

# ALA's Core Competences of Librarianship

*Final version*

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This document defines the basic knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies. Librarians working in school, academic, public, special, and governmental libraries, and in other contexts will need to possess specialized knowledge beyond that specified here.

## **CONTENTS**

- 1. Foundations of the Profession*
- 2. Information Resources*
- 3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information*
- 4. Technological Knowledge and Skills*
- 5. Reference and User Services*
- 6. Research*
- 7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning*
- 8. Administration and Management*

**A person graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies should know and, where appropriate, be able to employ:**

### **1. Foundations of the Profession**

**1A.** The ethics, values, and foundational principles of the library and information profession.

**1B.** The role of library and information professionals in the promotion of democratic principles and intellectual freedom (including freedom of expression, thought, and conscience).

**1C.** The history of libraries and librarianship.

**1D.** The history of human communication and its impact on libraries.

**1E.** Current types of library (school, public, academic, special, etc.) and closely related information agencies.

**1F.** National and international social, public, information, economic, and cultural policies and trends of significance to the library and information profession.

**1G.** The legal framework within which libraries and information agencies operate. That framework includes laws relating to copyright, privacy, freedom of expression, equal rights (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act), and intellectual property.

**1H.** The importance of effective advocacy for libraries, librarians, other library workers, and library services.

**1I.** The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.

**1J.** Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).

**1K.** Certification and/or licensure requirements of specialized areas of the profession.

## **2. Information Resources**

**2A.** Concepts and issues related to the lifecycle of recorded knowledge and information, from creation through various stages of use to disposition.

**2B.** Concepts, issues, and methods related to the acquisition and disposition of resources, including evaluation, selection, purchasing, processing, storing, and de-selection.

**2C.** Concepts, issues, and methods related to the management of various collections.

**2D.** Concepts, issues, and methods related to the maintenance of collections, including preservation and conservation.

## **3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information**

**3A.** The principles involved in the organization and representation of recorded knowledge and information.

**3B.** The developmental, descriptive, and evaluative skills needed to organize recorded knowledge and information resources.

**3C.** The systems of cataloging, metadata, indexing, and classification standards and methods used to organize recorded knowledge and information.

#### **4. Technological Knowledge and Skills**

**4A.** Information, communication, assistive, and related technologies as they affect the resources, service delivery, and uses of libraries and other information agencies.

**4B.** The application of information, communication, assistive, and related technology and tools consistent with professional ethics and prevailing service norms and applications.

**4C.** The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.

**4D.** The principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations in order to recognize and implement relevant technological improvements.

#### **5. Reference and User Services**

**5A.** The concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information to individuals of all ages and groups.

**5B.** Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.

**5C.** The methods used to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in their use of recorded knowledge and information.

**5D.** Information literacy/information competence techniques and methods, numerical literacy, and statistical literacy.

**5E.** The principles and methods of advocacy used to reach specific audiences to promote and explain concepts and services.

**5F.** The principles of assessment and response to diversity in user needs, user communities, and user preferences.

**5G.** The principles and methods used to assess the impact of current and emerging situations or circumstances on the design and implementation of appropriate services or resource development.

## **6. Research**

**6A.** The fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

**6B.** The central research findings and research literature of the field.

**6C.** The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.

## **7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning**

**7A.** The necessity of continuing professional development of practitioners in libraries and other information agencies.

**7B.** The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.

**7C.** Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.

**7D.** The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.

## **8. Administration and Management**

**8A.** The principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.

**8B.** The principles of effective personnel practices and human resource development.

**8C.** The concepts behind, and methods for, assessment and evaluation of library services and their outcomes.

**8D.** The concepts behind, and methods for, developing partnerships, collaborations, networks, and other structures with all stakeholders and within communities served.

**8E.** The concepts behind, issues relating to, and methods for, principled, transformational leadership.