ONTARIO LIBRARY SERVICE
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
Momentum

Public Library Board Program

Thursday, October 24, 2024 | 6pm to 9pm ET

2024 OLS Virtual Conference for Public Library Board Members Program

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6:00-6:15PM ET: Conference Welcome and OLBA Introductions

6:15-7:15PM ET: Keynote Address

Access Activations: Advancing Cultural Accessibility in Ontario's Public Sector with Eliza Chandler, School of Disability Studies, Toronto Metropolitan University

Session Description: Ontario has committed to increasing accessibility for disabled people through a combination of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), which motivates public institutions to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in their built environments, and dedicating training and funding to facilitate legislative compliance. Alongside these commitments, we have a roster of skilled professionals who provide accessibility services, such as sign language interpreters and audio describers (who provide spoken narration of visual elements). While this legislation and skilled labour force have the potential for improving access within the public sector, public institutions typically lack the comprehensive accessibility plans that are required to initiate systemic changes. Such changes are required in order to shift cultural practices and achieve true inclusivity for Deaf, disabled, mad, and neurodivergent communities.

In this presentation, I will demonstrate how the public sector must work with disabled people to develop and implement accessibility plans specific to their organization in order to advance accessibility in Ontario to support organizations in meeting their full access potential, these plans will combine universal design standards for built environments and cultural accessibility. "Cultural accessibility" refers to flexible practices created by disabled people to meet the needs of diverse publics. An increasingly popular cultural accessibility practice is the provision of access guides; a plain language resource that provides details about specific sensory advisories, content information, and accessibility features that are disseminated to audiences in advance of an event. Throughout this talk, I will introduce innovative cultural accessibility practices that can be adopted within the public sector to increase accessibility by centering disabled people and transforming culture.

7:20-8:05PM ET: Session

AI and Libraries: Shaping the Future of Services with Fiona O'Connor, Toronto Public Library

Session Description: Join us for an engaging session with Fiona O'Connor, Senior Services Specialist in Digital Initiatives at Toronto Public Library. This presentation will explore how AI is transforming library services and programs. Discover how TPL has integrated AI into its program offerings, address potential concerns, examine staff use of AI in their roles, and learn strategies for advancing AI education and literacy.

8:10-8:55PM ET: Session

Board Momentum: The Art of Staying on Track with the OLS Consultants

Session Description: Public library board members in Ontario are approaching the two-year mark of their four-year terms. This pivotal moment provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on achievements and remaining tasks.
During this session, Consultants from the Ontario Library Service will delve into various topics, with a focus on enhancing governance processes. Key discussion points include:

1. Maintaining Momentum: Strategies for keeping board meetings productive and impactful.

2. Performance Check-Ins: Balancing formal and informal assessments of board effectiveness.

3. Legacy Documentation: Creating a pathway for preserving institutional knowledge.

4. Setting the Tone: The board's role in shaping the library's organizational direction.

Join us to explore these critical aspects of library governance.