

Membership in the BLC

The Boston Library Consortium [BLC] offers two forms of membership:

- Full members agree to participation in the resource sharing activities of the consortium with all of the benefits this accrues and are eligible for participation in all other services and programs of the consortium.
- Affiliate members are not eligible for participation in resource sharing but may take advantage of other benefits of membership as described below.

Both full and affiliate members pay annual membership dues as well as any charges associated with the services it uses. All such services are charged at cost with no additional administrative fees or other overhead.

The [BLC bylaws](#) provide details on the requirements for full membership in the BLC. Interested libraries should initiate an inquiry with the Executive Director.

Full Membership in the BLC

Full membership is open to new members whose collections and services focus on the needs of graduate study, research and other scholarly pursuits. Full membership in the BLC requires participation in the [resource sharing](#) activities of the consortium with all of the benefits this accrues. All full member libraries are represented on the [BLC Board of Directors](#) by their dean/director with full voting rights. Their library staff is encouraged to participate in Communities of Interest [make this a link] and take advantage of the other [Services for Librarians](#) made available through the BLC. Full members are represented on any standing committees of the BLC as well as working groups relating to initiatives in which they are interested. Students, scholars and researchers affiliated with the library can take advantage of the services provided through the BLC including borrowing privileges at BLC member libraries.

Full Members pay an annual membership fee based on a tiered structure where a portion is paid as a base fee and the remainder based on FTE. Full members are also assessed charges associated with the resource sharing and related services provided by the consortium. These charges are passed through without any additional administrative fees.

In order to provide additional funding for BLC initiatives to support the Consortium's strategic goals, Full Members are asked to make a one-time nonrefundable payment into the BLC's Reserve Fund. These funds are used, at the discretion of the Board, to fund pilot projects, engage outside expertise to assist one or more of the Communities of Interest, and support longer term professional and workforce development.

Affiliate Membership

The BLC Board of Directors recently voted to add an Affiliate Membership to the long-standing Full Membership. Affiliate Membership is intended to encourage further diversity within the BLC, particularly among libraries who share the research interests of the consortium, but may not have the same need to participate in resource sharing. Affiliate Members, such as the University of Massachusetts Medical Library in Worcester, bring new perspectives to the Consortium through their participating on the BLC Board of Directors and Communities of Interest. While not eligible for participation in resource sharing, Affiliate Members are encouraged to participate in other programs, initiatives and services of the BLC and their library staff may join in the BLC Communities of Interest as well as take advantage of professional development and programming opportunities offered by the BLC.

Affiliate Members are represented on the BLC Board of Directors by their dean/director and may vote on issues related to specific programs or initiatives in which they participate.

Affiliate Members pay a reduced annual membership fee and are assessed any additional charges related to specific programs or initiatives in which they choose to participate. These charges are passed through without any additional administrative fees.

In order to provide additional funding for BLC initiatives to support the Consortium's strategic goals, Affiliate Members are asked to make a one-time nonrefundable payment into the BLC's Reserve Fund. These funds are used, at the discretion of the Board, to fund pilot projects, engage outside expertise to assist one or more of the Communities of Interest, and support longer term professional and workforce development.

Requirements for Membership

The requirements of eligibility for membership in the BLC are:

- Location in the northeastern region of the United States, preferably within New England.
- Adherence to the purposes and goals of the BLC as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and as supplemented through the strategic programs and initiatives of the consortium.
- Qualification as the educational institution under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or as a governmental agency.
- Demonstrated institutional and financial support necessary to actively participate in consortium programs.

Full Membership

To qualify as a Full Member, the library must possess unique and extraordinary collections or other resources that bring important strategic benefit to the BLC member libraries and must agree:

- To participate fully in the sharing of print, electronic and digital content with other BLC member libraries at no cost to those libraries utilizing the then current infrastructure of the BLC;
- To commit to adhere to the Best Practices of the BLC as approved by the BLC Board;
- That its dean or director will actively serve as a member of the BLC Board of Directors;
- To appoint a representative to any standing Committee of the BLC;
- To actively participate in at least two or more of the major programming efforts offered by the BLC. Programs change over time depending on the needs and desires of membership. [A list of current services [link to this] is provided below.]
- To encourage staff participation in the Communities of Interest;
- To attend membership meetings and encourage staff to participate in professional development and other BLC sponsored events;
- To pay the annual membership dues as well as other fees associated with the programs in which the library chooses to participate;
- To otherwise support BLC's collaborative goals and spirit.

