

2016 PR Xchange Awards Competition and 2016 PR Xchange Event at the ALA Annual Conference

Frequently Asked Questions (revised December 2015)

What are the PR Xchange Awards?

The annual **PR Xchange Awards Competition** recognizes the very best public relations materials produced by libraries in the past year. This year's competition will award and recognize original materials produced during the 2015 calendar year. The co-chairs for 2016 who coordinate the Awards Competition are Mark Aaron Polger and Laura Tomcik.

Who sponsors the PR Xchange Awards?

The PR Xchange Committee sponsors and oversees the PR Xchange Awards Competition. The PR Xchange Committee falls under the Public Relations and Marketing Section (PRMS) of Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA).

What is the PR Xchange Event?

The PR Xchange is a drop-in style event at the ALA Annual Conference in the Exhibit Hall. It's an exciting event where libraries across the country share their PR and marketing ideas. View and take **free** copies of award-winning PR materials from the juried PR Xchange awards, as well as promotional materials from libraries across North America. See creative library videos, newsletters, posters, and more! Attendees can learn how to improve their own promotional materials by talking with John Cotton Dana Award Winners, PR Xchange award winners, and other Library Marketing and PR authors and experts.

How are the PR Xchange winners selected?

Materials are judged on the quality of content, originality, design, and format. Judges will consider criteria such as the creativity of the approach, audience appeal, presentation of information in a clear and informative way, attractive appearance, appropriateness of design/graphics/photos and uniqueness of format.

Who is evaluating the work submitted?

The jury from **PR Xchange Awards Competition** are made up of eight (8) volunteers, who are professionals chosen from a field of experts in the areas of graphic

design, public relations, communications, or marketing. The jury does not include any members of the committee organizing the PR Xchange event or the PR Xchange Awards. The co-chairs of the Awards Competition are not part of the panel. The jury reserves the right not to award a prize in a particular category if submitted work does not meet the criteria described above.

Can I volunteer to be a judge?

For 2016, we are looking for volunteer judges in the Chicago area. Those selected to judge materials cannot submit any proposals for the 2016 PR XChange Awards Competition. Please contact us at prxchange.awards@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering your time.

What types of material may be submitted?

Original materials (such as brochures, newsletters, posters, bookmarks) may be submitted in **print or electronic formats**.

The categories for 2016 are below:

1. Advocacy materials
2. Annual Reports/Strategic Plans, List of Events, Calendars, Newsletters
3. Bibliographies/Booklists, Materials promoting Collections, Services, Resources
4. Fundraising materials
5. Patron orientation materials
6. Reading program themes (all ages)
7. Special Programs & Exhibits

What is the difference between a print and electronic submission?

A print submission is a promotional item that is disseminated and delivered to library users in printed format. An electronic submission is born digital. Examples of electronic submissions can be an online exhibit, a YouTube video, any web-based promotional item (excluding library web sites) are considered electronic submissions. The PR Xchange Co-Chairs reserve the right to re-classify incorrect submissions.

What if I have materials that do not fit into these categories?

If you have promotional materials that do not fit into the categories, please contact the program co-chairs to determine suitability for the PR Xchange awards. You are also welcome to send materials that do not fit into PR Xchange

categories to the PR Xchange for display (these could include newspaper ads, mascots, etc.) at the ALA Annual Conference. PR Xchange materials do not have to be exclusively from 2015.

Is there a limit for the number of entries?

Please limit your submissions to no more than **7 proposals per library**.

What about web sites?

Although web sites are an important piece of library public relations and marketing efforts, PR Xchange Awards does not accept library web sites as submissions. The application form has a space for entrants to include an optional URL, if it is relevant and provides additional context to a unique PR effort. The following examples illustrate how web sites might be considered in the context of this competition:

- If a library submitted an orientation video, they might submit the URL for the page within their library web site in which the video is embedded. Please note that the **video itself** is what is being entered in the competition, not the web site.
- A library with a clever YA summer reading campaign might submit a brochure or poster, but also provide the URL for the summer reading program. The **brochure or poster is the work entered** in the competition.

What about video and broadcast materials?

Video and broadcast materials (eg. television and radio PSAs) should be submitted in the electronic sub-category of the appropriate category type (Advocacy, etc.)

How do I enter the PR Xchange competition?

<http://www.tinyurl.com/2016-prxchange-awards-proposal>

The Call for Proposals opens on December 15, 2015. The deadline is March 15, 2016.

Online entries are preferred. However, if you have problems using the online form, contact the co-chairs, Mark Aaron Polger and Laura Tomcik at prxchange.awards@gmail.com to request a PDF entry form.

Each entry should be submitted in the primary format in which it was originally distributed.

For print formats, complete the online application form and mail exactly **three (3)** copies of your entry, along with a print-out of the submission confirmation you will receive, to:

2016 PR XChange Awards
c/o Laura Tomcik
Buswell Library/Wheaton College
501 East College Ave.
Wheaton, IL 60187

For electronic formats, you may submit the URL and/or upload a file at the end of the online application process.

Multiple submissions per library are encouraged. However, a library may submit only one entry in each category. Please enter the work in the category most closely describing the piece. Please limit your proposals to a total of **7 entries per library**.

If your Library Marketing Campaign contains many promotional items, please submit 1 item from your campaign and not all promotional items.

Incomplete submissions or entry forms may result in elimination from the competition.

What are the operating budget divisions from which winners are selected?

Winners in each category will be selected in the following library operating budget (not promotional campaign budget) divisions.

There are four (4) library operating budget categories:

Under \$5 million
\$5- \$10 million
\$10 - \$15 million
\$15,000,000 plus

What is the entry deadline?

Entries for the PR Xchange competition must be completed and postmarked no later than **March 15, 2016**.

When are winners notified?

Winners will be notified in early **May 2016**. They will be asked to submit 75 copies, if possible, of each winning entry for display and distribution during the PR Xchange event at the ALA Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida (Note: winners are not ineligible if they are unable to supply additional copies of their entry). The notification will include the address to which the copies should be sent and directions for preparing the mailings. Winners will also have their winning materials displayed and they will be invited to present their work at the PR Xchange event.

Winners will also receive their award certificates at the PR Xchange Awards ceremony held at the annual PR Xchange event during the ALA Annual Conference. We encourage winners (or another library representative) to attend this event to accept their award. Winners may have their pictures taken at the awards ceremony for their own public relations materials.

Where do I send PR materials to the PR Xchange event?

Please consider sharing extra copies of your library's PR materials with other ALA attendees at the PR Xchange event, even if they weren't submitted or did not win the PR Xchange. Mailing information (including a special mailing label) will be sent out in the weeks prior to the ALA Annual Conference. Look for information regarding mailing labels to be posted to the ALA News, ALA listservs such as *prtalk*, *ili-l*, *acrg-lmo*, *infolit*, *academicpr*, and the LLAMA web site.

When do the PR Xchange awards take place?

Awards will be presented at the 2016 PR Xchange event on Sunday, June 26, 2016 at 12:30pm. The PR Xchange event will run from 10:00am to 12:30pm. The PR Xchange Awards ceremony will be held from 12:30pm-1:30pm. Both the PR Xchange event and the awards ceremony will be held in the Exhibit Hall in the Special Events Area. Large signage will direct you to the event space. Check the final ALA Annual Conference Program for the exact location. The co-chairs will be checking email at the conference so they can also help you. Email us at prxchange.awards@gmail.com and we will be able to reply right away.