



**Manitoba
Library Association**

Lifelong learning for all Manitobans

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026–2030

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Manitoba Library Association (MLA) is pleased to share its Strategic Plan for 2026–2030. This plan reflects a collective vision for the future of libraries and library workers across Manitoba and sets a clear direction for the Association over the next four years.

Developed through meaningful engagement with members, the Board of Directors, and staff, this strategic plan is grounded in the priorities and realities of Manitoba’s diverse library community. Through a membership survey, strategic planning discussions, and stakeholder feedback, we heard a strong desire for increased opportunities for networking and professional development, strengthened communication, enhanced membership value, and continued advocacy for libraries and library workers.

The four strategic priority areas outlined in this plan—Networking & Professional Development, Membership Value, Communication, and Advocacy—will guide MLA’s work and decision-making. Together, they reflect our commitment to supporting library workers, strengthening connections across sectors, and championing equitable access to library services for all Manitobans.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed their time, insights, and expertise throughout this process. Your input has helped shape a strategic plan that is responsive, practical, and forward-looking. We look forward to working collaboratively with our members and partners to bring this vision to life

Sincerely,

Brigitte L’Heureux
Executive Director

KC Bateman
Board President



ABOUT US

The Manitoba Library Association is an incorporated, non-profit charitable organization advocating for libraries and library workers across Manitoba.

Since 1936, we have been a leader in professional development, advocacy, and learning. We work to strengthen libraries so all Manitobans can be lifelong learners and participate fully in their communities.

PHOTO BY GERRY KOPELOW
GAYNOR FAMILY REGIONAL LIBRARY
SELKIRK, MANITOBA



STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030



PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The development of the Manitoba Library Association's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan began with a **membership survey** designed to gather input from library workers across Manitoba. A total of **281 respondents** shared their perspectives on professional development, advocacy, communication, and membership value, ensuring that the plan reflects the diverse voices of the library community.

Building on this feedback, a strategic **planning workshop** was held in November 2025 with the Board of Directors and staff, including reflection on previous work, review of mission and vision statements, and facilitated brainstorming to identify key opportunities, challenges, and priorities for the association. The themes that emerged from this process informed the four strategic priority areas — Networking & Professional Development, Membership Value, Communication, and Advocacy. A first draft of the strategic plan was then developed by staff and the Board and shared with key stakeholders for review, with feedback incorporated into the finalized Strategic Plan for 2026–2030.





PHOTO BY LINDSAY REID
WINDSOR PARK LIBRARY
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Vision

The Manitoba Library Association envisions a province where strong, inclusive, and well-supported libraries ensure equitable access to information, knowledge, and lifelong learning for all Manitobans.

Mission

The Manitoba Library Association supports and connects library workers and libraries across Manitoba, advances professional learning, and advocates for equitable, accessible library services that benefit communities province-wide.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

MLA is committed to equitable access, inclusive practices, and respectful environments within the profession and library services across Manitoba.

Intellectual Freedom & Access to Information

MLA upholds intellectual freedom, freedom to read, and the right of all Manitobans to access diverse, credible, and enduring information.

Collaboration & Collective Impact

MLA works collaboratively across library sectors, communities, and partners to amplify the collective impact of libraries throughout Manitoba.

Advocacy & Leadership

MLA provides leadership and advocacy to advance library services, support library workers, and promote the public value of libraries in Manitoba.



STRATEGIC GOALS

Networking & Professional Development

Strengthen professional learning, peer support, and sector connectivity among library workers across Manitoba.

Communication

Increase awareness of MLA's work and strengthen communication across the Manitoba library sector.



Membership Value

Ensure MLA membership delivers meaningful value and strengthens engagement across Manitoba's library community.

Advocacy

Provide leadership and advocacy to advance library services, support library workers, and promote the public value of libraries in Manitoba.



STRATEGIC GOALS: **NETWORKING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

1. Expand accessible professional learning opportunities

Increase access to relevant professional development for library workers across all library types, including those in rural and small libraries.

2. Strengthen professional networks across library sectors

Foster connections between public, school, academic, and special libraries to support collaboration, knowledge sharing, and problem solving.

3. Support workforce development and mentorship

Create opportunities for early-career library workers and those entering the profession to access mentorship, guidance, and peer learning.

4. Promote emerging skills and innovation in library services

Support learning in areas such as digital literacy, AI, intellectual freedom, and inclusive library services.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG LIBRARY



STRATEGIC GOALS: MEMBERSHIP VALUE

1. Strengthen the Value & Relevance of MLA Membership

Clearly communicate the benefits of membership and ensure services reflect the needs of members.

2. Grow and Diversify MLA membership

Increase participation from library workers across all sectors and regions of Manitoba.

3. Enhance Member Engagement & Leadership Opportunities

Encourage members to participate in committees, initiatives, and volunteer leadership roles.

4. Explore Opportunities for Shared Services & Sector Collaboration

Investigate potential collective services, partnerships, or resource-sharing initiatives that could strengthen collaboration and provide additional value to members and Manitoba's library community.

SOUTH INTERLAKE
REGIONAL LIBRARY
STAFF, 2024



STRATEGIC GOALS: COMMUNICATION

1. Improve communication with members and the broader sector

Provide clear, consistent updates about MLA initiatives, opportunities, and advocacy activities.

