

VOLUME 40 ISSUE 2 • FEBRUARY 2026

FCIL NEWSLETTER

Foreign, Comparative, and International Law
Special Interest Section



From the Chair

BY MEREDITH CAPPS

I am excited in this issue to hear perspectives from our members concerning just a few of the many educational, networking and development activities offered by our sister groups connecting librarians globally and in other jurisdictions, including the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) and the British & Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL). (As a delegate at the 2025 IALL Annual Course, I warmly congratulate the board and local arrangements committee on organizing another, unsurprisingly, fantastic course, this year in Houston, TX!)



In our next issue, we will look ahead to our own association programming for the annual meeting in Cleveland. In the coming months, I hope that our members will make time to participate in a number of annual SIS efforts.

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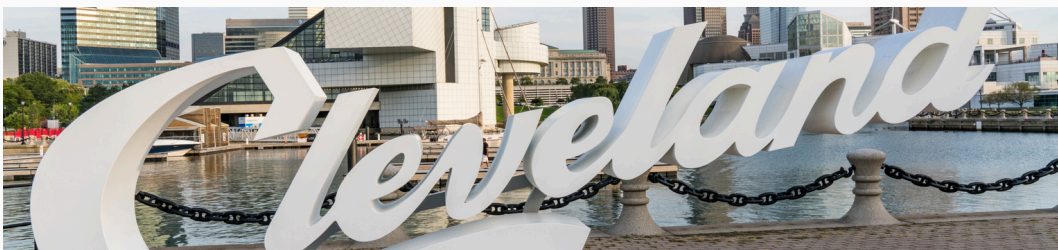
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From the Chair

1 - Awards

Each year, our SIS celebrates member achievements via six awards, some recognizing individual accomplishments, some collaborations. Please considering nominating a colleague, or yourself! Send your nominations by March 15, 2026 to any member of the Executive Committee: Meredith Capps (mcapps@bradley.com), Yemisi Dina (YDina@osgoode.yorku.ca), Sue Silverman (sue.silverman@brooklaw.com), and Caitlin Hunter (hunter@law.ucla.edu).

- The Daniel L. Wade FCIL-SIS Outstanding Service Award: Honors an FCIL-SIS member who has made an outstanding contribution to our SIS in the areas of section activity and professional service.
- The Thomas H. Reynolds & Arturo A. Flores FCIL-SIS Publications Award: Honors an FCIL-SIS member who has 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 Spirit of the FCIL-SIS Award: Honors an FCIL-SIS member whose work furthers our mission, serves the entire FCIL-SIS, and inspires others to act.
- 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 Newsletter Article of the Year Award: Honors an FCIL-SIS member who contributes an outstanding article for the FCIL-SIS Newsletter during the previous year.
- The Interest Group/Committee Project of the Year Award: Honors an 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.

2 - Elections

This spring, we will elect, as we do annually, a new Vice Chair/Chair-Elect. I am delighted to announce Ana Isabel Delgado Valentín, Chief Librarian of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, as this year’s candidate for Vice Chair/Chair-Elect. Ana currently leads our Latin American Law Interest Section and serves as co-editor of our newsletter. Ana also serves beyond AALL, participating in the Library Leaders Programme at the British Library, demonstrating her commitment to building and maintaining global networks of information professionals.

Editor’s Note:
See Ana’s column on this program on [page 11](#).



From the Chair

Members will also see the Chair position on their ballot. We do not typically directly elect a Chair, however, as you may recall, facing an unexpected vacancy in the Chair role this fall, I moved from Vice Chair to Chair, and the Executive Committee and Nominating Committees identified and appointed an outstanding candidate to fill the resulting Vice Chair vacancy – Yemisi Dina. As noted in my [October column](#), Yemisi hardly requires an introduction given her many contributions to the profession and the SIS, and as expected she has already demonstrated her enthusiasm and diligence in her work since September on the Executive Committee. In placing Yemisi on the ballot, the committee invites our membership to affirm her selection to continue serving in the next association year.



Editor's Note: I had the good fortune of attending BIALL with Yemisi (left) and Alison Shea (center) in June 2025. See my column on [page 8](#).

3 - Volunteer opportunities - 2026 - 2027

Our Appointments Committee will be working this spring to identify both leadership and membership service needs in our [committees and interest groups](#) for the forthcoming year. We welcome volunteers at all career stages, and in all sectors and roles, and no prior leadership experience is required to chair (or co-chair with a friend!) a committee or group. Don't hesitate to contact existing chairs, the Appointments Committee, or a member of the Executive Committee now if you'd like to begin exploring opportunities.



Editor's Corner: The Editors' Issue



My new favorite game: Guess the author's age from the meme.

This issue of the Newsletter features submissions from three of our Newsletter editors - hence, the name of this column.

I wrote a short piece on the BIALL conference, while Ana contributed a detailed accounting of her time with the International Library Leaders Program at the British Library, and Kristen's article discusses her work-in-progress on using AI tools to evaluate the FCIL collection at her library.

We also have a welcome submission from Ed Hart on the latest IALL conference. [Did you see 2028 is in New Zealand? I will be watching Lord of the Rings on repeat to prepare.]

This also seems like a good place to mention that the editors will shortly be releasing a readership survey. There will be questions like:

Hello? Is this microphone on? AND - Where should I be screaming into the void?

I usually have more questions than answers. Like, for example, does the Board of Peace go into the public international law class? Or the foreign policy class? Or maybe the trash can class?

Or -

How many times can a student ask for an English translation from a country that does not have English as an official language? How long until my head explodes from this question? How many librarians does it take to screw in a lightbulb?

Or from my personal life: how many princess barbies are enough for a three-year-old?

In any case, the work continues, and our welcome contributions in this issue show us that work is possible and can be interesting and fulfilling, and can evolve. I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I enjoyed editing it.

