IFLA AVMS Conference & Mid-Year Meeting, Berlin, 10–13 June 2025
Submitted to: Bibliothek & Information International – Grant Report

With the generous support of the Bibliothek & Information International grant, I had the opportunity to attend and contribute to the IFLA Audiovisual and Multimedia Section Conference and Mid-Year Meeting, held from June 10–13, 2025, in Berlin, Germany. Hosted at the Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin (ZLB), the event brought together a diverse group of professionals dedicated to the stewardship, accessibility, and future of audiovisual resources in libraries. The meeting was held in person, with selected sessions made available via hybrid format to allow remote participation from international members. This hybrid approach enabled valuable contributions from both in-person and online attendees.

Photo: Mirjana Nešić

Day 1 The conference opened at the Berlin Central and Regional Library, with welcoming remarks and an overview of the agenda delivered by Anna Bohn, who also acted as the local host. Much of the morning was dedicated to in-depth discussions and collaborative work on the ongoing revision of the *IFLA Guidelines for Audiovisual Resources in Libraries*. A key priority was finalizing edits based on a global peer review, incorporating feedback from OLAC, ISBD, and numerous international experts.

We also addressed the integration of AI in audiovisual metadata creation and its potential for improving accessibility, particularly for hearing and visually impaired users.

The afternoon offered a richer cultural dimension, including a guided tour of the Berlin City Library and an optional walking tour of historic Berlin. We concluded the day with a hybrid session featuring lightning talks—highlighted by presentations on AI-powered audiovisual search (Sven Strobel), copyright limitations in educational film use (Hélène Brousseau), and the planning of upcoming webinars, including *Preserving African Film Heritage*.

Hybrid meeting IFLA AVMS: Webinar planning with Michele McKentzie Photo: Anna Bohn

Day 2 took us to Potsdam's Film University and the Filmmuseum, where we explored archival film collections and discussed the role of film libraries in education and cultural preservation. The morning began with a guided tour of the Filmmuseum Potsdam, led by Ralf Forster, where the group explored the museum's Schaudepot (open collection) and learned about Germany' s cinematic history.

This was followed by a visit to the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf, where the head of the film library, Katja Krause, introduced the institution's audiovisual holdings. A digitized student film was screened and contextualized by Anke Wilkening, film preservationist and curator.

In the afternoon, back in Berlin, the group reconvened at ZLB for further presentations. Shali Zhang (Auburn University) introduced her university's initiatives in integrating AR/XR tools into library services for teaching and research. Mirjana Nešić (University Library, Belgrade) discussed the documentation of past and present social movements in Serbia and the pivotal role audiovisual media plays in archiving civic memory.

The day ended with an in-depth session dedicated to action planning for 2024–2025, covering webinar topics, collaboration with the IFLA Accessibility Network, and steps toward the finalization of AVMS reports for inclusion in the IFLA repository.

Film Museum Potsdam- Guided Tour with Ralf Forster Photo: Mirjana Nešić

Day 3 brought us to the Federal Archives' Audiovisual Media Department in Berlin-Lichterfelde. The group was warmly welcomed by Florian Höhensteiger from the Audiovisual Media Department, who provided a guided tour of the archives. We toured the digitization facilities, attended a private screening of a restored film, and engaged in a robust expert meeting focused on legal deposit, digital access, and preservation strategies.

The visit continued with an expert meeting focused on legal deposit policies, artificial intelligence in archival processing, and input on the AV Guidelines from the Bundesarchiv's perspective. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the Federal Archives' digital reading room and its approaches to metadata and digital preservation.

The afternoon was devoted to collaborative work on the Guidelines, hosted in small working groups at the archives' visitor lounge. In the evening, participants gathered for a shared dinner in Berlin, strengthening informal networks and fostering international connections.

Digital film restoration, Bundesarchiv Photo: Anna Bohn

Day 4 wrapped up the conference with presentations on current projects, such as the development of accessibility metadata principles and the use of AI for inclusive library services. We had presentations: Raffael Ammann: *Media Archive ZHdK - Zurich University of the Arts;* Hélène Brousseau: *Accessibility Metadata: Statement and Principles*, and Anna Bohn: *AI and accessible hearing and seeing in libraries. Scenarios for the use of artificial intelligence for accessibility.*

The business meeting concluded with discussions on upcoming officer elections, IFLA repository submissions, translation planning for the revised Guidelines (into German, French, Chinese, and Serbian), and the October 27 celebration of the World Day for Audiovisual Heritage—including a planned livestream event with Concordia University and the Cinémathèque Québécoise.

Katja Krause, Head of Film Library at Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf giving a library tour. Photo: Anna Bohn

The conference was a unique blend of technical collaboration, policy planning, site visits, and cultural exchange. It facilitated not only professional development but also forged meaningful partnerships across borders.

I am deeply grateful for the BII support that made this participation possible and look forward to applying what I learned to ongoing and future projects in the audiovisual and library fields.

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Sincerely,
Mirjana Nešić
Head of library, Academy of applied studies Politehnika
mirjana.nesic@gmail.com