

DENMARK TO HAVE ONE NATIONAL LIBRARY

PRESS RELEASE

On 1 January 2017, the Danish Minister for Culture, Bertel Haarder, will merge Denmark's two largest national and research libraries – the State and University Library and the Royal Library into a single organisation called the National Library of Denmark. The current director of the State and University Library, Svend Larsen, will be the head of the new library, which will retain its physical locations in Aarhus and Copenhagen.

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In the future, Danes will have a single access point to digitalised newspapers, radio and TV programs, Hans Christian Andersen's original manuscripts and Søren Kierkegaard's love letters, and the preservation of the cultural heritage will be strengthened by joining forces. At the same time, the merger of the State and University Library and the Royal Library will future-proof the services to the University of Copenhagen and Aarhus University at the highest level. It is a natural consequence of the thorough digitalisation that has characterised research libraries over the last decade.

Svend Larsen, Director of the State and University Library, will be appointed Director of the Royal Library on 15 September 2016 to head the merger and will then become Director of the new, national library on 1 January 2017.

Bertel Haarder, the Danish Minister for Culture, says:

“The State and University Library and the Royal Library have cooperated closely for many years – as research and university libraries, and not least as Denmark's two national libraries. Now we are taking the next step by combining forces in the new National Library of Denmark. For me it is important that the physical locations in Aarhus and Copenhagen continue after the merger – and that users will have a single digital access in the future. The objective is to give Danes better library for their money.”

Svend Larsen, Director of the State and University Library, says:

“The merger of the State and University Library and the Royal Library is a natural consequence of developments in research libraries – not least in light of digitalisation. To a large extent, the two libraries take care of the same tasks when they provide services for research and education in the universities in Aarhus and Copenhagen. As the country's two national libraries, there are also a large number of areas where the two libraries will benefit from carrying out tasks jointly. Therefore, it is obvious that they should join forces in a single organisation. I look

forward to the new task, which I will carry out in great respect for the efforts that the Director of the Royal Library, Erland Kolding Nielsen, has made for many years.”

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Facts

In 2016, the State and University Library and the Royal Library have received net expense appropriations amounting to DKK 165.7 million and DKK 335.7 million, respectively, through the Danish Finance Act. In 2016, 220 full-time equivalents are employed in the State and University Library and 413 full-time equivalents in the Royal Library.

Among other things, the combining of the two libraries takes place in connection with the retirement of Erland Kolding Nielsen, who has been the Director of the Royal Library for more than 30 years, on 1 February 2017.

Further information

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