



# *A Better* ALA

A Modern Association  
for a  
Modern Profession

*Preliminary Recommendations*  
*ALA Annual Conference 2019*

# Project Charge

The charge is to develop and recommend strategies and tactics to create an ALA with the agility to respond to current challenges and opportunities, and to focus energy and resources on its mission and members in the decades to come. Ultimately, it is to design *a modern association for a modern profession.*

# Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) Charge

Appointed by 2017-2018 ALA President Jim Neal in June 2018, the charge of SCOE is to: Carry out a comprehensive review and study of ALA's governance, member participation and legal structures and systems, with the goal of proposing changes that will vitalize its success, strength and agility as a 21st century association.

The Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) will provide advice and support to the Executive Board on priority improvements. The work of the Steering Committee will focus on membership development and engagement, and on encompassing the diversity of voices that enrich ALA through incorporating the perspectives, interests and contributions of a wide variety of stakeholders and affiliated groups. Its work will be mission driven and embrace the Association's core values.

Through input and feedback from across the Association, the Steering Committee will explore alternative models and reorganization possibilities. It will work with the Executive Team and a consultant to formulate and present its findings and recommendations to the Executive Board.

# The Foundation

Any assessment of organizational effectiveness begins with the question: “What is the most efficient and effective structure to fulfill our mission, achieve our vision and reach our goals?”

To that end, it is important for us to remind ourselves of that foundation.

## **Mission**

The mission of the American Library Association is to “provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.”

## **Core Organizational Values**

The Association is committed to:

- Extending and expanding library services in America and around the world
- All types of libraries - academic, public, school and special
- All librarians, library staff, trustees and other individuals and groups working to improve library services
- Member service
- An open, inclusive, and collaborative environment
- Ethics, professionalism and integrity
- Excellence and innovation
- Intellectual freedom
- Social responsibility and the public good

# A Better ALA

Steps and Timeline	
Committee review and development of preliminary recommendations	May 2019
Further review of recommendations	May - June
Staff input discussions	May
Presentations and discussion of next steps at the ALA Annual Meeting	June
Council focus groups	June
Staff input discussions	July
Integration of Chapters and Ethnic Affiliates, fiscal analysis, and further presentations/review of recommendations with members.	July – September
Development of final recommendations (SCOE Meeting)*	September
Presentation of recommendations to ALA Executive Board	October
Final fiscal, legal, and constitution and bylaws analysis	Oct, Nov
Develop final Council presentation	Nov, Dec
Determine implementation strategy	TBD
Presentation to Council	MW 2020
Council vote 1**	Annual 2020
Council vote 2	MW 2021
ALA membership vote	Spring 2021

\*Timeline subject to change based upon member feedback.

\*\*Per Bylaws, any changes to the constitution and bylaws of the ALA must be voted on twice by Council.

# Successful Organizational Effectiveness Projects Achieve the Following:

- Develop strategies for increased member engagement
- Identify ways to improve alignment across the organization
- Balance reliability, speed and quality
- Balance effectiveness and efficiency
- Ensure structures and processes are built to support continuous improvement
- Ensure structures and processes support equity, diversity, and inclusion

