

COUNTRY REPORT for CDNL-AO 2012

Name of Country: Japan

Name of Library: National Diet Library

Name of Director: Noritada OTAKI

Name of Contact Person: Tadahiko MOTOYOSHI

Email of Contact Person: kokusai@ndl.go.jp

Address: 1-10-1 Nagata-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8924, JAPAN

Telephone: +81-3-3581-2331

Official Website: <http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/index.html>

Official E-mail: webmaster@ndl.go.jp

1. General Overview

The NDL is the sole national library in Japan, and at the same time the legislative reference library belonging to the Diet (parliament). It consists of three main facilities – Tokyo Main Library, Kansai-kan, and International Library of Children’s Literature (ILCL) - and branch libraries established under the executive and judicial bureaus. Anyone aged 18 or over can use the library service (The ILCL is open to children as well).

As reported below the NDL saw many momentous events both organizationally and socially in 2011/12.

New Chief Executive

On April 1, 2012, Mr. Noritada Otaki was appointed as the new Librarian, succeeding Dr. Makoto Nagao.

Reorganization

To better equip the NDL to fulfill the role stipulated in the National Diet Library Law (see 2. Relationship to Government) in the advanced information society, a large-scale reorganization was carried out in 2011. On October 1, the Digital Information Department was newly established and the Public Service Department and Reference and Special Collections Department were merged to form the Reader Services and Collections Department.

Service renewal

The NDL has been actively enhancing its library service over the years, for example, by digitizing collection items or releasing digital library on the Internet. To create an environment where users can access diverse materials including digital contents in an integrated way, the NDL completely renewed its service in January 2012 and launched its redesigned website in February 2012.

The new service is highlighted by “NDL Search,” <<http://iss.ndl.go.jp/?ar=27d7&locale=en>> an integrated search program aspiring to be a gateway to knowledge in Japan and beyond. It provides seamless access to database catalogs and digital contents of libraries including the NDL itself, archives, museums and academic research institutions. In addition, it features automatic translation systems for Japanese/English, Japanese/Chinese and Japanese/Korean, which enables retrieval of items by a keyword in another language. As of January 2012, the search target contains 208 databases including collection catalogs of the

National Library of Korea, which amounts to some 69 million data, and continues to expand in the future.

Great East Japan Earthquake Reconstruction Assistance

On March 11, 2011, the Tohoku (north-east) region of Japan was hit by an earthquake of 9.0 magnitude and subsequent tsunami. The NDL set up a task force and has been engaged in reconstruction assistance including launching a portal site of earthquake and reconstruction information; no-charge copying and reference services; material restoration and preservation; and book support service for children.

As the national library of Japan, the NDL has a mission to archive diverse records on this disaster, to supply them for recovery, research and education and to pass on to future generations. The NDL has set this up as a national project involving the related ministries and agencies together with private organizations. The project aims at not only gathering records exhaustively but also establishing their databases and creating a portal system which allows cross-search and retrieval of needed data. To transmit a lesson of history in digital archives, the NDL works together with organizations beyond Japan, for instance the Edwin O. Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies (RIJS) at Harvard University, and the Internet Archive, an American non-profit body.

Through the year, many events were staged by the NDL: debriefing session “Supporting Reconstruction in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake: Needs for Libraries” in July 2011; open lectures in Tokyo and Tohoku in September 2011, inviting an expert on salvaging damaged materials from the Library of Congress, USA; symposium “Acquiring and preserving memories of 3.11: Establishing a Great East Japan Earthquake Archive” in March 2012, with the director of the RIJS as a speaker.

2. Relationship to Government

The NDL was established in 1948 by the National Diet Library Law, based on Article 130 of the National Diet Law, “the National Diet Library shall be established in the Diet by a separate law, in order to assist Diet Members in their study and research.” The National Diet Library Law declares the ideal of the library’s establishment in its preamble, “the National Diet Library is hereby established as a result of the firm conviction that truth makes us free and with the object of contributing to international peace and the democratization of Japan as promised in our Constitution.” Its coordination with executive and judicial agencies is defined in Article 13 of the law, “The Coordinating Committee (established within the NDL by Article 12) shall make recommendations to the Committee on Rules and Administration of each House for the improvement of the services of the National Diet Library to the Diet and the executive and judicial agencies of the government.”

