Minnesota Library Association (MLA) Policies

Archived Policies: https://www.mnlibraryassociation.org/page/forms_and_logos

As of October 21, 2026

Updated MMS 12/31/2024
Modified JC 05/22/2023 (for SH 12/29/2022)

(Policies are reviewed annually)

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MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

February 16, 2026

For all dues information, refer to Bylaws, Article I.

PRESIDENT

August 21, 2020

Term Length:
One year. Term commences at the beginning of the second fiscal year following election as Vice-President/President-Elect. This office is the second of a trilogy of annual offices; the first is the President-Elect and the third is Past President.

Responsibilities:
1. To call and preside at all association meetings including those of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. To enforce all laws and regulations relating to the administration of the Association.
3. To represent the Association at all official functions.

Duties:
1. Serve as the chair of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Set meeting dates/times and agenda for MLA Board of Directors meetings.
3. Recommend committee chairs to the MLA Board of Directors when vacancies occur.
4. Serve as chair of the Executive Committee.
5. Serve as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.
6. Serve as a member of the Bylaws and Policy Committee.
7. Conduct annual performance review of Executive Director with the Executive Committee.
8. Conduct an annual evaluation of the MLA lobbyist with the President and Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee.
9. Co-sign with the Executive Director, upon authorization of the MLA Board of Directors, all contracts and agreements in the name of the Association. (See Policy 9.5).
10. Serves as Chair of the Annual Conference (See Policy 13.1).
11. Write cover letter for Call to Conference and sets Annual Conference theme.
12. Conduct annual evaluation of the MLA Lobbyist activities with Chair of the Budget and Finance
13. Committee and the Chair of the Legislative Committee.
14. Sets MLA legislative policy with advice of Legislative Chair and the recommendation of the Legislative Committee and MLA Board of Directors members between MLA Board of Directors meetings.
15. Conduct annual membership meetings.
16. Perform speaking engagements in the name of MLA as required.
17. Carry on correspondence in the name of MLA as required.
18. Support the Board of Directors in reaching annual goals.

Estimated Time Commitment: 15-20 hours per month

Reports:
1. As needed to the Board of Directors and to the membership at the annual business meeting.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

May 21, 2021

Term Length:
One year. Term commences at the beginning of the first fiscal year following election as President-Elect. This office is the first in a trilogy of annual offices; the second of which is that of President, and the third of which is that of Past President.

Responsibilities:

1. In the absence of the President, act in the official capacity of the Association.
2. To become informed and oriented to the structure and operations of the Association so as to be effective during their presidential term.
3. The President-Elect serves as a liaison to library-related organizations, such as; the Minnesota Library Association Institute for Leadership Excellence (MILE), MLIS and related educational institutions in MN and the surrounding states.
4. The President-Elect serves as a liaison to Subunit chairs, convenes quarterly meetings for communication, training and support and reports back to the Board of Directors.

Duties:

1. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Serve on the MLA Executive Committee.
3. Serve on the MLA Budget and Finance Committee.
4. Serve on the MLA Bylaws and Policy Committee.
5. Serve as Chair of the MLA Annual Conference Sponsors Committee.
6. Recommend to the Board, candidates for chairs of the standing committees whose chairs are not elected by membership, such as: the nominating committee and awards committee.

Estimated Time Commitment: 8-12 hours per month

Reports:

1. Annually or as needed to the MLA Board of Directors.

PAST PRESIDENT

Updated: April 20, 2026

Term Length:
One year. Term commences at the beginning of the third fiscal year following election as President-Elect. This office is a third in a trilogy of annual offices; the first of which is that of President-Elect and the second of which is that of President.

Responsibilities:

1. The Past President serves in an advisory capacity for the overall function and administration of the Association.

Duties:

1. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Serve on the MLA Executive Committee.
3. Serve on the MLA Budget and Finance Committee.
4. Serve on the MLA Bylaws and Policy Committee.
5. Serve as Chair of the MLA Conference Program Committee.
6. Serve as Chair of the MLA Awards Committee.

Estimated Time Commitment: 8-12 hours per month

Reports:

1. Annually or as needed to the MLA Board of Directors.

SECRETARY

Updated April 20, 2026

Term Length:
Two years. Term commences at the beginning of the fiscal year following elections in even-numbered years.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To record the minutes of MLA Board of Directors and general membership meetings.
2. To maintain Policy and Procedures Manual, incorporating new or amended bylaws, policies, positions, and job descriptions as such items evolve from Board of Directors or general membership meetings.
3. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
4. Serve as a member of the Executive Committee.
5. At Board of Directors and general membership meetings, record the minutes and maintaining file of documents pertinent to said meetings.
6. Serve as Chair of the Bylaws and Policy Committee.
7. Submit a copy of proposed bylaws changes for mailing with the call to conference.
8. Support the Board of Directors in reaching annual goals.
9. Conduct annual performance review of Executive Director with the Executive Committee.
10. Manage the transfer of MLA documents to the Minnesota Historical Society.

Estimated Time Commitment: 6-10 hours per month

Reports:

1. Prepare minutes of each Board of Directors and general membership meeting with a copy delivered to the President and a copy delivered to the Executive Director. Provide a copy of the general membership meeting minutes to the MLA office for inclusion in the Newsletter.
2. Prepare annual written or oral report on the Bylaws and Policy Committee's activities.
3. Report to the Board of Directors on all proposed bylaws changes no later than the Board of Directors meeting held prior to the conference mailing.
4. Annually or as needed to the Board of Directors.

TREASURER

April 15, 2024

Term Length:
Two years. Term commences at the beginning of the fiscal year following elections in odd-numbered years.

Responsibilities:

1. In conjunction with the MLA Office, receives all income of the Association, authorizes all disbursements of the Association and manages all assets of the Association.
2. Assure compliance with all legal requirements of law.
3. Assure that the books and accounts of the Association are kept in accordance with the guidelines of the Association of Independent Certified Public Accountants and the Financial Accounting Standards Board.
4. Take any and all necessary action to execute the financial policies of the MLA Board of Directors and assure that the management of the finances of the Association are in keeping with written and implied community standards for non-profit, member service organizations.
5. In conjunction with the MLA Office, Budget and Finance Committee, and Executive Director, prepare the annual budget, conference budget and other necessary budgets in the detail required by the Board of Directors. The fiscal year is the calendar year.

Duties:

1. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Serve on the MLA Executive Committee.
3. Serve as Chair of the MLA Budget and Finance Committee.
4. Authorize payment of MLA bills.
5. Provide annual financial orientation to MLA's incoming subunit chairs.
6. Work with independent auditors in preparation of biennial audit during the first year of the two-year term.
7. Other duties as outlined in Fiscal Policies/Procedures Overview and Treasurer Timeline, below.

Estimated Time Commitment: 8-12 hours per month

Reports:

1. Present oral and written financial reports to the Board of Directors at each of its meetings.
2. Present written annual report at Annual Business Meeting.
3. In conjunction with the MLA Office, provide budget template to the Budget and Finance Committee for review during the budget preparation process.
4. In December, present the final annual budget, including conference budget, to MLA Board of Directors as Chair of Budget and Finance Committee.