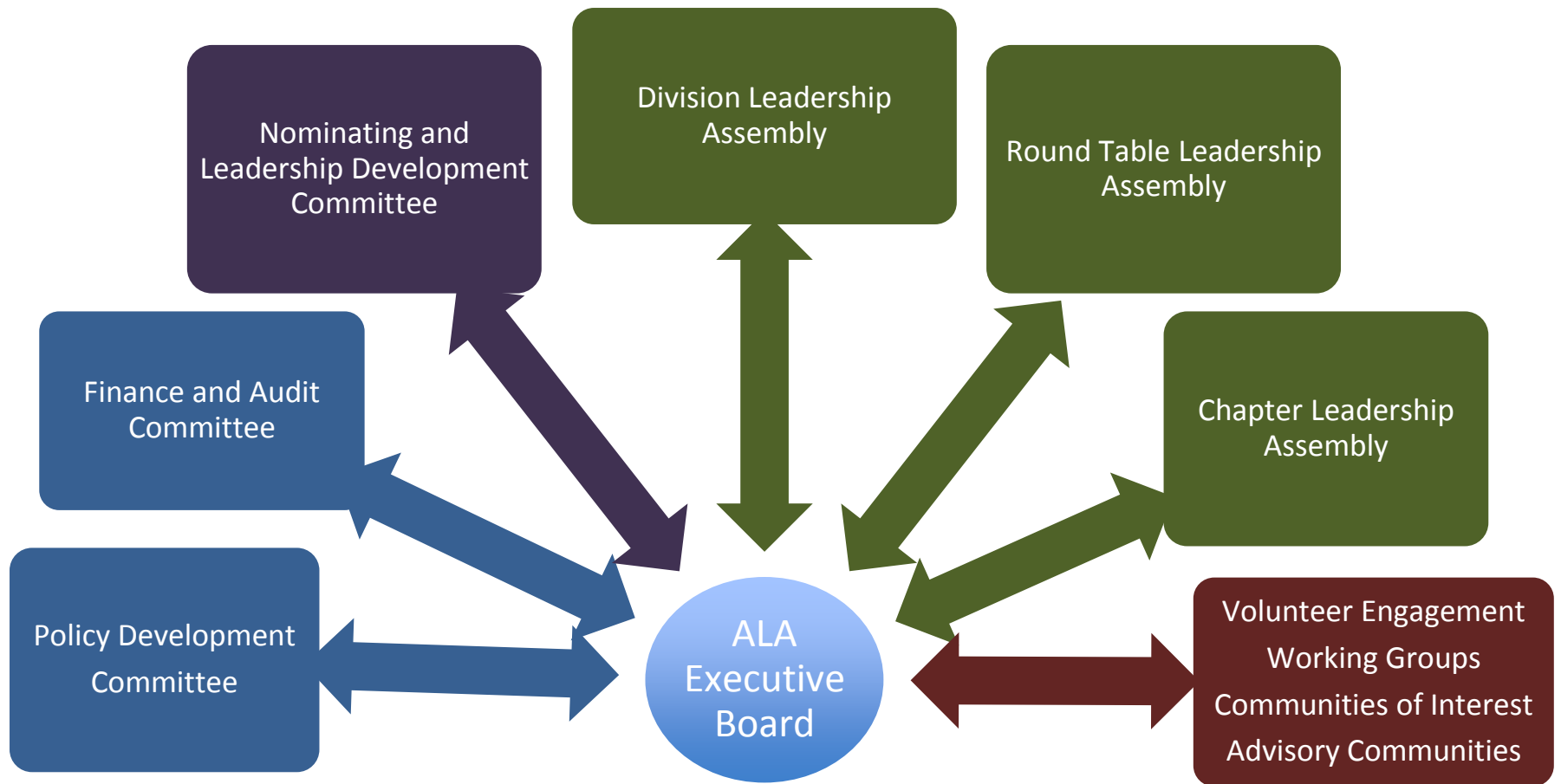
# Preliminary Recommendations

For the last year, ALA has received significant input into the “ideal” operational structure to serve libraries, library workers, and library supporters for the next 150 years (or more). The following recommendations have been developed as a result of numerous surveys, countless hours of conversation, discussions of ideas and models, examination of effective practices by other associations and a consolidation of ideas. They are preliminary recommendations.

# The preliminary recommendations are intended to achieve the following goals:

- Enable consistent, strategic, and effective member engagement
- Enable organization-wide planning focused on a common mission and vision for library workers, library supporters, and libraries
- Be financially sustainable
- Enable sustainable, long-term change (including evaluation of progress and more frequent future adjustments)
- Allow stakeholders to have confidence in decisions made when they are *not* in the room
- Deliver high value products, services, and impact for members





**Blue - Elected by and direct input from membership**

**Purple – Elected by the Executive Board and receives direct member input**

**Green - Direct input from membership groups**

**Red – Appointed by the executive board and receives direct input from membership**

# Redesigned ALA Executive Board

The ALA Executive Board will be comprised of seventeen voting members including:

- The following officers elected by the membership:
  - President
  - President-Elect
  - Immediate Past-President
  - Treasurer (three-year term)
- Eight at-large members of the board elected by the membership
- Five members selected by the Executive Board for unique skills required to govern the organization
- The ALA Executive Director will be an *ex officio*, non-voting member of the board
- An Executive Committee will be made up of the officers and Executive Director

