

Editorial

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As part of its strategy to remain one of the premier journals in the field, Libri aims to encourage the next generation of library and information science professionals to get into print, and issues a call for the “Best Student Paper” each year. No theme is prescribed. The editors simply look for research papers that address a significant issue facing today's librarians and information professionals.

Students' imagination knows no bounds, and they can make extraordinary efforts to research, understand, and present papers on topics that they have a particular interest in. Over the years, the Libri Student Award has regularly been made for papers that have no immediate parallel in the literature of library and information science, that bring innovative insights into an established field, or that apply an existing body of professional knowledge in an area previously ignored. This year is no exception, and we are once again proud to recognize the winner of the Libri Student Award, Sue Beer, whose paper appears in this issue. With the world's population moving increasingly to live in major urban centres, it becomes all too easy for our professional focus to follow them. Sue's paper reminds us that there are legitimate information needs in the island communities scattered across the oceans that comprise two-thirds of the world's surface area, as well as in the remote rural areas of every continent, and brings some fresh insights into our understanding of how they are being met.

The award for the best paper by a student has been made by Libri every year since 1996. Although this year's award goes to a Doctoral student, the annual Call for Papers is addressed to students at all levels (except senior information scholars returning to school for additional degrees outside the field of library and information science), and contributions are accepted from students who have just graduated if the work was written whilst they were still students. The papers are judged - on the basis of originality of thought and observation, depth of research and scholarship, and the topicality of problems addressed - by a panel drawn from the Joint Editors, the Editorial Advisory Board, and other international experts, selected to ensure that there is no conflict of interest when a paper from their own institution is submitted.

The author of the winning article receives an award of 500 USD and a complementary subscription to Libri for one year. If the quality warrants, some papers may be designated as receiving an honourable mention and the paper is published, with the author receiving a complementary subscription. It is particularly pleasing that the quality of entries is rising, and - although the editors have sometimes had to ask for minor revisions - recent and future issues include several other papers that were originally submitted in the annual Best Student Paper competition. We hope and believe that this will not be the last time that these young people make a significant contribution to the development of our profession.