



Australian Library and
Information Association

FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION

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Australian Library and Information Association

Future of the Library and Information Science Profession

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www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession

ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
& information sciences profession.*



Australian Library and
Information Association

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SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Australia is well served by libraries in all sectors. Like other nations across the world we are, however, seeing a decline in investment in school libraries and special libraries for industry and other organisations. The major reason given for this is economic, from funders who view libraries as less relevant in a world with Google.

If we want to reverse this trend, then we need to consider what is happening now, what will happen in the future, and shape our services accordingly. Above all, we need to ensure we are seen as vital, not only to the knowledge base of our communities but also to the economic, social and environmental development of our country.

Most futurists will tell us that it is important to look at the trends, and to develop various scenarios to assist in determining our future directions. However, spotting trends may be more difficult than we first think. The ebook was first introduced in the late '90s, then disappeared, only to make a significant impact on readers, authors, libraries and publishers some 20 years later, illustrating that trends may take some time before they become embedded in our everyday lives.

Let's look at some trendspotter predictions.

- Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) expects interactive games, particularly mobile phone applications, to be one of the highest revenue growth areas, driven by mobile internet access.¹ Some of our libraries are using 'serious games' to engage with new generation library users.
- Telefonica in its video *How will the world be in 2020*² states that the 'process of globalisation' will continue, and we should see traditional boundaries blurring. Of course we can see this trend developing through online sites and the use of social media. Libraries no longer need to work in isolation either geographically or by sector.

1 *Newspapers' future may lie in data* Sydney Morning Herald [Online] 1 July 2013 [Cited 27 August 2013] www.smh.com.au/business/newspapers-future-may-lie-in-data-20130630-2p5b1.html#ixzz2dJSacBTX

2 *How will the world be in 2020* Telefonica 15 May 2011

- Telefonica sees that the scarcity of resources (power, water, food) will determine our economic models.³ Australia has had a boom from natural resources, but as this slows, governments, universities, organisations are cutting their spending and we are all competing for meager dollars.

In the past ten years we have seen dramatic changes in technology: TVs connected to the internet, cloud technologies, online classrooms, mobile devices with fast computing power. We need to think how we will utilise these technologies and integrate them into our service delivery models. For example, all public libraries have websites but only a small number offer online membership without applicants having to come to the library to confirm their details.

Vijay Govindarajan, a professor at Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business and co-author of *The Other Side of Innovation*, talks about how successful companies can easily lose their edge and has categorised three traps that companies can fall into:

1. The physical trap, in which big investments in old systems or equipment prevent the pursuit of fresher, more relevant investments.
2. The psychological trap, in which company leaders fixate on what made them successful and fail to notice when something new is displacing it.
3. The strategic trap, when a company focuses purely on the marketplace of today and fails to anticipate the future.⁴

³ *How will the world be in 2020* Telefonica 15 May 2011

⁴ *10 great companies that lost their edge* US news [Online] 19 August 2012 [Cited 27 August 2013]
money.usnews.com/money/blogs/flowchart/2010/08/19/10-great-companies-that-lost-their-edge

Libraries measure people walking in through our doors, how much they borrow, and how often they visit the website and attend events. We build collections, offer some services, maybe even serve coffee — in short we rely on a model where people come to us. So are we too tied to the physical library building?

David Lankes in his book *The Atlas of New Librarianship* states that ‘future libraries will be valued more for services than for book collections’.⁵ He asserts that our services will move from our traditional role of book storage and lending into a dynamic community space. We need to embrace both our physical environment and our virtual environment, allowing our customers to interact with us wherever they are located via any means they choose. Anders Sorman-Nilsson expresses this as *Digilogue*; how to win the digital minds and analogue hearts of tomorrow’s customers.⁶

In our buildings, virtual or physical, we house rows and rows of containers holding content, the majority of our digital content today is really just a conversion of the print into a digital format. It still looks like a book or article. As learning and knowledge creation become more collaborative and dynamic, we need to make sure that the book is not our psychological trap. We need to consider how we tap into the content and repurpose it or bring it alive.

Augmented reality is an excellent example of how we can combine content with technology to provide a greater experience. We can feed local history information (maybe even genealogical information) into travel guides, so when a person points their smart device at a building, not only will it tell them what it is, but also what it was and who lived there, providing the tourist with an experience of the past, present and the future.

5 Lankes, R David *The atlas of new librarianship*

6 Sormann-Nilsson, Anders *Digilogue: how to win the digital minds and analogue hearts of tomorrows customers*. Richmond, Victoria, Australia : Wiley, 2013. 9781118647936 (hardback).

Avoiding the strategic trap, where we focus on what's happening today, rather than looking ahead to tomorrow, is what prompted the ALIA Board to initiate the Future of the LIS Profession project in 2012.

Over the last 18 months, we have consulted with hundreds of people, both within the library and information field and outside it, and this series of reports is the end result. ALIA has synthesised and analysed all the feedback we received, and from this distilled a number of themes, some generic, others specific to the different sectors.

One overriding theme emerged, and that is that, to move forward successfully, we will need to work collaboratively with technology companies, publishers, governments and each other. These collaborations, at a national and international level, will enable us to data and text mine, look at 'mashing' content, think about creating outstanding experiences, and be even more proactive with the rich content contained in our libraries.

Julie Rae
President, Australian Library and Information Association

THE PROJECT

Exploring the future of the library and information science (LIS) profession has been a highly collaborative project. It was initiated by the ALIA Board in 2012 and has involved consultation with a broad range of stakeholders through a year-long process.

This consultation was based on an initial Discussion Paper published by ALIA in May 2013, and was supported by the ALIA Futures wiki. The wiki is now closed, but papers, submissions and postings can be found on the ALIA website.

The findings from the project have been produced as seven documents, including one each for school libraries, public libraries, tertiary education libraries, special library and information services, collecting institutions (our National, State and Territory Libraries), and one for the library and information professionals who drive the sector. These documents are available as pdf downloads from the ALIA website.

For more information about this project, contact advocacy@alia.org.au.

www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession

How will libraries remain relevant for users?

What changes will institutions and individuals in the sector experience?

Will 'library and information professional' continue to be a necessary and desirable occupation?

INTRODUCTION

In this project, we set out to investigate the big questions. Heading towards 2025:

- How will libraries remain relevant for users?
- What changes will institutions and individuals in the sector experience?
- Will 'library and information professional' continue to be a necessary and desirable occupation?

We were looking for bold thinking and we received challenging, insightful, inspiring responses to our request for feedback, through submissions from individuals and groups; participants at our Future of the LIS Profession discussions around Australia; senior library leaders, who gathered at our Summit; and the heads of other associations in the sector, who attended our sector roundtable. All these events were held between May and October 2013.

Conversations initially focused on the current issues facing library and information professionals, before projecting forward into how we saw the landscape developing by 2025. As a result, we have been able to identify indicators, which will enable us to map our journey, and actions that will support positive outcomes.

We concluded that the future is not fixed and we are in a position to write it ourselves rather than having it written for us. We need to be the architects of our own destiny, anticipating change and adapting our library and information services to be part of the flow.

A HEALTHY EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

There was plenty of discussion, debate and diversity arising within the ALIA membership, in the broader library and information sector, and with external stakeholders. The many issues raised about the current environment can be summarised in a SWOT analysis:

Strengths

Users need, want, love libraries, and they value the expertise and support of the staff.

'Library' as a term has universal awareness and the strength of the brand has developed over centuries.

Libraries are not simply about the materials and the technology, they help satisfy the need for people to connect.

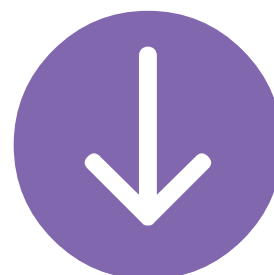
Libraries ensure access to books, resources and technology for everyone, promoting equality of opportunity.



Weaknesses

Management and funding decisions are often made by those who are not library users.

'Library' as a term can be seen as old fashioned and outdated, while 'information service' is not well understood.



Opportunities

We are living in an increasingly information rich, knowledge-based society.

New and disruptive technologies will help improve access to information.

Ebooks and eresources provide an exciting new format.

Growth in education through greater availability of online courses can only increase the demand for library services.

Libraries have an expanded role in content creation and can help disseminate new work.

In university and special libraries, there is an increased role for information professionals in the research field.

Information professionals are well positioned to counteract executives' information overload.



Threats

Free, cheap, ubiquitous online content competes with free library content.

Policy- and decision-makers are taking a DIY approach to sourcing information, with not enough concern for rigour, accuracy and completeness.

Shrinking budgets and higher costs make it hard to satisfy growing demand.



A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

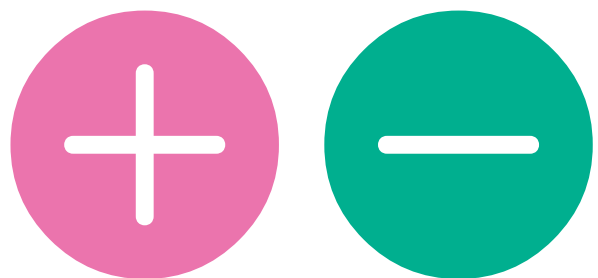
During the consultation period, there was no question that we would still be here in the future, and this optimism was endorsed by an exercise in matching what our sector provides against the type of society we live in.

Library and information services and professionals thrive best in an environment where:

- People respect and strive for truth, knowledge, justice.
- Governments are committed to freedom of access to information and freedom of expression.
- Citizens have enquiring minds.
- Literacy is a necessary skill.
- Reading for pleasure is a popular activity.
- History and heritage are valued.
- Information is abundant.
- There is evidence-based practice.
- People actively seek to reduce inequality.
- There is a sharing society.
- There is pride in civic and institutional infrastructure.
- Investment in knowledge is seen as essential for successful outcomes.

They do not thrive well when:

- Governments are oppressive.
- New ideas are seen as dangerous or irrelevant.
- The past is easily discarded.
- People don't value books and reading.
- There is a 'near enough is good enough' approach.
- Poverty and disadvantage go unchallenged.
- Enterprise and innovation are moribund.



WORLD VIEW

Australian libraries don't exist in a vacuum; they are part of worldwide networks of similar institutions. The future of Australian library and information science is wrapped up in the future success of libraries on a global scale and ALIA connects through the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

IFLA is carrying out its own extensive investigation into the future for the sector and, in August 2013, published the *IFLA Trend Report*. The *IFLA Trend Report* points to five high level trends that will change the information environment:

1 New technologies will both expand and limit who has access to information

An ever-expanding digital universe will bring a higher value to information literacy skills such as basic reading and competence with digital tools. People who lack these skills will face barriers to inclusion in a growing range of areas. The nature of new online business models will heavily influence who can successfully own, profit from, share or access information in the future.

2 Online education will democratise and disrupt global learning

The rapid global expansion in online education resources will make learning opportunities more abundant, cheaper and more accessible. There will be increased value on lifelong learning and more recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

3 The boundaries of privacy and data protection will be redefined

Expanding data sets held by governments and companies will support the advanced profiling of individuals, while sophisticated methods of monitoring and filtering communications data will make tracking those individuals cheaper and easier. Serious consequences for individual privacy and trust in the online world could be experienced.

4 Hyper-connected societies will listen to and empower new voices and groups

More opportunities for collective action are realised in hyper-connected societies — enabling the rise of new voices and promoting the growth of single-issue movements at the expense of traditional political parties. Open government initiatives and access to public sector data will lead to more transparency and citizen-focused public services.

5 The global information economy will be transformed by new technologies

Proliferation of hyper-connected mobile devices, networked sensors in appliances and infrastructure, 3D printing and language-translation technologies will transform the global information economy. Existing business models across many industries will experience creative disruption spurred by innovative devices that help people remain economically active later in life from any location.

We used these trends to help frame the latter stages of our consultation process.



ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION SUMMIT

More than 50 library leaders from across Australia and New Zealand came together at the State Library of NSW on 14 October 2013 for ALIA's Future of the LIS Profession Summit. The event started with futurist Mark Pesce's keynote 'our hyper connected future.' He said:

'Let me begin this morning with the good news: you've won. The culture of shared knowledge which is the essence of the message and purpose of the library has now become an established feature of global culture. The light of knowledge shines more brightly than ever before, from two billion smartphone screens.'

Mark framed his discussion by showing how far the industry, and access to information, has come and asking what this relatively new world of easy access to information means to the future of the sector.

'We got the world of our dreams, a world of nearly infinite knowledge nearly universally available. The price of this victory is an existential crisis of the first order: In the new culture of shared knowledge, what is a library?'

He suggested the following roles as those that libraries will provide:

- In a culture of shared knowledge, the library turns into a generator of value.
- Libraries and librarians have a role to play acting as filters.
- Librarians will become the solvers of problems automated systems like Google cannot solve.

THEMES

From the ALIA Future of the LIS Profession consultation, we have extracted the ten generic themes which follow, along with themes that we have divided by sector – school libraries, public libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, collecting institutions, and library and information professionals.



THEME 01

BUILDING THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT BRAND

Many library users and professionals say that 'library' is the word that unites and defines the sector, and that it sends out positive messages. Others, especially those working in business, industry, government, health and research, say that 'library' is outdated and they prefer to talk about their information service. 'Library' provides an easily understood shorthand, but how does it relate, for example, to a virtual service that is primarily concerned with online access to electronic databases?

As an Association, we use 'library and information service' and 'library and information professionals' as the all-encompassing terms, recognising both perspectives. Qualified professionals in the sector can start out studying for the same degree or Masters, but their work experience and professional development may take them along parallel trajectories. The role of someone working in a public library will be very different from that of someone providing a specialist information service to health practitioners, lawyers, engineers or government officials.

Information is so closely tied to information technology, that information management is often linked with it, yet the two are very different. For the future we need to work at making IM as strong as IT as a descriptor, so that both library and information management become strong brands in the public eye.

THEME 02

THE 'WHY' IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE 'HOW'

Most aspects of a library can be found elsewhere. Bookshops stock books; parks provide community spaces; researchers can find data on the web; people can access the internet on their smartphones; students can study in classrooms; informal learning can take place in neighbourhood houses. The unique features of libraries are not based on physical items and activities, they are in the expertise of the staff, the fact that most services are free for users, and the ethos of universal freedom of access to information and resources. These less tangible features make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

The 'why' of libraries is more important than the 'how'. Libraries exist to help preserve the human record and promote equality of opportunity by connecting people with information and ideas. These outcomes can be achieved in many different ways — through book borrowing, access to electronic databases, programs and activities — but libraries' special position now and in the future will be based on their impartial, apolitical contribution to a fair and just society.

An extension of this is copyright. Australian libraries support copyright reform that includes a 'fair use' provision, providing protection for creators, while enabling the use of their work by students and others, for social good rather than commercial gain. At the same time, we support the extension of the Public Lending Right and Education Lending Right to a Digital Lending Right for authors of ebooks.

To be a voice for fairness. Subvert the norm. Highlight privacy and personal identity.

– LIANZA WORKSHOP NOTES

We connect with either end of the age spectrum, as well as the socially disadvantaged through to high end researchers. Others will dip in and out. Staff are non-judgmental – there's no need to explain yourself and there's no commercial agenda.

– ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION SUMMIT NOTES

THEME 03

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Helping to overcome the gap between advantage and disadvantage is fundamental to the library ethos. This encompasses providing resources and guidance for students, supporting participation in tertiary education, ensuring litigants have access to the information they need to build their cases, patients to the health information they need to participate in treatment programs, and so on.

Looking into the future, we see no quick end to inequality. According to the latest research, in Australia approximately one in five five-year-olds has serious literacy issues⁷, nearly half the adult population is unable to read and write fluently⁸, and 17% of households don't have internet access⁹.

Gesture-controlled and voice-enabled devices facilitate communication, but there will continue to be a need for basic literacy.

If people are to remain engaged in the broader community, they will need the skills to handle new technologies — for seniors and people who are unemployed, this means public access devices and low-cost, easy entry training opportunities.

Fast internet connection may eventually be available in schools, homes and workplaces across Australia, but until that time, there will be a need for public facilities.

7 [www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/aedi/Report_NationalReport_2012_1304\[1\]\(1\).pdf](http://www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/aedi/Report_NationalReport_2012_13041.pdf)

8 www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4228.0Main+Features202011-12

9 www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/8146.0Chapter12012-13

THEME 04

FUNDERS UNDERSTANDING THE TRUE VALUE OF LIBRARIES

There is a disparity between funders, who think of libraries in terms of line items on their budgets, and library users, who see libraries as an essential community, workplace, research or education asset. Public library members will rise up at the prospect of a branch closure; medical staff will protest at cuts to health libraries, and academics will petition against service reductions in research libraries, yet administrators persist in thinking that such cost-reduction moves can be initiated.

Unless funding bodies and management teams have an inherent understanding of, and belief in, the value of libraries, there will continue to be a slow drain on investment. Cost-shifting will occur between different levels of government, and we will suffer from the fact that we cross multiple portfolios at a federal level — arts, education, health — with no single department required to take responsibility for Australian libraries.

Shrinking budgets and rising costs.

— ALIA NATIONAL ADVISORY CONGRESS NOTES, SYDNEY



people that walk with their heads downward! The Antipathies, I think--' (she was rather glad there WAS no one listening, this time, as it didn't sound at all the right word) '--but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand or Australia?' (and she tried to curtsy as she spoke--fancy CURTSEYING as you're falling through the air! Do you think you could manage it?) 'And what an ignorant little girl she'll think me for asking! No, it'll never do to ask: perhaps I shall see it written up somewhere.'

Down, down, down. There was nothing else to do, so Alice soon began talking again. 'Dinah'll miss me very much to-night, I should think' (Dinah was the cat.) 'I hope they'll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Dinah my dear! I wish you were down here with me! There are no mice in the air, I'm afraid, but you might catch a bat, and

THEME 05

THE LIBRARY EXPERIENCE

For more than 150 years, libraries have existed to satisfy the information needs of Australians. From the early university and state libraries and Mechanics Institutes, through to the end of the 20th century, libraries' principal goal has been to bring books and information within the reach of all citizens.

Libraries' values and mission remain highly relevant to today's society, but technology has brought new ways of realising these objectives, and libraries find themselves facing greater competition. We have been the market leader in the free/shared space, we are now losing market share to online providers. This means that library and information professionals need to see what they do in the context of competing providers.

Whereas information used to be in short supply, it is now readily available through the internet. That's not to say that the information is complete — much remains in print format awaiting digitisation — nor to say that it is, or will remain, free. Books, which used to be expensive to produce, are now much more affordable, and many ebooks are free, especially those that are out of copyright.

Libraries' exclusivity over books and information in the public domain has given way to a proliferation of sources, but more people than ever before are using public libraries. In the information business, special libraries maintain their market share because users buy into their brand values and want the added value service delivered by library and information professionals. In all cases, people are choosing to engage in the library experience, and it is the library experience that provides us with our competitive advantage.

In the future, we will need to put even more focus on the library experience. Rather than allowing it to grow organically, we will need to direct its development, using planning tools to look at the journey from the users' perspective — great customer service, anticipating your needs and tailoring services to meet them; what you want, when you want it, 24/7; easy, convenient, user-centric.

THEME 06

ANALOGUE AND DIGITAL

ALIA published a paper for discussion in 2013 entitled *50:50 by 2020*. Our theory was that despite the hype around ebooks, public libraries would continue to offer both print and digital formats for several decades at least. Electronic devices, new technologies and formats will come on stream, but it looks as though they will co-exist with the analogue originals for some time.

We can see this in retailing. Apple has opened stores where people can go and play with the physical devices; online clothing sales are growing, but people still like to try things on before they buy, and bricks and mortar retailers are focusing on building the shopping experience, with valet parking, lively cafes, concierge services and special family activities to encourage people to visit shopping malls.

Members of public, school and academic libraries enjoy the serendipity of discovering something new when browsing the library shelves.

Most libraries will need to have a foot in both camps — analogue and digital — and they will need to look as good online as they do in the real world. With a few exceptions, libraries' current presence online, through websites and social media, tends to be purely functional.

Staff must understand how to attract and engage successfully with users online — a passive presence will not be enough — and libraries will need to have a greater degree of control over their online look. Most are currently competing with other departments for the attention of their organisation's IT department and their web presence is restricted by organisational constraints.





THEME 07

MORE SPACE, NOT LESS

A greater emphasis on digital materials will not equate to a smaller footprint for the library. Yes, there will be fewer shelves, but the changing needs of library users will require more space, not less. The new Adelaide City Library opened in February 2014, with a third of the space for books, two-thirds for people. University libraries are putting physical items into off-site storage, in order to open up more study space. Schools are similarly investing in facilities for individual and group work, as part of the library. State Libraries are creating innovation labs, such as Experimedia at the State Library of Victoria and The Edge at the State Library of Queensland, and all major city libraries have exhibition areas.

And how will people use the space? In the past, staff ensured that these were quiet places; then libraries opened up as social spaces, with areas to chat. In the future, library users themselves will dictate behaviours, including designating specific areas for quiet study and reflection. Going into a library is one of the few opportunities people have to give themselves permission to switch off from their hyper-connected lives. It is a paradox that, while libraries will promote people's connection with information, ideas and each other, they will also provide an opportunity for users to disconnect from the stress of being perpetually contactable.

Another paradox: in special libraries especially, clients will seek fast track answers — they will want to be rescued from information overload — but in other types of libraries, people will welcome the opportunity to browse. Both high speed connection and leisurely exploration will be valued parts of the library experience.

THEME 08

STRETCHING COLLECTION BUDGETS EVEN FURTHER

There will be more and more content from commercial publishers. Prices will come down, but library budgets will still be squeezed, as items will be needed in a variety of formats; some owned, some licensed; some ebooks with one-book-one-user restrictions, others with a relaxed policy for use by defined groups (a school, for example).

Much that is on the internet will remain free, but paywalls are going up around quality content. Library and information professionals will need to be smart purchasers. We can expect to see more consortia arrangements at local, state and territory, and national level, making slim margins even slimmer for library vendors.

There's the growth in paywalls. Newspapers were freely available online for a nanosecond in time.

– ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION SUMMIT NOTES

THEME 09

COMMUNITY CREATED CONTENT

There will be stronger community- and self-publishing sectors, with producers looking for channels to market, some free, some paid for. Libraries will provide an exciting route for content creators direct to readers, peers, students and experts in the field, and quality content from alternative sources will help libraries acquire more content with their limited budgets.

The opportunities for free content through open access to government-funded research and scholarly works, will be balanced by paid-for content that rewards the efforts of creators and enables them to earn a living from producing original works.

We may see more libraries moving into publishing, whether that's along the lines of the University Press model, print-on-demand or providing a digital self-publishing platform. This will also require libraries to find new ways of collecting, curating and displaying content to make community content easily discoverable.

THEME 10

UNIMAGINABLE TECHNOLOGIES

No-one can predict with absolute certainty where technology will take us next, but we can be sure there is more to come, and that it will take us to places that are currently unimaginable.

Advances in size, speed, weight, usability, functionality, intelligence, personalisation, connection and affordability – all these characteristics are on the horizon and they will make today's tablets and smartphones look clunky. Whether we wear them, put them in our pockets or roll them up and carry them around with us, connected devices will be ubiquitous.

