

RESOLUTION ON *PRINCIPLES FOR THE NETWORKED WORLD*

- WHEREAS,** Libraries as institutions representing the information interests of their users have primary responsibility for facilitating the evolution of and public awareness to the networked world; and
- WHEREAS,** Recent legislative and government policy initiatives threaten the ability of libraries to fully serve the information needs of the public; and
- WHEREAS,** Leaders in the library profession have expressed the need for an effective advocacy tool that represents the principles and concerns of libraries in the ever-expanding, interconnected digital world; and
- WHEREAS,** The ALA Committee on Legislation requested that the Office for Information Technology Policy undertake an effort to revise and update the *Principles for the National Information Infrastructure* document; and
- WHEREAS,** Forty library professionals, representing over 25 library associations, ALA divisions, round tables and committees, developed through careful deliberation and consensus the strong statement of library interests and needs in the context of the rapidly evolving networked world; now, therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the American Library Association adopts in principle this declaration, *Principles for the Networked World*.

Cosponsored by:      Committee on Legislation  
                                 Office for Information Technology Policy Advisory Committee

As endorsed by:      Medical Library Association;  
                                 Chief Officers of State Library Agencies; and

As supported by:      Numerous ALA Divisions, Committees and Round Tables

# DRAFT PRINCIPLES FOR THE NETWORKED WORLD

## What is the Networked World?

The networked world moves beyond the Internet we know today. It links people to people, people to business, people to information, people to culture. This interconnected world encompasses an ever-expanding communications network via traditional telecommunications and computing systems. But it *also* employs new frameworks that move data, audio and video via increased bandwidth, wireless technologies, and systems not yet imagined.

We must constantly reevaluate how we communicate in a networked world. Now, more than ever, libraries—institutions with a historical and social imperative to ensure information access and flow—must assume a key position in facilitating the evolution of the networked world. Crucial themes, like privacy, intellectual freedom and equitable access, take center stage in our efforts to maintain the free flow of information in a democratic society.

## The Role of Libraries in the Networked World

In this document, libraries present their traditional and evolving role—a role that is essential to the advancement of the public interest in the networked world. Policy and decision makers will welcome this document as a blue print for building a networked world that is democratic, inclusive and accessible to all. The following six policy issues warrant full attention if the networked world is to fulfill its promise.

**Intellectual Freedom:** The right to express ideas and receive information in the networked world.

**Privacy:** The freedom to choose the degree to which personal information is monitored, collected, disclosed, and distributed.

**Intellectual Property:** A legal and policy framework to stimulate creativity and innovation, and to promote the progress of science and the useful arts through a fair and equitable balance of the rights and privileges of users, creators, and owners.

**Infrastructure:** Physical and social architectures that enable and affect the operation of the networked world.

**Equitable Access:** User-centered, barrier-free, and format-independent access to information.

**Content:** Information accessed by users of the networked world, including public information from government sources.

**PRIVACY:** The freedom to choose the degree to which personal information is monitored, collected, disclosed, and distributed.

Principles:

1. Privacy is a right of all people and must be protected in the networked world.
2. The rights of anonymity and privacy while retrieving and communicating information must be protected as an essential element of intellectual freedom.
3. The long-established principles of Fair Information Practices must be at the core of privacy policies in the networked world.
4. Users have the right to be fully informed about privacy policies and principles in the networked world.
5. Library patron confidentiality must be protected by law and policy.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** Physical and social architectures that enable and affect the operation of the networked world.

Principles:

1. Every library should have a high-speed connection to the Internet.
2. Libraries and other civic institutions should play an active role in the management and regulation of technological infrastructures.
3. Technological infrastructures must ensure, through interoperability and open standards, participation by all in the delivery and creation of content.
4. Technological infrastructures must evolve to continually support new and innovative information formats.
5. Libraries have an educational role in fostering an information literate society with the skills necessary to thrive.
6. Libraries should promote partnerships and collaborations among diverse communities to guide full participation in the networked world.
7. Technological infrastructures must ensure a secure and private environment.
8. Technological infrastructures must provide compatibility between leading edge and trailing edge technologies.

