

The future of the New Librarians' Symposium: we want your opinion!

The 4th ALIA New Librarians' Symposium (NLS) is being held in Melbourne in December this year. A few hundred of our best and brightest new professionals will be gathering to develop a better understanding and appreciation of what it means to be an information professional. They will hopefully leave excited, and eager to continue their involvement in the profession.

NLS has traditionally been held biennially; however, it will not be held in 2010 to allow efforts to be focused on the IFLA 2010 Congress in Brisbane. This means that there will be a four year gap between NLS events (the next one being scheduled for 2012) which in turn gives us some breathing space to consider what we would like the future of NLS to be. 'We' refers to you, our humble readers. All ALIA members have a stake in NLS, whether you have attended in the past, intend to go in the future, have contributed sponsorship funds, have encouraged your junior staff to attend, or have just watched with interest as NLS has gained the attention of international professional groups.

The ALIA New Generation Advisory Committee (NGAC), which advises the ALIA Board of Directors, has been working on developing some models for the future of NLS. While NLS has been successful against most of its measures, there has never been an opportunity to take a step back and consider the strategic direction of the event. We would like to develop a plan for NLS that ensures its medium-term sustainability. We would like to ensure that it meets the goals of the Board, of the various new graduate stakeholder groups, of delegates, sponsors and employers. We want to consider all viable options, and ensure that when a path for the future of NLS is chosen it is done so in a transparent and collaborative way.

To this end we have developed four models, which we now put to you for consideration. We would like you to read these models and then contact us with your preferred model. If you have any questions about these models, including more detail on how they work and who would be responsible for the various tasks, please feel free to contact us, and an NGAC member will be happy to discuss the issue with you.

Option 1: The Continuation Model

NLS is run every two years, with the next event being held in 2012, as per the original schedule. NGAC takes on a strategic leadership role in relation to NLS, which involves sending out a call for hosts, setting themes, and liaising with the ALIA Board of Directors. While each NLS is run by a new organising committee, NGAC provides some continuity between events.

This model allows NLS to build on a strong brand and ensure targeted professional development by new graduates, for new graduates. However, it does continue a model that is

increasingly pushed for funding and can involve significant volunteer commitment to organise. More active strategic guidance provided by NGAC may reduce the independence currently experienced by organising committees.

Option 2: The Satellite Event Model

NLS petitions to be held as a regular satellite event to large ALIA conferences. NGAC takes on a strategic leadership role, responsible for negotiating with current conference organisers to link up with NLS, however individual events are organised by a separate organising committee. NLS events may be regular or semi-regular depending on negotiated arrangements. NLS events may be held before, during or after the parent event.

This model allows for some cost sharing to occur with existing conferences, and gives new graduates the opportunity to interact with more senior industry figures at larger events. It may allow for shared speakers; however, NLS delegates would not be able to attend the full programme of the parent event without a separate registration. More active strategic guidance provided by NGAC, combined with the need to meet the guidelines of the parent event, would reduce the independence currently experienced by organising committees.

Option 3: The Integration Model

NLS no longer exists as a separate event, but new graduate themes are integrated into other existing ALIA conferences. NGAC takes on a strategic leadership role, with one committee member being appointed as the contact for each ALIA conference to represent the interests of new graduates. Reduced registration fees may be negotiated for new graduates and NGAC encourages organising committees to allocate space in the programme for first time presenters. NGAC may develop other programmes to make ALIA conferences more accessible to new graduates, such as a conference mentoring programme.

This model increases the interaction between new graduates and the wider conference delegate population. It allows new graduates to attend mainstream events with the support and encouragement of their peers. It relies heavily on the ability to integrate new graduate issues into current conference programmes. It may result in a loss of focus on new graduate issues, and new graduates may be competing with senior staff for attendance at events.

Option 4: The Cessation Model

No plans are made for the future of NLS. The New Graduates Group focuses on local events designed to appeal to a smaller audience, with the occasional larger coordinated event. NGAC continues to provide a strategic link between the New Graduates Group and the ALIA Board. Any group that wishes to host a NLS event in the future would have to apply independently to the Board.

This model reduces the financial and organisational burden of NLS on all parties, and may allow for energies to be redirected to smaller, more frequent, local events. The model recognises that there may be limited interest in the continuation of NLS as a distinct event or theme beyond 2008.

Now what?

We need to know what you think about this issue, and which of the four models you would prefer. Email us on ngac@alia.

Energise>> Enthuse>> Inspire!

...gives a voice to the new generation of library and information professionals. If you have any suggestions or topics for this column, please contact the column co-ordinator Naomi Doessel, naomi.doessel@au.ey.com

org.au by 31 January 2009 and if you have any questions about this issue, please don't hesitate to contact us. NGAC will collate and analyse the feedback, debate the models one more time, and then recommend one or two models to the ALIA Board for approval. We hope to have a clear picture of the future of NLS by mid-2009.



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Making the leap

The South Australian Library Technician (SALT) Workshop was held on the weekend of 25-26 October at Bungaree Station, a working sheep station in the Clare Valley.

This workshop had less than 20 delegates and presenters, but what it lacked in numbers it certainly made up for in all other aspects with an inspiring program.



Riina Sciacca viewing the Raeco Stand

The workshop, *Making the leap*, was opened by Graham Mill, Chairman of the Clare Region Historical Group, who acknowledged that we were on Ngadjuri land and gave us a brief background history of the region.

Riina Sciacca provided a most informative introduction to 'The women's springboard', and following a delicious country cooked lunch, four panel members talked about the challenges they have embarked on and the transitions they have made in their lives. I

would like to thank Kathy Sharrad, Sharron Zuodar, Christine Cother and Heather Layton for their inspirational insights.

An afternoon break of homemade scones, with all the trimmings, was followed by a hands-on session with Helen Alm of Helen Elizabeth Seminars & Coaching, who showed us 'How to handle decision making'. We learned how internal and external factors influence our decision making and that by recognising these influences, we are able to make better choices for ourselves.

This topic was complementary to the content of our next speaker, Marion Fielke, who spoke about time management. Marion named her session 'Living the life you want', and it focused on providing tools to give yourself the time to turn your decisions into actions.

That evening, 17 people sat down to dinner in the Old Shearers' Quarters to solve a 'Murder most foul'—everyone had a motive but there was only one killer or was there?!?

The next morning, having solved last night's mystery, we were given an introduction to Enneagrams. Len Sciacca, Chief Operating Officer at DSTO, showed us how an Enneagram

can be a useful tool in both your work life and your personal life. An example would be that if you recognise personality types in yourself and others, you can become a more effective communicator.

Storytelling by Amaranth was the ideal way to bring the workshop to its conclusion. Staying with the theme of *Making the leap*, Heather Brown, Kelvin Brown, Clare Eacott and Rosemary McGrath presented *The pandit's chronicles*, six stories from India and Japan revealing wisdom and humour. A perfect conclusion to the program.

It was an added pleasure during the workshop to present ALIA Silver Pins to Marion Fielke and Amanda Colbert. At the end of the workshop, everyone walked away feeling positive and with a sense of achievement—a most inspiring time was had by all.

Martina Munn
SALT Convenor
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A panel of 4 speakers talking about 'Making the Leap' (left to right) Heather Layton, Christine Cother, Sharron Zuodar, Kathy Sharrad.



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