



# SLLA Newsletter

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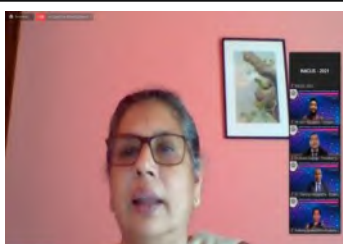
July – September 2021

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## National Conference on Library and Information Science 2021 (NACLIS 2021)



Dr. Ruwan Gamage  
President -SLLA



Professor Nilanthi de Silva  
Vice Chancellor, University of Kelaniya



Dr. Tharanga Ranasinghe  
Convener- NACLIS 2021



Mrs. Namalee Suraweera and  
Mr. Santharooban – Technical  
Session Chairs – NACLIS 2021

The 16<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Library and Information Science (NACLIS) was held on Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2021 as a virtual conference. Under the theme “Moving Towards Sustainability through Library Transformation”, this year’s NACLIS was organized by the newly formed LIS Research Group (renamed NACLIS Group).

The Inauguration Ceremony was graced by Professor Nilanthi de Silva, Vice Chancellor, University of Kelaniya as the Chief Guest who addressed the gathering by highlighting the importance of libraries in sustainable development. Dr. Krystyna K. Matusiak, Associate Professor in LIS Program, University of Denver (USA) delivered the Keynote address on “Sustainability of Digital Cultural Heritage Projects”.

There were two technical sessions, with twelve (12) research papers presented in all three languages (Sinhala, Tamil & English). All the abstracts and their English translations were published in the e-conference proceedings (abstract) book with an ISBN as well as an ISSN. Nearly 200 registered participants attended the inauguration ceremony and the technical sessions of the conference. In addition, the NACLIS 2021 was live telecasted via SLLA’s official YouTube Channel.



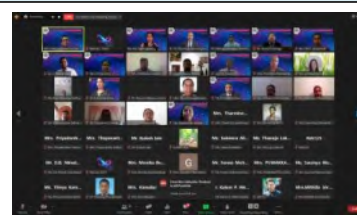
Invitees for lighting oil lamb



Dr. Krystyna K. Matusiak,  
Associate Professor in LIS  
Program, University of  
Denver (USA)



Mrs. Padma Bandaranayake  
and Dr. Pradeepan Technical  
Session Chairs – NACLIS 2021



Participants -NACLIS 2021

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## Awareness webinar on media libraries and its functions

Special Libraries Group of Sri Lanka Library Association organized the webinar on “Media Libraries and their functions” on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2021 via MS Teams. The Resource person was Mrs. Ranjani Aluthge Herath, Deputy Director/Chief Librarian, Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation. Dr. S.K. Illangarathne moderated the session. There were 70 participants including Council members, LIS professionals and students. The webinar was live streamed via SLLA Youtube channel.

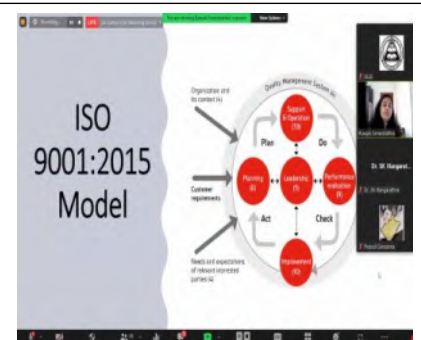
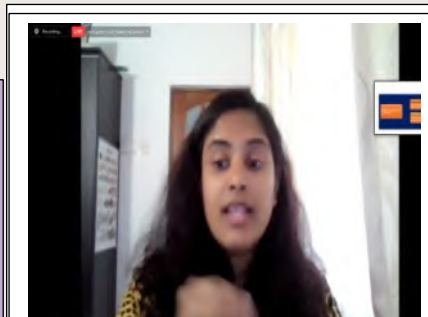
**FREE AWARENESS WEBINAR ON**  
**MEDIA LIBRARIES**  
**&**  
**THEIR FUNCTIONS**

