

Memories from EAHIL Scholarship recipients



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I am very grateful to have received a scholarship to attend the EAHIL 2024 conference in Riga. This opportunity has been exciting and rewarding, allowing me to connect with a diverse group of professionals and gain more knowledge in the field. As someone who is relatively new to information retrieval but has considerable experience in guiding researchers through Research Data Management and Open Access publishing, the inclusion of these topics in this year's EAHIL conference was a significant bonus for me.

The conference offered a broad array of sessions, including keynotes, workshops, and Continuing Education Courses (CEC). One of the highlights of my experience was the privilege of creating and presenting two workshops together with my colleague Thomas Vandendriessche. During the first workshop, we played the Research Survival Game, which I had the pleasure of contributing to its development. This game uses playful learning to develop an understanding of the possibilities, requirements, and best practices regarding Open Access, Research Data Management, and Information Retrieval. The attendees were enthusiastic and engaged, making the session lively and productive. It was rewarding to see the participants enjoy the game while learning important concepts in a fun and interactive way.

The second workshop was a hands-on training session focused on documentation and metadata. This workshop aimed to equip attendees with practical skills on the what, where, and how of documentation and metadata, emphasising their importance from the start of a research project through to its completion. The participants were keen to learn and actively participated in the discussions and activities, which made the session very enjoyable for me.

Additionally, I took part in two CEC trainings at the start of the conference and attended three workshops organised by other attendees. These sessions provided deep dives into various aspects of our profession. It is a pity that I could not attend more workshops and training courses due to the many parallel sessions in the schedule.

The conference also provided plenty of opportunities for networking and socialising. The first-timers' reception was a wonderful way to break the ice and meet fellow attendees. The social events, including the conference dinner and city tour, were beautifully organised, offering a perfect balance between relaxation and professional interaction. Exploring the beautiful city Riga and experiencing its rich culture added an extra layer of enjoyment to the conference.

Overall, attending the EAHIL 2024 conference in Riga was a great experience. I am very thankful to the EAHIL Board for awarding me the scholarship that made my participation possible. The knowledge and connections I gained during the conference have been very valuable, and I look forward to applying what I've learned in my role at KU Leuven.



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No newbie to the library sector as such, I certainly am one to the world of medical libraries. Having started my new position at the library of the Medical University of Vienna in November 2023, I am still in the process of learning about the very specific demands of our customers compared to those of other libraries. When I first heard about the EAHIL conference, I thought, why have a separate event dedicated exclusively to medical libraries? When I got there, I discovered what distinguishes it from other library conferences I attended in the past – on so many levels.

On the content level, I profited highly from workshops on “Improving efficiency and confidence in systematic searching medical bibliographic databases”, “Promoting and marketing library and information services: tips and tools for creating a communication plan”, and “Getting started with creating advanced OpenRefine workflows: Systematic searching and enhancing publication data”, as well as sessions on “Shaping the educational environment” and “Libraries as change agents”. All of these delivered more than enough “fuel” for fruitful conversations during the breaks.

I had set myself the goal of meeting someone new during every break. The open-mindedness of everyone I met made achieving this goal all the easier. On a personal level, I can wholeheartedly say that I have never attended a conference with more pleasant and inspiring conversational partners, so willing to share their experience with one another, and dedicated in their daily lives to the common goals of continuously developing library services to make them more visible and approachable to their users. Thank you very much to everyone for giving me so much valuable insight into your library’s best practices, projects and challenges.

What also struck me was the unusually high turnout at the social events (each one of them seemingly outdoing the next in terms of venue and catering), which, in my perception, seems to be another fundamental cornerstone of this community. I even met some colleagues who return to this conference year upon year, even after having left the medical field, to keep up with this special crowd they have grown so fond of. I believe that speaks for itself. The first-timers event made me feel welcomed into the community and helped me approach other attendees during the following days. A massive thank you to the local organizing team, who did an amazing job with the entire conference!

I am incredibly grateful to the EAHIL Board for awarding me with a Scholarship for attending the EAHIL Conference in Riga, and commend everyone who might receive one in the future, as this conference has been a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas and experience amongst such a warm and welcoming community of colleagues. Very much looking forward to next time!



Betsy Morgan

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I was so pleased to receive a scholarship this year to attend the EAHIL Conference in the wonderful National Library of Latvia in Riga. I would like to take this opportunity to thank EAHIL very much for the scholarship and this wonderful opportunity, as I believe that it has been a great addition to my early career. The conference totally exceeded my expectations and I have already recommended it to many colleagues across Wales.

I was a little apprehensive before attending due to my time in the profession (just over a year) and my experience of the duties undertaken by a Health Librarian. The events that EAHIL organised in the evenings were a lovely introduction to some wonderful buildings across Riga and indeed to the highly knowledgeable and friendly people who were also attendees. From the first-timer reception at the RSU Anatomy Museum on the first evening, with its amazing display of anatomy exhibitions, to the dancing and music experienced at the House of the Blackheads, on the last, it truly felt like I had found a new (very large) work-family. Everyone I met was so very welcoming and was so patient with my many, often naïve (due to my length of time in the profession) questions.