I wish you all respite from this seemingly endless winter we are experiencing in the Northeast. In the next issue I will be sure to complain about how hot it is.

JK



The 43rd Annual Course of the International Association of Law Libraries - Space City Houston: Legal Gateway to the World and Beyond Houston, Texas, USA, 19-23 October 2025

AS TOLD BY EDWARD T. HART, UNT DALLAS COLLEGE OF LAW

The Annual Course of the International Association of Law Libraries is typically an intensive, five-day exploration—Sunday through Thursday—of the host jurisdiction’s current legal issues and their impact on international law. That tradition continued at the 43rd Annual Course, hosted by South Texas College of Law–Houston.

The course opened on Sunday with a pre-conference workshop, **Skills for the 21st Century Librarian**, which examined current issues and emerging best practices for U.S. law librarians.

- **Barbara Fullerton** presented **“Tech & Tactics: Lightning-Fast Tips.”**
- **Debra Jobes** spoke on **“Inside the Deep Space of AI.”**
- **Dru Stevenson** highlighted best practices for remote presentations in **“Lights...Camera... ACT—oh wait, I’m muted, sorry!”** 😊
- **Donna Davis** closed the session with **“The Value of Developing Inclusive Leadership.”**



Visit the [Conference Website](#) for more information.



IALL Houston

Annual Course

From Monday to Wednesday, the program featured sixteen sessions, vendor presentations, and the IALL annual business meeting. The full schedule is available at the conference website.

One of the most memorable programs—purely for its novelty—was **Joseph Gutheinz’s “Operation Lunar Eclipse and the Moon Rock Project.”** A retired special agent with the NASA Office of Inspector General, Gutheinz investigated stolen and missing lunar rock samples. NASA once distributed commemorative plaques containing flecks of lunar rock to nations around the world and to each U.S. state. Some have since gone missing, occasionally resurfacing on the black market.

A Nicaraguan plaque was once offered for sale for \$5 million; a sting operation, **Operation Lunar Eclipse**, supported by billionaire Ross Perot, helped recover it. Colorado’s plaque also went missing after a former governor inadvertently packed it with his personal belongings when leaving office.

Another standout program was **“Houston and the LGBTQIA+ Community,”** presented by local attorney **Mitchell Avila Katine**. Drawing on his early experience in property law, Katine recounted his role representing the defendants in *Lawrence v. Texas*, shepherding the case from a Houston justice of the peace court to the U.S. Supreme Court. The decision established that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to engage in private, consensual sexual activity—a major breakthrough for the LGBTQ+ community and the foundation for later victories, including marriage equality.

Optional Day at Space Center Houston

A beloved IALL tradition is the optional “bonus day,” which gives attendees the chance to visit an important local site and learn about its connection to domestic or international law. In Houston, that site could only be the Space Center—the command center for U.S. space exploration.

Alongside the exhibits, attendees enjoyed **Charles Lee Mudd, Jr.’s** session, **Space Law 2025: A Primer for Lawyers and Law Librarians**, which offered insights into the expanding field of space law with the growing number of companies launching and managing satellites.





IALL Houston

Social Events

The IALL Annual Course is well known for offering rich opportunities to socialize and network with colleagues from around the world. The opening reception at the Heritage Society at Sam Houston Park—welcomed by the music of Rice University’s **Mariachi Luna Llana**—gave attendees a chance to explore Houston’s history.

Later in the week, we went “country” at **The Rustic**, where, after a few drinks, many attendees joined in on the line dancing. Another evening offered the popular **Dine Arounds**, featuring choices of local cuisine or creative international dishes.

The course concluded with the Annual Dinner, a formal event beautifully hosted in the historic **Julia Ideson Building** of the Houston Public Library, a Spanish Renaissance-style structure that opened in 1926.

Attendees also enjoyed tours of local law libraries, including the **Harris County Robert W. Hainsworth Law Library**, **South Texas College of Law Houston Special Collections**, and the **University of Houston Law Library**.

Future IALL Annual Courses

Having attended several of these conferences, I highly recommend them to anyone with a professional or personal interest in foreign, comparative, or international law. The insights gained at an IALL Annual Course simply cannot be replicated by reading texts or articles.

The **44th Annual Course** will be hosted by the **Squire Law Library, University of Cambridge**, in Cambridge, United Kingdom.

The **45th Annual Course** will take place in **The Hague, The Netherlands**, hosted by the **Peace Palace Library** and the **Sanders Law Library of the Erasmus School of Law**.

Editor’s Note: See IALL’s website for the upcoming [2026 annual course](#) and future [courses](#).



Reflections of a Summer Conference - British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) Birmingham, England - June 2025

BY JANET KEARNEY

This summer I had the good fortune of presenting at the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) annual conference in Birmingham, England with the great Alison Shea. This was my first time attending BIALl, and I would highly recommend it to librarians from any jurisdiction.

For those who have only attended AALL, the experience of the BIALl conference is quite different. The conference is smaller and has an exhibit hall where you can see everything! I am not sure how the ratio compares to AALL, but it seemed to weigh more heavily towards firm librarians and technology concerns. That being said, I still attended programs on legal research in the law degree at university, the Irish legal system, and finding Caribbean legal materials.



The main speaker hall during a presentation on teaching legal research in university law programs.



BIALL Birmingham

Alison and I presented on business law in the United States, with a focus on basic business information, identifying enforcement actions, business courts, and tracking changes in the federal government that can affect business law and operations. Look out for two forthcoming articles in the journal Legal Information Management, <https://www.eupublishing.com/journal/lim> -

Regulation by a Thousand Entities: Navigating the US Business Law Research Landscape

Abstract: Law librarians are often called to research transnational issues in the business world. This article identifies two key areas in United States business law: finding business information from incorporation to court dockets and identifying enforcement actions against businesses. This article will build upon previous discussions of US legal research more generally by focusing on these key aspects for business and corporate research. Readers will be able to analyse the US legal and regulatory landscape surrounding common issues involved in corporate and business legal research.

