Press release

INCOMPLETE: Digital science needs digital fitness in libraries

INCOMPLETE – International Conference on Economics and Business Information in Berlin discussed digital transformation in libraries – participants from Europe, Africa, Asia, North and South America see stakeholder and human resources management as the biggest challenges

Kiel/Hamburg, 15 May 2019: Librarians, information specialists, and researchers from 33 countries and five continents gathered for the second international library conference in the field of economics information “INCOMPLETE – International Conference on Economics and Business Information” in Berlin. The conference topics ranged from Alexa to visualisation, from Open Access to data policies in research journals. On 6 and 7 May 2019, the ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics welcomed more than 120 international participants to the INCOMPLETE conference.

The progress of digitisation confronts libraries all over the world with new challenges: not only must they digitise their business operations and change their business model; they must also find ways to create a workforce with the necessary digital skills. Employees must be open to transformation processes, implement digital solutions, anticipate opportunities, keep up a constant dialogue with researchers, and ideally actively engage in promoting changes.

The International Conference on Economics and Business Information (INCOMPLETE) addressed the topic of “Digital Transformation”.

The following core observations appeared again and again in presentations and discussions:

- Libraries re-invent themselves and create new areas of expertise, e.g. research data management, data mining or Artificial Intelligence.
- Libraries equip their staff with digital skills for new and old tasks, i.e. skills that enable employees to apply digital technologies, to use them within the framework of their assignment profiles, and to press ahead with the digital transformation of business operations in their library.
- Digital fitness plays an important part beside the professional-technical skills (information and data literacy) and business skills such as autonomy, communication ability, networking skills, and agility.
- It is crucial for libraries to stay in close contact with their users and to constantly acquire knowledge about needs, expectations and working routines.
Thorsten Meyer, chief librarian of the ZBW and chair of the INCONECSS: “From Nigeria to Finland, all participants of INCONECSS agreed that building a digitally competent and interdisciplinary workforce is vitally important for the scientific infrastructures of the current generation. It is important to know the needs, working habits, and daily routines of researchers and students in economics and to see them as the central starting point for day-to-day work.”

With INCONECSS, the ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics hosted an internationally unique conference for libraries that offer services aimed specifically at economists. More than 120 participants from 33 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America met in Berlin on 6 and 7 May 2019. The conference aimed to present best-practice case studies from different countries and to offer a platform for stimulating talks and discussions, with a particular emphasis on networking.

Look back with us at INCONECSS 2019:

Programme and conference slides: https://www.inconecss.eu/program.html

Speakers: https://www.inconecss.eu/speakers.html

Press photos: https://www.zbw.eu/de/ueber-uns/presse/pressebilder/veranstaltungen/

About the ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics:
The ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics is the world’s largest information centre for economic literature. The institution holds more than 4 million media items and enables access to millions of online documents in economics. In 2018 alone, more than 6.5 million digital full-texts were downloaded. In addition, the ZBW provides a fast-growing collection of Open Access documents. The repository EconStor currently gives free access to more than 170,000 articles and working papers. EconBiz, the portal for international economic information, allows students and researchers to search among ten million datasets. The ZBW edits two journals in economic policy, Wirtschaftsdienst and Intereconomics. The ZBW is a research-based academic library. Professors in computer science and an international group of PhD candidates carry out transdisciplinary research on the digitisation of the science system. Research at the ZBW is connected to international networks. The main co-operation partners are engaged in EU projects and in the Leibniz Research Alliance Open Science. The ZBW is a member of the Leibniz Association and a foundation under public law. The ZBW has been honoured repeatedly for its innovative library work with the international LIBER Award for Library Innovation. In 2014, the ZBW received the German “Library of the Year” award. In 2019, the ZBW celebrates its 100th anniversary.

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