

Erasmus Staff Training Week 2025

*Meet our Staff*



# Improving the Library Services to Students With LibCal Modules

François Renaville  
Systems & Data Unit



# What is LibCal?

- LibCal is a platform by Springshare used for scheduling and resource management
- Composed of several modules: **Spaces** (+ **Seats** + Equipment + **Maps** + Tickets), **Events**, and **Appointments**
- Adopted by thousands of libraries worldwide
- Allows self-service reservations
- Provides analytics and customizable access rules
- Integrated with other Springshare tools like LibGuides (less with LibStaffer)
- Partial integration with external solutions like Alma, Google Calendar, MS Teams, MS Outlook, etc.
- Lots of options for Branding and Accessibility



# Adoption at ULiège Library

- Started using LibCal **Spaces** and **Events** in September 2019
  - Previously, homemade solution for space booking
- **Seats** module added in September 2020 during COVID-19
- **Appointments** module introduced in January 2025
- Unified platform branded as 'Book it' at ULiège: <https://bookit.lib.uliege.be>
  - Layout (css) similar to the one of ULiège Library portal
- Bilingual FRE-ENG, in most cases
- Used across all library branches on 4 campuses
- Over 1,250 study seats managed digitally
  - Only for major library branches + smaller branches in the city centre
  - Only during cramming and exam periods



# LibCal Spaces



# LibCal Spaces – Purpose

- Enable students to reserve group study rooms easily
- Optimize limited physical resources and space
- Reduce workload for front-desk staff
- Custom booking rules: hours, duration, repeat limits
- Email confirmations and usage statistics



# LibCal Spaces – ULiège Use Case

- Implemented across library branches since 2019
  - 23 public spaces + 1 private
- Users can browse availability via an **interactive map**
  - Only when seat booking is enabled
  - Usage statistics is not as high as expected
- Booking hours synchronized with Alma opening hours
- Room bookings monitored and adjusted per demand, but no moderation enabled!
- In parallel, spaces can be managed in real time by library staff
- Offers flexibility across campuses and study needs