**CONTENT:** Information accessed by users of the networked world, including public information from government sources.

Principles:

1. Information in the networked world must be organized and preserved for historic, current and future access by the public.
2. Government at all levels must provide authenticated, permanent, public access to government information.
3. Privacy of personal information must be maintained when providing access to government documents and records.
4. People must have access to a rich variety of content that reflects their diverse perspectives, histories, concerns and visions of the future.
5. Publishers of digital information must establish alternative methods for ensuring permanent, public access to information resources in the networked world.
6. In licensing access to digital content, libraries must negotiate terms that reflect user protections under copyright law.
7. To enhance and maximize access to our diverse heritage, libraries must coordinate digitization of historical and cultural documents and artifacts while respecting the cultural values of all groups.

**Resolution on The Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act (FAIR)  
P.L. 105-270**

- WHEREAS, federal libraries provide critical support to the formulation and implementation of federal policies through research and information collection; and
- WHEREAS, federal librarians create, maintain, and acquire databases, information systems, and publications on behalf of the government, many containing substantial amounts of sensitive information; and
- WHEREAS, federal librarians represent the U.S. Government in numerous national and international organizations and forums; and
- WHEREAS, federal librarians play a key role in making government information available to the public through web sites, print collections, and direct public services; and
- WHEREAS, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has directed federal agencies to compete five percent of their work force positions that have been designated "not inherently governmental;" and
- WHEREAS, lack of recognition of the critical role of federal libraries and other federal information organizations has led many federal libraries to be designated as "not inherently governmental" by their agencies; now, therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, that ALA urge the Office of Management and Budget and other federal agencies to designate federal libraries and information centers as "inherently governmental" functions.

Initiated by: FAFRLT

Endorsed by: GODORT January 21, 2002

Endorsed by: COL January 21, 2002

Policy: 51.5

Prior history: CD #80 July 14, 1982

CD #? January 9, 1985

CD #20.4 January 29, 1992

Report to Council  
Policy Monitoring Committee  
January 2003

In accordance with Policy 5.6 of the *ALA Policy Manual*, the Policy Monitoring Committee (PMC) has reviewed all actions taken by the ALA Council during the 2002 Annual Meeting for possible incorporation into, addition to, or changes to the *ALA Policy Manual*. Based on Council action at the Annual Meeting in Atlanta, the following additions and changes are recommended:

### ACTION ITEMS

Item 1. Based on Council Document #20.2(Midwinter Meeting 2002), submitted by the Committee on Legislation, approved by ALA Council, the PMC recommends:

**Policy 50.15 (Principles for the Networked World)**

**“Libraries are crucial to assuring that society benefits from the promises of technology but are increasingly challenged by a number of critical policy debates. There are seven policy areas of intrinsic to libraries, technology, and the role that libraries play in connecting people to an increasingly networked world. These specific areas are:**

- intellectual freedom, the right to access and express ideas;
- privacy, the freedom to choose the degree to which personal information is made available;
- equitable access to information;
- intellectual property;
- infrastructure, physical and social architectures within the context of the networked world;
- content, including public and government information; and
- information literacy, the ability to access and effectively participate in the networked world.

By establishing a baseline for ongoing policy discussions and decisions, the fundamental public policy requirements needed to support the ability of libraries to serve the public’s information needs are well defined.

(See “Current Reference File”: Principles for the Networked World: 2001-2002 CD 20.2)

Item 2. Based on Council Document 19.5, submitted by the Intellectual Freedom Committee, approved by Council, the PMC recommends Policy 53.1.16

**53.1.16 (Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights)**

**“In a library (physical or virtual), the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one’s interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. Protecting user privacy and confidentiality is necessary for intellectual freedom and fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship.**

**(See “Current Reference File”: Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 2001-2002 CD#19.5)**

(Note: In order to place this “Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights” with the already existing interpretations, current Policy 53.1.16 was renumbered to become Policy 53.1.17 (Use of Filtering Software), and Policy 53.1.17(Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries) was renumbered to become Policy 53.1.18.

## **INFORMATION ITEM**

1. Based on CD#27.1, submitted by the Committee on Organization, revised ALA Policy #4.5 to read: **“With the exception of e-members, members of all ALA and unit committees are expected to attend all meetings. Failure to attend two consecutive meetings or groups of meetings (defined as all meetings of a committee that take place at one Midwinter Meeting or Annual Conference) without an explanation acceptable to the committee chair constitutes grounds for removal upon request by the chair to and approval of the appropriate appointing official or governing board. (This change has been added to the Policy Manual)**

(Submitted by: Policy Monitoring Committee: Stephen L. Matthews, Chair, Gloria J. Leonard, Joy L. Lowe)