

# ALIA GROUPS: ACCESS FOR ALL

ALIA groups make a special and greatly valued contribution to ALIA, bringing the library and information community together from all parts of Australia through location and special interests. There are now over 40 groups nationwide, offering our members unparalleled networking opportunities as well as access to all the benefits of coming together to learn and share.

## Networking

ALIA groups present and manage a vast array of networking events to enable members to connect with others in the industry, both locally and nationally. These events give you access to a network of peers and provide a platform to showcase and share your expertise.

Networking is a valuable activity, particularly for individuals who are members of a large organisation but who may be isolated either geographically, and for professionals who are part of a small staff or one or two. Networking gives you the opportunity to share information, provide (and get) support, and to learn what others are doing in their libraries.

## Access to professional development

Group professional development events can offer you great value for money professional development (PD) opportunities too, often free or at a very low cost. Groups'

PD events are frequently the ideal PD for our members, offering virtually customised sub-sector specialist events with the convenience of local venues. The volunteer Group Committees put in a lot of dedicated hard work to present these PD events. As active

It's easy to start an ALIA group. It doesn't matter whether you are in a rural or central location, and it can be done for nearly any special or sector focus.

practitioners themselves, they understand what you want in terms of area of practice or locality.

## Access to information

Your ALIA groups also provide access to information on their Groups' pages, blogs, social media and e-lists. The information provided ranges from simply sharing event information relevant to the sector, to providing free reports and publications. One example of the great reports accessible on the ALIA website is the *Health and Librarianship Workforce and Education: Research to Plan the Future* final report, made available by the Health Libraries Australia Group.

Another fantastic example of information sharing comes from Molly Tebo, a committee member of ALIA West Group, who used Twitter at her state's National Advisory Congress using a smart board. This extended the conversation to those who couldn't make it to the event and gave them access to updates of the event.

Here's what Molly had to say about using social media to enable more members to participate in the meeting: "Twitter is a wonderful tool for extending conversations beyond people who are physically present. At the WA ALIA National Advisory Congress, people who couldn't be there, and even people from interstate, could follow what was happening and ask questions via Twitter. This led to a workshop on the Future of the Profession that was more interactive and accessible to a greater number of people".

## How to join or start a group

It's easy to join or start an ALIA group. To see the full list and contact details for all our groups, check out the website at [www.alia.org.au/our-communities/alia-groups](http://www.alia.org.au/our-communities/alia-groups).

Starting a group is easy too. It doesn't matter whether you are in a rural or central location, and it can be done for nearly any special or sector focus. So if you have a special interest, or would like to create a new group for your region all you have to do is contact me, and I can help you get started.

Emily Peters  
ALIA Groups Coordinator  
[groups@alia.org.au](mailto:groups@alia.org.au)

QVLA

TALC TAFE Australasia Library Conference 2013 Brisbane

Adapt • Change • Evolve

21st - 22nd November, 2013  
Southbank Institute of Technology  
Brisbane

Featuring

- Speakers from across the Australian VET community
- Library tours
- Industry and vocational education exhibitors
- Q & A forum

For information about becoming a presenter or attending our conference contact us at:  
Email: [talc2013@gmail.com](mailto:talc2013@gmail.com) Website: [www.talc.org.au](http://www.talc.org.au)