



ASGCLA  
Association of Specialized, Government  
and Cooperative Library Agencies

Orientation Manual  
Interest Groups  
2019-2020

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# Orientation Manual for ASGCLA Interest Group Members and Leaders

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## **For Interest Group Members**

On the ASGCLADirect Interest Groups page, <https://www.ASGCLAdirect.org/interest-groups/>, you can find each group's purpose, leader(s) and how to connect with the group on ALA CONNECT and the interest group listserv.

### **What is an Interest Group?**

An interest group within ASGCLA includes colleagues with common areas of focus and attention. Interest groups do not have the administrative structure of a Committee or Section of the division. The interest group can focus on discussions and conversations on topics of common interest and projects or programs related to the group's purpose. An interest group provides opportunities for involvement within the organization.

ASGCLA interest groups support the interests member library organizations and agencies:

- Library agencies and individuals which provide library materials and service to populations with special needs, such as those with sensory, physical, health or behavioral conditions or those who are incarcerated or detained
- Federal libraries or Armed Forces libraries
- State library agencies, which promote library services in the state through a variety of statewide library services
- Library cooperatives, which are combinations, mergers, or contractual associations of one or more types of libraries
- Independent librarians and library consultants who work outside of traditional library settings

ASGCLA interest groups are virtual groups hosted on ALA Connect, <https://connect.ala.org/asgcla/>. Each interest group Connect space includes Discussion space, Library space for minutes, documents, drafts, or archives, and a member list. Most ASGCLA Connect Groups are for members only.

ASGCLA interest groups also have an electronic email discussion list (listserv) that is open to anyone with an interest in the group topic. See the list of ASGCLA discussion groups and

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subscribe, <http://lists.ala.org/sympa/lists/divisions/ascla>. Group messages to the email list are limited to members who have subscribed to the list.

Interest groups offer members the opportunity to share, learn, and create valuable resources for colleagues to grow our profession. As a member of an ASGCLA Interest Group, your efforts could result in an educational webinar, a program or preconference for the ALA Annual Conference, an article for ASGCLA's e-newsletter, a discussion forum for members, or even an innovative new ASGCLA product!

## **How do you join an ASGCLA Interest Group?**

Members join an ASGCLA interest group by adding that interest group to their ALA/ASGCLA membership record. The only requirement for joining an interest group is a desire to make a difference and be actively involved with colleagues to accomplish positive change within the interest group topic. There are no appointments or terms. You can join (and leave) interest groups at your discretion. ASGCLA members may join as many interest groups as desired, free-of-charge.

Members can join or leave interest groups in one of the following ways:

1. You can review, add, or delete membership in ASGCLA Interest Groups if you renew your membership online, or:
2. Call MACS (ALA's member services department) at the following number: 1-800-545-2433, x5 and request to have the interest group added to your membership, or:
3. Send an email to [membership@ala.org](mailto:membership@ala.org) with a subject line: "ASGCLA free interest groups" and your request to be added to the specific interest group(s), or:
4. If your membership is current and has more than 4 months left in the membership year, add the interest group(s) to your membership record online at [ala.org](http://ala.org).

You must use your ALA logon & password to access your membership record online. After logging in, select Renew from the options at the top right of the page. At the SIGN IN page, select the Sign In button to continue to your Membership Summary page, Select the ADD/DROP SECTIONS button to view a checklist of the available Free Sections (& IGs). Check/Uncheck the desired Interest Groups and then select the REVIEW button at the bottom of the page.

ALA members, who are not ASGCLA members, may join an ASGCLA interest group free-of-charge for one year by contacting [asgcla@ala.org](mailto:asgcla@ala.org) to request the one-year membership. After one year, in order to continue participating in an ASGCLA interest group, the ALA member will be required to also join ASGCLA.

