

Library and Information Technology Association Strategic Plan

July 2016 - June 2018

Table of Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Executive Director's Message](#)
- [President's Message](#)
- [Vision](#)
- [Mission](#)
- [Values](#)
- [Interim Strategic Plan](#)
- [Areas of Focus](#)
 - [Member Engagement](#)
 - [Organizational Stability and Sustainability](#)
 - [Education and Professional Development](#)
 - [Advocacy and Information Policy](#)
- [Implementation and Assessment](#)
- [Methods](#)
- [LITA Board](#)
- [Resources Consulted](#)

Introduction

LITA is the premier organization for librarians and libraries seeking leadership in information technology policy, valuable networking opportunities, and a broad range of educational offerings and publications on the latest technology issues impacting libraries. LITA has existed for over fifty years providing services and programs to its members, ALA, and information technology professionals around the globe. This document will guide members, encouraging them to build upon the successes of recent years and further strengthen LITA's reputation for risk-taking and innovation in information technology within libraries.

This strategic plan is guided by LITA's shared values, the Board, our Executive Director, and ALA's overarching strategic focus. This is intended to be a plan that will guide LITA over the next two years, keeping us anchored to key priorities as we manage a particularly intense period of transition. A successful conclusion to this plan will not only be a stronger, more adaptable LITA, but one in which ongoing strategic planning plays an important foundational role.

Executive Director's Message

Jenny Levine, LITA Executive Director

In June 2015, while interviewing to become the Executive Director of LITA, I was asked why I wanted this job. There are many reasons, but at the heart of them all is the belief that LITA has so much potential. The library technology landscape has changed dramatically during the past twenty years, and LITA's potential to affect change across the profession and at the national (and even international) level remains unique. What motivates me every day is the opportunity to position LITA members to work together to turn our values and ideas into meaningful change.

And now I get to work with a thoughtful and dedicated group of people, the LITA Board, to make our shared vision a reality. This strategic plan is the first step toward creating a flexible and sustainable infrastructure that will give LITA members the support and resources they need to influence information policy and practice in a way that aligns with our values. Many of these values have been expressed as part of our shared ethos for a long time (collaboration, experimentation, openness and transparency), and I'm particularly proud of the fact that we now deliberately include diversity and inclusion as an explicit value underlying everything we will do in the future.

We have spent the past year starting from scratch and re-examining how we do everything with the goal of using technology as efficiently as possible to reduce bureaucracy, remove gatekeepers, create new opportunities, and improve the member experience. We also plan to lead within ALA to model technical implementations and initiatives other units can use to improve how the entire Association works together. We are, after all, LITA, and we're celebrating our 50th anniversary by recommitting, reenergizing, and setting ambitious new goals for the future success and excellence of LITA.

President's Message

Aimee Fifarek, 2016-2017 LITA President

I am deeply honored to be President of LITA during our 50th Anniversary year. When I started my first professional job, my boss Nancy Colyar told me “You have to join LITA. You’ll meet lots of great people and find many opportunities to help you in your career.” It was some of the best advice I’ve ever gotten. Over the last two decades I have indeed met fabulous people, had opportunities to be on and chair committees, publish scholarly work, and play a small role in crafting our profession’s approaches to technology, privacy and intellectual freedom, and librarianship. Much of that has been a direct result of my involvement with LITA.

Needless to say, I am heavily invested in seeing LITA thrive. As librarianship becomes increasingly entwined with technology, it is more important than ever to have strong, knowledgeable voices leading policy discussions, making key implementation decisions, and advocating for the rights of our patrons and fellow library workers. I think the strategic plan that follows outlines a bright future for LITA, and will position us where we need to be - not just at the the table but leading the way. It is the first step towards our next 50 years, and I look forward to walking that path with you.

Vision

As the center of expertise about information technology, LITA leads in exploring and enabling new technologies to empower libraries.

