

***Forward Together***  
**Recommendations for a reimagined**  
**American Library Association governance model**  
October 2019

**A Note from SCOE**

*We heard you.* Members want an effective, nimble, inclusive, member-driven American Library Association. Maintaining the status quo with our 100-year-old governance structure will not propel ALA as the leading library association that members demand. In order for libraries and librarianship to thrive in the future, we invite members to move ALA *Forward Together*.

Relying on input from thousands of members and data about ALA membership trends and finances, the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) worked since 2018 to develop and refine a package of recommendations to ALA members. *Forward Together* aligns with the streams of change already underway within ALA related to finances, real estate holdings, technology and staffing.

*Forward Together* proposes a package of interrelated recommendations which are necessarily complex because ALA is large and complex. We recommend changes to the board and committees for more direct election and input by members. *Forward Together* streamlines ways for members to get involved, participate, and influence ALA.

The financial realities and advocacy needs faced by libraries demands ALA members to be bold. Share the excitement in moving ALA *Forward Together*. We invite you to review the attached document that details the input and refinement process, background information, rationale for recommendations, and some of the most important data reviewed related to membership trends and dues, ALA finances, and streams of change.

*Forward Together* was presented to the ALA Executive Board at their Fall Meeting in October. Recognizing the multiple streams of change occurring in the association right now, the Executive Board decided to move forward with the next phase of *Forward Together* including a transition of the work from SCOE to a new member group, extending the timeline of voting on recommendations by members. The details of this transition, timeline, and move to the next phase are still being developed and we hope to share more information with you all closer to Midwinter. The new, extended timeline will allow for ongoing, continuous changes to our governance model and *Forward Together*, modeling the iterative, 12-month process with checks and balances to increase member participation in not only *Forward Together* but also in our association. The following report is presented as it was to the Executive Board.

We invite you to review the current iteration of the recommendations, provide feedback, and continue in the drive towards a stronger ALA together.

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	3
Introduction .....	5
Building the Momentum for Change .....	5
The Committee .....	6
Creating the Recommendations .....	7
The Recommendations .....	9
Board of Directors .....	11
Standing Committees of the Board of Directors .....	13
Leadership Assemblies .....	16
Member Engagement Opportunities .....	17
Divisions of the American Library Association .....	19
Round Tables of the American Library Association .....	20
Additional Recommendations .....	21
Member Process: How It All Works Together .....	22
Next Steps .....	26
Conclusion .....	26
Appendix A: Fiscal Analysis .....	27
Appendix B: Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness Timeline .....	31
Appendix C: 2017-2018 ALA CD#35.1 2018 ALA Annual Conference .....	33
Appendix D: Avenue M Survey Results .....	39

## **Executive Summary**

*Forward Together* imagines a vibrant and effective American Library Association that supports libraries and library workers. Relying on input from thousands of members and data about ALA membership and finances, the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness has worked since early 2018 to develop and refine a package of recommendations with members. *Forward Together* aligns with the streams of change already underway within ALA and propels them into a future thinking organization. *Forward Together* proposes this once-in-a-generation opportunity to modernize ALA's governance structure through evidence-based recommendations for improved member engagement and effective governance. These recommendations will help lower barriers to member engagement, increase individual member impact, and widen the pool of potential leaders, creating a stronger association overall.

### Board of Directors

The Board of Directors and will be directly elected by members with five appointed positions to fill in gaps of diversity left by the election process. The board envisioned here has reset expectations, is accountable directly to the membership, and will receive critical, ongoing input from general members and assemblies of leaders on an ongoing basis.

### 6 Standing Committees of the Board of Directors

The proposed ALA Standing Committees of the Board of Directors are: Finance and Audit; Nominating; Leadership Development; Association Policy; Public Policy and Advocacy; and Social Justice.

ALA Members will directly elect two-thirds of the member leaders on these committees and the Board of Directors will work with the Nominating and Leadership Development Committees to appoint one-third of the member leaders to ensure the skills, experiences, and diversity to fill in gaps of skills, knowledge, and diversity left by the election process. Many of the functions of the current 187 member Council will occur within these six standing committees comprised of 90 members, as well as the below Leadership Assemblies comprised of over 100 members.

### Leadership Assemblies

The Division, Round Table, Chapter, and Affiliate Leadership Assemblies will directly participate in ALA's governance and influence the Board of Directors. The four assemblies will facilitate information sharing, partnership building, and networking within and between assembly participants. The functions of leadership assemblies build upon the strengths of current groups like ALA Council, the Chapter Leaders Forum, and the Round Table Coordinating Assembly by maintaining a place for discussion and influence while opening participation to more members and creating a direct path to recommending and influencing change.

### Member Engagement Opportunities

Communities of Interest, Working Groups, and Advisory Groups all serve as avenues for meaningful and influential engagement in ALA. Each opportunity provides a different member experience and engagement level, meeting members with the type of engagement and participation level they desire.

### Divisions

*Forward Together* imagines divisions that collaborate with each other and with the rest of the association to build on the enriching experience members have in their division home as well as the expertise division members hold. A direct line of influence to the Board of Directors will exist through the Division Leadership Assembly. Additional recommendations include:

- A regular review of each division in consultation with the ALA executive director. Potential mergers within the divisions may occur, including one merger already being discussed between LLAMA, ALCTS, and LITA to create one new proposed division, CORE: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures.
- A review of the “Operating Agreement” in relationship to the *Forward Together*.
- Work with the Membership Office and Membership Committee to align dues and dues structures across ALA and divisions.
- Align member engagement structures in the divisions and throughout ALA. Divisions may have advisory groups, working groups, communities of interest, and sections.

### Round Tables

*Forward Together* imagines round tables that collaborate with each other and the rest of the association to build on the enriching experience members have as well as the expertise of their round table. Round tables will be encouraged to recommend advisory groups and working groups to the Board of Directors to bring action and influence around important issues. They will have a direct line of communication and influence with the board through the Round Table Leadership Assembly and will be looked to for their expertise and advice around issues important to them. A number of recommendations have been made for round tables to enable focus on mission, programming, and member driven aspects, including:

- Replace individual round table bylaws and create a shared policies and procedures document. This will identify the relationship and fiscal responsibility of round tables with members, clarifying the symbiotic relationship between round tables and all of ALA.
- Work with the Membership Office and Membership Committee to align dues and dues structures across ALA and round tables.
- Increase the minimum number of dues-paying members needed to create a round table to one percent of ALA’s membership unless identified as a strategic priority by the Board of Directors to ensure the necessary volunteer and staff support needed.

Members seek a modern ALA that is the voice for libraries and librarianship into the future. The financial realities and advocacy needs faced by libraries today demands ALA members to be bold as we move the association forward. The following report details the input and refinement process, background information, recommendations, rationale, and some of the most important data reviewed related to membership trends and dues, ALA finances, and streams of change. There is excitement in moving ALA forward together with and for our members.

## Introduction

For decades, library leaders and members have recognized that the American Library Association (ALA) needs change. A change which has become more urgent following the 2008 recession as ALA membership declines and resources become stretched thin. Past members of the association often did not renew their membership because of feelings of disconnectedness and an inability to find a home within ALA. Most of these past members let their memberships lapse after only three years, indicating ALA is not meeting the needs of its newest library advocates and workers and is not relevant to those who are further along in their careers. Members join ALA because they see the association as a strong library advocate, a place for professional development, and an opportunity to connect with other passionate members, values that are a strength of the association. What newer members need in addition to these things to stay members and to continue finding the value in ALA membership is to also be part of an association that is a leader in the field, is mission driven, is inclusive, is responsive to the issues of the profession, and is proactive in advocating for libraries.

The structural changes that our association has struggled with over the last few decades and the resulting complexity has created an organization that is large, complicated, and difficult to change. ALA now has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to realign our association for the world we live in today. This opportunity includes an examination of how priorities are established for the association, how members identify the most significant challenges facing them, and how the efficiency of that work can be improved. Past efforts have resulted in tweaks, but to move ALA forward, a large, comprehensive evaluation of the most effective methods of member engagement and prioritization needs to take place.

## Building Momentum for Change

The only way that an organization like ALA can successfully move forward is through a member-driven and member-led process that relies on broad input and ideas, incorporation of those input and ideas, and member-driven action. Following the footsteps of many other large associations that have recently engaged in this type of review in response to the economic and societal changes around us, ALA 2017–18 President Jim Neal, in his November/December 2017 *American Libraries* President's Column, expressed a call to action to review our association's current structure. He wrote that this process of review must embrace our core values and focus on member engagement. He prompted readers to think about the complexity of the organization and how we might evolve for the future. With this as a stage, and with the recognition that this type of review needs to occur on a regular basis, the process toward *Forward Together*, the report of the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE), began to take shape.

Answering President Neal's call to action in fall 2017, the ALA Executive Board authorized the predecessor to SCOE, an exploratory subcommittee focusing on the concept of organizational effectiveness and governance review. Then board members Andrew K. Pace, Lessa

Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada and Patricia "Patty" M. Wong conducted research, compiled information from past surveys and focus groups, and explored previous organizational effectiveness and reorganization efforts. In addition to this research, the subcommittee held several feedback sessions at the 2018 ALA Midwinter Meeting. The subcommittee report, presented to Council at the 2018 ALA Annual Conference (and included as appendix c) concluded that members find ALA extremely complex and difficult to navigate, contributing to a decline in ALA membership and overall support for the association and its work.

At the same time, other important changes occurred in the association. The Membership Office worked with consultants from Avenue M to study ALA membership trends (see appendix D), and the Executive Board authorized an investment budget for the association, prioritizing and investing extra money into areas of need. The investment budget focused on five main "streams of change": information technology investment, Development Office investment, real estate exploration, Midwinter Restructuring, and Organizational Effectiveness. This investment budget was another signal that the association has large changes that need to be made in order to meet its mission and engage as many members as possible while remaining true to its core values.

These reports, investments, and proposed changes are all intertwined and rest on a cohesive, unified, forward-thinking association working toward the same goal. For one area to be successful, the others must also be successful. These changes and these needs led to the creation of SCOE, a group of twenty-three passionate members and staff from across the association who were tasked with conducting a comprehensive review and study of ALA's governance, member participation, and legal structures and systems, with the goal of proposing changes that will revitalize its success, strength, and agility as a modern association for a modern profession.

## **The Committee**

SCOE was appointed in June 2018 by then ALA President Jim Neal with support of the Executive Board and the next two ALA Presidents, 2018–19 ALA President Loida Garcia Febo and 2019–20 ALA President Wanda K. Brown, also a SCOE member. Appointments were made to solicit a wide variety of distinct perspectives, disciplines, library types, and ALA experiences. An intentionally large committee to incorporate as many varied intersections and perspectives as possible, SCOE used this strength to seek inclusion of and solicit input from all members into the recommendations, not just themselves or people who think like them.

Executive Board Member Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada serves as the SCOE chair and ALA Executive Board liaison. A full roster of the committee can be found on the [ALA website](#) and is listed below:

- Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada, Chair (Palos Verdes Library District)
- Wanda K. Brown (Winston-Salem State University)
- Emily Daly (Duke University)

- Emmanuel Faulkner Sr. (Baltimore City Public Schools)
- Kenny Garcia (California State University, Monterey Bay)
- Mandi Goodsett (Cleveland State University)
- Terri Grief (Retired, McCracken County High School, Instructor for Murray State University)
- Alexia Hudson-Ward (Oberlin College)
- Ben Hunter (University of Idaho)
- Steve Laird (Infogroup)
- Jack Martin (Providence Public Library)
- Alanna Aiko Moore (University of California San Diego)
- Jim Neal (Columbia University, emeritus)
- Lucinda Nord (Indiana Library Federation)
- Vailey Oehlke (Multnomah County Library)
- Andrew Pace (OCLC)
- Juan Rivera (A. Phillip Randolph Campus High School)
- Karen G. Schneider (Sonoma State University)
- Felton Thomas (Cleveland Public Library)
- Kerry Ward (ALA/Library Leadership & Management Association)
- Nora Wiltse (Chicago Public Schools)
- Steven D. Yates (University of Alabama)
- Shali Zhang (Auburn University)

ALA Staff Liaisons are Mary Ghikas and Raymond Garcia. Jim Meffert and Paul Meyer of Tecker International Consulting have provided guidance and support to the committee.

In addition to SCOE, a Fiscal Analysis Working Group was created to begin identifying the financial implications of the preliminary recommendations. This working group was chaired by ALA Immediate Past Treasurer Susan Hildreth, and more information on the Working Group and its work is in appendix A.

## **Creating the Recommendations**

Member participation and engagement was critical to developing *Forward Together*. The process for creating the recommendations included broad input from members across the association and represents a collaborative and iterative process that drew from knowledge, evidence, and feedback. Transparency was valued in communication and input which occurred through several avenues, including:

- eight in-person public input sessions;
- seven virtual webinars and feedback sessions;
- eleven ALA staff focus groups;
- meetings with more than 40 different groups across ALA, including Council, divisions, round tables, and committees; and
- the “Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) Discussion Forum,” a public space on [ALA Connect](#) for members to share their thoughts, questions, and concerns, with 378 members and growing.

Between these channels of communication, SCOE has reached thousands of ALA members: new, longstanding, past, and prospective, all of which have helped to inform and transform ideas and recommendations over the last year.

SCOE met in person for an initial two-day Design Summit in October 2018 in Itasca, Illinois. A change to ALA's current structure was not a foregone conclusion. The committee first considered a "no change" recommendation, but as its work progressed and member input was received it became clear that change was needed and members had many great ideas for ways to improve the work of the association. During the Design Summit, SCOE reviewed input from past discussions, including conversations within the library community over the last six years, kitchen-table conversations, membership surveys, interviews with stakeholders, and reports from previous efforts at organizational change within ALA. The committee also reviewed best practices for organizational change and models from other large membership associations. It was clear from those discussions, from studying other associations, and from past efforts to refine the decision-making structure of ALA, that the current ALA structure needs to change. The current structure has multiple, repetitive steps to joining, offers few opportunities for members to engage directly in helping the association prioritize issues affecting them, and is not reflective of the kind of community engagement we value in our libraries today.

