

A New Librarian of Congress: Qualities of a Successful Candidate

Joint Statement Approved by CoSA and the Society of American Archivists, August 2015

A nominee for the office of Librarian of Congress will be selected based upon the legal obligations and responsibilities under federal law. In addition to these requirements, the Society of American Archivists, the Council of State Archivists, and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators believe that the following personal and professional qualities are important in order for a nominee to be successful in this essential position of public trust.

Vision

- Ability to present a compelling vision for the mission and work of the Library of Congress (LoC) and, more broadly, for the library, information, and archives professions in the United States.
- Ability to envision LoC's stewardship role in preserving America's intellectual, historical and diverse cultural heritage.
- Ability to envision a leading role for LoC in digital asset management, digital preservation, copyright and fair use, and congressional research.

Values

- Commitment to protecting the public's right to privacy, as defined by law and custom.
- Commitment to providing access to open government and support for transparency.
- Commitment to protecting LoC's professional integrity and political non-partisanship.
- Commitment to the Library's leadership role in setting, maintaining, and promulgating national and international standards.
- Commitment to providing leadership in the advancement of digital preservation and information technology.
- Commitment to the ongoing mission of National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program.
- Commitment to recruiting a diverse and representative workforce for the LoC.
- Commitment to collaborate with other federal offices, with state and local governments, and with other library and archival programs, including those in other countries, to identify and address shared responsibilities and concerns.

Expertise

- Experience and excellence in leadership, program advocacy, and management of a complex information-based organization.
- Ability to communicate effectively, listen, and partner with a wide range of stakeholders, including librarians, archivists, historians, journalists, political scientists, researchers, and the general public.
- Ability to understand critical issues, including the challenges of implementing new information technologies, and the competing demands of access, security, and privacy in using primary source materials.

- Ability to provide leadership and advocacy on behalf of LoC's roles to the public, government officials, and LoC staff, and on behalf of the library, archives, cultural and historical communities.