

## **2019 Professional Development Committee Report**

We'd like to start by thanking the members of the Professional Development and Training Committee: Donna Chin, Leanne Coughlin, Rowly Lorimer, Gena Zuroski, and, of course, the Committee Chair who unfortunately could not be with us today, Antonia Pop. These individuals worked tirelessly to develop an engaging and relevant program for our annual conference and a highly successful CALJ webinar.

We would also especially like to thank all of our presenters, without whom this conference would not have been possible. Thank you to all that made this event possible – and for all of you who were able to attend, as well as all those who may be able to benefit from the sessions at a later time, via the recordings we were able to organize and we will make available to members – another first in the conferences history!

Outside of this weekend's conference, which occupies much of the committee's efforts (more on that in a bit), we held a webinar on social media marketing in January, led by Monique Sherett. The webinar was well attended, with more than 50 members from across Canada, coast to coast. Following the webinar, we conducted a brief survey to learn what people thought. Members found the theme of social media marketing to be relevant to their work; the content of the webinar was at an appropriate level of background information and detail, and the webinar provided practical advice that can be incorporated into regular work. We also received some good feedback for future webinars, including a clear desire to hold more training webinars. Some themes put forth to consider – managing peer review, different models for peer review, and how to manage the difficulty of finding suitable reviewers. People also wanted to have more training on social media and digital marketing, so you can already see how our program for this weekend was informed by feedback.

We plan to continue to explore webinar training since it was so well-attended and the feedback received was very positive. Some of the comments were especially helpful in improving the technical experience. A potential challenge is cost. We will have to work to find ways to ensure future webinars are cost-effective and of value to the membership. We are continuing to investigate and encourage sponsorship opportunities to help cover the costs of future webinars.

The Committee also worked on the program for the conference this weekend. We are very pleased to introduce the “bonus sessions” held on Friday afternoon. In previous years, we separated the more practical sessions into a “bootcamp” in order to differentiate it “bootcamp” from the conference. Feedback received from members over the past few years suggested that it is difficult for members to travel to two in-person meetings in one year. Member journals suggested scheduling a “bootcamp” either preceding or following the conference. As a result, the program was extended this year to include the newly rebranded “bonus sessions” on Friday and extending the program on Saturday. These more practical, “hands-on” sessions have been

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interspersed over the weekend and interwoven with what otherwise might be considered “regular” programming. As always, we are keen to ensure that members find the conference to be a valuable learning and networking opportunity, and we will be interested in hearing from, so do let us know during breaks or after the conference what you think.

Also new this year, we are recording most of the sessions (those for which we were able to acquire permission from presenters), and they will be made available to members. We will communicate with members to notify them when the sessions are available and how they can be viewed.

To wrap up, we would like to thank all CALJ members for your continued support of our programming. Your thoughts, questions, and feedback along the way help us develop programming that is of interest, and we really appreciate your involvement with the committee. Please continue to send us ideas, questions, and feedback, as these are always used to inform future planning. If you attend other industry conferences and hear presentations that you think would be of interest to CALJ, please send us suggestions. And, it goes without saying that if you are interested in serving on the committee, please let us know!