



# Tips for Organizing and Hosting an IFLA Satellite Meeting

A description of policy, procedures, experiences, and recommendations

By Barbara von Wahlde

The two most important aspects of holding a satellite meeting are gaining the permissions required by IFLA Headquarters to host and plan such a meeting and securing funding to cover the costs.

## Securing IFLA's sponsorship

Steps need to be taken with IFLA Headquarters to have a satellite meeting. (The IFLA Officer's Handbook, Section 14.5 on Satellite Meetings, states that "All proposals for pre-and post-conference satellite meetings must be submitted and approved by the Professional Committee at least 1-1/2 years in advance for discussions at the March meeting.") Organizers must raise all funding for satellite meetings. (See IFLA Officers Handbook, Section 15.5.1.) Funding for satellite meetings needs to be either in-hand or promised relatively early in the planning process. It is a risk to plan extensively if full funding is not found in advance.

## Choosing a satellite meeting location

It is desirable to have the satellite meeting as geographically close to the IFLA August World Library and Information Congress site as possible. Many satellite meeting attendees will also want to go on to the IFLA Conference. As examples, the satellite meeting in Buffalo, New York held prior to the Boston 2001 Conference may have been one of the furthest away although Dublin, Ohio and Montreal were satellite meeting locations. Others were closer to the Boston area where IFLA was held. The Aarhus, Denmark satellite meeting preceding IFLA 1997 Copenhagen was a short train ride away. The location needs to be reachable without too much expense and effort by travelers who would be coming from different countries to attend the satellite meeting and go on to attend the IFLA World Library and Information Congress. Hosting a satellite meeting in a city with good air and rail connections is essential. Satellite meetings can be either pre- or post-conference meetings. The pre-conference is more frequently offered.

## Financing the conference

After getting IFLA permission to host a satellite meeting, the next most important planning objective is finding money to finance the satellite

meeting. Ease in securing funding can vary depending on the country where the meeting is offered. For the satellite meeting in Buffalo, New York, governmental funding — local, state, or national — was not available. The satellite meetings in Tromsø, Norway and Aarhus, Denmark received some government funds. Possible funding sources can include local, state, and national library associations, government agencies, and national libraries. Private sources can be used as well including individual donors. If seeking library vendor funding, you must do this as early as possible. Many companies are large organizations that require going through a hierarchy to reach decision-makers for support. Securing vendor support can be time consuming. Much depends on the vendors based in the satellite meeting country and their international market. If you do not have most of the money promised or secured in advance, it is best to cancel the satellite meeting unless the sponsoring site can absorb unfunded expenses.

Satellite meeting organizers or institutions can contain costs. It is important to be as economical as possible in organizing and planning satellite meeting costs. For example, some conference hotels charge for many services. If you can provide some of these services on your own, that helps. Consider the social events connected with the satellite meeting, i.e., dinners, receptions, cocktail hours, etc., as these can be expensive. A vendor or an organization could sponsor one of these or you may want to build the cost of a special event into your registration fee. (See Appendix E for a Sample Budget.)

### **Developing the program**

A good satellite meeting sells itself on location, the content and theme of the program, and the reputation of the speakers. An interesting and topical theme can help build interest and registration. Name speakers can be drawing cards, but others actively engaged in the field, people with, perhaps, less visibility, can provide interesting material and round out the program. The Buffalo satellite meeting in 2001 was helped by the presence of Gary Strong, Director of the Queens Borough Public Library, as a speaker. The “Queens New Americans Program” is well known and viewed internationally as a program to watch. In planning the content of the Buffalo satellite meeting, a call for papers was not issued. It seems to be more common now for IFLA satellite meeting planners to issue a call for papers in advance of selecting speakers and solidifying program content. Anyone organizing a satellite meeting will want to consider this. While the Buffalo satellite meeting had a good program, it was based entirely on word of mouth recommendations.

## Publicizing the conference

Getting out the word about the satellite meeting early and often is vital. Creating a website for the satellite meeting is a must, and hosting it locally ensures timely updates and changes. [As of 2002, with the move of IFLANET to a new host, satellite meetings are now routinely publicized on IFLA's official website.] Besides the IFLA announcements and the publicity you will want to do in your own country and globally, publicizing the conference with your own librarians, local or regional, can help in realizing good attendance. Using listservs of interested and affiliated groups also helps to reach a wide audience. Library schools and associations should also receive publicity. To help with achieving reasonable satellite meeting attendance, attracting professionals in the area from a short distance away who are not expected to attend the main IFLA conference can help increase registration numbers and revenue.

