

# ARLIS/NA

ART LIBRARIES SOCIETY of NORTH AMERICA

## 2018 Environmental Scan Report Strategic Directions Committee

**Submitted by:** Strategic Directions Committee

Chair: Sarah Carter

Members: Sarah Osborne Bender, Kate Joranson, Billy Kwan, Emilee Mathews, Sylvia Roberts

## Purpose & Methodology

The ARLIS/NA Strategic Directions committee members reviewed various documents and gathered information from many sources in order to define environmental trends. The committee has organized our observations and recommendations for the board under the six existing strategic directions. Sources consulted for the environmental scan include:

- Literature review (LR)<sup>1</sup>
- Information gathered from ARLIS/NA affiliated professional organizations (AFF)<sup>2</sup>
- 2018 conference programs from ALA, CAA, RBMS (CP)
- Funding opportunities scan (FS)

This document is intended to provide the ARLIS/NA Board with a variety of options for consideration. Not all of the recommendations may be actionable at this time, but the committee feels that they should be considered as points of inspirations.

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the Strategic Directions committee located and reviewed 87 journal articles and one book from a wide array of publications. Databases consulted included LISTA, LISA, and Library Literature and Information Full Text. Articles from the past twelve months (since June 2017) were consulted.

<sup>2</sup> The affiliated professions reviewed were as followed: American Alliance of Museums (AAM), Association of Architecture School Librarians (AASL), Association of College and Research Libraries - Arts Section (ACRL), College Art Association (CAA), International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions - Arts Section (IFLA), Museum Computer Network (MCN), Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), and Visual Resources Association (VRA). The committee wishes to thank the following affiliate organization liaisons for providing information: Breanne Crumpton (VRA), Shaina Buckles Harkness (AAM), Aimee Lind (SAH), Gabriella Karl-Johnson (AASL), Olivia Miller (ACRL-Arts), Viveca Robichaud (IFLA), Kathleen Salomon (CAA), and Karina Wratschko (MCN).

# Summary Recommendations

As the committee has scanned our environment, we see that opportunities for development and growth abound. We recognize that the greatest challenge for the board is to set priorities within these strategic areas of opportunity. In summary, we recommend that ARLIS/NA:

- Build relationships with external partners who are interested in working towards shared goals.
- Seek external funding with partners to enhance efforts to work towards shared goals.
- Call upon our Affiliate liaisons to lead the board to new initiatives that ARLIS/NA may engage with. As outlined below, many of our affiliated associations have implemented programs that we may learn from.
- Put more instruments in place to evaluate ARLIS/NA's efforts on diversity and inclusion efforts and communicate to our members the effect it is having on our society.
- Implement more consistently the workflow for both board-funded and -initiated projects and the process by which we secure and steward outside funding.

## Leadership and Advocacy

### Recommendations to the Board

- Place greater emphasis on inclusive strategic planning and thinking. This could include integrating input from members into strategic plan during a session at conference, as well as engaging with grantmaking and fundraising to further publications and projects. (AFF)
- Incorporate agile design and design thinking into the society's/the profession's mindset; encourage failure and other signs of productive growth and trying things out. For example, MCN has created a Strategy SIG that hosts digital and in-person meetups, and invites guest speakers that inspire members. (AFF)
- The board should familiarize itself with three initiatives that might be significant in anticipating ARLIS/NA strategic directions in the future, including member education, association responses, and potential partnerships (CP):
  - [IMLS National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment](#)
  - [READ \(reference effort assessment data\) Scale](#) at work in Academic, Public and Special Libraries
  - [International Image Interoperability Framework](#) (IIIF)
- Identify potential partners for diversity advocacy work and membership training, whether other library associations (e.g. [ACRL's diversity standards & cultural competency training](#)) or other higher education or cultural organizations. (CP)
- Develop training and models for effective advocacy communication practices with influencers and potential partners (politicians, business leaders, diversity leaders), focused on identifying and speaking to their interests, in order to address these with our language and programs. (CP)

- The last twelve months have seen a tremendous amount of advocacy on the national, state, and provincial levels in North America. Consider what ARLIS/NA may contribute toward preparing its members for advocacy efforts led by ALA and EveryLibrary. In particular, op-ed letter-writing and email campaigns led by ALA,<sup>3</sup> and localized information campaigns led by EveryLibrary<sup>4</sup> may be useful for our members. (LR)
- Other forms of advocacy could include measuring impact on the role of creative research and programming in libraries in facilitating empathetic behavior in order to better advocate for importance in society, advocating for the importance of libraries as a creative incubator, and addressing library's identity as a quiet place for retreat, respecting that and balancing with the library as a noisy, group-oriented, study and create type of place. (AFF)

## Organizational Advancement

### Recommendations to the Board

- Review the [AAC&U's high impact educational initiatives](#); consider developing member training that introduces and adapts these principles for arts information practice in academic and art school libraries, as well as museum and public library programming. (CP)
- Assess ARLIS' success as a professional society using the resource *7 Measures of Success: What Remarkable Associations Do That Others Don't* (authored by ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership, Association Management Press, 2012). (AFF)
- Proactively cultivate leaders in ARLIS, provide opportunities to use leadership training, and more seamlessly strategize succession planning for leadership roles. (AFF)
- Investigate what products, resources, and tools ARLIS members use in order to better target sponsorships and other development opportunities. (AFF)
- Task a group to do a thorough review of progressive organizations in North America, in order to look for potential partnerships. (LR) (AFF)
- Invite more international professionals to speak about their programs to disseminate art library work outside of their countries. For example, the JAL Project<sup>5</sup> might be of interest, or a presentation from Beatriz Tarré Alonso, manager of the Centro de Información del Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, La Habana.<sup>6</sup> (LR)
- Investigate the professional identities of ARLIS members to ensure that ARLIS is representing and advocating for the current membership. For example, VRA has put together a VRA Identity Task Force, and other affiliated organizations have recently undergone similar investigations which has led to name changes and other updates to society identities. (AFF)

<sup>3</sup> Success for "Dear Appropriator" Letters. (2017). *American Libraries*, 48(7/8), 7

<sup>4</sup> The State(s) of National Advocacy. (2017). *Library Journal*, 142(13), 26.

