

Press Release

Walk With Web (WWW) and the Sierra Leone Public Archive (SLPA) Announce the Launch of the Official SLPA Website

September 2, 2025

<https://sierraleonepublicarchives.gov.sl>

Walk With Web, in partnership with the Sierra Leone Public Archives of Freetown, launched the official SLPA website on August 25, 2025, at the University Committee Room, University Building, Fourah Bay College (University of Sierra Leone) in Freetown, Sierra Leone. This launch marks a groundbreaking step in building Sierra Leone's digital capacity and strengthening access to the nation's archival resources.

Walk With Web's CEO, Kartikay Chadha, attended the launch alongside Director and Senior Government Archivist Mr. Albert Moore and his team. Key government officials from across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies also attended the Website Launch Ceremony. These include Mr. Ibrahim S. Kamara, Director of Corporate Strategy & Administration, who represented the Director-General of the Human Resource Management Office (HRMO). Mr. Ibrahim S. Kamara, the most Senior Civil Servant present at the launch, was accorded the opportunity to officially launch the website on behalf of the Government and People of Sierra Leone. Mr. Allan-Lafia Conteh, of the Directorate of Technology, represented the Ministry of Communication, Technology, and Innovation (MoCTI). The Permanent Secretary of Local Government and Community Affairs was represented by Mrs. Khalila J. Thomas, the Deputy Director of Records and Archives of that Ministry. Mrs. Adama Alima Kamara, Deputy Director of Records and Archives at the Office of the President, State House, represented the Office of the President. Mr. Saidu Kargbo, Deputy Director of Records and Archives at HRMO, also attended the Programme. Mrs. Ernestina Berri, Deputy Director of Records and Archives at the Ministry of Health, represented her Ministry. Mr. Yankuba Bangura, Senior Librarian at the Africana Collections of the National Library represented the Chief Librarian, Sierra Leone Library Board. Also present at the ceremony was Mr. Solomon Sellu, Head of the Department of Information Studies and Knowledge Management (DISKM). Other Senior Lecturers of DISKM at the Programme were: Barrister Umaru Bangura Esq, Mrs. Winstona Ama Taylor and Mrs. Vanessa O.C. Pratt. The Head of Fourah Bay College Library, Senior Librarian, and Senior Lecturer at DISKM, Rev. Oliver Harding, was also in attendance. Mr. Michael A. Sam, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of History and African Studies, represented the Head of the Department of History and African Studies. Final-year students from DISKM and Public Archives Staff were also present, as well as some other information management professionals from other MDAs. Their presence underscored the shared commitment to advancing Sierra Leone's digital infrastructure and ensuring broader access to the nation's historical legacy.

It is worth noting that this launch took place at Fourah Bay College, the citadel of Learning, the country's oldest and most renowned institution of higher education. The website is a milestone in Sierra Leone's mission to safeguard its records, while equipping its citizens with digital tools for teaching and engagement. The Sierra Leone Public Archives stands as a national treasure, a testament to the nation's resilience, creativity, and strength. With this digital initiative, Sierra Leone demonstrates its

enduring commitment to preserving history while shaping its future, rooted in accessibility and digital progress.

Acknowledgements

This achievement reflects the dedication of the SLPA team, particularly Mr. Albert Moore, Director & Senior Government Archivist, and Mr. Aiah Yendeh, Senior IT Officer, whose leadership and commitment were essential in bringing this vision to life. This website is supported by the Ministry of Information and Civic Education and the Ministry of Communication, Technology and Innovation of Sierra Leone, under whose guidance the Sierra Leone Public Archives operates, and the new website is managed. We sincerely thank The Ministry of Technical and Higher Education under whose stewardship the Public Archives Office had been a subvented agency of Government since 1965.

Key international collaborators include Prof. Paul Lovejoy of York University, Prof. Suzanne Schwarz of the University of Worcester, and Dr. Érika Melek Delgado of King's College London, principal investigators of the British Library's Endangered Archives Programme (EAP) grants, which provided funds to digitise fragile documents.

Additional contributions came from the DRAGEN Lab at the University of Waterloo, under the directorship of Prof. Steven Bednarski, and REACH Studio at Trent University, led by Dr. Katrina Keefer, in Canada. Susquehanna University in the United States sponsored a training workshop on June 11th and 12th, 2025, led by Prof. Mégane Coulon, assistant professor in the Department of History at the university. Certificates of Participation in this workshop were presented during the website launch event.

Support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) through the Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on Africa and its Diasporas at York University, as well as the Department of History at the University of Worcester, has further anchored the SLPA website in a solid framework of research excellence and global collaboration.

About the Sierra Leone Public Archive (SLPA)

The Sierra Leone Public Archives, housed at Fourah Bay College in Freetown, is the nation's premier custodian of government documents, private papers, maps, photographs, and other materials of significant historical value, safeguarding documents that chronicle Sierra Leone's political, social, and economic evolution. Beyond preservation, the SLPA serves as a hub for research, education, and cultural engagement.

Through innovative initiatives, including the launch of its official website, the SLPA is expanding digital access to its collections, fostering international collaboration, and creating opportunities for schools and institutions across Sierra Leone. Collaborative efforts are already underway; recent workshops, including training sessions led by Prof. Mégane Coulon, have equipped students with practical skills in archival management and digital stewardship. By uniting archival expertise with modern technology, the SLPA is ensuring that Sierra Leone's historical records remain a vital resource for understanding the past, informing present policies, and shaping the future.

About Walk With Web (WWW)

Walk With Web is a federally operated Canadian corporation dedicated to addressing the technical challenges surrounding the development, expansion, and preservation of Social Sciences and Humanities research. Supported by federal agencies and academic institutions in Canada, the United States and Europe, WWW provides customised technical support and develops sustainable, ethically grounded digital infrastructures for archives, communities, and institutions worldwide. Its board of directors include leading international scholars, among them Prof. Paul E. Lovejoy (York University, Canada), Prof. Henry Lovejoy (University of Colorado, Boulder, US), Prof. Melchisedek Chétima (UQAM, Canada), Dr. Katrina Keefer (Trent University, Canada) and Dr. Érika Melek Delgado (King's College London, UK), whose expertise strengthens WWW's commitment to bridging scholarship and technology.

With projects spanning Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, and North America, WWW exemplifies collaboration between industry professionals and academics. WWW develops secure, sustainable platforms that preserve historical knowledge, enhance public access, and empower both local and global scholarship.

For more information, please contact:

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