Treasurer Timeline:

1. Monthly: Review monthly financial reports prepared by MLA Office; present financial report to the Board of Directors at each of its meetings; approve and sign checks as needed.
2. Spring of the first year of two-year term: Work with independent auditors and MLA Office in preparation of biennial audit.
3. Spring: Work with MLA Office in preparation of tax return.

4. October: At Annual Business Meeting, report to the members on the financial status of MLA.
5. Mid-October: Budget Template provided to Budget and Finance Committee by MLA Office. The committee will meet to prepare the first draft, based on 3rd quarter data.
6. November: Present first draft of annual budget at Board of Directors meeting for approval. If not approved, Budget and Finance Committee will meet to prepare second draft.
7. December: Present the final annual budget to MLA Board of Directors for final approval.

CHAIR, INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM COMMITTEE

Updated April 20, 2026

Term Length:
One year. Term commences at the beginning of the second fiscal year following election as Chair-Elect. This office is second in a trilogy of annual offices; the first of which is that of Chair-Elect and the third of which is that of Past Chair.

Responsibilities:
Serve as a member of the MLA Board of Directors.

Duties:
Chair-Elect

1. Investigate upon request complaints concerning alleged violations of intellectual freedom.
2. Collect and report library material challenges to the American Library Association and MLA.
3. Update and maintain the Intellectual Freedom Committee section of the MLA website.
4. Support Intellectual Freedom Committee communication.

Chair

1. Keep MLA Board of Directors informed of intellectual freedom activities in Minnesota.
2. Work with the legislative committee in areas of legislation related to intellectual freedom.
3. At the direction of the MLA Board of Directors, act as an arm of the MLA Board of Directors in the area of intellectual freedom.
4. Arrange for and chairs Intellectual Freedom Committee membership meeting at Annual Conference and more often as necessary.
5. Arrange and chair Intellectual Freedom Committee meetings.
6. Lead Intellectual Freedom Committee communication.
7. Serve as liaison to State Library Services.
8. Supervise maintenance of MLA intellectual freedom resources.

Past Chair

1. Solicit programming for the Minnesota Library Association Conference, and throughout the year.
2. Work with the Intellectual Freedom Committee for nominations and evaluations for the Lars Steltzner Intellectual Freedom Award. More details on the award can be found in the Awards policy section (add Awards number when approved). The award is administered by the Past Chair.
3. Support Intellectual Freedom Committee communication.

Intellectual Freedom Committee

1. The Committee is made up of MLA organizational members that opt-in to the committee, as well as one member per division as designated by the ARLD, ITEM, and PLD Chairs. (MLA membership).
2. The committee shall assist with programming development, award nominations, and advise on intellectual freedom questions and inquiries.

Estimated Time Commitment: 3-6 hours per month

Reports:

1. Annually or as needed to the Board of Directors and members.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Updated April 20, 2026

Term Length:
Two years. Term commences following elections held in odd numbered years.

Responsibilities:
1. Serve as a member of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Serve as ex-officio member of the MLA Membership and Communication Committees as liaison of the Board.

Duties:
1. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Serve as ombudsman for MLA members.
3. Observe MLA Board of Directors' deliberations and activities with an eye to how these will affect general membership.
4. Serve as MLA liaison to Minnesota Library Foundation

Estimated Time Commitment: 3-6 hours per month

Reports:
1. Annually or as needed to the Board of Directors.

PRESIDENT, MINNESOTA LIBRARY TRUSTEES AND ADVOCATES (MLTA)

Motion to archive and remove from policy manual made May 21, 2021

Term Length:
Two years. Term commences at the end of the Annual Conference when elected. Limited to two consecutive terms.

Responsibilities:

1. To represent MLTA on the MLA Board of Directors and to chair the Division. (See Section 4.3 for more information about MLTA).

Duties:

1. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Preside at all Executive Committee, Membership, and Board of Directors meetings of the Minnesota Library Trustees and Advocates.
3. Serve as an ex-officio member of all MLTA Committees.
4. Write a letter annually encouraging trustees to join MLTA.
5. Support the Board of Directors in reaching annual goals.

Estimated Time Commitment: 3-6 hours per month

Reports:

1. Annually or as needed to the MLA Board of Directors.

CHAIR, ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES DIVISION

July 20, 2026

Term Length:
The elected officers of ARLD shall be a Chair, a Chair-Elect who shall serve as Vice-Chair, a Past Chair, a Secretary, and Member Communication, a Legislative Liaison, and two Members-at-Large, all of whom shall be Division members in good standing. The Chair, Past Chair and Chair-Elect shall also be members in good standing of the Association of College and Research Libraries. The elected officers of ARLD shall constitute the Executive Committee (see Article VI). Elected officers of ARLD shall take office on January 1st.

The Chair shall hold office for one year without immediately succeeding her/himself. The Vice-Chair shall hold office for one year and shall succeed the Chair.

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Division and of the Executive Committee, shall enforce all the laws and regulations relating to the administration of the Division and shall be an ex-officio member of any Standing Committees with the exception of the Nomination/Elections Committee. The Chair, or a designee, shall represent the Chapter at appropriate ACRL meetings and functions.

The Chair shall call a meeting of the Board of Directors (the Executive Committee, plus volunteers and appointees) no later than thirty days after the beginning of the fiscal year, or for the purpose of planning the activities of the Division. The Chair shall call meetings of the Executive Committee as deems necessary.

One year. Term commences at the beginning of the second fiscal year following election as Vice-Chair. This office is second in a trilogy of annual offices; the first of which is that of Vice-Chair and the third of which is that of Past Chair. Cannot be elected for two consecutive terms.

Responsibilities:
1. Chair the Division.
2. Represent the Division on the MLA Board of Directors
3. Represent the Chapter within the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) division of the American Library Association (ALA)
4. Must be a member of good standing of ACRL. **(See Section 4.1 for more information about ARLD)**.

Duties:
1. Preside at all Executive Committee and Membership meetings of the Academic and Research Libraries Division of MLA.
2. Serve as an ex-officio member of any Division standing committees with the exception of the nominating committee.
3. Represent the Chapter at appropriate Association of College and Research Libraries meetings and functions or designate someone to attend.
4. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors or send a substitute.
5. Assist MLA Membership Committee with recruitment of ALA members who are not MLA members.
6. Serve on planning committee for annual ARLD Day or other workshops sponsored by the Division.
7. Develop division budget.

8. Support the Board of Directors in reaching annual goals.

Estimated Time Commitment: 3-6 hours per month

Reports:

1. Annual and monthly updates as needed to the Board of Directors.
2. Annual report to ACRL.
3. Executive and Membership meeting reports to Division members.
4. Reports to the ACRL Chapters Council as needed.

CHAIR, PUBLIC LIBRARIES DIVISION

June 17, 2024

Term Length:
One year. Term commences at the beginning of the second fiscal year following election as Chair-Elect. This office is second in a trilogy of annual offices; the first of which is that of Chair-Elect and the third of which is that of Past Chair.