Mission

LITA educates, serves and reaches out to its members, other ALA members and divisions, and the entire library and information community through its publications, programs and other activities designed to promote, develop, and aid in the implementation of library and information technology.

Values

Values define the foundation on which we perform work and conduct ourselves. They allow us to maintain cornerstones of success while looking for new opportunities to

grow. The following values are our Association's guiding principles as we move toward realizing our vision and strategic plan.

Assessment - We engage in systematic assessment of programs, education, publications, and our budgetary spending.

Collaboration and Partnerships - We seek collaboration opportunities, both within LITA and beyond, to create stronger and more impactful programs, educational opportunities, new initiatives, and solutions to problems facing libraries and Association members.

Communication - We communicate clearly and thoughtfully about the value of membership, programs, education, and publications.

Curiosity and Experimentation - We support experimentation, innovation, and the development of new ideas, programs, and approaches that spur excitement within the Association and the library community.

Diversity and Inclusion - We respect all aspects of diversity, create inclusive virtual and physical learning and information sharing environments, and embrace programming, education, and activities that promote accessibility and diversity.

Lifelong Learning - We leverage opportunities for members to lead and engage in physical and virtual continuing education to expand knowledge and grow competencies.

Member Experience - We focus on the member experience and work diligently to create high-quality interactions with our members, anticipate their changing needs, and provide benefits, networking opportunities, and experiences that are targeted, supportive, empowering, and desired.

Openness and Transparency - We believe in being transparent about decisions, projects, and work done within the Association and publicly informing members and stakeholders both within and external to the library community about organizational activities.

Areas of Focus

The following four areas of focus and associated broad goals are intended to inspire creative responses at all levels within LITA and allow committees and interest groups to create concrete projects that align with the Association's goals over the next two years:

- Member Engagement
- Organizational Stability and Sustainability
- Education and Professional Development
- Advocacy and Information Policy

Member Engagement

LITA exists to support its members, and in turn membership dues make it possible for LITA to thrive and grow. Our most valuable resource has always been the expertise of our members and the sense of community that is created when that expertise is shared. Therefore we are committed to improving all aspects of the member experience, including programming, educational opportunities, publications, events, and even the way we communicate, as described by the following goals:

- Establish a plan for communicating timely and relevant information to members at all levels of involvement across LITA
- Leverage existing and create new virtual and in-person networking opportunities for members beyond ALA conferences and the Forum
- Broaden efforts to create diverse and inclusive environments for current and prospective members in our virtual and in-person interactions
- Explore ways to better align member skills and interests with potential service opportunities on committees, interest groups, or task forces
- Create a culture of continuous improvement by conducting research and using those findings to improve the quality of services and benefits for members
- Define and communicate the benefits of membership by establishing differential benefits for members

Organizational Stability and Sustainability

We are in a challenging yet exciting transitional period. Recent turnover in the LITA office has prompted the organization to re-examine long-standing practices from the

ground up, affording us the opportunity to significantly improve the way the organization serves its members. As LITA prepares for the future, we must use and expand our limited resources wisely and ensure the long-term viability of our Association by working toward the following goals:

- Develop a long-term balanced budgeting strategy that is closely linked with strategic priorities and growth areas
- Create and follow through on a membership growth plan that sets target membership goals for growth and retention to support specific organizational costs and core volunteer work
- Streamline processes and establish formal roles for the LITA staff and the elected and appointed leadership
- Improve communication between the LITA Board, standing committees, and appointed representatives to ensure the organization is efficiently functioning at all levels
- Cultivate organizational resilience in LITA through iterative strategic planning and assessment

Education and Professional Development

As the technology division of ALA, LITA has always provided excellent in-person learning opportunities at conferences. Because many members are under increasing budgetary constraints and because LITA is the technology division, now is the time for LITA to leverage online methods for presenting and expanding educational and professional development offerings. We will develop programming for the benefit of our members, and library technologists in general, in these ways:

