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INTERNATIONAL
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LOAD SHEDDING IN SOUTH AFRICA: HOW ARE SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES COPING? PART 2

Gloria Creed-Dikeogu

What is load shedding and why is it important?

According to Endeavour Energy, load shedding, a last resort tactic to balance electricity supply and demand, is necessary to protect power grids. It is “the reduction of electricity to selected areas to protect the electricity network from long-term damage and widespread consumer outages during extreme events,” according to Endeavour. But what happens when libraries experience the effects of load shedding? In part 2 of this series, we explore what happens at a South African academic library during these events.

Library funding and load shedding

Since 2019, four libraries were chosen by Nestle Bar One, a large refreshment company, to receive sponsorship by the Nestle Light Up the Libraries Initiative, to receive solar energy installations of R1

million rand each if they marketed 1 million hashtag tweets. The libraries chosen were the Wintersveld Library in Tshwane, the Randsburg Library in Johannesburg, the Beacon Bay Library in East London and the Mellville Library in Musgrave, Durban (Hako, 2023, June).

The University of Cape Town (UCT), in the Western Province, created a “UCT Communication on load shedding for staff, students and faculty” online resource, providing information about how to cope in an energy emergency that would affect students and faculty in teaching and learning. The university has backup generators and computer data centers that can be of use during load shedding. There is also an online chapter for libraries, where students are encouraged to access UCT library services on or off campus on their

library website by using their mobile devices, so that even during load shedding, students and faculty can access UCT's Primo Library Catalogue, online databases and OpenUCT resources, Ask-a-librarian and Leganto.

The Merensky Library at the University of Pretoria (UP) has kept the light on during load shedding by investing in a power generator. UP also presented programming about load shedding in 2023, and opened the conversation with students, staff, and faculty around how to face these challenges, with speakers focusing on energy solutions and sustainable living options.

Provinces in South Africa with high daily load shedding levels above stage 3, must cope with additional problems because of power outages that lead to water outages. This problem affects all types of libraries in those areas, because all of a library's services are affected when it is not possible to offer patrons their basic needs during library visits, such as consistent electricity for computers usage or running water and working toilets.

Power outages lead to water shortages

In an interview conducted with Maria Frahm-Arp, Executive Director of the University of Johannesburg Libraries, it is explained that in Johannesburg, in comparison with Cape Town, where there are high stages of load shedding several times a day, load shedding causes water shortages.

Frahm-Arp explains that this is a political problem, and not a problem with energy, because it connects back to what province of the country you live in and which political party you voted for. Frahm-Arp stated that when load shedding began in 2007 "it wasn't continuous, just a few power cuts" and then "the power would be back for months on end"...but much has changed since then. Now "we have continuous power cuts" and it has become "a way of life" for

many, she said. "Eskom does not lack the know-how, the skills, or the staff" to provide the country with energy. "That's not the problem. The problem is politics...the politics of Johannesburg where the ANC came into power and the plan was, to give electricity to everybody." But this did not happen.

When asked if the Western Cape was doing better with load shedding and the water outages, Frahm-Arp explained that because the load shedding stages are three and below, the Western Cape has "more consistent power...higher power," so that water shortages do not occur. "Water is not a problem until you hit about stage 6 load shedding...when you're at stage 1-3 of load shedding, water is not affected. But it's when they can't pump water for a significant portion of the day, like eight hours or twelve hours. That's when water becomes significantly affected. You can only pump so much water and the way our water systems are designed is that you're consistently pumping for the need" and "it's this constant cycle" that is problematic.

Why all of this is important is because the University of Johannesburg Libraries served 50,786 students (41,628 undergraduates and 9,080 postgraduates) in 2023 (UJ Key Statistics, 2024), 68% of whom are government-funded low-income students and who cannot use the university's library services effectively without there being daily consistent power available and water for patron use in library facilities. Frahm-Arp reiterates: "Water outages are so problematic because of the health and hygiene problems that ensue. Nothing feels more unhuman than not being able to wash and have access to clean drinking water."

When asked how libraries are managing in this situation, Frahm-Arp explained that "Universities that can afford it are spending enormous amounts of money...buying diesel for their generators. Now the generators that we bought, which were there for backup...have all 'packed up' because they weren't



University of Johannesburg



Executive Director Maria Frahm-Arp

built to be used four times a day.” When the University of Johannesburg Library “got a generator...we were able to function but in other parts of the university” where there is no generator, “there’s no power...when we came back from Covid and everybody was required to return to campus, “there was no power...lots of people...put in generators or solar or something else at home. They had power at home.”

