



President's Letter

11 June 2019

Dear ALIA Member

I am writing to thank you for continuing to be a Member of the Australian Library and Information Association and making a valuable contribution to our work. There has never been a more important time for us to stand together, with the library and information sector (LIS) facing new challenges and opportunities on an almost daily basis.

When we ran our Member Survey at the end of last year, you told us that the most important functions of the Association were advocacy and library and information science education – and that's where we have continued to focus our efforts.

Advocacy

We are meeting with government departments, politicians and their advisors, on average at least once a fortnight. In the first six months of 2019, we have already made nine submissions to government inquiries.

We are developing reports and promotional collateral to support your own advocacy, and we are active members of lobbying groups for copyright reform, early literacy, digital inclusion, education and the book industry. We participate in industry and government discussions about artificial intelligence, data, open government, health, literacy, digital inclusion and digital transformation.

At the same time, we are there for our Members who are facing local difficulties. We regularly offer advice and practical support to assist library services under threat of budget cuts and even closures.

Education

ALIA supports a robust LIS education framework and we work with educators at VET and higher education level to make sure our Diploma through to Masters qualifications reflect modern theory and practice.

We have also established an impressive professional development scheme, which encourages and supports our Members to engage in ongoing learning, putting LIS on a par with other recognised professions.



Leadership

As President, my focus is on leadership. When we talk about leaders, our thoughts naturally flit to the senior people at the top of the management ladder, but leadership happens at many levels in an organisation. There are those with Director in their title, but there are also people who have become acknowledged experts in their field; who have been recognised as thought leaders; who have a reputation for innovation; who have made an impact nationally and internationally through their commitment to the profession. There are many different types of leadership and for the library and information sector to thrive, we need them all.

My first initiative has been to commission a report on GLAMR Workforce Diversity, because I believe the issue for the Association going forward is not only about nurturing leaders, it is also about increasing diversity at all levels. More initiatives and activities will follow.

As you can see, we have a very full agenda, but with your support we can make it happen. Thank you for being an ALIA Member.

Best wishes

Robert Knight