New Horizons: On the Future of Libraries at Conservatoriums and Academies

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1. Foundational considerations

1.1.

Within the German university landscape, the conservatoriums represent their own type of tertiary education institution. As arts and research institutions, the legal framework for tertiary institutions (the so-called Hochschul-Rahmengesetz) and the state tertiary education laws (the LHG), legally equate the conservatoriums with universities. Among other things, this is reflected in the organizational structure, which includes the formation of central facilities such as conservatorium libraries, and computer laboratories etc. Legally then, conservatorium libraries are equivalent to university libraries. In reality however, this equivalency is still being waited on in many places.

Up until now, it has been difficult to coordinate standards because only some states have initiated their own library regulations or plans which combine the enormous social, cultural, educational and political significance of libraries with voluntary obligation. None of these texts pay attention to conservatorium libraries with their highly demanding complex and specific services.

1.2.

Qualifications for working at conservatorium libraries are gained through independent degrees and certification programmes. The IAML (International Association of Music Libraries Archives and Documentation Centres) founded in Paris July 1951 is responsible for questions around the professionalization of the work in music libraries, as well as defining standards and compliance. The consortium of conservatorium libraries is constituted within the IAML / Ländergruppe Deutschland e.V. as a forum of ongoing networked communication (professional development, training, quality management, standardization, normed data collection and development and more) for concept and content development. This accounts for the specific line of work in these libraries.

1.3.

The digital revolution requires us to re-define demand-concepts in conservatorium libraries. Central questions are concerned with future conditions for building and layout, services and tasks in the digital age, requirements for specialized management and qualified staff, and for solid financing right up to cooperation and networking, both within and without the conservatorium.

The following positions have been compiled as the result of a paradigm shifting debate run within the consortium since 2015. There is federal consensus on them and they are therefore to be viewed as standards. To facilitate greater readability, the term *library* will be used as a synonym for conservatorium library in the following.

2. Responsibilities

2.1.

The particular challenge for libraries in conservatoriums lies in the heterogeneity of the usership to be served. This consists of staff and students, who are either primarily active in the area of the performing arts, school-pedagogy, or in research and academics. When it comes to deciding where to study or the acceptance of a position, library resources, the information services offered, and professional staff capabilities play an important role.

2.2.

As central infrastructure, the library contributes significantly to the success of teaching, studying, research, and artistic practice. With its diverse physical and virtual media and services, the library supports a culture of learning, and inspires creativity and innovation in research and performance. It does not function on a commercial basis. Its services and information are available to its users completely free of charge. Technological development and increasing user expectations are revolutionizing library work. This work is co-forming the digital world, producing its own (digital) information, and providing its users with tools with which they can gain and transfer increasingly diverse and complexly structured knowledge.

2.3.
Teaching media and information literacy is one of the library's key tasks in the digital world. It trains competent use of information and provides the ability to scale, judge, and work with it. The anchoring of this strategic core qualification as an interdisciplinary competence in all study streams means that information skills are an important precondition for successful professional and artistic practice. The specialization of media, knowledge, and tools necessarily requires the subject-specific and media-training focus of the institution as a library of experts for experts.

3. Media Resources

3.1.
Conservatoriums are defined by a duality of practice (artistic training) and theory (pedagogy and research). There is a wide variety of degree-contents in different locations: instrumental and vocal artistic training, instrumental and vocal education, school music education, performance arts (opera, acting, dance, performance), musicology, church music, composition, audio design, theatre directing, and music journalism. The library has to make the media required for all degrees, teaching, artistic practices, and research available: as reference collections, lending collections, or online.

3.2.
Supplying teaching staff with information is one of the library's core tasks. Its collections, in the form of individually obtained, organized, and permanently accessible resources, are oriented around the local disciplines and areas of training. It presents the full spectrum of the history of music, connecting tradition to the modern. It encompasses music supplies, books, audio-visual (AV) media, journals, and often historical collections as well. Alongside the physical collections, it also includes an expanded digital selection. The library does not only make up-to-date, researched music and literature available, but also older editions for research purposes. In updating collections, there is a focus on the degree-content offered in that location and its musical history. Naturally, repertoire and standard editions which have been damaged due to frequent use are reordered and bought in multiple copies.

3.2.1.
The core of the library's physical collection is the music. This has to be available in form of sheet music as well as critical complete editions. Music collections are also unique in the different edition formats they have (scores, piano reductions, individual voices), multiple copies and parallel editions from different publishers for classical repertoire (edition comparison), as well as the performance material for repertoire rehearsals and for the conservatorium's projects for the orchestras and choirs.

3.2.2.

