



European Studies Section (ESS) Governance Procedures Document

March 2023

A. Name

The name of the organization shall be the European Studies Section (ESS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, hereinafter referred to as the Section.

B. Purpose

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) sections are established primarily for the purpose of building communities of learning and providing professional development and networking opportunities for their members. A section's name, purpose, and mission are as proposed by the Section and approved by the ACRL Board. The ACRL Board ascertains that overlaps between the mandates of various Sections are minimized. The Section shall represent those librarians and others in ACRL who specialize or are otherwise professionally involved in the acquisition, organization, and use of information sources originating in or relating to European countries. This section may cooperate with other professional groups and vendors, in regard to those aspects of library service that require special knowledge of sources from or concerning Europe.

C. Membership

Any ACRL member may also become a member of this Section. The number of "community of practice" affiliations included in the basic ACRL dues is determined by the ACRL Board. The dues for additional affiliations are also set by the ACRL Board.

D. Relationship to ACRL Board

The Board shall be authorized to establish Communities of Practice (including Sections), to monitor their activities, and determine their continuance in consultation with the respective groups. The Board shall also be entitled to establish policies to govern the activities of Communities of Practice. ([ACRL Bylaws](#),

[Article XV](#)) The Board liaison role provides a critical connection between membership structures and the ACRL Board of Directors. This liaison role can be particularly helpful in providing perspective, guidance, and insight regarding ACRL policies, procedures, and initiatives; soliciting feedback from Communities of Practice regarding proposed Board actions; and providing helpful advice regarding Action Plan Proposals and Board Action Forms which community of practice leaders will need to submit for official ACRL Board and ACRL Executive Committee action/decisions. The liaison relationship is meant to enhance communication; it is not an advocacy role and for that reason Board members are asked to liaison with communities in which they have not been active. The Board of Directors is the voice for the association. Sections, committees, and other established units are not authorized to speak for the association except through the Board. This is to say that unit leaders should refrain from issuing statements, taking positions, or endorsing any statements or positions except with Board approval. ([ACRL Guide to Policies and Procedures](#), 15.16, Use of ACRL's Name)

E. Meetings

Section meetings are scheduled by the Chair of ESS. ACRL units are encouraged to work outside of the regular conference schedule to increase group participation, efficiency, and productivity. Electronic meetings are conducted within the environment of [ALA/ACRL bylaws and policies](#). In all cases these requirements must be adhered to, although they may have to be adapted to fit the virtual environment. The [ALA Policy Manual 7.4.1](#) defines a meeting as “an official assembly, for any length of time following a designated starting time, of the members of any board, committee task force, commission, etc., during which the members do not separate except for a recess and in which the assembly has the capacity to formalize decisions.” Conference calls, meetings on online platforms, and in-person meetings are recognized as meetings subject to the open meetings policy ([ALA Policy 7.4.4](#)). There is a distinction between carrying on work of a committee electronically and conducting an electronic meeting. Asynchronous electronic discussions by electronic mail or other asynchronous communication methods do not constitute meetings because they are not an official assembly with a designated starting time ([ALA Policy Manual 7.4.1](#)). The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure (Alice Sturgis) applies to meetings of the Section to the extent that it is applicable, upholds the integrity of the voting processes, helps facilitate progress, and ensures equality, fairness, and common sense.

The Section shall hold a series of meetings of committees and discussion groups twice a year with one virtual series in the winter (usually January or February) and virtual or in-person series in the summer during or around the time of ALA Annual in June. The Section shall hold an annual business meeting at or near the time of the Annual Conference of the American Library Association. The General Membership Discussion Group meetings serve as the annual business meeting for the Section (see section I below). Special meetings of the Section may be called at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the

Executive Committee. Notification of a special meeting shall be sent to all members of the Section at least 10 days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. Members of the Section present at an in-person or virtual meeting shall constitute a quorum.

F. Officers

The officers of the Section shall be a chair, a vice-chair/chair-elect, the immediate past chair (hereinafter referred to as past chair), a secretary, and a member-at-large. All officers shall serve for a term of one year which ends at the adjournment of the annual meeting.

