THE FINAL DOCUMENT
of the Working Meeting to address
how to best adapt and implement
the IFLA Guidelines for Continuing Professional Development
in the Russian libraries

19 November, 2019,

M.I. Rudomino All-Russia State Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow

Introduction

On 19 November, 2019, Library for Foreign Literature hosted a Working Meeting to discuss how to best adapt and implement *the IFLA Guidelines for Continuing Professional Development: Principles and Best Practices* (hereinafter referred to as the IFLA Guidelines) in the Russian libraries. Among 45 attendees were Russian library managers and specialists, in particular those in charge of library educational units, LIS educators and students from Moscow and Saint-Petersburg, representatives from Russian library associations and professional media.

While working in groups, the participants in the Working Meeting reviewed the current situation in the provision of professional development and workplace learning opportunities to Russian library professionals. They also discussed the best practices specified in the IFLA Guidelines and jointly worked out practical solutions so as to further their implemenation in the Russian libraries.

The group discussion outcomes are listed below (according to the chapters in the IFLA Guidelines).

Group 1. The Learners.

Moderator: Nadezhda V. Beznosova, Director for Customer Service, Library for Foreign Literature
Secretary: Irina V. Karaulova, Leading Specialist, Center for Cooperation with International Professional Organizations, Library for Foreign Literature

In the IFLA Guidelines the term „the Learners" designates library professionals for whom the process of continuing workplace education is intended. While discussing the IFLA Guidelines, we identified a number of factors which impeded professional development of Russian library professionals, as well as developed suggestions as to how to overcome these problems.

Best practices for the Learners according to the IFLA Guidelines:

- conducting regular self-assessments;
- participating in performance appraisals;
- closing competency gaps;
- developing a personal learning plan;
- current position pre-eminence.

Analysing advantages in the current situation:

1. Russian librarians' involvement in professional communities through social networks raises their awareness and interest in the library field events. The websites of most Russian libraries carry news, event anouncements, reports, etc.
2. Professional development and retraining programmes are in high demand among librarians.
3. Most Russian librarians find it of great interest to participate in library conferences and familiarize themselves with professional print media.

Analysing drawbacks in the current situation:

1. Most Russian librarians have no systematic approach to upgrading their own professional qualifications.
2. Due to the lack of career advancement incentives in the Russian libraries their workers aren't enough motivated to develop professionally.
3. Russian librarians are all too often unaware of distance learning opportunities, including free ones.
4. In most cases, Russian librarians don't have enough time to upgrade their qualifications on a regular basis.
5. In most Russian libraries, there is a considerable gap in qualifications between librarians of the older and the younger generation.

The Working Group's suggestions
Librarians should:

1. be abreast of currently available workplace learning opportunities (distance learning programmes, especially free ones) as well as the work time and budget which their library earmarks for the staff's professional development;

2. be allowed to get directly involved in compiling evaluation interview questionnaires suited to various positions in the library;
3. take advantage of freely accessible online educational resources for self-directed learning;
4. undertake internships in larger libraries;
5. update their portfolio upon successful completion of education programmes and participation in professional events;
6. inform the HR department of amendments to their portfolio and of their individual learning plan so that HR could update the personal records and make compensation and/or promotion decisions;
7. actively engage in cooperation and reciprocal learning with co-workers in the other library departments.

Group 2. The Employers

Moderator: Maria A. Kapt-Galushko, First Deputy Director for Library Services, Library for Foreign Literature
Secretary: Valentina Serpa Salbieva, Leading Methodologist, Center for Cooperation with International Professional Organizations, Library for Foreign Literature

In the IFLA Guidelines the term „the Employers" designates library managers and heads of departments who are responsible for providing, on a regular basis, for professional development of the staff.

Best practices for the Employers according to the IFLA Guidelines:

- designating an overseer for staff development;
- learning needs assessment;
- learning opportunities and documentation of staff progress;
- allocating budget for staff development and work time for learning;
- evaluating staff development programme.

