IS Publication Policies & Procedures Manual

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Overview of projects and publications within the structure of the Instruction Section

The Instruction Section (IS) is a part of an organizational hierarchy within the American Library Association (ALA). IS is a section of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of ALA. As such, IS necessarily acts in partnership with its parent organizations by supporting ACRL's division level goals, objectives, and strategic plan, which are then approved by ALA. According to its charge, it is the responsibility of the IS Executive Committee to "provide direction for the attainment of the goals of the Section." The IS Executive Committee writes charges for IS committees to support the goals of the IS, ACRL, and ultimately, ALA.

IS committee goals and objectives are accomplished through projects and publications. An important function of the Executive Committee is to confirm that the work of each committee is aligned with the IS strategic plan; to ensure that each committee's work is attainable, given available resources; and to help committees avoid redundancy with the work of other committees within the IS. To fulfill this responsibility, the IS Executive Committee examines proposals for projects and publications to determine how they relate to the work of a committee, to other Section projects or publications, as well as to projects or publications outside the Section. The Executive Committee assigns a liaison to each committee. Liaisons are responsible for providing guidance to committee chairs and serving as a communication conduit with the Executive Committee. The Liaison's work is guided by familiarity with ACRL and IS policies and informed through consultation with the other Executive Committee members. Liaisons consult with committee chairs about projects and publications that are in planning stages, as well as throughout the process. A committee doesn't have to submit a proposal just to float an idea; the Executive Committee liaison can serve as a sounding board for a committee and answer questions about ideas for proposed projects or publications.

A liaison from ACRL works with the Executive Committee of IS, offering information and insights about ACRL policies and resources. ACRL also assigns a liaison from the ACRL Board to each Section. The IS

Executive Committee works with the ACRL liaison to seek approval for projects or publications intended for a wider audience or for formal publication.

How to Submit a Proposal for Review

Proposals are required for most projects and publications, though the level of approval required varies by publication. Consider the intended audience for the project or publication, how widely it might be distributed, and the assumed permanence of the medium used for publication. Currently, there are three levels of approval: Liaison, Executive Committee, and ACRL (formerly referred to as "Type 1, Type 2, and Type 3"):

Consult the "When are Proposals Needed?" flowchart to determine what type of proposal and approval is needed for a publication/project.

Types of Proposals and Approval Process

1. *No approval needed*:
   Generally, information about the work of an IS committee shared informally via social media (including via Facebook and Twitter) does not need formal approval.

   Process: None

   Examples:
   - Posts to the Instruction Section's Facebook page
   - Tweets using the Instruction Section's hashtag #acrlis

2. *Executive Committee liaison approval*:
   Liaison approval is needed for publications that are produced for use solely within the ACRL Instruction Section and generally function as a "work product" of a committee or task force. Liaison level approval also applies to information shared informally with a limited audience outside of the committee (such as listserv messages or conference program materials).

   Process: No formal request form needs to be completed; discuss the work with the committee's Executive Committee liaison.

   Average turnaround time for response to proposal: a few days.

   Examples:
   - News (e.g. event announcements sent to email lists or posted to the IS web site)
   - The themes and text of serial publications (such as *Tips and Trends*)
   - Committee websites
   - Conference program materials (promotional materials and conference handouts)
   - ACRL IS newsletter contributions

- ILI-L posts (regarding IS committee work)

3. *Executive Committee approval*:
   A proposal to the Executive Committee is necessary for publications that circulate within the IS, but may be accessible to others outside of the Section or that must be reviewed for alignment with greater ACRL requirements. New project or publication proposals, changes to the scope, purpose, or format of existing committee documents, and anything informally published (via web or print) for a wider audience (intended to reach IS membership and beyond) should be reviewed and approved by the IS Executive Committee.

   Process: Complete the [Executive Committee Publication/Project Proposal Form](#) and send it to your Executive Committee liaison. *[Keep in mind that ideas can be presented to the Executive Committee via the committee liaison prior to completing the form.]*

   Average turnaround time for response to proposal: 2 weeks.