Functions And Responsibilities Of The Chair

- Serves as chief officer of section, and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the section and ACRL.
- Chairs the ESS Executive Committee's winter meeting and the meeting held around the time of the ALA Annual Conference.
- Determines the format (whether virtual or in-person) of the series of meetings held around the time of ALA Annual Conference in consultation with the Executive Committee.
- Attends all meetings of the Section's committees and discussion groups, when possible.
- Assists the Conference Program Planning Committee in organizing and holding conference programs and forums.
- Responsible for section projects which the Section will pursue during the year.
- Plans budget and submits fundraising plan(s) to ACRL as needed with the Vendor Relations Committee.
- Meets deadlines for budget requests for payment or reimbursement, according to the budget being submitted.
- Schedules all ESS committee and discussion group meetings as well as programs and forums for the winter series of ESS meetings and the ESS meetings held around the time of ALA Annual. Notifies ALA of meeting times and space needs for all section meetings and programs.
- Submits reports to ACRL Board on ESS activities.
- Responds to inquiries from members and non-members regarding ESS interests and activities.
- Co-represents the Section, with the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, on the ACRL Communities of Practice Assembly.
- Writes a column for the *ESS Newsletter*, if desired.

- Makes special appointments to fill such committee, discussion group convener, and officer vacancies as occur during their term of office.
- Attends meetings of the ACRL Communities of Practice Assembly. Prepares oral report of section events/plans to be presented at the Assembly meeting if requested to by ACRL. Takes note of announcements and items of interest to be shared with the ESS Executive Committee and membership.
- The ESS vice-chair/chair-elect or the delegate that they authorize will act as the official ESS liaison to the ACRL board.

Functions And Responsibilities Of The Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect

- Serves as officer of the section, and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the Section and ACRL.
- As a member of the Executive Committee, attends meetings of the committee at the ESS winter meeting and the meeting held around the time of the ALA Annual Conference. Also attends, if possible, the series of meetings held around the ALA Annual Conference immediately preceding the taking of office. In consultation with the Chair, appoints a nominating committee and chair, which is responsible for producing a slate of candidates for section office.
- Appoints a conference program planning committee and chair, which is responsible for planning the section's program or forum normally held at the ESS series of meetings held around the time of the ALA Annual Conference. Serves as an ex-officio member of this committee.
- Makes appointments including chairs to all standing committees and discussion group conveners for terms beginning when term as chair begins. Committee chairs serve one-year terms but may be reappointed by the next vice-chair. Committee members will normally serve two-year terms.
- Plans section budget for their year as chair and participates in ACRL budget orientation as required. Meets deadlines for requests for payment or reimbursement, according to the budget.
- Assists in planning the programs and projects which the section will pursue during their year as chair.
- Responds to inquiries from members and non-members regarding the Section's interests and activities.
- Co-represents the Section with the chair on the ACRL Communities of Practice Assembly.
- Along with the Chair, the Vice-chair/Chair-Elect acts as the official ESS liaison to ACRL.

- Performs other tasks as assigned by the Chair or Executive Committee.

Functions And Responsibilities Of The Past Chair

- Serves as an officer of the Section, and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the Section and ACRL.
- As a member of the Executive Committee, attends meetings of the committee at the ESS winter meeting and the meeting held around the time of the ALA Annual Conference.
- Serves as chair of the ESS Research Grants Committee.
- Submits requests for outstanding payments or reimbursement for anything done during their time as Chair.
- The Past Chair serves in an ex-officio capacity on the Vendor Relations Committee.
- Performs other tasks as assigned by the Chair or Executive Committee.

Functions And Responsibilities Of The Secretary

- The Secretary serves as the recording officer for the Section, and as such attends and takes minutes for the General Membership Discussion Group meetings and the Executive Committee meetings. Final minutes are distributed to the Executive Committee, and the ESS membership via the email distribution lists and uploaded to the ESS website.
- The Secretary is responsible for forwarding minutes of all ESS agendas and minutes to ACRL during their tenure.
- As a member of the Executive Committee, attends meetings of the committee at the ESS winter meeting and the meeting held around the time of the ALA Annual Conference. Also attends, if possible, the series of meetings held around the ALA Annual Conference immediately preceding the taking of office
- The Secretary is responsible for the collection of archival materials relating to the Section's activities during their tenure of office.
- The Secretary works with the Website Administrator in maintaining current committee and discussion group convener rosters on the ESS website.
- The Secretary serves in an ex-officio capacity on the Communications and Publications Committee.
- Performs other tasks as assigned by the Chair or Executive Committee.