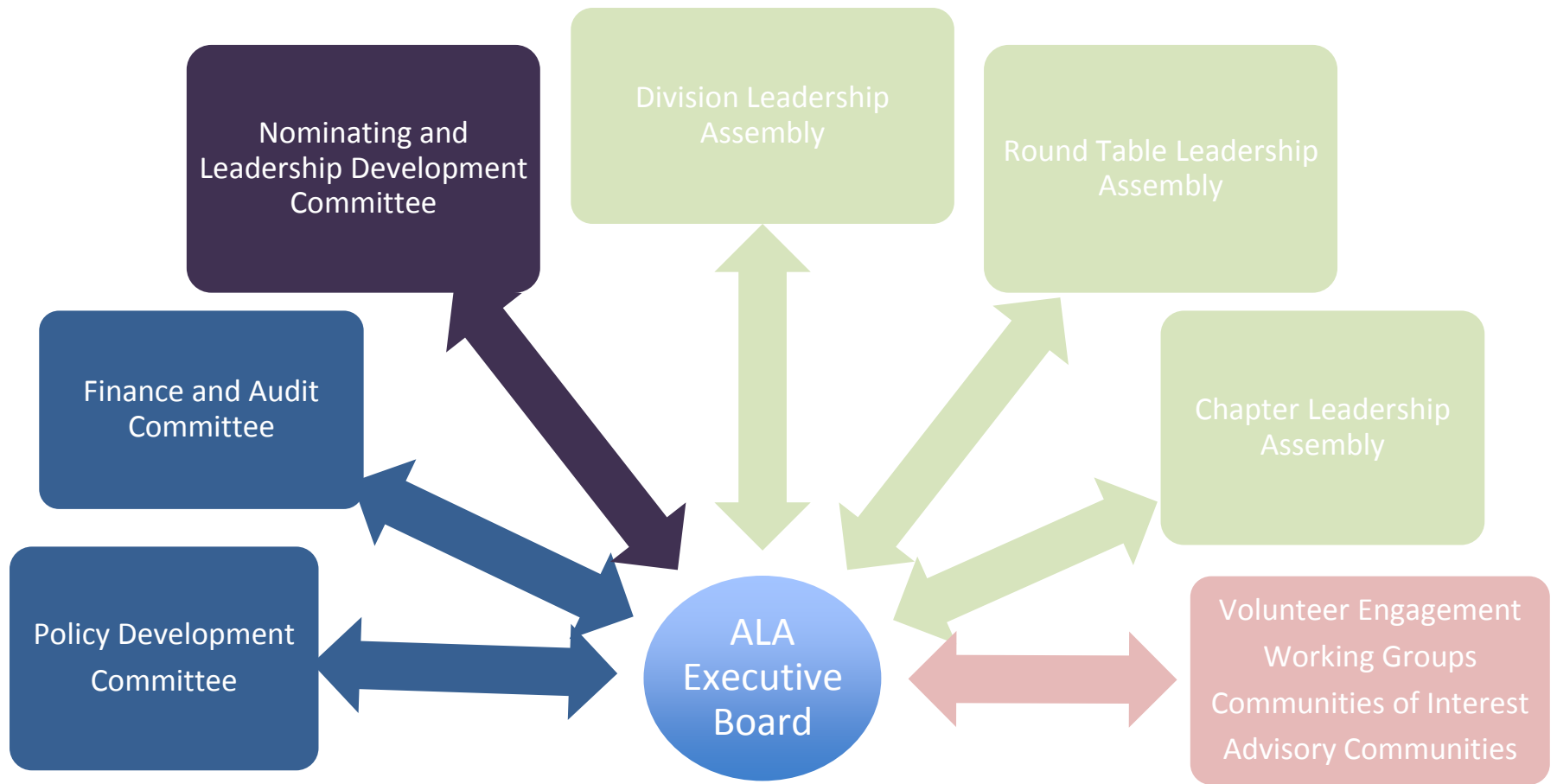
The Executive Board will be the policy-making body of the organization and will utilize the following structure to gain input into the prioritized needs of members.

# Board Input

The ALA Executive Board will require focused, transparent and efficient input to set the priorities and allocate resources.

Three primary committees will support the board:

- Nominating & Leadership Development Committee
- Policy Development Committee
- Finance & Audit Committee



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# Nominating & Leadership Development Committee

A fifteen-member committee shall be nominated by the ALA President and elected by the ALA Executive Board to assist in the identification and development of ALA leadership.