   Examples:
   - Conference program proposals
   - The original concept of social media initiatives including: Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Wikis (if publicly available), Blogs, Podcasts/Vodcasts, etc.
       Note: No approval is needed for individual posts, hashtags, etc.
   - New serial publications (an example of an existing publication is: *[Tips and Trends](#)*)
       Note: Liaison typically approves individual issues
   - Brochures or flyers for distribution to the ACRL IS membership
   - ACRL IS policies and procedures
   - Articles or white papers for distribution to ACRL IS membership
   - Poster session proposals from ACRL IS committees
   - Bibliographies
   - Directories
   - Guides
   - Checklists
   - Tip Sheets
   - Videos for the ACRL IS membership

4. *ACRL approval: Surveys*
   ACRL level approval is required for all surveys, including surveys sent only to IS members, surveys sent to ILI-L, or surveys distributed beyond the community of instruction librarians (to other listservs, or to the ACRL or ALA membership).

   Process: Complete a [Survey Proposal form](#) and submit it to the committee's Executive Committee liaison. Once the Executive Committee approves the survey proposal, they forward the proposal to the ALA Office of Research and Statistics for their approval.

   Average turnaround time for response to proposal: 2-3 weeks

Examples:
- Surveys sent to ACRL IS membership (unless limited to IS committee membership, i.e. survey to determine a convenient meeting time)
- Surveys distributed beyond the ACRL IS membership

5. *ACRL approval: Publications and projects other than surveys*
   ACRL level approval is also required for publications and projects intended for a wide audience as well as for formal publications in print or online. ACRL has the first option on any publications by ACRL units (including the Instruction Section).

   Process: Consult with your Executive Committee liaison before starting the project and throughout the process. Carefully review the ACRL Publications guidelines and complete ACRL's Publication Proposal form.

   Average turnaround time for response to proposal: 2 weeks minimum (longer for formal publications or guidelines)

   Examples:
   - Articles or white papers for distribution to individuals outside of the ACRL IS membership
   - Brochures for distribution beyond the ACRL IS membership
   - Flyers for distribution beyond the ACRL IS membership
   - Guidelines
   - Handbooks
   - Manuals
   - Models or model statements
   - Strategic plans
   - Standards for the ACRL IS or shared standards
   - Videos for distribution beyond the ACRL IS membership

Executive Committee Expectations for Publication and Project Proposals

The Executive Committee considers several factors when reviewing publication and project proposals. First, the Executive Committee expects proposals to document the purpose of a project or publication. This documentation helps chairs, committee members, and Executive Committee liaisons to understand a proposal's origin and what it is trying to accomplish. The proposal acts as a contract between the Executive Committee and the proposing committee, indicating what, how, and when the committee will complete the project or publication and the long term plans for maintaining the project or publication. To maintain a record of this agreement, all proposals are archived in the Publication Proposal Archive.

Additionally, the Executive Committee considers the level of commitment necessary for projects and publications. Will proposed items be a one-time project or publication, or will a proposal commit the committee to an ongoing project that perhaps only that year's chair and

committee members are interested in pursuing? (See the "Lifecycle of a Project or Publication: Planning for Revisions" section below for additional considerations). Further, the Executive Committee expects publication or project proposals to demonstrate that the committee has considered the feasibility and sustainability of proposed projects. The publication proposal should reflect that the proposing committee has fully considered the plans and implications for its proposed project or publication and has thoughtfully documented the details in the proposal.

After the Executive Committee reviews a proposal, they may send it back to the submitting committee with questions or requests for revisions. After a committee has revised the proposal, they may send it back to the Executive Committee for further consideration.

Note that all types of potentially useful communication formats are not explicitly addressed here. These guidelines will evolve as new needs and formats emerge, but the principles of fitting purpose and comprehensive planning and review will remain the same.

