



Call for Articles

Artificial Intelligence: Expanding the Frontiers of Belgian Archival and Library Practices

The rapid development of artificial intelligence is transforming the ways in which cultural heritage institutions work, organise their collections and make them accessible. Archives, libraries and museums are increasingly experimenting with AI for tasks ranging from digitisation and automatic transcription to metadata enrichment, classification, discovery and user engagement. At the same time, these technologies raise fundamental questions about professional expertise, ethics, responsibility, authenticity and access.

The next thematic issue of the Journal *Archief- en Bibliotheekwezen in België / Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique (ABB)* invites contributions that examine the impact of artificial intelligence on archives, libraries and museums, with particular attention to professional practice in Belgium and to developments relevant to the Belgian sector.

We welcome contributions from archivists, librarians, museum professionals, researchers, academics, digital humanities specialists, information scientists and other practitioners working at the intersection of AI and cultural heritage.

From new tools to new professional questions

The issue aims to go beyond an overview of the latest AI tools and projects. We are particularly interested in contributions that consider what AI means for the work, responsibilities and professional identity of archivists, librarians and museum professionals.

Contributions may explore, for example:

- **Changes in professional practice and workflows:** How is AI changing everyday work? What tasks are being automated or transformed? What new skills and forms of expertise are required? How are organisations adapting their processes and responsibilities?
- **Research and scholarship:** How does AI affect research methods, research questions and research results? How does the use of AI change the ways in which researchers discover, analyse and interpret archival, library and museum collections?
- **Search, discovery and access:** How do AI-powered search, recommendation and retrieval systems change the ways in which users discover and access collections? What opportunities and limitations do these systems create?
- **Collection development and processing:** How can AI support acquisition, appraisal, selection, cataloguing, classification, transcription, OCR, semantic indexing, metadata enrichment or duplicate detection? What are the implications for professional decision-making?
- **Preservation:** What possibilities does AI offer for assessing preservation risks, managing digital objects or supporting format migration? What challenges arise concerning the long-term sustainability of AI-dependent workflows and technologies?
- **Mediation and public engagement:** How are chatbots, conversational interfaces, personalised recommendations and other AI applications changing access to and engagement with collections?

- **Professional and disciplinary questions:** How do concepts such as authenticity, provenance, neutrality, accessibility and professional expertise need to be reconsidered in an AI-mediated environment?
- **Ethical, legal and societal issues:** What questions arise concerning bias, transparency, intellectual property, privacy and data protection, accountability and human–AI collaboration?
- **Sustainability and technological dependence:** What are the long-term implications of relying on proprietary AI systems, rapidly changing technologies and computationally intensive tools?
- **AI infrastructure, organisational capacity and collaboration:** What infrastructures are needed to develop and use AI in libraries and archives? How do they deal with computing capacity, data infrastructure, interoperability, security and access to AI systems? How can shared infrastructures, expertise, data and tools support the sector while avoiding unnecessary duplication and dependence on individual vendors or platforms (e.g. AI-Antenna, BE-AIFA)?

Contributions from Belgium and beyond

A central objective of the issue is to make current Belgian expertise, initiatives and professional experiences visible, while situating them within broader international developments.

We therefore particularly encourage contributions based on Belgian institutions, collections, projects or professional experiences. Contributions from outside Belgium are also welcome when they offer a clear comparative perspective or raise questions that are relevant to the Belgian archival, library or museum sector.

Rather than aiming for a comprehensive international state-of-the-art overview, the issue seeks to bring together concrete professional experiences and critical reflections on the transformations AI is bringing to our fields.

Types of contributions

We welcome a range of approaches, including:

- **Critical and conceptual analyses:** Articles addressing the ethical, legal, societal or professional implications of AI, or examining how AI challenges established concepts and principles within archival, library and museum practice.
- **Technical contributions:** Articles presenting methodologies, tools or systems developed or used in practice, including evaluations of their performance, reliability, limitations and applicability.
- **Experience reports, research projects and case studies:** Accounts of specific projects or implementations, including their objectives, successes, failures, unexpected outcomes and limitations. Contributions may focus on particular applications, such as automatic classification, audiovisual restoration, transcription, metadata enrichment or AI-supported discovery.
- **Research-based contributions:** Studies examining the impact of AI on research practices, methodologies, questions or results involving archival, library or museum collections.

- **International and comparative perspectives:** Contributions comparing approaches in Belgium with those in other countries, or examining international developments that have implications for Belgian practice.
- We particularly welcome contributions that combine **practical experience with critical reflection** and that make clear what can be learned from a particular implementation, experiment or professional experience.

Submission of proposals

Authors are invited to submit a short proposal (around 4000 characters) before **30 November 2026** outlining:

- the proposed title;
- the central question or argument;
- the material, case study or experience on which the contribution is based;
- the relevance of the contribution to the theme of the issue; and
- a short biographical note about the author(s).

Proposals may be **submitted to abb@kbr.be** in Dutch, French, German or English.

Following the selection of proposals, authors will be invited to submit a full article for review by the journal's editorial and academic review process. The texts are due by **15 April 2027** (for publication in November 2027).

About ABB and its periodical

Archief- en Bibliotheekwezen in België / Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique (ABB) brings together professionals and researchers from the archival and library fields. The association aims to study issues encountered by archivists and librarians in their professional practice and to strengthen links between the two professional communities. Internationally, ABB represents Belgium within the International Council on Archives (ICA).

The Journal *Archief- en Bibliotheekwezen in België / Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* publishes scientific contributions on archival science, library science and related disciplines. The journal combines theoretical discussions and technical questions concerning the preservation, appraisal, restoration, description or mediation of archival and library materials with contributions on current developments, institutional history, collections and the history of the professions.

Since 2007, the journal has combined a thematic section, bringing together contributions from specialists in Belgium and abroad, with a general section containing traditional articles and regular features such as chronicles and book reviews. The journal's thematic focus alternates between archival and library-related issues. The journal is published with the support of the *Belgian Universitaire Stichting / Fondation universitaire*.

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