



ALIA Professional Pathways Board Meeting

Take home messages

28 November 2022

The Professional Pathways Advisory Board (the Advisory Board) met for their sixth meeting on Monday 28 November. National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) representative and Director of the State Library of South Australia Geoff Strempel chaired his first meeting since taking up the Chair role from ALIA President Vicki Edmunds. The Advisory Board has been established to ensure sector representational strategic oversight for the project, and you can see the members on the Professional Pathways webpage.

The meeting was scheduled to be held following the close of Phase 1 of the consultation period which was designed to progress two of the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee following the Technical Report:

Recommendation 1: Develop a framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour

Recommendation 3: Develop new professional pathways

Phase 1 was centred on the Consultation Paper which included a draft framework of knowledge, skills and ethical behaviour and asked questions around the contents of that framework and how it could be applied. The Paper also raised questions about professional recognition and continuing professional development. ALIA reported on the consultation process which was widely promoted, including through all-member Electronic Direct Mail (EDM) to 14, 678 people and geographically targeted emails for in person workshops. There was also promotion in ALIA Weekly (16 times over the consultation period, each distributed to approximately 14,500 subscribers), two articles in INCITE magazine and regular promotion through ALIA social media channels (21,422 impressions with 654 engagements). Individual organisations and other associations were also asked to promote to their staff/members through newsletters and social media.

Multiple avenues were provided for feedback. There was strong engagement, with 29 written submissions and 43 short form responses received, 340 people taking part in face-to-face and online workshops and 175 people attending feedback sessions. In addition there were 786 valid responses to the survey. Across the consultation there was a spread of library and information sectors and career stages, from students to retirees.

Running in tandem Dr Lyn Hay undertook a specific research project into the needs and circumstances of the school library sector, including focus groups with 47 participants and a survey with 693 valid responses. The resulting report –

Professional Pathways School Library Research Project Report is an important examination of the challenges and opportunities facing people working in the school library sector.

Dr Gillian Hallam presented a preliminary high-level analysis of the key themes and feedback from Phase 1. As there had only been a short period between the close of consultations and the Advisory Board meeting more analysis still needs to be undertaken, with a report to be published in 2023. The Advisory Board carefully considered the preliminary findings and key themes and asked questions about a number of aspects. It was noted that there was a wide range of valuable feedback and perspectives. The Advisory Board also noted the concerns raised by members of the health sector in the open letter.

The Advisory Board discussed the areas of general agreement and areas where more work needs to be done. The three main areas for further work are:

1. Framework structure and conceptual design
2. Recognition and categorisation
3. The question of mandatory/optional CPD

The Advisory Board resolved to establish three working groups to progress these areas out of session for further discussion and refinement at the Advisory Board's face to face meeting on 23 February 2023. ALIA greatly appreciates the willingness of members of the Advisory Board to give their time and expertise to contribute to these working groups.

The Chair of the Advisory Board will present to the ALIA Board at their meeting on Monday 5 December.