I. DATE: February 2, 2023

II. NAME OF COMMITTEE: Finance Committee

III. MEMBERS: Marci Cohen (Chair, Fiscal Officer); Paula Hickner (Vice President/President Elect); Elizabeth Hille Cribbs (Chief Financial Officer); Katie Buehner (Assistant Fiscal Officer); Serena Vaquilar (Assistant Chief Financial Officer); Liza Vick (President)

IV. BOARD ACTION REQUIRED:

A. Research Awards

   BAR 1a: The Finance committee recommends that the Gerboth award be funded at $1,900 for FY24 (2023-2024).

   BAR 1a: The Finance committee recommends that the Bradley award be funded at $500 for FY24 (2023-2024).

   The FY23 combined Gerboth/Bradley award amount was $2,400. They were formally split in Spring 2022.

   BAR 2: The Finance Committee recommends that the Epstein award should not be funded for FY24 (2023-2024).

   Note that this fund is different from the other awards, in that it requires use of 75% of the fund earnings from the year, and the fund has lost value in the last year. The FY23 award amount was $1,000.

B. Publication Awards

   BAR 3: The Finance Committee recommends that the Duckles award be funded at $2,200 for FY24 (2023-2024).

   The FY23 award amount was $2,100.

   BAR 4: The Finance Committee recommends that the Hill award be funded at $300 for FY24 (2023-2024).

   The FY23 award amount was $300.

   BAR 5: The Finance Committee recommends that the O’Meara award be funded at $230 for FY24 (2023-2024).

   The FY23 award amount was $240.

C. Travel and Outreach Grants

   BAR 6: The Finance Committee recommends that the Kevin Freeman travel grant be funded at $2,700 for FY24 (2023-2024).
The FY23 award amount was $2,600.

BAR 7a: The Finance Committee recommends that $3,400 from the Diversity Scholarship fund be allocated for Diversity Scholarships in FY24 (2023-2024).

This award was previously calculated according to 4.5% of a four-year average of the fund. Beginning with FY24, it now follows the standard five-year average formula (since the fund has been in existence for five years). The FY23 award amount was $3,300.

BAR 7b: The Finance Committee recommends that two Diversity Scholarships be funded in FY24 (2023-2024), as follows: one $3,000 scholarship funded from designated award funds, and one $3,000 scholarship funded from award funds ($400) and operating funds ($2,600).

Two awards were given in FY23, with the baseline award funding ($3,000) supplemented by operating funds. This should be seen as an interim practice, until such time as the Diversity Scholarship fund is large enough to support two awards on its own.

BAR 8: The Finance Committee recommends that the Paraprofessional/Public Librarian Travel Grant be funded at $2,600 for FY24 (2023-2024).

This year, this newer award is calculated according to 4.5% of a two-year average of the fund. Beginning with FY25, it will follow the standard five-year average formula. The FY23 award amount was $2,700.

BAR 9: The Finance committee recommends that the Coral IAML grant be funded at $1,000 for FY24 (2023-2024).

This grant is typically issued every other year (which has generally been even-numbered fiscal years) at the Board's discretion (see FPH 7.f). It was issued in FY20 for $840, but due to COVID, IAML Prague was postponed. It was funded at $1,000 for FY23 for the postponed Prague meeting but had no applicants. This will put the award back on a schedule of awarding it in even-numbered fiscal years.

D. Achievement Awards

BAR 10: The Finance Committee recommends that the Ralph Papakhian Special Achievement award be funded at $500 for FY24 (2023-2024).

This award is funded from the operating budget, rather than an endowment. The FY23 budget included $500 approved for this award but was increased by $500 to $1,000 to fund a second award recipient.
E. Endowments

BAR 11: The Finance Committee recommends use of the Wicker endowment not to exceed $800 for FY24 (2023-2024).

This award partially funds the First-Time Attendees reception. The FY23 award amount was $800.

BAR 12: The Finance Committee recommends use of the Ochs/Notes endowment not to exceed $2,900 for FY24 (2023-2024).

This supports the Notes luncheon and other events subject to the discretion of the Notes editor. The FY23 award amount was $2,900.

BAR 13: The Finance Committee recommends use of the US RILM endowment not to exceed $2,800 for FY24 (2023-2024).

This endowment supports MLA’s $10,000 subsidy to RILM. The FY23 award was $2,800.

BAR 14: The Finance Committee recommends use of the MLA Fund not to exceed $66,000 for FY24 (2023-2024).

This is the average of December 31 value of the fund over the past three calendar years. Up to 5% of that average or $25,000 (whichever is greater) may be used to support the operating budget if necessary. The FY23 approved amount was $63,000.

