

The Prison Library Support Group

Declaration of Accession

- as a natural person – 24 € membership fee per year
 as a legal entity – € ... membership fee per year
(e.g. bookshops, libraries, associations, publishers, etc; membership fee not specified; suggestion: 50 € per year)
 as a supporting member – € ... membership fee per year
(supporting members have no voting rights in general meetings.)

I hereby join the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.)

Please fill in the debit authorization and return it to the Prison Library Support Group.

Institution (for legal entities only)

Surname, given name

Address

Post code, City

Telephone/Fax

Email address

Signature



REFERENCES

Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V. Gerhard Peschers (ed.). Bücher öffnen Welten: Medien für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013.

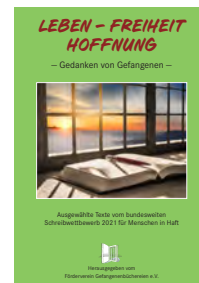
Thomas Sutter. Lesen und Gefangen-Sein: Gefängnisbibliotheken in der Schweiz. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2015.

Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.(Hrsg.), Bücher öffnen Welten: Die Gefangenenbücherei Münster als Deutschlands

„Bibliothek des Jahres 2007“ – Wurzeln, Werdegang und Wirkung. Münster: Ardey, 2017.

Lisa Krolak. Books beyond bars: The transformative potential of prison libraries. Hamburg: UNESCO-Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2019.

,PEACE' bookmark in the seven languages of IFLA.



Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V. (Hrsg.). LEBEN · FREIHEIT · HOFFNUNG: Gedanken von Gefangenen. Geldern: jva druck und medien, 2024.



For more references, please visit the website of the Prison Library Support Group.

WEBSITES

Homepages of the Prison Library Support Group:
www.fvgeb.de and www.libertree.eu



International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), Project page for prison libraries worldwide:

<https://www.ifla.org/library-service-to-people-in-prisons/>



How to help?

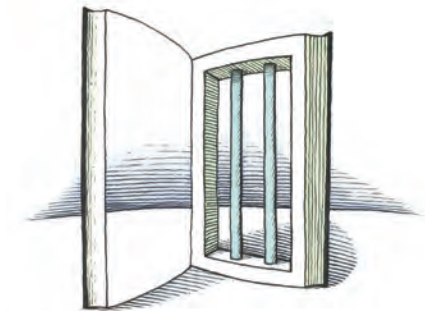
- Support incarcerated people in getting access to appropriate media.
- **Donate** current media that is not older than five years and could be of interest to the user. Therefore, please contact first the officer in charge of the prison library in the correctional facility.
- **Donate** money.
- Raise people's awareness for the needs of the Prison Library Support Group.
- Offer book events and take the initiative for new funding projects.
- Join the Prison Library Support Group (Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.).

We will be happy to provide you with a contact person from our association or with other potential cooperation partners regarding any question, suggestion, project planning, or exchange of experiences.

Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.
Gerhard Peschers (Second Chairman)
Mühlenstraße 61
D - 48268 Greven
Germany
mobile phone: +49 (0) 1578 40 66 253
Email address: kontakt@fvgeb.de
Websites: www.fvgeb.de and www.libertree.eu

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BOOKS OPEN WORLDS



Prison Library
Support Group
(Germany)

Improved Library Services For Incarcerated Persons

In general, every correctional facility provides library services for incarcerated individuals—either directly or through access to a catalogue. For many prisoners, this is the first time they consciously discover reading and come to value the library as a “pharmacy for the soul.” Prison libraries offer meaningful opportunities for constructive use of leisure time, supporting recreation, education, and personal development among the prison population.

The Prison Library Support Group aims to raise awareness among both citizens and institutions, encouraging a shared sense of social responsibility and solidarity. In cooperation with correctional facilities, the group works to improve library services for individuals in prison and under arrest.

Its members include private individuals as well as professionals from diverse fields, such as librarians, booksellers, prison service officers, architects, authors, and lawyers, along with various institutions.

The Prison Library Support Group maintains close connections with the German Library Association, the German Association for Literacy and Basic Education, PEN, the Goethe-Institut, and UNESCO.

Founded in December 2016 by 24 members at the Münster Correctional Facility in Germany, the group seeks to expand its membership both nationally and internationally in order to promote a wide range of projects. Its work is closely linked to the relevant section of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). Today, the Prison Library Support Group has grown to 130 members. Its honorary members include Peter Finkelgrün, Denis Goldberg († 2020), Jiří Gruša († 2011), Günter Kunert († 2019), Rolfraffael Schröer († 2022), and Ruth Weiss († 2025).