A Primer on US Business Courts

Abstract: In this short essay, overview is provided of specialized courts in the US for business disputes, both commercial and corporate. It focuses on the role of the New York State Commercial Division and the US District Court for the Southern District of New York.





BIALL Birmingham

As for personal travel surrounding the conference, I was happy to tick many boxes of classic English travel -

- Americans struggle with an electric car
- Ploughman's lunch in the Cotswolds
- Driving on the opposite side of the car and road
- Afternoon tea (and breakfast tea and evening tea and dinner tea)
- Fish and chips
- Kind and lovely people asking me why the heck I'm there but being welcoming nonetheless
- One night in London for the British Museum and a pub pie
- Terrible cold brew

Alison drives on the -correct- side of the car.



Lunch break in the Cotswolds.



Is there a better name for a pub than Sacks of Potatoes?



A Leadership Opportunity I'm Grateful For: Key Takeaways from the International Library Leaders Program at the British Library

BY ANA ISABEL DELGADO VALENTÍN
CHIEF LIBRARIAN SUPREME COURT OF PUERTO RICO

Participating in the fifth International Library Leaders Programme at the British Library this past July was a rare professional experience that renewed my perspective on leadership and service. For one intensive and thoughtfully structured week, I joined a global cohort of library leaders for an immersive program that was both practical and inspiring. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity, and especially thankful to have been able to participate through the AALL Marcia J. Koslov Scholarship, which made this leadership experience possible for me.

From the very first day, the culture was unmistakable: openness, transparency, and a genuine willingness to share knowledge generously. There was no gatekeeping, only meaningful exchange. Conversations were candid and strategic. Questions were welcomed. Even lessons learned from challenges were discussed with clarity and humility. That professional generosity left a strong impression and set a leadership standard I intend to carry forward.



View of the King's Library Collection—a six-story glass tower housing King George III's book collection at the British Library

The program blended leadership dialogue, operational insight, and institutional storytelling. The architectural tour was a standout. Learning that the building's design evokes the shape of a ship, carrying knowledge across time, elevated how I think about library space and symbolic design. Beneath the visible structure lies an extraordinary network of underground corridors and shelving that houses millions of items. The scale is remarkable, but what resonated more deeply was the mission behind it. A phrase repeated during the week captured it well: this is first and foremost a library, not simply a museum. Access to the materials themselves remains central to public service and knowledge creation. That principle was evident everywhere.



International Library Leaders Program



Early cylinder phonograph—a late 19th–early 20th century device used to record and play back sound on wax cylinders.



Hands-on elements used by the museum education department in pop-up areas designed for children's learning and discovery.

One moment that stayed with me was walking through the underground stacks and realizing how much invisible infrastructure supports visible access.

Experiencing the collections firsthand was equally powerful. From early Shakespeare folios to historic periodicals documenting events such as the Titanic and the coronation of Elizabeth II, the scope and depth of the holdings were extraordinary. We explored sound archives that included wax cylinder recordings alongside modern digital delivery systems. A visit to the Boston Spa site highlighted another dimension of contemporary librarianship, where advanced automation and human expertise operate side by side. Technology drives efficiency, but people provide judgment, care, and context.

We also learned about education and outreach initiatives, digitization and preservation strategies, community engagement models, and creative programs that connect libraries with broader public life, including a community garden project. Specialists across departments spoke with both precision and enthusiasm, whether about maps, preservation workflows, or public programming. Their energy was contagious and reaffirmed the value of subject expertise paired with user-centered service.

The cohort itself was another major highlight. The diversity of backgrounds, jurisdictions, and institutional roles created a rich professional exchange. The intellectual and creative bandwidth in the room was exceptional. Conversations continued well beyond scheduled sessions, over meals and between tours. The relationships built during that week are among the most valuable outcomes of the experience.



International Library Leaders Program

I returned home with concrete leadership takeaways, not just inspiration. Among them: design services with access as the starting point, build internal cultures that encourage knowledge-sharing, document workflows with transparency, and treat outreach and education as core institutional functions. Seeing these approaches implemented at scale helped me think more clearly about how to adapt them within specialized and smaller environments.

The experience also clarified my forward focus: strengthening digitization partnerships, expanding research training and outreach, and continuing to build practical bridges between collections, technology, and community engagement. Leadership development is not abstract. It is operational and measurable in how effectively we open doors to information.

I left with renewed energy, practical ideas, and a broader leadership lens. Opportunities like this matter, not only for individual growth, but for institutional progress. **If a program like this appears on your radar, pursue it. Apply for the program. Apply for the scholarship. Nominate a colleague. Encourage someone in your network.** Our profession benefits when more voices participate in global leadership conversations and bring that learning back to their communities.

Professional growth often begins with one bold application and a willingness to step into a room where knowledge is shared openly, and vision is built collectively. This program was exactly that kind of room. To learn more about this program and other international initiatives from the British Library, please follow this link: <https://www.bl.uk/about/international>.