**On 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 @ 9.30 - 11.30 a.m.**  
**@ Online via ZOOM**

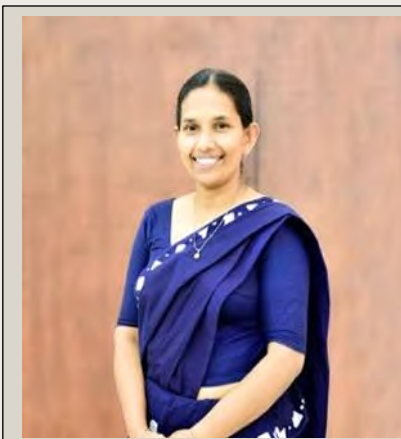
Join Zoom Meeting  
shorturl.at/ehmyD  
Meeting ID: 858 9800 4033 Passcode: SLLASL

## Awareness webinar on ISO standards and 5S Methodologies

Special Library Group of Sri Lanka Library Association aired the webinar on “Introduction to ISO Standards and 5S Methodologies” on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2021. The Resource person was Ms. Ruwini Senewirathne, Manager – Quality Assurance and Compliance, CIPM, Sri Lanka. Dr. S.K. Illangarathne moderated the session. Around 70 participants including Council members, LIS professionals and students had participated in the event. The webinar was live streamed via SLLA Youtube channel and the recorded video is available there.



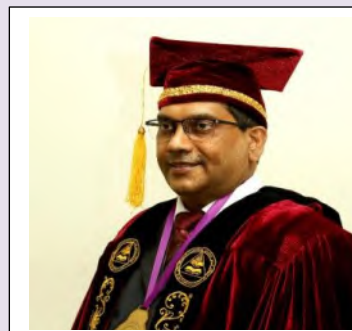
## The crisis as opportunity for change – virtual workshop



This free virtual workshop was organized by the Sri Lanka Library Association aiming to provide an overview of the main challenges and opportunities during the crisis situation. The event offered an opportunity to the participants to present their experiences, discuss and to share ideas and actions to tackle the crisis and to motivate the themselves. The workshop was conducted for the DIPLIS students on 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 via zoom conferencing. Hundred students participated from the SLLA education programs. The resource person was Dr. Mrs. K. R. N. Harshani, Career Guidance Counselor, and Senior Assistant Librarian of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. During this workshop, Dr. Harshani gave students tips on how to take advantage of the time which is available. She shared various activities to help them define their career goals. Dr. Harshani’s advice came at just the right time to help participants stay positive, stay connected and find opportunities in the online scenario as well as during the a crisis period

On 04<sup>th</sup> October 2020, we were heading to Colombo from Anuradhapura, where we held the inaugural Council meeting 2020/2021. It is then, that we heard the news of the beginning of the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, which led to lockdown of several cities which lay across our route.

Since then, the country was not working in its full capacity throughout the year. That led us finding new ways of operation forcing us to move into online modes of work, communication and delivery. SLLA staff members were working from home during the country lock down. When open, they came to work on a roster basis. All Council, Exco, and other committee meetings were held in online mode.



Dr. Ruwan Gamage  
President - SLLA 2020/2021

The education program was the first activity that needed to be remodeled. Soon we gathered contact details of the students and created WhatsApp groups for each class to maintain communication. A mobile hotline was introduced for students to contact the education staff for matters related to their studies, since no physical contact was possible.

Lessons were delivered using the Zoom App. Lecturers were instructed on using Zoom for teaching. During the year, we conducted all lessons in online mode for the Diploma/Higher Diploma program (DLIS/HDIPLIS) including distance mode classes, and the Course on Library Automation (COLA). Fifty participants completed the COLA as a hybrid course and over 500 students of DLIS/HDIPLIS courses completed examinations (all three levels) in online mode. Results are also being released and the follow up levels are ready to be started.

The Academic Libraries Group established a Gateway to online recourses, which could be useful for students as additional reading materials. DLIS students could not physically attend libraries for the mandatory training. Instead, they were given a two-day online program separately for Sinhala and Tamil medium students.

