

WASHINGTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Strategic Plan

WLA Vision for 2017

The Washington Library Association is a resource for Washington libraries and the people who make them great. A majority of the state's library professionals belong and perceive significant value in their membership. We are a vibrant, inclusive and diverse organization representing a variety of library types, geographical areas, services, job levels, ages and ethnicities.

The Association offers opportunities for learning, both in structured professional development offerings and through informal networking opportunities. WLA members have built strong, collegial relationships with other library professionals, library supporters and trustees, and allied organizations around the state and frequently consult with each other as individuals and through shared interest groups. The organization also provides support and encouragement for persons entering the profession through scholarship and mentoring programs and WLA has strong relationships with library science schools.

The culture of the organization is fun, friendly, welcoming, and focused on improving libraries and the professionalism of people who work in them. The public understands the value of libraries and supports library services at the ballot box. The legislature perceives WLA as a significant voice for libraries and looks to us for leadership and information.

WLA's governance structure is strategic, responsive, flexible, inclusive, and utilizes a rational ongoing process of planning and monitoring progress toward its goals. Members actively participate in committees, Board service, and other meaningful leadership opportunities to have an impact on the future of libraries in Washington State and further develop their leadership skills. The organization is financially sound and its processes are fully transparent. Our staff is professional, responsive, dedicated to the mission of the organization and libraries, and utilizes best practices in association management.

Elevator Version

WLA is a vibrant and effective advocate for libraries, library professionals, and library allies, and a community of practice where its members learn, grow professionally, develop strong relationships, and have fun.

WLA CORE VALUES

Community: *WLA brings people together because of our shared interest in libraries. We encourage, build and support mutual respect, common goals, and strong professional relationships.*

Integrity: *We consistently hold ourselves accountable to the highest standards of honesty and truth.*

Professionalism: *WLA actively strives to use best practices in conducting our business as an organization and treat each other with respect as colleagues.*

Responsiveness: *We listen to input from members, anticipate changing trends that affect our profession, and meet the varied needs of our stakeholders in a timely manner.*

Inclusivity: *WLA encourages and is open to diverse viewpoints, values and cultures and welcomes the unsettling as well as the familiar.*

Education: *We create learning opportunities for members of the library community to expand their professional knowledge, develop their professional skills, and share knowledge with each other in both formal and informal ways.*

Leadership: *WLA accepts responsibility for helping to coalesce groups representing library interests in the state, provides opportunities for members to practice their skills as leaders, and serves as the voice of the industry and profession.*

STRATEGIC PLAN

A. Membership: *To build a membership composed of a majority of the Washington State library community reflecting the diversity of library types, library roles, and the diversity of the citizens of the State..*

1. Perform a needs assessment for both individual and institutional memberships. Find out what people are looking for in professional organizations; what does WLA need to offer in order to appeal to them? (MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE)
2. Review membership structures, especially institutional memberships, with a goal of encouraging employer payment of dues (send thank you to employers that currently pay for staff memberships.) (MSC & DUES TASK FORCE)
3. Develop a strongly identifiable, universal, ubiquitous WLA brand. (COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE).
 - Organize a committee (by December 2007)
 - Conduct information gathering, including literature review (by March 2008)
 - Draft proposal for branded communications & marketing approach (TBD)
4. Develop a recruitment campaign that includes advertising, presentations to library, staff, governance, library friends and other support groups, and personal contact. (COMMUNICATION/MEMBER SERVICES)
 - Create a strategic outline and implementation plan for the recruitment campaign (by March 2008)
 - Launch recruitment campaign at OLA/WLA Conference (April 2008)
5. Explore joint events with ACRL, WLMA, CLAMS, Medical, etc. librarian groups. (VICE PRESIDENT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE)

B. Career Development and Continuing Education: *To lead in connecting members and the library community with continuing education and career advancement resources. WLA provides excellent, relevant formal and informal opportunities to learn and grow.*

1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment process every two years, determining needs and skill gaps that can be addressed through conference programs, workshops, publications, online and other learning opportunities. (CE COORDINATOR)
2. All WLA interest groups will sponsor (or co-sponsor) a workshop every year. (Need to build capacity in the IGs not currently doing this.) (IG COORDINATOR)
3. All WLA IGs will meet at least quarterly, in person or online. (IG COORDINATOR)
4. "Mine the membership"—identify individuals or groups (such as WALT) that can coach for effective workshops and presentations. (CE COORDINATOR)

