



Discussion paper for the PC hearing session on IFLA's professional structure

**World Library and Information Congress
Durban, South Africa**

19 August 2007 - 11:45-13:30

IFLA Professional Structure Review Committee

Report and Recommendations

1. Background

At its meeting in December 2006, the Professional Committee (PC) decided to form a new committee, the IFLA Professional Structure Review Committee, comprising certain members of the current Professional Committee and the four most recent past PC chairs, to “make recommendations to the Professional Committee on the professional structure of the Federation. The Committee’s work will be informed by the report of a committee of past Professional Committee chairs appointed by the Governing Board in 2006, comments by current members of the Professional Committee, and comments made at and following the public hearing convened in Seoul on the professional structure of the Federation.”

The Professional Structure Review Committee began work on this charge at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., February 19-20, 2007, with all members present. Members include: Nancy Bolt, Gwynneth Evans, Nancy Gwinn, Torny Kjekstad, Ia McIlwaine, Sissel Nilsen, Donna Scheeder, Winston Tabb (Chair), and Jacinta Were. (Ralph Manning, an original member of the committee, had to withdraw for personal reasons. Sjoerd Koopman, IFLA’s Professional Coordinator and ex-officio member of the committee was unable to attend.) The Professional Committee and Governing Board met in The Hague on April 24, 2007, and offered a number of comments, which were included in the document.

2. Framework

Believing that it is critical to be clear about why the re-examination of IFLA’s professional structure is necessary, the Committee began its work by asking two questions: “What kind of professional organization do we want IFLA to be, and what objectives are we trying to achieve through the restructuring?”

Building on a set of attributes for governance that were included in the Review of the implementation of the 2001 Statutes (GB-05-123RR) presented to the Governing Board at its March 2006 meeting, the group agreed that the following attributes were critical for IFLA:

Attributes

Alignment with IFLA's aims, core values, professional priorities, and strategic plan
Capacity to renew and grow
Inclusiveness
Continuity
Clarity
Transparency/Accountability
Dedicated members
Responsiveness to its members
Staff responsiveness to officers and members

The Committee then developed the following set of objectives that would guide the restructuring effort and move IFLA toward becoming the kind of organization envisioned above:

Objectives

Achieve strategic plan and professional priorities
Minimize bureaucracy
Facilitate robust, growing IFLA
Support programme diversity
Facilitate regional interests - including both geography and language
Improve communication
Balance growth and continuity
Enhance the ability of IFLA to show the relevance of libraries in the modern world
Enlarge the pool of leaders and participants
Ensure financial viability for IFLA

3. Conclusions

Having reached consensus on these overarching issues, the Committee turned to specific recommendations with regard to three structural elements in IFLA – Divisions, Sections, and Discussion Groups/Special Interest Groups - and the more general issue of the role of these groups' officers in the overall governance of the Federation.

4. Divisions

4.A. Role

Divisions cluster Sections and Special Interest Groups according to broad categories of interest to facilitate the professional programme of IFLA. They are primarily administrative structures focusing on such issues as finances, information sharing, and Congress planning.

4.B. Value

Divisions improve communications vertically and horizontally within IFLA, minimize bureaucracy, provide opportunities for leadership, and reduce duplication.

4.C. **Recommendations**

4.C.1. While Divisions can and do add value, the present arrangement of Divisions is overly complicated, administratively burdensome, is no longer logically structured, and does not meet the need for clarity and collaboration in the organization. Therefore, the Committee recommends that IFLA establish four Divisions, with each Section, Special Interest Group, and Core Activity assigned to one Division, as follows:

- a. Library Types
- b. Library Materials, Functions and Services
- c. Support for the Profession
- d. Regions

4.C.1.a. **Library Types**

Agricultural Libraries SIG

National Libraries

Academic and Research Libraries

Quality Issues in Libraries SIG

Library and Research Services for Parliaments

Government Libraries

Public Libraries

Metropolitan Libraries

Libraries for the Blind

Law Libraries

Art Libraries

Genealogy and Local History

Libraries for Children and Young Adults

School Libraries and Resource Centers

Health and BioSciences Libraries

Science and Technology Libraries

Social Science Libraries

4.C.1.b. **Library Materials, Functions, and Services**

Reference and Information Services

Information Literacy

Acquisition and Collection Development

Document Delivery and Resource Sharing

Government Information and Official Publications

Preservation and Conservation

Information Technology

Geography and Map Libraries

Library Services to Multicultural Populations

Libraries Serving Disadvantaged Persons

Reading

Bibliography

Classification and Indexing
Cataloguing
Rare Books and Manuscripts
Audio Visual and Multimedia
Newspapers
Serials and Other Continuing Resources
Knowledge Management
Libraries for Children and Young Adults
PAC Advisory Board Chair
UNIMARC Committee Chair
ICABS Advisory Board Chair