Responsibilities:
1. Chair the Division.
2. Represent the Division on the MLA Board of Directors.

Duties:
1. Preside at all Executive Committee and Membership meetings of the Public Libraries Division of MLA.
2. Serve as an ex-officio member of any Division standing committees with the exception of the nominating committee.
3. Represent the Division as appropriate at meetings and functions or designate someone to attend.
4. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors or send a substitute.
5. Assist MLA Membership Committee with recruitment of public library employees.
6. Serve on planning committee for annual workshops or other events sponsored by the Division.
7. Develop division budget
8. Support the Board of Directors in reaching annual goals.

Estimated Time Commitment: 3-6 hours per month

Reports:
1. Annual and monthly updates as needed to the Board of Directors.
2. Executive and Membership meeting reports to Division members.

MLA/ALA CHAPTER COUNCILOR

July 20, 2026

Term Length:
The Minnesota Library Association (MLA)/American Library Association (ALA) Chapter Councilor shall be elected for a three-year term in accordance with the Bylaws of the American Library Association.

Eligibility:
Must be a member of good standing of ALA and a member in good standing of MLA.

Responsibilities:

1. To represent the interests of the Minnesota Library Association to the American Library Association and vice versa.
2. Serve as liaison with the ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office.
3. Coordinate MLA member involvement in national library legislative initiatives.
4. Liaise with MLA Legislative Committee to provide updates on ALA Public Policy and Advocacy actions and opportunities.

Duties:

1. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
2. Attend and report on the ALA Council meetings at the Annual Conference of the American Library Association and during the virtual winter Council session. See MLA Travel Policy for funding details.
3. Insofar as possible, attend the ALA Chapter Relations Committee meetings, ALA membership meetings, and any ALA Council meetings called out of the conference and virtual winter Council session dates.
4. Although the Councilor is to be guided by the wishes of the MLA membership, MLA policy gives the Councilor latitude in voting on issues that come before Council, especially in cases where debate on the issue at the meeting may have changed the issue from when it was discussed by the MLA membership or the Board of Directors.
5. Serve as a member of the MLA Membership Committee.
6. Coordinate annual selection of MLA sponsored ALA Emerging Leader with the ALA office.
7. Provide information on ALA membership and activities either at a table or booth at MLA annual conference.
8. When possible, arrange a Minnesota gathering at the ALA Annual conference.
9. Support the Board of Directors in reaching annual goals.

Estimated Time Commitment: 3-6 hours per month. 12+ hours in June plus travel.

Reports:

1. Annual and monthly updates as needed to the Board of Directors on ALA issues.
2. Written reports to the Board of Directors on actions taken by ALA Council.

CHAIR, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

July 20, 2026

Term Length:
Four years. The Chair-Elect of the Legislative Committee shall serve the first and second years after election as the Chair-Elect of the Legislative Committee and the third and fourth years as the Chair of the Legislative Committee, as a member of the Board of Directors, and the Association's liaison with the Minnesota Legislature.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Promote the legislative priorities and policies of MLA and inform the membership of legislative action.
2. Implement MLA legislative policy as determined by MLA membership. The MLA Legislative Committee in the absence of Membership, the Board of Directors in the absence of the Legislative Committee, or the MLA President in the absence of the Board of Directors, has the authority to establish MLA legislative policy.
3. Serve as the official primary contact for MLA lobbyist and for partner communication regarding advocacy coordination.
4. Encourage communication between MLA membership and legislators and administrators at all levels of Government.
5. Provide for coordination of MLA lobbying and information efforts at the State and Federal level.
6. Support cooperation among organizations represented on the MLA Legislative Committee in efforts to promote library interests.
7. Work cooperatively with affiliate members and the MLA lobbyist to promote library legislation in Minnesota.
8. Plan the annual Minnesota Library Legislative Day.
9. In coordination with the Chair-Elect and committee, monitor activities of MLA legislative lobbyist on behalf of the MLA Board of Directors.
10. Receive and promptly bring any conflict-of-interest notification from lobbyist to the Legislative Committee and MLA President for determination of whether to waive the conflict, renegotiate the agreement, or terminate it.
11. Conduct an evaluation of the MLA lobbyist with the committee and, as needed, the President and Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee within 60 days of legislative adjournment
12. Negotiate lobbyist contract for submission to the MLA Board of Directors for approval. Ensure MLA begins required contract renewal discussions by the beginning of the final year of the agreement and meets all contractual renewal deadlines.
13. Appoint the Advocacy Subcommittee Chair. Support and coordinate advocacy education initiatives and collaborations outlined by the Advocacy Subcommittee. Review and approve all subcommittee-generated content prior to distribution.
14. Communicate regularly with the legislative network during the legislative session.
15. Serve as a voting member of the MLA Board of Directors.
16. Serve as a voting member and Chair of the MLA Legislative Committee.

Chair-Elect Duties and Responsibilities

1. Plan annual Minnesota Legislative Forum.

2. Serve as ex-officio member of the MLA Legislative Committee.

Estimated time commitment: 15 hours per month when the Legislature is not in session. 40+ hours per month when the Legislature is in session.

Reports:

1. Reports to MLA membership through various written and online channels and the *MLA RoundUp, eBlasts,* social media accounts, MLA website, and online legislative update meetings.
2. Reports to membership at the Annual Business Meeting.
3. Reports to MN legislature on behalf of MLA, as needed.
4. Annually or as needed to the Board of Directors.

CHAIR, SUBUNIT

January 15, 2021

Term Length:
One to Three years, as set by standard of practice for subunit. Term commences as set by standards of practice for subunit.

Responsibilities:
1. To represent the subunit to the MLA Board of Directors and to chair the Division, Section, or Round Table.

Duties:
1. Works with past chair of subunit to determine status of outstanding projects.
2. Determine and execute a plan of action, and cooperate with other MLA subunits, MLA committees, and the MLA office in accomplishing goals and objectives in the plan.
3. Participate in MLA's strategic planning process by focusing outcomes on goals and objectives in the plan.
4. Review MLA Bylaws, MLA Policy Manual and MLA Strategic Plan. Contact the MLA Office for interpretations or questions.
5. Evaluate unit's website for inclusiveness and currency and determines what content needs to be added. Submit edits and additions to MLA office.
6. Schedule, prepare agendas, conduct and maintain records of all meetings. Minutes should be submitted to MLA office for archival purposes and posting to the website.
7. Meetings should be scheduled during Annual Conference, and at other times deemed necessary by the Chair. Meetings should be held virtually whenever possible to encourage statewide participation. Meetings should include content of interest to members.
8. Work with the MLA Treasurer to understand the subunit budget. Subunits will need preauthorization from the MLA Board to use funds beyond what is budgeted and should submit the Subunit Project Proposal form.
9. Recruit and encourage membership to submit breakout proposals for the Annual Conference. Designate subunit as sponsor of session proposals if applicable.
10. Report minutes of the Subunit and an annual report (written and presented) to the board and executive director yearly (Annual Report due date varies by subunit).
11. Host and sponsor engagement and educational events throughout the year in line with the subunit's purpose statement.

