

Directline

Engaging with your community

Libraries are an integral part of communities and library staff around the country engage in unique and valuable ways. The feature stories of this issue look at the numerous ways that libraries are working with their communities to offer a widening range of services and events and in turn empowering those that they serve.

Defining the term 'community engagement' opens the doors to many interpretations. The idea of what or who makes a community can vary, so too the level to which the engagement is encouraged and achieved. While defining the theme of this month's *inCite* differs in many of the articles, the end result is the same...it's about interaction, communication and involvement.

2008 ALIA elections

As a member, you have the ability to shape your Association by voting in ALIA elections. This year the Governance Standing Committee of the Board recommended asking candidates running for Board of Directors and Vice-president (President-elect) a number of additional questions in order to familiarise ALIA members with the candidates running for positions of office. Each candidate has been asked to respond to a series of questions and the replies have been posted to the candidate webpage <http://www.alia.org.au/governance/elections/2008/board/candidates>

ALIA conferences

Engage with the ALIA community and with the library and information sector by attending an ALIA conference. Listen to keynote speakers inform and debate current issues. Talk to vendors at trade booths. Networking opportunities provided by attending a conference are often a high point and putting a name to a face is a great benefit when working in the industry. Sharing with likeminded people, the practical experiences and hurdles encountered, is also of great benefit to workers in our sector. <http://www.alia.org.au/conferences/2008-2009>

ALIA Groups

If you would like to engage with your Association at a grassroots level, consider becoming involved in one of ALIA's many groups. There are 50 different groups and they vary in size and scope; there may be more than one group that is of interest to you. Why get involved? You can develop many transferable skills and experience, such as in marketing, events management, public speaking, committee work, budgeting and strategic planning. Getting to know library workers in your local area is enjoyable and is useful in practical ways by keeping you up to date with technological developments, new

products etc. How to get started? Contact your Local Liaison Officer or the group convenor or go along to an informal event first rather than a more formal meeting. Group pages are at <http://www.alia.org.au/groups>

ALIA campaigns

Promote the tremendous contribution that libraries make to our communities by supporting ALIA's public campaigns. Library and Information Week (LIW) is from 19-25 May. This year's theme, 'Libraries are for everyone', is an appropriate message that reinforces the importance of community engagement and inclusion. National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) will be held this year during LIW and features the charming book, *Arthur* by Amanda Graham. NSS is a wonderful occasion for emphasising our commitment to literacy, reading and books, and for promoting storytime activities in public libraries. Encourage your library users to engage more with you and your library by using these campaigns as promotional tools.

The Education and Workforce Summit 2008

Prior to the commencement of the Education and Workforce Summit 2008, interested participants are invited to attend a pre-summit discussion. The open forum will be held on the 27th March at the Village Roadshow Theatre, State Library of Victoria. The summit will be focusing on the critical issues affecting library and information education and the library workforce and all ALIA members and groups are invited to make submissions by 12th March 2008. More information is available at <http://www.alia.org.au/education/summit08>

ALIA Board election ballot papers are in this issue of *inCite*. Ballot papers must reach ALIA National Office in Canberra by 5pm AEST, Wednesday 9th April 2008. For all enquiries, please email helen.wheeldon@alia.org.au or phone 1800 020 071.



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Local Liaison Officers

LLOs are ALIA representatives in each state/territory. Their duties include being a point of contact for members and non-members.

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