Particular consideration was given to the need to infuse the values of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into ALA's core. SCOE heard and recognized that many people who are underrepresented in the association feel disillusioned and excluded from ALA's current structure and are unable to see a path toward leadership, professional development, and moving the association forward. To address these issues, the committee took a close look at the institutional and structural barriers to participation and influence including cost, ability to travel, institutional support, oppression and marginalization of groups, and political differences. The recommendations seek to make an association that creates an equitable playing field, supports its members in their endeavors, and creates spaces for underrepresented people to gain desired support and experiences in professional development and focused, intentional leadership paths.

From the Design Summit, several ideas the committee wanted to test were brought to members at the 2019 Midwinter Meeting for in-person input sessions. Other opportunities for feedback were offered after Midwinter through virtual input sessions, online feedback forms, and email. Video-conferencing technology made it possible to host virtual opportunities, allowing SCOE to model and test their recommendations in real time. By using technology to gather feedback and input, SCOE explored the ways proposed recommendations could help create an association by and for all its members, where and when they can engage.

SCOE met again for two days in May 2019 at ALA headquarters in Chicago to incorporate member feedback into the original ideas and create preliminary recommendations. These preliminary recommendations were brought to members for feedback in June and July 2019 via in-person and virtual feedback sessions, as well as email and the ALA Connect discussion group. SCOE convened for a third face-to-face meeting for two days in September 2019 to



integrate the feedback gathered over the summer and create the recommendations provided in this report.

All SCOE meetings and public in-person input sessions included facilitators Jim Meffert and Paul Meyer from Tecker International. Additional ALA staff were brought into some of these meetings for their unique perspectives: Miguel Figueroa, director of the Center for the Future of Libraries; Jody Gray, director of the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services; and Stephanie Hlywak, director of the Communications & Marketing Office. In addition to in-person meetings, the committee held many virtual meetings and discussions via email and ALA Connect.

Members of the committee hope that ALA members and staff recognize this effort as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to move our association forward together and that we all need to look at ALA as a whole, not just our individual pieces. The committee members did not always agree with each other at every step throughout the process, but there was an understanding that consensus would lead to broad inclusion and increased benefits for members. Members want ALA to become a model for other associations to follow. Members want ALA to become an association that infuses equity, diversity and inclusion into every action. Members want ALA to become an association that will allow for stronger member participation and influence in an organization that supports libraries and library workers in a society and culture that was almost unimaginable when the current structure was developed. Member's aspiration and goals for ALA are the lens through which *Forward Together* was created.

## **The Recommendations**

In the spirit of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, SCOE members took time and care in the creation of recommendations that build upon more than a century of work by passionate member leaders. The committee sought to be as brave in its recommendations and think as aspirationally for the association as its founders did, with the understanding that our society and landscape has changed dramatically since the association's inception. This understanding of change was paired with the recognition that ALA's members are still united in its mission: "To provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."

The recommendations, collectively known as *Forward Together*, are intended to reflect the changes in society and in member expectations. One of the main changes recommended is to provide multiple avenues for year-round engagement by all members rather than just twice a year at Midwinter Meetings and Annual Conferences by a few select members. Another main change recommended is institutionalized intentionality and diversity in our governing bodies and structures and safeguards to protect us against homogeny. The recommendations are so intertwined with one another that it is difficult to pull out one example without affecting another area of the association.

The recommendations are complex because ALA, as currently structured, is incredibly complex. This complexity has made it difficult for members to get involved and find their way and has stifled past efforts to innovate. This complexity also requires us to look at the totality of the recommendations and not just focus on parts we favor, find convenient, or consider questionable. With these recommendations, SCOE hopes to accomplish a vision of a unified association that works towards one mission and supports all facets of its work. The pieces of the association are all of the parts that make us whole, and the facets described below work as one unit to create a strong ALA with increased member participation, member influence, and member engagement.

To guide the outcomes of the project, the following characteristics of a future ALA were developed through member feedback. The ALA of the future must

- enable consistent, strategic, and effective member engagement;
- enable organization-wide planning focused on a common mission and vision for library workers, library supporters, and libraries;
- be financially sustainable;
- enable sustainable, long-term change (including evaluation of progress and more frequent future adjustments);
- allow stakeholders to have confidence in decisions made when they are not in the room;
- deliver high-value support and impact for members;
- pursue environmental sustainability in its activities; and
- center equity, diversity, and inclusion.

With those goals in mind, as informed by ALA's members, *Forward Together* proposes the following recommendations:

## Board of Directors

<u>Future Composition of the Board of Directors of the American Library Association:</u>	<u>Current Composition of the Executive Board of the American Library Association:</u>
<p>17 volunteer members and 1 staff member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 4 elected by membership: president, president elect, immediate past president, treasurer</li> <li>● 8 elected by membership: at-large members</li> <li>● 5 appointed by the Board for unique skills and perspectives not represented by elected members</li> <li>● 1 staff (executive director, ex-officio, non-voting)</li> </ul> <p>Term Length: 3 years, staggered</p> <p>Sub-committees of the Board: Executive and Board Effectiveness (Endowment Trustees discussed in Member Engagement Opportunities)</p>	<p>12 volunteer members and 1 staff member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 4 elected by membership: president, president elect, immediate past president, treasurer</li> <li>● 8 elected by Council from current Councilors*</li> <li>● 1 staff (executive director, ex officio, non-voting)</li> </ul> <p>Term Length: 3 years, staggered</p> <p>Committees of the Board: Executive, Board Effectiveness, Finance and Audit, Endowment Trustees</p> <p><i>*At-large members of Council are elected by ALA membership. Councilors representing a specific division or round table are elected by their members and Chapter Councilors are elected by their chapter's members.</i></p>

*Forward Together* envisions a diverse, responsive, and inclusive Board of Directors. Currently only four members of the Executive Board are directly elected by the full membership: the president, president elect, immediate past president, and treasurer. In *Forward Together*, the majority of board members, twelve, will be directly elected by the membership, and an additional five positions will be appointed by the Board of Directors with the help of the Nominating Committee and Leadership Development Committee. These appointments will be made to ensure a diverse and inclusive board that incorporates skills, library types, and backgrounds not represented by elected members. The Board of Directors will continue to receive funding from the association for Board-related activities, including travel to meetings and conferences, reducing economic barriers to participation. Direct election of the majority of Board members places accountability of elected leaders of the association in the hands of the many, rather than the current multi-step process that results in less than 200 members selecting the majority of the Executive Board. The current multi-step process includes the election of eight at-large Executive Board members by and from ALA Council, some of whom were elected by the full membership, some by round table membership, some by division membership, and some by chapter membership. A single governing body with direct accountability to members as is proposed in the Board of Directors will enable Board members to take a larger view of the association rather than represent and promote the interests of one particular area.

Accountability is paramount to the role of the Board of Directors. Members of the Board are accountable to the association's membership, regardless of whether they have been elected or

voted onto the Board. This accountability to members requires Board members to listen to and create action on behalf of members and be able to articulate and explain their actions to members for transparency and trust.

This accountability and trust is also represented in the proposed name change from “Executive Board” to “Board of Directors.” The name change is intended to reset expectations of the Board. The Board of Directors as envisioned here is accountable directly to the membership and will receive critical, ongoing input from general members and assemblies of leaders. Moreover, the name change denotes the Board’s existing and increased accountability for legal, financial, and administrative responsibilities and direction given to the ALA executive director, whom the board is responsible for hiring. The new name also further distinguishes the Board of Directors from the Executive Committee, a five member subgroup of the Board made up of the ALA president, president elect, immediate past president, treasurer, and executive director.

Each Board member, as they do now, will have a direct liaison responsibility with a committee of the Board, leadership assembly, and area of the association (offices, divisions, round tables, etc.). These liaison roles are intended to provide direct input to the Board of Directors, and communication will be regular and timely. Board members will not only report out to their designated groups, they will bring back suggestions, requests, and expertise to inform and influence Board decisions. These two way relationships are intended to not only improve communication between the Board of Directors, member leaders, and members, but also to encourage accountability and allow for larger numbers of members to voice their support or opposition to association policy, legislative issues, and more.

**Standing Committees of the Board of Directors**

<p><u>Future Standing Committees of the ALA Board of Directors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 6 committees:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finance and Audit</li> <li>○ Nominating</li> <li>○ Leadership Development</li> <li>○ Association Policy</li> <li>○ Public Policy and Advocacy</li> <li>○ Social Justice</li> </ul> </li> <li>● 15 members per committee:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 10 elected by ALA members</li> <li>○ 5 appointed by the Board, one of which is a Board member and acts as the Board liaison to the committee</li> </ul> </li> <li>● 1 ALA staff member each</li> <li>● Each standing committee will also hold regular in-person and virtual committee membership meetings (except the Nominating Committee).</li> <li>● Standing committees will work in conjunction with advisory groups, working groups, and communities of practice</li> </ul>	<p><u>Current ALA comparison:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There is no direct correlation to current ALA structure. The future standing committees are comparable to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ some of the Committees of Council such as Policy Monitoring and Committee on Committees;</li> <li>○ some of the Committees of the Association such as Nominating, Appointments, and Constitution and Bylaws;</li> <li>○ some of the functions of ALA Council such as policy development.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● The number of members per committee varies as does their member composition. Most committees are appointed by the Committee on Committees or the Appointment Committee, but some Committees of Council such as Policy Monitoring may only be comprised of Councilors.</li> <li>● 1 Executive Board liaison each</li> <li>● 1 ALA staff member each</li> </ul>
---	--

Six standing committees will accomplish the core functions of the association. These committees will be supported by advisory groups, working groups, and communities of interest, each of which will provide greater opportunities for member participation than the current structure. These standing committees will also work closely with divisions and round tables to seek recommendations, input, and expertise from their areas.

To have broad member input and increase democratic participation from the few to the many, committees will also hold membership meetings focused around their charge. The membership meetings will be both in-person and virtual, providing opportunities for all interested ALA members to supply input, feedback, and recommendations to the committee for consideration. These focused membership meetings will be in addition to regular general membership meetings which will be held in-person and virtually to give a view of the entire association. Only

the Nominating Committee will not hold membership meetings because of the confidential nature of its work. To promote transparency, the committee will put out open calls for nominations from members and may hold open online meetings to share their process.

The members of all standing committees will be selected by a hybrid process just as the Board of Directors. Out of the fifteen members of each committee, ten members will be directly elected by members and five members will be appointed by the Board of Directors. Appointments will ensure a diverse and inclusive board that includes perspectives, skills, library types, and backgrounds not represented by elected members. The process for appointing and identifying potential members will include working with the ALA Leadership Committee, ALA staff, and other entities of the organization that may wish to provide input. One of these appointments will be a Board member who also acts as the committee's liaison. Members will serve two-year staggered terms and may serve up to two non-consecutive terms in their lifetime. Nominating Committee members will serve one-year, once in a lifetime terms. Each committee will also have a committed ALA Staff Member to support their work.

The proposed ALA Standing Committees are:

1. Finance and Audit
2. Nominating
3. Leadership Development
4. Association Policy
5. Public Policy and Advocacy
6. Social Justice

#### *Finance and Audit Committee*

The Finance and Audit Committee's charge will include reviewing ALA's proposed budget within the context of the association's strategic plan and strategic priorities, reviewing the financial impact of actions taken by the Board of Directors, and making budget recommendations to the Board of Directors. This committee will also work with the endowment trustees, review financial projections, and perform other fiscal duties as necessary. This committee will be chaired by the ALA treasurer.

#### *Nominating Committee*

The Nominating Committee's charge will include nominating the election slate for ALA officers and committees, overseeing the petition process for those members who wish to run as petition candidates for a position, and nominating chairs for the six standing committees of the Board of Directors. Nominations for committee chairs will be given to the Board of Directors for appointment. The Nominating Committee might opt to form sub-committees to help oversee appointments to advisory groups or working groups or to manage the Volunteer Clearinghouse, a new entity described in further detail later in this report under "Additional Recommendations." The Nominating Committee will also identify and nominate members and conveners for advisory groups and working groups. These nominations will be given to the Board of Directors for appointment. The Nominating Committee will work closely with the Leadership Development Committee to identify candidates and will encourage a self-nomination process. This committee

is intended to be highly inclusive and provide more members the opportunity to participate. The Nominating Committee will be chaired by the President-Elect.

#### Leadership Development Committee

The Leadership Development Committee's charge will be to identify, cultivate, develop, and grow potential member leaders within the association. This committee will focus on ensuring members from underrepresented backgrounds have opportunities to serve within the association and will have strong staff support to ensure continuity and priority. Leadership development programs such as Emerging Leaders and Spectrum Scholars would work closely with this committee. The Leadership Development Committee would also work closely with the Nominating Committee to identify potential candidates. These two committees would also work together to identify potential candidates and member leaders who may need more support and guidance in running successfully for office, chairing a committee, or serving the association in another capacity, and to identify resources and support for these members. The Leadership Development Committee will also recommend and solicit names to and from the Volunteer Clearinghouse. The Leadership and Development Committee will be chaired by the past president.

#### Association Policy Committee

The Association Policy Committee's charge will focus on issues and topics of internal association governance and policy as related to the work of ALA. This committee will work closely with all facets of the Association to regularly review and ensure best practices and policies that create an equitable, diverse, and inclusive association. This committee will also be charged with identifying and recommending members for honorary membership in the association. The Association Policy Committee will be chaired by an appointed member as recommended by the Nominating Committee.

