

# FCIL NEWSLETTER

Foreign, Comparative, and International Law  
Special Interest Section



## From the Chair

BY CAITLIN HUNTER

Welcome back! I hope everyone is having a good fall, and I want to start with a huge thank you to everyone who made the 2024 Annual Meeting a success.

Thanks to the efforts of Jean Wenger, many FCIL-SIS members were able to enjoy the first pre-conference FCIL workshop in several years, “Discover Foreign & International Law in the Second City.” Jean lined up an incredible panel of vice consuls, a practicing attorney, a law professor, and a former federal judge. Past FCIL-SIS Chair Dean Deane served as a speaker, and FCIL-SIS member Mandy Lee pitched in to moderate.

FCIL-SIS members also provided amazing FCIL programming during the conference itself. Loren Turner put great attention and care into organizing the first FCIL-SIS Cool Tools event, showcasing presentations by Meredith Capps, Charlotte Daugherty, Clement Lin, Sarah E.M Martin, Chelsey McKimmy, Louis Myers, II, Devan Orr, Alison A. Shea, Rachel Waldron, Latia Ward, Julie Wooldridge, and Loren herself.

FCIL-SIS member Sarah Martin coordinated a panel on “Obscenity, Authoritarianism, and Blasphemy: The Global Context of Book Banning”, featuring University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign professor and anti-censorship advocate Emily Knox and her Ph.D. advisee, Andrew Zalot.

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## From the Chair

When a planned third speaker was unable to attend, FCIL-SIS member Louis Myers and his colleagues at the Law Library of Congress stepped in at the last minute to pull together a full-fledged report on Book and Media Censorship in Selected Countries, which Louis presented.

Finally, the Schaffer Grant Committees continued their work bringing FCIL-SIS presentations by accomplished, interesting librarians from around the globe. This year's grant recipient, Ugyen Thinley, presented on his experiences founding the first law library in the Kingdom of Bhutan, at the newly created Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law.

**Editor's Note:**  
**See Mr. Thinley's reflection, page 13.**

I look forward to what I'm sure will be an equally wonderful slate of presentations at next year's Annual Meeting, taking place July 19-22, 2025, in Portland, Oregon, with the theme "Be Bold." Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit program proposals! I am excited for the fantastic program proposals that were shared with the FCIL-SIS Executive Committee. I hope that many of them will be selected for the Annual Meeting, and I encourage anyone whose proposal is not accepted to reach out to the FCIL-SIS Continuing Education Committee, so that we can enjoy your program as a webinar.

I also want to thank everyone who keeps the SIS running by serving on FCIL-SIS Committees and Interest Groups, and to highlight the ongoing work of two committees. First, the FCIL-SIS Strategic Planning Committee is hard at work updating FCIL-SIS' goals and strategic plan. Second, the FCIL-SIS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee met last year with the Appointments Committee and Schaffer Grant Selection Committee to review their procedures and materials and recommend changes that will help us recruit a diverse, inclusive pool of volunteers and grant recipients. Thank you to everyone who worked on this, and we look forward to supporting you in implementing the recommendations this year!



Finally, I want to recognize the work of the rest of the FCIL-SIS Executive Committee. A huge thank you to Marcelo Rodríguez for taking on an especially busy three years as Vice Chair, Chair, and Past Chair- it was wonderful to have the opportunity to work with him. I feel lucky that I will continue to have Mike McArthur's continuing guidance as our new Past Chair and Meredith Capps' thoughtful advice and ultra-competence as Secretary-Treasurer. And, of course, thank you to Renu Sagreiya for bringing her energy and talent for getting things done to the role of Vice Chair! I look forward to working with all of them this year.



## Gratitude and Memories: Honoring Jim Hart's Contributions

*James Hart, a veteran FCIL law librarian, passed away on July 26, 2024. In this section, we would like to publish two tributes. These tributes share fond memories about Jim and highlight his exceptional contributions to our profession and community.*

### Remembering Jim Hart

**Contributed by Marylin Johnson Raisch, Candidate, Doctor of Liberal Studies, Georgetown University. Retired from Georgetown Law Library.**

Finding a kindred soul with whom to discuss Roman Law or Buddhism in a casual encounter, such as in the exhibit hall at AALL, was never my principal aim for attending the AALL Annual Meeting, but when it happened it was a delight. Who but Jim would share a lot of erudition along with so much humor and the ability to summarize a lecture or book with clarity and ease. This was my experience in our history as conference colleagues, at AALL or IALL, and of course it has been on display for all, but of great help to me in the spirit of genuine friendship. For example, when I investigated precedent beyond the civil law tradition, there was Jim's great summary of a lecture we had attended at IALL, on the DipLawMatic Dialogues blog of FCIL. Jim, however, had gone way beyond my simple notes and created a resource. Jim was so good at this: following an argument, sharing the knowledge, and then, in perfect law librarian fashion, making it accessible and ready for use. His smile and greeting became an encounter I looked forward to having at those conferences, accompanied by wry observations of law librarian life and more than a few "suggestions for further research."

Serving FCIL, and so deserving of the Daniel L. Wade Outstanding Service Award, Jim was not one to just stand on the sidelines and provide commentary. His work on contextualizing and resourcing the European human rights system for researchers, initiated a focus on the unique features of that system which American law students too often think is part of the European Union. A true reference librarian, Jim surely knew that you could stop them in their tracks at the reference desk or at AALL: in person, virtually, and with a smile. He will be missed in all those places.

*Continued on page 4*



# Gratitude and Memories: Honoring Jim Hart's Contributions

## Celebrating Jim Hart: A Tribute to Excellence

**Contributed by Alex Zhang, Research Professor of Law and Associate Dean of Information Services, Duke University Law School**

It is with profound sadness that I learned of James Hart's recent passing—a distinguished figure in our field. Jim was not only a veteran librarian but also an exceptionally knowledgeable and established scholar who made significant contributions to our profession. His expertise and dedication were widely recognized and respected by colleagues throughout the legal research community.

I had the privilege of getting to know Jim through my participation in AALL's Foreign, International and Comparative Law Special Interest Section. His presence in this group was always marked by insightful contributions and a willingness to share his broad knowledge. Jim's passion for international and comparative law was evident in every interaction. I remember our first meeting at an AALL-IALL reception, where we engaged in a deep conversation about open access to foreign and international legal information. This discussion led to a piece we co-authored and published in the Law Library Journal. Our article explored appropriate models for providing access to free legal information, as we both believed this was essential for developing open and sustainable access to truly valuable information, not just any information. Our many discussions about the economic and open access models left me particularly impressed and inspired by Jim's passion for open access and his persistence in scholarly pursuits.

Throughout his long career, Jim also played an instrumental role in continuing to build the knowledge base and expert pool for our foreign and international legal research committee. Today, we have witnessed the shrinking of the international and foreign legal research librarians' community in the United States, as many law libraries struggle to provide sufficient resources to invest in talent building and collection development to support foreign and international legal research. How to effectively build the talent pool and essential resources remains a key area that deserves more attention and discussion. As we reflect on Jim's life and career, we're reminded of the profound impact one individual can have on an entire field. More importantly, his passion for foreign and international law, legal research, and open access to legal information will inspire us as we continue to serve the important missions of FCIL law librarians and legal information professionals.

## Call for Teaching Help!

Teaching FCIL IG Updating FCIL Syllabi and Course Materials Repository  
By Stephanie J. Farne



Have you used the teaching materials your FCIL-SIS colleagues have shared? I know I greatly benefited from this rich resource this fall, when I taught my first credit bearing FCIL research class. While these materials were invaluable to me, I noticed that there were not many materials which were added recently (the most recent materials date from 2014). As this year's Teaching IG chair, I would like to get some additional materials added. Do you have materials you are willing to share? Would you like to help on the update project? Please contact me at [farne@bc.edu](mailto:farne@bc.edu). Your current and future teaching colleagues will be most grateful! .

## Resource Reviews: World Legal Information Institute

*Part of a series of reviews prepared by the  
Electronic Research Interest Group*

*BY MEREDITH CAPPS*

This installment of resource reviews discusses the World Legal Information Institute's WorldLII site, 2024 winner of the American Society of International Law's Jus Gentium Award, which annually recognizes a free, non-commercial online resource providing international legal materials to researchers and the general public. ASIL approved the Jus Gentium Award in 2014, and past recipients include the Legal Tools Database, ILO's NATLEX, the United Nations Digital Library, GlobaLex, the Language of Peace Project, the Global Health and Human Rights Database, and the International Committee of the Red Cross's Customary International Humanitarian Law Database.

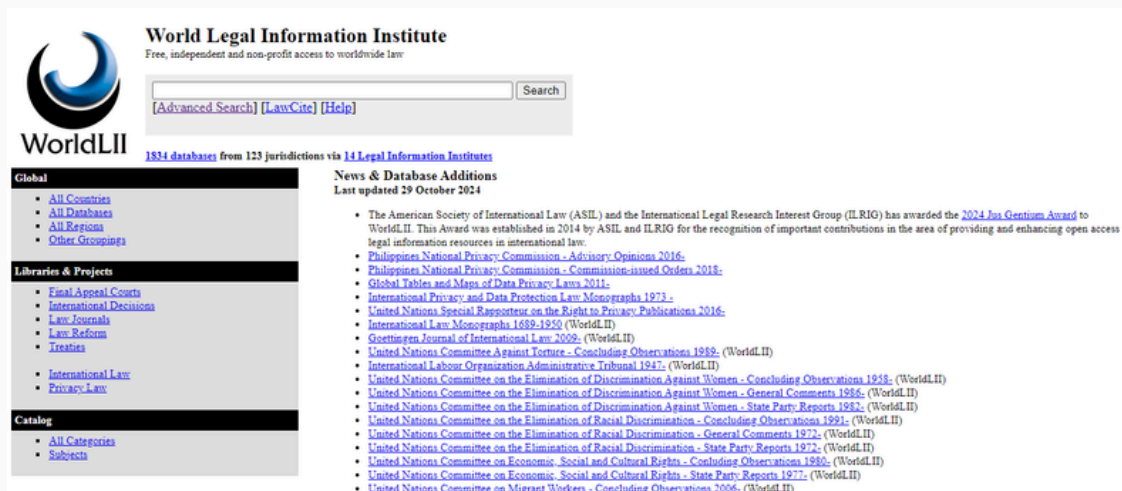
World LII is administered by AustLII, the Australasian Legal Information Institute, in collaboration with the legal information institutes of many jurisdictions and regions. AustLII is operated by faculty at the University of Technology, Sydney, and the University of New South Wales Faculty of Law. It is the leading independent, non-profit initiative compiling primary and secondary legal materials from a variety of domestic jurisdictions and intergovernmental organizations.

