



Project activity as the communication systems innovative functioning: The Ukrainian libraries experience

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Abstract. The purpose of the article is to highlight the leading Ukrainian libraries project activities as a factor of their innovative functioning. The research methodology is based on the application of systemic-structural and activity approaches, which led to the complex use of generally-logical and theoretical methods used in humanitarian research. The scientific novelty of the obtained results lies in clarifying the role and significance of libraries project activities, summarising the most relevant projects implemented by leading libraries of Ukraine, as well as in highlighting the characteristic consequences of innovative library projects implementation and their classification depending on the target nature. Conclusions. It has been established that the characteristic features of the projects are their clear purpose, uniqueness, as well as: social and cultural significance and social effect; for users – new services and new opportunities; for libraries and library specialists – implementation of innovations, professional development, modernisation of production processes, etc. It has been emphasised that thanks to the implementation of innovative projects there were: a) significant transformation of library technologies and functional areas of library activity; b) fully justified attraction to corporatism in the information and search systems creation and information resources consolidation; c) innovative transformations in the library-information service system for users; d) arrangement of innovative library space. The whole set of library projects is grouped according to the purpose: social and communication projects, technological and functional projects. It has been concluded that the project activity of libraries expands and at the same time enriches the libraries' functional capabilities and their information and resource base, promotes new services mastering and their development, and also establishes libraries as an important social and cultural institution and space for communication

Keywords: library; communication system; project; project activity; library project; Ukrainian cultural fund; charity fund

Relevance of the research topic

Comprehensive social and cultural changes characterising the modern stage of society's development have increased not only the information processes and

information importance, but also the libraries status, which have become an inclusive space for self-education, the embodiment of the relationship between

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accumulated knowledge, technologies (library, digital) and communication between people. Increased user demands for library services and their quality force libraries to master new library, information and communication technologies, use modern means of obtaining and processing information, and create innovative library products. Under these circumstances, the need for further progressive innovative functioning, capable of ensuring the social and cultural mission assigned to them – information support for the society development and the country's documentary heritage preservation, becomes obvious for library professionals. One of the innovation implementation directions is project activity – “the key priority of the new time, the innovation management basic tool” (Lobanovska, 2017) of libraries. The libraries' project activity, as an innovative, creative activity that “presupposes the reality transformation” (according to I. Lobanovska), is considered in the context of “libraries' implementation of the social and communicative function within the framework of the social partnership conceptual model” – a multivariate relations complex, a special type of interaction between library, information institutions, state and local authorities, libraries, public organisations, enterprises, associations and individual citizens, the purpose of which is to ensure (resource, organisational, intellectual, etc.) the maximum satisfaction of the informational, sociocultural, educational needs of society through implementation joint projects and activities” (Lobanovska, 2017). Indeed, the libraries' project activities are aimed, in particular, at the development of new products and services, consolidation of the library community, establishment of relations with other institutions, professional development of librarians, etc. However, as library practice shows, the libraries' project activity is spontaneous, accompanied by various difficulties of an organisational, economic and other nature, but this does not prevent libraries from taking an active part in the development and implementation of numerous projects quite diverse in content. The analysis of this experience and its consideration in library practice is the key to improving the library services quality, forming the library image as one of the means ensuring communication, a democratic source of access to knowledge accumulated by mankind, social and cultural space, etc.

Analysis of research and publications

Separate aspects of libraries' project activities are highlighted in the works by T. Kolesnikova (2016), I. Lobanovska (2017), K. Lobuzina (2020), O. Klymenko & O. Sokur (2021), and others. In particular, the article by O. Klymenko & O. Sokur (2023) is devoted to the current normative and legal framework of Ukraine analysis regarding the National Electronic Library of Ukraine development, starting from the end of the 90s of the 20th century to the present day. In another publication, “Library Projects of National Scientific Library and Information

Complex” (Klymenko & Sokur, 2021), the researchers consider the concept “library project” and study the project activities of the V.I. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine. I. Lobanovska analyses corporate library projects as a means of forming information resources (Lobanovska, 2017). The digital library project was analysed in her work by K. Lobuzina (2020), focusing attention on its definition, structure, and organisational forms. The author considers the digital library project concept “as an intellectual interdisciplinary product of library specialists and scientist's creative cooperation in the field of social and humanitarian sciences”. T. Kolesnikova focuses attention on the Ukrainian Library Association project “BiblioSynergy: supporting scientific research” (Kolesnikova, 2016). Despite the accumulated research results, the project activities of Ukrainian libraries still did not receive adequate coverage.

The purpose of the article is to highlight the leading Ukrainian libraries project activities as a factor in their innovative functioning.

