



Australian Library and
Information Association

ALIA Strategic Plan

2011 – 2015

Revised version December 2013

Vision

To be the Association of choice for information professionals and the library and information services sector.

Objects of the Association

- a. To promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy and democracy.
- b. To promote and improve the services provided by all kinds of library and information agencies.
- c. To ensure the high standard of personnel engaged in information provision and foster their professional interests and aspirations.
- d. To represent the interests of members to governments, other organisations and the community.
- e. To encourage people to contribute to the improvement of library and information services through support and membership of the Association.

Values

- Promotion of the free flow of information and ideas through open access to recorded knowledge, information, and creative works.
- Connection of people to ideas.
- Commitment to literacy, information literacy and learning.
- Respect for the diversity and individuality of all people.
- Preservation of the human record.
- Excellence in professional service to our communities.
- Partnerships to advance these values.

About ALIA

The Association seeks to empower the profession in the development, promotion and delivery of quality library and information services to the nation, through leadership, advocacy and mutual support. ALIA has been representing the interests of members and the community since 1937. It fosters a vibrant professional culture in the library and information sector and its advice and opinions are sought and respected by decision makers.

Our members

Our 5500 members are drawn from the library and information sector and related fields. ALIA represents the interests of 12 million library users.

Our services and activities

ALIA offers many services to its members, the library and information sector, and the people who work within it and use it. ALIA provides:

- Accreditation of education and practice standards
- Professional development through training, conferences and a formal professional development scheme
- Advocacy for issues of professional concern at local, national and international levels
- Professional support such as copyright, industrial relations and career advice
- Opportunities to develop professional networks through our groups, e-lists and events
- Research and publications that inform members and the sector
- An awards program to recognise achievement
- Public campaigns to promote the value of libraries and library professionals
- A unified voice when advocating for the sector to governments and other organisations.

Our structure and governance

The Association is established as a not-for-profit company, governed by an elected Board of Directors. Advisory committees and self-nominating groups within the Association provide a focus for communication and participation by members. A National Advisory Congress is convened annually to provide input on issues of importance to the profession. The Association is supported by a team primarily based at ALIA House in Canberra and a local manager in every state and territory.

Our profession

Australia's library and information sector is innovative, adaptable and collaborative. It has a well-qualified and trained workforce and is at the forefront of international practice. The Association and our members operate in a challenging world characterised by rapid social, economic and technological change, far-reaching changes in the information environment and challenges to the core value of the free flow of information and ideas.

Changing environment

The ALIA strategic plan 2010-2015 was developed with consideration of the current economic and political climate as well as the changing nature of the Library and Information Science (LIS) profession.

The ALIA Board of Directors recognises that the library and information profession has never been more diverse – the definition of a library and information worker covers a large range of tasks, skill sets, and career paths. From library technician to information manager, the scope of the profession has changed dramatically in the last decade. People seek information very differently now, but the profession's core values have not changed – we support the free flow of information, and the freedom to access that information.

Factors affecting our members

Our members' working lives are influenced by a number of factors offering both opportunities and challenges. These include:

- Technology-based new ways of working
- New media providing new ways of connecting with library users
- More ebooks and eresources
- Cuts in government funding at state/territory and local level
- Re-evaluation of the role of library and information professionals.

Factors affecting the Association

There has been an overall decline in membership of professional associations across Australia, but ALIA still has a strong membership base; significant assets (including ALIA House), and continues to be the overall peak body for the library and information profession. A sustainable future for the Association is further influenced by:

- How well we reflect the aims and ambitions of our members
- Providing services that are highly valued by our members
- Playing an active and visible role in advocacy for the profession
- Good governance
- Collaborating with other stakeholders to achieve the maximum positive impact.

Our goals

The Association's primary roles are best conceptualised through the four outcomes we aim to achieve to 2015. These are described on the following pages.

Outcome 1

Strengthening Our Membership

ALIA is a membership organisation which exists to serve the needs of its members.

Where we want to be in 2015:

1. Our membership will represent a minimum of 15% of the potential individual and institutional members.

In 2014 we will:

- Analyse and plan our response to the issues raised in the 2013 member survey.
- Implement the corporate membership category.
- Identify strategies for retaining student members.

This will be measured by the publication of summary results of the member survey and the planned response; by adding 10 new corporate members; by producing and implementing a strategy for attracting and retaining student members.