4.C.1.c. **Support of the Profession**

Management of Library Associations
 New Professionals SIG
 Women, Information and Libraries SIG
Management and Marketing
Education and Training
 e-Learning SIG
 LIS Education in Developing Countries SIG
Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning
Library Buildings and Equipment
Statistics and Evaluation
Library Theory and Research
 Library History SIG
 FAIFE Committee Chair
 CLM Committee Chair

4.C.1.d. **Region**

Africa
Asian and Oceania
Latin American and the Caribbean
Access to Information Network – Africa (ATINA) SIG
ALP Advisory Board Chair

4.C.2. Each Division will have a Chair, elected from the out-going officers of the Sections in the Division and limited to one two-year term. Thus the Division Chair will not serve concurrently as a Section Chair. This will allow the Division Chair to focus on assisting the Division and serving on the PC/GB without Section officer responsibilities. The Division Chair can then visit more Section meetings and programmes and can develop effective meetings and communication with the Sections during the year.

4.D.3. The Division Chair will be elected by postal ballot, which will be sent to section officers of each Division as part of the normal election process. Outgoing Division Chairs will seek nominations for Division Chair from outgoing section officers.

4.D.4. The Division Chairs will serve on the Professional Committee.

4.D.5. In place of a Coordinating Board, at each Congress, each Division Chair will convene a Leadership Forum comprising the Chair and Secretary of each of its Sections, the convener of its Special Interest Groups, along with the Chair of the Advisory Board of any Core Activities assigned to the Division. At the Leadership Forum, participants will discuss issues, inform Division Chairs of views, make suggestions for future conferences, and, bring up matters of concern. The Forum will become a major vehicle for communication of Division members.

4.D.6. The Professional Committee for 2007-2009 will be asked to organize the process for the first election under the new structure, which will take effect following the Quebec Congress.

5. Sections

5.A. Role

Sections address areas of continuing interest to substantial numbers of IFLA members.

5.B. Value

Strong Sections make a strong IFLA. Sections contribute to both the Professional and Membership Pillars of the association. They contribute substantive content at the Congress; produce publications, standards and guidelines; and engage in other worthwhile projects that benefit IFLA members and the profession. Strong, growing Sections bring in more members and participation in IFLA. Sections allow library and information professionals to find opportunities for learning, growth, collaboration and sharing on specific areas of continuing interest on a global basis. Therefore, the Committee concludes that IFLA should, in general, focus on strengthening the existing Sections.

5.C. Recommendations

5.C.1. All Sections will be required to have a minimum of 50 members AND 10 members of the Standing Committee. The maximum number of Standing Committee members will remain 20, with the understanding that the Chair of the Professional Committee will continue to have authority to authorize as many as 22 members (RoP 12.16). Requiring a minimum of 50 members provides economic viability for IFLA, provides a critical pool from which standing committee members may be nominated, and encourages regional and language diversity. Requiring 10 members of standing committees is necessary to accomplish the Section's work, helps grow new leaders and train new officers, and creates greater potential for diversity.

5.C. 2. Sections that do not meet these requirements by June 1, 2007 (the end of the current cycle for election of Standing Committee members) will have two years (i.e., by 2009) in

which to achieve the required number.

5.C.3. At the conclusion of the 2009 elections, the PC will work with any Section that does not have 50 members and 10 members of the Standing Committee to do one of the following:

- a. disband the Section;
- b. become a Special Interest Group (See VI below) under another Section; or
- c. merge with another Section.

5.C.4. Any Section that would like either to become a SIG or merge with another Section before 2009 will be strongly encouraged to consult with the PC about the process for doing so.

5.C.5. No new Sections will be created before 2009 at the earliest.

5.C.6. Newly created Sections will be given six years (three election cycles) to build up the required membership. To move from a SIG to a Section, SIGs must submit a petition with the names of 25 institutions or associations that are members or agree to become paying members of IFLA and the new Section, a plan for recruiting new members, and a strategic plan.

To assist Sections in finding new members, the IFLA staff, under the guidance of the Professional Committee, will complete a membership recruitment manual that offers suggestions for what Sections can do. This manual will be completed by June 1, 2007, and be the subject of a training session for Section officers in Durban.

5.C.7. The Professional Committee will work with the Division chairs of specific Sections to move toward certain mergers between now and August 2007.

6. Special Interest Groups (SIG)

6.A. Role

Special Interest Groups address emerging issues or trends or issues of continuing interest to a relatively small number of IFLA members.

