

PRRLA Background Information

Formal structure of PRRLA and authority of Secretariat

- PRRLA is a simple organization with no formal by-laws and with very little bureaucratic overhead.
- The Secretariat is responsible for the operation of PRRLA and establishes procedures and recommends changes (if required) to Steering Committee.
- The tradition has been for the Secretariat to consult with the Steering Committee and the Membership as needed regarding the annual meeting program and any other significant operational issues (eg projects, proposed name changes, etc) that may arise.

The University of California Irvine Library has full authority as Secretariat to continue with the same traditions or to establish a more formal organization, to recommend PRRLA move in new directions, etc.

Three-year term of service

When PRRLA was first formed, Karl Lo made a very good case that relocation of the Secretariat among the membership at three-year intervals would broaden the cultural perspective and would bring new energy and leadership. However the three-year interval is not rigid. Terms of service have varied from three years to five years. Also, note that this is simply a tradition. PRRLA has no formal policy regarding the three-year term of service. It is up to the Secretariat to determine how long they are able to serve but clearly there is a need to give notice at least six months prior to end of agreed term so there is an opportunity to canvas potential alternative members who might be willing to take on the Secretariat.

Effective 1 January 2016

The formal date of transfer is deemed to be 1 January 2016. However it is too challenging to organize for all the tasks associated with the transfer to be accomplished on that specific date. The specifics can be resolved at the convenience of both libraries.

The primary tasks include:

- transfer of archival and administrative files
- transfer of funds
- transfer of responsibility for website & domains
- move the 3 listserv – Primary Contacts, Steering Committee & All Contacts.

Once the lists are transferred, and operational at the new host, it is recommended that the new Chair of the Secretariat makes an announcement to the Primary Contacts and the Steering Committee where members are not on the Primary Contacts list (eg Brian Flaherty at UofA) re transfer to UC Irvine.

Responsibilities of the Secretariat

- serve as formal contact for PRRLA
- manage membership
 - invoice and collect annual dues with funds kept in a separate account
 - maintain membership contact information
 - invite new members with guidance from Steering Committee
- manage communication among membership
 - manage website
 - manage member listserv
- inform and consult with Steering Committee
 - ensure that Steering Committee is informed about all PRRLA activities
 - present action items and policy or project proposals to Steering Committee
 - manage Steering Committee listserv
 - initiate appointments to Steering Committee
- coordinate planning for annual meetings
 - identify host site
 - coordinate program planning with local site arrangements
- manage budget – allocate and expend funds for:
 - annual meetings
 - Secretariat expenses
 - Karl Lo Award
 - Pacific Rim Library service
 - special projects

Practice and policy – Secretariat administrative support

The Secretariat is compensated for labor and administrative costs.

- US\$10,000 per annum for administrative support (dues collection, fiscal management, file management, mailings, etc.)
- travel expenses to annual membership meeting for:
 - Chair of the Secretariat
 - one additional Secretariat staff member

Practice and policy – Membership

The PRRLA Steering Committee has endorsed a policy of incremental growth. The criteria for membership and the process for joining are simple:

- nominations of new members to Secretariat to be vetted by Steering Committee (usually via email between annual meetings)
- criteria: desire to join and willingness to participate.

There may well be changes to these criteria if APRU agrees to affiliate with PRRLA later in 2016.

Practice and policy – Membership – Dues

- US\$2,000 per year for annual dues
- membership is terminated after non-payment of dues for two years

The annual dues were set at US\$2,000 per year in 1997. The amount was purposely set low to make it more reasonable for libraries with limited funding resources. The annual income from 32 member libraries is sufficient to fully fund the annual meeting, the PRL server, the Karl Lo Award, and the administrative costs for the Secretariat.

Additional funds would be needed to support more substantial activities. These funds could be garnered via higher annual dues (which might result in a loss of membership) or with an increase in membership. PRRLA was started with grant funds (US\$300,000) from the Luce Foundation, and another proposal for funds for staff exchanges is under discussion with the Luce Foundation, with Brian Schottlaender continuing to take responsibility for this proposal. It may also be possible to obtain grants in support of expansion of membership or activities. However, this situation may also change if affiliation proceeds with APRU.

Practice and policy – Membership – Dues collection

The fiscal year for PRRLA is currently 1 July to 30 June. The annual invoice for membership dues is sent in early July each year. If necessary, reminders are also sent with individual emails to Primary Contacts as a final step to ensure all members have paid. Payment has generally been via check or wire transfer. If there is a fee associated with the wire transfer that reduces the amount of money that is transferred, this differential is ignored.

Practice and policy – Karl Lo Award

In recognition of Karl Lo's leadership in forming the Pacific Rim Digital Library Alliance and in recognition of his contributions to global libraries and librarianship, the Karl Lo Award is available for access by a PRRLA librarian each year.

