

Strategic Plan

2019 -2023

Introduction by the Director

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to present the Library's Strategic Plan 2019-2023. It sets out an ambitious programme to expand the collections, reach out to new and wider audiences than ever before and continue to build on our professional excellence in everything we do.

In the history of The Wiener Library we are at a unique moment, facing greater challenges from nationalism, antisemitism and populism than for many decades, but also having exciting opportunities to strive after. We are proud of a new partnership with the University of Huddersfield that will see the creation of a Wiener Library North, to support its academic work but also to strengthen the impressive exhibition created by the Holocaust Survivors Friends Association with the University's help and support.

We have reviewed our identity and 'branding' and have committed ourselves to a set of values that will underpin all our work and all our interactions with others. In all respects we aim to raise our standards still higher and strive to be worthy of being called Britain's Holocaust Archive.

Our Plan continues and develops the themes of Collecting, Preserving and Sharing - which have shaped our work for several years already. We now add the themes of Serving and Fundraising - the latter because our ambitions can only be realised if we are able to argue persuasively that we are deserving of support.

While many exciting changes have taken place and more are envisioned, we remain true to what Dr Alfred Wiener and his colleagues believed in and lived by: the power of truth to build a better future.



Ben Barkow
Director

Vision, Mission and Commitment

The Wiener Library is one of the world's leading and most extensive archives on the Holocaust and Nazi era. Formed in 1933, the Library's unique collection of over two million items is the oldest of its kind in the world, includes published and unpublished works, press cuttings, photographs and eyewitness testimony.

Our **VISION** is:

- To continuously develop a library, archive and information service for the UK and international community, dedicated to research, learning and teaching about the Holocaust and genocide, their causes and consequences.

Our **MISSION** is:

- To serve scholars, professional researchers, the media and the public as a library of record.
- To engage people of all ages and backgrounds in understanding the Holocaust and its historical context through an active educational programme.
- To be a living memorial to the evils of the past by ensuring that our wealth of materials is put at the service of the future.

Our **COMMITMENT** is:

- To continue to deploy the Library and its resources to oppose antisemitism and other forms of prejudice and intolerance.
- To strengthen the Library's reputation by retaining its independence and objectivity via its scholarly activities and publications.

Putting the Mission into Action

We have been keeping truth alive since 1933, by **COLLECTING** comprehensive documentation and personal evidence, **PRESERVING** evidence and memories for future generations, and **SHARING** by engaging people of all ages and backgrounds in the most challenging facts of history through the Library's outreach activities and publications. We give a voice to the victims of the Holocaust and other genocides. We support education and confront antisemitism and Holocaust denial and distortion. We work to bring together networks of people from different backgrounds. We put the past at the service of the future.

Our **VALUES** are:

- We are **SCHOLARLY**
Our work is evidence-based, contextualised and intellectually robust.
- We are **APPROACHABLE**
We are here to serve and help everyone, regardless of their background or academic achievements.
- We are **RESPECTFUL**
We value each individual's uniqueness, worth and dignity, regardless of background, abilities or religious beliefs.
- We are **AUTHENTIC**
We stand up for historical truth and its complexities and believe in the integrity of historical evidence.

Our Priorities for 2019-23

We have identified 5 key priorities for 2019-23 to enable us to fulfil our mission and work towards the Library's vision. These are:

1. **Collect:** We will enhance and expand our collections by actively collecting unique materials that may be at risk of being lost forever. Collecting will be broad and look beyond the needs of today's researchers and students, while continuing to cover the wider question of genocide and the issue of comparison. We will build on our existing pre-eminence to deliver this important goal and to future-proof all our physical and digital holdings.
2. **Preserve:** We will look after our priceless collections - many of them frail and endangered - so that they can speak to future generations.
3. **Share:** We will further open our collections to the world. We strive to connect the public to the latest in academic research to ensure the widest engagement with the latest research and historical interpretations and publicly commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and other genocides.
4. **Serve:** We recognise the importance of user service and value the expert skills of our staff as service providers. We will prioritise sustaining the accumulated expertise amongst our staff in order to enhance user experience, serve a vibrant community and ensure that our values of respect and approachability underpin our interactions with visitors, readers, volunteers and partners.
5. **Fundraise:** Our ambitious plans will require significant increases to our budget and a creative approach to a fundraising strategy. We will initiate a strategic fundraising campaign to secure the Library's core work, submit a major project application to renew the Ernst Fraenkel Exhibition Room, and enhance supporter relationships both nationally and internationally.