Presenting main material

Project activity has been one of the priority areas of Ukrainian libraries activity since the mid-1990s, when the projects development and implementation made it possible to introduce innovations into library practice, expand professional communication, offer new services and improve traditional ones. In recent years, the libraries' project activities have been directed, in particular, to the creation of electronic archives, information and library resources digitisation, etc. In 2016, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the “Library Development Strategy for the period until 2025 “Qualitative changes in libraries to ensure sustainable development of Ukraine”, which states: “The strategy creates the basis for the state policy and decision-making development in the field of culture, education and science, including decisions on financing library institutions, special programmes and projects” (Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 219-p., 2016). In this context, the library project is “a set of actions systematised by terms, budget and mechanism to attract new readers to the library and acquaint the maximum number of users with library services, including through mass media and social networks” (Klymenko & Sokur, 2021). An illustrative example of such a project is the grant project from UNESCO to create the National Electronic Library of Ukraine (NELU) as a nationwide centralised information and communication system. The issue of the National Library of Ukraine creation has been repeatedly raised – similar projects have been discussed among Ukrainian librarians for more than two decades. However, “only against the background of the Russian Federation full-scale aggression did understanding of their importance come, because now, more than ever, the problem of protecting the information space of Ukraine and the cultural heritage of our people, in

particular, in the part of the historical and documentary heritage stored in libraries, archives and museums, by digitising and creation of a reliable system for storing and organising access to digital copies of national memory objects 24/7” (Klymenko & Sokur, 2023).

This project is implemented in cooperation with the All-Ukrainian Public Organization “Ukrainian Library Association” and the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine. On 14 February 2023, at a coordination meeting of the AUPO “Ukrainian Library Association” representatives, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine (MCIP), the State Archives Service of Ukraine, national libraries, state, university and public book collections of Ukraine, as well as museums and archival institutions of the country, it was announced about the start of the project to create the National Electronic Library of Ukraine with the financial support from UNESCO and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) (Ukrainian library association, 2022). The goal of the project is “to protect the Ukrainian cultural heritage in terms of documentary heritage located in memory institutions throughout Ukraine (libraries, archives, museums, etc.), by digitising it and creating a reliable system of preservation and access to digital copies of objects via the Internet on a long-term basis” (Ukrainian library association, 2022). Such project will contribute to international cooperation, exchange of experience on issues of national heritage objects’ digitisation, Ukraine’s integration into the world cultural, scientific, educational and information space. The NELU project implementation will take place in four stages during 2024-2029 (How will work..., 2024). In particular, at the first stage of project implementation, the working group members studied the leading foreign libraries experience in creating national-level electronic libraries in countries such as Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Germany, and prepared the project “Concepts for the Creation of the National Electronic Library of Ukraine” (How will work..., 2024). MCIP has developed a draft Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On approval of the Concept for the creation of the National Electronic Library of Ukraine” (MCIP is working..., 2024).

With the Ukrainian Cultural Fund (UCF) formation for the purpose of cultural and artistic projects state financial support, projects related to the electronic archives and libraries creation are also sent to participate in contests for grant programmes. In particular, in 2018, among the winning projects was the project “Electronic Archive of the Ukrainian Print Press”, presented by “Digital Country” LLC in Kyiv. This is a specialised portal that combines libraries and archives online resources on Ukrainian history and periodicals of different times. Thanks to this portal, it became possible to search for periodicals located in various libraries of Ukraine (the actual budget of the project amounted to almost 738.7 thousand UAH) (MCIP is working..., 2024).

Libraries of various levels and subordination also take an active part in the UCF grant programmes. Thus, in 2019, the project “Books digital collection in the Collections of the Odessa National Scientific Library “Treasures of Ukraine” with an actual budget 400.5 thousand hryvnias received a grant from the UCF (Annual report..., 2019). The goal of the project is to digitise the Odessa National Scientific Library funds, which stores more than 200000 rare books. As part of the project, documents were digitised and open online access to them was provided 24 hours a day. Such digital archive creation contributed to the preservation and popularisation of the Ukrainian cultural heritage, as well as to the provision of educational, research and cultural needs of users.

Kharkiv V. Korolenko State Scientific Library presented the project “Kharkiv literary and artistic journals electronic collection of the first third of the 20th century”, supported by the Ukrainian Cultural Fund in the “Cultural Heritage” sector with an actual budget 41.1 thousand UAH (Annual report..., 2019). The online resource presents an archive of 6 periodicals (110 issues), the publication of which was often unsystematic, so their sets are few, sometimes represented by only one issue. Therefore, these magazines are not available in most libraries of Ukraine. The resource allows the reader, based on these publications, to remotely get a complete picture of the life of Ukraine in the first third of the 20th century (Annual report..., 2019).

