



GLOBAL LIBRARIES ROMANIA

Monthly Newsletter

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NEWS IN BRIEF

IREX Awards First Community Participation Contest Grant

On December 11th, a small evaluation panel composed of IREX staff, NGO members, and library representatives reviewed the first round of project applications for the Community Participation Contest and selected the **Center for Promoting Local Culture and Traditions (CLIO)** located in Jurilovca, Tulcea County as recipient of the first award.

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Jurilovca Library, Tulcea County

Meet the Global Libraries IREX Team

There are currently nine staff members managing the Global Libraries program in Romania. With a variety of backgrounds, skills and knowledge in development programs, IREX is proud of its talented staff members, all of whom are looking forward to

productive cooperation with program stakeholders.

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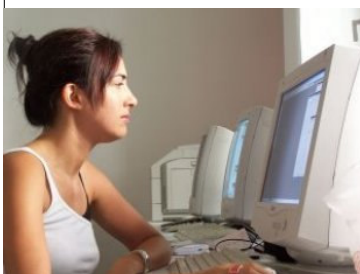
ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: Global Libraries Steering Committee

The Global Libraries Steering Committee

brings together local stakeholders including members from the National Library Commission, NGO partners, and members of government ministries, providing a forum for dialogue between institutions on how to best fit the program to Romania's needs.

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ONLINE FORUM AND DISCUSSIONS



On January 30, 2008, the online forum will host an interactive discussion for five NGO grantees. The topics that will be discussed include the grants process, collaboration with

local librarians, and the challenges of analyzing local communities. This first online forum will provide opportunities for participants to exchange and share ideas and experi-

ences. This event will be the first of many online discussions that aim to bring together Global Libraries participants from different areas for meaningful interaction. ■

IREX AWARDS FIRST COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION CONTEST GRANT

On December 11th, The Center for Promoting Local Culture and Traditions (CLIO) located in Jurilovca, Tulcea County was chosen as the first recipient in the Global Libraries Romania Community Participation Contest by an evaluation panel composed of IREX staff, NGO members, and library representatives.

Jurilovca, a community that straddles the edge of the Danube Delta and is both a World Heritage Site and biosphere reserve, is struggling to find a balance between promoting economic and community development and preserving one of the last surviving great wilderness areas of Europe. Jurilovca faces the additional challenges of frail infrastructure, contributing to difficult community access, and a vibrant, but deteriorating Russian cultural heritage. In order to address this concern, CLIO's project will engage elder members of the Russian-speaking community in an effort to share local folklore by relating folktales to groups of school

children in Russian, digitally recording them, and uploading the recordings to a website. Both older and younger generations will use modern technologies to create a "cultural bridge" between them.

Launched on November 15, 2007, the monthly Commu-



nity Participation Contest invites people from across Romania to engage communities in the Global Libraries program by developing innovative ideas for Internet use in public libraries. Contest winners receive small grants to implement their projects, an online collection of which will disseminate best practices in library-community cooperation and encourage a national discussion of libraries' role in their communities. Participating li-

braries will also build their capacity to provide their communities with better and more relevant service.

Other applications included ideas such as:

- A proposal to develop the Valcea County library website to attract a greater number of users to the library.
- "Come Take a Virtual Tour of our County" - The Neamti County library proposed posting a virtual tour of the county's many tourist and cultural sites on their website.
- The Scheia commune library proposed developing a local website to promote reading and culture.

For the December round, a total of 11 applicants submitted proposals. December's winner will be announced on the biblioteca.ro website and in the next edition of this newsletter. For questions about the contest, please contact Alexandrina Bucur at abucur@irex.ro ■



Danube Delta Flower

"The entire team would like to thank Global Libraries - Romania for according us with the trust necessary and we hope that the successful completion of this project will be of great benefit to our community."

*Professor Vasile-Marcel
Stoenica CLIO*



Winter in Tulcea County at the Danube Delta

MEET THE GLOBAL LIBRARIES IREX STAFF MEMBERS IN BUCHAREST

Mr. George Baraitaru is the Information Technology Specialist. Mr. Baraitaru will provide IT support and website development and maintenance.