### **How well-known is the source?**

WorldLII is a well-known resource amongst foreign, comparative, and international law librarians, but is perhaps less familiar to librarians or U.S. legal researchers focusing primarily on domestic legal research. Content from Cornell's Legal Information Institute, which hosts free copies of many core U.S. primary sources, often appears prominently in results from searches in internet search engines for items such as U.S. Code sections. Given this, many U.S. legal researchers are likely familiar with the concept of a free web-based LII, if not this global tool.

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# Resource Reviews: WorldLII



**World Legal Information Institute**  
Free, independent and non-profit access to worldwide law

1834 databases from 123 jurisdictions via 14 Legal Information Institutes

**Global**

- All Countries
- All Databases
- All Regions
- Other Groupings

**Libraries & Projects**

- Final Appeal Courts
- International Decisions
- Law Journals
- Law Reform
- Treaties
- International Law
- Privacy Law

**Catalog**

- All Categories
- Subjects

**News & Database Additions**  
Last updated 29 October 2024

- The American Society of International Law (ASIL) and the International Legal Research Interest Group (ILRIG) has awarded the [2024 Jan Gertsen Award](#) to WorldLII. This Award was established in 2014 by ASIL and ILRIG for the recognition of important contributions in the area of providing and enhancing open access to legal information resources in international law.
- [Philippines National Privacy Commission - Advisory Opinions 2016](#)
- [Philippines National Privacy Commission - Commission-issued Orders 2018](#)
- [Global Tables and Maps of Data Privacy Laws 2011](#)
- [International Privacy and Data Protection Law Monographs 1973](#)
- [United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy: Publications 2016](#)
- [International Law Monographs 1889-1950 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [Goettingen Journal of International Law 2009 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee Against Torture - Concluding Observations 1889 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal 1947 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women - Concluding Observations 1958 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women - General Comments 1986 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women - State Party Reports 1992 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - Concluding Observations 1991 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - General Comments 1972 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - State Party Reports 1972 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - Concluding Observations 1980 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - State Party Reports 1977 \(WorldLII\)](#)
- [United Nations Committee on Migrant Workers - Concluding Observations 2008 \(WorldLII\)](#)

*Partial screen capture of the homepage, taken on 28 October 2024.*

## How accessible is it?

The database is an open-access resource on the web. The site does not offer any paid subscriptions or the option for users to register for individual or group/enterprise accounts.

## How authoritative is it?

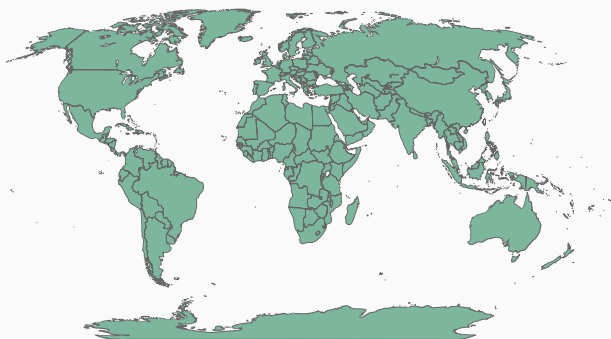
Material in the database is assembled by regional legal information institutes, which are non-profit institutions dedicated to promoting free access to information online, with contributors consisting of academic institutions, law societies and professional associations. Most content is pulled directly from the source of publication, be it a court, tribunal, legislature, government agency, or intergovernmental organization site.

## How current (up-to-date) is it?

Though new content is routinely added to the site, currency varies significantly across resources, and some databases do lack the most current material (for example, UN General Assembly Resolutions were last updated in 2015). As is common with free sources on the web, content on the site is not accompanied by a citator, so researchers locating an item of interest on the site should expect to conduct further research to determine currency.

## How comprehensive is it, in terms of its contents?

As of October 2024, the site contained 1,834 databases from 123 jurisdictions, plus many international organizations. It does not purport to be a comprehensive source of material for any one jurisdiction or entity.



*Continued on page 7*

## Resource Reviews: WorldLII

### How easy-to-use (user-friendly) is it?

Though sparse with respect to graphics, and simply designed, WorldLII is easy to browse, with content organized into databases by jurisdiction or content type. Content within databases is often organized by year or document name. When browsing content, items are typically identified only by document title, sometimes accompanied by citation information, without an accompanying abstract or other metadata. Some content is hosted directly on the site in HTML or PDF format, but in other instances external links are provided to content hosted on the site of a regional legal information institute, or the host entity's own site. PDF documents are typically those generated by the entity issuing the document, retaining the document's original text, formatting, and pagination.

The site also includes a search feature, with searches from the main search bar yielding results defaulting to relevancy; users have the option to select a different sorting methodology (eg.- date). An Advanced Search tool supports searching across selected databases and utilizing Boolean operators. Field and metadata searching are not supported. The site's search features sometimes generate seemingly complete and accurate results, but frequently generate errors or incomplete results.

### How useful is it in terms of its ability to answer both common and rare (difficult-to-find) questions?

Given the limited and somewhat unreliable search feature, and the variable content coverage, researchers are not likely to use WorldLII in the manner of a traditional legal research database, wherein users can utilize complex search and organizational tools and editorial enhancements to identify and assemble materials relevant to a particular legal question. Users are more likely to consult WorldLII after conducting research using other tools, having then identified particular documents that they need to retrieve from a trusted free source (much in the way that U.S. researchers utilize the Cornell-hosted LII to quickly locate primary source material from a trusted free source). With known citation or document identifying information, users seeking international or foreign law content should be able to quickly navigate WorldLII to determine whether it hosts their needed item.

*Editor's note: Want to submit a Resource Review or participate in another ERIG project? Visit [their website](#) or reach out to [Noreen](#).*



## Resource Reviews: Bloomberg Law FCIL Resources

Part of a series of reviews prepared by the Electronic Research Interest Group

BY ELAINE TORNÉS BLANCO

International Resources (Fig. 1) are housed within Secondary Sources in the Bloomberg Law (BLAW) platform. BLAW doesn't have other landing pages specifically for FCIL materials. The International Resources page has authoritative sources, with a broad but not exhaustive coverage of international legal topics. The platform is accessible and user-friendly, though some third-party resources may have limitations in usability. The resources are kept as current as possible, with regular updates to ensure the information remains relevant and accurate.

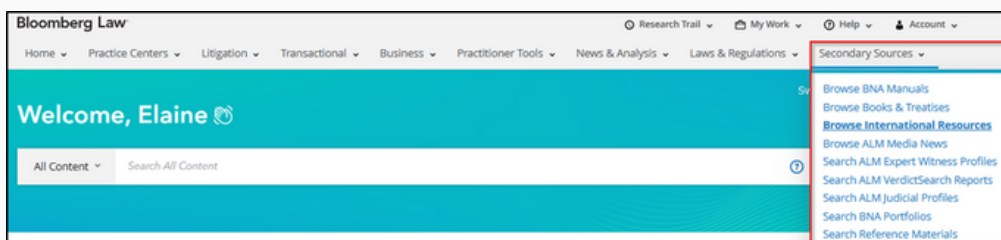


Figure 1 - International Resources are under the Secondary Sources tab in BLAW

### How well-known is the source?

BLAW is a well-recognized platform in the legal industry, known for its comprehensive coverage of various legal practice areas, but perhaps it's less well known for its coverage of foreign countries and international law related topics. Its partnership with the ABA for the International Labor & Employment Laws treatise and the licensing of the DLA Piper Data Protection Laws of the World are two of the most well-known resources of its International Resources collection.

### How accessible is it?

BLAW offers a user-friendly interface that allows for easy navigation through its vast resources. The availability of tools such as chart builders, workflow tools, and quick reference materials enhances its accessibility, making it easier for users to find the information they need efficiently. However, the Panoramic guides, being a licensed third-party resource, may not offer the same usability on Bloomberg Law as they do on their native platform.

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# Resource Reviews: Bloomberg Law

## How authoritative is it?

International Resources within BLAW are highly authoritative, drawing from a wide range of reputable sources. They include treaties and agreements, country surveys, and detailed analyses on a multitude of legal topics. The platform's content coverage is extensive, encompassing a broad spectrum of legal areas including tax, intellectual property, corporate, antitrust, banking and finance, labor and employment, litigation and dispute resolution, privacy and data security, and international trade, among others. These resources are authoritative, especially the U.S. International Portfolios, Country Portfolios, and Transfer Pricing Portfolios, which are updated regularly with the help of in-country authors.

## How comprehensive is it, in terms of its contents?

BLAW's International Resources (Fig. 2) are comprehensive in their coverage of specific practice areas and jurisdictions, supported by authoritative and regularly updated content. However, the platform does not cover all foreign authorities or countries for most collections.