Functions And Responsibilities Of The Member-At-Large

- Serves as an officer of the Section, and assists in advancing the goals and objectives of the Section and ACRL.
- As a member of the Executive Committee, attends meetings of the committee at the ESS winter meeting and the meeting held around the time of the ALA Annual Conference. Also attends, if possible, the series of meetings held around the ALA Annual Conference immediately preceding the taking of office.
- Organizes and chairs the General Membership Discussion Group meetings.
- Performs other tasks as assigned by the Chair or Executive Committee.

G. Executive Committee

The Section Executive Committee is responsible for the stewardship of the Section and the coordination of its activities, provided that it operates within the Section mandate and budget as determined by membership level.

The ESS Executive Committee may advise the Chair in matters related to committee and convenor appointments and establishments of ad-hoc committees.

The ESS Executive Committee shall consist of its officers and the chairs of its standing committees.

Powers and duties — The ESS Executive Committee shall conduct the business of the Section during the periods between meetings. During the Section's series of meetings, the Chair shall report on the work of the Executive Committee, at which time that work shall be subject to review by the entire Section membership.

Meetings – The Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee shall determine the format (whether virtual or in-person) of the summer series of meetings as well as that of the Executive Committee. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair. Only members of the ESS Executive Committee may vote at the Executive Committee meetings, although all such meetings shall be open to members of the Section as well as non-members. If a standing committee has two co-chairs, together they will have one joint vote on the Executive Committee.

A majority of voting members constitutes a quorum at any meeting of the ESS Executive Committee.

H. Other Committees

Standing committees charged with addressing matters of ongoing concern to ESS which are deemed to require continuity of attention may be authorized by a majority vote of the ESS Executive Committee. The size, name, and purpose of a standing committee shall be specified at the time of its authorization. Members of a standing committee shall be appointed for generally a two-year term, such that newly appointed members will serve the first year of their term alongside members who have served at least one previous year on the committee. Appointees to a newly formed standing committee may be appointed to an initial term of three-years. Standing committee members are eligible for subsequent reappointments to that committee, but the maximum allowable period of consecutive service on a committee is five years. The Vice-chair/Chair-elect shall appoint committee members to fill the vacancies due to occur during their term as chair. The Vice-chair/Chair-elect shall also designate the chairs of all committees active during his or her term as chair of the Section. Unexpected vacancies on a committee shall be filled by a special appointment made by the Chair. A standing committee may be discontinued by a majority of voting members present at an Executive Committee meeting.

Special (ad hoc) committees may be formed to address more occasional imperatives or for the fulfillment of specific projects. These committees may be appointed at any time by the Chair in consultation with the other members of the ESS Executive Committee. Special/ad hoc committees shall be automatically dissolved at the end of the term of the Chair by whom they were appointed, unless the incoming chair decides to extend their term of activity. No special/ad hoc committee shall be active for more than two years without special authorization in the form of a majority vote of ESS Executive Committee members.

Standing Committees as of March 1, 2023:

- Communications and Publications Committee
- Conference Program Planning Committee
- Membership Committee
- Newsletter Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Research and Planning Committee
- Research Grants Committee
- Slavic Cataloging and Metadata Committee
- Vendor Relations Committee

I. Discussion Groups

The Section has discussion groups focused around European regions or topics to facilitate discussion around current practices, new resources, and other related matters. Each discussion group shall have a convener whose appointment is normally for a two-year period. The Vice-chair/Chair-elect shall appoint discussion group conveners to fill the vacancies due to occur during their term as chair. Unexpected vacancies of conveners shall be filled by a special appointment made by the Chair. Unlike standing committees, discussion groups shall have no appointed membership. All discussion group meetings and participation are open to all ESS members and non-members.

Any group of five or more ESS members interested in forming new discussion groups may send a written petition to the Chair identifying the proposed focus (i.e. region or topic) and name(s) of ESS members agreeing to serve as conveners. The Chair will forward said petition to the ESS Executive Committee for deliberation. A majority vote of ESS Executive Committee members is required for approval of new discussion groups. If convener slots have not been filled or if attendance has been considered too small to be viable over a period of two or more years, the Executive Committee can vote to dissolve a discussion group.

Discussion groups shall meet at least once a year during the ESS virtual series in the winter or during the series of in-person or virtual meetings held in the summer during or around the time of ALA Annual in June. Discussion groups can hold additional meetings as desired. Each convener is ultimately responsible for deciding on the discussion topic(s), setting and uploading the agenda, and taking and uploading minutes but can enlist volunteers to assist them with these tasks.

