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Information Profession and Sustainable Development

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The 32nd BOBCATSSS conference on the theme of ‘Information Profession and Sustainable Development’ took place in Coimbra, Portugal, from January 23rd to 25th, 2024. We are convinced that information professionals are vital in promoting sustainable development, acting as catalysts for change. Through their commitment to knowledge dissemination, social equity, and innovation, information professionals drive positive change and help build a more sustainable and inclusive world. This special issue will explore these challenges and new roles for librarians, archivists, and other information specialists.

The organization and planning of the BOBCATSSSS 2024 conference was a collaboration between universities from three different countries. The teams of students and lecturers from Portugal (University of Coimbra), Brazil (São Paulo State University), and Bulgaria (University of Library Studies and Information Technologies) worked together to make an international meeting place for exchanging experiences and fulfilling the goal of enabling a discussion about sustainable development in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS). The conference theme ‘Information Profession and Sustainable Development’ attracted the interest of participants from 20 countries: Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, United States of America. Five invited speakers from Denmark (Mia H. Mathiasson), France (Julien Roche), Great Britain (Gobinda Chowdhury), Portugal (Patrícia Pereira da Silva) and Turkey (Serap Kurbanoglu) enriched the conference program and discussions. A total of 90 presentations, six workshops and seven posters were presented during the three conference days, accompanied by a rich social and cultural program.

For over three decades, the BOBCATSSS conference has been a prestigious European initiative for LIS students, fos-

tering academic and intercultural communication and collaboration. BOBCATSSS represents one of the many contributions of EUCLID (European Association for Library & Information Education and Research) to the Library and Information Science community. The name BOBCATSSS is an acronym representing the university network, with each letter denoting the initial letters of the cities where the universities that initiated the BOBCATSSS symposium are located: Budapest, Hungary; Oslo, Norway; Barcelona, Spain; Copenhagen, Denmark; Amsterdam, Netherlands; Tampere, Finland; Stuttgart, Germany; Szombathely, Hungary; and Sheffield, England. In recent years, additional members from Borås, Sweden; Riga, Latvia; Moscow, Russia; Tallinn, Estonia; Krakow, Torun, and Warsaw, Poland; Sofia, Bulgaria; Kharkiv, Ukraine; Ljubljana, Slovenia; Bratislava, Slovakia; Prague, Czech Republic; Osijek and Zadar, Croatia; Berlin and Potsdam, Germany; Porto, Portugal; Ankara, Turkey; and Parma, Italy, have joined the network. In 2019, EUCLID was renamed the BOBCATSSS Association, acknowledging the name’s wider recognition. Since its inception and continuing to the present day, the BOBCATSSS symposium has been organized and managed by students from various Library and Information Science Departments at European universities spanning Eastern and Western Europe.

Thanks to the efforts of the conference organizers and the support of the editor of CJILS selected papers of BOBCATSSS 2024 are featured in this special issue of the Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science. This special issue provides participating students, along with LIS researchers and professionals, the opportunity - many for the first time - to engage in scholarly communication through the publication of peer-reviewed articles. Authors from the conference submitted their papers to the Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science, following guidelines and undergoing a rigorous peer-review process. Of 37 submissions, 26 were accepted for publication in this issue.

Five themes related to the conference theme, information profession and sustainable development are highlighted in the accepted articles: Information professionals supporting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); 21st Century Skills and information profession; Information Management, Data management and research sustainability; Information literacy

and sustainability; Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

The first theme concerns the challenges faced by information professionals in supporting sustainable development goals (SDGs). It features articles on the Iberarchivos program, digital preservation as a digital transformation mechanism, trends in library services and the competencies of the librarian, The Pritzker Architecture Prize and its potential for developing library tourism, a citizen science project in a network of public libraries, book influencers, and music collections in the era of streaming services.

The second theme concerns 21st-century skills and their implications for the information profession. It includes contributions on the role of Libraries in sustainable AI development, Library and Information Science in the Romanian higher education system, and diversity in Library and Information Science undergraduate courses in Brazil.

The third theme focuses on information management, data management and research sustainability issues. It features articles on continuous learning in information management, information design and digital curation, the marketing of information services, keywords and descriptors in information science theses and dissertations, ontologies and research data, research data management, research support services in Hungarian academic libraries, and on the concepts, methods and applications of subject, content and domain analysis.

Information literacy and sustainability are the focus of the fourth theme, which engages with topics such as the use of smart mobile devices by teachers, algorithmic literacy among

students, information sharing through climate change images on social media, and information pathologies.

The fifth theme brings together articles related to LIS studies on gender, accessibility and diversity. It features pieces discussing gender and sexuality in knowledge organization systems, the representation of female composers on streaming websites, behaviour of Deaf people, and the accessibility of higher education institution websites.

The Guest Editorial Board comprises Dr. Ana Lúcia Terra, Assistant Professor, member of the BOBCATSSS Association Board and General Chair of BOBCATSSS 2024; Dr. Tania Todorova, Professor, former Chair of the BOBCATSSS Association Board (BobCAT of the Year 2023), Co-Chair of BOBCATSSS 2024 and Dr. Mariângela Spotti Lopes Fujita, Professor and Co-Chair of BOBCATSSS 2024. The board extends its deep gratitude to all authors and reviewers for this special issue. We highly value the support provided by the Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science to the BOBCATSSS community and future LIS professionals. We warmly invite students, faculty members, researchers, and professionals worldwide in the field of Library and Information Sciences and beyond to explore the contents of this special issue.

Enjoy reading!

Dr. Ana Lúcia Terra
Dr. Tania Todorova
Dr. Mariângela Spotti Lopes Fujita