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# Frankfurt: New Directions for Libraries, Scholars, and Partnerships

## Librarians gather for international symposium

By Kristen Totleben | October 25, 2017

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Attendees at the New Directions for Libraries, Scholars, and Partnerships symposium in Frankfurt, Germany, October 13. Photo: Judy Alspach

Librarians and scholars from 10 countries gathered in Frankfurt, Germany, on October 13 for [New Directions for Libraries, Scholars, and Partnerships: An International Symposium](#) at the [German National Library \(Deutsche Nationalbibliothek\)](#). The symposium and associated professional development activities provided a forum for nearly 120 attendees to exchange information and share current work.

The day-long event coincided with the Frankfurt Book Fair (October 8–15), which this year honored France and literature in French. Symposium discussions focused on the future of foreign language collections, libraries, and services, along with new and recurring trends in scholarship and the library profession. Library and scholarly communication professionals shared challenges and opportunities for 21st-century librarianship on a global scale. Sessions included “Engaging Scholars and Students,” “Strategies for Collections and Partnerships,” “21st-Century Scholarship: Mining the Past,” and “21st-Century Scholarship: Forging the Future.” Speakers hailed from the Bibliothèque nationale de France; from research libraries in Bonn, Munich, and Frankfurt; and from Mexico, Italy, and the United States.

[Organizers](#) sought to provide a balanced representation of librarian and scholar presenters from around the world, some of whom work with French and German language collections.

The Center for Research Libraries (CRL) sponsored the symposium with two of its global partners, Collaborative Initiative for French Language Collections and German-North American Resources Partnership. CRL’s Global Resources Partnerships support area studies collections, collaborations, projects, and partnerships.

In addition to the symposium and the book fair, the week was enriched with professional development experiences. Activities included a visit to the Frankfurt Public Central Library, a tour of the German National Library, a welcome reception and orientation to the book fair at the Frankfurt University Library, and a tour of the [Harrassowitz](#) headquarters. For many attendees, meeting with staff of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* newspaper and touring the printing plant was a highlight: football field–sized rooms with large rolls of recycled paper rushing through printers and folding machines, with the newspaper dropping hot off the presses at the end. The tour gave rise to nostalgia about print media and fit into the symposium topics on digitally reliant information services.

The diverse backgrounds of the symposium attendees provided a better understanding of the context and culture in which our international colleagues work. Related

professional experiences offered an opportunity to rethink our own approaches to collections and subject librarianship.

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**KRISTEN TOTLEBEN** is modern languages and cultures librarian at University of Rochester and cochair of the Association of College and Research Libraries' European Studies Section.