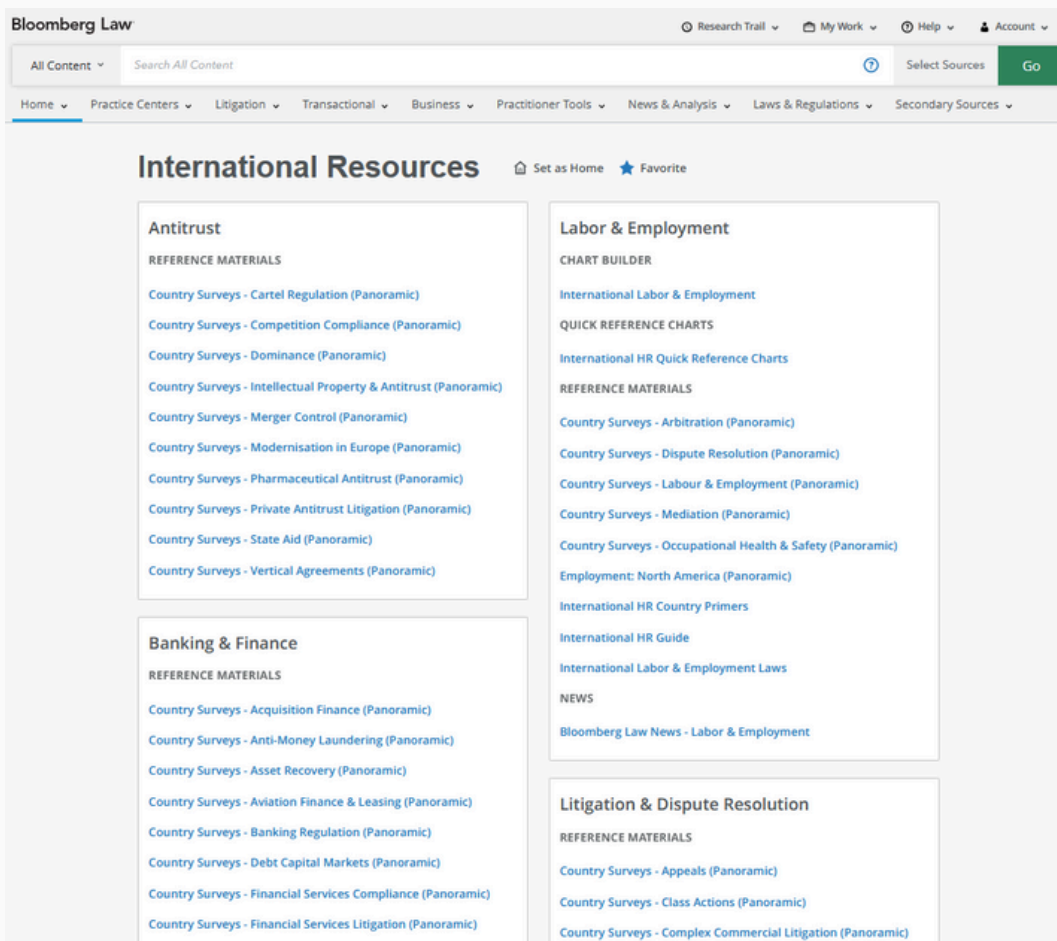


Figure 2 - International Resources homepage

**Tax:** This section offers detailed coverage on international tax matters, including U.S. International Portfolios, Country Portfolios, and Transfer Pricing Portfolios, which are updated regularly. This includes Country Guides, Value-Added (VAT), and more. These charts are easy to use but none are comprehensive in country coverage.

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## Resource Reviews: Bloomberg Law

*Labor & Employment:* It includes resources like [International Labor & Employment Laws](#), co-published with the ABA, a treatise that is not an exhaustive discussion of the different systems of law, but provides basic knowledge of the statutory and regulatory systems of the countries covered. [International HR charts and books](#), provides basic knowledge of International human resource issues, with a focus on U.S. employer-employee effects.

*Privacy & Data Security:* This section provides resources on international data protection, including the [International Data Protection resource](#) licensed from DLA Piper and a [Comparison Table for privacy laws](#) in selected countries, though these resources are not comprehensive of all jurisdictions.

*International Trade:* This section offers robust resources through [Panoramic resources](#) (previously called Getting the Deal Through) and a third-party resource from Lexology (Fig. 3-4), covering a variety of subjects and jurisdictions with updates that are annual or more frequent. This includes more than 120 work areas and 150 jurisdictions, written by leading practitioners globally. It's certainly not comprehensive of every country, but it does cover a host of specific topics and industries.

*Intellectual Property, Banking & Finance, and More:* These resources extend to a wide range of other areas, including antitrust, bankruptcy, litigation and dispute resolution, transactions, corporate, among others. Each of these areas includes country surveys and guides on specific legal topics, providing a cross-jurisdictional comparison tool.

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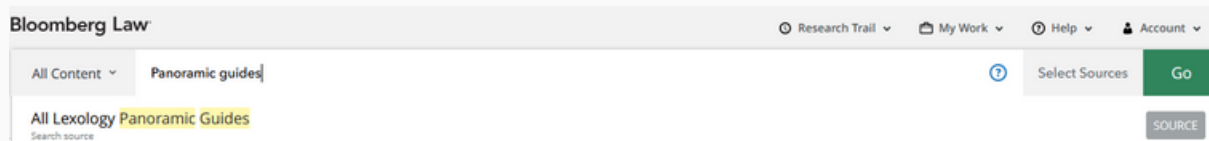


Figure 3 - Panoramic Guides, previously called "Getting the Deal Through"

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**Additional Tools and Resources:** BLAW's International Resources also offers workflow tools, practical guidance, news updates, and reference materials to support legal research and practice in international contexts. This includes chart builders, quick reference charts, treaties and agreements, and news. Bloomberg has more than 2,700 journalists in over 100 global bureaus; producing 5,000 stories a day. Additionally, Bloomberg Terminal News scrapes other international web sources throughout the day.

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# Resource Reviews: Bloomberg Law

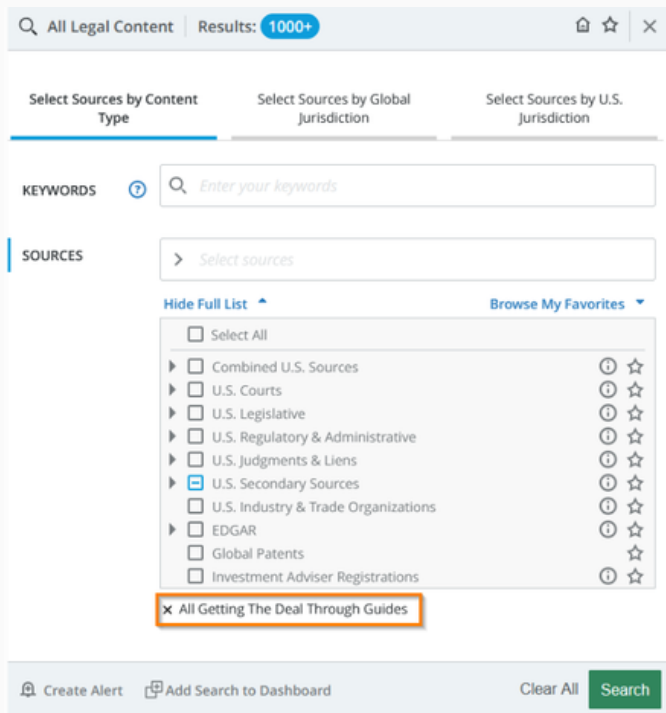


Figure 4 - Search Panoramic Guides by Content Type or Global Jurisdiction

## How easy-to-use (user-friendly) is it?

BLAW's interface is designed to be intuitive, catering to both seasoned legal professionals and those new to legal research. The platform's organization and search functionality allow users to quickly locate specific documents or explore topics in depth, making it a user-friendly resource for legal research.

## How useful is it in terms of its ability to answer both common and rare (difficult-to-find) questions?

The platform provides a Help Desk feature which allows users to get assistance from BLAW's customer service experts. As a comprehensive database, including panoramic country surveys and detailed guides on specific legal issues, BLAW helps in this endeavor.

The resources are easy to use, especially the tax-related resources and the customizable VAT and Withholding Tax Charts. However, Panoramic guides, due to being a licensed product, may not have the same level of usability as they do on their original site.

## How current (up-to-date) is it?

BLAW's International Resources are updated with varying frequency, from daily to weekly, depending on the subject and country. The [International Data Protection resource](#), for example, may not be updated as frequently as the firm's version, but BLAW ensures that its [Privacy and Data Security Developments Tracker](#) is maintained daily. The Panoramic resources are updated annually or sooner, depending on when new titles are added.



*We want to feature your travel photos in our next issue!*

*Email [Janet Kearney](#) for more information and to share photos.*



## Editor's Corner\*

The bulk of this issue is, as always, dedicated to the Business Meeting minutes from the Annual Meeting and the reports from our interest groups and committees. I want to take a short moment to highlight some volunteer opportunities and interesting reads that may get lost in the mass of text.

*Want to write?* Reports for the Newsletter Committee and the Publicity Committee.

*Interested in professional development?* Continuing Education Report on upcoming webinars.

*Want to volunteer?* Be sure to read the reports - for example, the Asian Law Interest Group is looking for a chair; the Indigenous Peoples Law IG and Int'l Visits committee have some very interesting projects in the pipeline; and the Website committee is looking for volunteers.

*Have you visited or would you like to visit a library in another jurisdiction?* International Visits Committee.

*Need a good read?* See the Awards section of the Business Meeting minutes for all the awardees and links to those with written projects - topics include Igor Kavass and a call to action from Loren Turner, a blog post by Juan-Andrés Fuentes when reference questions turn complicated, and a Newsletter (!) article by Susan Gaultier on decolonizing FCIL courses.

A few items while I have you -

A huge welcome to our newest Newsletter member - Ana Delgado Valentín!

A work in progress - I am considering the use of genAI tech as a translation tool for collection development. If anyone else is working with these tools in their FCIL work or is interested in exploring the concept further, please reach out.

**The February issue of the Newsletter will highlight Mardi Gras around the world. Prepare your King Cake recipes, stories of your favorite Mardi Gras traditions around the world, and most importantly, *laissez les bons temps rouler!* We will also feature everyone's travel photos from 2024 in an effort to combat the February blues so please submit those as well.**

Janet,  
[janet.kearney@nyu.edu](mailto:janet.kearney@nyu.edu)

\*This is a new column to highlight upcoming issues, ongoing projects, and other items I find to be interesting (editor's prerogative and all that). If you have things you want to hear about, feedback on the newsletter, or a better name for this column, let me know!



