

Re-conceptualising libraries – a project update

Re-conceptualising and re-positioning Australian library and information science education for the twenty-first century is a research project funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council. The project aims to establish a consolidated and holistic picture of the Australian library and information science profession and identify how its future education and training can be mediated in a cohesive and sustainable manner.

The project is being undertaken with an 11 member project team of university and vocational library and information science educators from around Australia.

Recognising the three major and equal stakeholders in the education process – students, educators, and employers – the project has been framed around three areas of consideration that represent key stakeholder groups in LIS education. These areas of consideration are LIS students, the LIS workforce, and LIS educators. The project's primary objective is to develop a *Framework for the Education of the Information Professions in Australia*. This framework will provide guidance on how best to reposition and reshape Australian library and information science education to ensure it remains dynamic, sustainable, and responsive to professional practice in the rapidly changing 21st century.

After commencing in November 2009, work on the project is now well underway. Data collection for each of the three areas of consideration has begun with four national online questionnaires released during July and August aimed at current LIS students, recent LIS graduates, LIS employees, and LIS educators. Each questionnaire aims to gather data that will assist the project team with responding to various research questions that have been developed for each area of consideration.



A range of dissemination activities have taken place with presentations delivered at the 19th National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference in Perth, and in Borås, Sweden, as part of a satellite event hosted by IFLA's Education and Training and Library Theory and Research Sections to the 76th IFLA World Library and Information Congress. More recently several members of the project team conducted a half-day workshop on 3 September as part of the ALIA Access 2010 Conference in Brisbane.

Further data collection will take place over the coming months in the form of focus groups and one-on-one interviews. Focus groups will be undertaken with current LIS students and recent LIS graduates, and one-on-one interviews will be conducted with LIS employment agencies and employers, LIS course coordinators, and individuals coordinating or involved in alternative models of delivering LIS education around the world.

A series of discussion papers will be released in the following months for comment and feedback and the project's final report is scheduled for publication in early 2011. Keep abreast of the project's ongoing work by visiting the website at www.liseducation.org.au and subscribing to the RSS feed. Questions, comments, or requests for further information about the project can also be directed to Associate Professor Helen Partridge at h.partridge@qut.edu.au.

Finally the project team would like to extend their thanks to all members of the LIS profession who have generously given their time by participating in data collection activities to date, and to members of the project reference group for their ongoing support and contribution to the project.

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Mobrarrians

Mo-brarian [moh-brair-ee-uhn] -noun

1. a male working in a library environment, who has hair growing on the upper lip, allowed to grow without shaving, and often trimmed in any of various shapes

2. a person of either gender, trained in library work and dedicated to changing the face of men's health

October 31st, traditionally the scariest night of the year as monsters haunt the Halloween streets, is now the last chance wives and partners across the world have to comfortably kiss their loved ones. Next day, the really scary stuff starts: Movember unleashes the hairy potential of upper lips everywhere, and teams vie to raise money and awareness of men's health issues such as depression and prostate cancer.

The Mo-brarians, a Movember team originating in Townsville in 2008 with a modest membership of 5 hairy-lipped library staff, swelled their ranks to 20 when mo-bros and mo-sistas joined from libraries all over Australia. All had the common goal of getting the information out and the cash in. Upper lips grew hair, men's health information displays were set up in libraries, sausages were sizzled, raffles were raffled, and lots of fun was had by all. In 2010 the Mo-brarians are planning to take the team to the next level.

Like libraries, and all good library workers, the Mo-brarians want to embrace the use of web 2.0 and get the message out there by creating a strong online presence. Guest bloggers



will raise the profile of our Mo-brarian blog, Mo-facts will be tweeted on Twitter, faces sporting Mo's will be booked, our embarrassing Mo-attempts will be Flickr'd, and you'll probably be able to watch a few hairy Search Stories on YouTube.

If you've made it this far into the article you're probably asking yourself, "What can I possibly do to help? I'm interested, but am no good at raising funds." Well fear not, if the least you do is mention this article to someone and tell them what we're trying to do (raise awareness for men's health issues, sorry if it wasn't clear) then you've already helped. If you're ready to be a Mo-brarian and help raise money and spread the word about Movember then check out www.mobrarrians.wordpress.com. Here you will find plenty of information on how you and your library can participate.

To sum up, we'd love your help in promoting Movember. We genuinely believe that libraries are ideally placed to make a difference. They're big buildings overflowing with information, some of which is bound to be about men's health issues. Librarians are people who love to share information with an audience that needs to know. The Mo-brarians were born to promote this information!

Be a Mo-brarian: all the cool librarians are doing it.

www.mobrarrians.wordpress.com
<http://au.movember.com>

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