COLLECT

We will enhance and expand our collections by actively collecting unique materials that may be at risk of being lost forever. Collecting will be broad and look beyond the needs of today's researchers and students, while continuing to cover the wider question of genocide and the issue of comparison. We will build on our existing pre-eminence to deliver this important goal and to future-proof all our physical and digital holdings.

We plan to enhance our collections by:

1. Cataloguing and digitalising all Photo Archive holdings to ensure their longevity and usefulness for future researchers.
2. Creating a robust and accessible digital repository, matching physical holdings in scale, breadth and authority.
3. Reviewing existing metadata standards, including our in-house thesaurus lists, to introduce consistency, visibility and ease of access.
4. Continuing digitising our holdings on paper, when possible, to ensure their longevity and maximise access.
5. Sharing our bibliographical records with other union catalogues such as the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure online catalogue, UK Archives Hub, UK National Knowledge Database and AG der Gedenkstätten Bibliotheken catalogue.
6. Carrying out a complete mapping exercise of our closed and current periodical holdings and update our catalogue entries accordingly.
7. Continuing creating direct online access to digitalised archival holdings such as the recent *1938 November Pogrom* and *Testifying to the Truth* collections.

We plan to expand our collections by:

1. Developing and leveraging national partnerships, in particular with institutions in the North of England, as well as with international partners, to ensure that our collections continue to grow as significant resources to Holocaust research, education and commemoration around the world.
2. Actively increasing our monograph, serial and photograph holdings on the Holocaust and the Nazi era, including a further systematic expansion on the subject of historical, contemporary and comparative genocides, in as many languages as we can.
3. Acquiring archives on paper, including those related to refugees and internees in Great Britain, via purchases and donations from individuals and organisations and digitalising them when possible.
4. Completing all incomplete runs of rare and significant periodicals, for instance periodicals produced by German Prisoners of War in British camps, and expanding our holdings of historical publications relating to propaganda, education, eyewitness testimony, resistance and early historical accounts.
5. Seeking out additional major digital archives and databases that would supplement our current ones.
6. Securing long-term acquisitions funds to ensure our collection's longevity.
7. Developing targeted online and print marketing and communications that highlight our collections.

PRESERVE

We will look after our collections - many of them frail and endangered - so that they can speak to future generations.

We plan to:

1. Demonstrate our continuous commitment to a preservation framework on how we obtain, document, maintain and make information available about our collections.
2. Adapt our in-house building management service to further protect our collections for the long term with minimal energy use and maintenance, and at low cost.
3. Review in-house storage, reading and display areas to ensure high standards of security and storage aspects of conservation are in place.
4. Identify conservation needs of the collections and establish a conservation programme by developing a strategy for identifying conditions and needs of the collections.
5. Implement digital preservation strategies according to sector best practice, subject to guidance of sector experts such as the Digital Preservation Coalition, ensuring that our services are tightly matched to shifting requirements.
6. Continue creating digital surrogates of vulnerable holdings produced on either low-grade acidic paper or fragile formats to preserve originals.
7. Develop targeted online and print marketing and communications that highlight our commitment to improving document handling awareness and activity.

SHARE

We will further open our collections to the world. We strive to connect the public to the latest in academic research to ensure the widest engagement with the latest research and historical interpretations and publicly commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and other genocides.