Lifecycle of a Project or Publication: Planning for Revisions

It is necessary to discern if a proposed project/publication will require future updates and/or revisions. This concern is also revisited when a committee is revising an existing document or project.

When a publication is proposed or reviewed, the responsible committee must consider the publication's lifecycle based on its anticipated and/or past use. Specifically, the following contingencies must be considered and planned for:

- How long will the publication's topical focus be relevant?
- How long will the publication's specific content be relevant?
- Will the publication's content require revision in the future, and why?
- How frequently should the publication be reviewed for relevancy, accuracy, and comprehensiveness based on the publication's subject matter?
- What conditions would indicate that a document should be retired?

A publication proposal should explicitly address each concern and identify the committee or person(s) responsible for future review of or revisions to the document. The review period for publications that need to be updated or revised are specified in the Publication Proposal Archive.

Tips for Successful Publication or Project Proposals

- Consult closely with the committee's Executive Committee liaison in the drafting of the proposal and completion of form(s) through all revisions and iterations. Review this document and the publication proposal flowchart. Confer with the committee's Executive

Committee liaison to determine what level of review and approval will be necessary for the planned publication/project, and which forms, if any, must be completed for further consideration.

- Review the [Publication Proposal Archive](#) and check with the committee's Executive Committee liaison to ensure that a planned publication/project does not already exist.

- Ensure that a proposed project or publication is aligned with the committee's charge and goals. Refer to the committee's annual planning form and indicate clearly how the proposal fits into the committee's work objectives.

- Review the appropriate proposal form to determine what information is required to describe and explain the planned publication/project. In particular, consider the following questions:

    o   What strategic goals are being addressed by the planned publication/project?

    o   Who is responsible for doing what and when?

    o   Does the action plan for the publication/project address all concerns stipulated in this manual and/or [ACRL publication guidelines](#)?

    o   Will the publication/project have a defined end, or will it require future review and revision?

    o   Who will be responsible for future review and/or revision and when?

- After you have gathered the necessary information, fill out the appropriate proposal form completely; respond thoughtfully to each area.

- Submit all proposals to your Executive Committee liaison.

- Allow sufficient time when submitting your proposal, especially for projects that are time-sensitive or that must be completed before a meeting or conference.   Consider the average turnaround time for receiving a response to your proposal (see the: "How to Submit a Proposal for Review" section); also allow time for edits that may be requested by the Executive Committee or ACRL.

Additional Tips for Publication Proposals:

- Use the current edition of the Chicago Manual of Style as the authority for grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and style. Use its Author-Date System (also called Style B) for citations.

- Consult with the Executive Committee liaison before making any major or minor changes to a document. The liaison can determine whether the planned changes may be approved by the liaison or if Executive Committee (or ACRL) approval will be needed.

- Track changes to the text if revising a previously published document or if revisions are made in response to comments by reviewers. Helping reviewers easily recognize changes simplifies and expedites the approval process.

- All committee members should carefully proofread a document before submitting it to the committee's Executive Committee liaison. Also, check that the publication draft matches the scope and inclusion criteria established for the document through the publication proposal and any other documents (such as tip sheets) that define the publication.

- Documents should include an update and an approval date.

- Final copies of committee projects or documents must either reside in an ALA supported workspace, such as ALA Connect, or be in a commonly used format, such as HTML, PDF, or Word, so they can be loaded easily into the IS website. Committees must ensure that final copies are converted to an acceptable format, as appropriate. (from http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/is/iswebsite/about/policies/comprodtools)

- Consider that ACRL has the first publication option on all work prepared for publication by an ACRL unit (including the Instruction Section).   According to the ACRL guidelines, a work "may take the form of news articles, journal articles, bibliographies, directories, monographs, databases, survey results, pamphlets, cassettes, software, and the like." Consult Chapter 13: Publications of ACRL's Guide to Policies and Procedures for more information.

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