The physical collection of books is made up of theoretical, historical, and didactic literature as well as lexicons and encyclopedias. It is geared towards the needs of all users and additionally, it has to offer an interdisciplinary orientation. Constant new acquisitions are required for the growing area of teacher training, as this is going through dynamic growth. Textbooks, books of exercises and music-teaching materials for all age groups and levels are required.

3.2.3.
The journal collection is also geared towards the local teaching, training, and research requirements. Apart from pre-existing older (historical) collections, a selection of titles which reflect the current developments in music culture and arts-politics has to be available. Students for instance, can use the job listings in key journals. Complete volumes should be archived where possible.

3.2.4.
The collection of audio-visual media is made up of classic physical formats (tapes, records, cassette-tapes, VHS, DAT, CD, CD-ROM, DVD). The AV-collection includes editions of diverse interpretations analogous to the sheet music collection, in order to facilitate comparison. Apart from this, some libraries collect and archive published in-house audio- and video clips. The argument that physical storage formats are being used less and less is insufficient to justify doing without complete collections. However, it does speak for thoughtfulness in decision-making on new acquisitions. The library therefore has to be able to provide the technical equipment for the continued use of classic AV media. In addition, libraries are having to increasingly confront the question of long-term digital archiving.

3.2.5.
Online resources include audio and video streaming services, online encyclopedias and bibliographies, databases, digital collections, ejournals, ebooks, and escores. The selection consists of the library's own resources and those of third parties. The latter can be freely accessed in the internet (open access = OA) or may require a license. Conventionally, media available in physical form represent the larger part of the inventory to be maintained. There is still no bigger commercial offer of music literature and sheet music capable of replacing physical collections.

3.2.6.
The library's own online resources are to be made available in the electronic library catalogue OPAC or the Discovery system (the next generation of catalogues). Specialized search-filters make these resources easy to find and access via the appropriate authentication processes in a common search interface, together with the library's physical collection in accordance with international subject standards. The catalogue is generally part of an integrated library management system, which if possible, should be fed via an interface to the conservatorium's management system and the data collected centrally there (persons, budget) in order to avoid double entries.

3.2.7.
Rented materials for conservatorium events form a significant part of the specialized media types the music library offers, which do not exist in other kinds of libraries. Many compositions which are required for concerts, operas, and ballet performances cannot be purchased and included in the collection. This primarily affects the sheet music to copyright protected works, by both living and dead composers. These works have to be ordered from the publishers directly, and rented for the time of the rehearsals and performances. This leads to both rental and performance fees, which are collected either via the relevant managing bodies (GEMA etc.)

for small-rights works, or from the publishers directly for performances of grand-rights works (e.g. staged works, operas, ballets). The large fees associated with this (royalties, rental materials) are to be calculated separately to the library's budget. Ordering and acquiring performance materials is generally undertaken by the library, as it already has expertise in these distribution channels. Close communication and cooperation between the responsible parties is crucial in order for the materials to be made available in a timely manner and to legally fulfil the contracts. If there is no one specialized in the care of sheet music, the responsibility for the complete and timely checking-in and out of choral and orchestral materials lies with the library. The extra service which individual parts require, even with electronic support, creates considerable additional costs (staff, time) for the library.

3.3.
The ever-growing collections have to be available to students, lecturers, researchers, and conservatorium members in a user-friendly way and in the appropriate spaces. Analogue and digital accessibility is indispensable. Inventory in the stack should be limited to performance materials and specialized formats. Historical and other particularly valuable collections require specialized air-conditioned, lockable rooms. There has to be enough space in the lending section for special music formats and project-loans. The use of the digital collection requires the appropriate workstations within the conservatorium. The accessibility of online-resources outside the library or conservatorium network is secured by authentification processes.

4. Buildings and Facilities

4.1.
The library is the central information and service centre for the conservatorium. The two central pillars are expert advice for students and lecturers, as well as the library's function as central learning and working space. Alongside these essential functions, libraries are increasingly used as places of meeting and exchange by users. An increase in space for growing physical collections should be planned.

4.2.
The library's spatial and technical facilities correspond to all aspects of its user requirements. As a basis for planning, DIN 67700 defines the central requirements: area requirements, climatic conditions, and lighting and furniture requirements. Additionally, room-planning also takes accessibility for the differently-abled into account. Free, unimpeded access to all media is a matter of course for libraries. Open-access shelving for physical media is the norm, and sufficient technical infrastructure for digital collections is always there. Libraries offer optimum conditions for advising users. Information areas are in central positions and have the best possible equipment in order to fulfil their information requirements with high professional and technical competence.