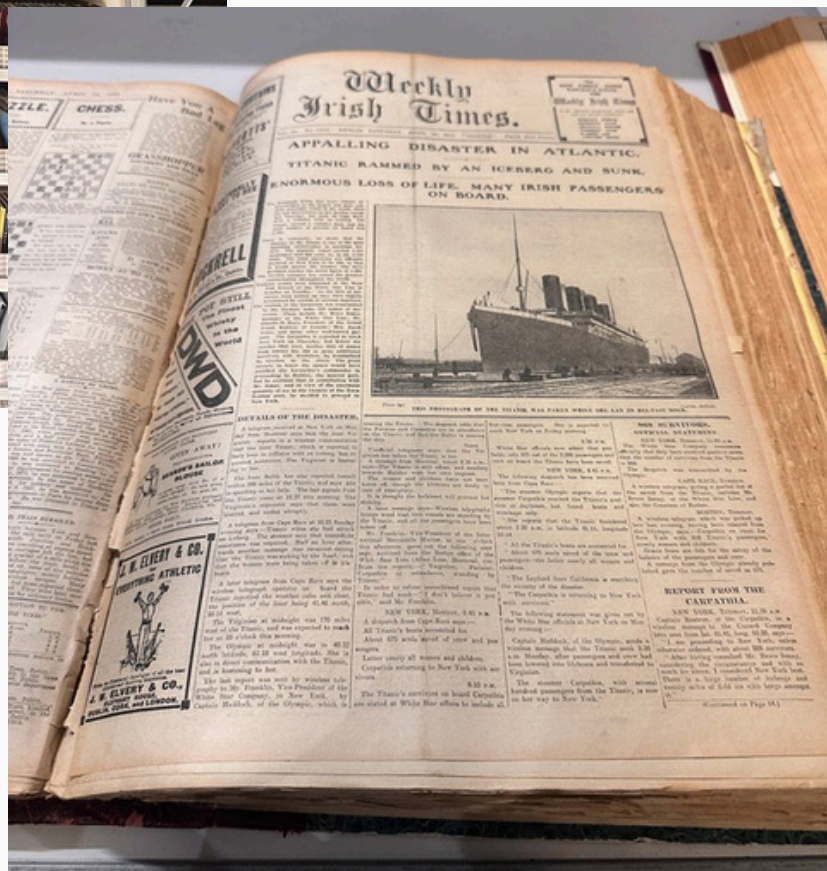
Sign for the Make a Story Garden—a public space for creative collaboration located near the British Library.



International Library Leaders Program



Not a scene from Harry Potter—this is an interior view of the Boston Spa stacks in Yorkshire, which house most of the British Library’s collection.



The Weekly Irish Times clipping announcing the Titanic disaster—history captured in real time through print.



Work-in-Progress - Mapping FCIL Collections with Generative AI: Gaps, Guardrails, and Discoverability

BY KRISTEN CLARKE KELLEMS

In May 2024, BYU Law's Foreign, Comparative, and International Law (FCIL) librarian retired after over 30 years of service. In September 2024, as a newly minted FCIL librarian, I stepped into the role with no prior FCIL collection development experience. If you have ever taken over a long-running FCIL collection, you know that what you really inherit is something intangible: decades of judgment calls, regional emphases, faculty relationships, and institutional memory that lives mostly in someone else's head. I also had the mandate to continue to maintain and develop, not just the FCIL collection itself, but over 200 country-specific legal research guides—and to create new guides based on law school curricula and faculty research needs.

That responsibility sharpened the urgency of understanding the collection. Updating guides required more than correcting links or adding new databases; it required a comprehensive understanding of what we owned, where the collection's strengths lay, and where significant gaps persisted. BYU Law's FCIL collection included thousands of titles acquired over decades, shaped by evolving faculty interests, publishing trends, and institutional priorities.

Mapping the collection required pattern recognition across spreadsheets, syllabi, greenslips, and policy language. Generative AI (GenAI) offered the possibility of accelerating that analysis. Because it excels at identifying patterns across large datasets, GenAI could surface thematic concentrations and jurisdictional absences that would otherwise remain obscured. I hoped it would help me map gaps, align acquisitions with policy and curriculum, and improve discoverability—quickly bringing into focus not only what we owned, but also what the structure of the collection revealed about its breadth, biases, and blind spots.

The Problem: Breadth, Bias, and Buried Books

Like many FCIL collections, ours reflected patterns familiar across law libraries: strong UK and EU representation, thinner coverage in other places. In some jurisdictions, our holdings lacked key treatises and foundational works. In others, we depended heavily on database access while under-collecting monographs. Certain guides also highlighted outdated materials or failed to surface strong but underutilized titles already in the collection.

These circumstances crystallized two interconnected questions. First, where were the genuine gaps in our FCIL collection? Second, even when those gaps were addressed, were our acquisitions discoverable and integrated into student research behavior?

