

# The National and University Library of Iceland Act

2011 No 142 28 September

---

**Entry into force 4 October 2011.** Amended by Act No 21/2012 (entry into force 16 March 2012) and Act No 150/2012 (entry into force 3 January 2013).

Any reference in this Act to “the Minister” or “the Ministry” not accompanied by express mention of or reference to a specific field of responsibility shall be understood as being a reference to the **Minister of Education, Science and Culture** or to the **Ministry of Education, Science and Culture** as responsible for the implementation of this Act.

---

## ■ Article 1 *Purpose and role*

The National and University Library of Iceland shall serve as a national library and as the library of the University of Iceland. Its role is to be a research library and a repository of knowledge for every member of the general public. The Library shall provide dynamic and comprehensive information services in the fields of science and scholarship, public administration and industry, and art and culture.

The Library is a university institution operating on a separate budget and reporting to the [Minister].<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup>Act No 21/2012, Article 2.

## ■ Article 2 *Board*

The Minister shall appoint seven members to the Board of the National and University Library of Iceland for a four-year term. Two members shall be nominated by the University Council of the University of Iceland, one by the Rectors’ Conference of Higher Education Institutions, one by the Science Board of the Science and Technology Policy Council, one by Upplýsing, the Icelandic Library and Information Science Association, one by the staff of the National and University Library of Iceland, and one member shall be appointed without nomination. Alternate members shall be appointed in the same manner. The same person may not be appointed as a principal board member of the Library for more than two consecutive terms.

The Minister shall appoint the chair and the vice-chair from among the members of the Board.

The Board of the Library shall advise its director—the National Librarian—on library policy and other issues related to the library’s operation. The Board shall submit comments on the Library’s annual operating plan and budget and on its organisation.

The National Librarian shall attend the Board’s meetings with the right to speak and propose motions.

## ■ Article 3 *National Librarian*

The Minister shall appoint the National Librarian for a five-year term after receiving the comments of the Library’s Board. The National Librarian must have completed a degree from a higher education institution, and must possess sound knowledge of the Library’s field of activity.

The National Librarian shall decide on the organisation of the Library after receiving the comments of its Board, and shall handle the day-to-day management of its operations and finances. The National Librarian shall employ the Library's staff and act as its representative. The National Librarian shall be responsible for the Library's finances and for ensuring that it operates in accordance with legal and administrative requirements.

■ **Article 4** *Tasks*

The National and University Library of Iceland shall principally fulfil its role by:

- a. communicating information and knowledge to the general public, scholars, and other academic and educational activities in the country in a comprehensive way through the provision of guidance and access to all types of information sources;
- b. meeting the needs of teaching and research at the University of Iceland and at other Icelandic higher education institutions, as well as those of academic and educational activities in Iceland, through the communication of information and knowledge by varied means;
- c. improving access to foreign source-material for the benefit of science and scholarship, public administration and business, including through the implementation of contracts for nation-wide access to electronic databases and journals, in consultation with principal stakeholders;
- d. preserving existing manuscript collections and private document archives and continuing the work to collect and study Icelandic manuscripts and private documents, as well as similar material on newer types of media;
- e. intensively collecting Icelandic material, including by serving as a legal deposit repository in accordance with law, as well as acquiring, cataloguing, providing access to and preserving for posterity various foreign source material with relevance to Iceland;
- f. carrying out research and provide assistance in connection with research in the fields of bibliography, the history of books, and library and information science, and provide information about publishing activities in Iceland;
- g. promoting cooperation, coordination and the further evolution of libraries' working practices, and provide them with professional advice;
- h. carrying out other tasks related to the Library's activities as further decided by the National Librarian, acting in concert with the Board.

■ **Article 5** *Cooperation with the University of Iceland and other higher education institutions*

Cooperation between the National and University Library of Iceland and the University of Iceland shall take place in accordance with a special cooperation and service agreement.

The Library may provide services to other higher education institutions in Iceland as further decided in mutual service agreements entered into with each individual higher education institution.

■ **Article 6** *Finances*

Operating costs of the National and University Library of Iceland shall be borne by the Treasury. The Treasury's contribution shall serve to finance the Library's legally mandated tasks as laid down in Article 4. Furthermore, part of the annual appropriations for the University of Iceland shall be assigned to the Library on the basis of the cooperation and service agreement established pursuant to Article 5.

The Library may sign cooperation or service agreements with institutions and other entities.

■ **Article 7** *Agreements*

Having obtained the opinion of the Board of the National and University Library of Iceland the National Librarian may conclude service agreements covering specific aspects of the Library's operations.

Moreover, the Library may, with the approval of the [the Ministry]<sup>(1)</sup>, agree with other institutions to regard their holdings as part of the Library's collections.

<sup>(1)</sup>Act No 21/2012, Article 2.

■ **Article 8** *Authorisation to charge fees*

[The National and University Library of Iceland may charge fees for its services, such as lending, interlibrary loans, copying, photographic reproduction, specialist documentation services, document searches in databases, and loans of special collection materials.

Having obtained the opinion of the Board, the National Librarian shall issue tariffs for all fees charged pursuant to the first paragraph above. The fees in question shall not exceed the actual costs incurred by the Library in providing the services, their purpose being to recoup the following cost elements:

- a. The salaries of the staff involved in providing the services;
- b. The cost of materials specifically linked to the services.

The Library may charge both per-day fines for the use of library material returned after the due date and penalties to compensate for library material lost or damaged while in the care of the borrower. The National Librarian shall lay down rules on the charging of per-day fines and penalties after obtaining the opinion of the Board. The rules shall provide that per-day fines imposed on individual borrowers with regard to particular library material, and penalties to compensate for lost or damaged material, may not exceed the cost of acquiring said material. The rules may also provide that in the case of library material which cannot be replaced the fine or penalty will be based on a fair and reasonable valuation, with the possibility of a surcharge of up to 50 per cent for material of particular importance.

Tariffs established on the basis of the second and third paragraphs above shall be made easily accessible to the borrowers.]<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup>Act No 150/2012, Article 24.

■ **Article 9** *Withdrawal of material*

The Library may withdraw from its holdings and destroy or dispose of to other entities or individuals any material no longer considered necessary. The National Librarian shall lay down rules on such withdrawals in consultation with the Library's Board.

■ **Article 10** *Regulation*

The Minister may issue a Regulation<sup>(1)</sup> containing more detailed provisions on the implementation of this Act.

<sup>(1)</sup>Regulation No 170/2014.

■ **Article 11** *Entry into force*

This Act shall enter into force forthwith. ...

■ **Transitional provision** The status and rights of employees of the National and University Library of Iceland shall not be affected by the entry into force of this Act.

---

*Disclaimer: This is an English translation. The original Icelandic text, as published in the Law Gazette (Stjórnartíðindi) is the authoritative text. Should there be discrepancy between this translation and the authoritative text, the latter prevails.*