

of his writing with enthusiasm and sincerity. In addition to introducing these two books, he also firmly expressed his stance of support for the Taiwan government and people.

Saint Vincent also especially arranged for Peggy Carr, the nation's permanent cultural ambassador to Taiwan and the author of another of the donated books, to read from her works at the event. In addition, in order to promote the integration of culture-related books into teaching and cultural learning fields, and illustrate the relevant benefits for domestic teachers to observe and consult, it was arranged for P'ei-lin T'an and Pai-yu Yeh, two students from Yongan Elementary School, to demonstrate with a reading from the Saint Vincent children's English picture book *Flippity Floppity Wing*.

Director-General Tseng, in addition to thanking Ambassador Andrea Bowman for the book donation and related arrangements, expressed particularly sincere thanks to Prime Minister Gonsalves for pre-recording his comments on the book donation activity. The Director-General said that the prime minister's discussion and commentary expressing his support for Taiwan and its people were truly very significant for Taiwan. At the same time, she said, it was also deeply significant as regards Saint Vincent's and the National Central Library's joint dedication to promoting reading attainments and bilateral cultural understanding, and staunchly declared that the National Central Library was extremely honored to have become a solid collaborative partner with Saint Vincent in the promotion of reading and the advancement of cultural exchanges and would continue to cooperate intimately with the embassies of its diplomatic allies to create a fruitful future. The National Central Library would also, by sharing books and cultural resources, strive with its diplomatic allies to support cultural learning and English education, eliminating distances and barriers between people.



Director-General Tseng pictured in a group photo with ambassadors and other distinguished guests following the book donation ceremony.

## ■ Taiwan's Reading Atmosphere and Reading Engagement in 2022: The Reading Power of the Whole Nation Recovered, and the Use of Public Library Entities and Websites Grew Comprehensively

The 2022 Annual Report on Reading Atmosphere and Reading Engagement in Taiwan press conference was formerly held on March 29, 2022, in the International Conference Hall of the National Central Library. The event provided analysis of the reading ability and reading interests of Taiwan's population in 2022. Analysis of the reading ability of the whole people by means of statistics of public library operations and services was undertaken and, in relation to a total of 132 aspects, commendations were issued for "cities with excellent performance in overall reading ability" and "cities with excellent performance in reading ability sub-items." The press conference was launched with a wonderful dance performance, "Jump into the Different World of Book City," by New Taipei City Tucheng District Guangfu Elementary School's dance troupe.

Ming-yu Lin, Political Deputy Minister of Education delivered remarks in which he shared his own experience of reading and encouraged the entire nation to read. As he did so, he said that the Ministry of Education has long been committed to promoting the construction and development of public libraries and improving the reading ethos of the whole nation, in order to build a scholarly society for lifelong

learning for all. Amid the cooperative promotion and efforts of the public libraries of the counties and cities of the entire nation, from the perspectives of system operation, space building, reading promotion and collection enhancement, library reading resources and service capacity had been upgraded, all of which had enabled the public to experience deeply the transformative and innovative power of libraries, and the National Central Library's report on the entire Taiwan people's reading ethos attested to public libraries' efforts and achievements in promoting reading for all. He also, he said, hoped that the press conference would serve as a reference for the senior officials present and the local governments of counties and cities. He looked forward, he said, to the joint efforts of the county and city governments and the Ministry of Education in the future in the construction of collection resources in public libraries, the optimization of reading space, reading promotion activities and other aspects, to highlight the role of public libraries as lifelong learning centers and knowledge centers for the public.

In the course of the event, Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng of the National Central Library offered analysis of "Taiwanese people's reading ability," and reviewed the performance in respect of various reading abilities of Taiwanese people in 2022. In 2022, people across the country fell in love with libraries, and the number of visits to public libraries in various places increased by 27.72 million over 2021, to a total of 86.31 million person-times in the whole year (growth of 47.31 percent). In terms of the total number of book borrowers and the total number of books borrowed, the former was 24.97 million, an increase of 6.07 million (32.12 percent) over 2021. The 9.311 million total number of books borrowed created a new record; an annual increase of 23.34 million volumes (growth of 33.45 percent) over 2021, with an average of 4.00 volumes borrowed per person across the country. In terms of the cumulative number of tickets processed in 2022, that processed for citizens across the country reached 20.02 million, an increase of 760,000 over 2021 (growth of 3.95 percent). In 2022, the number of e-books borrowed by the public also rose again, with a total of 9.33 million books borrowed, an increase

of 1.27 million books (a rise of 15.76 percent) over 2021. Throughout the year, people used library website resources more than 660 million times, a substantial increase of more than 100 million instances (a growth rate of 20.28 percent) compared with the previous year.

Taiwan's public libraries showed the resilience of their services in 2022. As people gradually resumed the pace of their daily lives, libraries continued to grow and develop creativity under the ever-changing epidemic situation, evolving constantly and exercising innovation, accompanying people's learning and spiritual growth. In recent years, public libraries in many counties and cities have gradually carried out the construction of new buildings and the renovation of old buildings, and continued to enrich their collection resources and launch a rich variety of reading activities, so that the library not only borrows books, but also provides activities in which to participate and interact. Functions such as discussion, learning sharing, and rest and interaction make the library an arena that is intimately related to people's lives, and it is also an important place for all people to learn for life and cultivate reading skills and personal competitiveness.

For detailed report content, please visit <https://nclfile.ncl.edu.tw/files/202303/efda9658-b129-4fdc-a8bf-ec263034ac5f.pdf>



*Group photo of VIP guests at the 2022 Annual Report on Reading Atmosphere and Reading Engagement in Taiwan press conference.*