



Australian
Library and
Information
Association



ALIA Public Libraries Summit
Thursday 16 July 2009

National Library of Australia
Conference Room, 4th floor
10am—4pm

www.alia.org.au/summit09

WELCOME



The Hon Peter Garrett AM, MP

**Minister for the Environment, Heritage
and the Arts**

Libraries have long played an important part in our society as critical store-houses of literature, knowledge and information. I remember as a child visiting the mobile library near the local shopping centre for an armful of books to enjoy through the week. It is an experience that my own children enjoyed and it is one that kids of today, and I am sure of tomorrow, will also relish.

But our libraries are also changing. From shelves of books, index cards and microfiche the increasing digitisation of our world and a more e-connected society means that computers connected into the web and wireless hotspots are now just as much a feature of our local libraries. This has opened new challenges for our libraries as well as the opportunity to build on their proud reputation for expert, friendly advice and service.

It is a challenge that I believe our libraries have responded to well. In my own electorate I am very aware of the central role the local library plays in many of my constituents' lives and how access to its resources, be they books or the web, is so important. It is an experience that I know all of my colleagues in the Parliament will share.

But libraries also play an important social role. They are a place to meet and interact with your community and to learn about what is happening where you live. They are places of quiet contemplation, information and importantly they are safe places to connect with the wider world.

Managing these sometimes competing demands and priorities are among the issues that I know you will discuss at this summit and I wish you all well as you consider these important matters, confident that just as libraries have accommodated and led change in the past, they will maintain their relevance and centrality to our communities tomorrow.

Peter Garrett

July 2009

INTRODUCTION



We are delighted that you are able to join us for the ALIA Public Libraries Summit, on Thursday 16 July, at the National Library of Australia.

The title of the event is ***Setting a national agenda*** and our aim for the day is to show you how public libraries already act as national champions on many fronts; to seek your input and advice about how they could do even more for their communities, and to begin to put together a national policy framework.

We will ask you to think of public libraries as community spaces, filled with useful information and knowledge, providing access to the internet, hosted by experts who are only too happy to help people navigate these resources.

Public libraries are part of our heritage and tradition, yet at the same time, very much at the forefront of new technologies and in tune with the most pressing government priorities.

During the course of the day, we will be looking at how public libraries contribute to a wide variety of government agendas, including health, economic prosperity, digital citizenship, social inclusion, lifelong learning, literacy, stronger communities, well-being, supporting families, multi-culturalism and the environment.

There is so much to say about public libraries, but when we asked the public library community to submit papers for the ALIA Public Libraries Summit about issues that were top of mind, several clear themes emerged.

- Children, early reading and a literate Australia
- Encouraging the digital economy and digital citizenship
- Social inclusion and community partnerships — safety, fairness and participation
- Health and ageing

These have become the four strands around which we have built the Summit program. We have provided short summaries of the papers about these and other topics in this document. If you would like to go into more detail, the full versions are available to read and download at www.alia.org.au

We look forward to seeing you in Canberra.

Sue Hutley

Sue Hutley
ALIA Executive Director
sue.hutley@alia.org.au

OPENING ADDRESS



Senator Ursula Stephens

Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector

Dr Ursula Stephens was elected to the Australian Senate for NSW in 2001 and re-elected in 2007. She was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector in the Rudd Labor government. In this role she is driving an ambitious change agenda related to the government's social inclusion framework and third sector reform. Her vision is for a strong Australian democracy where everyone has the chance and choice to be actively engaged in their communities.

She has been actively involved in adult and community education and adult literacy in Australia for almost 25 years.

FACILITATOR



Gregory Cook

Director, Centre for Leadership and Management

Gregory Cook is a psychologist with more than fifteen years' experience in conference facilitation, organisational consulting and leadership development

Greg has worked with all levels of government in Australia on projects as diverse as the development of partnering agreements with health and welfare consortia; strategic planning in local government; team building for front line service teams; leadership development with universities and executive coaching.

The Centre for Leadership and Management is a Melbourne based company working exclusively with the public sector.

PRESENTERS



Libraries and social inclusion – the story so far ...

Jan Richards
ALIA President



Children, early reading and a literate Australia

Sylvia Marshall
Chair
Public Libraries Australia



Encouraging the digital economy and digital citizenship

Roxanne Missingham
Chair, Electronic Resources Australia
Parliamentary Librarian



Social inclusion and community partnerships—safety, fairness and participation

Frank McGuire
Pioneer of Hume Global Learning Village



Health and ageing

Regina Sutton
State Librarian & Chief Executive, State Library of NSW
Chair, National and State Libraries Australasia

SUMMIT PROGRAM

10.00 am

Welcome and opening

- **Welcome**
Jan Richards, President, Australian Library and Information Association
- **Opening**
Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and Parliamentary Secretary for the Voluntary Sector
- **Welcome to the National Library of Australia**
Jan Fullerton, Director-General, National Library of Australia
- **Welcome from the facilitator**
Greg Cook will outline the day's proceedings.

