



**Library Leadership and Management Association,
a Division of the American Library Association**
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LLAMA Proposed Reorganization Frequently Asked Questions Updated February 2017

1. Is my section going away?

No, it will become a Community of Practice and its name will be more descriptive of the work it does because most members don't understand all of our acronyms. Communities of Practice will still do the important work of creating educational content and connecting members with similar interests, but they will be less structured and provide members with more opportunities to get involved.

2. I would like to get involved, will there still be committees?

Yes. One of the goals of the reorganization is to make it easier for members to engage with the organization. There will still be standing committees with a traditional two-year appointment (this is particularly likely for major award committees). Members will have ongoing access to other volunteer opportunities, including project groups, micro-projects, etc. The listed opportunities will clearly define the work to be done, the time commitment and the desired skills. Appointments will be made throughout the year, and projects could be as short as a month or as long as two years. Additionally, we anticipate there being more opportunities to participate on virtual groups to allow those who cannot travel to still have the benefits of membership and active engagement

3. What will happen to current committees?

The current work of your committee will go on at least through the 2017 Annual Conference, and many committees will go on just as before except within a Community of Practice. However, all committee members will be part of a process to examine your current committee and to revise its charge. At the end of this process you should have a clear understanding of your role on the committee and the outcome you can expect from your volunteer experience

4. Will I need to separately join all the Communities of Practice in order to participate in discussions or volunteer?

No, you will no longer need to check off all the individual Communities of Practice when joining or renewing your membership. You will immediately have access to the resources they offer and the available volunteer opportunities.

5. How will I know how much work is involved with a volunteer opportunity?

All member groups will have a standard description of the volunteer opportunity, so you will know what to expect when you volunteer your time:

- Charge - why the group exists
- Deliverable - a description of what the group will produce/final work product
- Expected time commitment
- Desired skills, knowledge, experience
- Staff contact and role
- Resources available (budget, IT support, etc.)

6. How will this affect academic librarians who need to serve on committees as required for promotions/continuing appointments/tenure or as justification for attending conference?

The new structure should actually make it easier to establish, join, and participate in relevant team-based, professional service activities. Names of groups may be more fluid and selection to leadership roles less structured, but the impact of the work of the group (be it called a community, committee, task force, interest group, project team, etc.) may actually be more influential than that of a long-term standing committee whose charge has gone stale. This may be particularly true when the opportunity is one that addresses newly emerging area of concern or multi-disciplinary issue that crosses different areas of the professional arena. Additionally, we anticipate there being more opportunities to participate on virtual groups to allow those who cannot travel to still have the benefits of membership and active engagement.

Many academic libraries are moving to a model for service that looks beyond simply counting how many committees one has been on to a more qualitative model that asks what is accomplished and the impact it has. The new structure will support this context by offering active and relevant engagement. In addition, there will still be a number of committees within LLAMA and ALA that are formally appointed with defined multi-year terms and elected positions for the LLAMA Board.

What this means for me?

If you are interested in getting involved and taking an active role in a group, community, committee, task force, interest group, project team, etc., either respond to a call for interest, complete the appropriate volunteer form, or contact the leader of that group to get more information on participation expectations and “officially” joining.

7. Is the LLAMA Board also changing?

Yes. Following best practice, the size of the Board will be reduced from 15 to seven members and terms will be increased to allow for better governance, greater continuity, and better development/oversight of the division’s strategic objectives. The members will be the current/past/incoming presidents (3 year term), the treasurer (2 year term), the division councilor (3 year term), and two elected directors (alternating 2 year terms).

8. Will members still vote on dues increases?

No. Under the proposed reorganization, members will elect an additional Director to represent their interests. The Board already has a legal and fiduciary responsibility to prudently manage the finances of the organization in a transparent way, which includes raising revenue or cutting expense. It is important to note that LLAMA dues have not increased since 2003, and there is no plan to increase dues now or in the near future. In fact, the Board remains committed to keeping LLAMA as affordable and accessible to as many ALA members as possible, particularly new professionals.

9. Will there still be section (Communities of Practice) executive committee elections?

No. Under the proposed reorganization, the Communities of Practice can still choose to have an executive committee, or they may have a rotating group of volunteers, but they will not be elected. Following current best practice, communities will identify the skillset needed for particular positions and then actively recruit volunteers for that position. Like many legacy processes, the eight separate section elections are time-consuming processes that add little value for the average member. In the 2016 election, six sections had only a single candidate for section chair, and only one out of eight balloted for any office other than section chair.

10. How will LLAMA staff roles and responsibilities change?

With less time devoted to process, more staff time will be devoted to two core functions: member value and continuing education.

The Director will:

- Strengthen member communication/connection/education; better utilize new ALA technology to add value to membership; more personalization of messages and targeted marketing;
- Create a robust onboarding process for members; provide clear road map of what to expect and how they can successfully engage with the division; deliver immediate value;
- Significantly increase communication with Communities of Practice, committees, content developers and members to foster collaboration, a shared understanding of strategic goals, and a meaningful volunteer experience;
- Analyze data to better understand what our members want: surveys; patterns with new/renewing/drop members; patterns in job titles/work settings; patterns in membership and purchase/engagement patterns; opportunities in underserved markets, etc.

The Program Officer will:

- Take a much more strategic and hands-on approach to managing content development within the agreed upon leadership and management curriculum;
- Work with member groups to align and evaluate content, and to assess and report results. Content will include Annual Conference programs, preconferences/institutes, discussion groups, webinars, online courses, online discussions and presentations, etc.

11. What are the goals of the reorganization?

- Create an association that will focus on professional development in new, more relevant and meaningful ways;
- enable more open, flexible, and constructive member engagement;
- optimize the use of staff time;
- and be a true leader for innovation within ALA.

12. If the members approve the reorganization, when will it take affect?

The Bylaws would be in force immediately upon approval. The many changes to policy and procedure, particularly related to ALA processes, will evolve throughout the rest of the fiscal year, which ends August 31, 2017.

13. How will the new structure help LLAMA members in different Communities of Practice better collaborate on similar ideas?

We will be looking for groups that have a similar purpose, and help guide them through a collaborative effort. Part of this will be through staff, the website and ALA Connect. There will also be greater documentation of what current community projects.

14. How will the new structure help members learn about committees and their work?

Using more virtual tools will allow members to learn about the work of a group. We're hoping that moving the focus from conference involvement to virtual involvement will help engage more members. We're also hoping that the new structure will allow members to more quickly engage with others around similar interests or project ideas.

15. How do you think LLAMA will look in five years and how will it relate to ALA in general?

- The organization will not be bounded by current membership requirements and there will be more fluidity in the volunteer experience.
- More teams with members from diverse Communities of Practice
- More agility in connecting members
- Cross divisional leadership and management education and anyone at any point in the career can have a place in LLAMA
- Rewarding virtual involvement, eliminating the need to come to conferences and meet face-to-face

- Micro opportunities for meaningful participation
- The go-to organization for leadership and management professional development

16. Given that section leadership will no longer be on the Board, how will you facilitate communication between Communities of Practice and the division level be facilitated?

There will be more open member meetings at conferences as well as virtually. We want to have the opportunities to meet and engage with other member leaders, and to understand and respond to their needs, just outside the current structure of Friday/Monday Board meetings.

17. How will we assess the reorganization?

We are committed to assessing the project and continuing to evolve. We have an Assessment Section that we hope will play a role, along with the Reorganization Task Force. The need to reorganize actually grew from member assessments, and that process will continue.

This FAQ will be updated with additional member questions as they are received.