

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: ALA Membership Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Information report

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Melissa Walling, MBA, CAE, Director, Member Relations & Services

CONTACT PERSON:

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DRAFT OF MOTION:

N/A

DATE: Monday, June 7, 2021

BACKGROUND:

Report on membership activities and membership counts.

ATTACHMENTS:

Report on membership activities and membership counts.

January 2021 Membership Statistics

Count of Personal (Individual) Members:	46,801
Count of Organizational Members:	5,074
Count of Corporate Members:	127
Total:	52,002

As predicted, ALA's membership has declined due to the pandemic as well as well as due to seasonal fluctuations in membership counts. We expect this trend to continue and move us closer to 50,000 total members as of May 2021. Assuming seasonal patterns hold, our counts will continue to decline through the summer and then start to rebalance in the Fall. As previously noted, we are continuing to see a decline in Regular, Organizational, and Corporate Members which yield the highest dues prices. We are seeing an increase in Student Members, especially through our joint students, who pay only \$21 annually.

The Member Relations & Services team has added an additional staff person to support the pivot plan growth goals. We are working on strategies for membership recruitment and conversion of student members. We are also rolling out our membership onboarding campaign this summer to ensure that new members are familiar with the benefits of ALA membership. ALA has a high rate of churn because of members who join for conference discounts, and we want to work towards stabilizing those fluctuations to drive growth.

FY21 ALA Membership Dues

Membership Dues – 591-9152

ALA Membership Dues (Q2 Close)

Total Revenues Budgeted/Actual/Remaining:	\$ 3,717,768	\$ 2,347,249	\$ (1,370,519)
Total Expenses Budgeted/Actual/Remaining:	\$ (110,000)	\$ (26,297)	\$ (83,703)
Contribution Margin:	\$ 3,607,768	\$ 2,320,952	\$ (1,286,816)

The primary season to collect membership dues ended in February so we now have a very good understanding of where we will end the fiscal year. We are ahead of budget for our membership dues and are projecting to end the year approximately 10% over budget.

Our membership renewal processes occur monthly and include e-renewals and printed notices. Our e-renewal notices have been mostly on track; however, we were not mailing printed invoices when behind with check and ACH processing so those processes were paused in recent months. We anticipate that we will be back to our normal renewal schedules in July. It is imperative that we execute the entire eight-point renewal process to ensure that we meet FY22 budget.

In early fall, we will begin targeted membership recruitment to ensure that we start rebuilding our membership revenue to pre-pandemic levels.

FY21 Key Membership Activities and Focus Areas

Membership Onboarding Campaign – Activating in Summer, 2021

The experience a new member has in their first 12 months of membership greatly impacts their long-term relationship with the association. The Avenue M research indicated that the majority of former members did not make it past the three-year mark of membership; therefore, a cross-organizational team has been working to build a new member onboarding campaign.

The membership onboarding campaign will include a series of emails, virtual meet ups, and a new member web page to ensure that our new members learn about everything ALA membership can offer. This effort is being supported through the sponsorship of OverDrive.

Goals of the Program:

1. Thank and welcome new members;
2. Introduce members to membership benefits, key resources, and the overall work of ALA;
3. Make ALA and its entities less complex and easier to navigate;
4. Help members make connections with other members;
5. Increase revenue.

The goal of the program is not to:

- Ask the new member to volunteer immediately;
- Ask the new member to spend additional money immediately.

This program is the beginning of a standardized new member engagement program. There are a lot of opportunities to expand this program to include greater personalization and increased coordination with division and round table communications. Future phases of this initiative will be pursued.

New Member Center Web site:

<http://www.ala.org/membership/new-member-center>

New Member Email Series:

Here is a broad overview of the email series. All of the emails will have similar branding and a sample email is attached. There may be minor tweaks as we finalize the series.

