



Academic & Special Libraries Section

Annual Report for LAI

Committee Officers and Members 2023 - 2024

Committee Officers:

- Chairperson: Fiona Logan (National Library of Ireland - fionaloganasl@gmail.com)
- Hon. Secretary: Deirdre McGuinness (William Fry LLP - deidremariemcguinnessasl@gmail.com)
- Hon. Treasurer: Genevieve Larkin (Marino Institute of Education - aslsectiontreasurer@gmail.com)
- Communications Officer: Laura Rooney-Ferris (HSE - *stepped down during 2023*), Martin O'Connor (UCC - martinoconnorasl@gmail.com), Eilís O'Neill (DCU - eilisoneillasl@gmail.com), Aoife Murphy (National Library of Ireland - aoifemurphyasl@gmail.com), Dimphe Ní Bhraoináin (Griffith College - dimpheibhraonainasl@gmail.com)

Committee Members:

- Susan Brodigan (McCann FitzGerald LLP) - susanbrodiganasl@gmail.com
- Nadina Yedid (Children's Health Ireland) - nyedidasl@gmail.com
- Joe Peakin (Novartis) - joepeakinasl@gmail.com
- Marta Bustillo (UCD) - marta.bustillo@ucd.ie

About the Academic & Special Libraries Section

The A&SL Section of the LAI is committed to promoting the role of all information professionals working within the academic and special libraries sector. The group works to ascertain and disseminate best practice within these fields, and act as advocates both to employers and to the wider public. Through our networking events we work to provide opportunities for continuing professional development throughout the year.

Our membership is made up of professionals working in academic institutions (public and private), corporate and business libraries, private libraries, and special libraries, such as those in the voluntary and charity sector.

Collaboration and community building is at the heart of this group, and the committee organises events throughout the year. Our main event in the year is the annual conference which is open to the wider information and library professional community, we also host regular networking events and partner with our colleagues across other LAI groups to share professional practice and knowledge share on current topics and challenges within the profession.

Overview of 2023

During 2023, we welcomed several new members to the committee for the 2023-2025 term and bid farewell to some long-standing members. We had the opportunity to host in-person events - our AGM and a joint networking event with the HSLG, both of which were held in the Royal Irish Academy. Both events featured interesting talks and provided section members with a great networking

opportunity. During 2023, we also properly kicked off our planning for the return of the A&SL conference (held in March 2024). As part of this, we launched our new website www.aslibraries.ie.

Committee meetings and membership in 2023

The Committee met on 10 occasions in 2023. This included 9 Committee meetings and the Annual General Meeting which was held on 9th February 2023. We have continued to hold most of our meetings online on Zoom, which took place on the following dates: 25th January, 1st March, 27th April, 6th June, 29th August, 27th September, 2nd November and 14th December. We also held in-person meetings on 22nd July and 25th November.

2023 saw many changes to committee membership. We welcomed Martin O'Connor, Eilis O'Neill, Aoife Murphy, and Dimphe Ní Bhraoináin, who joined the committee at the 2023 AGM, as well as Joe Peakin and Marta Bustillo, who joined the committee during 2023.

We said goodbye to Máire Caffrey and Assumpta Byrne who stepped down at the 2023 AGM, and to Laura Rooney Ferris, who stepped down during 2023. We would like to thank them for their hard work during their tenure. They have all contributed so much to the Committee and will be greatly missed.

As a result of Laura's stepping down, the role of communication officer had to be reassigned. Due to the volume of work associated with this role, it has been split amongst a few committee members - Martin O'Connor, Eilís O'Neill, Aoife Murphy, and Dimphe Ni Bhraonain. With regards to the other officer roles, Fiona Logan,

Deirdre McGuinness and Genevieve Larkin remain as chairperson, secretary and treasurer respectively.

AGM 2023

The 2023 AGM was held in the Royal Irish Academy on 9th February 2023. The agenda included the Chairperson's welcome and introduction, the Secretary's Report - Review of the year, and the Treasurer's Report.



The RIA Library: past, present and future

As part of the 2023 AGM, the committee held a talk by Barbara Mc Cormack, Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy. Barbara presented to the group on *The RIA Library: past, present and future*, detailing the RIA's history and their collections,

their present work blending the physical and the digital, and future plans focussing on collective digitisation, working with partners and developing digitisation plans.

Other A&SL Section events for 2023

Summer solstice celebration: Joint HSLG and A&SL network evening 2023

A joint networking event was held by HSLG & A&SL groups in the Royal Irish Academy on 21st June 2023. This was a great evening of networking for the two groups and included a talk by Saoirse de Paor, teaching & learning librarian at Maynooth University library. With her social media and communications hat on, Saoirse took us through the different ways that social media platforms can enhance how libraries engage and interact with their users and how it can further promote library services.