“But when you come to college, you sit at the university and your laptop dies after an hour and what must you do for four hours? ... At our university and many of the wealthier universities, they all have power systems. So, we’re back to ‘normal.’ But in the not so well-funded universities this is a major problem. So, you either do chalk-and-talk teaching, ...or because people are lazy and tired, they say, well, I can’t teach because there’s no power.”

What is not understood is, “When you have twelve hours with no power,” and “water has to get pumped from whatever lake you have into the city...we have water outages because the reservoirs in the different suburbs are dry...because there’s no power to pump the water...I had to close the library for two days because there’s no water and in our one library, we have 13,000 people go through the library in a day.. You do have to have restroom facilities and you have drinking water for them.”

“But now the university doesn’t want us to close the library. And the students don’t want to close the library...And so the students go onto Facebook and say I want to come into the library to photostat books or to photostat notes or something but now the whole library is closed because we don’t have water. So then,

what they let us do is last week, most of us worked from home, so I said, all librarians who can must work from home. The circulation staff then worked on a router system, coming in for three or four hours...before leaving, because you can cope...with that.”

Frahm-Arp said that because of the widespread water outages due to load shedding, “the university...bought water trucks.” When there is a water outage, “we drive to the reservoir to fill this water truck. They go early in the morning. When they come back, they’re filled and... if the university has everybody there, by twelve o’clock the water’s gone. That’s why I say that as many librarians as possible must work from home,” that way they avoid the water outages at work and can offer struggling students more access to the water trucks.

When asked how students are taught to cope with load shedding and water outages in the university environment, Frahm-Arp said, “Our students find all kinds of clever workarounds. People buy themselves power banks. So that they charge up their power bank at the university or when there’s power or there isn’t power, they can keep working. And people work on a kind of online and offline systems. So, you download everything, you don’t keep your stuff in the cloud, because when there’s no power, there’s no Internet.” Frahm-Arp further said, “Students had to use the portable toilets the university provided and come into the library for two hours at a time since the students knew that the library’s bathrooms were out of service. If they don’t have their own devices...they’re coming in to check their emails, to print things...We noticed that as the water outages progressed the student numbers decreased coming into the library, so instead of the library being busy and hardly a space available, it was empty.”

Conclusion

When asked whether there was any hope of any of this being resolved soon, Frahm-Arp stated, “No, not immediately...there were no immediate plans. They keep talking about how they’re going to improve the electricity, but nothing’s really happened...the reason that we didn’t come to a complete standstill last year in winter which is what we were really worried about...zero-degree temperatures...was because so many people who could afford it...put solar services into their homes and so there was less demand on the grid.”

Despite the proactive stance of libraries in South Africa to combat load shedding, much more needs to be done by the South African government to resolve this crisis by embracing alternative and renewable electricity options and by taking decisive policy actions on how best to end load shedding in the future in South Africa.

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EDITORIAL

As 2024 comes to a close, we report on two conferences, the Charleston Conference for book and serial management and acquisition, and the International Association of School Librarianship conference. Both conferences highlight the idea of community, which is the IRRT's theme, Connections Worldwide. We get a northern European perspective on an ALA roundtable as well as explore the concept and consequences of load shedding for South African libraries. (See the September issue for the first part of that story.) We also share information on the International Librarians Networking Program, which is an exciting, fun, and low-pressure way to build community globally.

We wish you a bright, prosperous 2025!

The Editors



ABOUT INTERNATIONAL LEADS

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MESSAGE FROM THE IRRT CHAIR

CONNECTING LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY WORKERS LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Carol Brey

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Hello IRRT Members! It is so exciting to see our IRRT Committees hard at work on projects and programs for the year. I am so humbled by the amazing work our IRRT members do, every day, to connect with libraries and library workers on an international level. You all inspire me! My email Inbox is already full of your accomplishments, such as the report on the Roundtable Spectacular virtual program held on October 18 in which I and others from IRRT participated. That program resulted in 841 “impressions” (total number of times our video thumbnail was shown to viewers) and 39 live viewers. Many thanks to all who were involved, whether as a presenter or a viewer.