#### Public Policy and Advocacy Committee

The Public Policy and Advocacy Committee's charge will include focusing on issues and topics of importance to libraries, especially in the areas of public policy and advocacy. Members will seek input and expertise from librarians across the association, and its actions may include recommendations for the creation of advisory committees, working groups, and communities of practice. The Public Policy and Advocacy Committee will be chaired by an appointed member as recommended by the Nominating Committee.

#### Social Justice Committee

The Social Justice Committee's charge will focus on issues and topics of importance to libraries and the association in the context of social justice and equity, diversity, and inclusion. Members will seek input and expertise from librarians across the association, and its actions may include recommendations for the creation of advisory groups, working groups, and communities of practice. The Social Justice Committee will be chaired by an appointed member as recommended by the Nominating Committee.

## Leadership Assemblies

<u>Future leadership assemblies:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Chapter Leadership Assembly (50-80 members)</li><li>2. Round Table Leadership Assembly (21 members)</li><li>3. Division Leadership Assembly (9 members)</li><li>4. Affiliates Leadership Assembly (30 members)</li></ol>	<u>Current leadership assemblies:</u> <p>There is currently no direct correlation for the proposed leadership assemblies, but they seek to be direct, open lines of influence to the Board of Directors. Leadership assemblies maintain the functions and strengths of several existing groups such as ALA Council, the Chapter Leaders Forum and the Round Table Coordinating Assembly.</p>
--	--

Four leadership assemblies with representation from four areas of the association will be convened both in-person and virtually multiples times throughout the year. Leadership assemblies have a hand in ALA's governance and are direct, open lines of influence to the Board of Directors. Members of the leadership assemblies will share information, influence priority setting, and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. Recommendations may include the creation and appointment of working groups or advisory groups or focus on a strategic area. Convenings of the leadership assemblies will be open to all interested ALA members, and agendas will be set and determined by core members.

The four leadership assemblies and their members are identified below. Member numbers are determined as of October 2019 except for the divisions which assumes a successful merger of LLAMA, LITA, and ALCTS into CORE: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures.

1. *Chapter Leadership Assembly:* Approximately 80 members. All ALA chapters (including of regional chapters), AASL affiliates, and ACRL chapters would have a representative.
2. *Round Table Leadership Assembly:* All 21 round tables would have a representative.
3. *Division Leadership Assembly:* All 9 divisions would have a representative.
4. *Affiliates:* Up to 30 representatives, including all ALA affiliates.

Each leadership assembly will be led by two co-conveners with staggered year terms. These co-conveners are selected by their members and formally appointed by the Board of Directors upon receipt of the recommended appointments. Members will determine the process of appointment or election of the conveners. This may include an election, rotating appointment, or another mechanism. The process for appointment recommendations are intentionally left up to members of the leadership assemblies because each one functions uniquely and their needs and relationships with each other vary. In-person participation would not be required for meetings convened at conferences and members would be able to designate who their representative is for each meeting. Members may select one or a few individuals to represent their interests. Each leadership assembly will have a liaison from the Board of Directors and ALA staff.



The functions of these leadership assemblies build upon the strengths of current groups like ALA Council, the Chapter Leaders Forum, and the Round Table Coordinating Assembly by maintaining a place for discussion and influence, by opening membership to wider representation, and by creating a direct path to recommending change. The groups of each assembly, while directly participating in ALA’s governance, also can facilitate information sharing, partnership building, and networking between each other, and, ultimately, between the assemblies themselves. The open nature of these assemblies to be shaped by the groups represented allows for the unique cultures of each to set the agenda and topics for discussion while coming together to strengthen the association.

***Member Engagement Opportunities***

<p><u>Future Member Engagement Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communities of Interest</li> <li>● Working Groups</li> <li>● Advisory Groups</li> <li>● Standing Committees of the Board of Directors</li> <li>● Endowment Trustees</li> <li>● Committee on Accreditation*</li> </ul> <p>*Name to be changed to reflect unique role within the association upon findings of working group</p>	<p><u>Current Member Engagement Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Standing Committees of the Association</li> <li>● Standing Committees of Council</li> <li>● Task Forces and Working Groups appointed for special projects</li> <li>● Endowment Trustees</li> </ul>
--	--

The results of the surveys and member input indicated changes in members’ vision of ideal participation in the association. Members no longer want long-term appointments with no potential end results. Members want to engage in the association for shorter amounts of time doing work that they are passionate about, they have expertise in, and that influences the association. The member engagement opportunities below are intended to provide a variety of options for members to meaningfully engage with the association, helping them to see value in the work of the association and, ultimately, their membership. In addition to engagement through the Board of Directors, standing committees, membership meetings, and leadership assemblies, communities of interest, working groups, and advisory groups are proposed to give a wide range of engagement opportunities.

*Communities of Interest*

Communities of interest are ALA Connect communities where members can create conversations around newer areas of interest within the profession and the association. Communities of interest may develop enough conversation to identify a need for the creation of an advisory group or may identify necessary actions to create a working group. These communities will be monitored by the Board of Directors to identify emerging issues, trends, and experts. An ALA staff member will be identified to help members create communities of interest in ALA Connect and troubleshoot technical issues. If a community of interest goes inactive for

two years, their discussions and documentation will be archived in ALA Connect. Some examples of what a community of interest might focus on include virtual reality or STEM.

### Working Groups

Working groups are intended to be time-bound, project-based groups whose work results in an end product such as a toolkit, report on best practices, or an update to ALA materials. Examples of working groups include: the Monetary Library Fines Working Group, the Awards and Scholarships Review Working Group, and the Library Bill of Rights Working Group.

The size of working groups will vary with the task and the actions required. Each working group will have a minimum of five members with a recommended total membership of no more than fifteen members and a convener. Appointments will be made by the Board of Directors in collaboration with the Nominating Committee, the Leadership Development Committee, and the group who recommended the working group if applicable. These appointments will seek members with the appropriate skills and background for the work at hand with room for mentoring and growth of newer members. Appointments will be short-term: initially one year or less with the potential for extension if the work requires.

### Advisory Groups

Advisory groups will advise the ALA Board of Directors and relevant standing committees on important, timely issues by monitoring the profession and the association. They will be encouraged to propose working groups to the ALA Board of Directors to complete tasks or projects in relationship to the issues they are advising on and monitoring. The number of advisory groups will be flexible and change over time based upon the needs of the profession and the association. This process may look like the following example:

1. The Intellectual Freedom Advisory Group works with the Office for Intellectual Freedom to track a new issue, determine its scope, and gather some details.
2. It is determined that a series of recommendations may need to be made to influence policy and advocacy around a particular area. The Intellectual Freedom Advisory Group then recommends to the Board of Directors the appointment of a working group and the Board of Directors works with the advisory group and the Leadership Development Committee to determine appointments.
3. The working group then becomes accountable to the Board of Directors, who relies upon the Intellectual Freedom Advisory Group for their expertise and skills in determining the course of action regarding the results of the working group.

Examples of possible topics for advisory groups include intellectual freedom, sustainability at conferences, and professional ethics.

Advisory groups comprise of a chair, chair-elect, and past chair with a three-year commitment, one year in each role, to promote institutional knowledge and appropriate preparation for the role of chair. Members of the advisory groups will be nominated by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Board of Directors for two-year terms. Advisory group members can serve up to two consecutive two-year terms.

Once *Forward Together* is approved by ALA members, a reconstitution phase is proposed to get to the new member engagement structure: All ALA and Council committees will have one year to reconstitute as an advisory group, working group, round table, or community of interest. The reconstitution proposals will be submitted to the Board of Directors and require a rationale and proposed outcomes. Existing committees will be encouraged to review their work as it relates to the work of other existing committees and propose merging or rearticulating their goals and purpose where needed. Committees that do not submit a reconstitution proposal during that time will be sunsetted at the end of the reconstitution period.

#### *Additional Engagement Opportunities*

The current ALA Committee on Accreditation plays a unique role within the association and structurally does not fit into the proposed member engagement opportunities in *Forward Together*. Taking into account the unique role and a possible need for restructuring the work of the committee, the Committee on Accreditation will request the establishment of a Committee on Accreditation Working Group by the Executive Board at its Fall 2019 meeting to address issues raised by the committee. This working group will bring an interim report to the Spring 2020 meeting of the Executive Board and the results may be included in the final *Forward Together* recommendations at the 2020 ALA Annual Conference. SCOE recommends that the Committee also change its name to reflect its unique role and scope of work.

The current Endowment Trustees structure and function does not have any recommended changes.

#### ***Divisions of the American Library Association***

ALA Divisions provide a focal point for the important and unique issues facing different types of libraries and library work in addition to helping members find a natural home in the Association based on the uniqueness of their work place or work type and their expertise.

With this in mind, and considering the unique expertise that each division holds, *Forward Together* encourages the divisions to work together to increase their strengths and lean on each other for support in areas of need. Divisions will have a direct line of communication and influence with the Board of Directors through the Division Leadership Assembly, which will foster communication and collaboration between the divisions and other facets of the association. It is also important to note that because division members are also association members, individuals elected or appointed to: the Board of Directors, standing committees, advisory groups, working groups, or communities of interest, will provide not only their individual perspective, but also their important perspective from membership in a division. It is through this lens that the recommendations for ALA's divisions are the following:

- A regular review of each division in consultation with the ALA executive director.  
Potential mergers within the divisions may occur, including one merger already

underway between LLAMA, ALCTS, and LITA to create one new proposed division, CORE: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures.

- A review of the “Operating Agreement” in relationship to the *Forward Together* recommendations. This review may include but is not limited to a review of bylaws, dues, and dues structures. Within this larger umbrella of the Operating Agreement are several recommendations:
  - Replace individual division bylaws with a shared policies and procedures document. This will help define the relationship and fiscal responsibility of divisions, helping members understand the symbiotic relationship between divisions and the rest of ALA.
  - With assistance from the Membership Office and the Membership Committee, align dues and dues structures across the divisions. This makes the process easier for members to join divisions and helps members understand how dues are spent. It is recommended to explore the rate of \$70 for each division from the preliminary fiscal analysis models. This would have the least fiscal impact overall and is only a recommendation for the Membership Office and Committee to further explore and test this model.
  - Schedule a regular review of the Operating Agreement.
  - A process and timeline for the above recommendations is to be determined in consultation with the divisions and the executive director.
- Align member engagement structures in the divisions and throughout ALA. Divisions may have, but are not required to have: advisory groups, working groups, and communities of interest. Sections can continue to exist in their current form, but it is strongly recommended that each Section consider whether they should instead be reconstituted as an advisory group, working group, or community of interest. Section elections will be administered through an online platform following best practices developed by ALA staff.
- Empower ALA staff to investigate and recommend best practices for efficient elections for divisions for positions such as division president.
- Charge divisions to develop an action plan to implement *Forward Together* recommendations within two years of the approval by members.

### ***Round Tables of the American Library Association***

As issue-based and identity-based groups, round tables have provided an important home for members that crosses the many intersections of their lives. The twenty-one round tables are often the home for newer and emerging issues within the association, raising important and unique concerns and focus on different types of library work, experiences of library workers, and experiences of library users. Over the last several years, round tables have experienced increased membership growth and the creation of new round tables, indicating an importance to the association and value to members.

Round tables will be encouraged to recommend advisory groups and working groups to the Board of Directors to help accomplish their work and bring action and influence around

important issues. They will have a direct line of communication and influence with the Board of Directors through the Round Table Leadership Assembly and will be looked to for their expertise and advice around issues important to them. An important note of the Round Table Leadership Assembly is the inclusion of all round tables, regardless of membership size, to have full participation in the assembly.

Efficiency recommendations are provided below to help the round tables focus on the important work of their members. By freeing up ALA staff time from administrative work, staff can help members accomplish their goals for the round table and focus more attention on mission-based tasks. The Round Table Effectiveness Committee, a collaborative effort of several round tables, will begin work in November to determine best and efficient practices for round tables.

These recommendations, some of which are already being discussed by the Round Table Effectiveness Committee identified above include the following:

- Post all future documents in ALA Connect to help share institutional knowledge and give member access to as much information as possible. In addition to improving efficiency, this will help members identify what a round table is about and what they do, making it clear how a new member can participate.
- Administer all necessary elections through ALA Connect.
- Replace individual round table bylaws and create a shared policies and procedures document. This will help identify the relationship and fiscal responsibility of round tables with members and leaders, helping them understand the symbiotic relationship between round tables and all of ALA.
- Work with the Membership Office and Membership Committee to align dues and dues structures across ALA so that discounted rate opportunities for special categories are consistent across the association. It is recommended to explore the rate of \$20 for each round table from the preliminary fiscal analysis models. This would have the least fiscal impact overall and is only a recommendation for the Membership Office and Committee to further explore and test this model.
- Increase the minimum number of dues-paying members needed to create a round table to one percent of ALA's membership unless identified as a strategic priority by the Board of Directors. Membership numbers will be revisited and averaged over a period of three years. Current round tables will be able to remain intact for the first three years to provide them the opportunity to grow their membership. This will provide round tables with more fiscal stability and the resources to accomplish their mission-driven goals.

### ***Additional Recommendations***

The charge of SCOE was to focus on large, structural change of the association. While the primary focus of this report is on organizational effectiveness and governance there are a few recommendations that have no large structural home:

- ALA's governance structure and organizational effectiveness should be subject to regular, institutionalized review to make incremental change rather than rely upon a large reorganization as is recommended in *Forward Together*.
- A robust virtual member orientation should be established and conducted by the Membership Office and Membership Committee to welcome new members into the

whole organization, explain engagement opportunities, and provide a refresher for current members.

- A clearinghouse of volunteers should be created. Volunteer forms should be accepted on an ongoing basis and solicited when new advisory groups and working groups are formed. The form should identify volunteer interests, skills, expertise, and passions and would be used by all facets of the organization to determine potential volunteers.
- Upon acceptance and approval of *Forward Together* by ALA members, an Implementation Working Group should be established and appointed to identify timelines and tasks necessary to complete the work of the recommendations. Timelines provided in the recommendations of this report are subject to modification by the Implementation Working Group. The Committee anticipates implementation will take several years.

