

Children's services in Helsinki Central Library Oodi

Eeva Rita-Kasari
Special Librarian,
Helsinki City Library
eeva.ritakasari@hel.fi



Oodi in a nutshell

- Construction cost €100 million
- Design: ALA Architects Ltd
- 10 000 visitors a day; 2.5 million a year
- 10 000 m², 3 floors
- 100 000 items in the collection
- Construction started in autumn 2015, and we opened on **5 December** 2018 to celebrate Finland's centenary.
- Oodi is the Finnish Government's official **centennial project**.



Families dreams for Oodi

- In 2012, “**Central library dreams**” campaign with citizens
- A place for children, families and dialogue between generations
- Events for kids
- Storytime in different languages
- Space to explore, climb, crawl, jump
- Musical education, music-related events
- Reading and stories are the main purpose for libraries
- Games and playfulness
- Inspirational activities for young people



**What do we actually do
with kids, families and
young people?**



A place to hang out

- A free public space
- Peaceful and safe atmosphere
- Spending time together
- Services for families:
 - Coffee shop
 - Toilets for small kids
 - Place to heat up baby food
 - Tables for playing board games
 - Sofas
 - Group activities with third parties

Stories and reading

- Sunday evening good night storytime
- Stories in different languages
- Story room: a relaxing space to read
- No digital noise
- Children's collection: 27 000 items
- 73% out on loan
- Collection is too small





Playground Loru

- One of the library's in-house partners
- Open Mon-Fri 9.30am to 6.30 pm
- Helsinki City Department of early childhood education
- Activities for small children and their parents: rhyme time, music events, parent & baby clubs...
- Outdoor playground facilities to open in summer 2019

Events for kids and families

- With partners
 - Publishing companies, organizations, art festivals...
 - > The library provides the venue and marketing resources
- Our own events
 - Harry Potter Book Night
 - Star Wars Day





Oodi as a learning platform



Libraries preserve
knowledge and **values**
as well as **share** and **teach**
new **skills**.
(Finnish Library Act 2017)

We can do it in a fun way,
learn and **do** together.



For daycare centres and schools

- Learning by doing (workshops)
- Creativity is for all

- New skills: problem-solving, coding, creativity, multiliteracy
- Emotional empowerment: experiences, joy, sense of accomplishment



Makerspace visits

- 3D printing
- Make stickers
- Vinyl cutter
- Laser cutter
- “Houston, we have a problem!” Coding robots to perform small tasks
- Lego robots
- Challenges with Sphero robots
- Collaborating to build an inMoov robot
- Stories and makerspace activities brought together

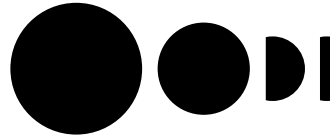


What about young people?

Oodi is for young people

- No designated location for young people
- A lot of places to hang out with friends or on your own
- A Safer Place to Be – workshop for young people





Non-discrimination

Everyone has the right to be at the library. Just hanging out is allowed. Racism and discrimination have no place in the library.

Respect

Always take other people into consideration.

Comfort and well-being

Everyone should respect the comfort and well-being of others.

Promise

Our staff are here for you. It is our job to make sure that Oodi is a safe place for everyone – tell us if you are worried about something.

Young people and reading

- Book talks for Helsinki's 3000 7th grade students (13 yrs old)
- Audiovisual book talks in Kino Regina, cinema run by National Audiovisual Institute
- No separate department for young people : books in the centre of 3rd floor, comic books, LGBTQIA+, games
- Finland's biggest boardgame collection, Helsinki's biggest comic book collection



See you at Oodi!

eeva.ritakasari@hel.fi
oodihelsinki.fi