



Illinois Library Association



Executive Director Opportunity Guide

[www.ila.org](http://www.ila.org)

## Mission and Goals:

The Illinois Library Association (ILA) is the voice for Illinois libraries and the millions who depend on them. It provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services in Illinois and for the library community in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people. ILA's primary goals are:

- Advocating for the Public Interest
- Promoting Excellence and Innovation
- Managing the Present to Prepare for the Future

## Vision:

The Illinois Library Association (ILA) is indispensable in leading efforts in library advocacy and collaboration, and serving as a springboard to innovation and excellence in library services. In service of these priorities, ILA will use its resources wisely and maintain a flexible structure that promotes the diverse interests and broad participation of members and units.

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**More than 2,500 personal and 500 institutional members, made up of public, academic, school, and special libraries as well as librarians, library assistants, trustees, students, and library vendors, comprise the ILA membership. Founded in 1896, the ILA has a budget in excess of \$3 million, is the third largest state library association and is a chapter of the American Library Association. Leadership is provided by an Executive Director, reporting to an elected Executive Board, each Board member serving a three-year term. Members participate through an appointed committee structure and forums that are open to all members. A staff of four is headquartered in downtown Chicago, and the Association's work is accomplished through the team and outsourced contractors.**



# The Opportunity: Executive Director

The Illinois Library Association seeks new leadership to guide the organization toward its future, and collaboratively create a vision for growth and success. The new leader will continue the impactful work to date by this fiscally strong Association, particularly in the area of advocacy, while exploring new opportunities to better serve Illinois stakeholders. This opportunity is perfect for a visionary, mission-driven and charismatic leader to join with this comprehensive and forward-thinking advocacy-focused organization. The current Executive Director is retiring after twenty years of dedicated service. The new Executive Director will report to the Executive Board President and work closely with the entire Board to enact vision and strategy for the Association.

The new Executive Director will lead strategic efforts to inform and educate members, volunteers, donors, prospective donors, and the larger community about the mission and unique impact of ILA; oversee and ensure implementation of all programs and services, ensure that partnerships and relationships with government, private and public entities are supported and stewarded, and further expand the public image of the organization. While the successful candidate will bring a visionary perspective, s/he must also have superior analytic skills and use data to inform effective decisions.

## Performance Objectives

### Visionary Leadership and Strategy

- Serve as a resource to the Executive Board in the development and execution of long and short-term strategies, vision, and adherence to mission.
- Develop an operational plan incorporating goals and objectives that work toward the strategic direction of the organization. Oversee the planning, implementation and evaluation of the organization's programs and advocacy activities.
- Support the volunteer-driven ILA Executive Board and Committees, and serve as chief staff representative for various board and committee initiatives.
- Oversee administration and operations of the Association consistent with ILA's by-laws and governance policies, in a legally compliant, ethical and transparent manner.
- Ensure the work and impact of the Association is well known to the library community (library leaders, members, constituent and component societies, as well as legislators, officials and partner organizations) and the greater community/general public.



2016 Sylvia Murphy Williams Scholars  
<https://www.ila.org/publications/ila-reporter/article/48/2016-sylvia-murphy-williams-scholars>

# Performance Objectives

## Relationship Management

- Work closely with ILA's partner, the Department of Defense, on strengthening an innovative program that provides a curriculum for summer reading for families of US military based all over the world. ILA has the distinguished honor of being the only Association to provide materials through a Department of Defense contract.
- In conjunction with the Executive Board President, serve as an articulate, passionate and visible advocate and spokesperson for the ILA to members, partners, potential partners, the American Library Association and the general public.
- Identify new benefits or ways to strengthen current benefit offerings to ILA members; continue to provide excellent customer service to current members.
- Uphold and promote the Association's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all relationships and functions of the Association and manage the diverse body of existing and future members/ membership.
- Establish and build a presence in library networks to keep abreast of industry issues and establish thought leadership.
- Represent ILA as the public face of the Association at local, regional, state and national conferences, other meetings and events.
- Establish and maintain a strong relationship with the Executive Board of Directors, allowing for a strong partnership and effective governance; ensure training is provided, effective two-way communication established and information is current and accurate to inform decision making.
- Demonstrate strong communication and presentation skills.

## Advocacy and Community Outreach

- Work effectively with the ILA lobbyist, Illinois politicians, and public policy committee to stay on top of legislative threats and opportunities, advocating effectively, and in defense of Illinois libraries and librarians.
- Engage libraries and library professionals throughout Illinois.
- Provide strategic leadership to the Association's efforts to effectively package and communicate the mission, goals and accomplishments of the ILA to members, partners, other stakeholders, and the public at large.
- Promote the ILA to potential partners and disclose and evaluate the ethical, financial and political aspects of all potential partnerships.
- Coordinate and speak at a high-quality annual library conference.
- Attend regular legislative meet-ups throughout the state of Illinois as part of ILA's strong public presence and focus on legislative advocacy



Part of the 2017 National Library Legislative Day Illinois Delegation in Washington, D.C.



