Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies

Strategic Plan

June 2015 – July 2020

ADVOCATE...LEARN...TRANSFORM
VISION

The Association for Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) is the premiere destination for ALA members to find information and build capacity to serve populations that are served by state library agencies, specialized libraries, library cooperatives and library consultants.

MISSION

The Association for Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) enhances the effectiveness of library service by advocating for and providing high quality networking, enrichment and educational opportunities for its diverse members, who represent state library agencies, libraries serving special populations, library cooperatives, and library consultants.

ENVIRONMENT

ASCLA is one of the eleven membership Divisions of the American Library Association. As such this strategic plan is intended to support and reflect the strategic plan of the larger association. The strategic directions have been set by the larger organization, while the specifics relate to the division.
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. Advocacy

ALA and its members work with libraries, the broader library community and members of the public to advocate for the value of libraries and for public support for libraries of all types at the local, state, federal and international level.

This work includes a broad continuum of activities, including raising public awareness of and support for the value of libraries, training and assisting library advocates, advancing legislation and policies that support information and library services in all types of libraries, and effectively responding to specific opportunities and threats.

Advocacy efforts support ALA’s core values, provide a vision of innovation, focus on the impact of libraries and librarians, enable the future of libraries and promote libraries as centers of community engagement, lifelong discovery, and learning.

ASCLA Goals/Objectives:

ASCLA will:

- Advocate for specialized and cooperative library services.
- Remain recognized as the division most knowledgeable on issues related to individuals with disabilities and diverse needs.
- Build awareness of ASCLA to increase membership and support for related causes.
- Ensure our audiences are represented and support them in advocating for their needs.
- Communicate with members clearly and consistently.

Strategies:

ASCLA will:

- Develop and implement regular evaluation of advocacy needs
- Annually determine which issues and programs to address with advocacy efforts addressing the issues that are most pressing and those about which our members’ voices will have an effect.
- Create and make quality marketing tools available to the membership.
- Identify publications and publicize to the membership encouraging them to provide articles and stories that support the mission of ASCLA and its represented populations.
- Work with other divisions and units in ALA to ensure that all Association activities are universally accessible.
- Maintain regular publications to support all members of the division.

2. Information Policy

ALA's information policy efforts empower people to use libraries and information-based resources to improve their lives and communities. Information policy comprises laws, regulations, court decisions, doctrines, and other decision-making as well as practices related to information creation, storage, access, preservation, communication, accessibility, and dissemination.
ALA advocates in diverse policy areas including intellectual freedom, privacy, civil liberties, telecommunications, funding for education and research programs, funding for libraries, copyright and licensing, open access, government information, and literacy. Progress in these policy areas enables libraries to advance important societal goals such as employment, education, entrepreneurship, equity, personal empowerment, community engagement, creation of new knowledge, literacy, and civic participation. ALA’s interests reside at the local, regional, state, national, and international levels. ALA serves as a knowledgeable resource and advocate on policy issues within these areas for ALA members, library professionals, decision makers and influencers, the media, and the public.

**ASCLA Goals/Objectives:**

ASCLA will:
- Support the development of best practices, policies, guidelines and standards as they relate to providing quality library and information services for individuals with disabilities and diverse needs.
- Ensure that policies, guidelines, and standards are in place that support equitable and accessible library and conference services to individuals with disabilities and diverse needs.

**Strategies**

ASCLA will:
- Monitor, identify, update and create policies, guidelines and standards that ensure equitable and accessible library services.
- Foster strong public relationships to build awareness of the ASCLA’s guidelines, standards and policies for service to represented groups.
- Develop relationships with other ALA divisions and offices as well as external agencies to ensure equitable and accessible libraries and conferences.
- Solicit feedback and input from stakeholders when drafting policies, guidelines, and standards.

3. **Professional Leadership and Development**

Recognizing that the professional and leadership development of all who work in libraries is essential to high-quality professional practice and the future of libraries and information services, ASCLA will:

- Provide professional development opportunities appropriate to all levels of experience and expertise, in multiple formats/venues, with diverse presenters and educators;
- Provide leadership development opportunities both within the Association and for the field;
- Maintain strong but flexible accreditation standards and processes;
- Coordinate the multiple opportunities available throughout ALA to provide coherent and accessible continuing education frameworks for all members;
- Attach meaningful recognition to learning opportunities;
- Increase diversity and inclusion within the field;
- Provide clear pathways that help members set and meet professional and leadership development goals;
- Develop a pervasive culture that encourages continuous learning based on content and forms of recognition provided by ASCLA;
- Align leadership development and continuing education with the best thinking about the changing information environment.
ASCLA Goals/Objectives:

ASCLA will:
- Support the educational and life-long learning needs of members by providing a variety of learning opportunities at preconferences, conferences and virtually.
- Effectively respond to the needs of its members and the users they represent by providing the tools and opportunities that support them.
- Raise awareness among members of available guidelines, standards and policies for use.
- Increase the number of learning and networking opportunities for members and other interested parties.

Strategies

ASCLA will:
- Develop and implement a regular survey of members to be responsive to their needs.
- Complete an assessment of members’ training needs to guide conference programming and online course development.
- Coordinate activities, resources, and opportunities that relate to the unique needs of consultants, specialized libraries, state libraries, and cooperative systems.
- Encourage the creation of and involvement in interest groups and committees.
- Offer both in-person and virtual networking opportunities for members which support the sharing of ideas and resources.
- Maintain an effective website for communicating ASCLA services and programs, and for connecting members to each other.
- Continue to enhance and grow the Interface newsletter.
- Use a variety of social networking tools to engage members.

4. Organizational Excellence

To continue to be a successful division ASCLA must remain responsive to the needs of its members and the people they represent and provide tools and opportunities that support their work and professional interests.

ASCLA Goals/Objectives:

ASCLA will:
- Maintain a sustainable division that adds value to ALA as a whole.
- Communicate clearly and consistently with current members, potential members, and other ALA divisions and units.
- Increase membership by 3-5% each fiscal year by building support for and awareness of library services to individuals with disabilities and diverse needs.
- Ensure that ASCLA is a fiscally sound division.
- Ensure that all events sponsored or co-sponsored by ASCLA are universally accessible to all who wish to attend.

Strategies

- Conduct member needs surveys and provide activities and resources to support identified needs.
- Hold in-person and virtual membership meetings.
- Review strategic plan and business plan annually and update as appropriate.
• Maintain an effective website for communicating ASCLA services and programs, and for connecting members to each other.
• Continue to engage members by enhancing and growing the Interface newsletter and using other social networking tools.
• Continue to offer fundraising programs such as the annual international trip for members and friends.
• Create and implement marketing tools which help build awareness of and interest in ASCLA programs and services.
• Identify publications to provide articles and stories that support the mission of ASCLA.
• Create and implement a resource development plan.
• Work with other ALA divisions and units to advance equity and accessibility of conferences and other organizational services and resources.

Approved by the ASCLA Board, June 29, 2015 at the annual conference board meeting.