VdA - Verband deutscher
Archivarinnen und Archivare e.V.

Pressemitteilung

15. Juli 2025

englische Übersetzung von Christine Diefenbacher
vom 30. März 2026

“Fulda Declaration” by the Executive Board

“A resilient democratic state of law needs resilient archives”

An open, pluralistic society also thrives on open archives. By utilising the archival material they safeguard, they enable diverse perspectives and make the functioning of the democratic rule of law retrowpectively transparent and comprehensible. A strong and resilient democratic state of law needs archives that are equally strong and resilient. They are strong when they are able to carry out their statutory duties according to professional and objective criteria, without being subject to direct political influence. They are resilient when they actively uphold the principles of the democratic constitutional state within their sphere of responsibility, stand up to enemies of the democratic state of law and resolutely defend the free democratic constitutional order.

The events of recent years and months have powerfully demonstrated the importance of taking a clear stand on this issue: for more than three years, a war has been raging in the heart of Europe, in which museums, libraries and archives are also being specifically targeted. Since the beginning of this year, the US government has effectively begun to abolish academic freedom, to delete vast quantities of public sources, to close museums and to dismantle an entire state education administration. Wherever extremists hold positions of power, they invariably target the freedom of science and culture. This applies not only to authoritarian regimes such as those in China or Russia, but can also be observed in democratic states. In the USA and certain EU member states, too, extremists are beginning to reshape societies according to their agenda as soon as they attain positions of power, and are putting their plans into action. This applies to Germany as well.

Considering recent events on the international and national stage, it is time to take a firm stand and to show solidarity with our colleagues who are affected and the institutions for which they work. The VdA therefore supports international initiatives that counter anti-democratic tendencies by facilitating academic work.

In Germany, too, extremists are attempting to exert influence over science and culture. The archival sector must actively fulfil its role as a pillar of democracy. In the face of increasing attacks on a democratic, open and pluralistic society, a wait-and-see approach or retreat is not an option. With the “Fulda Declaration” and the revision

of its mission statement, the VdA reinforces its commitment to a liberal-democratic, fact-based archival sector operating in accordance with scientific principles. Any ideological influence on archival methods must be resolutely countered. The creation of historical records, the cataloguing and preservation of archival materials, and their accessibility are carried out independently of external political influence and are guided exclusively by professional standards.

Moreover, the VdA calls on its members to work towards a coexistence characterised by mutual respect between different nations, cultures, worldviews, religions and sexual orientations, and to oppose any form of individual or group-based discrimination, exclusion and hatred. Views and activities that are diametrically opposed to these principles have no place within the VdA. It is essential to strengthen civil society within a free and democratic constitutional state. In order to clearly demonstrate this self-image of the association both internally and externally, a position that affirms and defends democracy is to be incorporated into the VdA's mission statement.

Der VdA – Verband deutscher Archivarinnen und Archivare e.V. ist ein Fachverband für Archivarinnen und Archivare. Er nimmt sich der Förderung des Archivwesens und der Information im Interesse der Allgemeinheit an. Mit knapp 2400 persönlichen und korporativen Mitgliedern ist er der größte Archivfachverband in Europa.

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Ihr Ansprechpartner zu dieser Pressemitteilung

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