

## Wanna be a "dill"? Apply Now!



Katherine Howard

The International Masters in Digital Library Learning (<http://dill.hio.no>) – or DILL for short – is a Master's program under the European Union's Erasmus Mundus program. It is a joint degree offered by a consortium of three European universities: Oslo University College in Norway; Tallinn University in Estonia; and Parma University in Italy, with all teaching conducted in English. One semester is spent at each institution and the final thesis-writing semester is spent at the institution of the students' choice. Students graduate with a Masters degree that is recognised by all three partner institutions.

I was fortunate enough to be accepted in to the first intake of this program that commenced in August 2007. However, I came very close to not even applying. After reading an email from one of my lecturers with details about the program and application requirements, I deleted it. The program – along with a very generous scholarship – sounded too good to be true, and even if it were true (I actually Googled it to see if it was a scam!), it was highly unlikely that I would be accepted – these opportunities happen to other people, not me! At the end of the email, my lecturer had written "For those of you who are able, I urge you to put your hat in the ring". Even after deleting the email, those words haunted me. A few days later, I retrieved the email from the trash and applied.

The Erasmus Mundus scholarship initiative was modelled in part on the United States Fulbright Scholarship program and is now said to be in direct competition with that program for attracting foreign students<sup>1</sup>. By also offering scholarships of up to three months to academics, the program seeks "to enhance quality in higher education through scholarships and academic cooperation between Europe and the rest of the world."<sup>2</sup> Australian LIS academics have been very active in receiving these scholarships. To date, we have had three academics that I am aware of involved in the DILL Program: Dr. Anne Maree Lloyd from Charles Sturt University (CSU); A/Prof. Helen Partridge from Queensland University of Technology (QUT); and Dr. Sue Myburgh from the University of South Australia (UniSA). However, the same cannot be said for Australian students. In the year that I was accepted, there was one other Australian who made the reserve list – a colleague of mine from UniSA. Since then, no Australians have applied. I hope that by the time you have finished reading this article, you too will be motivated to apply! Erasmus Mundus programs are approved for five guaranteed intakes; after this time the consortium must apply for an extension to continue delivering the program. The next intake in August 2011 has a closing date of 15 November, 2010.

The program is incredibly well organised and delivered. It is supported by excellent administration and international office staff who were only too happy to help us adjust to life in our new, albeit temporary, homes. The quality of the teaching staff is second to none. They are all well known in their field and have an incredible network of contacts to other academics equally well known in their field – and as students we were on the receiving end of many of them agreeing to be guest lecturers, some for just one session, and others for several sessions.

It is difficult to explain exactly how this program has changed me personally, except to say that I have grown from the experience. Living in different countries, experiencing their culture, their way of living life, dealing with language barriers (although English is widely spoken) has a way of building not only one's resilience but also understanding. Additionally, the bonds that we as a student group formed were incredibly strong. Despite being from completely different backgrounds in most cases, we experienced the highs and lows of the two years together. These were common experiences that took precedence over any country of origin. I can honestly say that I started the program in August 2007 with colleagues and I ended it in July 2009 with friends, including many of the academic staff.

One final remark: if you do consider this program, it is only fair that I warn you now – there is a 6 hour exam in Oslo for the Digital Documents module!

*Katherine is very happy to be contacted by potential applicants and can be reached at [howard.katherine@gmail.com](mailto:howard.katherine@gmail.com). Further details can be found in the full paper presented at ALIA Access 2010: [http://conferences.alia.org.au/access2010/pdf/Paper\\_Thu\\_1100\\_Katherine\\_Howard.pdf](http://conferences.alia.org.au/access2010/pdf/Paper_Thu_1100_Katherine_Howard.pdf)*

### Katherine Howard

Katherine Howard graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma from the University of South Australia in 2006. She then worked for two special libraries. In 2007 she was awarded an Erasmus Mundus Scholarship which allowed her to undertake the International Masters in Digital Library Learning (DILL) program which took her to Oslo University College in Norway; Tallinn University in Estonia, and the University of Parma in Italy. She graduated from this program in 2009 and until recently was managing the Digital Audio Book Library for the Royal Society for the Blind in South Australia.

### References

<sup>1</sup> Weimer, L.M. *Fulbright vs. Erasmus Mundus: a comparative policy analysis*, unpublished master's thesis, University of Oslo, Faculty of Education, pp1-90 (2008). Available from <http://www.uv.uio.no/hedda/assets/docs/Leasa-final.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> European Commission: *Education and Training. Erasmus Mundus - Scholarships and academic cooperation (2010)*. Available from [http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programs/doc72\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programs/doc72_en.htm)

## Call for Expressions of Interest Coordinator, Energise>Enthuse>Inspire, *inCite*

ALIA is seeking expressions of interest for coordinator of the Energise>Enthuse>Inspire column in *inCite*.

EEL is a monthly column in *inCite* and seeks to engage and inspire students and new graduates with the association and profession as a whole. Covering all aspects of LIS, EEL offers a glimpse into the many and varied careers, opportunities, networks, and prospects available to those entering or seeking to enter the profession. The Coordinator will be expected to be familiar with ALIA's objectives, programs, range of interests, and place in the LIS sector. Coordination of the column takes approximately 5 hours a month, but may require more.

The Coordinator will be organised and proactive, and understand the tone and history of EEL. They should be inclusive of all students and new grads, and able to assist and mentor writers and encourage new graduates and students to write for the column and the magazine. They must also continue to keep the profile of EEL high through regular call-outs for contributors, and approaching potential contributors individually. The Coordinator must be available to quickly respond to email from potential contributors and ALIA staff.

The Coordinator will maintain ALIA membership, and will coordinate with ALIA's National Office Staff, the Publishing Team, and NGAC to source content, promote programs of interest, and ensure a high standard. The Coordinator position is on an honorary basis.

This is a fantastic opportunity for a young professional to increase their professional networks, get involved in the Association, and raise their profile within the Association and the profession.

Interested people should email their expression of interest, including a resume and a cover letter detailing any relevant experience, demonstration of commitment, and member number to [incite@alia.org.au](mailto:incite@alia.org.au). For further information, contact Robyn Ellard, 02 6215 8250

**Closing date for expressions of interest is 1 November 2010**