



## Library Buildings & Equipment Section

Report of Session 142

IFLA World Library and Information Congress 2007, Durban, South Africa

The World Library and Information Congress for 2007 was held in Durban, South Africa. Against the background of an excellent climate and beautiful surroundings, we observed the growth of new library services supporting democracy for all in South Africa and we recalled Gandhi's promotion of non-violent non-cooperation as a means of achieving political change. Observing South Africa today left room for reflection on change. While democracy is firmly embedded, the economy remains uncertain and there are both "winners" and "losers" as all seek to learn new ways.



The **Library Buildings and Equipment** session on Wednesday afternoon focused on *Toolkits for successful library design: guidelines and case studies*.

The session presented several useful papers and further thinking on library design in various countries of the world. It also presented the much-awaited *Guidelines for library buildings*. Much preparation and work had gone in to the preparation of this publication, which was released at the Congress and made available for purchase. The presentations at the session were:

- [The new State of Jalisco Public Library "Juan Jose Arreola": evaluating competition entries and the role of the brief in the process](#)

**Français**

- ANDERS C. DAHLGREN (Library Planning Associates, Madison, USA)
- National standardization put into practice: the German DIN-Fachbericht 13 as a tool in library planning and its impact on the construction of academic libraries  
OLAF EIGENBRODT (Humboldt University Berlin, Berlin, Germany)

- Build it and they will come: rethinking the design and scope of library facilities and how they serve their communities.  
RICHARD AMRHEIN (Valparaiso University, Indiana, USA)
- Guidelines for library buildings: the final version  
([Link to more information and to order the publication](#))  
HELLEN NIEGAARD (Danish Library Association, Copenhagen, Denmark)

**Anders Dahlgren** and **Helen Ladron de Guevara** presented an extremely useful paper on a Mexican project, highlighting the design selection process where a competition is used to obtain design submissions. A state network of 267 libraries operates in Mexico involving agreements between universities and public libraries. In 2003, a process of consultation was begun for an international competition to design a library and cultural centre for Jalisco. The winning design was expected to feature a library which would be a library for the present as well as for the future and one where the architects clearly understood the needs of the building. .

The brief was the prime document for achieving the desired outcomes. The brief is a communication document for the architect and needs to be understood by the audience and use vocabulary familiar to that audience. It should define internal departments, rooms and areas, calculate the space needed in each area and describe the adjacencies. The brief must be short, to the point, and stand alone. The competition was launched and the selection process modelled on the methodology adopted by the review panel of the American Institute of Architects/American Library Association Building Award program. [http://www.aia.org/awp\\_library](http://www.aia.org/awp_library). Scoring in the program ranges from unacceptable to enthusiastic acceptance, and the first review of submissions for the Jalisco project using this approach eliminated 200 submissions from further consideration. 60 submissions remained which were examined by a technical review panel as well as the selection jury. The technical panel and the jury identified key themes – a clear point of entry, separation of historical collections, sensible number of floors, keeping departments intact, consistent vertical path, clear and consistent organization on each floor, windows and natural lighting, emphasis on the clients, and the design’s conformity to the adjacencies specified in the brief.

And the winner? Museotec and Grinberg, López Guerra, Toca y Topelson, chosen “blind” fortuitously is a team of architectural firms from Mexico.



Further information is available at [www.centrocultural.org.mx](http://www.centrocultural.org.mx) and [www.libraryplan.com](http://www.libraryplan.com)  
Opening late 2008, early 2009.

The second paper at the session focused on standardization in library design. **Olaf Eigenbrodt** described the German approach to the development of standards for libraries and included a brief history of the development of standards beginning in ancient Mesopotamia and tracking through to the development of the German standard, DIN-Fachbericht 13, and its role in the design and construction of academic libraries in Germany. The use of the “Fachbericht” rather than a DIN-Norm allowed further particulars to be included in the document. The Deutsches Institut für Normung is the body charged in Germany for the production of standards and the use of standards as a way of ensuring quality assurance, performance levels, conformance to building and other codes, a means of rationalization and a way of achieving cost reductions, and efficiency and effectiveness of library buildings and services. Libraries were involved in its development. There are nine chapters, including organisation of academic libraries,, details of land assumptions and a catalogue of rooms and spaces. Chapter 5 outlines the space standards, referring to circulation areas, areas for users, office areas and spaces for collections. Published in 1998, **DIN-Fachbericht 13 Bau- und Nutzungsplanung von wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken** has made a significant impact on the design and construction of academic libraries in Germany. The second edition included lighting, sound proofing, storage conditions and materials handling technology. Library standards in Germany reflect changes in industrial democracy and also emphasize strategic developments in academic libraries. Further information is available at <http://www.din.de/cmd?level=tpl-bereich&menuid=47566&cmsareaid=47566&languageid=en>