2. ALIA members will be supported in advocating for the profession and the sector.

In 2014 we will:

- Review, reinvigorate and relaunch the ALIA awards structure.
- Promote participation and nomination for the ALIA awards.
- Continue to develop and promote a range of advocacy tools.
- Run a series of advocacy campaigns, including Library and Information Week.
- Help our members advocate at a local level.

This will be measured by the receipt of nominations for the available awards; our active involvement in advocacy campaigns; the delivery of Library and Information Week in 2014; positive quotes from members about our advocacy involvement.

3. Ensure ALIA members continue to value their membership.

In 2014 we will:

- Investigate the potential for a return on investment figure for every dollar invested in ALIA.
- Continue to communicate the value of membership through positive member quotes.

This will be measured by a paper being presented to the Board about the potential for an ROI study; 36 positive member quotes generated for use on our website and our 2014 National Conference stand.

Outcome 2

Strengthening Our Association

ALIA needs to be a financially sustainable, well governed, respected and valued professional membership organisation.

Where we want to be in 2015:

1. ALIA will be a financially sustainable organisation.

In 2014 we will:

- Develop and meet an appropriate operational budget that supports the continued health of the Association.

This will be measured by end of year financial results that reflect the position agreed by the Board at the start of the year.

2. Governance which meets the needs of the Association.

In 2014 we will:

- Develop and implement strategies to continue to attract appropriately skilled candidates for the positions of President and Director.

This will be measured by a competitive election being held in 2014.

3. Improve recognition of ALIA volunteers.

In 2014 we will:

- Actively participate in National Volunteers Week in May 2014.
- Acknowledge volunteers by issuing certificates of appreciation.

This will be measured by National Volunteers Week coverage in INCITE and ALIA Weekly; activities of Groups being profiled in INCITE; certificates of appreciation being sent out; positive quotes from volunteers.

Outcome 3

Strengthening Our Profession

We will support the needs of members to remain current, skilled and relevant in a changing profession. We will advocate on behalf of members, our profession and libraries to government, employers and the wider community. Strong members equal a strong profession.

Where we want to be in 2015:

1. All members, partners and stakeholders are well informed about professional issues.

In 2014 we will:

- Promote awareness of current issues and trends – linked data, open access, data and text mining, internet governance – through conferences, publications, training and other vehicles.
- Continue to advocate for and on behalf of the profession with government and industry by providing submissions to all appropriate Government inquiries.

This will be measured by the appearance of articles in INCITE, news alerts in ALIA Weekly, themes for conference presentations; submissions made to the relevant Government inquiries; maintaining the momentum of external media coverage for advocacy issues.

2. Establish and support a viable and relevant research agenda within the profession.

In 2014 we will:

- Publish an ALIA research agenda which describes the LIS research landscape, identifies opportunities for funding from ALIA and other organisations, and the linkages between the ALIA conferences and the publications.
- Develop and implement a robust peer review process for ALIA conference papers.

This will be measured by the publication of the ALIA research agenda and the implementation of an optional peer review process for the 2014 National Conference papers.

3. Our publishing program will meet the needs of members and be sustainable.

In 2014 we will:

- Develop and implement an ALIA digital archive for conference papers and ALIA reports and publications.

This will be measured by the creation of an ALIA digital archive and development of an ALIA open access policy.

4. Provide professional development programs for members that meet their ongoing needs.

In 2014 we will:

- Roll out the Certified Professional status, with specialisations, as planned.
- Investigate the implications of moving to compulsory membership of ALIA to be a practicing professional in the eyes of employers.
- Increase membership of the PD Scheme

This will be measured by the development of two further specialisations (in addition to health); a report to the Board about employers' positions with regards to membership of ALIA; 1000 members of the PD Scheme.

5. Provide a sustainable course accreditation model that meets best practice and employer and workforce needs.

In 2014 we will:

- Implement the new model for course accreditation.

This will be measured by the adoption of the new model and positive feedback from educators and employers.

Outcome 4

The future of our Profession

As we contemplate the future, there is need for a conversation across the profession about what it will mean to be a library and information professional in 2020 and therefore what ALIA may become.

Where we want to be in 2015:

1. Understand the longer term future of our profession including the roles of library and information professionals and the skills, knowledge and abilities required to fulfill these roles to 2020.

In 2014 we will:

- Carry out a strategic piece of research about where the professional library and information roles will be in 10 years time to help guide educators.
- Develop strategies around the 'I' in ALIA

This will be measured by the publication of a series of sector reports relating to the Future of the Profession investigation in 2013; a Board paper on the 'information' part of ALIA.