

Bursaries and Grants Update

Actions required:

The EC is asked to take note of the bursaries awarded, to make a decision regarding one Romanian SKE application, to discuss the results of the survey on emergency planning and then decide whether or not to set up a new fund for emergency planning.

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. Three grants were awarded in 2024.

Status of EKN grants

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	This grant awarded in 2023 was completed in March 2024, report on website
Bulgaria	Cross-Border Collaboration for European Cultural Heritage Preservation and Sustainable Development of Library Services: The project will encompass a 3-day exchange program (to be scheduled for the second half of September, along with the European Heritage Day initiative) hosted at the National and University Library in Zagreb, accommodating 5 delegates, comprising librarians and management staff from the National Library of Bulgaria.	Upfront payment made
Georgia	We plan to have maximum two days - for working conference, and one day for cultural activities around library. The Program will include various activities. More detailed program with its studying topics will be sent also, but initial matters of the conference which is very important, essential for us is the circulation process in the library system, as well as, how to work in various models of SIERRA, how to implement a support base which helps to run an electronic catalog.	Conference planning is in progress
Moldova	The project consists on organizing a study visit of 4 specialists from the National Library of Moldova to the National Library of Lithuania, focussing on international relations, project management, developing new services, using informational resources and innovations of the National Library of Lithuania and others.	Planning of the visit is in progress

II. 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 aimed to support projects to collect, preserve, research and highlight the stories from, by and related to underrepresented communities in our national collections. **The fund was closed at the end of 2023.**

Some facts and figures

Altogether, 12 applications were submitted since 2020, and 8 Hidden Stories grants were funded with a total of 22,500 EUR:

- In 2020, one grant was awarded to the Croatian National Library for 2,500 EUR.
- In 2021, two grants for 5,000 EUR each were awarded to the National Library of Serbia and to the National and University Library “St Clement of Ohrid” of Macedonia.
- In 2022, two grants for 2,000 EUR each were awarded to the National Library of Scotland and to the British Library.
- In 2023, three grants were awarded for 2,000 EUR each to the National Libraries of Croatia, Greece, and Romania.

Status of remaining Hidden Stories Funds

Year	CENL Member	Overview of application	Status
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 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.	Project completed, see https://bibnat.ro/femeia-si-avatarurile-sale-profesionale-expozitie-virtuala/ project report for CENL website is in progress
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.	Completed, report on website
2022	UK/British Library	Youth-led project with support from the Library, working closely with local youth group, KCBNA (Kings Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association).	Project sessions to be held on 19th, 24th and 26th September 2024

III. Skills and Knowledge Exchange Bursary Scheme Update

For 2024, the Board of Directors has approved a budget of 10,000 EUR for this Bursary, i.e., 10 bursaries for 1,000 EUR each. So far, three applications were submitted, all of which the CENL secretariat approved.

Status of 2024 Skills and Knowledge Exchange Bursaries

CENL Member	Details	Status
Romania	Study visit of the National Library of Italy in Firenze for 5 days in Summer 2024	Completed, report on website
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Visit of the National Library of Hungary and signing of Memorandum of Understanding	Due to the financial situation of the National Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Bursary could not yet be used.
Latvia	Visit of the Martynas Mazvydas National Library of Lithuania in Vilnius, Lithuania, for an experience exchange with colleagues at the Music and Visual Arts Unit	Completed, report on website
Romania	Study visit of the Département de la Conservation within the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in November 2024	Approved
Romania	Participation in the Annual Meeting of ISSN National Centers in Tunis from 21-24 October. The CENL secretariat finds that the application does not exactly meet the scope of the grant, proposes to decline it and seeks approval of the CENL Executive Committee.	Decision needed by the CENL Executive Committee

In the CENL Newsletter in August 2024, the CENL secretariat promoted the opportunity for all CENL members and the staff of their libraries to apply for Skills and Knowledge Exchange bursaries, which led to two new applications (from Romania), so far. Normally it is up to the secretariat to decide on the SKE bursaries, but for one of the applications we are seeking the decision of the EC.

IV. Future direction of the funds

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

At the AGM in Warsaw in 2024, the Secretary reported on the results of the survey: A questionnaire was sent to all 46 member libraries and 23 responses were received. The responses showed that 96% of respondents had experienced emergencies, mainly in the last five years. Almost all respondents reported having a risk assessment and an emergency plan, although not all emergency plans covered the most commonly experienced hazards: water, cyber-attack and war.

Almost 82% reported that they review their emergency plans every 2-3 years and 83% reported that their staff receive regular emergency training. 92% of respondents said they work with external organisations, particularly local organisations.

The EC is asked to discuss the results of the survey and then decide whether or not to set up a new fund for emergency planning. A budget of €5,000 has been set aside for this purpose in the 2025 budget.