We plan to:

1. Create a robust and accessible digital repository, matching physical holdings in scale, breadth and authority.
2. Open up our digitalised archival holdings for researchers to maximise access in line with the General Data Protection Act.
3. Rebrand and redesign the Library's external communications tools, in particular its main website, and develop a communications strategy to support the rebrand and launch of the new website.
4. Develop curated web-based educational resources, namely TheHolocaustExplained.org, for audiences at all stages of learning about the Holocaust, especially school children and the general public. We aim to ensure that TheHolocaustExplained.org website is widely used and leveraged for future activities within the sphere of UK Holocaust education and memorialisation at the national level.
5. Pending the establishment of strategic partnerships and resourcing, establish a number of fellowship programmes to produce and disseminate cutting-edge scholarship and involve fellows in public engagement activities.
6. Expand and enhance our events and exhibitions offer to the widest possible audience base, including targeting new audiences through the creation of a Wiener Library North, and ensuring that many of our outreach activities demonstrate the contemporary relevance of our collections and research to the issues and challenges of today.
7. Develop targeted online and print marketing and communications that engage users outside of London and that articulate the contemporary relevance of our activities.

SERVE

We recognise the importance of user service and value the expert skills of our staff as service providers. We will prioritise sustaining the accumulated expertise amongst our staff in order to enhance user experience, serve a vibrant community and ensure that our values of respect and approachability underpin our interactions with visitors, readers, volunteers and partners.

We plan to:

1. Continue meeting and exceeding customer service standards.
2. Enhance the Library's online catalogue to ensure ease of access and retrieval for our holdings.
3. Provide effective visitor engagement opportunities and plan a series of engagement sessions with a range of communication opportunities.
4. Ensure our operations are compliant with new GDPR regulations and other corporate governance.
5. Prioritise staff development in order to retain accumulated expertise on staff and ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and experience they need to succeed in their roles.
6. Recognise and develop our volunteer programme to engage new communities.
7. Develop and leverage national partnerships, in particular with institutions in the North of England, as well as with international partners in order to ensure our collections and staff serve as a resource to Holocaust research, education and commemoration around the world.
8. Develop targeted online and print marketing and communications that engage users outside of London with our events, exhibitions and other opportunities.

FUNDRAISE

Our ambitious plans will require significant increases to our budget and a creative approach to a fundraising strategy. We will initiate a strategic fundraising campaign to secure the Library's core work, submit a major project application to renew the Ernst Fraenkel Exhibition Room, and enhance supporter relationships both nationally and internationally.

We plan to:

1. Clarify our mission and strategy to supporters (potentially with a re-branding) to make a compelling case about the unique added value offered by the WL's collections and our wider work.
2. Initiate a sustained campaign of unrestricted fundraising prompted by the centenary of Alfred Wiener's work fighting antisemitism, which began in 1919 with the publication of his pamphlet *Vor Pogromen?*, drawing in particular on the moving story of Wiener's daughter, Mirjam Finkelstein. We plan to call the campaign *Mirjam's Campaign*.
 - a. Build relationships with high-net-worth individuals, trusts and foundations, approaching them for contributions to *Mirjam's Campaign*.
 - b. Ensure that relationship management includes careful efforts to raise awareness about the benefits of legacy giving.
 - c. Promote and grow the existing stream of small gifts from supporters, both online and offline, by evolving and harmonising the WL Membership scheme, the WL Friends scheme, the WL Wall of Honour scheme and WL Leave a Legacy scheme.
 - d. Develop a strategy to uncover global opportunities and supporters, primarily through working with the WL American Friends to establish institutional recognition and a supporter base in the United States, but also potentially working in other countries (e.g. Israel, Germany).
3. Prepare and submit a major bid for funding for the redevelopment of the Exhibition Area to allow for a significantly enhanced visitor experience.
4. Seek to establish effective partnerships with corporate sponsors, in particular to grow the Library's resources for marketing and communications.
5. Establish a fundraising Sub-Committee to facilitate close cooperation between the Board of Trustees, Director, Head of Development, Senior Management Team and staff.
6. Explore possibilities for generating income through subscription services.
7. Develop targeted online and print marketing and communications that engage private donors and institutional funders with our mission and values.