**Richard Amrhein** described the process of the design and construction of the Christopher Center for Library Resources at Valparaiso University. The Center was built with funds provided by alumni and the Christopher family as the academic focal point of the campus. The university has 4000 students and the library contains 425,000 volumes, with 25,000 e-journals, 10 librarians and 13 support staff. The work done on the design emphasized the library’s ownership of the project, the need to think “outside the box”, the use of flexible spaces, looking beyond traditional needs and a clear focus on services to meet user needs. The aim was to design a learning environment which would nourish both the intellect and the spirit. Services would be provided to the university community without physical boundaries in a space where the user would feel at home, be comfortable, be able to interact freely with others and easily obtain help and assistance. The desired result has been achieved with a welcoming, inviting, state-of-the-art learning environment that also serves as an important campus social centre. The Christopher Center for Library and Information Resources was designed by Esherick, Homsey, Dodge and Davis of Chicago and "breaks the mould" of institutional libraries. It is contained on 4 floors, with 105,000 square feet. . Wireless enables a variety of study experiences and rows of carrels are replaced by casual furniture arranged more to look like a living room than a library – there are 4 fireplaces. A community centre complements a variety of seating areas and a circular reference desk enables easy access by all. A Café is provided, and surprise surprise, food and beverages may be consumed

in various parts of the library, although not close to the collections themselves. The entire library is a “commons” with clusters of computers, varying sized group study areas and a 90 seat classroom recognizing the philosophical role of the library as a “teacher” on campus. Casual seating supports teamwork and approaches to teaching and learning which stress learning from one’s peers as well as from one’s formal teachers. Multimedia rooms and facilities are also available. Exhibitions are easily supported.

Each floor includes a mix of experiences involving collections as well as computing access. There is a computer-driven, robotic Automated Storage and Retrieval System which uses space efficiently and allowed the overall shelving capacity in the center to increase to 600,000 volumes without having to increase the size of the building. Natural light is used wherever possible with a grid-like structure softening the sun’s rays and protecting the collections contained in the building.



Further details are available at <http://www.valpo.edu/facilities/christophercenter/>.

The final paper on the session focused on the *IFLA Guidelines for Library Buildings*. . **Hellen Niegaard** has done an outstanding job on driving the project through to completion with assistance from various members of the Library Buildings and Equipment section committee. The editorial work was carried out by **Karen Latimer** and **Hellen Niegaard**. The publication is designed as an all-round tool for the library manager and an instrument which can be used by everyone - library managers, planners, architects, designers and library owners, to ensure joint understandings of library building design and construction and to promote awareness of the ongoing transformation of library buildings. The building is for use by all, no matter what the perspective. Beautiful buildings may not necessarily be functional for the user or the library staff. The *Guidelines* focus on the transformation of yesterday’s library into the 21<sup>st</sup> century library.

Initially, as new media emerged and gained good currency, the library seemed threatened. It stood exposed and perhaps outdated at a moment when free and open access to knowledge was becoming more crucial. The library was no longer exclusively dedicated to the book and library design was forced to change from a book fortress approach to emphasise the role of the library as a local community centre with lots of activities – all giving access to information and culture!

Libraries now integrate various formats, promote many ways of access, meet present needs, and are moving from a collection focus to a user focus. New services include remote services as well as face to face service. Web based services are being incorporated in to service delivery; online guidance is provided; and personalized services are being introduced with community programmes as the library rethinks its role. The library is becoming the “third place”, a learning centre, a cultural meeting place in a diverse environment and is impacting on information literacy as well as traditional literacy skills. The library now emphasizes the development of democracy and citizenship in a global environment.

In building and designing new libraries, intelligent buildings and facilities are being created. Libraries are place makers, information and cultural hubs and constitute landmark buildings with organic flow and design. New emphases include wireless access, exhibition and display, the provision of virtual services, green management and sustainability.

The *Guidelines* consist of reflections and essays of people involved in library design and provide guidelines for planning the process, with a few examples of standards along the way. The content ranges from interior design considerations through green building management to reading plans for professionals. The Contents are:

*Prologue*

*Introduction: a new tool for planning library buildings.* Hellen Niegaard and Karen Latimer (editors)

*I. DEVELOPMENTS & REFLECTIONS*

1. *The top ten qualities of good library space.*  
Andrew McDonald, U.K.
2. *Reinventing the library: investigating the need for space*  
Hellen Niegaard, Denmark.
3. *Investigating the need for space*  
Anders C. Dahlgren, U.S.A.
4. *Unlocking the library: library design from a marketing perspective.*  
Janine Schmidt, Canada
5. *Users and public space: what to consider when planning library space.*  
Karen Latimer, U.K.
6. *Configuring internal staff areas.*  
Marie Françoise Bisbouck, France
7. *How was it for you? The building process in practice.*  
Andrew McDonald, U.K.

*II. GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING THE PROCESS*

8. *The building process including how to choose an architect.*  
Marie Françoise Bisbouck, France
9. *A practical means of estimating library space needs.*

- Anders C. Dahlgren, U.S.A.
10. *Interior design considerations and developing the brief.*  
Cecilia Kugler, Australia
  11. *A library project from an architect's point of view.*  
Santi Romero, Barcelona Province, Spain
  12. *Green building management and sustainable maintenance*  
Sean Wagner with contributions from Jeffrey Scherer, U.S.S.A.
  13. *Reading plans for library professionals.*  
Olaf Eigenbrodt, Germany
  14. *Renovating historic buildings.*  
Santi Romero, Barcelona Province, Spain.
  15. *Site & location*  
Hellen Niegaard, Denmark
  16. *What to look for: a check list for visiting library buildings.*  
Marie Françoise Bisbouck, France

Just purchase a copy for more details!

*IFLA Library Building Guidelines: Developments & Reflections*

Edited on behalf of IFLA by Karen Latimer and Hellen Niegaard

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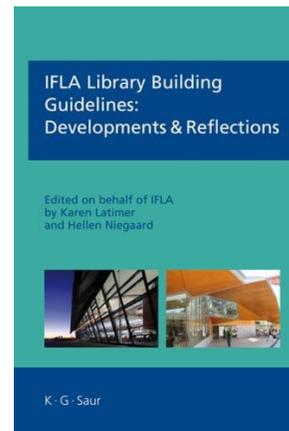
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