Summer Reading Program at the Scott Air Force Base near Belleville and O'Fallon

# Performance Objectives

## Revenue Development

- Identify, expand and diversify revenue streams. Cultivate a portfolio of relationships related to all revenue sources and lead stewardship activities on major fundable initiatives for the Association.
- Explore new revenue streams which could include, but are not limited to, philanthropy, licensing, and additional publishing. Oversee the development and implementation of plans that support viable and approved new/expanded priorities adopted by the Executive Board.

## Administration and Staff Management

- Establish a positive, healthy and collaborative work environment which encourages creativity. Mentor and lead staff in maximizing their performance in executing operational aspects of the Association.
- Evaluates and hires staff and consultants.
- Evaluate policies, roles and infrastructure, making certain that roles are clearly defined and accountable, in order to achieve maximum impact of the Association's vision.
- Demonstrate prudent and efficient use of all organizational resources, establish internal controls and record keeping, and ensure and manage external financial reviews and audits.
- Have an extensive knowledge of financial analysis, budgeting, reporting.
- Work with partner consultants and vendors to clearly define roles and to maximize return on investment when contracting for professional services.



Exhibit Hall at the 2015 ILA Annual Conference in Peoria

# Candidate Qualifications

## The Qualified Candidate

Illinois Library Association seeks a mission-driven executive leader with strong programmatic, interpersonal, and management skills. The new Executive Director will hold a deep commitment to the library profession's foundation and ethics and bring experience in a membership association governed by volunteers. Strong candidates will have progressive experience leading a complex, statewide, or multisite nonprofit or association with a significant advocacy component. The successful candidate will continue and build new external financial partnerships, grow membership, engage in geographical outreach and, as a partner to the Executive Board, lead the Association into the future. The ILA office is currently in Chicago.

The Executive Director will be a goal-oriented, accomplished leader who is passionate and committed to the value of libraries which provide free and equal access to information. S/he is visionary, with the ability to develop strong external partnerships. Familiarity with the types of mission-focused programs and services offered by ILA is important, and a familiarity with issues of importance to the members who make up the ILA is essential.

### Specific Requirements Include:

- Commitment to ILA core values: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues> including experiences with managing a diverse body of members and potential members, with varying cultural viewpoints.
- A minimum of 7 years of progressive experience in leadership and management, with documented ability to manage staff and lead teams.
- Proven ability to build strong external relationships with a variety of volunteers, public leadership, partner organizations and other stakeholders.
- Association leadership experience in an institutional based membership association is preferred.
- Track record in financial management, stewardship, and developing strategies to successfully increase revenue, including experience in managing an effective philanthropic program.

- Proven success in building strong and productive work teams with a focus on mentoring and nurturing staff development.
- Experience in a state-wide or multi-geographic organization where the leader is "present" at various meetings and events.
- Strong analytic and strategic-thinking skills, with a demonstrated ability to create, implement and monitor complex plans, and translate those plans into goals and concrete strategies.
- An understanding of both traditional and emerging trends in how libraries serve their communities is preferred.
- Career track record that shows stability with an organization and capacity to develop and nurture relationships culminating in overall success.
- Library leadership experience is preferred.
- BA/BS degree required; MLS, MBA or related advanced degree(s) strongly preferred.

This position offers a competitive salary with strong benefits. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

Illinois Library Association is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.



Retiring ILA Executive Director Robert P. Doyle and Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White in Springfield

## To Apply



February 2017 *ILA Reporter*  
and 2017 iREAD Summer Reading  
Program "Reading by Design"

To assure confidential tracking of all applicants, **no applications will be accepted via email. ALL INQUIRIES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.**

This search is being managed by Heather Eddy, President and CEO and Laura Weinman, Senior Consultant of Alford Executive Search. Questions may be addressed to: [lweinman@alfordexecutivesearch.com](mailto:lweinman@alfordexecutivesearch.com)

Alford Executive Search, a division of Kistner Eddy Executive Services (KEES), is a retained search firm that builds transformative teams and leaders in the nonprofit and public sectors.

### **More about the Illinois Library Association:**

Some of the Illinois Library Association's key activities, shepherded by the Executive Director, include:

- Legislative advocacy that monitors, informs and encourages action on local, state and federal legislation, forms coalitions with like-minded groups to successfully advocate for libraries and library principles
- Annual conference and workshops throughout the year, including workshops for trustees, a conference for support staff, industry exhibits, and more
- Bi-monthly magazine, the *ILA Reporter*
- Timely e-newsletter with job postings, links to libraries in the news, legislative alerts, and Association activities
- Publications on library law, trustee training, and other topics
- iREAD, award-winning summer reading program
- Awards and recognition
- Group purchasing for libraries, including an insurance pool

## To Apply

Candidates may apply by clicking the APPLY NOW button below. To assure confidential tracking, no resumes will be accepted via email.