10.30 am

Libraries and social inclusion – the story so far ...

Jan Richards

Summit Leader and President, Australian Library and Information Association

11.10 am

Launch of Public Library Ambassadors campaign
Announcement of Public Library Standards Project

11.20 am

Morning tea

11.40 am

Public libraries as national champions of community engagement

Children, early reading and a literate Australia

Sylvia Marshall
Chair, Public Libraries Australia

Encouraging the digital economy and digital citizenship

Roxanne Missingham
Chair, Electronic Resources Australia
Parliamentary Librarian

Social inclusion and community partnerships – safety, fairness, participation

Frank McGuire
Pioneer of Hume Global Learning Village

Health and ageing

Regina Sutton
State Librarian and Chief Executive, State Library of NSW
Chair, National and State Libraries Australasia

1.00 pm

Lunch break

1.45 pm Workshops

The afternoon session will provide opportunity for discussions of the key themes and developing a clearer description of how public libraries could further assist or champion each of these issues.

The workshops will be facilitated by ALIA and representatives of each of the seven state public library associations.

- ***Public libraries as National Champions of community engagement by government***
 - Review of themes, case studies and projects described in the morning
 - Suggestions for further initiatives
- ***National Framework for 'partnering' between all levels of government and public libraries***
 - Developing draft principles and objectives
 - Processes for ongoing engagement
 - Policy implications

3.00 pm Afternoon tea

3.15 pm Plenary and review

- Review of Summit and workshop findings
- Identification of next steps
- Summary and commitments

4.00 pm Close

SUMMIT SUBMISSIONS

Copies of the full submissions are available at
<http://www.alia.org.au/summit09/submissions.html>

1. ***Australian Books from Birth program on behalf of the National Advisory Group for New Arrivals Early Literacy Reading Pack***
by Christine Sayer, State Library of Queensland
2. ***A bibliotherapy partnership between public libraries and health services***
by Jenn Martin, Community Liaison Librarian Auburn Public Library and Steering Committee Member NSW Readers Advisory Working Group
3. ***Creating a national public library service delivery model***
by Public Libraries Australia
4. ***Creating the future: the strategic direction and sustainability of Australia's public library system***
by Public Libraries NSW Metropolitan Association (PLM)
5. ***Developing a literate and reading nation***
Recommendations of *Reading critical: developing readers in Australia and New Zealand, a trans-Tasman conference held at the State Library of Victoria 11-12 April 2008*
by Dr Alan Bundy AM
6. ***Electronic Resources Australia: access to quality information resources for all Australians***
by Roxanne Missingham, Parliamentary Librarian
7. ***Libraries: social and cultural axis of our community***
by Graham Smith on behalf of Public Libraries NSW – Country (PLNSW-C)
8. ***Living Libraries: communities talking together***
by Lucy Kinsley, Lismore Area Librarian, Richmond-Tweed Regional Library
9. ***Making a difference - better beginnings: Family Literacy Program***
by Margaret Allen, CEO and State Librarian, State Library of Western Australia
10. ***New partnerships and working with the not-for-profit sector: CAVAL and collaboration***
by Janette Wright, Chief Executive CAVAL Ltd.
11. ***NLA submission***
by Jan Fullerton, Director General National Library of Australia
12. ***NSLA submission***
by Regina Sutton Chair, National & State Libraries Australasia, State Librarian & Chief Executive, State Library of New South Wales
13. ***Public libraries and internet connectivity***
by Ian Greenhalgh, Armidale Dumaresq Council War Memorial Library
14. ***Public libraries in an aging community***
by Chris Jones, Great Lakes Library, Forster NSW

15. **Public Libraries South Australia (PLSA)**
16. **Public libraries in cities of diversity: providing a space for redistribution, recognition and encounter**
by Professor Ruth Fincher, Department of Resource Management and Geography, University of Melbourne and Dr Kurt Iveson, School of Geosciences, University of Sydney
17. **Public libraries third places, social spaces**
by Louise Bauer, Library Hubs Manager Sunshine Coast Libraries, Queensland.
18. **Public library driven family literacy initiatives**
by Barossa Council Public Library, SA
19. **Strengthening communities through libraries - Public Libraries Victoria Network Inc.**
submitted by Elisabeth Jackson, Executive Officer, Public Libraries Victoria Network Inc.
20. **The role played by public libraries in Western Australia**
by the Local Government Librarians' Association of Western Australian (LocLib)
21. **Towards a policy framework for the Australian public library system**
by Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA)
22. **Unleashing the potential of libraries in regional and remote communities**
by State Library of Queensland
23. **Web 2.0 and public libraries: essential innovation requires a national solution**
by Jack Goodman

