

Policy of Ethical Behavior for YALSA Volunteers

This policy applies to all volunteers who perform official duties on behalf of YALSA, including: members of the Board of Directors, Task Forces, Juries, Advisory Boards, and Committees; as well as Editors, Member Managers, Bloggers, and so on.

YALSA values its members as well as the time and expertise they give to the organization. Therefore, it is important to the organization to provide resources, guidelines and support that empower them to be successful in their activities with YALSA. The guidelines listed below lay out a minimum expectation for all members who are appointed or elected to official YALSA groups, or positions, to provide clear expectations, promote a sense of equity and improve the quality of everyone's experience and the work they produce.

Throughout the full term of their appointment or term of office, all committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board members and other volunteers will

- I. Abide by all YALSA and ALA rules and regulations as well as federal, state and local laws, and laws of any other applicable jurisdiction.
 - A. Recognize that ALA/YALSA will be the copyright owner of any work created by/for the appointed group. Additionally, ALA/YALSA will have right of first refusal to any work product resulting from the appointed group (per ALA Policy Manual, Section 10.1.1).
 - B. Refrain from using YALSA or group resources to encourage or call for a boycott of any company. Federal antitrust laws prohibit ALA/YALSA as an organization from organizing, participating in or encouraging a boycott. This is enforced by criminal code (not tax code) and applies to a variety of organizations, including associations and not-for-profits.
 - C. Refrain from using YALSA or group resources to support or oppose any political candidate at the local, state or federal level. IRS tax code strictly prohibits ALA/YALSA as a 501c3 not-for-profit organization from lobbying for or against any political candidate.
 - D. Demonstrate a willingness to serve YALSA and support its mission and strategic plan.
 - E. Be personal members of YALSA and keep their membership up to date.
- II. Conduct all affairs in a professional manner, with good faith, honesty, integrity, high ethical standards and due diligence.
 - A. Adhere to a minimum level of professionalism in both virtual and face to face environments when interacting with the association, members, library community, vendors, partners, supporters and the public.
 - B. Show respect for the chair, fellow group members, staff and liaisons at all times, in person and online. Personal insults, name calling, harassment, intimidation,

discrimination, hate speech, or creation of an unsafe/unwelcome environment based on an individual's personal attributes, including, but not limited to: race, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, sex, physical or mental disability, appearance, or any other classification protected by law is inconsistent with the ideals and principles of ALA/YALSA and will not be tolerated.

C. Refrain from (as well as refrain from giving the appearance of) placing one's own self-interest or any third-party interest above that of YALSA.

D. Refrain from soliciting gifts, gratuities, free trips, honoraria, personal property, or any other item even of nominal value. If such items are freely given, members will use their own best judgment in accepting them. At no time should a member solicit or accept a gift, etc. as an inducement to provide special treatment to such donor with respect to matters pertaining to YALSA.

E. Frame messages, communications, comments, discussions, etc. as openly and inclusively as possible and be aware of how language or images may be perceived by others.

III. Keep matters confidential if they are designated as such in meetings, discussions or in writing.

IV. Use good judgment in dealing with association staff, vendors and the general public.

A. Understand that the only person with authority to speak for a member group is the chair. Only the President and Executive Director speak on behalf of YALSA, unless the task is delegated to another individual by the President or Executive Director.

B. Before making any contact with vendors, publishers, organizations, etc. first obtain consent from the chair, who then clears it with YALSA's President and Executive Director.

V. Use any association information and resources appropriately and ethically.

A. Refrain from using staff or YALSA resources (including items provided to you as part of committee service) for personal or third-party gain.

VI. Make a good faith effort to be a productive group member.

A. Be able and willing to work year-round in a virtual environment, using digital tools (e.g. Skype, wikis, e-chats, ALA Connect)

B. Devote adequate time to the work of the group. Group members agree to serve continuously for the entire length of the appointment.

C. Take a proactive approach to group work and seek clarification or assistance when needed.

D. Make an effort to communicate in a timely manner with the chair and other group members.

E. Recognize when circumstances arise that prevent you from being able to contribute adequately to the work of the group, and step aside so that a replacement can be secured and the work of the group and YALSA will not suffer.

If any appointee or committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board members, etc. are ever found to have breached one or more of these guidelines, he/she may be asked by the President to relinquish their appointed position. In egregious cases where this policy is flagrantly violated, the incident may limit a member's capacity for securing future YALSA appointments. Any individual who feels they were wrongly removed from an appointed position can seek recourse through YALSA's Executive Committee.

If any appointee or committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board member, etc. ever experiences personal insults, name calling, harassment, discrimination, hate speech, and/or any other situation that creates an unsafe or unwelcome environment, they are encouraged to report it to YALSA's President or Executive Director. Contact information is online at www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsaalacontacts. Effort will be made to keep reports confidential to the extent permitted without compromising the rights of others. It is important to recognize, though, that in the process of following up on reports of harassment, complete confidentiality is not always possible.

If any member volunteer is ever in a situation where the YALSA President is the offender, they are encouraged to contact YALSA's Executive Director, and vice versa. ALA's President and Executive Director may also be contacted if the member feels that is the best approach given the particular circumstance.

In order to support the work of YALSA groups and its appointees, elected officials and volunteers, YALSA will, in addition to complying with the items stated above:

- I. Coordinate the volunteer process
 - a. Identify potential group members, make appointments and fill vacancies
 - b. Compile, maintain and distribute rosters for each appointed group
 - c. Create and maintain policies and procedures to facilitate the work of member groups and appointees, and to provide that information via the online YALSA Handbook
 - d. Help clarify any policy or procedural matters
 - e. Conduct regular evaluation of appointed groups via the Organization and Bylaws Committee to ensure effectiveness of meeting its stated goals
 - f. Provide recognition for group members' achievements
 - g. Seek out and employ industry best practices in relation to managing member engagement activities

- h. Seek feedback from members periodically to ensure the volunteer process meets their needs
- II.** Strive to provide members with the tools and support they need to be successful
- a. Provide periodic training and resources to help group members be successful in their volunteer role
 - b. Maintain and provide a virtual work space and tools for groups
 - c. Lend support for each group in the form of a board liaison and staff liaison
 - d. Offer the group the opportunity to have a meeting space at ALA Midwinter and Annual conferences
 - e. Assist chairs with management and leadership challenges, as requested
 - f. Answer group members' and volunteers' queries in a timely manner
 - h. Facilitate communication between the appointed group and other entities, such as YALSA's Board of Directors or ALA committees. Strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all member volunteers, through activities such as providing orientation that includes a review of the Policy of Ethical Behavior and provides an emphasis on professionalism, mutual respect, and inclusivity.

Committee/jury/taskforce/advisory board members who feel that YALSA is not meeting the stated expectations, as listed above, may share their concern with YALSA's President in order to work toward a resolution.

Additional Resources

- ALA Policy Manual: www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual
- YALSA Handbook: www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsahandbook

--Adopted by the YALSA Board of Directors, June 28, 2014 and updated June 23, 2018