

North Texas Library Partners Future – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What needs to happen for NTLP to continue to exist beyond next year?

NTLP has convened a bylaws committee to review the bylaws to make the needed changes for the proper governance and structure. This committee is led by Dale Fleeger and is currently reviewing the bylaws. These bylaw revisions will be introduced to the System Assembly for consideration at the July 29th System Assembly meeting in Bedford.

How will the governance and structure of the organization need to be changed?

The bylaws committee is looking at traditional models for nonprofit corporations and recommending that the NTLP governance be constructed in a way that will retain the balance of power that current exists between the board of directors and the library membership. The current bylaws tie the Corporation and the Texas Library System closely together so what is dictated by the Texas State Library and the Texas Library Systems act plays heavily into the governance of the organization. The bylaws committee is recommending all instances of Texas State Library and the Texas Library Systems act be stricken from the bylaws to better separate the corporation from the role it plays as a Texas Library System. NTLP will continue to act as regional organization for the Texas State Library in FY2012. However, governance of the organization will no longer be tied to Austin if the bylaws are approved as presented. To help with the transition, we are calling all library members of the corporation, *NTLP Partners*. Library members of the Texas Library Systems program will continue to be called *System Members*.

How does one become a NTLP Partner library?

The bylaws committee is recommending that the board of directors establish a set of pre-defined criteria for being a NTLP partner, which may or may not include Partner annual dues.

If annual dues are part of the pre-defined criteria, how much will they be?

The board of directors convened a development committee in May to look at this issue. It is made up of representatives from the board, and a library director from each of our regions. This committee is currently investigating various fee models. Libraries will be given an opportunity to become NTLP Partners in FY2012. NTLP Partners will be eligible for certain program and services available only to NTLP Partners and they will be part of the corporate governance. Texas Library System members will receive programs and services underwritten by the Texas State Library, which will include consulting and resource sharing.

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Huh??? Now am I confused, isn't being a NTLP Partner the same as being a System Member?

I can understand your confusion. It is a confusing picture that has been painted for us in FY2012. If the bylaws are passed as presented in July, NTLP Partners will be the libraries who choose to join the corporation by meeting the pre-defined criteria set forth by the board of directors. These libraries will be the ones who share the responsibility of governing the corporation with the board of directors in FY2012. System members will be the libraries who meet the pre-defined criteria to be System members in 2012 as dictated by the Texas State Library. The System members will only have a say in how the resources from the state library are utilized. The other difference between the two is that some services will only be available to NTLP Partners while the services underwritten by the state library will be available to all libraries who qualify as System members, which are currently the 78 member libraries being served by NTLP.

Ok. What are the programs and services that are only available to NTLP Partners in the transition year of FY2012?

NTLP Partners will receive a discounted cost to attend NTLP workshops in FY2012 and be eligible to receive the vendor discounts negotiated by the NTLP staff.

What are the programs and services available to System Members in the transition year of FY2012?

For FY2012, resource sharing (consortia) is being underwritten by the Texas State Library so NTLP will continue to support resource-sharing consortia for System members. Examples are the Overdrive consortium and the Evergreen ILS consortium. System members can also receive basic consulting services. More advanced consulting projects will be available through NTLP, for a fee.

Will all workshops cost money in FY2012?

Yes. CE will not be underwritten by the Texas State Library so NTLP will have to charge fees for workshops in order to cover costs. NTLP staff will do its best to keep these costs reasonable. NTLP Partners will receive a discount. The amount of discount is still being considered by the development committee and the board of directors.

What vendor discounts will be available to NTLP Partners in FY2012?

NTLP staff is currently working on negotiating discounts with select vendors for FY2012 and beyond. NTLP staff is also planning on going out for bid on books and other collection materials. These contracts will be in place for FY2012.

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What resource sharing (consortia) will be available in FY2012?

As it stands right now, NTLP has consortia for Overdrive, Evergreen, Learning Express and Live Homework Help. NTLP staff is open to other ideas for consortia.

What is the difference between consortia and vendor discounts?

NTLP distinguishes between these two services in the following way. Consortia are a collection of libraries who receive a discount on a product or service because of their collective purchasing power, or who combine resources to increase the level of service they can provide to their patrons. NTLP handles the contractual and financial aspects of the consortia including the collection of funds from the libraries and the payment of all expenses associated with the consortia. NTLP also assists the consortia with administrative and support tasks. Vendor discounts are price breaks extended to NTLP Partners, but all administration and financial transactions are handled by the participating Partner libraries. Book contracts fall under vendor discounts.

If the bylaws are passed, what other benefits does my library receive from becoming an NTLP Partner in FY2012?

Well, other than the prestige of being a founding member of the new NTLP, the library would also be part of the decision making process for planning for FY2013. As mentioned before, the bylaws committee is working to retain the balance of power between the NTLP Partners and the board of directors. NTLP Partners will be the libraries that will consider all planning documents for FY2013 and provide feedback to the board of directors in governing decisions. Also, these libraries will be the ones to vote in board elections in FY2013. Finally, any bylaw revisions are voted on by NTLP Partners.

What if I don't want to become an NTLP Partner, but I want to use some of the services offered to the Partners, can I pay NTLP to provide them?

Yes, you can. NTLP will have a listing of services available to all libraries a la carte. NTLP will administer these services and depending on staffing levels, either handle them internally, or contract them out.

What about NTLP staff?

It looks like NTLP will have to reduce its staff from 9.5 FTEs in FY2011 to 4 or 5 FTEs in FY2012. For FY2013, staffing level will depend heavily on the projected income.

What other ways are NTLP going to bring in funds in FY2012 and beyond?

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The development committee is considering fundraising and grant writing as possibilities. NTLP will also provide a selection of fee-based services a la carte that will be offered to all libraries for the purpose of bringing in additional funds.

Do I still have to file an annual report?

The Texas State Library has indicated that they will still be providing accreditation services for public libraries. If you want to receive certain services from TSL, then you will have to provide the data. According to a letter sent out by TSL, “accreditation will be required for participation in TexShare, eligibility for competitive grants, and other special services.” The NTLP board of directors will look at accreditation closely to determine if it should be part of the pre-defined criteria for being a NTLP Partner.

Can Library Directors or staff members or board members serve as the voting representatives for their libraries?

The bylaws committee is recommending that each NTLP Partner designate a representative for their organization for voting reasons. The specifics of who can serve as representative has yet to be determined, but a policy on this matter will be discussed and considered by the board before September 1st.

Can Library Directors or staff members serve on the NTLP Board of Directors?

The bylaws committee is recommending that the restriction on library staff serving on the board of directors be stricken from the bylaws. The consequence of this is that anybody nominated by the nomination committee will be eligible to run for a board seat.