

## Division-level Committee Year-end Report and Work Plan Template

Each summer, ACRL [division-level committees](#) should complete a year-end report and work plan. By **August 31, 2022**, the committee chair should post the completed combined template to ALA Connect.

The **report** section should be completed by the outgoing chair. The **work plan** section should be completed by the incoming chair. Committee members, Board liaison, staff liaison should all review and approve the work plan. Projects included in a committee's work plan will be implemented September 2022 through June 2023.

Committee Name & Charge	
<b>Committee Name:</b>	Government Relations Committee
<b>Charge/Tasks:</b>	Collaborate with ACRL and ALA leadership to draft the ACRL Legislative Agenda. This document will speak to legislation and emerging issues of political import to higher education and academic libraries

2021–2022 Leadership (terms: July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022)	
<b>Chair:</b>	Erik Nordberg
<b>Vice-Chair:</b>	Mark Offermatt
<b>Board liaison:</b>	Jacquelyn Bryant
<b>Staff liaison:</b>	Kara Malenfant
<b>Other leaders:</b>	

2022–2023 Leadership (terms: July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023)	
<b>Chair:</b>	Kevin Walker
<b>Vice-Chair:</b>	Hallie Pritchett
<b>Board liaison:</b>	Kara Whatley
<b>Staff liaison:</b>	Kara Malenfant
<b>Other leaders:</b>	

Report & Work Plan Submission			
<b>Year-end report written by:</b>	Erik Nordberg	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Work plan submitted by:</b>	Kevin Walker	<b>Date:</b>	

## 2021–2022 Year-end Report

This report will be included in the committee’s official record of activities maintained by ACRL staff. Brief bulleted lists are suggested for the responses.

### 1. What were the major projects/activities accomplished by your committee in the 2021–2022 membership year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022)?

The Government Relations Committee (GRC) drafted the 2022 ACRL Legislative Agenda.

### 2. What were the relevant results for your projects?

This year, the GRC continue to consider priority issues at the federal legislative level which impact higher education and the work of academic libraries. This included updates to previous advocacy items for protection of consumer data, the environmental impact of data centers, and federal funding for higher education and for libraries. The Committee also gave thoughtful consideration of the interrelation of open access initiatives and the continuing need for public access to federally funded research and the inclusion on the watchlist of potential changes to copyright law. The ACRL Board approved the 2022 Legislative Agenda at their meeting on June 3, 2022.

### 3. Which if any 2022–2023 projects will continue next year?

The 2023 Legislative Agenda.

### 4. What worked well?

1. As in previous cycles, we divided the work amongst the committee members. Each individual acted as the lead for the development of an assigned section (some had two people working together)
2. Use of Google Docs as a platform for drafting the agenda. This allowed everyone to work in and edit a single document.
3. Soliciting legislative agenda recommendations from ACRL Committee Chairs and ACRL Leaders.
4. Staff from ALA’s Public Policy and Advocacy office reviewed and provided valuable suggestions prior to submitting the Legislative Agenda to the board for approval.
5. We did all of our work virtually, with a few zoom meetings to keep the process moving. (there was no need for an in-person meeting at ALA Midwinter).
6. The committee chair did the final work of editing the material into a cohesive document.
7. The committee benefited greatly from the content and editorial review of ACRL staff liaison Kara Malenfant and ACRL production editor Ann-Christie Galloway.

## 5. What could have worked better?

1. Some issues and legislative bills remain stagnant in Congress. With close party margins in the House and Senate, it can be difficult to see much movement so it can be easy to become cynical about the purpose of the agenda.
2. Meanwhile, some issues (such as federal funding for higher education) saw regular activity which made some sections of the Agenda outdated by the time of Board approval.
3. While divvying up the review and writing of the document helps to spread out the workload, the level of research and new writing can vary from person to person. There can also be differences in writing style, tense, and grammar which may be difficult to homogenize in the final document.
4. The Chair carries important responsibility in seeing the process through, particularly with the final editorial work on the Agenda and the formal aspects of submittal for board approval.
5. As has been suggested before, it may be useful for this committee to use a 3-year leadership cycle with an individual serving a first year as vice-chair, a second year as chair, and a final year as immediate past chair.
6. ACRL Executive Director has a good suggestion that either future versions of the Agenda become shorter, or that some type of executive summary be produced. For the purposes of legislative advocacy, it is much easier to hand a legislative aide a “two-pager” (front and back) that covers the primary advocacy topics.

## 6. How has the work/activities of your committee demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, within or beyond ACRL?

Many of the issues in the 2022 Legislative Agenda speak to social justice and matters of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Others will improve funding for higher education and academic libraries, having an indirect impact to strengthen EDI programs at individual institutions.

## 7. Please indicate EDI activities you would like to publicly include on the [ACRL EDI LibGuide](#) (Limit to 75 words or less).

If there are questions regarding the above activities, staff can contact:

- Name: Kevin Walker
- Email: [kwwalker@ua.edu](mailto:kwwalker@ua.edu)

The ACRL Government Relations Committee proposes legislative advocacy which address economic issues in higher education and academic libraries which affect accessibility to, and affordability of, post-secondary education for students from underserved communities.

**8. Was there information you could have been provided before starting this project that would have made your work easier?**

This year's chair had been previously involved with federal advocacy work with a previous employer. But most committee members have no knowledge of the federal legislative cycles and processes. It is important that the chair provide background to incoming committee members. It may be useful for the committee to meet ACRL leadership and staff from the ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office early in the cycle to understand their needs for the Legislative Agenda and to provide input on the process.