This year, SLLA celebrates the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of LIS education in Sri Lanka. We were unable to celebrate this event along with the awards ceremony due to the pandemic situation. Nevertheless, a major undertaking by the SLLA Education program this year was the participation in designing the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) for library and information Science by the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) of Sri Lanka. A syllabi for NVQ 5 and 6 levels were also developed.

Transforming SLLA office activities to online mode was the next challenge. Automation of accounting is underway. A Zoom account was purchased for office and professional meetings. The office staff were assigned Microsoft licenses and new emails were created for common functions such as information ([info@slla.lk](mailto:info@slla.lk)), education ([edu@slla.lk](mailto:edu@slla.lk)), and membership ([member@slla.lk](mailto:member@slla.lk)). The Web site was moved to the Category 1 domain slla.lk. A YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/sllalk](http://www.youtube.com/sllalk)) and a Facebook Page ([www.facebook.com/slla.lk](http://www.facebook.com/slla.lk)) were created to deliver messages to and beyond the membership.

The SLLA publications were all distributed as e-versions. It was a triumph of the present Committee to issue the SLLA Newsletter in all three mediums: Sinhala, Tamil, and English in five issues. Two issues of the Sri Lanka Library Review; the SLLA scholarly journal were published. The journal recorded a milestone by entering itself into the Sri Lanka Journals Online (sljol.info) platform. The previous Publications Committee (2019/2020) should be also appreciated for initiating the approval process. In addition, the publication of the '**Guidelines for Essay Writing for Final Year Higher Diploma Students**', originally written by Dr. R.H.I.S. Ranasinghe in Sinhala medium was translated to Tamil by the Committee.

Another feature of the year in review is trying to standardize functions and record keeping. The membership directory and the mailing list were updated with a call to all members to send their updated contact details. The office procedures which had been drafted several years ago was brought back to surface and the resulting publication; **Operations Manual of the Sri Lanka Library Association** will be available soon. The subcommittee for revising rules of the association, which functions under the Committee of Monitoring and **Contd.....**

Assisting in Implementation of the Strategic Plan (COMAISP), continued its work and the draft revisions will be presented at the AGM to be approved by the membership.

The ‘**Minimum Standards for Libraries in Orphanages and Child Protection Centers**’ was also published as a project under the COMAISP.

The membership drive was a major activity of the Association which attracted over 50 new members. 51 upgrade applications to Associateship and Fellowship, and hundreds of renewals after paying the arrears in past years. This resulted in increasing the list of Chartered Librarians to 329, and the total active membership to over 500.

Cash handling for membership payments and student registrations at the office was completely halted and the members and students were instructed to make transactions through bank transfers only. Several other recommendations of the Systems Audit conducted during the previous year were implemented to streamline the bookkeeping and accounting.

The SLLA continued networking with the local and international organizations such as the National Library of Sri Lanka (NLSL), National Institute of Library and Information Sciences (NILIS) – University of Colombo, Department of Library and Information Sciences – University of Kelaniya, University Librarians Association (ULA) of Sri Lanka, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Association of Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) etc.

SLLA was a contributor to the Covid-19 advisories prepared by the NLSL. SLLA contributed to the preparation of the proposed Service Minute for Government and Provincial Librarians and responded to the call for proposals by the Sri Lanka Pay Commission to solve salary anomalies issues. There, we focused mainly on the issues faced by the Government Librarians. Also, a letter was sent to the Director of the Combined Services of the Ministry of Public Services, Provincial Councils and Local Government informing about recent changes in the LIS qualifications offered by the SLLA. The Convenor of the School Library Group participated in preparation of the School Library Guidebook, developed by the School Library Development Unit of the Ministry of Education.

Several Webinars were conducted by the professional groups and committees of the SLLA 2020/2021 Council. These include series of revision seminars for the competitive examination for government librarians’ recruitment, school library guidelines for school library staff, Google Workspace (application), intellectual property and copyright laws, crisis beyond unique opportunities (motivational workshop), and media libraries and their functions. In addition, a seminar was organized for A/L students looking for University admission, in collaboration with the Colombo Public Library. The National Conference in Library and Information Science (NACLIS) of 2021 was held online on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The Government Librarians group published *Prathirawa* magazine with a collection of articles from the membership.

