

MLA Reference & Access Services Subcommittee Handbook
Revision: 19 October 2016

I. Charge

The Reference & Access Services Subcommittee (RASS) is a Subcommittee of the Public Services Committee. RASS investigates all aspects of public services interactions, including the examination of past and present trends, and projection of future trends in public services. RASS also explores the various divisions of music library public services, including reference, circulation, reserves, special collections access, and interlibrary loan, and the intersections of these areas with other library activities.

II. Structure

Committee members include:

A. Chair - appointed by the MLA President in consultation with MLA Board of Directors (“the Board”).

B. Committee members – officially appointed by the MLA President in consultation with the Chair.

All members must be in good standing with MLA.

III. Responsibilities

"The chair of each committee is responsible for assuring that the charge given to the committee by the President and the committee’s obligations as described in the MLA Administrative Handbook, Section V. A-G are carried out; and that committee members are kept fully advised of and involved in all committee activities." (MLA Administrative Handbook, Section V. C)

A. Reference & Access Services Subcommittee Chair

- Follow the MLA Administrative Handbook, Sections V. H, as appropriate.
- Prepare the Subcommittee roster.
- Develop calendar of activities.
- Track and distribute documents.
- Make work assignments.
- Anticipate budget needs and submit budget requests to Committee Chair, as applicable.
- Submit receipts/Requests for Payment (RFPs) to the Committee Chair for expenses, as needed.
• Request and plan business meeting at the MLA annual meeting, as needed.
• Prepare agendas.
• Plan and submit program proposal(s), in coordination with Committee Chair and Subcommittee membership, to Program Committee for MLA annual meeting, including requesting honoraria/expenses for program presenters.
• Make recommendations to the President through the parent Committee Chair for appointments.
• Process resignations by preparing letters.
• Write “thank you” notes to retiring Subcommittee members and annual meeting program presenters (in some cases the President may issue these).
• Maintain appropriate section of committee handbook.
• Prepare reports for Committee Chair of activities to be submitted to the Board as requested for the Board’s three meetings each year with a deadline based upon the Board’s meeting calendar.
• Prepare and submit annual report to the Committee Chair along with goals for coming year.
• Communicate to the MLA membership issues of broad concern.
• Lead discussions, both in person and virtual.
• Develop process for responding to requests for feedback from organizations and individuals in a timely fashion.
• Prepare summaries of comments or written reports.
• Field and delegate questions from MLA membership.

B. Subcommittee Members

• Participate in group discussions, both in person and in electronic forums, drawing on personal experience, skills and knowledge.
• Provide timely feedback on documentation, proposals, and requests for comments.
• Complete any assigned tasks or projects within the timeframe allotted.

IV. Qualifications for Appointment

A. Reference & Access Services Subcommittee Chair

• Member-in-good-standing of MLA.
• Ability to participate in the work of the subcommittee and attend the MLA annual meeting unless extenuating circumstances occur.
• Specific professional interest in music library public services, specifically with regards to reference and access services, as well as a particular skill,
area of expertise, or point of view to contribute to subcommittee deliberations.

- Strong leadership, diplomatic, organizational, and writing skills.
- Willingness to subscribe to and read electronic mailing lists that support subcommittee topics.
- Previous or current experience on the subcommittee, desirable but not required.

B. Subcommittee Members

- Member in good standing of MLA national (includes student members at the discretion of the President).
- Ability to attend the MLA annual meeting when feasible.
- Ability to actively participate in both in-person and remote meetings and work of the subcommittee.
- Specific professional interest in music library public services, specifically with regards to reference and access services, and a particular skill, area of expertise, or perspective to contribute to subcommittee deliberations.

V. Appointment Procedures

A. Reference & Access Services Subcommittee Chair

- The outgoing subcommittee chair recommends a successor to the Public Services Committee Chair for consideration. The candidate should meet the qualifications identified in section IV.A of this document.
- The Public Services Committee Chair submits the recommendation to the MLA President for finalization of the appointment.

B. Subcommittee members

- The subcommittee chair submits known openings to the President in October-early November; the Planning and Reports Officer puts out a unified call on MLA-L for new members on all MLA committees in November, well in advance of the annual meeting.
- Shortly before the annual meeting, the subcommittee chair posts openings to MLA-L. The annual meeting is an opportunity for the subcommittee chair or any other designated members of the subcommittee to meet with interested members and answer any questions about the work of the committee.
• Immediately following the annual meeting, the Subcommittee Chair posts a call for applications to MLA-L. Interested members must submit a CV and a short statement of interest.
• The members of the subcommittee review applications and make appointment decisions.
• The subcommittee chair reviews the subcommittee’s appointment decisions with the Chair of the Public Services Committee.
• The subcommittee chair then recommends the names of potential appointees to the MLA President.
• The subcommittee chair and Public Services Committee Chair determine the necessary number of members. In most cases, appointments are staggered, so that rotations off the subcommittee are balanced by experienced members who remain on the subcommittee.
• Appointments are not final, nor should they be announced, until individuals receive appointment letters from the MLA President. Because of this, chairs should not promise appointments to people. Individuals usually do not serve on two subcommittees within the same committee at the same time, and serving on more than one committee simultaneously is not recommended.
• It is the subcommittee chair’s responsibility to check the membership directory to verify that a candidate is a member in good standing and, preferably, not already serving on other committees.

