

Editorial

The Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) reported in its *2010-2011 Annual Report* that it “has taken the stance that it has to be an advocate for the open access movement”. In recent years the open access movement has gained momentum worldwide as a result of rapidly evolving technology that has increased possibilities for new forms of scholarly communication, as well as the need to democratise access to information especially to those in developing contexts. In support of this movement, LIASA at its 2011 Annual Conference signed the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and the Humanities and as a mark of its commitment to the open access movement, LIASA took the decision to publish its journal, the *South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science*, using open source software (OJS – Open Journal Systems) from 2012 onwards. To commemorate this decision LIASA decided to put together a special launch issue of the journal in its new open access format, drawing papers from its 2011 Annual Conference and placing them in the usual peer-review process but using the OJS electronic workflow.

Appropriately, the lead article is on open access publishing and is by Reggie Raju, Ina Smith, Paulette Talliard and Hilton Gibson from Stellenbosch University which has made its mark as the university taking the lead in the open access movement in South Africa. In fact *SAJLIS* in its open access format together with a host of other scholarly journals are currently being hosted by Stellenbosch University. The authors of this article, using a case study approach, contextualise open access in the current digital age, examine the ‘green road’ and ‘gold road’ open access publishing models and interrogate a new role of the academic library as ‘publisher’ of scholarly information.

Maintaining the digital theme, the next article, by Aneé Sieberhagen and Linda Cloete, reports on the evaluation of a digital information literacy program in order to ascertain the program’s effectiveness in promoting digital information literacy among tertiary education Generation Y and Generation Z students. Based on this evaluation the authors make useful recommendations on how digital information literacy programs may be improved to enhance students’ digital information literacy skills.

In a journal issue where topical themes such as open access and information literacy are covered, the contribution of public libraries to societal development is no doubt a theme that adds to current discourse on social inclusion. Genevieve Hart, also using a case study approach, reflects on outreach programmes pointing the way to new models of public library services promoting the inclusion of wider parts of South African society.

The final article reports on a burning issue within the library and information services (LIS) profession in South Africa that has been the subject of debate and discussion

for the last ten years or so – statutory status for the LIS sector. In more recent years there has been a renewed drive on the part of LIASA to explore the acquisition of statutory status for the profession as part of its efforts at revitalisation of the profession. Reggie Raju, who has been leading this drive for LIASA, together with Sally Witbooi and Annamarie Goosen, examine the latest drive by LIASA to solicit the views of a cross section of LIS personnel in South Africa on the issue of the sector acquiring statutory status. Given that the survey reports an overwhelming support for the acquisition of statutory status, the authors usefully go a step further and examine significant aspects that would need to be incorporated into the governance structures of a statutory body for the LIS sector.

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Guest editor: Special Open Access Launch Issue