

On October 23, participants attended a sub-forum and site visit at the National Library of Public Information. The sub-forum, themed "Applications of AI in Public Libraries," featured presentations by Hong Qian, Director of Changzhou Library, on the use and expression of cultural symbols in public libraries during the AI era, and Chiong-hui Hsu, Section Chief at the National Library of Public Information, introduced Taiwan's first generative AI-powered virtual librarian, Xiaoshu. Xiaoshu provides consultation, book recommendations, and chat services. Following the sub-forum, attendees participated in a site visit to explore the National Library of Public Information's achievements in digitalization. The visit offered opportunities for sharing experiences, fostering mutual learning, and exchanging best practices.



*The delegation from Mainland China touring the National Library of Public Information*

On the morning of October 24, participants visited the Taoyuan City Library Main Branch to learn about the library that attracted the highest foot traffic in Taiwan last year. The visit provided insights into the library's planning, operations, architectural features, and floor layout. In the afternoon, attendees toured the Multimedia Innovation Center at NCL. The visit highlighted the center's unique collections and various digital and creative spaces. Participants were particularly impressed by how the center creates an open, interdisciplinary, youthful, and innovative environment, leading public libraries toward a new and diversified service model.

On the morning of October 25, participants visited the National Palace Museum. In addition to viewing three exhibitions—Boundless Connections: Ancient

Maps of Roads and Transportation, The Arrival of the Princess: Traces of Princesses in Qing Dynasty Documents, and National Treasures in Focus—they also admired renowned artifacts such as the Jadeite Cabbage, the Meat-shaped Stone, and the Mao Gong Ding (Mao's Tripod).



*The delegation from Mainland China touring the National Palace Museum*

### ■ **“A Shared Sky: The World of Chinese Texts and Cultural Exchange” NCL Organizes Ancient Text Exhibition in Malaysia’s UTAR**

On November 27th, 2024 National Central Library and Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) held the opening ceremony of their jointly organized exhibition of ancient texts and documents at the UTAR Kampar Campus, entitled “A Shared Sky: The World of Chinese Texts and Cultural Exchange” held from November 27th, 2024 to January 6th 2025.

NCL Deputy Director-General Chih-Tsung Weng expressed that books and reading are a common language throughout the world. In recent years, NCL has worked to promote collaborative international exhibitions with prominent libraries around the world in the hopes of sharing invaluable cultural heritage and also to promote awareness of NCL’s collection throughout the world. Deputy Director-General Weng hopes that the joint curation of this exhibition with UTAR will be the start of new cultural exchanges between the two institutions. He also expressed gratitude and regards on behalf of NCL Director-General Han-ching Wang, emphasizing the value she places on this collaboration.



*"A Shared Sky: The World of Chinese Texts and Cultural Exchange" Exhibition Held at Malaysia's UTAR*

The opening ceremony for the exhibition was held at the UTAR Kampar Campus with Ms Charlin Chang, Director of the Education Division at TECO Malaysia in attendance. Director Chang not only thanked UTAR for their collaboration on this exhibition, she also commended the exhibition's significant contribution to cultural exchange. Other esteemed guests at the opening ceremony included UTAR Vice President Dr Choong Chee Keong, Director of Mary KUOK Pick Hoo Library Ms Ang Suan Sim, UTAR's Institute of Chinese Studies Assoc. Prof Dr. Chong Siou Wei, and Director of the UTAR International Office Dr. Lai Soon Onn. UTAR Vice President Dr Choong Chee Keong expressed that ever since NCL established a Taiwan Resource Center for Chinese Studies (TRCCS) at UTAR on November 29th 2013, they have actively worked to promote academic cultural exchange between the two institutions. In addition to donating publications about Taiwan to the university for use in academic research, NCL has also collaborated with UTAR in organizing international conferences and Taiwan Lectures on Chinese Studies. These efforts hold deep significance in the promotion of academic, cultural, and educational exchange between Taiwan and Malaysia. Vice President Dr Choong Chee Keong looks forward to continuing and strengthening the close relationship between the two institutions in future collaborations.

