

## STUDY GRANT AWARD 1997

There are funds available to ALIA members wishing to undertake a study project. Study Grants are offered to provide an opportunity for librarians or library technicians to undertake projects that they would otherwise be unable to do because of the time and costs involved. Study Grants are open to practising librarian or library technician members who have been personal members for at least two years and have a minimum of three years experience.

The number of awards in any year will depend upon the funds available and the estimated costs of proposals received.

Nomination forms are available from ALIA National Office  
PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2600  
ph 06 285 1877, fax 06 282 2249  
e-mail [awards@alia.org.au](mailto:awards@alia.org.au)  
URL <http://www.alia.org.au/awards.html>

Applications close  
1 September 1997

ALIA

# CPD as a career strategy [What does our profession need to learn?]

Marion Nicolson, ALIA Board of Education

The velocity of change in our working environment is accelerating. Degrees and diplomas are considered to have a shelf-life of two years. In the United States of America, the average graduate will move jobs eight times in his or her working life and half the moves will be involuntary. You will not have one career but a series of careers. How do you survive and prosper in this world?

The information leaders of tomorrow will engage in continuous learning, keep a close eye on changes in their working environment and ensure that their competencies are up to date. In other words, they will undertake continuing professional development.

### Continuing professional development that pays

There is clear evidence that continuing professional development combined with effective individual performance counts in job retention and career advancement for librarians.

For example, one recent survey in the private sector (1996 Library and Information Work and Salary Survey, Library Locums) confirms that among those surveyed, librarians with additional qualifications are better paid than their peers.

Against the median salary of \$34 000 for professional librarians with no other qualifications, the median salary for librarians with a qualification in management is \$48 000; with a qualification in science the median salary is \$44 000 and the median salary with a legal qualification is \$41 482.

However, continuing professional development is not confined to obtaining higher-level degrees. It also refers to the training and education of professionals after their initial, pre-service or undergraduate degree. There are some very obvious areas where librarians can enhance their earnings and career prospects immediately by obtaining skills in: staff supervision/team management, and information technology, and in particular the skills and knowledge to develop and maintain in-house databases. Employers in the private

sector are increasingly looking for librarians with additional training in: sales and marketing; report writing; presentation skills; communication; and conflict management.

### Implications for our profession

So far, continuing professional development has been the responsibility of the individual librarian usually motivated by fear of job entrapment, slow career mobility, peer competition as well as a professional commitment to learning and improvement. It is very important that we move beyond the entry-level qualification as the benchmark for our profession if we want to stake out a leadership role for ourselves.

Other professions such as accountants, lawyers, engineers and health services have also recognised the need for their members to keep up with changes in the workplace, in science, technology, legislation and research through continuing professional development.

### Where to next?

The pressures for change will continue to affect all professions. Only organisations and individuals who espouse continuing learning, development and renewal will survive and prosper.

At a recent conference representatives from a number of professional associations got together to look at the continuing professional development of their members. Several issues were raised at this gathering which have remained largely unanswered. For example, who runs the continuing professional development agenda — the association, the members, or the general public? What drives the agenda — public expectations, changes in knowledge base/specialisation, or association eligibility requirements? And just what is the link between continuing professional development and performance in practice?

Ultimately, career success will hinge on the quality of the individual's own continuing professional development and work performance. ■



## THE METCALFE MEDALLION

Nominations are now being  
called for the 1998 award

John Metcalfe, and his contribution to librarianship and library education, are commemorated by the Australian Library and Information Association through the Metcalfe Medallion.

The Metcalfe Medallion is awarded for the most outstanding essay or other piece of work on any topic in the area of library and information science or archives administration. To be eligible nominees must be a student undertaking an entry-level course in these fields.

Entries should be sent to ALIA National Office,  
PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2600  
phone 06 285 1877, fax 06 282 2249  
e-mail [awards@alia.org.au](mailto:awards@alia.org.au)  
URL <http://www.alia.org.au/awards.html>

Entries close 15 December 1997

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