

Literacy Matters!

Literacy and Reading Section: Chairs Annual Report September 2016 – August 2017

Prepared by Annie Overall, Chair

Literacy Matters!

I can read, therefore I am.

I can:

- be smart and become smarter;
- communicate with others in many different ways;
- solve problems, understand and connect with new challenges;
- participate fully in family, workplace and community life;
- use a range of technologies;
- think for myself and with others;
- keep my culture alive;
- share with others on a global stage;
- be creative and understand the complexities of our changing world.

I have the world and beyond at my feet.

I can read, therefore I am empowered and can learn lifelong.

I can read, therefore I am part of the present and the future.

I can read, therefore I am,

Because LITERACY MATTERS!

Scope of the LiR Section:

The Section provides a focal point for the promotion of reading and literacy in libraries; and the integration of reading research and reading development activities into library services for all citizens. It covers issues such as increasing the social awareness of the significance of reading and general literacy; functional literacy in various cultural settings; reader development; illiteracy in different milieus; teaching the encouragement of reading among young people and adults; readers' skills and reading habits; and the interaction of audiovisual media and reading in the digital environment.

It aims to stimulate leadership, research, good practice, information and exchange on the role of libraries in these issues.. The Section is concerned with a range of activities that affect all types of libraries, library associations, and institutions related to reading and literacy development and practice. Through discussion, conferences, publications, its website, partnerships, training and special projects, the Section examines these activities within the cultures of both print and electronic media; and seeks to understand and support the basic rights and approaches of all citizens to access to information, knowledge and works of the imagination for personal and community learning, enjoyment and development.

The relationship between reading research and reading promotion and the role of libraries in lifelong literacy is considered significant in professional terms. The Section works in cooperation with other IFLA Sections and a number of international reading and library associations, including the International Reading Association ([IRA](#)) and the International Board on Books for Young People ([IBBY](#)).

Membership of the Section:

Awaiting updated membership information from IFLA HQ

Officers:

Chair and Treasurer: **Annie Everall**, Director, Authors Aloud UK

Secretary: **Barbara Combes**, Lecturer, Charles Sturt University

Information Coordinator: **Sylvia Vardell**, Professor, Texas Woman's University,
School of Library Information Studies

Blog Co-ordinator: **Lesley Farmer (Corresponding Member)**, California State
University Long Beach Librarianship Program Coordinator /
CSU ICT Literacy Project Manager, California State University Long Beach

Meetings:

Two SC meetings were held in Ohio in 2016. Unfortunately, only the Chair and two committee members plus two corresponding members were able to attend Congress. This made discussion and agreement of decisions very difficult. Key topics discussed in the two meetings held included:

- The Literacy Matters Campaign and projects / activities for it
- Preparation for the LiR programmes being held in Ohio

- Agreeing the theme and initial planning for the LiR Programme in Poland in partnership with Libraries for Children & Young Adults, Public Libraries and School Libraries Sections
- Reports were also presented from a number of countries, highlighting literacy and reading initiatives

Action Plan

This has been a particularly difficult year for the Literacy and Reading Section. This has in part been due to changes in work circumstances and/or capacity issues for the Sections Officers and committee members, as well as lack of responses and engagement from a number of committee members. This has meant that much of the Action Plan for 2016/17 has not been achieved and will be ongoing into 2017/18. The Section has a number of new committee members and Officers, who will take up post in Poland and it is hoped that they will be able to help re-energise the Section and its activities. Given the issues experienced this year, in drawing up the Action Plan for 2017/18, it may be better to be more conservative in what actions may be undertaken

Actions achieved:

- Literacy Matters! Website has been developed and You Tube channel for Best Practice videos is being established
<http://www.literacymatters.org.au/>
- Programme on the theme of 'Literacy Matters: It takes a community to raise a reader – building a nation of readers and creating a reading culture developed and will be delivered in Poland in partnership with School Libraries, Public Libraries and Children's & Young Adults Section
- Initial idea for a programme in Kuala Lumpur was developed (Literacy Matters! Literacy and the Workplace). This will be discussed and other ideas welcome in Poland. Final theme will then be taken forward.
- Participation on the IFLA Literacy & Reading working group to take the Joint Statement on Literacy & Reading forward
- New committee members to the Section but more still needed
- Blog continues but more support from committee members needed by the Blog Co-ordinator
- Skype meetings between Officers but need to try to engage committee in tasks orientated meetings.

Actions not achieved and still ongoing

- Finalise and publish the Literacy Matters! Guidelines for Library Based Literacy Activities
- Finalise and publish the Literacy Matters! Using Research to promote Literacy & Reading in Libraries: Guidelines for Librarians
- Finalise Literacy Matters logo and publicity materials and print
- Revise the LiR Section leaflet
- Communication plan development and improved communication within the committee and with members
- Social media strategy – although there has been some increased viewing of the facebook page there is a great deal more work to be done in this area

- E-newsletter
- Discussion with IFLA re revision of MOU with IBBY and ILA

Projects: Literacy Matters! Resources

A project proposal was submitted to take forward the 'Literacy Matters!' campaign, requesting funding for:

- Design and printing of Literacy Matters materials (bookmark, poster, postcard)
- Production, design and editing of Literacy Matters video/online digital content
- Design and printing small quantity of new Literacy Matters LiR Section Leaflet

2,500 euros was agreed but as yet has not been spent due to the delay on the project but will need to be ongoing

Programmes 2016 Ohio

The section held a joint programme in partnership with the School Libraries, Public Libraries and Children's & Young Adults Sections. The theme was **Literacy Matters!: Strategies, Awards and Campaigns for Supporting Development Through Literacy and Reading**. The programme featured papers on:

- The influence and importance of literacy awards in supporting development through reading, with particular reference to the Library of Congress Literacy Awards
- The Dutch National Reading Plan
- The IFLA Literacy Statement and the UN SDG's
- Research into the impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment and the importance of research to validate Literacy and Reading
- Literacy and Reading best practices in Sweden
- The value of the crowd: individual initiatives in social media as a starting point of organisational reading promotions
- Smart ideas and common strategies – a Norwegian perspective on public libraries
- A forest of reading: a book club to improve literacy

The Section also participated and presented in the Division 3 Programme '**Library Services taking action for the UN2030 Agenda**' The Chair gave a presentation on Literacy Matters: Supporting Access and Development through Literacy and Reading Initiatives in Libraries focusing on two case studies, in Western Australia and the UK, where library services have developed initiatives that are making a difference in the lives of their communities.

Annie Everall OBE

Chair, IFLA Literacy & Reading Section August 2017