### ***Member Process: How It All Works Together***

*Forward Together* envisions a cohesive structure which allows many different opportunities for members to participate, engage, and bring forth issues for prioritization by the association. The following examples of the current process for members and the future process for members demonstrate the nimble, responsive nature of *Forward Together*.

#### *Getting Involved as a New Member*

Feedback and survey data indicate that many ALA members feel disengaged from the association, in part due to the complexity of ALA's structure. According to the Avenue M membership study, most ALA members are members for three years or less. With this in mind, today, the process for getting involved as a new member might look something like this:

- New member joins ALA and adds on divisions and round tables that sound interesting or align with professional/interest goals
- New member may (or may not) receive a welcome email from each group with varying degrees of information about the group and how to get involved
- New member feels overwhelmed by options to participate and different modes of operation. New member never moves past paying membership dues, and never finds the wealth of value or resources in the association
- OR, member fills out a volunteer form and is placed on a committee that has no clear goals or projects and loses interest in participation; sometimes never hears a response
- OR, member has no institutional support and cannot attend conferences or committee meetings, losing out on member engagement opportunities.
- OR, member has an idea for improving the association but has no clear sense for how to communicate it, preventing the association from benefiting from our newest members' innovative ideas.

Imagine the process in *Forward Together*:

- New member joins ALA and adds on divisions and round tables that sound interesting or align with professional goals

- New member receives a welcome email outlining groups joined and listservs added to, with an invitation to a virtual orientation to learn more about getting involved in ALA as well as to fill out a volunteer form if they are ready
- New member attends the orientation and is invited to participate in areas of interest and projects of interest based upon their volunteer form indications, leading to a fulfilling and engaging experience.
- Participation is offered through a variety of in-person and online channels to expand participation beyond those who can afford the expense of conference participation.

### The Passionate Member Experience

The Avenue M membership survey reported that, while most members of ALA were “satisfied” with their membership, the members who were “Very Satisfied” were those who were long-term, engaged, and passionate ALA members. “Very Satisfied” is the type of member *Forward Together* seeks the majority of ALA members to be. With this in mind, today, the process for engaging the passionate member might look something like:

- Member leader identifies member who attends ALA conferences and attends division or round table meetings they also attend
- Member is encouraged to get more involved by joining a committee or running for a round table or division role.
- OR member is encouraged to run for ALA Council. If the member is successful, they become part of an approximately 190-person policy-making body that requires formal processes that are highly formal and challenging to learn. Most new Council members limit their participation during their three years to voting on resolutions crafted by a handful of seasoned peers.

These options assume that the member has the resources and support to attend face-to-face meetings for several consecutive years and is satisfied with a low level of participation (meeting twice a year) extended over a long period of time (one to three years). A member with a specific passion or goal must “work their way up,” regardless of their expertise or the timeliness of their issue. Members with finite resources for travel have to be willing to dedicate those resources to ALA participation. As a result, the vast majority of ALA members do not participate or engage in the work of the association.

Imagine the process in *Forward Together*:

- A member joins ALA and upon receiving their welcome email, decides to attend a virtual assembly or division or round table meeting. There are enough meetings year-round that the member can “jump on board” at any point, at no additional cost, rather than waiting to attend a face-to-face meeting
- The member hears a conversation specific to their identity, affinity, or professional interest. The meeting is small and focused enough that the member can envision themselves participating
- The member volunteers for an opportunity or proposes an issue to pursue

### Raising Issues for Discussion or Action

Oftentimes, issues come up in libraries across the nation that have not been identified by the association for discussion or action. Members who are working on the frontlines may begin conversations with one another about the need for attention to an issue by the association to help provide guidance, resources, or awareness. Round tables are often the home of such scenarios. Today, the process for raising an issue through a round table might look like:

- A member has an issue they bring to the leadership of a round table.
- That issue may be reviewed by round table leadership to frame into a resolution.
- The round table's councilor (if they have their own) takes that resolution to ALA Council.
- Depending on the required action, if passed by Council, the Executive Director proceeds with the desired actions of Council and will provide a report to Councilors over the next 6 months.
- If the resolution is referred, a report could take up to six months to be developed and reported back to Council to determine a vote.
- If the resolution is passed and requires a policy change, Council will have to vote on the resolution again in six months at the next meeting before the resolution can take effect.
- It may take at least a year or more for the process to complete depending on the actions required in the resolution.

Imagine the process in *Forward Together*:

- A member has an issue that they bring to the Round Table Leadership Assembly at the next convening, held multiple times a year. All round table leaders provide input. Round table members are informed and provide input to strengthen the information around the issue.
- The Round Table Leadership Assembly brings the issue to the Public Policy & Advocacy Committee who adds input and helps to identify the scope, impact, and resources necessary to take action on that idea if the round table has not already done so. The Committee could reach out to the general membership and/or specific stakeholder groups including division, chapter, and affiliate leaders through the Leadership Assembly communications tools (more on leadership assemblies in the above section).
- The issue (with a report from the Public Policy & Advocacy Committee) then goes to the Board of Directors for adoption as policy or action.
- The whole process could take a few months, perhaps even weeks.

#### *Moving Legislative and Public Policy Advocacy*

In the Avenue M report, members indicated they expect and find value in ALA as the voice for libraries in federal public policy, library funding, and the regulatory framework related to library values and services. Today, the process for legislation and public policy advocacy is often *reactive* to external threats to library-supportive policies and funding. A reaction today might look like:

- Any of ALA's number of legislative and advocacy focused committees may *respond* to library-related legislation driven by external forces with or without consulting with one another



- OR at one of its two meetings a year, ALA Council may pass a resolution against the threatening legislation and public policy. If the resolution is referred to a committee for review, it may take up to a year for the resolution to pass and for action to be taken.

ALA and its member groups are effective at mobilizing members to respond when libraries are threatened, yet struggle to unite members in a timely manner around shared public policy goals that would advance or sustain libraries for the future. This is in part to difficulty in identifying potential risks as well as a lack of process for public policy proposals to be proposed and vetted by members. When proactive proposals are sought by ALA members, policies tend to focus on a narrow objective that may be advanced at the expense of ALA's strategic directions or long-term policy goals.

Imagine legislative and public policy advocacy in *Forward Together*.

- ALA will advance public policies that support funding, legislation and a regulatory framework for thriving libraries and into the future
- Library-specific public policy ideas may be initiated through members, leadership assemblies, or Board-appointed working groups.
- The Public Policy and Advocacy Committee will develop and recommend to the Board a proactive policy agenda that is aligned with ALA's mission, core values and strategic directions. The Committee will assess progress in proactive and reactive policy advocacy.
- ALA will mobilize members and supporters in advocacy strategies that maximize local, state, and federal relationships with policymakers and influencers, as well as the expertise of policy professionals.
- In addition to ALA's grassroots and grasstop networks, ALA will deploy technology-based advocacy and communications tools so that an increased number of members and supporters are informed of library-related policy issues and will take action for the benefit of libraries and the communities served by libraries.
- Members will be encouraged to strengthen their relationships as advocates with their elected officials.

### Influencing ALA Policy

Today, the process for influencing ALA Policy might look something like:

- A member wants to suggest an edit to the ALA Code of Conduct to be more reflective of ALA values.
- The member notices there is no information in the Code of Conduct as to who maintains and updates it.
- The member may try to contact a number of different groups to share their idea with varying degrees of success and contact. There is no clear path towards proposing this change.

Imagine the process in *Forward Together*.

- A member may propose their suggested edit through any of the leadership assemblies, committee membership meetings, or member engagement opportunities.

- Each of these assemblies, membership meetings, and member engagement opportunities will have a Board of Directors liaison and an ALA staff member who will hear the suggestion and direct it to the appropriate body for review.
- The member has now provided the association with their idea, feels heard, and receives a follow-up to their request from the group that helped initiate their proposal.

These simplistic examples are just a few ways Forward Together can help to increase membership participation, influence, and engagement. The ultimate goal of these recommendations is to ensure members have a clear path to help move the association forward and *Forward Together* creates multiple clear paths to accomplish member and association goals together.

### **Next Steps**

After discussion with the ALA Executive Board at the Fall Meeting, SCOE recommends a legal analysis to be conducted by the 2020 ALA Midwinter Meeting and a Constitution and Bylaws Committee analysis and a Committee on Organization analysis of *Forward Together* to be presented at the 2020 ALA Annual Conference. Initially, SCOE recommended conducting a more robust fiscal analysis and identifying a *Forward Together* Implementation Working Group prior to the 2020 ALA Midwinter Meeting. SCOE now recommends first conducting a legal analysis, Bylaws Committee analysis, and a Committee on Organization analysis so that we can gain a more complete understanding of the implementation needs before proceeding with the fiscal analysis and Implementation Working Group. A full timeline of SCOE events past and present and an explanation of changes to the timeline can be found in appendix B.

### **Conclusion**

To become the leading library association that members demand, the necessary changes within ALA requires its members to be bold. The work of many similar groups that have come before the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness have resulted in small tweaks to our association and its governance, but there has not been the same momentum or the same urgency felt now by members and member leaders. As society and technology moves forward, ALA has not changed its practice and member engagement models. That inaction has led us and our members to hunger for innovation and forward thinking. The recommendations included in *Forward Together*, informed and created by ALA members, are intended to do just what the title states; move the world's oldest and largest library association forward together, as a whole, with established members and new members to advocate and "provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."

These recommendations are intended to be taken as a package, for it is only when we look at all facets of our organization that we can make true, lasting change.

## **Appendix A: Fiscal Analysis**

The report of the Fiscal Analysis Working Group was completed and given to SCOE on September 16, 2019. The report is presented as it was prepared for SCOE members at the time.

### **REPORT OF SCOE FISCAL ANALYSIS WORKING GROUP**

The Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) Fiscal Analysis Working Group is comprised of Susan Hildreth, Chair and immediate past Treasurer, Andrew Pace and Alexia Hudson-Ward, SCOE members, John Lehner, Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) liaison and Clara Bohrer, engaged ALA member with in-depth knowledge of ALA finances. ALA staff working with the group are Mary Ghikas, Executive Director, Mark Leon, Chief Financial Officer, Melissa Walling, Membership Director and Raymond Garcia, Special Assistant to the Executive Director.

The group met virtually in August and September. Although the group had limited time to conduct any type of comprehensive analysis, we wanted to identify key areas of potential fiscal impact that could result from SCOE recommendations. We recommend that a more detailed analysis be conducted after SCOE has made its final recommendations to the Executive Board in October 2019.

It must be noted that there are several other ALA change streams which could impact the SCOE recommendations on changes to its governance structure. Because SCOE recommendations may impact membership models and ALA is reviewing membership models on a parallel path with SCOE efforts, the working group focused primarily on potential fiscal impacts of SCOE considerations for Division and Round Table dues.

#### **Membership Models/Division and Round Table Uniform Dues Analysis**

ALA, supported by research done by Avenue M, is considering a variety of membership models. Changes in the general membership model could impact SCOE recommendations as well as memberships in ALA divisions and round tables. It is likely that new membership models will be less complex than the current structure. The current strategic investment in ALA Information Technology (IT) infrastructure will be useful in supporting a responsive member database that can support the implementation of pricing model changes. Additional IT investments may be necessary depending on required functionality to support a new member database platform.

Current or potential members are often confused by the diverse dues structure for divisions and round tables. SCOE suggested that uniform dues for divisions and round tables be considered. This recommendation would not preclude divisions and round tables from having different categories of memberships, i.e. international, student, etc. The suggestion was that these categories have uniform dues amounts for each division or round table. ALA staff, led by Melissa Walling and Mark Leon, are testing models that show the financial impact of division

dues at \$60, \$65 and \$70 and round table dues at \$10, \$15 and \$20 annually. This analysis is looking only at the regular member dues category for divisions and round tables.

In developing this model analysis, the working group had a detailed discussion regarding what divisions considered as basic services for their members and what was the cost of those services. Based on information from PLA and ACRL (provided by Clara Bohrer and John Lehner who have knowledge of PLA and ACRL finances, respectively), 1) basic services for each division vary significantly; 2) basic services are not covered by annual division regular member dues; 3) PLA and ACRL have resources to provide these services from other revenues but that is not the case for other divisions.

This analysis is rather complicated but provides ALA Membership, Finance and IT staff to have some “skin in the game” in analyzing potential restructuring impacts. The analysis is in process and staff hope to have initial information available for review at the September SCOE meeting.

### **SCOE Recommendations/Potential Fiscal Impact**

Outlined below are specific SCOE recommendations which may have fiscal impact. Each area must receive further fiscal analysis. In all cases, effective provision of virtual platforms by ALA IT will be critical for the success of these new structures. The current strategic investment in IT will be useful in supporting engagement platforms. Additional IT investments may be necessary depending on required functionality to support the virtual engagement platforms. There may be additional training costs to ensure that members and staff are able to effectively use virtual tools and facilitate meetings and discussions in a virtual environment.

#### **Area 1: Board of Directors: Increasing from 12 members to 17 members**

- Elimination of ALA Council will result in an estimated cost savings of \$800,000 annually. ALA Council costs at the Annual and Mid-Winter conferences are estimated at \$400,000 each. ALA staff led by Mark Leon are preparing a detailed cross-functional analysis of Council costs that will be available later in September.
- The operational costs for an expanded executive board will increase and must be factored into fiscal impact.

#### **Area 2: Redesigned Volunteer Work and Committees: Reducing 37 Standing and Council Committees to 3 Executive Board Committees, advisory committees, working groups, communities of practice and leadership assemblies**

- Although the exact number of advisory groups has not been determined, these groups will function primarily in a virtual manner and may result in less staff time that could be redirected to other activities.
- As mentioned above, the impact on IT development and related costs needs to be examined to make sure that the provision of virtual platforms currently being developed will be sufficient.