All in all, it seems that the current situation in the world forced us to work online, while enabling new avenues for action and participation. As the President of the SLLA for 2020/2021, I salute all members of the Council, the Executive Committee, General Membership, Students, and well-wishers for the support extended throughout the year. Thank you!

**Dr. Ruwan Gamage,**  
**President,**  
**Sri Lanka Library Association (2020/2021)**

**If you have not updated your recent contact details yet, please do so as soon as possible.**

**Use the form available at <https://forms.gle/4eiRXog8fva2Mwf7A>**



United Nations (UN) proposed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), at an assembly held in the Head Office of the United Nations Organization (UNO), New York, in September 2015 to remark its 70th anniversary. Altogether, the 17 goals target with 169 objectives. To evaluate the success, they have identified 244 indicators. SDGs have created immense attention of the whole world, as it is a universal agenda to transform the world. The action plan for SDG proclaims to realize the development based on people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, which are the major notions. The 193 countries took part in the convention have included these 17 goals as their own developmental agendas. SDGs consider mainly three aspects such as Economic, Social, and Environmental perspectives. Sri Lanka is also one of the participative countries, which has been working to attain the goals. These 17 long-term goals are expected to achieve within 15 years starting from January, 2016. The 17 sustainable development goals are as follows (United Nations, 2015). All participative countries declared that they envisaged a world with free of poverty, hunger,



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disease and want where all life can thrive. They envisage a world free of fear and violence. They expect a world with universal literacy, equitable and universal access to education, health care, social protection, human rights, safe drinking water, sanitation, and improved hygiene, sufficient and nutritious food, and universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy. It is crucial to plan and work not only the governments but also all stakeholders including libraries. We have to provide “access to information” (IFLA, 2021) to achieve all 17 goals.

**What is the standing of public library in this venture?**

IFLA (2021) has developed and launched a toolkit, which aims “support advocacy for the inclusion of libraries and access to information in formal national and regional development plans adopted in the context of the SDGs”. This IFLA’s advocacy has included three major aspects; *support to libraries at the regional, national and local levels, direct engagement at the global level, and tools and materials to help libraries use the SDGs as a framework*. IFLA’s Library Map of the World is a good indicator to make the world visible on the extent of SDG activities they engage. This map uses library visit as an indicator. IFLA participates the “High- level political forum”, of UN. IFLA encourages all libraries to take part similarly in their respective government’s initiatives and developmental activities.

Pastana(2016) stated as “...public libraries have, can , will serve as both anchors and platforms of sustainable development through the transcendent reality of the community as a center for sustainable development.” UK, USA, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, South Korea, Mianmar and Uganda are pioneers and considered as champions in formulating strategic activities and successfully performing them with the aim of attaining SDG in various aspects. Libraries have to prepare brochures for specific activity’s promotions. While public libraries of a few countries perform such community, services by anchoring public/civil society why not we are keeping them aside and sticking to traditional services only? It is important to public librarians to formulate strategic activities in order to extend their services as community outreach as they are crucial contributors in attaining SDGs. A few such activities public libraries may engage are tabulated below.

