TO: Executive Board

RE: Conference Services

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Information

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

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DRAFT OF MOTION:
N/A

DATE: October 12, 2021

BACKGROUND:
LibLearnX: The Library Learning Experience
Accessibility Task Force Recommendations - 2017

ATTACHMENTS:

Accessibility Services Closeout Report - Midwinter 2020 (Seattle)
Virtual Presentations Accessibility Webpage – Annual Conference 2021 (Virtual)
**LibLearnX: The Library Learning Experience**

In October 2021, Conference Services, with the support of CMO, will launch registration, marketing, and promotion for the new ALA event LibLearnX: The Library Learning Experience. The official dates are January 21-24, 2022 and will feature innovative and participatory education programs and highlights such as ALA Gives Back, Book & Media Awards, I Love My Librarian Award, LLX Marketplace: Exhibits and Ideas Xchange, LLX Studio, and the Youth Media Awards.

**Programming**
The LibLearnX call for presentations received 171 submissions - 44 ShopTalks, 25 Ideas Xchange, 91 Learning Labs, 11 Accelerators. The LLX Subcommittee reviewed, scored, deliberated, and selected 118 submissions – 28 ShopTalks, 17 Ideas Xchange, 70 Learning Labs and 3 Accelerators.

**Marketing (sample from Marketing/Promotion Plan)**

*High level messages:*
- LibLearnX is the event you told us you wanted.
- LibLearnX is a completely new conference experience built from the ground up based on years of research, exploration, and feedback from ALA members, industry partners, and event planning experts.
- LibLearnX is focused on active learning. Attendees will participate and contribute to the conversation and outcomes. New: more live education programming. Real time networking and learning.
- A must-attend learning event.
- The live and interactive format allows for a one-time only chance (per year) to participate.
- Participants will take away immediate actionable insights from peers and colleagues.
- The focus at LLX is on quality over quantity; this 4-day event is designed to be more manageable, approachable, friendly, and invigorating.
- New members value – affordable registration rate for LLX with other membership benefits.

*Value in attending:*
- A virtual structure that offers the opportunity to learn from home with high participation with peers, leaders, and presenters.
- New education structure with interactive components for increased learning and retention.
- The LLX Marketplace with new and instruction/learning experiences.
- Education and professional development curriculum specifically planned to enrich professional development and careers.
- Access to information that can directly impact the community you serve.
- Networking and Celebrations. Communicate value: High level of engagement throughout the conference, and the learning and professional develop benefits that will result from this new learning format – and at an affordable registration rate.
Registration
LibLearnX has a total registration goal of 4,000 (budget formula 3000 member/1000 student member). Registration for LibLearnX is scheduled to open October 15, 2021. There will be opportunities for scholarship, donation, and carbon offsets during the registration process.

Implementation of the “Final Report of ALA’s conference accessibility task force 2017 CD#37.1”

The following information is provided in the Accessibility Information section of Program Book and Mobile App for conferences produced by Conference Services:

ALA works to make sure your experience will be a pleasant and accessible one. Here are the features we in place to ensure the ALA [Meeting Name] is accessible to all:

- We caption our main sessions, e.g., President’s Program, Membership Meeting, Council Meetings, and others as requested by organizers.
- We have accessible sleeping rooms in our hotel block. There are rooms for people who are deaf, blind, and attendees who use wheelchairs.
- Please fill out the housing form and check the appropriate box. An onPeak representative will contact you to make sure you are placed in an appropriate room.
- Leader animals of all kinds are welcome throughout the ALA Conference.
- Listening devices are available for those who are hard of hearing.
- Our shuttle bus company has accessible buses, call (XXX) XXX-XXX to make reservations. Further instructions on how to obtain rides are available in each hotel, in the convention center on-site, and in the mobile app.
- Based upon availability in each city, we maintain a limited number of wheelchairs and scooters on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Conference Services coordinates interpreting services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. To request accommodations, please contact ALA Conference Services Accessibility Hotline at confaccess@ala.org.
- An interpreter is also on-call in the Conference Services Office located [Room] of the [Venue], Thursday through Monday for last minute requests on a first-come, first-served basis.
- For accessibility information the Conference Services staff can be reached at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Accessibility Consultant
Conference Services utilizes services of an accessibility consultant who specializes in providing communication access; hearing and assistive technologies; and support services for persons who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing. Our consultant represents the “hotline” noted above, is available for site visits, reviews captions, font requirements, symbol usage, and manages the assignments of accessibility services for in-person and virtual events. At the end of each conference, a close-out report is provided (sample attached) summarizing and capturing the feedback for the services provided during the event.

Accessibility Webpage on Conference Websites
In addition to services available for attendees, Conference Services provides a resources page for presenters. The tips and guidelines are to assist speakers in making their presentations accessible for all. (sample attached)
ALAMW20 Report – Accommodations and Accessibility

DATA:

- 21 attendees requesting sign language interpreter, captioning and assistive listening devices (ALDs). Schedules ranged from 1 day to the full conference. Attendees were presenters as well as members of the audience.
- 17 Interpreters provided a total of 473 hours of interpreting service.
- 2 Writers (captioners) on-site (none remotely).
- 3 ALDs (assistive listening devices).

