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## **Building strong, sustainable library associations: learning how to make a difference**

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Across the world there are literally hundreds of library associations with quite diverse organisational structures, operating within a wide range of linguistic, cultural, political, legislative, economic and social environments. These associations share the common aim of bringing together professionals who care deeply about the core values of their chosen field and believe in the benefits that libraries and librarians bring to society. Inevitably, one crucial question that has been asked repeatedly is 'What actually makes a library association strong and sustainable?'

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has developed an ambitious training program designed specifically to assist library associations answer this key question. The IFLA





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Building Strong Library Associations (BSLA) program is currently being run in six different countries with the aim of helping LIS professionals better understand the critical success factors of effective associations.

The value of the BSLA program is considered through an Impact Evaluation Framework which enables the changes taking place at the individual, association and library community levels to be measured. The evidence collected demonstrates the real progress made towards the program's goals, highlights how the program can really make a difference to the association and gives members the confidence to build on success. This paper will provide insights into the BSLA program, discuss the impact it has had on participating organisations, and highlight transferable ideas.

