

Responses from Philip Keane

Candidate for Board of Directors

What benefits do you believe ALIA membership can bring to a new graduate?

Being an ALIA member can bring many benefits to a new graduate. For someone newly graduated, the people that you meet through your local ALIA group or e-list can suggest how and where to look for work opportunities either paid or voluntary, so that you can gain some work experience. For new graduates who are working, your ALIA contacts and e-list can provide ideas on how to participate in many professional activities beyond your immediate workplace. Our professional work often requires us to learn other workplace skills and many of these are developing by participation in professional groups: taking part at meetings; putting on events; public speaking; working across sectors; writing submissions etc etc. These are all benefits to be derived from joining in and taking part.

What role do you see new graduates playing in the function and direction of ALIA?

I see new graduates being involved in a whole range of ways with ALIA. The most immediate involvement that you can have is with your local groups. Being on e-lists and contributing to discussions is another very immediate way to be involved. Local groups and virtual groups set their plans and activities within the ALIA umbrella, and each member plays a part in the directions of their groups.

So by being involved in your local groups, you can be involved immediately in the directions of those groups.

At a broader level, you can contribute actively to the e-list discussions at any time, and can contribute ideas and suggestions to ALIA as a whole. The National Advisory Congress approach has sought to hear from every member across the country in guiding the Board in setting the broader directions for ALIA. These are all opportunities for new graduates, as well as those who graduated earlier, to have their say, and to contribute to the life of the Association. And how often is that someone new to a group can see some things more clearly and can say so?

How do you propose to engage with new graduates if you are elected to the Board?

Again, it would be a whole range of ways: I'm already involved in some of our library courses, and at each opportunity, I've invited students about to complete their studies to take the opportunity to join their local (or virtual) ALIA groups; to take part in the mentoring groups' activities that are offered, and to begin networking with others. For some time now, I have been mentoring students and new graduates both formally and informally, and if re-elected to the Board, would see that involvement continuing right on. This often involves assisting with immediate issues like setting out job applications, preparing for interviews, etc.

Mentoring continues way past this, and I will continue to be involved with mentoring and being mentored myself.

If I'm re-elected to the Board, I would be seeking the involvement of many groups and sectors as the questions and issues arise. For example, while chairing the Board's Conference Standing Committee in rewriting the ALIA Conference

Manual, each of the convenors of current and recent conferences (including NLS) were invited to participate in the teleconferences and the result was that the Manual has been updated (almost complete!) with the engagement of all of those groups.

On broader level, as a Board member, I would be trying to encourage as many new graduates as possible to be actively involved as soon as they graduate, and to keep their groups and ALIA on the move.

What would you do to ensure ALIA's relevance to new graduates?

I think this can work in a number of ways; it comes from working with new graduates and others and asking each person what they want from their Association at the local, virtual and national level. As described above, if I'm re-elected to the Board, I would continue to seek the involvement and responses from many groups to tune ALIA's directions to what members want ALIA to be.

Would you commit to supporting the continuation of the New Librarians' Symposium?

I have already been very clear about my commitment to the role and value of the NLS. In chairing the Board Conference Committee redeveloping the ALIA Conference Manual, I have strived to ensure that the convenors of the current and recent New Librarians Symposia have been involved, and as a result, the NLS convenors contributed a great deal to the updating of the ALIA Conference Manual.