- Members may serve one three-year term. Terms will be staggered.
- The committee will be chaired by an ALA Executive Board Member
- The committee will be supported by ALA Staff
- The committee will work with all ALA groups (divisions, round tables, etc.) to develop a consistent leadership development program
- The committee will vet and select a slate of candidates for ALA elections
- The committee will establish a prioritized set of criteria to select a slate of candidates and attempt to create a balance of experience and perspectives on the ALA Executive Board and committees
- ALA members will have the opportunity to self-nominate for elected positions

# Policy Development Committee

The ALA membership will elect a fifteen-member **Policy Committee**. The committee will make recommendations to the ALA Executive Board on new or revised ALA policy (internal operations and public policy).

The Committee will hold a **Policy Assembly** for member input during the Annual and Midwinter meetings. In addition, the Committee will host a virtual assembly on priority issues that arise between meetings. *The assemblies shall be open to all ALA members for participation.*

Additional details include:

- Committee members will serve three-year terms. The terms will be staggered. A maximum of two consecutive terms may be served at any time.
- The committee will recommend a set of criteria to the ALA Board to help prioritize issues. That criteria may include impact to the profession, ability of ALA and groups within ALA to have impact on the desired result, and timeliness of the issue.
- The committee may take policy recommendations from members, groups within the ALA, or requests from the ALA Executive Board for member discussion of issues.

# Finance & Audit Committee

The Finance and Audit Committee will provide input to the ALA Executive Board on the current and future financial priorities of the ALA.

- There will be fifteen members on the committee: Twelve will be elected by the ALA membership to no more than two, three-year terms. Three members will be ALA Executive Board members. Terms will be staggered. A maximum of two consecutive terms may be served at any time.
- The Committee will be chaired by the ALA Treasurer.
- The ALA CFO and staff will work with the committee to establish an annual budget.
- The committee will hold a budget assembly at ALA meetings (replacing BARC and PBA).
- With staff, the committee will evaluate the fiscal impact of proposed policies.
- The committee will oversee the annual audit.

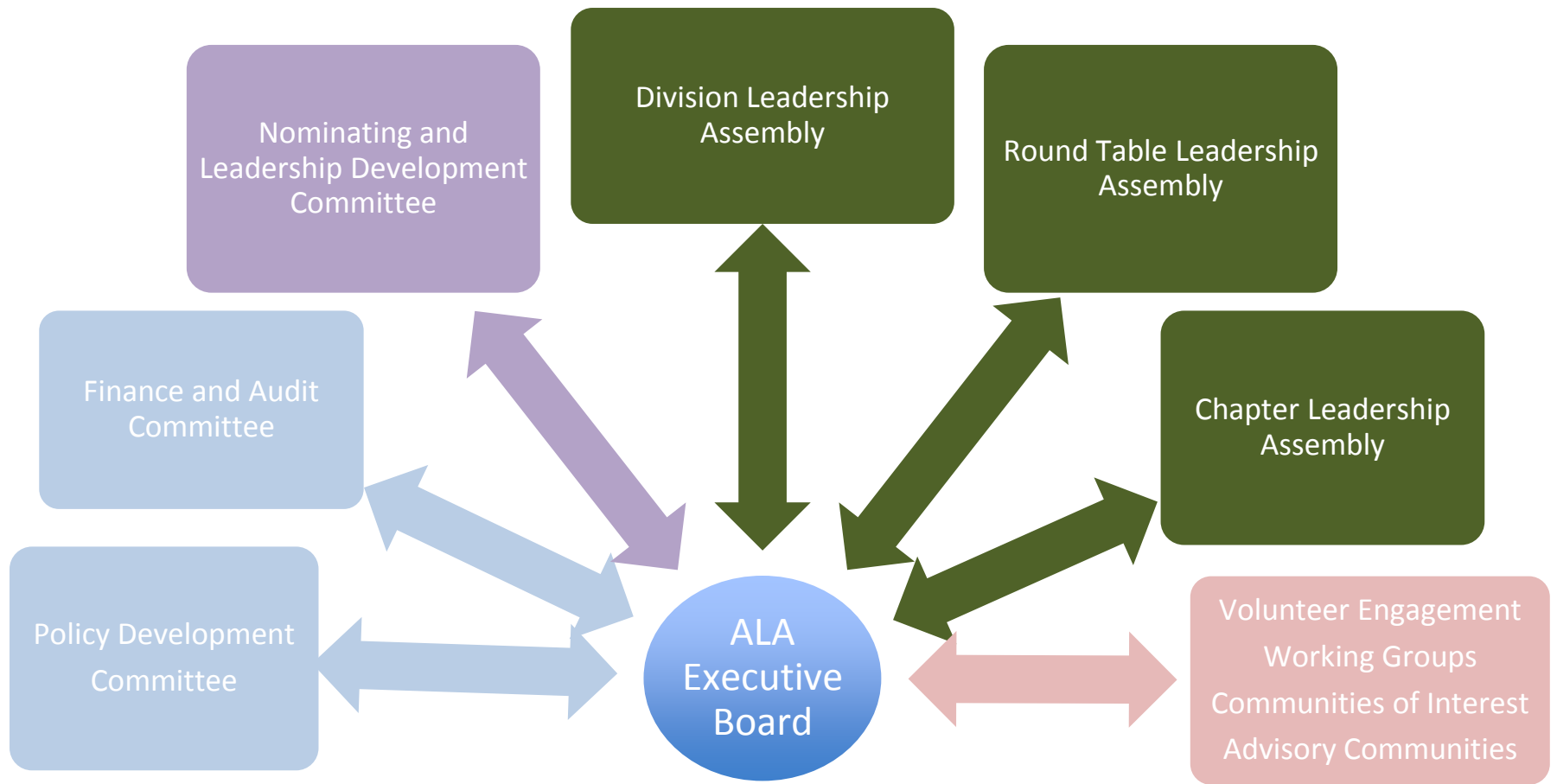
# Planning and Engagement Leadership Assemblies