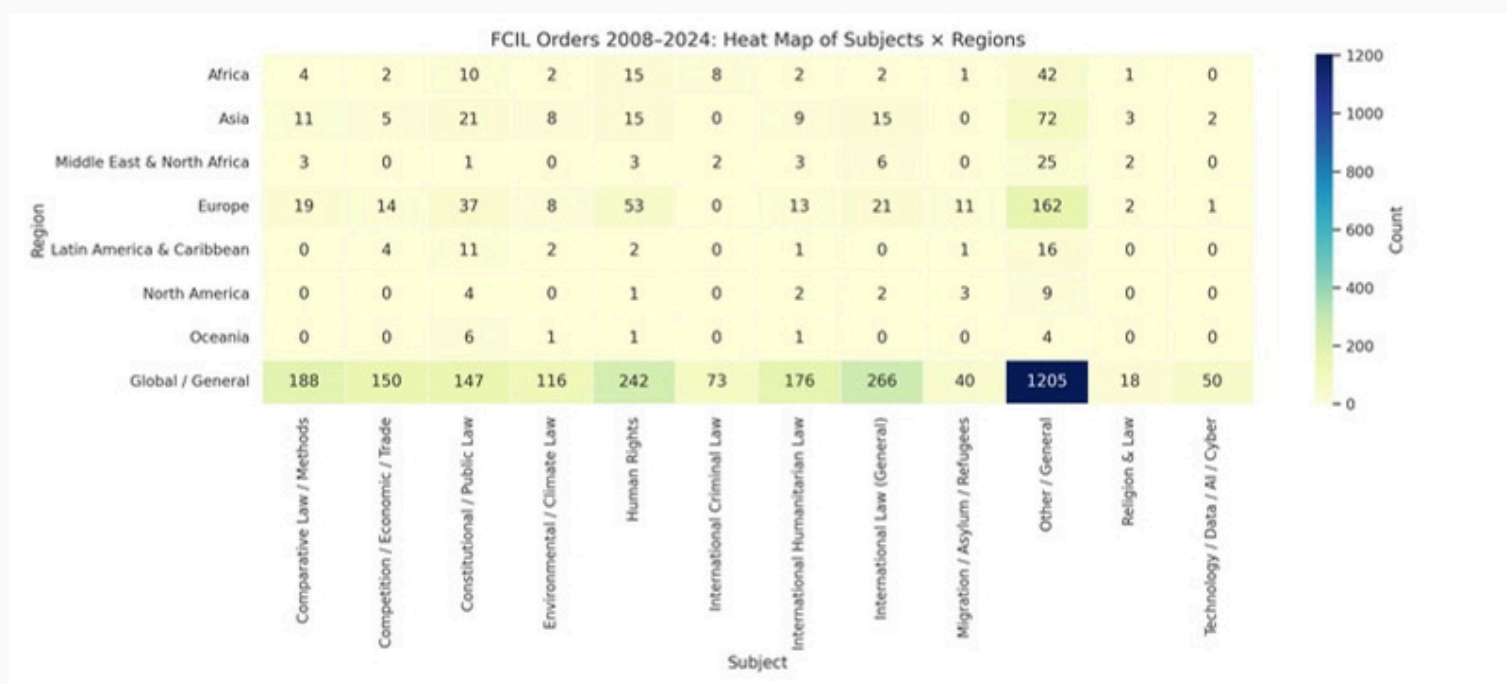


Mapping FCIL Collections

From Greenslips to GPT

The project began with a dataset consisting of a spreadsheet of FCIL holdings acquired from 2008 to 2024, supplemented by recent greenslips recommendations and course syllabi. Taken individually, each title represented a reasonable acquisition decision made at a particular moment in time. Taken together, however, the dataset allowed me to see the overall shape of the collection. Using generative AI to produce R code, I categorized titles by jurisdiction and subject matter, generating visualizations that revealed regional concentrations and thematic clusters.

The results largely confirmed the impressions that I had of our collection when I looked at the FCIL holding spreadsheet. The collection demonstrated substantial depth in European and common law jurisdictions, while representation in African and various Asian jurisdictions was thinner (see visualization chart). This mapping exercise directly informed the ongoing revision of country-specific research guides. When reviewing guides for Brazil, Tanzania, or broader BRICS jurisdictions, I could now assess whether our monograph coverage was robust or sparse.





Mapping FCIL Collections

I now wanted to use GenAI to help me with acquisition purchases—I wanted to see if it could find relevant titles to purchase to fill our jurisdictionally sparse areas. I developed a custom FCIL GPT where I uploaded the existing collection development policy, faculty research interests, assigned course textbooks, historical purchasing data, course syllabi and assigned textbooks. I began by defining a precise goal: to analyze our existing list of FCIL holdings and identify acquisition priorities in jurisdictions where the collection appeared sparse, particularly in East Asia and Africa. One goal-defining prompt was, “The BYU Law Library has research guides that cover almost all of the countries and provide information about their governmental systems. I need you to **take this list of books** (attach book list) that are already in our current collection. I need you to **decide based on the previous list** what to prioritize for ordering new books given where our collection is a bit sparse. **We are looking to prioritize east Asia and Africa in this collection.**” I continued to refine prompts by narrowing the jurisdiction and requesting it to find only certain keywords until I narrowed results to those that met my requirements.

Verification and Validation

From the outset, I imposed clear constraints on the GPT: no fabrication of information, no duplicate titles, and a focus on materials published between 2018 and the present. Even with those guardrails in place, validation revealed predictable issues: more than ten recommended titles were already in our collection, and several “forthcoming” books showed no evidence of existence.

I then hired two undergraduate students that I charged with verifying the FCIL GPT’s outputs. They checked the output against ISBN numbers, our law and undergraduate library catalogs, and publisher websites. Each recommendation was evaluated for alignment with our collection development policy, the law school curriculum and assigned textbooks, and our existing holdings. Scholarly quality was also assessed by reviewing publisher reputation and verifying the academic credibility of authors and subject matter. Only after a title satisfied these criteria—accuracy, relevance, and scholarly merit—was it considered a serious acquisition candidate.

