

TO: ALA Council

RE: Simplified ALA Membership Model; Increased Salary Threshold for Non-Salaried Members

ACTION REQUESTED

On the recommendation of the ALA Membership Committee and ALA Executive Board, action is requested from Councilors to cast their vote to:

- (1) Approve the simplified ALA membership model for the Personal Members Classification of Membership to be implemented in FY24.
- (2) Change the salary threshold for non-salaried membership from \$30,000 to \$45,000 for FY23.

ACTION REQUESTED BY: ALA Membership Committee

CONTACT PERSON: Miranda Bennett, Chair, Membership Committee

STAFF LIAISON CONTACT: Melissa Walling, Staff Liaison, Membership Committee

DATE: January 7, 2022

DRAFT OF MOTION:

On the recommendation of the ALA Membership Committee and ALA Executive Board, the ALA Council to approve the simplified ALA membership model for the Personal Members Classification of Membership in FY24. *Background on pages 2-4*

On the recommendation of the ALA Membership Committee and ALA Executive Board, the ALA Council to change the salary threshold for non-salaried membership from \$30,000 to \$45,000 for FY23. *Background on page 4*

BACKGROUND:

These recommendations are based on an ALA commissioned research study with Avenue M in 2018 to identify a membership model that supports growth in both membership and revenue. Over the past few years, the Membership Committee has been working on identifying recommendations and examining the impacts. The full background is attached.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix A: Simplified Membership Model and Corresponding Prices (page 5)
- Appendix B: Division and Round Table Dues Highlighting Nominal Impact (page 6)
- Appendix C: IT Systems Diagram Overview of Impact of Membership Model (page 7)
- Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions (page 8)

Background and Overarching Goals of Membership Model – Action Requested

As noted in ALA policy (Section A.1.6) Member Engagement Goal Statement: ALA provides an environment in which all members, regardless of location or position, have the opportunity to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from engagement in their association.

With a market share of approximately 15%, there is great potential for growth; however, [recent research](#) has indicated that the complexities and cost of the membership model is a barrier to membership. As presented to the board in Fall, 2019 ([EBD 12.20](#)) and Fall, 2020 ([EBD 12.11.1](#)) the Membership Committee is recommending a modification to the membership model to achieve the following goals: Simplicity, Flexibility, and Personalization. We want to ensure that this new model positions ALA as the professional membership home for *all* library workers and library supporters, especially those not currently represented within our membership.

In 2018, ALA contracted with a market research firm, Avenue M which presented five potential models to ALA. These five models were informed by the goals of creating a membership structure that will increase membership growth and market share and increase dues revenue for the organization. After review and deliberation, the Membership Committee is recommending a two-phase approach to ALA's membership model work:

- **Phase One:** Consolidate the eleven (11) membership categories into four (4) membership categories. The new model would roll out in FY24 and would not change division or round table structures. FY23 will be needed to work on implementation and communication plans.
- **Phase Two:** Building upon Phase One, launch an “enhanced” membership package which will include a bundle of additional benefits. Examples of the bundled benefits may include an e-learning bundle, a division membership, or round table membership.

With the two-phase approach, the Membership Committee is focusing on the first goal of simplification with this consolidated model. We are also aiming to launch improved loyalty and flexibility options including monthly installment payments and auto-renewals. Phase Two will tackle the goal of personalization and flexibility by offering bundles to enhance the membership package.

Phase One – Simplified Membership Model:

Consolidate the eleven (11) membership categories as outlined in Appendix A (page 5). All member benefits and privileges will remain the same, including discounts, voting rights and ability to volunteer.

Pros – Consistent dues for members will minimize confusion and promote ease of access and equity as members will be able to engage with ALA under four (4) simple categories. Additionally, this will decrease the amount of ALA staff time spent on inquiries, technology mapping, and membership recruitment efforts.

Cons – While this achieves the goal of simplification, this does not achieve the goal of flexibility, which will be tackled in future phases. Depending on the final dues prices, the pricing may not be different enough to combat the opinion that our dues are too expensive.

Phase One does not make any changes to the Continuing, Honorary or Lifetime Memberships. Joint Student Membership will also continue to be offered with participating ALA Chapters.

