



Estonian Literary Museum



# Estonian Literary Museum Development Plan

2024–2027



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# 1. Introduction

**The Estonian Literary Museum (ELM)** is a state research and development institution administered by the Ministry of Education and Research and a centre of excellence for innovative basic and applied research in the field of cultural history and heritage. The ELM plays an important role in international research in humanities and provides information services to the whole of society.

**A**s a memory institution, the ELM provides access to the world's most diverse and comprehensive research collections in the field of Estonian cultural history and folklore, as well as to collections of national records and publications related to Estonia, including personal archives. The ELM is responsible for the supplementing and development of the scientific collections, their long-term preservation and the provision of reliable and trustworthy IT systems.

The oldest units of the ELM are the Archival Library (AL), founded in 1909 as a department of the Estonian National Museum, the Estonian Folklore Archive (EFA), founded in 1927, and the Estonian Cultural History Archives (ECHA), founded in 1929. In 2000, the Folkloristics Department of the Institute of the Estonian Language (FD, 1947) joined the Estonian Literary Museum. Established to house the archives and publications of many organisations, personal collections and archives, the ELM has become a research and memory institution equipped with state-of-the-art IT infrastructure and technology. What makes ELM research collections unique is that they were formed during the national awakening. The databases formed as a result of citizen science in the 19th and early 20th centuries cover very different groups in society. The ELM is a central custodian and interpreter of Eastern and Western diaspora and minority collections. The core activities of the ELM in the collection, research, preservation, providing access to and promotion of cultural heritage are supported by the Administrative Department and the IT workgroup, preservation and conservation specialists, a technologically advanced digital centre (including a photo and sound studio) and the ELM Scholarly Press. National cultural heritage and source materials are made available to the public in the form of studies, research collections, databases, open data



***The Development Plan defines the ELM's strategic objectives, key indicators and target levels, as well as the strategic framework for its activities.***

and annotated source publications.

ELM is an internationally renowned humanities centre. It was **the leader** of the Centre of Excellence of Cultural History and Folkloristics in Estonia (2000-2007), the Centre of Excellence of Estonian Studies (2015-2023) and **a member** of Estonian Roots: Centre of Excellence for Transdisciplinary Studies on Ethnogenesis and Cultural Diversity (2024-2030) led by the University of Tartu Institute of Genomics.

The ELM was the highest-ranking research institution in the humanities in 2017. The ELM is a partner institution of E-Varamu and the Centre of Estonian Language Resources, objects of the Research Infrastructure Roadmap.

The influence and significance of the institution in the

local and international research space is expanded by five non-profit organisations registered and operating as specialist academic institutions in the ELM – the Academic Folklore Society, BaltHerNet, the Estonian Society for Digital Humanities, the Estonian Folklore Institute, and the Association of Estonian Life Stories.

The ELM Development Plan 2024-2027 has been prepared on the basis of the Estonian Culture Development Plan 2021-2030, the Estonian Language Strategy 2021-2035 and the roadmap of the 'viable Estonian society, language and cultural space' focus area of the RDIE, which set the preservation, availability and appreciation of a viable, developing culture and cultural memory that is open to the world as the objective. The Development Plan also reflects the ELM's own vision, mission, strengths, values and development needs, which have been analysed and discussed with the involvement of ELM employees, management, the Supervisory Board and cooperation partners. The Development Plan defines the ELM's strategic objectives, key indicators and target levels, as well as the strategic framework for its activities.



## 2. Mission

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, the mission of the ELM is to ensure the preservation and viable development of the Estonian language, culture and nation by collecting, preserving and ensuring access to cultural heritage.

### We ensure that:

- the Estonian culture is vibrant, evolving and open to the world, and participation in culture, tradition and heritage is a natural part of everyone's life;
- the role of cultural history, literature and heritage in the development of society is valued;
- the memory of the Estonian people – oral, written and digital cultural heritage – is maintained, preserved long term and accessible to the public.

