

Mr. Francis Gurry
Director General
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
34, chemin des Colombettes
CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

1 October 2019

Re: International Conference on Copyright Limitations and Exceptions for Libraries, Archives, Museums and Educational & Research Institutions, Geneva, Nairobi, 18 -19 June 2019

Dear Director-General Gurry,

We are writing to you concerning the International Conference on Copyright Limitations and Exceptions for Libraries, Archives, Museums and Educational & Research Institutions.

We were very surprised to see the [constellation of speakers for the education and research panel](#). It must not have gone unnoticed by the Secretariat that out of the ten current panelists, seven represent commercial rights-holder interests, one is a consultant on collective licensing and only two panelists actually come from the field of education and research and therefore have the ability to bring in practitioner voices and public interest views.

Well in advance of the Conference, some of us provided suggestions to the Secretariat for suitable expert speakers who would be available to participate, and we offered support in case further ideas might be needed. For example, our suggestion included the renowned professor Bernt Hugenholtz who was not invited.

As a result, we regret that the panel as currently constituted is simply not credible as a forum for a fair and balanced discussion on education and research. This fact will be obvious to member states, observers and the wider global education and research community.

We duly request that you reconsider the composition of the panel so that the interests of educators and research practitioners are properly represented. At an international conference on Copyright Limitations and Exceptions for Libraries, Archives, Museums and Educational & Research Institutions, it is surely obvious that the beneficiaries of the exceptions must be clearly visible. At least half of the panelists should, we believe, represent the institutions that have a genuine interest in making exceptions and limitations for education and research work for practitioners.

Please see below a list of speakers who would be available and interested to speak. We would be happy to provide you with their CVs:

- Bernt Hugenholtz
- Kimberlee Wheatherall, University of Sydney
- David Robinson, Canadian Association of University Teachers, Canada
- Ariel Katz, University of Toronto
- Allan Rocha, Catholic University of Rio, Brazil
- Martin Senftleben, Free University of Amsterdam
- Andreas Holtberget, EUROCLIO, Europe
- Yamile Socolovsky, CONADU, Argentina
- Caroline Ncube, University of Cape Town, South Africa (tbc)
- Tobias Schonwetter, University of Cape Town, South Africa (tbc)

We have been repeatedly disappointed by a similar problematic bias shown in WIPO events, for example, at the regional seminars and other events (letter addressed to you on the 21 June 2019). This conference calls into question WIPO's commitment to seek to balance an innovation incentive and the need for access to knowledge, both of which contribute to a sustainable global innovation ecosystem and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals¹. To avoid a negative public perception, we urge you to re-balance the panel on education and research.

Thank you for your time and for giving this issue full consideration.

Respectfully,

Centre for Internet and Society, India
COMMUNIA
Corporacion Innovarte
Creative Commons
Education International
EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries)
Fundación Karisma

CC: Sylvie Forbin, Darren Tang

¹ WIPO and the Sustainable Development Goals, <https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4354>