![Australian Library and Information Association logo]

Senator Tony Sheldon
Chair, Select Committee on Adopting Artificial Intelligence
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Sheldon

Select Committee on Adopting Artificial Intelligence (AI) – supplementary information

Following from our submission that spoke to the importance of AI inclusion and AI literacy, two further reports have been released which we would like to bring to the committee's attention. From the library perspective, these reports highlight trends we are already seeing, where AI is increasingly integrated into daily life, and yet there continue to be deep divides within the general population in awareness, understanding and skills.

Adult Media Literacy in 2024

This second national survey of adult media literacy[i] received responses from a representative sample of 3852 people from January-April 2024. For the first time the survey asked about Generative AI.

Despite the inescapability of AI, 60% of people surveyed in early 2024 reported that they had not used generative AI. Just one in five (22%) adults are confident about using generative AI tools, while twice as many (44%) are not confident.

▶ **Figure 6.8**
I don't use generative AI because I don't know what it is. By demographics and media ability confidence (%)
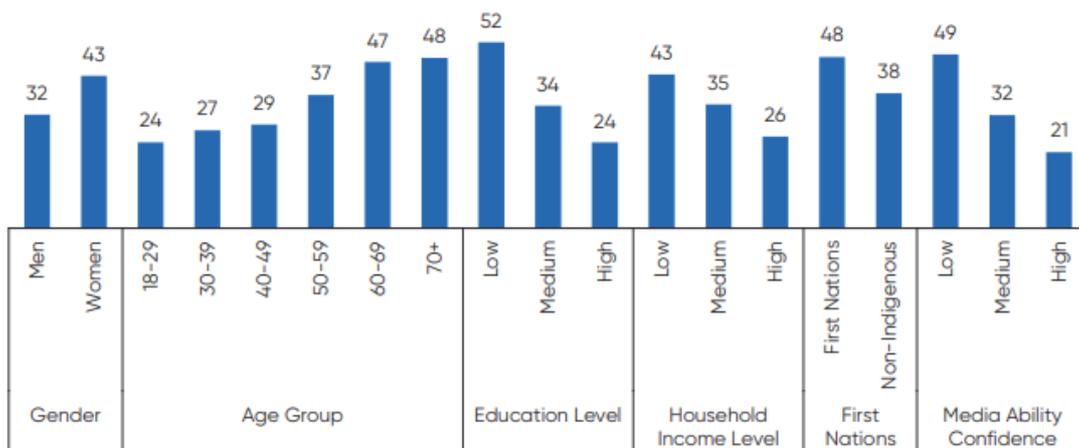
N = 990 (respondents who do not use generative AI because they do not know what it is)

As can be seen from the figure above, the percentage of people reporting that they don't use generative AI because they don't know what it is, has a reverse correlation with income and education, and increases with age. At the same time older adults are more likely to cite not wanting to be left behind by technology as a reason for using generative AI: (30% for 60+ versus 14% for 18–29 14%).

When asked about media literacy education (an important component of AI literacy), 82% percent of people support adult media literacy being available for adults and 84% think it should be taught in schools. For adult media literacy, First Nations people, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members and older Australians are more likely to seek support from libraries and community organisations.

Digital Sisters: AI for Good

This report from Good Things Foundation specifically looked at a program supporting AI literacy and digital inclusion for CALD women supported by Microsoft and the Telstra Foundation. It noted key risks to low AI literacy for this cohort include exacerbating digital exclusion, widening power imbalances, increased online harm and parents being unable to protect children. It showed the success of pilot programs working through trusted organisations, and strongly recommended AI literacy for all.

Conclusion

The Australian Library and information Association would be very happy to provide further information about the current demands of library services for AI literacy and effective support. In particular we would support programs to upskill library staff to ensure they have the AI literacy levels and skills needed to support community, and the development and roll-out of evidence-based AI literacy programs in libraries across Australia.

If you have any questions about this submission, please do not hesitate to contact us on Trish.Hepworth@alia.org.au or 0401 838 244.

With thanks

Trish Hepworth

Deputy CEO, ALIA

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[i] Notley, T., Chambers, S., Park, S., Dezuanni, M. 2024, Adult Media Literacy in 2024: Australian Attitudes, Experiences and Needs. Western Sydney University, Queensland University of Technology and University of Canberra

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