



Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche
Association of European Research Libraries

Dear colleagues,

It is my pleasure to be here in Amsterdam for our first Winter Event, centered on our LIBER community. We decided together, when we discussed the new LIBER services model, that we should better serve our professional community. This Winter Event is indeed the time when we gather, celebrate and enjoy our network, our collaborative achievements, our shared experience and expertise. It is all about the liveliness of the current Working Groups and the commitment of the active LIBER members. The Working Groups are at the heart of LIBER life as a professional community, and your presence here today shows once again how strong we can be when we act together, in the framework of a strategy.

I would like to thank all the organisational team. For many amongst us, this is also a very convenient moment to make acquaintances with colleagues that recently joined the LIBER office. Let me introduce Anxhela Dani, our events and partnerships coordinator, who begins her activity at LIBER with - successfully - setting up this Winter Event. And of course, this is the perfect time and place to thank once again Astrid Verheusen, our Executive Director, and all the LIBER Office for their commitment. Let me also dedicate a very warm thank you to the whole team at the Vrije Universiteit that welcomed us so kindly here in Amsterdam today. Hilde [van Wijngaarden], a special thank to you and all the local team for making all of that possible. And of course, thanks to you, and all LIBER members, for your enthusiasm and willingness to contribute to these 2 days. This event is indeed yours!

I will not say much more this morning, but I sincerely invite you to attend this evening's session, where you will discover our new LIBER 2023-2027 strategy, the one we have been building together for more than a year, firstly at a distance but also in person in Odense last July. See you at 4pm!

[Launch of the strategy]

Coming to the end of this session dedicated to the new strategy, I'd like to address another important issue.

It has come to my attention that some concerns have been expressed among our LIBER community regarding the situation of the LGBTQIA+ community in Hungary. More recently, academics also raised concerns over academic freedom, pointing out that the Hungarian government has further tightened controls over universities and research institutes. These are sensitive issues, not only for the LGBTQIA+ community, not only for academics, but for LIBER as an academic and a human community.

I want to say here and now, loud and clear, that LIBER do have inclusivity and respect as part of our core and fundamental values. We work hard every day, the office together with the board, to offer a safe environment for everyone taking part in any event organized by LIBER. It's indeed our commitment and duty to promote our values of diversity, equity and inclusion everywhere and at all times, especially where and when sensitive concerns are expressed inside our LIBER community. This is what I am intending to respectfully do in Budapest next July, delivering my opening speech during our Annual Conference as LIBER President by re-affirming the values we as the LIBER community are defending, supporting and promoting. These values are indeed part of our 2023-2027 strategic plan that will be presented in its final version in Budapest in 2023, I do hope you will be numerous in Budapest to lend support to my words!

But for now, have a nice evening and a wonderful time in Amsterdam!

Julien Roche – LIBER President