



I'm excited!

My energy, enthusiasm and inspiration for the future of our library and information industry was re-ignited at the recent New Librarians Symposium 2 held in Adelaide. Walking out of the lift to the registration desk on the first day of the Symposium, there was an overwhelming feeling of excitement and eagerness filling the air. The most anticipated event in 2004 for new librarians had arrived.

I was in awe of the number of people that had travelled from Tasmania, the Northern Territory and remote areas of Queensland. All of them had travelled to show support and take part in a two-day event, just for new librarians. But it was not just new librarians taking part! Alan Smith, the new director of the State Library of South Australia, and Dagmar Schmidmaier, the state librarian of the State Library of New South Wales were there to show their support, together with Jennefer Nicholson, ALIA executive director, and other notable ALIA Board members and academics.

As I sat at the back of the room, waiting to present my panel section, I felt enormously pleased. The room was full of new librarians who were taking an active part in an ALIA activity and working towards developing their careers and participating in their industry. I began to see that the hardwork of the New Graduates Group and the New Generation Policy, Advisory Group and SALIN was taking flight and it was starting to really work.

During the New Librarians Symposium, delegates were asked to complete a survey developed by the New Graduates Group and the New Generation Policy and Advisory Group to determine needs of new librarians, and to find out whether initiatives such as the e-list and the new librarians website were beneficial.

This important survey will assist the development of the new strategic direction of the New Generation Policy and Advisory Group (NGPAG). NGPAG has just started its second term as an advisory group to the Board of Directors to address the ALIA 2002–2004 Initiative K – Develop and market new services for students/new professional members, and

strengthen the participation of a new generation of library and information professionals in the Association.

There are some familiar faces and some new faces that shape the second term of the NGPAG. Sadly, we have said goodbye to members Alison O'Connor, Sue Hutley, Mylee Joseph, Jenelle Cleary, Samantha Hughes and Yvette Turner (ALIA National Office). NGPAG now consists of Kate Watson, Kate Sinclair, Tony Wauchope, Tania Barry, Adrienne Harris, Fiona Bradley, Andrew Rayner, Natalie Blanchard and Emma Royan-Smith (ALIA National Office). NGPAG are ready to further develop initiatives and services to encourage new librarians to stay in their profession and to actively participate in the library and information industry.

Some of the initiatives that are ongoing with NGPAG are mentoring schemes, regular social events in regions around Australia and CPD activities and events. There is always room for more and we are looking for new developmental areas that are important to new librarians.

While in the new strategic document from ALIA, called *Beyond 2010*, there is no specific initiative for NGPAG, the initiatives and services developed by NGPAG will fit into multiple ALIA initiatives, giving NGPAG a broader scope for association and industry participation and inclusion.

Given this broad scope for the next term of NGPAG, it is more important than ever to receive as many responses to the survey as possible. I would like to encourage delegates, as well as those new librarians not able to attend the symposium, to return their surveys. The survey can be found at: <http://alia.org.au/groups/newgrad/>.

The future of NGPAG and the New Graduates Group is important to our future as librarians, as an industry and as an Association. Judging by the enthusiasm and active participation in the New Librarians Symposium, I no longer worry about our future. I am excited by it! ■

Natalie Blanchard

New Generation Policy
and Advisory Group

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...gives a voice to the new generation of library and information professionals. If you have any suggestions or topics for this column, please contact the column coordinator, Kate Watson, k.watson@cqu.edu.au.

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