2. Promote the value and impact of libraries across Manitoba

Share stories and examples demonstrating how libraries support communities, education, and access to information.

3. Strengthen MLA's visibility and digital presence

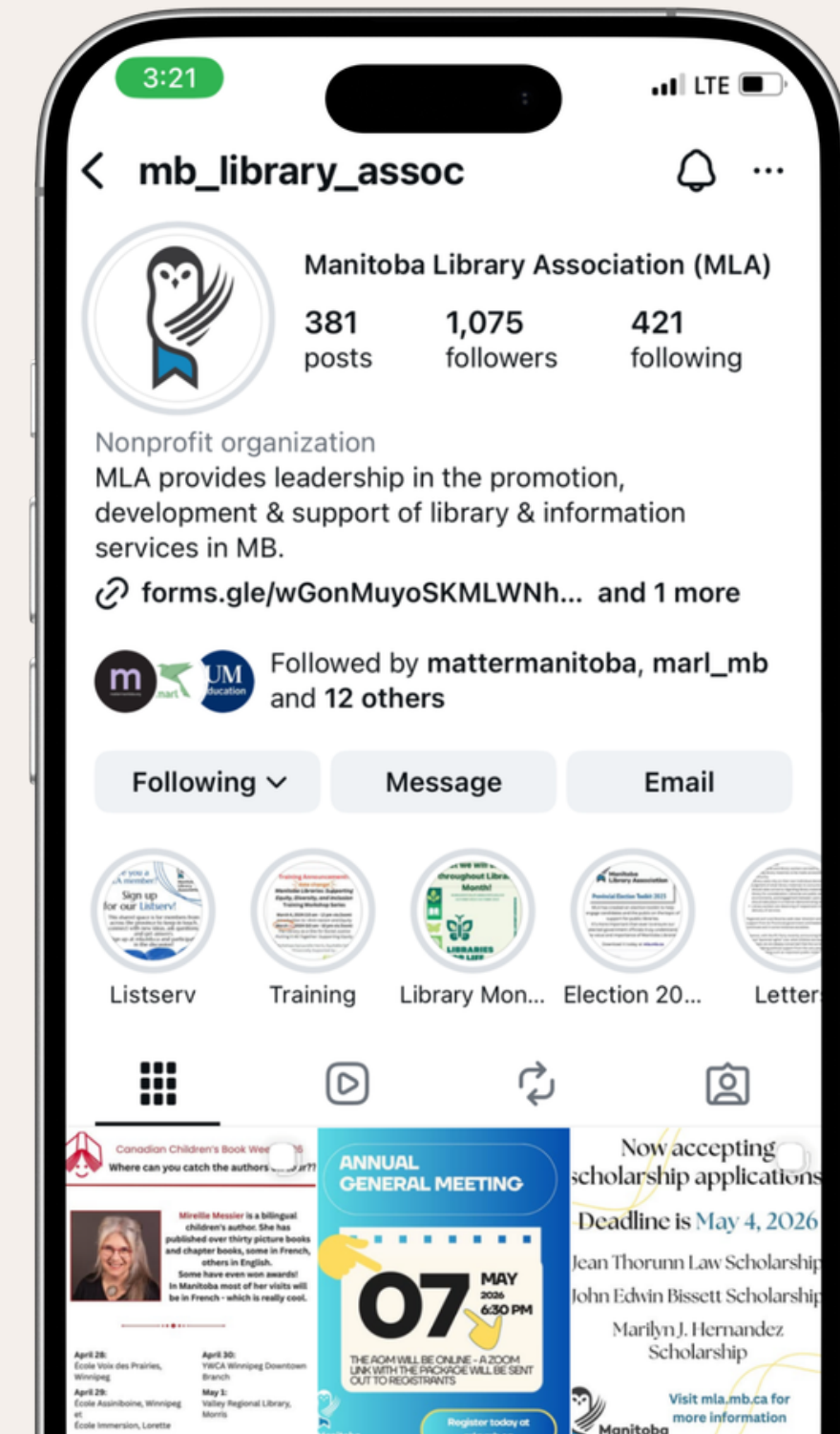
Ensure MLA's website, social media, and communications tools effectively support engagement and outreach.

4. Support members with communication and advocacy tools

Provide resources that help libraries communicate their value and respond to challenges such as censorship or funding pressures.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030



STRATEGIC GOALS: **ADVOCACY**

1. Strengthen MLA's role as the provincial voice for libraries

Advocate for policies and investments that support sustainable and accessible library services across Manitoba.

2. Promote equitable access to library services and information

Support initiatives that address disparities in resources, infrastructure, and service capacity across the province.

3. Support sector collaboration and coordination

Work with partners to address shared challenges and opportunities within Manitoba's library ecosystem.

4. Promote recognition of the library profession and workforce needs

Advocate for the importance of librarians, library technicians, and library workers across the sector.



JACQUIE NICHOLSON
ORGANIZING THE ANNUAL
PRISON BOOK DRIVE AND
BAKE SALE.

PHOTO BY KELSEY JAMES,
REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER
FOR THE FREE PRESS
COMMUNITY REVIEW





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