

Opening of Central Library Oodi attracts some 55,000 visitors

Even after the opening, Oodi has continued to be busy.

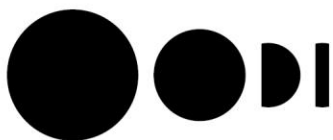
The opening of Helsinki's Central Library Oodi was celebrated with great festivities on 5-6 December 2018. On the two opening days, Oodi attracted some 55,000 visitors - approximately 22,000 on Wednesday 5 December, and about 33,000 on Thursday 6 December.

The opening programme on 5 December was a unique journey into Finnish culture, nature and community spirit. Oodi received a welcoming address from President of the Republic **Sauli Niinistö** as well as congratulations from its nearest neighbours: Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki Music Centre (Musiikkitalo) and the Sanomatalo business and office building. Oodi's opening featured two commissioned artworks: Oodi metsälle (Ode to the Forest) by choreographer **Hanna Brotherus** and Ultra Organ Oodille (Ultra Organ for Oodi) composed by accordion artist **Kimmo Pohjonen**. Oodi's opening celebrations continued on Finnish Independence Day on 6 December with programme aimed at families, in particular.

The spontaneous feedback received from visitors on the opening days was glowing in its praise. In addition to the diverse opening programme, the visitors were especially impressed by Oodi's architecture. The glass-walled corner nearest to the Sanomatalo building on the third floor became one of the most popular selfie spots in Finland. During the opening days, the social media were bursting with pictures and videos from Oodi. Congratulations through the social media also arrived from many official quarters, such as the Finnish Government.

"We are extremely pleased with how well Oodi has been received. During the opening, a total of 12,000 items were borrowed and 2,500 returned in Oodi. Since the opening, there have been many new library cards made - around 700 by now. The Fazer cafés in Oodi sold up to 9,000 Christmas pastries," says **Anna-Maria Soininvaara**, Director of Oodi Library.

Oodi has also received much attention in international and Finnish media. The New York Times reported on the library on the front page of its international edition. Oodi has also been featured in the Swedish media Dagens Nyheter and SVT Nyheter, Estonia's TV3, The Guardian, ZDF German National TV, Lonely Planet, the Afghan news channel Tolonews and the Indonesian The Jakarta Post as well as many Finnish daily media, periodicals and architecture and construction industry media.



"It is wonderful that Finland is becoming known worldwide as a pioneer of library services. We may be the only country in the world where people queue to gain entry to a library," says Soininvaara happily.

Oodi's future looks bright. There is a great variety of events offered on the library side. The offering will grow further once the Kino Regina cinema of the National Audiovisual Institute opens in January 2019. When the facilities on Oodi's second floor open on 28 December, customers will also get to use the 3D printers, vinyl cutters, sewing machines, overlockers, a coverstitch machine, a sewing machine for embroidery, badge machines, customer computers, a photocopier, learning facilities and workrooms as well as premises for conference and group use. Some of the facilities and functions on the second floor, such as studio premises, will be opened later next spring. Central Library Oodi's reservation calendar will open this week in the City of Helsinki's premises and equipment reservation service Varaamo: <https://varaamo.hel.fi/>.

Media images: <https://www.oodihelsinki.fi/en/for-media/>

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