

Summary



More Tinkering, Less Swotting / The Cologne City Library Mobilizes Interest in STEM (Hannelore Vogt)

(pp. 18 – 21)

Science and technology are found at the bottom end of the scale of favourite subjects among Germany's teens, both boys and girls. Only 15 percent chose to pursue a career in a STEM subject area. STEM is the acronym used today for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (in German: MINT). Clearly these fields are in need of more advocacy and the Cologne City Library is doing this with two programmes which encourage playful learning and experimentation: »Tinkering Beats Swotting« and »Creativity Trumps Imitation«. In 2018 the library gave particular focus to this theme and expanded its already broad palette of programmes by setting a new accent. In doing so the pertinent aspects of the library's services achieved greater visibility all around the city, and feedback showed that its focus on STEM would be welcomed with open arms.

The investments in infrastructure included a dedicated STEM library located in Kalk, a quarter of Cologne, a pop-up makerspace, a mobile makerspace mounted on a cargo-bike, and a library of things (where, for example, experiment kits, coding sets or mini-robots are available for borrowing). A special highlight has been an interactive jumbo screen which was developed for Cologne by the artist group »Urbanscreen«. As an electronic projection screen it provides unique opportunities for experimentation: with multiple devices it is possible to cooperatively and simultaneously develop large-scale graphics, graffiti, and animation series, while also allowing music to be included in the experimental exploration of animation principles. By adopting an idea already implemented by Germany's Reading Foundation (Stiftung Lesen) and its project partner the German Telekom Foundation, a city-wide network of STEM mentors has also been established.

Explore – Experiment – Learn / Schleswig-Holstein's Mobile Makerspace (Jessica Witt)

(pp. 30 – 31)

»Just try it!« – the motto of Schleswig-Holstein's mobile makerspace speaks not only to children and young adults who are have the chance to experiment with robots and other devices, but also to librarians who want to gather first-hand experience with makerspaces and STEM promotional projects at the headquarters of the Schleswig-Holstein public library network agency.

The LEB, the regional library for loans and special services, in Flensburg has three identical mobile makerspace sets which can be borrowed via this state-wide interlibrary loan system. This is of particular benefit to the low-density state of Schleswig-Holstein, and in particular for libraries in small towns and rural areas. This opportunity has provided libraries with a first taste of the makerspace concept and encourages them to make further investments in this programme. Library staff are also supported through regularly held training sessions in the agency headquarters.

Makerspace sets consist of various devices which facilitate a playful interaction with various STEM topics. First encounters are already possible at kindergarten age. With BeeBots children learn that a robot is programmed in individual steps to carry out a certain operation. This introduces the learner to forward-thinking processes which are so important for coding. Hence the little bee robots are an introduction to programming. Primary school students have fun using these bees while learning the alphabet or practicing text comprehension.

Turbulent Times for Research and Teaching / 90th Anniversary of the Institute for Library and Information Science in Berlin (1928/29-2018/19) (Elke Greifeneder, Christoph Husel, Kirsten Schlebbe)

(pp. 40 – 45)

On November 2, 2018, the Institute for Library and Information Science at the Humboldt University in Berlin celebrated its 90th anniversary in the company of 160 invited guests. Strictly speaking, of course, the institute has not existed in this form for 90 years. A period of closure, re-establishment in the 1950s, various crisis years, and multiple name changes bear witness to a less than direct course of development, and indeed to the turbulent and complicated history of the institute.

This article for BuB traces – to the extent possible – a rudimentary history of the institute. Naturally in the limited space of this article it is only possible to pick out historical highlights, rather than offer a comprehensive and complete account. A review of the institute's past reveals that there was no strictly followed course of development, but rather requires, by necessity, that gaps, junctions, and upheavals be given mention. There has been, in fact, not just »the« institute but rather several institutes, which together have helped to shape a common history.

But anniversaries should be celebrated when and as they come. Hence, with the winter semester of 2018/19 the Institute for Library and Information Science commemorates the founding of its predecessor at the Berlin University in the semester of 1928/29. From the beginning, all the institutes have had one idea in common: the goal of focusing their research and teaching around the relationships and interactions between people, information, and the facilities pertaining hereto.

Translated by Martha Baker