This competitive award provides

(a) support for travel and research with a focus on Pacific Rim library collaboration and digital library issues.

- \$10,000 annual award (alternative: two \$5,000 awards)
- simple narrative application
- PRRLA Steering Committee assesses and approves or denies
- application can be made at any time
- each award winner must provide a formal report to PRRLA membership
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or (b) travel expenses for a librarian to attend a PRRLA membership meeting.

Selection criteria:

- less than two years post-MLIS as a librarian
- brief essay regarding value of Pacific Rim library collaboration
- application deadline: 30 June
- PRRLA Steering Committee selects.

The most common application of the awards has been for travel expenses to a PRRLA meeting.

It is recommended that a call be made for the Karl Lo Award mid-year once the location and theme for the annual meeting has been announced and preparations are underway.

Practice and policy – Annual membership meeting – Fees

The primary benefit of PRRLA membership is attendance at the annual membership meeting and interaction with other PRRLA members. To this end, membership dues are used to fully fund the meeting, including the costs of meals, entertainment, and excursions.

- There is no registration fee for the annual membership meeting.
- There is no fee for the cultural day excursion on the third day of the meeting. This helps to ensure maximum participation.
 - There were several years in the past in which the cost of the cultural day excursion was paid by the attendees. However, attendance began to decline and the value of the shared time was lost.
- There is no charge for personal guests at banquets or for the cultural day excursion.
 - Typically only a few PRRLA members are accompanied by a spouse or family member, i.e., the total cost to PRRLA is small.
 - The cost is nominal to include these individuals at banquets and the excursion, and the paperwork to process a fee collected from these individuals is more effort than the return.
 - There is benefit from the broadened cultural exchange.

Practice and policy – Annual membership meeting – Responsibilities of host institution

The primary role of the host institution is to facilitate local arrangements:

- identify and reserve meeting rooms
- contract for meals / banquets
- arrange ground transportation
- identify hotels
- provide local tourist information.

It is expected that the Program Planning Committee will coordinate closely with the host institution to ensure that all logistical needs are met.

The PRRLA Secretariat budgets to finance all expenses associated with a meeting although it has been the practice that, depending of the financial situation of the host institution, some meals and activities are provided at no charge to PRRLA. However it is agreed that hosting a meeting should not automatically result in additional costs for a host; it is their decision as to what costs are charged. Appropriate sponsorships have also been used in some instances but this is not the norm and needs to be done in collaboration with the Secretariat or the Steering Committee.

Practice and policy – Annual membership meeting – Attendance

- Attendance is limited to two representatives from each PRRLA member organization. Exceptions may be approved by the Secretariat.
 - This is rarely a concern because member libraries usually cannot afford to send more than two attendees.
 - The approval for more than two attendees has always been pro forma. When there is an extra attendee it has always been for the benefit of PRRLA, e.g., the additional person often a presenter at the program
- The host institution for a membership meeting may have more than two attendees at any session as long as the facilities have sufficient space and seating. We rely on the host to manage this.
- The Steering Committee may invite representatives from a non-PRRLA organization to a PRRLA membership meeting for purposes of developing projects and sharing technical expertise.
- The Steering Committee may invite a potential member to a PRRLA meeting.

Practice and policy – Annual membership meeting – Program

The format for the program of the annual meeting has been the same for many years: two days of content presentations, one day for a cultural excursion. Earlier, repeated informal polls have endorsed this format; however if there is a reason to change this format, the Secretariat and the Steering Committee are empowered to make that change.

There is a planning calendar in the files that serves as a checklist for the meeting planning process. It is also important to ensure that the three day program includes sufficient time (1.5 to 2 hours) on the first morning of the annual meeting for the Steering Committee to meet before the formal annual meeting convenes.

Practice and policy – Annual membership meeting – Formal letters of invitation for Chinese universities in order to obtain visas

Examples of previous letters of invitation are included in the files being transferred.

Membership lists

There are three membership lists in the files:

- PRRLA Primary Contacts [PRRLA-PRIMARY-CONTACTS@uci.edu]
 - formal membership list arranged by university and library name
 - contains name of director of library, i.e., the formal contact
 - contains primary mail and email addresses to be used for formal communication, dues invoice, etc.
- PRRLA Steering Committee [PRRLA-STEERING-L@uci.edu]
 - current and historical information about the Steering Committee
 - Feel free to develop a different way to keep track of this information.
- PRRLA All Contacts [PRRLA-L@uci.edu]
 - attendees at meetings since 2013
 - anyone who asks to be added to the listserv

Members of the listserv are allowed to send mail to the listserv. Non-members cannot send to the listserv. This eliminates transmission of spam.