

American Library Association
Committee Information Update

Please note: ALA and Council Committees are required to submit an update of their activities within one-month after each Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference. This form will be sent to the ALA Council and the ALA Committee on Organization.

Report for Midwinter Midwinter 2014_____

Report for Annual Conference _____

Name of Committee: ALA Awards Committee

Committee Chair: Susan DiMattia

Committee Members Present: Susan DiMattia, chair; Carol Pitts Diedrichs, Rene Erlandson, Susan Hess, Natalie Donoso Lane, Andrea Lapsley, Eric Suess, Beth Gallego (intern), Kyla Johnson (intern), Cheryl Malden (staff liaison). Committee member Courtney Young, the Committee's Executive Board Liaison attended briefly to give a report.

Committee Members Absent: Camila Alire (member)

Others Present: Joanne Brunetti, Rebecca Gerber, Beth McGuire, Nanette Perez, Shali Zhang.

Accomplishments [at this meeting], a concise account:

Heard from Rebecca Gerber about the ALA **Online Award Database**—its content and uses. She is working on a grant to support entering remaining data. Discussed **online award application forms**. One visitor spoke to the approval of her jury, on the use of the online form. Other discussion on the effectiveness of online applications was positive. Discussion of **how awards are publicized** and what additional efforts could result in greater numbers of worthy applications/nominations. Discussed the **trend for juries to meet virtually**. All agreed that this practice works well for all but a few awards.

Action Item: Lemony Snicket Prize for Noble Librarians Faced with Adversity. The Committee heard about the genesis of the award, discussed the proposal and requested certain changes and clarifications in wording and intent. The Committee approved establishment of the award. It was sent to Council where it was approved.

Action Item: Roald Dahl Social Justice Award, proposed by AASL. The Awards Committee had several concerns about the award. Among other problems, it required that projects eligible for the award use only specific books by Dahl, all of which had to be published by Penguin/Random House, sponsor of the award. The committee sent the award proposal back to the AASL Board for further work. Note: After conference, the committee received a revised proposal that removed several aspects and addressed concerns of the Committee. The proposal was approved unanimously by an email vote of the committee.

Planned activities for upcoming year, a concise account: Following up on a discussion at MidWinter, a basic audit of the official ALA Awards will be undertaken. It will examine the criteria of awards to uncover duplication, it will look at the history of each award and whether nominations have been substantial and in keeping with the intent of the award, it will suggest wording changes to make the intent of the award more precise, and possibly suggest other awards to fill gaps in award areas. ALA President Barbara Stripling is in full support of such an audit. She has asked for a preliminary report to ALA Executive Board's Spring meeting in April.

Other comments/information you believe will help the Association in its work:

The Awards Committee handbook calls awards the ALA Hall of Fame. With 16 ALA Awards and literally hundreds of unit awards, the Hall of Fame concept is diluted. It suggests that greater care be given to the approval of new awards to be certain they are unique and provide coverage of worthy topics.

Submitted by: Susan DiMattia, Chair _____

Date Submitted: March 20, 2014 _____

Please return the completed form to COO Staff Liaison, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.
Current COO staff liaison is Lois Ann Gregory Wood, lgregory@ala.org.