Phase One will have a nominal financial impact on six (6) divisions and four (4) round tables that will need to alter their rates for International, Non-Salaried, Retired, or Support Staff Members (Appendix B – page 6). Since these are smaller membership categories, the revenue impact will be negligible but should be noted here. The Membership staff team has already notified the impacted divisions and round tables and will work directly with them to analyze their options and determine how to align their prices with the new model.

Phase Two Efforts:

The ALA Membership Committee will conduct a financial analysis on bundling including division membership, round table membership or online learning offering in Phase Two. With the implementation of the new Learning Management System and the corresponding price standardization, efforts are underway to start building an e-learning bundle to be rolled out for FY24.

Phase Two work will expand to include consideration of division or round table memberships when the financial analysis and technology requirements can be conducted. The recent action taken by Council ([ALA CD#46.1, Item #2 \(Roundtables\)](#)) will lay the groundwork for Phase Two since it standardizes round table dues prices and creates opportunities to consider membership bundles.

Phase Two efforts will be presented to ALA Executive Board in Spring, 2022 and are on track to be considered as part of the dues prices that will be presented to Council for a vote in FY23.

Dues Pricing:

The Membership Committee and the Membership Office have been working to determine the new price points for the simplified membership model. ALA Executive Board reviewed a preliminary proposal at the 2021 Fall October Board Meeting and requested additional analysis to be presented at the Spring, 2022 ALA Executive Board Meeting. Final prices will need to be approved by Council and the general membership prior to implementation. This information is projected to be presented to Council at either the June 2022 meeting or the January 2023 meeting.

Timeline for Implementation:

Membership Committee approval	October 5, 2021
ALA Executive Board approval of Personal Members Classification of Membership (simplified model)	October 29, 2021
Discuss changes with Policy Monitoring Committee and Constitution and Bylaws Committee	November 2021-January 2022
Virtual conversations with Councilors to discuss model and address questions via Council forum	January 2022
ALA Council vote of Personal Members Classification of Membership (simplified model) <i>Note: Per ALA Bylaws Article I. Membership, Section 2. Categories within each classification of membership in the Association may be</i>	January 2022

<i>established by the Council upon recommendation by the ALA Executive Board.</i>	
Implementation process with goal of completion by start of FY24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate implementation costs into FY23 IT budget • Communication plan for new simplified model 	Spring 2022-Summer 2023
ALA Executive Board approval of dues prices	Spring or June 2022
ALA Council vote on dues prices	January 2023
Member vote on dues prices <i>Note: Per ALA Bylaws Article I. Membership, Section 2. Dues for personal members shall be set by the Executive Board with approval by a vote of the Council and subject to a mail vote of the personal members.</i>	Spring 2023
New membership model goes live	September 1, 2023 (FY24)

Costs for Implementation:

The preliminary estimate for implementation of this project is 300+ IT staff hours. While this is a simplification project, the complexity of our systems requires significant effort to implement the new model. Any outside costs to implement this project will be considered in the FY23 budget. There are no costs in FY22 expected. See Appendix C (page 7) for a snapshot of the IT systems impacted by this simplification and a high-level overview of effort.

Background and Change to Non-Salaried Membership Threshold – Action Requested:

During the discussion on the membership model, the ALA Membership Committee discussed the \$30,000 salary threshold for non-salaried members. Based on the Salary Survey Data, the \$30,000 price point is not in line with the average salary and has not increased in recent history. Therefore, the ALA Executive Board, on the recommendation of the ALA Membership Committee is recommending that this salary be increased to \$45,000. This salary threshold is in alignment with the average salary of some of those working in the smallest libraries based on the [2019 Salary Survey](#) which is a growth market for ALA membership.






Historically membership in the non-salaried category has averaged 3,000 members; therefore, a nominal increase in this category could be expected but it would not have a measurable impact on dues revenue. This change should position ALA to bring in additional members instead of losing dues revenue for current members.

This modification can take place for FY23 as it is not dependent on the membership model effort.

Appendix A: Phase One Membership Model Simplification

The left column shows the current eleven (11) membership categories that are being consolidated down to four (4). The four new categories are indicated in the right column and by the corresponding colors.

As noted above, there are no changes to Continuing, Honorary or Lifetime Memberships. Also, joint student membership will continue to be offered as part of the Student Membership category.

