

### Letter from the President



**Marshall Dozier**

Information Services  
University of Edinburgh  
Edinburgh, UK  
Contact: [marshall.dozier@ed.ac.uk](mailto:marshall.dozier@ed.ac.uk)

Dear Colleagues,

In this letter I'd like to focus on the current round of funding awards that EAHIL is offering. All of these awards have, as an underlying motivation, the aim of supporting continuing personal and professional development. I chose this topic partly to continue to capture and share some of the operations of our association to increase our members' general awareness.

#### **Annual EAHIL-EBSCO scholarships to attend conferences and workshops**

We have for several years been able to offer approximately six scholarships per year, funded jointly by EBSCO – for which we are very grateful. These scholarships of approximately 500€ are intended to support members who are relatively new to the profession or to working in health information; members who for economic or political reasons may have difficulty in securing funding to attend professional meetings; members who have presentations or courses accepted at conferences and workshops but cannot get funding to travel.

These scholarships have enabled many members to attend EAHIL events for the first time, and we know from reports submitted by recipients that they have found the conferences and workshops to be really fantastic experiences. As an association, we also benefit individually and collectively by enabling greater numbers to attend, thereby widening and strengthening our professional networks.

The scholarship process is led by the Past President, currently Peter Morgan, who oversees the scheduling and produces the anonymised application set that is reviewed by the rest of the Board members. Each application is scored by Board members according to a set of criteria that is published along with the call for applications. The Past President then collates all the scores. This collation usually identifies the winning applicants, but in cases where there are ties which lead to a greater number of high-scoring applications than there are places, the Board has a discussion to identify the stronger candidate or find an alternative solution (such as two applicants who are also co-presenters sharing a scholarship).

The current round of scholarships for the Seville Conference in 2016 is now open – please see [eahil.eu/eahil-ebSCO-scholarships-for-the-2016-eahil-conference/](http://eahil.eu/eahil-ebSCO-scholarships-for-the-2016-eahil-conference/)

#### **EAHIL-AHILA Scholarship for the 2016 EAHIL Conference**

For the coming year, we have entered into a new scholarship venture in partnership with the Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA). As a regionally-oriented professional association, EAHIL has always tried to have strong links with our sister organisations in other parts of the world – one example of that is our exchange of representatives with the MLA in the US. Similarly, EAHIL has in recent years invited the chairs (or their nominees) of sister organisations to attend EAHIL conferences or workshops, and offered a registration fee waiver to facilitate these visits. The visits provide valuable

opportunities for organisational learning and spark ideas for collaboration. In the past, we have received scholarship applications from information professionals from countries outside Europe – but as the scheme described above is intended for our core members from Council of Europe countries, those applications have not been considered eligible.

Putting together these two elements (strong links with sister organisations, and applications from outside Europe) the Board has formed an agreement with the President of AHILA, Rehema Chande Mallya, to offer a scholarship of up to 1000€ to applicants from Hinari-eligible countries in Africa. The aims of this scholarship are to support the career development of AHILA members by enabling them to attend EAHIL meetings and to foster collaboration between EAHIL and AHILA in order to advance the practice of health information and libraries in Europe and Africa.

Personally I am very happy to see EAHIL take this step. For the 2015 Workshop in Edinburgh, a librarian from Rwanda was able to attend through joint sponsorship of the Edinburgh LOC and the Global Health Academy at the Edinburgh School of Medicine. I believe this visit was of great value to both the Workshop and the sponsorship winner – so I hope this venture by EAHIL will prove fruitful and that it may continue into the future.

Details of the EAHIL-AHILA scholarship will soon be published with a call on the EAHIL website.

### **EAHIL project grants**

As you may have read in the previous issue of JEAHIL, EAHIL currently has open (until 15 December 2015) a call for bids for project grants. A total of 25000€ are available for up to four projects. The project grants are being led by Manuela Colombi, and there will be a panel of reviewers to evaluate the applications and recommend award winners to the Board.

The aim of this funding is to provide opportunities to carry out research, or develop systems or tools. Research could allow better understanding of our work, requirements of our profession or user communities; systems or tools may allow more efficient working or provide better access to essential information. These grants also give the project participants the chance to gain experience in conducting research or development of new systems – thereby gaining personal and professional skills. The duration of the projects may be up to two years – so this gives time for a small project to be fitted in alongside a busy work schedule. For details, please see [eahil.eu/call-for-eahil-projectgrant-applications](http://eahil.eu/call-for-eahil-projectgrant-applications)

### **What would you like to see offered?**

The scholarship and grant schemes described above are of direct benefit to a relatively small number of people, notwithstanding the indirect benefits to all our members through cascaded learning and building of professional networks. I'd love to hear your ideas on other ways that EAHIL provide or enable continuing personal and professional development for members – I look forward to hearing from you!

*Kindest wishes,*

*Marshall*