ALSC Roadshow: Guide to Participation  
Spring 2014

Introduction

The ALSC Roadshow provides limited funding for members who are interested in staffing booths, presenting programs or coordinating social events at state or local conferences. Conferences must be related to library service, children’s publishing, or have some connection to library services.

This document is a guide to participating in the program. It will detail expectations, realities, and how to make the most out of your conference experience.

Setting Up a Booth

Having a physical booth is a great way to the attention of prospective members. At a booth, attendees can pick up literature and ask questions at their leisure. Booth space isn’t always cheap, but as long as you write this expense into your proposal, ALSC will cover the full cost of the booth.

Where will I get the ALSC promotional literature?

Get in touch with the ALSC office. You can contact, ALSC Membership/Marketing Manager, Dan Bostrom, 1-800-545-2433 ext 2164 or dbostrom@ala.org. Or send an email to the general ALSC office account, als@ala.org.

Do I have to staff the booth by myself?

No. You shouldn’t kill your conference experience just to staff the booth. ALSC will help you set up a schedule and find volunteers to staff the booth. A booth is a big commitment so before you propose setting up a booth, make sure you’re ready for it.

What is expected of me in the booth?

1. Have a good time! Be friendly, help people find information and let others know about your personal ALSC experiences.
2. Familiarize yourself with current ALSC programs and initiatives. For more information, check out the website: [http://www.ala.org/alsc](http://www.ala.org/alsc)

3. Please replenish handouts as needed.

**Hosting a Social Event**

A social event can be a much more relaxing way to spread the word about ALSC. Social events can be in the form of meet-ups, networking activities, or just a happy hour. By putting on a social event, you are giving a human face to the ALSC organization.

*How do I promote my social event?*

Great question. First, write up a small promotional blurb for your event:

> You're invited to a social hour and networking event for children's librarians! On [date, time], come to [location] for a children's library meet-up. Talk, mingle, and find out a little bit more about membership with the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC). There will also be a cash bar and food is available for purchase.

Then, find an appropriate email discussion list (such as ALSC-L) and send it out. You may also ask organizers if they can include this information in their conference emails. Also, make sure to send your blurb to the staff at the ALSC office.

*Do I need to reserve a room at a bar/restaurant?*

Not necessarily. Not only can this be expensive, it can also make the mood feel a bit too heavy. If you’re hosting a social event, make it feel light and un-intimidating. Find a bar/restaurant and ask them to put together a few tables. Leave room for people to grab promotional literature and offer for them to sign up for more information. This might inspire more casual drop-ins and easier natural conversation.

*If I set up a social event, do I need to pay for everyone’s drinks/food?*

No. It’s important to stress in your communications that the food and drinks are the responsibility of attendees. Use familiar phrases such as “cash bar” and “food available for purchase.”

*What should I talk about?*

Much like a booth conversation, this should be about the needs of the prospective member. Ask them about their current job, their library/school/organization, their career aspirations, and what sort of professional interests they have (i.e. advocacy, diversity, grants/scholarships). These are great conversation starters that can be steered around to the advantages of membership.
Presenting a Program

Are you a good public speaker? Want to include a conference presentation on your resume? Presenting an ALSC-related program at a local/state conference is a great way to get the word out about ALSC programs and services. Here a few recommended topics:

- Membership with ALSC
- EL día de los niños/El día de los libros
- Read! Build! Play! and the Importance of Play
- Everyday Advocacy
- ALSC Mentoring Program

How do I propose a conference program?

Each library association will do things differently, but usually proposing a conference program means thinking ahead. Way ahead. Many conferences are planned more than a year ahead of time, so get in touch with your planning committees as soon as you have an idea. You can propose the idea and refine it as time gets closer.

How do I promote my presentation?

See above under “Hosting a Social Event.”

How do I get promotional literature?

Again, please contact the ALSC office.

Is there a model membership orientation program?

Yes. It’s called ALSC 101. If you’re interested in presenting an ALSC 101 at another conference, please contact the ALSC office. ALSC has bingo board, agendas, and other materials that could be useful for your presentation.

After Your Booth/Social Event/Program

Once the conference is over and you’re back to your home library/school/organization please remember to fill out the ALSC Roadshow Conference Review Form within two weeks of your event.

Doing so helps the ALSC Membership Committee find new ways to reach new members. If you have any questions, please contact ALSC Membership/Marketing Manager Dan Bostrom, dbostrom@ala.org.