HOW WILS EVENTS SERVE WILS MEMBERS
In support of WILS mission to serve member libraries and cultural organizations, and to drive the field of librarianship forward, WILS hosts professional development events to connect and educate members of the community, to build and grow relationships, to foster collaboration, to solve problems, and to introduce and build upon innovative ideas affecting members. WILS draws on a variety of expertise to plan and produce these events. Planning teams are made up of WILS members, and meeting or session topics are determined by member input whenever possible. Programs and workshops are led by experts from WILS staff, the member community, as well as professionals from the broader library, business, and educational spheres.

WILS EVENTS: CHANGES FOR 2016
WILS seeks ways to improve how events align with our services and mission, and to improve event efficiency, reach, and outcomes. In order to do this, WILS has developed a plan for each of its current yearly events, and has developed a few models to test with new or one-time events for 2015-2016.

CHANGES TO CURRENT WILS EVENTS
WILS hosts or co-hosts the following events: the ILL Meeting with RL&LL (Spring -- annually), Peer Council (Late Spring -- annually), WILSWorld and Annual Member Meeting (Summer -- annually), the Upper Midwest Digital Collections Conference (UMDCC) (Summer – biennially) and six Regional Community Meetings (Fall -- annually). The following outlines changes, if any, to each of those events planned for 2016.

ILL Meeting
Because of declining interest from RL&LL as a partner, and because WILS no longer offers ILL services, WILS will not hold the annual ILL Meeting in 2016. Instead, and in order to continue to promote resource sharing across the state, WILS will also add a resource sharing track to WILSWorld and will also participate in planning and promoting the Great Lakes Resource Sharing Meeting.

Peer Council
WILS will change Peer Council from a single-track, traditional meeting to an “unconference” event, allowing more peer education about interesting and innovative developments in technical services and more opportunity to connect with one another around shared interests. This change will be considered an experiment and will be carefully evaluated to determine if this new model is appropriate for the topic and audience.
Upper Midwest Digital Collections Conference (UMDCC)

WiLS partnered with Minitex and OCLC to host the first UMDCC in 2014. With the increased interest in digitization and digital content, and WiLS’ substantial role in Recollection Wisconsin and DPLA, we will continue to partner on this event. We are working with Minitex to identify additional partners (Illinois, Iowa, etc.), which will allow us to do more with the event while expending less staff resource on planning.

WiLSWorld

In 2015, WiLS changed WiLSWorld from a day and a half event to a single day, using the second day as an opportunity for workshops to develop skills requested by members. Feedback to this change has been positive, and there will be no substantial changes to WiLSWorld 2016, except to move the Annual Membership Meeting to a virtual meeting in order to facilitate participation of a wider array of WiLS members.

Regional Community Meetings

In 2015, WiLS incorporated a more substantive educational component into its Regional Community Meetings, centering those meetings on maximizing the use of electronic resources. In 2016, if feedback is positive on the 2015 model, WiLS plans to continue to focus those meetings on educational topics that align with WiLS services.

NEW EVENTS AND EVENT MODELS

In 2016, WiLS will test some new models for events, in addition to adjusting its existing events to better serve members.

Piggyback model

WiLS often presents at other state and regional conferences. In this test, we would formalize our involvement with a specific event or events.

Formalizing relationships to existing events provides WiLS with exposure to new audiences, reinforces our partnership with other organizations, allows us to provide more educational opportunities without all of the logistical planning, and gives us the opportunity to reach members where they already are.

An example of this model could be creating a “WiLSWorld” track at the WEMTA conference.
Cohort model

Cohort events convene the same people (or organizations) regularly and grow skills or complete processes over time to build a community of practice. Cohorts will give members more time to digest and apply information and will incorporate the peer and collaborative model that is a cornerstone of WiLS thinking. The model may involve both virtual and in-person meetings, or may culminate at another in-person event, such as WLA or WiLSWorld.

An example of this model could be having a webinar series on building topics with a discussion forum available to attendees, followed by an in-person tour of new libraries.

Think Tank model

While gaining practical skills is important, it’s also important to have the big conversations about library challenges, strengths, and opportunities. WiLS would like to convene library leaders and thinkers to tackle some big questions facing libraries, and share the results with the community.

An example of this model would be to convene a multi-type group to discuss the future of resource sharing in the state.

RESELLING

In addition to our own events (and piggybacking on other events), WiLS will work to offer cooperative purchasing discounts to educational opportunities for members. We currently have an agreement for Gale Courses, which some libraries are using for staff development. We will extend this type of offering to include other vendors or organizations, such as NISO and Infopeople.