



**IFLA Section
School Libraries**

Minutes of School Libraries

Business meeting

Virtual (Zoom), 13 September 2023

(10:00-12:00 CEST)

Standing Committee Members (in alphabetical order):

Mayasari Abdul Majid (Malaysia) - Catherine Barnes (Australia) - Valerie Byrd-Fort (USA), **Information Coordinator** (IC) - Svetlana Chazova (Russian Federation) - Everton Camillo Da Silva (Brazil) - Beatrice Eleuteri (Italy) - Ceire Hopley (New Zealand) - Melissa Johnston (USA) - Elsaid Ezzat Khaled (Bahrain) - Jacqueline Lucas (Australia) - Luisa Marquardt (Italy), **Chair** - Jerry Mathema (Zimbabwe) - Alejandro Oscar Micalucci (Argentina) - Inger Nilsson (Sweden) - Fumie Niwai (Japan) - Grace Onyebuchi (Nigeria) - Abha Singh (India), **Secretary** - Hans-Petter Storemyr (Norway) - Lisa Thiesing (Germany) - Esther Ndapewa Tobias (Namibia) - (Bella) Jing Zhang (China)

AGENDA

1. Opening
 2. Welcome and apologies
 3. Introduction of participants and visitors/observers (if any) – name, country and institution
 4. Adoption of the Agenda - Approved
 5. Approval of the Minutes of the previous Business Meetings (20th August 2023)
 6. Any items from the previous meeting (not covered elsewhere)
 7. WLIC 2023: highlights and comments – inspiring speeches
 8. IFLA SL Manifesto: update on Unesco
 9. Basecamp for Section's Communications, Documents and collaborative work
 10. Division E updates and important deadlines
 11. Review of the Action Plan 2021-2023
 12. Engagement of Section subscribers
 13. ISLM 2023 (International School Library Month – 1-31 October)
 14. MIL Week 2023: collaboration with Information Literacy Section (ILS)
 15. Midyear meeting 2024
 16. WLIC 2024: attendance, session planning
 17. Round Table: SC Members' contributions (from countries and library associations/institutions) and expectations
 18. Varia
- Closing of the meeting

MINUTES

Attendance

Attendance is as follows (in alphabetical order):

Catherine Barnes (Australia) - Valerie Byrd Fort (USA) - Svetlana Chazova (Russian Federation) - Beatrice Eleuteri (Italy) - Ceire Hopley (New Zealand) - Elsaid Ezzat Khaled (Bahrain) - Jacqueline Lucas (Australia) - Luisa Marquardt (Italy) - Fumie Niwai (Japan) - Abha Singh (India) - Hans-Petter Storemyr (Norway) - (Bella) Jing Zhang (China).

1. Opening

Whereas the majority of the SC Members is present, the meeting officially opens at 10:05 am CEST, after waited for the participants to join. Minutes are taken by the Section Secretary Abha Singh, jointly with Valerie Byrd-Fort (IC) and the Chair.

2. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomes participants. The attendance is as above mentioned.

Apologies from Mayasari Abdul Majid, Elizabeth Burns, Melissa Johnston, Lisa Thiesing.

Hans-Petter, Svetlana, Catherine and Fumie inform that they might have to leave the meeting earlier.

3. Introduction of participants and (if any) visitors/observers (name, country and institution)

Each participant introduces her/himself. Each of the presentations were particularly information-rich and stimulating. The Chair suggests to have a brief presentation from each of the SC Members (150 words, or more, as needed), plus photos and useful links, that are related to the library associations, organizations, institutions and projects mentioned in the self-introduction. The Section provides a good variety of “voices” and perspectives – Elected and Co-Opted Members cover all continents. The proposal is moved by Luisa, seconded by Jacqui and Catherine, and then approved. Valerie (IC) suggests to have the presentations both in English and one’s own home language; each of the presentations will be collected by Valerie (mail to: valbyrd@mailbox.sc.edu) and posted on the Section’s blog; children’s faces have to be blurred in respect of privacy rules. All agree.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda is approved and therefore adopted.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the previous Business Meetings (20th August 2023)

The minutes and the addendum with Bella’s proposal on the 2024 Midyear Meeting for being held in China circulated and were available in Basecamp. Bella’s proposal on establishing an award is mentioned in the minutes, too, but it requires further investigation, including the analysis of the awards established by the IASL, in order not to replicate them, and will be discussed in the next future. The approval is moved by Luisa, seconded by Jacqui, approved by all.

