

“Think Globally, Act Globally” IMLS China/US Grant

Host Visits: Background and Planning

1. General information about host visits

- Three groups coming to the US
 - Group 1: Directors of public libraries (June 29 – July 19, 2009)
 - Group 2: Library Educators (January 2010)
 - Group 3: IT librarians (June 2010)
- All groups will participate in host visits
- 2 Chinese librarians will be placed at each host location
- Likely to be about 10 librarians per group, so 5 host sites are needed
- CALA Chapters will coordinate the host arrangements for the first group, the dates of the host visit are Tuesday, July 14 to Saturday, July 19
- Programs for groups:
 - Program at the University of Illinois, Mortenson Center
 - Attendance at a conference/workshop
 - Host visit

2. Issues to consider when hosting

- The host institution for the first group should be a public library
- Meeting and talking with the director of the host institution will be a critical part of the host visit for group 1
- One contact person for each host site
- A planned program available 1 month before the host visit
- Interpretation will probably be needed
- Balanced program: visits, meetings with director, meeting with senior management staff, meeting with local government officials, Board of Trustees or university officials, some unstructured time, a couple of cultural activities, etc.

3. Suggested activities for Group 1

- Ask the international librarian to give a brown-bag talk to your staff about libraries in his/her country;
- Ask your library director to schedule time with the visitor to discuss his/her role and responsibilities
- Review your library budget with the visitor and discuss any fundraising strategies that you use in your library;
- Have the librarian job-shadow your department managers, spending a couple of hours in each department;
- Share with the visitor your library’s policies and procedures for your library;
- Have the librarian spend some time with your IT staff. Discuss the use of the internet in your library;

- Discuss any recent problems you have had in your library and your strategies for resolving the problems (issues such as: building problems, challenged books, security incidents, difficult patrons, etc.);
- Have the librarian visit the community (tour the city). Make sure that they understand whom you are serving;
- Have the librarian meet local government officials and library trustees to discuss the role of the library in your community.
- Invite the librarian to attend any staff meetings;
- Do not feel that you have to schedule an activity for each hour of the day. Let the librarian roam the library, look at the collection and databases, and observe patron behavior.

4. Financial considerations

The IMLS grant will cover up to \$1350 per person per host visit. The University of Illinois will work with hosting institutions and individuals on the details of the reimbursements.