**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**FROM:** Barb Macikas (bmacikas@ala.org)

**RE:** Board immersion experience

**DATE:** October 23, 2018

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:** Report

**ACTION REQUESTED BY: N/A**

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**  N/A

**OVERVIEW**

In 2017, the PLA board discussed Nashville as a conference site and these [guidelines](http://www.ala.org/pla/about/workingwith/conferencesites)\* resulted. We are considering ways to ensure the 2020 conference will adhere to the spirit of these guidelines, including holding community outreach activities during the conference and dedicating the Saturday of our conference to get attendees out in the community.

At our fall board meeting, we will be participating in an insight immersion program in Nashville, themed around inclusion. The goals of this activity are to:

* Provide a sense of the kinds of activities being considered and to get the Board’s input on how we might use our conference to educate and inspire action.
* Help the Board become more familiar with our conference site and engage the Board in conference planning from the beginning.
* Provide board development by changing up the Board’s traditional meeting structure and providing a thought-provoking and fun experience.

**KEY CURRENT ACTIVITIES/METRICS**

PLA will be using the company Now Plus One to facilitated the insight immersion - <http://www.nowplusone.com/>. Stephan Paschalides is the founder of Now Plus One and will be managing the immersion experience, kicking off during dinner on Sunday, Nov. 4. The insight immersion program will take place all day on Monday, Nov. 5, and the debriefing session will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 6, ending around 2pm. We hope to come out of the debriefing with ideas that can help us further develop our plans for 2020.

Thanks go to Kent Oliver, Nashville Public Library and Susan Earl, Brentwood Library, co-chairs of the PLA 2020 Local Committee for their assistance in planning. Susan and Kent will be joining us for some portions of the event. Thanks also go to PLA staffers Melissa Faubel Johnson and Lian Drago for all their hard working pulling the event together.

**BUDGET**

The cost of this pilot will be covered by Gates grant funding.

**ASSESSMENT**

PLA staff will use the Board’s input to further develop PLA 2020 events. The ultimate program developed for PLA 2020 will be evaluated.

**PLA STRATEGIC GOAL LINK (check all that apply)**

TRANSFORMATION   LEADERSHIP  ADV. & AWARENESS  E.D.I.S.J.  ORG. EXCELLENCE

## Core Values and Conference Sites—PLA Guidelines\*

The PLA Board discussed the [issues](http://mediamatters.org/blog/2016/04/12/what-media-need-know-about-tennessee-s-new-anti-lgbt-bill/209882) associated with the PLA 2020 Nashville site at the ALA 2016 Annual Conference board meeting (see board documents [2016.81a](https://connect.ala.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=c4c82a60-ca26-4f0d-8a86-43d0d88bfd8f&forceDialog=0) and [2017.16](https://connect.ala.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=05809cbc-a65e-4066-af8b-f52dab8207cb&forceDialog=0)). The discussion was the result of newly enacted legislation ([Tennessee HB1840](http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/109/Bill/HB1840.pdf)) that allows mental health counselors to refuse to treat patients based on the therapist's religious or personal beliefs.

The PLA Board considered these factors in voting to stay with the original site, Nashville. These will serve as guidelines for future conversations about meeting sites and will be shared with the PLA Conference Committee and other PLA/ALA groups that help develop our continuing education programs that support the [core values of librarianship](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/corevalues#social):

* No conference/meeting site is immune from future political actions or legislation contrary to our values;
* Conference planning cycles may begin as early as 10 years out; PLA can monitor but cannot predict what may happen in a host city or state;
* PLA uses and will continue to use language in our hotel/convention center contracts that specifically spells out our civil rights’ values and principles and PLA will be proactive in seeking sites that best align with those values and principles;
* PLA is a national organization and our members, stakeholders and libraries live, work and serve communities in all 50 states;
* Through its conferences, PLA provides high quality education opportunities and seeks to educate and share with host communities our core values and principles;
* PLA conferences have been and will be inclusive as public libraries are community conveners on equity, inclusion, and diversity;
* Equity, diversity, inclusion and community engagement will be addressed at conferences going forward;
* PLA will communicate to its membership the thinking behind this decision and will plan an inclusive conference in Nashville and at future meetings and conferences;
* PLA will work with the ALA Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table and use the recommendations from the ALA Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to guide conference planning;
* An intended outcome of our conference will be to raise awareness and ultimately, to impact changes to policies and law that are discriminatory. PLA will use our presence to educate and inspire action.

Approved by the PLA Board of Directors, January 2017.