

American Library Association Committee on Organization
Report to Council
Midwinter Meeting 2014—Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

NO ACTION ITEM

COO had no action items for Council at the 2014 Midwinter Meeting. Therefore COO was not on the Council agenda in Philadelphia.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Two new Membership Initiative Groups have met the requirements of ALA Policy A.4.3.12:

A Membership Initiative Group (MIG) is formed when a group of ALA members identifies a common concern or interest about librarianship which falls outside the delegated responsibility of a single division, roundtable, or unit, and wishes to establish a short-term mechanism to address this concern or interest. To establish a MIG, which must be approved by COO and reported to Council, a group must submit to the Committee on Organization a statement of purpose, at least one hundred signatures of ALA members in good standing, and the names and addresses of designated organizers.

The two new MIGs are the Diversity Membership Initiative Group and the Programming Librarian Membership Initiative Group.

2. As Policy A.4.3.12 states, a MIG can be created as “a short-term mechanism” to address a particular concern or interest. In Philadelphia COO began consideration of what “short-term” signifies—after how much time does a short term conclude? And once that period has passed after the creation of a MIG, what are the implications?

A list of extant MIGs (not including the two new ones) is available at <http://www.ala.org/groups/mcoms/migs>:

- Graphic Novels & Comics in Libraries
- Information Commons
- Libraries Fostering Civic Engagement
- LibraryLab (formerly Library Boing Boing)
- Virtual Communities and Libraries

COO concluded that no action on its part is necessary regarding the “short-term” question. The MIGS are serving their purpose. If member participation and support wane and a MIG ceases to be active, it de facto ceases to exist. COO will, in such a case, recommend to

In light of the ambiguity about the meaning of "short-term" COO will consider if ALA policy A.4.3.12 should be revised to substitute the word "informal" for "short-term."

3. On January 1, 2014 Jim Rettig, chair of COO, sent a discussion paper to COO members and Council asking for ideas about how ALA should respond, what action it should take, when an ALA committee or a Council Committee goes silent (i.e., does not report on its work) and remains silent over a period of time. A mild consensus, both in COO and on Council, indicates that members think that two years of silence from a committee warrants additional action.

In its meetings during the 2014 Midwinter Meeting COO concluded that messaging about the need for committee chairs to communicate about their committees' work can be improved in the following ways:

- A. COO recommends that the Training, Orientation and Leadership Development Committee (TOLD) consider making its annual training program for committee chairs available as an online training program accessible to individuals on demand. This could take the form of a Webinar or, perhaps, be done through the ALA YouTube Channel. Some committee chairs have scheduling conflicts and cannot attend the face-to-face session at the start of the Annual Conference. This would address that problem.

Online access to committee chair training would complement "The Committee Chair and Staff Liaison's Handbook" readily available at <http://www.ala.org/offices/hrdr/abouthrdr/hrdrliasoncomm/otld/alacomchairresources>

Online training also has ALA precedent in the resources listed on the Financial Learning page at <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/financialdata/finlearn>

The COO chair shared this idea via email sent to the TOLD chair and the TOLD staff liaison on February 3, 2014.

- B. The ALA Executive Board has a robust liaison program with every ALA and Council committee. As Board members' schedules permit, they make a face-to-face visit to the committees for which they have liaison responsibility. These visits offer an opportunity to explain to committees the importance of communication and the expectation that they submit reports about their work two times a year. EB liaisons could communicate this when, as is routine, they email the Board "talking points" document to the committee chair. A brief document explaining the sorts of things a report can address and how to submit their reports could accompany that. A paper copy can also be shared during those visits to committees.

The COO chair shared this idea via email with President Stripling

- C. Give greater visibility to the page that provides links to committee reports. It currently takes five clicks on the

ALA COO report