

Guidelines for Campaigning by Candidates for ALA Office

Overview

The process for nominations and elections for candidates for councilors are governed by the Association's Constitution and Bylaws, Article III, Sections 1-6. The ALA Nominating Committee recommends candidates annually for the position of president-elect and members-at-large for Council and candidates for the position of treasurer every three years.

Support is provided to those candidates standing for election for the positions of ALA President-Elect and Treasurer and Council members-at-large in accordance with guidelines approved by the ALA Council in 1992 that ensure that "there is equality of opportunity for all members of the American Library Association to seek elected office regardless of their personal financial resources or their access to organizational or other financial support."

The ALA Executive Director is charged with developing "an election guide for candidates, listing available ALA services and other helpful information." These guidelines are updated regularly to reflect changes in communication technology and other external and internal factors that influence the election process.

- An Association-wide candidates' forum held at the ALA Midwinter Meeting preceding the election.
- A table in the convention center at the Midwinter meeting to display campaign materials.
- The publication of full-page candidate's statement in the March issue of *American Libraries*.
- A candidate's statement limited to 300 words included in the ballot distributed to all members.
- A reimbursement of \$1,000 to each candidate for president-elect and treasurer to help offset the cost of website development, postage, printing and other campaign-related expenses.

Support Provided to Candidates for ALA Council:

Following the recommendations that Council approved in 1992, all candidates for ALA Councilor-at-Large receive the following support from ALA and its units:

- A candidate's statement limited to 150 words included in the ballot distributed to all members.
- A listing of candidates' names, positions and organizational affiliations published in *American Libraries*.

Use of ALA funds to support the campaigns of individual candidates:

Other than the support provided as specified above, no additional ALA funds may be used to support the campaign of any individual candidate for ALA office. ALA policy defines ALA funds as funds of all offices, divisions and round tables. This includes use of budgeted funds for mailings or production of campaign materials, or use of staff time to support the candidacy of any individual candidate for ALA office.

Campaign Spending:

Candidates are expected to use good judgment in their use of financial or other resources available to them in conducting their campaigns. ALA does not have any policies specifically relating to the financing of campaigns. There are no limits on the amount of money a candidate may spend, on the ways in which the candidates choose to finance their campaigns, on whether a candidate may raise money for his or her campaign, or in the way in which they choose to spend the campaign funds raised.

Vendor Support:

While Council did not adopt specific guidelines for support provided by vendors, the 1992 draft Guidelines also remain the basis for current practice with regard to vendor support:

“Campaign contributions by vendors, either in cash or in kind, have the potential of seriously skewing the election process. Candidates should avoid such contributions; vendors should be encouraged to make financial contributions to

