

The image shows the front cover of a book titled 'Idéa, texts and photographs' by 'El globus vermill'. The cover is white with a large, stylized, dark grey graphic of a globe or a cluster of interconnected nodes in the center. The title is at the top in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the title, the author's name 'El globus vermill' is printed. The publisher's name 'Nacho Sanz' is at the bottom. The book is part of the 'Libraries of Barcelona' series, as indicated by the text 'LIBRARIES OF BARCELONA' at the top left. The book is bound in a dark grey cover with a white spine. The spine has the title 'Idéa, texts and photographs' and the author's name 'El globus vermill' printed vertically. The book is shown at a slight angle, revealing the spine and the front cover. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

Barcelona's public libraries are one of the city's major cultural infrastructures: an extensive network spread evenly throughout the city that guarantees everyone has access to knowledge and culture. There's a rich diversity of style in their architecture, influenced by the history of the city, and the buildings, be they purpose-built or renovated, are not just repositories for books but open, bright places that play an active role in the daily life of their respective neighbourhoods. However, this model cannot be properly understood without examining a history that began long ago, with the earliest forms of preserving and passing on knowledge that have evolved into the system we enjoy today.

The origin of libraries goes hand in hand with that of writing. Over 5,000 years ago, scribes in Mesopotamia would write in cuneiform on clay tablets to create commercial records, royal decrees and censuses. The first libraries were therefore archives used for administration and control which, over time, also became centres of knowledge. The Library of Alexandria (3rd century BCE) contained works of philosophy, science and literature from various cultures and became a great centre of study and knowledge. This role reappeared in the House of Wisdom in Baghdad (9th century) and the Toledo School of Translators (12th century), which were key to Europe's intellectual renaissance.

In the Middle Ages, books were copied individually by hand, a meticulous, slow and costly process. They were kept, with restricted access, in the libraries of monasteries, cathedrals and universities and the architecture of these places reinforced their role as guardians: enclosed spaces with books secured by chains. However, Gutenberg's invention of the movable type printing press (15th century) was truly revolutionary, making it possible to produce books more quickly and at a lower cost. Bookshops and private libraries proliferated, although access to knowledge remained unequal and limited to certain groups in society.

A major change came about in 1850 with Britain's Public Libraries Act, which led to municipal public libraries being set up, the origin of the so-called Anglo-Saxon model. This sees libraries as a universal, free and open-access service designed to promote education and equal opportunities. In addition to being repositories for books, they also offer reading rooms, specialised staff, extended opening hours and lending services. This new approach was also reflected in the architecture, with accessible, bright, well-ventilated buildings and the model spread rapidly to other Anglo-Saxon countries and Scandinavia.

The situation was very different in Spain, however. Although the first provincial public libraries were created after the state confiscation of ecclesiastical property in 1835, these were still limited and with restricted access. The first major leap forward came in Catalonia in 1915, when the Catalan government launched its Public Library Network, the country's first modern public library system, inspired by the Anglo-Saxon model. These libraries, pioneers in Spain, brought reading to the general public with specially constructed buildings, modern operating standards and a clear educational and social vocation.

The government's project was based on three key features: functional, well-equipped buildings acting as "small temples of civic culture", according to Eugeni d'Ors, the intellectual behind the project; well-qualified staff through the creation of the School of Librarians; and up-to-date, balanced collections containing reference works, fiction and science books, as well as periodicals. One revolutionary aspect was the free and direct access to books. In March 1915, the Catalan government held a tender to promote libraries with separate rooms for adults and children, good natural lighting and comfortable furnishings. One of the projects chosen, for its rationality, was by Lluís Planas, with Noucentista façades symbolising the Catalan identity and the idea of a hygienic, beautiful and efficient city. The plan prioritised decentralisation and placed one library in each province of Catalonia – Valls (Tarragona), Olot (Girona), Sallent (Barcelona) and Les Borges Blanques (Lleida). The buildings in Valls and Sallent are still standing today, although they're now used for other purposes.

This network of libraries was interrupted by the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, revived during the Second Republic (when the Children's Library in Barcelona's Plaça de les Palmeres was built, designed by GATCPAC following rationalist criteria) and stopped again by Franco's regime, but it laid the foundations for an advanced model capable of connecting with the educational and cultural needs of the time. The current network of municipal libraries has inherited its legacy and continues to grow in order to reach all neighbourhoods.