There is also a lot of work going on related to this year’s theme, **“Connections Worldwide: Librarians Working Together to Improve Our Communities”** – such as the work of the Chair’s Program Committee to line up a stellar panel of speakers for the ALA Conference, primarily from the western hemisphere, to talk about their experiences with making global library connections. We are adding a new feature to this program if time permits – small group discussions to explore the themes our speakers have suggested, as they relate to each region of the world.

The International Librarians’ Reception Committee is also hard at work, seeking the perfect venue where we can celebrate libraries on a global scale – on a **Saturday** night, as the Reception will likely move to Saturday due to ALA’s new compressed schedule for the ALA Conference. And, the Membership Recruitment and Engagement Committee is exploring its new charge that now includes the International Librarians Orientation that will take place at Conference, as well as operating the International Visitors’ Lounge.

It’s not too late for you to get involved in the work of IRRT this year! One way to get involved is to join an IRRT Committee – there are still a few slots left, and you can express your interest by completing the [volunteer form](#). If you aren’t able to serve on a Committee, make plans to join

one of ALA’s upcoming [webinars](#), or join us in Phoenix for LibLearnX or the Annual Conference in Philadelphia. Let’s continue the international conversation!

In the last edition of Leads, I challenged you to look for ways to enhance connections between library workers and libraries around the world, and also to communicate our collective successes and stories to strengthen libraries worldwide. I love a good story (don’t we all?) and encourage you to share your stories with me at cbrey@lascrucses.gov. Who knows, maybe some will be published in a future issue of International Leads?

IRRT Mission Enhancement Grant CALL FOR PROPOSALS

IRRT announces the call for proposals for its 2025 Mission Enhancement Grant. In 2016, IRRT members & supporters established the IRRT Endowment. Interest from the Endowment is used to fund member-initiated proposals for international projects that contribute to ALA’s role in international librarianship. Goals for the funding are to provide support for international projects or partnerships; promote a global dialogue about librarianship’s increased visibility of international opportunities for U.S. and international librarians, and to encourage international collaboration in librarianship.

Examples of proposals that could be considered for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Support for travel that is necessary to advance an international project
- Funds to collaborate on sister library projects
- Funds to support the development and distribution of training or publicity materials in support of an international project.

The amount available for grants may vary each year. IRRT may choose to use available funds to provide one or more grants of varying amounts. The maximum grant amount per proposal will be \$1,000.

Proposal process: Please visit the [IRRT Mission Enhancement Grant](#) website to learn more about the criteria and proposal process and to download the proposal form.

Proposals are due no later than January 6, 2025 and will be reviewed by the IRRT Endowment Committee.

MESSAGE FROM THE IRRT CHAIR-ELECT

Sandy Hirsh

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As we stand at a pivotal moment for libraries worldwide, I've been reflecting on how we can shape the future of libraries to meet the evolving needs of our communities. In my new book, [*Library 2035: Imagining the Next Generation of Libraries*](#), I gathered perspectives from leading library thinkers who shared their insights on what the next decade might hold for libraries. A recurring theme throughout the book is the essential role of libraries as pillars of community well-being, innovation, knowledge, and civic discourse. By adapting and aligning with community needs, I believe libraries will not only endure but thrive as we approach 2035. The future of libraries is also a good question for us to consider in our international library community of the International Relations Roundtable (IRRT). I'd be interested in hearing your thoughts!

For those interested in exploring the future of libraries further, I recommend the following **free** resources:

- [Library 2035 Webcast Site](#): Here, you can find interviews with contributors from *Library 2035*, offering a deeper dive into their thoughts and ideas.
- [Library 2.024 Virtual Conference](#): One of this year's Library 2.0 virtual conferences focused on the future of libraries and the themes from *Library 2035*. [Recordings are on YouTube](#) for those who missed them.
- [2024 IFLA Trends Report](#): This recently published report provides a strategic look at global shifts impacting libraries over the coming years, including issues like intellectual freedom, digital access, and the library's role in supporting democratic values – all topics that resonate with IRRT's commitment to fostering understanding and engagement across borders.

