

Seeking and fostering information literacy research...

Are you conducting information literacy research? Are you evaluating information literacy programs in your institution? If so, then the Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy Institute (ANZIIL) needs you!

Formal and informal research into information literacy in all educational sectors, the workplace and the community has undergone significant growth and development in recent years. Many institutions and organisations are delivering and evaluating information literacy programs, implementing projects, and are participating in action research. Researchers in higher education are investigating many facets of information literacy, including ways of experiencing information literacy, effectiveness of teaching methods, and design of curriculum to develop information literacy. Information regarding this formal and informal research in progress is often not available until the completion of the project, if at all. Much of the informal, in-house research goes unreported. The ANZIIL Research Working Party's goals are to disseminate information on current research, encourage researchers to publish, mentor and develop the skills of researchers and to facilitate the sharing of information related to information literacy research.

The ANZIIL Research Working Party has recently defined its goals and mission:

ANZIIL aims to foster and encourage research which underpins innovation and improvement of practice for the embedding of information literacy within the total educational process.

'Research for innovative practice' may be either formal or informal and is defined as the systematic collection and analysis of data to enhance learning, decision-making and improvement in practice. Outputs of research include guidelines; state-of-the-art reviews;

good/best practice documents; the development of conceptual/theoretical models; evaluations and investigations; performance indicators; methods/models for dealing with a problem or issue; statistics and benchmarking data as well as more conventional published and unpublished research project reports. [Adapted by ANZIIL research working group from ALIA Research Initiative Project 'Promoting research and information sharing'. May 2002]

ANZIIL's strategies for fostering research will be to:

1. disseminate information on research in progress;
2. provide information on possible funding sources for information literacy research;
3. mentor new researchers, linking established researchers with beginning researchers;
4. provide information on possible publication opportunities;
5. foster research skills which will enable best practice information literacy research; and
6. facilitate the formation of partnerships with other organisations for the sharing of knowledge and mutual benefit in the conduct of research relating to the teaching and learning of information literacy concepts. [ALIA, CONZUL, CAUL etc.]

The group is currently compiling a list of publications and advice to authors in order to support those reporting their research. We are also investigating research funding opportunities and will create a list of those relevant to information literacy inquiry. ANZIIL has developed a pro forma to facilitate reporting of research in progress. It is available from Irene Dorskatsch at Irene.Dorskatsch@unisa.edu.au and on the ANZIIL website at <http://www.library.unisa.edu.au/anzii/research.htm>. We urge those conducting any form of research to use the pro forma and thereby contribute to the dissemination of information and building of a knowledge base about information literacy.

Mandy Lupton and Helena Zobec, ANZIIL Research Working Party



Leonard French (b. 1928) Stained-glass window 1967

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