LIBRARIES OF BARCELONA

INTRODUCTION

Libraries are local, intergenerational services that guarantee democratic access to information, knowledge and leisure pursuits. In Barcelona, the public library network is evenly distributed to serve all its districts and has established itself as a driving force for both culture and society, promoting community life in each local area.

The architectural diversity of these libraries reflects the city's history whilst their close ties with the local community help to enliven neighbourhoods.

For all these reasons, this publication provides a historical, architectural, urban and social view of Barcelona's libraries.

BARCELONA 2026
World Capital of Architecture

This publication is part of the programme of Barcelona 2026 World Capital of Architecture, a designation by UNESCO and the UIA (International Union of Architects) that turns the city into a global forum on architecture, urban planning and landscape. Over ten months, the Barcelona City Council will unfold a multidisciplinary programme developed in collaboration with schools, universities and professional and cultural organisations. In addition, Barcelona will also host the UIA 2026 World Congress of Architects, consolidating its position as the global epicentre of architecture.

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GUÍES D'ARQUITECTURA I URBANISME DE BARCELONA

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<p>CIUTAT VELLA</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA BARCELONETA - LA FRATERNITAT</p> <p>Comte de Santa Clara, 8-10 [Barceloneta]</p> <p>Original building: Workers' Cooperative "La Fraternitat" of Barceloneta. Francesc Guàrdia i Vial. 1918</p> <p>Remodelled: Josep M. Rovira. 2001</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA FRANCESCA BONNEMAISON</p> <p>Pedagogue, writer and feminist. 1872-1949</p> <p>Sant Pere més Baix, 7 [Sant Pere, Santa Caterina i la Ribera]</p> <p>Original building: Manor house. 16th-17th century</p> <p>Remodelled: Institute of Culture and Public Library For Women. Josep Fontserè i Mestre. 1857</p> <p>Remodelled: Jordi Campanillas. 2005</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA GÒTIC - ANDREU NIN</p> <p>Marxist politician, writer and translator. 1892-1937</p> <p>Rbla. de Santa Mònica, 30-32 [Barri Gòtic]</p> <p>Original building: Gran Hotel Falcón. Juli Marial. 1879</p> <p>Remodelled: M1441 Arquitectura. 2010</p> <p>To be transferred as per the 2030 Plan. Stock Exchange building.</p> <p>Reforms: J. A. Martínez Lapena and E. Torres</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA SANT PAU - SANTA CREU</p> <p>Hospital, 56 [Raval]</p> <p>Original building: Hospital de la Santa Creu. Guillem Abiell. 1406</p> <p>Library: Sant Pau. 1970 Santa Creu. 1975 Jointly run since 1997</p> <p>To be extended as per the 2030 Plan</p> <p>EIXAMPLE</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA ESQUERRA DE L'EIXAMPLE - AGUSTÍ CENTELLES</p> <p>Photographer. 1909-1985</p> <p>Comte d'Urgell, 145-147 [Esquerra de l'Eixample]</p> <p>Víctor Rahola and Jorge Vidal. 2011</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA VAPOR VELL</p> <p>Ptge. Vapor Vell, 1 [Sants]</p> <p>Original building: Textile factory "El Vapor Vell". 1846</p> <p>Remodelled: Josep M. Julià. 2000</p> <p>To be transferred as per the 2030 Plan</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA FORT PIENC - ANA MARÍA MOIX</p> <p>Writer. 1947-2014</p> <p>PL Fort Pienc, 4-5 [Fort Pienc]</p> <p>Josep Llinàs. 2003</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA JOAN MIRÓ</p> <p>Artist. 