



International
Federation of
Library
Associations and Institutions

Approved Minutes

Advisory Committee on Cultural Heritage

Meeting 1: Wednesday 6 April 2022, 17:30-19:00 CEST

Meeting 2: Thursday 7 April, 10:30-12:00 CEST

Teleconference

Note: these minutes provide a record of both meetings.

In attendance: Helen Vincent, Huanwen Cheng, Liisa Savolainen, Rashidah Bolhassan, Stacy Allison-Cassin, Silvia Stasselova, Ramesh C Gaur, Claire McGuire (IFLA HQ)

Apologies: Carlos Alberto Della Paschoa, Dorothea Sommer, Cecilia Salvatore, Mariia Kolpakova, Rana Abdulrahman, Russell Lynch, Ry Moran, Daryl Green, IFLA SG

1. Welcome and Approval of Agenda: Ramesh Gaur - Chair, ACCH

Committee members were welcomed. It was reiterated that this meeting was being offered at two different times, with identical agendas, in order to accommodate members in all time zones.

The Chair expressed disappointment in the lack of relatively even attendance between the two meetings. The two small groups made it impossible to make decisions.

He felt that it would be better for the work of the committee to return to one meeting.

Given low attendance, the agenda was **not approved**. Instead, the chair asked that those in attendance continue with a discussion on the WLIC 2022 session proposal, and that IFLA HQ (Claire) gives the planned presentation and leads a preliminary discussion on the Risk Register.

This amended agenda was agreed.

ACTION: Claire (CMG) will circulate a poll to request committee's agreement on moving to one meeting, and ascertain available for a late-May/early-June meeting (ahead of WLIC).

2. Approval of Minutes, January 2021: Ramesh Gaur - Chair, ACCH

Minutes were **unable to be approved** given the low attendance. Minutes will be circulated to the committee by email to approve.

ACTION: CMG to circulate minutes and request approval.

2. WLIC 2022 CCH Open Session Plan

This was a continuation of the discussion regarding plans for the CCH open session at WLIC 2022. Input has been made by committee members on Basecamp and in an informal meeting on 28 March, and all members are invited to share their views to work towards finalising the session plan.

MEETING 1

In a discussion on taking a specific focus (climate action) vs. a more general focus (wide range of culture topics), it was felt that a specific topic was better, especially since climate action can include many different angles.

The key issue is organising the session.

A provoking discussion might include different viewpoints from different fields who can bring differing expert opinions.

For example, maybe invited climate experts can discuss questions relating to the impact of climate change on library issues.

The Chair noted that documentary heritage is the most important to libraries, and so there should be a focus on the protection of rare documentary heritage material. It was noted that in the climate heritage space, there is also a strong focus on intangible cultural heritage – especially in regards to indigenous heritage, and that libraries do have a role in this topic.

Climate heritage network was mentioned as a good partner and potential speaker.

A further discussion was had on the negative affect libraries can have on climate change. For example, digitisation has a large carbon footprint. Large buildings to house collections make a lot of emissions – there could be an interesting discussion on balance between preserving collections and minimizing impact.

MEETING 2

A perspective from indigenous librarianship was shared, in which there are two angles: threats and solutions.

Threats include the impact of climate change on intangible cultural heritage, traditional livelihoods and lifestyles (i.e. for SIDS, coastal or arctic communities), on plants and crops for traditional medicine and foodways. Solutions include looking at practices of indigenous people that are in line with sustainable practice – allowing for living in good relation with the environment.

In this, the threat to ICH was noted.

It was further noted that many indigenous communities may be based more around cultural centres than traditional ideas of a library institution – language should consider the more expansive role of libraries.

The committee and the speakers will need to decide on which of these topics they will focus.

The new IPCC report Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change (released in April) was noted, making this topic timely.

The role that cultural institutions can play not just in teaching and modeling sustainable practices, but in helping people build cultural resilience in their spaces was noted. This is in line with the Climate Heritage Network.

It was argued that perhaps the knowledge that libraries should practice sustainability is known, that now further discussion on the culture angle is needed.

However, this understanding may be regional. It was noted there is a need for more awareness-raising on climate change and resilience in Asia-Oceania region (Malaysia) – it is not being talked about as much as in West, but the affects (like flooding) are being felt and threatening built and intangible heritage. Noted how libraries have acted as community spaces of refuge in disaster

IFLA HQ noted that identifying such a gap and suggesting to the Regional Division Committee and/or Regional Council that it is addressed further is a very good role for this committee.