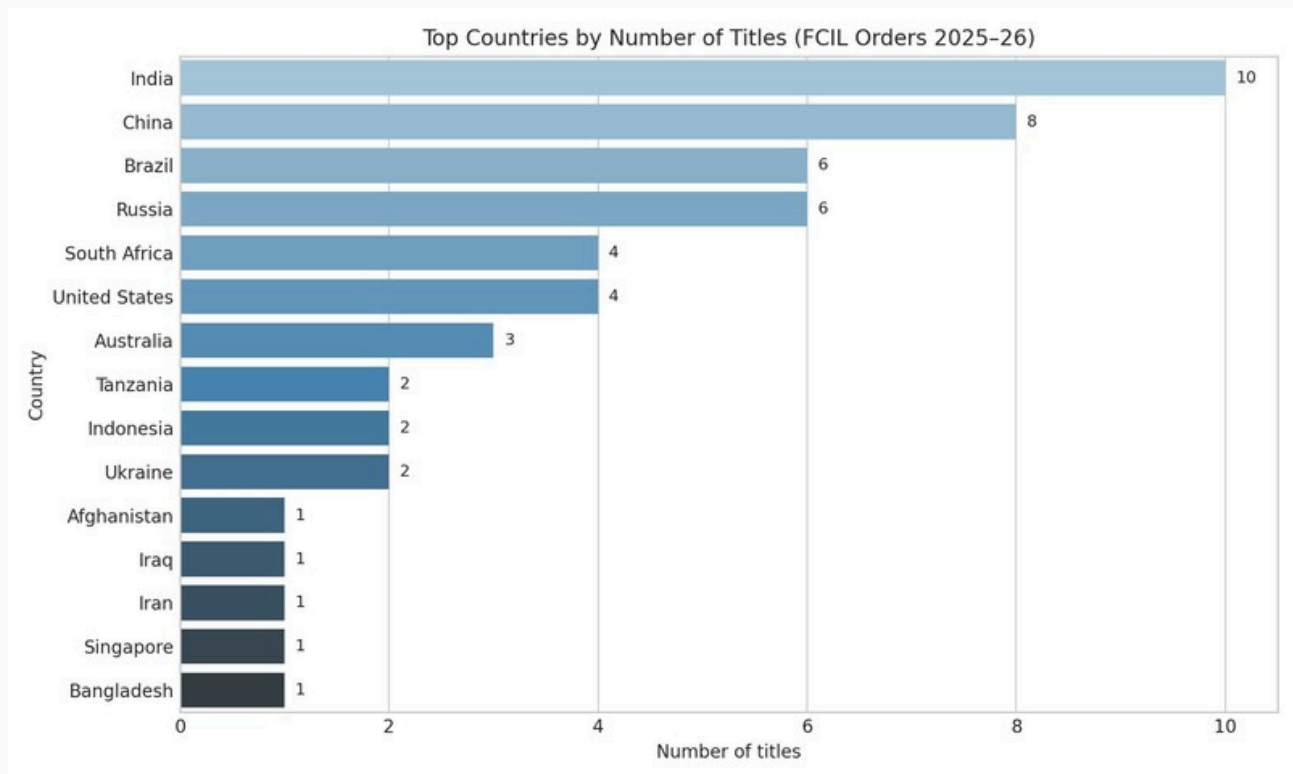
From Analysis to Acquisition

The titles selected for purchase grew directly out of what the mapping revealed. To address those weaknesses, we added works such as *Family Law in Africa: Perspectives on Selected Issues*, *Women, Land and Justice in Tanzania*, and *Gender, Justice, and the Problem of Culture* to deepen coverage of African legal systems and socio-legal scholarship.

At the same time, the data confirmed areas where additional depth would directly support the curriculum. In public international law, acquisitions such as *Rosenne’s Law and Practice of the International Court of Justice*, *Advanced Introduction to International Humanitarian Law*, and the *Elgar Concise Encyclopedia of Migration and Asylum* were chosen to reinforce courses like International Human Rights and related offerings. AI-assisted analysis helped spotlight where expansion would matter most, but it did not make the decisions. The final selections were guided by policy, curricular priorities, and my burgeoning professional judgment.



Mapping FCIL Collections



From Acquisition to Access

After identifying and acquiring new titles, I wanted to confront a quieter but persistent problem: discoverability. Like many academic libraries, we face the challenge that students—and sometimes faculty—are not always aware of the depth of materials already in the collection.

By playing around with the catalog's search functions, I found that my recent acquisitions were not consistently surfacing—and the country-specific and new research guides weren't surfacing at all. I turned to our new Systems and Digital Content Librarian to determine how to use GenAI to make the acquisitions and research guides discoverable. We created a structured AI prompt designed to reflect how a law librarian evaluates research questions. Instead of allowing the AI to suggest anything it "knew," we limited it to an approved list of BYU Law research guides and databases. The system was instructed to recommend only a small number of highly relevant resources and to explain why each one matched the user's query. If a resource did not clearly match the query, the AI was instructed not to include it. The result is a search query function that includes new acquisitions and research guides in search hits—ensuring that the acquisitions are seen by those who can use them.



