

SYNERGY: The Illinois Library Leadership Initiative 2004

March 23-25, 2004, Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center, Utica
August 3-5, 2004, Pere Marquette Lodge, Grafton
November 16-18, 2004, Hickory Ridge Marriott Conference Hotel, Lisle

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Do you have an idea of how many people can attend *Synergy* and is that figure for public knowledge?

A. *Synergy* is planned for a maximum of 30 individuals who will commit to participating in the entire year's events. We encourage individuals to consider their nominations on their own merits, rather than seeing this as a competition. *Synergy* is an annual event.

Q. This year's dates don't work with my schedule.

A. We're sorry about that, and we understand. Finding working dates is one of our biggest challenges. In our planning, we look at many calendars and try to allow for major events as well as individual schedules.

Q. When I send in my application packet, do I include everything (nominating letter, references letters, etc.), or can individual pieces be sent in separately?

A. In answer to your question, #1 under "Application Package" states: "Cover letter indicating applicant meets all the Selection Criteria and has enclosed the materials requested below." In other words, we consider it the responsibility of the potential leader to gather this material and submit it all at one time. Application Packages that do not arrive as complete packages will not be considered.

Q. Is *Synergy* designed only for those who are new to the library profession?

A. The working group that proposed the selection criteria did not wish to limit the applicants by the number of years of professional experience. With predictions that 50% of librarians will retire in the next ten years, the profession will need leaders at all levels.

Q. Can a library nominate more than one employee?

A. Yes. There is no quota for the number of nominees from any one library.

Q. Can the supporting letters come from anyone, for instance, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, United Way, neighborhood groups?

A. Yes.

Q. How many total letters are required?

A. A total of four letters are required: 1) a cover letter, written by the applicant indicating the applicant meets all the Selection Criteria and has enclosed all the requested materials; 2) one letter of nomination as indicated in Point 3 of the Criteria; 3) two letters of support as indicated in Point 4 of the Criteria.

Q. Who should I ask to write letters?

A. This is an opportunity to begin developing mentors and networks, so you may want to consider asking the strongest individuals, particularly in light of their roles as leaders and any work they may have done with you.

Q. What do you mean by a "one-page resume"?

A. A "one-page resume" is designed so the applicant can provide the most pertinent information about themselves in a limited amount of space. Applicants should use as much of that space as possible in order to demonstrate their achievements and expertise.

Q. I'm a school librarian, and it's hard for me to get away for nine days in one school year.

A. Actually, the first three days are in one school year, the next three days are over the summer, and the last three days are in the following school year.

Q. Can you explain more about the "School Library Media Specialist" requirement? I'm not sure what certification I have?

A. The criteria specifies the applicant must be a School Library Media Specialist. This requires 32 hours of library science, is based on coursework and requires professional testing. A Teaching Certificate Endorsement (18 hours of library science and coursework) is not applicable.