**Leadership Assemblies** will be established to provide an open communication exchange to and from the ALA Executive Board and all ALA members. They will also provide opportunities to bring efficiency and consistency to the related organizations along with reinforcing a common sense of purpose. This structure will reduce the current barriers for communication to the Executive Board where members must communicate first through council who then may communicate to the Executive Board.

The following Assemblies will be convened at the ALA Annual Meeting, the Midwinter meeting and virtually throughout the year.

- Division Leadership Assembly
- Round Table Leadership Assembly
- Chapter Leadership Assembly





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# Planning and Engagement Leadership Assemblies

Each Assembly will focus on three important activities:

1. Offering input to the ALA Executive Board on critical issues identified by the ALA, groups or members.
2. Serving as a forum for integrated planning and prioritization.
3. The sharing of effective practices among the groups represented.

## **Participation:**

Assembly participants will include two elected leaders from the oversight body of the participating groups, the senior staff leader of the group, and a designated ALA Liaison from the group represented.

An ALA Executive Board liaison will convene the Assemblies in consultation with staff and represented groups. A co-convenor will be selected from the group and by the participants. Liaisons will be responsible for developing compelling agendas and ensuring communication throughout the year. All ALA members are invited to participate in the Assemblies.

The Assembly structure is designed to consolidate and/or utilize existing meetings to create efficiency and streamlined lines of communication to the Executive Board and reduce barriers to communication. For example, the Chapter Leadership Forum will consolidate the chapter leaders meeting and chapter relations meeting into one, ongoing assembly. The Round Table Leadership Assembly will replace the Round Table Coordinating Committee and provide more support and structure for the work of that group.

# Additional ALA Leadership Groups

- **Endowment Trustees** will continue to manage the investments of the Association. They will provide an Annual Report at the Finance and Audit Assembly.
- There will be a general **Membership Meeting**. The most effective timing and structure are to be determined.
- An **Accreditation Commission** to best support accreditation activities will be explored

# The Volunteer Work of the ALA

Meaningful, effective and efficient volunteer engagement is the cornerstone of any successful association. The following recommendations are intended to bring a streamlined method of engagement with consistency for **all** ALA members.

It will be critical to utilize new digital tools to streamline the identification and selection of participants to any volunteer group. That process should be consistent across all ALA related organizations and should be integrated with work of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee. All members of ALA Volunteer Work Groups will be appointed by and accountable to the ALA Executive Board.

