



# IFLA Section Cataloguing

Minutes of Cataloguing Section  
Mid-Year Meeting  
Teleconference (Zoom),  
26 May, 2023 3-4:30 PM CEST

## I- Welcome and Introductions of the Membership and Newly Elected Members

The chair welcomed the attendees to this transition meeting that included incoming, outgoing and continuing members of the Section. He also congratulated new and re-elected members, and said that the Cataloguing Section is in good hands.

The membership introduced themselves.

Present at the meeting were:

Vincent Boulet (Chair) (BnF - France)  
Merideth Fletcher (Secretary) (Library and Archives Canada)  
Ricardo Santos (Information Coordinator) (National Library of Spain)  
Elise Conradi (Biblioteksentralen SA – Norway)  
Karina Esman (National Library of Russia)  
Maira Kreislere (National Library of Latvia)  
Fabyola Lima Madeira (Câmara dos Deputados - Brazil)  
Susan Morris (Library of Congress, Retired - United States)  
Rania Osman, (Bibliotheca Alexandrina - Egypt)  
Ángela Quiroz (Library of National Congress – Chile)  
Marja-Liisa Seppälä (Newsletter editor) (National Library of Finland)  
Katarina Synnermark (National Library of Sweden)  
Joan Wang (United States of America)  
Yang Wang (National Library of China)  
Deanna White (ISSN International Centre - France)  
Jennifer Wright (Bibliographic Data Services – Scotland)  
Miki Yamaguchi (National Diet Library - Japan)  
Sofia Zapounidou (National Library of Greece)

The following members sent their regrets:

Trine Adolfsen (National Library of Norway)  
Christian Aliverti (Swiss National Library)  
Gordon Dunsire (Independent Consultant, UK)  
Mathilde Koskas (BnF - France)

## II- Approval of the [Minutes](#)

The minutes were approved with one minor change (correcting the name of the ISSN International Centre).

## III- Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted with one minor change: merging the elections and transition period topics into a single agenda item.

#### **IV- Organization of the Section in the Transition Period and Election of IFLA Officers**

The chair indicated that the election period for new section officers begins on June 1. There are three positions available: Chair, Secretary (responsible for administration and communication within the section), and the Information Coordinator (responsible for communication activities and news from the section, managing the section webpage and other communication tools such as the section's Twitter account). The Chair and the Information Coordinator are outgoing members of the section, and the Secretary is a continuing member, but all three positions are open for elections. The positions of officers are two-year terms.

Nominations will begin on June 1 and run to June 19, and the elections themselves will run from June 26-July 10. The results will be announced on July 13.

All new members and continuing members can nominate themselves for officer positions. If you wish to nominate yourself, you will need to fill in an online form, and provide a candidate statement between 100 and 300 words explaining your motivation for seeking nomination and the skills and abilities you possess that are aligned with the position you are seeking. It is important that you do not miss the nomination deadline.

A member asked if there are descriptions of duties available. Merideth Fletcher indicated that she would provide the link to the information document in Basecamp following the meeting. [It can be found [here](#).]

Merideth, the current Secretary, was asked if she planned to seek re-election. Merideth indicated that she did, but that she felt conflicted because she wouldn't be able to attend WLIC 2023 in person. She said that she would stand-down if there were another interested candidate (or candidates) who would be able to participate fully by attending WLIC in person.

The Chair noted that all incoming and continuing members will be eligible to vote via a web form, between June 26 and July 10. He also pointed out that under IFLA rules there is only one chair, one secretary and one information coordinator per section (no co-chair, vice chair, co-secretary or co-information coordinator roles.) However there are opportunities in the section to assist the elected officers with their tasks.

The Chair indicated that the outgoing and incoming chairs are expected to jointly prepare a provisional annual report before August 1. The final report deadline is September 15.

The Chair asked if there were questions, and as there were none, moved onto the next agenda item.

#### **V- Update on WLIC 2023**

The Chair noted that (as was the case at last year's WLIC) there will be only one business meeting during the conference in Rotterdam. The meeting is planned for Sunday August 20, so members were asked to reserve their calendars. There will also be a second business meeting after WLIC, to be organized by the new section leadership before the end of August. This meeting will be online, and only attended by incoming and continuing members.