Estimated time commitment: 1-8 hours per month, varies by subunit

Reports:
1. Reports to legislative network members as needed.
2. Reports to MLA members through the *MLA Round Up*, website and listserv
3. Reports to membership at the Annual Subunit Business Meeting
4. Annually or as needed to the Board of Directors.

FISCAL POLICIES/PROCEDURES OVERVIEW

September 16, 2024

The MLA Board of Directors has the fiscal responsibility for the Association. The Board shall ensure that transactions of MLA are executed in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures.

Primary sources of revenues for the operation of the Association are conference and program income, membership dues, corporate sponsorships, sales and advertising and other mechanisms. Expenditures are made to further the goals and betterment of libraries and library workers throughout the State and to ensure ongoing Association operations and services to members.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is the Officer of the Association legally designated and bound to receive all income of the Association, authorize all disbursements of the Association and manage all assets of the Association. The Treasurer shall at all times assure the Association's compliance with all legal requirements of law. The Treasurer shall assure that the books and accounts of the Association are kept in accordance with the guidelines of the Association of Independent Certified Public Accountants and the Financial Accounting Standards Board. The Treasurer shall, in addition to the foregoing, take any and all necessary action to execute the financial policies of the MLA Board of Directors and assure that the management of the finances of the Association are in keeping with written and implied community standards for non-profit, member service organizations.

The Treasurer, with the MLA Office, Budget and Finance Committee and Executive Director, is responsible for the preparation of the annual budget, conference budget and other necessary budgets in the detail required by the Board of Directors. The preliminary preparation of budgets may be delegated by the Committee to the MLA Office. The fiscal year is the calendar year.

The fiscal years of each MLA subunit shall be concurrent with that of the Association as a whole.

AUDIT AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

December 19, 2022

An audit of the financial records of the Association shall be conducted every six years. A financial review will be completed every two years when a new treasurer takes office or at other times as approved by the Board of Directors. The audit report and accompanying information will be reviewed by the Treasurer and the Budget and Finance Committee. The Executive Committee and the Board of Directors will receive the financial review or audit report and direct the necessary action. A summary of the financial review or audit will be sent in the Association Newsletter following Board of Directors review and posted to the association website.

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Updated April 20, 2026

Purpose
The Budget and Finance Committee is charged with the responsibility for the fiscal management of the Association. The Committee shall specify a process for and oversee the development of the annual budget which must be submitted to the Board of Directors for full Board of Directors approval no later than at the December meeting prior to the beginning of the fiscal year (as stated in Bylaws Article VII.6.1).

Membership
Chair: Treasurer.

Members*:* The members of this committee will be the Executive Committee members. Ex-officio: Executive Director also serves as an ex-officio member.

Duties

1. Develops proposed annual budget for the following fiscal year for presentation to the Board of Directors for approval.
2. Reviews budgets as needed and recommends changes to the Board of Directors.
3. As part of the budget process, review membership dues annually.

Timeline

1. Mid-October: Budget Template provided to committee by MLA office. The committee will meet to prepare the first draft.
2. November: First draft presented at board meeting for approval. If not approved, committee will meet to prepare second draft.
3. December: Final draft presented at board meeting for approval.

CHECKING, SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS

November 18, 2024

The MLA Office shall recommend for Board of Directors approval such agents as are necessary to properly conduct the financial transactions of the Association. Banking, bookkeeping and auxiliary financial services shall be named as needed. Auditors shall be designated to conduct the audit as stated in Audit procedure. Association funds shall be placed in a federally insured financial institution. Interest-bearing accounts are preferred.

Internal control procedures require that all disbursements of Association funds within the approved budget be authorized for payment, initially by the Executive Director, and ultimately by the Treasurer at the time of actual disbursement of funds. The President, President-Elect, Treasurer, and Executive Director are the designated signatories for Association accounts. No disbursements shall be made without submission of a vendor invoice or written bill. All reimbursements must have accompanying receipts or appropriate documentation. Online bill pay will be the preferred method of payment and will be used whenever possible.

> "No Subunit, Committee, officer or member of the Association shall establish or maintain a checking or savings account for conducting any business of the Association except by permission of the Board of Directors, nor shall any member of the Association conduct Association business through personal account except as provided by Association policy." (Bylaws, Article XIV.6)

Any account in which the operating fund is invested shall have an investment horizon of no more than twelve months.

The MLA Board of Directors shall serve as an investment committee to supervise and pre-approve the investment of Association funds. In the execution of this responsibility, the following prioritized list of considerations shall apply: (1) Security, (2) Yield, (3) Convenience. All investment transactions shall be made in good faith with the degree of judgment and care that a person of prudence, discretion and intelligence would exercise in the management of their own affairs.

MLA RESERVE POLICY

November 18, 2024

Basis for a Reserve
The Minnesota Library Association desires to maintain a firm and strong fiscal foundation. To achieve that it is the policy of this organization to hold certain assets in reserve. This policy outlines the size of the reserves and the intended uses of the reserve funds.

Reserve Fund Types
There are to be two primary types of reserve funds. The first is to sustain the Chapter for a period of not less than nine months in the event that basic operations continue and revenue does not, and will be known as, “Operating Reserve.” The second is to provide funding for special projects and strategic initiatives and will be known as, “Strategic Reserve.”

Operating Funds/Reserve
An operating fund (or reserve) is maintained by an Organization to help them maintain their Organizational activities during times of hardship. The value of this reserve should be the greater of nine months current operating expenses or one-third of the average actual annual operating expenses for two of the previous three years. The amount to be held for the Operating Reserve needs to be calculated at the start of each fiscal year using data from the preceding fiscal year. The Executive Committee of the Board will be contacted immediately if there is an Operating Reserve deficiency at the year-end.

Strategic Reserve
The Strategic Reserve is any funds remaining after establishment of the operating reserve. This reserve will be used, at the discretion of the Board, to fund special projects and strategic initiatives. Reserves should be used for programs that:

1. Benefit MLA members
2. Enhance or complement on-going programming for the membership.

Examples may include, but may not be limited to:

1. Seeking and implementing external, contracted services (this includes cutover costs from existing vendors)
2. Contributions to scholarship and other member support initiatives
3. Upgrades to the website
4. Infrastructure costs for implementing technological improvements
5. Leadership development training programs

NOTE: The nature of some projects funded through this reserve may require multi-year funding. In that event, if those commitments have met established phase funding approval, they are removed from the funds available in this reserve and considered designated funds.

Access of the Strategic Reserve

1. Funding requests for this reserve must be presented for review and approval before a quorum of the Board as normal Board Meeting business. The funding request must include a proposal, budget, cost/benefit analysis that is as quantitative as is reasonably possible and describe the alignment to the MLA mission. The request may be initiated by any member in good standing of the Minnesota Library Association. The primary author of the request will be asked to present their request to the Board. These requests will be considered throughout the year. Requestors are required to prepare a project plan including budget,

project schedule and resources used in a detail appropriate to the project. This plan will be reviewed with the Board
2. To maintain the funding the minimum that is required of the individual or group formed to implement the initiative:
3. Provide a monthly status of budget and project progress to the Board using the MLA Board Report form

Unbudgeted Funds
MLA budgetary units occasionally have needs that exceed planned budgets. MLA Executive Committee may authorize expenditures of 10% in excess of budget for a subunit.

