

Communities of Interest

Many of you are aware that our structure will be changing in 2021 when ArLA enacts its new bylaws. One major change is to simplify our organization to make it more relevant and streamlined. Instead of having divisions and roundtables, we invite the Arkansas Library Association members to establish Communities of Interest. Communities of Interest (COIs) are groups of Arkansas Library Association (ArLA) members who choose to organize around a type of library, type of activity, a special interest, or geographic area in order to further the mission of the ArLA. These groups are subject to ArLA rules. COIs are a benefit of membership and all voting ArLA members may join and participate in as many COIs as they choose.

All internal workings of the COI are at the discretion of the members. They decide how to select chair(s), govern themselves, etc. The only ongoing requirement of an ArLA Community of Interest is to submit an annual report and a current contact person. A group must have at least fifteen (15) members to form a COI. Bylaws are optional at the discretion of the group (a sample bylaws template will be provided on the ArLA website to assist COIs should they want to govern with bylaws). The contact person from each COI will attend board meetings as liaisons between the governing body and interest groups.

Many of the working parts of ArLA, such as divisions, roundtables, committees, and LDDs, will be meeting the week of conference to discuss forming COIs. A list of meetings can be found at the beginning of this publication, which will be updated on a regular basis. The 2020 executive board will facilitate the formation of Communities of Interest for the remainder of 2020. Beginning in January of 2021, the new executive board will take over governance of this process. For further details on the workings of Communities of Interest, consult the ArLA website (<https://arlib.org/about/bylaws>), where there will soon be the following resources:

- Community of Interest Petition of Formation
- Community of Interest Annual Report Form
- Community of Interest Bylaws Template
- Community of Interest Form to Request Funding