

# The IASL PD Library

*By Elizabeth Greef*

*A most important truth, which we are apt to forget, is that a teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.* Rabindranath Tagore (Nobel Laureate in Literature, 1913) [Online Source](#)

The International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) is an association that has been in operation for 45 years since its inception in 1971. The focus of IASL's vision is to be a positive influence in establishing, advocating and supporting school librarianship in every country in the world. It provides an international forum to nurture and share cutting-edge research in school librarianship, to build a sense of community among school librarians around the world, to disseminate information about useful materials, advocacy and program initiatives, to promote the training and professional development of school library staff, to encourage the integration of school library programs into the school curriculum and to coordinate activities, international and regional conferences and other projects to undergird the strength of school librarianship around the world.

The concept of developing an online professional development library emerged out of a survey I conducted during 2011 for IASL members and non-members; this was in my role at the time chairing IASL's International Development Special Interest Group. The survey had 82 respondents from 30 countries and covered areas like professional development and support desired by IASL members.

The data was crunched during 2012 and I developed a strategic plan for implementing some of the findings and suggestions of what people wanted from IASL. One of the strongest recommendations was for professional development (PD) content, suitable for school librarians in a variety of situations – from those looking to set up a school library in a developing country to well-developed networked libraries looking at integrating technology into teaching and learning or starting a BYOD program or investigating Open Education Repositories. The membership of IASL is very diverse, including top researchers in the field of school librarianship, school library personnel and teacher librarians from many countries and people in developing nations trying to strengthen school libraries in their countries. Consequently, catering to professional development needs required meeting a very diverse set of requirements.

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In the meantime, my role within IASL changed when I became the Vice President for Advocacy and Promotion. I saw the PD Library (and the WOW Project – see separate article in the Perspectives – Global section. Ed.) as a means of advocacy and promotion for both IASL and the profession and as providing an incentive for membership. The IASL Board gave permission for me to set up an Ad Hoc Committee to coordinate the realisation of some of the survey's recommendations at the IASL Conference in Bali in 2013. I sought interested parties at the conference, at the IASL AGM, via the IASL listserv and through email contacts, to contribute to PD topics. When someone submitted a listserv post useful to the PD Library, I asked the person if the post could be adapted and incorporated. Two examples of this are Doug Johnson's tips on writing articles for non-library journals (an important form of advocacy) and Anil Mane's list of translation websites.

One subcommittee led by Katy Manck took on the herculean task of going through older IASL conference proceedings and selecting ones which were still very relevant and then digitising them if they were not in electronic format.

The PD Library currently contains 36 topics, a few of which are links to existing relevant sites. The PD Library has a covering document with broad suggestions on delivering PD content. Each topic has a brief introduction on how the content may be used for professional development. The plan is for Dr. Lesley Farmer in the USA to develop some video clips addressing topics and the IASL PD content. About half the content is freely available and the other half for members. The library can be found [here](#).

The topics/links on the website are:

- **AASL's Toolkits** (external)
- **Access to Selected IASL Conference Papers suitable for PD.** A selection of papers from most years from 1996-2009
- **Creating a Scope and Sequence of Information Literacy and/or Digital Literacy Skills**
- **Designing a School Library Website**
- **Detecting Plagiarism and Preventing It** (external)
- **Developing a School Library**
- **Digital Citizenship**
- **Disaster Recovery, updated 2015**
- **Education-Related Publications**
- **Free Resources** – Face-A-Book; Adventurers' Book Club; Literacy Outcomes; Literature Circles; SLA Orientation Activities; SLA Challenge; Reading Olympics; Reading in Bed is Terrific (RIBIT); School library plan
- **Getting Started: Ideas and Procedures for Starting a School Library Association** (external)
- **Guide to writing grant proposals**
- **Guidelines for Library-Based Literacy Programs** (external)
- **Information Literacy Resources**
- **ISTE's New Digital Literacy Standards and Students** (external)
- **Library Design/Learning Spaces**
- **Library-related Publications**
- **Maker Spaces**
- **Mentoring**
- **Online Access to Professional Development Programs**
- **Open Educational Resources**
- **Periodicals**
- **Public Library and School Library Cooperation**
- **Recent School Library Research** (compiled by IASL Research SIG)
- **Rubrics for Assessment of Student Skill Levels**
- **Sample Policies for School Library Programs**
- **School Libraries and Diverse Student Needs – CISSL** (external)
- **School Library Advocacy Resources**
- **Talking to Children About War and Terrorism**
- **Technology Integration in Schools**
- **Tools for Assessing the Reading Levels of Books and Websites**
- **Translation Services Online**
- **Working with your Administration**
- **Writing Articles for Non-Library Journals**
- **Writing Conference Proposals**

#### **Topics coming soon:**

- Global Education Projects
- Promoting Your Library
- Reading
- Student Motivation

This project has taken longer to realise than first anticipated. Working with a large, geographically-widespread group of people is challenging and delays occur due to life pressures and people being volunteers. However, the primary reason, unfortunately, was due to the previous Secretariat not incorporating material into the IASL website. In early 2016 IASL changed to a new Secretariat, Penman & Winton, who rapidly incorporated the PD Library into the website.

Of course, the PD Library will need to evolve over time as professional needs and trends change and websites move or die. In our profession we know that change is the name of the game!

The PD Library is the result of the efforts of many people from the following countries and we owe them a great debt of thanks for their contributions: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mozambique, Netherlands, Philippines, Portugal, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden, Timor-Leste, Turkey, UK, USA.

**Elizabeth Greef** is an experienced teacher-librarian and an active member of IASL. Elizabeth has only recently stepped down from the position of IASL Vice President Advocacy and Promotion. She continues to hold the role of IASL PD Library Coordinator.