F. Fiscal Policy Handbook update

BAR 15: The Finance Committee recommends updating “socially responsible funds” to “environmental, social, and governance funds.” (Fiscal Policies Handbook 2.i, 6, 7.a)

2.i Accounts and Account Signers
MLA maintains the following bank and investment accounts:

- Checking
- Savings (a money market account with the bank)
- Money market account with Fidelity
- Certificates of Deposit (occasional, short-term; none as of 2021)
- Investment accounts (both standard and socially responsible environmental, social, and governance)

6.Investments
MLA will invest in at least one socially responsible environmental, social, and governance fund. (Minutes, 10/1995, X.C.2)
7.a Awards and Endowment Funds
If an award or endowment fund is split between socially responsible environmental, social, and governance investments (currently Calvert) and traditional investments (currently Fidelity), determine the percentage of the total fund deposited in each and transfer a proportional amount from each to fund the award or program. For example, if 60% of the total fund is in a traditional investment account and 40% in an socially responsible environmental, social, and governance account, 60% of the award amount will come from the traditional account and 40% from the socially responsible environmental, social, and governance account. This policy supersedes all previous policies. (Minutes, 09/2012, 09.g)

BAR 16: The Finance Committee recommends updating the membership of the Finance Committee to include the Early Career/Student Representative (in the second year of their term). (Fiscal Policies Handbook 2.d)

The Finance Committee, a subcommittee of the Board, is responsible for preparation of the annual budget and for monitoring income and expenditures during each fiscal year. They also make recommendations to the Board concerning all matters with fiscal implications including the management of MLA’s investment funds. These recommendations are then reviewed by the full Board and may be amended prior to being voted into policy. The Finance Committee consists of six or seven voting members, of which the Fiscal Officer (who serves as Chair of the committee) is specified by the constitution. Additionally, the constitution specifies that the Chief Financial Officer works with the Finance Committee on fiscal matters and prepares the budget with the Finance Committee. Currently, the Chief Financial Officer, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, Fiscal Officer (chair), Assistant Fiscal Officer, Student and Early Career Representative (in the second year of their term), and President and Vice/Past President meet as the Finance Committee and are voting members. (Handbook, VI.H.4.b; board minutes 5/2014, 03, VI.H.4.b)

BAR 17: The Finance Committee recommends removing the Publicity Officer as a holder of the Corporate Credit Card (Fiscal Policies Handbook 2.j)

Cardholders for the MLA Corporate American Express card may use it to pay for expenses that have been approved as a part of the annual budget, and that would normally be reimbursable under MLA fiscal and travel policies. The following Board members and Special Officers are cardholders: Chief Financial Officer (basic cardholder), President, Vice-President/Past-President, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, Development Officer (if needed), Convention Manager, and Assistant Convention Manager, and Publicity Officer. Other individuals require Finance Committee approval. Reasonable monthly charge limits may be placed on each card.

BAR 18: The Finance Committee recommends updating item 3g to reflect the end of the AmazonSmile program (Fiscal Policies Handbook 3.g).
3g. AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is a program in which the company donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to a charitable organization of the purchaser’s choice. MLA was already on the list, but the account needed to be activated in order to receive the donations. (Board minutes, 5/2014, 07.a) The activated account was announced via MLA-L by Susannah Cleveland, MLA Development Officer, June 27, 2014. Amazon ended the AmazonSmile program on February 20, 2023, resulting in the deactivation of MLA’s account.


4.b Laptop purchase for Assistant Chief Financial Officer

MLA purchases a laptop for each incoming Assistant Chief Financial Officer soon after the annual meeting in which they were appointed. Since ACFO appointments occur in even numbered fiscal years, the estimated cost of a laptop should be included in the budget requests (in line 6.024—Assistant Chief Financial Officer – Other) for those years. In Spring 2022, the Board voted to allow the outgoing ACFO to retain the laptop purchased by MLA at the completion of their full ACFO/CFO term.


Members eligible for travel reimbursement include Board members (incumbent and incoming), special officers, Cataloging & Metadata Committee (CMC, formerly BCC) representatives to crucial ALA committees, and sometimes other members traveling on behalf of the Association.

BAR 21: The Finance Committee recommends adding a provision for direct payment of expenses for non-MLA speakers at the annual meeting whose employers forbid reimbursement (Fiscal Policies Handbook 8.a).

The Program Committee may request travel, lodging, and honoraria for invited plenary session speakers who are not MLA members during the annual meeting. (Board minutes, 02/2019, 09.1.A) In some circumstances, MLA may offer travel and lodging to invited non-MLA speakers at non-plenary program sessions. For non-MLA speakers, MLA reimburses up to 100% of the U.S. General Services Administration per diem rate for meals. (Minutes, 2/2022) Any requests are to be made for the Spring Board meeting and become part of the Convention budget. These requests should be made through the Convention Managers. (Minutes, 12/2013, 2) MLA will make reasonable accommodation for direct payment of expenses with sufficient documentation for non-MLA speakers whose employers forbid reimbursement.
V. BRIEF SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:

- AFO Buehner coordinated a periodic review of the Fiscal Policies Handbook. After the Board has had an opportunity to review the recent FPH changes, and has voted on BARs 15-21 above, the most recent version of the FPH will be submitted to the MLA Web Managers for posting online.
- The committee consulted on numerous fiscal matters related to the Annual Meeting.
- After discovering that at the fall board meeting, the board had not been given the most recent version of the Approved Vendors List, we moved to have the board approve the revised version. The motion passed.

VI. ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES:

“Develop and Retain Membership” and “Cultivate Inclusivity” were the underlying principles for fiscal decisions, particularly for using our resources to remove economic barriers to participating in MLA activities. Examples include:

- Approving funding to support streaming of annual meeting content so that virtual attendees will not have a denigrated experience.
- Exempting board members with relevant medical conditions from the requirement to share hotel rooms.

It has been my honor and joy to serve as MLA’s fiscal officer.

Respectfully submitted,

Marci Cohen,
MLA Fiscal Officer