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How you can help your association grow

As avid *inCite* readers would be aware, the Renewal Working Group has been formed to act as an advisory group to General Council during the change to a new Association. This change process started with the Memorandum of Understanding between ACLIS and ALIA, signed two years ago.

The Renewal Working Group consists of Mairéad Browne (vice president/president elect), Robyn Collins (State Library of South Australia), Helen Mandl (University of Wollongong), Jennefer Nicholson (acting ALIA executive director) and myself. The group attempts to cover a variety of viewpoints and experience.

The Group has a limited life-span — it hands a final report to General Council in October, with a set of recommendations on directions for the future.

The Group has built on the work of the Leadership Committee, the input from State and divisional groups across the country last year, and the reports by Gardini, McCallum and Lunn.

The Working Group's first report to General Council was at the meeting held on 12 April. At that meeting a series of viewpoints and options were canvassed, and some general directions set. As a result of that meeting position papers will be produced for the June *inCite*, for consideration by members.

The papers will cover broad areas of the Association's organisation and management. These areas are:

Objects of the new organisation

The matters to be considered include the potential membership base of the new organisation, the relationship the Association has with other groups, and where members feel the Association should be in five years.

Governance

There are many potential models for governance. As a body constituted under *Corporations Law*, it will be necessary to have a Board of Directors. It will also be necessary to specify in the Articles of Association how the Board is nominated, appointed and/or elected. There are a number of requirements under the Act, but it is intended that the

structure be defined in such a way that maximum flexibility can be obtained — both now and in the future.

One of the decisions taken by General Council is that a separate sub-group be formed to examine possible divisional structures. This is a complex and critical job that must somehow find a comfortable place between the rock of administrative efficiency and the hard place of flexibility. This group will report back no later than the middle of next year on recommended structures. Incorporation will be able to proceed prior to these decisions being made.

Institutional involvement

It will be necessary for institutions to have strong involvement in the new Association. This necessity is driven by the lack of another cross-sectoral body to represent institutions, by the commitment made in the Memorandum of Understanding, and by the need to maintain institutional support for work done for the Association by employees.

Incorporation

The changes outlined above revolve around the incorporation process. While some of these changes could take place without incorporation, they would be much more difficult under the Royal Charter on which the Association is now based. The aim is still for incorporation early in 2000. This will take a concerted effort on the part of elected officers and Association staff. The June *inCite* will contain further information on the steps through the incorporation process.

The months ahead will be exciting ones for the Association — but they will only be a beginning. The intention of General Council and the Renewal Working Group is to provide the basis for a strong, flexible and adaptable Association which can confidently take us, and our profession, into the next century.

I would like to urge you to read June *inCite* carefully, and provide feedback via the mechanisms listed there. The draft papers will also be available on ALIANet prior to the publication of June *inCite*. We need the enthusiasm, interest, and input of all members — please help your Association grow into the future. ■

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