In cooperation with local and international partners, we create new knowledge and make sense of societal processes. The ELM participates in society and acts as an expert to help the people of Estonia understand and make sense of changes in the cultural, economic, social and political environment, in order to recognise both threats and new opportunities to preserve our language, culture and identity. The ELM secures the use of intangible heritage in creative work and research, supporting cultural diversity and developing the Estonian scientific language.



## 3. Vision

The ELM is a world-class centre for the study of Estonian culture, the heart of Estonianness, which builds a bridge between the rich past and future of language and culture.

The ELM is at the forefront of the study of the languages and cultures of small peoples, creating and sustaining dialogue worldwide. Thanks to the activities of the ELM, the preservation and presentation of Estonian and Estonian-language culture in a global

context is ensured and the continuous development of research and education is supported. The ELM's credibility as an academic cooperation partner is high, ensuring continuity of culture and language and an innovative approach in the humanities.

# 4. Core values

## Science-orientedness

The ELM conducts high-quality innovative research that meets international standards and the principles of research ethics and ensures the preservation, development and interpretation of the sources of Estonian and other peoples' national identity with the support of modern technologies.

## Consistency

The ELM maintains and promotes the continuity and vitality of Estonian culture and cultural heritage, building on long-term experience and traditions and has a consistent competence in researching, preserving and providing access to Estonian national culture and the competence to initiate and realise new ground-breaking ideas and research directions.

## Reliability

The research and archival activities of the ELM are trustworthy and its staff are the best professionals in the field and competent and reliable specialists whose voice is widely respected in Estonian society and international professional circles. Additionally we also have the trust of the Estonian people and our kindred people.



## Openness

The ELM is open and inclusive to its staff as well as to its partners, target groups and stakeholders – other research, development, memory, educational and cultural institutions in Estonia and abroad; the ELM is open to scientific communication. The activities of the ELM are known and appreciated, and the public has a strong interest in the ELM's key undertakings, the scientific and cultural heritage it preserves and the results of its research.

## Nationalism

The creative nationalism of the ELM promotes diversity, cultural richness and tolerance, takes into account other small nations, placing Estonian culture alongside other small nations of the world; analyses what is happening in Estonian society and conceptualises Estonianness, Estonian cultural history, literature and folklore.

## Competence

The ELM has a highly knowledgeable, experienced, internationally recognised, dedicated and creative cultural and research staff, as well as a skilled support staff, who safeguard and value the archives and collections, and contribute in the best possible way to public service and research outcomes.





# 5. Development needs

The development needs of the organisation arise from self-analysis, its role and the goals set in the Development Plan:

- to create a focused research strategy, setting priorities for the content, scope and objectives of research activities, based on national and international research policy trends and needs;
- to enhance and conceptualise the collection of culturally relevant sources on contemporary issues, actively reflecting and analysing societal changes and phenomena;
- to involve different social groups and target audiences in its activities, taking into consideration their interests, expectations and needs, and provide services and products that suit them;
- to ensure the integrity of the collections, improve public access to the ELM's collections and outputs through a variety of channels and formats, and increase the impact and user-friendliness of information sharing;
- to continue to develop technological solutions and innovative methods that support the quality, efficiency and visibility of collections and research;
- to improve the working and salary conditions of employees, create opportunities for the development of professional skills to ensure their motivation, satisfaction and loyalty;
- to be in constant partnership with educational institutions, to connect with young people through an attractive traineeship base and science schools; to systematically identify and develop the next generation of researchers, archivists, librarians and other professionals, providing them with training, mentoring and career opportunities;
- to develop detailed plans for the preservation of collections in crisis situations and for possible evacuation and back-up of digital data, including in foreign countries;
- to achieve the economic stability and transparency that support the development of the ELM;
- to develop opportunities for multifaceted use of networks related to archive data and collections and expand the competence of data analysis of collections;
- clarify the division of labour with other research and memory institutions;
- update the ELM's public image and create a marketing plan to increase its visibility and attractiveness at home and abroad.



# 6. Strategic objectives

The main objective of the ELM as a modern research and development institution is to maintain and develop the Estonian language, enrich the cultural life of Estonia and increase the contribution of research to society and to be an influential research institution with international connections. The aim of the ELM is to be a leader in the continuity and high scientific quality of research on our national culture, in order to ensure the preservation and development of intangible Estonian culture in today's information society, and the knowledge of cultural history and folklore in society..