Current Member Type		Proposed Member Type
1st year Regular		Individual Type I Includes librarians and other employees in library and information services or related positions that: (a) require a master's degree; (b) require a state level certification; or (c) are managerial.
2nd year Regular		
3rd year+ Regular		
Earning <\$30,000		Individual Type II Includes librarians and other employees in library and information services or related positions that are: (a) earning < \$45K annually; or (b) working outside the U.S.; (c) retired; or (d) not listed in Type I.
Support Staff		
Retired		
International		
Associate		Supporter Includes those not employed in library and information services or related activities who, through their personal commitment and support, promote library and information services.
Friends		
Trustee		
Student		Student Includes individuals enrolled in a program for a certificate or a degree in library and information studies. Student membership is limited to five total years.

Appendix B: Division and Round Table Dues

Note: The highlighted cells indicate where dues are not consistent across current membership categories that will be consolidated in the proposed model.

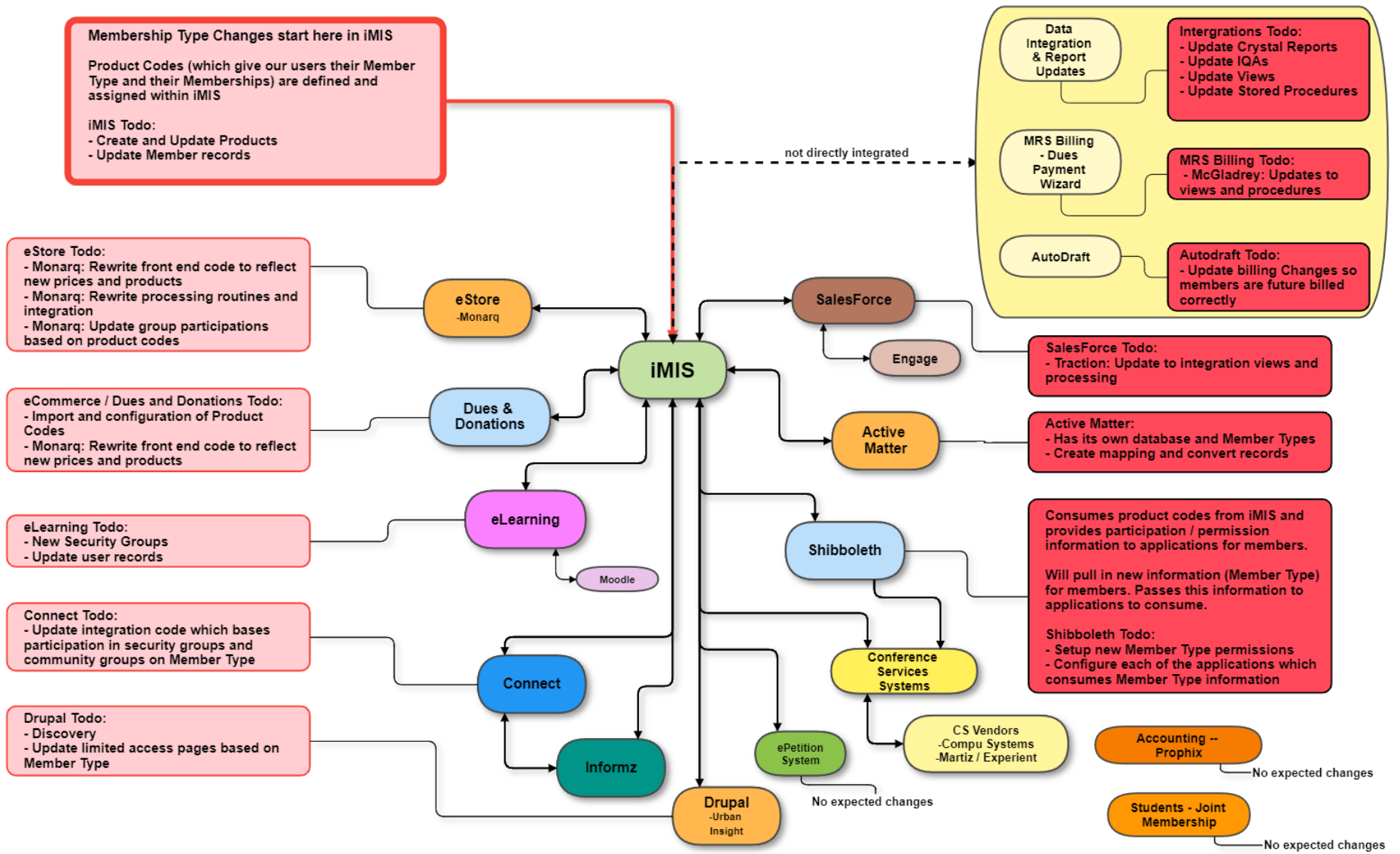
Divisions:

