

RAiLS 3



Research Applications in Information and Library Studies

On 23 September 2006, the third one-day RAILS seminar was held at the State Library of Western Australia in Perth, Western Australia, in conjunction with ALIA's biennial national conference. Eleven papers on a variety of research topics and activities were delivered and there were lively questions. The abstracts are available at <http://cedar.humanities.curtin.edu.au/conferences/rails3/Program.cfm>. Presenters are being encouraged to submit their papers for consideration to the e-journal LIBRES (see <http://libres.curtin.edu.au>).

The RAILS seminar series is now well established. The first was an informal meeting of LIS researchers at the ALIA conference in Adelaide in 1998. Since then, research seminars have been held at Queensland University of Technology in 2004 and in 2005 at the National Library of Australia (run by Charles Sturt University).

The Perth seminar continued the theme begun at the 2005 seminar, 'Linking Research With Practice'. A discussion of LIS research issues in the Australian context was therefore the opening item. The current key driver in research is the implementation of the Australian federal government's Research Quality Framework (RQF) funding model for research; a scheme with some similarities to the UK's Research Assessment Exercise. RQF will drive scholarly research practice in specific directions and the LIS academic world needs to be prepared. The seminar was co-sponsored by the ALIA Research Committee and a number of the issues discussed will be taken up by that committee, including:

1. LIS research in Australia – who is doing what? CILIP's web-based research directory initiative will be closely monitored by committee members, with a view to Australian LIS researchers participating.
2. LIS research in Australia and external funding mechanisms. Some grant successes were reported. We need to make Australian LIS researchers more aware of the funding mechanisms available. This information is beginning to be collated on the research pages of the ALIA website. Information on PhD applications and scholarships will be added. The ALIA Research Committee will seek information from groups like CAUL and NSLA. Information on ALIA awards is readily available.
3. LIS journals and the RQF environment. As a contribution to the RQF debate, it was decided to prepare a list of preferred academically acceptable LIS journal titles.
4. Researching the Information Commons: this Curtin University website, it is hoped, will create a virtual community of like-minded researchers.

Further information about RAILS 3 is available <http://cedar.humanities.curtin.edu.au/conferences/rails3/About.cfm>.

Dr Kerry Smith
RAiLS 3 Convener

Linking people with ideas...



**ALIA's
Excellence
Awards**

Australian
Library and
Information
Association

Nominations are now being called for the following excellence awards of the Australian Library and Information Association

National Excellence Award
The National Excellence Award recognises excellence in any area, field or aspect of practice in the library and information services sector. This award is peer- or self-nominated. Nominees may be: a personal member of ALIA or the nominated ALIA representative of an institutional member; a group comprising personal members or the nominated ALIA representatives of an institutional member; or an institutional member.

Metcalf Award
The Metcalfe Award recognises high achievement by a personal financial member in their first five years of practice in libraries and information services. Achievement would be commensurate with experience and should show a contribution beyond the normal requirements of the nominee's employment. This may include but not be limited to initiative, a commitment to innovation in practice, and leadership. This award is peer-nominated.

Nominations forms
Nomination forms and further information:
<http://alia.org.au/awards/>
ALIA National Office, PO Box 6335, Kingston 2604
awards@alia.org.au 02 6215 8235
Nominations close 1 August 2007