Projects aimed at digitising the funds and information resources of libraries, archives, and museums gained special importance during the COVID-19 pandemic, because due to quarantine restrictions, almost all activities went online. In the 2021 grant season alone, 21 projects from libraries were submitted to various grant programmes (Laguta, 2021), most of them were submitted to the “Innovative Cultural Product” programme. In particular, Korolenko Chernihiv Regional Universal Scientific Library (from 2023 – named after Sofia and Oleksandr Rusov) submitted the project “Virtual Library of Photography of Chernihiv Region” (LOT-5 “Cultural Heritage”) (Register of the Innovative Cultural Product program, 2024) the purpose of which is to preserve the Chernihiv region material historical and cultural heritage. The project implementation will make it possible to organise Chernihiv photo artists’ exhibition projects, as well as to create Chernihiv photography album from 1880 to 1920 with scientific articles by leading historians. An equally interesting project was presented by the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Universal Scientific Library named after Cyril and Methodius, the first Slavic languages teachers – “From the Scythians to the Stars” (LOT-4 “Literature and Media”) (Register of the Innovative Cultural Product program, 2024). The project’s goal is to create a new cultural product: the book “Seven Wonders of Dnipropetrovsk Region” reprint with AR-realisation

and interactive educational components. “The project result will be a printed and e-book published on the DniproKultura portal, a mobile application with an AR WonderBook function, which will allow filling the publication with a game AR quest, an animated 3D character, geolocation of objects, audio content, which will significantly deepen book perception and will become a platform for interactive acquaintance with significant Dnipropetrovsk region man-made objects” (Register of the Innovative Cultural Product program, 2024). Lutsk city branch library No. 6 for adults of the centralised library system submitted the project “Library under the open sky” (LOT-7 “Urbanism and public spaces”), which involves “creating a mobile summer reading room under the open sky” to unite people around a common interest-reading (Register of the Innovative Cultural Product program, 2024).

The analysis of the projects registers for competitive programmes of the Ukrainian Cultural Fund shows that every year there is an increase in the applications number submitted by the libraries of Ukraine. For the 2022 UCF grant season, 68 projects have already been submitted from Ukrainian libraries of various profiles and levels: 18 projects for the “Culture without barriers” programme (Laguta, 2022); for the “Audiovisual Art” programme – 1 project (Laguta, 2022); for the programme “Innovative cultural product” – 29 projects (Laguta, 2022); on the programme “Research. Education. Residences. Scholarships” – 3 projects (Kravchenko, 2022); for the “Cultural heritage” programme – 14 projects (Kravchenko, 2022); for the “Grand Event” programme – 1 project (Kravchenko, 2022); for the programme “Culture. Regions” – 2 projects (Kravchenko, 2022). So, the most projects from libraries for UCF grant programmes in 2022, as in the previous year, were received for the “Innovative Cultural Product” programme. However, the 2022 grant season never took place due to the Russian Federation full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022.

With the grant season partial renewal in 2023, among the winning projects of UCF grant programmes, the project “Shevchenko Scientific Society book heritage (1874-1913): digital collection”, developed by V. Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv (the actual project budget is 999.9 thousand UAH) (Register of the Cultural Heritage program, 2022). This project “is dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the Shevchenko Scientific Society and is intended to attract the attention of Ukrainian society to the political heritage of the Society and the selfless activities of its members” (Register of the Cultural Heritage program, 2022). Making digital copies of original documents of Shevchenko Scientific Society is a valuable source for the study of Ukrainian culture.

In addition to the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, public organisations, charitable foundations, and international partners provide financial and other support

to library projects. The project “Bibliosynergy: Support for Scientific Research”, launched in 2016 by the section of university libraries of the All-Ukrainian public organisation “Ukrainian Library Association”, deserves attention (Ukrainian library encyclopedia, 2024). This is a partnership project of higher educational institutions libraries, “aimed at creating a professional environment (website) for communication between like-minded people and the implementation of new practices of supporting scientific research” (BiblioSinergy..., 2016).

Among library projects supported by charitable foundations, it is worth noting the projects of the “Library Country” charitable foundation, created in 2015. In particular, among the latest projects supported by the foundation, one should highlight the competitions “Book Grants for Libraries of Ukraine”, “Libraries – Soldiers of the Information Front”, “Network Library Shelter” and others (Charitable foundation..., 2023).