Remarkable Facts from the Chronicle of the Prison Library Support Group



Bibliothek
des Jahres
2007

“LIBRARY OF THE YEAR 2007” IN GERMANY

The prison library of the Münster Correctional Facility was awarded German Library of the year 2007. The jury states that the Prison Library Support Group created the fundamentals to share this model experience nationwide.

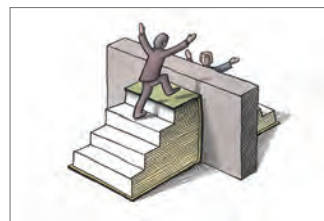
CONCEPT AND SPACE RENEWAL

Inspired by the award ceremony, Prof. Julia Bolles-Wilson, a member of the Prison Library Support Group, conducted two seminars at the Münster School of Architecture. These seminars led to the design of spaces for 12 new prison libraries, several of which were subsequently realized. In addition, she initiated further renovations and improvements in other prison libraries.

AUTHOR READINGS

Authors repeatedly participate in events behind bars, thus showing solidarity with the Prison Library Support Group, e.g. Joe Bausch, Jiri Grusa (†), Günter Kunert (†), Sten Nadolny, Bernhard Schlink, Marga Spiegel (†), Erich Loest (†), Wolfgang Hohlbein, Sebastian Fitzek as well as members of the writers’ association or the PEN.

TREVELING EXHIBITIONS



The association offers the following two travelling exhibitions: „Libertree. Bücherbäume überbrücken Mauern“ presents a vision of dialogue and integration across dividing walls between people through the use of media. Further information is available at: www.libertree.eu

„Lesen verbindet – Alphabetisierung als Menschenrecht“ documents the issue of low literacy, both in Germany and internationally. Further information is available at: www.raus-blick.de

SPECIALIST LITERATURE

In 2013, the Prison Library Support Group published the reference work “Bücher öffnen Welten: Medienangebote für Menschen in Haft in Deutschland und international” with the publisher De Gruyter. The publication was presented at the International Library Congress in 2015 in the form of a poster session.

In 2017, documentation on the Münster prison library—formerly awarded “German Library of the Year 2007”—was published. In 2019, UNESCO published “Books Beyond Bars” on prison libraries worldwide, written by a member of the Prison Library Support Group. It was presented at the International Library Congress in 2019 as a poster session and translated into German in 2020 under the title “Bücher hinter Gittern.”

AWARD COMPETITION “PRISON LIBRARY OF THE YEAR”

On the occasion of its 10th anniversary, an award competition for prison libraries was announced for the very first time in 2016 by the Prison Library Support Group. It honors successful library services for incarcerated persons, setting important impulses for the future development of prison libraries.

WRITING COMPETITION “LIFE, FREEDOM, HOPE”

In 2019, 300 inmates submitted over 400 original texts. A selection of 40 of these works was published as a paperback.



Major Achievements

Members of the Prison Library Support Group have expressed the impact of prison libraries in the following statements:

A user-friendly, well-designed prison library invites individuals to experience the rich diversity of literature. Its media services are perceived by incarcerated persons as both a privilege and an opportunity.

Bernhard Schlink, author

Studies show that incarcerated individuals often face greater challenges in reading and writing than the general population. Therefore, a well-stocked library, combined with active reading promotion and the provision of accessible literature for adults, is essential.

Peter Hubertus, CEO of the German Association for Literacy and Basic Education (1995–2014)

“We should offer prisoners new perspectives and opportunities from the very first day of their detention. They should encounter stories beyond those they already know; they should read—an active and engaging process—and develop reading as a source of enjoyment and comfort. This may not make them better people, but it can make them more hopeful. That would be a major achievement.”

Sten Nadolny, author

Many individuals become delinquent in part because they have not learned how to use their leisure time constructively. Prison libraries therefore play an important role in supporting social rehabilitation.

Roswitha Müller-Piepenkötter, 2005-2010 Minister of Justice in North Rhine-Westphalia

Reading reveals new ways of living and opens up fresh perspectives on one’s own life.

Maria Look, Head of Münster Correctional Facility (2001–2014)

Immersed in reading, the constraints of reality fall away.

Günter Kunert (†), author

Sender

To

Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.
Gerhard Peschers (stellv. Vors.)
Mühlenstraße 61
48268 Greven
Germany

Direct Debit Authorization

Dear Sir or Madam,
I hereby authorize the Prison Library Support Group on a revocable basis to withdraw my membership fee from my bank account by means of a direct debit as follows:

IBAN:

Swift / BIC:

Bankers:

If my account does not have the required coverage, the account-keeping bank institute (Sparkasse Münsterland Ost, BIC WELADE33, Förderverein Gefangenenbüchereien e.V.: IBAN DE53 4005 0150 0034 1359 96) is not obliged to cover the submitted direct debit.

Date

Signature