VI. Length of Appointment

A. Subcommittee Chair
Typically serves no more than four consecutive years. The four-year period restarts when a subcommittee member becomes a subcommittee chair.

B. Subcommittee members
Normally serve no more than four consecutive years. In exceptional situations, the Committee may recommend a one-year extension of a given committee member’s term. Per the MLA Administrative Handbook (V.A.3.), “In consultation with the President, committee chairs may request the resignation of members who are not contributing to the fulfillment of the committee’s charge.”

VII. Resignations

A. Resignations

• To resign from a subcommittee, the member submits a letter to the subcommittee chair.
• The subcommittee chair forwards a copy of the written resignation to the Chair of the Public Services Committee.
• The Public Services Committee Chair prepares a written letter of acknowledgment to the individual (with a copy to the subcommittee chair) for his/her contributions and service to MLA.

B. Mandatory termination of service

• If a subcommittee member ceases to be an active participant in the subcommittee, as determined by the subcommittee chair, the chair may write the member to ask whether the member wishes to continue. If the chair deems a member to be non-responsive or not cooperative after repeated attempts to encourage him/her to participate, the member will be asked to resign.

VIII. Meetings

A. Generally one business meeting is held at every MLA annual meeting. The subcommittee chair convenes and conducts the meeting(s).

1. A majority of voting members constitutes a quorum.

2. Business meeting agendas may include: correction and approval of the previous year's minutes, and planning for the coming year.

   a. Anyone wishing to place an item on the agenda should submit a request to the Chair before the meeting.
   b. The Chair will distribute a preliminary agenda to members at or in advance of the meeting.
   c. Guests may attend business meetings and may speak upon recognition from the Chair.

3. The MLA Program Committee determines which proposed program sessions will occur at each MLA Annual Meeting. The Program Chair issues a call for proposals annually, in the spring following the annual meeting, and shortly after that, a call for scheduling business meetings. Business meetings should be strictly that and not program sessions.

4. The subcommittee chair submits requests for meeting time and space to the Program Committee through the meeting scheduling process.

IX. Absences at MLA Annual Meetings

A. Chair
If illness or other emergency precludes the subcommittee chair from attending a committee meeting, the Chair will notify the subcommittee and designate one of the members as a temporary Chair.

B. Members
If a member knows s/he will be absent at a meeting, s/he must notify the Chair as soon as possible.

IX. Budget
The subcommittee chair works with the Public Services Committee chair to submit a budget proposal (as needed) to the Finance Committee of the Board each spring; budget proposals are typically due at least four weeks before the start of the spring Board meeting. Estimates should be realistic, and goals should be clear.

X. Documentation

A. Documentation and document distribution is the responsibility of the subcommittee chair.

B. The subcommittee will keep a record of its meetings in the nature of minutes for the use of the subcommittee and the Board.

C. Upon leaving the subcommittee, the chair transfers to the MLA Archives committee files that are not required by the succeeding Chair. The Chair should read the Archives section of the MLA website for more information on Archives policies, what should be submitted, and how transfer is to be accomplished, and/or consult the MLA Archivist.

XI. Communication Tools

A. The subcommittee chair is added to MLA-COMM email list, which exists for committee chairs and MLA Board members. This listserv is typically used for administrative matters related to the running of committees and reporting of their work, including calls for reports. The listserv moderator updates the list membership at least once per year, following annual committee appointments. Questions regarding this listserv and membership should be directed to the MLA President, MLA Administrative Officer, or the current listserv owner.

B. The subcommittee chair is responsible for establishing and maintaining any other communication channels for the use of its members. (See section III.A.2.vi above.)
## Appendix 1: Committee Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 July</td>
<td>Fiscal Year Starts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 August</td>
<td>Annual reports due to Planning and Reports Gatherer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-August</td>
<td>Board reports due to President for Fall Board meeting. Watch for call on MLA-L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November-December</td>
<td>Unified call for new members, put out by the MLA President (via Planning and Reports Officer).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late December-Early January</td>
<td>Board reports due to President for Winter Board meeting. Watch for call on MLA-L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After annual meeting</td>
<td>Submit recommendations for new committee members to President as soon as possible, after verifying their current membership in MLA. Send “thank you for your service” letters to retiring committee members. Verify currency/accuracy of committee charge, send changes to President. Ensure that reports of business meetings and program sessions are submitted for publication in MLA Newsletter (newsletter editor solicits volunteers).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April-May</td>
<td>Prepare and submit program/business meeting forms to Program Chair as requested. Watch for call on MLA-L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April-May</td>
<td>Submit Budget Requests to Fiscal Officer as requested. Watch for call on MLA-L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late April-Early May</td>
<td>Board reports due to President for Spring Board Meeting. Watch for call on MLA-L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late April-Early May</td>
<td>First call for Annual Reports, due 1 August, to Planning and Reports Gatherer. Watch for call on MLA-L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 June</td>
<td>End of Fiscal Year</td>
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MLA Calendar: [http://musiclibraryassoc.org/member.aspx?id=64](http://musiclibraryassoc.org/member.aspx?id=64)