<sup>5</sup> Mizutani, T. (2017). JAL project: Project for inviting, giving training to, and exchanging with, japanese-art librarians from outside japan 2014-2016 - answer symposium and proposal as summing up for 3 years' JAL project. *Joho no Kagaku to Gijutsu*, 67(6), 309.

<sup>6</sup> Gabrielle Reed, ARLIS/NA Study Tour coordinator, has established a relationship with Ms. Tarré Alonso.

- Explore ethics of the profession as well as related professions (museums, universities, etc.) with the goal to enhance social justice awareness. (AFF)
- As the Development Committee transitions out of their role in securing conference funding, consider giving them primary responsibility for researching funding opportunities and matching them with funding priorities, specifically identifying board-funded projects that are ready for outside funding. (FS)
- Consider writing project charters for all board-initiated projects, especially those with funding attached, so that these board priorities are communicated to the Strategic Directions and Development Committees. (FS)
- Consider outside funding for conference childcare. ([Sustainable Arts Foundation](#) funds this for artists specifically; perhaps would consider a partnership with ARLIS/NA). (FS)
- Consider outside funding for the Digital Art History Directory in the future. Possible funding sources include: [Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation](#), [IMLS National Leadership Grants for Libraries](#), [Andrew Mellon Scholarly Communications](#). (FS)
- Consider other projects that may be eligible for funding through the [IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program](#). (FS)

## Art Information Professionals

### Recommendations to the Board

- Collaboration skills are essential to art information professions, whether within their institutions or working with outside partners. Education programs can be helpful, as can providing opportunities for collaboration within ARLIS/NA and having leaders provide mentoring & modelling to support the development of these skills. (CP)
- Provide opportunities for professional knowledge and skill-building in emerging areas:
  - New media arts practice (interactive, locative, immersive, etc.)
  - Big data scholarship
  - Evidence-based decision making
  - Understanding search analytics (ethics and technology)
  - Interdisciplinarity, especially with STEM
  - Assisting artists in developing or improving their documentation practices. (CP)
  - Management of art and object information (both analog and digital) in cultural heritage institutions and environments
- Continue to provide spaces for ARLIS/NA members to publish, speak, and engage with the larger library profession about opportunities for the ACRL Framework in various studio environments. (LR)
- Provide more training opportunities for art information professionals interested in learning about archival practices and project management. These may be achieved through a variety of modes (virtual or in-person meet ups; on a local, regional, or national scale). Consider ways that ARLIS/NA may partner with SAA. (LR)
- Pilot an award program for support staff, in order to engage a more diverse set of members, while simultaneously encouraging involvement with the association. (AFF)

## Diversity and Inclusion

### Recommendations to the Board

- Actively address issues of inequity and injustice, both current and historical. For example, pilot a program to create programming (as well as awareness and empathy) around librarians working with migrants and refugees. (AFF)
- Develop training and tools to:
  - Support members advocating for diversity programs in their institutions
  - Encourage effective allyship and deliberative dialogue
  - Define language for difficult conversations about diversity (as well as mechanisms for supporting others in those conversations)
  - Identify and remove barriers to acquiring and accessing diverse materials in collections (reviewing sources, discovery system algorithms, non-Latin character sets)
  - Champion space planning for inclusion. (CP)
- Consider recognizing the strengths and accomplishments of ARLIS/NA's diverse members and Diversity committee via a conference program session, similar to ALA's session [\*African American Pioneers in Library Leadership: Bridging the Past to the Present\*](#). (CP)
- Look to programs such as PLA's [\*Inclusive Internship Initiative\*](#)<sup>7</sup> for models that ARLIS/NA may study, and ultimately consider for implementation. (LR)
- Develop a rubric to audit ARLIS conference programming and other educational opportunities, in order to determine whether they reflect ARLIS' Diversity Statement and Code of Conduct. (AFF)
- Proactively recruit and retain diverse and inclusive membership; ensure that these strategies also investigate how to make the society's culture, not just its membership, diverse and inclusive; Find ways to relate profession and society to general public and shifting demographics. (AFF)

## Innovation and Technology

### Recommendations to the Board

- Actively participate in initiatives such as the IIIF Initiative; for example, MCN has a IIIF user group. (AFF)
- Consider the effect of hybrid and new media arts practice for arts information practice, especially for special collections & archives, including digital platforms, immersive,

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<sup>7</sup> Inclusive Internship Initiative Commences Successful Summer Pilot. (2017). *Public Libraries*, 56(6), 3-4.

locative and interactive media, 3D platforms, artificial intelligence and alternative forms of scholarship, such as podcasts and blogs. (CP) (AFF)

## **Collections and Access**

### Recommendations to the Board

- Investigate implications of shared print collections for art libraries, including the impact on arts and humanities scholarship, to prepare members to better advocate on behalf of their users. (CP)
- Consider the effect of hybrid and new media arts practice for arts information practice, especially for special collections & archives, including digital platforms, immersive, locative and interactive media, 3D platforms, artificial intelligence and alternative forms of scholarship, such as podcasts and blogs. (CP) (AFF)
- Develop programs and tools to help members highlight and promote to their stakeholders the value of unique library collections, both local and global, grounded in local interests and expertise; these programs and tools should also be effective in developing relationships with diverse communities. (CP) (AFF)