- The extent of saving will not be known until it is determined during implementation discussions how the groups actually will engage in their work and interact with each other and staff.

Area 3: Divisions, Round Tables and Membership Initiative Groups: Make organizational structures consistent and uniform, consider potential merger of groups and focus on virtual operations

- Simplification of organizational structure, elections and other activities will result in less staff time and cost which could be redirected to more impactful activities.
- ALA's operating agreement with divisions and round tables should be reviewed and updated in light of new governance and membership models as well as standard 21<sup>st</sup> century professional organization and business practices that were not in place when the agreement was developed in 1982. A change in ALA's operating agreement may have fiscal impact.

### **New Winter Meeting**

ALA is also revising the format and focus of its Mid-Winter meeting with a smaller footprint which will have impacts on revenue and expenses, staff time and member engagement and committee work. It is anticipated that the new Mid-Winter format will result in less revenue and less expenses and provide more opportunities for regional engagement. The continuing education focus of Mid-Winter will require stable and intuitive virtual platforms for member engagement. Although not directly related to SCOE fiscal analysis, these meeting changes will impact member engagement and staff workload. Member engagement will become more virtual. Staff workload could be redirected to alternate activities when not preparing for and staffing a major conference.

### **Recommendations**

The fiscal analysis of SCOE recommendations is impacted by other changes currently being considered by ALA. This is really complicated! Having said that, at this time, we do not see any significant issues that would constrain further development and consideration of SCOE recommendations.

The work of SCOE was undertaken to enhance member engagement, not to reduce operating costs. We think there may be increased costs in some areas that would be offset by reduced costs in other areas. With simplification of governance and membership organization, it is anticipated that staff time would be able to be redirected to enhanced member engagement.

ALA is making strategic and critical investments in its IT infrastructure and platforms. These timely and valuable investments are moving ALA forward to function more effectively in a connected world. It is anticipated that additional IT investments will be required to support a streamlined membership database and useful and intuitive virtual platforms for member

engagement. Although we cannot specifically estimate the cost at this time, support for needed IT enhancements and for staff and member training to effectively use these platforms will be critical for the success of streamlined governance and organizational models.

Because of the limited time available to the working group and the preliminary nature of SCOE recommendations, we recommend a more detailed analysis be conducted when the Executive Board makes its final decision to move forward. We also recommend that a larger body be appointed to undertake further analysis, including representation from a variety of ALA stakeholder groups.

We would like to thank all members and staff who participated in the working group. We would especially like to thank Melissa Walling, ALA's new Membership Director, who provided useful expertise and knowledge on association membership trends and practices.

## Appendix B: Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness Timeline

Appointment of SCOE by ALA President Jim Neal (New Orleans)	June 2018
Remodeling Summit (Chicago)	October 2018
Initial ideas presentations to members (Seattle)	January 2019
Virtual ideas presentation to members	February 2019
Executive Committee Meeting, meetings with ALA staff (Chicago)	March 23, 2019
4 virtual input sessions with specific member groups	April 2019
SCOE review and developing preliminary recommendations (Chicago)	May 7-8 2019
Meetings with ALA staff (Chicago)	May 20, 2019
Presentation of preliminary recommendations to members (Washington, DC)	June 2019
Virtual presentation of preliminary recommendations to members	July 8 & July 19, 2019
Meetings with ALA staff (Washington, DC)	July 15, 2019
Fiscal analysis by working group, integration of chapters and affiliates	July - September 2019
Development of recommendations (Chicago)*	September 2019
Presentation of recommendations to Executive Board*	October 2019
Legal Analysis	November - December 2019
Constitution & Bylaws Committee and Committee on Organizations Analyses*	November 2019 - April 2020
Introduction of new ALA executive director	January 2020
Presentation to Council at Midwinter Meeting (Philadelphia)	January 2020
Council vote 1 at Annual Conference (Chicago)	June 2020
Council vote 2 at Midwinter Meeting (Indianapolis) <u>Note:</u> Will occur only if Council accepts the Constitution & Bylaws and Policy changes in June 2020	January 2021
Begin Identifying potential Implementation Working Group to begin their work after the Spring 2021 membership ballot (assuming successful passage)	

Membership ballot vote <u>Note:</u> Will occur only if Council accepts the Constitution & Bylaws changes again in January 2021	Spring 2021
Implementation Working Group takes over <u>Note:</u> Will only occur upon successful passage of the Constitution & Bylaws changes in Spring 2021	June 2021
Larger in-depth fiscal analysis	TBD

\*Explanation of changes to the Timeline since July 2019:

1. The word “final” was removed from the development of recommendations in the September 2019 development and the October 2019 presentation to the Executive Board to recognize that due to the iterative nature of SCOE’s process, additional changes may be needed through the final presentation and vote with Council in June 2020.
2. The second fiscal analysis and the Constitution & Bylaws Analysis was originally slated for November - December 2019. Changes were made to these based upon the report of the first fiscal analysis subcommittee and the workload of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee and the Committee on Organization. The fiscal analysis working group recommended an expanded review of the financial impact of the recommendations after acceptance and approval of the recommendations. This is in part because ALA staff and members would be unable to complete this analysis without many implementation details.
3. Identification of the Implementation Team/Implementation Working Group, originally slated for November 2019 will be postponed until after the initial work of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee and the Committee on Organization to determine the exact needs of the Working Group. To begin the implementation process analysis and ensure member input, SCOE would like to draw upon the expertise of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee and the Committee on Organization to determine what implementation steps will be necessary. SCOE asks that this analysis be done by May 1, 2020 to allow for inclusion in the final materials and report that will be shared with Council for a vote.



## **Appendix C: 2017-2018 ALA CD#35.1 2018 ALA Annual Conference**

This Council Document is presented in its original form with the exception of document appendices which have been removed for length. For the full appendix which includes list of chapters, organizational charts, and kitchen table talk discussions and additional resources please refer to the [full council document](#).

### **American Library Association**

### **Organizational Effectiveness Plan**

2018 Annual Conference – New Orleans, LA

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Following the 2018 ALA Midwinter Meeting, the ALA Executive Board working group on governance and organizational effectiveness—Mary Ghikas, Andrew K. Pace, Lessa K. Pelayo-Lozada and Patricia Wong—transcribed and created a database of feedback from the discussions at ALA Council and at PBA, as well as other feedback received – over 300 documents. Wordles were also created to assist working group members in the analysis. The resulting files were reviewed by members of the working group.

On April 5, the working group met to discuss next steps and to review an initial draft of this document. Based on that discussion and review, at their spring meeting, the ALA Executive Board decided to retain outside consultants to advance this discussion. In addition, ALA President Jim Neal will appoint an ad hoc Steering Committee and Executive Oversight group. What follows is a summary of the Midwinter 2018 feedback, a draft timeline for next steps, a steering committee structure, and structure for facilitated discussions to take place at ALA Annual 2018 in New Orleans.

Attachments:

- (1) APPENDIX 1: Council and PBA feedback on Organizational Effectiveness discussion (Wordles)
- (2) APPENDIX 2: Concurrent Activities
- (3) APPENDIX 3: 2017-2018 ALA CD#35, 2018 ALA Midwinter Meeting – American Library Association, Organizational Effectiveness Discussion

### **ALA Governance Review Process**

The following outline attempts to look at the reorganization process from two perspectives: what we know and how we might move forward.

A series of appendices provide additional information, including: (1) Wordle images of what we

know, (2) descriptions of related ongoing work that both the ALA Membership and Management will need to be aware of as this process proceeds, and (3) the 2018 Midwinter discussion document.

### **Purpose and Key Question:**

The purposes of the Governance Review were laid out in the Midwinter 2018 document -- 2017-2018 CD#35. (See Appendix 3) CD#35 also positioned the ALA Mission as a central guide for this work, along with a set of “guiding principles.”

**ALA Mission:** *To provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.*

To achieve this mission, ALA has defined four strategic directions:

- Advocacy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Information Policy
- Professional and Leadership Development

As we think about how we organize to support this mission, these “guiding principles,” articulated in the 2018 Midwinter Meeting discussion document, need to be kept in mind:

1. We will build upon ALA’s strengths
2. We will focus on ALA’s Strategic Directions—Advocacy; Information Policy; Professional & Leadership Development; Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
3. We will enable open, flexible, and easy member engagement
4. We will simplify and streamline process
5. We will ensure a governance and coordinating structure that enables members and staff to be effective, engaging in meaningful and productive work
6. We will empower member engagement
7. We will adopt a new mindset
8. We will optimize use of ALA staff time
9. We will experiment and try new approaches; we will learn from our experiences and be intentional about assessment
10. We hope to be a model of innovation for professional associations

ALA is an association. As such, its primary asset for achieving its mission is its members, working with staff to achieve a shared mission and shared goals. The ALA membership includes over 58,000 individuals, organizations and corporations. Indirectly, through chapters and affiliates, which typically have overlapping memberships with ALA, the reach is significantly larger. Collectively, membership and those associated through chapter or affiliate membership represent librarians, a wide range of other individuals with many specializations who work in or for libraries, trustees, friends and advocates for libraries, corporate leaders invested in the library ecosystem, content creators, and others.

While the mission and membership focus remain, the question implicitly posed by the document developed for the 2018 Midwinter Meeting discussion was: “How can ALA best organize itself to fulfill its mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?”

### **What We Know Now: Midwinter 2018 feedback**

Feedback from discussion with Council and other active members during the 2018 Midwinter Meeting, as well as some email feedback, largely confirmed the “findings” of the Kitchen Table Conversation. (see Appendix 3) But, as would be expected from a largely more active and ALA-experienced group, extended them in some respects. (see Appendix 1)

- ALA needs to be relevant to those with an MLS – and to those without an MLS who work in libraries, do work related to libraries; and, focus on or support libraries and their missions. There is also a desire for clearer, stronger focus on the needs and interests of library workers, which suggests that a comprehensive look at ALA may necessarily involve a close look at ALA-APA, and at potential funding mechanisms.
- Given the experience of many participants and the complexity of the organization, unsurprisingly one focus of attention was figuring out where to start. Which thread do you pull? Where are the innovative opportunities? Can we look at the question from an “issue perspective” not a “type of library perspective”?
- There was significant emphasis – echoed in internal (staff) discussions – about focus on advocacy, or perhaps on advocacy and education.
- There was strong focus on mindful, consistent relationship development – encompassing ALA Chapters and other state associations (e.g., AASL and ACRL-affiliated organizations, ALA Affiliates, and other organizations, both within ALA’s unique areas of focus and broader areas representing member values).
- In both the discussions on advocacy and on relationships, there is interest in stronger collaboration between ALA and chapters/state associations and in being able to act locally.
- Feedback echoed the Midwinter document’s focus on reduced complexity and reduced redundancy – but both complexity and redundancy are to some extent in the eye of the beholder. Comments included the need to “force prioritization,” “focus on what matters,” disband groups are “aren’t effective,” and shift to a more “as needed” structure, rather than so many standing bodies.
  - There is a perceived tension between resolving complexity/reducing or eliminating silos and the desire to find “my place,” “my home.” This tension will have to be addressed.
- Clarity in both structure and communications was a strong focus. Members want to “feel impassioned, invested, and relevant.” As was clear in the Kitchen Table Conversation findings, they want “clear pathways to engagement.” Other comments focused on member ROI; a collective and sustainable focus; a member-centric vs. member-led organization and enabling “complete and robust participation.”
- There is recurring interest in investing in IT – including the technology for “virtual” or digital participation and learning.

## **Moving Forward: 18-month timeline**

The question then is “what are the next steps?” While the Midwinter Meeting largely confirmed many aspects of the diagnosis, and suggested elements of a solution, the difficult work of negotiating a “solution” in a highly participative and complex organization, with interests that sometimes compete, remains to be done.

For that purpose, the Board wishes to retain a consultant. While consultants coming from the library arena, with ALA experience, will bring knowledge of ALA’s culture(s), consultants coming from the association arena will bring knowledge of the wide array of models among associations – and their relative success in achieving specified aims. Management and the Board recommend a consultant from the Association or nonprofit environment, knowledgeable in the variations and purposes of association governance structures. Given the demands of the process, consultation and member facilitation of the change management process itself may be highly desirable. Since consultation with a deep understanding of current ALA organization and governance is also desired, the Board is recommending a Steering Committee to work closely with the outside consultant to guide what is likely to be a complex process, extending over 12-18 months, followed by an implementation phase.

A working calendar is outlined below – primarily to show the feasibility of the time frame proposed. It is highly likely that the specific approaches and intermediate steps within the timeline will change as ALA begins working with specific consultants and establishes the steering committee.

### **(1) Now – Through Annual Conference 2018**

Conduct a series of facilitated focus groups or discussions built around some of the specific questions sitting behind many of the comments/concerns raised in both the Kitchen Table Conversations and at the 2018 Midwinter Meeting. These facilitated discussions will take place at ALA Annual and virtually. These may be structured around several “what if” scenarios, for instance:

- A shift from a structure largely based on standing committees to one largely based on as-needed groups, with a (small) core of “standing” committees.
- A shift from a “governance” model to an “engagement” model for many specialty groups, e.g. Round Tables. (see, for example, <http://growglobally.org/?p=1394>)
- A stronger ALA-Chapter/State Association structure.
- A different Board/Council composition/structure/relationship
- A potential change in or streamlining of the current ALA/Division relationship

### **(2) Annual Conference 2018 to Fall 2018 Board meeting**

Based on feedback to date, work with consultant(s) to create multiple versions of a “new” ALA.

(3) 2018 Board Meeting to Midwinter 2019

Review scenarios at Fall Board meeting. Adjust scenarios based on Board feedback. Distribute adjusted scenarios for member/potential member feedback. Prepare discussion documents for 2019 Midwinter Meeting discussion.