Technology will clearly have a massive impact on the library and information sector. Applying Deloitte's Digital Disruption mapping tool, we are looking at a 'short fuse, big bang' situation. If libraries were simply about access to information, we might be questioning our relevance, but we are about freedom of access, equality of opportunity, preservation of the human record, informal and formal learning, community spaces, and so much more. Technology will affect how we do things, not why we do them.

Mobile phones used to be banned in libraries.
Now they are the libraries.

– DAVID NICHOLAS, FOUNDER DIRECTOR OF CIBER RESEARCH UK



THEME 10 (CONT.)

UNIMAGINABLE TECHNOLOGIES

There will be challenges:

- The ethos of library and information professionals endorses privacy and protecting one's personal identity online. However, if we are to provide an efficient library service and a personalised service to library users, with their consent we will need to make use of information about their reading, borrowing and research habits.
- We need to find ways to collect and analyse the big data generated around library and information services. By aggregating data, we will be able to provide a stronger picture of libraries' value, impact and influence.
- We see the short term issues about ebooks, particularly with bestselling fiction titles, disappearing within a few years, as the book industry finds an economic model that works with digital, and there is greater competition amongst lending platforms.
- Funding shortages will require innovative approaches. 'Free' is an essential component of the library brand, but we have to be open-minded to the potential for more funding from sources other than government, such as philanthropic and charitable organisations, for added value services. There may even be the potential to crowd-source funding for some experimental aspects — maker spaces, environmental initiatives and so on.

ACTIONS ARISING

ALIA and colleagues in the library and information sector can't afford to relax. Challenges will be coming at us from all directions and we will need to define and redefine our value proposition as we move within the rapidly changing information environment.

ALIA

- We will ensure that we recognise and promote the 'I' in ALIA.
- We will continue to lobby the Australian Government for copyright reform and the introduction of a Digital Lending Right.
- We will actively promote the value of library and information services to funding bodies and develop evidence and materials to help members advocate within their own organisations.
- We will continue to research and report on trends to assist our members to plan for the future.
- We will look at developing a user experience toolkit to help managers assess and refine their offering.
- Our ALIA PD and Training will reflect the needs identified in this report, including enhanced skills in areas such as purchasing, community publishing and managing big data.
- In partnership with other associations, we will investigate new relationships between libraries, content creators and publishers.



Advocacy

- The sector needs to unite behind the term information management to help increase awareness of this as an aligned but distinct discipline.
- We must uphold and promote the traditional values of fairness and equality associated with libraries.
- We need to close the gap in understanding between users, who clearly see libraries' value proposition, and funders, who focus on budget line items.



Professionals and their organisations

- Libraries and information services will need to focus on the user experience, not only in terms of content, but also how the service looks and feels in the real world and online.
- User data, gathered with consent, will play an important part in tailoring the library experience to individuals.
- Websites will need greater attention to turn them from purely functional devices to an easy, engaging and useful part of the library experience.
- Opportunities to collect, curate and disseminate community created content will be open for investigation.





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FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION: **COLLECTING INSTITUTIONS**

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Future of the Library and Information Science Profession: Collecting Institutions

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, April 2014

www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession

ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
& information sciences profession.*



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ABOUT COLLECTING INSTITUTIONS

The nation's nine collecting institutions are the National Library of Australia, the State Libraries of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia, the ACT Heritage Library and the Northern Territory Library. The primary role of these libraries is to collect, preserve and provide access to the documentary history of Australia, including books, manuscripts, documents, images, maps and other materials, in print, digital and other formats. The collective body representing these institutions is the National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA).

The state and territory libraries play a leadership role in supporting public libraries within their jurisdiction, and there is a close bond with archives, museums, galleries, university and special libraries, which also hold unique collections.

Current services for users include:

- Access to historic and contemporary collections of books, newspapers, pictures, maps, papers and digital resources.
- Access to genealogy records for family history researchers.
- Purpose designed spaces for group interaction and quiet study.
- Assistance from specialist librarians.
- Exhibitions, talks, events and activities.

The role of library and information professionals:

- Collect, preserve and make accessible our documentary heritage.
- Curate collections, providing context and identifying items of special significance.
- Implement legal deposit requirements to ensure that copies of all published items are available for posterity.
- Ensure all materials and the ways they are used are copyright compliant.

These are just some of the specialist skills library and information professionals bring to their roles:

- In-depth knowledge of their subjects and their collections.
- High level research, information and digital literacy and learning support.
- Original cataloguing and metadata application.
- Digital preservation.

Statistics

The latest available figures from NSLA show that during the 2011–2012 financial year:

- 12 million people visited our library buildings.
- 217 million pages were viewed on our websites.
- 1,703 terrabytes of digital collections were stored.
- \$37 million was the total spend on collections.
- \$5.2 billion was the asset value of our collections.
- \$1.02 billion was the asset value of our buildings/sites.

These institutions together employ approximately 1,700 staff, including librarians, library technicians, archivists, curators and professionals from other disciplines.





THEMES

THEME 01

NATIONAL TREASURES DIRECT TO YOUR DEVICE

The National, State and Territory Libraries are home to manuscripts, maps, diaries, photographs and other materials of Australian significance. Local history collections can be found in public libraries, while government departments, companies, schools, universities and other organisations have their own unique collections. The vast majority of these materials are print-based, and significant investments will be required for digitisation, to make these rich resources widely available through the internet.

The prime example is Trove, a world-leading initiative from the National Library of Australia, which features more than 391 million Australian and online resources, including books, images, historic newspapers, maps, music, archives and more.

Libraries are critical agents in broadening the range, increasing the depth, and improving the quality of the information on the web. The question is who will pay for the digitisation process that will enable this to happen — government or philanthropic; arts, culture or education?

In the past, people have deposited correspondence from ‘men of letters’, now and in the future our collecting institutions will need the capacity and capability to collect, store and make discoverable digital records. Our collecting institutions will play a leadership role in heritage collections at local, state/territory and national level.

THEME 02

LINKED DATA ENRICHES THE EXPERIENCE

Libraries are part of the GLARM sector — galleries, libraries, archives, records and museums. Historically, these institutions have operated at arms length, but digital technology will bring new opportunities to interweave collections, providing visitors, students and researchers with a richer, deeper experience. For example, several institutions will be able to bring together items in the online environment — artifacts, documents and illustrations — that together give a much more comprehensive picture of a subject's life and times.

For the user, this will be a seamless experience, made possible by linked data generated by the institutions. This will mean even greater levels of collaboration between our major cultural institutions, and it will need a significant investment in staff time and technology to enable this to happen.





THEME 03 THE NEED FOR NEW LEGISLATION

Alongside colleagues working in archives and information management, library and information professionals in these institutions are concerned with collecting, preserving and making available our documentary heritage, capturing human memories, contributing to Australia's nation-building.

Legal deposit, enshrined in the *Copyright Act 1968*, has made it possible at a national level to capture printed outputs, requiring publishers by law to provide the collecting institution with a copy of every item produced. This has not carried over to digital formats in all states and territories, and there is also an urgent need for new legislation to be passed by the federal government.

Reform will be needed to address anomalies in the current copyright legislation, which hinder preservation in an environment where multiple copies are needed to move digital items from server to server, and to keep pace with changes in formats.

THEME 04 MANAGING VOLUME

The State Library of NSW, with one of the nation's largest collections, needs approximately two kilometres of additional storage every year for new physical items. Pandora, the Australian web archive managed by the National Library, contains more than ten terrabytes of information and is growing at a rate of some three terrabytes per annum.

Managing volume in both the physical and digital spaces will be a significant challenge for collecting institutions in the future. A partial solution lies in even greater collaboration to reduce duplication, but there will also need to be investment in increased storage capacity to keep pace with the exponential growth in content creation.

THEME 05 CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

In the past, collecting institutions have provided access to materials created by others. In the future, it is likely these libraries will engage in partnerships with individuals and groups to co-create content that will then also become part of the collection. This could take the form of community publishing, or using items from the collection to develop new works.

This cultural participation will require a different mindset for library users, librarians and curators and it opens up exciting opportunities to bring collections to life and give them new meaning for future generations.



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ACTIONS ARISING

Collecting institutions are the bedrock of the library and information sector and their continued role in society is guaranteed. However, there are significant challenges facing these libraries in dealing with the massive volume of content that is generated every year in print and digital formats.

ALIA

- ALIA will work with LIS educators to ensure library and information professionals graduate with the skills required to support the needs of collecting institutions, particularly in the area of digital preservation.
- We will also provide professional development and training opportunities for staff, to secure ongoing learning.



Advocacy

- Copyright reform is essential to support legal deposit in the digital environment and to reduce an unnecessary administrative burden on collecting institutions.



Professionals and their organisations

- The collecting institutions will continue to bid for funding to digitise materials and increase access to items that are in the public domain.
- The GLARM sector will converge in the online space, with even greater levels of cooperation between cultural institutions at local, state, territory and national levels.





Australian Library and
Information Association

FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION: **LIBRARY AND INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS**

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Future of the Library and Information Science Profession: Library and Information Professionals

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, April 2014

www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession

ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
& information sciences profession.*



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ABOUT THE PROFESSION

Every year, some 800 people graduate from an Australian university or TAFE, with a professional qualification in library and information science. Often it is a second career choice, and this contributes to the diversity of age and experience within the sector. Graduates with a degree or Masters qualification are eligible to become an ALIA Associate member, and those with a VET certificate or diploma, an ALIA Library Technician member.

The library and information sector is characterised by a diverse workforce that is successful in:

- Promoting and defending the core values of the library and information profession.
- Understanding and responding to cultural, social, information and learning needs of clients/stakeholders and customers.
- Managing the storage, organisation, access, retrieval, dissemination and preservation of information and enabling free access and use of information.
- Developing, delivering and evaluating information facilities, services, sources and products in response to client needs.
- Envisioning and planning future directions for the library and information sector.
- Advancing library and information science in its adaptability, flexibility and autonomous application to information services.
- Engaging with clients, community and other industries.

Typical tasks of a professional librarian, teacher librarian or information manager may include:

- Managing and resourcing a branch library, a section of a large library, a small special library, or a research program.
- Supervising and leading staff.
- Designing, directing, formulating policy and applying services to meet the information needs of clients.
- Providing expert advice or consultancy services on strategic information management matters.
- Developing strategic plans, preparing budget submissions and briefings for general management.
- Managing major projects, including information technology systems and applications in a resource environment.
- Providing leadership, managerial and commercial skills and judgment.
- Marketing and promoting a library or information management service.
- Providing expert advice or consultancy services.



Library and information educators base their courses around ALIA's core knowledge, skills and attributes

The body of knowledge required to become a library and information professional¹ comes under these seven headings:

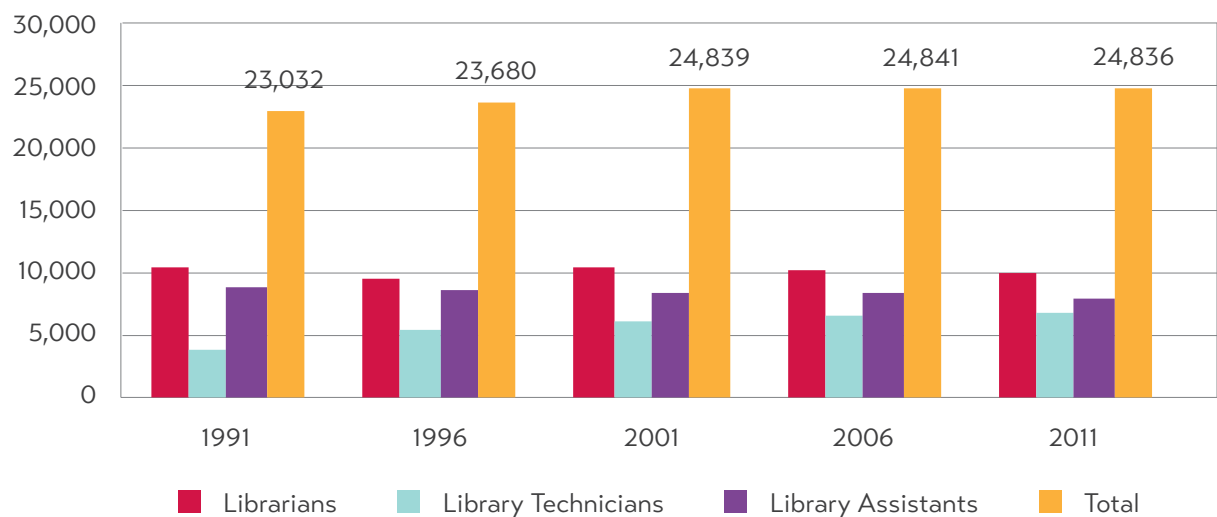
1. Knowledge of the broad context of the information environment.
2. Information seeking.
3. Information architecture.
4. Information organisation and access.
5. Information services, sources and products.
6. Information management.
7. Generation of knowledge.