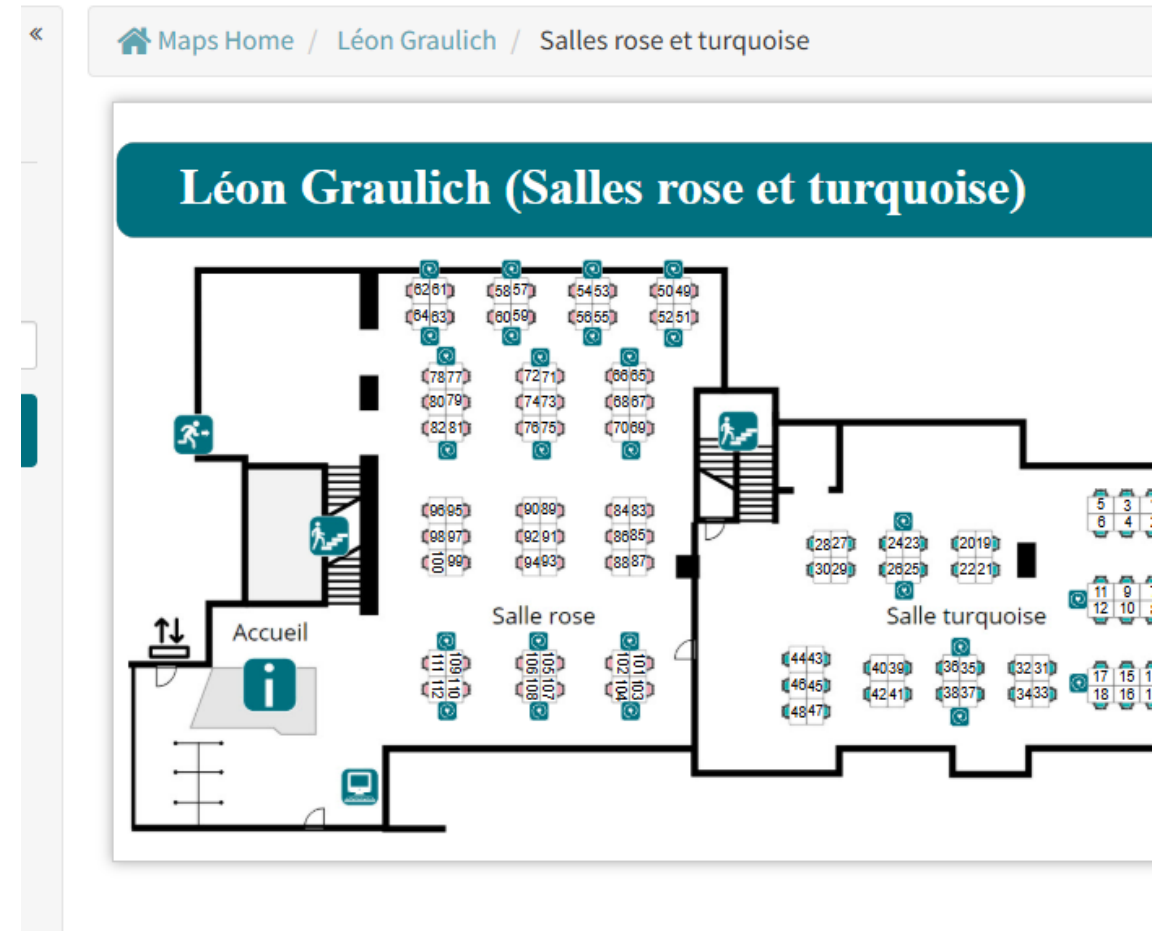


# LibCal Seats – COVID-19 Response

- LibCal Seats is part of LibCal Spaces
- Deployed in September 2020 to manage individual seating
- Used to enforce **social distancing and limit occupancy**
- Reservation mandatory during peak periods (exams, study breaks)
- Initially available in 5 branches, including Health Library and Graulich Library
- Encouraged fair access and minimized in-library congestion
- Still active during high-demand periods

# LibCal Seats – Specific Features at ULiège

- Access limited to ULiège community (via SSO).
- Seat validation required via **check-in (QR code and geolocation)**.
- Advanced settings: duration, no-show rules (-> automatic cancellation)
- Interface includes visual maps of seat layouts
- Usage tracked for planning and reporting
- Tools and rules in place to prevent booking abuse or overuse
  - Not always easy to find the best configuration to give flexibility and to prevent abuse...







# User Feedback on LibCal Seats

- Surveys carried out in 2022 and 2023
- Students appreciate the booking system, but also request improvements
  - Sometimes on our hands, sometimes can be only be achieved by Springshare
- Sometimes concerns about geolocation privacy and accuracy
  - But a lot of misunderstanding too!
- Issues with mobile usability and complex navigation (Availability Grid)
- Desire for app notifications and easier check-in
- Frequent feedback on abuse of the system by peers
- Suggestions include physical control (e.g., turnstiles) and better mobile UI



# LibCal Events



# LibCal Events – Purpose

- Centralize the scheduling of training sessions and public events
- Promote library instruction sessions to students
- Allow online registration with automated follow-up
- Offer statistical reports for attendance and topics
- Flexible event categories, types, and visibility settings
- Support hybrid or virtual delivery (Teams/Zoom)



# LibCal Events – ULiège Implementation

- Used since 2019 for internal training sessions first
- Integrated with ULiège website via 'Book it'. <https://bookit.lib.uliege.be/calendar>
- Three public calendars:
  1. **Training** (-> mainly for students and faculty)
    - Embedded in page <https://lib.uliege.be/en/help-training/need-help/training>
  2. **Events** (conferences, visits...)
  3. **ULiège Library events and training** (-> internal purposes only)
- Registrants receive confirmations and reminders
- Librarians track attendance and interest per session
- Promotes visibility of the library's educational role
- Well-suited for managing limited-capacity workshops



# Book it, votre système de réservation

Notre outil "Book it" vous permet de réserver une salle de travail, une place ou votre participation à une formation ou manifestation.

