

Professional partnerships

ALIA Tasmania launches mentoring program

ALIA Tasmania launched its inaugural mentoring program in March. The decision to establish a mentoring program was largely influenced by the re-establishment of a post-graduate library and information studies program at the University of Tasmania in 2003 after a nine-year hiatus.

ALIA Tasmania has worked hard to establish close links with the School of Information Systems, which offers the Graduate Diploma in Information Management program and is keen to build upon this successful relationship by supporting the graduates of the program as they secure their first professional appointments. The Group decided that one of the best ways of achieving this was to establish a mentoring program.

The aim is to provide a facilitated mentoring program to meet the needs of professionals at all levels, with a particular emphasis on new graduates. General guidelines are provided for both mentors and mentees. The mentoring committee negotiates formal pairings. Written agreements are established for each pairing so that both partners have a reference point for their relationship and expectations. Set timeframes operate: the

program commences in March and concludes in November; and intakes of participants are at set intervals rather than continuously. Agreements are for limited terms rather than open-ended. Staged events include the launch, which provides orientation and training for mentees and mentors, and a follow-up schedule. Evaluation mechanisms for both experience and progress are used. Facilitation is provided by the mentoring committee, which is responsible for organisation, negotiation, monitoring and problem-solving.

Six partnerships were negotiated for the 2004 program. One of the partnerships involves Terri (mentee) and Chris (mentor). Terri graduated in December 2003 and commenced work in the Department of Education Library and Information Centre in February this year. She has been paired with Chris, a senior librarian in the State Library of Tasmania.

By participating in the program, Terri hopes to increase her networking opportunities, tap into an experienced librarian's professional knowledge and improve her employment prospects. Terri says, 'It's going really well. We meet up for a drink after work and have a chat about once

a month, or whenever I need to pick Chris's brains for a job application for example. So far, Chris has helped me with a few job applications and the interview process, an application for funding to attend the New Librarians Symposium, talked with me about library politics and culture, and is there should I need to vent some frustration after a long day'.

Chris sees her involvement in the program as an opportunity to give back to the profession and share her knowledge and experience with someone just starting out. Chris is equally keen to 'learn from a person with fresh ideas on the profession.' For Chris, this means 'being able to help a new professional, keep up-to-date with new thinking within the profession and develop an on-going professional relationship with that person to enhance both their and my networking within the profession'.

More information about the ALIA Tasmania mentoring program is available at <http://alia.org.au/members-only/groups/aliatas/mentoring/> or by contacting Jane Jeppson, ALIA local liaison officer, Tasmania at tas.alia@education.tas.gov.au or phone 03 6231 9511. ■

Move up the value chain

New ALIA-Information Edge partnership announced

ALIA and Information Edge have formed a partnership to deliver the *Moving up the value chain* workshop to ALIA members. This is a one-day workshop, developed by Information Edge, designed to improve your skills in:

- communicating with management about the value of your library,
- understanding the differences between value chain and supply-chain management,
- surfacing and delivering value,
- highlighting and explaining your unique competencies to management,
- understanding a budget and avoiding unnecessary overheads,
- recognising what a USP is and how to market yours,
- learning how other libraries facing closure or downsizing have survived, and
- identifying the strategies used by the most-successful libraries.

The workshop is specifically designed for library managers and senior library staff. Feedback from past partici-

pants has been very favourable, including the following:

'This day has exceeded my expectations — I have completed the day with a plan of attack...'

'All in all, good value for money — lots to think about back at work...'

'I personally enjoyed the day's activities — a good mix of interactive participation and straight talk!'

'I liked the 'change' of presenter and the practical work. Another very helpful and informative workshop...'

ALIA and Information Edge will be holding the *Moving up the value chain* workshop on Tuesday 21 September. Participants can then go on to the welcome reception and to register for the ALIA Biennial Conference 2004.

If you would like further information about the content of the workshop, please contact Information Edge, phone 02 9371 0300, info@infoedge.com.au. If you are interested in attending the workshop please contact Kathryn Cable ph 02 6215 8235, kathryn.cable@alia.org.au or visit the website [<http://alia.or.au/events/>]. ■