¹ www.alia.org.au/about-alia/policies-standards-and-guidelines/library-and-information-sector-core-knowledge-skills-and-attributes

Statistics

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, employment in the library sector has been fairly static over the last ten years and remains at approximately 25,000 librarians, library technicians and library assistants. This does not take into account information professionals working outside libraries, nor does it factor in the people from other disciplines who help run our libraries. For example, less than half the employees at the National Library of Australia have library qualifications. As an organisation, it needs HR, finance, security and other staff.

Employment in the library sector (ABS)



Perhaps in the future, library organisations could consider providing cadetships and selling library careers to graduates from different degree areas as a way of actively recruiting into the library profession.

— ALIA NEW GENERATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THEMES

THEME 01 BALANCING THE WORKFORCE

In the short to medium term the library and information profession will experience a wave of people retiring. The next generation effect will enable employers to address the age and gender imbalance — currently focused on older, female staff — and further increase the diversity in the sector.

Recent graduates bring new skills and a fresh perspective. While the job market has been fairly static in recent years, the retirement wave will open up more opportunities and instead of jobs for new entrants being hard to find, it could be that we find ourselves by 2020 with too few professionals to fill the vacancies.

THEME 02 HIGHER PAID JOBS

The library and information profession is not highly paid for new entrants and junior staff, although senior managers and library leaders can earn in excess of \$100K per annum. A shortage of recruits would encourage employers to review pay levels and, while it would vary by sector, where knowledge has a high commercial value we could expect to see the greatest improvement. In the longer term, earnings for people in female-dominated professions should rise anyway, as the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has a gender equity agenda and will be working to eradicate the difference in earnings between men and women².

² www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au/reports/gender-equity/tracking-equity-comparing-outcomes-women-and-girls-across-australia

We need to address the gender and age issue.
There is a lack of men and young people in the profession.
We need to work with school careers officers and see school
kids working in libraries.

– DARWIN ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

THEME 03 AIMING FOR THE TOP

Outside of the National, State and Territory Libraries and universities, library and information professionals rarely have a seat at the top table. Public library managers are generally several steps removed from the council CEO; teacher librarians are not often included in the school's senior team, and special library and information professionals fare worse, reporting through several layers of management, with diminishing understanding of their role and contribution.

We can't expect overnight change, but there are factors in our favour. Library and information professionals are intelligent, well educated, skilled and experienced, and we handle knowledge, which is critical to most organisations. On top of this, we will need to sharpen up our business skills, demonstrate our flexibility and lateral thinking, and show our adaptability, helping to lead change rather than having change imposed on us.

THEME 04

WHAT WE CALL OURSELVES

During the consultation process, there was a great deal of discussion about librarian stereotypes. There were positives — the trust relationship with users; the sense of it being a vocation as well as a job; the ethos that supports ‘good’ (privacy, open government, open access) and the alignment with the social media environment (grassroots, crowd-sourcing, sharing, connection). The negatives included librarians being seen as old fashioned, rules-based and inflexible.

Participants were evenly divided between those who wanted to retain ‘librarian’ and make it more contemporary, and those who wanted to switch to ‘information professional’ and carry across the trust and ethos. Both had advantages and both were long term goals.

ALIA’s take on this is that we are talking about the same skills but different perceptions, and while they are not mutually exclusive, the best outcome would be to modernise ‘librarian’ and separately promote the ‘new’ title of information professional, creating a future landscape where both co-exist. This will be driven partly by sector — we can’t see communities welcoming a change to information professionals in public libraries, but it could well be a strategic advantage in special libraries.

We should come up with an umbrella term for the profession to embrace the varied information roles – archives, knowledge management, librarian, library technician, records management – for example, data professional, and move away from librarian.

– DARWIN ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

By putting people first and then providing technology, resources and services which cater to the communities' needs, we will enable the unique voices in the community to participate in democracy, contribute to society and ensure libraries are exciting community hubs.

– ALIA NEW GENERATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The next generation may not be as concerned about privacy, maybe because they haven't yet learned the consequences. A role of the librarian will be to protect people's choices with the level of privacy. Libraries should advocate that privacy levels are available, we shouldn't advocate for one or the other, but for choice.

— ADELAIDE ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

All libraries collect data about their users to provide an enhanced, responsive service ... In accordance with privacy regulations and general goodwill, libraries do not use this information as other private companies would ... This would require a change in privacy regulations governing the operation of libraries and graduate librarians would need to be educated in the implementation of these policies and practices.

— ALIA NEW GENERATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THEME 05 GUARDIANS OF PRIVACY

The IFLA Trend Report states ‘the boundaries of privacy and data protection will be redefined ...’ and asks ‘who’s profiting from your personal information?’³. In this sector, our instinctive reaction is to help shield data, but what happens when library and information professionals are the ones to profit? There are several ways this can happen.

- By using data to find out more about library users’ habits, we can tailor our service to better meet their needs.
- We anticipate that library and information professionals will find new roles in the big data revolution, helping to collate, process and make useful the enormous volume of information generated through consumer transactions.
- Information and knowledge management professionals in businesses will find it is part of their job to make consumer data available.

Just as library and information professionals are the copyright watchdogs, ensuring that organisations fulfill their obligations, we see our members taking on a similar guardianship relating to personal privacy – enabling data that is appropriately harvested to be used in an ethical manner by their organisation.

3 trends.ifla.org/files/trends/assets/insights-from-the-ifla-trend-report_v3.pdf

THEME 06 TECHNOLOGY FOR ALL

ALIA currently recognises two forms of professional membership — librarian (degree or higher) and library technician (vocational qualification). With technology so much a part of everyone's job in the library and information sector, it was felt that this would no longer be a relevant distinction in the future and that everyone would need to be at least as proficient in IT as their average user.

You don't have to work in a library to be a librarian.

— SYDNEY ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

Focus on the client groups using an informationist model or the embedded model. We can still have assistants to be reactive to questions on the spot but blend this with online help.

— MELBOURNE ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

The future is all about creating a flexible workforce.

— QUEENSLAND ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

There are many examples of people stepping up to take on other roles. There are more promotions than demotions. People just have to realise librarians have all these skills.

— MOUNT DRUITT FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

THEME 07 BEYOND THE LIBRARY

Within libraries, service points are on their way out, and in the future expert assistance will be delivered at the point of need, whether this is through roving staff with handheld devices, or through staff responding to enquiries online. Services will move beyond the library walls, into the online environment.

There will also be more jobs outside traditional library settings, in information management; as part of research and special project teams; working in any organisation that requires the kind of skills we have to offer, embedded in information-hungry teams.

As well as library and information professionals finding new roles outside the library walls, there is also the probability that jobs will move to different points in the supply chain. Outsourcing is a strong possibility. There are currently companies providing library staff or carrying out fee-for-service duties such as cataloguing, but none offer a comprehensive outsourced service for library and information services in Australia at this time. That could easily change. It is a relatively small step from centralising library and information technical services to outsourcing them.

THEME 08 ONGOING LEARNING

It is clear that every professional, no matter what their discipline, will need to take part in professional development to keep their skills current. Scientific, technological and social advances are creating a constantly shifting landscape and disruptive change is something we all have to accommodate.

By 2020, ongoing learning will be compulsory to retain ALIA professional membership status. While some will see this as an imposition, others will recognise the increased value this will give them on their career track.

It was felt ALIA should work with major employers to make membership a requirement to hold a librarian position and that ongoing CPD should be essential. Professionals needed hard evidence of the value they bring and libraries needed to promote their role in education and literacy.

– ADELAIDE ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

Continuous professional development was seen as the single most important method for individuals to secure their future in the sector. In such a rapidly changing environment, keeping abreast of new trends and developments, and being able to work with new technologies were vital factors in making oneself more employable and improving the likelihood of promotion.

– MOUNT DRUITT FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

For individuals it will be important to engage in continuous professional development and to show greater confidence in marketing their skills. Managers will need to work on succession planning and support for emerging leaders.

– MOUNT DRUITT FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

There is a lack of understanding and recognition for what we do and the skills required to undertake our professional tasks. People use our services but don't know who provides them or how we do it.

– MELBOURNE ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

ALIA's role will be especially important in training and ongoing learning; providing networking opportunities and providing an overall umbrella for marketing the profession.

– MOUNT DRUITT FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

THEME 09 FUTURE LEADERS

Many senior library and information professionals will be included in the retirement wave and it is essential that we build the next generation of library leaders. Succession planning is happening in many organisations and, as an association, ALIA will support this through the development of masterclasses in various aspects of leadership.

THEME 10 VISIBILITY

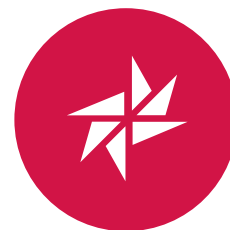
Something we have to be mindful about is making sure library and information professionals remain visible in their organisations, even as many services move more online.

ACTIONS ARISING

In common with other professions, the library and information profession is in a state of flux. The fundamental skills remain necessary and desirable, but organisations don't always recognise this through appropriate status and pay. There is uncertainty among professionals about how we should position ourselves, and technology brings its own special challenges and opportunities. New career paths are opening up alongside existing ones and we need to ensure we have the people, the skills and the visibility to take full advantage of these.

ALIA

- We will map and monitor the LIS workforce to identify the ebb and flow of job openings to new entrants. This will help identify when we have sufficient people in the workforce and when we need to run active recruitment campaigns.
- ALIA Training will develop further courses to support LIS professionals seeking to improve their general business and leadership skills.
- We will work with educators to ensure that LIS courses continue to evolve their technology units.
- ALIA will introduce ongoing learning as an essential part of professional membership by 2020.



Advocacy

- We will promote the library and information sector as a positive career choice, with the aim of increasing the diversity of the workforce.
- We need to support the title 'information professional' and help construct brand values around it.
- We must ensure that library and information professionals are seen to have an important role in the big data space, potentially acting as privacy legislation watchdogs for their organisations.



Professionals and their organisations

- Library managers can aspire to management and leadership positions within their own organisations, confident that their skills make a valuable contribution.





Australian Library and
Information Association

FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION: **PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

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Australian Library and Information Association

Future of the Library and Information Science Profession: Public Libraries

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, April 2014

www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession

ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
& information sciences profession.*



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ABOUT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

There are some 1,505 public library service points across Australia, including 1,429 fixed point and 76 mobile libraries. These services are funded by local and state or territory government in New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia, and by the State Government in Tasmania and the ACT Government in Canberra.

Public libraries enable good citizenship. They provide the resources and support for self-education, literacy and lifelong learning in communities.

The ALIA Australian Public Library Alliance is made up of representatives from every state and territory (there are public library associations in each state) and Public Libraries Australia.

