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Your global professional voice

Engage with IFLA in the United States and beyond

What can ACRL do to highlight research and practice that provide an international and/or comparative understanding on issues that affect academic and research libraries? This was the question, raised at the Research Forum at ACRL 2015, that sparked the creation of *International Insights*, a new *C&RL News* column. This quarterly column will provide a global perspective on issues relevant to academic and research libraries, and offer ideas and opportunities for action. The column will also complement the work of the ACRL International Perspectives on Academic and Research Libraries Discussion Group.

As coeditors weaving diverse experiences into a shared vision, we are excited to embark on this collaboration to expand discussions across borders of all types, to challenge the worldview of the academic and research library community, and to call us to action. Although English will be the language of publication, *International Insights* will promote the voices of international academic and research librarians as a catalyst not only for dialogue among our community, but also with our international stakeholders and across international cultural heritage sectors, including archives and museums.

For the inaugural column, we are focusing on the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) as a place for international professional engagement and learning. IFLA, the global voice of the library and information profession and the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services

and their users, is our professional home. ALA is an institutional member of IFLA, making ACRL and ALA members IFLA members. The IFLA Academic and Research Libraries Section is the international forum for all interested in this area, providing opportunities to exchange experiences and ideas with colleagues worldwide, and is a vehicle for collaborative action.

Other IFLA units cover a wide variety of topics of interest to those in academic and research libraries. These include Sections, which cover, for example, Cataloguing, Document Delivery and Resource Sharing, Rare Books and Special Collections, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that focus on emerging or specialized topics such as Big Data, E-Metrics, and Environmental Sustainability and Libraries, among others.

From August 13 to 19, 2016, IFLA will hold its 82nd World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) in Columbus, Ohio, with the theme, "Connections, Collaboration, Com-

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Contact series editors Clara M. Chu and Barbara J. Ford with article ideas.

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munity.” WLIC moves to various parts of the world. It was in South Africa in 2015, and will be in Poland in 2017. It brings together more than 3,500 participants from more than 120 countries. It sets the international agenda for the profession and offers opportunities for networking and professional development to all delegates. We hope to see you there. Register by May 17 for the early bird rate, and read more about WLIC at the IFLA website (www.ifla.org).

To introduce other IFLA activities, we invited three authors to contribute. Steve Witt, editor of *IFLA Journal*, introduces the journal and IFLA as a resource for international research; Jesús Lau, a leading voice on information literacy at IFLA and internationally, provides a global perspective on information literacy; and Donna Scheeder, IFLA president, presents an international action agenda for academic and research libraries.

***IFLA Journal*: Research and practice for a global profession—Steven W. Witt**

IFLA’s academic journal, *IFLA Journal*, provides excellent opportunities for librarians whose research and practice touches on global, international, and comparative themes. Published by Sage, *IFLA Journal* disseminates peer reviewed articles on library and information services and the social, political, and economic issues that impact access to information through libraries. The journal publishes research, case studies, and essays that reflect the broad spectrum of the profession internationally.

For more than 40 years, the editors of *IFLA Journal* have aimed to publish articles that reflect the work and mission of IFLA. This requires a long-standing dedication to channeling the global voice of the library and information professions, while promoting research which impacts practice. If one reflects upon past publications and often-cited articles from the journal, the diversity of authors, perspectives, and issues are unmatched within the field’s literature.

Looking at some of the most frequently read articles that are featured on the journal’s

website, one sees the depth and breadth of its coverage. Articles focus on topics that remain timely, such as freedom of expression, cultural heritage, development, indigenous knowledge, building leadership within the profession, and perspectives from around the globe that inform our professional practice.

In the past, the journal promoted research and scholarship by publishing the best papers from within the annual WLIC. In a predigital age, this strategy provided a timely and effective means to disseminate knowledge to members of the profession who were not able to participate in the Congress. Through the implementation of IFLA Library, a digital repository by which conference papers are made freely available online, these papers are now disseminated quickly. The IFLA Library provides the opportunity for conference participants to share their work broadly, while providing another open access venue that increases access. This also provides the journal with the flexibility to publish in a different manner.

Beginning in 2014, *IFLA Journal* began publishing an annual special issue. The inaugural special issue of the journal focused on National Libraries as centers of innovation in 2014. In 2015, the special issue focused on Cultural Heritage with guest editors Douwe Drijfhout of the National Library of South Africa and Tanja de Boer of the National Library of the Netherlands. In 2016, the journal’s special issue turns toward library support for Research Data Services, which will be published in October 2016. Moving forward, *IFLA Journal* will continue to focus special issues in a manner that encourages exchange between library researchers and practitioners and those from allied fields to inspire wider research that relates to practice and furthers dialogue with other professions ranging from archivists to urban planners. Ideas for special issues are always welcome by the editor and editorial board.

IFLA Journal strives to promote research and publishing that engages the diversity of the profession and speaks to the multiple challenges we face. Academic and research

librarians can participate in the journal's efforts to promote international coauthorship and wider mentorship and networking throughout IFLA in order to foster research and scholarship on topics important to the profession on a global scale. The profession will benefit by increasing access to publishing opportunities among members, while raising the level of the research and scholarship published in the journal.

To learn more about *IFLA Journal*, visit www.ifla.org/publications/ifla-journal or follow us on Twitter @IFLAJournal.

Global information literacy progress: IFLA and international conferences— Jesús Lau

Information literacy (IL) around the globe has taken momentum. The focus of this section is to describe IFLA's role in the development of international IL, and the work carried out by non-English speaking countries in international IL development.

