



“A Library Policy for Europe”

On behalf of EBLIDA I would like to invite our members and other interested parties to EBLIDA's Annual Conference which will be held in the beautiful and historical city of Vienna from the 7th – 9th of May 2009.

Last year we changed the concept for EBLIDA's Annual Council Meeting and this year we are replicating the successful model from last year, where one afternoon was dedicated to the business meeting of EBLIDA while on the second day we joined forces with the Dutch Library Association and the Dutch Library Umbrella to co-host a conference in the impressive new public library in Amsterdam.

This year our partners for “A Library Policy for Europe” are NAPLE (the National Authorities on Public Libraries in Europe), the Austrian Library Association and the Austrian Association of Librarians, once again, underlining cooperation between national and pan-European library organisations. Over the last couple of years EBLIDA has prioritised our cooperation with other international and European organisations resulting in, among other things, joint conferences with IFLA, LIBER and EUCLID and we hope that the future will also entail closer cooperation with the national associations and our members. We see this year's conference as a good example of this, both from an organisational point of view and from a conceptual point of view.

The choice of the theme for this year's conference “A library policy for Europe” reflects the importance of initiating a discussion of what we can do together and at the European level – what can be achieved at this level to support the work of the national library associations.

The conference is divided into three separate themes. The first part of the conference entitled “Library policy and legislation” will address the issues of libraries on the agenda from a political and policy perspective and look at some examples of library legislation as a state framework for libraries, as well as how public library perspectives are reflected in national legislation and national policies. It is important to bring to the debate what and in what ways does library legislation and national policies support – in structural and economic terms – the library sector in the individual members states.

The second part of the conference “The role of libraries in a European perspective” will investigate how EU projects and EU policies have been used to promote the role of libraries within the EU. The session will start with a more

general introduction to the role of libraries in society today and how this is reflected in the strategies of the EU (in this case using the i2010 initiative and the LLL programmes as examples of policy in practice) with representation from the European Commission and with an analysis of European-funded programmes. The following panel discussion will focus on whether, and to what extent, the European projects aimed at the library sector meet the needs of the European library sector - what have they accomplished and what is still missing at this level?

The final part of the conference will look at those areas of EU policy which actively focus and stimulate access to European information, culture and research. The European project is an obvious example of this, as is the Commission's policy on OPEN ACCESS. At the same time we have, over the last 20 years, seen that the Commission's policy on IPR and copyright seems to have the opposite intention, by diminishing the public domain and creating barriers for users to access information. Our panelists will discuss what concrete initiatives could be envisaged so that libraries can facilitate access to information resources and content. What can we do to stimulate the process and position these ideas on the European Union agenda?

With speakers from the European Commission, the library associations, the library authorities, from libraries and from academia we hope to investigate the question of the need for a library policy for Europe from different angles and to agree on a way forward.

We hope that many EBLIDA members, members of the co-hosting organisations and other stakeholders will choose to join us in Vienna for what we believe is a very important high level topic for discussion and that this will be the starting point for the realisation of “A library policy for Europe”.

Gerald Leitner
President
EBLIDA

Full details of the conference and information about how to register can be found at:

www.conference.bvoe.at

EBLIDA/FEP Meeting, Wednesday 11th March 2009, Paris

By Andrew Cranfield, EBLIDA

On the 11th of March 2009 Toby Bainton, Harald von Hielmcrone and Andrew Cranfield met with representatives from the Federation of European Publishers at the offices of the SNE in Paris.

Many of the suggested items for discussion at this meeting had been on the agenda before and it seems that it will be difficult to find common ground for the challenges of mass digitization and whether solutions should be grounded in law or whether they should be left to the market to be solved by voluntary agreements between right holders and cultural institutions and by licenses and contracts.

The fundamental problem is securing access to the cultural heritage of Europe is still the question of how to handle mass digitization and the all important issue of rights clearance. EBLIDA has continuously argued that for many materials this is just not possible – the resources to be used and the outcomes in terms of verifying and locating the right holders would be hard to justify in economic terms. Therefore we either need exceptions in law or pragmatic solutions that give institutions the opportunity to embark on projects of digitization and here the recent agreement in The Netherlands (as reported in EBLIDA News nr. 1 2009) between the Dutch Library umbrella (FOBID) and the rightholders (VOI@E) looks like a viable solution. EBLIDA thinks that author-by-author clearance for journal and newspaper articles in projects of mass digitization is more or less impossible.

At the moment it seems difficult to reach a common understanding on this issue, but it was decided that for the next meeting with the FEP the proposed Dutch solution should be on the agenda, giving both EBLIDA and the FEP the time to investigate the ramifications of this agreement.

The FEP is also involved in the development of the ARROWS (Accessible Registries of Rights Information on Orphan Works) database, which if successful should go some way to reducing the number of orphan works and supporting the concept of the "diligent search". The objectives of the ARROW project is to:

- ◆ Facilitate identification of rightholders (creators/publishers)
- ◆ Facilitate the identification of the IPR status
- ◆ Network of orphan works registries.

If successful this database will prove useful to both libraries and rightholders and EBLIDA will follow the project closely and with interest.

EBLIDA elections

Elections for the President and Executive Committee will take place during the Council Meeting in Vienna on May 7th.

We would like to remind you that the call for nominations is open until Friday 17th April. Nominated representative from a full member organization may stand for election and needs only to submit a signed nomination form by the deadline. A copy of the nomination form is available from the EBLIDA Secretariat.

All EBLIDA members are welcome to the Council Meeting to meet the nominated candidates and full members will be asked to cast their votes at the end of the meeting.

EBLIDA's New Staff



Joanne Yeomans



Claudia Forero

The EBLIDA offices in The Hague are seeing some changes of staff in 2009. Current Director Andrew Cranfield will be coming to the end of his term at the end of April and his successor, Joanne Yeomans, has arrived to shadow him until his departure. Joanne is a qualified librarian from the UK who has worked for the last six years at the library of CERN, the European particle physics laboratory based in Geneva. She gained much experience there in the international Open Access movement, organised a number of large workshops and also presented CERN's work at various international events. She has also improved her French to a conversational level in the bilingual environment there.

After nearly ten years working for EBLIDA, Carmen Morlon left in January to become Assistant to the Directors of LIBER and SPARC Europe. Her knowledge of EBLIDA's history and procedures is immense, and we are very grateful for her hard work and help during all these years. We hope to be keeping in touch with her. Carmen's replacement as Office Manager is Claudia Forero who you will speak to if you telephone the offices on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. She takes over management of the membership database and publications. Claudia is Colombian with a Masters degree in Development Studies.