

**ALA Executive Board  
2012 Fall Meeting**

**TOPIC:** Round Table Liaison Roles and Responsibilities

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Discussion

**REQUESTED BY:** Keith Michael Fiels, Executive Director  
Mary W. Ghikas, Senior Associate Executive Director

**DATE:** October 11, 2012

**BACKGROUND:**

Members of the ALA Executive Board raised questions related to Round Table liaison and orientation during their Executive Board liaison reports at the 2012 ALA Annual Conference. At that time, members of the Round Tables Coordinating Assembly were discussing development of a document to clarify member leader and liaison roles and to achieve a more consistent understanding. The attached draft document was developed, in consultation with other Round Table leaders and liaisons, by Mary McInroy, a member leader with extensive round table experience, and Danielle Alderson, liaison to the RTCA, as well as three individual Round Tables.

The attached documents include:

- Draft statement of Round Table Leader and Staff Liaison Roles and Responsibilities, developed by Mary McInroy (MAGIRT, GODORT) and Danielle Alderson (MPS), in consultation with other Round Table leaders and liaisons.
- Round Table Policy Framework
- Basic Member Service Year Calendar: ALA Round Tables (draft), developed by Mary Ghikas for review by both round table leadership and staff liaisons
- List of current Round Table chairs and staff liaisons, along with ALA Executive Board liaison

The Round Table Coordinating Assembly meets twice annually, on Friday morning, at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and ALA Annual Conferences.

Individual Round Tables vary significantly in their Bylaws provisions, in their meeting practices and schedules and in operations.

There are currently 19 round tables; the newest was organized in 2011-2012. While overall Round Table coordination oversight is assigned to the Senior Associate Executive Director, individual round table

liaisons are spread across three ALA operating departments: ALA Member Programs and Services, ALA Communications and Member Relations, ALA Washington Office. In assigning staff liaisons, an attempt is made to assign liaison to an ALA unit which has a role and focus complementary to that of the round table itself. So, for instance, liaison to the Intellectual Freedom Round Table is provided through the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom (MPS). Liaison to the International Relations Round Table is provided through the ALA International Relations Office (CMR). Liaison to the Government Documents Round Table is provided by the ALA Washington Office (WO). A list of current round table liaisons, showing ALA unit, is attached.

# ***Roles of Round Table Leaders and Staff Liaisons***

## **Round Table (RT) Leader—Definition**

The RT leader (Chair, President, Designate, Coordinator, etc.) is the lead elected officer of the Round Table, usually for a one-year term. The RT leader is generally responsible for the fiduciary and programmatic activities of the Round Table.

## **Round Table Staff Liaisons (SL)—Definition**

The Liaison is an appointed member of the ALA staff who responds to the needs of the Round Table within the limits of time and other responsibilities. Specific roles and actions of the Staff Liaison may vary slightly from liaison to liaison and thus from round table to round table.

### ***Role of the RT Leader. The RT Leader should:***

- Demonstrate interest in, and support of, the Round Table and its goals
- Be familiar with your round table's own governing documents (bylaws)
- Be familiar with ALA's governing documents, found at <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/constitution>
- Demonstrate an ability to communicate with members, staff and other groups
- Understand how the Round Table fits into the larger work of the Association
- Support and understand the protocol of conducting business within the Round Table and ALA
- Support and understand the role of the Staff Liaison
- Include the assigned Staff Liaison in all RT communication
- Attend the Planning & Budget Assembly (PBA) meeting
- Work with assigned Staff Liaison on budget matters, e.g., tracking expenditures
- Plan/schedule (in many cases), and facilitate meetings of the RT
- Prepare and distribute notice of appropriate RT meetings and agendas to members in advance of the meeting
- Attend Round Table Coordinating Assembly (RTCA) meetings at conferences
- Conduct regular online communication with RT committee members, including the SL, to ensure that assignments are being carried out and that the work of the RT is moving ahead between meetings
- Appoint a RT website administrator to keep the RT website up to date. Contact SL to arrange for any needed website training.
- Within two weeks after Annual Conference, send an updated RT roster to SL. This roster should consist of: each committee of the round table, the chair of the committee, the members of the committee and expiration terms of each member. Notify the SL of any changes in the committee make-up, so changes can be made to the ALA database. Until a RT leader sends this roster to the SL, the group will not be able to operate in Connect. All people on the roster must

be current members of ALA and the round table for which he/she is a member, in order to participate in ALA Connect.