1. **Day One** – Welcome message from ALA President with member certificate and card
2. **Day Two** – Complete a survey about why you joined and introduction to American Libraries
3. **Day Seven** – Engage on ALA Connect
4. **Month One** – Career resources including Salary Survey, ALA JobLIST and NMRT career resources
5. **Month Two** – Benefits of attending a conference – ALA or division
6. **Month Three** – Orientation to ALA-APA
7. **Month Four** – Invitation to a new member virtual meet up
8. **Month Five** – Develop your skills through e-learning and some resources for your library
9. **Month Six** – Mid-year check in and survey
10. **Month Seven** – Mission work of ALA including advocacy, intellectual freedom, and EDI
11. **Month Eight** – Invitation to a new member virtual meet up
12. **Month Nine** – Benefits of joining a division
13. **Month Ten** – Benefits of joining a round table
14. **Month Eleven/Twelve** – The new members are rolled into our member renewal processes

New Member Sample Email

There will be consistent branding on the new member email series and a customized quote at the bottom of each page:

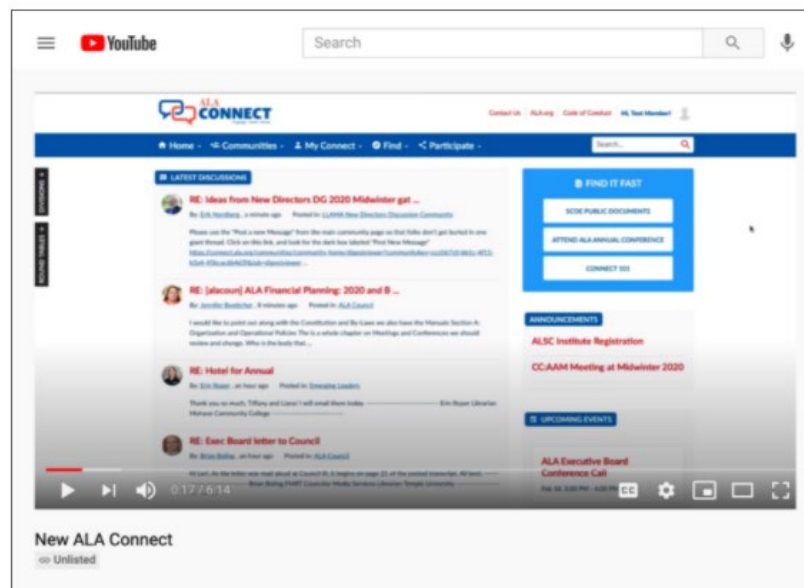


Dear [FIRST NAME] –

Have you had a chance to explore ALA Connect? [ALA Connect](#) is a centralized space for members to communicate online with each other and crowdsource ideas from a community of 55,000 library workers. Talk with other members on discussion boards, download shared resources from community-generated libraries, and collaborate as a member of volunteer committees and other groups.



If you haven't yet, now is a great time to log in and set up your ALA Connect profile and make sure you're getting messages when and how you want to see them. If you need some help navigating the space visit the [FAQ](#); for more detailed overview and tutorials you can check out the [Connect 101 video playlist](#).



Ready to dive in and join the conversation? [The ALA Member Community](#) is a great space to begin.

Check out the discussion threads at connect.ala.org/!

See you on ALA Connect!

ReMember Fund:

The ReMember Fund was established in April 2021 and promoted during National Library Week to support library worker members in maintaining their membership during challenging financial times. The Fund was established with \$15,000 in seed money and an additional \$3,447 was generously donated to the Fund.

The first round of awards was recently made to four members. There were an additional five applicants who either renewed their membership after applying or did not hold an eligible member type. In order to encourage applications, we are now sending details about the Fund to members who have not yet renewed their membership. These details are included in their final renewal email. The Membership Committee will continue to monitor this program.

Membership Model:

The Membership Committee is continuing its work on the membership model with the goal of bringing a comprehensive recommendation to this body in the Fall, 2021. As presented to the Board in October 2020, the Committee is taking a phased approach to this effort:

Phase One: Consolidate the eleven (11) membership categories into four (4) membership categories. The plan take effect in FY23 (Executive Board, Council and Member Vote in Early, 2022) and would not change division or round table structures. See Table 1: Phase One Recommendations for more details.

Phase Two: Building upon Phase One, launch an “enhanced” membership package which will include a bundle of additional benefits. Examples of the bundled benefits may include a division, a round table membership and/or professional development offerings.

Since we last reported on this work, we have focused our efforts on the financial impact of this proposed structure. With a market share of approximately 15%, there is great potential for growth; however, recent research has indicated that the complexities and cost of the membership are barriers to membership. We are also cognizant that membership dues are a revenue driver for the association, so we want to have a neutral overall impact on dues revenue.

The Committee has also affirmed that while the price of the two tiers of Professional Membership will be different, the benefits package will be the same. We also anticipate bringing a recommendation to increase the threshold for those earning <\$30,000 to a more current level. These specifics are still being reviewed by the committee and no formal action has been taken yet.