ISSUES:

Deaf-Related issues presented during Midwinter that should be addressed before Annual:

1. ALDs inappropriately stocked/available.
2. Ballroom captioning box was not PIP. Either set-up as true PIP or change the videos to fit in less than the full screen size and place captioning directly above the video.
3. Ballroom graphics was too busy to focus on captioning/interpreters.
4. Writers in Ballroom didn’t have a screen/view of the stage (they sit back stage) and need to be provided with a monitor so that they can see who is speaking and ensure that the captions are flowing properly. AV needs to bring a feedback monitor, power strip and light for the writers.
5. Ballroom floor monitors should be connected to the video provided on the main screen, as well as captioning, for the interpreters to view from the stage.
6. Communicate what additional sessions (other than YMAs) are going to be live streamed so that if we are already captioning it, captioning can be provided through a link, and the link can be tweeted (no extra cost as long as Wi-Fi is reliable).
7. Audio issues in the Council room – having an assigned person to the room each day could be helpful.

Non-Deaf-Related issues:

1. Attendees with mobility issues need to be tracked by OnPeak (long-time attendee continues to request an accessible room and isn’t provided with one).
2. Scooters to borrow should be placed near the closest entrance to the conference center (the walk from shuttles to registration was too far in Philadelphia).
3. Desk for checking out scooters did not have a chair so that attendees could sit down while waiting for their scooter. The chair should not have wheels on it.
SURVEYS:

After the conference, I send surveys to attendees and interpreters asking for feedback. Below are some comments/feedback:

DEAF CONSUMER SURVEY: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ALAConsumer

Of questions asked, 100% were satisfied, except for Question 8: If you used an ALD (Assistive Listening Device), was it available, charged and useful? Response comment: “Not always available but always useful when it was available.”

- I was a bit nervous to ask and did not want to have so much extra expense spent on me, but really it meant the difference between being able to understand and not understand. At the 2019 ALA, that is where I realized I really need the extra help. So THANK YOU A MILLION. I really appreciate it all.
- Keep up the good work. I appreciate all of the work that everyone provided to make my experience the same as everyone else.
- GREAT job as always! Thanks for making our ALA conference so wonderful!
- I saw the captioning during the open ceremony session and the one during Sunday. The captions and interpreters matched all the times.

INTERPRETER SURVEY: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ALA20terps

Again, satisfied responses with the below remarks:

- Karen was very transparent! Updated me I felt frequently and was very clear with regards to expectations...I felt I could speak up regarding working with teams.
- It was an honor to work with the interpreters. They were all highly skilled and supportive teammates.
- Karen set the stage for the interpreters to make sure we all got breaks and lunch!! Thank you!
- Karen responded to all emails and texts in a timely manner.
- Absolutely! They were respectful and appreciative (comment regarding how interpreters were treated by the deaf attendees).
- It was one of the more organized conferences I’ve worked. Thank you.

IN SUMMARY: I check emails daily and respond to requests regarding accommodations from attendees as well as ALA staff and presenters. I increase my hours 3-months before a conference by reaching out to attendees and interpreters. At this same time, I should be connected with AV, review the program book sections pertaining to accommodations, etc.

Please let me know if you have any questions and I look forward to working with you at Annual.
Presenting at ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition (Virtual)?

The tips and tools below can help you make the most of your presentation.

Tips to Make Your Virtual Presentations Accessible

- Choose fonts that are easy to read (sans-serif fonts, like Arial, Verdana, Calibri, etc.) and make sure text is large (minimum 14 pt) and has good color contrast. Use Webaim's color contrast checker to check exact shade combinations.
- Ensure your slides are uncluttered and consider using images to help explain concepts.
- Include alternative text and image descriptions on all images.
- Be sure to describe images verbally, especially when using charts and graphs that may be more difficult to read.
- Any supplementary video materials should include captioning whenever possible.
- Do not use flashing or strobing animations in a presentation or other materials. If using a presentation software that includes motion (like Prezi), be sure to inform viewers ahead of time.
- Speakers should use a headset whenever possible to improve audio quality and reduce background noise.
- Make sure the speaker’s face is well-lit and can be clearly seen.
- Mute any attendees not speaking to keep background noise to a minimum.
- In a discussion setting, speakers should say their name every time they speak, so captioners and attendees know who is talking.
- Repeat audience questions aloud before answering them.
- Be inclusive of all attendees by avoiding jargon, slang, and assumed knowledge.

Get more tips and resources compiled by the ASGCLA Accessibility Assembly.

Virtual Presenter Quick Tips

- Best Practices to Help You Prepare for a Professional Virtual Presentation

Accessibility Tips from Microsoft

- Accessibility Checker
- Create Accessible PDFs: Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Visio, or Word
- Accessible PowerPoint Presentations

Free PowerPoint Templates for Annual Conference & Exhibition (Virtual) Event Presentations

- Powerpoint Template 1
- Powerpoint Template 2
- Powerpoint Template 3