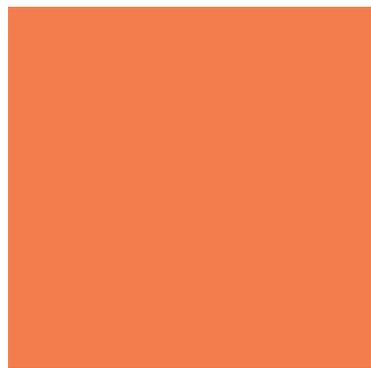
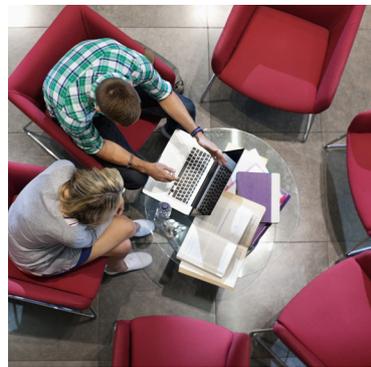


AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY ALLIANCE ACHIEVEMENTS

2010–2015





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Australian Public Library Alliance Achievements 2010–2015

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, June 2015

www.alia.org.au

AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY ALLIANCE ACHIEVEMENTS 2010–2015

OVERVIEW

The ALIA Australian Public Library Alliance (APLA) is the peak body for public libraries in Australia. Our committee comprises the chair of every state-based public library association, a senior representative from the ACT, Northern Territory and Tasmanian library services, and expert members. We represent 94% of all the 1500 public libraries across Australia through membership subscription.

APLA (or, as it was previously known, the ALIA Public Libraries Advisory Committee) was formed following a highly successful ALIA Public Libraries Summit in July 2009. At the summit, libraries leaders called for, 'Australia's public libraries, united behind common goals and ambitions, sharing best practice, contributing to strong communities, valued by people and government, continuing to provide universal free access to information, knowledge and ideas, and confirming the importance of their role for future generations.' A national alliance, supported by every state and territory, and Public Libraries Australia, was the primary outcome of the summit and was ratified by the signing of a Memorandum of Collaboration in July 2010.

In the past five years, APLA has many achievements to celebrate.

- We have developed national standards and guidelines for public libraries, providing essential benchmarks for library managers, councils and state and territory government.
- We have established public libraries' position as the 'active connectors' for early literacy and run highly successful campaigns encouraging readers of all ages. Every year we have delivered the Summer Reading Club and National Simultaneous Storytime. Our biggest single activity has been the National Year of Reading in 2012, and from this The Reading Hour has emerged as an annual event.
- We have provided submissions to 10 federal government consultations and engaged in discussions with the Ministry for the Arts, Department of Communications and Department of Industry.
- We have supported the book industry by promoting Australian authors and their works, and we have tracked libraries' expansion into ebooks, collaborating on a national level to address the issues around lending with publishers and platform providers.
- We have developed our vision for the future for public libraries at a national level, through the ALIA Futures initiative, and shared this with colleagues internationally through our involvement with IFLA.
- We have run high profile media campaigns around Library Lovers' Day and Library and Information Week.

- We have highlighted the role of public libraries in ensuring online safety for children and all members of the community, partnering with the Alannah and Madeline and Telstra Foundations to create eSmart Libraries and with the Department of Communications to promote Stay Smart Online Week.
- We have published the Little Book of Public Libraries for a broad range of stakeholders and produced regular monthly newsletters for public library subscribers.
- We have developed a public library specialisation as part of the ALIA PD Scheme for library and information professionals, and we have created a proficiency program for non-library qualified staff working in public libraries. Public library streams at ALIA conferences have provided further opportunities for professional development.
- We have measured the return on investment of public libraries, providing further evidence of their important role and value to their communities.

Many of these activities are ongoing and further initiatives are under discussion, for example an Early Literacy Summit in March 2016 and the updating of the national standards and guidelines.

APLA meets every two months via teleconference and at least once a year there is a face-to-face meeting.

Since APLA's inception in 2010, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) has provided strong support in administration, project management, research, report writing, design, finance management and communications infrastructure. This has enabled the alliance to function as the peak body for public libraries within ALIA (which is the peak body for all types of libraries and library and information professionals in Australia).



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CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

This time six years ago we were contemplating the ALIA Public Libraries Summit, the first time in Australia that major stakeholders from across the country came together to discuss the future of the sector. We were excited, and more than a little nervous as to how this would pan out.

Fast forward to June 2015 and the aspirations of the dreamed of collaboration are a reality. The goals we set ourselves at the Summit in 2009 to speak with one voice and to develop and deliver initiatives with a national focus have been realised. Not that we've stopped there! As you'll see from this report the momentum of our shared vision has led to an ongoing series of targeted programs.