ABSTRACTS OF THE SUMMIT SUBMISSIONS

Abstracts of the 23 Summit submissions are included here grouped by themes:

Children, early reading and a literate Australia	page 10
Encouraging the digital economy and digital citizenship	page 11
Social inclusion and community partnerships — safety, fairness and participation	page 12
Health and ageing	page 14
Public libraries as national champions of Literacy and reading	page 14
Public libraries as national champions of Community partnerships	page 15
Public libraries as national champions of Health information	page 15
Setting a national agenda for libraries in the digital age	page 15
A strategic framework for Australia’s public libraries	page 16

Copies of the full submissions are available at
<http://www.alia.org.au/summit09/submissions.html>

CHILDREN, EARLY READING AND A LITERATE AUSTRALIA

Australian Books from Birth program

Christine Sayer

State Library of Queensland

National Advisory Group for New Arrivals Early Literacy Reading Pack

The Federal Government recognises that social exclusion is multi-dimensional and is created by a combination of inter-related factors. One of the most important of these is literacy. People who have poor literacy skills are more likely to feel excluded from society, and that’s why this paper calls for the introduction of an Australian *Books from Birth* program, delivered through Australia’s network of public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres. This would provide all Australians with the opportunity to commence a lifelong literacy and learning journey. It would also provide a second chance for some parents to learn alongside their children, especially those from indigenous, CALD and socially disadvantaged families.

Making a difference - better beginnings: Family Literacy Program

Margaret Allen

CEO and State Librarian

State Library of Western Australia

Key findings from *Making a Difference, an evaluation of the Better Beginnings Family Literacy Program* conducted by Edith Cowan University, Western Australia, demonstrate that the program is having a strong and positive impact on parental literacy practices, attitudes and beliefs, and it is increasing library membership and usage. Coordinated by The State Library of Western Australia and co-funded by state and local governments and Rio Tinto since 2005, Better Beginnings is an integrated program working across library services, health, education and community services

that aims to provide positive early language and literacy experiences for parents and young children.

Public library-driven family literacy initiatives

Elizabeth Beales

Barossa Council Public Library, SA

This paper looks at ways in which the local public library can work in partnership with other organisations within their community to provide and encourage family literacy programs aimed at the youngest and more vulnerable audiences. It suggests ways in which government could help public libraries achieve these goals.

ENCOURAGING THE DIGITAL ECONOMY AND DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Electronic Resources Australia: access to quality information resources for all Australians

Roxanne Missingham

Parliamentary Librarian

As a nation, we lack universal access to quality information. Electronic Resources Australia (ERA) is a vital component of a successful, inclusive, digital Australia. It provides a national approach to purchasing electronic resources for all Australians. ERA is a reality today because of the commitment and vision of many Australian public, national, state and special libraries. These libraries have worked together towards providing easy access to a variety of trusted, licensed, online sources through their libraries. After two full years of operation the consortium has enabled almost half of all Australians (8.5 million individuals) to view quality online full text resources.

Web 2.0 and public libraries: essential innovation requires a national solution

Jack Goodman

CEO and Founder

Tutoring Australasia

The future of public libraries lies in building and strengthening relationships with the communities they serve, and Web 2.0 services are central to achieving this mission. At the same time, for our public libraries to be able to innovate in these essential ways, they require far more comprehensive and sustainable funding. This paper proposes an urgent and profound rethink of the manner and scale in which the nation funds these critical local institutions, to support the long-term growth and viability of Australia's public library network.

Public libraries and internet connectivity

Ian Greenhalgh

Armidale Dumaresq Council War Memorial Library

By putting its weight behind public library connectivity, the Federal Government can provide equal access to internet communication for nearly every community in Australia. Current infrastructure funding and policy provide a welcome opportunity to advocate for public libraries to be made a priority for government support.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS — SAFETY, FAIRNESS AND PARTICIPATION

Closer partnership and collaboration to address social inclusion challenges

Regina Sutton

Chair, National and State Libraries Australasia

State Librarian and Chief Executive, State Library of New South Wales

Libraries contribute to the goals of social inclusion – securing a job; accessing services; connecting with family, friends, work, personal interests and the local community; dealing with personal crises; and one's voice being heard. In this paper, National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) urges closer partnership and collaboration between libraries and other parts of the public sector that address social inclusion challenges, so that these efforts are coordinated and cohesive, strengthening the benefits to the community.

