

TO: ALA Executive Board

SUBJECT: ALA Membership Model

BOARD REQUEST: Board Action

ACTION REQUESTED BY: ALA Membership Committee

CONTACT PERSON:

Sandy Hirsh, Chair, Membership Committee

Melissa Walling, Staff Liaison, Membership Committee

DRAFT OF MOTION:

On the recommendation of the ALA Membership Committee, the ALA Executive Board to approve the following prices for ALA personal dues effective Fiscal Year 2025:

Individual Type I	\$125
Individual Type II	\$55
Supporter:	\$70
Student:	\$40

DATE: September 30, 2023

BACKGROUND:

This recommendation continues the multi-year effort to improve the ALA Membership Model. In January, 2023, ALA Council approved [#44.1](#) to extend the membership model effort one year for additional market research and this recommendation is based on that research.

ATTACHMENTS:

Executive Summary 2022 ALA Membership Survey – Executive Board Document #12.7



<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/ExecutiveBoard/20222023Docs/ebd%2012.7%20Exec.%20Summary%20Presentation%202.23%20Combined.pdf>

Updated Timeline for Simplified ALA Membership Model – Council Document #44.1

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/ALA%20CD%2044.1%20Extended%20Membership%20Timeline%20for%20Council.pdf>

Standardized Round Table Dues – Council Document #44.3

https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/ALA%20CD%2044.3%20Round%20Table%20Dues%20Standardization_0.pdf

Approved Simplified ALA Membership Model - Council Document #44:

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/ALA%20CD%2044%20Membership%20Committee.pdf>

Background and Overarching Goals of Membership Model






With a market share of approximately 15%, there is great potential for membership growth; however, research and member feedback have indicated that the complexities and cost of membership are a barrier. The Membership Committee has worked to improve the membership model in phases.

- **Phase One:** Consolidate the eleven (11) membership categories into four (4) membership categories.
- **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 an e-learning bundle, a division membership, or round table membership.

Phase One was approved in January 2022 but additional research was required to finalize the prices for the new model. The Membership Committee therefore chose to embark upon the updated prices and Phase Two at the same time in order to have a full model ready for FY25.

Phase One – Pricing for Simplified Membership Model:

The first phase of the membership model will conclude once the prices are adopted. For reference on the action item, the chart below shows how eleven (11) membership categories collapse into four (4) membership categories:

Current Member Type/ FY24 Dues		FY25 Membership Type/ FY25 Dues
1st year Regular: \$81		Individual Type I: \$125 Includes librarians and other employees in library and information services or related positions that: (a) require a master's degree; (b) require a state level certification; or (c) are managerial.
2nd year Regular: \$123		
3rd year+ Regular: \$162		
Earning <\$45,000: \$58		Individual Type II: \$55 Includes librarians and other employees in library and information services or related positions that are: (a) earning < \$45K annually; or (b) working outside the U.S.; (c) retired; or (d) not listed in Type I.
Support Staff: \$58		
Retired: \$58		
International: \$58		
Associate: \$73		Supporter: \$70 Includes those not employed in library and information services or related activities who, through their personal commitment and support, promote library and information services.
Friends: \$73		
Trustee: \$73		
Student: \$43		Student: \$40 Includes individuals enrolled in a program for a certificate or a degree in library and information studies. Student membership is limited to five total years.



The Avenue M survey included questions about member value and pricing. Therefore, Avenue M presented 3 prices for consideration for each membership type. The Membership Committee adopted the recommended price point from Avenue M which supported the goals of membership growth, affordability to the member, and revenue generation for ALA.

In looking at other similar associations such as the [American School Counselor Association](#) or the [National Association of Social Workers](#), these prices are in alignment or even lower.

Membership Tye	Scenario A (Recommended)	Scenario B (Low)	Scenario C (High)
Individual Type I	\$125	\$115	\$145
Individual Type II	\$55	\$50	\$60
Supporter:	\$70	\$70	\$75
Student:	\$40	\$41	\$42

The detailed financial analysis from Avenue M shows that ALA membership counts and dues revenue are projected to increase each year after implementation. The alternate models did not balance those two goals and resulted either in losses in revenue or membership counts.

We should note that this analysis did not take into account the two-year cycle of membership counts or the possibility of another significant external impact (i.e., pandemic). However, the Membership Committee considers the recommended dues prices to be the best path forward.

Member Counts and Revenue Compared to FY2022

	Push Into		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	Member	Revenue	Member	Revenue	Member	Revenue	Member	Revenue	Member	Revenue
Scenario A (Recommended)	0	\$183,607	561	\$295,280	1,408	\$500,151	2,307	\$608,244	3,522	\$739,677
Scenario B (Low)	0	-\$87,997	839	\$42,329	1,729	\$233,857	2,939	\$367,682	4,484	\$522,928
Scenario C (High)	0	\$750,122	-883	\$687,001	-1,404	\$725,305	-1,630	\$690,694	-1,564	\$676,899

Phase Two Efforts:

The ALA Membership Committee and Avenue M have conducted an analysis of bundling division membership, round table membership or e-learning with membership in Phase Two. Avenue M recommended that we explore a Professional Membership Tier which includes all current benefits and offer an Enhanced Membership option to include additional benefits. Additional tiers could be explored in the future.

The value of e-learning to members is very clear; however, the research concludes that it is not enticing as a bundle with membership. A lot of members receive professional development through their library and the bundled e-learning would be selected by ALA, not the individual member, which limits its value. ALA is also already working vigorously to expand members only e-learning content and we would like that effort to progress before adding something new. Therefore, the Membership Committee considers that we should continue to focus on expanded members only e-learning content for all members in the short term. As a future phase of the membership model work, we could consider e-learning content for an additional tier.

The Membership Committee explored the following model in detail:

ALA Professional Membership Tier = reflects all current membership benefits and the prices on page one

ALA Enhanced Membership Tier = all current membership benefits + one division membership + one round table membership

With 60% of members already joining a division or a round table, the value to members is immediately clear. The ALA Enhanced Membership Tier would allow members to join a division and round table more easily and at a discounted rate. This model should also entice ALA-only members to consider joining a division or round table which is likely to increase their satisfaction with ALA.

Challenge:

To operationalize such a model, ALA division dues would need to be standardized. When a member opts into the Enhanced Membership, their dues would need to be divided into 3 components – general fund, division and round table. Since Round Tables have standardized dues, their allocated dues amount would be the current dues rate. Divisions have a range of prices which cannot be accommodated with a bundled approach. The Membership Committee conducted a financial analysis on the Individual Type I member only, using an average of all division prices (\$68 for FY24). Because division dues for FY24 range from \$53-\$85 some divisions would experience a financial loss if a bundle was implemented.

The Committee therefore determined that no additional work could be conducted on Phase Two without engaging the divisions directly and considering a standardized division dues rate. Membership dues revenue is important to divisions so a collaborative approach would be necessary to move forward.



Timeline:

Task	New Timeline
Round Table Standardized Dues Task Force to Finalize Recommendation to ALA Membership Committee	Completed
Implement Second Council Action Around Increased Salary Threshold for Non-Salaried Membership to \$45,000 from \$30,000	Completed
Avenue M re-engagement and finalizing prices and structure	Completed
ALA Executive Board approval of dues prices	Fall, 2023 – In Process
ALA Council vote on dues prices	January 2024
New membership model goes live	September 1, 2024 (FY25)