Member Type Description	ALA Dues	AASL	ACRL	ALSC	CORE	PLA	RUSA	UNITED	YALSA
Regular Member (Y1)	75	62	69	50	70	78	67	55	62
Regular Member (Y2)	114	62	69	50	70	78	67	55	62
Regular Member (Y3)	150	62	69	50	70	78	67	55	62
Make < \$30,000 annually	54	40	69	35	40	57	33	55	27
Support Staff Member	54	62	69	35	40	57	33	55	27
Retired Member	54	40	45	35	40	57	33	55	27
International Member	90	62	69	50	40	78	67	55	62
Associate Member	68	62	69	25	40	78	67	55	27
Trustee Member	68	62	69	50	40	78	67	55	62
Friends of ALA	68	62	69	50	40	78	67	55	27
Student Member	40	40	5	20	30	35	25	20	27

Round Tables

Member Type Description	ALA Dues	EMIERT	FMRT	GAMERT	GNCRT	GODORT	IFRT	IRRT	LEARNRT	LHRT	LIRT	LRRT	LSSIRT	MAGIRT	NMRT	RMRT	RRT	SRRT	STORT	SUSTRT
Regular Member (Y1)	75	20	20	10	15	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	15	3	10
Regular Member (Y2)	114	20	20	10	15	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	15	3	10
Regular Member (Y3)	150	20	20	10	15	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	15	3	10
Make < \$30,000 annually	54	20	20	10	5	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	5	3	5
Support Staff Member	54	20	20	10	5	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	15	3	10
Retired Member	54	20	20	10	15	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	5	3	5
International Member	90	20	20	10	15	20	15	0	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	8	3	10
Associate Member	68	20	20	10	15	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	15	3	10
Trustee Member	68	20	20	10	15	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	15	3	10
Friends of ALA	68	20	20	10	15	20	15	15	20	20	15	15	10	20	15	20	15	15	3	10
Student Member	40	10	0	10	5	10	5	5	20	5	5	0	10	10	10	20	5	0	3	0

Appendix C: IT Systems Diagram



Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions:

Q. The new model appears to be for Personal Members only, what about Organizational and Corporate Members?

A. There are no proposed changes to Organizational or Corporate Membership categories at this time. The Avenue M research which supported this work, focused on Personal Members only. Personal Members are also the largest percentage of our membership. Therefore, the Membership Committee chose to start the membership model effort focusing on Personal Members only. Now that this work is underway, the Committee can focus on updating the Organizational and Corporate Membership structure.

Q. I think we should bundle division and round table dues to make it easier on our members, why isn't that included in this plan?

A. This is definitely something that is being pursued during Phase Two. The ALA Membership Committee does not have authority for division or round table dues, so we wanted to focus on the areas within the scope of the committee first. As we start working on Phase Two, we will collaborate with division and round table representatives to consider some of these bundles.

Q. Why aren't dues prices included in this vote?

A. The Committee chose to tackle this work in two phases to ensure a timely implementation of the new model. As noted above, there is a great deal of IT configuration that is required to support the new model and ample lead time is required for that effort. Because of revenue implications, the dues prices require a bit more deliberation and that recommendation will be presented to the ALA Executive Board in Spring 2022 for the first round of discussion.

Q. Why are international members getting a reduced price?

A. The Committee spent a lot of time thinking about how to price International Members and made an intentional decision to categorize them as Individual Type II to encourage growth of this segment of our community. For many International Members, the current \$90 price point is too high, especially as the majority of them are also paying dues with their country's library association as well.

Associations with larger percentages of International Members consider using the World Bank scaling classification rates. Since ALA does not currently use that type of classification, we wanted to aim for the lower rate to encourage growth and engagement of our international colleagues.

With the new model, members will continue to use the honor system in selecting the appropriate membership categories.