The General Membership Discussion Group serves in the function of a business meeting for the Section for reporting and discussion of timely ESS and ESS-related information and the exchange of information among the ESS membership. These meetings include reports and announcements by ESS officers, committee chairs, and discussion group conveners about ESS meetings, events, and activities. The General Membership Discussion Group meets twice a year—once during the ESS series of virtual meetings in the winter and once during the virtual or in-person series in the summer during or around the time of ALA Annual in June. The Member-at-large sets the agenda and chairs each meeting.

Discussion groups as of March 1, 2023:

- Cataloging Issues Discussion Group
- Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance Discussion Group
- College and Medium-Sized Libraries Discussion Group

- General Membership Discussion Group
- Germanists Discussion Group
- Romance Languages Discussion Group
- Scandinavian Discussion Group
- Slavic & Eastern European Discussion Group
- Social Sciences and History Discussion Group

J. Website Administrator

The Website Administrator shall serve a two-year term which can be renewed with the approval of the Chair and the Committee Chair of Communications and Publications at the end of each term. If a current administrator decides not to renew, the Chair and Committee Chair of Communications and Publications shall select a new administrator in consultation with the Executive Committee.

The Website Administrator is responsible for ensuring maintenance of and updates to the ESS website (<https://acrl.ala.org/ess/>). To carry out these duties, the Website Administrator can enlist volunteers or establish teams of volunteers. The Website Administrator shall serve ex-officio on the Communications and Publications Committee.

K. Nominations and Elections

To be nominated, elected, and continue to serve on a Section's Executive Committee, a person must be a current member of the Section (with ALA, ACRL, and section dues—if applicable—paid).

The Vice-chair/Chair-elect shall appoint a Nominating Committee of at least two members, designating one member as committee chair. No member of the Nominating Committee shall be currently serving on the Executive Committee. Likewise, no member can run as a candidate in the election during which they serve on the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall choose a slate of nominees for each of the offices of (a) vice-chair/chair-elect, (b) secretary, and (c) member-at-large. Additional nominations for these offices may be made by petitions signed by no fewer than five Section members submitted to the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Nominations put forth by the Nominating Committee, as well as any additional nominations made by petition, shall be filed with ACRL. All nominees must be members in good standing of the Section and must consent to candidacy in writing.



Elections shall be conducted by electronic ballot as specified by ALA/ACRL ([ACRL Bylaws, Article XIII](#)). For each office, the candidate receiving a plurality of the votes cast shall be elected. In case of a tie vote the successful candidate shall be determined by lot.

L. Vacancies

Chair

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the chair, the vice-chair/chair-elect shall succeed to the office of the chair and shall continue in that office until the expiration of the term for which he or she was originally elected to serve as chair.

Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect

In the event of a vacancy in the office of vice-chair/chair-elect, the chair shall appoint a member of the section to be vice-chair/chair-elect to serve provisionally until an election can be held.

Secretary, Member-at-large, Committee Chairs, Conveners

If the office of the secretary, the member-at-large, chair of one of the committees, or convener of one of the discussion groups becomes vacant, the chair shall appoint a member of the section to that office.

Special Circumstances

In the event that both the chair and vice-chair positions become simultaneously vacant, the remaining members of the Executive Committee shall appoint a member of the section to become chair. Subsequent to this, the new chair shall appoint a member of the section to become vice-chair/chair-elect and who shall serve a normal three year (vice-chair/chair-elect — chair — past-chair) term.

Past Chair

In the event that the past chair position becomes vacant, the members of the Executive Committee shall appoint a member of the section to become past chair. Subsequent to this, the new chair shall appoint a member of the section to become past chair for the remainder of the term.

M. Amendments to Governance Procedures



Amendments to these Governance Procedures may be proposed in writing to the Section's Executive Committee, by a committee appointed specifically for the purpose, or by any five members of the Section. If approved by the Executive Committee, the proposed amendments can be made to the Governance Procedures, as long they are not in conflict with ALA/ACRL bylaws, policies, and procedures. Changes to these governance procedures do not require, and should not include, a ballot vote by the membership. A current copy shall be provided to the ACRL Executive Director per [ACRL Bylaws, Article XV, Section 3](#).

On March 6, 2023, the ESS Executive Committee resolved unanimously that this Governance Procedures Document replaces the one from 2016. These changes are in effect as of March 7, 2023.