1893-1983</p> <p>Vilamarí, 61 / Parque Joan Miró [Nova Esquerra de l'Eixample]</p> <p>Beth Galí, Màrius Quintana and Antoni Solanas. 1990</p>	<p>LES CORTS</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA MONTSERRAT ABELLÓ</p> <p>Poet and translator. 1918-2014</p> <p>Comtes de Bell-lloc, 192-200 [Les Corts]</p> <p>Original building: Benet Campabadal factory. Antoni Pons i Domínguez. 1924</p> <p>Library: 1994 (in another location)</p> <p>Remodelled: Ricard Mercader and Aurora Fernández. 2018</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA SANT ANTONI - JOAN OLIVER</p> <p>Poet and dramatist. 1899-1986</p> <p>Comte Borrell, 44-46 [Sant Antoni]</p> <p>RCR Arquitectes. 2007</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA SOFIA BARAT</p> <p>Religious sister. 1779-1865</p> <p>Girona, 64 [Dreta de l'Eixample]</p> <p>Judith Masana. 2000</p> <p>To be transferred as per the 2030 Plan. Taller Masriera building.</p> <p>Reforms: Länk Arquitectes and DataAE</p> <p>SANTS - MONTJUÏC</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA FRANCESC CANDEL</p> <p>Writer and journalist. 1925-2007</p> <p>Amnistia Internacional, 10 [La Marina del Port]</p> <p>Original building Z - Philips lamp factory. Antoni Grau. 1954</p> <p>Remodelled: Josep Lluís Canosa. 2006</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA LA MARINA DEL PRAT VERMELL</p> <p>[La Marina del Prat Vermell]</p> <p>Future library as per the 2030 Plan</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA POBLE-SEC - FRANCESC BOIX</p> <p>Photographer. 1920-1951</p> <p>Blai, 34 [Poble-sec]</p> <p>Original building: School built by the charity "Juntas de Señoras de Salas de Asilos". 1889</p> <p>Remodelled: Jaume Graells. 2001</p> <p>To be transferred as per the 2030 Plan</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA SARRIÀ - J. V. FOIX</p> <p>Poet, journalist and essayist. 1893-1987</p> <p>Pg. Reina Elisenda de Montcada, 8 [Sarrià]</p> <p>OP Team Arquitectura. 2025</p> <p>NOU BARRIS</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA CANYELLES - MARIA ÀNGELS RIVAS</p> <p>Activist. 1935-1994</p> <p>Rda. de la Guineueta Vella, 34 [Canyelles]</p> <p>Jordi Saumell. 1994</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA LES ROQUETES - RAFA JUNCADELLA</p> <p>Priest and activist. 1931-2019</p> <p>Via Favència, 288-B [Les Roquetes]</p> <p>Original building: Civic Centre. Marcià Codinachs. 1992</p> <p>Remodelled: Soldevila Soldevila Soldevila Arquitectes. 2008</p>	<p>BIBLIOTECA JAUME FUSTER</p> <p>Author, screenwriter and translator. 1945-1998</p> <p>PL Lesseps, 20-22 [Vallcarca i els Penitents]</p> <p>Josep Llinàs and Joan Vera. 2005</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA VALLCARCA I ELS PENITENTS - MARIA ANTONIETA COT</p> <p>Librarian. 1910-1994</p> <p>Pg. Vall d'Hebron, 65-69 [Vallcarca i els Penitents]</p> <p>Francesc Rius, Joan Iníiguez and Carles Lladó. 2011</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA VILA DE GRÀCIA - ROSA MARIA ARQUIMBAU</p> <p>Writer, feminist and journalist. 1909-1992</p> <p>Torrent de l'Olja, 104 [Vila de Gràcia]</p> <p>Josep Llinàs. 2002</p> <p>HORTA - GUINARDÓ</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA EL CARMEL - JUAN MARSÉ</p> <p>Writer. 1933-2020</p> <p>Murtra, 135-145 [El Carmel]</p> <p>Francesc Calbet, Roser Elías and Francesc Guartímoner. 2003</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA GUINARDÓ - MERCÈ RODOREDA</p> <p>Writer. 1908-1983</p> <p>Camelies, 76-80 [Guinardó]</p> <p>Màrius Quintana. 1999</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA HORTA - CAN MARINER</p> <p>Vent, 1 [Horta]</p> <p>Original building: Can Mariner farmhouse. 