

## The ALIA Education and Workforce Summit

The ALIA Education and Workforce Summit was held on Friday 28 March 2008 at the State Library of Victoria. It was a great opportunity to bring together over fifty participants including library and information employers, representatives of library associations, sectors and groups, educators, researchers and ALIA members. The delegates considered major issues regarding education and the workforce in the library and information industry and worked towards an action plan to address these issues.

### Background

The ALIA Education and Professional Development Standing Committee (SC) developed the idea for an Education and Workforce. This was to provide an overview of LIS education and workforce issues that have come to the fore as a result of the ageing workforce and the perception that there is a crisis in both education and recruitment to the profession. In 2007 the National Advisory Congress (NAC) focused on education and workforce planning and provided feedback to ALIA on the following issues, which contributed to the content of the Summit.

### Issues

The Summit was structured around 6 major issues which had been identified in planning by the SC, and the submissions made to the Summit by key educators, employers, and members.

1. What areas of skill shortage are there in libraries today, and in libraries in 5-10 years time, and how should we address them?

2. ALIA course recognition processes for professional and paraprofessional course – what changes? How will we support them?
3. The binary qualifications structure: what can we do to integrate the two pathways to library qualifications more effectively into a single framework? What should be the qualification to become a librarian?
4. Recruitment to the profession: what strategies should we be adopting and whose responsibilities are they?
5. Role of employers in workforce planning and development – what can employers do? How will this come about?
6. Admission to the profession through widened eligibility, including provision of 'clear and feasible pathways for future non-professional participants in the LIS workforce who seek to attain professional status'.

### Where to from here

Across each session there were recurring themes; these included: the need to define the profession, a mechanism for further dialogue between educators and employers, recruitment to the profession, defining core competencies and the need to develop stronger relationships with other information associations.

The ALIA Education and Professional Development SC will develop these initial suggestions into recommendations, actions and timelines.

More information available <http://www.alia.org.au/education/summit08>

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## Looking beyond the hype of Web 2.0

Facebook, Second Life, wikis and blogs were all given a thorough examination at the first Beyond the Hype symposium held in February. More than 180 library and information professionals attended the two day event held at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, hosted by ALIA's QUILL and QUORUM groups and sponsored by the State Library of Queensland and the Queensland University of Technology Library. The symposium's theme was Web 2.0, and provided delegates with the opportunity to explore the role and future of Web 2.0 technology within the ever-changing library sector.

Opening keynote speaker Christine Mackenzie from the Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service set the tone by discussing the impact, benefits and usefulness of Web 2.0 within the public library context. Speakers from academic, TAFE, health, public and state libraries demonstrated their use of YouTube, podcasting, enhanced searching and MySpace to engage with clients. Kate Watson from University of the Sunshine Coast provided an alternative perspective arguing that just as skinny leg jeans don't fit everyone, Web 2.0 technologies should not be adopted by libraries without comprehensive client consultation. Delegates revelled in the opportunity to play in Second Life, set up their Facebook profiles, create a slidecast and learn about open source library management systems in the hands-on workshops. Final keynote speaker,



*Christine Mackenzie from the Yarra  
Plenty Regional Library Service*

Sherman Young from Macquarie University, challenged delegates to reflect on the key cultures and motivations surrounding Web 2.0 and to explore the trends towards web 3.0 and beyond.

For those unable to attend Beyond the Hype: Web 2.0, never fear you can still engage in the debates and discussions. Papers and presentations are available from the symposium web site <http://www.alia.org.au/groups/quill/beyond.hype.html> Plus you can still join the symposium's social networking site – <http://beyondthehype.ning.com> With more than 220 members from around the world, the site is the perfect way to continue discussing the issues surrounding Web 2.0 and to experiment with new technologies.

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