(4) Midwinter 2019

Hold facilitated discussions (National Issues Forum-style discussions) at Midwinter 2019, aimed at identifying “common threads” in member response. The objective is to arrive at a “new ALA” model.

(5) Midwinter 2019-Spring 2019 Board Meeting

Prepare draft “new ALA” scenario (single) and related discussion materials for discussion at Spring 2019 Board meeting.

(6) 2019 Spring Board Meeting – 2019 Annual Conference

Adjust scenario and related materials based on Board discussion. Distribute widely for consideration prior to the 2019 Annual Conference.

(7) 2019 Annual Conference

Hold series of facilitated discussions on proposed model. Continue to develop model, based on feedback.

(8) 2019 Annual to 2020 Midwinter Meeting

Develop action document(s) for Council/membership. Develop potential implementation plan/schedule. Develop FAQ.

(9) 2019 Annual to Spring Election

Share information widely. Schedule online discussion sessions. Develop spring ballot materials. Refine implementation plan based on feedback.

Spring 2020 Election and forward.

Based on Spring 2020 election plan, begin implementation.

## **Guiding the Process**

2017-2018 ALA President Jim Neal has committed to leading this process through to completion – at least completion of the design and initial decision process. Vice President / President-elect

Loida Garcia-Febo has already indicated that President Neal will continue in an oversight/leadership role after his presidential term ends in 2018. The Executive Board has approved this structure to guide the process.

**Executive Oversight Group:** Jim Neal (2017-2018 ALA President; Past President, 2018-2019)  
Mary Ghikas (ALA Executive Director)  
TBD, Steering Committee Chair  
Consultant (s)

**Steering Committee:** Executive Board (2) (including Chair)  
Council (2)  
Division Leadership (2)  
Round Tables (1)  
Chapters (2)  
ALA Ethnic Affiliate (1)  
Emerging professional (e.g. NMRT, Emerging Leader, Spectrum Scholar) (1)  
At-large (1)  
ALA Staff (1)

There should be significant attention to diversity of all types – including diversity in length of membership – in forming the steering committee.

This work is also taking place within the context of multiple “streams” of change (see Appendix 2). It will be important for the Board, Management and, to a lesser extent, the Steering Committee to remain aware of these additional change streams and to consider their potential impacts.

## **Appendix D: Avenue M Survey Results**

The full [Avenue M. - Final Survey Report](https://bit.ly/31aTtWG) is approximately 70 pages long and can be read at the link provided (<https://bit.ly/31aTtWG>). The following slides are a summary presented to the ALA Executive Board at their Fall 2018 meeting as EBD#12.12 ALA Survey Results: Avenue M Presentation.

**ALA Executive Board  
Fall Board Meeting**

**TOPIC:** ALA Survey Results: Avenue M Presentation [PPTs]

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Discussion

**DRAFT MOTION:** NA

**REQUESTED BY:** Mary Ghikas, ALA Executive Director  
Lorelle Swader, Associate Executive Director, ALA Offices and Member Relations

**DATE:** 23 October 2018

**BACKGROUND:**

In spring 2018, ALA contracted with Avenue M Group, a market research firm, to conduct a communications and membership study with the goal of improving our services to members.

On membership, questions such as the following were posed to Avenue M:

- *What are the barriers that may prevent individuals from joining ALA?*
- *Are there membership models that might better respond to the needs of current and prospective members?*
- *How might we improve or increase member engagement?*

In the areas of communications, the key objective was to develop an overall high-level strategy for more consistent communications with members. Questions included such things as:

- *How do we refresh and refocus our message framework?*
- *How do we focus individual communications more specifically to avoid “over-communicating” with members (a frequent member complaint)?*
- *How might we more effectively coordinate and collaborate across units – again, to avoid “over-communicating” and confusion.*

Work on the study began in April with interviews of ALA staff and members. In July 2018, a survey was sent to 65,000 individuals – ALA members, recently lapsed ALA members and other non-members. Over 10,000 responses were received. These responses, as well as interviews and other research, formed the basis for recommendations in three reports:

- American Library Association (ALA) -- 2018 Membership Study – CBD#9
- American Library Association (ALA) – Marketing Communications Assessment and Strategy – CBD#8
- American Library Association (ALA) – 2018 Membership Models Report – CBD#10



Sheri Jacobs, President and CEO of Avenue M, will meet with the ALA Executive Board on Friday, October 26, to provide a high-level review of the survey results and their implications for ALA. (2018-2019 EBD#12.12, attached).

Current ALA staff members who were part of the internal Membership and Communication Study selection team were: Beth Nawalinski (Executive Director, United for Libraries); Christopher Keech (Director, Production Services, ALA Publishing); Eleanor Diaz (Program Officer, ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom); Emily Wagner (Assistant Director, ALA Washington Office); Jan Carmichael (Web/New Media Manager, Communications and Marketing Office); Sheila O'Donnell (Director, ALA Development Office); Terra Dankowski (Associate Editor, American Libraries); Thomas Ferren (Registration Coordinator, ALA Member and Customer Service); Allison Cline (Deputy Executive Director, American Association of School Librarians); Denise Moritz (Director of Financial Reporting and Compliance, ALA Finance); Kerry Ward (Executive Director, Library Leadership and Management Association); Lindsey Simon (Campaign Coordinator, Communications and Marketing Office); Michael Dowling (Director, ALA Office for International Relations/ALA Office for Chapter Relations); and, Tim Smith (Deputy Director, ALA Information Technology and Telecommunications Services). With the July 2018 retirement of Cathleen Bourdon (Associate Executive Director, Communications & Member Relations), overall leadership for the process was passed to Lorelle Swader (Associate Executive Director for ALA Offices and Member Relations).

Over the coming weeks and months, a number of staff and member groups will be reviewing recommendations and developing strategies to enhance organization effectiveness, increase member engagement, and build an agile model for future ALA support for libraries and library workers.



**ALA Survey Results**

**October 2018**

## Project Overview: Membership Research



### Research Goals

Better understand the interests, needs, motivations, habits and behaviors of current and former members and those who have never been members of ALA.



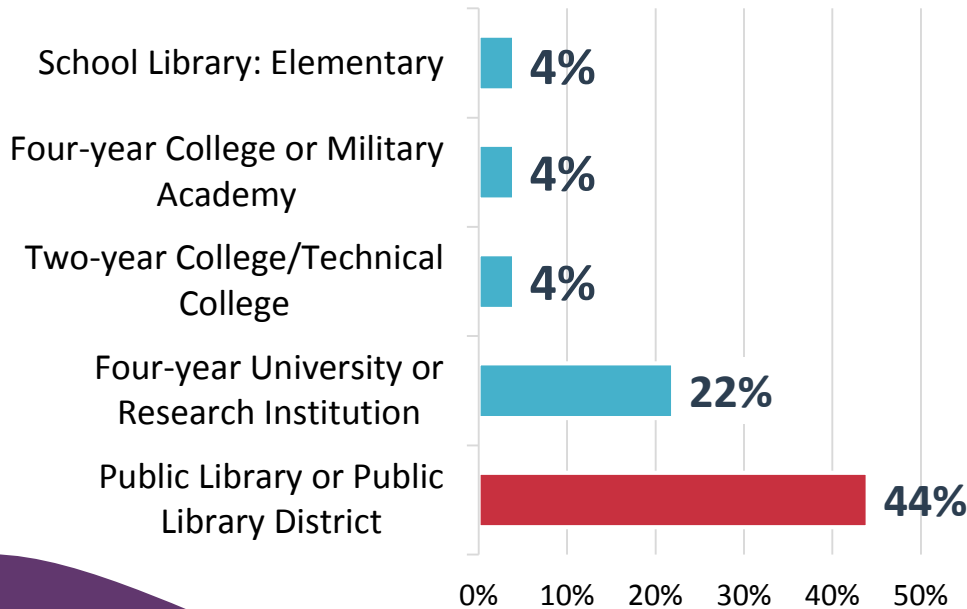
### Electronic Survey: July 10 – July 27, 2018

- Survey delivered to 65,152 individual email addresses.
- 10,386 survey responses; overall response rate = 16%
- Margin of error of +/-1% at the 95% confidence level is well within the industry standard

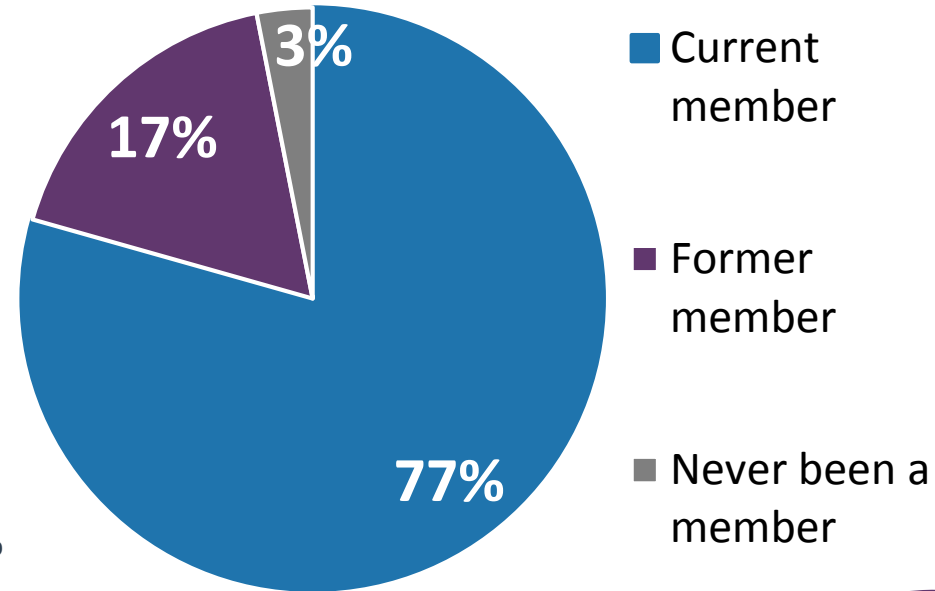


# Study Participants\*

## Work Setting



## Membership Status



\*Please note this is an overview of the demographics, and some figures have been rounded or excluded. Please refer to the Excel file for all data.

**81%**  
are white

**80%**  
are female

## Study Participants\*

Years a Member	Respondents
1 year or less	21%
<b>2– 3 years</b>	<b>41%</b>
4 – 5 years	14%
6 – 10 years	10%
11 – 15 years	4%
16 – 20 years	2%
21 – 30 years	2%
31 or more years	1%

Years in Profession	Respondents
Less than 1 year	2%
<b>1 – 5 years</b>	<b>22%</b>
6 – 10 years	20%
11 – 15 years	16%
16 – 20 years	12%
21 – 30 years	15%
31 or more years	10%

\*Please note this is an overview of the demographics, and some figures have been rounded or excluded. Please refer to the Excel file for all data.

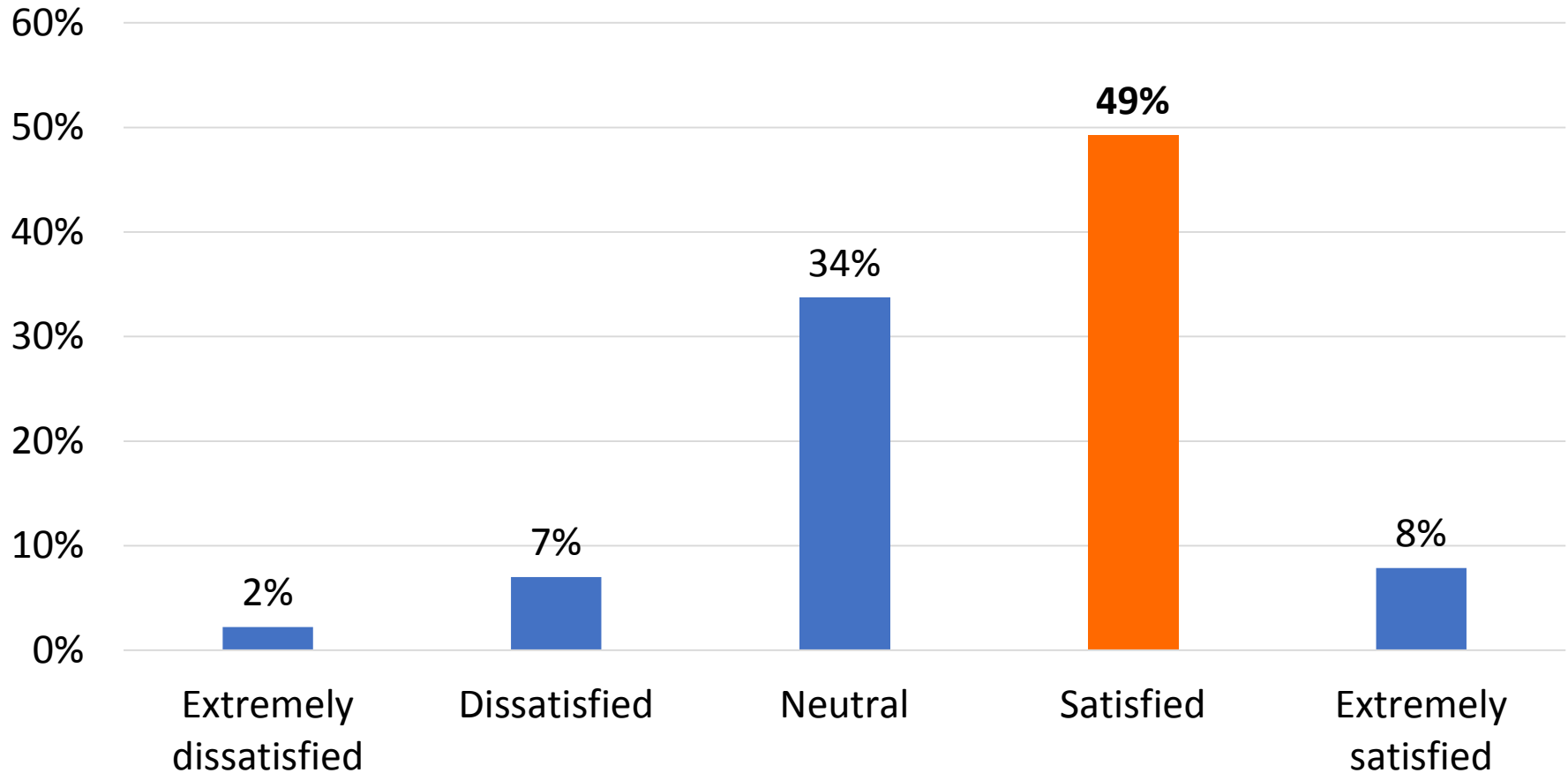


# Key Findings

# ALA members are drawn to membership because they see ALA as an advocate for the profession.

Drivers of Membership	Not a Driver	Low Driver	Medium Driver	High Driver
Believe in supporting my profession	3%	10%	34%	<b>54%</b>
Support advocacy for the profession	5%	14%	37%	<b>44%</b>
Support intellectual freedom	7%	17%	36%	<b>40%</b>
Learn new skills to become more proficient in my job	10%	15%	<b>38%</b>	37%
Keep up-to-date through ALA publications	8%	19%	<b>40%</b>	33%
Access to ALA Division	25%	22%	<b>27%</b>	26%
Employer pays my dues	<b>67%</b>	6%	10%	16%
Gain leadership experience through volunteer service	<b>34%</b>	30%	23%	13%
Receive member discounts for continuing education	<b>38%</b>	28%	23%	11%