## Reflection as a Schaffer Grant Recipient: Attending the 2024 AALL Conference in Chicago

*Ugyen Thinley*



Being selected as a Schaffer Grant recipient to attend the 2024 AALL Conference in Chicago was a profound honor, and the experience far exceeded my expectations. As someone committed to advancing legal research and the role of law libraries in promoting access to justice, this opportunity gave me both the resources and the platform to engage with cutting-edge ideas and experts in the field. Furthermore, from the stunning architecture of Chicago to the vibrant conference sessions, it was an experience filled with learning, discovery, and meaningful connections.

The conference venue was nothing short of impressive. It was spacious, bustling with activity, and had a welcoming environment that made me feel part of something much larger than myself. The sheer volume of people made the venue feel busier than Paro International Airport back in my home country. The scale of participation was evident from the moment I stepped in, with attendees moving from one talk to another, networking, and exploring the exhibits.

*Photo courtesy of Ugyen Thinley*

The moment I arrived at the conference I felt an overwhelming sense of excitement. Knowing that I was part of a broader community of professionals who share my passion for law librarianship was both humbling and inspiring. The diversity of attendees, ranging from seasoned professionals to emerging leaders, created a rich environment for learning and collaboration.

The heart of the conference was, of course, the presentations and panels, which were truly engaging. The speakers were not only knowledgeable but also deeply in touch with the current trends in legal information. Their discussions covered a wide range of topics, from the evolution of legal research to the integration of new technologies in law libraries. Each session was enlightening, and I found myself scribbling notes and thinking about how these ideas could be applied back home.

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One of the key highlights for me was attending sessions that addressed the future of legal information management. The discussions around artificial intelligence, emerging research platforms, and the challenges of managing digital collections were particularly relevant to the work I do. I left with actionable insights into how I can implement some of these innovations to better serve my library users.

As a Schaffer Grant recipient, I also felt a strong sense of responsibility to bring the knowledge I gained back to my own institution and community. Several sessions left a lasting impact on me, particularly those focusing on how technology is reshaping the way legal professionals access and manage information. The discussions about the use of AI in legal research were particularly eye-opening. I left these sessions with a clear understanding of how emerging technologies could improve the efficiency of legal services, and I'm excited to explore how these ideas can be implemented back home.

In addition to the informative sessions, one of the rewarding aspects of the conference was the opportunity to meet other professionals and scholars. The networking opportunities allowed me to connect with librarians, researchers, and vendors, many of whom shared valuable insights and offered their support. These conversations helped me better understand the challenges we all face in our respective roles and how we can work together to overcome them.

I have to commend the AALL organizing team for pulling off such a massive event with flawless precision. The coordination of sessions, exhibitions, and networking events was seamless. Despite the large number of attendees, there was a sense of flow, with every event starting and ending on time, leaving no room for confusion or delays. I was constantly amazed at how well the organizing team managed to create an environment that was both professional and welcoming.

The exhibit hall was also an eye-opener. It was fascinating to see the variety of new technologies and tools being developed to support legal research. I particularly enjoyed engaging with vendors offering AI-enhanced legal research tools, as well as platforms that facilitate easier access to complex legal databases. I'm excited to explore how these innovations can be applied to improve my own library's services despite budget shortages.



*Photo courtesy of Ugyen Thinley*

*Continued on page 15*



Overall, the 2024 AALL Conference was an unforgettable experience, and I am incredibly grateful to the Schaffer Grant committee for making it possible. Not only did I gain a wealth of knowledge, but I also left with a renewed sense of purpose and motivation to contribute meaningfully to the library’s law community. Especially, it was an unforgettable prestigious platform for sharing my thoughts on the topic “Establishment of Law Library and Access to Legal Resources in Bhutan”. This conference solidified my commitment to ensuring that law libraries continue to be indispensable in the legal profession and beyond.



*Photo courtesy of Ugyen Thinley*

As I return to my country, I am excited to implement the lessons I learned and share the knowledge with my colleagues. I feel more equipped to face the challenges ahead and am confident that the connections I made at AALL will help me in my journey as a law librarian. Being a Schaffer Grant recipient has been an incredible honor, and I am deeply appreciative of the opportunities it has provided.



## Minutes for the FCIL-SIS Business Meeting, July 16, 2024

**Minute-taker: Secretary/Treasurer Meredith Capps, [mcapps@bradley.com](mailto:mcapps@bradley.com)**

**Location: Zoom**

### **Introductions**

A quorum of 38 members being present, the meeting was called to order by Chair Mike McArthur at 1:01 pm CST. Mike first discussed the virtual meeting format, noting that this allows the SIS to include attendees who are unable to attend the AALL annual meeting or chose to attend other conferences in the year, and thus to receive feedback from more members. Mike asked whether this meeting was any attendee's first time attending a FCIL-SIS business meeting, and those attendees introduced themselves. He also asked that new members introduce themselves.

Mike then introduced the current Executive Committee: Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect - Caitlin Hunter, and Secretary/Treasurer - Meredith Capps. Immediate Past Chair Marcelo Rodríguez was unable to attend.

### **Old Business**

- Approval of Minutes from 2023 Business Meeting: The 2023 business meeting minutes were published in the FCIL-SIS Newsletter at Volume 38, Issue 1, page 10 (October 2023). A motion to approve the minutes was introduced, seconded, and passed.
- Secretary/Treasurer Report:
  - Finances: Meredith reported that, as of July 16, 2024, the most recent available SIS budget reports were dated March 31, 2024. As of March 31, the balance of the FCIL-SIS operating account was \$15,020.79. Also as of March 31, the Schaffer Grant account contained \$52,000 in its endowed corpus and \$131,033 in its excess.
  - Elections: Meredith reported that the 2024 election was uncontested. Renu Sagreiya was elected Vice Chair/Chair Elect.

*Editor's Note: Due to the nature of reporting, some information is duplicated in the Business Meeting Minutes and the Interest Group & Committee Reports (below). For a full accounting, see both sections.*

*Continued on page 17*



## Interest Group Reports at the Business Meeting

### **African Law IG:**

Yemisi Dina, Chair (2022-2024) - Yemisi reported on the update to the African Holdings list, and encouraged new interested members to join the group's listserv and participate. Renu reported that she is planning an event that the African IG will be co-sponsoring with other stakeholders in the FCIL-SIS.

### **Asian Law IG:**

Sherry Xin Chen, Chair (2021-2024) Sherry sent the following remarks, read by Caitlin: "The Asian Law Interest Group is working with the Foreign Law Selectors' Group on a project to review fee-based databases in Asian jurisdictions. For each of those Asian law databases, we will provide a brief description, summarize primary or/and secondary sources covered in the database and relevant coverage period, and link you to existing reviews, contact info of vendor representative, etc. The goal of this project is to quickly direct or connect our FCIL colleagues to some helpful fee-based Asian law databases if they are looking for one to subscribe to. The Appointments Committee reports that they don't have a new chair lined up- so Caitlin can encourage members to reach out to the Appointments Committee, Josh Freeman ([jf3528@columbia.edu](mailto:jf3528@columbia.edu)) or Anne Burnett ([aburnett@uga.edu](mailto:aburnett@uga.edu)), or the Executive Committee and volunteer."

### **Customary and Religious Law IG:**

Hans Herzl-Betz, Chair (2023-2025) - Hans sent the following remarks, read by Caitlin: "I have been working with a few partners to see about getting a webinar or other professional development activity going."

### **European Law IG:**

Alison Shea, Interim Chair (2024) - Alison reported that Anahit stepped down as chair, and that the group created a survey for members, distributed via the European Law IG page in My Communities, which yielded four responses.

### **Electronic Research IG:**

Noreen Farley, Chair (2023-2025) - Lucie Olejnikova reported that Noreen updated the [jumpstart pages](#) this year.

### **Foreign Law Selectors IG:**

Alison Shea, Co-Chair (2023-2025), Lucie Olejnikova, Co-Chair (2023-2025) - Lucie reported that 25 colleagues attended a virtual meeting, and that the group intends to meet twice annually virtually. Prospective projects include creating foreign law selector focus groups.

### **Indigenous Peoples Law IG:**

Julienne Grant, Chair (2021-2023) - Joan Policastri reported that she and Julienne hope to continue work on a project concerning land acknowledgements, and are planning a webinar (researching Canadian law concerning indigenous peoples) for next year. *Note:* The Appointments Committee reports that this IG doesn't have a new chair identified for this year - members may contact the Appointments Committee, Josh Freeman ([jf3528@columbia.edu](mailto:jf3528@columbia.edu)) or Anne Burnett ([aburnett@uga.edu](mailto:aburnett@uga.edu)), or members of the Executive Committee to volunteer.

### **Latin American Law IG:**

Juan-Andrés Fuentes, Chair (2021-2024) - Juan-Andrés reported the group is organizing a webinar and more networking opportunities.

*Continued on page 18*

## Interest Group Reports

### **Roman Law IG:**

Paul Moorman, Chair (2022-2024) - Paul discussed the Roman Statutes webinar on May 22, which had 100 registrants and 70 attendees. Sarah Martin will on August 5th host a session at the LA Law Library including Roman law materials, in addition to religious law materials. Paul will include references to recent Roman law scholarship in his IG report.

### **Teaching Foreign & International Legal Research IG:**

Noreen Farley, Chair (2023-2025) - no representative to report.

*Editor's Note:  
See the Most  
recent Teaching  
FCIL IG project  
on page ##.*

## Committee Reports at the Business Meeting

### **Appointments Committee:**

Anne Burnett, Co-Chair (2023-2025) - The committee utilized forms and templates created by past chairs David Isom and Meredith Capps, and Anne and Josh Freeman received feedback on improving the process from the DEI committee. The survey resulted in placements of several new chairs and members; still seeking chairs for Indigenous and Asian Law IGs.