C. Community: *To offer multiple opportunities for building mutually beneficial connections by linking individuals with similar and diverse interests, and by establishing relationships with organizations having shared values and goals.*

1. Library workers self-identify as a welcoming presence to other members of the library community in various parts of the state using appropriate technologies. (COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR)
 - Launch member highlights feature on the website and via an electronic newsletter (starting January 2008)
 - Explore the use of online collaboration (such as OPAL) or social networking tools to provide venues for WLA members to offer online programs to engage broader library community (i.e. book discussion programs, interviews and virtual tours of special digital library collections).
2. Model RIG job shadowing program for distance, i-School, and technical college students as well as to practitioners. (WLA PRESIDENT to set up taskforce)
3. Energize IGs to build relationships with groups outside of WLA. (IG COORDINATOR)
4. Increase IGs' mutual support and idea sharing. (IG COORDINATOR)
5. Operate a WLA Welcome Wagon that greets each new member. (MEMBER SERVICES CHAIR)

D. Advocacy: *To create effective library advocates who raise awareness about the value of libraries and enhance our ability to build relationships with key elected officials and other stakeholders who can affect the success of libraries.*

1. Enhance Library Legislative Day and increase participation by more libraries and all levels of the library community. (COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR)
 - Create a suite of relevant materials available online that can be utilized by libraries to promote and recruit for the event (by November 2007)
 - Explore feasibility of hosting a pre-Legislative Day gathering geared toward training and/or networking (April 2008)
2. Continue the work of the Legislative Planning Committee and seek ways to make it more visible and relevant to the membership. (LEGISLATIVE CHAIR and LOBBYIST)

3. Find effective means of communicating to the membership and securing their active support for federal legislation that will positively affect Washington libraries. (FEDERAL RELATIONS COORDINATOR)
 - Monitor federal legislation and alert membership to issues that affect Washington libraries.
 - Attend and lead a delegation representing the Association to the annual ALA National Library Legislative Day.
 - Submit, at least yearly, articles summarizing federal legislation affecting Washington libraries in appropriate WLA publications, e.g., ALKI and the WLFFTA Advocate
4. Educate the library community to be effective advocates for libraries. (WLFFTA)
 - To have a program at WALE and WLA conferences on library advocacy.
 - To have a session at the 2008 WLFFTA Friends and Foundation Forums on library advocacy.
 - To include an article on library advocacy in each of the quarterly Advocate newsletters.
5. Seek venues for collaboration and partnerships to raise awareness of library-related issues. (COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR)

E. Governance: *To create and share a framework to support WLA's vision, goals, and activities by promoting innovation, communication, and involvement in an open and transparent environment.*

1. Provide formal and informal training and orientation for WLA leaders. (BOARD/STAFF)
 - Create a handbook of general and pertinent organizational materials to orient new WLA leaders (by April 1, 2008)
2. Ask WLA leaders to explore, compare, and recommend best practices relevant to their roles and responsibilities. (BOARD/STAFF)
3. Implement the most effective and timely tools and methods for conducting business and communication. (BOARD/STAFF)
 - Select and contract with new Internet Service Provider (ISP) (by September 2008)
 - Develop members-only section of the WLA webpage for conducting Association business and communication (during 2008)
4. Assess and update WLA structures and processes as appropriate for effective operation and continuity. (BOARD/STAFF)
 - Appoint a committee to audit WLA policies and procedures; identify areas needing to be updated (by June 2008)

F. Administration: *To maintain a structure appropriate to facilitate and enhance the work of the organization.*

1. Develop a description of the organization as it exists and its vision. (By 6/28)*
 2. Investigate and possibly hire a transition planning consultant. (By 6/28)*
 3. Identify appropriate staff functions to be included in a management company contract or executive director or other staff job descriptions. (By 6/28)*
 4. Develop an RFP to select and hire an organization management company if appropriate. (Written by 7/20; received by 8/20. Decision at September board meeting.)*
 5. Develop a short term plan to manage the web site. (By 7/31 by Web Site TF)
- *To be done by Transition TF.*