Current services for users include:

- Resources, ie books, ebooks, newspapers, magazines, films, music and other materials in print and digital forms, for leisure and study.
- Access to content, including support for book groups, and home library services for people who can't travel to their local library.
- Learning opportunities through events and activities, including storytime for families with young children, classes and learning opportunities for all ages.
- Local history collections.
- Fast internet access on library computers, and, increasingly, free wi-fi for people's own devices.
- News and information about local issues.

The role of library and information professionals:

- Shape the library service to meet the needs of the local community.
- Celebrate reading, literacy and lifelong learning.
- Manage the print and online collections.
- Network with partners to connect with local issues, needs, people.
- Arrange interlibrary loans.
- Deliver programs and activities.
- Provide information and answer enquiries.
- Ensure all materials and the ways they are used are copyright compliant.

These are just some of the specialist skills library and information professionals bring to their roles:

- Literacy and learning support.
- Collection development, management and acquisition.
- Advice for readers — understanding reading levels and interests and matching people with their perfect book.
- Delivering programs for children and young people, which help with language and literacy development.
- Community support — developing policy, programs, collections and networks to address the issues that are holding a community, group or individual back from achieving their full potential.

Return on investment

In March 2103, ALIA published a report by independent consultants SGS Economics and Planning, which showed that Australian public libraries provide a net annual benefit of some \$1.97 billion¹.

'This is reflected in a benefit cost ratio of 2.9, meaning that the annual benefits generated outweigh the annual costs by a factor of 2.9. This is considered to be a sound return on investment. Importantly, the level of investment in public library services does not display a pattern of diminishing returns. Estimates of per capita costs and benefits, using the research carried out in Victoria and Queensland in 14 case study communities, highlight that the larger the investment made into public libraries, the larger the benefits derived by the respective communities.'

¹ www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/advocacy/Contribution%20of%20Australian%20Public%20Libraries%20Report.pdf



Statistics

The latest available figures² show that during the 2011–2012 financial year:

- There was one public library service point for every 15,000 people.
- More than one third of all public libraries were open more than 45 hours per week.
- More than seven out of ten public libraries were open for more than 30 hours each week.
- Almost 181 million items were lent to 10 million members of Australia’s public libraries.
- There were over 110 million customer visits annually, or more than nine million per month.
- More than 40 million items (1.8 items per person) were made available for the use of the community and over \$123 million was spent on ensuring that these collections remain up to date and relevant (more than half the collections are less than five years old).
- Total expenditure on public libraries increased from \$815 million in 2007–2008 to over \$1.01 billion in 2011–2012, representing a 24% increase. Expressed on a per capita basis, funding for public libraries has increased by 17% over the same period to \$44.55.

2 www.nsla.org.au/sites/www.nsla.org.au/files/publications/NSLA_public_library_stats_2011-12_0.pdf



THEMES

THEME 01 50:50 BY 2020

The big excitement in book borrowing over the last three years has been around ebooks. Yet despite growing demand from borrowers, ebooks currently represent fewer than 5% of loans across the public library network. This is partly a result of ebooks not being available through all libraries, partly because of issues around availability of popular titles, but there is also strong evidence that people who use ereaders continue to read physical books. Very few have moved exclusively to digital content.

ALIA produced a discussion paper in 2013 entitled *50:50 by 2020*³, putting forward the premise that public library collections will not have gone beyond the point of 50% print, 50% digital by this date — and in some regional library services, ebooks will still be in the minority. The topic is open for debate.

Whatever the actual percentages, the challenge for public libraries and their funders will be to maintain collections of the same titles in multiple formats. This will require discussions at a national and international level with publishers, firstly to achieve an economic model that works for all parties, and secondly to work through the technical issues of lending ebooks to users whose devices operate on different platforms.

³ www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/about/ALIA-5050-by-2020_2.pdf

Funding is the biggest issue. Publishers' pricing goes up 7–10% per year. My budget goes up 3%.

— ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION REGIONAL TELECONFERENCE NOTES

THEME 02

READING — A NATIONAL PASTIME

Australian Bureau of Statistics data tells us that 44% of Australians have literacy difficulties⁴, yet figures published by the Australia Council for the Arts show that those of us who have the skills are reading just as much as we ever did⁵, and people with portable reading devices spend more time reading than others. With an ageing population — ie a generation with more time on their hands — we can reasonably expect this demand to grow. Any thought of public library book borrowing being redundant in the digital age has no basis in reality.

THEME 03

NEW MEDIA

In the digital environment, the boundaries between ebooks, films, video games and animations are blurring. Book apps for children, for example, provide exciting new opportunities to explore interactive text, pictures and sound. Dreamworks and Pixar are moving into interactive storybooks, and we will see an explosion of activity in this area over the next few years. Libraries will be an important route to readers, but this will require the development of new delivery methods beyond the current ebook platforms.

⁴ www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4228.0Main+Features202011-12

⁵ www.australiacouncil.gov.au/resources/reports_and_publications/artforms/literature/fact-sheet-trends-in-reading-among-australians



THEME 04 SUPPORT FOR THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

Australian authors, publishers and booksellers are under growing pressure from global internet retailers. By contrast, libraries provide a valuable local route to market. Readers have always borrowed and bought books; in the absence of a local bookshop, they are now using libraries to browse for new authors and new titles, which they either borrow or then buy online. In the future, through initiatives such as the 'buy it now' button on library management systems, and the promotion of local work, Australian libraries will provide greater support for the wider book industry, including Australian authors, publishers and booksellers⁶.

THEME 05 COMMUNITY CREATED CONTENT

Digital publishing and print-on-demand bring content creation within the reach of individuals and communities. Local history groups, genealogy researchers, clubs — there is enormous potential for people to produce works that others will want to see and use, and what better way to gain access than through the library?

⁶ www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/Discussion%20paper%20-%20The%20business%20case%20for%20ebooks%20and%20elending.ADVOC_.20130702.BC_.pdf

The library itself has been transformed from a storehouse of the collection and quiet individual study into a true community meeting place. It is now made up of a diverse interlocking series of spaces for study, casual reading, interaction, collaboration, children's spaces, community spaces, language and IT support spaces, café environments, lounges and outdoor terraces and gardens. It is a place where guidance and assistance is offered without obligation, where we can meet by arrangement or informally bump into our neighbours or visitors from out of town. It is place where we can just be without having to buy. It is paradoxically the most grounded and localised community environment that at the same time facilitates and supports global interconnection.

— *PUBLIC PLACE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE CONTEMPORARY LIBRARY*, RICHARD FRANCIS-JONES, FRANCIS-JONES MOREHEN THORP

Chris Anderson in his book *Makers: the new industrial revolution* (2012) discusses the revolutionary possibilities of 3D printing, do-it-yourself biotechnology and more adaptable small-scale robotics. Economies of scale are only effective in some situations and Anderson argues that the internet supports global online communities with new opportunities to connect to specialised expertise and niche services. Creating and 'making' in many forms may be increasingly dispersed and if so, this will impact on the use of libraries.

— NSLA SUBMISSION TO THE ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION CONSULTATION

THEME 06

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT THE BOOK

Book borrowing will remain the core public library service, but public libraries of the future will have many other roles — and we are already seeing these take shape. The library as a community space will become even more important; technology will continue to feature, providing people access to devices and software that would otherwise be unaffordable; library staff will not be behind a desk, they will be engaging with users face-to-face and online, and they will be delivering programs and activities, both direct and through partnerships, tailored to suit the local community. Public libraries will continue to connect users to information and ideas, but they will play an even greater role in bringing people together.

THEME 07

MAKER SPACES

Libraries have always been places for exploration and discovery through the use of shared resources. Now, as well as books, we have new materials and devices. Public libraries are already experimenting with maker spaces, including 3D printers and other gadgets that would be beyond the reach of most individuals. We can expect more of this in the future, encouraging learning through play.

THEME 08 ENTERPRISE HUBS

In the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, libraries attracted job seekers — drawn by free newspapers and internet access — and people interested in starting up their own businesses. From here, the notion of public libraries as enterprise hubs has further developed. In future, we can expect teleworkers looking for space outside the home; small businesses seeking affordable web conferencing facilities and meeting rooms; independent consultants conducting research for clients through library databases — public libraries will be an integral part of councils' support for the local economy.

THEME 09 ONLINE LEARNING

For many years, public libraries have offered informal pathways into formal learning, but with the growth in online education, their role has the potential to expand even further. Partnerships with higher education institutions offering courses remotely will see more students using public libraries as local meeting and study spaces. This will require new resources, but has the potential to make a significant contribution to councils' commitment to developing a skilled local workforce.

Potential developments include digital technology labs to provide opportunities for entrepreneurs and innovators to develop new ideas and services.

– PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF NEW ZEALAND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2012–2017

Learners will want to get away from hyper-connected spaces so they can focus on study. That's where the library will come in.

– ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION SUMMIT WORKSHOP NOTES

Grey nomads will increase and they want one library card. Regional libraries have wi-fi to attract and encourage them to stay and spend money. Smart drivers' licences enabled as library cards were ruled out, but what a great idea.

— QUEENSLAND ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

Collaboration is a keyword in the language of politics, and collaboration is something we do well.

— MOUNT DRUITT TAFE ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

THEME 10 EVERYONE A MEMBER

With 44% of the population already registered library members, there was a strong feeling throughout our consultation that library membership should be a gift to every child at birth. There was also discussion about creating a council smartcard that could be enabled for library membership, discount travel, medical and other uses that currently require residents to carry multiple cards.

THEME 11 LOCAL SERVICES THROUGH A NATIONAL NETWORK

Especially with an ageing population to take care of, the pressure on local and state/territory government funding is unlikely to lift. This makes it even more important for libraries to operate as efficiently as possible. The local funding model does not encourage collaboration, but public libraries themselves have taken the initiative to work as an informal national network, seeking out economies of scale and benefiting from collaborative projects such as the National Year of Reading in 2012 and eSmart Libraries (in partnership with the Alannah and Madeline Foundation and the Telstra Foundation).

South Australia has introduced one library card for all the state's library users, based on a shared library management system, and other states are set to follow. In future, we will see further collaboration and consortia arrangements put in place to support local delivery of services.

THEME 12

THE MEANING OF FREE

Equality of opportunity is one of the foundations of the public library service, and we will defend free book loans with our last breath — but as public library services expand, there will be increasing pressure to introduce charges for additional services, such as use of equipment, participation in training courses, interlibrary loans, meeting room hire, and so on.

Many libraries already charge users for these ancillary activities and library and information professionals will need to have a clear view of what is a core activity (free of charge), and what is an add-on, which users might need to pay for.

ACTIONS ARISING

New media and technologies provide exciting opportunities for public libraries to expand their services to meet community needs in innovative ways, but they also introduce major challenges around funding.

ALIA

- We will continue to hold discussions with other book industry stakeholders to find mutually beneficial ways of working in the ebook environment.
- We will help identify advantageous ways for public libraries to collaborate.
- We will help inform public library members about innovation in the sector nationally and internationally.
- We will deliver PD and training opportunities to support library and information professionals and library staff who come from other disciplines.
- We will help connect public libraries with higher education and other libraries.



Advocacy

- We will advocate as needed for core library services to remain free at the point of use (library services are paid for through taxes).



Professionals and their organisations

- Library services will need to further develop their ebook holdings and create collection management strategies that factor in multiple formats.
- Libraries within specific jurisdictions will need to work closely together to achieve operating efficiencies, for example providing users across municipal boundaries with one library card.
- Library managers will need to stay on top of innovation in the sector, identifying ways to maximise community engagement and make the library experience even more interactive.
- Enterprise support will enjoy a stronger focus and libraries will need to develop their services for entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- Stronger partnerships between public libraries and education libraries will also be beneficial.





Australian Library and
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FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION: **SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

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Future of the Library and Information Science Profession: School Libraries

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, April 2014

www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession

ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
& information sciences profession.*



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ABOUT SCHOOL LIBRARIES

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' Schools Australia 2012 report stated the number of Australian government schools (6,697), Catholic schools (1,713) and independent schools (1,017), giving a total of 9,427 primary and secondary schools.

