

ELIAS 2026

Reimagining Africa

The organisers are happy to invite you to the 2026 ELIAS meeting which will be held at the African Studies Centre Leiden (ASCL) at Leiden University in The Netherlands. Kindly find all the details below.

Date: Friday 19 June 2026
Time: 9.00 – 18.00 (followed by optional dinner)
Location: African Library
[African Studies Centre Leiden \(ASCL\)](#)
Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands

Practical Strategies for Access, Visibility, and Use of African Library Collections

Libraries and archives within the European Libraries in African Studies (ELIAS) network hold rich and diverse collections that are essential to African Studies research worldwide. Yet many of these materials—print, archival, audiovisual, and digital—remain underused due to challenges related to discoverability, access, description, and outreach.

The one-day ELIAS meeting aims to bring together librarians, archivists, and information professionals to exchange practical approaches to improving the visibility, accessibility, and active use of African Studies collections. The focus is on hands-on experiences, tools, workflows, and lessons learned, rather than theory-driven discussions.

By sharing concrete case studies from ELIAS institutions and beyond, the conference will strengthen professional collaboration and help participants translate shared challenges into actionable solutions.

The aim is to:

- Share practical methods for improving access to African Studies collections
- Explore ways to enhance discoverability through metadata, cataloguing, and digital platforms
- Discuss user-centred approaches to collection development and services
- Highlight successful digitisation and outreach projects
- Strengthen collaboration and knowledge exchange within the ELIAS network

If you would like to contribute we welcome the following formats:

- Individual papers or presentations (15–20 minutes)
- Roundtable (3-4 participants) or facilitated discussion

- Creative or practice-based presentations (e.g., exhibitions, digital projects, storytelling)

Proposals should include:

1. Title of presentation/session
2. Abstract (250–300 words) outlining the topic, approach, and relevance to the theme
3. Presentation format
4. Name(s), institutional affiliation(s), and short bio(s) (100 words max per presenter)
5. Contact information

Please submit proposals as a single PDF or Word document to:

l.n.kanis@asc.leidenuniv.nl with the subject line: ELIAS 2026 Submission.

Important Dates

- Proposal submission deadline: 15 March 2026
- Notification of acceptance: 1 April 2026
- Meeting date: Friday 19 June 2026

Participation and Registration

Participation is aimed at ELIAS members, but is also open to people who would like to get to know the network or get involved. You can register by sending an email to:

asclibrary@asc.leidenuniv.nl. A registration fee of EUR 50 will be charged on site.

Questions

For inquiries about the ELIAS Network contact: Sophia Thubauville (Thubauville@em.uni-frankfurt.de)

For inquiries about the ELIAS Meeting contact: Liesbeth Kanis (l.n.kanis@asc.leidenuniv.nl).