The ELM supports the [Estonian Language Strategy 2021-2035](#) with its activities and ensures the vitality and functioning of the Estonian language in the Republic of Estonia as the primary language in all

spheres of life, guaranteeing the right and opportunity for everyone to use Estonian in Estonia, preserving and strengthening the status, reputation and cultural and information space of the Estonian language and valorise the knowledge of other languages.

With its diaspora-focused activities, the ELM contributes, in accordance with the [Estonian Diaspora Action Plan 2022-2025](#) to the life and development of contemporary Estonian society, promotes cooperation and ensures high-quality service, contributing to the collection and preservation of cultural heritage of Estonians living abroad, and to the integration of the young generation of Estonians living abroad into the Estonian cultural space.

In order to achieve this, the ELM sets objectives in key lines of action. ➡

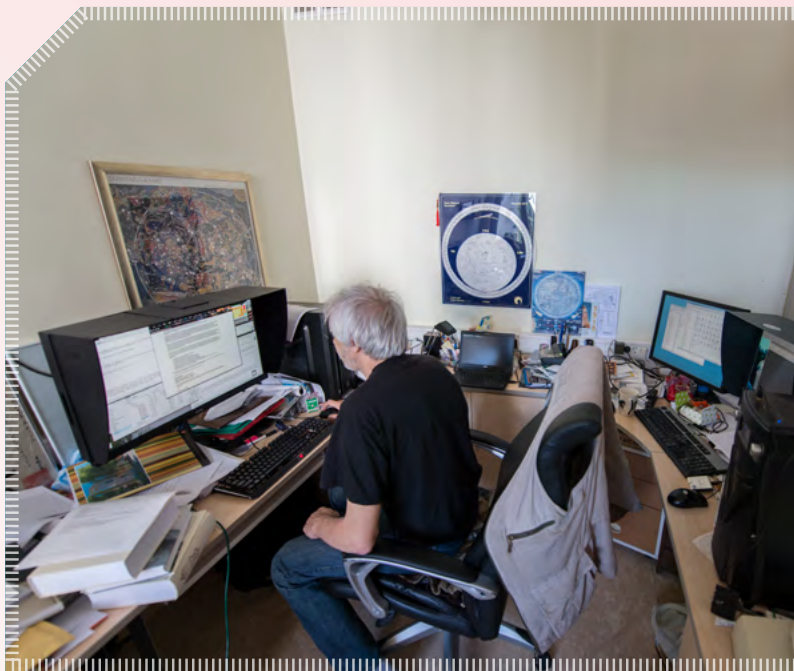




## 6. Strategic objectives

# 1. Basic and applied research at international level

- As a centre for the humanities in Estonia, we will take a leading role in the unique focus areas of the ELM, with the aim of developing a holistic and dynamic view of Estonian culture (and other small cultures). To this end, we will fulfil the objectives established in the [Estonian Research and Development, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Strategy 2021-2035](#) and, upon conducting new research and finding new digital solutions, base our activities on the RDIE focus areas: digital solutions across all areas of life and viable Estonian society, language and cultural space (dominated by the humanities, in particular general and comparative literature studies, literary criticism, literary theory, folkloristics, cultural anthropology, religious studies, musicology).
- In the basic, applied and experimental research of the ELM, the priority development areas are the cultural history of the Estonian national cultural heritage and the Estonian diaspora and Finno-Ugric and other peoples living in Estonia, including literary studies and folkloristics, and both past and present important cultural phenomena. In our activities, we will keep the focus on Estonian subject matter, ensure the competitiveness of Estonian national research and the development of specialist vocabulary in inter- and transdisciplinary studies of folklore, literature and cultural history. The focus is on the characteristics of the older Estonian cultural heritage, the development patterns of Estonian literary culture and the



mechanisms of contemporary culture. The training of our researchers here must enable national research on an international scale, offer comparative and interdisciplinary added value, and incorporate diverse methods of interpretation.

