

THE FUTURE OF ALIA JOURNAL PUBLISHING

INITIAL CONSULTATION

The following paper was circulated to the Members and other stakeholders who have had a particularly close connection with ALIA journals in the past, including editors, editorial board members, contributors, academics and others.

Their feedback can be summarised as:

Amalgamation

There was a high level of support for merging the two journals - many believed that supporting two journals was unsustainable and that amalgamation, in some shape or form, was inevitable. 'Eminently sensible, '... delighted the move is finally happening' and 'I have no issue with the merger' gives a flavour of the positive comments received. One person commented that the merger would put the editors in a stronger position when working with the authors to improve the quality of submissions.

Open access

The feedback was supportive of open access, providing unrestricted access and reuse of material. However there was acceptance of the current arrangements with Taylor & Francis/Routledge while urging the Board to consider free access for the next iteration. There was an acknowledgment that green open access was currently offered, however that was dependent on the authors depositing their final manuscripts in a wide range of repositories, which one commented was far short of best practice.

Format

There was general agreement that printing hard copy journals is outdated and there should be a move to online only in their next iteration. One commented that there is 'no conceivable argument in favour of continued printing and distribution of a limited circulation journal.' Many respondents acknowledged that the publishing world is changing at an astounding rate and going online is the only option.

Title

The title proposed in the paper was *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* which was felt to best reflect the goal of the Association (driven by ALIA's Research Advisory Committee) to encourage more joint researcher-practitioner projects.

Other titles which were proposed included: *Alternatives Australian Libraries*, *Australian Library and Information Studies*, *Australian Library Review*, *Theories and Applications of Knowledge*, *Information Theories and Applications*

If you would like to add your thoughts about the future of our scholarly publishing, please send your comments to: Heather Wellard, heather.wellard@alia.org.au (02 6215 8225) by close of business Wednesday 16 March.

THE FUTURE OF ALIA JOURNALS DISCUSSION PAPER

INTRODUCTION FROM JOHN SHIPP, ALIA PRESIDENT 2015-2016

ALIA is facing a number of challenges to its future viability as a professional association and the Board has been considering issues and strategies that will assist the Association to thrive. As ALIA moves forward, strategies will be needed on multiple issues including attraction of members, strengthening of our financial position and identifying innovative ways to promote the profession. Some of the decisions associated with these strategies will be difficult and may be controversial.

One issue discussed by the Board has been the type, scope and format of publications produced by the Association. The Board has re-affirmed that ALIA has an obligation to promote research associated with our profession. An essential element of that promotion is to assist in disseminating research outcomes through publication.

Both AARL and ALJ have served the profession well. During its discussions, the Board was mindful that scholarly communication is changing and that current publishing formats may be superseded at some time in the future. The resources required to support two journals were also taken into account. The Board also considered other strategies, such as reducing the issue frequency of the journals, but decided that they were merely stopgap measures.

With some regret, the Board resolved that the Association can only support one journal into the future given our forecasted financial position. The decision of the Board is to find a way in which AARL and ALJ can be combined. The actual form of the amalgamated publication will be dependent on advice from the two editorial boards as well as from interested ALIA members.

DISCUSSIONS

The journal editors, editorial board chairs and members have considered many factors and provided advice on topics such as:

- Respecting the heritage and traditions of the two titles
- Maintaining the scholarly integrity
- Retaining the ranking of the journals
- Open access models

The title of the single publication was a cause for some debate. Suggestions included:

- Australian Library Journal, incorporating Australian Academic and Research Libraries
- Australian Academic and Research Libraries, incorporating Australian Library Journal
- Australian Library and Information Journal
- Library and Information Science Australia
- Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association

The latter title was felt to best reflect the goal of the Association (driven by ALIA's Research Advisory Committee) to encourage more joint researcher-practitioner projects.

By positioning this as a new title for Australian Library Journal, incorporating Australian Academic and Research Libraries, we would be able to carry forward the journal ranking, retaining the ISSN.

The proposed changes would be implemented during 2016 and take effect from 2017. The long term future of the ALIA publishing options will be reassessed prior to the expiry of ALIA's agreement with Taylor & Francis.

THE PROPOSAL

	Australian Library Journal	Australian Academic and Research Libraries	JALIA: Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association
Year established	1951	1970	1951/new title 2017
Frequency	4 issues per annum	4 issues per annum	4 issues per annum
Subscriptions	Included in ALIA Institutional Membership and by subscription	General subscription	Included in ALIA Institutional Membership and general subscription
Availability	More than 20,000 libraries around the world, through T&F and its partners	More than 20,000 libraries around the world, through T&F and its partners	More than 20,000 libraries around the world, through T&F and its partners
Open access	Green open access	Green open access	Green open access
Back issues digitised and freely available on T&F website	Complete from 1989 and dating back to Vol 6 1957 (38 vols of 64)	Complete from 1988 (28 volumes of 46)	Complete from 2017
Current issues	Free access to entire volume after 3 years	Free access to entire volume after 3 years	Free access to entire volume after 3 years
Editors	Ross Harvey	Gaby Haddow and Mary Anne Kennan	TBC
Editorial Boards	7 LIS experts from academic, special and public libraries	9 LIS experts from academic and collecting institutions	Combined
Authors	Practitioners, researchers, academics	Mainly researchers and academics	Practitioners, researchers and academics
Format and content	Print and online journal; articles and book reviews	Print and online journal; articles and book reviews	Print and online journal; articles and book reviews; further online content eg video abstracts, blog
Peer review (double-blind)	Majority of articles	All articles	Majority of articles
Downloads/citations	More full text downloads than AARL	More citations than ALJ	Strengths of ALJ and AARL
2014 impact factor	0.140	0.424	To be determined

TIMELINE

Initial consultation with immediate stakeholders	25 Jan – 29 February
Broader membership	3 -16 March
Feedback collated and presented to the ALIA Board	18 March
Decision communicated to Members	23 March