The Modern Language Association of America, often referred to as the Modern Language Association (MLA), is the principal professional association in the United States for scholars of language and literature.

Founded in 1883 and having 25,000 members in 145 countries primarily academic scholars, professors, and graduate students who study or teach language and literature, including English, other modern languages, and comparative literature.

Although founded in the United States, with offices in New York City, the MLA's membership, concerns, reputation, and influence are international in scope.

The MLA International Bibliography, the most widely distributed humanities database, is the preeminent reference work in the fields of literature, language, linguistics, folklore, ethnomusicology, and teaching.

The bibliography lists over 2.4 million citations, and is available online worldwide.

Most North American and European higher-education institutions subscribe to the bibliography; it is used by a broad range of researchers—from high school students to senior scholars.

The MLA Directory of Periodicals provides detailed information on over 6,000 journals and book series that cover literature, literary theory, dramatic arts, folklore, language, linguistics, pedagogy, rhetoric and composition, and the history of printing and publishing. Articles published in works listed in the directory are indexed in the MLA International Bibliography.