## Funding

It was an unwritten rule of the "Library Services to Multicultural Populations Committee" that the IFLA satellite meeting registration should be \$150. When you have a known fixed price for your satellite meeting registration, it helps the budget. However, it is worth considering whether the satellite meeting registration fee might be increased and what the traffic will bear. If you are able to get a number of free services from the hotel or conference expenses are low, you can hold to a lower registration rate. The registration rate should cover conference expenses such as speaker travel costs and honorariums and additional costs for set-ups (computers, projectors, and Internet connection fees). At the Buffalo satellite meeting, there was an informal understanding among the standing committee that members who presented at the satellite meeting would seek funding through their parent organizations. Depending on the funding for the conference, every registration fee can be important to achieve the needed amount to break even. This policy decision needs review every time a satellite meeting is planned.

Differential registration fees are possible and have been used at some satellite meetings. Library students have been offered a reduced conference rate. Local librarians could have a lower registration rate through subsidies provided by a local library council as a membership benefit. Likewise, a discounted fee can be given for early registrations. Regardless, requiring registration fees be paid in advance is important primarily if the facilities can accommodate a limited number of registrants. Making the registration process easier for international attendants, for example, by

providing international bank codes for the transfer of money into the sponsor's account, can help increase attendance.

### **Publishing the satellite meeting proceedings**

The proceedings of the satellite meetings in Tromsø, Norway and Aarhus, Denmark were published in small, spiral-bound editions after the meeting. Either the standing committee or IFLA has a tradition that satellite meeting proceedings are sent to IFLA Headquarters. If proceedings are published, a full set of papers should be sent to IFLA Headquarters. The cost of publishing and mailing proceedings needs to be built into the budget or absorbed by the section's standing committee budget.

Some issues to consider regarding publication of satellite meeting proceedings are:

- Obtaining permission before the conference to publish the papers. IFLA claims copyright for anything written or spoken at their satellite meetings and their conferences. Permission from individual authors and speakers must be secured. In looking at the IFLA website, papers presented at the annual conference appear with IFLA's copyright.
- Getting copies of the papers in advance or through quick follow-up after the satellite meeting.

In these days of electronic access and websites, the practice of publishing paper proceedings needs reconsideration. Would a Web publication suffice? Should only a partial set of papers be made available? These are questions for individual standing committee discussion and decisions unless there would be IFLA policy available.

For more information on satellite meeting planning, contact me by telephone at 716-645-2967; or by fax at 716-645-3844; or via e-mail at [bvw@buffalo.edu](mailto:bvw@buffalo.edu). Consultation with colleagues in your country who have hosted and arranged conferences recently can be helpful as well.



Barbara von Wahlde, Associate Vice President for University Libraries, University at Buffalo, organized the IFLA satellite meeting "Technology, Globalization and Multicultural Services in Libraries" held in Buffalo, New York in August 2001. Barbara was a member of the IFLA Library Services to Multicultural Populations Section from 1995-2003.

## A: Sample letter of agreement

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

We are delighted that you will be a presenter at the IFLA satellite meeting [title]. The conference will take place [date] in [ city, country ] and will be headquartered at the [ hotel/ conference center name ]. The [ name ] conference center is located [ address ].

You are scheduled to give your presentation on the [ first/second day ] of the conference, [ date ] from [ time ] to [ time ].

There are three forms which are listed below that we need you to complete and return to us as soon as possible.

1. Speaker Information Form
2. Presentation Summary Form
3. Audio Visual/Presentation Needs Form

Completed forms should be faxed to [ fax number ] or e-mailed to [ e-mail address ] no later than [ date ].

Also, below is some additional information concerning the conference.

**Transportation to [ city ]**  
We will cover your travel expenses to and from [ city, country ]. Reimbursement for travel expenses will be remitted after the conference. Allowable transportation expenses (to and from home/hotel) include train fare, bus fare, cab fare, mileage and tolls. To reimburse you for your transportation expenses, we will need original receipts for any claimed expenses. If driving, make note of your mileage as you will need to provide this information for reimbursement at the appropriate rate per mile.

