

# Library and Archives Canada: *International Relations Strategy 2016-2019*



## Context

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) proactively engages with international networks and institutions to support its corporate strategic priorities, the broader foreign policy objectives of the Government of Canada, as well as to demonstrate leadership within the library and archival communities in Canada. Active engagement in international networks and activities enables LAC to express the value and the importance of libraries and archives; understand the views of national and international partners and stakeholders; identify innovative solutions in the digital age; and to undertake the most appropriate analysis and provide the most comprehensive advice to the Government of Canada.

Aligned with LAC's mandate and corporate priorities as outlined in *Library and Archives Canada – 2016-2019 Three-Year Plan*, LAC's *International Relations Strategy 2016-2019* has the following three objectives:

1. To further the skills and expertise of LAC professionals in the areas of library, archival and information sciences and history to share expertise, lessons learned and best practices on the international scene.
2. To increase engagement and collaboration with international library and archival organizations to advance strategic issues, transfer knowledge and share best practices.
3. To support Government of Canada foreign policy objectives, including cultural diplomacy, and to provide leadership on issues affecting Canada's library and archival communities on the international scene, while enhancing LAC's visibility and profile.

## LAC's International Areas of Interest

Anchored by LAC's *2016-2019 Three-Year Plan*, the *2016-2019 International Relations Strategy* focuses on the following three international areas of interest:

### **1. Being at the leading edge of archival and library science, and new technologies**

LAC seeks to be an institution that draws on the strength of all of its staff to be at the leading edge of archival and library science and new technologies (e.g. web harvesting, digitization, digital preservation, etc.). Engaging with international organizations and institutions allows LAC employees to be part of these current trends and to contribute their expertise, and to bring innovative digital solutions and best practices back to LAC.



- LAC employees participate in international conferences, meetings and seminars in order to share, develop and maintain their expertise, as well as to remain apprised of the latest trends in the library, archival and information sciences.
- LAC engages with international partners to share experiences, new directions, and lessons learned, and uses formal agreements and other tools to advance international initiatives.
- LAC invites international experts from the academic, public and private sectors to domestic lecture series and seminars focused on sharing innovative solutions and disseminating strategic thinking in the domains of information and archival science, history, digitization, etc.

## **2. Actively engaging with international networks**

LAC aims to be an institution that is proactively engaged with international networks in an open and inclusive way. In addition to supporting Government of Canada interests, LAC also works alongside other Canadian organizations to represent the perspective of the Canadian library and archival communities on the international scene.

- LAC maintains memberships and an active presence within key international documentary heritage associations and organizations.
- LAC shares information and facilitates connections between national and international networks.
- LAC nominates its own employees, and encourages/supports other Canadian experts to sit as representatives on committees of key international organizations, including the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and International Council on Archives.
- LAC engages with international francophone library and archival networks.
- LAC supports international meetings, sessions and / or annual conferences in Canada when appropriate and feasible.

## **3. Contributing to Canada's international priorities**

The Government of Canada is committed to re-establishing Canada's place internationally, and is using cultural diplomacy in priority areas to enhance Canada's image and brand on the international scene. As a government entity, LAC is a key player in supporting these international policy priorities set by the Government of Canada. By highlighting its professional expertise and the work of library and archive communities in Canada, LAC seeks to strategically link its international activities alongside Canadian Heritage (PCH), other organizations within the PCH Portfolio, and Global Affairs Canada (GAC), where possible.

- LAC participates in Government of Canada discussions and / or initiatives focused on international issues related to LAC's mandate and priorities.

- LAC engages in the activities of UNESCO, including the Memory of the World programme, alongside GAC, PCH and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.
- LAC hosts foreign delegations, and supports official state visits led by the Government of Canada.
- LAC supports international events held in Canada and the acquisition of documentary heritage that document the role of Canada on the world stage (e.g. Olympics, international trade and engagement activities)

## **Prioritizing LAC's International Activities**

LAC's *International Relations Strategy 2016-2019* leverages existing working relationships with international and national networks, institutions, stakeholders and partners to achieve organizational corporate priorities while maximizing return on investment.

As outlined in the *2016-2019 Three-Year Plan*, LAC will prioritize its international activities in areas whereby LAC is currently investing significant resources and efforts.

- **Standards**
  - Building on its longstanding participation in library, archival and information management standards work, as well as its priority to ensure that Canada is represented on major international committees, LAC will increase communication with stakeholders on standards, and will establish stronger linkages between the national and international library and archival communities on this work.
- **Access**
  - Building upon its continued commitment to the democratization of information and knowledge, LAC will prioritize the sharing of information on how it is increasing information access and innovation with national and international networks, including Canada's Aboriginal communities in an open and transparent manner. By harnessing the knowledge, experiences and best practices from national and international networks, LAC will be better suited to respond to pertinent library and archival issues that impact Canada's information policy landscape, policies and practices (e.g. improving access and discoverability to documentary heritage holdings, discoverability and repatriation of digital documentary heritage records of interest, open access, open government, copyright, and access to published works for people with disabilities).
- **Digital Strategies**
  - In line with its priority to remain relevant in the digital age by making collections easily accessible, LAC will establish partnerships, identify innovative solutions, and build state-of-the-art infrastructure with

national and international partners to develop and implement its *Canadian Documentary Heritage Digitization Strategy* and *Digital Strategy*.

By targeting these areas, LAC will ensure that its international activities are organized in a strategic, coherent and coordinated manner, and that they remain aligned with the corporate priorities as outlined in the *2016-2019 Three-Year Plan*.