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## **What is the process for creating an Interest Group?**

Any ASGCLA member can propose the creation of an interest group by submitting an e-petition. Signatures must be from current ASGCLA members who agree to participate in the group, if it is established. Upon obtaining signatures of ten (10) ASGCLA members the request is reviewed by the ASGCLA Interest Group Coordination Committee (IGCC). The IGCC recommends group creation to the ASGCLA Executive Director.

To create an e-petition go to: <https://www.ASGCLAdirect.org/resources/how-do-i-start-an-ASGCLA-interest-group/>. Log on using your ALA login and password and follow the onscreen directions. The Interest group e-petition requires:

- A name for the interest group
- Name(s) and contact information of the interest group leader or co-leaders
- A description of the focus area
- Signatures of ten (10) ASGCLA members
- A desired output for the first year

## **Continuance and Dissolution**

Interest groups will remain in existence if there is active leadership, participation, and action. The ASGCLA Interest Group Coordination Committee (IGCC) may dissolve an interest group at the request of the group leader(s) or if evidence indicates the group is no longer actively advancing ASGCLA purposes.

## **For ASGCLA Interest Group Leaders**

### **Leadership**

Interest groups may establish their own leadership structures and their own processes for selecting their leadership. At minimum, each interest group will have one individual designated as the interest group leader or chairperson. Groups may also have co-leaders, may establish leadership teams or may establish another leadership structure, as determined by the needs of the interest group. All interest group leaders must be ASGCLA members. Interest group leaders may serve up to four (4) consecutive years in office.

Each interest group shall define its own purpose, goals, and activities. The group shall manage its own affairs, provided that the interest group does not adopt rules for the transaction of its business inconsistent with those of the ALA and ASGCLA.

The leaders of an interest group are the facilitators and coordinators of all the group's efforts. Some examples of interest group leader activities are:

- Encouraging involvement by generating discussion topics, articles, programs, projects, etc.
- Scheduling virtual and physical meetings of Interest group
- Communicating regularly with Interest group members through ALA Connect and the group's listserv
- Reporting on interest group activities, changes in leadership, interesting discussions or innovations
- Bringing issues or action items to the ASGCLA Board of Directors
- Ensuring that there are documented processes in place for maintaining the history of the group, including identification of materials to be weeded and materials that are important for future members. The group's ALA Connect Library is encouraged for this purpose.

The interest group leader is responsible for coordinating the overall activities of the interest group and for reporting on group activities. Leaders will notify the chairperson of the ASGCLA Interest Group Coordination Committee (IGCC) and the ASGCLA executive director by June 1, for the term starting July 1, of the names of the leader (or co-leaders). If leadership changes during the year, leaders should promptly notify the ASGCLA office. The ASGCLA office can help publicize vacancies and the need for new leaders. See ASGCLA staff contact information at <https://www.ASGCLAdirect.org/about/contact-us/>.

## **Interest Group Coordinating Committee**

The ASGCLA Bylaws has designated an Interest Group Coordinating Committee (IGCC) to support and monitor the ASGCLA Interest Groups. The IGCC roles and responsibilities include:

- Establish policies and procedures for the creation, ongoing support and dissolution of Interest Groups
- Serve as the official conduit between the Interest Groups and the Board
- Report to the Board on activities of the interest groups including but not limited to programs, products, and services.

The ASGCLA Interest Group Coordination Committee, chaired by the ASGCLA Past President, will meet to review interest groups for continuation. The ASGCLA Executive Director will produce a list of those Interest Groups with low activity for the IGCC to review. Groups with low activity will be notified that because of low or no activity, the group is being considered for dissolution unless the leader provides a report indicating that Interest Group activity (in-person or virtual Interest Group meetings, discussions, projects, etc.) has taken place or will soon take place. The Interest Group Coordinating Committee will offer guidance needed to continue with

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the Interest Group activities. A second year of low or no activity will result in a recommendation to the IGCC for dissolution.

**Continuance and Dissolution:** Established interest groups are reauthorized by the Interest Group Coordinating Committee. The Committee may dissolve an interest group at the request of the group leader(s) or if evidence indicates the group is no longer actively advancing the purpose of the Association.

