

Articles by NDL staff

NDL participation in Poster Sessions at the IFLA/WLIC 2018

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The World Library and Information Congress (WLIC): 84th International Federation of Library (IFLA) General Conference and Assembly was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from August 24 to 30, 2018. The National Diet Library (NDL) sent a delegation of twelve staff members led by Director General Dr. Sawako Hanyu to participate in business meetings and to present reports at sessions. I made a presentation during the [poster](#) session.

122 posters from about 60 countries were displayed in the exhibition hall of the Kuala Lumpur Convention Center, the Congress venue, from August 25 to 28.



The National Diet Library delegation



Posters from a variety of libraries

The title of NDL's poster was "Connections and Collaboration of 800 Libraries in Japan: Collaborative Reference Database."

The [Collaborative Reference Database \(CRD\)](#) is intended to help support library reference services and individual research by library patrons. The CRD is an archive of past reference queries from nearly 800 member libraries, including public libraries, university libraries, school libraries, and specialized libraries. Now roughly 100,000 queries are searchable and freely accessible online.



The 84th IFLA/WLIC venue, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre and the opening ceremony



Poster, leaflets, and the CRD mascot character

The poster session was held for two days, on August 26 and 27. Together with Mr. Jin'ichi Kitano from the Library Support Division of the Kansai-kan, I explained the CRD concept to visitors and answered their questions.

The poster session was attended by librarians from all kinds of libraries in many different countries, and more than 200 people listened to us explain the features of the CRD and talk about our efforts to publicize this project.



In poster session

Some typical comments from visitors included:

- It is interesting that this database is an archive of past reference queries. Often, different patrons ask similar questions, so I think that this kind of database is very useful.
- I was surprised that many different kinds of libraries take part in this project, especially school libraries.
- We have similar databases in my country, but only a few libraries participate.
It is convenient that records are searchable and accessible from outside the CRD. For example, it is very helpful to be able to find records by searching with keywords on search engines.

Here are some typical inquiries from visitors and their answers:

- Q: Is the CRD accessible from outside Japan? Is it free of charge to use?
- A: The CRD is accessible from anywhere, and you can search and view the records freely.
- Q: Is the CRD different from an online reference system?
- A: Yes. It is an archive of past reference queries and each record includes the question, its answer, the process used to find the answer, and other reference materials.
- Q: What are Search Guides?
- A: Search Guides describe how to search for information on a specific subject. They introduce basic information sources that can be checked before searching for more specialized reference sources.
- Q: Is there an English version of the CRD?
- A: There is a page that explains the CRD in English, but the system and its content are primarily in Japanese.



Visitors excitedly discussed the posters with colleagues from around the world

Looking back on those two days, I realize that many people agreed that "being able to search for specific keywords is convenient" and "reusing reference queries and their responses is a good idea." I also use the CRD on a daily basis in my work as a reference librarian, and being able to reference similar queries does make research more efficient. And the more records we accumulate, the more useful the CRD will be.

The CRD is designed to foster connections and collaboration between member libraries, so it was very meaningful to have the opportunity to introduce this project and exchange information with librarians from all over the world at IFLA/WLIC.

As we continue our efforts to develop this project even further, we hope that the CRD will grow to the point that will prove useful even to overseas librarians and researchers.

Links to poster and leaflet:

- ["Connections and collaboration of 800 libraries in Japan: Collaborative Reference Database" \(Poster\)](#)
- ["Connections and collaboration of 800 libraries in Japan: Collaborative Reference Database" \(Leaflet\)](#)
- ["Reference Examples" \(Leaflet\)](#)