For the past two years, all workshops have included a cross-program training module titled “Research4Life Programmes — Similarities and Differences.” The HINARI, AGORA, and OARE Web interfaces are reviewed, as are the different databases and search tools. This is most useful for participants from universities where there is access to multiple Research4Life programs. By the end of 2014, all the programs will have the same search tool (SUMMON) and this will increase the similarities among the programs. Also, during the past year, the HINARI training staff has developed better tools to evaluate the impact of training besides the post-workshop surveys that are now used. This includes evaluating pre- and post-workshop usage of the HINARI resources and sending an “outputs” survey six months after a workshop is concluded.

Challenges

Some challenges for the e-library training program have been Internet and Wi-Fi access and the availability of laptops. The speed of Internet access has slowly but surely increased in many countries although bandwidth and minutes still can be expensive. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the increase often is the result of access via cables strung to East and West Africa with less reliance on satellite links. Also, the eligible institutions have increased bandwidth as there is a better understanding of the potential of the Internet as a source of academic and research information.

Approximately three years ago, participants began bringing laptops to workshops. In most cases, the host institutions have also added Wi-Fi access. Consequently, participants can bookmark Internet links and save files directly to their laptops. Also, bibliographic management software such as Zotero or Mendeley can be downloaded directly onto these laptops.

Finally, a continuing challenge is to maintain funding for the program. We hope to continue to work with the Elsevier Foundation and several other partners to continue this very valuable program.

Conclusion

The MLA/Librarians Without Borders e-library training initiative has successfully worked for the past six years in partnership with a variety of other organizations to train health and health-related professionals, including librarians, to effectively access and use health-related databases. The program has also trained U.S. health sciences librarians to be trainers of their international colleagues. This global outreach project has not only renewed MLA’s historic international commitment to assist people anywhere in the world, but in a practical sense has demonstrated a consistent ability to work with a diverse group of individuals and funding organizations to build in-country capacity for improved health of all participants.

Endnotes


Rumors

Speaking of which, one of the books reviewed in this issue is Reinventing the Library for Online Education by Frederick Stielsow. See this issue, p.44.

Reinventing the library operation(s) is being explored everywhere we turn. The work that Outsell is doing to survey the information industry gives us a longitudinal snapshot of our end users. In this issue, we have a look at Outsell’s End-User Study of Faculty and Students. Interesting that faculty are more loyal to print than expected and both faculty and students find digital textbooks more difficult to work with than with their print counterparts. See this fascinating summary, this issue, p.90.