In October, IRRT was proud to participate in the [Roundtable Spectacular](#) for the first time. With a theme of "international," IRRT was a natural fit for this event, which celebrated media and libraries that cross national boundaries. It was a fantastic opportunity to share more about IRRT's work, with Chair Carol Brey presenting an overview of our roundtable, and the IRRT Poster and Sister Libraries Committees highlighting some of their outstanding initiatives. We look forward to participating again next year!



Looking ahead, we are working on an exciting lineup of [IRRT webinars](#). These sessions will spotlight innovative projects, challenges, and successes from libraries around the world, fostering professional growth, sharing insights, and providing valuable networking opportunities for our members. Stay tuned for more announcements, and please reach out if you have any ideas for webinar topics! As we approach the holiday season, I want to express my gratitude to all IRRT volunteers and members. Your dedication is essential to our roundtable's success, and I hope you'll continue to engage with our activities and consider volunteering on one of our committees. Please feel free to connect with me anytime – my virtual door is always open! You can reach me at: sandy.hirsh@sjsu.edu.

International Librarians Networking Program (ILNP) 2025

We are pre-announcing the opportunity to apply for the International Librarians Networking Program (ILNP) 2025 of IRRT.

The goal of the ILNP is to assist librarians from around the world to network and expand their skills in librarianship through a cooperative and collaborative program. This program is designed to be self-guided, allowing participants to form a collaborative relationship with one another.

This program has successfully been held for five consecutive years (since 2020). We regularly receive a couple hundred applications from over 56 countries; however, due to the limited number of volunteers, we are only able to accept between 100-200 applications per year.

Mark your calendars to visit our application site in January. The program will run from March to May 2025. Participants need to plan for two to three hours per week for those three months: ask your supervisors now! Each team produces their own poster to receive a certificate of participation for their professional development dossiers.

If you want to volunteer to be a liaison, please contact irrt.networking@gmail.com

For more information about the ILNP program, please go to: <https://www.ala.org/rt/irrt/irrtnetworkingprogram>

Participation at an ALA Roundtable from a Northern European Perspective

Sophie Capdeville

In spring 2024 I was accepted to make a presentation at the ALA's 8th Research Round Table Seminar held at the University of Kentucky, focusing on "Telling Library Stories." The Round Table seminar included numerous presentations addressing the adaptation of librarianship to meet the specific needs of different communities, an approach that European libraries should incorporate. In this article, I offer the perspective of a scholar specializing in the History of the Book, rather than from a library science standpoint. Nonetheless, these fields are interconnected.

After reading the book *Beyond Article 19* [...] (2010), my interest grew in gaining a deeper understanding of more recent ALA contributions. In Europe, librarianship often emphasizes customer service based on the Universal Human Rights Declaration of 1948, which highlights individual human rights. This focus, however, tends to overlook the diverse needs of various communities. The authors of the aforementioned book effectively argue for libraries to consider their community roles, especially when serving non-dominant or marginalized groups, which is the case of the Saami¹, the last Indigenous people of Europe. The article published in 2023 by Moniz Hau olihiwahiwa was interesting in this regard: the author expounds well the works achieved by ALA in the framework of Indigenous communities.

In numerous European countries, libraries primarily cater to the national mainstream population by ensuring a robust collection of books in the dominant vernacular language. During times of economic constraints, they often emphasize digitalization and open access initiatives. European librarianship may still grapple with its extensive colonial legacy, making it challenging to address this history and recognize marginalized communities. This situation is notably evident in Finland, where research related to cultural heritage appears increasingly overlooked, particularly concerning the country's Indigenous communities.

In 2023, I received an invitation to participate in the IFLA's conference organized by the members of the Indigenous Matters section (IM) and the Rare Books and Special Collections Committee. This allowed me to become familiar with the IM's initiatives, which are not widely recognized in

many European libraries. Prof. Camille Callison introduced the Respectful Terminology project and the National Indigenous Knowledge & Language Alliance (NIKLA). This crucial project encounters challenges in implementing its initiatives, often relying heavily on volunteers, although it requires increased attention from authorities to adequately support the needs of the affected communities in North America. This project should also be introduced to Saami libraries and archives workers in Nordic countries, where there is a strong effort to operate more respectfully within both research and educational frameworks.

