

NEW HAMPSHIRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2025

Mission: The New Hampshire Library Association (NHLA) is a professional association that advances the interests of its membership through advocacy, legislative action, professional development, networking, and resources. NHLA creates opportunities for communication, collaboration, and leadership among library workers in New Hampshire.

Values: The New Hampshire Library Association fosters a culture of collaboration, diversity, equity, and inclusion in its work and among its membership. Sustainability is at the heart of what we do.

Introduction

NHLA's first-ever strategic plan spanned 2022-2023 and was a valuable tool to guide NHLA in its priorities and activities. With oversight from the NHLA Executive Board, in the fall of 2023, the NHLA Strategic Planning subcommittee solicited input from the NHLA membership, the New Hampshire library community at-large, NHLA Executive Board members, and NHLA sections. A link to the survey data is available on the NHLA website.

This strategic plan will cover 2024-2025. It is the recommendation of the NHLA Strategic Planning subcommittee that the NHLA Executive Board convene a new subcommittee group in Summer 2025 to begin the strategic planning process for the next plan, which will cover 2026-2027.

For the second time, at the recommendation of the Strategic Planning subcommittee and based on the data gathered, the 2024-2025 plan will include practical and actionable items for the next two years. This plan is intended to give direction to better serve the NHLA membership, strengthen NHLA as an organization and promote participation, diversity, and professional development.

Strategic Areas of Focus

The NHLA Executive Board has identified three strategic areas of focus for the next two years that are intended to increase the value and sustainability of NHLA. As reflected in the data gathered by the surveys, these goals and the work to achieve them should include the overarching values of access, equity, diversity, inclusion, collaboration, and sustainability. These areas of strategic focus should inform the work of the sections and committees of NHLA.

Professional Development

Survey results showed that professional development opportunities through conferences, workshops and classes remain a significant motivator for membership. In addition, 90% of respondents listed professional development as valuable to the mission of NHLA.

- Offer professional development training that is relevant to the membership based on levels of experience and roles within local libraries
- Offer information on the subjects of adequate funding for library operations, salary and benefits

- Explore opportunities for increased collaboration and communication with the New Hampshire State Library for the purpose of shared professional training opportunities
- Based on the results of the survey, professional development and training should focus on the following areas: adequate funding for library operations and staff salary/benefits, community engagement/outreach/advocacy, staff recruitment and retention and staff mental/physical well-being
- Utilize the McDonald Fund to provide high-quality training to the NHLA membership

Advocacy

Advocacy encompasses a wide range of topics and tasks and was ranked as the second most important aspect of NHLA. Additionally, “community engagement/advocacy/outreach” was identified as the second most important priority for NHLA.

- Develop advocacy and legislative training. Conduct workshops and training sessions on effective techniques and procedures that includes promoting the role of librarians and library staff as leaders and advocates vs. “activists”, connecting politically with legislators and decision makers, and developing advantageous community partnerships.
- Continue to provide in-person and virtual opportunities to foster the sharing of ideas, collaboration amongst libraries, and reinforce a sense of community and the belief that we are all “stronger together” in our work and advocacy.
- Develop a consistent and sustainable communication strategy that informs members and allows them to keep up-to-date on relevant legislation, funding opportunities, and library advocacy initiatives.

Organizational Stability and Growth

As a volunteer-run organization, the key to the sustained health of NHLA is to cultivate the relationships with the members it has as well as create opportunities that appeal to new members.

- With a goal of increasing member involvement and investment in NHLA, appoint a subcommittee to review all aspects of membership in NHLA, including but not limited to: welcoming packets, description of sections and committees, review of fees, and membership incentives for new members
- Create standardized training for Executive Board members that includes review of: the history of NHLA, the structure and procedures of NHLA, roles and delineation of sections and committees, acronyms and a standardized handoff document for officers, sections and committees

(Voted to accept by the NHLA Executive Board March 2024)