

FAFLIG Manual

Federal and Armed Forces Libraries Interest Group (FAFLIG)
Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)
American Library Association (ALA)

This manual is a compilation of information, guidelines, procedures and policies for FAFLIG leaders and members. It is intended to be a living document. It was adopted by vote of the FAFLIG membership on November 18, 2020. It was last updated on May 25, 2022.

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Section I. Name, Mission, Membership, History

1. The name of this organization is the Federal and Armed Forces Libraries Interest Group, abbreviated FAFLIG.
2. FAFLIG is an interest group of the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), which is a division of the American Library Association (ALA).
3. The mission of FAFLIG is to promote the library and information service profession in the federal and armed forces communities, providing a common forum and professional network for library staff supporting their current needs and preparing them for the future.
4. The members of FAFLIG include librarians, library staffers, library agencies, students, and others interested in the activities and work of federal and armed forces libraries.
5. Membership in FAFLIG is open to any interested member of RUSA.
6. FAFLIG can trace its history to World War II, when the ALA's Division of Public Libraries established a Service Librarians Section. That section became known as the Armed Forces Librarians Section until 1990, when it was reorganized as the Armed Forces Libraries Round Table. Meanwhile, in 1972, the ALA formed a Federal Librarians Round Table. The two groups merged in 2001 to form the Federal and Armed Forces Libraries Round Table. That group merged in 2018 with the Association of Specialized Government and Cooperative Library Agencies and established two separate interest groups (the Federal Libraries Interest Group and the Armed Forces Libraries Interest Group), which merged in 2020 to form the Federal and Armed Forces Libraries Interest

Group. When ASGCLA was dissolved later that year, FAFLIG moved to the Reference and User Services Association as an interest group.

Section II. Leadership

1. FAFLIG is governed by an Executive Committee.
2. The six voting officers of the Executive Committee are the Chair, the Chair-Elect, the Immediate Past Chair, the Secretary, the Federal Representative, and the Armed Forces Representative.
3. Chairs of FAFLIG committees are non-voting members of the Executive Committee.
4. All officers must be members of FAFLIG.
5. The Chair-Elect shall serve a one-year term in that position, followed by a one-year term as Chair, followed by a one-year term as Immediate Past Chair. This is a three-year commitment.
6. The Secretary, Federal Representative, and Armed Forces Representative shall each serve a two-year term.
7. The duties of the Chair are to lead the organization, schedule and chair meetings of the Executive Committee, appoint chairs and members of committees, oversee production of the annual report, organize and preside at the annual meeting, liaise with RUSA and ALA, and perform other duties as necessary. In the event of a tie, the Chair's vote will be decisive. The Chair may delegate the role of liaison with RUSA and ALA to another member of the Executive Committee.
8. The duties of the Chair-Elect are to chair meetings of the Executive Committee in the Chair's absence, assist the Chair in the performance of their duties, and perform other duties as necessary.
9. The duties of the Immediate Past Chair are to conduct annual elections for officer positions, advise the Chair and the Executive Committee, and perform other duties as necessary.
10. The duties of the Secretary are to maintain the organization's records, take minutes of Executive Committee meetings, handle correspondence, maintain the FAFLIG Manual, and perform other duties as necessary.
11. The duties of the Federal Representative are to advocate for the interests of federal libraries and perform other duties as necessary.
12. The duties of the Armed Forces Representative are to advocate for the interests of armed forces libraries and perform other duties as necessary.
13. If any voting member of the Executive Committee is unable or unwilling to continue in their role, a replacement may be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve until the next scheduled election for that position.
 - a. Exception: If the Chair leaves office, the Chair-Elect shall perform their duties for the remainder of that term before serving their own one-year term as Chair.
 - b. Exception: If the Immediate Past Chair leaves office, they are not replaced, but the Chair will assign another person to conduct the annual election.

14. Meetings of the Executive Committee should be open to any FAFLIG member who wishes to attend, unless a majority votes to go into executive session. Executive sessions should be extremely rare.
15. Copies of FAFLIG records may be transferred to RUSA or ALA for archival preservation at the discretion of the Secretary.