### **Continuing Education Committee:**

Caitlin Hunter, Chair (2021-2024) The committee presented three webinars this year:

- Evidence-Based Instruction for Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Research
- Careers in Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Librarianship
- Collection Development in Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Librarianship

Caitlin thanked everyone who presented and attended, and the three committee members: Britt Hunter, Sophia Kingsley, and Louis Meyers. Britt and Sophia will be committee chairs in 2025.

Caitlin encouraged members who have an idea for a webinar to contact her.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:**

Sue Silverman, Chair (2023-2025) - Sarah Martin reported that the committee advised several committees, including Bylaws and Appointments, and that the committee hosted additional "So You Wanna" webinars, and thanked Sue for her work as chair. Errol Adams reported that consultation with committees aligned with the Executive Committee's request; Errol will be stepping down this year to focus on other professional activities. One member noted that they particularly enjoyed the webinar concerning trauma from world events.

### **Executive Committee:**

Mike McArthur, Chair (2023-2024) - Mike reports that the executive committee has handled several AALL concerns. One noteworthy issue concerns the Schaeffer Grant recipient - that recipient will now also receive an invitation from the Library of Congress to visit the library, close in time to the AALL Annual Meeting; that invitation is not affiliated with our SIS or tied to the grant.

*Continued on page 19*



## Committee Reports

### **Education Committee:**

Caitlin Hunter, Co-Chair (2023-2024),  
Dennis Sears, Co-Chair

- The FCIL-SIS submitted nine programs to the Annual Meeting Program Committee, three of which were selected.
- Caitlin thanked everyone who developed and submitted programs.
- Proposed programs covered a wide range of topics including teaching FCIL, foreign and international research in practice, the Olympics, international environmental law, and the Nuremberg trials. These can be revised and resubmitted for next year or developed as webinars.
- Three accepted programs:
  - Saturday preconference workshop - Discover Foreign & International Law in The Second City. Thank you to Jean Wenger for coordinating this workshop and to the FCIL-SIS members presenting there.
  - FCIL Cool Tools - 11:30 am on Sunday, July 21. Thank you to Loren Turner for organizing and to all of the members presenting.
  - The Global Context of Book Banning - Monday, July 22. Thank you to Sarah Martin for organizing.
  - Caitlin also encouraged everyone to attend the Schaffer Grant reception, at 6 pm on Sunday, July 21, followed by the International Attendees Reception from 7-9 pm at Emerald Loop Bar & Grill.
- Finally Caitlin thanks Education Committee co-chair Dennis Sears. Dennis was not in attendance and is enjoying his retirement but served as Education Committee co-chair for years and years, and Caitlin appreciated the chance to work with him during his last year as co-chair.

### **Schaffer Grant Selection Committee:**

Joseph Hinger, Chair (2023-2025) - Joe reported the following:

- The 2023 -24 committee planned and executed the grant awarded to Ugyen Thinley of Bhutan, who will be in Chicago to give his presentation at the annual meeting.
- The committee advertised and selected the 2024 - 25 grant recipient, Judy Ng'ang'a, from Kenya.
- Joseph met with the DEI Committee who provided recommendations concerning changes to the Schaffer Grant web page, which will be implemented in the fall, and other policies.
- Joseph is working with SIS and AALL leaders to update the grant reimbursement policy to align with AALL policy changes, implemented following the pandemic, for reimbursement of travel expenses.
- Mike emphasized that the Executive committee continues working with AALL staff to address concerns regarding the association's policy requiring that recipients be reimbursed after attending the annual meeting.
- Alison Shea suggested that the committee consider collaborating with the AALL Government Relations Committee concerning visa approval delay issues.

### **FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians - Fundraising Committee:**

Sherry Leysen, Chair (2022-2024) - Sherry reported that as of March 31, 2024 (the latest fund statement that is available), the balance on the Schaffer Grant Fund is \$131,003. The restricted endowed corpus is \$52,000, and the excess balance is \$79,003. Current committee members include Christopher Dykes (newest member), Evelyn Ma, Paul Moorman.

*Continued on page 20*



## Committee Reports

Kerry Lohmeier completed her term on the committee, and Sherry thanked her for her service.

- Sherry reported that in the past year the committee:
  - Continued to encourage new donors and solicit donations.
  - Updated promotional materials, including the “What Do the Recipients Have to Say” piece and the annual fundraising brochure, used by the Selection and Fundraising Committees to promote the Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians.
  - Continued to support the work of the Selection Committee by helping to facilitate the Schaffer Grant recipient’s attendance at events of interest, like pre-conference workshops and other AALL Annual Meeting & Conference add-ons.
- Next year will mark the 25th Anniversary of Ellen Schaffer’s generous donation, which took place in August 2000! The Fundraising Committee is excited to highlight this incredible milestone as part of our fundraising and promotional efforts in anticipation of the 2025 Annual Meeting & Conference in Portland. The committee is grateful to Ellen Schaffer and all of you for all continuing generous contributions and support.

### **International Visits Committee:**

David McFadden, Chair (2022-2024) - David provided the following remarks, read by Caitlin:

Chair of the International Visits Committee, David McFadden, reports that the committee has two new members and is looking forward to restarting the work of the committee next year.

Among other things the committee would like to do is update our Reports, Articles and Other Testimonials from Law Librarians Who Have Participated in Visits and Exchanges. Please contact the chair, if you have any recent reports to add to our collection.

### **Newsletter Committee:**

Janet Kearney, Editor (2022-2024), Carmen Valero, Copy Editor - Janet reported that Sept. 15th is the submission deadline for reports. She acknowledged twenty contributors this year, and thanked the Website Committee and editors for assembling and posting content. Three issues were published this year as usual. The Electronic Resource IG solicits two resource reviews for each newsletters. Anna Delgado Valentin joined as a new committee member. Contributions are welcomed!

### **Publicity Committee:**

Meredith Capps, Co-Chair (2022-2024), Devan Orr, Co-Chair (2023-2025)

- Meredith reported that readership of the DipLawMatic Dialogues blog has continued growing, and contributions from membership have remained steady. Between January 1 and June 25, 2024 the blog was viewed 7,451 times by 4,830 visitors in 109 countries; in the calendar year 2023, the blog received 21,565 views - more than double its 2022 views.
- Thanks to the following contributors to series this year: Jonathan Pratter (From the Reference Desk); Marcelo Rodriguez (Through the FCIL Lens), Juan-Andres Fuentes (View from the Periphery), and Sarah Martin (New FCIL Librarian). Jessica Pierucci continues to organize our Member of the Month feature. We welcome new contributors for 2024-25, and/or ideas for new series!

*Continued on page 21*



## Committee Reports

- The committee is hosting a display in the exhibit hall at this year's annual meeting, and a table at CONELL.
- Devan Orr will co-chair next year, with Kristin Wolek joining as co-chair.

### Website Committee:

Charlotte Daugherty, Co-Chair (2023-2025) and Lucie Olejnikova, Co-Chair (2022-2024) – Charlotte reports that the committee continues to receive updates from members, and encourages everyone to report changes as they arise. Thanks to Noreen for updating the jumpstart pages. Links to webinar recordings and materials are available on the continuing education committee site. Ongoing project – assessment of history section of the SIS website.

## Awards

The ***Daniel L. Wade FCIL-SIS Outstanding Service Award*** honors an FCIL-SIS member who has made outstanding contributions to the Section in the areas of section activity and professional service. The award was given to **Loren Turner**, Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Librarian at the University of Minnesota Law Library. From Loren's nomination:

“I would have submitted this nomination three years ago but for the fact that Loren has been serving for so long as a member of the Executive Committee and thus could not be nominated until she finally rotated off!” “[Loren] bravely and passionately led the group through the early days of the pandemic in 2020. While so many of us were wondering what the next day would bring, Loren was working passionately to ensure the FCIL-SIS had a robust slate of virtual programming in lieu of the 2020 Annual Meeting which she had already put in a huge amount of work planning.” “But wait – there’s more! Loren’s service didn’t just end when she rotated off from an unprecedented and exceptional period of serving as Chair in July 2020: she became immediate Past Chair...twice!! Not only did Loren continue to contribute to the forward motion of the SIS during the first year of the pandemic, but she came back to serve in this capacity when the SIS experienced a leadership issue in 2022. .... I sincerely believe that Loren’s willingness to step up and serve when called upon is directly responsible for the SIS surviving through what was an incredibly challenging period.” The nominator also wrote to highlight “one of Loren’s greatest acts of service to the SIS – co-creating and maintaining the DipLawMatic Dialogues blog from 2013-2020” and “Loren’s significant contributions to the FCIL literature.” Loren’s nominator concluded that “This letter could literally go on forever.”

*Continued on page 22*



*Photos courtesy of Loren Turner*

The **Thomas H. Reynolds and Arturo A. Flores FCIL-SIS Publications Award** is given to an FCIL-SIS member or members who have greatly contributed to the professional development of their AALL colleagues during any given year. The winning “publications” may be print, digital, or electronic initiatives. The award was given to **Loren Turner** for her Law Library Journal article “[Passion Projects in Law Librarianship: A Belated Tribute to Igor Kavass and His Personal Mission to Acquire & Organize U.S. International Agreements.](#)”

From the abstract: “This article pays tribute to Igor Kavass, a law librarian who pursued a professional passion to acquire and organize U.S. international agreements for researchers all over the world. It shows how one law librarian’s passion project can lead to extraordinary advances in our access to legal information, but only so long as the individual creator remains active in the profession. The article seeks an association-level collaborative effort to identify and revive the passion projects of our predecessors that still have the potential in the modern era to fill a gap in our access to legal information, especially to primary source materials.”