6. Any items from the previous meeting (not covered elsewhere)

Bella raises the question about the pictures taken during the 1st BM in Rotterdam. Luisa will ask for them to the former Chair Valérie Glass.

7. WLIC 2023: highlights and comments

Luisa reports that many trendy topics (as AI and ChatGPT) were discussed in several sessions from a variety of perspectives. She comments on the fact that, although the virtual component is absolutely necessary - being hybrid meetings the new normal (to allow remote attendance) -, the possibility of meeting in-person, discussing and sharing ideas face-to-face, sharing many social and informal moments (including lunches and/or dinners) provided a good occasion for networking. The 1st BM of the Section (Aug. 20) was well attended both in-person and virtually by members and observers; the open session offered interesting contributions from Nigeria, Turkey and USA. In her confirmed role as Secretary of Division E, Luisa attended several business meetings of Sections/SIGs (e.g., LCYA, Library History, Relindial etc.) to listen to emerging issues and proposals, to establish or reinforce relationships for better networking also as SL Section. Bella found many speeches very inspiring. For Valerie it was her first WLIC in-person, which she enjoyed very much, while for Abha her first virtual one.

8. IFLA SL Manifesto: update on Unesco

The Chair mentions the long process for having the Manifesto released by the IFLA SL Section and IASL on the 12th of September 2021, endorsed by the IFLA Governing Board (17 April 2023) and still pending for the final approval by Unesco. The approval should be put by a Member Country of Unesco as an item in the call for order of the next Unesco General Meeting (November 2023). Luisa reports on the attempts that are being made through the AIB – Associazione italiana biblioteche (i.e., Italian Library Association), whose President Dr. Laura Ballestra was at the IFLA WLIC 2023 and confirmed her availability to submit the request to the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Foreign Affairs; an update on these attempts will be sent as soon as possible. Luisa invites participants to explore the possibility of contacting Ministries in their own countries to ask for putting the item of the SL Manifesto approval in the next Unesco General Meeting Agenda. At the current stage, the SL Manifesto cannot be translated; it can be presented as a draft for Unesco (who might ask for integrations, corrections etc.).

Luisa expresses her concerns about the long time consuming procedure, while there is a strong need for having the Manifesto translated in languages other than English, especially in countries (like Italy) where the school librarian's (or teacher librarians') job description and position do not exist, do not have any legal framework, and the situation of school libraries is very weak. The SL Manifesto risks to sound "old" or not enough update when will be finally approved, taking in account the many challenges (AI and its educational implications, just to mention one) the educational world and school libraries are currently facing. As reported in the last BM in Rotterdam, while still waiting for the official version of the IFLA Manifesto approved by Unesco, the Italian Ministry of Education and its "Control room" on School Libraries released a five-key point SL Manifesto "Una biblioteca in ogni scuola" (i.e., "A Library In Every School", as the SL advocacy campaign launched by the IFLA SL and IASL over 10 years ago); it has been published in Italian, English, French and Spanish, and presented in Turin, at the International Book Fair (May 2023), and in Rome, at the IASL Conference (July 2023).

9. Basecamp for Section's Communications, Documents and collaborative work

Luisa informs that Basecamp will be used very intensively. The School Libraries area in Basecamp aims at sharing information, documents, and ideas within the Section, facilitating the communication among its members and their collaborative work. There are currently two areas (2021-2023 and 2023-2025) that probably will be merged in the next days. In the current transitional phase, the second one was set up to facilitate the communication and the circulation of useful documents. Although e-mails will be also used, it is important that all members become familiar with the platform. Resources and communication can be clearly and rationally organized, and easily reached or retrieved in Basecamp. Luisa proposes to have the minutes checked and approved through Basecamp a few days after the end of a meeting, so that, once approved, they can be quickly uploaded to the IFLA Repository in order to guarantee efficiency and transparency. Luisa moves, Valerie seconds, all in favor.

10. Division E updates and important deadlines

Luisa reports some issues discussed during the Division E meeting (Sept. 11), like the recommendation of using Basecamp; the "Infinity" tool for more efficient planning etc. (see the Division E Meeting minutes). Important deadlines are Sept. 15 (submission of Sections' / SIGs' reports) and October 31 (submission of the reviewed/updates Action Plan).

