

# The *neXus* workforce study: a progress report

In late 2006, workers in the library and information services sector in Australia were invited to participate in a major survey, the *neXus* census. Almost 2,500 library and information professionals from all over Australia completed the survey; aimed at providing the profession with a rich source of data about the demographics, education, career and goals of librarians and library technicians in this country.

The title of the survey, *neXus*, was born from the belief that a nexus, or a series of connections between education, curriculum, recruitment, retention, training and development, exists and needs to be better understood if our ultimate goal is to sustain and develop a committed and productive LIS workforce in Australia. Since the research team completed the data analysis, the findings have been progressively disseminated through a series of presentations for LIS professionals across the country and throughout the varying library and information services sectors.

Now the research has been brought together into one report which presents the data for the whole of Australia, with comparative tables presenting the information by State and Territory, and by sector (e.g. public libraries, academic libraries, TAFE libraries, special libraries etc). It has not been possible to interpret all the data: a good knowledge of the

# neXus

immediate professional contexts and the local conditions is required to paint a complete and clearly defined picture of different situations. Nevertheless, the report is food for thought, providing the statistical basis for discussion - and indeed argument - about the future of the profession.

2008 sees the commencement of Stage 2 of the *neXus* project. Stage 2 is to be a focused study of institutional policies and practices in the areas of recruitment, retention and staff development. It is anticipated that an organizational perspective will counterbalance the individual data already collected and assisting in gaining a better understanding of workforce issues. Funded by ALIA and NSLA, *neXus* 2 promises to offer a further source of rich information that will help us understand the complexity of employment practices in the library sector. Once collated, the research findings will be disseminated through the use of professional literature, conferences and professional development seminars.

<http://www.alia.org.au/employment/workforce>

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## Jean Arnot MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP 2008

The annual Jean Arnot Memorial Fellowship honours Jean Fleming Arnot (1903–1995) MBE, FLAA who had a distinguished career of 47 years in librarianship and was a pioneer of equal pay and women's rights.

The fellowship is funded by a generous donation from the National Council of Women in New South Wales Incorporated and the Australian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Associations Incorporated.

The fellowship is awarded to a female librarian or student of librarianship for an outstanding paper of no more than 5000 words on any aspect of librarianship. An award of \$1000 will be presented to the winner at the annual Jean Arnot Memorial Luncheon to be held at Parliament House, Sydney on 9 May 2008.

**Entries for the fellowship close on 14 April 2008** and should be submitted to:

Elizabeth Ellis, Assistant State Librarian  
Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian  
State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie Street  
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### Further information:

Ph: (02) 9273 1466  
Email: [eellis@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:eellis@sl.nsw.gov.au)

### For conditions of entry and application forms:

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