E-mail: gbaraitaru@irex.ro



George Baraitaru
IT Specialist

"I am happy to use my IT skills to help the program and to help my country," says Mr. Baraitaru, "The Global Libraries program is a very important initiative for Romania." ■

Mr. Paul Baran is the Program Director for the Global Libraries Romania Program. Mr. Baran was the Executive Director of the Romania Think Tank, a policy research organization committed to identifying issues in regards to Romania's transition to a functioning market economy. Mr. Baran worked with the Romanian Presidency as councilor for public administration reform and initiated a nation-wide institutional assessment of local governments' capacity to provide quality citizen services. Mr. Baran is fluent in Romanian. E-mail: pabaran@irex.ro



Paul Baran
Program Director

through the Internet is not only a wonderful provocation but also an immense personal privilege," says Mr. Baran. ■

"The opportunity to work with the professional staff here at IREX Romania combined with the responsibility of increasing the capacity of librarians and local governments all in an effort to provide Romanians with universal access to information

Ms. Mihaela Milea is the Office Manager. Ms. Milea ensures the effective administrative functioning of the Global Libraries - Romania program. E-mail: mmilea@irex.ro

"I have the opportunity to be a small part in an important project which opens new frontiers for average citizens. This project gives everyone the possibility to discover the rest of the world, and to share information, thoughts, and connects people together." ■

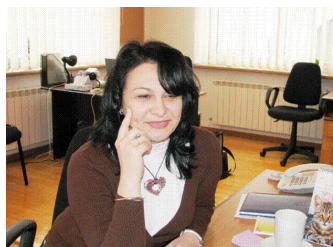
Ms. Alexandrina Bucur is the Pilot Site Coordinator for the Global Libraries program. Ms. Bucur has worked in program management and coordination for the past 10 years under four US development assistance programs in Romania developed by Chemonics Inc, Research

Triangle Institute, Mashav Center for International Development, and World Learning. She has extensive experience in the design and implementation of USAID international assistance projects promoting improved local government management, the export of agricultural commodities, and child welfare in Romania. Ms. Bucur will oversee and manage linkages between program components.

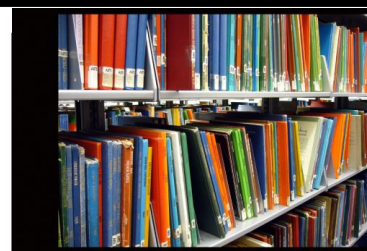
E-mail: abucur@irex.ro



Alexandrina Bucur
Pilot Site Coordinator



Mihaela Milea
Office Manager



"It's wonderful that our libraries will have technology and Internet access. This project will offer Romanian citizens who visits a library the entire world. I am happy to be working on this important initiative for Romania."

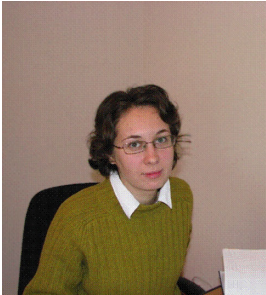
*Alexandrina Bucur –
Pilot Site Coordinator*



MEET THE IREX STAFF CONTINUED...

Mrs. Adriana Dumitrescu is the Financial and Administrative Officer. Ms. Dumitrescu will contribute to the essential budget planning necessary for the Global Libraries roll-out.

Email: adumitrescu@irex.ro



Adriana Dumitrescu
Financial and Administrative
Officer

"The Global Libraries project brings a wonderful opportunity for Romania," says Mrs. Dumitrescu, "I am glad to be a part of it. With the help of the Gates Foundation, we hope the whole concept of using the public library will be redefined within a few years and people will go to libraries not only for books but to use the Internet." ■

Mr. Marcel Chiranov is the Impact Assessment Specialist. Mr. Chiranov has worked in project and performance management in Romania



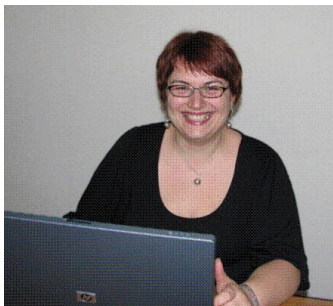
Marcel Chiranov
Impact Assessment Specialist

for several years. Mr. Chiranov's abundant knowledge in assessing impact will provide valuable program direction and provide the information necessary to measure and plan for program success.

