

The National Library of South Africa creates synergies between Global Library networks, By Kepi Madumo

In a momentous occasion highlighting the synergy between global library networks, the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) opened its doors to esteemed members of the Council on Library & Information Resources (CLIR) on May 3rd, 2025. Spearheaded by Mr. Kepi Madumo, the CEO and National Librarian of NLSA, the visit underscored the mutual commitment to advancing knowledge preservation and dissemination on a global scale.



The NLSA, established in 1999 by an act of Parliament, stands as a cornerstone of South Africa's intellectual landscape, dedicated to collecting, preserving, and disseminating the nation's rich documentary heritage. With a sprawling campus in Pretoria and a diverse collection spanning centuries, the NLSA serves as a vital resource for scholars, researchers, and the public alike.

In hosting the CLIR board, the NLSA provided a platform for dialogue and collaboration, fostering opportunities for knowledge exchange and partnership. The CLIR Board comprises a diverse array of leaders from the global library and information community, including Guy Berthiaume, Michele Casalini, Christopher Celenza, Tess Davis, Mercedes de Vega Armijo, Laurence Engel, Fenella France, Charles Henry, Anne Jarvis, Carol Mandel, Buhle Mbambo-Thata, Asma Naeem, Richard Ovenden, Sandra Phoenix, Ismail Rashid, Stephen Rhind-Tutt, Ben Vinson III, Sohair Wastawy, and John Price Wilkin.

The tour, which encompassed the exploration of NLSA's facilities, including the special collections, Grey Room, and Digitization Section, offered the CLIR board a firsthand glimpse into the institution's multifaceted endeavors.



The significance of this visit cannot be overstated, as it signifies a convergence of shared values and objectives between the NLSA and CLIR. Both organizations are dedicated to the preservation and accessibility of cultural heritage and scholarly resources, albeit on different scales and contexts. The NLSA, as a bastion of cultural heritage preservation and scholarly excellence, complements CLIR's role as a catalyst for innovation and collaboration within the global library community. Together, their collaboration signifies a convergence of shared values and objectives, fostering dialogue, knowledge exchange, and partnership opportunities to enhance the accessibility and preservation of cultural heritage and scholarly resources. Through initiatives and programs, both organizations champion the critical role of libraries in enriching societies and advancing learning.