



Illinois Heartland Library System

TO: IHLS Executive Committee
FROM: Leslie Bednar
DATE: October 17, 2025
RE: Advocacy and Education Committee

Background

In September, the Executive Committee and Board reviewed and approved changes to the charge for the Advocacy and Education Committee. IHLS staff have since created an evaluation rubric and updated rollout schedule for your consideration.

Rubric

IHLS creates and posts a rubric for all competitive member opportunities. Evaluators assess proposals with identifying information stripped out. For this committee selection, we will include library type (academic, public, school, or special library), the individual delivery service hub (Carbondale, Champaign, or Edwardsville), and a number tied to the original application. When you receive the evaluation packet, it will include the full application (less identifying information) and a spreadsheet to record the scores. We will do our best to make the process as painless as possible.

The rubric is based on the Committee Responsibilities from the charge document and is designed to appeal to all IHLS members regardless of advocacy experience. On the application form, participants will reply to a series of questions related to the work the committee will engage in:

Advocacy and Education Committee Application Questions

1. Describe the most pressing challenges you believe libraries in Illinois are currently facing. How have you engaged with or addressed any of these issues in your role?
2. Share an example of a time you worked with another organization or community partner to support a library-related initiative. What was the goal, and what was the outcome?
3. How have you advocated for core library values—such as intellectual freedom, equitable access, or sustainable funding? What strategies or tools have you used to support advocacy?
4. Have you created or shared advocacy tools or resources (e.g., talking points, presentations, toolkits, training sessions)? If so, please describe the resource and its intended audience.
5. How have you supported colleagues, staff, or trustees in becoming stronger advocates or leaders within the library field? What role do you see for yourself in building advocacy skills in others?
6. Why are you interested in serving on the Advocacy and Education Committee? How do your skills and interests align with the committee's goals?

IMAGINING TOMORROW ~ DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY!

Here is the rubric itself. We may wish to modify the process after this year's new members are selected:

Criteria	Limited Fit (0)	Moderate Fit (1)	Strong Fit (2)
1. Awareness of Library Sector Challenges	Vague understanding; little or no experience using member input or assessing challenges.	Identifies general challenges; some experience with feedback or assessment efforts.	Clearly identifies current issues facing multiple library types and has experience gathering or using member input to address them.
2. Collaboration with Partners	No experience with collaboration or unclear understanding of its value.	Some collaboration experience with partner orgs or interest in doing so.	Has built partnerships with library associations or community/civic orgs; contributed to joint advocacy or educational efforts.
3. Advocacy for Library Values & Funding	No clear commitment to library values or advocacy efforts.	Expresses commitment to values; may have limited direct advocacy experience.	Actively promotes library values (equity, access, intellectual freedom) and has participated in advocacy or funding campaigns.
4. Communication & Resource Development	No experience developing resources or communicating advocacy messages.	Some relevant experience or a clear interest in supporting advocacy communication.	Has created advocacy tools (e.g., talking points, trainings) or delivered related communication to stakeholders.
5. Support for Mentorship & Capacity Building	No mentoring or leadership support experience; unclear commitment.	Open to supporting others; some potential to contribute to skill-building.	Has mentored others or supported professional development in advocacy or leadership; committed to empowering others.
6. Committee Interest	Limited availability or unclear motivation; may not fully engage.	Generally available; motivated but may have some constraints.	Expresses strong motivation and clear availability to participate fully in committee responsibilities.

Updated Timeline

The challenge we face is giving adequate time for member staff to consider and apply for the committee, as well as for executive committee members to evaluate the responses. Once we add the rubric and application form to the website [here](#), we are looking at a slight delay in the timeline:

- All committee information updated and shared with our members around October 22
- November 21 is the last date to apply
- Executive Committee members receive applications and the evaluation spreadsheet on December 1 or slightly after. They have until mid-January to complete the task in time for the January 21 meeting date. Finalists are included in the January 27 board packet and approved at that meeting.
- New committee meets in February.

Thank you for your review and feedback!