Affiliate Membership

To qualify as an Affiliate Member, the library must agree:

- To actively participate in at least one or more of the major programming efforts offered by the BLC. Programs change over time depending on the needs and desires of membership. [A current list of services [link to this] is provided below.]
- To encourage staff participation in the Communities of Interest;
- That its dean or director will actively participate in BLC Board meetings and may vote on issues relating to the services in which it participates;
- To attend membership meetings and encourage staff to participate in professional development and other BLC sponsored events;
- To pay the annual membership dues as well as other fees associated with the programs in which the library chooses to participate;
- To otherwise support BLC's collaborative goals and spirit.

The Membership Process

A library interested in membership in the BLC should first contact the Executive Director [link to email] to determine if the BLC is accepting new members. As of June, 2015, the Board has agreed to entertain applications for both Full and Affiliate Members.

If an application is encouraged, the Executive Director will send an application form and the library director should write to the BLC Board of Directors highlighting their reasons for interest in membership, the type of membership [Full or Affiliate] they wish to be considered for, their qualifications per the Criteria indicated above, and any particular contributions they believe they can make to the BLC as members. The applicant is encouraged to provide details on the ways in which it will add to the breadth and depth of library resources and services available to BLC members including unique and extraordinary qualifications, or skill sets, in kind services it

expects to offer, as well as diverse perspectives and views the applicant brings to the BLC membership. This will form the basis for the initial application.

Such an initial application should be received no later than one month prior to the next quarterly meeting of the BLC Board to be considered at that meeting. [Quarterly Board meetings are held in March, June, September and December and are listed in the Events section of the BLC website [link to this].]

If the Board approves the initial application it will appoint a Working Group, consisting of the Executive Director, Treasurer, and President or designee, to further consider the application.

The Working Group will contact applicants to review the initial application and arrange a site visit for libraries seeking full membership.

Upon completion of the call/visit, the Working Group will report back to the BLC Board with a recommendation as to whether or not the application should be accepted. Such a recommendation should be made no later than 60 days following the Board meeting at which the initial application was reviewed. If appropriate, the recommendation will include an indication of any financial or other impact of adding the member.

If the recommendation is made to offer the library membership, the Board will be asked to vote on the application either at its next scheduled meeting or via a special email vote. Once the vote is confirmed, the Executive Director will notify the library.

Current Services of the BLC

Both Full and Affiliate Members are offered access to these services and programs:

The Communities of Interest

The BLC supports a broad and diverse group of Communities of Interest [COI's]. These COI's are typically focused around a common area of library practice [scholarly communications, collection development, ILL, etc.]. Some are primarily birds-of-a-feather communities that meet once or twice annually to share ideas of mutual interest. Others grow out of a specific project or initiative, such as the BLC's ebooks programs, or are ad hoc working groups created to investigate a new service or program.

All Full Members of the BLC are asked to participate in the Resource Sharing COI, which has overall responsibility for continually refining the Best Practices for Resource Sharing. This COI is actively involved in working collaboratively to maximize the resource sharing services of the consortium for the benefits of its members' students, faculty and scholars.

Both Full and Affiliate Members are asked to participate in the Heads of Resource Management COI. This Committee is charged by the Board to further the consortial collection development goals of the consortium.

Both Full and Affiliate Members may also choose to participate in the other COI's currently active across the BLC. The full list of COI's and their current membership as well as focus is provided here [link].

Consortial Collection Development

Over the last few years, the BLC has sponsored a number of pilot projects focused on consortial collection development, particularly for the purchase of ebooks.

The eBook Working Group[link] meets regularly during the academic year to evaluate ongoing programs and investigate new opportunities for the BLC to increase its access to the growing corpus of electronic books.

A Consortial Collection Advisory Group, appointed by the Board, focuses on expanding the opportunities for the BLC to serve its members through consortial collection development.

Five Colleges Library Depository

The Five College Libraries (Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts Amherst), have created a Print Archive Repository Collection with the goal of retaining a single copy of print backfiles of selected journals. This print resource serves as a secure backup and is maintained as a trusted repository for the Five Colleges Libraries and Affiliate Library members. The BLC has joined the Five Colleges Library Depository as an Affiliate. Details of the membership as well as the titles currently included are available here -

https://www.fivecolleges.edu/system/files/attachments/Depository%20Affiliate%20Agreement%20template%20Library%20FY%202016_0.pdf

Digitization through the Internet Archive

In 2007, the Boston Library Consortium [BLC] joined the [Open Content Alliance](#) [OCA], a collaboration of cultural, technology, non-profit and governmental institutions helping to build a permanent archive of digitized text and multimedia content. Through the BLC's participation, [member libraries](#) are provided discounted rates at the Northeast Regional Scanning Facility located at the Boston Public Library and contribute their digitized content to [The Internet Archive](#), which administers the OCA program.