11th century</p> <p>Remodelled: Josep Vila i Bayó. 2008</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA MONTBAU - ALBERT PÉREZ BARÓ</p> <p>Writer and trade unionist. 1902-1989</p> <p>Arquitectura, 8 [Montbau]</p> <p>Original building: Enric Borràs school. 1960s</p> <p>Library: 1991</p> <p>Remodelled: Oliveras Boix Arquitectes. 2015</p> <p>Remodelled: Moisés Gallego and Tomàs Morató. 2005</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA LA SAGRERA - MARINA CLOTET</p> <p>Activist. 1941-2006</p> <p>Camp del Ferro, 1-3 [La Sagrera]</p> <p>Javier Sanz Rodríguez. 2009</p>	<p>BIBLIOTECA NOU BARRIS - AURORA DÍAZ-PLAJA</p> <p>Writer, translator and librarian. 1913-2003</p> <p>PL Major de Nou Barris, 2 [La Guineueta]</p> <p>Original building: Santa Creu Mental Institute. Josep Oriol i Bernadet. 1889</p> <p>Remodelled: Ricard Pèrdigo and Tomàs Rodríguez. 1997</p> <p>Remodelling of the children's area: Beatriz Borque and Miquel Mariné. 2024</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA PROSPERITAT - IDEAL PLÀSTICA FLOR</p> <p>Pg. Valldaura / Font d'en Canyelles [Prosperitat]</p> <p>Future library as per the 2030 Plan.</p> <p>Project: H Arquitectes and AR 47</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA VILAPICINA I LA TORRE LLOBETA - CARMEN LAFORÉT</p> <p>Writer. 1921-2004</p> <p>PL Carmen Laforét, 11 [Vilapicina i la Torre Llobeta]</p> <p>Juli Laviña and Pilar de la Villa. 2011</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA ZONA NORD - MÀRIA SÁNCHEZ</p> <p>Journalist. 1963-2023</p> <p>Vallcivera, 3 bis [Torre Baró]</p> <p>Rafael Perera. 2009</p> <p>SANT ANDREU</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA BON PASTOR - JOSEFINA CASTELLVÍ</p> <p>Oceanographer. 1935-1939</p> <p>Estadella, 62 [Bon Pastor]</p> <p>Ricard Nieves. 2004</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA IGNASI IGLÉSÍAS - CAN FABRA</p> <p>Dramatist and poet. 1871-1928</p> <p>Segre, 24-32 [Sant Andreu]</p> <p>Original building: Fabra i Coats company. 1880</p> <p>Remodelled: Moisés Gallego and Franc Fernández. 2005</p> <p>OTRAS BIBLIOTECAS</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA DE CATALUNYA</p> <p>Hospital, 56 [Raval] Ciutat Vella]</p> <p>Original building: Hospital de la Santa Creu. Guillem Abiell. 1406</p> <p>Library: in a different location, 1907. Current location, 1931</p>	<p>BIBLIOTECA TRINITAT VELLA - JOSÉ BARBERO</p> <p>Activist. 1945-2009</p> <p>Galicia, 16 [Trinitat Vella]</p> <p>Ricard Nieves and Carlos Fuentes. 2012</p> <p>SANT MARTÍ</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA CAMP DE L'ARPA - CATERINA ALBERT</p> <p>Writer and artist. 1869-1966</p> <p>Indústria, 295 [Camp de l'Arpa]</p> <p>Original building: Bonaventura Costa i Font textile factory. Francesc Mitjans Miró. 1948</p> <p>Remodelled: Oliveras Boix Arquitectes. 2012</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA EL CLOT - JOSEP BENET</p> <p>Politician, historian and editor. 1920-2008</p> <p>PL de les Glòries Catalanes, 37-38 [El Parc i la Llacuna del Poblenou]</p> <p>MBM Arquitectes. 2013</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ</p> <p>Colombian writer. 1927-2014</p> <p>PL Carmen Balcells Segalà, 1 [Sant Martí de Provençals]</p> <p>Suma Arquitectura. 2022</p> <p>BIBLIOTECA POBLENOU - MANUEL ARRANZ</p> <p>Lecturer, historian and archivist. 1946-1990</p> <p>Joncar, 35 [Poblenou]</p> <p>Original building: Can Saladrígas textile factory. Francisco Pascual. 1884</p> <p>Remodelled:</p>
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BARCELONA'S LIBRARY NETWORK

