

VALLA Task Force Report

Background

The VLA Executive Committee, at their April 19, 2022 meeting, passed a resolution to sunset the Continuing Education Committee, removing the Virginia Library Leadership Academy from the CEC umbrella and establish it as its own Committee.

To help usher in this change, a VALLA 2024 Task Force was formed, with Clint S. Rudy (past VALLA Chair, VALLA graduate and Suffolk Public Library Director) as Chair with input from previous VALLA graduates and Co-Chairs, including Margaret Howard, who chaired the 2022 VALLA. The Task Force will end in September 2023, at which time VALLA will become a Committee, ensuring that the 2nd VP of VLA will manage the membership of the committee.

The Task Force was charged with:

Establishing protocol for:

- applications for future cohorts
- communication with potential and accepted candidates
- securing speakers for the Academy
- evaluations/surveys of past academy attendees and VALLA 2024 attendees
- ensuring that the program is financially self-sustaining
- recruitment of mentors
- assistance with completion and implementation of projects
- a project management cycle for all future VALLA programs
- site selection for VALLA 2024 and all subsequent VALLA events
- description of the committee and its bylaws for inclusion in the VLA Manual

Members

Dr. Jennifer Brown, Augusta County Library Director
Zach Elder, 2nd Vice President, Virginia Library Association/Massanutten Regional Library Director
Kendra Hawkins, Coordinator of Library Services - TCC
Margaret Howard, Branch Manager, Chesterfield Public Library
Tina Rollins, William R. and Norman B. Library Director - Hampton University
Clint S. Rudy, Suffolk Public Library Director
Lisa Varga, Virginia Library Association Executive Director
Liz Weir, Dickson Librarian, Chrysler Museum of Art

Input from the Library Community

Surveys:

- Conducted two online surveys, one for previous VALLA participants and another for the library community.
- Provided wide distribution over academic, public, school, and special libraries.
- Random drawings for gift cards were provided for both survey audiences.

Poster Session:

- At the 2022 VLA Conference, shared information about VALLA, provided the QR code to the survey, and asked two prompting questions:
 - What are the traits of a good leader?
 - Who is a leader you admire?

Key Findings

The following are key findings used to inform the restructuring of VALLA and the development of the proposed vision, mission, and values:

Audience

The need for individualized leadership development that is catered to the individual's current leadership development stage, position in the organization, and future career goals.

Focus on Leadership

Make the distinction between leadership and management, and be clear on the focus of VALLA during the promotional stage.

VALLA Structure

Networking was seen as an important aspect of past VALLA sessions. The short amount of time participants have in-person should focus on networking, building relationships, and interacting with other participants. Additionally, participants did not feel they received further development opportunities following the in-person workshop.

Previous iterations of VALLA included a project participants were to complete following the workshop, however there was a lack of accountability and guidance based on mentor involvement. Since peer learning and mentorship were identified as areas to improve upon, as well as the need for additional time to delve into leadership topics, the following structure is proposed in an effort to maintain peer relationships, focus on individualized leadership development plans, social learning, and mentorship the 11 months following the in-person workshop.

Career Advancement

Past participants indicated attending VALLA supported their career advancement.

Promotion & Awareness

Respondents indicated a need for clear messaging that outlines:

- Time commitments
- Expectations following the in-person workshop
- Who VALLA is geared toward
- What content will be covered

Barriers to Access

Respondents indicated the following barriers to participation in VALLA:

- Amount of time away from the building
- Travel Time for the in-person workshop
- Cost
- Time commitment following the in-person workshop
- Organizational support

Recommendations: Vision

Develop a diverse Virginia library workforce to become leaders in their community in all stages of their career.

Mission

Provide leadership development and mentoring that is individualized, regular, and accessible.

Values

Individualized Leadership:

VALLA values the many leadership styles and stages within Virginia Libraries and aims to meet cohorts where they are in their leadership journey.

Increase Equity, Accessibility and Inclusivity:

In order to provide the most opportunities possible, VALLA is designed so that it has as few time, financial and accessibility barriers as possible through an equity lens.

Personal Growth:

Realizing that all career growth comes with understanding one's own strengths, VALLA will incorporate various elements of self-reflection and visioning.

Connection Building:

The spread of great ideas and inspiration only comes through connection with others, therefore VALLA will utilize mentorship, networking, coaching, relationship building, and social learning to create growth within our cohorts and across the Commonwealth.

Alternative and Supplemental Leadership/Management Opportunities

With VALLA's sole focus on leadership, as well as being offered as a competitive, time sensitive and structured process, other opportunities will be shared as alternative and supplemental options.