*Continued on page 23*



The ***Spirit of the FCIL-SIS Award*** is presented each year to members whose work furthers our mission, serves the entire FCIL-SIS, and inspires others to act. This year's recipients include:

- **Errol Adams**, Senior Resource & Access Specialist, at Cooley LLP.
- **Sue Silverman**, Reference Librarian & Adjunct Professor of Law, at Brooklyn Law School.
  - Mike discussed Sue and Errol's efforts leading the DEI Committee, and especially organizing their popular "What in the World" series.
- **Charles Bjork**, International & Foreign Law Reference Librarian, at Georgetown University Law Library.
  - Comments from Charles's nomination: "Charles has been a quiet but important member of our SIS for 10 years. He has authored a number of excellent recap posts for DipLawMatic Dialogues blog (including an outstanding 3-post series highlighting a 2023 ASIL program) - and, without people to reliably create content for the blog, the blog cannot thrive, let alone survive. Charles has further served on AALL's IFLP Committee, and also was instrumental in planning and presenting the FCIL Workshop held during the 2019 AALL Annual Meeting in Washington DC. .... I believe he embodies the Spirit of our SIS."

—”



*Photo courtesy of Charles Bjork*

*Continued on page 24*



The **Blog Post of the Year Award** honors an AALL member who contributes an outstanding blog post for the FCIL-SIS blog, DipLawMatic Dialogues, during the previous year. The award was given to **Juan-Andrés Fuentes**, Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Research and Student Services Librarian at Harvard Law School, for his regular blog post series “A View from the Periphery”.

DipLawMatic Dialogues // Published by the FCIL Special Interest Section of the American Association of Law Libraries

Home About Blog Administrators

**A View from the Periphery: What happens when a law is technically in effect but has not yet been implemented through regulations?**

Posted on July 8, 2024 by FCIL-SIS

By Juan-Andrés Fuentes

A few months ago, I conducted a training session for a legal clinic at my current employer on foreign law in a Latin American country. The clinic staff were interested in learning about the rules and regulations pertaining to a specific topic.

In addition to the complexity of doing legal research in a country with a language other than English, an additional layer of difficulty was added. As you probably know, there is currently

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The **Newsletter Article of the Year Award** honors an FCIL-SIS member who contributed an outstanding article for the FCIL-SIS Newsletter during the previous year. The award was given to **Susan Gaultier** for her article “Decolonizing a Human Rights Research Course: First Steps.”



**Decolonizing a Human Rights Research Course: First Steps**

BY SUSAN GUALTIER

In Fall 2023, I had the opportunity to teach an online, asynchronous course on Human Rights Legal Research. Although I have been teaching variations on the traditional FCIL research course for the duration of my library career, this was my first chance to teach a specialized class on an FCIL topic. Given the novelty of the topic, it was also a chance to design a course completely from scratch for the first time in a few years, which is always both challenging and exciting.

*Continued on page 25*



The ***IG/Committee Project of the Year Award*** honors the FCIL-SIS Interest Group and/or Committee that produces an outstanding project for the benefit of FCIL-SIS and/or AALL members during the previous year. The award was given to the **Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians – Selection Committee**, consisting of:

- **Joseph Hinger**, Director of Global Legal Content Initiatives, Law Library Microform Consortium
- **Sherry L. Leysen**, Reference Librarian, University of California Los Angeles School of Law
- **Mark Engsborg**, Director of Library Services and Professor of Practice, Emory University School of Law
- **Paul Moorman**, Senior Law Librarian, Research Services/Foreign and International Law and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Law, University of Southern California Gould School of Law.

This award acknowledges the committee’s work navigating the extremely challenging recent visa and travel difficulties to continue welcoming foreign law librarians and enabling FCIL-SIS members to learn about law librarianship around the world. It also acknowledges the committee’s advice and support to the Executive Committee in connecting Schaffer Grant recipients with the Law Library of Congress.



*Photo courtesy of Sherry Leysen*

Mike congratulated all the award recipients.

*Continued on page 26*



## New Business

Mike invited Charles Bjork to provide an update on the **Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals** - Marci Hoffman stepped down as editor at the end of last year after many years of service, and Charles is the new general editor, with Melissa Abernathy and Charlotte Daugherty serving on the advisory board. Their process is still reliant on valuable human indexing, the cost of which keeps rising, and they are considering ways to incorporate automation. Subscriptions and revenues are flat to declining, with the academic market saturated. The board is considering ways that the index can evolve to retain relevance, and will be seeking input.

**GlobaLex** - Lucie Olejnikova discussed recent changes to the interface.

The screenshot shows the GlobaLex website interface. At the top, there is a purple header with the NYU LAW logo on the left and 'SEARCH' and 'MENU' on the right. Below the header, the word 'GlobaLex' is prominently displayed in a large, blue, serif font. Underneath, there are four dark blue navigation tabs: 'INTERNATIONAL LAW', 'COMPARATIVE LAW', 'FOREIGN LAW', and 'TOOLS FOR DEVELOPING COLLECTIONS'. A search bar with the placeholder text 'Search Articles' and a 'Search' button is located below the tabs. To the right of the search bar, there are two purple buttons: 'ABOUT GLOBALEX >' and 'CONTACT INFORMATION'. The 'CONTACT INFORMATION' button is expanded, showing the name 'Lucie Olejnikova', her title 'Editor', and her email address 'Globalex @ NYU.edu'. Below the search bar, there is a paragraph of text describing GlobaLex as an open-access electronic legal publication dedicated to international, comparative, and foreign law research. It mentions that GlobaLex is supported by the Hauser Global Law School Program and the Guarini Institute for Global Legal Studies at New York University School of Law. At the bottom of the page, there is a purple button that says 'SUBSCRIBE TO NEW ISSUE UPDATES >'.

Mike sought updates concerning recent conferences:

- **ASIL:** Lucie Olejnikova reported that the business meeting was held in the spring, and that the Jus Gentium award last year went to Legal Tools.
- **IALL:** Mark Ensberg discussed last month's annual course in Norway. Next year's meeting will be in Houston, TX - Oct. 19th - 23rd, focusing on space law. He emphasized that these conferences are small with a unique format.

Caitlin then discussed the shredding of SIS archival materials held by AALL:

- In the past, AALL encouraged SISs to send their documents to AALL. Recently, AALL notified all SISs that it will be shredding those SISs archival materials. Various SIS chairs have expressed concern and that plan is now on hold. The FCIL-SIS Executive Committee will continue opposing the plan, in coordination with the other SISs.
- Basis for AALL policy - difficulty of extracting materials from records, concern that SISs might later lose materials, concerns that materials include member personal information and copyrighted material.
- FCIL-SIS has a relatively small volume of material in the archives, consisting of two boxes labeled "Foreign, Comparative and International Law SIS Publications, 1985-2017" and "Foreign, Comparative and International Law SIS File, 1985-92".

*Continued on page 27*



## **New Business**

Mike briefly introduced the SAILS project based out of Georgetown Law School, and noted that faculty members are seeking to collaborate with librarians on the project in a supporting (not co-authoring) capacity. Anyone interested should contact him for a referral. Alison Shea suggested that interested librarians review the existing scholarship in the project before contacting coordinators.

## **Gavel Passing**

Mike recognized Caitlin as the new Chair and Renu as the new Vice Chair. Mike and Caitlin both acknowledged and thanked the various committee and interest group chairs and the other members of the executive committee.

## **Upcoming Events**

Caitlin again encouraged all members attending AALL to join their fellow FCIL-SIS members for the programs discussed above.

Renu Sagreiya - announced the continuation of the SIS book club.

## **Adjournment**

Mark Ensberg moved to adjourn, and Alison Shea seconded the motion. The chair asked all those in favor to say Aye. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:19 pm CST.





## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

### Asian Law IG

Sherry Xin Chen, Chair (2021-2024)

The Asian Law Interest Group is working with the Foreign Law Selectors' Group on a project to review fee-based databases in Asian jurisdictions. For each of those Asian law databases, we will provide a brief description, summarize primary or/and secondary sources covered in the database and relevant coverage period, and link you to existing reviews, contact info of vendor representatives, etc. The goal of this project is to quickly direct or connect our FCIL colleagues to some helpful fee-based Asian law databases if they are looking to subscribe to one.

The Appointments Committee reports that they don't have a new chair lined up; Caitlin can encourage members to reach out to the Appointments Committee, Josh Freeman ([jf3528@columbia.edu](mailto:jf3528@columbia.edu)) or Anne Burnett ([aburnett@uga.edu](mailto:aburnett@uga.edu)), or to the Executive Committee, and volunteer. [[Note: since the meeting, the Indigenous Peoples Law IG has gained a chair.]

### Indigenous Peoples IG

Joan PolICASTRI

The Report of our group for last year is pretty minimal. Julianne Grant was Chair and we spent some time developing a survey for a research project around Land Acknowledgments; however, due to understaffing at my library, and several issues with Julie's work, we didn't get the survey finished. This year I am the Chair and we have a webinar planned for November on researching Canadian Aboriginal Rights.

### Publicity Committee

Meredith Capps

This year was yet again productive for the SIS blog, DiplawMatic Dialogues, and our content was routinely featured in AALL communications with members. Marcelo Rodríguez continued posting in his popular Through the FCIL Lens series, while Jonathan Pratter contributed to the ongoing From the Reference Desk series, and Sarah Martin posted in the "New FCIL Librarian" series. Members contributed posts recapping sessions from the AALL Annual Meeting held in Boston, the IALL Annual Courses held in Geneva and Oslo, the ASIL Annual Meeting held in Washington, as well as relevant webinars hosted by the SIS and its partners. Eleven SIS members were featured on the blog in the "Member of the Month" series. Blog readership continues to grow. Between January 1 and June 25, 2024 the blog was viewed 7,451 times by 4,830 visitors in 109 countries; in the calendar year 2023, the blog received 21,565 views - more than double its 2022 views.

In addition to hosting the blog, the committee has maintained an SIS presence on Facebook and X, and Caitlin Hunter and Meredith Capps hosted a table at the Conference for Newer Law Librarians at the AALL Annual Meeting in Boston, along with Jennifer Allison representing the Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals. The SIS again hosted a CONELL table at the annual meeting in Chicago, with Alison Shea representing the SIS, and hosted a display in the exhibit hall. Meredith Capps concluded her two-year term as co-chair, with Devan Orr continuing as co-chair, joined by Kristin Wolek.

As always, we welcome ideas for new blog content, and other means of outreach!