MODEL AND OBJECTIVES

After Franco's dictatorship and the subsequent Transition to democracy, Catalonia's library system became more stable and structured thanks to the first Library Act in 1981 and the "Catalan Regulations for Public Libraries".

In 1987, Barcelona's Provincial Council launched an ambitious library programme: the network became independent from the Library of Catalonia and all services began to be computerised.

Subsequently, in 1993, the Law on the Library System of Catalonia defined public libraries as a mandatory municipal service.

Finally, in 1998, the Barcelona Library Plan was approved and, in 2001, the Barcelona Library Consortium was set up between Barcelona City Council and the Provincial Council.

From this point on, the consolidation of the library network in Barcelona was evident. It expanded following a strategy of local presence and involvement, modern facilities, and greater breadth in both collections and services.

The current Barcelona Library Master Plan 2030, which aims to increase the network to 45 libraries, forms part of Barcelona's Cultural Rights Plan and sets out a clear mission: to guarantee the right to reading, knowledge and innovation as fundamental aspects of democratic life, by means of libraries as places for training, involvement, digital access and social cohesion. The 2030 Plan sets the goal of maintaining and strengthening the commitment to distribute libraries evenly across all neighbourhoods and to guarantee uniform access with a local, equal approach. At the same time, it also establishes lines of action to encourage the co-creation of content, contribute to digital inclusion, promote dialogue between citizens and institutions, and offer cultural activities for all kinds of audiences.



I FIND TELEVISION VERY EDUCATING. EVERY TIME SOMEBODY TURNS ON THE SET I GO INTO THE OTHER ROOM AND READ A BOOK.

Groucho Marx

ARCHITECTURE AT THE SERVICE OF KNOWLEDGE

At the beginning of the 20th century, Catalonia's regional government established a principle that's still in force today, namely libraries as a civic infrastructure with their own functional and recognisable building. This legacy continues in Barcelona, the architecture of libraries forming an inseparable part of the cultural and social project they represent.

The design of these buildings has evolved in line with social and technological changes to adapt to new objectives and requirements. Architectural design has been influenced by the democratisation of knowledge, the incorporation of the internet and new technologies, and the diversification of services. Today's libraries are more open and transparent, reinforcing their ties with their locality. They also offer a rich variety of spaces, often flexible and multipurpose, such as quiet study rooms, areas for group work, children's areas, and spaces for cultural activities, allowing for a wide range of uses. Finally, they also contain new technological resources and are adapted in order to be energy efficient.

Another fundamental feature is their relationship with the urban context. In Barcelona, the network has been deployed with the aim of covering the entire territory and ensuring its buildings become hubs in the community life of the different neighbourhoods, often in conjunction with other facilities (civic centres, schools, markets, etc.) and nearby public spaces. As a result, and in an increasingly digital world, libraries play a key role by offering a physical place of reference, with local involvement and recognised by the community.

In this way, today's libraries are both a place for concentration and also a community meeting place, a place for reading and also a facility with a wide range of cultural activities, a climate shelter and an indoor agora.



In general, the network has been expanded either by renovating heritage buildings, which have required adaptation to meet new needs but express the historical past of the neighbourhood in question, or by means of purpose-built libraries, designed with a clear intention to become a new civic and cultural landmark in the local community.

The buildings that make up Barcelona's library network are therefore an excellent example of the city's different historical periods and also of the best contemporary architecture.

Among the heritage buildings are a former Gothic hospital (Sant Pau - Santa Creu), a farmhouse (Horta - Can Mariner), factories (Francesc Candel, Vapor Vell, Montserrat Abelló, Ignasi Iglésias - Can Fabra, Camp de l'Arpa - Caterina Albert, Poblenou - Manuel Arranz...), a workers' cooperative (Barceloneta - La Fraternitat), a mental health institute (Nou Barris - Aurora Díaz-Plaja) and a school complex (Montbau - Albert Pérez Baró).

Among the more contemporary examples are the Joan Miró Library (the first to be purpose-built, in 1990), the Jaume Fuster Library (one of the three designed by Josep Llinàs), the one in the Eixample district known as the Esquerra de l'Eixample - Agustí Centelles (in a mixed-use building that also houses a nursery school and a civic centre and opens onto an interior courtyard and garden) and the multi award-winning Gabriel García Márquez Library.

In all these buildings, the result is never neutral: the spaces, natural light, materials and colours create experiences that turn the library into a meaningful place and invite people to make it their own.

The library network is therefore an exceptional example of architecture that houses one of the public services most highly valued by citizens.

THE LIBRARY IS THE MOST DEMOCRATIC OF INSTITUTIONS BECAUSE NO ONE - BUT NO ONE AT ALL - CAN TELL YOU WHAT TO READ AND WHEN AND HOW.