- Build LITA's strength and expertise in education and professional development through evaluating and re-prioritizing existing activities with both affordability and sustainability in mind
- Explore additional ways educational and published content can be generated, shared with, and distributed to members
- Expand online learning opportunities and augment instructional tools to respond to members' needs to understand emerging technology and pursue professional development
- Recruit more members as authors, presenters, and panelists while remembering our diversity and inclusion values

- Provide paths for LITA members to share their expertise through LITA's online and in-person educational and publishing venues
- Offer services and continuing educational opportunities for members at all stages of their careers

Advocacy and Information Policy

LITA's collective membership embodies a vast trove of library technology expertise. We seek to magnify the impact of this knowledge both within and outside of ALA. When LITA was formed, technology in libraries was new and not closely integrated into the broad functioning of libraries or society. Now, technology touches every part of the library. LITA's focus therefore will shift to being the ALA Division that offers expertise on the context, issues, and policies around information technology in libraries. To that end, we establish the following goals:

- Explore and define technology issues for our membership and the Division, drawing from the rich talents of LITA members
- Provide advice, recommendations, guidance, and support to ALA's information technology policy activities in a proactive manner, to help set the agenda as well as reflect emerging technology debates in society at large
- Reinvigorate existing relationships and establish new ties with ALA policy and advocacy groups and national standards bodies to bring LITA's collective knowledge, experience, and insight to issues of concern to library technologists
- Increase the organization's visibility in the broader library community
- Represent and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in all of our technology-related advocacy and policy efforts

Implementation and Assessment

The LITA Strategic Plan's implementation will be overseen by the LITA Board, and work will be tracked by the Board and the LITA office. In some cases, the Board may provide explicit directions for some committees to work on specific projects or create task forces to accomplish strategic initiatives. In others, the Board will encourage committees and interest groups to embrace the goals outlined in this document and use them to provide direction and inspiration as they themselves set goals, create priorities, and plan long-term projects.

Ongoing progress towards the strategic goals will be tracked through a tactical plan that will be created and maintained by the LITA Board, Committee and Interest Group Chairs, and LITA Staff. All members of this team are critical to the success of any

planning initiative and should feel empowered to update the elements in the tactical plan as appropriate. However everyone in the group must also recognize that the communal nature of LITA means that changes to the elements in the plan will likely affect multiple areas. Effective communication about the tactical plan across the team is critical. Avenues for communication include but are not limited to quarterly reports, open communication between Board Liaisons and Committee/IG chairs, and meeting communication.

Assessment is the core value that will enable us to evaluate the efficacy of our initiatives. Assessment will be incorporated into all projects from their earliest stages. An assessment plan (including collecting and analyzing data, soliciting feedback, and other mechanisms) is expected from each project.

LITA Board

LITA is governed by an elected Board of Directors consisting of the president, the vice-president / president-elect, the immediate past-president, the LITA Councilor, and seven directors. The executive director and the chairs of the Bylaws and Organization Committee and Financial Advisory Committee are also ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board. The 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 LITA Boards, whose members are listed below, collaboratively wrote this document.

Aimee Fifarek, President
Andromeda Yelton, Vice-President / President-Elect
Thomas Dowling, Past President
Rachel Vacek, Previous Past President
Ranti Junus, Director-at-Large
Bohyun Kim, Director-at-Large
Tophher Lawton, Director-at-Large
Jenny Reiswig, Past Director-at-Large
Susan Sharpless Smith, Director-at-Large
Jenny Emanuel Taylor, Director-at-Large
Ken Varnum, Director-at-Large
Evviva Weinraub, Director-at-Large
Aaron Dobbs, LITA Division Councilor
Frank Cervone, Parliamentarian
Andrea Mullarkey, Previous Parliamentarian

Nancy Colyar, Previous Financial Advisory Committee Chair
Renee LeBeau-Ford, Financial Advisory Committee Chair
Jenny Levine, Executive Director
Mark A. Beatty, Staff Liaison