- We will contribute to the activities of established high-level research groups and to the creation of promising new working groups, encouraging domestic and external cooperation.
- The Research Council of the ELM is developing a research and development strategy aimed at specifying the institution's priority and unique research themes and achieving greater capacity to apply for international research and development projects.
- We use an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving, focusing on new, complex and overlooked phenomena.
- Our research is based on the principles of research integrity.





## 6. Strategic objectives

# 2. Science-based development of archives

- ✦ We ensure the quality of public services and safe preservation, accessibility and exploration of collections. According to the objective of the [Culture Development Plan 2021-2030](#), the ELM supports the vitality, development and openness of Estonian culture and the participation of people in culture through its activities, ensuring the long-term physical and digital preservation of cultural heritage and its availability through Ellen, Kivike and ESTER information systems. We will continue to build and develop databases and corpora of specialist subjects and participate in national sectoral development projects.
- ✦ We will ensure the creation of the fullest possible collection of intellectual heritage and publications important to Estonian culture, their long-term preservation and their continued availability, in accordance with the [Legal Deposit Copy Act](#).
- ✦ We shape the principles of collecting, storing, systematising and accessing material on a scientific basis, keeping in mind the current and future needs of research and society.
- ✦ We will involve as wide a range of target groups as possible in the collection and processing of data, while respecting people's rights under the Copyright Act and the Personal Data Protection Act.



- ✦ In our activities, we are guided by three main values – reliability, user-centredness and creativity, based on the vision document [21st Century Library](#).
- ✦ The Archives Council solves the institution's archiving problems, develops its central archiving services, updates archiving-related documentation, including the collection policy, develops a preservation policy, a risk plan and an action plan for the evacuation of collections and the back-up of digital data, including abroad, and prepares a risk analysis.



## 6. Strategic objectives

# 3. Implementation of IT solutions and innovative technologies

- ✦ Based on the objectives of the [Digital Agenda 2030](#), we contribute to the development of the Estonian digital society as an innovative developer of the Estonian language, cultural memory and national sciences.
- ✦ Through our activities, we support the digital transition in the humanities, introduce the potential of applying computational methods in humanities research and the need for modern digital culture research as an important part of the humanities to the public and the research community, contribute to the promotion of related cooperation networks in both Estonia and internationally, with the aim of boosting the development of the field and, as a result, the ability of the ELM to analyse large collections of cultural data and digital cultural phenomena with the most modern methods.
- ✦ We work closely with the Institute of the Estonian Language and other organisations to identify the needs of language technology developers and provide accurate and up-to-date input.
- ✦ We are working on the development of indicator systems, i.e. methods and metrics for measuring the cultural quality of AI.
- ✦ To improve the quality of machine learning platforms, we will create a national cooperation platform using the reinforcement learning method and deal with the leadership and implementation of this process and the technological capability solution.
- ✦ Creation of widely accessible research tools and databases:
  - We will develop modern user experiences that provide engaging and easy access to the ELM's collections (Estonian Book 500, etc.). Success can be measured via web traffic and user satisfaction.
  - The development of a digital laboratory will provide a toolbox and international access to data for researchers, students, teachers, amateur researchers and all other interested parties.
  - We will develop systems to efficiently manage, analyse and publish the data we process in research.
  - We participate on platforms and create content to popularise our research in influential environments where young people spend their time and attention (i.e. Instagram, TikTok).



- We offer content creators innovative digital technologies that support the spread of culture and science in modern information channels.
- ✦ Preservation and accessibility of digital cultural heritage:
  - We ensure the quality, sustainability and adaptability of digitisation of cultural heritage based on the changing linguistic and cultural context, and facilitate cooperation between memory institutions to reach new levels of quality by improving the technological capacity of the system. We discover and create capacities to archive both short and long-term phenomena in the cultural space, e.g. memes, etc.
- ✦ Modernisation of information technology infrastructure:
  - We invest sustainably in state-of-the-art IT infrastructure, tools and software licences to make the daily operations, collaboration and research of the organisation and its staff more efficient.
- ✦ Increasing cyber security:
  - We improve cybersecurity standards and train staff to protect our highly valuable records, data and infrastructure.
- ✦ Adoption of sustainable technologies:
  - We implement green IT and opportunities offered by modern technology to ensure the energy efficiency of the organisation's activities and reduce the environmental impact of our building complex. The indicators are energy savings and reduced environmental impact.