Designated Funds
The Board of Directors may create designated funds for specific Association activities. These funds will be called out on the face of the Organization's balance sheet. Their balances will be considered part of the Organization's strategic reserve. The annual interest from designated funds administered by the Association will be returned to the operating fund.

Subunit Carry-Over Funds
As part of a financial restructuring in 1995, the ability for subunits to maintain individual unit reserve funds was eliminated. Subunits are encouraged to make budget requests on an annual basis for planned activities. On a case-by-case basis, the Board of Directors may approve the carry-over of a specific subunit's funds to accomplish a specific project or activity. If no financial activity occurs within a two-year period and the subunit does not take action with the Board of Directors, the individual subunit's carry-over fund will be returned to the operating fund. MLA administers these funds.

DIVISION AND SUBUNIT BUDGET POLICY

September 16, 2024

Minnesota Library Association Board of Directors will set policies and procedures for funding of Divisions and Subunits (Sections & Round Tables) of the organization. Divisions and Subunits should address their finances in their policies.

Base Budget
Subunits of MLA will receive an annual base budget as follows: $200 for Divisions and $100 for Roundtables and Sections.

The base budgets support the unit's activities and specific and unique responsibilities such as, but not limited to, communication expenses, photocopying, supplies, meeting expenses and other routine operating activities. Base budgets may not cover expenses of individual members unless authorized by the MLA Board of Directors.

Carrying Over Funds
Base budget funds will not be carried over to a new budget year.

Requested Funds
For activities beyond the scope of the base budget, units may apply to the MLA Board of Directors for funding by submitting a Subunit Project Proposal Form, available on the MLA website. Units may request additional funds for activities that support the mission and strategic vision of the Association and the unit's specific and unique responsibilities. Requests for Annual Conference and program budgets will be made in accordance with policies governing Annual Conference and programs.

Monies are allotted based on availability and services to unit and Association members as determined by the Board of Directors. Such monies are to be in the custody of the Association and will be disbursed on authorization of the division, section or round table through procedures established by the Board of Directors. Any balances unexpended and undesignated at the end of the fiscal year will revert to the general Association operating fund.

Fiscal Year
The fiscal and membership years of each MLA subunit shall be identical and shall be concurrent with that of the Association as a whole.

DISBURSEMENTS

September 16, 2024

All disbursements of the Association funds within the approved budget must be authorized for payment, initially by the Executive Director, and ultimately by the President and Treasurer at the time of actual disbursement of funds (Bylaws, 2.6.2).

All requests for disbursement (including reimbursement) should be submitted to the MLA Office with appropriate documentation. The MLA Office will send the Treasurer and President a check register to approve before checks are to be written. The MLA Office retains a copy of Check Requests and documentation for seven years as mandated.

All check requests must include a completed Check Request form and a supporting vendor invoice, written bill, contract, receipts, or other documentation. The Check Request form and supporting documentation should be submitted together at the same time. Check Request forms can be downloaded from the MLA website (http://www.mnlibraryassociation.org) or requested by contacting office@mnlibraryassociation.org. The form should be completed by the relevant subunit chair, committee chair, or other MLA volunteer or MLA office staff coordinating the disbursement request. Check Request forms must be submitted for all disbursements to be paid by check, including items that appear in the annual budget. Instructions for coding expenses and submitting the Check Request appear on the Check Request form. All check requests should be submitted to the MLA Office at least one full week before the monthly MLA Board Meeting. Board Meeting dates are posted on the MLA website.

Requests without proper documentation will be rejected and sent back to the submitter. The Treasurer will be copied on all rejected check requests. Missed deadlines will not justify special payment runs.

All payments made by the MLA Office via credit card will be approved initially by the Executive Director, and ultimately by the President and Treasurer upon payment of the MLA Office invoice.

Some disbursements are related to contracts. The President, upon authorization of the Board, shall sign all contracts and agreements in the name of the Association (Bylaws, 2.3.3). The President will submit a copy of all signed contracts to the MLA Office so that the contracts will be on file when related disbursements are needed. The MLA Office will retain related documentation as guided by the organization's document destruction practices.

REIMBURSEMENTS

September 16, 2024

Invoices and requests for authorized reimbursement(s) must be submitted to MLA within 30 days from the date incurred. If the MLA volunteer coordinating the reimbursement has not received an invoice to forward to the Executive Director within 30 days, the Executive Director shall be notified of the delay. All requests shall require executive committee action and approval for payment.

Receipts for travel must be submitted for reimbursement of transportation, registration fees at pre- registration reduced rate, actual expenses for lodging and meals all within guidelines established by MLA.

Reimbursement for food and beverage, program printing, office supplies, printing and copying, or any other expenses related to subunit or division events or activities, will be authorized only for expenses that directly support those events or activities; all other reimbursement requests will be denied. All reimbursement requests should be commensurate with the scope of the event or activity, including, but not limited to, the number of event attendees, the volume of programs to be printed, the volume of printing and copying to be done, and so forth.

All reimbursement requests should include a completed Check Request form and supporting receipts and other documentation. Check Request forms must be submitted for all reimbursements, including items that appear in the annual budget.

Requests without proper documentation will be rejected and sent back to the submitter. The Treasurer will be copied on all rejected check requests. Missed deadlines will not justify special check runs.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

April 21, 2025

Purpose:

The Membership Committee is charged with the responsibility to develop and implement an annual plan of action to recruit and retain membership with the Association.

Membership

Chair: The chair is the Member-At-Large.

Members: Includes one representative member from each division board. May also include active or affiliate MLA members who indicate interest through an annual call for committee volunteers, or who communicate interest to the Board. The MLA Board Member-at-Large serves as ex-officio member of the committee.

Duties

1. Assist the President with membership activities.
2. Recruit members at conference and other Association activities.
3. Host new members and first-time attendees activity at conferences.
4. Obtain names of new MLA members from the MLA Office and welcome them to the association. This may be done in conjunction with Board of Directors members.
5. Works to retain existing members.

Reports

1. Annually or as needed to the Board of Directors.

MINNESOTA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AWARDS AND CRITERIA

May 19, 2025

William G. Asp Distinguished Career Award (One per year)
Nominated by current MLA members and selected by the Awards Committee
Presented in recognition of distinguished service to the profession and for active and innovative leadership in the development of libraries and the improvement of library services. Candidates must have demonstrated support of the Minnesota Library Association over their career. Recipients will receive a certificate presented at conference, and $300.

