



ENSULIB
Environmental Sustainability and
Libraries Special Interest Group
<http://www.ifla.org/environmental-sustainability-and-libraries>



ENSULIB announces the winner of the 3rd IFLA Green Library Award 2018

Environment, Sustainability and Libraries ([ENSULIB](#)) is a special interest group under IFLA. With generous sponsorship from [De Gruyter Publishing](#) (Boston/Berlin), the group circulated a Call for Submissions for the *IFLA Green Library Award* for the third year in a row. To ENSULIB's great delight, 32 submissions were received from around the world, including Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Croatia, France, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Kasachstan, Kenya, Latvia, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Spain, Ukraine, USA, and Usbekistan. When the call for reviewers went out, 17 people stepped up to help with the process. The reviewers were as diverse as those who submitted. Coming from Australia, France, Finland, Kenya, Germany, Pakistan/New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S., they were a blend of LIS students, library professionals (from public and academic libraries) and an architect as well.

After much deliberation, the winner was selected: the **Foshan Library** ("Foshan Library's Green Practice"), located in Foshan new city, which is key area of construction of sponge city in the province of Guangdong, China (<http://www.fslib.com.cn/>).

One reviewer found: "The Foshan Library is a culturally significant building in harmony with the prevailing landscape, and which delivers a compelling architectural vision that pays homage to the cultural and artistic history of the region. The library and its services are strengthened by a powerful commitment to sustainable principles which extends to architectural design, building materials, management, and staff commitment to continuous improvement and community education. The library presents an impressive array of engaging and inspiring green programs for its community."

The Foshan Library project fulfills the goals of the Green Library award, which include, communicating the library's commitment to environmental sustainability and creating awareness of libraries' social responsibility and leadership in environmental education. More generally, the Award aims to support and promote the worldwide [Green Library movement](#) and encourage green libraries to present their activities to an international audience. Following the [IFLA Statement on Libraries and Sustainable Development](#), the award advances the profession through illuminating the role of libraries and librarians in the advancement of sustainability standards and the promotion of specialized knowledge within professional practice.

The award will be presented at the at the World Library and Information Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Session 153b, Special Presentation of Awards Session, held on Monday, 27 Aug 2018, 12:45–13:45, Expo Pavillon.

Five Runners Up

The five runners up for the award came from Hungary, Romania, Croatia, Iran, and Kenya. The various polarities of the submissions created a mighty challenge for the reviewers. For instance, cool weather countries grapple with how to warm a building, while those in hot climates aim to cool their buildings. Some the submissions focused on children, with libraries promoting literacy and environmental awareness to the next generation. Some projects are very low-cost, illuminating how a library can successfully create environmental awareness in children without big money.

The economic disparities between the submissions raised other questions in terms of judging projects with variable consumption levels. Some of the countries do not have national waste policy or recycling programs while others maintain rigorous laws to protect the environment. It was also noted that some of the libraries are still in the process of developing a project, while some have well-defined sustainability structures in place. This made the comparison hard. Reviewers wrestled with the definition of a “green library” (e.g. tree planting, recycling, re-using) and how to also reward creativity, novelty, or the best solution to a real problem in hand. Should the project be rewarded based on the aim to stop climate change, or is it sufficient to raise awareness in citizens? There are no definite answers to these questions since there are no widely accepted criteria for “green libraries.” In the end, reviewers made their own decisions and pooled their responses. The final winner was awarded as an excellent example of a green library. All aspects, especial library building but also services, users and professionals are paid attention. In addition Fosham library connects past and future to the sustainable development.

Hungary: “Library-Greening: Environmental education, strengthening of the environmentally aware attitudes with traditional and non-traditional resources”

The Jozsef Attila County and City Library in Tatabánya (<http://www.jamk.hu>) developed innovative and well received consciousness raising programs to increase community awareness of the importance of sustainable and ecologically sound development practices. The library takes their sustainability message into local schools and communities and encourages the uptake of green policies and practices. The library used an holistic approach to consciousness raising through children’s games, community film events, eco competitions for schools and the green reading room to name but a few of their programs.

Romania: “Sirna Rural Library cultivates involved citizens”

The Biblioteca Comunală Sirna, Prahova county (<http://bibliotecasirna.blogspot.com/>), is a great example of how libraries can and must advocate in their local communities for environmental care and above all: with the young generations – it is very difficult to reach local authorities in some countries, but this library efforts were huge. The library has made significant progress with a range of programs that have changed the community – with very little budget but huge outcomes – children as leaders for others. The library has developed impressive partnerships with local, regional and national organizations to provide ongoing education in sustainability practices. See also

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8ws0ta86qst1nsd/AACQoVy8yNXN2fj5R2miB1Cpa?dl=0>

Croatia: “Green Festival – Lets Go Green”

The National and University Library in Zagreb (<http://www.nsk.hr>) and its Green Festival shows great leadership across many sectors. The Lets Go Green Festival presented the latest scientific research in sustainability issues through lectures and talks and allowed green businesses to introduce their products and services to a wider audience. The festival promoted sustainable agriculture and food science, green technology, green energy and green building design and methods and materials.

Iran: “Designing a Green Library Evaluation checklist”

The National Library and Archives of Iran, Tehran (<http://www.nlai.ir/>), have created something new and useful for every library, a checklist to evaluate a green library. Evaluating is important when planning and developing services and functions. It is interesting since the project is working on general guidelines more than on a single building. There are indicators so the study clarifies the existing situation, highlights success but also the needs. This could serve libraries as a road map towards green library. Extensive research and logical cohesive methods enabled the creation of a valuable planning checklist for current and future libraries and communities. The checklist encourages evaluation, self-reflection and continuous improvement in sustainability practices and identifies areas of deficiency and pathways for improvement.

Kenya: “USIU-Africa: Garden in the library”

The USIU-Africa (United States International University-Africa) library (<http://www.usiu.ac.ke>) is an enormously large green building with a library garden with trees, plants and everything for a green environment that also provides a good air for users and staff. The flat roof gives the harvest of rainwater to water the garden with. The gardens giving the library and outdoor effect. The plants give the library an ambience and homely feeling. The paper gives a more practical in approach as building and practices within tough economic realities. It shows libraries in Africa have also embraced the green movement, it is applicable in new buildings and can be used as a good benchmark, the methodology is very sound. The concept is original and shows innovativeness in the library practice in Africa.

Petra Hauke, July 17, 2018