## 6. Strategic objectives

# 4. Active development of education and knowledge transfer activities

- ✦ We contribute to the implementation of the [Education Strategy 2021-2035](#), which aims to support inclusive education in society, acknowledge and value everyone, and enable everyone to learn skills and attitudes to cope with changing situations and realise their potential. We develop excursions, workshops, educational programmes and other educational activities (e.g. teacher training and life story days) for different target groups (e.g. primary school, Estonian and history teachers, primary and secondary school pupils, students and post-graduate students, the elderly), involve the public in the collecting work and promote community research.
- ✦ We will create an education strategy to strengthen existing and create new collaborations where the added value of our archives and research contributes to addressing practical needs in society.



- ✦ We will create an ELM Education Centre to coordinate training, lectures and popularisation activities and to share the knowledge gained from archival and research work in our daily pedagogical work.
- ✦ We communicate our research to national curriculum makers and experiment with unique non-formal education methods (e.g. workshops for young content creators to provide the required content creation base based on our collections and infrastructure), and offer ideas, materials and services for the creative industries and tourism.
- ✦ We will prepare a permanent exhibition of the content and research results, which will offer an attractive insight into Estonian cultural history and heritage.
- ✦ In cooperation with higher education institutions, we contribute to finding and motivating a new generation of employees.

## 6. Strategic objectives

# 5. Openness, visibility and social impact as a collector, custodian, creator and promoter of cultural heritage

- ✦ We contribute to the shaping of Estonian cultural and scientific policy in its various fields. We integrate into EU science and culture policies at various levels.
- ✦ We will actively communicate research results and cultural material to the public and the international research community.
- ✦ We will participate as a partner in social development and debate, and help to create a more cohesive society.
- ✦ We will contribute to the integration of people with a mother tongue other than Estonian into the Estonian information and cultural space, and thus into society as a whole.
- ✦ We will develop business collaboration, taking into account the synergy between research, development, innovation and entrepreneurship, seek opportunities for creative collaboration with businesses, and encourage related staff initiative and readiness.
- ✦ We will communicate cultural heritage and research results to all audiences through traditional and non-traditional methods, including guerrilla marketing and active marketing partnerships with the private and public sectors.
- ✦ We will enhance the flow of information and cooperation between the different units of the institution and improve awareness of the work of the departments and ongoing projects in order to develop a common understanding of the objectives and priorities of the institution.
- ✦ We will find ways to provide a service regarding the management of national measures based on the ELM's content-based competence (e.g. coordination of national programmes).
- ✦ We will update the public image of the institution (which includes solving the name issue) and create a marketing plan.





## 6. Strategic objectives

# 6. Good and inclusive organisational governance and strategic planning of activities

- ✦ We are looking for stable and sustainable funding options that will, among other things, ensure a payroll independent of competitive funding for key research staff and reduce the pay gap. In addition to stable core funding, it will increase the capacity of the institution to apply for research and development projects, both within Estonia and internationally.
- ✦ We will organise the structure and basic processes of the institution based on development needs in order to direct the researchers' main resource – knowledge and energy – to the development of novel ideas, research objects and interpretation models.
- ✦ We will create a pleasant, supportive and motivating working environment for our employees, with flexible forms of work and equal opportunities, based on [European Charter for Researchers](#).
- ✦ As an employer, we are open and supportive, and are developing an in-house motivation and recognition package.
- ✦ We regularly evaluate and measure the success of our activities. We will analyse whether it is possible to offer more services (studio and space rental, reviewing staff assignments) outside the core business and increase own income.
- ✦ We are an economical and environmentally friendly organisation that purposefully promotes sustainable and so-called slow science, helping society make sustainable choices through national science.

