

IASA'S TRAVEL AWARD PROGRAM **Experiences on attending the IASA Conference** **Paris 27th September – 01 October 2016**

Bertram Lyons, IASA Editor, USA

Being an international organization, IASA recognizes that travel to the annual conference can require extreme expenses for IASA members that vary from year to year depending upon the geographic location of the host organization. To supplement individual travel costs, to encourage and support diverse attendance at IASA annual conferences, and to demonstrate to the audiovisual archive community that IASA values its membership's participation in IASA activities, IASA offers yearly Travel Awards to the annual conference for IASA members (individual, institutional, or sustaining) who are in good standing.

These travel awards support up to 50% of travel costs for awardees, including an effort waive the awardee's conference registration fee. No food or lodging costs are covered, however. Only transportation costs are supported with IASA's Travel Award.

In the past, this award was referred to as the IASA Travel Grant. However, to reinforce the fact that all IASA members are eligible, the name was changed in 2013 to the IASA Travel Award. This being said, applications from IASA members from least-developed countries¹, those presenting a paper, and first-time applicants are prioritized. On average, IASA awards 15 applicants with travel support to the annual conference each year.

In an effort to promote IASA Travel Award recipients, and to illustrate the diversity of recipients, the IASA Journal is highlighting some of last year's recipients with their own words. Each recipient was asked to comment on their experience attending last year's conference in Paris. Excerpts from their responses are included in the text below. For information on how you can acquire support for this year's IASA conference in Washington, D.C., USA, see the Travel Award page on the IASA website: <http://iasa-web.org/travel-awards>.

Reflections on the IASA Travel Award, 2015.

“Although I have attended IASA conferences before, I recently made the decision to begin attending regularly—and participating more deeply—as IASA is the organization that speaks most directly to the work I do as an audiovisual archivist at the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive. Receiving a IASA travel grant eases the financial burden of attending the conference and supports me in my goal of contributing more actively to the work of IASA. It also directly informs my work in and teaching about audiovisual archives, since it is IASA members that are doing cutting edge work, helping establish standards, and setting the direction of the field. In other words, IASA is “where it’s at” for audiovisual archives, and I’m grateful to be able to be there as well.”

Aaron Bittel, UCLA, Los Angeles, USA

¹ Least developed countries are defined using the UNESCO scale, which is politically neutral and changes as countries become more prosperous. The UNESCO scale can be viewed in Annex 1 of the following PDF document (opens in new window): <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002229/222917e.pdf>.

“The conference was very enriching for me in terms of exchanges, networking, and opportunities to gather new experiences in the area of archiving processes. Thank you for everything.”

Lamine Wone, Dakar, Senegal

“It was a great opportunity to present my Gramophone Museum and Gramophone Records Archive as a poster presentation at the 2015 conference in Paris. It was also beneficial for me to meet old and fresh enthusiasts in this field.”

Sunny Mathew Kunnelpurayidom, India

“As an audiovisual archivist at the Public Relations Department Museum and Archive, Thailand, where we administrate the national radio and television stations, I have been responsible for collecting and preserving massive audiovisual materials produced by the PRD. Being a Travel Award recipient has allowed me not only to enhance my knowledge about moving image archiving and preservation but also to network with other professionals. I really appreciate IASA giving me an opportunity to attend the conference in Paris.”

Pawarisa Nipawattanapong, The Public Relations Department Museum and Archive, Thailand

“Travel to IASA Conferences would be very difficult without the Travel Award Program, especially since IASA involves expensive international travel. Assistance from IASA not only reduces the cost, but also provides an external show of support, which aids in obtaining internal institutional support.

Archives can easily become vacuums of knowledge. IASA Conferences provide the opportunity to be exposed to diverse ideas that are catalysts for innovation. Specifically, IASA Paris has exposed to me a new approach to workflow that will hopefully make processing more efficient and stable within the Drexel Audio Archives. This would not be entirely possible without stepping out of one’s daily system and exploring what others are doing.

At Drexel, I am mainly concerned with multi-track file sets, which can be cumbersome to maintain in the digital environment. Housing the Sigma Sound Studios Collection, the Drexel Audio Archives strives to maintain the cultural heritage of Philadelphia’s recorded popular music. IASA attendance allows me to share that cultural heritage and the preservation issues that surround it. The discourses surrounding intellectual property, file management, and technical concerns that occur at IASA provide fresh perspectives and assessments in audiovisual preservation practices.”

Toby Seay, Drexel University, Philadelphia

“I began at Cornell University Library as the AV Preservation Specialist within the department of Digital Scholarship and Preservation Services almost 3 years ago. During my tenure in that position, I have developed and implemented an audiovisual digitization lab that handles various media formats- ¼” audio tape, VHS, U-Matic, cassette, and vinyl LPs. We’ve created over 70TB of digital materials and are continuing to produce around 2.5TB per week.

