

SPOTLIGHT

EIFL General Assembly 2013



A look at the 2013 General Assembly EIFL's major knowledge-sharing event of the year

The 2013 EIFL General Assembly (GA), our annual knowledge-sharing and networking event, took place in the vibrant city of Istanbul that lies on the ancient Silk Road, that has facilitated cultural interchange over the centuries.

On November 11 – 13, 2013, 82 participants from 47 countries met to debate the latest developments in electronic content delivery, to discover emerging topics that have a significance for libraries, and to share achievements from library consortia over the last year.

We were also delighted to be joined by representatives of the Anatolian University Libraries Consortium (ANKOS), who gave a presentation on Turkish librarianship and the activities of ANKOS.

Four key topics were introduced by expert guest speakers in interactive “Trends to Watch” sessions: Redefining Research Assessment, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Open Research Data, and Text and Data Mining. These sessions sparked a great deal of

interest and discussion.

A new feature was a poster session that showcased 20 projects supported by EIFL programmes on Open Access (EIFL-OA) and Copyright and Libraries (EIFL-IP). Other sessions included recent developments in the landscape for licensed e-books and e-monographs, an overview of resource discovery technologies, and updates in EIFL programme areas.

In addition to welcoming back old friends we were pleased to see some new faces at the GA. This year, EIFL welcomed Fiji as a new partner country to the GA.

“This was a marvelous experience as I got the chance to meet with other Country Coordinators and EIFL staff,” said Chaminda Chiran Jayasundara, EIFL Country Coordinator in Fiji, which is in the process of establishing a library consortium. “It was an ideal opportunity to learn about the latest developments in licensing, and accessing electronic information resources.

Seasoned participants also benefited from the programme. “I found the GA especially interesting this year. The ‘Trends to Watch’ sessions were very exciting,” said Irakli Garibashvili, EIFL Country Coordinator representing the Georgian Integrated Library & Information System Consortium (GILISC). “I kept thinking to myself: how can I implement these ideas when I get home?”

And for the facilitators and presenters, the knowledge sharing went both ways.

“I was so impressed by the range and the quality of activities that EIFL is involved in their partner countries,” said Kevin Smith, Director of Copyright and Scholarly Communications, Duke University Libraries, who facilitated the session on Massive Open Online Courses

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knowledge without boundaries



Kevin Smith, Director of Copyright and Scholarly Communications Duke University Libraries (far left) answers questions from GA participants on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) during the 'Trends to Watch' session.

(MOOCs). "The value of being here is that it's just fascinating to talk to librarians from so many different countries, to see their different issues but also their similarities."

Participants also had the opportunity to have individual discussions with EIFL Programme Managers, and 15 EIFL-partner publishers, through intensive "speed dating" sessions.

"The 2013 EIFL GA was a rich opportunity for us," said Jonathan Wynne, Sales Director, International Development at Wiley-Blackwell, an EIFL-partner publisher. "We had the chance to meet senior customers from

over forty countries in a unique and nicely-structured context. We value this meeting highly and are grateful to EIFL for planning such a useful event and for creating an infrastructure for ongoing licensing opportunities in emerging countries."

Encouraging libraries across our network to increase awareness and usage of e-resources is a key priority for us. At this year's GA, we celebrated the impressive achievement of our partner consortium in Uzbekistan where full text downloads from EIFL-licensed resources rose by over 1300% from 2011-12. In recognition of this success, Marat Rakhmatullaev, EIFL

Country Coordinator representing EIFL Uzbekistan, was awarded a Kindle, which was kindly donated by Royal Society Publishing.

In addition to the daily conference agenda, participants were treated to lively group dinners filled with laughter and shared connections, and an afternoon spent on a cultural tour of Istanbul.

As the Assembly drew to an end, many participants remarked how eager they were to share what they learned with their own consortium members when they returned home.

"The presentations were educative as much as they were informative. The spirit of friendship that prevailed throughout the GA reinforced the understanding of issues discussed," said Benedict Oladele, Nigerian University Libraries Consortium (NULIB). "I intend to share my new knowledge with our consortium members in NULIB."

EIFL would like to thank all the sponsors and partners who helped make the 2013 General Assembly possible.



Rosemary Otando, EIFL-OA Coordinator, Kenya with Iryna Kuchma, EIFL-OA Programme Manager during the GA poster session.



“I would like to congratulate EIFL for the excellent organization of the GA . . . COBESS is proud to belong to EIFL and will always work to make it stronger.”

Youssoupha Gueye, EIFL Country Coordinator representing Consortium des Bibliothèques de l'Enseignement Supérieur du Sénégal.



“It was wonderful to be among a diverse group of such committed people. It was an uplifting experience. There were some challenging questions that opened my eyes to different perspectives, so it has been tremendously beneficially for me.”

Mark Patterson, Executive Director of eLife Sciences Publications, who facilitated the session on Redefining Research Assessment.



“EIFL is a family. At the GA you feel like you are at home. At the GA you are involved in everything, you can discuss, you can talk about your own country challenges. And that’s why you love EIFL and you don’t want to ever leave.”

Diana Jeries Sayej-Naser (West Bank), EIFL Country Coordinator representing Palestinian Library and Information Consortium.



EIFL-OA Coordinator (left) Viatcheslav Britchkovski from Belarus speaks with EIFL Country Coordinator (left) Biljana Kosanovic from Serbia about his open access project.



From left: Khalid Abusin, Sudan, Naniki Maphakwane, Botswana, Diana Jeries Sayej-Naser, Palestine, Jagadish Aryal, Nepal.



Susanna Lob, EIFL-Licensing Programme Manager (right) discusses licensing issues with Ecaterina Zasmenco, Director, Central Library of Moldova State University, representing Electronic Resources for Moldova Consortium (left) and EIFL Country Coordinator Marat Rakhmatullaev from Uzbekistan (middle).