



Letter to the Editor

The message on the front cover of INCITE October 2012 is revealing and sad.

Throughout history, librarians have been the experts in our community on how to find published information. Our forebears were expert users of library catalogues, indexes, abstracting journals, citation indexes, concordances, directories, and other secondary publications used as finding tools. Our forebears were also expert at evaluating the quality and relevance of publications.

Now in 2012 when so much useful information is available online and sometimes not on paper, we as librarians must still aim to be expert and discriminating users of the online finding tools including search engines such as Google. As in the past when we coached our clients how to use finding tools to locate relevant information on paper, in the 21st century it is our professional responsibility to show our clients how to use finding tools to locate the wealth of extraordinarily useful information available online whether it is on the free web or in value added services. Only people who are unskilled Google users are swamped with 100 000 answers! Only those ignorant of the wealth of information available online, would try to demonise finding tools such as Google. The front cover of INCITE would better support today's librarians if it read "Google can bring you back 100 000 answers but a librarian can show you how to use Google and other tools effectively to locate the right answers wherever they are".

Yes the free web is a challenge to many of us, but it is also an amazingly rich source of information if you know how to use it – and as librarians, if we don't know how to use it in 2012, we should. And if we don't learn, our clients will anyway!!

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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Nominations are now open for the ALIA Board of Directors, a great opportunity for members with a passion for the library and information profession to make their mark. The work of the directors is interesting, challenging, and rewarding. It enables members to hone their leadership skills, develop new perspectives, and to make a significant contribution. 2013 will see us refreshing the Association (see the Frontline/Directline column), so it is going to be an especially exciting time to be part of the board.

What the role entails

The role of a director is to help shape the future direction, providing guidance to the executive team; making policy decisions; and being responsible for the financial sustainability of the association. Directors attend three face-to-face meetings at ALIA House in Canberra each year, with a further five or six two-hour teleconferences taking place in between. Directors are also invited to attend special events in their own states and territories and to chair meetings, such as the National Advisory Congress. All travel and accommodation expenses are paid by the association.

Board nominations

There are three board positions to be filled and we are seeking nominations for the ALIA vice-president (and president-elect). Nominations opened on Monday 26 November and will close at 5pm AEDT on Monday 14 January 2013. All our personal members will have the opportunity to vote and, should we receive more nominations than vacancies, voting will take place in March and early April. The successful candidates will take office at the board meeting following our Annual General Meeting in May 2013, and their positions will be for two years, until the AGM in May 2015.

If you would like to nominate yourself or another ALIA member for the board, we will need your nomination in writing, signed by two financial members of the association (with the written consent of the nominee). You can download the nomination form from our website. The form needs to be accompanied by a CV giving details of academic and professional qualifications, and a 100-word statement about the nominee's professional interests. We also need a standard colour portrait photograph.

Send the completed nomination form to the Executive Director Sue McKerracher, ALIA, PO Box 6335, Kingston, ACT 2604 or email sue.mckerracher@alia.org.au or fax 02 6282 2249. More information available on the website www.alia.org.au/governance/elections/2013/.