

Basic Building Blocks of Librarianship 2026 : A Valuable Learning Experience

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The American Library Association International Relations Round Table (IRRT) Mission Enhancement Project, in collaboration with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) WLIC 2026 Korea National Committee, continues to strengthen the professional development of librarians worldwide through its international webinar series. Designed to support capacity building and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) within the Library and Information Science (LIS) profession, the webinars provide librarians with opportunities to gain new knowledge, practical skills, and global perspectives on current trends and innovations in library services.

Moderated by Gina de Alwis Jayasuriya, recipient of the ALA IRRT Mission Enhancement Grant 2025, the webinar series builds upon earlier initiatives that successfully encouraged global collaboration and professional learning among librarians. With extensive experience in library leadership and research on CPD opportunities, she continues to play an important role in promoting international dialogue and knowledge sharing within the global library community.

These webinars offer meaningful learning experiences that highlight the changing role of libraries in today's digital environment. Beyond traditional book-centred services, modern libraries are increasingly becoming centres for digital learning, research support, information literacy, and community engagement. Through participation in these webinars, librarians are able to gain valuable insights and practical ideas that can contribute to the continuous improvement of library services and better support theological education and student learning.

The sessions focused on strategic planning, digital literacy, artificial intelligence (AI), open educational resources, research support, and human information behaviour. Through presentations by experienced librarians and researchers from different countries, participants gained practical knowledge, innovative ideas, and global perspectives that can help improve library services and support the changing needs of library users.

ALA

Capacity Building Webinar
Series: Basic Building Blocks
of Librarianship, 2026



One of the most meaningful lessons for me was learning about the importance of strategic planning in library development. Amanda E. Standerfer's framework — Spark, Learn, Dream, and Do — which gave me a better understanding of how libraries can improve services, understand users' needs, and plan for future growth. I believe these ideas can help STM Library continue to support theological education and student learning more effectively.

I also found the webinars on digital literacy and artificial intelligence (AI) very useful. They provided practical ideas on how librarians can guide students in research skills, evaluating online information, citation methods, and responsible use of technology. The sessions also helped me understand how AI can be applied in library services while maintaining academic ethics and integrity.

Another valuable experience was learning about free academic resources such as EconBiz, EconStor, and World Bank open-access collections. These resources can greatly benefit STM students by giving them access to more research materials without additional cost.

The webinars also reminded me that librarians today play important roles as educators and learning guides. This encouraged me to further improve information literacy support and research assistance for students while continuing to contribute to STM's mission in theological education and spiritual formation.

Overall, attending these webinars gave me new knowledge, practical ideas, and broader global perspectives that I believe will help me contribute more effectively to the development of STM's library services.