*Continued on page 29*



## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

### **Appointments Committee**

Anne Burnett

Co-Chair Anne Burnett thanked everyone who responded to the call for volunteers that she and co-chair Josh Freeman sent out in the spring. They were able to fill all committee leadership and volunteer positions and all but two of the interest group chairs: the Indigenous Peoples Law IG and the Asian Law IG. [Note: since the meeting, the Indigenous Peoples Law IG has gained a chair.]

Anne thanked previous committee chairs David Isom and Meredith Capps for the great work they had done in setting up procedures and templates. Like other section committee chairs, Anne and Josh met with the FCIL SIS DEI Committee to discuss DEI challenges and goals. In response to feedback from the DEI Committee and the Executive Board, they revised the call for volunteers survey to include a statement of commitment to DEI. Additionally, the survey was reviewed for neurodivergent friendliness, and committee leadership provided estimates of time commitments for prospective volunteers.

### **International Visits Committee**

David L. McFadden

Know anyone who has had an extended visit to a foreign law library or library with a legal collection? Been interested in an exchange with other librarians in other countries? The International Visits Committee, its current name, has been around for over thirty years and has helped bring together librarians and libraries willing to host or be part of an exchange.

We are now trying to revive that committee and restart our International Visits Survey. This survey started when the committee was known as the Clearinghouse for Internships and International Personnel Exchanges. The current committee will reach out to libraries throughout the world finding those that want to host a librarian for two weeks, a semester, or some other length of time. In some cases, exchanges can be arranged as well. Their librarian comes here and ours goes there. Essentially the survey has a matchmaking role to bring together libraries and librarians. When the survey is completed we'll post those results on the FCIL webpage and spread the word about this service.

In addition, we know that over the years librarians have experienced other libraries on their own, through their institutions' long-standing programs and in other ways. If you have participated in a visit or exchange to a foreign law library or foreign library with a legal collection, please contact David McFadden, International Visits Committee Chair at [dmcfadden@swlaw.edu](mailto:dmcfadden@swlaw.edu) to add to our collection of reports, articles or other testimonials. Currently our most recent is from 2017 and the earliest is my own visit to Glasgow in 1995.

The committee is also in need of FCIL members who are willing to do the frankly hard work of surveying libraries all over the world and otherwise help their fellow FCIL members in pursuing meaningful and educational experiences.

Let's see how a revived International Visits Committee will continue the good work that was started so many years ago.

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## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

### Website Committee

Lucie Olejnikova and Charlotte Daugherty, Co-Chairs

The website committee co-chairs would like to thank all FCIL-SIS chairs and members who have sent in updates to the website over the past year. It is important that we continue to hear from you, so our pages stay up to date throughout the year.

The [FCIL-SIS homepage](#) highlighting the most recent FCIL-SIS Shaffer Grant recipients, and all individual committee and interest groups pages have been updated. Please check them out as many groups describe their work on their pages and share valuable information with the community. Under the leadership of Noreen Farley, the [Jumpstart Your Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Research page](#) was updated this year.

The Education and Training section of our website continues to be regularly updated throughout the year. The [annual meeting programs](#) and [continuing education webinars](#) offered throughout the year are posted, often including recordings and materials prepared by the presenters. We encourage you to explore this great bank of continuing education materials.

Looking at the year ahead, we are looking for volunteers who are interested in reviewing and assessing the [History](#) section of the FCIL website. Please reach out to Lucie and Charlotte if you are interested.

We also ask that you reach out to us with any updates or proposals to share.

Thank you.

### Newsletter Committee

Janet Kearney

The FCIL Newsletter continues to serve as both a source for sharing FCIL-related information and archiving important milestones of our SIS. This year we successfully published all three issues of volume 38 in a revised and updated format. The revised format is designed to make the Newsletter easier to read online and faster to create, and we hope everyone found it an enjoyable experience. Thank you to the leadership of the FCIL-SIS for assigning us one of their Canva seats to help create the Newsletter.

Our largest issue was a tie between the October 2023 issue (vol. 38, no. 1) and the February 2024 issue (vol. 38, no. 2) at 30 pages. The October issue included our 2023 Business Meeting Minutes and Committee & IG reports from the Annual Meeting as well as two resource reviews (one on the ICSID case database and one on the Legal Tools Database). The February 2024 issue included two resource reviews (N-Lex and Jus Mundi), several individual contributions, and two special features (one on related professional development organizations and one highlighting world travel; the latter will be recurring in February issues). The May issue (vol. 38, no. 2) contained two resource reviews (CRS Reports and VitalLaw Tax), highlights for the 2024 Annual Meeting, and two publication spotlights.

The mailing list: The FCIL Newsletter is currently distributed through the FCIL-SIS listserv and cross-posted to the CONE (Council of Newsletter Editors) list-serv.

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## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

Publication schedule: The FCIL Newsletter is published three times a year in February, May, and October. The newsletter is distributed electronically to FCIL-SIS members and an archived version is placed on the FCIL-SIS [website](#). Thank you to the Website Committee for posting our publications.

Masthead change: We are happy to welcome a new member editor, Ana Delgado Valentín, from the Supreme Court Library for Puerto Rico!

Need for new content: Like most other places, we are always looking for more contributions! We are looking for suggestions, especially for recurring content columns. This year we've made a concerted effort to publish some additional reflections on FCIL teaching and publications, and hopefully we can continue that push, perhaps with some contributions on collection development and other related FCIL topics.

Submission Deadlines: These will generally fall between the 1st and 15th of each month, but I will announce them closer to the publication deadlines for each issue. Calls for content and reminders will go out via My Communities. The upcoming deadline for Committee and IG reports is September 15.

I'd like to acknowledge our contributors this year: Juan-Andrés Fuentes, Meredith Capps, Asha Moncrieffe, Susan Gaultier, Julianne Grant, Alison Shea, Mandy Lee, Edward Hart, David Isom, Sarah Martin, Erin Gow, Charles Bjork, Elaine Tornés Blanco, Yasmin Morais, Yemisi Dina, Jean Wenger, Joseph P. Hinger, Sue Silverman, Brittany Menton, and Stephanie Farne.

Please email Janet Kearney (janet.kearney@nyu.edu) or Ana Delgado Valentín (Ana.Delgado@poderjudicial.pr) with articles, pictures, and/or suggestions for the newsletter.

We are always open to hearing how to make the FCIL Newsletter even better.

### **Roman Law IG** Paul Moorman

The Roman Law Interest Group's most significant event this year was hosting a webinar on May 22, 2024 with [Prof. Clifford Ando](#) of the University of Chicago Department of Classics discussing Prof. Ando's ambitious [Roman Statutes: Renewing Roman Law](#) project, which aims to produce the first comprehensive, accurate, and freely available repository of all surviving inscribed legislation from classical Rome. The program was a success with over 100 registrations and 70 participants. A recording of the program is available on the FCIL-SIS website.

In addition, the LA Law Library hosted a group of 4 local law librarians to review its significant religious and canon law collection on August 5, 2024. Sarah Martin from the LA Law Library thanks all who attended.

Please contact the [Chair](#) with any suggestions for a webinar or types of programs on Roman law. While the topic of Roman law doesn't always translate well to annual meeting programming, the response to the Clifford Ando program shows that there is interest within the law librarian community for programming on this topic.

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## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

### Continuing Education Committee

Caitlin Hunter

After several years serving as the only member of the FCIL-SIS Continuing Education Committee, I was very pleased to welcome three new committee members this year: Britt Hunter, Sophia Kingsley, and Louis Myers. I am very grateful for all of their enthusiasm, hard work, and expertise.

Together, we produced a webinar series on FCIL librarian careers and job responsibilities, based on topics suggested by Lyonette Louis-Jacques. The series kicked off with a webinar on “Evidence-Based Instruction for Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Research,” featuring panelists Alyson Drake and Janet Kearney and moderated by Britt Hunter. This was followed by a webinar on “Careers in Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Librarianship.” Experienced FCIL librarians discussed their professional backgrounds and what led them to become librarians specializing in foreign and international legal research. Juan-Andrés Fuentes moderated the discussion using questions developed by Sophia Kingsley. Panelists were Bianca Anderson, Director of Research and Information Services, Shutts & Bowen LLP; Heather Casey, Writer-Editor, Global Legal Research Directorate, Law Library of Congress; Yemisi Dina, Chief Law Librarian, York University; Abby Dos Santos, Manager of Library Services, Caplin & Drysdale; and Erin Gow, Satellite Librarian, United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. The series concluded with the webinar “Collection Development in Foreign, Comparative, and International Law.” The panel was moderated by Louis Myers and featured panelists Alex Burdett, Laura Cadra, Sherry Chen, and Gabriela Femenia.

The committee already has two webinars scheduled for this year:

- Please [register now](#) to join FCIL-SIS on **November 21, 1-2 pm Central** for the webinar “**Researching Indigenous Laws and Canadian Aboriginal Law: Context, Strategies, and Collection Development.**” Clare Asquith Finegan (Courthouse Libraries BC) and Amy Kaufman (Queen’s University, Kingston) will discuss research and collection development strategies for laws by and about Canadian Indigenous peoples. Joan PolICASTRI (FCIL-SIS Indigenous Law Interest Group chair) will moderate. Thank you to Alison Shea for suggesting this webinar and assisting in its development!
- Please check [AALL’s eLearning platform](#) for a forthcoming registration link for the **December 12, 1-2 pm Central** webinar “**Law, Not Force: Ben Ferencz’s Legacy of Legal Justice for Human Rights Victims.**” The webinar honors the work of Nuremberg prosecutor and international criminal justice advocate Ben Ferencz. John M. Geiringer (Partner, BFKN; Adjunct Professor, Chicago-Kent College of Law) will present on Ferencz’s groundbreaking prosecution of the Einsatzgruppen death squads and Adam Weber (Associate Dean of International Programs and Associate Teaching Professor, Chicago-Kent College of Law; former prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia) will present on the contemporary human rights tribunals that continue Ferencz’s legacy. Thank you to Eugene Giudice for suggesting this webinar and assisting in its development!

