

## AHI membership and beyond!

### Jim Mitchell and Dr. Philip Ryland

One of the great strengths of AHI as a network is its diverse membership, drawing from many different disciplines and the entire width of cultural and natural heritage. Its membership is made up of people at all stages of their professional interest and experience in the field of interpretation, from those just starting out through to lifelong interpreters with many decades of experience.

AHI is committed to supporting and assisting your professional development in interpretation wherever you are in your career. There are many different ways you can engage with AHI and its membership including through its events and conferences and the myriad of informal connections you make at these events. There are also some set milestones that you can reach in your career related to membership categories, starting with Associate and Student Membership, through Full membership, and for some, onto becoming a Fellow of AHI.

AHI has recently reviewed and updated its Full Membership process, making it simpler, more transparent and more accessible, as befitting our diverse range of applicants. The process is based on demonstrating core competencies in three areas of interpretation:

- **Planning:** the process to help guide delivery and evaluation of interpretation.
- **Delivery:** employing suitable media to deliver the planned interpretation.
- **Evaluation:** formal or informal techniques used to inform and improve interpretation development and delivery.

These are explained more fully on AHI's website. The new process more easily allows those who are practitioners in a particular field to become AHI Full members, for example a guided walk leader, designer or costumed interpreter can demonstrate the competencies with reference to their particular discipline.

The application process is simple- to apply you fill in an application form detailing your experience and describing how you have demonstrated these competencies in your career to date. This form is reviewed by a membership panel drawn from volunteer members. If the information supplied in the application form demonstrates the applicant's competency then full membership is awarded. If not, the panel will come back to the applicant with feedback and recommendations for how this can be achieved and what further evidence they might wish to see. This might include attending events or training and we are now matching many of these to the competencies to help those interested in membership identify which would be most suitable for them.

The current panel consists of Dr. Philip Ryland, Lisa Keys and Jim Mitchell with an additional position being recruited this autumn. We want to encourage associate members to become full members and we are very happy to talk through the process and answer any queries by phone, email or in person at our conference. Please do contact us through the office if you have any questions, call us or email [admin@ahi.org.uk](mailto:admin@ahi.org.uk)

Full members can use the AHI logo and letters MAHI after their names. Full membership is an important step in the career of an interpreter and one to be celebrated, but there is more to do after that! Our ongoing professional development never stops and AHI is committed to supporting interpreters throughout their careers. Keep in touch with AHI through our e-bulletins, social media and website to see upcoming courses that will aid your professional

development. Likewise, AHI is a great platform to share your experience, through presenting at our conference to writing an article for the journal.

For those for who have practised interpretation for many years and made a significant contribution to the field, there is a further category of membership that can be applied for – Fellow of AHI. Fellows have often had a very active role in the development of interpretation, a significant contribution to good practice or a substantial publications record. We are now starting to review the process of becoming a Fellow of AHI in the light of the Full Membership review, and are keen to encourage more of our experienced members to consider applying. Please get in touch if this is of interest to you.