Minnesota Library Association Above & Beyond Award
Nominated by current MLA members and selected by the Awards Committee
The Minnesota Library Association Above & Beyond Award is given in recognition of a recent group or individual contribution significant to the Minnesota library community. The award can be given to up to three recipients per year. Recipients receive a certificate, recognition at the Annual Conference, and $100. Individuals and groups receive the same level of recognition. Recipients do not have to be members of MLA.
Eligible candidates:

1. Academic, public, school, and special libraries
2. Any level of library staff, work team, or department
3. Friends, trustees, foundations, and other library supporters
4. Legislators

Criteria: Projects, programs, or services that demonstrate innovation and/or outstanding dedication and have local or statewide impact.
The nomination form for both group and individual nominees asks for the following information:

1. Name of individual or group being nominated
2. Project name (if applicable)
3. Library or Organization Affiliation
4. Primary contact name (first and last)
5. Email address
6. Phone number

President's Award
Selected by the current MLA President
This award recognizes significant and major contributions of members to the work of the Minnesota Library Association. Recipients must be members of MLA as defined in MLA Policies and have made the contribution within the current fiscal year or the previous year. The winner receives a free membership for the next year. The MLA President's Award was established in 1981.

Awards of MLA Divisions and Subunits:

Minnesota Academic Innovators Award
Nominated by current MLA members and selected by ARLD

This award recognizes academic librarians or academic project teams who have made an outstanding recent contribution to advance the mission of an academic library in Minnesota through an innovative project, program, or service. (Innovation will be considered very broadly.) The award is sponsored by the MLA Academic & Research Libraries Division (ARLD). The recipient of the Innovators Award is recognized and presented with a $300 award at ARLD Day.

Criteria: Projects/programs/services should demonstrate recognized creativity and quality within the context of an academic institution.

Eligibility: Nominees must be employed by or associated with an academic or research library and/or organization that furthers the mission of academic libraries.

Nomination and selection process: Self nominations are accepted. The ARLD Awards committee will receive and evaluate nominations from the ARLD membership. Nominations must include a nomination form and a statement (not to exceed 500 words) highlighting the nominee's innovation.

Notification: The award recipient will be notified prior to the ARLD Day and invited to give a brief presentation on his or her project/program/service at ARLD Day. Announcements will be made via multiple methods to the Minnesota and national academic library community.

School Librarian of the Year
Nominated by current MLA members and selected by ITEM. The MN School Librarian of the Year Award honors a K–12 licensed library professional for outstanding achievement and the exemplary use of 21st-century tools and services to engage children and teens toward fostering multiple literacies in Minnesota School Libraries.

School Media Innovator of the Year
Nominated by current MLA members and selected by ITEM. The School Media Innovator of the Year award honors a licensed school librarian, or technology integrationist who has made innovation and the development of new ideas and teaching philosophy using school library, maker, or technological practices and ideas.

Distinguished School Library Supporter Award
Nominated by current MLA members and selected by ITEM. The Distinguished School Library Supporter Award honors a school library supporter who has made worthy contributions to the operations of an exemplary school library or contributed to advancing the role of the school library in an educational program. Recipient(s) does not need to be member of *MLA/ITEM.*

Lars Stelzner Intellectual Freedom Award
Nominated by any citizen of Minnesota and selected by the Intellectual Freedom Committee
The Lars Steltzner Intellectual Freedom Award is given in recognition of an educator who has contributed to preserving students' rights to intellectual freedom and opposing censorship in a school setting. The award was established in 2008 and is named in honor of Lars Steltzner, an elementary school teacher, media specialist, director of technology, active member of the Minnesota Coalition for Intellectual Freedom, and strong supporter of students' intellectual freedom rights. It is not mandatory that the award be given annually.

Eligible candidates: teachers, librarians, educators, school administrators

Criteria: Nominees will have championed students' intellectual freedom (the freedom to read, write, think and speak) through actions and/or support for students' rights.

Past Awards
Information on past awards can be found on the MLA website.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

June 16, 2025

American Library Association:

1. The Minnesota Library Association maintains chapter membership in the American Library Association; the Chapter Councilor serves as liaison between the two Associations.
2. By vote of the ALA Council the Minnesota Library Association is a chapter member of the American Library Association. In accordance with ALA bylaws, Article IV, Section 2b, each chapter is entitled to elect one councilor to represent the state association for a term of four years.
3. The bylaws of the Minnesota Library Association must be without conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the American Library Association.

General:

1. The President may appoint additional liaison officers to represent the Association to other organizations.

2. The President represents the Association to other organizations in an ex-officio role, including, but not limited to:
    a. The Minnesota Library Foundation

3. The President-Elect represents the Association to other organizations in an ex-officio role, including but not limited to:
    a. Minnesota Library Association Institute for Leadership Excellence (MILE)
    b. MLIS and related educational institutions in MN and surrounding states

4. The Association also maintains relationships through contracts and financial contributions, including:
    a. Council of Regional Public Library System Administrators (CRPLSA)
    b. Multicounty Multitype Regional Library Systems (MCMT)
    c. Minnesota Youth Reading Awards (MYRA)
    d. Government relationship firm and management company

5. All memberships or relationships for affiliation or cooperation between the Minnesota Library Association and other organizations are the purview of the Board of Directors.

SCHOLARSHIPS

July 21, 2025; August 23, 2002; October 2011

The Minnesota Library Association may make available scholarship funds in support of Association continuing education activities, including unit programs, ALA Emerging Leaders and the MLA Annual Conference. Funds for the scholarships shall be included in the unit program and Annual Conference budgets. Reimbursements for expenses will be within MLA policy for travel and other reimbursements.

TRAVEL POLICIES

August 18, 2025; August 16, 2021; August 19, 2019

Members of the MLA Board of Directors members may be reimbursed for travel in conjunction with official business of the Association including Board of Directors meetings and other Board of Directors-related activities. Mileage shall be reimbursed at the rate set by the IRS. No reimbursement shall be made for the first fifty miles round-trip (first 25 miles each way from home/office to the meeting site). If the cost of public transportation is less than the amount that would be paid in mileage, reimbursement shall be limited to the lesser amount. The MLA Executive Director and management staff shall be eligible for reimbursement of mileage and hotel in accordance with existing management contract. No other members of the Association are eligible for mileage or other travel reimbursement unless expressly approved by the Board of Directors.

TRAVEL NATIONAL ALA CONFERENCES

The MLA/ALA Chapter Councilor, MLA President, President-Elect and Executive Director are eligible for travel reimbursement within prior budgeted limitations to attend the American Library Association Annual and/or Midwinter Conference. MLA may provide travel reimbursement within budget limitations for one person to attend ALA Legislative Day based on the recommendation of the Legislative Committee Chair. Reimbursement may be made for expenses for transportation, registration, lodging and meals, subject to approval of the Board of Directors and provision of proper receipts. Travel and expense allowances for the Executive Director and Association staff are set for each annual budget. All exceptions to travel policies require prior approval of the Board of Directors.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

September 16, 2024

The Minnesota Library Association has adopted the following policy designed to avoid any possible conflict between the personal interests of Board members, subunit leaders, or committee members, and the interests of the Minnesota Library Association. All board members, and subunit and committee chairs must sign the “Conflict of Interest” form and return it to the Executive Director by January 31.

The standard of behavior at the Minnesota Library Association is that all staff, volunteers, and board members scrupulously avoid conflicts of interest between the interests of the Minnesota Library Association on one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding potential and actual conflicts of interest, as well as perceptions of conflicts of interest.