At the last section meeting in February, a decision had been taken for set up a small group to work on planning an open session on AI and machine learning. Ricardo and Ángela agreed to work with the Chair on this. This group had some discussions with representatives from the IT and Subject Analysis and Access (SAA) Sections, as they were planning open sessions on similar topics. The three groups agreed to form a single planning committee and organize two joint open sessions on AI practices ([\*Utopia, threat or opportunity first? Artificial Intelligence and machine learning for\*](#)

[cataloguing](#)) and AI ethics and issues ([Library data in the world of machine learning: ethics, bias and algorithms](#).) The planning committee received many proposals and is now in the process of selecting the papers. The committee hopes to be able to inform the selected speakers during the week of May 29-June 2.

The Chair mentioned that the Cataloguing Section (CAT) Business Meeting will be held in a room that supports hybrid meetings. Merideth confirmed that she had been told by IFLA administration that all business meetings will be held in boardrooms with hybrid functionality, and that more information would be provided soon.

The Chair mentioned that all section activities (of which there are many) would be discussed at the business meeting in Rotterdam.

## **VI- Cataloguing Competencies (Susan)**

[Report](#) [Appendix A](#) [Appendix B](#)

The Chair thanked Susan Morris for the work put into developing the Competencies Working Group report, and then he turned the floor over to Susan.

Susan summarized the draft report of the Working Group on Cataloguing Competencies. Susan said that the working group, whose members included nearly half the members of the full Standing Committee, had worked since late 2021 to identify competencies required for a contemporary career in descriptive cataloguing and descriptive metadata production. The working group consulted the *IFLA Guidelines for Professional Library and Information Science (LIS) Education Programmes* produced by the IFLA Building Strong Library Education (BSLISE) Working Group and endorsed by the IFLA Professional Council in April 2022. BLISE is primarily a group of library science educators, whereas the CAT Cataloguing Competencies Working Group is composed of cataloguing managers. The Cataloguing Competencies WG therefore focused on the knowledge and skills that managers want their entering and midcareer cataloguing staff to possess in order to serve library users well.

The Competencies Working Group recognized that cataloguing skills may be taught in LIS curricula and also can be learned on the job. The group therefore began by reviewing cataloguing courses in LIS curricula in the 125 member institutions of the iSchools, an informal consortium of educational institutions dedicated to the advancement of librarianship. The working group also reviewed requirements for cataloguing competences in 18 countries that do not have representation in iSchools. Data from these reviews form Appendices A and B of the working group's draft report. The WG had hoped to review vacancy announcements from libraries in many countries in order to see what competencies are in greatest demand at present, but this was not feasible under pandemic conditions, as hiring was greatly curtailed during the WG's efforts.

The Competencies Working Group report groups its findings and recommendations under the Foundational Knowledge Areas of the BLISE *Guidelines*, because the WG hopes that the report will be considered by generalist librarians as well as by cataloguing specialists. The three Foundational Knowledge Areas that the working group found most relevant for contemporary cataloguers are Information and Communication Technologies, Information Resources Management, and Information Needs and User Services.

The working group had consensus, right at the start of its brainstorming discussions, that cataloguing should be a major element of all LIS curricula. This consensus leads to the working group's first recommendation: **The Working Group recommends that IFLA advocate for inclusion of cataloguing and metadata conceptual skills as a fundamental element of every LIS program.** The working group realizes that advocacy for cataloguing in LIS curricula is an uphill battle by now, as many LIS schools

have reduced the emphasis on cataloguing over the past 25 to 30 years. The 125 iSchools institutions fall into three roughly equal categories: 47 offer a full range of cataloguing courses or require a cataloguing course for a master's degree; 38 that offer cataloguing courses as options; and 40 that do not offer a master's-level cataloguing course at all. However, the working group feels that cataloguing is fundamental to the provision of high quality, equitable library service to all user communities. Other library services such as collection acquisition, in-person and remote reference, circulation, and digitization services all depend on high quality cataloguing data. Although the working group recognizes that many cataloguing staff can learn cataloguing skills only on the job, and the report therefore identifies competencies that can be learned either in coursework or on the job, the best place for librarians to gain the necessary understanding of cataloguing is in LIS courses.

