

## **Information needs and behaviors of neurodiverse users in the context of designing inclusive academic library services in the physical library space -NEURO-INC**

The starting point for the project is the idea of inclusiveness of library services, defined here as striving to organize services in such a way that they are accessible and friendly to the widest possible group of users. The literature on the subject contains many descriptions of ideas for adapting library services to the needs of people with disabilities of the motor organs, as well as sensory disabilities of sight and hearing, but the problem of adapting physical library spaces to the specific needs of neurodiverse users is still rarely discussed. This is partly due to the vagueness of the concept of neurodiversity itself, which is primarily defined almost exclusively from the point of view of medical science, and not from the point of view of its social consequences.

In this context, one of the main cognitive goals of the research will be to develop a comprehensive definition of neurodiversity perceived as a feature of library users, based on the achievements of social sciences and taking into account in particular the information and communication contexts of this issue. Other scientific goals include: developing a conceptual, methodological framework for researching the information needs and behaviors of neurodiverse library users, developing tools and procedures for researching neurodiverse library users and testing these solutions in practice, determining the relationship between neurodiversity and the needs and information behaviors of academic library users, developing a comprehensive model for designing innovative information services tailored to the needs of neurodiverse library users, as well as preparation of guidelines and recommendations for librarians, library management and designers enabling for effective adapting existing library services to the needs of neurodiverse users.

The research project is based on the thesis that neurodiversity may have a significant impact on the scope and method of satisfying the information needs of academic library users, including their information behaviors. This may mean that neuroatypical people (f.e. such as those on the autism spectrum, ADHD, or dyslexia), may have different requirements for searching, processing, and using information and interacting with academic libraries.

The issue addressed in the project concerns an important problem both in scientific and social terms. The implementation of the project's objectives will fill the identified gap in research conducted in the field of library information services in aspects related to the design of inclusive library services for neurodiverse users. At the cognitive level, the research will provide a comprehensive methodological framework for researching the needs and information behaviors of neurodivers users, as well as provide observations that allow for the creation of a model for designing inclusive services that take into account the needs of this, often excluded, but increasingly broader group of users. On the level of social application, conducted research will help fight the social exclusion of neurodiverse people in the area of access to information and education.