



The Voice for Your Library

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New Jersey Library Association Strategic Plan: 2024-28

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NJLA Mission Statement

Developing library workers, uniting the library community.

NJLA Core Values

Professional Development

NJLA provides opportunities for growth for all library workers, from all library types, through professional development, collaboration, and community.

Member Engagement and Collaboration

NJLA's strength lies in the involvement of its members — we encourage our members to work together, with NJLA, and with our statewide organizations to play a part in what they want NJLA to be.

Advocacy

NJLA celebrates the library community by sharing our work widely to garner statewide support.

Transparency

NJLA is at its strongest when members are regularly informed of the work of the organization. We value transparency and being held accountable by our members.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

NJLA welcomes, engages, and strives to reflect the needs, goals, and contributions of all people in our communities.

Sustainability

NJLA embodies practices that are environmentally sound, economically feasible, and socially equitable.

Joy and Community

NJLA strives for its members to feel pride in their profession and to celebrate the work of libraries.

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Unite All Library Workers and Advocates

NJLA needs more and clearer opportunities for non-MLS library workers and advocates in the state, as well as ways to ensure sustainability and engagement through the Enhanced Institutional Membership (EIM) model.

Goals

- Ensure, test, and evaluate pathways to engagement for library staff from EIM libraries.
- Develop effective NJLA orientation materials, focusing on ensuring a sense of welcome and highlighting clear pathways for engagement.
- Reach out to lapsed members to better understand what factors have driven non-EIM library staff to give up membership, and address those factors.
- Identify ways that NJLA is providing distinct value and opportunities to the library community, including academic libraries. Collaborate with partner organizations to ensure that NJLA members' needs are being met in ways that are clear and useful to library workers.

Increase Member Engagement

NJLA needs to define and increase engagement, ensuring there are adequate and varied opportunities for members to contribute to the association. Developing this area is important as more members join under the EIM model. Institution-linked members are not necessarily making a personal decision to join and may not find value in the opportunity for service leadership. NJLA needs to find ways for them to feel engaged..

Goals

- Determine how to define an engaged member, and how to measure this engagement (e.g., section membership, newsletter open rates, participation in NJLA elections).
- Work with the relevant committees and sections to focus on welcoming new members, creating and clarifying opportunities, matching members with opportunities, and following up with new members.
- Simplify NJLA's member-facing structure, including communication channels, professional and community development, opportunities to volunteer and lead, and other member-driven initiatives, creating a more welcoming and sustainable model.
- Increase support for groups that professional associations often struggle to welcome, by supporting student memberships, EDI-focused opportunities, and services for library workers who do not have an MLS.
- Establish goals and strategies for recruiting and retaining members who are library workers of color.

The New Jersey Library Association provides vision and leadership for the library community and serves as a voice for New Jersey libraries and library workers.

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Organizational Sustainability

NJLA holds a triple-bottom-line view of sustainability as a core value: environmentally sound, economically feasible, and socially equitable. NJLA will spend this plan period demonstrating its dedication to this core value.

Goals

- Make adjustments to events based on member desires and needs, including synchronous vs. asynchronous, in-person vs. virtual, and geographic locations.
- Undertake an equity assessment of New Jersey's library community, including NJLA's role, sharing the results with NJLA members and developing a plan to achieve the goals identified in the assessment.
- Allocate funds in the NJLA budget for equity-related programs and initiatives.
- Assess Enhanced Institutional Membership (EIM), individual membership, conference and event attendance, and evaluate and adjust fees to ensure they are equitable and sustain NJLA's mission.

Advocacy

NJLA members and partners view advocacy as one of NJLA's most important roles, and want NJLA to lead libraries in formal and informal advocacy work. NJLA must serve as the voice for library workers, libraries, and New Jersey residents who benefit from strong libraries.

Goals

- Provide cross-training or learning opportunities for NJLA leadership with leadership from partner organizations.
- Establish consistent ways for members, stakeholders, and advocates to develop united, successful messages and campaigns.
- Work with the membership and partner organizations to identify and achieve annual legislative priorities.
- Assist library workers and libraries that would benefit from the support of their colleagues and partners from across the state.
- Assist library workers in developing, documenting, and certifying the skills they need to achieve their personal goals and provide greater service to their communities.
- Document library workers' salaries and compensation in a way that facilitates thoughtful benchmarking by staff, administrators, and the public.

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