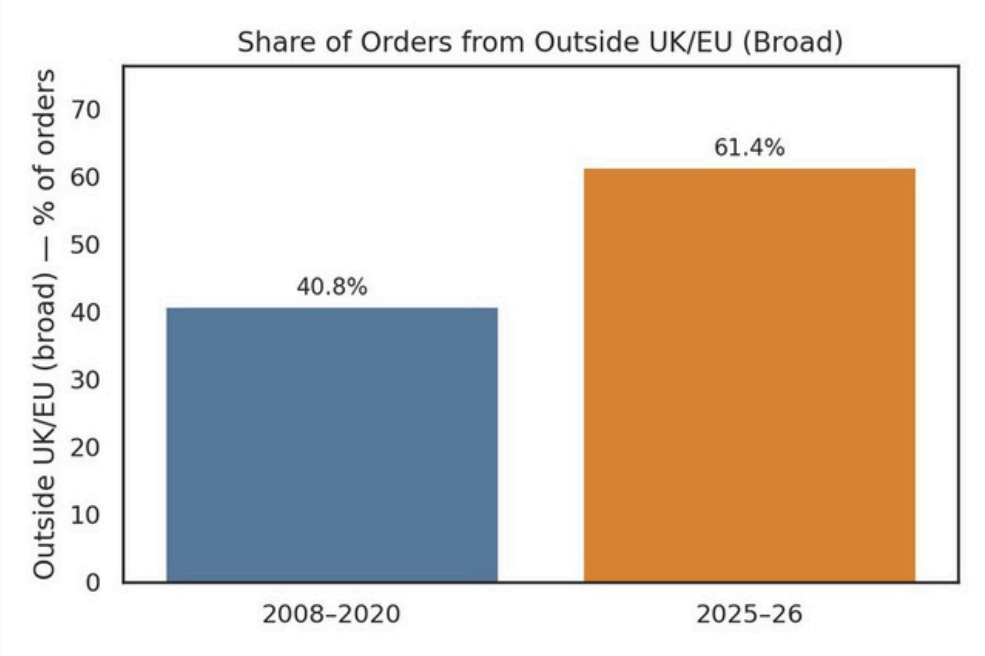
Mapping FCIL Collections

Reflections and Recommendations

This project demonstrates that GenAI can serve as a powerful analytical tool in FCIL collection development. When paired with clear prompting and careful review, GenAI helped turn large, complex datasets into useful insights. This experience reaffirmed that generative AI reallocates rather than replaces librarian expertise. The essential work of a FCIL librarian—evaluating scholarly quality, aligning resources with curricular needs, balancing jurisdictional representation, and designing effective research guides—remains fundamentally human. GenAI can help map the terrain, but librarians still determine the direction of travel.

Editor's Note: A version of this work also appeared in [Diplomatic Dialogues](#).

For colleagues interested in experimenting with similar workflows, the recommendations are straightforward: **start small by piloting one subject area; build on existing data, including collection lists, policy language, and faculty research interests; document the process by recording prompts, outputs, and refinements; verify rigorously by pairing GenAI recommendations with librarian review; and collaborate broadly.** Ultimately, this project shows that when used intentionally and within clear constraints, generative AI can help us see our collections more clearly—while librarians remain the ones who shape what they become.





Traveling the World One Conference at a Time: My 2025 Conference Report and 2026 Recommendations

BY ALISON SHEA

Global Legal Skills Conference

My experience: In May 2025, along with FCIL luminaries Lucie Olejnikova and Jennifer Allison, I presented a program on “Incorporating Legal Research Skills in Substantive Law Classes” at the 17th Global Legal Skills Conference in Masaryk University Faculty of Law in Brno, Czechia. As my current law school is very heavily into professional formation, I was excited to attend a few sessions on professional identity building in addition to content in the areas of legal writing, legal English, LLM, and clinical instruction. Our program focused on introducing a non-librarian audience to ways they could incorporate research tools like Globalex (edited by Lucie) into both doctrinal and skills-based classes, using Jennifer’s experience teaching a human rights class she had developed for the University of Würzburg’s law faculty.



Jennifer Allison and Alison Shea speaking at Masaryk University, Czechia.

Where it is next: December 2-4, 2026 in Monterrey, Mexico

Why you should go: We observed that if librarians are not in the room discussing the importance of research as a legal skill, others will take our place. Although there are many excellent legal writing and other skills-based faculty out there who are wonderful instructors, they lack our bibliographic training and pedagogical experience in the area of research instruction. If you have been doing any sort of library work with other skills-based departments in your school, consider submitting a program proposal for the 18th Conference later this year. Attending a library-adjacent conference is a great way to build your network and develop ideas for exciting new collaborative initiatives for your law school!



Traveling the World

British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) Annual Conference & Exhibition

My experience: Birmingham was actually my 14th (!) BIALL conference, but the first time I had the pleasure of presenting a program with this Newsletter’s exceptional, award-winning Editor, Janet Kearney. It turned out to be a very interesting exercise, as we couldn’t have anticipated how differently our program on researching US law would turn out in June 2025 from what we proposed in October 2024! Beyond the conference itself, one of the most important things I learned on this trip is to always double-check you car rental reservation to ensure you haven’t accidentally booked an EV if you are not comfortable driving EVs; this delay to our journey meant we missed an opportunity to visit a castle, so hats off to Janet for her incredible patience with me during our Cotswolds adventure!

Where it is next: June 10-12, 2026 in Glasgow, Scotland

Why you should go:

Similar to what Janet said, I find BIALL to be far more accessible and less exhausting than AALL. The fact that there are only 2-3 times when you are required to make a choice on which parallel session to attend allows me to simply relax and focus on the content being provided, much of which mirrors the topics that are usually covered at AALL. And the fact that BIALL still includes a fancy dinner as part of the conference registration always makes this a fun way to get to know British and Irish colleagues – and catch up with the AALL & IALL presidents who are usually in attendance!



Jenny Silbiger (AALL President), Alison Shea, Janet Kearney, Mark Engsborg (IALL President), at BIALL 2025 in Birmingham, England.



Traveling the World

International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress (WLIC)

My experience: As a member of the IFLA Law Libraries section Standing Committee, I was excited to travel to Astana, Kazakhstan in August 2025 to participate in a joint program hosted by Division B members (Law Libraries, Parliamentary Libraries, Government Libraries, Government Information and Official Publications, AI Special Interest Group) aimed at bringing WLIC attendees together to discuss how libraries act as incubators for civil society. You can read more about the program and its outcomes in [an article published by the IFLA PARL section in their recent Newsletter, pp. 7-10.](#)

The Law Libraries section also co-sponsored a program on how libraries are working to help implement the Marrakesh Treaty; it featured Aslihan Bulut from the Law Library of Congress discussing [a recent LLOC report](#) on how select jurisdictions

around the world have been implementing these initiatives. I had the opportunity to listen to, and meet, many interesting librarians from all different types of libraires and learn about what other types of libraries are doing through a poster session with more than 100 posters from around the world.