The networking opportunities throughout the whole time at the conference were amazing – no coffee time was rushed and lunches were leisurely. This relaxed approach to the conference allowed for plenty of stimulating conversations about everything from systematic reviewing to publishing, from library patrons to wellbeing ideas, from book suggestions to taking a tour to the top floor of the library. As a first timer at an international conference, I tried to use these times to speak to as many people as I could, to ask as many questions as I could and to marvel at the sumptuous amounts of food available.

I really liked the workshop heavy content of the conference and felt the opportunity to work through scenarios with others, such as different marketing strategies, was very beneficial. With the increase of AI related enquiries within the library service, I felt the workshop that I attended about ChatGPT and the way it could be used in systematic reviews very useful as well as the session on AI in a more general context. I thoroughly enjoyed the debate about the “best” ways to search – whether it was multi-line or single-line and was very entertained with the reasoning behind each argument. I would have liked to have gone to more workshops and did find it difficult to choose which ones to attend.

My time at the conference was truly amazing and the only one criticism that I would be able to find is that it was too short and I would have loved to have stayed longer. Thank you to the LOC and EAHIL for arranging an amazing, educational and inspiring few days. I felt, when I came back, as though I wanted to tell everyone what I had learnt and how fabulous the time had been.



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High-quality workshops about research data management at EAHIL Conference

I want to thank EAHIL for granting me the EAHIL scholarship which enabled me to attend to EAHIL conference in Riga, Latvia in June 2024. A conference that was filled with warmth and expertise! I had high expectations for the event to give me new insights for my work as an information specialist at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF) and Kuopio University Hospital (KUH).

As part of my work is concerning research data management, I decided to focus on those topics also in the conference. I chose to attend a few workshops that were about research data management so that I would be able to pass on valuable information and practices to our university's data support team. I gave my presentation about integrating research data management as a part of undergraduate education at UEF and I hoped that it gave tools and inspiration to others to do the integration also in their organizations.

The workshops in which I participated were of high-quality and especially the conversations among the participants were exceptionally fruitful. Among other things, we discussed together how legal issues steer data management in really different ways in different countries. Interesting and very educational!

Moreover, many good practices arose from the workshops and presentations. In UEF and KUH, we could definitely use eg. the training model that KU Leuven university's research data support services have for their researchers about metadata and documentation of research data (Research Data Management @ KU Leuven: Interactive workshop on metadata and documentation held by Anouk D'Hont and Thomas Vandendriessche). In KU Leuven they have this amazing example-dataset that they are using in order to educate researchers on how to document and collect reasonable metadata of their actual research data. Very impressive!

As I am an EAHIL council member, I also attended the council meeting in Riga. It is highly important for us newcomers to see how EAHIL operates so that we can give our best to represent EAHIL in our home countries. Also, while in Riga, the next year's International Programme Committee had a face-to-face meeting which I attended. I think it is the most valuable thing to actually see each other live and the EAHIL events each year give us the possibility to do this. So thank you EAHIL!

The EAHIL conference in Riga offered a lot of content to develop one's own professional skills, but also great networking opportunities and especially practical arrangements were in a class of their own. A dedicated app for the conference made it easier for the participant to navigate both online and on-site. Congratulations to the organizers for a successful conference! See you next year in Łódź, Poland, June 9-13!



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The schedule for my first time at an EAHIL conference was jam-packed. I was involved in delivering two workshops, an oral presentation, and a panel discussion on AI! The conference was held at the National Library of Latvia, which has impressive views of the city.

The workshop I delivered was about the potential of using large language models for systematic searching in databases like PubMed. I was overwhelmed by the popularity of the workshop and the number of requests for additional places – great that so many people are interested in this area of development. In the workshop we discussed developments in research, experimented with prompt design, and considered the effectiveness of searches created by ChatGPT. When I got back to the UK, it was fantastic to receive emails from attendees to say they had already tried using ChatGPT to design a search for a project they were working on.

AI was a hot topic for discussion at the conference and I was delighted to sit on a panel with Marydee Ojala and Andrea Alessandro Gasparini. We discussed some of the limitations and opportunities of using automation tools in libraries from systematic review software to teaching students to effectively use and evaluate AI output.

It was also interesting to learn from colleagues by attending presentations and workshops. In particular, I enjoyed a workshop led by Morwenna Rogers, Rebecca Whear, and Jill Buckland. In this workshop we considered the impact of poor-quality systematic reviews from the perspectives of researchers, publishers, the public, and information professionals. It was great to hear experiences of the challenges of working in information roles and how people are solving issues at their institutions.

This was my first time visiting Riga and it was great to explore the city through the social programme, which included events at the RSU Anatomy Museum, House of the Black Heads, and Museum of the History of Riga and Navigation. It was a pleasure to meet others attending EAHIL at the First Timers Reception. This really helped to break the ice and introduced me to people working in information professional roles across Europe. The social programme gave me an opportunity to network and I will definitely be keeping in touch with people.

