

MOBILE APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS AS A WAY TO PROVIDING LIBRARY SERVICES

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ABOUT THE NIAGARA PROJECT

The main aim of the project is to utilize the partnership between universities in Zambia, Tanzania, Poland and Norway to improve and expand information services by developing libraries' ICT infrastructure and librarians' digital competencies.

The specific objectives of the project are as follows:

- to strengthen the digital infrastructure in partner university libraries in Tanzania and Zambia that will benefit all students and staff and ensure inclusive and equal access to library and information services;
- to examine current digital competencies needed for efficient provision of library and information services;
- to develop and implement tailored courses (the primary target groups are the HEI librarians and LIS students in Tanzania and Zambia).

Further target beneficiaries are all students and faculty members (including those with fewer opportunities) in the noted countries and beyond.



1. INTRODUCTION

Digital application

- **A mobile digital application** is any application software that can be used by a computer, mobile device, or tablet to perform useful tasks.
- It is simply a computer program created to carry out or facilitate a task on a computing device.
- It should be noted that although all applications are programs, not all programs are applications.
- Some common examples of digital applications are social networks, banking applications, transportation applications, games, business management systems, among others.

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital application

- **A mobile digital platform** is a web-based structural software package that speeds and eases transactions among users via a mobile device.
- It is a digital space that provides facilities for users to collaborate, interact or transact digitally. Digital marketplace and digital platform are sometimes used interchangeably.
- Examples of mobile digital platforms include social media (Facebook, Instagram), e-commerce (Amazon, Etsy), media sharing (YouTube, Spotify), and on-demand services (Uber, Airbnb).

2. LIBRARY ACTIVITIES REQUIRING THE USE OF MOBILE DIGITAL APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS

Library activities and services that require the use of digital applications and platforms include:

- Are effectively accomplished by more than one person.
- Require inputs from others in the institution.
- Require suggestions from external sources.
- Involve sharing risks, responsibilities, and rewards.
- Require involvement of other institutions.

2. LIBRARY ACTIVITIES REQUIRING THE USE OF MOBILE DIGITAL APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS

Thus, in libraries, digital applications and platforms are used for:

- Acquisition and digital collection development.
- Cataloging and classification.
- User registration.
- Circulation management.
- Reference services.
- User education.
- Information needs assessment.
- Current awareness.
- Research support services.
- Marketing library services

3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR USAGE OF MOBILE DIGITAL APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS IN PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

For usage of digital applications and platforms in provision of library services, the library should have the following:

1. Basic digital infrastructure

- The ICT infrastructure is an avenue for digital collaborations in libraries.
- This infrastructure is made up of the internet, computers, sources of power and other ICT devices for data input and output.
- The library should have the basic ICT infrastructure to support the use of digital collaborations tools and platforms.

3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR USAGE OF MOBILE DIGITAL APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS IN PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Requirements continues..

2. Digital skills

- Digital skills are important for using digital applications and platforms.
- When adopting digital applications and platforms for collaborations, it is important to select digital platforms which do not require more efforts to use.

3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR USAGE OF MOBILE DIGITAL APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS IN PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Requirements continues..

3. Stakeholders and library user engagement plan

- The library should have a plan to engage users and other stakeholders.
- The plan involves selection of stakeholders and users the library to engage with, level of interactivity required, and decision on digital application and platforms to use in the engagement.

3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR USAGE OF MOBILE DIGITAL APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS IN PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Requirements continues..

4. Digital content creation plan

- It is important to have a plan on digital content creation.
- The plan should spell out the goal for digital content creation, target audience, the number of content to be created, how to be shared to stakeholders and how to monitor the impact of the content distributed.

4. MOBILE DIGITAL APPLICATIONS AND PLATFORMS TO SUPPORT LIBRARY ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES.

- There are several mobile digital applications and platforms which can support digital collaboration in libraries.
- These applications and platforms may be integrated into the library's website or accessed as stand alone.
- Digital applications and platforms are summarized in Appendix 1 (click the link below to access)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nghyY8kM9rDu7-ifglRBHdorelZN_FgvpCT3h6VPDIE/edit?tab=t.0

5. SELF ASSESSMENT

Click the link below for self assessment

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1tAChfSsJeGUqTQ2QBi0P5MNQHTkYumYBlSksI2eBa7Y/edit>

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