



How to Start Your Own International Library Group in Your State

ILCE-IG began when a group of librarians who were interested in international librarianship asked permission of the Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL) Board to form an interest group. Below are some suggestions for how you might begin your own international librarianship unit within your state association and what we did in Colorado.

- **Get together with other Association members who are interested in international librarianship and prepare a statement of the purpose or mission of your group.**
 - *Two Colorado librarians decided to request permission for forming a unit within CAL for those with an interest in international librarianship.*
- **Determine where the group would fit into the general structure of your state library association**
 - *We determined that an Interest Group would attract members from all types of libraries and was the best place for our group. It also has the most freedom of all CAL units. According to CAL rules, we needed 15 signatures on a petition to form the interest group.*
- **Publicize the formation of your new group and have a meeting for those who are interested and get their contact information**
 - *We used our state's library listserv and CAL publications to obtain signatures and gathered more at the annual conference. We quickly came up with 40 signatures, more than enough to form the Interest Group. We developed a statement of purpose and proposed a Steering Committee to lead the interest groups activities.*
- **Determine a Steering Committee and Officers for your group**
 - *Several people volunteered to be on the Steering Committee. It's open to anyone who is interested in working on international and cultural understanding projects.*
- **Find funds for your activities, through your association's budget or fundraising events.**
 - *ILCE-IG is funded through importing international jewelry and selling it. This is an unusual approach that works for CAL but requires investment to get it started.*
- **Be active – Do programs, posters, receptions, and other activities at your state library association annual meeting – get contact information for everyone interested and add them to your membership.**
 - *ILCE-IG has proposed a program every year at the CAL annual conference. We also hold an "International Adult Beverage Reception" with wine and spirits brought back and donated by our traveling members. We have submitted posters and participate in all CAL membership activities.*



Janet Lee with CAL Poster

- **Be creative in ways to publicize your unit's commitment to international librarianship.**
 - *ILCE-IG members regularly submit articles to journals and publications.*
 - *ILCE-IG members are also active in ALA and IFLA and offer to do programs at these conferences on our project and activities.*
 - *Based on our contacts in other countries we have sponsored a tour to Nicaragua to visit libraries and ILCE-IG members taught an international librarianship course for Emporia State University, culminating with a trip to Bulgaria.*
- **Facilitate international library cooperation through Sister City International and Partner Library programs.**
 - *ILCE-IG reached out to Sister Cities International and suggested that libraries be partners in Sister City partnerships that already existed. We have been able to encourage partners between Sister Cities in Denver and Aurora, Colorado.*
 - *ILCE-IG has encouraged partner library agreements in several countries.*
- **Keep your members informed** – use the State Association newsletter, your own newsletter, Facebook pages, and websites to inform members.
 - *We publish a quarterly newsletter and a brochure, submit an article each month to the CAL newsletter, and have a page on the CAL website.*



Bulgarian Library children's room

- **Encourage members to visit international libraries and to report back to you about their experiences for your newsletter/Facebook page/website.**
 - *Check out the CAL website for recent articles. <https://ilceig.wordpress.com/>*

- **Visit library schools in your state and encourage students to join your group.**
 - *We have spoken at both the University of Denver and the Emporia State University. We have encouraged students to form an IRRT Student Chapter and join our group.*
- **Depending on your financial and personnel resources, develop a grant program.**
 - *ILCE-IG has been able to offer grants for projects celebrating international librarianship.*

Mission of ILCE-IG

- ***Support individual and library partnerships and activities that enhance cultural understanding, and***
- ***Support cultural programming and activities that celebrate ethnic and immigrant cultures in Colorado***

For more information contact: Nancy Bolt at nancybolt@earthlink.net or Janet Lee at janet.lee35@gmail.com. We are happy to assist in any way we can.