Gaining deeper insights into Indigenous librarianship is particularly crucial as Finland continues its Truth and Reconciliation Process with the Saami. My research in this field began after the release of the Fellman family's Lapponica Fonds (2001), which served as an opportunity to shape my PhD thesis on the Saami Book History in Finland (2017). Our retrospective catalogue project adopted a cultural-historical approach, aiming to clarify traces and different marginalia within various items. This approach is not unfamiliar in the USA, where researchers have managed to launch the BookTraces database (e.g., Jensen 2021, *Stories Among Stories* [...] 2023). However, the project currently faces challenges due to insufficient funding. Hopefully, they will secure the necessary support to continue their efforts soon. Such progress would also enhance the study of Saami book collections history in Nordic countries, complementing the catalogue published in 2001.

I currently prefer to describe my approach as the Saami Written Culture History, as the term "Book history" often leads people to mistakenly believe it pertains to literature. Working with Indigenous communities necessitates adhering to the 5 "r" principles (Respect, Relevancy, Reciprocity, Retrospectivity and Relationship). This was evident to me when I began my PhD thesis, though it seems less apparent to many mainstream researchers. At that time, I had the opportunity to work at the Library of the Saami University College in Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino, Norway. During this period, I observed the challenges faced by Saami teachers due to the scarcity of teaching materials. This issue reflects a long-standing historical context, which I addressed in my thesis.

¹ In this article, the spelling for the term "Saami" is that used by UNESCO, as well by the Saami Culture and Language Institute of the University of Oulu. The term is written with different spellings in English and in French scientific articles, which leads young researchers to misuse various forms sometimes with wrong accents – especially in French but also in English articles. To avoid any misuse and problem occurring from diverse accents this orthography has been chosen for use in my PhD thesis: (Capdeville 2017, 18-9).

The Indigenous people of North America face challenges similar to those experienced by the Saami in the Nordic countries. Notably, many educational resources for the Saami are simply translations of materials designed for mainstream education, often overlooking the perspectives

of Indigenous communities. Presently, efforts are being made by the Saami to publish books in various Saami languages, emphasizing their unique lifestyle, history, and cultural traditions. However, these endeavours are complicated by decisions such as Finland's recent budget cuts affecting both the Saami Parliament and public libraries. This action underscores ongoing support for mainstream education while neglecting the diverse needs of the country's communities.

To conclude, I would like to note our satisfaction with the recent developments in Saami research, which is why I have added several references at the end of this article. The engagement of Saami researchers within their own research framework is critically important, similar to the development of their Written Culture History, which progressed significantly due to Saami participation (Capdeville 2017, 2020). I had to notice that ALA has published some articles in which Saami are mentioned: however, those living in Finland's Sápmi seem to be absent in those articles. This might be explained by the fact that the first Saami translations were published in Sweden from 1619 on, and this in a more systematic manner than in Finland. However, those translations were in Saami languages which Finland's Saami did not understand. The first translations understandable for Saami living in Finland's Sápmi were published only from 1825 on, and only sporadically.

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- Indigenous research methodologies in Sámi and global contexts.* (2021). P. Virtanen (ed.). Leiden: Brill.
- Saamelaisia koskevan tutkimuksen eettiset ohjeet Suomessa = Sámiide guoski dutkama ehtalaš rávvagat Suomas = Sámmilijđ keyeskee tutkámeettisiib ravvuuh Suomást = Sámmilaid kuõskeki tu'ikkummuž eettla vuá'ppõõžž Lää'ddjánnmest = Ethical guidelines for research involving the Sámi people in Finland.* (2024). L. Heikkilä, R. Kuokkanen, V.-P. Lehtola [et al.]. (eds.). Oulun yliopisto.

About the author

Sophie Capdeville established the *catalogue raisonné* of the "Fellman family's Fonds Lapponica", which was located in the Finno-Ugrian department of the University of Helsinki, which was the first *catalogue raisonné* published in Finland. Her thesis subject was the Saami book history in Finland. She is currently striving to safeguard research on various Saami book collections located in Finland and hopefully in Norway and in Sweden.



First Aanaar (Inari) Saami language master, who helped with the first translations in his language, Henrik Mattus (1838-1926).

