

At its 62nd General Conference held in Beijing in August 1996, IFLA addressed the theme: 'The challenge of change – libraries and economic development'. Prime Minister Li Peng, opening the Conference, recognised the centrality of libraries and access to information to economic development and declared his government's aim to equip every town, in that vast country of 1.2 billion people, with a library by 2010.

The Section of Art Libraries addressed the economic development issue in a practical fashion by asking the question: 'Pay or profit: fee or free?', attempting to learn from an array of different libraries how to create income with which to expand services. The papers in this issue of *Art Libraries Journal* provide the opportunity to look at a number of case studies which were presented.

Guidelines for charging at the Smithsonian Institute led the Workshop to discuss institutional practice of allocating income. It became crystal clear, naturally, that where income was redirected to the fundraising department, it acted as an incentive for further endeavour. A project at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland has led to the establishment of an active consultancy business. In Cluj, Romania, at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy an experiment in self-financing schemes, such as payment for photocopying, not only augmented the budget but in the event provided the main instrument for change in library culture in a country where both law and custom prohibited charging for library services¹. In Russia an art library took the lead in setting up a business and helping the organisation survive in the trying economic times of that country. A thorough analysis of operations and a potential market, established to what extent services over and above traditional library services could be charged for to achieve a contribution towards the cost of running the library.

Partnerships between the business sector and non-profit institutions can lead to a very wide distribution of information as well as to conservation of rare materials, as various projects at Madrid's National Library demonstrate. Finally, the issue of subsidy aimed at increasing scholarly access to major databases, is addressed in a review of the various projects of the Getty Information Institute.

Pricing and staffing policies provided a focus for lively discussion, but use of income and issues of intellectual property rights pointed to the complex problems which confront the culture of income-raising.

During the Open Forum of the Section of Art Libraries attention was given to Chinese library collections inside and outside China. A paper by Dai Shujuan, Director of the Reference Library, Chinese Academy of Arts, Beijing described current developments in her library which stressed the need to 'move away from the old concept of book orientation' . . . towards 'service orientation'. London, one of the most important centres for the study of Chinese art outside of China, was focussed on in a paper comparing provision, by four libraries in particular, of materials relevant to the study of Chinese art. The session concluded with an imaginative description of collaboration between China and Europe in the 18th century in the production of copper engraving.

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Note

1. This paper, the subject-matter of which falls outside the scope of *Art Libraries Journal*, is not included in these pages. Copies are available through IFLA, and it is expected that it will be published in *Inspel*. (Ed).

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