Analysing advantages in the current situation:

1. In most libraries at the federal and oblast levels there are training and methodology centers overseeing professional development of the library personnel.
2. Performance appraisal interviews are routinely conducted in most federal and oblast libraries (once in 5 years) and provided for in their charters.

Analysing drawbacks in the current situation:

1. For the time being there is no unified methodology guidelines to provide for the continuing on-the-job professional education in the Russian libraries. Most existing guidelines are of local use only.
2. In most Russian libraries conditions for individual professional developement are substandard: there is no information available on distance (particularly free) learning opportunities, the institutional budget earmarked for staff development is low, the work time allocated for upgrading individual qualifications using professional media and networks is insufficient, there is no reciprocal learning between library units.
3. Typically, performance appraisals are generic and not germane to the jobs under review, they are conducted irrespective of employee's specific competencies and responsibilities in their departments (for instance, PR department or IT department).
4. In most cases, outcomes of performance evaluation interviews are not used for further analysis of learning needs of the staff and development of individual learning plans. Nor are they utilized for making compensation/promotion decisions or, on the contrary, reprimanding an employee.

The Working Group's suggestions
The Employers should:

1. use a multi-faceted approach to training the personnel while providing for varied learning needs of library units with functionally different remits;
2. seek assistance of experts from outside the organization to help improve the competency appraisal policies and to conduct appropriate interviews;
3. create a competitive environment by putting in place business-models which presuppose strict delineation of areas of responsibility, monitoring the progress of work and giving group leaders extra powers to promote most effective members and to motivate less effective ones to be more productive;
4. motivate their staff to develop professionally by:
a. running professional contests for their library staff with rewards (business trip, annual subscription to professional journals and magazines, etc);
b. furthering career advancement;
c. assigning employees to more difficult and sensitive tasks or projects;
d. encouraging participation in seminars/conferences held by other libraries.
5. set up special units in their organization to oversee professional development of the staff, to survey their learning needs and to disseminate best practices, using face-to-face formats as well as electronic media.
6. allocate, on a regular basis, time within the working hours of the staff for on-the-job learning and keeping up-to-date of library publications, including in social networks.
7. make sure lists of competencies for performance interviews are suited to specific requirements in each library department.

Group 3. The Professional Associations

Moderator: Daria A. Beliakova, Head of Center for Cooperation with International Professional Organizations, Library for Foreign Literature
Secretary: Ekaterina A. Pavliuk, Leading Specialist, Center for Coordination and Organization of International Activities, Library for Foreign Literature

Among professional associations, whose spokespeople took part in the Working Meeting, were Library Assembly of Eurasia, which rallies national libraries of the CIS countries, as well as several associations representing libraries of a particular type.

Best practices for the Professional Associations according to the IFLA Guidelines:

- developing guidelines and recognition systems;
- idenifying learning needs;
- coordinating and promoting international collaboration in the provision of educational events;
- disseminating information about learning opportunities;
- sponsorship of learning resources;
- advocating for policies and regulations that ensure access to continuing education.

Analysing advantages in the current situation:

1. The Russian Library Association (RLA) annual contest „Librarian of the Year" helps to tap the potential of librarians and to further career advancement among young professionals.
2. Over the past few years RLA have rewarded winners of the Young Librarian contest with the opportunity to attend the annual IFLA Congress, which broadens their outlook and contributes to their professional growth.
3. The RLA Section for Library Profession, Human Resources and Continuing Education makes regular publications in the trade press to address issues of the LIS education.
4. Russian Library Association considers it mandatory for school librarians to earn a certificate attesting to upgrading one's qualifications or retraining for the position of school librarian as such certificates are relevant to further assessments and career advancement.
5. Library Assembly of Eurasia has offered young professionals from the CIS countries annual internships, which have fostered international professional exchange.
6. All professional associations have printed media outlets, which discuss topical issues in the international and domestic library field, research outcomes and reports on most significant professional events.

