

IFLA Grant

Purpose

Enable an information professional from Suriname to attend the annual IFLA World Library and Information Congress.

Venue, city, country

Swedish Exhibition and Congress Centre, Gothenburg, Sweden.

Your name, status, library, university

Jane W.F. Smith
Director of Libraries,
Anton de Kom University of Suriname

Describe the conference

The 76th IFLA Conference (theme 'Open access to knowledge : promoting sustainable progress) was great and informative. At the conference there were more than 3,000 attendees. All together there were more than 200 presentations with over 300 presenters. In the exhibition hall, there were approx. 150 posters sessions.

Meetings, presentations, library visit

On August 8th and August 9th I attended the Satellite meetings in Borås:

Cooperation and Collaboration in Teaching and Research Trends in Library and Information Studies Education and The global librarian.

From August 10th until August 15th I attended the IFLA conference in Gothenburg.

I attended some:

- sessions of interest, namely:
 - Academic and Research libraries,
 - Agricultural Libraries,
 - Information literacy,
 - Knowledge management,
 - Library Information Science in Developing Countries SIG,
 - Education and training
 - Continuing professional development and workplace learning
 - LIS education in Developing Countries

These sessions were very useful and informative. For example the sessions about continuing professional development, education and training and LIS were very valuable. As we don't have a library school in Suriname, training for paraprofessionals is one of our priorities at the moment.

The information in the sessions academic and research libraries created an ideal picture of this library type, where I got a lot of ideas for the University Library.

Information literacy is an issue we are trying to promote at the AdeKUS. With the information I gathered we can try some other perspectives.

- standing committee meeting on academic and research libraries
- division leadership forum: LF II. V. Region
- two caucus meeting, one for Netherlands Speaking participants and one for Africa, Asia & Oceania and Latin America and the Caribbean

These sessions inspired me to get more involved in the IFLA organization.

Furthermore I was present at:

- the opening session
- all three plenary sessions
- the general Assembly
- the closing session
- of course, the newcomers session
- the update session on Haiti
- the session on IFLA publications
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During the conference, I did a spontaneous visit to the Gothenburg City Library. I was impressed by the range of media that is available for the users. I also noticed the different meeting places for children and young people.

Other meetings during the conference:

- Meeting with Marian Koren (VOB, Netherlands) about training and continuous education for paraprofessionals in Suriname.
- Meeting with Sjoerd Koopman (IFLA Professional Programmes Director) about the possibilities of more involvement in IFLA as a member and about training and continuous education for paraprofessionals in Suriname. The benefits of Institutional membership were also an issue. More reason to indicate the importance to change the membership-category in institutional IFLA member instead of a personal affiliate member.
- An encounter with Ellen Tise, IFLA president. On our way to the IFLA office I was introduced to the president by my colleague, Françoise Beaulieu-Thybulle, director of Haiti's National Library.
- Talks with different colleagues from the Caribbean, Africa and Sweden.



Jane Smith (Suriname), Ellen Tise (IFLA president) and Elviera Sandie (Suriname), IFLA Conference, Sweden, August 11, 2010

Other activities

- **Exhibition**

Visiting the Exhibition I was interested in the boots from Elsevier, EBSCO and Springer, especially for the online databases they offer.

The IFLA boot had information on IFLA, the publications, the Conference in 2011 in Puerto Rico. As Suriname is part of the Caribbean it is better to have information upfront for a good planning.

Information about scanners was available in the boot from Zeutschel. A presentation was given about the features of a book copy, to scan documents. As we have plans to digitize the Suriname documents it was wise to gather information.

Evaluation

Opening session

Being accustomed to formal opening ceremonies on Conferences in the Caribbean, I did not know what to expect. The opening of the Conference started with the speech of the IFLA president, Ellen Tise, which was very promising for a fruitful conference. Very impressive was the keynote speech of Jan Eliasson. He used his experiences to explain the importance of access to knowledge for world peace. The option for a pseudo. ABBA Band was well chosen.

Plenary sessions

From all three speakers at the plenary sessions I think Hans Rosling was the best. The use of animations in his presentation about past and contemporary changes in the world was an overwhelming demonstration.

General Assembly

This meeting was formal and very well attended. As I am a personal affiliate IFLA member, I didn't vote, but I noticed the correct use of the 'Robert's Rules of Order'.

Closing Ceremony

This meeting was a farewell from the Swedish colleagues and a welcome call from the ones from Puerto Rico to attend the next IFLA congress.

Final comments

As networking is one of the purposes for attending a conference, I enjoyed meeting some dear friends from the regional library organization ACURIL, namely from Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti, Jamaica, Barbados and Puerto Rico. Also the networking with new colleagues from the Netherlands and Sweden, colleagues from the International Visitor's Leadership Program on Libraries.

Overall the conference was well organized and inspiring. So much that I have the intention to present a paper on the next conference. Furthermore would like to get more involved in IFLA. I'll work on that.

This experience was great and I sure will share this with my colleagues in Suriname. Together we'll execute new ideas for the benefit of librarianship in Suriname.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere thanks to:

- NBD/Biblion and other donors for supporting the IFLA Grant Programme, to make it possible for information professionals to attend the annual IFLA World Library and Information Congress;
- Sjoerd Koopman, IFLA Professional Programme Director, for all the efforts he made during the pre-conference phase to assure my attendance at the 76th IFLA Conference;
- Josche Ouwerkerk, IFLA Conference Officer, for the assistance with administrative issues;
- The Anton de Kom University of Suriname for given me the support and opportunity to attend the conference.

Thanks again for this opportunity,

Paramaribo, Friday, August 27, 2010

Jane W.F. Smith
Director of Libraries
Anton de Kom University of Suriname