Section III. Committees

1. The Executive Committee may create and dissolve committees to conduct the organization's work.
2. The Chair shall appoint and remove committee chairs and members, and notify the Executive Committee of any appointments and removals.
3. Members of the Executive Committee may serve on and chair committees.
4. Committee chairs should keep documentation of their work and procedures, and provide that information to the Secretary so it can be incorporated into this Manual and kept up-to-date. This will help ensure continuity of operations and preservation of institutional memory.
5. Communications Committee: The Communications Committee is responsible for communications from the Executive Committee to the FAFLIG membership, operating the FAFLIG social-media accounts, and generally promoting the group and its activities.
 - a. The Communications Committee should coordinate closely with the Programming Committee and the Community Committee as necessary.
 - b. The group email address, faflig.ala@gmail.com, should be presented as the group's contact address. If inquiries or comments are received through other channels, forward these promptly to the group's email and/or the appropriate member(s) of the leadership team.
 - c. The Communications Committee maintains passwords, subscriber lists, and access control for all FAFLIG social media and shared online user accounts. Passwords should be updated annually for account security. This information will be shared with Executive Committee members in a private online document of procedures and contacts that is updated regularly.
 - d. When there are questions or concerns regarding FAFLIG communication practices and policies in relation to RUSA and ALA, the Communications Committee will liaise with RUSA to address and resolve these while keeping the Executive Committee informed.
 - e. Though FAFLIG will prioritize use of the official ALA Connect platform, the Communications Committee will ensure that messages are also distributed through our informal channels (social media) in order to reach non-members and some of the members who choose not to engage in the ALA Connect site.
 - f. Per ALA, it is not possible to send a message out to all members of an interest group, as this would override members' individual privacy and contact preferences. The existing email list requires members to subscribe on lists.ala.org; members are not automatically added when they become members.

ALA Connect has various options for what notifications members receive and how frequently. Note that among those who do choose to receive notifications, such notifications may reach them up to one week later (with the “weekly digest” option), so it is crucial to send time-sensitive information as early as possible.

g. Types of communications

i. Newsletter-style messages:

1. A traditional format newsletter distributed in PDF format to FAFLIG member emails was well received in past years. The Committee is encouraged to reestablish its publication and distribution. As of 2021, the Communications Committee sends periodic emails (at least monthly) in place of the newsletter, with collected updates, announcements, events and opportunities of interest to Federal and Armed Forces libraries, within the body of the message rather than a PDF attachment.
2. Whether such communications come in HTML format or a PDF file, the Communications Committee is responsible for both soliciting contributions and producing new content, and formatting these into messages for the membership on a regular basis.
3. Check the formatting of all such messages for ADA compliance.
4. Such messages should not suggest that the opportunities and events within them are an exhaustive list. Time-sensitive information such as events and job postings should only be shared in these messages when the deadline is several days from the release of the newsletter. It is best to share job postings more than one week prior to the closing date.

ii. FAFLIG event messages and other official notices:

1. When a meeting or program is scheduled, the Communications Committee will send the information out promptly to the ALA Connect discussion board, and the LinkedIn and Facebook groups. The event should be added in the “Events” section of the discussion board prior to creating a discussion post. When creating events, there is the option to send an invitation to all members, and this is generally a good idea.
2. If the content is of broader interest/importance, the Communications Committee can also send information to the FEDLINK email list and other organizations that might be interested (e.g. the most relevant SLA or ALA groups, if Committee members are subscribed to them, or library schools for “how to get a federal library job” events).
3. When sending information through email, it is preferred to send official FAFLIG messages from the group email address, faflig.ala@gmail.com, rather than one’s personal or work email account.

4. A reminder message should be sent through the same channels within 1-2 days of the actual event. Any communications that go out in newsletter or quasi-newsletter format should also prominently feature the event. Likewise, if the event is recorded, send a follow-up message out as soon as possible with the link to the recording.
 5. If relevant, the Communications Committee should locate and acquire supporting documentation for the event (such as meeting agenda, presentation slides, or resources discussed during the event), and attach these to pre- or post-event emails and ALA Connect posts as appropriate.
 6. If the sender does not have access to a relevant distribution list or platform (such as a Facebook account or the Armed Forces Libraries email list), they will consult with the FAFLIG leadership team to find someone with access who will share the information there instead.
- iii. Time-sensitive or pre-packaged news/opportunities from other sources:
1. The Communications Committee will monitor FEDLINK, Armed Forces email lists, and email lists for other library organizations to which they belong (e.g. SLA, AALL, state/regional groups) for relevant information to share with FAFLIG membership. When these are time-sensitive, lengthy, or otherwise complete and significant on their own, such messages may be forwarded to the FAFLIG email list as they are, rather than waiting to add to the grouped newsletter-style messages. Forwarding existing messages as-is should not be done frequently or by default, however, as this may be looked on as “spamming.” Consider who will have already seen the same information elsewhere, and whether it is significant and relevant enough to Federal and Armed Forces libraries to share with those who have not seen the information.
 2. When creating an ALA Connect message from an email the committee has received, mention at the top of the message that it is cross-posted, or who originally sent the message. Remove unnecessary formatting and information, but leave relevant contact information (if the person who sent the message originally is not the contact for the event/program/opportunity, remove from the ALA Connect post the person’s email signature, the email header information, and other contact information not directly related).
- iv. Social media posts:
1. The Communications Committee will post, share, and repost to FAFLIG social media only the content deemed directly relevant to

library and information services within the Federal and Armed Forces context, and pertinent information on FAFLIG, RUSA, and ALA.

