

PLG STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (DRAFT)

The Library has long been assumed to be the bastion of liberty and learning, where people are free to reflect on the past and converse with the present in one of the few settings where commercial speech is muted. Signaled by the change in the name of what we do from librarianship to “information management”, we may be giving up our professional responsibility to protect free public access to the knowledge generated in this society. We also seem to be forgetting that the library is an agent of democratic education and cultural development, and have instead embraced unthinkingly the idea that libraries must transform themselves into “competitors” in the “information marketplace.”

We must dedicate ourselves to the renewal of the democratic ethos of library service, combat the attacks on library service that emanate from the various sectors of the information industry and work to restore libraries as socially progressive educational institutions. We must attempt to make known and to change the disparities of information provision for different sectors of our society and oppose and attempt to roll back the pervasive imposition of fees for library service. Above all, we will dispute the claim for the library as a neutral, non-political organization that serves best when preserving the status quo, and attempt to renew the library as an agent for progressive social change.

To accomplish these goals we have established this organization. Its purpose will be to:

- Provide a forum for the open exchange of radical views on library issues
- Conduct campaigns to support progressive and democratic library activities locally, nationally and internationally
- Defend activist librarians as they work to effect changes in their own libraries and communities
- Bridge the artificial and destructive gap within our profession between school, public, academic, and special libraries
- Encourage the debate about prevailing management strategies adopted directly from the business world and propose democratic forms of library administration
- Consider the impact of technological change in the library workplace and on the provision of library service
- Monitor the professional ethics of librarianship from a socially responsible perspective
- Facilitate contacts between progressive librarians and other professional and scholarly groups dealing with communications worldwide.