

Frequently asked Questions by potential candidates for ALA President-elect

Q: What is the time commitment expected of the ALA President-elect and President?

Both the ALA President-elect and President receive many invitations to speak, to visit chapter or other association conferences, or to represent ALA at other functions. Each officer's travel schedule is discretionary. Depending on the officer's professional and personal situation, he/she may choose to travel a lot or a little. Members do want to see the officers, and there are times when one or both of the officers must be available to represent the Association, but it is possible to develop a sensible travel schedule that allows the officer to be out and about without having a disastrous effect on his or her job and personal life. At a minimum, both the ALA President-elect and President are expected to attend the ALA Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference as well as the Spring and Fall Executive Board meetings (held at ALA headquarters in Chicago in April and October respectively) as well as participate in monthly conference calls with the Executive Board and the Executive Committee of the Executive Board. Most ALA Presidents also attend the annual meeting of the International Federations of Library Associations (IFLA) which is generally held in August in a venue abroad.

In addition to meeting attendance, ALA Presidents receive 6 to 10 media requests per week. These include telephone interviews with reporters from radio, print and Web media. The ALA president also participates in multiple face-to-face interviews with high-level editors/reporters during Media Day in New York or Washington, D.C. and there may be an occasional network broadcast opportunity that will require the ALA President to travel to a network affiliate location.

The President-elect and President have non-travel commitments that include making appointments to the various ALA and Council committees, responding to written communications from members, preparing reports to the Board and Council, etc. Additionally, the President and President-elect have regular (weekly or bi-weekly) telephone conversations with the ALA

Executive Director and the Director of the Office of ALA Governance. (See the [Duties and Responsibilities of the President and President-elect](#) for a more comprehensive list.)

Q. What kind of financial support does ALA provide the ALA President during his/her term in office?

The successful candidate serves on the ALA Executive Board for three years: one year as President-elect; one year as President; one year as Immediate Past President. During the President-elect and Presidential year, the individual is provided two line-item budgets. One budget is designed to cover travel and administrative expenses (such as the services of a part-time administrative assistant, postage and other general supplies). The second budget is provided to cover expenses associated with the planning and execution of the presidential initiatives. These budgets have proven to be more than adequate to cover all expenses incurred during the President-elect and Presidential years and the officer is not expected to pay for any expenses out-of-pocket without being reimbursed by ALA. ALA also pays for the individual's registration, travel and lodging at the Midwinter Meetings and Annual Conferences during their years on the Executive Board.

There is no budget extended to the Immediate Past President; however, ALA does continue to pay their registration, travel and lodging at the Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference until their term on the Executive Board ends.

Q: What other support does ALA provide the ALA President?

ALA Headquarters and Washington Office staff assist the President and President-elect with matters relating to Association policies and procedures, strategic planning, Presidential focus and program development, invitations to and catering for conference social events, registration and housing for Midwinter and Annual Conference, legislative matters, Congressional testimony, etc.

The staff of the Public Information Office (PIO) works with the ALA President to prepare him/her for interview opportunities by providing talking points, relevant topic research, and offering suggestions on how to effectively communicate with reporters/hosts. The Director of PIO organizes a full-day media relations training session for the ALA President-elect. The session includes training on how to effectively deliver ALA messages to reporters, as well as how to conduct a satellite television interview. In addition, each spring a full-day strategy session is held with the ALA President-elect, the

Public Awareness Committee Chair and approximately a dozen key ALA communicators to develop a communication plan for the ALA President that outlines goals, tactics and procedures for the coming year.

Since the President and President-elect share presiding duties at Board, Council, and Membership Meetings, ALA's professional parliamentarian provides parliamentary training early in the President-elect year to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with parliamentary procedure.

Presidents and Presidents-elect have also chosen to allocate a portion of their operating budgets to hire clerical or other support at their home institution to help with correspondence, filing, scheduling, travel arrangements, and other tasks related to the ALA presidency.

Q: What will it cost me to run for ALA President-elect?

The cost of a campaign can fluctuate greatly depending on how much travel a candidate embarks on during the campaign period. Recent candidates have spent from \$2,000 - \$5,000 on their campaigns. Beginning with the 2009 campaign, candidates are eligible for a reimbursement up to \$1,000 from ALA to help offset the cost of website development, postage, printing and other campaign-related expenses.

Much of the cost associated with campaigning can relate to travel to chapter and affiliate meetings and division conferences during the campaign period.

Q: Does ALA provide any financial support to candidates running for ALA President-elect?

At their 2008 Fall meeting, the ALA Executive Board approved the following support to all candidates for ALA President-elect:

- A press release issued by ALA/PIO announcing the candidates.
- Information on the ALA election web site containing the candidate's photo, biography and statement of professional concerns.
- A link on the ALA election web site to a website maintained by the candidate.
- Mailing labels or email addresses (subject to member communication preferences) for all members listed in the ALA Handbook of Organization, provided at no cost,
- Electronic distribution of one message from each of the candidates for president-elect and treasurer to all ALA members.

- A complimentary meeting room at the Midwinter Meeting preceding the election to hold campaign-related strategy meetings or social events. The candidates are responsible for food, beverage, meeting supplies or any other charges associated with these meetings.
- An Association-wide candidates' forum held at the ALA Midwinter Meeting preceding the election.
- A table in the convention center at the Midwinter meeting to display campaign materials.
- The publication of full-page candidate's statement in the March issue of *American Libraries*.
- A candidate's statement limited to 300 words included in the ballot distributed to all members.
- A reimbursement of \$1,000 to each candidate for president-elect and treasurer to help offset the cost of website development, postage, printing and other campaign-related expenses.

Please refer to the complete [Guidelines for Campaigning by Candidates for ALA Office](#) approved by the ALA Executive Board in October 2008.

Q: Can the ALA President-elect and President collect honoraria for speaking engagements?

In 1997 the Board approved a policy regarding acceptance of honoraria. The policy has been amended to include guidelines defining what constitutes speaking for or representing the Association and to add the ALA-APA as a permitted fund for designation of honoraria.

“When speaking for or representing the American Library Association, Executive Board members will designate that any payment in excess of expenses go to the Association, any ALA fund, the Freedom to Read Foundation, or the ALA-APA.

When Board members are asked to speak solely on their field of expertise, professional affiliation, or affiliation with an organization other than ALA, without reference to their current position as a member of the ALA Executive Board and without any intention that they are representing ALA or the Executive Board, the issue of honoraria is left to the individual Board member.

In any instance when it is unclear whether the Board member is speaking for or representing ALA, the ALA Executive Director shall be consulted.”

Board members who receive honoraria when speaking for ALA must be aware of the tax consequences related to the receipt of funds.

In order to avoid tax liabilities on the part of the individual Board members, honoraria checks should be made payable to ALA, the Freedom to Read Foundation, or the ALA-APA.