2. The intended audience for FAFLIG social media is just as much those who want to become Federal/Armed Forces library professionals as those who already are. The latter have many other networking resources at their disposal, but those who are not yet employed, or in library school, may only have social media as a means to connect with federal/armed forces librarianship. Because of this, avoid governmental jargon, and spell out acronyms where they might cause confusion.
 3. Any brief messages sent via email or ALA Connect should also be posted to FAFLIG social media accounts the same day. Multi-topic emails may be broken into separate social media posts over several days to keep new content flowing. Longer content created by FAFLIG, such as articles, should be publicized on social media with links to the content.
6. Programming Committee: The Programming Committee is responsible for FAFLIG programming for professional development including panel discussions and webinars, as well as social and networking events.

Section IV. Activities

1. An annual meeting of FAFLIG members should be held each summer, around the time of the ALA annual conference.
 - a. The business of the annual meeting should include the election of officers, the presentation of awards, a review of the annual report, and other activities as necessary.
2. The Executive Committee should produce an annual report on the organization's activities and distribute it to FAFLIG members ahead of the annual meeting. A copy shall be provided to RUSA and a record copy shall be kept by the Secretary.
3. FAFLIG may engage in other activities to advance its mission as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.
4. Events and meetings should generally be held via RUSA's official Zoom account. To schedule a Zoom room, go to the following link:
<https://rusaupdate.org/resources/schedule-a-zoom-meeting/>

Section V. Nominations and Elections

1. The Immediate Past Chair shall conduct an annual election for Chair-Elect and elections every other year for Secretary, Federal Representative, and Armed Forces Representative.

2. The Immediate Past Chair shall issue a call for nominations, including self-nominations, through the ALA Connect group, the FEDLIB listserv, and other appropriate channels at least one month prior to the ALA Annual conference.
3. The Immediate Past Chair shall nominate at least one candidate for each open seat in that year's election. The Immediate Past Chair has discretion to select candidates from the pool of submitted nominations and to recruit alternative candidates from the FAFLIG membership.
4. Additional candidates may be nominated at the annual meeting by motion and second.
5. Elections should be conducted with maximum transparency and openness.
6. Voting may be conducted via voice vote or show of hands at the annual meeting. A motion to conduct a confidential ballot vote for one or more offices shall be adopted if it has support from at least 10 FAFLIG members.
7. The Immediate Past Chair is responsible for counting the votes and declaring a winner. Election results should be announced promptly.
8. Terms of office begin on July 1 and end on June 30.
9. As much as possible, the position of Chair should rotate on an annual basis between a Federal library candidate and an Armed Forces library candidate.
10. The Federal Representative and the Armed Forces Representative should be elected in alternating years, to stagger their terms.

Section VI. Accounts

1. The FAFLIG group email account is faflig.ala@gmail.com. The password should be given to all members of the Executive Committee.
 - a. This Google account owns the FAFLIG records folder in Google Drive, which should be shared with all Executive Committee members and committee chairs.
2. The FAFLIG Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/FederalArmedForcesLibraries> and was formerly the FAFLRT page. As of 2021, the page administrators were Ben Leubsdorf and Ebony McDonald.
3. The FAFLIG LinkedIn group is <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6517619/> and was formerly the FAFLRT group. As of 2021, the group administrators were Heather Kiger, Ben Leubsdorf, and Ebony McDonald.
4. The FAFLIG Twitter account (@FAFLibraries) is <https://twitter.com/FAFLibraries> and was formerly the FAFLRT account. As of 2020, the account administrator was Ben Leubsdorf.

Section VII. Adoption, Amendments, General Matters

1. This manual shall go into effect if it is ratified by a majority of FAFLIG members present and voting at a virtual meeting called for that purpose.
2. At the meeting when this manual is adopted, FAFLIG members may also vote to approve a slate of candidates for an initial Executive Committee, with formal elections following in subsequent years. Candidates for the initial Executive Committee should be nominated by FAFLIG's transitional leadership group. The initial Federal Representative will serve a

two-year term and the initial Armed Forces Representative will serve a one-year term, to ensure staggered elections.

3. This manual can be amended by vote of the Executive Committee or by a majority of FAFLIG members present and voting at the annual meeting. The Preamble and Section VI can be updated by the Secretary with notification to the Executive Committee.
4. On all matters not specified in this manual, the Executive Committee should do its best to uphold the principles of its parent organizations, RUSA and ALA; the spirit of public service; and the ideals of the Republic.