

## **Serving the Public: A White Paper on the Operations of the NCL**

The NCL recently released a white paper chronicling the library's more than 70-year history of transformation and achievements and providing an outline to its operations and prospects today. Below is a summary of this report.

The National Central Library (NCL) was established in Nanjing, China in 1933, and later relocated to Taiwan in 1949. It moved to its current location on Chungshan South Road in Taipei in 1986.

According to the Organizational Law of the NCL, promulgated in 1996, the main functions of the NCL are to serve as a repository of national publications for public access, to facilitate research, promote international publication exchange, and support research development.

The library collection consists of general publications, rare Chinese books, government publications, Chinese studies materials, microfiche materials, and numerous online information and catalog systems.

The NCL was created to serve the general public, domestic and overseas government agencies and private groups, other domestic libraries, researchers, publishers and cultural exchange activities.

Services to the general public include reader services, reference services, document printing services, inter-library loans, assistance in library usage, and information search services.

Services to other libraries encompass promotion assistance, compilation of library surveys and statistics, publication of a national library yearbook and other library-related information, coordination of library cooperation, provision of librarian training, establishment of cataloging support systems, and drafting of standards for library operations.

For researchers, the NCL provides assistance through resource collection, publication of news on Chinese studies, publication of academic reports and catalog references, and the holding of academic seminars.

The library also serves publishers through its national book deposit system, management of the ISBN, CIP, ISSN and ISRC systems, publication of news on recent and upcoming publications, and a new publication information download service.

Library services to government organizations include the storage of government publications and facilitation of public access to such materials through online systems and other channels. The library also stores publications of the U.S. government, United Nations, and other international organizations.

In its role of promoting cultural exchange, the NCL provides domestic publications to over 1,200 exchange partners in 120 countries, and in turn receives a large volume of overseas and mainland Chinese publications for public use in Taiwan. Duplicate copies received by the library are donated to domestic and overseas libraries in need, including mainland libraries, and libraries serving the children of overseas Chinese. The NCL also organizes book exhibits in Taiwan and overseas to promote its information systems and new publications. It invites domestic and overseas experts to attend seminars on specialized topics, and supports foreign scholars of Chinese studies to conduct research in Taiwan, among other international exchange activities.