Goals	Description
Goal1: No poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Information services: conduct programmes to write their resume, applying for jobs, etc and mentoring</li> <li>• Providing information services for entrepreneurial, economic development</li> <li>• Generating and providing career opportunities and commercial activities</li> </ul>
Goal 2: No hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support civil society by providing financial information services to develop small &amp; medium enterprises, farming &amp; agriculture</li> <li>• Educate them to identify subsidiary services, loan facilities etc.</li> </ul>
Goal 3: Good Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing health information services</li> <li>• Awareness programmes on hot topics. For example; Corona, Dengue, Cancer</li> </ul>
Goal 4: Quality and equitable education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning spaces</li> <li>• Access to physical and virtual resources (consortia for e-resources)</li> <li>• Digitized services</li> <li>• Literacy Programme</li> <li>• Education and experienced learning opportunities.</li> </ul>
Goal 5: Gender Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women empowering programmes</li> <li>• Seminars and workshops regarding gender equality, violence against women’s and girls’, women’s rights, counselling, health literacy etc.</li> <li>• Meeting spaces for gender programmes</li> </ul>
Goal 8: Good jobs and Economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is interdependent with SDG 1: Thus the activities for supporting SDG 1 are suitable to SDG 8, too.</li> </ul>
Goal 9: Innovation and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet access facilities; access centres to bridge digital divides</li> <li>• Technology transfer for functional literacy</li> <li>• Offer ‘Makerspaces’ to develop creativity, innovative skills and develop technology of the patrons</li> </ul>
Goal 10: Reduced inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treating all patrons equally apart from traits, and ethnic concepts</li> <li>• Treating men and women, girls and boys equally, this aligns with SDG 5, too.</li> </ul>
Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link /bond with community and raise a sense of citizenship</li> <li>• Democratic public space to enhance civic spirit, socio-civic cohesion, inclusive growth etc.</li> <li>• Conducting Awareness programmes to make aware the responsibilities.</li> </ul>
Goal 15: Life on Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and motivate ‘Green Library’ concept</li> </ul>
Goal 16: Peace, Justice and strong Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This goal aligns with SDG 11</li> <li>• Resource sharing through library hub/knowledge hub</li> <li>• Support open government initiatives, if any.</li> </ul>
Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate/partner with local government, (Municipalities, Urban councils Pradeshya Sabas) universities, industries, enterprises, and national libraries to provide and organize programmes.</li> </ul>

Goal 6, 7, 12, 13 & 14 are not directly align with public libraries’ activities. However, these goals also could be treated and supported under enhancing access to information. If any leading public libraries under a municipality or in a district can create

of such library hub or knowledge hub including all libraries and community centers. Through this hub, they can coordinate access to e-resources, access to diverse collections, providing conducive learning environment, core literacy activities, training and technology transfer. This type of knowledge hub are developed by the collaboration of school libraries, college libraries, public libraries, university libraries, national libraries and libraries with civic institutions such as churches, temples and mosques. This paper recommends the leading institution and professional association of Sri Lanka **NLDSB** & **SLLA** to formulate their strategic plan by including sustainable development as one of the key concepts and through which they can expand strategies to guide, support, and to seek financial assistance for successful initiatives of public libraries.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

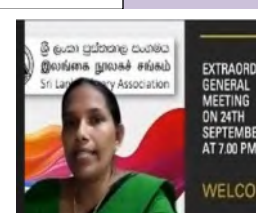


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## Extraordinary General Meeting of SLLA

An Extra Ordinary General Meeting was held on 24th September 2021 to get the mandate of the membership to hold the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Sri Lanka Library Association in Online Mode. The President - SLLA, addressing over 100 members at this online meeting informed the audience how the security and confidentiality of the call for nominations, and voting at the AGM is required can be maintained. The membership unanimously approved the decision. However, they also inquired whether it is possible for the present Council to continue for another year until the situation of the country becomes normal. However, the President reiterated that the members of the present Council have confirmed their support to conduct the AGM and some of the members have personal difficulties in continuing so. This was a short but a pleasant meeting, and for a few minutes the members had the opportunity to informally talk with each other, reviving their friendship and adding good vibes even under difficult conditions.



### SLLA Publication Committee 2020/2021

#### Main Committee

Mrs.T. Sritharan	Mrs.Chandima Wadasinghe
Mrs.K.Murugathas	Mr.BNGS Premaratne
Mr.M.S.M.Shiham	Mrs.A.V.M.K. Ankumbara
Mrs.W.Pavithra	

#### Newsletter – Subcommittee

Mrs.T.Sritharan	Mrs.Gayani Lasantha Perera
Mrs.K.Murugathas	

#### Journal – Subcommittee

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Mrs.Chandima Wadasinghe	S.Navaneethakrishnan