Calendrier ▾

Catégorie ▾

Public ▾

Campus ▾

En présentiel ou en ligne ▾

Chercher

Rafraîchir

Filtres appliqués : **Calendrier** : *Tous les calendriers* ; **Type** : *En présentiel ou en ligne*

Changer l'affichage :

JANV. 16

jeu., 9:00 - 11:45

En présentiel

Sart Tilman Polytech, Salle informatique (U

RESTE 12 PLACES

Parcours d'accueil du personnel ULIège Library : présentation de pôles + visite de l'implantati...

LIÈGE université Library

9h00-10h00 : Découverte et rencontre avec le responsable du Pôle Système & Données (François Renaville) 10h00-10h45 : Découverte et rencontre avec la...

Personnel ULIège Library

Découverte ULIège Library

JANV. 16

jeu., 11:45 - 13:15

En présentiel

Sart Tilman Agora, Salle de formation ULIège

RESTE 12 PLACES

Parcours d'accueil du personnel ULIège Library : visite des implantations Sciences et...

LIÈGE université Library

11h45-13h15 : Visites et rencontres dans les implantations Sciences et Géosciences

Personnel ULIège Library

Découverte ULIège Library

JANV. 16

jeu., 12:00 - 12:45

ORBi Quick start Q&A

Prise en main rapide d'ORBi et Questions/Réponses (visioconférence) Comment déposer mes publications sur ORBi ? Puis-je déposer mes articles en...

E. V. E. N. T.

JANV. 16

jeu., 12:00 - 12:45

En ligne

RESTE 3 PLACES

ORBi Quick start + Q&A

Prise en main rapide d'ORBi et Questions/Réponses (visioconférence) Comment déposer mes publications sur

ORBi

JANV. 16

jeu., 14:30 - 15:30

En présentiel

Sart Tilman Agora, ULIège Library | Léon

RESTE 12 PLACES

Parcours d'accueil du personnel ULIège Library : visite de l'implantation Léon Graulich

LIÈGE université

14h30-15h30 : Visite et rencontres à l'implantation Léon Graulich

JANV. 16

jeu., 16:00 - 17:00

En présentiel

Sart Tilman Hôpital, ULIège Library | Santé

RESTE 12 PLACES

Parcours d'accueil du personnel ULIège Library : visite de l'implantation Santé-CHU

LIÈGE université

16h00-17h00 : Visite et rencontres à l'implantation Santé-CHU

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# LibCal Appointments



# LibCal Appointments – Purpose

- Let users book 1-on-1 time with a librarian
- Custom schedules and topics per staff member
- Virtual (via Teams) or in-person options
- Streamlines consultation requests and tracking
- Improves user autonomy in scheduling help
- Encourages subject-specific guidance and support



# LibCal Appointments – Rollout at ULiège

- Launched end of January 2025 under the 'Book a Librarian' label.
  - <https://bookit.lib.uliege.be/appointments>
- Users select a campus (inc. Virtual), a service group, and a librarian.
- Predefined groups (by topics): Open Access, Zotero, LaTeX, library catalogue, data management, systematic reviews, remote access, bibliometrics, etc.
- Multiple appointment lengths (15 min, 30 min, 45 min.) and types configured
- Teams integration for online consultations
- Encourages cross-campus coordination of expertise





# Appointments Interface and Experience

- Users filter by location and topic of expertise
- Librarian names are labelled with subject domains
- System prevents overlapping bookings and overuse
- Each booking sends calendar invites and links
- Mobile-friendly public interface via Book it
- Easy rescheduling and cancellation options



# Service Promotion and Outlook

- Promoted via website, email signatures, and phonebook
- Positive response from staff and users, but
  - Difficult to get some reference and subject librarians on board!
  - Limited usage statistics (so far)
- Potential to extend to non-library experts (e.g. 'Research and Innovation' service)
- Ongoing refinements possible, based on feedback
- Emphasis on training staff to maintain availability
  - Hard!!



# Conclusion and Future Directions



# Conclusion and Future Directions

- LibCal has become essential to space and service management at ULiège Library
- Well-received by students for ease of access and clarity
- User feedback is guiding iterative improvements (when possible)
- Mobile UX (for seat and space booking) enhancements are priorities
- Stats from LibCal feed into strategic planning
- Goal: a unified, user-friendly digital library experience

