

5 Ways to Boost Your RIM IQ

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Educating yourself either formally or informally is one of the best ways to become a better information professional, and yet it's also one of the least pursued. If you're plagued by stalled opportunities, limited or irrelevant professional development, and other records and information management (RIM) education issues, here are 5 ways that the ARMA International Education Foundation (AIEF) can boost your RIM IQ.

1. Suggest a Third-Party Research Topic

If you have a practical RIM problem that needs a solution or an idea that needs clarification, help is available to you. Any practitioner, educator, student, or vendor can suggest RIM-related research topics to the AIEF. Those topics that meet the Foundation's mandate may be chosen as a research project. The AIEF will coordinate with a third-party researcher to get your answers and fund the research, in whole or in part. After the research report is completed, it will be available to you and other interested parties on the Foundation's Website.

2. Submit Your Own Research Proposal

On the other hand, if you would like to pursue your own research project and need funding, the Foundation is committed to fostering and facilitating focused research. The proposed research and development initiatives should encompass new strategies, products, and tools that address issues in information management, particularly those that deal with the implications of information technology. Just fill out a research proposal form available through the Foundation Website and submit it for review. After your research is completed, it will be disseminated to your RIM colleagues and the public through the Foundation's website.

3. Apply for a Graduate Level Scholarship

Another great way to stay informed and boost your RIM IQ is to enroll in a graduate level Masters or PhD program. If you participate in an accredited graduate level program and meet other requirements, you can apply for one of the nine scholarships available from the AIEF. Some examples of the types of programs that qualify include: Records Management; Archival Administration; Information Science; IT Management; Knowledge Management; Data Resources Management and Library Science. Further details and an application are available on the Foundation's Website.

4. Apply for a Tuition Reimbursement Grant

As a current RIM professional and a student taking courses in an undergraduate program, you can apply for a tuition reimbursement grant. Each course must in some way relate to a RIM career and preference is given to those taking courses in Legal, Finance/Business, IT and HR. If you are chosen to receive one of the grants, reimbursement will be for the cost of tuition up to \$1,000 per application. Applicants may receive only one award every 12 months, up to a total of \$3,000. Further details and an application are available on the Foundation's Website.

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5. Read Sponsored Research Projects

You can browse and then download a free copy of any research paper by clicking on the research project title on the Foundation's "Research Reports" page. Research projects are categorized into the following broad areas: regulatory environment; information governance and RIM references; litigation readiness; and e-mail, Web 2.0 and future trends in RIM. Since research projects have been suggested or proposed by other RIM professionals like yourself, you will find them to be timely, useful, and most importantly practical.

When you contribute to the AIEF by providing a research idea or conducting research yourself, you give back to your profession. After following through with one or more of these opportunities from the AIEF, you'll be sure to boost your RIM IQ.