

ALA Committee/Taskforce Report Form to Council

TO: ALA Council

DATE: January 2026

RE: REPORT

CONTACT PERSON: Jennifer Ferriss, Chair, Council Committee on Sustainability
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STAFF LIAISON CONTACT: Shakir Akbari, Director of Enterprise Applications [sakbari@ala.org]

BACKGROUND:

- ALA Council voted to create the Council Committee on Sustainability in January 2021.
- The ALA Sustainability Committee's charge is to provide the necessary leadership and monitoring of ALA strategic initiatives that will infuse the core value of sustainability throughout policies, procedures, practices of our association and our professional activities, in collaboration with the ALA Board and President, ALA Council, ALA divisions, ALA offices and unites, ALA round tables, ALA committees, ALA affiliates and ALA staff so that our association and its members contribute to the development of sustainable and resilient communities.

REPORT:

1. **Implement the 2021 Council Resolution to Achieve Carbon Neutrality for ALA Conferences by 2025: *In progress.*** To date the Committee has met with Conference Services staff; obtained quotes for a consultant to aid conference services staff with this goal; issued the "Carbon Neutral/Carbon Offsets FAQ" document to ALA Council in January 2022; partnered with the ALA Sustainability Round Table to promote the carbon offset option in conference registration; partnered with Conference Services staff to produce a ribbon for the ALA Ribbon Bar at ALA Annual 2022 for folks to promote the fact they chose the carbon offset option; worked with the Conference Committee and made a recommendation to ALA decision makers to roll the cost of offsets into the budget. Voluntary carbon offset donations are not meeting the neutrality goal. In June 2025, the Council was asked to extend the original 2025 deadline to 2027 for CD#53. This extension will provide the time needed to evaluate the feasibility and financial impact of absorbing the cost of carbon offsets into the cost of doing business for the ALA Annual Conference, or to allow the [Conference] committee time to investigate alternative options. The Sustainability Committee has formed a working group to investigate alternative options that will be shared with the Conference Committee.

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2. **The Core Values Interpretation for Sustainability** was approved by Council in June 2025 and seen as an exemplar for the other Core Value Interpretations. Sustainability was reaffirmed as an ALA Core Value in January 2024.
3. **Promotional partnership between ALA and the Sustainable Libraries Initiative: *Ongoing effort***. Since the last report, through a private funder, 100 public library workers were selected to complete Resilient Communities: Advancing Sustainability in and through Libraries an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) in collaboration with the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI). Participants will complete “Sustainable Librarianship: Core Competencies and Practices,” a four-part asynchronous e-course. In addition to free tuition for the course, participants will engage in a community of practice with advisors from the SLI and peers over six months.
4. **Develop a web presence to introduce key sustainability concepts and urge climate action: *Ongoing effort***. The ALA LibGuide on Sustainability has been recently updated.
5. **Members of the committee participated in SustainRT’s ROOTS: Re-imagining Organizational Operations Toward Sustainability.**
<https://libguides.ala.org/SustainableLibraries/ROOTS>

The event accomplished the following:

- clarified the roles and strengths of various library groups doing sustainability-related work
 - surfaced shared talking points and goals for external stakeholders
 - encouraged connections and celebration
6. **Reviewed Final Report of the ALA Special Task Force on Sustainability (EBD #5.4 2017-2018). *Ongoing effort***. At the November meeting, members of the Committee reviewed the Recommendations: Translating Vision into Action (p. 6-12) to determine if the actions were still relevant, had been completed, and/or needed to be prioritized. The Committee will focus on working with our new Executive Director, the Executive Board, and Council.

I want to thank the current committee members for their dedication.

Sunny Clay Branick
Sara Dallas
Dr. Sheril Hook
Alicia M. Mangin
Michelle Mussuto
Rebekkah Smith Aldrich

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Eric Tans
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