Unleashing the potential of libraries in regional and remote communities

State Library of Queensland

Case studies support this paper's recommendations that public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres in small regional and remote communities are funded, recognised and more widely utilised as facilities for progressing the government's social inclusion agenda.

Libraries: social and cultural axis of our community

Graham Smith

Public Libraries NSW Country (PLNSW-C)

This paper examines the changing nature of libraries in Australian communities through a series of vignettes and by providing examples from current practice. These examples are used to present an argument for the social and cultural centrality of libraries and to highlight the problems which the network currently faces. It proposes a building of alliances between communities and government at all levels to ensure the continuation of quality library services.

Strengthening communities through libraries

Elisabeth Jackson

Executive Officer

Public Libraries Victoria Network Inc

Public libraries contribute to the social inclusion agenda developed at the Australia 2020 Summit in 2008 and this paper lists specific projects being undertaken in Victoria. It explains the challenges facing libraries and describes how, with greater recognition and resources from all levels of government, they could play an even greater role in community development.

Public libraries third places, social spaces

Louise Bauer

Library Hubs Manager

Sunshine Coast Libraries, Queensland

If the home is first and workplace second, libraries are the third place – community spaces on neutral ground, where people can gather and interact.

The role played by public libraries in Western Australia

Local Government Librarians' Association of Western Australian (LocLib)

This submission offers a number of case studies that illustrate how public libraries in Western Australia play an integral and vital role in ensuring social inclusion of people from all walks of life, using structured formal partnerships and more casual and serendipitous library experiences. The case studies include state-wide funded programs; individual council programs; programs offered in conjunction with other stakeholders, and the benefits for an individual library user.

The transformation of libraries into community social hubs

Public Libraries South Australia (PLSA)

Increasingly the libraries of the new millennium are no longer simply repositories for books but serve as a civic gathering place and stimulus for neighbourhood and community revival. Public libraries are being designed as part of larger public spaces making the library space more open to opportunities for real-life social networking. It is the vision of PLSA to enable the transformation of the traditional library setting into a hub for personal growth and vibrant social interaction, which will excite, encourage, assist and serve the community.

Living libraries: communities talking together

Lucy Kinsley

Lismore Area Librarian

Richmond –Tweed Regional Library

This case study of Lismore Living Library shows how effective libraries can be in bringing people together in a positive environment. The Living Library concept is international and was first developed in 2000, by Danish youth organisation 'Stop the Violence', for Denmark's largest annual music event, the Roskilde Music Festival. With so many people from varying backgrounds together, organisers wanted to ensure a harmonious environment and prevent outbreaks of violence. Concert-goers were invited to be books and sit down with a reader who could ask them about aspects of their life - where they came from, how they saw society, and so on. 'Stop the Violence' was a peer-led youth initiative aimed at educating young people to be active in preventing violence and its potential was shown to be so great that it has since been adopted around the world.

Public libraries in cities of diversity: providing a space for redistribution, recognition and encounter

**Professor Ruth Fincher, Department of Resource Management and Geography,
University of Melbourne**

Dr Kurt Iveson, School of Geosciences, University of Sydney

This paper discusses the important contribution public libraries make to social justice, and how they respond to the challenges of urban diversity. The authors talk about the historic universalism of the public library, and how this principle can continue to be applied in our multi-cultural, multi-media society. They identify the tensions in designing library spaces to accommodate groups with varying requirements, and highlight the importance of ensuring that the library service is geared to the particular needs of the local community.

HEALTH AND AGEING

Public libraries in an aging community

Chris Jones

Great Lakes Library, Forster NSW

Australia has an aging population and the demands of older people in the future will put an increased focus on the role of public libraries. The impact can be seen in the characteristics of communities that, even today, have a higher proportion of older residents. Library services to these communities generally have high stock turnover rates, high circulation levels per staff member and a demand for aged services and targeted collections. This has direct and often expensive resourcing implications. In addition, public libraries are also required to play an increasingly important social role for older people.

Libraries: social and cultural axis of our community

Graham Smith

Public Libraries NSW Country (PLNSW-C)

This paper includes references to 'grandparents and books' programs, surfing seniors, and the help given by library staff to elderly users around the expanding provision of government e-services.

