

### US Medical Library Association report for EAHIL



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#### **LATEST NEWS: MLA 2020 CONFERENCE TO BE TOTALLY VIRTUAL**

Update on MLA '20 Virtual Conference (vConference)

On 7 May 2020, the Governor of the State of Oregon issued a press release stating that:

“... large gatherings such as conventions, festivals, and major concerts and live audience sporting events will need to be cancelled at least through September. Restarting events of this size will require a reliable treatment or prevention, like a vaccine, which is many months off.”

<https://www.myoregon.gov/2020/05/07/gov-kate-brown-releases-plan-for-rebuilding-a-safe-and-strong-oregon/>

This was the final nail in the coffin for the planned ‘in-person’ MLA '20 Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon. You will remember from my last piece in the March issue of JEAHIL, that I had reported that MLA had taken the very difficult but wholly necessary decision to postpone MLA from May 2020 to August 2020, in the hope that the COVID-19 situation might be adequately under control by then. This is now, clearly, not going to be the case, so MLA and the conference organizers are now working hard to put together a fully virtual event. <https://www.mlanet.org/meeting>

As I mentioned in my last piece for the March issue of JEAHIL, I would ask you to support MLA at this difficult time. Please do consider attending the vConference remotely this year. You may have conference funds in your budgets that you have been unable to spend on attending conferences in person this year, so, do please consider using those funds to register for the MLA vConference. This will be the 120th Annual Meeting and as such should be a landmark event.

It is difficult to confirm, at this time, the proposed programme for the MLA '20 vConference, as the demise of the ‘in-person’ event in Portland has only just been announced. In the coming weeks, MLA will need to reconfirm their presenters’ availability and investigate the necessary technical solutions. It will be interesting to see if moving to a fully virtual format at half the normal registration fee (see below) might, in fact, increase the number of registrants and exhibitors. Normally the conference would expect to attract c. 2,500 participants, including delegates and over 100 exhibitors.

MLA are planning to offer 4 Keynotes this year, for which delegates can view the ‘livecast’ or view it later in your own time. It is anticipated that the audience will be able to interact with the presenters through Q&A via ‘chat’ (Audience Response System). Additionally, selected keynote presentations will be streamed live without requiring a vConference Registration.

With respect to the contributed programme, it is expected that there will be c. 100 papers and c. 40 ‘Lightning Talks’ presented, which can be viewed as videos online, listening to the presenters in your own time, and interacting with attendees and presenters in virtual sessions and through ‘chat’. The ‘Lightning Talks’ are five-minute presentations and focus on one main topic, submitted as either a research abstract or a programme

description abstract. Additionally, there will be c. 160 posters, which can also be viewed online, listening to the presenters in your own time, and interacting with attendees and presenters in virtual sessions and through 'chat'.

This year there will again be Immersion sessions, described as follows. "They are intended to: provide an in-depth perspective on areas of interest to MLA members. They are your chance to design and offer the programming that you want to see. Immersion sessions should strive for excellent engagement and can vary in format from a panel of invited speakers to a single invited speaker, a facilitated book discussion, as well as less-conventional sessions like an "unconference" or flipped session. The only type of programming excluded from immersion sessions are paper presentations." It is envisaged that c. 20 sessions will be held as Immersion sessions this year. These were an innovation in the 2019 MLA programme. MLA are currently considering how best to offer these virtually.

Sunrise Seminars, Lunch and Learns, and Technology Showcase sessions are planned to go ahead as either live or recorded virtual presentations allowing interaction with the presenters through Q&A via 'chat'.

Continuing Education courses, which were planned for the two days prior to the conference, will probably not be held this year, as they were based on face-to-face instruction. MLA, however, continues its programme of webinars, available as both live and recorded events.

<https://www.mlanet.org/p/cm/ld/fid=412>

The Exhibition will also be fully virtual this year and c. 65 vendors are expected to 'attend'. It is anticipated that delegates will be able to view vendor videos and download product and education materials in their own time, as well as join public video 'chat' sessions (scheduled or open) to ask questions and talk about products and services.

A Preliminary Programme will be made available shortly.

<https://www.mlanet.org/meeting>

Networking Events will also be fully virtual this year and more information will follow on the meeting website in due course.

Conference registration is expected to open in early June 2020. There is a discount for EAHIL members through EAHIL's association with MLA. The vConference registration fee for EAHIL members is 350 USD, reduced from 685 USD for the originally planned 'in-person' event in Oregon.

<https://www.mlanet.org/p/cm/ld/fid=1653>

The MLA '20 Blog will continue to provide coverage of a range of topics including programme sessions, plenary sessions, exhibition activity and virtual social events, before, during and after the meeting.

<https://www.mlanet.org/p/bl/et/blogid=136>

Additionally, you can follow the meeting on Twitter with the MLA '20 hashtag #mlanet20 and follow MLA more generally on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/MedicalLibraryAssn>

Future MLA annual meetings - dates for your diary:

Washington, DC, 21-26 May 2021

New Orleans, Louisiana 2-7 May 2022

Membership of MLA

MLA offers International Membership to individuals at a reduced rate. This category applies if you work or

have worked in a health- or health information-related environment and live outside the US or Canada. The current annual subscription rate for International Membership is 150 US dollars (or 25 US dollars if you are from a HINARI-eligible Group A or Group B country).  
<https://www.mlanet.org/join>

### News and publications from MLA

The latest issue of the Journal of the Medical Library Association (JMLA) (Volume 108 (2) April 2020) is now available (open access) at:  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/journals/93/latest/>

Open access to back issues of the JMLA (and its predecessors back to 1898) is available from:  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/journals/93/>

Preprints of articles from the forthcoming issue of the JMLA are no longer available. JMLA does, however, encourage self-archiving at any point in the manuscript preparation or peer review process:  
<http://jmla.mlanet.org/ojs/jmla/article/view/877>

MLAConnect is MLA's members-only e-mail newsletter and is circulated weekly. The online version now displays all articles to which members have access, including from blogs of MLA sections and is updated continually. Most articles are restricted to MLA members and/or to members of specific MLA sections. For the most complete display of articles, you need to login with your username and password.