The topic of disaster risk reduction was discussed, but it was felt it would be timely to look beyond this topic and explore other areas than preservation and conservation of materials.

Structure

The committee must find a good, knowledgeable moderator.

It was proposed to invite 1 or 2 experts from the field of climate change to speak with 1 or 2 experts from the library field. This could help with provocation through their discussion.

In a 1-hour time, it was felt there would be two or three speakers, followed by a discussion. A key issue is finding very good speakers who can bring different inputs.

This discussion will need to be structured and lead to interesting conclusions. It is important to consider what kind of provocation angle would the discussion encourage.

Identify 2-3 speakers with different perspectives and experiences

Ideas:

- Climate Heritage Network
- Representative from an Indigenous community (perhaps IM Section can help – not many members can come to Dublin, but perhaps a speaker from the Sámi Community?)
- Climate change experts
- Library expert

It was noted that speakers might include local representation and different profiles from different countries.

Public libraries participated in the cultural programme of COP26. It was suggested that it would be be interested to invite someone who participated in COP26 to speak.

Provocations will be led by a moderator – must be very knowledgeable on this topic

Next Steps

Helen volunteered to coordinate the session.

Stacy will be coordinating the Indigenous Matters session, so cannot lead, but would be willing to help. For information, the IM Section Session will be on Indigenous language, with a focus on local languages and will feature a connection to Wikimedia projects.

Not many members of the IM Section will be able to travel to WLIC, but perhaps the IM Section can assist in finding an Indigenous speaker.

Action: CMG to update session proposal with all feedback, sent to Helen and Ramesh for comments, then circulate to the committee for final input. Try to have final proposal (title/session summary) ready by end of April.

IFLA Risk Register: Claire McGuire – IFLA HQ

The committee was asked to review the document *Guidelines assessing registrations received to IFLA Risk Register* [PDF], which was circulated prior to the meeting. IFLA HQ shared a brief presentation on the Risk Register, its intended function, and the nomination requirements. The committee was then asked to share questions and comments on the register and/or assessment process.

The reason for the register was questioned. The intended purpose was somewhat clear, but in function its purpose is less clear.

It was noted that a lesson-learned in Ukraine is the challenge of knowing what collections are in which institutions. Therefore, perhaps it would be more important and usable to have a collection of catalogues kept somewhere safe (at IFLA), rather than individual collections.

It was suggested that this committee could work with the Cataloguing Section to explore good solutions to this. That section doesn't always work with cultural heritage so this could be an interesting opportunity.

Similarly in Ukraine, it is difficult to know what material is digitised and whether it is safe (where the disks are, if they are stored in multiple locations, if they are uploaded to the cloud) as it is difficult to contact individuals in the country.

Another idea was whether IFLA could provide a safe place to store digitised material.

It was noted that if an institution's metadata is stored in WorldCat, they would likely not feel the need to store it elsewhere. The crowd-sourcing and volunteering effort to save digital heritage in disaster was noted. We would want to avoid duplicating effort.

One problem is that some institution's collections are not digital, perhaps IFLA could broker digitisation.

It was noted that perhaps the RR is more usable in a natural disaster, but in active armed conflict it is harder to use.

Another issue is that large libraries, such as National Libraries, have many collections, all of which are heritage. It is hard for them to assess which would be "at risk", and hard to nominate them all to the register.

There was also confusion over terms. Unique and irreplaceable is broad, and a more specific definition would be helpful.

There is further confusion around risk – how does one determine if their collection is “at-risk”? The Committee is asked to assess collections based on authenticity, not on the immediacy of the risk.

There should be guidelines on documentary heritage at risk – helping users determine what actually determines that their collection is at risk.

There is further confusion on the difference between the RR and the MoW Register. Upon further explanation it is clear, but more communication is needed to help users understand the difference.

It was noted that confidentiality is difficult, but Ukraine has shown the importance of this in some cases.

The unique selling point of the RR was noted to be its openness to all types of collections. MoW might have collections of significance in the view of government, but that’s not representative of all.

We will need to determine the needs by region and then target more specifically in communication and awareness-raising.

Action: CMG to compile the recommendations and continue the discussion with the committee.

Proposals to improve the RR could be a possible workshopping exercise in a future meeting. Perhaps a recommendation to the GB could be prepared before the August GB meeting? Then actions to implement could be carried out in the second half of the term.

If a CCH member is interested in leading on this, they are welcome to contact Claire!

6. AOB and closing of the meeting, Ramesh Gaur - Chair, ACCH

No other business.