

Library leadership

It is with a great deal of pride that I present my first *INCITE* column as President of the amazing association that is ALIA. I feel privileged to undertake this role for the next 12 months and I look forward to working with Members to achieve the objectives of the Association.

I would like to welcome our newly elected ALIA Board Members: Viv Barton (Vice-President and President Elect), and Directors Vicki Edmunds and Kim Sherwin, who will join Helen Ebsworth, Paula Kelly Paull and Monika Szunejko. The first meeting of the new Board, held in May, demonstrated the strong commitment of the incoming Board to continue the strong advocacy for the Australian library sector, provide responsive Member services, plan a sustainable future for ALIA, maintain a strategic focus for the organisation, and ensure sound governance of the Association.

I offer my sincere thanks to retiring Board Members Lyndall Ley, past President, and past Directors Anne Reddacliff and Jonathon Guppy. Along with the continuing Board members, these fine folk have all been instrumental in supporting me to navigate the steep learning curve associated with the effective governance of ALIA.

As incoming President, I have chosen 'leadership' as my presidential theme. Leadership is a critical success factor in any sector, and the library sector is no exception. I want to work with libraries across Australia to understand what great leadership means, identify emerging leaders, and mentor staff at all levels of organisations to support the future sustainability and profile of our libraries.

Leaders are not only found at the top of the organisational chart. Leaders are evident at all levels of organisations, and it is the emerging leaders that will shape the future of the Australian library sector. Libraries need to fully invest in the next generation of leaders to ensure the future capacity, prosperity and relevance of our sector.

Interestingly, the theme of this edition of *INCITE* is 'what binds us together'. From my perspective astute, engaged and effective leadership is one of those things.

So, what creates a great leader? There are many things, some of which are innate, some of which a learnt, and others which a matter of opportunity and experience. One of the great opportunities for emerging leaders is the benefit of a

fantastic mentor. I have been favoured with many inspiring mentors and colleagues, who have collectively influenced my career and supported my leadership aspirations. There are a broad variety of opportunities for emerging and aspiring leaders to develop their skills, knowledge and profile, for example participation in professional groups; presenting at library sector and other forums; stepping up into higher duties when the opportunity presents; making a positive difference in your workplace; embracing innovation and continuous improvement; finding your voice; and seeming much more confident than you feel.

During the next 12 months, I hope to meet many leaders, emerging leaders and aspiring leaders to discuss the development of effective, sustainable and relevant strategies to ensure that the importance of strong leadership at all levels of our libraries is always a priority in planning for the future. ✨

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