

OPLA Research & Evaluation Committee

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mandate:

The OPLA Research & Evaluation Committee reports to the OPLA Council and is responsible for collaborating with OPLA Council to develop a research and evaluation strategy that identifies and supports best practices for assessing the value of Ontario public libraries.

Responsibilities/Objectives:

The committee's work will contribute to OLA's 2017-20 strategic priority of "[building evaluation and research capacity](#)" in the Ontario public library sector by conducting applied research and by supporting professional development for research and program evaluation.

The OPLA Research & Evaluation Committee will:

- Advise OPLA Council on the research priorities for OPLA, taking into consideration current trends in public libraries, existing research in the sector and other organizations such as the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS), and the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC), etc.
- Manage the survey process for OPLA, conducting at least one survey of Ontario Public Libraries per year. Committee responsibilities include: identifying research questions, development of data collection tools, data analysis, report preparation, dissemination and data management according to [FAIR](#) principles
- Assist in building public library sector capacity for applied research and evaluation skills by developing training in multiple formats.

Deliverables:

- The committee will provide an annual work plan based on the above responsibilities to OPLA Council.
- Facilitate the administration and analysis of annual OPLA surveys.
- Create training on applied research and evaluation skills for the public library sector.

Composition:

The Committee will be composed of 6-8 current OPLA personal or institutional members who have expertise in the area of applied research, library metrics, evaluation and data analysis in a public library setting.

Resources and budget:

Resources required for this committee include:

- Ongoing support from the Advocacy and Research Officer.
- OLA office staff support for teleconference arrangements for 3-4 meetings per year.
- Maintaining a public web page on the OLA website
- Meeting space at OLA Office, as needed (once per year)
- Funds for expenses related to travel and food for in-person meetings

Timelines:

- The Committee will meet 3-4 times annually via teleconference
- Members will complete tasks as assigned between meetings
- The majority of tasks will be completed online using a shared project management tool, so that all members can participate in ongoing work and revisions collaboratively during and in between meetings
- The Committee will submit verbal or written updates to Council meetings

Type of Committee:

X Standing Committee (responsible for a specific program or function)

Task Forces (time-limited tasks on a specific topic)

Action Groups (development of a limited program or activity)

Term of Appointment:

The Committee requires a 3-year commitment to assure that the group has the time to begin and complete the work for at least one survey. Committee members may wish to stagger terms to ensure smooth succession planning. Since members of the Survey Committee are volunteers, we recommend that membership is dependent upon management approval and that Survey Committee tasks be done during work hours.