Almost all schools have a library of some description, but they vary enormously in terms of staffing, facilities and resources. At the lower end, there are schools with a few shelves of books and a member of staff whose responsibility it is to look after them, as part of a much wider teaching or administration role. At the high end, there are flagship library and IT hubs, with more than a dozen members of staff. Several of the team will be qualified teacher librarians. They will have a growing collection of print and ebooks and provide a range of services to students, including safer online experiences, group learning and study spaces, and more electronic resources.

ALIA School Libraries Advisory Committee and ALIA Schools Group (based in Victoria) liaise with the Australian School Library Association and the state-based school library associations to create a united voice for the sector.

Current services for users include:

- Books, ebooks and other resources in print and digital forms, for study and reading for pleasure.
- Fast, safe internet access on library computers, and wi-fi for students' own devices.
- Formal classes and informal learning opportunities for students.
- Quiet study spaces and rooms for group work.
- Resources and curriculum support for teachers.

The role of library and information professionals:

- Teacher librarians are valued members of the teaching community as well as being members of the library team.
- Library staff manage the print and online collections, provide information and help students develop their own research skills.
- Staff ensure all materials and the ways they are used are copyright compliant.

These are just some of the specialist skills library and information professionals bring to their roles:

- Understanding learners and their needs.
- Collaborating with teachers to plan and implement information literacy and literature programs.
- Ensuring the school library collection supports the school curriculum and community.
- Using technologies as teaching and learning tools.
- Creating effective learning environments.
- Participating in the school and wider learning community.



The impact of a teacher librarian

According to research carried out by Queensland University of Technology and the School Library Association of Queensland, published in 2013:

'At schools without a qualified teacher-librarian, school NAPLAN scores were consistently below the national mean score for NAPLAN reading and writing, and one principal relates declining growth in average NAPLAN reading scores to the lack of a qualified teacher-librarian.'¹

Statistics

Figures about the sector are hard to come by. The 2011 report from the Australian Government Inquiry into School Libraries and Teacher Librarians stated:

'One of the dominant themes that emerged is a lack of hard data, especially collated at the national level relating to staffing issues, specifically determining the actual numbers of teacher librarians in Australian schools, their qualifications, and part-time/full-time status.'²

An Australian Council for Education Research survey of staff in Australian schools, carried out in 2010, suggests that there are some 5,600 library teachers in primary schools and 2,900 in secondary schools, making a total of 8,500³.

1 www.slaq.org.au/sites/default/files/School%20libraries,%20teacher-librarians%20and%20their%20contribution%20to%20student%20literacy%20in%20Gold%20Coast%20schools%20-%20Research%20Report.pdf

2 www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/house_of_representatives_committees?url=ee/schoollibraries/report.htm

3 research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1013&context=tll_misc

THEMES

THEME 01

THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB IN THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SECTOR

Children's relationship with libraries is often shaped by their relationship with their school librarian. An inspiring, gifted professional in the school library will ensure that students go on to use libraries throughout their lives. However, it is easy to lose sight of this under the day-to-day pressure of managing a school library. There is never enough time and never enough money.

Cutbacks in state schools mean that many children will not have the opportunity to develop a love of libraries, books and reading for pleasure, and this will potentially impact on the literacy levels of future generations. In its submission to the ALIA Future of the LIS Profession consultation, the Australian School Library Association cited uncertainty of government commitment to school libraries as one of the top three issues facing teacher librarians and school libraries. The other two were teacher librarians' ability to address the National Professional Standards of Teachers, and information literacy and digital citizenship in the Australian Curriculum.

Everybody knows the sports master in their school,
but do they know the librarian?

— DARWIN ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION WORKSHOP NOTES

THEME 02

DEEPENING THE DIVIDE

For independent schools, the library is often a symbol of the institution's commitment to knowledge and learning. It is a part of the school that is a source of pride to the school community and contributes to its competitive edge. As a result, the library benefits from investment in the fabric of the building, in the staffing levels, in the collection, and in the technology available to students.

By contrast, in state schools, the library can be seen as a cost burden, despite the important role it plays in supporting literacy, study and research skills. Where there is this difference in attitude, and therefore support and investment, it deepens the divide between young people in government schools and those in independent schools, and increases the likelihood of poorer educational outcomes. Ironically, many government schools benefited from new school library facilities as part of the Building the Education Revolution program, but don't have the staff and collections to make them work effectively.

Schools need to keep supplying resources and that won't change, but the technology will change extensively. How do we support all the devices and keep up with all of them?

— ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION REGIONAL TELECONFERENCE WORKSHOP NOTES

THEME 03 EASY AND REWARDING

'Google bashing' was one of the colourful terms used to describe students' (and teachers') simplistic search skills, in the SCIS School Library Survey 2013. Respondents were concerned that the quality resources in the school library were being bypassed in favour of internet searching. Part of the reason for this was that library resources could not be accessed outside the school. In the very near future, school libraries need affordable technology solutions that make it as easy for teachers and students to search the library catalogue as it is for them to put keywords into search engines — and ultimately more rewarding.

Also, in common with public libraries, school libraries seek an ebook platform that feeds directly into their library catalogue, without requiring students to search in different places.

THEME 04 DIGITAL SKILLS

Managing digital resources effectively was another concern raised in the SCIS survey — audiobooks, subscription databases, digital videos, apps, ebooks and other items — all require new skills. There is the further dynamic of the rapid growth in BYOD (bring your own device), which brings its own challenges. Training and professional development will be a continuing focus for school library staff.

THEME 05 PARENT POWER

Outside of government, parents will be the most effective advocates for investment in school libraries and it will be essential for the future success of school libraries to raise awareness of what can be achieved with a well-staffed, well-resourced library. ALIA and school library association partners created the What a Difference a School Library Makes⁴ campaign in 2011, providing parents with a 10-point checklist to judge whether their children's school was investing where it counts. We also collaborated on Project 13⁵, an initiative focusing on the role school libraries play in promoting cybersafety.

4 schoollibraries2011.wikispaces.com/checklist+for+parents

5 www.alia.org.au/advocacy-and-campaigns/advocacy-campaigns/13-project-0

THEME 06

COMPETING FOR ATTENTION

While the overriding branding is that of the school, the school library also needs to create a distinct identity through its service culture, key messages, tone of voice, imagery, physical and online presence. Young people are sophisticated consumers and libraries compete for their attention, especially in the internet environment, with high profile brands such as Google, YouTube and Facebook. School library staff will need to take a more proactive approach to developing and marketing their brand.

ACTIONS ARISING

Government support for school libraries will be essential if we are to develop information and digital literacy skills, and a love of books and reading, in future generations. This is the single biggest challenge facing school libraries going forward.

ALIA

- We will work with educators and employers to ensure that professionals graduating from LIS courses have the skills needed to work in tomorrow's school libraries.
- We will continue to develop and deliver PD and training opportunities to support school library staff, especially around digital resources.



Advocacy

- We will actively advocate for federal, state and territory governments to make clear commitments to well-staffed, well-resourced libraries in every school.
- We will leverage 'parent power' to get our message across to government, education departments and principals.



Professionals and their organisations

- Library managers need to work with vendors to find technology solutions that allow for easy access to library resources.
- School libraries need to be smarter about their physical and online branding.





Australian Library and
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FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION: **SPECIAL LIBRARIES**

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Future of the Library and Information Science Profession: Special Libraries

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, April 2014

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ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
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ABOUT SPECIAL LIBRARIES

Special libraries comprise government, association, health, law, corporate, consulting firm, ICT, engineering, religious, science and technology, art, museum, agriculture, media and other libraries that serve departments, institutions, not-for-profits, charities and businesses. The word library doesn't always appear in the title, instead some are called information services or research units, terms which also describe their main purpose and function.

Current services for users include:

- Fast and thorough searches, presenting the latest, most comprehensive and accurate information to executives and practitioners.
- Training to enable library users to carry out their own searches of electronic databases more efficiently and effectively.
- Filtered, evaluated and packaged search results.
- Relevant, tailored, current information from national and international sources.
- In some cases, there will also be assistance for people who are studying for a tertiary qualification and training to achieve a higher level of competency.



The role of library and information professionals:

- Manage a dynamic collection of physical and online resources, so staff can access up-to-date, authoritative resources, and make well-informed decisions.
- Negotiate with publishers of books, journals and online resources, to achieve the best value for the organisation.
- Curate and preserve unique physical collections.
- Ensure all materials and the ways they are used are copyright compliant.

These are just some of the specialist skills library and information professionals bring to their roles:

- Specific experience managing subject-related journals, books and ebooks.
- Knowing what to look for and where, for literature and database searches and advanced searches.
- Specialist knowledge supporting cataloguing, abstracting and thesaurus constructing.
- Embedded awareness of the dynamics of the sector.
- Networks and contacts that enable resource-sharing with colleagues nationally and internationally.

The value of these services

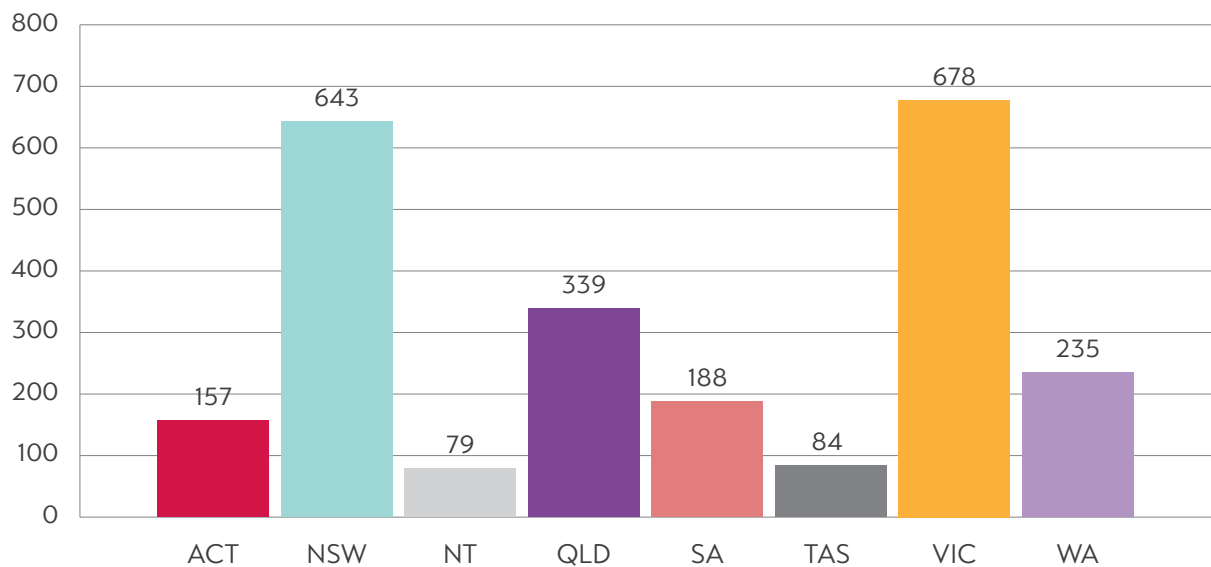
In 2013, we undertook research into the return on investment of special libraries (in partnership with the Australian Law Librarians' Association, ALIA Health Libraries

Australia and Health Libraries Inc) and reported an indicative return of \$5.43 for every dollar.

Statistics

It is hard to pin down an exact number for these libraries. Many are small and most are hidden within the organisations they serve. Best estimates, based on the Australian Libraries Gateway database, are from 2200 to 2400, depending on which types of library and information services are included (the definition can cover everything from volunteer-run historical society collections to libraries in large teaching hospitals).