The exhibition is organized around five main themes, the first: "Square It Off: The Evolution of Printing and Writing," features a collection of rare prints including oracle bone rubbings and painting

prints as an exploration of the history and evolution of writing and printing technologies. The second theme, "A World of Words: Chinese Texts and East Asian Civilization," displays prints of Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese texts from the NCL collection, providing visitors with insights into Chinese character exchange and the role of ancient Chinese texts as a medium of disseminating knowledge and culture within the East Asian cultural region. The third theme, "Paper Trails: Evidence of Malaysian History in Chinese" presents relevant ancient texts for a glimpse at cultural exchanges in Southeast Asia that have continued unceasingly since ancient times, paying witness to the splendid history of printed civilization. The fourth theme, entitled, "Formosan Footprints: Rediscovering the Beauty of Taiwan" presents traces of ancient travel to Taiwan; through the records left behind by scholars of the era, the exhibit faithfully presents the beauty, history, and local ethos of Taiwan a century in the past. The fifth theme, entitled, "Treasury of Treasures: Highlights from Special Collection" presents a special selection of representative print of ancient works from NCL's collection, exhibiting the earliest dual color overprint text, the smallest book, the Yongle Encyclopedia, and other special works.



*An exhibit of valuable ancient text prints from the NCL collection*

NCL also organized a Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies held in conjunction with the exhibition, inviting Professor Kean-Fung Guan of National Tsing Hua University's Department of Chinese Literature to give a talk entitled, "Traversing the 'Dark Continent:' Chinese Translation and Dissemination of David Livingstone's Writings on Africa." The talk explores the work of Scottish missionary David Livingstone, who has received attention by late-Qing researchers,



his work "Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa," and its acceptance and dissemination in the late-Qing period. Focusing on these rarely used historical and literary materials, Professor Kean-Fung Guan explored the linguistic contexts, ideologies, and poetic structures that appear within their various translations and the significance they reflect, thereby reconstructing the contexts in which David Livingstone's role and work were accepted and disseminated within the world of cultural studies at the turn of the 20th century.



*UTAR faculty and students attend a Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies*

## ■ Reading is Beautiful · Creating the Future Together—2024 Taiwan Reading Festival Takes Joyfully to The Stage

The Taiwan Reading Festival Carnival was held amid merriment at the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall from December 7 to 8, 2024. The up and coming Taiko drummers from Hsinchu City Fuli Junior High School stunned the entire audience with their performance of "Reading the Future," which kicked off the prelude to the event. Administrative Deputy Minister Teng-Chiao Lin of the Ministry of Education, National Central Library Director Han-Ching Wang and guests from co-organizers jointly pieced together the knowledge tree to light up the light of reading.



*Launching Ceremony of Taiwan Reading Festival Carnival*

Administrative Deputy Minister Lin said, "The theme of the 2024 Reading Festival, Reading is Beautiful · Creating the Future Together; we hope that, through this activity, everyone can feel the innovative energy and infinite possibilities that reading brings. Nowadays, textbook-style reading is no longer the norm, and "reading literacy" is an important development goal of the 108th curriculum. "Literacy orientation" has become an extremely important change in the main axis of education, and the ability to read is the key to the cultivation of basic abilities and can also be used as a skill that you can carry with you.

In recent years, the Ministry of Education has vigorously promoted reading for infants and young children in public libraries, diversified reading promotion programs, subsidies for primary and secondary school book purchases, continuous improvement of reading promotion teacher programs, construction of public libraries and enrichment of library hardware and software equipment, energetically advocating the importance of reading. According to the results of the National Central Library's annual collection and analysis of reading promotion by public libraries in counties and cities, the data for 2023 showed that middle-aged people aged 35-44 are the main reading group in libraries, and the borrowing rate of schoolchildren aged 6-11 is second only to that of middle-aged people. It grew by 4.22 percent compared to the previous year, and the borrowing rate of readers aged 0-5 has also been on the rise (up 2.44 percent), which shows that the importance of early reading literacy has become a consensus among everyone.

The 2024 "Happy Reading Carnival" event is innovative and diverse. The National Library of Korea's National Children and Youth Library, the National Library of Thailand, and the National Library of the Philippines set up activity booths to share reading activities of foreign libraries with the public. One hundred and thirty institutions, including 11 Taiwan-based organizations and the Library Association of the Republic of China, public and school libraries, museums, publishing houses, bookstores, and reading groups jointly set up more than 200 reading booths to showcase the results of