



  **YOUTH FOREST**
  **POLICY DAYS 2022**

1-3 December 2022 | Online

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Living Library Manual

Prepared for
readers and books

During our Workshop day, we will host a Living Library session. Here, we want to invite you all – either as curious readers, or as books!





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What is a Living Library?

The Living Library (also known as the human library) method, used worldwide at various events, seeks to promote understanding and dialogue between different people and to fight prejudices and discrimination. When you come to visit the Living Library you pick a book that sounds interesting from a catalogue, but instead of a pile of paper, you will get to borrow a real person – with a story to tell! You will be able to ask the book whatever questions you have in your mind concerning the topic of the book, but remember to be respectful – do not bend the pages, or spill coffee on them!

Living Libraries are in general about all different sorts of topics. However, in our Workshop, we will limit the topic variety to the “Working Life Section”. So as a book you get to tell about yourself and a topic that is important for you, an event or project you organised, or just giving handy hints for life, e.g. about work-life balance. You are always allowed to leave questions unanswered or to return to the safety of the bookshelf. Before the library opens we will brief our books, and make sure that they are prepared to be borrowed.

Obviously, there will be no Living Library without books. Therefore, we are hoping that many of you will volunteer for this programme point. Do you have a story to tell? If so, please indicate it at the registration form!

REGISTRATION FORM



What kind of books are we looking for?

Some examples:

- Do you have a great skill that helps you in your student or working life? If so, how did you get the skill and in which way does it help you? Example title: “My time-management is awesome: I am happy to explain how I structure my day”
- Did you manage to get a fantastic traineeship, a scholarship or make your dream project at university come true? Please tell us about it! Example title: “Himalaya – writing your Master Thesis at 4500m above sea level”
- Do you represent some social, political or religious group or a minority? Does this affect your working life? Often we are fast forming our opinions about groups we do not belong to but are at the same time too shy to ask someone who represents them... Could you help build bridges? Example title: “Being the only indigenous person in our team is (not) a problem” or “I have only one arm, but I can still be a forester!”
- Would you like to share your dream job with us and how you got there? Example title: “I founded a company and love it!”
- We hear self-help books are all the rage! Do you have some awesome methods for coping in everyday life, and reducing stress or did you manage to establish yoga at your workplace? Example title: “Why juggling is great for your concentration and how to convince your boss about this” or “How I manage to not get crazy if the workload is too high”

How do I become a book?

Each book can be borrowed for 15 minutes from the readers. Then they will be returned and the readers can choose another book.

If you have an idea for a book but are not sure if it fits, please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you are interested to become a book, please fill this form <https://forms.gle/RmCxCDWUtzdkxJRt7>. You would need to send us a book title (see suggestions above) and a short description about the content of your talk until **10th November 2022** by filling in the form at our website or here. Similar to the back cover of a book. This will help readers to make a well-informed choice which book to borrow. During the Workshop, you will have a virtual breakout room where people can come and talk to you for 15 minutes. Then the groups change. If you have time and energy, we invite you to stay after the Workshop and continue the Living Library as long as you want to.



How do I become a reader?

Simply register for our Workshop and attend that day. You can browse between the book descriptions prior to the event on our website and think which book you would like to borrow. Please understand that it might not be possible to always get the book you want, but we will try our best. We will have at least 4 rounds of book exchanges, so you can read different books for sure.



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Rules for Readers

- Only one book can be borrowed at a time.
- A book can be borrowed for 15 minutes, and then it must be returned to the Living Library.
- You are not allowed to take the book home or lend it to someone else.
- You must return the book in the same or better mental and physical condition as borrowed.
- It is forbidden to cause damage to the book, tear out or bend pages, get food or drink spilt over the book or hurt their dignity in any other way. You are responsible for preserving the condition of the book.
- You are encouraged to ask questions and share your point of view, but always with respect to the person who has volunteered.
- You accept the fact that the book can quit the conversation if they feel that you treat them in an inappropriate manner or hurt their dignity.

Hints for Books

- Be yourself: be honest and open to talk. Listen carefully. Do not act in another role or invent characteristics for yourself. The reader will eventually realize and you will lose credibility.
- It can be useful to prepare some factual information (statistics, research, etc.) or pictures, depending on your topic
- Be ready to share your reflected personal experience. If questions become too intimate, feel free to say that you do not want to answer or simply need a break.
- Accept and remember that your Reader has borrowed your title and is interested mainly in that aspect of your personality. While it may feel limiting, this is normal in the context of the Living Library.
- While you might have to repeat yourself over and over to different Readers, try to treat each of your Readers as if he or she was the first one.
- Readers will be interested in your title for a variety of reasons. A good question to start the conversation is 'Why did you choose my book?'
- It may turn out that a reader is ignorant or for some reason becomes verbally aggressive and/or attempts to hold you responsible for a variety of social problems. Try to remain calm and show understanding, while expressing your disagreement where necessary.
- You will mostly be borrowed by two or more people. Try to avoid being used to sort out differences of opinion between your Readers.
- If you feel uneasy or humiliated by a Reader, recall the rules of the Living Library: you have the right to end the discussion if you feel insulted.
- And above all, enjoy being a Book! It can be a very enriching and interesting experience.