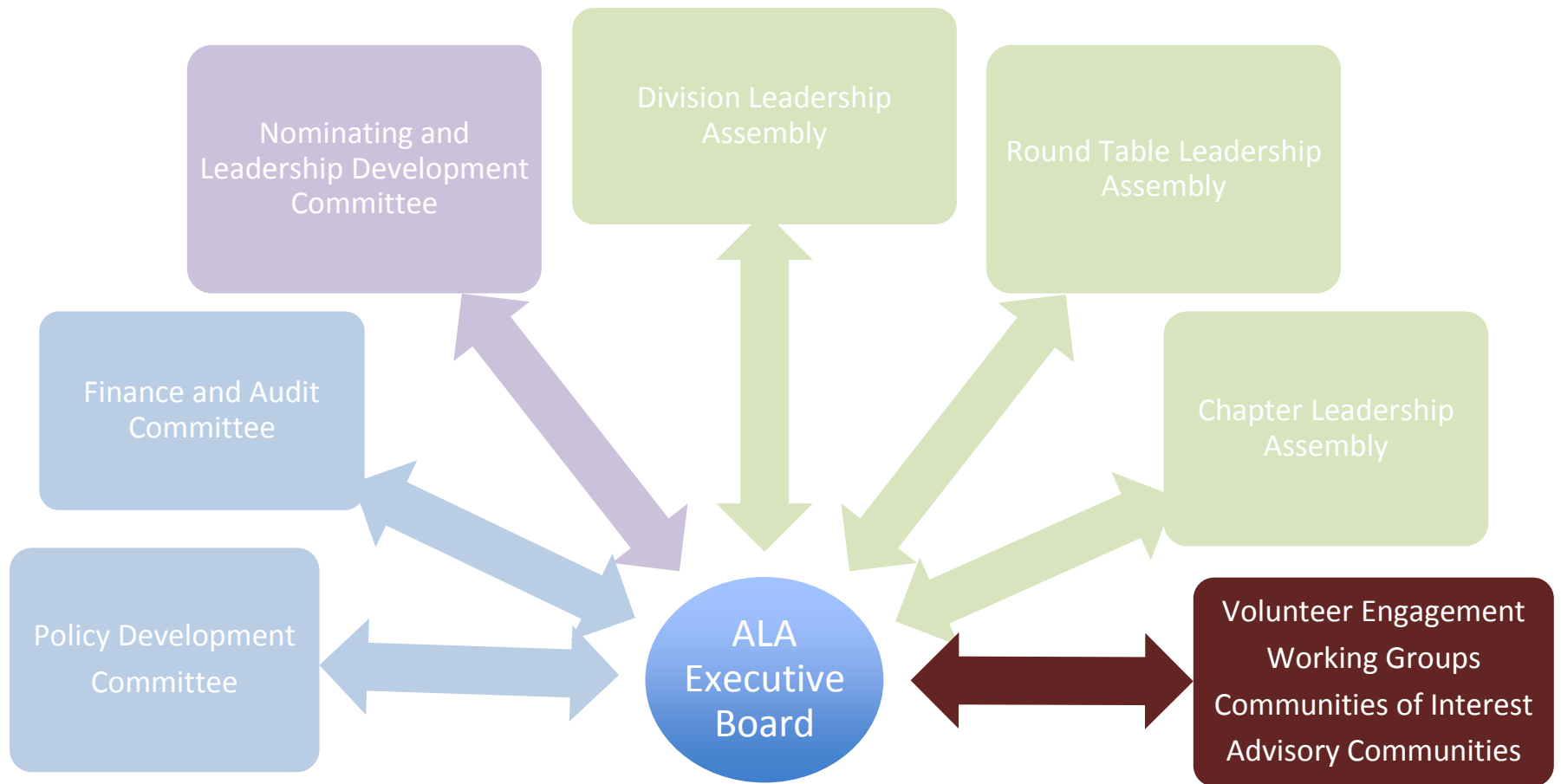
# Volunteer Engagement Groups

## The Work of the Association

**Advisory Communities** – charged by the ALA Executive Board to advise on important, timely issues across the profession and the association. May recommend working groups.

