

**BOARD DOCUMENT**

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**TO: Board of Directors**

**FROM: Cindy Romaine, Chair, Public Relations Committee**

**RE: International Special Librarians Day 2005**

**DATE: December 27, 2004**

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board of Directors allow a one year hiatus of the International Special Librarians Day in order for the Public Relations Committee and HQ Communications staff to develop and implement a comprehensive public relations plan.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

SLA PR Committee efforts are focused on public relations strategy and the Committee has developed *A Framework for SLA Public Relations Initiatives*.

The PR Committee and headquarters' communications efforts are aligning against *A Framework for SLA Public Relations Initiatives* which emphasizes 1) a focus on the Association's Strategy and 2) that consistency is critical in public relations.

International Special Librarians Day is a public relations event, but the PR Committee has not developed an implementation plan against which this event will be positioned.

The PR Committee is focused on developing 1) a Toolkit for Chapters and Division and 2) media contacts and an outreach plan, which will bring about consistent PR efforts at various levels within the organization.

The position of Communications Director, who implements the International Special Librarians Day promotion, has been vacant during the critical planning period for ISLD.

Participation in International Special Librarians Day has waned significantly in the recent past.

The PR Committee is directing its efforts to have more impactful results on the image of the profession and the association.

The result of these factors is that the PR Committee recommends that Board of Directors place International Special Librarians Day on hiatus for 2005.

**IMPACT ON MEMBERS:** Association members have varying degrees of affinity for ISLD. Many of the Chapters and Divisions use it as focal point for activities. We are not recommending its dissolution—and Chapters and Divisions may continue their individual efforts. We are simply recommending a one year hiatus to allow us to focus on reshaping the event to achieve a more unique focus and generate more positive publicity for the information profession.

**IMPACT ON ASSOCIATION STAFF:** Promotion for ISLD is handled by the Communications Director, a position which is vacant currently. It would be prudent to have the new Communications Director involved in the reshaping process.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** Over the past 2 years, an average of \$3,000 per year has been budgeted for ISLD. If ISLD is not implemented, the funds can be redirected.

**PROBLEM/S TO SOLVE:** Once the ongoing association communications strategy is defined, the utility, value, and effectiveness of ISLD within that strategy can and should be discussed.

**SCENARIO HISTORY:** There is no history to consideration of a hiatus or reshaping of ISLD.

**ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES TO SOLUTIONS:** Members have varying degrees of affinity for ISLD. Some members will be disappointed in a decision to put ISLD on hiatus. Certainly, we can encourage units to continue the practice if they wish. However, given the lack of effectiveness in our overall efforts in recent years, the PR Committee believes that it's more important to conduct a review and assessment period in order to connect any potential future event to the association's communications strategy.