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Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the ALIA Professional Pathways phase 2 consultation. I am making this submission in a personal capacity and not representing my employer or any other organisation. You can make this public if you want.

The Professional Pathways programme initially promised great things, and I was excited by this once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape LIS education, training and professional recognition in Australia. From the phase 1 consultation paper it sounded like ALIA was on board with the need to view and do things differently. The Framework, as outlined in the phase 2 paper, is a sound model of modern LIS skills and knowledge. I see my expertise reflected in the Framework and, for what it's worth, I like the new colour scheme. However, the implementation of said Framework—especially the recognition and credentialing section—is an utter disaster. I am bitterly disappointed and deeply unimpressed.

In short: I initially proposed something akin to the LIANZA model, where professional recognition is available *equally* to new LIS graduates and to people with a degree in any discipline (or a LIS degree awarded before 2007) and a completed portfolio demonstrating competence in core areas of LIS practice. It is similar to the ASA model, where archivists with and without formal archival degrees are recognised separately but equally as professionals in their field. It appears ALIA, along with a large chunk of phase 1 consultation respondents, have rejected this model in favour of something that looks very much like the status quo, restricting Associate membership to those with LIS degrees. I am at a loss to understand why Australian librarians felt the LIANZA model wasn't good enough for us. Why did so many respondents lobby to retain something that is failing us?

The LIANZA model also requires revalidation every three years, suggesting that a demonstrated commitment to lifelong learning is, in the long run, more valuable than an initial qualification. Not only does the phase 2 model say nothing about revalidation, but it also appears that 57.3% support for compulsory CPD was not 'a clear mandate', and so it is not included. This seems like a great way to ensure the LIS profession in this country continues to stagnate. Does ALIA really believe that a LIS degree awarded thirty years ago is a sound basis for professional recognition today? I sure don't and LIANZA definitely doesn't. Revalidation and/or compulsory CPD would ensure that those postnominals reflect contemporary knowledge and skills, and demonstrate that ALIA takes seriously the Active Professionalism aspect of the Framework.

I can kind of understand why the health librarians reacted as they did. Hospitals and health organisations are highly credentialist workplaces, where everyone in a clinical role has a degree specific to that role, which is accredited by a body of some kind. In order to retain their seat at the clinical table, librarians in these workplaces feel they need to maintain similar professional standards as their colleagues in other fields. If that's what works for health librarians, I have no issue with that. I do, however, have a major issue with that system being imposed on other LIS sectors where professional needs are very different.

In my experience, public libraries, NSLA libraries and (to a lesser but growing extent) academic libraries are more prepared to recognise skills and experience gained elsewhere

when hiring people for library roles. Perhaps this is due to the greater proportion of work sitting outside the Information Services and Information Management domains, the two that most closely correspond to traditional librarianship. I suspect that librarianship in special libraries (which are more likely to be smaller entities within a bigger organisation) is defined much more narrowly than librarianship in other sectors.

I have worked alongside, and currently supervise, people without LIS degrees doing identical work and receiving identical pay to colleagues who do have those degrees. These people are barred, both in the current model and that proposed in phase 2, from Associate membership of ALIA and are relegated to the 'Allied Field' category. It is essentially saying 'you can't sit with us' to people who have already claimed a chair. If they can demonstrate competence in the three Core and in one or more Professional Knowledge domains, and already have a degree in something else, I see no good reason not to recognise them as the LIS professionals they are. I am unconvinced that a whole additional degree, an enormous financial and personal commitment, would make much meaningful difference.

[Redacted sentence.] Commentary on the professional value of [Redacted] courses is beyond the scope of this submission, but I would suggest that increased competition for budding librarians may incentivise existing providers to ensure their courses are meeting contemporary needs.

The proposed 'badges' system is a mess. It's unclear whether such a system would replace or complement the established ALIA CPD scheme, but it also has an infantilising undertone, rather evoking one's childhood in the Cub Scouts. The example on page 26 outlines two ways someone might achieve competence in the Core Domains, one being through an ALIA-accredited course (is this a degree?) and the other being a series of ALIA-accredited training sessions delivered at someone's workplace. Under the proposed model, while both of these pathways would be rewarded with (presumably) a Core Domains badge or similar, only the first pathway would be recognised as being eligible for Associate membership. Unless I've misread the example, this appears at odds with the stated goal of 'Creat[ing] an environment where people can pursue their own pathways and be supported to do so'. Why would anyone pursue a pathway that leads to a dead end?

I support the LIANZA model so strongly because its ethos of accrediting the *individual*, rather than the *provider*, means that practitioners can follow their own pathway into a LIS career, rather than the handful of pathways mandated by an accrediting body. We all recognise the need to diversify the LIS workforce, and by extension the pathways into LIS work, but this does not—and cannot—mean funnelling everyone into the same three library schools or into workplace training conducted by the same handful of trainers. Our sector is far richer for the breadth of experience brought by those from other knowledge traditions.

On other matters: I support the introduction of an employer credentialling scheme, both as an employee and as a mid-level hiring manager. I would be interested in more detail on who would be doing the credentialling, as I'm sure it would be tempting for sub-par library managers to throw their weight around and demand credentials for their organisation, which their employees may or may not feel the organisation deserves.

I also support aligning the CPD specialisations to the Framework, especially as my specialist expertise in metadata and cataloguing currently has no obvious home in the CPD scheme. The current Data specialisation is geared to those in research data management roles, which are related to, but distinct from, library metadata roles; an Information Management specialisation would suit both areas. Such an alignment could help librarians with more traditionalist views of the scope of library work expand their understanding of what modern roles require.

ALIA has invested considerable time, labour, expense and political capital in reimagining LIS education and professional recognition in Australia. This programme was a direct response to the closure of several library schools and the inability of the library industry to develop, maintain or attract workers with necessary skills and expertise. I can't understand why ALIA would do all of this work only to produce a report saying 'Everyone complained loudly at us so nothing is changing after all'. How does this meet the initial stated Professional Pathways goal of broadening the library field in the face of dwindling educational options?

I strongly urge ALIA and the Professional Pathways Board to reconsider adopting the LIANZA model of professional recognition, a more inclusive yet equally rigorous approach that validates many more pathways to a LIS career. Our sector needs all the help it can get. Don't close the door on people who've taken the scenic route.