Rules of Engagement: A ‘Revolutionary’ Approach to Members’ Activity and Experiences in State Library Associations

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Problem
Service to professional library organizations and conference attendance are pillars for professional development. Yet, library budgetary constraints often limit librarians’ travel to national conferences and committee meetings. Shown are the results of a national survey about the factors affecting librarians’ professional engagement at the state level. We asked academic librarians for their current method and level of engagement in professional service at the state level, and their perceptions of their state library associations. We hope these responses will help to shape the future directions and decision-making of state-level library associations in order to better serve academic librarians.

Survey
Authors completed Institutional Review Board training to ensure the protection of human subjects. We designed and distributed a survey using Qualtrics software and received 486 responses from around the US.

Revolutionary suggestions
- Mentoring
- Research match-ups
- User groups for products (ILS)
- Unconferences
- One day mini-conferences
- Leadership institutes
- Legislative days
- Listservs
- Newsletters
- Academic library focused events
- Social events
- Library tours
- Meet-ups
- Wikipedia edit-a-thons

Influences

Benefits

- Presenting at a conference or publishing in a newsletter or journal
- Volunteering at an event or as a peer-reviewer for the organization’s conference or publication
- Leadership experience gained through volunteer service on a committee or as an officer
- Participating in a mentor program as a mentee or mentor
- Attendance at conferences or other professional development events

Barriers

What types of offerings from your state/local/regional association are you most interested in attending?

- Online business meetings
- Access to business meetings
- Events provided by a national organization that are funded by my local or state organization, such as workshops on...
- Webinars on topics related to my current interests
- Local or regional networking events such as meet-ups, happy hours, or gatherings
- In-person professional development events focused on one or two topics (1 day or 2 days)
- Larger conferences (2 days or more with multiple interest tracks)

Ways Membership and Participation in a National Library Organization is More Beneficial than at the Local or State Level

Barriers to Involvement in State Level Library Associations

- Other barriers
- Other barriers
- Other barriers
- Other barriers
- Other barriers