- On the roster, indicate which member will be scheduling RT meetings. The information will be put into the ALA database and that person will receive an automatic message re. scheduling meetings, including a link and password.
- Report on the RT's activities, as required
- Send all contracts to assigned SL for approval

***Role of the Staff Liaison (SL). The Staff Liaison (SL) should:***

- Serve as a resource to the RT. (Too large a staff role may reduce the motivation of RT leaders/members; too small a role may result in the RT operating ineffectively.)
- Attend RT executive meetings when possible, as time and schedule permit
- Attend Round Table Coordinating Assembly meetings at conferences, as time and schedule permit
- Become thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the RT's work and the Association's policies related to RT work
- Monitor communication from leaders of the RT
- Answer questions, offer suggestions, and raise issues
- Work with the individual RT to provide needed administrative support, such as authorizing payment of bills, handling contracts sent by a RT leader, identifying members, making arrangements for programs including equipment setups, and budget matters, e.g., tracking expenditures.
- When roster information is received from RT leaders (or when election results are posted), update iMIS database so that roster information can flow to Connect and the Committee Landing Pages on ala.org; if there are structural changes, work with ITTS so that new committees can be entered into/deleted from iMIS, added to Connect, and added to the RT's basic ("handbook") page on ala.org. These are crucial to good customer service for information about the RT (including membership growth), conference information, and intro-RT communication
- Serve as a gatekeeper for communication between the RT and ALA
- Send information re. online conference meeting request forms to the RT member specified by each RT. RT member will then complete the online meeting forms
- Arrange website training for RT members upon request

**Policy Framework: ALA Round Tables**

(A)

Please note that many other sections of the ALA Constitution, ALA Bylaws and ALA Policy Manual affect the operation of Round Tables – participation on committees, voting processes and schedule, open meetings, endowments, etc. Full information is available on the ALA website:

ALA Constitution and Bylaws: <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/constitution>

ALA Policy Manual: <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual>

Round Table leaders also need to be familiar with the Bylaws of their specific Round Table; these are available on each Round Table’s website.

(B)

In addition, the Association and its units operate within a complex legal environment. Basic guidance may be found on the website:

Legal Guidelines: <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/legalguidelines>

(C)

A variety of other information resources have been collected to support the work of member leaders. They may be found on the website:

Member Leader Resources: <http://www.ala.org/groups/mleader>

(D)

The following ALA policy sections, specific to Round Tables, are provided here for convenience:

***ALA Constitution***

Article IV. Divisions and Round Tables

Section 1. Divisions and Round Tables of the Association may be organized and supported as provided in the Bylaws.

***ALA Bylaws***

Article IV. Council

Section 2.

- d. Those round tables with Personal Membership equal to or greater than one percent of ALA’s total Personal Membership shall be entitled to elect one councilor each, and the remaining Round Tables jointly shall be entitled to one

councilor to be elected to a term of three years by the members of the respective round tables. A councilor elected under this Article shall continue to serve without prejudice to any change that might occur in the size of the membership of their round table. For the purposes of this section, the Personal Membership of each round table and the Personal Membership of ALA shall be fixed as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.

- g. No person shall serve simultaneously as a member of Council elected by a chapter or a division or a round table and as a member elected by the Association at large. A person who is a member by virtue of being a member of the Executive Board may simultaneously be a regularly elected member according to paragraphs (b), (c), and (d), but such person shall have but one vote.

#### Article VII. Round Tables

Section 1. The Council may establish round tables under the following conditions:

- a. The Council may authorize the organization as a round table of any group of not less than 100 members of the Association who are interested in the same field of librarianship not within the scope of any division, upon petition of such group which shall include a statement of purpose.
- b. The Council may discontinue a round table when, in the opinion of the Council, the usefulness of that round table has ceased.

Section 2. No Round Table shall incur expense on behalf of the Association except as authorized, nor shall any Round Table commit the Association by any declaration of policy.