52nd Annual Conference and the 27th International Forum on Research in School Librarianship

Jennifer Branch-Mueller

The International Association of School Librarianship hosted the 52nd Annual Conference and the 27th International Forum on Research in School Librarianship from October 26-28. The conference was held virtually across three time zones (Edmonton, Alberta, Vienna, Austria, and Tokyo, Japan) to provide opportunities for presenters, keynote speakers and conference attendees to engage with others in real time. There was a mix of live and pre-recorded options including keynote speakers, panel presentations, special interest group sessions, Hot Topic sessions, research and professional presentations.

Keynote Speakers



David A. Robertson is a two-time winner of the Governor General's Literary Award, has won the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award, as well as the Writer's Union of Canada Freedom to Read award. He is a member of Norway House Cree Nation and lives in Winnipeg.

David spoke about reconciliation and community and his memoir *Blackwater* and read from his upcoming work, *All the Little Monsters: How I learned to live with anxiety*.



Amanda Jones is a 24 year teacher-librarian and grassroots organizer in Louisiana on the frontlines fighting against censorship in libraries. She is the 2021 Librarian of the Year as presented by *School Library Journal*, a 2021 *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker, and the 2020 Louisiana School Librarian of the Year.

Amanda spoke about how to be prepared for book challenges and her work to advocate for intellectual freedom.



Dr. Margaret Merga is an Associate Professor at the University of Notre Dame Australia and Lead Consultant at Merga Consulting. She is an active researcher in the school library research space, and she has written over a hundred peer-reviewed and research-informed publications, including six books. As an active advocate

for libraries, she is the inaugural Patron of the Australian School Library Association and the Western Australian School Library Association.

Dr. Merga shared some of the preliminary findings from the 2024 *International School Library Workforce Project* which gathered crucial library workforce data from respondents across more than 60 countries.



Professor Tse Shek Kam was Associate Dean and Director of The Centre for the Advancement of Chinese Language Education and Research in the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong. For many years, he has provided a consultancy service to a number of organizations, including The Chinese

Education Centre of the Netherlands Government, The Ministry of Education in Singapore, The Education Bureau of the Hong Kong Government, The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau of The Macao Government and five international universities.

Professor Kam shared the approach taken by Hong Kong to improve student literacy scores by making the issue a public concern.



Dr. Bella Jing Zhang is the Head of the Academic Committee of the iSchool (<https://ischool.sysu.edu.cn/>) and Head of Joint Research and Promotion Center of National Reading Campaign (JCoNR). Her research interests include first, cultural governance and public cultural services, second, preservation of ancient books and documentary heritage, and third children's reading, learning and empowerment.

Dr. Zhang shared the value demonstration of children's reading promotion and a participatory study in Gaozhou, China including the urban/rural divide in terms of parent-child reading, home reading environment, and reading needs.

Special Interest Group Panel Presentations

Children's and Young Adult Literature SIG

Kasey Garrison hosted this presentation and shared all kinds of wonderful ideas for reading promotion in school libraries.

School Library Research SIG

Jennifer Moore hosted this presentation and shared the experiences of school librarians who participated in scholarly research.

Advocacy SIG

April Dawkins hosted this presentation and shared the Get Ready Stay Ready Toolkit and the IMLS-funded READCON project which is a curriculum equipping library workers with skills to more effectively partner with their communities for advocacy.

Education SIG

Judy Henning, Sherry Crow and Mona Kerby hosted this presentation and engaged in a collaborative discussion exploring the school librarian's role as an instructional leader in the areas of Science of Reading, collection development, and providing professional development for teachers on generative AI.

Information Literacy SIG

Lesley Farmer hosted this presentation and explored the question of how artificial intelligence (AI) intersects with information literacy (IL)?

Panel Presentations

There were ten panel presentations. Topics included:

- Logistics and Tips for Author Visits
- Urban Gardening
- Engaging Readers with Science through Collaboration
- Principal and Librarian Partnerships
- Experiences of International Students in online USA-based LIS programs
- Research on how School Leaders decide about School Librarian Employment
- Using Fiction to build Curiosity, Grit, and Resiliency
- Becoming a World Class School Librarian
- School Libraries and Nonprofit Organizations Collaboration
- Introduction to Diverse BookFinder

Professional Presentations

There were 21 pre-recorded professional presentations on topics including:

- Collaboration
- Whole School Change
- Impact of AI and AI Tools
- Social Justice Issues
- One School One Book Program/Whole-School Read
- English as an Additional Language
- Networks and Partnership
- User Experience in School Libraries
- Making Books Come Alive with Music
- Reading Comprehension and Student Engagement through Artistic Expression
- Using Poetry to Promote Inclusion, Increase the Sense of Community, and Improve Writing Skills
- Books as Tools for Social Justice
- Creating a Successful Study Away Program
- Advantages of a Library Advocacy Committee

Research Presentations

There were 16 pre-recorded research presentations on topics including:

- Library Aesthetics as a Determinant of Effective School Library Use
- Collaboration in Nigerian School Libraries
- Designing Culturally Competent and Impactful K-12 Online Learning
- Role of School Libraries in Community and Collaboration in Nigeria
- Communication of Croatian High School Libraries on Instagram
- Analysis of IASL Research Papers (2013-2023)
- Theory of School Librarian Leadership in Practice
- Librarian's Role in Fostering School-Wide Positive Reading Culture
- High School Library as a Safe Space for Student Wellbeing
- Mental health themes in Australia's 'prized' books
- Analyzing California Student Media Festival Winning Videos
- School and Public Library Collaboration in Australia
- Impact of School Librarianship on College Success
- Approaches to Media and Information Literacy Instruction
- Surprise Findings in School Librarians' Evidence Gathering
- Critical Discourse Analysis of Anti-LGBTQ+ Rhetoric in School Board Debates over Literature

The conference also included live "Hot Topic" sessions where presenters could discuss research and professional practice and attendees could ask questions and share their own wonders. These were very engaging sessions.

We are currently looking for bids for the 2025, 2026, and 2027 IASL Conferences. For more information please see <https://iasl-online.org/meetings/host.html>.

The IASL 2024 Organizing Committee



Jennifer Branch-Mueller
Jennifer Moore
Joanne Rodger
Jill Hancock
Melissa Johnston

Report on the 2024 Charleston Conference

Whitney Bevill

From November 13-15, 2024, over 1900 librarians gathered in Charleston, South Carolina, USA for the in-person iteration of the 44th annual Charleston Conference, “The Sky’s the Limit.” The gathering, which deals with issues related to book and serial acquisition, is intended as “an informal global gathering for the scholarly communication community.” The online portion of the conference took place December 9-13. The conference was planned by Katina Strauch, Beth Bernhardt, and Leah Hinds, and was made possible with the help of many other personnel and logistics workers.

Preconferences took place prior to exhibits in the Vendor Showcase. Several plenary sessions drew audiences, including talks with Katina Strauch, Founder and Executive Advisor for the Charleston Conference; Richard Charkin, Founder of Mensch Publishing; Malika N. Pryor, Chief Learning and Engagement Officer for the International African American History Museum; Andrea Cayetano-Jefferson, owner of Gullah Sweetgrass Baskets; Nancy Kopans, Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of ITHAKA; Roy Kaufman, Managing Director, Business Development and Government Relations, of the Copyright Clearance Center.

Sessions during the main conference included topics such as the following:

- Community-Driven Open Access Initiatives at Scale
- Counting Constellations, Not the Whole Sky: Diversity Assessment at a Large University Library
- Raising the Curtain on Retractions
- Resolved: Generative AI Will Make Academic Libraries Better
- Shared Collections: Is the Sky the Limit or Is the Sky Falling?
- Mining for Diamonds: Challenges and Opportunities for US no-APC Open Access Journals
- Collaborative Approaches to Navigating Open Access and FAIR Research Workflows: Insights from Denmark and the UK



St. Matthew's Church in downtown Charleston

- An International Data Space for OA Book Usage Data Exchange Across Public and Private Stakeholders
- IFLA Meets Charleston: The Meaning of Diversity in a Diverse World
- Niche Publishers Leading Innovation and Transformative Agreements
- Making Shared Print Work: Data, Tools, and Workflows for Monographic Shared Print Collections
- Managing Transitions in Collection Development and Collection Management
- The Legislative Landscape: The Library's Hand in the Higher Ed Game
- Indigenizing Library Collections: Strategies for Inclusive Curriculum Representation
- Charleston Trendspotting Initiative
- And stopwatch sessions and poster sessions

All sessions were recorded and will be available online in December 2024. See <https://www.charleston-hub.com> for more information.

The Charleston Conference will have its first Asian event in Bangkok, Thailand January 26-28, 2026.



Attendees at a full session