Membership Model Phase One Recommendation

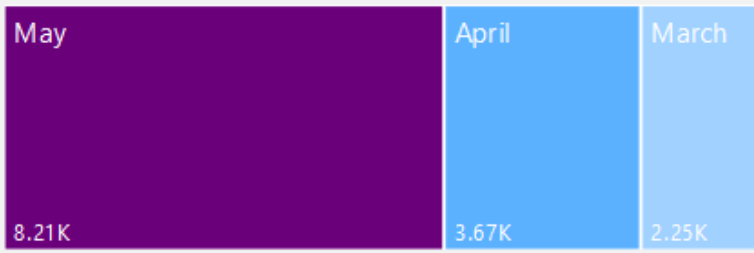
Current Member Type	Feb. 2020 Counts	FY22 Dues	New Member Type	Potential FY23 Dues	Notes
1st year	4,950	\$75	Professional – Option 1 (Includes library workers as well as others employed in library and information services or related activities in positions)	\$125 – Not Final	Positions that (a) require a Master’s degree; or (b) require a state-level certification; or (c) are managerial. <i>Higher rate of dues than option 2</i>
2nd year	2,911	\$114			
3rd year+	21,253	\$150			
Earning <\$30,000	2,929	\$54	Professional – Option 2 (Includes library workers as well as others employed in library and information services or related activities in positions)	\$55 – Not Final	Positions other than those listed in Level 1 and including those who are (a) earning < \$30K annually; or (b) working outside the U.S.; or (c) retired.
Support Staff	1,529	\$54			
Retired	2,144	\$54			
International	750	\$90			
Student	8,351	\$40	Student (Includes individuals enrolled in a degree or certificate program in library and information studies.)	\$40	<i>Eligible for five years. Graduating students will remain in this category to help transition to the price of the professional membership.</i>
Associate	561	\$68	Advocates (Includes those not employed in library and information services or related activities who, through their personal commitment and support, promote library and information services.)	\$75 – Not Final	
Trustee	987	\$68			
Friend	160	\$68			

ALA Connect Dashboard

ALA Connect is a key member benefit and as more communities transfer onto Connect, we are monitoring key metrics to ensure that this remains a relevant and useful tool for our members. Here is a snapshot of some of the data we are monitoring which all reflects an upward trend in usage and engagement. This will be especially important as we complete the final phases of the Sympa migration.

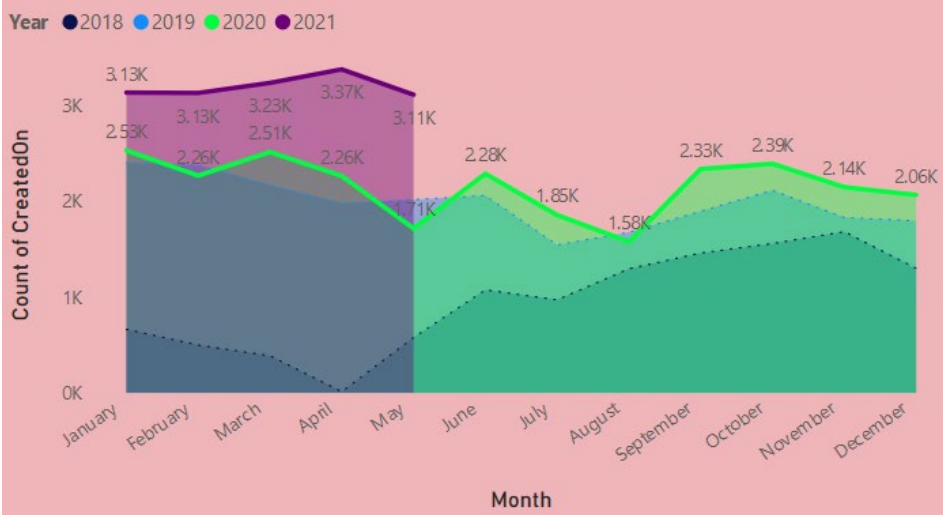
Key Performance Indicator: Logins to the Web site

Unique web logins this quarter, by month of most recent (platform-wide)



Key Performance Indicator: Engagement

Discussion posts, year-to-year



We are also looking at trending topics on the community. Here are the most active topics in the last quarter