3. Key Facts and Figures

- Collections (as of March 2011)
Total: 37,497, 260 items
(Books: 9,698,593 volumes / Serials (periodicals and newspapers): 14,272,111 items)
- Number of staff: 890 (as of April 1, 2011)
- Annual budget (FY2011): 19.498 billion yen (approximately 244 million in USD. At average exchange rate of 2011)

4. New Developments in Creating and Building Collection

The NDL continues to acquire publications issued in the country through the legal deposit system as well as building its collection by purchase, donation and international exchange. Large-scale digitization allowed by the supplementary budget of FY2009 finished in July 2011 and materials are provided inside the library or via the Internet, after copyright clearance. As of January 2012, 1,650,000 items are digitized, of which 290,000 items are also provided via the Internet.

5. New Developments in Managing Collection

In January 2012, the NDL introduced a new integrated library system. This system functions as a foundation for more efficient collection management as well as a control system for the new on-site services mentioned in 1. General overview.

6. New Developments in Providing Access

The most remarkable development, NDL Search, a new integrated retrieval system, was launched in January 2012 (see 1. General overview and 7. Collaboration with Other Institutions and Professional Associations). It provides access to a wide range of data.

With the aim of preservation, the NDL has been carrying out large-scale digitization without permission of copyright holders, which is enabled by the 2009 amendment to the Copyright Law. Digitized materials whose copyright has not expired are provided inside the library although unavailable via the Internet.

To provide the data of recorded materials, the NDL launched the Historical Recordings Collection consisting of digitized sound sources contained in Japanese records from the early 1900s to around 1950, in cooperation with the Historical Records Archive Promotion Conference (HiRAC) on May 31, 2011. On January 4, 2012, a trial service to deliver the sound data to Japanese public libraries began.

The NDL aims at unified use of its various materials and services. As part of this aim, a new National Bibliography is provided as Bibliographic Records Service on NDL-OPAC from 2012 in place of the Japanese National Bibliography which was provided on the website from July 2007 and ceased publication in 2011.

In January 2012, Web NDL Authorities, integrated search service for authority data maintained and held by the NDL, was released in full scale. The data can be downloaded and utilized by various applications and systems on the web.

7. Collaboration with Other Institutions and Professional Associations

On May 18, the NDL and the Agency for Cultural Affairs forged an agreement to locate, index, acquire, preserve and make use of works and materials which the NDL, museums and galleries had not systematically preserved previously despite their historical or cultural value, so as to expand collaboration and cooperation in securing the passing on of valuable cultural materials to the next generation. Targeted materials are scenarios and scripts of TV and radio programs, music-related materials and comics, animations, games.

In 2010, the NDL established a roundtable on digital information resources in MLA (museums, libraries and archives) collaboration in Japan. The roundtable consists of an annual meeting and two working groups. The 3rd annual meeting was held in December 2011, discussing a paper by a working group of the Roundtable, summarizing the activities of the Roundtable since FY2009, reporting reorganization of the NDL to establish a new department which strengthens its capability to handle digital information resources, and exchanging opinions about other related topics.

The NDL was appointed as the ISIL National Registration Allocation Agency of Japan on August 31, 2011, and started to allocate ISIL to public libraries, university libraries, special libraries and related institutions in Japan. However, school libraries, archives and museums are outside its scope at present.

To secure integrate access to external information and services, the NDL launched a new retrieval system, NDL Search, which covers catalogs and digital archives of libraries, archives, museums, and academic institutes (see 1. General overview and 6. New Developments in Providing Access).

8. Education and Training

The NDL provides various training programs to its staff based on Article 27-2 of the Diet Officers Act. There is hierarchal training targeting new recruits, second and third year staff, and three other levels including managerial position. Special training programs are also provided to the staff, i.e. lectures by academic experts outside the library to expand professional knowledge and accomplishments. Other examples include foreign language training, and sometimes NDL staff are dispatched to attend training programs held by other organizations.