I understand that the purposes of this policy are to protect the integrity of the Minnesota Library Association's decision-making process, to enable our constituencies to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputations of volunteers, staff, and board members.

In the course of meetings or activities, I will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where I (including my business or other nonprofit affiliations), my family, and/or my significant other, employer, or close associates will receive a benefit or gain. After disclosure, I understand that I may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and will not be permitted to vote on the question. I understand that this policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and I will respect its spirit as well as its wording.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

October 18, 2019

Purpose of the Nominating Committee
The Nominating Committee is charged with the responsibility to prepare a slate of candidates for each elective office of the Association and to certify election results.

Membership of the Nominating Committee
Chair: Selected by the President-Elect by November 1st from active members of the Association and appointed by the Board of Directors to take office at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

Members: Four additional members appointed by the Board of Directors. An annual call for volunteer members will be distributed from the Chair of the Nominating Committee upon their appointment. Members of the committee should reflect the diversity of the organization, representing all types of libraries and geographic areas of the state. Preferably, there would be one representative from each of the divisions. The Executive Director shall serve as an ex-officio member.

Duties of the Nominating Committee
1. Prepare a slate of at least one candidate for each elective office of the Association in accordance with the MLA Bylaws and report to the Board of Directors no later than May 31 each year.
2. The Nominating Committee should seek to nominate candidates with new voices and perspectives, as well as diversity regarding their workplace, geography, age and gender.
3. Candidates should be well matched to their nominating office.
4. Serve as the tellers committee.
5. Certify election results to the President and the Executive Director.
6. Other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

Procedures for Candidate Selection
1. All candidates must be current members of the Minnesota Library Association.
2. Secure the written consent of each candidate, and the candidate's statement and biographical information.
3. Send statement and biographical information to the Executive Director.

Reports
1. Slate of candidates, to the Board of Directors, no later than May 31 each year.
2. Election results, to the President and the Executive Director, prior to announcement to general membership, each year.
3. Nominating Committee Chair shall inform each candidate of the election results prior to announcement to general membership.

Nominating Committee Deadlines
1. No later than May 31: Report slate of nominees to the Board of Directors.
2. August 1: Candidates' statements and biographical information due to the Nominating Committee Chair.
3. August 15: Executive Director distributes ballot via e-blast (link to ballot).
4. September 15: Deadline for close of ballots online; Executive Director to compile results.
5. September 25-30: Count ballots and report results to the President and the Executive Director.

MLA AWARDS COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

June 18, 2021

Awards Committee Purpose

The Awards Committee is charged with the responsibility to select recipients of the Minnesota Library Association Above & Beyond Award and the William G. Asp Distinguished Career Award, and to coordinate the awards presentation at the Annual MLA Conference.

Membership

Chair: Past President of MLA

Members: Six to be appointed by the Past President to serve staggered three-year terms plus the Past President who serves as chair. MLA Executive Director serves as an ex-officio member. Committee members should include a mixture of representatives from multiple library types.

Duties

1. Solicit nominations from the membership for the Minnesota Library Association Above & Beyond Award and the William G. Asp Distinguished Career Award.
2. Coordinate with the MN Writes MN Reads, Intellectual Freedom Committee and the MLA President on awards announcements.
3. Determine eligibility of candidates.
4. Review the nominations and select the winners of the Minnesota Library Association Above & Beyond Award and the William G. Asp Distinguished Career Award.
5. Chair notifies winners and determines if they will be at Conference and gathers pertinent information for any cash prizes, certificates, or plaques.
6. In coordination with MN Writes MN Reads, The Intellectual Freedom Committee and the MLA President, supply information about recipients for the award presentations at the Annual Conference.
7. Develop press releases for Above & Beyond and William G. Asp recipients.
8. Other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

Reports

1. To the President at the conclusion of the awards process.

Awards Committee Timeline

Timeline of awards process is subject to change depending on conference timeline.

1. 5-7 months before the conference:
    a. Past President appoints new members
6. 4 months before the conference:
    a. Identify Awards Structure and plan for targeting people to ask
    b. Draft, finalize and submit award nomination materials for website
    c. Draft, finalize, and distribute email call for award nominations
7. 3 months before the conference
    a. Draft, finalize and distribute call for award nominations reminder
8. 2 months before the conference:
    a. Deadline for award nominations
    b. Select award winners
9. 1 month before conference
    a. Notify award recipients
    b. Notify MLA President and conference chairs of winners
    c. Order award materials as needed

    d. Draft media release about award recipients
    e. Prepare awards presentation
10. At Conference:
    a. Announce award winners at awards presentation
    b. Past President explains awards process, recognizes committee, and presents awards at Annual Conference
11. Within one month after conference:
    a. Finalize and distribute media release about award recipients
    b. Publish award recipients on MLA website

For the full list of awards, see MLA Awards and Criteria.

EVENT PRICING POLICIES

November 20, 2023

The Minnesota Library Association, its divisions and subunits may sponsor programs in addition to the Annual Conference. An MLA program is a planned presentation with a clearly defined structure and content, seeking to meet specified goals and objectives for an identified audience.

Programs are to be coordinated and planned in accordance with MLA policies. Requests for advance seed money may be submitted for consideration with the understanding that the money will be reimbursed. Tentative site locations may be arranged prior to approval. No further financial arrangements may be made until approval of the Executive Committee is received. Any financial agreements entered into by subunits without Committee approval will be paid from the subunit budget.

Divisions, subunits, sections, and round tables of MLA are eligible to apply for funds for programs in addition to the base budget as outlined in the Division and Subunit Budget Policy.

Budget and Registration Fees

Program budgets detailing expenses, proposed registration fees and any budgeted scholarships for the specific program must be itemized on the Subunit Project Proposal Form and submitted to the Treasurer. The request will be considered at the next scheduled Executive Committee meeting. Programs are to be budgeted at no less than cost plus administrative overhead as determined by the MLA Executive Director and authorized by the Executive Committee.

All programming should be self-supporting, and program coordinators shall consider registration fees to offset costs. Subunits may choose to offer a reduced rate to members of their subunits. “Subunis Rate” is available only to members of the sponsoring unit. “Member Rate” is available to MLA individual members. A rate higher than the member rate shall be charged for non-MLA members.

Revenue from programs will first be applied to actual expenses based on the approved budget through the Subunit Project Proposal Form, including the administrative overhead. Any balances unexpended and unencumbered at the end of the financial reckoning, as determined by the MLA Executive Director and authorized by the Executive Committee, shall revert to the general association operating fund unless otherwise agreed to by the Board of Directors.

Reporting

A final financial report must be filed by the subunit chairperson within sixty (60) days of the program.

ANTITRUST POLICY

December 18, 2023

Introduction

Broadly stated, the basic objective of the antitrust laws is to preserve and promote competition and the free enterprise system. These laws are premised on the assumption that private enterprise and free competition are the most efficient ways to allocate resources, to produce goods at the lowest possible price, and to assure the production of high-quality products.

The U.S. antitrust statutes of principal concern to companies and individuals that participate in trade association activities are Section 1 of the Sherman Act and Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act. These laws prohibit all contracts, combinations, and conspiracies that unreasonably restrain trade.

