

Directline

Can you remember your first experience in a school library? For a lot of people, the teacher librarian is their first ever contact with the world of information, their introduction to the wonders contained within books and online resources, and where they take their first steps towards information literacy.

Therefore, it's actually hard to over-estimate the critical community role teacher librarians play. These are the professionals who, quite literally, take Australian children by the hand and lead them towards opportunities for a fulfilled and happy life.

Over the years, ALIA and the Australian School Libraries Association (ASLA) have worked together on various projects to raise the profile of teacher librarians and both organisations constantly seek to have input into the national debate and national policy development concerning information literacy. Within ALIA, the ALIA Schools Group works towards promoting the interests of school libraries and teacher librarians and supports members in professional development and advocacy. We also have ALIA representatives on the ALIA/ASLA Policy Advisory Group. With the trends revealed in recent research reports, there are many causes for concern about the pressures on teacher librarians and therefore on

their continuing ability to develop information literacy among young Australians. In this world of dual (and more) qualified professionals, teacher librarians remain an unusual breed, combining qualifications in education and librarianship and working under expectations that they will participate both in teaching and in the library in the school environment. As such they, and others of us as their colleagues, all need to do what we can to make sure the general community understand the importance of information literacy and how teacher librarians deliver those skills within our schools. Those of us who are parents have an even more powerful incentive to get involved and add our support.

The ALIA/ASLA Policy Advisory Group meets regularly to discuss issues and projects. There is currently an ALIA representative vacancy on the group and calls for expressions of interest will go out shortly. New Terms of Reference for this group have also recently been agreed to, and these revised TOR's and the Memorandum of Understanding between ALIA and ASLA will be re-signed in October by Presidents, Jan Richards and Rob Moore at the ASLA Conference in Perth.

Sue Hutley
ALIA Executive Director
sue.hutley@alia.org.au



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ALIA Executive Director
sue.hutley@alia.org.au

ALIA Assistant Directors

Jane Hardy
Assistant Director
Strategy & Advocacy
02 6215 8235
jane.hardy@alia.org.au

Robyn Ellard
Assistant Director
Member Services
02 6215 8250
robyn.ellard@alia.org.au

Catherine Kelly
Assistant Director
Business Support
02 6215 8220
catherine.kelly@alia.org.au

Local Liaison Officers

LLOs are ALIA representatives in each state/territory. Their duties include being a point of contact for members and non-members.

ACT: Robyn Ellard
02 6215 8250
robyn.ellard@alia.org.au

NSW: Niki Kallenberger
0408 818 028
niki.kallenberger@alia.org.au

NT: Jayshree Mamtara
0416 366 634
jayshree.mamtara@alia.org.au

QLD: Claudia Davies
0407 964 967
claudia.davies@alia.org.au

SA: Jeannine Hooper
0437 167 050
jeannine.hooper@alia.org.au

TAS: Sally Murdoch
03 6228 7904
sally.murdoch@alia.org.au

VIC: Margie Anderson
03 9315 1090
margie.anderson@alia.org.au

WA: Carol Newton-Smith
08 9381 5674
carol.newton-smith@alia.org.au

Call for Expressions of Interest for ALIA

The ALIA Board of Directors is calling for Expressions of Interest from ALIA members for a new Advisory Committee:

Library Technician Advisory Committee: 6–8 members

The primary role of ALIA Advisory Committees is to provide advice in the form of identification of issues, opportunities, activities and in general assist in developing a strategic direction with the ALIA Board of Directors. Advisory Committees are formed and dissolved, and members are appointed, under ALIA By-law 8. Members of Advisory Committees must be ALIA personal financial members or the nominated institutional representative. They are experts in the area of interest. Work done by Advisory Committee members is purely voluntary. At the time of nomination, members should carefully consider whether they have sufficient time available to take on committee responsibilities, and have sought the approval of their employer (if required) to be an appointed member to an ALIA Advisory Committee. Members hold office for an initial three years, with the Board being able to appoint the member for a further three year term. Advisory Committee guidelines are available here <http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/>

The Board of Directors has appointed Gail Schmidt as Chair of the Library Technician Advisory Committee, with the Membership and Awards Standing Committee Library Technician representative as a standing member of this committee. Other interested members are asked to submit a 100 word CV outlining their suitability and interest in the

committee to the Assistant Director: Member Services. Nominations will go to the ALIA Board of Directors for approval. If more than the number of nominations is received for this committee, the Board will select the members to be appointed, in consultation with the Chair of the committee.

Deadline for EOI: 23 October 2009

Enquiries: Robyn Ellard, ALIA Assistant Director: Member Services, robyn.ellard@alia.org.au, ph 02 6215 8250



Do you have excellent research and writing skills, a desire to further your professional development, and an interest in all areas of LIS?

ALIA is calling for Expressions of Interest for an experienced researcher/writer to produce a monthly *inCite* column, starting 2010.

On The Edge will be a monthly thematic column that looks at cutting edge research, controversy, or an area of interest within that month's theme. This column will be in addition to our member-provided content, and will be a conversation-piece, designed to engage readers with the theme. We are looking for someone with a keen interest in the industry, and strong writing skills, who will be unafraid to address issues, but will maintain the fine balance between debate and discord. This is not about conflict, but being cutting edge.

This column will come with a small salary. For more information, or to express interest, please contact Kate Cuthbert, Publishing Manager, kate.cuthbert@alia.org.au, ph 02 6215 8231.