece	„We, the Afro-Greeks: Black literature as a bridge between cultures.“ The project aims to address the lack of visibility and inclusion of Greeks of African descent, frequently referred to as "Afro-Greeks", in the dominant public narrative of Greece, by enriching the collections of the National Library of Greece with black literature and by creating spaces for their stories to be told, heard, and spread among its audience.	Upfront payment made, project ongoing
2023	Romania	„The woman and her professional avatars. Representations in the communist press.“ In Romania, like in all communist countries, great attention has been paid to the role of women in new professional fields. The press of time, following the ideological principles of the regime, built through images and texts the typology of the working woman. The project will select visual material (text and image), which illustrate the female's gender stereotypes. The	Upfront payment made, project ongoing

		most representative images will be scanned and assembled into a virtual exhibition with curatorial texts. The exhibition will appear on the library website and Digitool and social media.	
2023	Croatia	„The first Croatian woman librarian: the road to gender equality.“ Through the exhibition and the video reportage on Elza Kucera, the public's attention shall be drawn to the first Croatia woman doctor of philosophy, woman psychologist, woman librarian and woman public servant. The exhibition and reportage are part of the year-long celebration of the achievements of women in culture and science organized by the National and University Library in Zagreb in 2023 under the name "Women in NSK". The preparation of the video reportage with the translation of subtitles into English is the reason why the library is applying for the grant. The funds needed for setting up the exhibition are secured from other sources.	Upfront payment made, project ongoing
2022	British Library	Youth-led project with support from the Library, working closely with local youth group, KCBNA (Kings Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association).	Project (re-)scheduled for 2024

III. Skills and Knowledge Exchange Bursary Scheme Update

For 2023, the Board of Directors has approved a budget of 6,000 EUR for this Bursary, i.e., six bursaries for 1,000 EUR each. In 2023, six applications were submitted, of which the CENL secretariat approved four. The rejected ones were from Finland (the applicant was an affiliated researcher and not employed by the National Library of Finland) and from Moldova (two people applied to visit the same Conference, of which only one was approved). The budget of the two remaining Skills and Knowledge Exchange Bursaries was used to approve three instead of two Hidden Stories Funds as agreed on by the EC in September 2023.

Status of 2023 Skills and Knowledge Exchange Bursaries

CENL Member	Details	Status
Romania	Study visit of the National Library of the Netherlands for 1 week in June 2023.	Completed, report on website
Latvia	Study visit of the DNB in Leipzig to learn about the organisation of the Humanities and Natural Science Reading Rooms of the DNB	Completed, report on website
Serbia	Study visit of the National Library of Finland in November 2023	Completed, report on website
Moldova	Participation at Let's Go green Conference, 9-10 November 2023, organized by the National and University Library in Zagreb	Completed, report on website

IV. Future direction of the funds

Regarding the future direction of the funds the EC confirmed at its meeting on 18 September 2023 in Stockholm that the Hidden Stories Fund shall not be continued. The EC members agreed that the existing system was working well and should therefore continue with the EKN Grant and Skills and Knowledge Exchange Fund.

Referring to the idea of an earlier discussed Emergency Planning Fund (EPF) the EC members suggested to assess the members' needs with a survey, first. They asked the secretariat to prepare a survey of all CENL members on the status of their libraries with emergency plans and their need for support from CENL.

This action is ongoing, and a first draft of possible survey questions will be delivered to the EC soon.