

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)	
Document nr	RC 24-03-2
Agenda Item	2
Subject	Minutes, Regional Council Meeting, 17 January 2024
From	Alejandro Santa, Chair
Purpose	Agree of the Minutes
Date	5 March 2024
Note	
Recommendations	That the Regional Council approves these minutes

MINUTES

The fourth regular meeting of the 2023-2025 IFLA Regional Council was held on Wednesday 17 January online, 12:00-13:30 UTC

Present: Alejandro Santa (Chair), Lin Li Soh (Vice-Chair, AO RDC Chair), Diane Koen (NA RDC Chair), Sharon Memis (IFLA SG), Isela Mo Amavet (LAC Regional Office), Lindi Nhlapo (Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Office), Ian Loh (AO Regional Office), Ertugrul Cimen (Europe RDC Chair), Ayanda Lebele (Sub-Saharan Africa RDC Chair), Jeannette Lebron Ramos (LAC RDC Chair), Eiman AL Shammari (MENA Regional Office), Michelle Chan (AO Regional Office), Saif Al Jabri (MENA RDC Chair), Interpreters

Apologies: Vicki McDonald (President), Te Paea Paringatai (PC Chair)

1. Welcome, apologies and agreement of agenda

The Chair welcomed participants, and noted that there would shortly be an announcement about the President's Meeting from the President.

2. Agreement on the minutes of the previous meeting

The Vice Chair noted some corrections needed related to the sections on the action plan. She would send these on in writing. The minutes were approved subject to this amendment.

3. Welcome by the Chair, updates from Governing Board, Professional Council, Headquarters

The Secretary General wished everyone a happy new year, and looked forward to the President's meeting, highlighting that this would not be a Congress, but rather something new and different. She also noted internal work to build the capacity of the library field as a partner, with work commissioned looking at who is funding libraries, and opportunities for partnership. She also noted a new approach to planning, focused on setting out more clearly the stories we wanted to be able to tell about IFLA at the end of the year.

The Chair welcomed this, and looked forward to engaging in this alongside the Professional Council, Management of Library Associations Section and more.

4. Deep-Dive: Understanding and Building Connections in New York

Following a presentation of the paper by HQ, the Chair started the discussion, noting his interest in trying to establish a Friends of Libraries group at the United Nations. Regional Division Committee chairs then shared the information they had collected around engagement.

Key themes included the value of engaging at the High-Level Political Forum, using national and government library contacts (as well as those who have previously worked there, or in UN agencies) to establish connections, some great examples of national mobilization around the SDG, the need for representatives to have the skills and confidence to do the job well, the value of engaging in Voluntary National Reviews, complexity in making connections when you are resident in another country, the opportunity we have to respond to the sense that governments have failed people, and the potential to use webinars, meetings and other opportunities in committees to learn about what can work in building effectiveness.

The Council agreed to continue pulling together reports, and to follow the plan set out in the paper. Regional Offices could also be engaged in support work here, and the Chair noted his readiness to help others.

5. Deep-Dive: RDC Plans and Practices for Engaging Emerging Leaders

The Chair opened the item by noting the good representation of emerging leaders among regional offices in particular, and then gave the floor to the Chairs of the North America and Latin America and Caribbean Regional Division Committees.

The NA RDC Chair presented a paper, built on the assumptions that we are trying to identify emerging leaders who can both help grow Regional Division Committees and to support IFLA's wider development. The potential to help build pathway for emerging leaders across IFLA units, as well as the need within Committees to have constant attention to this was highlighted. The LAC RDC Chair (herself presented as an emerging leader by the Chair) underlined the need, in this, to be realistic about what is possible.

In the subsequent discussion, issues raised included the attitudes of new generations, the different types of leadership programmes that exist (and their strengths and weaknesses, including cost and retention questions), the potential for RDCs to use (joint) webinars to help, positive memories of IFLA's own International Leadership Programme in the past, the likelihood that leadership programmes will build loyalty to the organisation providing them, the need to plan for follow-up, and the need to be clear about definitions of what we mean (both in order to avoid excluding potential beneficiaries, but also in order not to deter applicants). There was general consensus that programmes should be age-specific.

It was noted that RDCs have the possibility to name mentors, and should feel ready to use this possibility. In the meanwhile, there could also be value in evaluating leaders' programmes that exist in order to understand their focus, impact, methods and more. In the meanwhile the Council agreed that further comments would be welcome on the checklist, in order to be able to finalize this.

6. Deep-Dive: Communications – Preparing for the next meeting with IFLA HQ

The Chair underlined the importance of this work, and working to deliver on the potential of Information Coordinators to boost the dissemination of IFLA's work. It was noted that times for a next special communications meeting would be agreed shortly. The Chair noted that Information Coordinators should also be looking at the IFLA website at least once a week for news, and confirmed that RDC Vice-Chairs are also invited to the communications meeting.

7. Updates on the Regional Council Action Plan

The Vice-Chair noted the updated version that had been circulated, and welcomed any final comments by the end of the week before finalizing this.

8. Planning for the March meeting

The Council agreed to focus on changing perceptions of the library field as a deep-dive theme, but also to discuss more about themes for the future. HQ would suggest specific questions to help prepare. It was noted that the Deep Dive sessions were helpful and interesting for the Council.

9. Any other business

None

10. Commitments and close

The Chair thanked all for their participation and contributions.