Library of Virginia

- Management Academy (available as a self-paced or facilitated online format)
- Niche Academy Training

ALA Leadership Institute

Association of Research Libraries Leadership Fellows

PLA Leadership Academy

AASL Course

Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians

LEAD (Leading, Educating, and Developing)

Proposed Structure

IN-PERSON

WHEN: March/April

WHERE: Richmond area/Western VA

WHO: 20 – 30 Participants recommended
One Facilitator
VALLA Committee Chair and One Other Member

TOOL: Basecamp/Niche Academy

IN-PERSON SCHEDULE (intensive)*:

PreWork: "Get to know yourself"
Leadership Style Test
Personality Tests
"Get to know others" online chats/posts

Sunday- Checkin and Voluntary Dinner

Monday- Team Building (from PreWork)
"Why" of Leadership
Leadership Skills
Dinner- Discussion of the year long process; "aspirations", "reflection", time management, staying engaged

Tuesday- Strengths and Gaps (from PreWork)
Self-Reflection- "How to..." and tips/tricks
Building your Leadership Identity (Exploration)
Dinner- "reflection"

Wednesday- Visioning
Lunch- wrap up, reflection, evaluation, departure

*** Schedule subject to change based on budget and participant feedback.**

POST-SESSIONS

Time Commitment: 2 hours/month for 12 months

Content/Reflection (1 hour/month)

Mentorship Group meeting (1 hour/month)

Topics:

Visioning

Change Management

Communication/Interpersonal Relationship Building (EDI lens)

Cultural Responsiveness

Leadership Plan- development as a "project"

Mentorship Groups:

Mentors- lead small groups of participants
(mentor manual and guidance)

Time to reflect on the content (Pre-Work)

Reflect on challenges/experiences and learn from each other

Funding Recommendations

\$37,000 budget (all inclusive for each participant)

1. VLA Annual Budget (phased in over 4 - 5 years)
2. VLA JobLine Fees (allocated for VALLA)
3. Sponsors (vendors, libraries, VPLDA, library schools, etc.)
4. Donations (previous participants, general members, etc.)
5. Fundraising (signature event/item(s), raffle, or similar Idea)
6. Fees (tuition, lodging, meals, etc.)

Recommendation is for phased in funding to cover the total costs of VALLA with at least \$10,000 for the 2024 Cohort, which would cover the costs of the facilitator. An estimated \$40,000 would be needed for the 2026 Cohort with a recommendation to include an inflationary adjustment each year.

VALLA Budget

VALLA	30 PEOPLE
Parking	\$500.00
Breakfast	\$3,000.00
Lunch	\$4,000.00
Dinner	\$4,000.00
Breaks	\$1,500.00
Rooms	\$11,000.00
AV	\$2,000.00
Supplies, Materials, etc.	\$1,000.00
Facilitator	\$10,000.00
TOTAL	\$37,000.00

2024 VALLA Budget

VALLA 2024	25 PEOPLE
(Food/Beverage=32.3% tax)	
Parking (\$3/Day)	\$150.00
Breakfast (\$20+\$6.46=\$26.46)	\$1,323.00
Lunch (\$22+\$7.11=\$29.11)	\$1,455.50
Dinner (\$40+\$12.92=\$52.92)	\$1,323.00
Breaks (\$16+\$5.17=\$21.17)	\$1,058.50
Dessert Reception	\$750.00
Rooms (\$98+\$12.04=\$110.04)	\$5,502.00
AV (\$700)	\$1,400.00
Supplies, Materials, etc.	\$1,000.00
Facilitator	\$7,500.00
TOTAL	\$21,462.00
Sponsorships	\$26,660.00
NonMember (\$2,025)	\$0.00
Funding Needed	-\$5,198.00

VALLA Committee (VLA Manual Text)

Purpose:

To implement, promote, and evaluate VALLA (Virginia Library Leadership Academy).

Objectives:

Vision: Develop a diverse Virginia library workforce to become leaders in their community in all stages of their career.

Mission: Provide leadership development and mentoring that is individualized, regular, and accessible.

Values: Individualized Leadership:

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Personal Growth:

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Officers and Membership:

Chair: The Chair is appointed for a two-year term by the President and is a member of Council. The Chair becomes Past Chair for a two-year term once their term ends.

Vice Chair-Chair Elect: Vice Chair-Chair Elect is appointed for a two-year term by the Chair and becomes Chair at the end of their term.

Membership: The Second Vice President appoints at least two regular members. Regular members serve for two-year terms. Committee members pay Association dues by January 1 of each year of office.

Records Management: In order to ensure sustainability, accountability, and continuity, all documents, files, etc. will be stored on the VLA's selected project management service.