2022-2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- ITOCA’S 24TH ANNIVERSARY
- ICML+ AHILA 2022 CONGRESS
- DR. G. CHIMWAZA APPOINTED AS CHAIR OF THE RESEARCH4LIFE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.
- ITOCA DONATES TO YOUTH FOR SURVIVAL
- ITOCA - DAAD COOPERATION: E-RESOURCES TRAINING FOR SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS
- ORCID’S GLOBAL PARTICIPATION FUND (GPF)
- ITOCA RAMPS UP VIRTUAL TRAINING
The 13th International Congress of Medical Librarianship (ICML) was held on the African continent for the first time in 2022 from the 15th to 19th March. The Congress was delivered in hybrid format with the in-person event hosted at the Protea Hotel Fire & Ice, Pretoria, South Africa. It was held in conjunction with the Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA) bi-annual Conference.

The congress theme was ‘A call to action: Engaging to save lives’. It gave the delegates an opportunity to reflect on the contributions that medical librarians and other information professionals are making to achieve global health goals by connecting, engaging, and ultimately improving health and saving lives.

The Congress brought together about 200 medical librarians, academics, researchers, and other professionals from related disciplines. Delegates had a knowledge packed agenda which consisted of presentations, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses and breakout sessions. The programme reflected on the contributions that medical librarians and other professionals are making to achieve global health goals by connecting, engaging, and ultimately improving health and saving lives.

ICML was launched in 1953 and takes place every 4 years, it is sponsored by IFLA’s Health and Biosciences Libraries Section. The 13th ICML + AHILA Congress was hosted by ITOCA in collaboration with the City of Tshwane, SA Tourism Convention Bureau and several other partners.

To access the congress proceedings, visit our website at: https://icml2022.org/proceedings
DR. G. CHIMWAZA APPOINTED AS CHAIR OF THE RESEARCH4LIFE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

Our Executive Director Dr. Gracian Chimwaza was recently appointed Chair of the Research4Life Executive Council. He succeeds Ylann Schemm, Director of the Elsevier Foundation and VP of Corporate Responsibility at Elsevier, who held this role from June 2020 to July 2022. He will be serving his term with Lise McLeod (WIPO) who was elected Vice-Chair of the Research4Life Executive Council. ITOCA’s involvement with the partnership spans two decades, since the launch of Research4Life. During this time, our primary focus has been to spearhead Research4Life outreach, training and user community engagement in Africa via capacity development. Dr Chimwaza has leveraged his position at ITOCA to develop programs that have contributed to building of user communities and training of Research4Life champions in Africa.

ITOCA DONATES TO YOUTH FOR SURVIVAL

For the year 2022, ITOCA’s Mandela Day donations were dedicated to Youth for Survival of South Africa. Youth Survival is aimed at addressing the social and economic development challenges faced by the economically disadvantaged communities, especially women, children and the youths, and therefore provides developmental support programmes that are aimed at changing their livelihoods.
The ITOCA and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) cooperation that started in 2012 trained new African scholarship holders on effective use of library digital resources to increase African scholarship. The DAAD has been offering scholarships to Africans, enabling many to study in Germany and also to study at selected African universities under the in-country/in-region scholarship programme.

The in-country / in-region programme is tailored to develop capacity in the region for both present and future teaching academic staff in the universities. ITOCA supports this effort by offering training that helps the scholars access and use available scholarly digital resources to improve the quality of research and university education.

Two hundred and eighty-five Masters and PhD scholarship holders from eighteen African countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal, Malawi, Mauritius, DR Congo, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) were trained in 2022 under the programme.
Since 2020, ITOCA has partnered with ORCID to increase its reach in the Sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia regions. ORCID strives to enable transparent and trustworthy connections between researchers, their contributions, and their affiliations by providing a unique, persistent identifier for individuals to use as they engage in research, scholarship, and innovation activities.

In 2022, ORCID launched the Global Participation Fund (GPF). This programme was developed to remedy gaps in ORCID participation from organizations in the Global South. In these Focus Communities, ORCID aims to provide funds to: foster the development of ORCID Communities of Practice, working with local partners who can build understanding and use of ORCID in local contexts; and create and enhance technical integrations to support the realization of the benefits provided by the use of ORCID. To learn more about ORCID’s GPF visit: https://info.orcid.org/global-participation-program/global-participation-fund/

ITOCA RAMPS UP VIRTUAL TRAINING

In the last three years thousands of researchers, academic staff and librarians have attended ITOCA learning programmes virtually. Travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in 2020 spurred on the ramping up of online and blended learning programmes. ITOCA redesigned several of its courses to fully online training with both synchronous and asynchronous sessions.

In 2022 ITOCA ran 7 online courses which resulted in the training of 2085 participants. The courses included Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS) and closed online courses.