Why is Compliance with the Antitrust Laws Important?

Aside from the fact that MLA is committed to abiding by the laws of all jurisdictions in which it operates, the penalties for violations of the antitrust laws can be very severe – both for MLA members and for individuals.

For the Association:

- Injunctions or other orders issued by the courts may prevent MLA from pursuing association business.
- On occasion, courts have ordered trade associations to disband.

For Members:

- Under U.S. antitrust laws, corporations can be fined up to $100 million per violation. Courts also can impose an "alternate fine" of up to twice the gain to the perpetrator or twice the loss to the victim as a result of illegal behavior.
- Courts or government antitrust agencies can impose permanent restrictions limiting corporate activity.
- Private actions – by customers or competitors who can show they were harmed by the perpetrator's actions – can result in damages many times the size of a government-imposed fine.

For Individuals:

- Violations of the Sherman Antitrust Act are felonies.
- Individuals can be imprisoned for up to ten years, fined up to $1 million, or both, per violation.

Dealing with a government antitrust investigation or a private antitrust lawsuit is expensive, time-consuming, and distracting. In addition, an investigation or lawsuit can seriously damage the reputation of MLA, its members, and individuals. These penalties, damages, and distractions are entirely avoidable by understanding in very basic terms what the antitrust laws require, and by consulting with legal counsel whenever you are in doubt.

Policy

The Minnesota Library Association (MLA) has a policy of strict compliance with federal and state antitrust laws. MLA members should avoid discussing certain subjects when they are together – both at formal MLA membership, Board of Directors, committee, and other meetings and in informal contacts with other industry members – and should otherwise adhere strictly to this policy.

I. These policies and procedures apply to all membership, board, committee and other meetings of the Association, and all meetings attended by representatives of the Association.
II. Discussions of prices or price levels is prohibited. In addition, no discussion is permitted of any elements of a company's operations which might influence price such as:
    a. Cost of operations, supplies, labor or services;
    b. Allowance for discounts;
    c. Terms of sale including credit arrangements; and,
    d. Profit margins and mark ups, provided this limitation shall not extend to discussions of methods of operation, maintenance, and similar matters in which cost or efficiency is merely incidental.
III. It is a violation of Antitrust laws to agree not to compete, therefore, discussions of division of territories or customers or limitations on the nature of business carried on or products sold are not permitted.
IV. Boycotts in any form are unlawful. Discussion relating to boycotts is prohibited, including discussions about blacklisting or unfavorable reports about particular companies including their financial situation.
V. It is the Association's policy that all meetings attended by representatives of the Association where discussion can border on an area of antitrust sensitivity, the Association's representative request that the discussion be stopped and ask that the request be made a part of the minutes of the meeting being attended. If others continue such discussion, the Association's representative should excuse herself/himself from the meeting and request that the minutes show that she/he left the meeting at that point and why she/he left. Any such instances should be reported immediately to the President of the Association.
VI. It is the Association's policy that a copy of these Antitrust Compliance Policies and Procedures be given to each officer, director, committee member, official representative of member companies and Association contract employees annually.

Guidelines:

The intent of these guidelines are to give you enough information about the law so you will know a dangerous area when you see it. The following are some of the most critical “Dos and Don’ts” for antitrust compliance:

- **DO** clearly state the purpose of any association meeting.
- **DO** insist that MLA meetings have agendas that are circulated in advance, and that minutes of all meetings properly reflect the actions taken at the meeting. All MLA meetings generally should have written agendas prepared and circulated in advance.
- **DO** request that counsel be present at any trade association discussion that involves potentially competitively sensitive information.
- **DO** seek legal counsel review of any “code of ethics,” “industry guidelines,” “standards,” or the like sponsored by a trade association.
- **DO** seek legal advice from legal counsel if you have questions regarding the antitrust laws or your responsibilities under these laws.

- **DO** leave any meeting (formal or informal) where improper subjects are being or will be discussed. Tell everyone why you are leaving.
- **DON'T** discuss prices, price trends, the timing of price changes, costs of common inputs, margins, terms of sale, discounts and rebates, advertised prices, promotional programs, inventory levels, production levels, capacities, new projects, and the like with competitors.
- **DON'T** discuss prices, fees or rates, or features that can impact (raise, lower, or stabilize) prices such as discounts, costs, salaries, terms and conditions of sale, warranties, or profit margins. Note that a price-fixing violation may be inferred from price-related discussions followed by parallel decisions on pricing by association members — even in the absence of an oral or written agreement on prices.
- **DON'T** share data concerning fees, prices, production, sales, bids, costs, salaries, customer credit, or other business practices unless the exchange is made pursuant to a well-considered plan that has been approved by legal counsel.
- **DON'T** agree with competitors as to uniform terms of sale, warranties, or contract provisions
- **DON'T** agree with competitors as to restrictions on production or other output.
- **DON'T** agree with competitors to divide customers, markets, or territories.
- **DON'T** agree with competitors not to deal with certain suppliers, customers, or others.
- **DON'T** try to prevent a supplier from selling to your competitor(s).
- **DON'T** discuss your customers with your competitors.
- **DON'T** agree to any association membership restrictions, standard-setting, certification, accreditation, or self-regulation programs without consultation and approval by legal counsel.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

December 18, 2023

This Whistleblower Policy is designed to provide a mechanism for contract employees and other organization leaders to raise good faith concerns regarding suspected violations of law or Minnesota Library Association (MLA) policy; to facilitate cooperation in any inquiry or investigation by any court, agency, law enforcement, or other governmental body; and to protect individuals who take such action from retaliation or any threat of retaliation by any other employee or agent of MLA.

This Policy applies to all MLA employees, including part-time, temporary, and contract employees, as well as directors, officers, and other organization volunteers.

MLA is committed to maintaining a workplace where employees and organization volunteers are free to raise good-faith concerns regarding MLA's business practices. Employees and volunteers should be encouraged to report suspected violations of the law on the part of MLA; to identify potential violations of MLA policy, including those contained in the MLA Policy Manual; and to provide truthful information in connection with any official inquiry or investigation.

MLA expressly prohibits any form of retaliation, including harassment, intimidation, adverse employment actions, or any other form of retaliation, against employees or volunteers who raise suspected violations of law, cooperate in inquiries or investigations, or identify potential violations of MLA policies. Any employee who engages in retaliation will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Reports of suspected violations of law or policy and reports of retaliation will be investigated promptly and in a manner intended to protect confidentiality. The President, or his or her designee, will manage such investigation, and may request the assistance of counsel or other outside parties as he or she deems necessary. The President, or his or her designee, will prepare a report of the findings of the investigation, and submit such report to the Board of Directors.

In the event that a report concerns the President, he or she shall recuse himself or herself from the proceedings, and the Board of Directors shall select an appropriate officer of MLA to continue the investigation.

Any employee or volunteer who believes that he or she has been subjected to any form of retaliation as a result of reporting a suspected violation of law or policy should immediately report such incident to his or her supervisor or the President. Supervisors, managers, and Human Resources staff who receive complaints of retaliation must immediately inform the President.