The transformation of libraries into community social hubs

Public Libraries South Australia (PLSA)

This submission talks about the increased demand for public library facilities, collections, technologies and programs to support the aging population. It is noted that older people read more, and are more frequent visitors to public libraries, with people over 65 visiting libraries on average five times more a year than younger age groups.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AS NATIONAL CHAMPIONS OF:

Literacy and reading

Developing a literate and reading nation.

Dr Alan Bundy AM

Recommendations of *Reading critical: developing readers in Australia and New Zealand*, a trans-Tasman conference held at the State Library of Victoria 11-12 April 2008.

This paper proposes that an Australian *Year of Reading* is held in 2011 or 2012, using the experience gained from the successful UK *Year of Reading* held in 2008. This was launched by the British Prime Minister and underwritten by a central government grant of £3.7 million. It aimed to be a 12 month celebration of reading by encouraging people to read in businesses, homes and communities throughout the UK. It provided new opportunities to read and access help and support through schools, libraries and related agencies. It was a national campaign to foster a reading

culture and specifically to engage people who needed help with reading or who thought that reading was not for them. A priority was to develop an enduring legacy of reading embedded in the social culture.

Community partnerships

New partnerships and working with the not-for-profit sector

Janette Wright

Chief Executive CAVAL Ltd

Australia's 1500 public libraries are spread across all states and territories with a variety of governance and funding arrangements. To achieve their full potential, they must find ways to collaborate across state and regional boundaries, and through partnering with specialist agencies achieve synergies and efficiencies in service delivery. CAVAL encourages public libraries and their peak bodies to consider collaborative arrangements to achieve better outcomes for all libraries in Australia's network.

Health information

A bibliotherapy partnership between public libraries and health services

Jenn Martin, Community Liaison Librarian Auburn Public Library

Steering Committee Member NSW Readers Advisory Working Group

This proposal for a partnership between public libraries and healthcare providers to promote the benefits of reading is derived from a close working relationship between staff at Auburn Council and staff in the Multicultural Health Eastern Cluster at Sydney West Area Health Service (SWAHS).

It states that bibliotherapy is not costly or invasive, but does require a partnership between government, libraries, healthcare services, and volunteer and community organisations. Bibliotherapy touches upon far-reaching agendas such as social inclusion, literacy, life-long learning, employment, promoting the arts and culture, innovation in healthcare and increasing access to psychological services.

SETTING A NATIONAL AGENDA FOR:

Libraries in the digital age

NLA submission: three recommendations

Jan Fullerton

Director-General, National Library of Australia

The National Library of Australia's three recommendations reiterate and build on the recommendations of an earlier report of the Senate Committee on the Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee, *Libraries in the Online Environment* (2003).

The National Library encourages governments to work with public libraries so they contribute information about their collections, participate in the inter-library lending system, access cataloguing data and promote Libraries Australia to their users. It urges Summit participants to seek a commitment from governments to make funding available at a national level to support the purchase of a core set of online databases for access by all Australians regardless of their individual library affiliation. It encourages public libraries to work with National and State Libraries Australasia through *Re-imagining Library Services* to improve library services to meet the information needs of Australians in the digital age.

A strategic framework for Australia's public libraries

Creating the future: the strategic direction and sustainability of Australia's public library system

Public Libraries NSW - Metropolitan Association (PLM)

Australia's 1500+ public libraries receive around 100 million visits per year by 12 million Australians. The libraries are primarily funded by local government to the tune of \$750 million per annum, which consists of both capital investment and annual operating expenditure. There are varying financial contributions from state and territory governments. The Australian public library system is under financial pressure. Some public libraries need to revitalise their infrastructure, programs and offerings. The 2008 *Enriching communities: the value of public libraries in New South Wales* report revealed the value of public libraries, including quantified economic value. The development and implementation of a strategic framework and direction for Australia's public library system is now critical.

Towards a policy framework for the Australian public library system

Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA)

This paper calls for a consensus on the need, and the mechanisms, for the endorsement by the three levels of Australian government of a strategic framework for the Australian public library system 2010-2020. This is required to convey to the 12 million public library users and others, why and how those governments are committed to partnership in a better, more accessible, and more equitable public library system for all. It is also required as a reference point for all public library funders and stakeholders.

Creating a national public library service delivery model

Public Libraries Australia (PLA)

Public Libraries Australia presents the case for a national approach to public library service delivery. PLA identifies three major areas of focus that it believes would especially benefit from this – literacy, the aging population and technology.

PLA recommends that the library associations should collaborate on the development of a national set of library standards and that these be used by all spheres of government, working together, to develop a model for consistent, well-resourced public libraries across Australia.

CONTACTS

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