
The mission of the Center for Global Development (CGD) is “to reduce global poverty and inequality by encouraging policy change in the U.S. and other rich countries through rigorous research and active engagement with the policy community.” CGD’s Web site provides numerous options for learning about its work by providing access to policy papers of original research, blogs, podcasts, and multimedia productions.

A visitor to the site can go directly to the Google-like search box in the upper right corner of the screen and search by topic, such as “immigration” or “debt relief.” The result will be a list of links to CGD resources and activities. Links to articles in the mainstream press that cite comments and research of the CGD staff are also included.

The homepage uses rotating photographs and visuals for a fresh, attractive, and uncluttered look. On this page the visitor can access recently featured blogs, articles, and reports. Events sponsored by CGD, research topics, new publications, and brief biographical information on CGD experts can also be found on the homepage.

Nine tabs at the top of the page lead to a more extensive list of CGD activities and publications. The “For Educators” tab leads to syllabi, podcasts, videos, and printed material. These are potentially useful to students and professors teaching and learning about global development. The “Initiatives” tab leads to descriptions of the practical applications (complete and ongoing) of the CGD’s policies. A calendar of events found under the “Events” tab provides an opportunity for involvement in conferences and seminars. Anyone can sign up for weekly and monthly newsletter updates on global development.

The CGD Web site will appeal to a range of users from the undergraduate looking for information on hot topics like climate change, debt relief, and immigration, to the researcher who is looking for original research and statistics on issues related to global development. Laypersons will find easy-to-read papers, interviews, statistics, and other information that will make them aware of key issues in global development.—Maureen James-Barnes, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, mejames@ualr.edu


Gallica is the digital library service created by the Bibliothèque nationale de France/National Library of France (BnF) through its program of mass digitization. Founded in 1997, the site offers more than 1.7 million documents digitized by BnF and partner libraries, including books, journals, newspapers, images, maps, manuscripts, and sound recordings.

Gallica’s emphasis is on the cultural heritage of France, especially from the early modern period, and many of the core resources are rare, out-of-print materials that have been previously inaccessible.

In addition to documents digitized by BnF (most in the public domain), Gallica provides access to copyrighted e-books via the platforms of several e-retailers. Users can browse a portion of the e-book for free and purchase it, if desired. It is an interesting model for bridging the divide between commercial and open access to cultural heritage materials. All “ePub” documents can be retrieved easily, and a list of participating e-retailers (“e-distributeurs”) is available.

Most of the document text in Gallica is in French, but the site offers an interface in
English as well as Spanish, Portuguese, and German. Researchers who do not speak French should have no trouble with simple or advanced search options or refining search results with facets. Still, knowledge of French is useful for navigating the site, as some helpful information is in French only, for example, blog posts highlighting new additions and tutorials. In addition, the option for searching full text within a document (Module de recherche) may not be obvious to non-French speakers.

From the homepage, users may search all of Gallica or limit a search to a particular format. The advanced search provides many options to limit results, including availability of full-text searching and broad themes such as arts and hobbies, literature, religion, or sciences. Browsing the “Feature collections” is a great way to explore the wealth of resources, focusing on a character, a work, a theme, a place, or an event.

Gallica is well integrated into social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest. Gallica’s Pinterest page is especially useful for highlighting interesting collections, with beautifully presented boards on themes such as ethnophotography, children’s books, posters from May 1968, and images from specific artists.

Gallica provides a wealth of information about French culture in a beautiful and engaging interface. Scholars and students will be delighted with the availability of rare editions, the breadth of the collections, and the high quality of the digitization.—Lori Robare, University of Oregon, lrobare@uoregon.edu

NYC Municipal Archives Online Gallery.


Since the mid-1800s, the Records Department of the City of New York has collected photographs, taken primarily by municipal workers, which document life in New York City. More than 870,000 of these photos, along with maps, motion pictures, and audio recordings are now freely available through the NYC Municipal Archives Online Gallery. The holdings of the Municipal Archives total over 160,000 cubic feet of materials dating from the 17th century to the present. Items are accessioned from more than 100 city agencies. In addition to photos, the collections include office records, manuscript material, still and moving images, ledger volumes, vital records, maps, blueprints, and sound recordings.

An ongoing project to select and digitize material from the more than 2 million items in the archives began in 2003 with the establishment of the Municipal Archives Digital Lab. The goal was twofold: to produce digital surrogates of fragile materials and to increase access to the city’s unique and historical collections.

Through the LUNA Imaging System, viewers can readily browse images compiled from all the collections in the gallery or can view each collection separately. LUNA provides links to every collection in the gallery, which lead to thumbnail views of the selected items. By clicking on the thumbnail images, viewers are taken to an enlargeable image and a full data record with image description, subjects, title, and format. The data record and a small version of the image can be printed directly from the site and high-quality prints can be ordered online.

Most people are seeing these easily accessible images from the NYC Municipal Archives Online Gallery for the first time. Until the gallery came online spring 2012, most materials were accessible only by visiting the archive offices in lower Manhattan. Given the quality of the images, the sophistication of the LUNA system, and the amazing and unique view of life in New York City over the past 150 years, the site was an instant success.

With collection titles such as the Mayors’ Reception Committee—Returning Soldiers, 1918–1921, and the New York Police Department Evidence, 1915–1930s, there is much to be discovered in this gallery, and it is no surprise that its popularity continues to grow.—Sarah Goodwin Thiel, University of Kansas Libraries, sgthiel@ku.edu