

**YALSA Board of Directors  
Midwinter 2021, Virtual  
January 2021**

**Topic:** Recommendations from the Reimagining Alex Awards TF

**Background:** In the years since their inception in 1998, the Alex Awards have always bridged an uneasy gap between award and selection list. YALSA staff suggested that a Task Force be formed to better define and promote the Alex Awards for the future. Director Charli Osborne & Immediate Past-President Todd Krueger bring the recommendations from the Reimagining the Alex Awards Task Force to the Board.

**Action Required:** Action

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**Overview:** At the 2020 Midwinter Meeting, the Board directed the President to form a Task Force to reimagine the Alex Awards, including managing the volume of eligible titles, clarifying the purpose of the vetted list, and updating the criteria.

**Recommendations:**

1. **Format - Keep the 10 winning titles; select up to 20 honor titles in place of the vetted list. This will bring the award more in line with other YALSA book awards, which have winner(s) and honor titles. It is recommended that the committee go into the final discussions with a finalist list of up to 40 titles from which to choose the winning and honor books.**
2. **Selection criteria - Committee members should endeavor to show the breadth and depth of adult books with teen appeal.**
  - a. **Select from all genres of fiction and nonfiction.**
  - b. **All formats should be considered, including poetry, graphic novels, and other visual works.**
  - c. **Keep in mind that although these books have teen appeal, they may well have more mature content than typical teen titles.**
3. **Procedures/logistics -**
  - a. **FAQ/Toolkit - ALA and YALSA create a single FAQ/toolkit document that is shared with each new Chair that includes how-tos and best practices. This document will provide much-needed guidance for Chairs and will ensure**

quality and consistency in practice from year to year. Further details of what should be included are in the full recommendations.

- b. **Requesting Titles - The Chair, in conjunction with the Administrative Assistant, requests titles from publishers, preferring e-galley via NetGalley, Edelweiss or other means in advance of publication. This makes the process more equitable for small publishers. If available, final hardcopies of titles under consideration will be requested by the Chair/Administrative Assistant.**
  - c. **Committee Attendance - Only the conference where final voting decisions are made need be attended in-person by all committee members. Committee members are able to attend all other meetings virtually, and should be prepared for monthly (at minimum) virtual meetings. Special consideration should be given to members with limited internet or broadband access to ensure that equity is promoted.**
  - d. **Contacting Authors - The committee has the option to call (or otherwise contact) authors prior to the YMAS with news of the award. Again, this will bring Alex more in line with other YALSA awards.**
4. **Marketing/Promotion - The Chair should work in conjunction with the Administrative Assistant and YALSA’s Social Media person to solicit nomination of titles from YALSA membership.**
- a. **~~Form a marketing committee to generate ideas to promote the Alex Award and raise its profile.~~ Work with the YALSA staff liaison and the Social Media Task Force to ensure Alex Awards are given prominence and clarify their purpose when doing so. Promote Alex not only to membership, but to media and publishers as well.**
  - b. **The award should be announced at the Youth Media Awards event along with all the other YALSA awards.**
  - c. **Virtual events to promote the Alex Awards, such as a Booklist webinar prior to conference, would add an event for authors for non-conference attendees.**
  - d. **If possible, the Alex Awards should be presented at a celebration similar to other YALSA awards, possibly in tandem with another/several awards.**

**Alignment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Goals:**

Consider a redesign of the seal and medal to feature a more dynamic image that reflects the history of Margaret Edwards’ work with the disadvantaged and underserved. Having up to 20 honor books allows for showcasing the diversity of adult publications. Small publishers can more readily provide e-galleys and/or ebooks to the committee members for consideration. The global EDI policies affecting all committees, task forces and juries will apply to the Alex Award committee when they are established.

**Fiscal Implications:**

Any additional events that would promote the Alex Awards titles and authors could result in some amount of cost, be it a virtual or an in-person event. Redesigning the seal/medal and/or the logo could result in costs as well. Most promotion/marketing could be done with

**minimal costs in conjunction with Social Media Task Force. Staff capacity for having a virtual or in-person event and redesign of the seal must be considered.**

**Action:** The Board will adopt the recommendations of the Task Force for the 2022 Alex Awards committee.

**Additional Resources:**

**Full recommendations document from Task Force:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/15zlmsslwpEX6QFOviR0uci\\_MEHBrzngNcREBVrFfkZ\\_U/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/15zlmsslwpEX6QFOviR0uci_MEHBrzngNcREBVrFfkZ_U/edit)

**Alex Awards site:**

<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/alex-awards>