

# **IFLA 2018 Congress Experience by IFLA WLIC 2018 Attendance Grant Winner,**

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I was fortunate to be selected as one of the attendance grant winner for 2018 IFLA WLIC ARL section grant. Thanks to the generous support of SAGE and Ex Libris who made my attendant to IFLA WLIC 2018 congress possible for the first time in my practise as an information professional. I will never forget this great opportunity. May they never relent in this provision of making the dreams of our professionals in low income countries participate in such a great gathering come true. Neither will I forget the hard working section (ARL) of IFLA that felt the need to seek for such a grant, I appreciate.

## **Experiences**

It was a great privilege to learn about my profession from an international perspective. Malaysia is a beautiful country and their people are very friendly, no wonder, people from other countries like China, India, Libya amongst others are seen doing their businesses in the country peacefully. I arrived Malaysia on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August from Nigeria, it was quite a long journey but worth it. I went for a satellite meeting of the African section at the Serambi Ilmu Rakyat Library which unfortunately didn't hold on that 22<sup>nd</sup> due to a public holiday but was postponed to the next day being 23<sup>rd</sup>. All the people I met was so friendly that even one of the police officers called Sam, had to take me all the way to the train station when I was about missing my way to KLCC location same day.

I made friends in Malaysia and from other parts of the world. I met a friend, Wan, a Media personnel who walked up to me on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug. when I came for registration to take a selfie, yea! That's how lovely they are. A friend's friend from Bangladesh was able to recognise me just through the pics that was sent to her. Wow, it was quite surprising but we enjoyed it all.

I shared an accommodation with a colleague to reduce cost in Bukit bintang which is a popular area in Malaysia and very accommodating. I had the experience of exploring their different pavilions (walk way) which surprisingly takes you to different locations without you feeling the hotness of the weather. The country took the value of maintaining a nice temperature inside the pavilions, with malls attached in some of them, it was a wow!

I was able to manage my scheduling to accommodate enough presentations and standing committee meetings throughout the conference. The first timers' session was a memorable event, I loved the way we were welcomed and tags attached to our ID's.

Dinner on the Night of 26<sup>th</sup> August at Songket restaurant was great. We had a long walk which was estimated to be 10 mins but turned out to 25mins to the restaurant. We had very sumptuous meals and all thanks to Ex Libris who sponsored the dinner.

There were great excitement as I received my award certificate on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August at the Expo Pavilion/Tech. lab. Session by the chair ARL standing committee; Mimi Calter. Although there were no provision for a brief vote of thanks to share my gratitude, but all



the same, I was high spirited holding my award certificate with a feeling of great honour. I had the opportunity of physically meeting with the awesome librarians that has been in my email all this while with prompt response, in the person of Mimi Calter, Liz State, Marga Koelen and not forgetting Jayshree the awesome blogger. ARL hot topic sessions was legit.

I will not forget the invitation and exquisite entertainment by the Minister of Tourism and the Government of Malaysia. The fruits, foods and the performances by the entertainers in the Malaysian Tourism Centre. The exhibition stand is information packed, the poster stands, the gifts, the souvenirs and various libraries in the world Access points amongst others.

I really felt lonely when I saw papers and posters presentations and none to present myself. I promised myself to make a positive difference in IFLA WLIC 2019.

## Library Tours



The library tour took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August, it was initially a walking tour but changed to our favour to a Bus ride tour. We visited International Medical University (IMU) and Malaysia Multimedia University (MMU) whom were very hospitable to us in their reception, explanations and refreshments.

## Challenges

- I experienced few difficulties in meeting up with some interesting but clashing programs/sessions. Some of the sessions I wished to be a part of, were clashing and at such could not allow me to fully participate in all.
- Challenges were also encountered in locating some of the session rooms, and some of the volunteers had difficulties in the directions as well. Apart from these, the experience was beautiful.

I left Kuala Lumpur on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Sept. 2018 after a brief shopping and tour around the vicinity. Knowledge on my experiences at IFLA WLIC has already been passed on to my colleagues at home and they won't just get enough. Thanks so much to IFLA Academic and Research Library Section for this wonderful opportunity. They are a section like no other.