Finally, I would like to thank the Executive Board for awarding me an EAHIL Scholarship to attend the conference. My first time at an EAHIL conference was a great experience and I look forward to attending again.

Memories from a first timer



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It was my first time participating in an in-person EAHIL Conference – EAHIL 2024 – in Riga, the lovely capital city of Latvia, especially the Old Town's splendid architecture.

Supported by the university and determined to actively participate in the EAHIL 2024 Conference with the theme "Small step and a giant leap: reorienting towards a new environment", I was convinced that that would be a unique experience to upscale my librarianship know-how. The convivial reception and welcoming atmosphere were particularly reassuring and rewarding at the remarkable Riga Stradi š University and the captivating National Library of Latvia, aka. Castle of Light. Attending competitive CECs, panel presentations, and workshops and engaging in fruitful discussions with fellow librarians from across Europe, Canada, and the United States of America was enriching and impactful. Participating in the EAHIL 2024 Conference confirmed that my university library is moving in the right direction. Thought-provoking ideas on Open Science and Institutional Repositories have been captured and I tend to apply them. Equally important, the Conference was also an opportunity to meet the *Journal of EAHIL's* wonderful board members.

The spectacular social events at the jaw-dropping RSU Anatomy Museum, Museum of the History of Riga and Navigation, and The House of the Black Heads promoted fabulous ice-breaking and amazing networking with friendly and engaged EAHIL community members.

I was also delighted to meet the Conference exhibitors, most of whom I am already familiar with. And we are now exploring new horizons for further collaboration.

I would like to extend my deep gratitude to the local organizing committee. The great job they have done mustn't go unrecorded.

I aspire to sustainable collaboration with EAHIL.

Memories from a Castle of Light

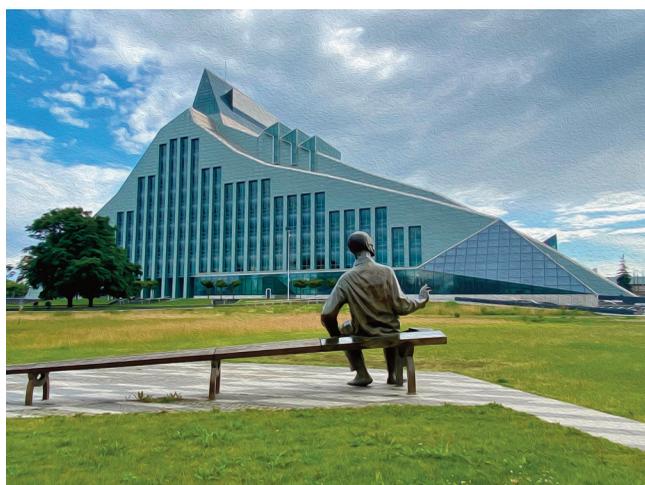
Camilla Larsson, Julia Harrysson and Sara Landerdahl Stridsberg

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On the banks of Daugava River lies a castle filled with the treasure of books and enlighten-ment. In its grand halls the yearly EAHIL conference took place in June 2024. What a suiting dwelling for the meeting of hundreds of librarians and information specialist to mingle, learn and workshop about themes like: Shaping the Educational Environment; Research & Open Science; Libraries as change agents; Visibility & Strategic presence; Technology & Tools.

Three adventurous librarians from the shore of lake *Mälaren* in Sweden seized the opportunity to go there. They were especially looking forward to the great battle of multiline vs single line searches; to explore the potentials (and limits) of the ChatGPT when designing a systematic literature search; to pilot methods for translating search strategies; the endeavour of using AI in research libraries; and much more. All workshops were very appreciated!

A first-time experience was also to be made. With a poster prepared the three librarians presented how they have worked from several angles after the device “little streams make big rivers”, to improve their communication and visibility strategies. Other posters caught their attention and gave good lessons for a possible next time, for example that it is a clever idea to add contact information, interactive sticky notes, QR codes and plants. Plenty of plants.



*The National Library of Latvia - the Castle of Light.
Photo taken by Camilla Larsson*

How delightful it was to meet fellow colleagues from around the world – to learn together, to get inspired as well as challenged to think in new ways. The librarian trio saw that they were not alone in the challenges they face in their day-to-day work. Keynote speaker Kristīne Pabērza-Ramiresa gave good insights on how to work community-centred with planning and evaluation in order to make an impact.

Inside the castle coffee flowed freely, and occasional rains was pouring outside, making the streets of Riga glimmer in the sunset. The three librarians from *Mälardalen* made the best out of their adventure by participating in all the evening activities. A local guide showed hidden gems of the old city. The welcome reception and gala dinner offered dancing until the soles of their feet were burning.

All in all, our librarians conclude that the memories made in a castle of light is to forever be kept in the card index of their hearts.