

focus of the meeting was a report on replacement of the NBINet automated system currently underway by NCL, including the results of a questionnaire survey regarding the automated system.



*Successful Conclusion of the 2024 NBINet Collaborating Library Directors Meeting*

## ■ NCL, the Taiwan Digital Publishing Alliance, and the Taipei Book Fair Foundation Co-host and International Forum on “Trends and Changes in the Publishing Industry in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan after the Pandemic”

The National Central Library, in collaboration with the Taiwan Digital Publishing Alliance and the Taipei Book Fair Foundation, jointly hosted an international forum on “Trends and Changes in the Publishing Industry in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan after the Pandemic” on October 2, 2024. This forum examined the significant impacts of the global pandemic on the publishing industry and explored trends in digital publishing and reading. Six prominent publishing professionals and experts from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan were invited to share insights, discuss the current state of the international publishing industry, and exchange experiences.



*The poster for Trends and Changes in the Publishing Industry in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan after the Pandemic*

The event commenced with opening remarks by Ms. Wen-Chen Pong, Chairperson of the Taiwan Digital Publishing Alliance and CEO of Global Views - Commonwealth Publishing Group. Ms. Pong highlighted that the event was made possible through collaboration facilitated by the Taipei Book Fair Foundation, bringing together publishing professionals and experts from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The forum focused on sharing insights into trends in the international e-book market, analyzing the current state of the industry, and exchanging experiences regarding policy implementation, fostering mutual learning and cooperation.

During the morning session, Mr. Tatsuro Imura, Deputy Director of Kodansha Japan, presented the current growth trends in Japan's e-book market. He generously shared insights into the company's electronic manga publishing workflow and its development journey. This included the shift toward simultaneous print and digital releases, followed by the unification of pricing between print and digital formats, which led to significant sales growth during the pandemic. This strategy ultimately achieved the goal of maximizing profitability across all products. Following this, Mr. Woong-Joon Chae, Senior Researcher at the Korean Publishers Association, provided an overview of the implementation of Korea's fixed book pricing system. He elaborated on the impact and challenges faced by publishers and libraries under this policy. Lastly, Mr. Min-I Ho, Chairman of Locus Publishing, analyzed Korea's experience with the fixed book pricing system. He highlighted its benefits in promoting the development of independent bookstores and fostering fair competition for younger generations in the publishing industry, which in turn creates greater space for innovation.

The afternoon session began with Ms. Junko Kamata, President of Voyager Japan, leading a presentation on the current state of Japan's e-book market. She shared insights into her company's digital publishing production workflows, marketing strategies, and competitive advantages. Following this, Mr. Seung-Kyu Kim, Researcher at the Korean Publishers Association, analyzed the current state of Korea's

e-book market and discussed consumer reading habits. Finally, Ms. Yi-Fang Lai, Division Chief at the Taiwan Institute of Economic Research, presented a statistical analysis of Taiwan's e-book market, highlighting its current status and development trends.

This lecture, attended by over 200 participants from various regions, including publishing professionals and readers interested in e-book development trends, was a resounding success. The event fostered active discussions through online interactions, particularly on topics such as book pricing systems and the application of AI in digital publishing, marking a perfect end to the event.



*A group photo of the presenters*

### ■ NCL and Saudi Arabian Trade Office in Taipei Cohost the 2024 World Arabic Language Day Celebrations

The Saudi Arabian Trade Office in Taipei, in collaboration with the National Central Library, held the 2024 "World Arabic Language Day" celebration on December 8, 2024, the second day of the Taiwan Reading Festival. The event featured an exhibition showcasing significant Arabic works translated into Chinese. The celebration took place at the main hall of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall and was organized in partnership with the Department of Arabic Language and Culture at National Chengchi University and the Arabic Department of Radio Taiwan International, aligning with the 2024 Taiwan Reading Festival. Distinguished guests included Nabeel Al-Tel, Director of the Jordan Business Office, Mohammed Muslem Said Al Baraami, Director of the Oman Trade

Office in Taipei, representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Taipei City Government, as well as delegates from Islamic embassies, institutions dedicated to Arabic language studies, key figures from the Arab and Islamic communities, scholars, students, and language enthusiasts.

In her speech, NCL Director-General Han-ching Wang stated that Arabic is one of the oldest languages in the world, characterized by a rich history, profound cultural heritage, and a wealth of accumulated wisdom. It is also one of the six official languages of the United Nations. Arabic serves as a medium of communication for hundreds of millions of people worldwide and as a bridge for transmitting philosophy, science, art, and literature, fostering knowledge development and cultural exchange. In today's rapidly globalizing world, respecting and valuing cultural diversity has become our shared responsibility. In recent years, NCL has been dedicated to promoting international exchanges and expanding its global impact, particularly through interactions and collaborations with cultural and educational institutions in Taiwan. The library has worked with embassies of allied nations and foreign offices in Taiwan to organize book donation projects, reading promotion events, and cultural activities. Moreover, the library invites foreign institutions in Taiwan to participate annually in the Taiwan Reading Festival, showcasing various cultures and reading traditions, which has become a hallmark of the festival. Libraries carry the mission of preserving cultural heritage and fostering cultural exchange. NCL continues to encourage cross-cultural collaboration and scholarly exchanges, introducing the wisdom and charm of the Arabic-speaking world to Taiwanese readers through exhibitions and related cultural events.

The "World Arabic Language Day" celebration is not only a grand event for language enthusiasts but also an opportunity for cross-cultural dialogue. We hope to work together to help more people learn about and understand Arabic and its culture, thereby enhancing international dialogue and cooperation.

In 2024, the Saudi Arabian Trade Office joined the Taiwan Reading Festival for the first time, introducing Arabic reading activities and distributing the latest