4.3.
Area requirements for staff work stations are significantly greater than the average requirements for offices because of the media to be worked with there. The large variability of different media types and formats poses a special challenge for rooms and facilities. There is a special work-station for each staff member in a library. Up-to-date technical equipment is indispensable.

4.4.

As a place of learning, the library is simultaneously an individual learning environment and a space of quiet reflection. It is equipped for training groups and group work. Means of replication for print and AV media (WLAN, high-speed data cables, printers, scanners, e-pianos) are part of the basic equipment. The facilities offer areas for different user requirements and can be structured with a modular system. As a place of social interaction and exchange, the library offers high quality spaces and an inspiring, communicative atmosphere. Libraries see themselves as a third kind of space: the needs of their users, for instance for comfortable seating and work stations, drinks machines, or charging stations for mobile end devices, are therefore highly relevant. For newly designed rooms, enough resources from the building-budget have to be set aside to secure a high quality in the long term.

4.5.
The conservatorium library is not a public library which can withdraw media at the same rate as it acquires them. It is often the first location for accepting of historically valuable collections (pre- and postmortem bequests from conservatorium alumni or citizens from the region otherwise connected to the institution). In archiving libraries, the capacity to expand the floor space should be included in room-planning calculations.

5. Staff

5.1. Expectations of Conservatorium Staff

The library is a professional, specialized institution acting in partnership. It has in-depth understanding of artistic processes. It requires a flexible, prompt, and musically trained team with a high level of identification with the current desires of conservatorium members. The library team has to be able to connect the ever-widening range of library-specific tasks within an increasingly digital working environment. This is only possible with specialized staff who is supported by a strong IT department.

5.2. Specialized Management

In relation to the varied tasks and areas of expertise in a 21st-century library, comprehensively trained, and specialized leadership is indispensable. Full-time management has to have extra qualifications over and above a degree in librarianship and information management. In accordance with the equality ruling of the legal framework for tertiary institutions (Hochschul-Rahmengesetz), salaries are understood to be part of the pay-grouping for higher civil service, as is already the case in many other tertiary training institutions. Because of what is normally a very thin job-position plan, libraries need managers who can act as both generalists and specialists. These comprehensively trained and experienced library managers take on both operative and structural roles. It is advisable that the managerial position be coupled with a degree in musicology as well as librarianship, particularly in conservatoriums with a strong focus on musicology. The anchoring of these demands in the state laws for tertiary institutions (Landeshochschulgesetze), the conservatorium's foundational- or library regulations strengthen the position of library management as specialists for information supply to all conservatorium members, and secures the (re)filling of the position by qualified library specialists.

Without its own computer labs or IT staff, conservatorium library systems require a high level of technical understanding for both taking on system administration tasks as well as the design of transformation processes for digital information provision. A readiness to innovate, and organizational experience are necessary in order to maintain up-to-date library services.

The ability to moderate and negotiate are necessary competencies for team communication inside and outside the institution.

Tasks which would be spread among management in multiple different departments in a larger university library culminate in the library manager. Apart from the classic areas of librarianship (acquisitions, indexing) there are structural tasks such as staffing, budgeting, project management, innovations management, strategic development, library politics, training, and quality management. There has to be active networking of local and (trans)-regional facilities in order to be able to make use of synergy effects. In addition, management is expected to keep an eye on, and adapt to, the ever-growing complexity of media technologies and the related changes in the needs of musicians, artists, and researchers. The speed of the digital turn means that continued, targeted professional development is mandatory. Otherwise there is hardly any chance of profiting from new qualifications in teams.

5.3. Team-Leader Qualifications and Team Responsibilities

Highly qualified staff is needed more than ever, as some of the simpler tasks are disappearing due to increasing automation. Staff are responsible for creating cooperative partnerships, applying the new RDA regulations and the compulsory registration of data in the shared norm format GND. Sheet music and AV media largely require analytical data collection and registration (= registering all works contained in a medium if possible, so that they can be found in the catalogue). This service is time consuming and is not normally offered in larger research libraries. It requires staff with the relevant knowledge of music. License negotiations for digital content and research data, as well as OA are new job fields. Language abilities (international students), and a talent for teaching IT skills, as well as knowledge of web design and social media communication are important qualifications. Particularly when expert information is required (musical edition forms, genre terminology, repertoire etc.), music training is required in the entire team. The only tasks left for less qualified staff are simple ones like taking back media, technical maintenance (labelling, laminating, book upkeep), and posting performance materials.

