

**ALA Executive Board
2011 Fall Meeting**

TOPIC: ALA 2015 Strategic Plan: Implementation Report #2

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion

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DATE: 19 October 2011

BACKGROUND:

ALA's 2015 strategic plan was developed over an 18-month period. Work began in Fall 2009 at a retreat of ALA, ALA Division and ALA Round Table leaders. Planning continued throughout the Spring of 2010, as members participated in surveys and responded to proposed drafts. The final version of ALA 2015 goals and objectives was approved by the ALA Council on June 18, 2010.

With the approval of goals and objectives, attention shifted to implementation strategies. In October 2010, the meeting of the Joint Boards – the ALA Executive Board and members of the Boards of Directors of the eleven ALA Divisions – focused on preliminary discussion of strategies for two goal areas: Transforming Libraries and Member Engagement. In December 2010, ALA Management and Unit Managers – including the executive directors of the divisions and directors of ALA offices and business units – held a retreat to develop draft strategies. Formation of the initial strategies was further informed by ALA Executive Board discussions – on member engagement (Annual 2010 and Fall 2010) and transforming libraries (Spring 2011). One or more implementation strategy was developed for each objective. While goals and objectives – approved by the ALA Council – will remain steady for the planning period, implementation strategies will be reviewed and modified as necessary to maintain progress toward achievement of objectives.

Initial reports to the ALA Executive Board will focus on activities undertaken as part of the implementation strategies. As implementation work proceeds, however, the fundamental question regarding any strategy is: ***Is this strategy allowing us to achieve, or make progress toward achieving, the objective?*** To that end, the following questions are placed in front of member leaders and staff working on implementation:

- *What has actually occurred or been accomplished toward achieving the objective?*
- *Do members believe we have made progress?*
- *Can we see any impact on public perceptions or attitudes?*
- *Are there measurable impacts on libraries, users or the public?*

The second ALA 2015 implementation report includes the following information:

- (a) The specific 2015 section (e.g. Goal Area (1), Objective (1.1) and Strategy (1.1.1)).
- (b) For strategies: selected major strategic initiatives and projects. As new projects and initiatives are developed or reported, they will be noted. Reporting here is intended to be indicative of the scope, range and nature of implementation work – but will not be an exhaustive list of all relevant work.
- (c) For objectives: the impact questions above. As answers to one or more of those questions are knowable (e.g., through surveys, through statistics, through benchmarks) questions will be replaced by assessment statements. While reporting on strategies will focus on actions, the impact statements will focus on outcomes.

As with ALA 2010 implementation, regular 2015 progress reports are intended to maintain focus on goals and objectives articulated and approved by the Association's leadership and members, and to provide a consistent framework for gathering summative data that will enable us to evaluate impact and that will provide the essential basis for future planning.

A review of data gathered for the 2nd (Fall 2011) implementation report supports some overall observations:

1. 2015 Plan implementation activities have a strong focus on pulling together resources across the Association. This is apparent in projects such as the Transforming Libraries website, the *State of America's Libraries* report and the planned 2011-2012 Association Options Fair.
2. ALA is responding to current stresses in the employment market. JobLIST (AL, ACRL) and HRDR (including the Placement Center) are providing increasing support for job seekers as well as outreach tools for employers.

3. ALA's focus on continuing education continues to sharpen. All divisions are now offering web-based continuing education, along with ALA Publishing and several ALA offices. Acceptance of ALA's IACET application now authorizes ALA to offer CEUs for qualifying CE.
4. Across the Association, the new "Transforming Libraries" goal is providing a collaborative framework for conversation, for collective action to address significant change, and for new products and services.
5. In a time of economic stress, the Association is continuing to invest in critical 21st century infrastructure, including the website (new CMS, mobile), ALA Connect, and a new Finance system.
6. There is strong recognition of and, within real resource constraints, support for the research needed to support advocacy. Among the current projects are the 2015-funded projects "Libraries Matter: Research on the Impact of Libraries" and "ACRL Metrics: Evidence to Support the Value/Impact of Academic Libraries."
7. Grant funding, from both private and public sources, continues to be critical to the achievement of ambitious goals. Among the projects included in the current report are an expansion of the Spectrum program (with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation), a second Spectrum doctoral program (Institute of Museum and Library Services), and a significant effort to refresh and continue the John Cotton Dana Award (Ebsco).
8. While the unique structure of the Association creates complexity, it also enables a depth and range of responses, including projects such as the Campaign for the World's Libraries, Preservation Week (ALCTS) and "The Small But Powerful Guide to Winning Support for Your Rural Library" (ALA's Committee on Rural, Native, and Tribal Libraries of All Kinds).

Related previous documents:

2010-2011 EBD #12.10: ALA Ahead to 2010: Final Progress Report

2010-2011 EBD #12.42: ALA 2015 Strategic Plan: Implementation Report #1