Susan highlighted the specific competencies identified by the working group.

After highlighting the competencies identified by the working group, Susan presented the working group's recommendations:

1. CAT should urge the IFLA Regional Council and the Advisory Committee on Standards (CoS) to advocate for cataloguing courses in all LIS curricula.
2. A cross-sectional working group of CAT, the Section on Education and Training, and possibly the LIS in Developing Countries Special Interest Group should identify which cataloguing competencies should be presented in coursework and which can be learned on the job.
3. CAT should consider possibilities for a Metadata Competencies Community within iSchools, which has several communities of common interest. This would require funding and might involve a delicate interface between LIS educators and hands-on cataloguing managers.
4. Review hiring requirements for cataloguing jobs in the 2023-2025 Action Plan for CAT.
5. Consider whether the Competencies Working Group report could evolve into a companion document to the BLISE *Guidelines*.

Joan Wang, an incoming member of the Standing Committee, made several points about the condition of cataloguing in today's libraries. In particular, she noted that most cataloguing is done by paraprofessional staff, and this fact makes it important to present foundations of cataloguing as part of on-the-job training. Susan agreed that this was a realistic perspective but noted a possible tension if cataloguing managers give the appearance of conceding that cataloguing is no longer a professional-level specialty.

Next steps: Vincent agreed that the working group should revise its Appendices to include information from ten to twelve countries that was submitted after the first draft was written. Vincent wondered whether there was enough time to finalize the WG report and prepare a request to CoS on the first recommendation, asking IFLA to advocate for including cataloguing in LIS curricula. Susan thought that the group should try to do this for the Rotterdam WLIC, in view of the number of working group and standing committee members who would rotate off CAT at that point. Vincent will check to see if IFLA maintains a template for submitting requests to CoS. **The working group welcomes input on its draft report from all Standing Committee members.** Please send comments to Susan Morris, [susanrmorris@verizon.net](mailto:susanrmorris@verizon.net) and Susan will share them with the other WG members. Please send comments by June 30, 2023.

## VII- Updates

- **ICP Structural Update (Christian)**

Christian had technical difficulties and was therefore unable to attend this meeting as he had planned, to present his [Report](#) on the ICP Structural Update.

The Chair asked Sofia Zapounidou, as a member of the ICP Revision Working Group, to make a few comments in Christian's place. Sofia indicated that the group recommends that ICP should be agnostic as to the data model, meaning that an entity-driven approach is more favored than a bibliographic/authority division. Sofia also indicated that a draft revision of the ICP will be presented at the section business meeting in August.

Vincent indicated that the work has been a great achievement and thanked Christian for having submitted a written interim report.

- **IFLA Metadata Standards WG Update (Vincent)**

The Chair provided an update on the IFLA Metadata Standards WG. This transitional group, is composed of representatives from all three of the metadata sections (CAT, SAA and Bibliography), and the chairs of the metadata review groups (under the auspices of the CoS). The group will provide recommendations on how to improve the interrelation and integration of all metadata standards under CoS' scope (e.g. Unimarc, LRM, ISBN) along with MulDiCat (under CAT).

The WG has had discussions with all the chairs in charge of the metadata standards, and now the WG has started developing their own recommendations.

They plan to ask CoS to work on a policy statement explaining the direction IFLA is planning to take on metadata and metadata standards. Their second recommendation is to improve the expertise within the review groups and to lengthen the two-year terms of the review groups, which are too short. They also plan to recommend procedures and concrete proposals on how to update the standards, given that each standard is linked to the other, and changes in one standard should trigger changes in the others.

The Chair indicated that the WG hopes to finish their paper before Rotterdam and that it will be shared for discussion with whole section.

## **XII- Any Other Business Issue**

The Chair indicated, as this would be the last meeting that he would chair, that he wanted to say that he had been very happy to share the section with the membership; to see the very good work that had been achieved in spite of trying circumstances, including the pandemic and challenges within IFLA. He said that it had been a pleasure to chair the section.

The membership thanked The Chair for his service.

The meeting was closed.