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## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

Stay tuned for more information on the following webinars:

- Diane Rodríguez proposed a webinar highlighting the work of The Pathfinders, an international organization that works on promoting access to justice initiatives worldwide. Later this year, the committee will turn to lining up speakers and setting a date for this webinar.
- Alison Shea suggested a webinar demystifying the process of volunteering for FCIL-SIS and encouraging new members to get involved. The webinar will take place sometime in Spring or Fall 2025 and will feature members who have served as Interest Group chairs, Committee chairs, or Executive Committee members, talking about their experiences volunteering within FCIL-SIS. Please feel free to contact me at [hunter@law.ucla.edu](mailto:hunter@law.ucla.edu) if you have served in any of these roles and are interested in participating, or if you have questions about these roles that you'd like to see the webinar address.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that Britt Hunter and Sophia Kingsley volunteered to take over the committee as co-chairs in July 2025. I will be working with them this year to prepare them to transition into the role and I look forward to handing over the reins in 2025!

### **European Law IG**

Anahit Petrosyan (until March 2024),  
Chair  
Alison Shea, reporting

In October 2023, the Chair put together a survey to gather members' input on what projects the IG should move forward with. The Chair consulted with fellow European Law IG members Alison Shea and Lucie Olejnikova extensively to come up with unique and useful ideas, but ultimately only 4 people responded. The Chair disseminated the results via MyCommunities in November 2023, but unfortunately had to step down from the Chair position in early 2024. Alison Shea stepped in to nominally lead the group until a new Chair, Traci Emerson Spackey, was found during the annual Appointments process.

### **Foreign Selectors IG**

Lucie Olejnikova and Alison Shea, Co-chairs

After assuming the co-chair responsibilities in the fall of 2023, we held our first virtual meeting in the spring of 2024 with about 25 colleagues attending. We talked about how to administer the group, such as meeting frequency and format. We also agreed on some initial projects and collected ideas for future work. Currently, we are pursuing two projects: creating a list of foreign law databases and planning out foreign law selecting focus groups throughout the year. We surveyed the group about their preferences and hope to begin with the foreign law selecting focus groups after AALL. The goal is to create a safe learning environment where our colleagues can learn from one another. If anyone is interested in joining, please do not hesitate to [contact the co-chairs](#).

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## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

### Schaffer Grant Selection Committee

Joseph P. Hinger

The Schaffer Grant Selection Committee selected Judy Wairimu Ng'ang'a as the recipient of the 2024 FCIL-SIS Schaffer Grant. Ms. Ng'ang'a is an academic librarian at the Kenya School of Law, University of Nairobi, Kenya. Due to long visa processing time around the world, this is the first award where the Selection Committee is working more than one year in advance, to allow additional time for the recipient to prepare and obtain a travel visa. Judy is planning to attend the 2025 Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon.

Our 2023 grant recipient, Ugyen Thinley, attended the 2024 Annual Meeting in Chicago, this past July. Ugyen, from the Kingdom of Bhutan, gave an outstanding presentation titled "Establishment of the Law Library and Access to Legal Resources in Bhutan" on Sunday, July 21. His presentation will soon be available on the FCIL-SIS webpage.

For the 2024 Schaffer Grant, there were 19 applicants representing most regions of the world. Applications were received from: Ghana, Haiti, India, Kenya, Luxembourg, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Scotland, South Africa, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The Committee narrowed the applicants to 3 finalists. After receiving references for the 3 finalists, the final selection of Ms. Judy Wairimu Ng'ang'a was made.

The 2024 Schaffer Grant Selection Committee was chaired by Joseph Hinger of LLMC. Committee Members included Sherry Leysen of the University of California Los Angeles Law School, Paul Moorman of the University of Southern California School of Law, and Mark Engsborg of Emory University School of Law. The Committee met this past year with the FCIL-DEI committee. Many suggestions were made to enhance the Schaffer Grant webpage, to better embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion. The first goals for the new year are to completely revise and update the Schaffer Grant webpage, before beginning selection of the 2025 Schaffer Grant, for attendance in 2026.

*Editor's Note: Learn more about our interest groups & committees or volunteer for an ongoing project:*

*Visit [our website](#) to learn more.*

*Follow us on [My Communities](#).*

*Read our section blog, [DipLawMatic Dialogues](#).*

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## Interest Group & Committee Reports - 2023-2024

### **Education Committee**

Caitlin Hunter, Co-Chair

It was a productive year for the Education Committee. FCIL-SIS members submitted over ten programs to the Annual Meeting Program Committee, three of which were selected.

Jean Wenger coordinated a pre-conference workshop, titled “Discover Foreign & International Law in the Second City.” FCIL-SIS member Dean Deane served as a panelist and FCIL-SIS member Mandy Lee moderated. The workshop also featured speakers Aaron Gillett, Partner, Seyfarth Shaw LLP; Pádraig Manning, Vice Consul, Consulate General of Ireland, Chicago; Hanna Maria Tetz, Vice Consul, Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany; Adam Weber, Associate Dean of International Programs, Assistant Professor of Law, Chicago-Kent College of Law; and Diane Wood, Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Chicago School of Law.

Loren Turner coordinated “FCIL Cool Tools,” an FCIL-specific version of the popular “Cool Tools” program. The program featured presentations by a variety of FCIL members, including Loren, Meredith Capps, Charlotte Daugherty, Clement Lin, Sarah E.M. Martin, Chelsey McKimmy, Louis Myers, II, Devan Orr, Alison A. Shea, Rachel Waldron, Latia Ward, and Julie Wooldridge.

Sarah E.M. Martin coordinated and spoke at the program “Obscenity, Authoritarianism, and Blasphemy: The Global Context of Book Banning.” The program featured Emily Knox, a Professor at the School of Information Sciences, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and a well-respected anti-censorship advocate and author. Knox’s Ph.D. advisee, Andrew Zalot, also presented on his doctoral research on discourse in online and local communities where books are banned. After a planned attorney speaker was unable to attend, FCIL-SIS member Louis Myers and his colleagues at the Law Library of Congress stepped in at the last minute to create a full-fledged report on Book and Media Censorship in Selected Countries. Louis presented the results of the report.

Thank you to everyone who participated in or submitted a program! Special thanks to Dennis Sears, who served for years as co-chair of the Education Committee. Dennis completed his final year as co-chair and is leaving the committee to enjoy a much-deserved retirement. We are grateful for his many years of service to the FCIL-SIS.



## FCIL-SIS Member Recent Publications Roundup

*Our SIS is fortunate to include in its ranks exceptionally talented and enthusiastic writers. With this feature, we are happy to spread the word of their recent publications.*

### ***Journal Articles***

Erin Gow, The Value of Law and Library Degrees in the Legal Information Profession, 116 Law Libr. J. 369 (2024).

Beau Steenken, Pilots for Fraught Channels: How Law Librarians Can Help Law Reviews Navigate their DEI Journeys, 43 Legal Ref. Serv. Q. 57 (2024).

Teresa M. Miguel-Stearns & Casandra Laskowski, Democratizing Law Librarianship: Reducing Barriers to Entry through Alternative Pathways to the Profession and Increased Support to Students. A Call to Action, 43 Legal Ref. Serv. Q. 104 (2024).

### ***Spectrum***

Lindsey Carpino, Ryan Metheny & Scott Vanderlin, Reference Desk: Navigating Work Commitments and Social Justice Advocacy in Your Institution, 28 AALL: Spectrum, July / Aug. 2024, at 49.

### ***GlobaLex Articles***

Christopher C. Dykes, Researching International Tax Law.

### ***SIS Newsletter Articles***

#### **Government Law Libraries**

Jocelyn Stilwell-Tong, An Eye on AI: Generative AI Policy Developments.

#### **Legal History & Rare Books**

Christina Jurusik, Serendipity in the Archives.

### ***Blog Posts***

#### **IALL**

Mark Engsborg, Thank You, Oslo!

Mike McArthur, What Makes U.S. Elections Different: Three Observations.

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## Recent Publications

### RIPS Law Librarian

Stephanie Farne, [Information Literacy: A Path Forward for AI Legal Research?](#)

### DipLawMatic Dialogues

Charles Bjork, [IALL 2024 Recap: Peaceful Use and Conflicts in the Arctic: The Case of the Svalbard Treaty.](#)

Juan-Andrés Fuentes, [A View from the Periphery: What happens when a law is technically in effect but has not yet been implemented through regulations?](#)

Stephanie Lynn Grace, [AALL 2024 Recap: Obscenity, Authoritarianism, and Blasphemy: The Global Context of Book Banning.](#)

Clement Lin, [AALL 2024 Recap - FCIL Cool Tools Pt. 2 - Lexsitus.](#)

Sarah Martin, [Hidden Gems of the LA Law Library: Treasure Hunting in the Stacks.](#)

Lucie Olejnikova, [GlobaLex July/August 2024 Issue is Live.](#)

Lucie Olejnikova, [Visit the Newly Designed Globalex.](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: FCIL Librarians and Foreign Relations Law.](#)

Marcelo Rodríguez, [Through the FCIL Lens: Mexico, Venezuela, West Africa, Sudan, Sri Lanka and Hong Kong.](#)

Sue Silverman, [Webinar Recap - Analyzing the July 2023 Coup in Niger: Insights from the FCIL-SIS DEI Committee's What in the World Series.](#)

Latia Ward, [AALL 2024 Recap - FCIL Cool Tools Pt. 1 - FLARE Index to Treaties.](#)

*Editor's Note: Have you recently published?  
We would love to highlight it in our Recent  
Member Publications.*

*Send your information to [Jingwei Zhang](#) for  
the next issue.*

# FCIL NEWSLETTER

Foreign, Comparative, and International Law  
Special Interest Section



**FCIL Newsletter is a publication of the Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Special Interest Section of the American Association of Law Libraries. It is published in February, May, and October of each year. Current and past issues of FCIL Newsletter are available on our [website](#).**

**We welcome submissions!**

**Send us your conference recaps, member news, and other contributions, such as works in progress or reviews.**

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