

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Denver  
February 9 - 12, 2018**

**Topic:** Providing Support to Interest Groups

**Background:** At the 2017 Annual Conference, the Board adopted a document that provided prioritized ideas and strategies for creating a more robust support network for interest groups, as well as encouraging more members to participate in them, especially those members who are interested in short-term, opt-in ways to connect with other YALSA members. Kate McNair and Derek Ivie present this update for the Board's discussion.

**Action Required:** Discussion

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YALSA currently has 6 interest groups:

- Los Angeles County Area
- Picture Books for Young Adults
- Teen Mental Health
- Teen Services Coordinators
- Teens Are Not Alone
- Washington DC Metro Area

Most interest group conveners report spotty engagement from members. Some groups have struggled to engage members consistently because of either low group membership numbers or the capacity of the convener to give the group attention and energy.

Interest group success stories include the Teen Mental Health Interest Group which had a robust conversation around the release of Netflix's 13 Reasons Why. The Teen Services Coordinators group hosts weekly Slack chats with engaged conversations and a healthy sharing of gifs. The Picture Books for Young Adults Interest Group held an in-person meeting at the 2017 Annual conference in Chicago and had a good conversation.

In 2018, many conveners have express a renewed attention to their groups and bigger plans on the horizon. The LA interest group has seen 4-10 people attending quarterly in-person meet ups and is working to organize a librarian exchange. The Teen Services Coordinator Interest Group is changing their Slack discussion schedule now that there is a solid base of engagement. And the Teen Mental Health Interest Group will work on a list of mental health resources for the Hub to coincide with the release of the second seasons of 13 Reasons Why.

**Approved Action Items from Annual 2017 with Status Updates**

This prioritized list of support activities was approved by the board at ALA Annual 2017. See the right-hand column for progress updates.

## High Priority Items (to be completed in by June 2018)

Task	Who	Time	Resource Use	Impact on IGs	Status
Make minor updates to the content on YALSA Interest Group FAQ page.	Diane and Jennifer have content ready to go. YALSA Staff needed to post.	ASAP/ Once	Low: Board member and staff time.	Mid: Updated tips and make IG startup faster.	Completed by YALSA Staff 2017
Send a promotional interest group email to YALSA members who submitted applications but were not selected to serve on a committee, TF, etc.	YALSA Membership Coordinator	Semi-annually, After appointments are made	Mid: Staff time to draft and send email.	High: Will encourage those members who want to be more engaged with YALSA but are either lacking needed experience or taking a forced committee gap-period, to stay engaged.	Ongoing (Letitia or President Elect emails people about this opportunity)
Create a one-page flyer or infographic promoting interest groups to be distributed at conferences and information sessions.	YALSA Staff	Ready for Distribution at Annual 2018. Update annually with active Interest Group changes.	High: Staff time for content creation and design. Cost of printing.	High: Can be distributed at ALA conferences/ events, and state, regional, and local conferences/events. Past infographics have been well received by members.	

## Medium Priority Items (to be completed in by January 2019)

Task	Who	Time	Resource Use	Impact on IGs	Status
Ask conveners to promote their interest group at	Board Liaison	Quarterly	Low: time of IG conveners,	Mid: Will alert members to IG work and encourage	Reminder sent Jan 2018

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least quarterly through YALSA e-news, blogs, social media, etc.			Board Liaison, Blog Managers, YALSA communications staff.	members to join IGs or start a new one. Will also alert YALSA staff, Board members, Blog managers etc. to potential topics that need further exploration.	
Use annual reports to identify potential publication, blog, or CE content and potential future YALSA member leaders for development.	Board Liaison and Board members	Annually Reports are submitted July 1 each year.	Mid: Time of Liaison and potential time of Blog Managers and YALSA staff	Mid: The benefit is potentially greater for YALSA as an organization. Would be a great way to promote IG as a path to increased engagement.	

**Low Priority Items (No Due Date)**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Resource Use</b>	<b>Impact on IGs</b>	<b>Status</b>
Create and maintain a listserv or Slack Channel of IG conveners.	YALSA Communications Specialist, Board Liaison	Update as needed	Mid: YALSA staff time. If IGs can use Higher Logic, this could be easier to accomplish.	Low to Mid: Effectiveness and impact will depend on whether conveners actually use listserv.	Completed by YALSA Staff 2017 <a href="http://lists.ala.org/sympa/info/convenor">http://lists.ala.org/sympa/info/convenor</a>
Develop a prioritized list of potential interest group leaders and topics to seed new groups	YALSA Board	TBD	High: time consuming for Board Members	Low to mid: Could help members see the potential of Interest Groups to offer a path to involvement	

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and to seed new groups and offer targeted involvement opportunities for the identified members through marketing and personal contact.				through their special interests or needs	
Recruit interest group conveners to participate in a crowdsourcing effort to create an interest group convener manual or guide.	Conveners, YALSA Staff, Board Liaison	TBD	High: Great demand on YALSA Staff and Board time and on IG chairs.	Low: The Chair Manual, once updated and expanded, could fill this need	
Prepare an evaluation of the above efforts to determine impact, and make recommendations for improvement as needed.	Board Members, IG conveners	2019	High: Time demand on Board members and IG Conveners	Mid: Evaluation is necessary to ensure limited capacity and resources are being used appropriately.	

**Questions to Consider**

- How do we define a successful interest group? How do we measure their success?
- Is the current support and plan having the desired impact on increasing interest group success?
- How can we, as board members, promote interest groups?
- How might interest groups be leveraged to support the goals and priorities in the Organizational Plan?
- How might interest groups be positioned and leveraged to provide more member engagement opportunities, especially local or virtual ones?

**Additional Resources**

- Interest Group Board Document from Annual 2017  
[http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InterestGroups\\_AN17.pdf](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InterestGroups_AN17.pdf)
- Interest Group Board Document from Midwinter 2017  
[http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InterestGroups\\_MW17.pdf](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InterestGroups_MW17.pdf)
- Interest Group Board Document from Annual 2016  
[http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InterestGroups\\_AN16.pdf](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/InterestGroups_AN16.pdf)
- YALSA Interest Groups <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/discussion>
- Interest Groups FAQ <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/faq>