## In terms of the content of its activities, the ELM is a:

- ✦ **DIGITAL HUMANITIES CENTRE** – we implement innovative technological solutions to achieve the best results by developing digital humanities methods;
- ✦ **REPOSITORY OF MEMORY** – we collect, preserve and interpret the life stories and autobiographical sources of the Estonian people;
- ✦ **RESEARCH CENTRE** – we support and promote (integrated) research of national culture;
- ✦ **PLACE OF SAFETY** – we collect, systematise and preserve Estonia's printed, handwritten, audio-visual and digital heritage;
- ✦ **CULTURE HUB** – we offer memorable cultural events based on the institution's content activities to the public;
- ✦ **EDUCATION CENTRE** – we engage and inspire learners of all age groups;
- ✦ **INTERNATIONAL HUB** – we work with foreign partners to promote cultural dialogue and comparative studies, international knowledge and mutual understanding;
- ✦ **CREATIVE CENTRE** – we support the use of collections in creative work;
- ✦ **ECONOMIC CENTRE** – we create opportunities for companies to transfer knowledge and innovate and generate business ideas.



# 7. Indicators

## (KEY INDICATORS AND TARGET LEVEL)

KEY INDICATORS	STARTING LEVEL 2024	TARGET LEVEL 2027
Share of competitive financing, varied R&D project portfolio (1 and 6)	850,000	2,000,000
Number of high-level research publications 1.1, 2.1, 3.1 (1)	54	60
Number of joint publications published as a result of domestic and foreign cooperation (1.1+2.1+ 3.1) (1)	20	30
On-site visits by researchers (2)	1,000	400
Statistics on the use of collections in units (records/archival documents) (2)	30,000	30,000
Volume of digitised collections in TBs, units, hours (2)	130 TB	180 TB
Number of database visits (2)	Around 11,000 orders in Kivike, 1,000,000 orders in Folklore server	Around 12,000 orders in Kivike, 3,000,000 orders in Folklore server
Number of participants in excursions and educational programmes (4)	1,000	2,000
Number of trainees (4)	10	20
Number of popularising articles (5)	45	50
Number of public appearances, including at events and in media (5)	100	120
Reputation and renown of institution (5)	Under development	Under development
Number of public events (5)	30	40
Number of KirmusTV broadcasts / visits (5)	12 / 3,500	15 / 7,000
Number of social media followers: ELM FB / ENA FB (5)	2,400 / 3,900	5,000 / 5,000
International networking meetings/conferences organised (5)	20	30
Membership of organisation's staff in expert councils (6)	40	60
Employee satisfaction and motivation survey result (6)	Under development	Under development



# 8. Strategic operational framework

The Estonian Literary Museum bases its development on the values described in the Estonian Constitution and the following documents:

- ✦ [Statutes of Estonian Literary Museum](#)
- ✦ [Digital Agenda 2030](#)
- ✦ [Estonian Language Strategy 2021-2035](#)
- ✦ [Estonian Literary Museum Development Plan 2024-2027](#)
- ✦ [Research and Development, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Strategy 2021-2035](#)
- ✦ [European Charter for Researchers](#)
- ✦ [Estonian Language Technology 2018-2027 R&D programme of the Ministry of Education and Research](#)
- ✦ [Estonian Language and Culture in the Digital Age 2019-2027 language R&D programme of the Ministry of Education and Research](#)
- ✦ [Education Strategy 2021-2035](#)
- ✦ [Good Research Practice 2023](#)
- ✦ [Personal Data Protection Act](#)
- ✦ [Culture Development Plan 2021-2030](#)
- ✦ [Higher Education Act](#)
- ✦ [Estonia 2035 Strategy](#)
- ✦ [Legal Deposit Copy Act](#)
- ✦ [Organisation of Research and Development Act](#)
- ✦ [Organisation of Research and Development and Innovation Act](#)
- ✦ [21st Century Library vision document](#)
- ✦ [Estonian Diaspora Action Plan 2022-2025](#)



## Annexes to Development Plan

- Annex 1.** Estonian Literary Museum's research and development strategy
- Annex 2.** Estonian Literary Museum's IT Development Plan
- Annex 3.** Collection and Preservation Principles of the Estonian Literary Museum
- Annex 4.** Estonian Literary Museum's Educational Strategy
- Annex 5.** Estonian Literary Museum's HR Strategy