Purpose

Recruitment of talented staff and students into librarianship has emerged as a core goal of professional development in libraries. Creating improved opportunity for under-represented groups to enter the profession also has become a major goal.

To help meet these goals, the RALC Scholarship for the Profession provides financial support for graduate education leading to an advanced degree in library science, information science, information systems, archival studies, or related programs, undertaken with the intent to pursue a career in academic librarianship. The Scholarship award is intended to support staff in RALC libraries who wish to earn a professional degree.

Award guidelines

The RALC Scholarship for the Profession awards a minimum of $1,000 for the academic year, $500 per semester, to qualifying applicants. Awards are annual and are made once each year, disbursed on a semester basis. Multiple recipients each year are possible, if the fiscal resources of RALC permit. Larger scholarship awards for the year are possible if RALC fiscal resources permits and the RALC Board agrees to a larger amount. The following guidelines apply:

1. Scholarships are provided without regard for financial standing.
2. Applicants must have at least 3 years of consecutive employment as a permanent employee at a RALC institution, including part-time permanent employment. Temporary employees are not eligible.
3. Recipients must continue to work for a RALC institution during the term of the scholarship. In the case of termination for any reason, the award for the current semester is not affected but the recipient is not eligible for further support beyond the current semester.
4. Awards are annual. Recipients must apply each year to be eligible for multi-year support, and there is no guarantee that a recipient will receive an award each year.
5. Applicants must earn passing scores each semester in order to receive an award for the following semester.
6. Awards cover tuition and fees for ALA-accredited graduate programs only. No other expenses are allowable. Payment is either directly to the institution or by reimbursement after presentation of appropriate proof of payment to institution for tuition and fees.

7. RALC will adhere to standard national practice regarding the return of scholarship funding in the event an awardee does not complete the semester program of study covered by the award.

**Award procedures**

The applications and award process is designed to create clear audit trails that document the decision process and awards amounts. Application deadline is before the April Board meeting for awards covering the following academic year.

1. Applicants will submit an application packet which includes the following:
   - Cover letter requesting an award and outline long-term career goals
   - Current resume
   - Name and position title
   - Institution and address
   - Length of employment at the institution
   - Library school where the applicant intends to enroll and the degree they wish to earn
   - Progress towards the degree
   - Existing credentials and education

2. Applicants must provide at least two letters of support from colleagues at their institution, including one letter from their supervisor. The letters must be included in sealed envelopes as part of the application packet.

3. The application packet is forwarded to the current President of RALC. The president will organize the review and ensure that consideration of the requests appears on the agenda for the April Board meeting.

4. The RALC Board will make award decisions at the April Board meeting.