The seminal work in IL has been undertaken since the 1990s in English-speaking countries and Northern Europe, but is now also carried out in other regions and countries. If entirely IL-focused conferences are used as an indicator of IL activity, there has been IL action in several non-English speaking countries, such as in Argentina, Bosnia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Spain, and Taiwan. If we are to combine Media and Information Literacy (MIL) as thematically coined by UNESCO, we would also include Morocco, China, and Russia, with a conference being planned in Tunisia this year.

Conferences in Mexico, a nation with which I am more familiar, have played a key role in promoting the subject, having organized the first and oldest running Spanish-speaking IL conference since 1997. It has recently changed name but continues to be held biannually. At Mexico's IL meeting, national IL standards for higher education following ACRL guidelines were drafted in 2002. The latest conference effort, the European Conference on Information Literacy, started by Turkey and Croatia, is of

interest beyond its geographical scope. It had participants from more than 60 countries in its first year. Its proceedings are considered the best source for international IL literature, similar to those of conferences mentioned on a smaller scale, where we go for published best practices, experiences, and research on the subject outside of the English-speaking regions and Northern Europe.

IFLA has contributed to most of the international IL activities, sponsoring some events, or through the actions of its members as organizers, taking inspiration from its IL Section and the IL/MIL contributions of UNESCO. Its leadership is noted in the creation of the Guidelines on Information Literacy for Lifelong Learning, the IFLA-UNESCO IL logo, as well as the former International Information Literacy Resources Directory, later published by UNESCO. IFLA meetings, publications, and documents are a prime learning source for non-English speaking countries. It is the only organization that works tirelessly to include contributions in seven international languages and that partners with UNESCO in projects like the MIL international indicator framework that is now being piloted in seven Latin American countries, a great methodology to create hard-to-find indicators of citizens' media and information competencies. IFLA is indeed, besides the listed conferences, a key player in the international arena, therefore, anyone wishing to learn and professionally engage in global IL work should participate in this association's efforts.

An international action agenda for academic and research libraries— Donna Scheeder

Approximately three years ago, IFLA launched the IFLA Trend Report.¹ Since that time, the five societal trends expected to have a large impact on libraries and the profession have been the subject of discussion around the world. These discussions have identified several opportunities for libraries and librarians to transform their services and themselves in order to be positioned for success in this century. What has been notable is that the discussions have revealed

that the impacts for libraries are relatively very similar around the world.

For example, libraries answer the question “What transformational services need to be implemented in academic and research libraries in order to respond to the trends and position them for success?” One of the most obvious opportunities for academic and research libraries lies in the Trend Report’s observation that “online learning will transform and disrupt traditional education.”² The rapid global expansion in available online education resources will make learning opportunities more abundant, cheaper, and more accessible. Both universities and corporate entities are players in the online education market. What is disrupting the traditional university is disrupting the traditional library, as well. What will academic libraries do to serve both the creators and the students of MOOCs (massive open online courses), as well as other forms of online educational courses? What new skills does this require?

The Trend Report also notes that new technologies have disrupted the traditional information chain (creator, publisher, rights holder, distributor, retailer, library, reader), challenged established business models and regulatory frameworks, while facilitating new sources of competition and new access models. This trend has impacted academic libraries in many ways.

As the academic community debates the future of scholarly publishing, the move towards open access, fueled in some areas of the world by a government mandate that publicly funded research must be freely available, reveals a host of challenges for libraries. Academic libraries are now involved in the creation of digital repositories, which also require digital preservation strategies. Metadata strategies must be devised to ensure the items in the repository are findable again.

Data curation and management for the research life cycle create new challenges for academic and research libraries, as well. Practitioners in all disciplines are increasingly creating or incorporating big data into their research, and institutions are creating repositories to manage it all. Libraries are assuming

important roles in making this data more useful and visible.

On the global policy level, IFLA is taking action to support libraries to meet these challenges. Current key initiatives include working with members and partners to promote standards and best practices for digital preservation, and defining a long-term, sustainable information environment by gathering a strong evidence base to inform policy work on openness and access to data, information, and knowledge. In addition, IFLA will promote The Hague Declaration on text and data mining,³ enabling access to data, facts, and ideas for knowledge discovery and creation. IFLA will work to improve the e-lending framework and continue our work at WIPO to promote copyright frameworks that facilitate the work of libraries in the Digital Age.

These are exciting times as our profession uses its global voice to overcome the obstacles in the building of the library of the future. To join IFLA in this work be sure to visit www.ifla.org.

The view ahead

We welcome ideas on topics that might be covered in this column. Some we are considering are United Nations sustainable development goals, evidence-based librarianship, faculty engagement, scholarly communication, library leadership, multilingualism, and digital preservation. Articles could include exploration of a topic from an individual or a group of authors, expressing a particular view or providing multiple points of view on an issue or topic. You can contact the coeditors Clara M. Chu and Barbara J. Ford at cmchu@illinois.edu and bjford@illinois.edu with your ideas and suggestions.

Notes

1. IFLA, “IFLA Trend Report,” 2013, <http://trends.ifla.org/> (accessed March 25, 2016).
2. Ibid, <http://trends.ifla.org/node/308>, accessed March 25, 2016.
3. The Hague Declaration, <http://thehaguedeclaration.com/> (accessed March 26, 2016). *ZZ*