Section 3. Round tables may charge annual dues, limit their membership, and may, subject to approval of the Publishing Committee, issue publications. All round table funds are to be in the custody of the Executive Board, to be accounted for and disbursed by its designated officer on authorization of the round table officers.

Section 4. A round table may affiliate with itself regional, state, or local groups interested in the same field of library service or librarianship. Such groups may admit members who are not members of the round table or of the Association.

Section 5. Any member of the Association may become a member of any round table by complying with the requirements for membership. The members of each round table shall, either by mail ballot or at its final session at each annual conference, choose officers to serve until the close of the next annual conference. Only personal members shall have the right to vote and hold office.

#### Article VIII. Committees

## Section 5. Joint Committees

- c. Joint committees of the divisions or Round Tables with organizations outside the Association may be established only with approval of the Council and upon recommendation of the Committee on Organization.

### ALA Policy Manual: Section One

#### 6.2 New Units of ALA

##### 6.2.1 Petitions for Establishment of New Units of ALA

Petitions for the establishment of new divisions, round tables, and other units of ALA may be filed in electronic or paper format. Minimum acceptable standards for petitions requesting establishment of new divisions, round tables, and other units of ALA are: For electronic petitions the process found on the ALA website shall be used in the petition process. For petitions using paper format, 1) The purpose of the petition shall be clearly stated on a single sheet attached to each group of signature pages. 2) Each signature page shall contain this statement: "I favor this petition to...." 3) Petitioners shall sign and give library affiliation legibly. Failure to do so may result in the invalidation of the petition. 4) Information about this format and a sample petition will be supplied from ALA headquarters to anyone inquiring. 5) Petitioners shall be personal members of ALA.

#### 6.3 Round Tables of ALA: Role and Function

Round Tables are provided for in the ALA Bylaws, Article VII.

1. *Role of Round Tables in ALA.* Round Tables may conduct continuing educational activities; study and discuss topics of concern to the Round Table; work with other ALA units on joint projects; issue publications with the advice, assistance, and approval of the ALA Publishing Committee. Conduct projects and programs in the areas of the Round Table's purpose and recommend activities and policies to units of the Association, including Council.
2. *Policy Functions.* As noted in the ALA Constitution, Article VI, and the Bylaws, Article VII, three bodies – Council, the divisions, and the membership – have authority to determine and act for ALA in matters of policy. Recommendations of Round Tables regarding a lack of policy, a new policy, or changes in policy shall be forwarded to the appropriate body for action.
3. *Finances.* Round Tables shall not incur expenses on behalf of the Association except as authorized. Funds of Round Tables are in the custody of the ALA Executive Board, to be accounted for and disbursed by its designated officer only upon authorization of the Round Table officers. Any formal solicitation of funds by any ALA unit from outside organizations, agencies, groups of individuals, or others must be authorized by the ALA Executive Board or Executive Director. Acceptance of unsolicited funds shall be authorized by the Executive Director to assure that the terms and conditions are consistent with ALA policies. Contracts, grant agreements, project proposals, and similar financial documents shall be signed by the ALA Executive Director for all ALA activities and units.

4. *ALA Services to Round Tables.* ALA will supply to Round Tables such support services as: staff liaison and related staff services; maintenance of Round Table membership and subscription records; accounting services to include preparation of monthly budget reports and bill payment; preparing, distributing, and counting ballots for annual election of Round Table officers; services of the Conference Arrangements Office, in include scheduling and announcement of Midwinter and Annual Conference meetings and other special events; cartage of materials to ALA meetings; services of the Public Information Office, including preparation and distribution of press releases; specialized reference services of the ALA Library; use of the ALA mailroom for routine and specialized mailings; storage of supplies, documents, and equipment at the ALA warehouse organization and storage of Round Table documents at ALA Library and archives.

Round Tables shall deposit at least two copies of all periodicals and other Round Table publications in the ALA Library.

Charges for data processing services, reproduction of materials, mailings, and similar support services will be charged to the Round Table at the same rate as to other units.

Staff liaison services are made available to Round Tables to aid the officers and members in coordinating projects and programs with other units, in handling financial obligations and records, in orienting new Round Table officers and groups, in determining procedures to expedite or conduct Round Table projects and programs, in administrative or secretarial phases of Round Table activities, and in planning activities.

