



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

April 2010

This newsletter provides summarized information on the activities of the Program Management Unit under the Glob@l Libraries – Bulgaria Program in April 2010

STAGE 2010: CLOSE OF TARGET LIBRARY APPLICATIONS

In all, 741 libraries from 214 municipalities submitted applications to participate in the Glob@l Libraries Bulgaria Program Stage 2010. Applications closed on 14 April 2010.

The greatest number of applications, 18, came from Shumen. Sofia City turned in 16 applications, and the municipality of Dulovo entered 14.

Fifty municipalities did not file applications for Stage 2010. Last year four of these – Avren, Bobovdol, Nevestino and Dragoman, did not apply in Stage 2009.

Applications are being reviewed and draft lists of proposed target libraries for Stage 2010 will be drawn up in accordance with the methodology approved by the Program Board.

The Board is expected to approve the target libraries for Stage 2010 at the end of June.

DELIVERY, INSTALLATION AND SUPPORT OF ICT EQUIPMENT IN TARGET LIBRARIES

Six companies placed bids in the international tender for delivery, installation and support of ICT equipment for 900 target libraries. Bids were opened on April 23 in the presence of bidder representatives. A team comprising PMU members, UNDP representatives and external experts, began the evaluation of offers.

Competitive recruitment of district IT specialists, who will verify libraries' readiness to receive and use ICT equipment, closed in April. The call garnered 274 applications and 75 applicants were interviewed by the selection panel. Thirty district IT specialists were selected and will be instructed by the PMU in May.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

Talks with municipalities whose applications were not approved or who failed to participate in Stage 2009, resumed in early April. Efforts aimed at presenting the program and clarifying the benefits of participation as well as the commitments of local partners (municipal governments and chitalishte).

PMU teams had on-site conversations with local governments in Nevestino, Kyustendil District; Kaolinovo, Shumen District; Dragoman, Sofia District; Maglizh, Stara Zagora District, among others.

Work continued on a fundraising strategy for the Glob@l Libraries Bulgaria Program. Funding opportunities were identified under EU operational programs and other sources available to Bulgarian libraries/chitalishte. A regularly updated database is available at: <http://glbulgaria.bg/page.php?c=73>.

Terms of Reference were drafted for updating the program’s portal, including upgrading the content management system, design of new vision and testing usability. The Terms of Reference are available from <http://glibulgaria.bg/en/page.php?c=74>. Closing date for submissions is May 13.

TRAINING COMPONENT

Interviews of trainer applicants closed on April 16 for all four modules of the training program: “Information and Communication Technologies”, “Public Library Management”, “Modern Library Services” and “Soft Skills”.

Selection panels comprised of PMU members and external experts interviewed 178 applicants. The final lists of approved applicants will be posted on the program’s portal in early May.

Draft training aids for librarians in the four thematic areas were reviewed in April. PMU teams comprehensively reviewed the materials and made comments and recommendations. Development of training materials for the pilot stage of the training program will continue in May.

READING MARATHONS

This year Bulgaria hosted its fifth annual 24hrs Reading Marathon. The marathon started on April 23rd, the International Day of the Book. The regional libraries organized various events and activities to celebrate the initiative. The Glob@l Libraries - Bulgaria Program provided promotional materials to the Regional Library Petko R. Slaveykov in Veliko Tarnovo and reported events at different libraries and chitalishte on the program’s portal.

ANNUAL MEETING OF GRANTEES, GLOBAL LIBRARIES INITIATIVE HELSINKI, 11-16 APRIL 2010

The annual meeting of teams working under the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Global Libraries Initiative took place in Helsinki, Finland, April 11-16. The event’s motto was “Where Innovation Meets Implementation”. The meeting gathered 60 representatives from Finland, Botswana, Bulgaria, Chile, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, Vietnam, USA and Australia. Bulgaria was represented by Mr. Igor Chipev from the Ministry of Culture; Mr. Trendafil Meretev, Program Manager; Ms. Emiliana Zhivkova from UNDP; and Ms. Luba Devetakova and Mr. Iliya Popov, PMU members. The participants discussed the program’s development in different countries highlighting innovative approaches. The Bulgarian team noted opportunities to share experience with the programs in Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Chile, Ukraine and Romania.



PLM Café - coffee chat with GL program manage



Espoo City Library – Sello Library



Töölö Library – Helsinki City Library



Espoo City Library - Entresse Library

In May 2010 we expect to accomplish the following:

- Finalize the evaluation of offers for delivery of ICT equipment for target libraries and begin contract negotiations;
- Prepare necessary documentation to request software licenses for target library computers;
- Instruct district IT specialists in Sofia for installation of ICT equipment in the libraries/chitalishte participating in Stage 2009 and Stage 2010;
- Compile a draft list of target libraries to be included in Stage 2010;
- Develop advanced versions of training aids for the pilot stage of the training program;
- Start organizing training of trainers and logistics for the pilot stage of the training program;
- Submit proposed composition of Public Council for discussion by the Working Group;
- Discuss in the Working Group network infrastructure alternatives at target libraries.