

Library Association of Ireland Education Committee: Professional Standards

ALAI Review: Proposed Actions

In 2017, the Library Association of Ireland engaged Dr John Cullen of Maynooth University to review the Association's Associateship award (ALAI) in order to clarify how the award is understood by members and others, the value the award offers to members and whether or not changes should be implemented with regard to the ALAI application and awarding process.

Dr Cullen carried out his research in late-2017 and early-2018 and reported in May 2018, with a number of key recommendations. These recommendations have been considered by the Association and it is proposed now to act as follows:

1. Maintain the current ALAI award as it is while also being open to changing the award name.
2. Introduce a new award positioned between the ALAI and Fellowship (FLAI) awards. This award will be designed to promote a culture of Continuing Professional Development activity amongst LAI members and to encourage active engagement with the Association. The process of applying for and receiving this new award could act as a de facto re-validation of the ALAI, the achievement of which will be a pre-requisite for the new award, as well as recognizing progression in a member's professional development and achievements since their ALAI award. It is proposed to consult with members to name the new award.
3. Develop clear criteria for achieving all three awards and support these by communicating transparent guidelines on the application and assessment processes to members and other stakeholders.
4. Actively promote the awards amongst members and more widely, emphasising their value and benefits to individuals and employers alike.

It is proposed to hold further discussions with interested parties in the near future, with a view to submitting outline proposals for the new award for approval at the Association AGM in March 2019. Once approved, detailed criteria and guidelines will be developed and issued.

The proposed timeline from September 2018 to March 2019 is shown below.

Date	Action
14 Sept 2018	Discussion document on proposed award system for LAI PS to review
3 Oct 2018	PS Committee (PSC) meet with Eva Hornung present
9 Oct 2018	PSC and CPD Committee meet
25 Oct 2018	Outline to Council at meeting with Groups & Sections (KK)
5 Nov 2018	Consult with LAI Career Development Group (KK)
7 Nov 2018	Update at Public Libraries Conference (PC)
28 Nov 2018	Consult CONUL
Dec 2018	Put out to membership for final observations
20 Jan 2019	PSC approve
24 Jan 2019	Proposed award structure considered at Council
28 March 2019	Proposed award structure voted on at AGM.
April – Sept 2019	Assuming AGM approval : Development of criteria and guidelines
October 2019	Assuming AGM approval : Issuing of criteria and guidelines, receive applications
October 2020	Review