# Though roughly half of members are satisfied, few are extremely satisfied with their ALA membership.





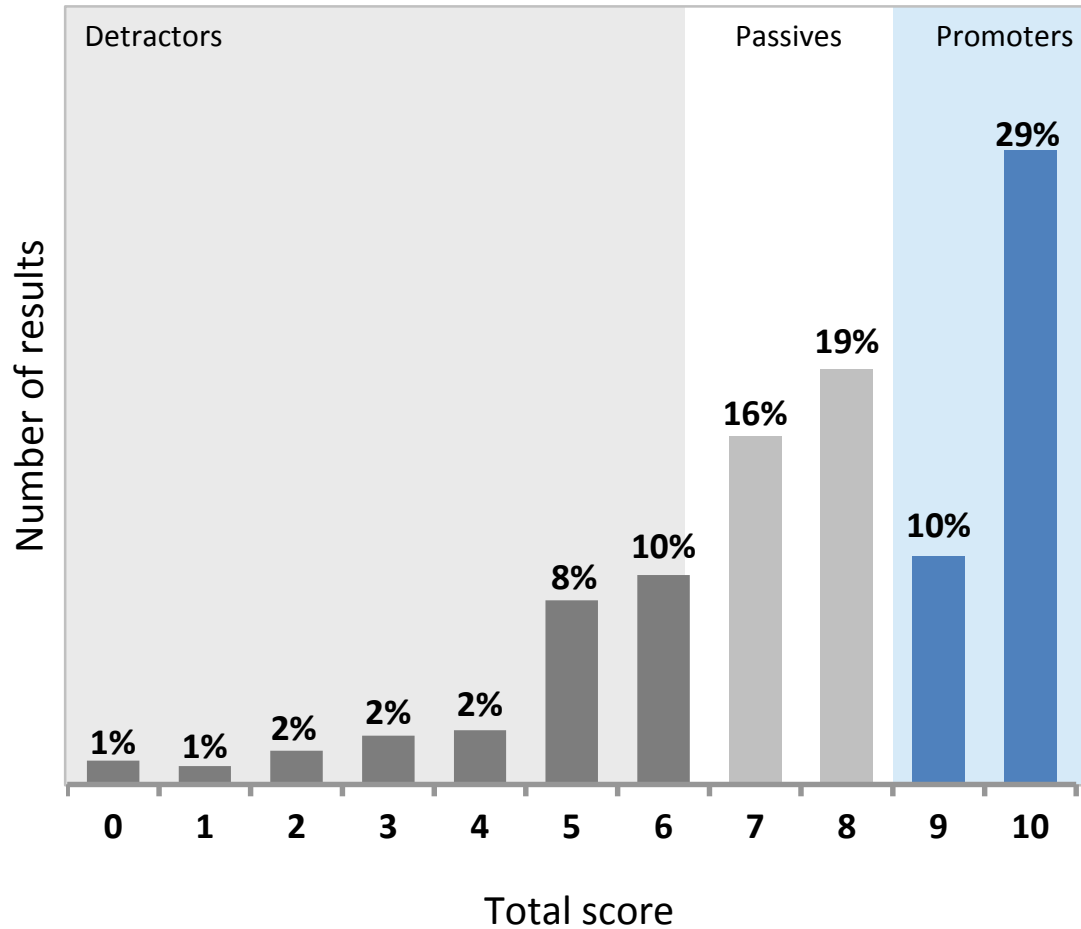
# ALA Membership Satisfaction

- The proportion of ALA members who are extremely satisfied with membership is lower than the average of 25% observed in Avenue M's database\*.
- Satisfaction is higher among members who have been in the profession longer (21+ years), and it is lower for those newer to the field.

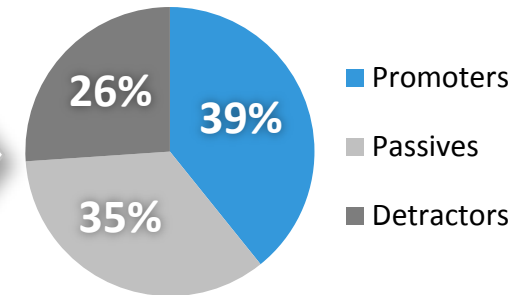
\*Avenue M's database includes professional membership associations from a range of industries.

# Net Promoter Score

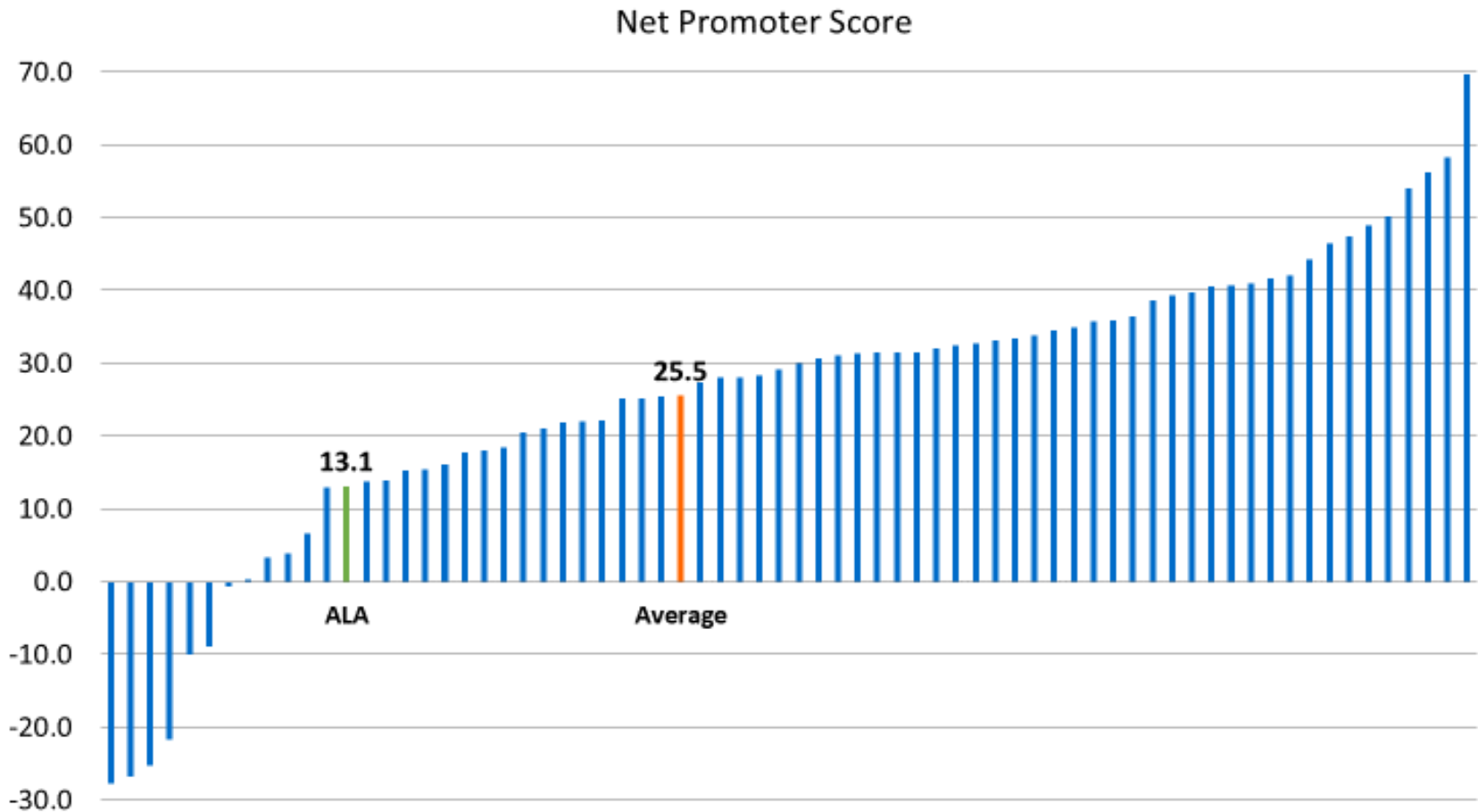
## Number of Results per Total Score



## NPS (Net Promoter Score)



# Member loyalty is low relative to other professional associations.



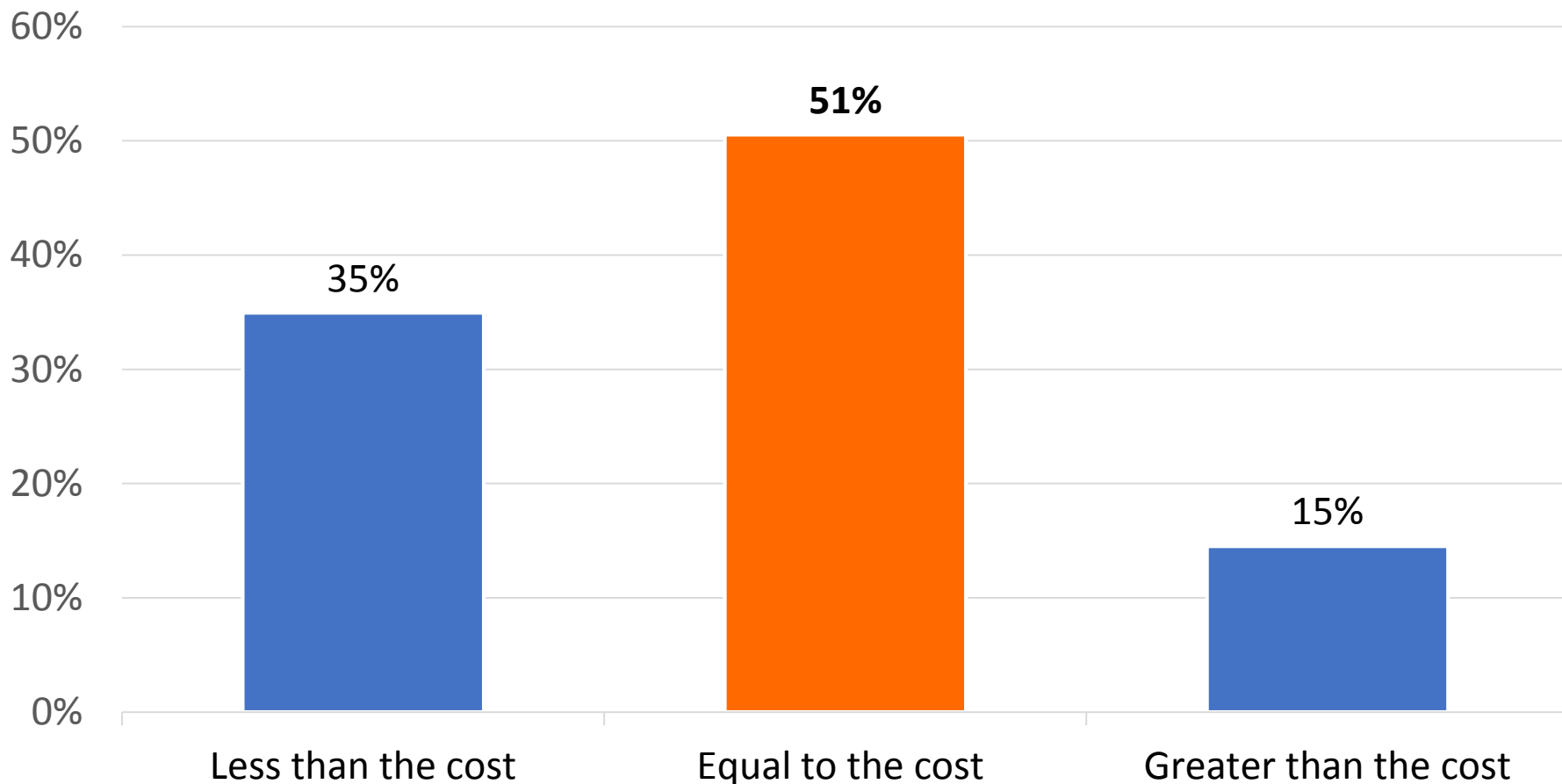
\*This average is based on Avenue M's database, which includes professional membership associations from a range of industries.

Two-thirds of members pay their own ALA membership dues.

53% pay for dues associated with divisions and/or roundtables.



