

Your Association at work

More information from the FARM

In December 2008 Jan Richards provided some details of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Standing Committee (FARM) and a brief overview of ALIA's finances. Given that Jan has moved on to the loftier role of President, it's now my turn as Vice-President to chair FARM. Jan will remain on the Committee as will Philip Keane, the Board member who was on last year's committee.

Now that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) has come and gone, it's worth reflecting on some of the key aspects of the financial result. As Derek Whitehead said in the President's statement of the 2008 Annual Report, "In 2008 ALIA's effort to achieve financial sustainability were the least successful of the year and the Association ended the year with a substantial deficit." The deficit for the year was \$717 430. For an organisation the size of ALIA, this is a significant amount, even if you say it quickly.

The largest single item affecting the bottom line was a reduction in the value of our investments. As Jan advised in December, in 2006/7 the Association prudently invested \$2.00M in some fairly conservative funds. The value on the investment increased to \$2.166M in September 2007 and then went downhill from there. At the end of ALIA's financial year the value of our investment had fallen \$323 945 compared to 2007. The overall decline in value compared to our initial investment is approximately 17%, which is not too bad compared with other stocks and shares. As the markets slowly recover, we are hopeful that the value of our investments will also recover.

Other factors to impact on the bottom line included increased depreciation for our corporate management system, and, more importantly, a reduction of approximately \$80 000 in membership receipts. There were 3.4% fewer members of the Association at the end of 2008 than the same time last year. As we are a

member-driven and focused organisation, a healthy membership is key to the long-term health of the organisation.

As Chair of FARM, I, like my other Board members, are concerned about our financial situation and will be focusing on moving the Association back onto a financially sustainable footing. Before I go any further, I would like to stress that ALIA is solvent with net assets of over \$5.1M.

One of our largest assets is ALIA House in Deakin. The building has served ALIA well, however it will be reaching its 20th anniversary next year. As a homeowner I can assure you that as buildings age, the cost of keeping them in good conditions steadily increases. ALIA House is no exception – ongoing maintenance, replacing aged equipment and services, and ensuring compliance are all part of a landlord's lot. Over the next few years, the building will require substantial investment to maintain its fabric. We are coming to a crossroad where it needs to be decided whether we continue down the road of a homeowner and landlord, or we change direction and move into a rental property.

This is obviously not a decision that can be taken lightly or quickly. Accordingly, at the last meeting of the 2008/09 Board, it was resolved to establish the Steering Committee on ALIA House Matters which will report to FARM. The membership of this group is yet to be determined, however one of the Steering Committee's key roles will be to review the future of ALIA House.

As you can see we have our share of financial challenges over the next few years. I look forward to letting you know how we're faring in a few months time.

Graham Black
ALIA Vice-President
graham.black@alia.org.au

Call for Expressions of Interest

Editor: *Australian Library Journal* (ALJ)

The ALIA Board of Directors is seeking expressions of interest in the position of ALJ editor from suitably qualified and experienced persons.

The *Australian Library Journal* is published quarterly and covers a wide range of professional interests in the sector. Published by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), ALJ is now in its 55th year. It is the flagship publication of the Association and the editor will be expected to be familiar with its evolution and with ALIA's objectives, programs, range of interests, and place in the LIS sector.

Experience in the professional field, in serial publications, and as an editor are important. Applicants should briefly address the selection criteria (indicating editorial experience) and supply the contact details for two referees. A maximum of 400 words outlining their thoughts on possible editorial directions for ALJ and its relationship to ALIA's other publications would also be acceptable as part of the application. <http://www.alia.org.au/publishing/alj>

Further information on the duties and responsibilities of the editor and the roles of the Editorial Board and the Association, and copies of the selection criteria, are available from Sue Hutley, ALIA Executive Director, ph 02 6215 8215, sue.hutley@alia.org.au.

Closing date for expressions of interest is
16 October 2009

Call for Expressions of Interest

Editor: *Australian Academic & Research Libraries* (AARL)

The ALIA Board of Directors is seeking expressions of interest in the position of AARL editor from suitably qualified and experienced persons.

Australian Academic & Research Libraries is published quarterly by ALIA and is a scholarly journal publishing original refereed articles. It is devoted to all aspects of librarianship in university, TAFE and college libraries, and in research libraries of all types.

Experience in the professional field, in serial publications, and as an editor are important. Applicants should briefly address the selection criteria (indicating editorial experience) and supply the contact details for two referees. A maximum of 400 words outlining their thoughts on possible editorial directions for AARL and its relationship to ALIA's other publications would also be acceptable as part of the application. <http://www.alia.org.au/aarl>

Further information on the duties and responsibilities of the editor and the roles of the Editorial Board and the Association, and a copy of the selection criteria, are available from Sue Hutley, ALIA Executive Director, ph 02 6215 8215, sue.hutley@alia.org.au.

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