The projects initiated at the national level by the national libraries of Ukraine should also be noted. In particular, the V. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine is the main coordinator of such national information projects: the abstract database “Ukrainika Scientific”, the electronic library of professional periodicals “Scientific Periodicals of Ukraine”, the electronic library “Ukrainika”, the information portal “Science” Ukraine: access to knowledge”, etc. (Klymenko & Sokur, 2021). On the initiative of the Yaroslav Mudry National Library of Ukraine, the project Electronic Library “Culture of Ukraine” was launched in 2010, the main goal of which is defined in the project concept: “integration of the Ukraine’s peoples culture into the European and global information space, strengthening cultural ties and creating a positive image of Ukraine in the world” (Order of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine No. 1094/0/16-1..., 2011). Today its fund consists of 4 main collections: Cultural Studies, Art, Ethnography, Cultural Institutions, which are systematically replenished. Currently, almost every library develops projects and publishes them on its website, as well as on social network pages.

The scientific novelty of the obtained results lies in elucidating the library project activities role and significance, summarising the most relevant projects implemented by leading libraries of Ukraine, as well as highlighting the characteristic consequences of the innovative library projects implementation and their classification depending on the target nature.

Conclusions

Innovative methods of modern libraries functioning are determined not only by the need to improve their activities, but also by the opportunities provided by the projects. The library projects characteristic features are a clear goal, uniqueness, and also: for society – sociocultural significance and social effect; for users – new services and new opportunities; for libraries and library

specialists – introduction of innovations, professional development, production processes modernisation, etc. As a result of the projects implementation, libraries contribute to their positioning in society not just as sociocultural, information and communication institutions, but as communication systems in the meaning of communication channels and at the same time semantic messages. Thanks to the implementation of innovative projects, the following occurs: a) significant transformation of library technologies (from routine and ineffective to digital) and functional areas of library activities; b) a completely justified inclination towards corporatism in the creation of information retrieval systems and the information resources consolidation; c) innovative transformations in the system of library and information services to users, in particular, the new services emergence; d) arrangement of innovative library space

capable of ensuring intellectual development and implementation of creative initiatives of library users.

The entire set of library projects can be grouped into certain categories depending on their target nature: 1) projects of a social and communication nature (aimed at updating the relations “library-society”, “library-users”); 2) technological (aimed at the active development of digital technologies and their extensive implementation in library practice); 3) functional projects (provide for expanding the functions of libraries, including as educational institutions). So, the project activities of libraries expand and at the same time enrich the functionality of libraries and their information and resource base, contribute to the development of new services and the new services development, and also establish libraries as an important social and cultural institution and communication platform.

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Проектна діяльність як чинник інноваційного функціонування комунікаційних систем: досвід українських бібліотек

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Анотація. Мета статті – висвітлити проектну діяльність провідних українських бібліотек як чинник їх інноваційного функціонування. Методологія дослідження ґрунтується на застосуванні системно-структурного та діяльнісного підходів, що зумовило комплексне використання загальнологічних і теоретичних методів, які застосовуються у гуманітарних дослідженнях. Наукова новизна одержаних результатів полягає у з'ясуванні ролі та значення проектної діяльності бібліотек, узагальненні найбільш актуальних проектів, що реалізуються провідними бібліотеками України, а також у виокремленні характерних наслідків реалізації інноваційних бібліотечних проектів та їх класифікації залежно від цільового характеру. Висновки. Констатовано, що характерними ознаками проектів є їхня чітка мета, унікальність, а також: для суспільства – соціокультурна значущість і соціальний ефект; для користувачів – нові послуги і нові можливості; для бібліотек і фахівців бібліотек – впровадження інновацій, професійний розвиток, модернізація виробничих процесів тощо. Наголошено, що завдяки реалізації інноваційних проектів відбувається: а) істотна трансформація бібліотечних технологій і функціональних напрямів бібліотечної діяльності; б) цілком обґрунтоване і виправдане тяжіння до корпоративності у створенні інформаційно-пошукових систем та консолідації інформаційних ресурсів; в) інноваційні перетворення у системі бібліотечно-інформаційного обслуговування користувачів; г) облаштування інноваційного бібліотечного простору. Усю сукупність бібліотечних проектів згруповано залежно від їх цільового характеру: проекти соціально-комунікаційного характеру, технологічні та функціональні проекти. Підсумовано, що проектна діяльність бібліотек розширює і водночас збагачує функціональні можливості бібліотек та їхню інформаційно-ресурсну базу, сприяє освоєнню нових сервісів та розробці нових послуг, а також утверджує бібліотеки як важливий соціокультурний інститут і комунікаційний майданчик

Ключові слова: бібліотека; комунікаційна система; проект; проектна діяльність; бібліотечний проект; Український культурний фонд; благодійний фонд