5.4. Staffing Requirements

Current staffing models can be turned to for basic staffing. However, the reference values for measuring input times for sheet music and recordings named there are to be raised, as this acquisition and indexing takes much longer. Staff requirements depend on the desired service profile, the size of the conservatorium, and the library's opening times with the associated positions in lending, information, and supervision.

5.5. Recognition

Library staff is made up of qualified specialists for information provision at a conservatorium. It is important to take the particularities of tertiary arts institutions into account here. Wages should appropriately reflect binding collective wage agreements, job profiles, and performance. Acceptance and recognition of competencies within the conservatorium is a matter of course. The most important role of the library as an area of support for research and art is not currently sufficiently recognized when it comes to staff organization and development. The availability of resources for professional development, retraining, and vocational advancement training is necessary here.

6. Financing

6.1. General

The two largest factors in the library's performance are the available resources and the level of the librarians' qualifications. If the number of subjects to be served increases due to an expansion in topics taught, or the teaching content changes, then the resources required also rise. Furthermore, extra requirements for financing digital media and the digital preparation of physical collections (cf. 6.2. and 6.3.) have to be taken into account in the library's financing.

6.2. Digital Information Structures

The increase in digital information structures in the areas of education, research, and administration require libraries to build-up a whole range of new ways of utilization and services:

- The introduction of new business connections for license acquisitions, in order to setup free access to fee-bearing digital content for users. Free access to information is a goal specifically demanded in the UN Agenda 2030
- The provision and administration of subject-specific digital information through the library's website and embedding in cooperatively lead platforms (e.g. digital libraries, the database information system (DBIS), the electronic journal library (EZB))
- The further development of the OPAC to an information portal, which offers a self-explanatory, shared interface for searching for physical and licensed digital items in the user's own library, as well as in subject-related facilities (Discovery systems with search machine technology and media specific search filters)
- The development and maintenance of new forms of cooperation with internal conservatorium digital providers (IT department, recording studio, institutes) and external service providers (computer labs, regional and transregional syndicates, local library systems, software user communities) for the amalgamation of the conservatorium's digital services and the deployment of standardized authentication processes
- Preparing and holding events for teaching information and media literacy as a recognized key competence for professional development and lifelong learning
- The development and maintenance of platforms for digital long-term archiving of OA publications and retro-digitalization for use in open educational resources and protection of written and audio-visual cultural heritage.

6.3. Collection conservation and Licensing

Despite the increase in digital media on offer, there is no recession in book and music production to be seen. In fact, there has been an increase in new releases of physical classical albums. When it comes to digital services, extra library-specific fees for ebook licenses have to be taken into account, as these can be many times the price offered to private end-users. When it comes to the physical collections, book-binders' costs for books and sheet music to reduce wear and tear have to be taken into account. If the library also has historically valuable written and audio-visual cultural goods, then the creation of security copies (e.g. retro-digitalization) for protection and easy access have to be taken in to account as well.

6.4. New User Forms and Services

New user forms and services create additional demands on library staff in the form of information technology competencies, knowledge of copyright-, data protection- and licensing law, meta data management, and in working with publications which are protected and worthy of being preserved, as well as works in digital formats. The digital expectations placed on conservatoriums can only be fulfilled when there is the willingness and means to permanently employ enough qualified staff.

Analysis of operating figures has shown that an efficient library should take up 5% of a fully developed hosting institution's staff- and materials budget. In individual cases, this proportion depends on the size and specialization of the hosting conservatorium.

7. Other Questions

7.1. Quality Management

Currently, extensive use of quality management as an operative management method for securing consistent product quality (e.g. collection management or breadth and depth of indexing), services, and in customer orientation is only undertaken in libraries from time to time. Total quality concepts are not applied and so far, there are no libraries which are certified according to EFQM or DIN ISO 9001 standards. Traditionally, libraries are oriented around inherited organizational structures or media transactions. However, a change in the direction of processes and project management is occurring within the reorganization of conservatoriums themselves. As part of the accrediting and evaluation of degrees, libraries are also regularly examined and generally do well. Currently, quality management measures are established through comprehensive staff qualifying measures via professional development, conferences, quality-circles in meetings, user evaluations, a strong focus on service, candidacy for library prizes, creation of detailed manuals and operating procedures with exactly defined standards and related tests, reporting oriented towards key figures, and finally, a high professional ethic in this area of cultural work. In the future, libraries will have stronger user participation in planning (e.g. design thinking method), and a greater role in the initialization of product development. The introduction of new certification processes should be accelerated analogous to the practice of teams in art and museum libraries, and total quality concepts as management methods should be introduced. Importantly, quality standards and goals should continue to be set by the respective tertiary institutions.