5. *Round Tables Services to ALA.* The ALA Round Tables through their programs and services implement and enhance the overall ALA program, further the Association's Goals and Priorities, and provide an added dimension to the ALA structure. All Round Tables are membership units which provide an additional avenue for membership discussion, opinion, and response. It is not currently possible for Round Tables to bear a charge which will cover the complete direct and indirect costs of services from ALA. ALA has adopted a schedule of charges based on a Round Table's total dues income. The assessment of each Round Table shall be based on the best estimate of services performed recently by Headquarters staff.

## **6.5 Units**

A unit is any membership group within the American Library Association which has a distinct organizational entity. Committees and subcommittees which are appointive groups are excluded from this definition of unit.

The ALA is one association, legally responsible for the actions of all its subunits. Divisions, other membership units, and committees are bound by the Association's Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies. The governing authorities (parent bodies) of Divisions, other membership units, and committees that create subunits or subcommittees are responsible for orientation/training and

guidance to ensure that such subunits/subcommittees work within the framework provided by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies of the Association.

If Divisions, Round Tables, other ALA membership units, or committees are thought to have violated ALA Constitution, Bylaws, or Policies, Council is empowered to take actions to ensure compliance with established ALA policy. The Council, ALA Executive Board, or other designated body may investigate the actions of the unit or committee and recommend a course of action. Actions that may be taken include, but are not limited to, internal sanction, limiting communication and/or spending by the unit or committee, or disestablishment of the unit or committee.

If violations are found to be the result of an individual member presuming to act in the name of the Association without the approval of the parent body, the ALA Executive Board may, under the authority of the Constitution (Article III, Section I), suspend that individual's membership in the American Library Association.

## 9. Relationship to Other Organizations

### 9.1 The Use of ALA's Name and Formal Relationships

The American Library Association is a non profit organization operated in the interest of libraries and to promote library service and membership.

All ALA units are responsible to Council which determines policies. Council's actions, however, may be overset by the membership. Therefore, primarily and ultimately the responsibility for the use of the American Library Association name rests with the aggregate membership.

The Association is governed by Council and administered by the Executive Board, which in its role as central management board, appoints the executive director, who is in charge of headquarters and its personnel.

The executive director delegates authority within Ala headquarters to ALA's department heads, who, in carrying out their assigned duties, are called upon to use ALA's name and, in that name, to commit the Association to programs, activities, and binding agreements.

Divisions are empowered by ALA's bylaws "to act for the ALA as a whole on any matter determined by Council to be the responsibility of the division." Authority for acting on behalf of the division rests with that division's executive board.

Round tables, membership initiative groups, and committees do not have this constitutional authority.

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### 9.3 Definition of Affiliate

An affiliate is a group having purposes or interests similar to those of the Association or its Divisions/Round Table which has made successful formal application for affiliate status to Council (national and international group) or Division/Round Table (local, state or regional groups). No

subdivision of the Association may separately affiliate itself with an organization with which ALA as a whole is affiliated. (See "Policy Reference File" for full text of ALA CD#19.1 Revised)

Basic Member Service Year Schedule: ALA Round Tables

Draft - 10-10-12

	Appointments & Rosters	Awards & Scholarships	Budget	Conference Planning	Elections	Governance	Other
<b>July</b>							
						√	
	√						
<b>August</b>							
			√				
			√				
				√			
			√				
<b>September</b>							
			√				
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		√					
							√
<b>October</b>							
					√		
				√			
<b>November</b>							
				√			
<b>December</b>							
		√					

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Basic Member Service Year Schedule: ALA Round Tables

Draft - 10-10-12

		Appointments & Rosters	Awards & Scholarships	Budget	Conference Planning	Elections	Governance	Other
<b>January</b>	ALA Midwinter Meeting				√			
	Development of next fiscal year budget begins			√				
	Award jury processes begin		√					
<b>February</b>	Next fiscal year budget submitted to ALA Finance			√				
	Annual Conference final program requests due				√			
	Ballot information due					√		
<b>March</b>	Final Annual Conference program description changes due				√			
	Conference AV requests due				√			
	Election opens					√		
<b>April</b>	Award winners announced		√					
	Next fiscal year budget goes to ALA Executive Board for initial review and referral to BARC			√				
	Election closes					√		
<b>May</b>	Election results announced					√		
	Final Annual Conference preparations				√			
	All rosters need to be updated with next year appointments	√						
<b>June</b>	ALA Annual Conference				√			
	BARC recommends approval of RT budgetary ceiling to ALA Executive Board for approval			√				
	Member service year ends at end of Annual Conference						√	

