

2015-12-04

Dear Colleagues,

The Future Federation Working Group would like to thank the 480 individuals, the 77 institutions, and the 17 library associations who responded to one of the many Future Federation Surveys regarding the proposal of a federation of library associations in Canada.

As well, the Working Group would like to thank the 84 CLA members (individual and institutional) who took the CLA member survey, providing CLA feedback as to its future as an association.

The results of the surveys demonstrate broad support across the respondents for a significant change for the national association and support for the proposal in general. Within the survey results, some specific themes emerged that did not occur across the majority or even a strong minority of the responses, but were flagged by the Working Group as important to address for the final version of the proposal. These themes either arose because not enough information was provided in the proposal, the Working Group needs to discuss the issue more and make a recommendation, or there was misunderstanding of the proposal noted enough times that clarification or different way of expressing the idea is required.

Some of these themes will result in an actual change to the proposal, some will result in the provision of additional information in the proposal document, and some will be addressed through explanation in an accompanying Frequently Asked Questions document.

Once again the Working Group thanks our colleagues, institutions, and associations for taking the time to provide feedback. Every comment was read and considered and while we are encouraged by the overwhelmingly positive response to the proposal provided by the respondents, we do take the concerns expressed and suggestions made seriously.

While we will never create the “perfect” proposal that meets every single interest expressed by every individual, institution, and association that comprises the library sector in Canada, we do believe we can get to a proposal that is most definitely “good enough” to get us started along a new path in Canada for a unified national voice for the library communities that make up this country.

The Working Group

Toward a Federation of Library Associations in Canada

PROPOSAL SURVEY RESULTS

November 30, 2105

A. BACKGROUND

From October 16 to November 13, 2015, two almost identical surveys were conducted to solicit feedback regarding the Working Group's proposals: an *Individual Survey* and an *Institutional Survey*. As well, CARL and OLA conducted member surveys and CULC discussed the proposal at a meeting of its members. The survey results below include the CARL and OLA survey results and have been grouped by question and then sub-grouped by the survey itself. During this period, the Working Group also received letters from a number of associations summarizing their response to the proposal. Because comments provided in each of the sections generally ranged across the content of the whole, a discussion of the comments is provided at the end.

While OLA and CARL and CKRN, the latter two jointly, undertook a survey of their own that aligned with the Individual Survey and Institutional Survey, other associations sent the Individual Survey and Institutional Surveys onto their memberships with a request for completion.

In addition, CLA distributed a membership survey to solicit feedback from members. This survey is important because CLA members will need to vote to determine the future of CLA and CLA Executive Council needed CLA member specific feedback. The CLA member results are provided after the results of the surveys above as there is possible overlap with the respondents of the other surveys.

B. INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SURVEY RESULTS

Includes CARL/CKRN and OLA survey results

Respondents

Individuals

229 people filled out the Individual Survey: respondents noted that they received the survey from a variety of sources, including CLA, BCLA, LAA, SLA, MLA, NSLA, ABPQ, and APLA. Others received the survey through other referrals from individuals and a handful found it on the CLA website. A further 251 individuals completed a survey from OLA bringing the total individual results for most questions to 480.

In terms of which sectors respondents worked in or associated with, the OLA survey allowed for multiple associations so the total number of respondents that allowed for identification of sector was 526.

Public libraries	222
University and college libraries	119
School libraries	58
Government and special	28

libraries	
Other, including subject affiliations (e.g., OLITA)	112

**Includes OLA survey results*

In the Individual Survey, 47 respondents specified other places of work. Other “places” included Faculty of Information Studies, library service providers, hospitals, consultancy work, student, as well as retirement.

Institutions

56 institutions responded to the Institutional Survey. An additional 21 CARL and CKRN members completed the CARL/CKRN survey. Institutional survey responses from both surveys represented the following types of institutions:

University	24
College	3
Public	39
School	2
Special, includes government	6
Other	3

Some CULC members opted to complete the survey, while others relied on the CULC response to reflect their position (and did not fill out the survey). CARL also submitted a letter providing feedback from the association itself.

