



# Core President's Report

Mid-Year Board Meeting (Covering July 1-December 31, 2022)

January 9, 2023

*Submitted by Margaret Heller, Core President*

As Core moved into its second year, there were a number of pilot or pandemic emergency initiatives to assess and either adopt or stop. The strategic action plan for the first two years of Core ended shortly before my presidential year began, so it was a good point to take a look at everything happening and determine what we had begun doing was strategically important, and what was necessary to set aside. With the departure of Kerry Ward and Brooke Morris-Chott to new professional opportunities, Core's staffing levels are well below what was anticipated when Core began, and therefore require a temporary reduction in activities to focus on building a strong foundation for this new division. This will be a challenge for the coming year, but one that nearly all library workers face in their professional lives currently.

My work as President is to guide the board and all the Core members to achieve the goals we have set together. As a new division with many new committees, much of my work has been focused on communication and connection to make sure that the goals are clear. To that end, I have attended multiple meetings a week either in my board liaison role to committees and been in regular communication by email with all levels of Core membership and leadership. What follows is a summary of some of the high-level work on which I have spent much of my time, though is by no means a complete list.

## Infrastructure

Core has the major advantage of being able to pick and choose the best practices of the divisions that merged to create it. The disadvantage is that this leaves room for confusion when collaborators from different groups are unaware of differing practices, or people new to ALA are unsure of how to get involved. To that end, I focused the first part of my work with Core in trying to create consensus about how we got work done. I held a committee chair orientation in late July, and minimally updated the committee chair documentation. We also held a board orientation in conjunction with our board retreat in August, and worked on updating some of the board documentation. Much thanks to the Nominating Committee who created a board expectations document for potential candidates.

As the board liaison to the Bylaws and Organization Committee, which has not been staffed until this year, I have helped shape a list of priorities for policies and procedures to document, as well as a bylaws edit wishlist for future years. Likewise, I have worked with the Fundraising and Sponsorships Committee to establish strategic priorities for fundraising. While transition between Executive Directors and delayed fundraising for Core Forum took some focus from that work, I am certain that in 2023 we will do well with establishing a stable and routine fundraising cycle.

## Strategic Planning

Starting the with board meeting at the ALA Annual Conference this summer, the board and section leadership has been working on refining a limited number of strategic objectives for Core as it moves out of a start-up phase and builds capacity and resilience. We developed these strategies out of several design thinking activities and focused work sessions in small groups. I want to thank everyone who participated in this work, and I look forward to officially introducing the strategic plan in early 2023. Meanwhile, we continued work on all the activities that our early discussions made clear were important strategies, and this allowed us to refine strategies in progress. I believe that strategic plans must be living documents that help everyone shape their work, but that respond to emerging needs within reason.

## Communication

Following in Lindsay Cronk's excellent presidential tradition, many Fridays I have written what I am titling "Friday Philosophy", a short post that summarizes the work of my week or professional events I have attended. While these are fun to write, they are only one piece of a larger communication plan to ensure that I have regular contact with various groups of leaders and members. The Past-President, President, President-Elect, and Executive director meet weekly to discuss plans for the week and address any major issues or plan communication on complex questions. I meet with Section Leaders once a month, and those meetings are always really useful for me to learn about the needs and interests of the sections. The most exciting communication I got to do this fall was in person with the attendees of the first Core Forum in Salt Lake City. It was such a positive and enlivening experience to stand up in front of everyone and welcome them in person. I look forward to that again this summer at the Annual Conference.