E-mail: mchiranov@irex.ro

"I'm happy to be part of the effort to make ICT available to Romanian citizens," says Mr. Chiranov. "We're going to help open doors and make their dreams come true." ■

Ms. Monica Grecu is the Global Libraries Advocacy and Training Specialist. She joined the program with extensive knowledge and experience in local government institutions and government reform programs. Ms. Grecu works closely



Monica Grecu
Advocacy and Training
Specialist

with each pilot site community empowering both librarians and the community at large.

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Ms. Grecu says, "I'm thrilled to work for this program because of all the benefits to rural and underdeveloped commu-

nities. Traveling throughout Romania one can see how much need there is for an easy link with the rest of the world. The Internet is their open window and connection to the world and the possibilities of what is out there." ■

Ms. Ecaterina Vasile is the Global Libraries Grants Manager. Ms. Vasile has experience in program man-



Ecaterina Vasile
Grants Manager

agement and monitoring and evaluation. She previously worked with USAID/Romania on development and humanitarian projects.

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"18 years ago, the very thought about being funded by the Gates Foundation would have seemed science fiction to me—a scientific researcher in computing technology that considered Bill Gates a living IT legend," says Ms. Vasile, "Now, this Global Libraries program - sponsored and brought to Romania, makes me proud to be a small part of it and happy that I have this opportunity. Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Gates

for this opportunity. I am happy to be part of a great team!" ■



Anca Rapeanu
Project Coordinator

Ms. Anca Rapeanu is the Global Libraries Project Coordinator. Ms. Rapeanu comes to IREX with a background in library science. Ms. Rapeanu will provide essential knowledge in reaching out to the library community while aiding in the management of projects.

E-mail: arapeanu@irex.ro

"Joining Global Libraries was the equivalent of coming back to life," says Ms. Rapeanu, "I have worked as a librarian for the past 3 years and I am well aware of the difficult situation of libraries, especially in rural communities. I consider this program to be a great help for librarians in Romania, both in terms of activities that the program is going to develop, and more importantly, in that it will demonstrate that change is necessary." ■

GLOBAL LIBRARIES STEERING COMMITTEE

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IREX
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IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development. Founded in 1968, IREX works in more than 50 countries.

In order to achieve the ambitious goal of bringing Internet access to all of Romania's citizens through public libraries, the Global Libraries project is counting on advice, consultation and guidance from experts in a variety of fields. For this reason, during the initial planning phase of the Global Libraries project, IREX is partnering with the Romanian Government and the National Library Commission to convene a National Steering Committee consisting of representatives from a number of sectors to make the key decisions that will determine not only how the project is implemented, but to also guide future policy development in developing the library and IT sectors. During the monthly meetings, Committee members will provide guidance on the following major issues:

- The name of the project in Romanian and appropriate branding to facilitate understanding and adoption of the project by local librarians and communities in every region of

the country.

- How to effectively promote Romanian cost-share by accessing sources of funding at the national and local levels in order to sustain public access Internet in the long term.
- Development of effective and workable models for a procurement process that will ensure transparency, efficiency and confidence on the part of the general public.
- How to collect and dynamically update information on infrastructure and connectivity options for libraries across the country.

might be designed to help achieve them.

- Evaluation of the effectiveness of different models of Internet center management and funding and recommendations for improvement.
- How small-scale pilot projects in 13 communities can be replicated and expanded to reach all of Romania's 2,933 public libraries.

Although the Steering Committee initially will be a decision-making body for the Global Libraries project, long-term sustainability of the project will require that project activities are carried out by Romanian institutions and that the Committee's deliberations feed into the government's policy-making process. The Committee will meet under the auspices of the National Library Commission, with the eventual goal of integration into the government policy apparatus. The Committee's first meeting, hosted by the Prime Minister's office, will take place on January 29, 2008. ■



- Methodologies for training librarians and community leaders to transform libraries into community information centers.
- Identifying national development goals in health care, the economy, agriculture and other fields that might be served by a library Internet program and how the program