Where it is next: [August 10-13 in Busan, South Korea](#)

Why you should go: This year the Law Libraries section has been graciously invited by the Parliamentary Libraires section to participate in their very successful pre-conference Satellite Meeting, tentatively scheduled for August 6-7 in Seoul, which will focus mainly on topics concerning legislative research but will feature some cross legislative-legal research topics. IFLA will begin a rotating system of 3- and 4-day WLICs, with this year only having 3 days of substantive programming; we're still waiting to see if a similar Division B program gets accepted this year, but it is important to point out there won't necessarily be any stand-alone law-focused programming. However, if you've ever wanted to visit South Korea, are interested in getting to know librarians who work in all kinds of different library settings around the world, and are interested in the global advocacy work that IFLA does (check out IFLA's current [Trend Report](#) for more information), IFLA's WLIC could be a great choice for you in 2026!



Alison and her new Kazakh friend (top tip: golden eagles are surprisingly heavy!)



Short bio for Vice-Chair, Chair-Elect FCIL-SIS

Ana Isabel Delgado Valentín

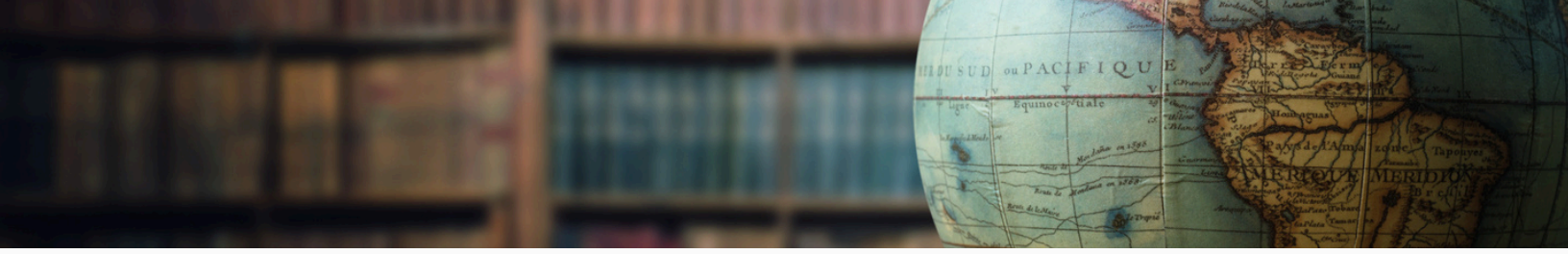
Ana Isabel Delgado Valentín serves as Chief Librarian of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico Law Library, where she leads with a deep commitment to access, preservation, and the power of legal information to shape just societies. Trained in law, history, and library and information science, her work sits at the intersection of doctrine, cultural heritage, and public service. She oversees strategic initiatives that strengthen research services, expand access to jurisprudence, and modernize legal information infrastructure in a mixed civil-common law jurisdiction.

Ana's engagement with foreign, comparative, and international law is rooted in both scholarship and lived institutional experience. Through her participation in the International Library Leaders Programme at the British Library, her work within AALL, and her collaboration with colleagues across jurisdictions, she has seen firsthand how FCIL librarians build bridges—across languages, legal systems, and professional cultures.

She believes FCIL-SIS is more than a section; it is a community of stewards who safeguard complexity and make it navigable. At a time when global legal research demands agility, collaboration, and clarity, she is motivated by the opportunity to help cultivate professional growth, mentorship, and meaningful dialogue within our membership.

Serving as Vice Chair/Chair-Elect would be both a challenge and a privilege. Ana is ready to step into that responsibility with energy, humility, and a strong belief in collective leadership—supported, as always, by the generosity and brilliance of her colleagues.





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

Alex Zhang, Information Retrieval in the Age of Generative AI: A Mismatch that Matters, 44 Legal Ref. Serv. Q. 297 (2025)

Michael McArthur & Julie M. Wooldridge, Behind the Books: Global Insights from Law Librarians (Insights from the United States), 53 Int'l J. Legal Info. 285 (2025)

Meredith Capps, Clement Lin, Devan Orr, Alison A. Shea, Loren Turner and Latia Ward, Core Skills & "Cool Tools" from the Third Generation of FCIL Librarians, 53 Int'l J. Legal Info. 219 (2025)

Spectrum

Havilah Bakken, Aamir Abdullah, Valerie Horton & Jason Tubinis, Navigating Career Choices in Law Librarianship, 30 AALL: Spectrum, Nov. / Dec. 2025, at 30

Lindsey Carpino, Ryan Metheny & Scott Vanderlin, Aligning Professional Development with Career Goals, 30 AALL: Spectrum, Jan. / Feb. 2026, at 30

SIS Newsletter Articles

Government Law Libraries

Jocelyn Stilwell-Tong, An Eye on AI

Academic Law Libraries

Edward T. Hart, Reimagining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in an Anti-DEI Climate: The Role of Law Libraries (Program Review)

Editor's Note: IJLI is moving from Cambridge to De Gruyter Brill - update your bookmarks!



GlobaLex Articles

Jootaek Lee, [Research and Bibliography for Korean Law Resources in English](#)

Julienne E. Grant, [Researching the Law of the Spanish Autonomous Communities](#)

Andrew Dorchak, [International Criminal Courts for the Former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone - Online and Print Resources](#)

Janet Kearney, [Understanding European Union Legal Materials](#)

Blog Posts

IALL

Mark Engsberg, [Thank you, Houston!](#)

Amy Flick, [IALL 2025 Recap: Delayed Justice for the Buffalo Soldiers](#)

DipLawMatic Dialogues

Lucie Olejnikova, [Globalex September/October 2025 Issue is Live](#)

Lucie Olejnikova, [GlobaLex July/August 2025 Issue is Live](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: International Agreements Made by States of the Union, a Challenge for Research](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: What Is the Significance of Case Law in the Civil Law World?](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: Non-Binding International Agreements, a Problem for Research](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: Two Ways of Researching Foreign Law](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: The FCIL Librarian as a Cosmopolitan](#)

Sue Silverman, [What in the World... is Happening? Reflections on FCIL Librarianship in Challenging Times](#)

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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