

OCULA

Student Guide to Super Conference 2024



Super Conference is the annual gathering of The Ontario Library Association (OLA), Canada's largest professional association for library workers. Held annually at the end of January, thousands of library workers from across the country meet in downtown Toronto, share what they are working on, learn new things, and have some fun!

This guide is created by OCULA, the Ontario College and University Library Association, a division of OLA, to introduce students to the conference and offer some tips and tricks.

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TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL THE WAYS THAT STUDENTS CAN GET DISCOUNTED REGISTRATION

Though OLA already offers discounted registration to students, there are a few other ways that students can save some money!

- [Sign up to volunteer!](#) In exchange for a few hours of work, volunteers who are not yet OLA members attend the day of their shift for FREE; if you are an OLA member you receive free registration for the entire conference. [Student OLA membership is only 20\\$](#), but either way all volunteers get access to all free social events! Volunteer slots fill up fast, so sign up as soon as you can!
- [Enter OCULA Lightning Strikes](#) before December 10, for a chance to give a short, 10 minute presentation alongside some of your fellow students. No need to have completed fancy research, you can speak about a course project, experience, or just your thoughts and ideas. All lightning strikes participants can register at the discounted speaker rate. You'll also get access to the speaker's lounge, where you can store your things, have a coffee, chat with other speakers, and take a rest!

2

START PREPARING EARLY AND GET EXCITED!

There are lots of things you can do before the conference starts to get ready to and to get excited.

- [Attend the ONLib Chat "OLA Tips and Tricks"](#) on January 9th
- [Plan accommodations and travel](#)
- Prepare your resume for the Career Centre [SEE TIP # 6](#)

Keep an eye out for updates and additions to the conference schedule. The Thursday night social events are sometimes some of the last events to be announced but are one of the best (and most fun) places to meet new people. Also stay tuned for alumni social events where you can meet graduates from your program and see where they are now.

3

HEAD IN EARLY ON YOUR FIRST DAY

Avoid the lines and visit the registration desk early to get your badge and other conference information. The badge is your ticket to any and all conference activities.

You should also take some time to stop in at the Library Marketplace to check out the fun merch! The Marketplace is usually located on the main floor of the conference, just inside the entrance, and across from the registration desk.

4

DRESS TO IMPRESS, BUT STAY COMFY

There is no formal dress requirement, but there is an expectation that people will be dressing in professionally appropriate clothing. Wear something that you feel good in! Especially comfortable shoes!

There is a cash coat-check where you can store your coats, hats, and scarves, but be aware that if you want to leave the conference for lunch you will have to brave the cold or pay for coat-check twice.

5

VISIT THE EXPO

The EXPO is a floor of the conference with many treasures to explore. It has everything from vendor booths and networking opportunities, to animal shows and book signings with both established and up and coming authors!

Also check out the poster presentations! Presenters display highlights of their research on posters which are up all day. From 12 noon to 1 pm on Thursday and Friday, presenters stand with their poster to answer questions and discuss their findings.

6

GO TO THE CAREER CENTRE

Curious about career trajectories as a librarian? You are not alone! Plan some time to visit the Career Centre and experience the personalized support.

- Get a professional headshot taken! Headshots are free, but slots fill up fast.
- Talk one-on-one with experienced mentors about your career
- Sign up for a mock interview to tweak your interview skills and bring your resume/cover letter to be critiqued
- Or drop in during open hours to Network!

7

TRY TO GRAB SOME FREE BOOKS

There are a lot of free books, advanced copies of new titles, and tons of swag available at the conference so bring a big bag! There are never any guarantees but some likely spots to find these free books are:

- EXPO publisher booths and author signings
- Dewey Divas Sessions- these are scheduled sessions where publisher reps tell you about their hottest new titles and sometimes hand some out to the audience
 - Thursday 25th 2:15-3:30: Books Worth Defending
 - Thursday 25th 3:45-5:00: Speed-dating with the Dewey Divas

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Schedule Spotlights

[The full schedule is available online](#) With so many sessions and social events, the schedule can feel overwhelming, but just remember to take it slow and follow your curiosity. If you can't decide what to do, try to check these boxes:

- ☐ Attend a session that discusses something you have already done
- ☐ Attend a session that addresses an idea that is new to you
- ☐ Attend a session that doesn't apply to you at all
- ☐ Skip a session and talk to someone interesting

Wednesday January 24th

The majority of the first day of the conference is dedicated to pre-conference workshops – intensive sessions spanning half or full days. While these sessions are typically less frequented by students, you will be warmly welcomed. They provide ample opportunity for immersive learning and in-depth conversations.

You should also try to check out the Opening Keynote at 6:30 pm if you are able. ALA President Emily Drabinski and Leslie Weir, Librarian and Archivist of Canada are library STARS so their conversation is sure to be interesting!

Thursday January 25th

Thursday morning's opening keynote at 9:15 am will also be a conference highlight! Julie Lalonde will be speaking about building community care through bystander intervention.

Throughout the day many sessions occur simultaneously, but don't worry, presentation slides are often made available online after the conference. Don't be afraid to email the speaker about a session that you missed, they are always happy to share their work and have a chat.

Thursday night is also THE night for social events. Keep your eye out for more news as these events are announced. You should definitely plan to attend! Students are more than welcome! There is always something for everyone and it is a great place to meet new people.

Friday January 26th

Friday morning, come check out the OCULA Lightning Strikes to cheer on your fellow students as they present their lightning talks!

Later that afternoon, come find out the winner at the OCULA Spotlight. The Lightning Strikes Award Winner will be announced along with the two other annual OCUL Awards of Special Achievement, and Lifetime Achievement. Following the awards, Meredith Broussard will be presenting a fascinating talk "Confronting Race, Gender & Ability Bias in Tech".

Finish off the conference with Eric Klinenberg's closing keynote. Author of *Palaces for the People* and Director of the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University, he will surely leave you with something to think about.