Question

In general, what is your reaction to the proposal to dissolve CLA and create a new national Federation of Canadian Library Associations in its place? / Dans l'ensemble, comment réagissez-vous à la proposition de dissoudre l'ACB et de la remplacer par une nouvelle Fédération nationale des associations de bibliothèques canadiennes?

Individual Survey / Sondage auprès des particuliers et des membres à titre personnel (n=227)*

Very Positive / très favorable	76
Positive / favorable	104
Neutral / neuter	37
Negative / défavorable	8
Very Negative / très défavorable	2

**OLA did not ask this question in their survey.*

Institutions Survey / Sondage auprès des bibliothèques institutionnelles (n=78)*

Very Positive / très favorable	30
Positive / favorable	38

Neutral / neutre	6
Negative / défavorable	2
Very Negative / très défavorable	1

**The numbers above include the results from the CARL/CKRN survey.*

Question

What do you think of the proposed proposal elements? / Que pensez-vous des éléments suivants de la proposition?

A. Mission/Purpose - Mission/objectif

Individual Survey / Sondage auprès des particuliers et des membres à titre personnel (n=477)*

Very Positive / très favorable	200
Positive / favorable	216
Neutral / neutre	45
Negative / défavorable	12
Very Negative / très défavorable	4

**Includes OLA survey results*

Institutions Survey / Sondage auprès des bibliothèques institutionnelles (n=77)*

Very Positive / très favorable	31
Positive / favorable	41
Neutral / neutre	3
Negative / défavorable	2
Very Negative / très défavorable	0

**The numbers above include the results from the CARL/CKRN survey.*

B. Strategies and Deliverables / Stratégies et produits livrables

Individual Survey / Sondage auprès des particuliers et des membres à titre personnel (n=224)*

Very Positive / très favorable	59
Positive / favorable	119
Neutral / neutre	31
Negative / défavorable	12
Very Negative / très défavorable	3

**OLA did not ask this question on their survey*

Institutions Survey / Sondage auprès des bibliothèques institutionnelles (n=76)*

Very Positive / très favorable	27
Positive / favorable	42

Neutral / neutre	6
Negative / défavorable	1
Very Negative / très défavorable	0

**The numbers above include the results from the CARL/CKRN survey.*

C. Structure and Governance / Structure et gouvernance

Individual Survey / Sondage auprès des particuliers et des membres à titre personnel (n=475)*

Very Positive / très favorable	95
Positive / favorable	254
Neutral / neutre	87
Negative / défavorable	32
Very Negative / très défavorable	7

**Includes OLA survey results*

Institutions Survey / Sondage auprès des bibliothèques institutionnelles (n=75)*

Very Positive / très favorable	26
Positive / favorable	33
Neutral / neutre	8
Negative / défavorable	8
Very Negative / très défavorable	0

**The numbers above include the results from the CARL/CKRN survey.*

Comments

There were numerous opportunities throughout the surveys to provide specific comments regarding the overall proposal and specific aspects of the proposal. 410 comments in total were received and reviewed by the Working Group. A further 283 comments were received and reviewed by OLA. The majority of the comments in response to specific elements also included or applied to the larger proposal or spoke to other aspects of the proposal so all of the received comments are discussed in this section.

Overall, most of the comments were broadly supportive of the proposal. Positive comments often recognized that a change is necessary and a federated approach moving forward makes sense to the responder. Some of the positive comments expressed concern about the feasibility of the federation achieving all of the deliverables either very quickly or with the funding available: caution was recommended by many in terms of over-promising on achievement of aspirations.

A handful of comments were uniformly negative either toward the proposal itself, CLA having a role in the development of the proposal, or the need for a national voice at all.