The Australian Public Library Alliance is truly representative of the countries' 1,500 public libraries. Our members comprise the leaders of the state associations, each elected by their peers, or respected senior library staff in the case of Tasmania, ACT and Northern Territory. This is complemented by the inclusion of several expert members, colleagues who have a strong history of engagement in the sector.

In developing APLA we have recognised the importance and individuality of the states and territories and the pivotal role that local and state governments have in the provision of public library services. Indeed the strength of the Alliance is the bringing together of these partners, each with their own expertise and willingness to contribute. We also work closely with National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) who are key players in the public library arena.

The model we have developed is recognised as world's best practice and over the past 12 months it has been my great privilege to be able to share this with colleagues at international conferences. The feedback has been universally positive with many comments made about how we can move forward when territorial jealousies are left behind.

What we have created and achieved is due to the dedication and commitment of all concerned who share a common goal to deliver the best possible services to our communities, wherever in Australia they may be. The Australian Public Library Alliance isn't just those of us who gather for teleconferences or our annual 'face to face' meeting. It is representative of all Australian public libraries. You are the Alliance, and you are amazing.

Jan Richards

Chair, Australian Public Library Alliance

NATIONAL COLLABORATION

ALIA PUBLIC LIBRARIES SUMMIT 2009



Although the Public Libraries Summit took place before the period covered by this report, we have included it because this marked the start of five years of successful formal collaboration between APLA partners.

Our aim with the ALIA Public Libraries Summit was for public libraries to be confirmed as national champions, advancing social, educational, cultural, broadband and digital programs and policies.

Some 50 leaders from public and state libraries, government, not-for-profit and other stakeholder groups came together in Canberra in July 2009 to celebrate the achievements of the public library network and to talk about further opportunities to make a valuable contribution to all three levels of government.

There were three major outcomes from the summit:

1. Agreement from all the state-based associations to form one national committee (the forerunner of APLA) under the auspices of ALIA.
2. Shared commitment to a national vision and framework for Australian public libraries, leading to co-funded programs.
3. A joint initiative, with State and Territory Libraries, to produce the National Year of Reading 2012.

MEMORANDUM OF COLLABORATION 2010 AND 2014

Following on from the summit, our 11 organisations signed a Memorandum of Collaboration. We are: ACT Library & Information Service, Australian Library and Information Association, Northern Territory Library, Public Libraries Australia, Public Libraries New South Wales Country, Public Libraries New South Wales Metropolitan, Public Libraries South Australia, Public Libraries Victoria Network, Public Libraries Western Australia, Queensland Public Libraries Association, State Library of Tasmania.

The memorandum was intended 'to provide a cooperative framework for all parties to work in partnership towards the goal of a better, stronger future for Australian public libraries, for the sustainability of services to local communities'.

The collaboration proved so successful that a further Memorandum of Collaboration was signed in June 2014 by the same partners (albeit with some name changes): Australian Library and Information Association, Libraries ACT, LINC Tasmania, Northern Territory Library, NSW Metropolitan Public Libraries Association, Public Libraries Australia, Public Libraries New South Wales, Public Libraries South Australia, Public Libraries Victoria Network, Public Libraries Western Australia, Queensland Public Libraries Association.

FRAMEWORKS AND STRATEGIES

NATIONAL VISION AND FRAMEWORK FOR AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES 2010

The 2009 ALIA Public Libraries Summit helped us develop a vision of Australian public libraries as 'united, collaborative, community-focused and valued', and from this to develop strategies and a workplan to deliver the desired outcomes 2010–2015.

- United and collaborative — we will come together to achieve our vision; we will work together and with partners to guide and improve operations, build services and increase reach.
- Community-focused — we will shape public library services to suit the changing needs of the communities they serve,
- Valued — we will provide universal free access to information, knowledge and ideas, and deliver against local, state/territory and national government priorities.

NATIONAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES 2010 AND 2012

APLA commissioned Libraries Alive! to develop national standards and guidelines for Australian public libraries.

The brief was to determine whether the evidence-based methodology used for the NSW standards for public libraries, *Living Learning Libraries: Standards and guidelines for NSW public libraries*, could be extended to derive standards and guidelines applicable across all Australian states and territories. The State Libraries of New South Wales and Queensland generously gave permission for their state-based standards and guidelines to be used as touchstones for the national project.

The project resulted in 12 standards — quality levels at baseline and enhanced service delivery levels — and 20 guidelines, documenting best practice and providing operational suggestions for improving library performance.

The original 2010 measures were revised for the second edition, published in 2012.

EARLY LITERACY FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGY 2014

Work commenced in 2011 on an early literacy framework and strategy for Australian public libraries and the final version was ratified by APLA for publication at the start of 2014. The purpose of this national framework and strategy was:

- To define the special role of public libraries in early literacy.
- To raise the profile of the important role that public libraries play in pre-school learning both internally (with library staff) and externally, with the public, government and especially funding bodies.
- To gain formal recognition from government and other agencies providing early childhood support and services, resulting in the inclusion of public library representatives in high level state, territory and local government planning for pre-school children.