How special libraries are distributed across Australia



THEMES

THEME 01 RADICAL TRANSFORMATION

Special libraries are experiencing significant upheaval and all the signs are that this will continue. In a 2013 study¹, managers of these services reported that budgets, staff hours and physical spaces have all reduced over the last three years.

While cost-cutting has been the principal driver, improved efficiency has also been on the agenda. ALIA has campaigned vigorously on behalf of special libraries, where cuts have been indiscriminate, and we have been diligent in providing support to member libraries going through a review process.

The best reviews may have resulted in some loss of funding and reduction in staff hours, but they have reshaped the library and information service and assured its future as a core part of the organisation. The worst reviews have been rushed through, by executives with no understanding of the value of the service to the organisation, and with no insight into how a library and information service operates. We have seen instances of ‘corporate regret’ months after such cuts have been imposed, where organisations have had to rehire staff and upgrade systems, but have been unable to retrieve elements of the physical collection that have been dispersed or destroyed.

It is difficult and potentially dangerous to talk openly about change when the axe may be about to fall. The hard conversations can only take place in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation, and where the value of the library and information service is clearly understood.

We can’t ignore the need for future transformation in the special library sector, and library staff will need to judge the right moment to engage with senior management. It is vital that library and information professionals help develop the next iteration of their service rather than having a solution imposed.

¹ www.alia.org.au/roispecials

THEME 02 VALUE PROPOSITION

In the turbulent times ahead, library teams will need a firm handle on their value proposition and will need to be able to articulate their contribution to the financial bottom line, to client care, to innovative design, to competitive advantage and to minimising risk. However the organisation defines its strategic goals, the library and information service will need to demonstrate its unique role in helping to achieve them. Gathering the evidence will be important, and so will presenting it as a powerful business case.

This is a highly fragmented sector, which makes it difficult to create meaningful data. Like organisations may be hard to track down and competitive considerations can get in the way of benchmarking. Yet comparative measures are an essential part of reporting. Greater collaboration between special libraries will be needed, for example to provide context to claims of superior performance against industry averages, or as evidence for increased investment in services.

Libraries' inability or unwillingness to share information has hampered our efforts to produce effective advocacy tools, but ALIA will continue to work with associations in the sector and through our Special Libraries Advisory Committee to develop useful performance indicators.

THEME 03

DIY INFORMATION

There's more information available, and a greater need for that information to be managed and filtered than ever before, yet special libraries are experiencing cuts rather than investment. Organisations do not understand the value proposition, and it is being undermined by executives and practitioners seeking out their own information. The Google generation erroneously believes everything can be found on the web, and will not easily be swayed — if they are working to a tight deadline, DIY information is an attractive option, 'near enough is good enough'.

The only way we can counter this perception is to provide the instant gratification of a popular search engine with the quality and integrity of a professional service. In the future we will need to provide even faster, tailored, easily accessed, accurate, comprehensive information, 24/7, in formats to suit every kind of device. Patron driven acquisition will need to be considered.

Users will want to drive their own search experience; it will be up to the professionals to have created a federated search that gives them the best results, and to ensure that the library branding remains strong.

THEME 04 READY TO USE

At the same time, clients will be seeking decision-ready information, that saves them time ploughing through the original source material. Increasingly, people will want information packaged in useful, illustrative formats that can easily be shared — charts and infographics rather than text-heavy documents. Library and information professionals will need to stay abreast of formats and develop data presentation skills as part of their ongoing learning.

THEME 05 A SEAT AT THE TOP TABLE

A source of much frustration among special library and information professionals is how far down the pecking order they find themselves. Performance reporting, making the case for further funding, stating their value proposition — these things often have to be achieved through a senior manager who may have little affinity with the service. As a sector, we have to find a way to leverage the importance of information to organisations to establish our place at the top table.

No longer data gatekeepers, information professionals must work hard to demonstrate their value in new ways. Doing this means making a fundamental shift from isolated, technical expert to multi-skilled team member, enabling decisions and proactively integrating into the organisation.

— *THE EVOLVING VALUE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT*, FINANCIAL TIMES,
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

Librarians are becoming research partners, they are co-authors of academic papers and reports. This is becoming an increasingly important role that they play. It's no longer just about searching for the information (librarian as handmaiden, unacknowledged service provider), it is about becoming a partner in the team. There's an expansion of their roles; a blurring of the margins.

— ALIA HEALTH LIBRARIES AUSTRALIA GROUP SURVEY OF HEALTH PRACTITIONERS 2011

THEME 06 CENTRALISE AND EMBED

One way to move higher up the food chain is to combine a number of services, creating a department with bigger numbers for budget and head count. There has been much concern expressed about government library and information services being centralised, and there are certainly issues when subject specialists are removed from frontline interaction with clients, but increased visibility in the overall hierarchy is one of the benefits.

We may fear the results of centralisation, but we can't be blind to the fact that governments, international firms, multi-site businesses and others are looking at a pooled library and information service as a financially astute alternative to multiple service points with some duplication. Our goal for the future is to convince organisations that a move to centralising collection management, cataloguing and other technical services, should be accompanied by a policy of embedding library and information professionals in areas that require a steady flow of high quality information and a high degree of subject expertise.

THEME 07 BIG DATA

Organisations are both excited about the prospect of big data and daunted at the challenge of turning zettabytes of free-form, unstructured information into meaningful insights that make their operations more efficient and improve their bottom line. Big data is seen principally as an IT issue, but library and information professionals also see a role for their skills in sourcing data from external sources and making information generated by data analysts discoverable across the organisation.

We will have to manage the possible conflict between the profession's support for individuals' right to privacy and the potential for organisations to generate valuable insight and knowledge from websites, social media and other digital content sources.

THEME 08 DIGITISATION

While the organisation's focus may be on big data and other forms of electronic information, library managers need to be thinking about the future of their physical collections, both the content — historic records can be vitally important in developing long term trend reports — and the artifacts. Digitisation of priority items will be costly, and can be framed in the context of disaster management and business interruption planning.

There will be a shortage of talent necessary for organizations to take advantage of big data. By 2018, the United States alone could face a shortage of 140,000 to 190,000 people with deep analytical skills as well as 1.5 million managers and analysts with the know-how to use the analysis of big data to make effective decisions.

— *BIG DATA: THE NEXT FRONTIER FOR INNOVATION, COMPETITION AND PRODUCTIVITY*, MCKINSEY

Sir Muir Grey, Chief Knowledge Officer of the NHS, England, has said 'knowledge is the enemy of disease'. As knowledge agencies, health libraries are an essential component in the health sector's goals to improve health outcomes for individuals and populations.

— ANN RITCHIE, CHAIR, ALIA HEALTH LIBRARIES AUSTRALIA

Choices will be made and we will not choose space ...
The librarians have left the building.

— ALIA FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION SUMMIT NOTES

THEME 09

SUBJECT SPECIALISTS

Library and information professionals quickly develop an understanding of the environment within which they operate, and the flexibility to switch between industries has been a useful trait for people on an upward career trajectory. However, there is a counter-movement that is seeing professionals within industries retrain as information managers. It will be interesting to note how this relates to pay and status within the organisation, when engineers, accountants and qualified people from other disciplines join the ranks of library and information professionals. Longer term we can only see this as enhancing the image of our profession.

THEME 10

SPACE

For the majority of libraries, the future will mean more space, not less, to accommodate a range of programs, activities and uses. However, in special libraries where the focus was on rapid access to information from electronic sources, participants in the consultation process were sanguine about giving up floor space. The embedded librarians of the future will operate beyond the walls.

ACTIONS ARISING

It's going to be a rollercoaster ride for special library and information services between now and 2025. We will see the biggest changes in government, law, health, research and other libraries that are more about information supply than physical collections. Arts and heritage libraries will be somewhat protected. There are actions we can take to support positive outcomes:

ALIA

- Greater collaboration to enable benchmarking of services is required. This will mean the development of standard metrics, and data gathering and analysis by an independent third party such as ALIA.
- We must work with LIS educators and look at how new areas of practice such as big data can be incorporated into our ALIA PD and Training.



Advocacy

- We need to be open to the prospect of centralised technical services, while advocating strongly for embedded subject specialists.
- We have to ensure that we are seen as part of the big data conversation, both at a national level, and within our own organisations.
- We must advocate for investment in digitisation to ensure vital records from the past are part of our digital information future.



Professionals and their organisations

- Library and information professionals will need to build on their resilience and adaptability.
- Value propositions must be strengthened and any weaknesses addressed.
- Library and information professionals need to work with their IT colleagues to create a fast, effective federated search, tailored to the needs of the organisation.
- Ongoing learning will be essential for library and information professionals to stay abreast of new environments and new technologies.





Australian Library and
Information Association

FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION: **TERTIARY EDUCATION LIBRARIES**

TERTIARY EDUCATION LIBRARIES

Tertiary covers both university and vocational education. However, they are very different and we have divided this section in two to reflect the different themes that emerged during the Future of the LIS Profession consultation.

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Australian Library and Information Association

Future of the Library and Information Science Profession: Tertiary Education Libraries

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, April 2014

www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession

ALIA FUTURES

*Initiatives for the future of the library
& information sciences profession.*



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ABOUT UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

It is a requirement for all universities in Australia to have a university library service, and institutions take pride in their facilities, often seeing them as a symbol of the university's investment in 21st century learning.

University libraries serve students and faculty on campus, and provide access to resources for the rapidly increasing number who study remotely.

The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) represents the library leaders in Australian universities and develops a national perspective on issues that affect its 39 members.

Current services for users include:

- Access to contemporary collections of study and research materials, in print and electronic formats, including abstract and full text ejournal items and electronic databases.
- Purpose designed spaces for group interaction and quiet study.
- Assistance from specialist librarians.
- Support for research and research training.
- Support for scholarly publishing.
- Open access repositories of research outputs, including theses.
- Displays, talks, events and activities.



The role of library and information professionals:

- Acquire, develop and maintain scholarly information resources in all formats to meet research, learning and teaching needs.
- Contribute to the skills development of students through information literacy and training programs.
- Disseminate research outputs and institutional information through online repositories.
- Deliver a wide range of information services to academic staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students.
- Provide spaces for students to study and work.

These are just some of the specialist skills library and information professionals bring to their roles:

- In-depth knowledge of their subjects and their collections.
- High level research, information and digital literacy and learning support.
- Application of metadata and software applications to improve discovery.
- Commercial acumen, particularly in negotiations for subscriptions to resources with national and international vendors.

Statistics

The latest available figures from CAUL show that in 2012:

- The 39 Australian universities had 203 libraries and branch libraries.
- 4,050 staff were employed, including 2,496 LIS professionals.
- There were more than 15 million loans.
- Total expenditure was over \$667 million, including salaries of \$331 million and eresources of \$218 million.
- Approximately one million staff and students used the library services.

THEMES: UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

THEME 01 SWITCHED TO DIGITAL

Fewer than 15% of journals today are acquired by university libraries in print format, and while a university's existing print collection will remain important, contemporary information will predominantly be available in the form of eresources. This increases access to the university's materials for staff and students, but it changes the dynamics for publishers and aggregators. Resources must be affordable for university libraries, and commercially viable for the producers.

University libraries were the first to get to grips with the digital environment, and over the last 25 years they have developed a balanced approach that works for all. However, there are still challenges around economic models for the future. There is dissatisfaction with the 'big deal' — where ejournal publishers bundle together titles, and libraries find themselves with a substantial collection, only a portion of which is used — and there is a need to find new ways of making materials available to the many thousands of students involved in free Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in Australia and overseas. Instead of earning substantial revenue from relatively few users, vendors will need to look at gaining modest returns from many more customers.

There will also be new ways of acquiring content, driven by even greater collaboration between Australian and overseas universities.

Libraries will have an important role in influencing and engaging with publishers, preservation agencies and other key stakeholders in establishing appropriate and sustainable business and preservation models for digital content.

– GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY STAFF COMMENT

THEME 02

LIBRARIES, MOOCS AND ONLINE LEARNING

In March 2014, ALIA, CAUL, OCLC and the State Library of Queensland delivered a seminar on *Libraries, MOOCs and Online Learning*. The event was oversubscribed, as leaders from the higher education sector gathered to discuss topics such as the copyright implications of MOOCs, the need for library and information professionals to help improve students' research skills and digital literacy, and the potential for university and public libraries to work together to support distance learners.

While there were concerns that MOOCs might not reach the less advantaged, as originally intended, there was a strong feeling at the seminar that large student cohorts engaged in online learning would be a game-changer for tertiary educators in the future. Many academic libraries were actively participating and leading the way in online learning.

THEME 03

OPERATING IN THE GLOBAL MARKET

University libraries have always operated in a global environment. It is estimated that approximately 15% of university libraries' expenditure is on Australian publications and the rest goes towards acquiring content from North America and Europe predominantly. This proportion is unlikely to change significantly. Australian university libraries are world class in the delivery of customer service, online learning and in their collaboration with academics.



We're making it very easy for our users but it is difficult for us — we have made ourselves invisible. If we were to stop doing what we do ... Librarians stand between chaos and a coherent user experience.

— ALIA FUTURE OF THE LIS PROFESSION SUMMIT WORKSHOP NOTES

THEME 04 THE BEST ONLINE EXPERIENCE

The library will have an even more important role in supporting its institution's online presence. Universities will want to see their investment in the physical infrastructure of flagship libraries translated into an expanding online experience that will help attract students who may never set foot in the buildings themselves. Online students will want to enjoy a similarly engaging and productive relationship with library and information professionals, comparable with that of their real world counterparts. The best access to the best resources; the best library experience — these factors will count when students are making their choice between competing institutions nationally and internationally.

THEME 05 MAINTAINING VISIBILITY IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

The more seamless the access to information and resources, the less visible the library becomes. This has been a dilemma facing university libraries, with so much service delivery taking place online and without the intervention of a staff member. We need to find a way of making the library brand more visible in the information search process, without creating unnecessary friction for the user. One strategy is to build strong and deep alliances within the university community.

THEME 06

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Library and information professionals with a first degree in another discipline will be an attractive proposition for university library recruiters in the future. While library skills remain essential, employing subject matter experts and people with strong technology skills will translate into an improved library experience for on- and off-campus users. We need to recruit professionals who are committed to lifelong learning, engaged in developing services and can see opportunities to improve online and face-to-face experiences for academics and students.

THEME 07

MAKING SPACE

For print collections, the 'five year rule' has become standard practice internationally. If a book has not been borrowed in the last five years, it is a candidate for removal from the open access shelving and for relocation to the deposit library or offsite storage. While eminently practical, this practice has drawn fire, especially from Arts and Humanities academics, who view the library as their 'laboratory'. This will continue to be an issue for university libraries, as the opportunity to reimagine library spaces in exciting ways for study and research competes with the traditional view of libraries as places for books.

Graduate librarians will require skills in evaluating and assessing the quality of information and helping library users to do the same. To enable this, library graduates will need to come from a range of different educational backgrounds including science, engineering, as well as arts and business, to ensure they have the knowledge from which to make these assessments. Perhaps in future, library organisations could consider providing cadetships and selling library careers to graduates from different degree areas as a way of actively recruiting into the library profession.

— ALIA NEW GENERATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUBMISSION

THEME 08 PATRON DRIVEN ACQUISITION

The digital publishing environment has made patron driven acquisition achievable for academic libraries. Instead of staff purchasing resources ahead of use, library users find a journal article they need and it is purchased for their use, as well as being available to others. This has been trialled with success in some Australian university libraries and it is likely that patron driven acquisition will feature to a greater or lesser degree in most, in the future. Automating these processes has already begun to change the roles of acquisition teams and liaison staff.

THEME 09 SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Library and information professionals in universities are taking, and will take, a far greater role in research. In some instances, researchers seek their help to make their outputs more accessible through bibliometrics, research data management and curation; in others, library staff become part of the research team itself. There is a growing demand for library professionals with data curation, data mining and data analysis skills.

It is our clients who will play a strong role in shaping libraries of the future.

— GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY STAFF COMMENT

THEME 10 LIBRARIES AS PUBLISHERS

Research and publishing are interlinked. As university libraries become even more engaged in academic research projects, the greater the opportunity to explore new ways of publishing content and disseminating the basic research data. Library and information professionals are strongly supportive of the open access movement, and while this approach may not be possible with commercial publishers, university-produced materials can be made available through an open access model.

The library is well placed as a key participant or catalyst in helping the university 'publish' the outputs of its research and scholarship and build new types of virtual research and scholarly collections, thereby making outputs more easily discoverable and accessible for collaboration and reuse.

– GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY STAFF COMMENT

ACTIONS ARISING: UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Australian university libraries are an intrinsic part of their institutions. Their role and contribution is clearly understood by academics and students, although this does not protect them from the funding problems faced by higher education around the world. In an increasingly global education market, university libraries can be a competitive asset, but it will be up to library teams to demonstrate their value to the institution.

ALIA

- ALIA will seek out further opportunities to work with CAUL and other stakeholders to keep members informed about trends and activities in the sector that will impact on their roles and workplace.
- We will support university library modernisation programs.
- ALIA PD and Training will look at helping library and information professionals further develop the skills they need to support academic research.



Advocacy

- University libraries will need to demonstrate how they contribute to their institutions' competitive edge in the global education market.
- We will aim to attract next generation library and information professionals with subject matter expertise and strong technology skills, by promoting this as a career choice for graduates from other disciplines.



Professionals and their organisations

- University library consortia purchasing through CAUL is long established, but further innovation and collaboration will be needed to ensure collections keep pace with changes in pedagogy and advances in technology.
- University libraries will need to ensure that their online presence is not only functional and informative, but also engaging, helping to create an exceptional library experience online.
- The library brand must be visible, even while the library experience is seamless for students, academics and researchers.

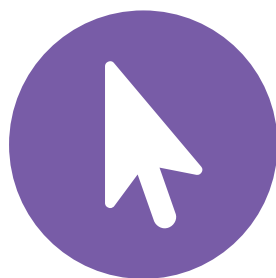


ABOUT VET LIBRARIES

The vocational and educational training (VET) sector is in disarray. Funding cuts, restructuring, amalgamation and modernisation have all been features of the past 12 months, and have had a serious impact on TAFE libraries. We are particularly concerned that federal and state and territory governments undervalue the important and complex role of TAFE libraries in supporting VET courses, and the need for qualified library and information professionals to support students, especially with their research and digital information literacy.

Current services for users include:

- Access to print and online collections of study resources.
- Access to the very latest information, including current standards and regulations.
- Purpose designed spaces for group interaction and quiet study.
- Assistance from library and information professionals.
- Help with digital literacy and information skills.
- Access to the internet, through library PCs and free wi-fi.



The role of library and information professionals:

- Working closely with course teachers, keeping staff up-to-date with the latest advances in their fields.
- Identifying and sourcing the information and materials educators need to deliver current, relevant courses.
- Working alongside learning support officers, disability support officers, social workers and counsellors, to give every TAFE student — school leavers and mature students, from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds — the best chance of success.
- Enabling both supported and self-paced and self-directed learning.
- Helping students develop information discovery skills.
- Ensuring all materials and the ways they are used are copyright compliant.

These are just some of the specialist skills library and information professionals bring to their roles:

- Specialist subject knowledge.
- Understanding of the additional needs of some VET students.
- Information and digital literacy and learning support.
- Ability to help students improve their employability.

Statistics

- There are 61 institutes of TAFE around Australia, 17 in Victoria, 13 in Queensland, 12 in New South Wales, 11 in Western Australia, 4 in South Australia, and one each in the ACT, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.
- We have far less information about TAFE libraries than we do university libraries, which is why our TAFE Library Advisory Committee commenced a data gathering exercise at the beginning of 2013.

From analysis carried out in 2012, we have comparisons between TAFE and university libraries in Victoria:

- Average library budget amount per TAFE student \$26.36; average library expenditure per university student \$459.70.
- Staff to student ratio in TAFEs 1:793; staff to student ratio in universities 1:352.

THEMES: VET LIBRARIES

THEME 01 DISRUPTION

The federal government initiated a House of Representatives Inquiry into the role of Technical and Further Education system and its operation in 2013–2014. ALIA welcomes the inquiry. We share the nation's pride that the Australian TAFE system has had a world class reputation for best practice, and we support any initiative that will help us reclaim our global standing. Reviews are also taking place at state and territory, and institutional level. Until we see the outcomes of these review, it will be difficult to predict the future for TAFE libraries. There is systemwide uncertainty for management, administrators, educators and students, and this shows no sign of abating in the next three to five years.

THEME 02 A VET FUTURE

Having said that the TAFE system is going through a period of serious disruption, we can be certain that vocational education and training will be needed and that VET students will require access to learning and professional resources.

More than ever before, qualified workers are having to maintain their skills and knowledge through ongoing learning. This will expand the market for short courses, with people studying units, not necessarily for an additional qualification, but to make sure they are completely up-to-date with what is happening in their field.

With so many courses now being delivered online, VET colleges will be competing outside their geographic area for students. The TAFE and RTO online library experience will be a selling point for remote learners.

THEME 03

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

TAFEs are required to have libraries, but registered training organisations (RTOs) are not. This creates an imbalance for institutions and for students. TAFEs invest in library services, and this is reflected in the fees they charge students, whereas an RTO can decide not to, reducing its fees and making the course appear cheaper. However, students are being short-changed because they don't have access to the resources they need. Instead, they are often advised to make the best use they can of community libraries, which are unlikely to have the specialist information required for their studies.

In the future, standards will need to be built into the government accreditation process to create a level playing field for providers of VET courses.

THEME 04 PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

TAFE libraries have a very low ratio of qualified staff to students (approximately one to 800) yet the need for support is especially keen, when library users often do not have basic information literacy skills. Library and information professionals working in the VET sector are skilled at helping people learn how to use the internet and gain confidence in their own research abilities — skills which will increase their employability.

Funding pressures have seen the proportion of qualified staff in TAFE libraries diminish, and where RTOs have invested in some form of library service, or database access, there is rarely a qualified library and information professional available to help guide students. This is removing expert help from those who need it most.

THEME 05 OUR VISION

There will be a future for VET colleges and there will be a future for VET libraries. Increasingly, colleges will be competing in the online space, and investment in an engaging online library experience, as well as the physical infrastructure, will help provide the institution with a strong competitive edge.

Our vision for the future of VET libraries is consistent, well resourced facilities, with attractive study spaces — especially important for those who have no quiet study area at home — tailored IT and learning support, and staff with the qualifications, skills and experience that will enable students to achieve the very best results.

The activities of the college centre should rest on the propositions: first, that college libraries constitute a natural core for their activities; second, that the quality of the learning process is strongly influenced by the range and quality of services available in or from resource centres; third, that to the extent that colleges are prepared to accept a substitute for the traditional formal teaching environment the central resource centres will grow in importance for self directed learning.

— KANGAN REPORT, 1974

ACTIONS ARISING: VET LIBRARIES

VET libraries are going through a period of unprecedented change and disruption, and we can expect a very different look for the VET sector by 2020. We can see a positive future for libraries in this sector, but there are activities we can undertake to support this positive outcome.

ALIA

- We will continue to advocate for TAFE libraries through submissions to government and active participation in hearings and public discussions.
- We will work through our TAFE Library Advisory Committee to create national standards, guidelines and statements of best practice for VET libraries.



Advocacy

- We will advocate for qualified library and information professionals to be employed in VET libraries, to give students the best chance of success.



Professionals and their organisations

- VET libraries will need to develop their web presence to help support their institution's competitive edge in the online learning market.