**Working Groups** – appointed groups with a specific charge, defined timeframe, clear deliverables tied to ALA's strategic directions

**Communities of Practice/Engagement/Interest** – groups that give members the opportunity for socializing and sharing common experiences and interests



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# Advisory Communities

## **Purposes:**

- Allow for member input and ongoing support for ALA offices and programs
- Provide critical member input into areas of concern and values
- May propose working groups to address specific projects or needs that may arise from member input

**Function:** Advise Executive Board or ALA Offices

**Example:** Center for the Future of Libraries Advisory Group

**Accountability:** Executive Board or ALA Offices

**Composition:** Executive Board appoints member leaders to cultivate and coordinate discussions. Appointments will be informed by volunteer interest forms, ALA staff recommendations and other methods that may be identifies to engage members.

**Relationship to Staff:** Staff Liaison

# Working Groups

## **Purposes:**

- Carry out the work of the Association
- Focus on important, timely issues
- Focus on specific projects to promote the Association's strategic directions
- Committee or Task Force

**Function:** Carry out specific, time-bound charges set by Board

**Example:** Task Force on Sustainability

**Accountability:** Executive Board

**Composition:** Appointed by the ALA President with emphasis on diversity and inclusion as well as relevant experience/expertise. Members are not required to be ALA members if their expertise is necessary. Year-round volunteer form and a call for volunteers for specific projects will help inform the appointments to Working Groups.

**Relationship to Staff:** Staff Liaison



# Communities of Practice/Engagement/Interest

## **Purposes:**

- Provide opportunities for members to socialize and share common experiences and interests
- Through discussion, members may propose a working group or program

**Function:** Provide opportunities for members to network, share common experiences, and learn from each other

**Examples:** LITA Interest Groups, AASL Special Interest Groups, Entrepreneurship and Maker Spaces Member Interest Group

**Accountability:** Executive Board

**Relationship to Staff:** Limited staff oversight

**Composition:** Members may elect a leader through ALA Connect. Participation will be free of additional dues and open to all.

# Member Engagement Divisions

60% of ALA members have also joined a Division. It is clear that there is a strong connection between many of the valuable programs and services offered by divisions and our members. This connection should be enhanced where possible.

It is also important to recognize that the library ecosystem is changing. The future of ALA member engagement must recognize those changes and adapt as necessary. The following structure was developed with that in mind.

# Member Engagement Divisions

- ALA strategic plan and division strategic plans should be in alignment.
- Division leadership structures and volunteer engagement structures should be consistent with ALA leadership and volunteer structures. This will be more efficient for the organization and for members, allowing members to see paths to leadership and engagement.
- We envision the ALA Executive Board will look to Divisions for content expertise before initiating a new volunteer group.
- Current division consolidation and realignment efforts should be encouraged to continue.

# Member Engagement Divisions

- A possible Division membership model that will be tested by Avenue M along with other pricing models is: Every member will be a member of the ALA and a division. There would be one dues amount for all members.
- There should be an examination of the most effective way to consolidate divisions (that may extend beyond the scope of the SCOPE project).

# Member Engagement

## Round Tables

Round Tables are a growing percentage of ALA members. While the current structure of Round Tables has developed a depth of support, there is a strong sense that some structural consistency may lead to a breadth of increased connection and engagement with all ALA members.

We envision that:

- The ALA Executive Board will look to Round Tables for content expertise before initiating a new volunteer group.
- We will increase the minimum number of members required for ALA staff support. Currently, Round Tables need a minimum of 100 members. For an association of more than 50,000 members a larger minimum needs to be established -- this will help the organization prioritize efforts on areas of high value to a large percentage of members.

# Member Engagement Round Tables

- All future documents will be located in Connect.
- All elections will be administered within Connect.
- The mission, values, and bylaws of Round Tables will be aligned with the ALA mission and values.
- All Round Tables will have the same operating document.
- A single dues structure will create administrative efficiency.

# Member Engagement Membership Initiative Groups

- Transition to Connect online discussion groups
- Will be utilized as a mechanism to identify expertise for volunteer engagement groups
- Online discussion groups will be utilized to identify emerging issues and member trends

# Keep the Conversation Going!

- For more information on the work of SCOE and to stay up to date, follow our ALA Connect Group: “Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) Project: Discussion Forum” (<https://bit.ly/2ZGwxiC>)
- To provide feedback after Annual conference, post in the SCOE Connect group or email SCOE Chair, Lessa Pelayo-Lozada: [lessalozada@gmail.com](mailto:lessalozada@gmail.com)
- This presentation will be repeated virtually on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 1pm Central