



Celebrating 130 years

The 130th anniversary of the Ohio Library Council represents an important milestone and a visit to Cleveland.

This is an exciting time to be a part of the Ohio Library Council, as we celebrate 130 years of service to our members and to the profession.

Founded in 1895 and originally named the Ohio Library Association, our professional organization was the idea of three determined librarians - William Howard Brett, Electra C. Doren and Linda A. Eastman. The first conference was held that same year in Cleveland. A brief timeline is listed below.

It's clear that OLC's longevity and strength come from continuously innovating new programs and services that benefit members. The creation of the Ohio Public Librarian Certification (CPL) and the Ohio Public Library Staff Certification (CPLS) are obvious examples, but OLC's advancements extend across key areas such as advocacy, education, career development, and leadership. It's inspiring that these innovations are due to the engagement and expertise of our vibrant public library community. One hundred and thirty years later, the founding members would be proud to learn that the OLC is now one of the leading and most well-respected library associations in the country.

Please join us in celebrating this milestone during the 2025 Convention and Expo at the site of OLC's first meeting – Cleveland, Ohio. The Convention and Expo will be held on November 19-21, 2025, at the Huntington Convention Center in downtown Cleveland. Thank you for helping make OLC the association it is today – here's to 130 years and counting!

Timeline

- 1895 Ohio Library Association (OLA) founded. First meeting is held in Cleveland.
- 1930 Ohio Library Trustees Association (OLTA) organized to address the funding crisis experienced by Ohio's public libraries.

- 1932 OLA and OLTA Legislative Committees met jointly to address the new intangibles tax and state aid for libraries.
- 1936 First *Ohio Libraries* journal published.
- 1939 First *Ohio Library Trustee* published.
- 1941 First OLA employee, Frances Nunmaker, hired as Executive Secretary and Membership Director.
- 1956 First legal counsel employed by the OLA and OLTA.
- 1963 Ohio Library Foundation established.
- 1964 A. Chapman Parsons hired as first executive director by the OLA/OLTA Joint Governing Board.
- 1973 Ohio Friends of the Library Association (OFLA) established.
- 1993 Ohio Library Council incorporated as a federation of the OLA, OLTA, and OFLA. Each organization maintains a set of bylaws and board of trustees, elects members to the OLC Board of Trustees, and appoints members to OLC committees.
- 1995 OLC is instrumental in the creation of the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN).
- 2001 Ohio Public Librarian Certification Program is established.
- 2003 OLC creates the Library Futures Initiative.
- 2004 OLC governance restructured to merge OLA, OLTA and OFLA into one organization, governed by one Board of Directors.
- 2005 OLC's Library Education Committee develops first set of Ohio Public Library Core Competencies.
- 2006 OLC Board of Directors creates Continuing Education Task Force.
- 2007 OLC partners with State Library of Ohio to launch the Ohio Ready to Read program.
- 2008 OLC Board of Directors creates two new task forces: Ready to Read and Library Security.
- 2016 OLC members vote in favor of the Board of Directors' proposals to amend the Code of Regulations to dissolve the OLC Chapters and update the titles of the OLC officers.
- 2018 In lieu of Chapter Conferences, OLC presents targeted, subject-specific professional development conferences developed by the OLC Committees and Divisions and presented at regional sites around the state.

- 2019 OLC partners with the Academic Library Association of Ohio (ALAO) and Ohio Education Library Media Association (OELMA) to host a conference for academic, public and school library staff.
- 2020 During the pandemic, Ohio's public libraries made it their mission to keep people connected, not just to the library, but to school, work and one another. Library staff quickly adapted and enhanced services by introducing virtual programs, offering curbside pickup, expanding digital collections, and ensuring round-the-clock internet access.
- 2021 Thanks to a partnership between OLC, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health, Ohio's public libraries were among the first in the country to distribute free, at-home COVID-19 testing kits.
- 2024 The Public Library Association hosted its biennial national conference in Columbus, Ohio.
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This timeline is just a snapshot. For more information on OLC's advocacy efforts, read the [History of State Funding of Ohio's Public Libraries](#) on the OLC website.