Chapter 28: Discussion Groups

I. Purpose
A Discussion Group is an informal group that allows for the discussion of topics of common interest.

II. Organization
Discussion Groups are created, changed, or discontinued by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee must approve a statement of each discussion group's purpose and duration for inclusion in the PPM (*Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 4.*).

In accordance with the GODORT *Bylaws (Article IV, Section 1),* all appointments begin at the start of new business at the Steering Committee meeting of the Annual Conference.

A. Officers: Discussion Group Leader

III. Discussion Group Leader and Duties
See Chapter 1: Conferences; Chapter 2: Communication & Correspondence; Chapter 3: Steering Committee

A. Discussion Group Leader:
1. Is appointed by the GODORT Chair for a term of at least one year.
2. Defines discussion topics, coordinates discussion and reports back to GODORT membership as appropriate.
3. Is required to have an active ALA Connect account for communication with the GODORT membership.
4. Have activity updates posted to GODORT membership following the Steering communication schedule (*PPM*, *Chapter 3).*
5. Is required to contact and coordinate with GODORT Past Chair for the purposed of scheduling face to face sessions.
6. Prior to Annual Conference: Have the agenda/topic ideas for committee meeting posted to the website by the Technology Committee.
7. Best practices – suggestions for new Discussion Group Leaders
   a. Supply the GODORT Past Chair with relevant keywords to increase findability in ALA scheduling system.
   b. Solicit participation from other units of ALA.
   c. The Discussion Group Leader will be on the same schedule as all other GODORT committee and task force chairs with respect to room scheduling and topic selection. These are face to face sessions, therefore getting scheduled for space at the conference is critical and puts the group on the same schedule as all other committees and task forces scheduled by the GODORT Past Chair.

      d. During the session, have prepared questions to guide the discussion.
      e. Consider breaking attendees into small groups for some of the session and having them report back.
      f. Suggest brief but relevant readings in advance, but do not assume attendees will have read them.

IV. Meetings and Communication

A. Discussion group meetings shall be held at Annual Conferences or may be held virtually throughout the year.

B. It is recommended that all Discussion Groups establish and maintain a "discussion" section on the main GODORT node of ALA Connect to allow all GODORT members a chance to participate.

V. Government Information Technology Discussion Group [created 2013, currently inactive]

A. Purpose

Digital content, which began as a novel addition to the array of government publication formats, now defines nearly the entire landscape of government information production. For libraries this represents an opportunity for entirely new approaches to collection development and user discovery. However, it's an opportunity complicated by:
- which technologies are used
- how they're used
- what kinds of information are included or excluded
- the speed with which these factors change

This discussion group will explore government information production and its effects on library collection development practices and user discovery.

B. Activities and Projects

Example of discussion topics:
- How well do government publications optimized for desktops/laptops work on mobile devices?
- Given both the effectiveness and privacy reduction of search customization as practiced by companies like Google and Bing, should we advise users to avoid such customizations to retain privacy or use them to improve search results?

Created: 3/2013, revised 2/2018, 7/2018, 3/2020, 9/2020