Though the value of membership is equal to the cost for about half of members, more than one-third of members are concerned with ALA's value proposition.



## How to Increase the Value of Membership?

1

Free registration to a CE course/webinar with membership (52%)

2

More virtual conferences (24%)

3

Improve accessibility of resources on website (20%)

4

More opportunities to increase skillsets (20%)

5

Increase state/local advocacy (19%)

## How to Increase the Value of Division Membership?

1

Free registration to a CE course/webinar with membership (44%)

2

More virtual conferences (22%)

3

Make it easier to find resources online (17%)

4

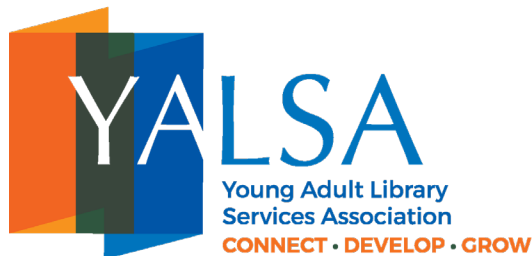
More opportunities to increase skillsets (16%)

5

Increase state/local advocacy (16%)

# Members of ALA Divisions often derive more value from their Division membership than their National membership.

Value of National Verse Division Membership	Percent
I receive more value from my division membership(s)	48%
I receive equal value from my ALA membership and my division membership(s)	24%
I receive more value from my ALA membership	12%
I don't know	16%



# ALA members believe that ALA National is most effective in advocating for the profession and helping them stay up-to-date.

Which branch of ALA is most effective?	ALA (National)	ALA Division(s)	ALA Regional/ State Chapters	ALA Round Table(s)	Non-ALA Association
Advocates effectively on behalf of my profession	<b>67%</b>	11%	13%	1%	7%
Helps me stay up-to-date on the latest information in my profession	<b>52%</b>	28%	9%	2%	9%
Provides high quality, affordable education	<b>29%</b>	26%	18%	1%	26%
Facilitates networking or the exchange of information between peers	25%	26%	<b>27%</b>	5%	17%
Offers volunteer opportunities	17%	26%	<b>29%</b>	6%	22%



# ALA's most widely utilized benefits:

- *American Libraries* Magazine (78%)
- ALA Annual Conference (58%)
- AL Direct (41%)
- ALA eLearning (41%)
- ALA Standards and Guidelines (40%)



ALAAmericanLibraryAssociation

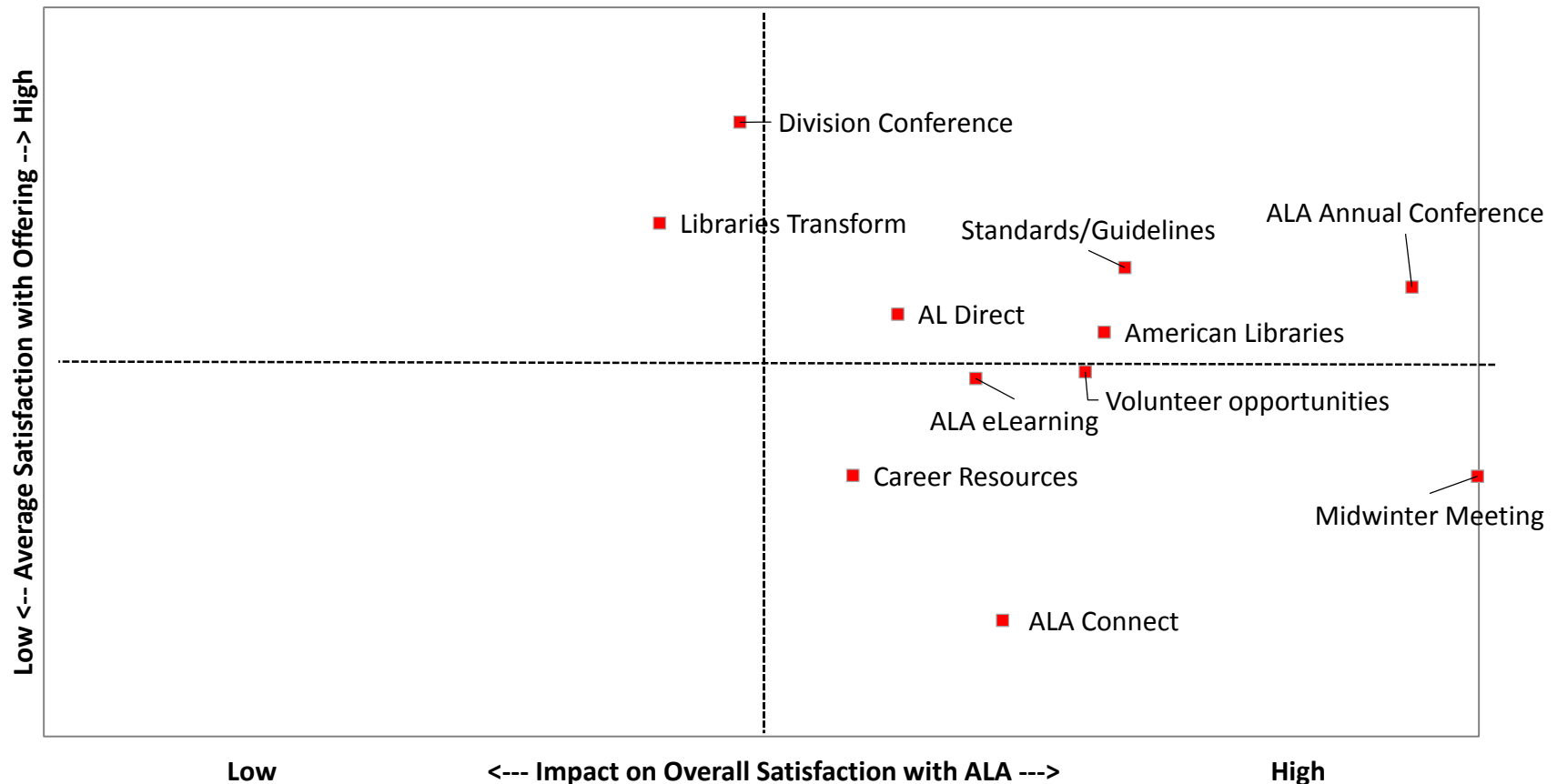
# Satisfaction for ALA's core benefits is generally strong.

Benefit Usage and Satisfaction	Usage	Satisfaction (Satisfied + Extremely Satisfied)
American Libraries	78%	74%
ALA Annual Conference	58%	77%
AL Direct e-publication/newsletter	41%	75%
ALA eLearning (webinars, online courses)	41%	71%
ALA Standards and Guidelines	40%	79%
ALA Midwinter Meeting	33%	62%
ALA Connect	29%	46%
Division Conference/Symposium/Forum	29%	85%
Libraries Transform public awareness resources	23%	83%
ALA Library Resource Guides	21%	75%
Career Resources	21%	59%
I Love Libraries Website	20%	78%
ALA online discussion lists	19%	65%
Advocacy Resources	17%	81%

This table only displays a selection of benefits.

# The ALA Midwinter meeting and Annual Conference have the strongest relative impact on overall membership satisfaction.

Satisfaction with Offerings & Impact on Overall ALA Satisfaction



## Connectedness to ALA

34% of members feel connected to ALA, 20% feel disconnected and 46% are neutral.

- Long-term members have a stronger sense of connectedness to ALA than their peers.
- Newer members (5 years or less) are more likely to feel disconnected.

# Connectedness to ALA (continued)

Members indicated that the top ways they feel connected or would feel more connected to ALA are...

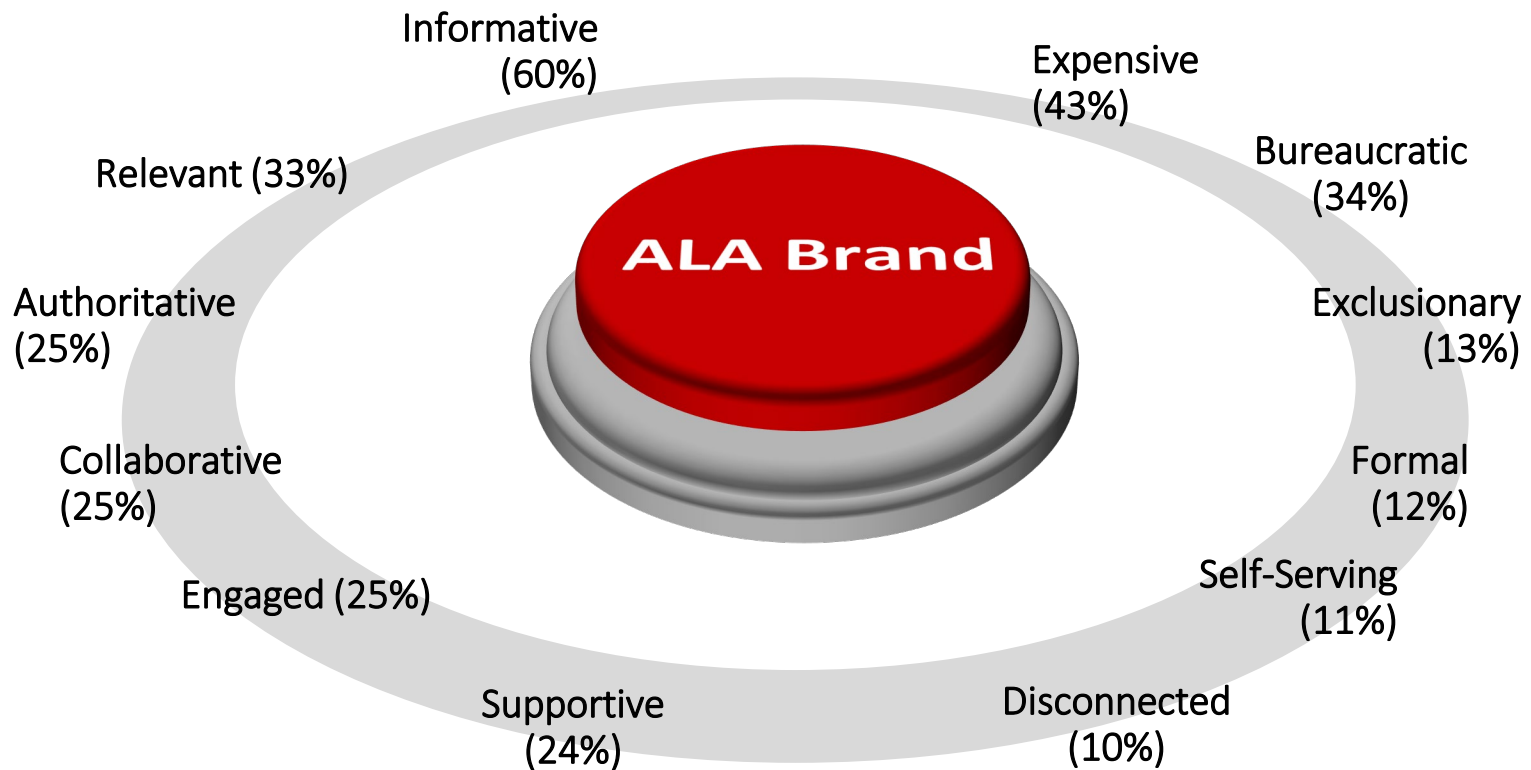
- Meeting other librarians and library workers (36%)
- Learning new things from ALA educational offerings (33%)
- Collaborating with peers (31%)
- Meeting colleagues/peers at events (31%)



# ALA is described as informative and relevant but also expensive and bureaucratic.

## Positive Attributes

## Negative Attributes



# Non-Member Survey Respondents

The majority of former members did not make it past the three-year mark of membership (62%).

A misalignment between dues and value is the number one reason some library professionals are not members of ALA.

Just one in five non-members say they are likely (15%) or extremely likely (5%) to join ALA in the next year.

# Keeping up-to-date is library professionals' number one challenge.

Professional Challenges	Percent
Keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field	41%
Dealing with budget constraints	37%
Personal considerations (e.g., work/life balance, family commitments)	30%
Expanding my knowledge/level of expertise	29%
Finding a job or making a job change	23%

This table only displays a selection of challenges.



# ALA effectively helps library professionals address some of the challenges they face.

How Well Do You Feel ALA Addresses Each of These Issues?	Bottom-two box (Not well + Not well at all)	Top-two box (Well + Very Well)	Unsure
Keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field	4%	<b>72%</b>	6%
Expanding my knowledge/level of expertise	10%	<b>51%</b>	12%
Expanding my network/connections with other library professionals	17%	<b>40%</b>	12%
Finding a job or making a job change	<b>30%</b>	20%	19%
Dealing with budget constraints	<b>32%</b>	17%	22%
Personal considerations	<b>40%</b>	6%	35%

This table only displays a selection of issues/challenges.



## Next Steps - Recommendations

## Recommendations

- Develop a wide range of volunteer opportunities and emphasize the benefits of these opportunities on the volunteer and on the profession.
- Diversify communications to members and prospects about the opportunities at ALA.
- Demonstrate the value of paid ALA resources over free alternatives.

## Recommendations

- Increase awareness of ALA's advocacy-related successes. Make it easier for members to become involved in advocacy issues.
- Guide members to ALA's educational and professional development offerings that best fit their career stage, topical interests and formatting preferences.

## Recommendations

- Use this research to further evaluate ALA's portfolio of programs, products and services. Guide members to the offerings that best address their needs.
- Highlight how ALA membership can save members time and money in the short- and long-term.

**Sheri Jacobs, FASAE, CAE, President & CEO**

**Trevor Schlusemann, CIPP/E, Vice President, Market Research and Analytics**

**Nick Fernandes, Senior Director, Marketing Research**

**Matt Cavers, Senior Market Research Analyst**

**Emily Thomas, Market Research Analyst**

**Greer Faber, Marketing Assistant**

**Prepared by Avenue M Group**