Some specific themes arose through the comments. Themes are identified as comments that arose repeatedly:

- Need to further clarify school library involvement and representation.
- People working in special libraries or as consultants do not see how they can be involved and ask for individual membership.
- Some individuals expressed concern that they do not have a voice unless they can be a member of the Federation directly.
- There was concern expressed about the relationship between CKRN and CARL at the governance level.
- There is some confusion about whether all library associations can be members (yes) so this needs clarification.
- The role of the Board and the role of the membership needs to be clarified.
- There is a lack of clarity about how voting at the membership level and voting at the Board works and where influence is wielded.
- The membership fee approach was noted as opaque and clarification was requested.
- How the Board elections would work needs to be clarified.
- What happens or could happen in provinces that have multiple library associations needs to be discussed
- How small remote and rural libraries voices will be heard needs discussion
- What will small associations that don't have significant funds do to belong and how will they be engaged when in a group with much larger associations?
- An explanation of the proposed regional groupings for the Board composition is needed.
- There were a number of comments about specific role groups and their voice in the proposed model: trustees, school librarians, support staff.
- There was some concern about whether the Federation would be able to represent all unique voices in the library community.
- There was interest in understanding if or how the new organization will defend and uphold the value of our professional roles such as Librarians, Library Technicians, and Teacher Librarians?

Further to these themes arising from the comments, CARL members identified the need to further review Québec and Francophone representation on the Board to ensure it represents an approach that reflects the intention of a national bilingual organization in Canada. As well, there was concern about how college and smaller university libraries would contribute to the federation and an interest in seeing the financial model clarified and contribution caps for the larger associations. CULC members passed a motion in support of the proposal and raised concern about the proposed budget being sufficient to advance and achieve the aspirations expressed in the proposal.

C. CLA MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

84 CLA members (62 individuals and 22 institutions) completed the CLA member survey. As there were many surveys to complete, it is likely some people opted to just complete the Individual Survey or the Institutional Survey and not complete the CLA survey. Likewise there is likelihood in overlap of respondents so, as noted above, the results are reported here separately.

Question

In general, what is your reaction to the proposal Toward a Federation of Library Associations in Canada?

n=84

Very Positive / très favorable	35
Positive / favorable	33
Neutral / neutre	11
Negative / défavorable	3
Very Negative / très défavorable	2

There were 42 comments in response to this question. The comments in response to this question were broadly supportive, with a number expressing regret that CLA is in its current position but recognizing the need for change. Some of the comments that were supportive in general noted some of the same questions that were also raised in the Individual Survey and the Institutional Survey, already noted above, so are not noted here.

Question

As you know, the Working Group will review feedback from these surveys and make any appropriate changes in the final version of the proposal. Are there any outstanding questions that you have that you would like to see the final proposal address?

There were 41 comments in response to this question. A number of questions were asked that are already reflected in the summary of questions above so are not described below. Unique questions arising in this survey are:

- Worry that it will be difficult for individuals to signal their interest in participating due to the construct of the association of associations model.
- What will happen to CLA's existing networks and committees?
- Worry about sector specific associations and their influence in the new model.
- An observation about the need for provincial associations to consider how to reflect and advance their members interests in the federation
- Will there be a mechanism that enables people across the country who are interested in similar issues to connect with each other?
- What happens to the existing CLA Awards?
- How will the new federation represent support staff?

D. ASSOCIATION SURVEY RESULTS

14 Associations responded to the survey. Overall, 12 of the Associations responded to the proposal with "very positive" or "positive" and two responded with "neutral". 10 Associations noted "very positive" or "positive" and 4 "neutral" for the specific proposal elements of Mission and deliverables. For Governance, one association noted the governance model as "negative," eight were "positive" or "very positive" and five noted "neutral".

22 comments were received through the Association Survey. Some responses signal the need for clarification on issues already noted above. As well, association responses indicate that the most significant factor to determining participation is financial commitment. After this, alignment with the Mission is considered the next important.

Four associations that are not represented on the Working Group corresponded with the Working Group in lieu of completing the survey. Three associations were generally positive or cautiously positive. The fourth association noted that the association likely would not be in a position to join because of the advocacy focus of the proposed Federation would be in conflict with the roles of their members.

E. NEXT STEPS

The Working Group will further refine some proposal elements, clarify some items in the proposal, and create an FAQ document that addresses the issues arising from the surveys.

A final proposal is scheduled for December 18, 2015.

Thank you again to everyone who took the time to complete the various surveys.