The Internet Archive is a non-profit organization founded to build an Internet library that provides access for researchers, historians, scholars, those with disabilities and the general public to various collections in digital form.

The BLC libraries' materials, primarily out-of-copyright titles published before 1923, are scanned on specially designed equipment using a non-destructive process. Within days of being scanned, the digital version are available on the [Internet Archive](#), usually integrated into the

digital collections at their local BLC member library and accessible through search engines and other sources. Scanned materials are returned to their owning library. From June, 2013 through May, 2014, the BLC libraries scanned over 5,300 titles into the Internet Archive.

Professional Development

The BLC funds, through its operating budget and, in some cases, Board approved allocations from the Reserve Fund, a number of professional development opportunities for both Full and Affiliate Members throughout the year. These range from formal training sessions to workshops on new products and services to the annual Networking Day members meeting that includes presentations on new projects and initiatives across the Consortium. While most are held onsite at one of the BLC member libraries, some are offered via live or recorded webinar.

Some examples of recent professional development offerings are:

- Workshop on open educational resources
- Training on RDA for serials catalogers
- Using Tableau for library assessment
- Data Management and Digital Science
- Marketing of e-resources
- Copyright issues in libraries.
- Using Reprints Desk for document delivery.

Licensing of Products and Services

Although the BLC is not engaged in major licensing of e-resources for its members directly, it supports members' participation in WALDO[[link to their website](#)] for consortial licensing of a wide range of e-journals, databases, and related services. Occasionally the BLC will work with a vendor to license a product or service and make it available to all members, typically at a discounted price. Recent examples of this include a consortial agreement with Reprints Desk, with Third Iron for the BrowZine service and the ebook projects described above.

Ad hoc Initiative and Pilot Projects

In addition to its ongoing programs, the BLC often engages in ad hoc initiatives based on the interest of members. These can be pilot projects focused on investigating the feasibility and value of a particular product or service, engagement of outside expertise or consulting services to

work with a member group on a Board approved initiative or simply investigation and research into potential new products or services that could be effectively licensed at the consortial level.

Some recent examples of these projects are:

- An investigation into open access funding for publication in hybrid journals
- A development project with Rapid in support of interoperability for streamlining resource sharing across the consortium
- Engagement of a metadata consultant to work with interested BLC member libraries in ensuring the metadata for their digital special collections meet the necessary standards for harvesting into the Digital Public Library of America [DPLA] via the Digital Commonwealth.

Annual Membership Dues

As of June 1, 2017 the BLC annual dues will be as follows:

Full Membership – Full members pay a base fee of \$10,000 plus a tier charge based on FTE.

Tier charges are currently:

- For libraries with 10,000 or less FTE: \$10,000 for a total of \$20,000
- For libraries with FTE of 10,001 – 19,999: \$12,000 for a total of \$22,000
- For libraries with FTE of more than 20,000: \$14,000 for a total of \$24,000.

Affiliate Membership – Affiliate members pay a base fee of \$6,500 only.

New members are also asked to make a one-time, nonrefundable payment into the Reserve Fund which is used to by Board to fund agreed upon projects and initiatives. This payment is equal to the then current base fee for both categories of members.

Boston Library Consortium (BLC) Membership Application - Full

Name and Address of Institution

Provide data for the previous 3 years:

Faculty FTE

Students

Library Staff:

Professional

Support Staff

Other

Library Expenditures

Total

Salaries

Acquisitions for books, serials, etc.

Inter-Library Loan

Loans

Borrowing

In which networks, consortia or other bilateral agreements does the library participate?

Documentation:

Library annual report

Library departmental reports

Library strategic plan

Signature of Chief Academic Officer demonstrating institutional and financial support for the application.

Please include a letter to the BLC Board of Directors highlighting your reasons for interest in membership and qualifications per the Membership Criteria listed on the BLC website. Include details on the ways in which your institution will contribute to the Consortium. The applicant is encouraged to provide details on the ways in which it will add to the breadth and depth of library resources and services available to BLC members.

Boston Library Consortium (BLC) Membership Application - Affiliate

Name and Address of Institution

Provide data for the previous 3 years:

Faculty FTE

Students

Library Staff:

Professional

Support Staff

Other

Library Expenditures

Total

Salaries

Acquisitions for books, serials, etc.

In which networks, consortia or other bilateral agreements does the library participate?

Documentation:

Library annual report

Library strategic plan

Please include a letter to the BLC Board of Directors highlighting your reasons for interest in membership and qualifications per the Membership Criteria listed on the BLC website. Include details on the ways in which your institution will contribute to the Consortium.