## Communicating with Members

Interest group leaders can communicate with the group members through the group's listserv or through the group's Connect discussion feature. (Due to the differences in listserv voluntary subscription and Connect Group membership, the lists are not the same).

In Connect, it is also possible to send private emails to members. The message is sent to the email address connected with the person's ALA membership record.

Interest group leaders can also request a current Interest Group roster from the ASGCLA office at [ASGCLA@ala.org](mailto:ASGCLA@ala.org). Member lists may be requested at any time.

## Meetings

Interest Groups may meet in-person at ALA Conferences. Groups may also schedule conference calls or virtual meetings at any time of year.

- For in-person meetings at conference, the ASGCLA Office will contact the person currently listed as the interest group leader with the deadlines and procedures for requesting meeting space at Conference.
- For virtual meetings by teleconference (voice conference call), or by Zoom, visit the How to section of [ASGCLADirect.org/Tools](https://www.asgcladirect.org/Tools) and Resources -
  - <https://www.asgcladirect.org/resources/>
  - How to Schedule a Teleconference - <https://www.asgcladirect.org/resources/schedule-a-teleconference/>
  - Schedule a Zoom Virtual Meeting -- <https://www.asgcladirect.org/resources/schedule-an-adobe-connect-meeting/>

## Programs and Products

Interest groups are encouraged to plan and offer ASGCLA discussion forums, conference programs, pre-conferences, webinars, and other formal and informational professional development events and activities.

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Interest groups are also encouraged to develop ASGCLA products including publications, policy documents in their area of responsibility, eNewsletter articles or other informative products of interest to ASGCLA members.

**Resources and Information:** Interest Groups also have the ability and responsibility to add content on the ASGCLA website that relates to their area of interest on the ASGCLADirect Tools and Resources page - <https://www.asgcladirect.org/resources/>. That responsibility includes:

- Review content periodically to ensure that the content is accurate and current
- Add new content that would be useful to librarians and the general public

**News and eNewsletter:** Interest group members are encouraged to send updates of programs, presentations, articles, featured members, and other news for sharing with all ASGCLA members on ASGCLADirect News and the monthly eNewsletter. Use the simple Google Form linked on the ASGCLADirect.org Tools and Resources page -

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdBfuXqImhc0oqEflLF2pGuT1Dm-QNaNviVhvxCwNEE9vmZYA/viewform?c=0&w=1>. You may request social media postings for news you want to have broader distribution.

**Publications:** ASGCLA does not have a standing Publications Committee. However, ASGCLA members and groups that have ideas or drafts for publications, can contact the ASGCLA executive director or the ASGCLA Office [asgcla@ala.org](mailto:asgcla@ala.org) to discuss the proposed publication.

All interest group programs, products and activities will be consistent with the goals and purposes of both the interest group and ASGCLA. Interest group leaders are encouraged to contact the ASGCLA executive director with suggestions for new programs and products.

## **Planning a Continuing Education Event**

**Conference Programs:** Calls for program and pre-conference proposals are managed by the ALA Conference Committee. Conference program proposals are submitted online from June through August, reviewed by the division Conference Program Planning Committee, and selected by the ALA Conference Committee. Information about planning conference programs with requirements and deadlines is available on the ALA Conference Program website - <http://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/submissions>.

**Meetings as Information Sessions:** Even if the interest group is not the sponsor of an ALA Program, the group can still provide valuable information sessions at Conferences. The Interest

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Group can use the scheduled interest group meeting time for mini-presentations, panel discussions, facilitated topic discussions, and other valuable conversations and information sharing. Use the listservs, the Connect Group and ASGCLA News to promote these Conference meeting information sessions.

**Webinars:** Proposals for webinars are approved by the ASGCLA Online Learning Committee. Calls for proposals go out twice each year and are announced to all members via the news page of ASGCLAdirect.org and via email. Additionally, proposals are accepted year-round. Interest groups can send submissions or questions about submissions at any time.