Analysing drawbacks in the current situation:

1. Library associations in Russia possess no certification to render education services; therefore they can't run any education programmes.
2. In Russia it isn't the remit of library associations to ensure the quality of continuing education programmes through independent expert evaluations; such programmes and their providers don't get rated; as a result, libraries and librarians have experienced difficulties in selecting providers which maintain good quality of education.

The Working Group's suggestions
The Professional Associations should:

1. create a database of organizations providing education services and programmes for the library field, including online courses, and make it available to employers and library professionals for reference especially when making up individual learning plans;
2. administer certification/licensure systems to ensure the quality of professional development programmes for library professionals;
3. make a ranking list of the most successful providers of education services and programmes, with ratings being determined by independent experts and service users;
4. set up a platform for the exchange of professional expertise and materials within the library community of Russia and the CIS countries, probably, involving social networks;
5. contribute to the development and approval of the nationwide LIS education standards, as well as a number of narrow-focused aids for library specialists.

Group 4. The Educators

Moderator: Tatiana V. Polezhayeva, Director for Scholarly and Educational Activities, Library for Foreign Literature
Secretary: Anastasia A. Petrova, Methodologist, Rudomino Academy, Library for Foreign Literature

In the IFLA Guidelines the term „the Educators" designates the LIS faculty of the tertiary institutions and other institutions offering continuing education, as well as library units in charge of continuing professional developement of the staff.

Best practices for the Educators according to the IFLA Guidelines:

- Motivating students whilst pursuing continuing education;
- Conducting and disseminating research;
- Encouraging LIS school involvement in continuing education;
- Advising professional and government bodies.

Analysing advantages in the current situation:

1. The contemporary tertiaty institutions of Russia have employed up-to-date effective training methods, such as individual student internships; distance learning; engaging specialists from other educational fields; encouraging educators and experts from other regions to participate in distance teaching; project activities and SMART technologies.
2. Larger libraries tend to have an educational department and/or a training center to provide educational services to their staff.
3. There are several Internet-based educational platforms offering free online courses for library professionals, developed and uploaded by LIS tertiary institutions and educational departments of larger Russian libraries.

Analysing drawbacks in the current situation:

1. No nationwide LIS education standards have been adopted in Russia as yet, which impedes developing relevant educational programmes and assessing their effectiveness.
   No comprehensive research has been conducted with the view to identify learning needs and to assess the effectiveness of LIS education and professional development activities.
2. Today's library education market is saturated with offers, including free ones, from LIS tertiary institutions and library training centers. However, the independent expert assessment of their quality is missing, and so is the ranking system for educational programmes and their providers. So librarians and their employers have experienced difficulty in making choice of a provider that would ensure the quality staff training.
3. The LIS school education has lagged behind everyday practices of modern libraries. Young professionals' competencies are not up to the requirements that libraries have to meet in today's society. A large portion of contemporary library competencies can only be taught through blended learning. Meanwhile, most educators find it hard to harness information technologies and blended learning for a number of reasons: they are either psychologically unprepared or overworked or lack proper IT skills.
4. Learners' digital gap stands in a way of obtaining quality distance education.

The Working Group's suggestions
The Educators should:

1. regularly conduct comprehensive research of the learning needs and the effectiveness of the LIS education and professional development system;
2. regularly evaluate the quality of traning activities provided by organizations specializing in education services;
3. be more engaged in introducing mentoring practices in the Russian libraries;
4. develop and implement a system of on-the-job counseling facilitating the use of new products and software by the staff;
5. tailor to specific needs and implement the SMART methodology in the education process;
6. continue motivating LIS students through engaging them in project activities and offering individual internships.

Conclusion

The present FINAL DOCUMENT has been prepared on the basis of the group discussions and presentations of their outcomes at the Working Meeting on 19 November, 2019. The document is intended for familiarizing members of the IFLA CPDWL Section, including the authors of the Guidelines for Continuing Professional Development, as well as for the Russian library community at large.