Planning for 2024

During 2023, planning kicked off for the return of the annual A&SL conference. The conference had sadly been put on hold for a couple of years due to COVID, so the we were excited to bring the conference back. The conference was scheduled for March 2024 and the theme decided on was *Fair for All: Creating Equitable and Universal Access to Information*.

Advertising for the conference began in November 2023, followed by the call for papers.

New website

The A&SL committee launched our new website in November 2023 -

www.aslibraries.ie

The new website provides visitors with updates regarding upcoming events, including our 2024 conference.

Attendance at LAI Executive Board Meetings and LAI Council Events in 2023

Deirdre McGuinness attended LAI Council Induction and Meeting with Groups and Sections on 26th September 2023.

Attendance and Presentations at Conferences and Training Events in 2023

- **Deirdre McGuinness** attended the BIALL Conference *Gaining the edge: investing in our skillset*, the HSLG *Graphic design for librarians* webinar, and the LAI Open Scholarship Group AGM.
- **Eilis O'Neill** completed the following courses - LinkedIn *Writing for the Web*, the UDL Badge in DCU in association with Ahead, HSLG *Graphic design for librarians*, and *Identifying and responding to students in distress or at risk*. She is currently undertaking *Gramadach gan Stró* Irish grammar course with Gaelchultúr. She attended the Children's Books Ireland annual conference and spoke at the LAI CDG *Emerging Careers* event. She wrote a blog post for LibFocus: [Unlocking Accessibility: Transforming Your Library with UDL](#)
- **Nadina Yedid** attended the *Open to all* Webinar from the LAI Open Scholarship Group, *Designing Systematic Searches* in-person workshop

from Evidence Synthesis Ireland and the HSLG annual conference. She also organised and attended *Emerging careers and LAI* (as part of the CDG AGM), *Graphic design and Canva* (CDG event) and *Ace the interview, get the job* (CDG event). She wrote a Blog post at the RCPI Heritage Centre Blog: [One year of cataloguing a “special collection” of medical literature \(and what I learnt while doing it\)](#)

- **Genevieve Larkin** completed an Improvers course in Gaeilge with Gael Linn, attended the National Academic Integrity Network Panel Discussion during Academic Integrity Week 2023, and completed the American Library Association's *Fundamentals of Collection Assessment 2023* course. She attended the EBSCO Library Technology Day in Dublin, an Acquisitions Group of Ireland meeting at All Hallows, Drumcondra, and the TUS Universal Design for Learning Symposium (online). She attended the Choice ACRL webinar on Library Support for Scientific Data Sharing, and training in Intercultural Awareness and Communication run by the Irish Council for International Students. She participated in a webinar on Systematic Reviews run by Lancaster University, focusing on collaboration with academics and researchers.
- **Dimphne Ni Bhraonain** attended the Ahead 2023 conference in Croke Park Conference Centre, *Unity: How Staff and Learner Communities Drive Inclusion in Tertiary Education*. She also attended the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) Panel Discussion during Academic Integrity Week 2023. As a member of the HECA Librarians committee, Dimphne created a video guide for the partner institutions, *Institutional Repositories -*

Supporting faculty research, HECA Libraries 2023, providing an overview of how institutional repositories benefit both the individual researcher and their institution, highlighting the supports that can be gained from college librarians.

- **Susan Brodigan** completed the Law Society's 2023 MOOC *Social Media and the Law*, which provided participants with a comprehensive guide to the key social media issues arising in the context of changing Irish and EU regulations, together with an examination of other key social media developments and trends.
- **Marta Bustillo** co-delivered a presentation with Loise Macharia at the LAI / CILIP conference on 27th April entitled *The Exploring Your Digital Identity Module: Digital Literacy at UCD Library*. Marta also attended the *Ireland and the COVID Pandemic* conference at the Royal Irish Academy on 14th June 2023.

Communications

Sign up to our mailing list on <https://listserv.heanet.ie>

If you already have a HEAnet account you can link directly to the ASL list

here <https://listserv.heanet.ie/cgi-bin/wa?A0=ASL>

Websites

<https://aslibraries.ie/>

<https://www.libraryassociation.ie/academic-and-special-libraries-section/>

Social media:

Twitter @ASLIBRARIES

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/aslibraries/>

LinkedIn: [Academic & Special Libraries Section of the Library Association of Ireland](#)