Doris Lessing



THE LIBRARIES' NAMES. Memory and identity

How libraries are named also reveals how the library service has evolved. Place names predominated in the early days: the name of the neighbourhood, district or a recognisable place served to identify the library as a local facility linked to the area.

However, the desire to associate each centre with figures from culture and history, especially literature, has gradually gained ground. This not only provides a symbolic reference point but also leads to the creation of specialised collections and the organisation of activities that help to keep the memory of the author in question alive.

For decades, the choice of names was strongly gender-biased, with almost all being male. The absence of women in the nomenclature also meant that women's contribution to culture was invisible and the general public were largely unaware of it. This situation began to change with the arrival of public policies focusing on equality and a critical review of urban nomenclatures.

The 8th of March 2024 represented a leap forward in such policies: all at once, seven libraries in the network adopted the names of prominent women in culture, journalism and activism. This change has brought the number of libraries with female names to fourteen, going some way to rebalancing the symbolic

map of the city and recognising careers that had been historically underappreciated. Even so, the figure is still far from equal: out of the 41 public libraries, only one in three is named after a woman.

A library's name is therefore not merely an administrative detail: the aim is for nomenclature to become a public policy regarding historical memory, whilst recognising important figures, rebalancing historical shortfalls and helping neighbourhoods to achieve a sense of identity through their cultural facilities.

OTHER LIBRARIES

REMARKABLE LIBRARIES

Barcelona has other libraries besides those managed by the Consortium: namely those in museums and cultural centres, universities, public institutions, professional associations and private organisations. They all respond to different needs and house specialised collections.

This guide focuses on some of them due to the architectural uniqueness of their buildings.



The Biblioteca de Catalunya is located in part of the old Hospital de la Santa Creu, one of the city's best examples of Catalan civil Gothic architecture. The Arús and Ateneu Barcelonés libraries take visitors back in time, featuring rooms with little natural light, dark wooden shelves enclosed by glass doors, elevated walkways to reach the highest books, etc.

The Pavelló de la República houses a library belonging to the University of Barcelona that specialises in the period from the Second Republic to the Transition to democracy. Its collections are as exceptional as the building's own architecture and history (it's a reconstruction, as the original was built in Paris for the 1937 Universal Exposition and was later demolished).

The Antic Dipòsit de les Aigües in Ciutadella Park is a library belonging to Pompeu Fabra University, where the historic building and contemporary works complement each other to create one of the most magnificent spaces in Barcelona.

Also noteworthy, in this case due to its absence, is a State Public Library, as Barcelona is the only province that does not yet have one. This has long been demanded and a project was selected in a tender held in 2011, but its construction has yet to start.

Finally, it's also worth mentioning the libraries of the College of Architects (COAC) and the School of Architecture (ETSAB) due to the importance of their collections specialising in architecture.

SOCIAL LIBRARIES

Barcelona is also home to a significant part of the Social Library Network, which complements the rest of the libraries but operates in a very different way. In general, it's made up of collections that have grown out of associations, neighbourhood organisations and workers' and alternative movements, often created to preserve and disseminate specialised materials that are unlikely to be kept by official institutions.

These collections are diverse and heterogeneous: from documentation on social movements, trade unionism and historical memory to alternative publications and personal archives donated by activists. What defines them is the desire to preserve and make accessible those voices and experiences that are often marginalised as a result of the dominant narrative.

These libraries also serve as places for people to get together, debate and share critical thought. They're usually managed collectively and horizontally and have very close ties to the local area and social movements.

Although their reach is more limited than that of public libraries, they form an essential part of Barcelona's cultural and political plurality and have become a necessary complement to the municipal library system.

Nevertheless, the fact that they rely on self-management and volunteers places them in a vulnerable situation and makes their long-term survival difficult. That's why we've only focused on a few of them, namely those that, to date, seem to be more well-established and resilient.



A LIBRARY IS A HOPE, IT IS A FRAMEWORK FOR DIALOGUE, IT IS A CENTER OF INITIATIVES. A LIBRARY, DEEP DOWN, IS A CULTURAL REVOLUTION.

Javier Pérez Andújar

LIBRARIES of BARCELONA

- Municipal library
- Library pending relocation to a new site
- Future library pending construction
- Future library pending site selection
- Other libraries