<https://www.asgcladirect.org/2019/03/teach-for-asgcla/>

### How and When to Report

Each interest group is also responsible for reporting at least twice a year to the ASGCLA Interest Group Coordinating Committee (IGCC) about the interest group’s major accomplishments, activities and products. Send the report (see the form at the end of this document) to the ASGCLA Interest Group Coordinating Committee chair (ASGCLA Past President) with a copy to the Executive Director. The reports are due 2 weeks prior to or 2 weeks after the Midwinter meeting and the Annual Conference and will be shared with the ASGCLA Board. Interest groups are encouraged to communicate at any time with the IGCC Chair to ask questions or to discuss ideas, issues, challenges or policies.

### Quick Calendar of Activities and Due Dates

Activity	Due Date
Interest group leader notifies ASGCLA office of any changes in leadership for terms starting July 1	At any time
Mid-Year Report of Activities sent to IGCC chair and ASGCLA Executive Director	January 10 or within two weeks after the Midwinter Conference
Confirm Interest Group Leaders with the ASGCLA office	June 1 (for the term starting July 1)
End-of-Year Report of Activities sent to IGCC chair and ASGCLA executive director	June 10 or within two weeks after the Annual Conference

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## For New Interest Group Leaders:

Here are just a few tips and ideas for new leaders as they work with their interest group.

### Getting Started

- Get to know ALA Connect. It will be your primary tool for communicating with your Interest group members and leadership.
- Think about how to promote your Interest Group to other ASGCLA and ALA members. How can you encourage people to join? Work with the ASGCLA staff on a press release. Write an article for the eNewsletter and / or post a notice on the ASGCLA-L listserv. Reach out to others in the library community who may share your group's interests.
- Create an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other. It can be as simple as sharing quick bios on Connect or the listserv or asking members to share a few fun facts at the start of a meeting. Ask why they joined the interest group.
- One of the first conversations with the interest group should be what are the expectations of participating in the interest group and how you will communicate with each other. This will help set up the foundations for the work of the group. Be sure to document to share with new members.
- Make sure to decide as a group how you will nominate and elect leadership. Succession planning is important.
- The group will need to decide and document how the group will maintain all materials related to the Interest Group for historical purposes.
- Each year, the group should brainstorm and agree on what to accomplish for the upcoming year.
- Define roles and responsibilities for the projects and activities of the group.

### Getting Organized

- Use ALA Connect to share documents and resources.
- Create a schedule and calendar of activities including conversations and meetings.
- Be sure to have a process for bringing in new members and helping them to acclimate and dive in.
- Consider setting up regular opportunities for communications. This will help to keep the group's activities and initiatives in front of the members.
- Create an evaluation process to get input from the members. Institute a debrief opportunity to find out what is working and what could be done better to support the Interest group.
- Experiment and have fun!

### Questions?

Ask the staff at the ASGCLA Office <https://www.ASGCLAdirect.org/about/contact-us/>.

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## ASGCLA \_\_\_\_\_ INTEREST GROUP REPORT

Please submit reports twice a year. They are due within 2 weeks before or after the Midwinter and Annual conference. Provide a 1-2-page summary/overview of activities and plans covering the last several months.

Post a copy to the Committee's Connect group. - Send a copy to the ASGCLA Executive Director and the ASGCLA President for distribution to ASGCLA Committee and Interest Group Reports Connect Group.

<b>DATE:</b>
<b>INTEREST GROUP NAME:</b>
<b>NAME(S) OF INTEREST GROUP LEADER(S):</b>
<b>ACTION ITEMS IN PROGRESS / PENDING:</b>
<b>ACCOMPLISHMENTS / ACTION ITEMS COMPLETED AND WHICH <u>ASGCLA STRATEGIC PLAN</u> GOALS/OBJECTIVES THEY SUPPORT:</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE:</b>
<b>OTHER COMMENTS:</b>
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>