11. Review of the Action Plan 2021-2023

Luisa shows on the screen the Action Plan 2021-2023 that will be made available in Basecamp for analysis. All of the SC Members are invited to have a close look at it and submit their comments and proposals on what should be kept, updated etc. Luisa will be attending a training session on Fri. 15th on the new tool "Infinity", that should facilitate Action Planning. As suggested by Russell Lynch, Chair of Division E, an Action Plan should be "SMART", i.e., Sustainable, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely. It is not possible to go in depth on this item due to the lack of time; it will be adjourned

to the next meeting. Preparatory work will be also done in Basecamp, where some “To-Dos” are already defined.

12. Engagement of Section subscribers

When registering for IFLA, an individual or an association/organization/institution can subscribe one or more Sections and SIGs. Subscribers of the School Libraries Section are not usually involved or in close touch with the Section: they can get information and updates from the webpages and list-serv, while their contribution or expertise could enrich the conversations, feed the Section’s blog with news from the worldwide school library community. The Chair suggests to plan a meeting with them, to be held possibly by the end of September (also to promote the ISLM and share ideas for the MIL Week or other purposes) to explore their interests and possible contributions. All of the SC Members are of course invited to attend (if they are interested in and can). All are in favor of a better engagement of Section subscribers.

13. ISLM 2023 (International School Library Month – 1-31 October)

The Chair reminds that October is the ISLM – International School Library Month, established and promoted by IASL (<https://iasl-online.org/>), and shows the ISLM webpage (<https://iasl-online.org/ISLM>). The ISLM 2022 was endorsed by the Section. The Chair moves the proposal, Valerie seconds it, all in favor of endorsing the ISLM 2023, too. All members are invited to spread the word about the ISLM through their channels and networks and to organize initiatives.

14. MIL Week 2023: collaboration with Information Literacy Section (ILS)

As already discussed at the 1st BM, the two Sections – IL and SL – are planning a joint initiative (one or more webinars) for the Unesco Global MIL Week 2023, whose theme suggested by Unesco is: “Media and Information Literacy in Digital Spaces: A Collective Global Agenda” (<https://www.unesco.org/en/weeks/media-information-literacy>). The IL Section discussed the MIL initiative in the BM of Sept. 12, whose outcomes are not known yet. Luisa will contact the IL Section Chair to hear about possible topics to be explored jointly by the two Sections.

15. Midyear meeting 2024

The Chair summarizes the proposal presented by Bella in Rotterdam for the next midyear meeting being held in China, as a part of a bigger national and international meeting on reading or literacy. The draft proposal is attached to the minutes of the BM of Aug. 20 and available in Basecamp. Bella explains that the meeting could be held in July, August, or Autumn, in a time too close to the IFLA WLIC (or overlapping it) or too far from the usual time (Spring). In this case, the meeting could however be planned with the SL Section, not as a Midyear one, and with the IASL that has many members in the East, far East and Oceania, who may be interested in attending. About the Midyear meeting 2024, an alternative proposal could be the 61st edition of the Bologna Children’s Book Fair (Bologna, Italy, 8-11 April 2024, <https://www.bolognachildrensbookfair.com/en/home/878.html>). Prof. Donatella Lombello (Padua University and President of ASPEI) is planning with the Chair a meeting on school libraries/librarianship. This gathering is a long-standing tradition that is usually held on Monday. Luisa will develop a proposal, while waiting for further information from Bella.

16. WLIC 2024: attendance, session planning

Luisa informs on what arose both from the 1st BM of the Section at the IFLA WLIC 2023 and from the Division E meeting of Sept. 11: many associations are not in favor of the IFLA WLIC 2024 in Dubai and will not support their members’ attendance; the participation of delegates is therefore not sure. This affects the organization of sessions, workshops etc. Satellite meetings can be organized in countries in the UAE Region. A decision had to be made by the end of October. This item is adjourned to next meeting.

17. Round Table: SC Members' contributions (from countries and library associations / institutions) **and expectations**

All of the SC Members are invited to submit their ideas, contributions, information; express their specific interests or field(s) of expertise (e.g., reading promotion, information literacy education etc.), how they would like to contribute (for instance, a project within the Action Plan), and also their expectations from the Section (and IFLA). About information and updates from the different countries, Valerie is available to collect information and post it; she can set up a calendar so that each of the SC Members can plan to provide their contributions. All are in favor.

18. Varia

No other matters arise.

Closing of the meeting

The Chair expresses her deepest gratitude for the participation and the fruitful discussion.

The meeting ends at 12:15 pm (CEST – Rome time).

Rome (and virtual), September 13, 2023.