

COMING TOGETHER TO LEARN

Most Presidents, during their one year term of office, have the pleasure of attending one major ALIA conference. I have been fortunate to attend two: the ALIA National Conference last September in Melbourne, and the ALIA Information Online 2015 Conference, which took place at the Hilton Hotel, Sydney, last month.

We are always pleased to welcome international speakers, with their alternative viewpoints and innovative approaches. ALIA Information Online 2015 Conference keynotes Liz McGettigan, Siva Vaidhyanathan, Erik Boekesteijn and Mitchell Whitelaw held to that tradition, and gave us all much food for thought. I enjoyed listening to them all and personally found Erik's keynote the most thought provoking and challenging.

Erik's presentation looked at the work he has been doing over the last few years and the smart use of multimedia technology to bring to life the research and consulting work his team puts together for libraries all over the world. I have spent the last six months working on putting together a maker space (with 3D printer and a professional video and audio studio) for my employer Charles Sturt University. Erik's keynote gave me some more creative ideas on how we can use the new space in both our teaching and research.

The challenge for ALIA is to keep these conferences feeling fresh, keep the registration at a price that's value for money, provide our vendors with opportunities to show new products and services to prospective clients and, most importantly, to provide an avenue for people to come together to present, debate, learn and share new information. In my presidential address at the conference I said that, at its core, ALIA is about professional development and building the strength of our profession through quality professional development.



ALIA President Damian Lodge welcomes delegates to the ALIA Information Online 2015 Conference

ALIA Information Online 2015 was a success in terms of quality professional development, attendance (750+ registrations), positive delegate and exhibitor feedback, and in providing us with an opportunity to discuss and debate new technologies and new ideas that can really benefit our profession.

I would like to personally thank the conference committee, ably lead by Michelle Simon (Chair), committee members Fiona Emberton, Anne Lahey, Vicki McDonald and Alison Neil for doing such a fine job in putting together the program and organising such a successful conference. Thanks again too, to our major conference sponsors SAGE publications (our platinum sponsor and conference partner), RMIT Publishing, Royal Society of Chemistry, University of Canberra, Elsevier, Copyright Agency, and Bibliotheca.

This month sees ALIA membership figures trending upwards again. For the last five months ALIA membership figures have risen, which for the ALIA Board, the many volunteers and the staff at ALIA House, is very satisfying. The Board and the staff at ALIA are continually looking at ways to support our members and our profession. Advocacy has taken centre stage at ALIA with the launch of FAIR at the ALIA Information Online 2015 Conference and I would ask you all to take a look at ALIA's exciting new advocacy campaign. I hope you will be an active participant in FAIR over 2015.



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