**Transportation to the [ hotel/conference center ]**  
Attached is an information sheet with contact information, maps, and directions to the [ name ] conference center. If the maps and directions are not adequate for your travel, please contact [ name/ telephone number ].

**Lodgings and Hotel Room Reservations**  
We will cover [ number ] nights stay (excluding room service and telephone calls) at the [ hotel ] on [ date ]. A preliminary room reservation has been made for you but you will need to confirm it by [ date ]. You can confirm the room by either calling [ telephone ] or using the online reservations system at [ URL ].

**Conference Registration**  
We will provide complimentary registration and ask that you complete the attached *Speaker Registration form* and fax or e-mail it as addressed to assure our prompt processing. Your meals, including breakfast and lunch, will be provided as part of the conference and will be served at the [ hotel ]. The two evening receptions are likewise complimentary.

**Conference Website**  
The conference website is available at [ URL ].

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us by e-mail or telephone. We look forward to working with you this summer.

Cordially,



B: Sample form letter requesting abstract of presentation.

IFLA Satellite Meeting  
[ city, country ]  
[ dates ]

**Summary of Presentation**

Speaker name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

Short summary of presentation (1/2 page) for posting on conference website.

**Conference Proceedings**

Do you agree that the speech presented at the conference will be published at the IFLA Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations website?

Yes, I agree:

\_\_\_\_\_

signature date

To facilitate this, please submit a copy of your speech electronically as a text file (preferably in Microsoft Word) no later than [ date ].

If your presentation will include Power Point slides, we ask that you submit your speech in narrative form as a Word document.

## D: Sample form letter requesting presentation equipment needs.

<p>IFLA Satellite Meeting</p> <p>[ city, country ] [ dates ]</p> <p><b>Audio-visual Equipment and Presentation Needs</b></p> <p>Speaker name: _____</p> <p>Audiovisual equipment and presentation needs</p> <p>___ Overhead projector with screen</p> <p>___ 1/2 VHS Video with monitor</p> <p>___ Paper flipchart</p> <p>___ Other</p> <p>1. Will you be using a Powerpoint presentation? If yes, what version? Will your backup-presentation be on a Zip-disk or CD? What platform? What operating system?</p> <p>2. Will you be bringing your own laptop computer? Operating system used: Powerpoint version used:</p> <p>3. Other equipment I will need: (Please be as specific as possible)</p> <p><b>Handouts</b></p> <p>We can provide printing services (black and white) for any handouts you need distributed for your presentation.</p> <p>Do you plan to distribute any print materials to the audience? ___ yes ___ no</p> <p>If you will be using our printing service, please submit your duplicating masters <u>no later than</u> [ date ] to:</p> <p>[ name ] [ institution / library ] [ postal address ] [ city / state / province ] [ postal code ] [ country ]</p> <p>If sending electronically, please e-mail to [ address ].</p>
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E: Sample budget report.

<p>IFLA SATELLITE MEETING</p> <p>[ city, country ]</p> <p>[ date ]</p>	
<p><b>SAMPLE BUDGET REPORT</b></p>	
<p><b>REVENUES</b></p>	
<p><b>Registrations:</b></p>	
_____ @ \$150	
_____ @ \$100 (students)	
_____ complimentary (speakers)	
	_____ TOTAL REGISTRATIONS
<p><b>Donations:</b></p>	
_____ Sponsor 1	
_____ Sponsor 2	
_____ Sponsor 3	
_____ Association 1	
_____ Association 2	
	_____ TOTAL DONATIONS
	_____ TOTAL REVENUE
<p><b>EXPENSES</b></p>	
_____ Speakers Fees/Travel	
_____ Conference Facilities	
_____ Meals	
_____ Lodgings (Speakers)	
_____ Conference Set-up Fees	
_____ Internet Connection Fees	
_____ Computer/Projector Fees	
_____ Reception 1	
_____ Reception 2	
_____ Transportation	
_____ Services for Registrants and Speakers	
_____ Printing and Publicity	
	_____ TOTAL EXPENSES