

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Atlanta
January 20 – 24, 2017

Topic: Interest Group Support & Build-Out

Background: At the 2016 Annual Conference, the Board passed a motion “that the YALSA Board agrees to its responsibility to identify and recruit interest group conveners, directs the President to appoint interest group liaison, and directs the Executive Director to work with staff and member leaders to promote interest groups as outlined in the document.” Interest Groups provide an opportunity for increased member engagement and can potentially support all three areas of the Organizational Plan. The following initial steps are complete: Three YALSA Interest groups are currently active: Teen Mental Health, Washington DC Metro Area, and Los Angeles County Area. Proposals for the Picture Books for Teens and Teens Are Not Alone Interest Groups are before the Board and awaiting approval. A Board Member is assigned to liaise with Interest Groups. Interest Group promotion has been posted on the YALSA Blog, The Hub, YALSA E-News, and through Twitter posts. The Board now needs to consider how to best provide a more robust support system for YALSA Interest Groups. Diane Colson and Jennifer Korn present the following support system.

Action Required: Action

For Interest Groups to thrive, a permanent support system and marketing mechanism need to be put into place. Interest Groups, by their nature, do not require the same amount of oversight and support as committees, advisory boards, and task forces. However, the low level of oversight and support previously provided resulted in Interest Groups not being utilized to their full potential.

The proposed system below will provide needed support to Interest Groups and conveners, will ensure Interest Groups are recognized as a worthwhile member engagement opportunity, and will provide feedback about Interest Group activity to YALSA leadership, while also maintaining the more organic nature of Interest Groups.

Task	Who	Due date/ frequency
Update content on YALSA Interest Group FAQ page, including adding to the Benefits sections and editing the Duties of the Convener section to encompass more than just conference meeting related duties.	Content: Diane and Jennifer Posting to website: YALSA staff	2/28/2017 One time project

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<p>Update the tips on starting a new interest group. Include a guide of tips on the virtual collection signatures and recruitment of members.</p>	<p>Content: Jennifer and Diane Posting: YALSA Staff</p>	<p>2/28/2017 One time project</p>
<p>Create a one-page flyer or infographic promoting Interest Groups to be distributed at conferences and information sessions.</p>	<p>Content: Jennifer and Diane Design and printing: YALSA staff Future updates: YALSA Staff</p>	<p>Content, 3/31/2017 Ready for distribution at Annual 2017. Update annually with active Interest Group changes.</p>
<p>Recruit Interest Group Conveners to participate in a crowd sourcing effort to create an Interest Group Convener manual or guide. Guide will be evaluated and approved by Staff and Board liaison.</p>	<p>Conveners, YALSA Staff, Board Liaison</p>	<p>Conduct crowdsourcing in early 2018.</p>
<p>Develop a prioritized list of potential Interest Group leaders and topics. YALSA Staff and Board members will this to seed new groups and offer targeted involvement opportunities for the identified members through marketing and personal contact.</p>	<p>YALSA Board</p>	<p>Spring 2017</p>
<p>Send a promotional Interest Group email to YALSA members who submitted applications but were not selected to serve on a committee, task force, or advisory board each year. This email should strongly encourage these members to join or start an interest group. The email should state doing so will allow members to contribute to YALSA and can lead to further YALSA involvement opportunities.</p>	<p>YALSA Membership Coordinator</p>	<p>Semi-annually, after appointments are made</p>
<p>Create and maintain a listserv or Slack Channel of IG conveners. This is in addition to the YALSA chairs listserv and would be used exclusively for Interest Group related communication. Board and Staff Liaisons will use this to communicate reminders about the annual report and other relevant information, and conveners can use this to solicit advice from each other if needed.</p>	<p>YALSA Communications Specialist, Board Liaison</p>	<p>Update as needed.</p>

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Once the updated version of ALA Connect launches, assist IG Convenors with creating virtual communities, if desired	YALSA Membership Coordinator	TBD
Ask conveners to promote their Interest Group at least quarterly through YALSA e-news, blogs, social media, etc.	Board Liaison	Quarterly
Review the Interest Group reporting form, and updated as needed	Diane and Jennifer	2/28/2017
Use annual reports to identify potential articles, blog posts, webinar content, or conference presentations and connect the IG convener with the appropriate party to do this, identify potential YALSA leaders and committee members, and help the Interest Groups address any concerns.	YALSA Communication Specialists, Blog Managers, and Editors	Annually
Organize opportunities for an All-Interest Group meeting at conferences and /or Symposiums if the conveners indicate interest in doing so.	YALSA Program Officer for Conferences and Events	At Annual, Midwinter and the Symposium
Prepare an evaluation of the above efforts to determine impact, and make recommendations for improvement as needed.	Board Liaison to IGs	Full board discusses at Midwinter 2018.

Questions to consider

- What changes to staff responsibilities are needed so that a staff member has the capacity to take on the duties described above?
- Several of these tasks are more project and task-management related. Is it appropriate use of Board member time to complete these? If not, who should be responsible for them?

Fiscal Implications

- Considerable YALSA staff time to maintain webpages, update and post to listserv or Slack, gather data from annual reporting form, organize All Interest Group meetings at conferences.
- Board member time to liaise with and periodically review success of Interest Groups.
- Staff and Board time to measure impact of Interest Groups over time.

Measuring Impact

- Compare the number of active Interest Groups from year to year.
- Compare the number of members belonging to Interest Groups from year to year.

- Track the involvement of members who move from Interest Group to committee, jury, or task force involvement.
- Track any programs, webinars, conference presence at ALA and other conferences, and other continuing education materials that arise from Interest Groups.

Recommended Board Action

- The Board agrees to its responsibility to support Interest Groups as described, and directs the President to lead Board work on identifying and prioritizing a list of Potential Interest Groups and Convenors.
- After the Board completes the YALSA program review, the Board directs the Executive Director to work with staff to make necessary work-flow changes so staff can support Interest Groups as described in this document.

Additional Resources

- Interest Group Board Document from Annual 2016
www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InterestGroups_AN16.pdf
- YALSA Interest Groups, www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/discussion
- Interest Groups FAQ, www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/faq
- Interest Group Reporting Form www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsahandbook/convenor