**9. What made this work most rewarding (observations/comments/accolades)?**

The committee members were active, engaged, and contributed throughout the cycle. Input from Kara Malenfant was difficult to appropriately value – she was regularly in touch with the chair and shared information to the committee throughout the year via the ALA Connect site that she felt would be of interest to the committee. Advocacy is difficult work and it is rewarding to be involved in crafting an agenda which may help

**10. Any other comments, recommendations, or suggestions?**

While we realize the need for ALA as our umbrella organization to lead federal advocacy, there seem to be missed opportunities for ACRL leadership (and ACRL members) to be more directly involved in advocating for these issues. Academic libraries exist in every congressional district in this country and librarians at these institutions are well-connected at the local level and could provide powerful voices to elected officials. More should be done by ACRL to engage our members in legislative advocacy in support of higher education and academic library funding.

## 2022–2023 Work Plan

The [ACRL strategic plan](#) is revisited every year, but the past recent years have brought about significant changes in higher education, academic libraries, and ALA that necessitate identifying and drafting short-term priorities. Beginning in summer 2021, the ACRL Board has set priorities for two years in three areas: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Communication and Engagement; and Membership. **In general, how do you see your group's work in the coming year (activities described below) connecting with these three priority areas:**

### ACRL Short-Term Priorities

#### 1. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

- a. What conversations will your committee continue about EDI-related initiatives? (e.g., developing programming, tools, publications, eLearning, etc.)
- b. What are some ways you could determine outcomes/impact?

a. The ACRL Legislative Agenda regularly highlights matters of import within the context of EDI.

b. By maintaining an active dialog with the ACRL EDI Committee, the GRC can ensure the Legislative Agenda remains attuned to issues of public policy relevant to ACRL's Core Commitment to EDI.

#### 2. Communication and engagement:

- a. How involved are members in the work of the committee?
- b. What ideas does your group have for helping members feel more connected to the work of the team?
- c. What kind of support might you need to improve communication and engagement?

a. The committee roster is relatively limited and involvement typically high. A majority of the committee typically participates in the drafting of the ACRL Legislative Agenda.

b. Introductions are an important part of the committee's first meeting each year. Further, a norm has been established whereby the Chair and Vice-Chair seek to ensure broad engagement within the committee. When a committee member has not voiced an opinion or provided feedback within the context of a meeting, the Chair and Vice-Chair will tactfully seek to re-engage that member through increased attention (e.g., encouraging the member to provide any incite they might have on the matter at hand).

c. None at this time.

#### 3. Membership:

- a. How might the work of your committee support or provide value for members?

a. Participation in this committee provides members with an opportunity to learn about the legislative processes of the US Congress. The process of developing a public-facing, formal document, such as the ACRL Legislative Agenda, provides members with experience in technical writing.

## 2022–2023 Work Plan

Please complete this form for each activity that the committee plans to undertake in the 2022–2023 program year. While the form is pre-populated with ten activities, it is not required to generate ideas for all ten activities. Please only complete this form for the appropriate number of activities that work for your committee. If you need additional sheets, please contact your staff liaison.

Work Plan Activity #1	
<b>Activity Name:</b>	
<b>Brief Description:</b>	This committee will draft and revise the Legislative Agenda to provide background information for ACRL Board, staff, and members, to advocate effectively around national legislative policy issues important to academic libraries and higher education.

Activity #1 Timeline	
<b>How long will it take to do this project?</b>	
<b>X</b>	continuous project assigned in charge
	short-term project that will be completed this membership year
	multi-year project continuing past June 30, 2023. Expected completion date: <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 150px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></span>

<a href="#">ACRL Plan for Excellence</a>	
<b>Check the best goal and indicate the objective.</b>	
	Value of Academic Libraries
	Student Learning
	Research and Scholarly Environment
	New Roles and Changing Landscapes
	Core Commitment to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
<b>X</b>	Enabling Programs and Services (education, advocacy, publications, or member engagement)
<b>Provide a brief sentence connecting your project to the goal area and objective you selected:</b>	
The ACRL Legislative Agenda acts as a road map to support advocacy for legislation and policies which will positively impact higher education, enabling effective programs and services.	

Activity #1 Outline			
Outline the steps and deadlines planned to complete the project. Attach additional sheets if needed.			
Specific Action	Due Date	Party Responsible	Resources Needed (e.g., financial, tech, staff support)
Welcome committee members.	July 31, 2022	Chair	None
<b>Mtg #1 – end of July.</b> Introduce members to each other and review the work of the committee.	August 31, 2022	Chair	None
Solicit issues from ACRL and ALA committees.	September 1, 2022	Chair	None
<b>Mtg #2 – late Sept.</b> Review previous year's Agenda, discuss ongoing and emerging legislative issues, and assign sections to specific cmte. members	September 30, 2022	Committee	Establish Google Doc to compose
<b>Mtg #3 – early Nov.</b> Review and discuss draft Legislative Agenda.	November 30, 2022	Committee	Google Docs.
<b>Mtg #4 – ALA Midwinter.</b> Review and discuss draft Legislative Agenda.	ALA Midwinter January 27-31, 2023 New Orleans, LA	Committee	Google Docs.
Submit penultimate draft to ACRL Staff Liaison for copy editing.	Feb 10, 2023	Chair	None
<b>Mtg #5 – mid-March.</b> Final review and discussion.	March 31, 2023	Committee	
Submit final agenda, with Board action form to ACRL office for virtual vote.	April 2, 2023	Chair	None

Activity #1 Assessment
How will success be measured?
Successful completion and approval of the Legislative Agenda by the ACRL Board.