When planning and now moving forward expanding our lab, I heavily relied on IASA’s Technical Committee’s publications. I benefitted from Carl Fleischhauer, Kate Murray, and Chris Lacinak’s presentation on ADC specifications, Bert Lyons’ Digital Curation Tools Workshop, Pio Pellizzari’s Selection workshop, George Blood’s Colorspace tutorial and many others. The true benefit of attending in person was to be able to talk with and hear from the community as to challenges in digital preservation.

In the past three months I’ve assumed a new role at the library and now have even more duties related to conservation and digitization. I’m now working with our stellar Conservation Department, our Digital Media Group, and our Audiovisual Lab. The IASA community is an indispensable resource to myself and many others in this work. I’m grateful.”

Tre Berney, Director, Digitization and Conservation Services, Cornell University Library

“I am currently a senior sound conservator at the Alexander Turnbull Library, which is a research library within the National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa. Our collections focus on New Zealand and the Pacific. In the field of AV preservation, I have seen many changes in my career so far. The work of the Library has been hugely supported by attending IASA conferences and technical committee meetings over the years.

AV preservation is supported by the Alexander Turnbull Library where I work but it has become increasingly difficult for the Library to fund travel to meetings and conferences, both internally and externally. As the Secretary of the Technical Committee the travel grant has meant the difference between going and not going. I was able this year to attend the conference in Paris and carry out my secretarial duties as well as attend many inspiring conference sessions and meetings. IASA is a whānau (family) and without this support AV archiving is a lonely profession. I appreciate the fact that I have been able to benefit from this Travel Award in order to support the greater good for AV archiving internationally. Thank you IASA!”

Bronwyn Officer, National Library, New Zealand

“My attendance helps me to further encourage my Asian colleagues to look beyond local possibilities and habits. It also helps to get a real picture about all issues around the world, not only in third world countries. As secretary of the T&E Committee, I feel responsible for making points and contribute to the discussion from the viewpoint of the far eastern parts of the globe, third world countries as well as developing countries alike, where many colleagues think that the West is still going ahead ‘without problems.’ It is tremendously important to be personally present at conferences in order to convince others, who cannot attend, about necessary changes, new views on old issues and current trends. Though many things can be done via social media and online, the personal contact to key persons and experts who do the daily work is not replaceable.

The most important impact is that the T&E Committee was not again without secretary; that I could together with a newly introduced colleague, who is going to take over archiving work dedicated to preservation at the university I was teaching for 7 years, could meet up with experts in the field and traditional places of audiovisual history. I felt honored to be supported, which encourages me to further work with enthusiasm.”

Gisa Jähnichen, Berlin, Germany

“I currently work as the Head of the Audiovisual reading room and collection at the National Library of Latvia (NLL). My background is in music and before starting work at the National Library I had no experience in dealing with sound and video recordings, and wasn’t aware of their specific preservation, storage and other requirements. Lucky for me, NLL is a member of IASA, and so I was able to access and read many documents on the IASA website, as well as in IASA journal, that provide really useful and necessary information for working with audiovisual materials.

Receiving travel awards from IASA has enabled me to attend several IASA conferences, which has been invaluable in my professional life. Listening to presentations and participating in tutorials has given me new and practical knowledge that I can apply at my workplace. Conferences have also served as important networking spaces for establishing new contacts which have led to new opportunities in my work, and allowed for easier solution of problems, as I now know exactly who to contact with a specific question. Receiving IASA travel awards has had a really positive impact on my professional development.”

**Zane Grosa, Head of Audiovisual Reading Room,
National Library of Latvia**

“For the last 25 years, I have been involved in bringing together collectors of recorded music in India, through the ‘Society of Indian Record Collectors,’ founded in 1990. At present its 250 members are involved in preservation and digitization of over 3,00,000 gramophone discs and recordings. These are individual efforts not supported by government funds. We plan to upload data on a virtual archive

My paper was accepted for the poster presentation at IASA-2015. As a retired person I was not sure how would I finance the trip. So, I applied for the travel award.

At the conference, I met many old friends from Europe and USA who had attended earlier conferences viz. IASA-2001 (London) and IASA-2012 (India). I also made new friends. Exposure and the experience at the conference will help me in carrying out my work back home in India.”

Dr. Suresh Chandvankar, Mumbai

“I am currently the Senior Conservator at the National Archives of Zambia in charge of conservation, preservation of archival library and sound and audiovisual materials. I hold a Bachelor of Arts with Library and Information Studies. Within the sound and audiovisual archiving profession, my responsibility is to preserve, conserve sound and audiovisual materials, and make these materials easily accessible by the public.

Being a travel award recipient has had a positive impact on me and my work. It has given me an opportunity to meet professionals from sound and audiovisual archives who shared their experiences and I learned a lot from these experiences. The conference brought me from “darkness to light” in terms of sound and audiovisual archiving as this was my first time to attend an IASA conference. The paper presentations, tutorials, workshops, and professional visits were very helpful to me. I am now thinking beyond what prevails at the National Archives of Zambia in terms of sound and audiovisual archiving.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the IASA Board for the Travel Award which enabled me to attend the conference.”

Judith Namutowe, National Archives of Zambia