6.B. Value

Special Interest Groups bring together IFLA members with common and continuing interests that they wish to discuss/explore, but which are not included in the Mission, Goals and Strategic Plan of an existing Section. Interests may cut across the concerns of multiple Sections, identify and follow an emerging issue or trend, be very specialized or narrow and be relevant to a small number of members.

6.C. Recommendations

6.C.1. There will be only one grouping, and it shall be called Special Interest Group instead of Discussion Group.

6.C.2. Each SIG must be attached to a Section.

6.C.3. Leadership of the SIG may come from an interested person or from the Section leadership. However, the SIG leader must be a member of an institution or association that is a member of the sponsoring Section or must be a Personal Member of that Section.

6.C.4. To form a SIG, a convener must submit a petition to the Professional Committee signed by 25 persons who intend to participate in the SIG, requesting either

- a. a meeting at the next World Congress to invite people to see if there is sufficient interest, or
- b. the immediate establishment of a SIG under a Section that has agreed to accept it.

If the Professional Committee approves the request, the PC will arrange for the meeting and, if the SIG has not found a Section sponsor, find a sponsor.

6.C.5. SIGs may exist as either a virtual group or as a group that meets at the annual World Congress.

6.C.6. The sponsoring Section will review the SIG every four years at the World Congress to decide whether to affirm or disband the SIG at that time and will report this action to the PC at the close of that World Congress. There will be no required ending period for a SIG and no expectation that it will automatically become a Section.

6.C.7. Administrative funds for a SIG must come from the Section's budget; however, a SIG is eligible to apply for special project funds if the Section approves the request.

6.C.8. The convener of the SIG will be a member of the sponsoring Section's Standing Committee either through the normal nomination process or as an ex-officio member.

6.C.9. The term of office of the SIG convener is two years after the start-up meeting, renewable once by appointment of the sponsoring Section's Standing Committee.

6.C.10. The work of the SIG must be included in the Section's strategic plan.

6.C.11. IFLA will schedule a two-hour meeting for SIGs that wish to meet at the World Congress. However, if the SIG wishes to hold a formal programme, that request must be submitted by the Section as the Section's programme for the Congress, as a special request from the Section for additional programme hours, or as a satellite meeting.

7. Professional Committee - Recommendations

7.A.1. There will be a Professional Committee comprising the Chair (elected from the out-going members), the chairs of the four Divisions, IFLA's President-Elect, and the chairs of FAIFE and CLM Committees (non-voting).

7.A.2. The Chair of the Professional Committee will be elected by postal ballot sent to Section officers as part of the normal election process. The outgoing Chair of the Professional Committee will seek nominations from the outgoing Division Chairs to serve as the new Professional Committee Chair for the ensuing two-year term.

7.A.3. The PC chair, in consultation with the other PC members, may co-opt an additional member of the PC for specified purposes and limited times.

7.A.4. At the beginning of each Congress, the PC Chair will convene a meeting of the PC with all Section Officers, SIG conveners and Chairs of the Core Activities advisory boards to discuss issues relating to the Congress and IFLA programmatic and administrative activities.

8.B. Governing Board - Recommendations

8.A.1. The Chair of the Professional Committee and the Chairs of the four Divisions will be members of the Governing Board.

8.A.2 The Chair of the Management of Library Associations Section will be a permanent, ex-officio member of the Governing Board.

9. Process and Timeline

The Committee asked Winston Tabb, Nancy Gwinn and Nancy Bolt to draft a report that was submitted to the entire PC for consideration at its April 2007 meeting. The PC approved the recommendations at this meeting and successfully sought support from the Governing Board (GB) that same month. The committee recommended that this report with its recommendations be forwarded electronically to the Sections and Chairs of the Advisory Boards of the Core Activities for review in early summer. The Review Committee will conduct a hearing early in the World Congress at Durban, and submit its final recommendations to the **existing** PC and GB for approval *at a special session* in Durban. Once final approvals are made, the Committee, working with IFLA HQ and the GB, will finalize changes needed in the Statutes and Rules of Procedure, so that IFLA HQ can send a postal ballot to Council for approval, enabling IFLA fully to implement the new structure during the 2008-09 nomination and election cycle.

2007 Schedule

April 1	Distribution of draft to the PC
April 24	PC discussion and approval
April 25	GB Discussion and approval
June 15	Distribution of proposal to Sections and core activities
August 19, 11:45-13:30	Hearing at Durban World Congress
August ____	Special PC/GB session to act on proposal
<date>	Postal ballot to Council

Revised by Nancy Gwinn and Sjoerd Koopman, 15 June 2007