

Collection Development in Africa (CDiA) Conference 2026

Theme: "Collections Evolved: User Centred Collections, Equity & Resilience in the Scholarly Landscape"

Dates: 9–10 September 2026

Venue: Cape Town, South Africa

Website: <https://librariescd.itoca.org>

About the Conference

The *Collection Development in Africa (CDiA) Conference* is an annual gathering of library leaders, publishers, researchers, and information professionals dedicated to advancing the discourse on scholarly publishing and collection development in Africa. Following the success of CDiA 2025, the 2026 edition continues the series' mission to amplify African perspectives and foster equitable participation in the global scholarly communication ecosystem.

Theme Overview

The 2026 *Collection Development in Africa (CDiA) Conference* continues its mission to position Africa at the heart of global conversations on scholarly communication, publishing, and knowledge equity.

Under the theme **"Collections Evolved: User-Centred Collections, Equity & Resilience in the Scholarly Landscape,"** this year's conference explores how libraries and knowledge institutions can reimagine collection development in response to user needs, technological disruption, and global challenges.

It invites participants to reflect on the shift from content-driven acquisition to *user-centred curation* — ensuring that collections are inclusive, sustainable, and responsive to the communities they serve. The conference will also address the balance between innovation and resilience, particularly in the African context where equity and access remain at the core of scholarly transformation.



Sub-Themes

1. User-Centred Collection Strategies

- Understanding and mapping user behaviour in the digital era.
- Designing inclusive and accessible collections.
- Co-creation and participatory collection development.

2. Equity and Knowledge Justice

- Decolonising collections and amplifying African scholarship.
- Promoting open access and fair representation of local content.
- Addressing systemic barriers in global scholarly publishing.

3. Resilient Libraries in a Changing World

- Sustainable collection models amidst financial and infrastructural constraints.
- Libraries' role in crisis recovery and continuity (e.g., post-pandemic innovation).
- Building adaptable policies and frameworks for uncertain futures.

4. Data, AI, and Digital Transformation

- Leveraging artificial intelligence and data analytics for smarter curation.
- Managing ethical risks and algorithmic bias in collection development.

- Balancing automation with human-centred decision-making.
- 5. **Collaborative and Community-Driven Models**
 - Regional consortia and shared collections in Africa.
 - International partnerships for resource sharing and joint digitisation.
 - Policy alignment for collective resilience.

Types of Contributions

- **Paper Presentations:** 15–20 minutes per presentation.
- **Panel Discussions:** 3–4 experts addressing a specific subtheme.
- **Workshops/Demonstrations:** Hands-on sessions showcasing practical tools or case studies.
- **Poster Presentations:** Emerging research and innovative projects.

Submission Guidelines

- Abstracts should be **300–400 words**, clearly articulating the research question, methodology, and contribution to the conference theme.
- Include author(s) name(s), institutional affiliation, email address, and presentation format.
- Submit abstracts through the CDiA submission portal:
<https://librariescd.itoca.org/submit>.
- **Deadline for submissions:** 31 January 2026.
- **Notification of acceptance:** 15 March 2026.

Important Dates

Activity	Date
Call for Papers Announcement	20 October 2025
Abstract Submission Deadline	15 February 2026
Notification of Acceptance	31 Mar 2026
Early Registration Opens	20 October 2025
Conference Dates	9–10 September 2026

Organizers and Partners

The CDiA Conference Series is organized by **ITOCA**, in collaboration with **CLIR**, **Casalini Libri**, and **Charleston Hub**, alongside leading universities, research libraries, and regional library consortia across Africa and internationally.

Contact Information

Conference Secretariat – CDiA 2026

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Together, let us innovate, integrate, and inspire the future of African library collections.