7.2. Open-Access

OA supports open, free, and electronic access to all academic publications with free licenses for subsequent use if possible. This is supposed to help counteract the rapidly rising periodical prices in the STM areas. Additionally, fast publishing and free use of publicly financed academic publications in the spirit of the timely availability of research results should be supported. Nowadays, OA is being supported by many organizations in project proposals. Numerous tertiary institutions have adopted OA policies. In the humanities, for instance in musicology, OA is sometimes still viewed very critically, as a high value is placed on publishing in respected (analogue) series or with high-profile publishers. Because OA will be an important building block in the supply of academic literature, it is vital that libraries also bring their expert knowledge to conservatoriums. They advise conservatorium management on implementing OA policy (e.g. OA appointees), provide support for conservatorium members when it comes to the different publication possibilities, create repositories or offer cooperation with external (geographic or discipline oriented) repositories, are familiar with OA media and

journals, are experts for meta data collection and long-term archiving, manage publication budgets, and lay publishing fees open. The libraries' special competence lie in the music-specific formats sheet music and AV materials (compositions, concert recordings etc.). Libraries fundamentally support the OA philosophy and are the most important contact for this topic.

7.3. Retro-Digitalization

The retro-digitalization of in-house non-copyrighted collections brings in new or non-book loving users, while protecting the physical collections. Digitalization in libraries is cooperative and oriented towards their own specialized music collections and repositories with long-term collective archiving. In this way, it offers significant support for new digital learning environments (open educational resources - OER). Librarians have the necessary technical expertise in digital learning and research processes, and edit the collections to be digitalized. They are experts for metadata, legal questions, data formats, collections, and require sufficient financial resources and professional development for this.

7.4. Communication and Structural Integration

Exact observation of individual groups of people within the conservatorium makes the possibilities and the necessity of communication with each other clear. As a central facility of the conservatorium, the library views itself to be an active part of internal conservatorium strategic processes in terms of rights and responsibilities, as far as collaboration and participation are relevant for the library.

Conservatorium autonomy generally makes it possible to make their respective library's profile and services visible. Active support and cooperation with institution-specific committees is explicitly desired and strengthens the library's position. In addition, there is a possibility of profile-raising through special services (lending instruments and technical devices), and through staff-related specializations (copyright, teaching, and other extra qualifications etc.). Furthermore, close cooperation with lecturers when it comes to the acquisition and provision of content and infrastructural materials which relate to lectures and teaching sessions is essential and should be viewed as self-explanatory.

Effective cooperation between departments and individual staff is made possible when all those involved recognize the increase in knowledge and meet at eye level. This is of the highest possible use for the conservatorium.

The decreasing significance of physical media lending both allows for and requires an intense focus on digital media (see point 1.3.), as well as the acquisition and development of the infrastructure required.

The valuable and continued exchange of knowledge can occur and be further developed when the library is also available for external users, and local, national, or sometimes even international subject- or library-specific institutions.

7.5. Interlibrary Loan

As a rule, the library only allows conservatorium members to borrow media, because use by the wider interested public cannot be supported structurally or in terms of staff. Active (= outgoing) interlibrary loans conflict with this formality. Passive (= incoming) interlibrary loans can be used to temporarily complement and expand a collection as needed, assuming this service is not offered by other local libraries. Internal interlibrary loans among conservatoriums to facilitate faster administrative assistance have already been established through interlibrary networking (mailing list, Wiki) as a form of best practice.

8. Summary and Conclusion

The library is the conservatorium's central concrete and virtual information and media centre with high quality learning spaces and common rooms. It provides information to lecturers and students with the aim of supporting users with media and free access to digital information and software, as well as in the provision of subject-specific information for users' studies, research, teaching, and artistic practice. In a field with ever changing demands due to digital transformation, one of the library's central tasks is to constantly develop its services. Staff bring their openness towards this challenge to the table, as well as a willingness for continued professional development and to develop ideas themselves. Apart from this, the classic competencies of librarianship, such as acquisition, indexing, and the provision of media and information resources, will retain their relevance going into the future. Further to acquisitions and provision, libraries will increasingly act as carrying infrastructure and consulting organization in the open access transformation.

The library is a place of meeting and advice. It teaches information literacy and supports its users in effectively scaling relevant results in the ever growing flood of information. Quiet places for concentrated learning assure a high quality spacial experience. In their selection of physical and digital information services, the library serves as a source of inspiration for all user groups and assures up-to-date teaching and learning conditions at the conservatorium. The focus here is always on being in harmony with the strategic goals of the hosting institution.

Mastering a balance between past, present, and future, the library will be an integral part of successful academic and artistic work and will have an important place in the structure of the conservatorium in the future.