Round Table	Staff Liaison	SL-Department	SL E-mail	RT Current Chair	RT E-mail	ALA Exec. Bd. Liaison
Ethnic & Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT)	John Amundsen	Office for Diversity (MPS)	jamundsen@ala.org	Tess Tobin	ttobin@citytech.cuny.edu	Michael Porter
Exhibits Round Table (ERT)	Patrick Murphy	Conference Services (MPS)	pmurphy@ala.org	Eugene Shimshock	gshimshock@iii.com	Molly Raphael
Federal & Armed Forces Libraries Round Table (FAFLRT)	Rosalind Reynolds	Washington Office (WO)	rreynolds@alawash.org	Anne Harrison	anha@loc.gov	Michael Porter
Games and Gaming Round Table (GameRT)	Jenny Levine	ITTS (MPS)	jlevine@ala.org	JP Porcaro	jporcaro@njcu.edu	
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT)	John Amundsen	Office for Diversity (MPS)	jamundsen@ala.org	David Vess	david.vess@gmail.com	Linda Williams
Government Documents Round Table (GODORT)	Rosalind Reynolds	Washington Office (WO)	rreynolds@alawash.org	Barbara Miller	barbara.miller@okstate.edu	Kevin Reynolds
Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT)	Shumeca Pickett	Office for Intellectual Freedom (MPS)	spickett@ala.org	Julia Warga	julia.warga@gmail.com	Michael Porter
International Relations Round Table (IRRT)	Deline Guerra	International Relations Office (CMR)	dguerra@ala.org	Loriene Roy	loriene@ischool.utexas.edu	Alexia Hudson-Ward
Learning Round Table (LearnRT)	Kimberly Redd	Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment (MPS)	klredd@ala.org	Louise Whitaker	louise@pls.lib.ok.us	
Library History Round Table (LHRT)	Norman Rose	Office for Research and Statistics (CMR)	nrose@ala.org	Mark McCallon	mccallonm@acu.edu	
Library Instruction Round Table (LIRT)	Beatrice Calvin	Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment (MPS)	bcalvin@ala.org	Mardi Mahaffy	mmahaffy@ad.nmsu.edu	Linda Williams
Library Research Round Table (LRRT)	Norman Rose	Office for Research and Statistics (CMR)	nrose@ala.org	Lynn Connaway	connawaL@oclc.org	
Library Support Staff Interests Round Table (LSSIRT)	Beatrice Calvin	Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment (MPS)	bcalvin@ala.org	Anthony Pendleton	pendlaj@auburn.edu	Linda Williams
Map & Geospatial Information Round Table (MAGIRT)	Danielle Alderson	Member Programs and Services (MPS)	dalderson@ala.org	Tracey Hughes	thughes@coloradomtn.edu	
New Members Round Table (NMRT)	Kimberly Redd	Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment (MPS)	klredd@ala.org	Janel Kinlaw	janel.kinlaw@yahoo.com	Kevin Reynolds
Retired Members Round Table (RMRT)	Danielle Alderson	Member Programs and Services (MPS)	dalderson@ala.org	Therese Bigelow	tbigelow1@me.com	
Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT)	John Amundsen	Office for Diversity (MPS)	jamundsen@ala.org	Laura Koltutsky	ljkoltut@ucalgary.ca	Linda Williams
Staff Organizations Round Table (SORT)	Kimberly Redd	Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment (MPS)	klredd@ala.org	Sarah Bentley	bentley@rice.edu	

Video Round Table (VRT)	Danielle Alderson	Member Programs and Services (MPS)	dalderson@ala.org	Scott Spicer	sspicer8229@comcast.net	Kevin Reynolds
Round Table Coordinating Assembly	Danielle Alderson	Member Programs and Services (MPS)	dalderson@ala.org	Mary McInrory	mary-mcInrory@uiowa.edu	Molly Raphael

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