In this report, we described the special role of public libraries in early literacy and noted their position as the 'active connectors', providing:

- Early literacy advice and encouragement direct to parents – new parents' visits to libraries with the maternal and child health service; visits to crèches, kindergartens, community language centres; parent advice at the desk eg booklists
- Activities for parents and/or children to encourage early literacy – Children's Week events, Children's Book Week activities; Reconciliation Week storytimes
- Early literacy programs for parents and children – community publishing, baby bounce, Auslan baby bounce, toddler time, storytime, bilingual storytime
- Advocacy — promoting the need for early literacy – outreach to community groups, the Reading Hour and National Simultaneous Storytime
- Training for professionals and/or parents – training for library staff and family day care, childcare centre, playgroup staff and maternal and child health nurses; training and support for volunteers
- Resources for professionals and/or parents – collections of board books, picture books, CDs, DVDs, databases eg Tumblebooks, Intrepica; parenting books and magazines; book bags for babies; tips for reading with very young children; resources for playgroups
- Information sharing events and connections – liaison programming with the Council, early literacy working groups in some Councils; hosting and participating in children's forums
- Research into early literacy
- Gaining external funding for early literacy initiatives.

LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY

ENGAGEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT 2010–2015

APLA has been actively involved in discussions with the Australian Government and its agencies around a number of topics, including early literacy, high speed internet access, cyber-safety, copyright and the broader arts agenda. Between 2009 and 2015 we have made the following submissions on behalf of public libraries:

- Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety (2010)
- Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy: Mandatory ISP filtering (2010)
- Ministry for the Arts: National Cultural Policy (2011)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics: Essential statistical assets (2012)
- Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety: Inquiry into cyber-safety for senior Australians (2012)
- Australian Law Reform Commission: Inquiry into copyright and the digital economy (2013)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics: Census 2016 (2013)
- Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy: Digital White Paper (2013)
- Productivity Commission: Issues Paper on Childcare and Early Childhood Learning (2014)
- Attorney General: Online Copyright Infringement Discussion Paper (2014)

In 2010, on behalf of public libraries, ALIA became a founder member of the Safer Internet Group, which successfully campaigned against mandatory ISP filtering. APLA was part of the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Environment's Consultative Working Group on Cybersafety from 2010–2013, and was a member of the National Local Government Workforce Development Reference Group from 2010–2015.

During 2012–2013, senior library leaders represented ALIA and APLA public libraries on the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Book Industry Collaborative Council. In 2014–2015, APLA colleagues supported the NSW Public Libraries Association in its lobbying of the NSW State Government.

In addition, we have had meetings with the Department of Communications to talk about how the public library infrastructure can be used to support Digital Hubs and other programs, and with the Ministry for the Arts and the Australia Council for the Arts to promote public libraries' role in the Australian book industry.

IFLA AND THE LYON DECLARATION 2014–2015

Jan Richards, the Chair of APLA, and Marian Morgan-Bindon, Chair of the Queensland Public Libraries Association and a Director of ALIA, both sit on the IFLA Public Libraries Standing Committee. Although attending in a personal capacity, they represent Australian interests at the World Library and Information Congress each year. As a result, APLA was one of the first organisations to sign the IFLA Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development at the congress in France in 2014.

As a signatory to the IFLA Lyon Declaration, we have been in contact with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and met to explain the library position that access to information be included in the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals.

BOOK INDUSTRY AND ELENDING

Keeping abreast of the changing environment for ebooks and e lending has been a major task for APLA since 2010. In 2013, ALIA organised a series of ebooks and e lending think tanks around Australia. APLA participated in these and supported the development of issues and position papers, which were used to reflect the interests of libraries to government and other stakeholders. In addition, we surveyed public libraries to identify year-on-year growth in digital borrowing and produced the *Comparison of ebooks and e lending in Australian public libraries 2013 v 2014* report.

In 2015 we have carried out a further e lending survey, with the aim of building insight into the level and forms of e lending currently available, borrowing habits and emerging trends.

During the past five years, we have established good relationships with the Australian Publishers Association (APA), Australian Booksellers Association (ABA), the Australian Society of Authors and the Copyright Agency.

Since 2013, we have been supportive of the Copyright Agency Reading Australia initiative, promoting Australian content; in 2014 and 2015 we have provided a communications channel for the APA Australian Book Industry Awards (ABIAs), and in 2015 we produced the Book Industry Awards Calendar, in association with the APA and the ABA.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Many organisations see the benefit of working with public libraries to reach local communities, and where this is of mutual benefit and 'for good', APLA has provided its support. For example, in 2010 APLA members were pleased to support the SBS's new series *Immigration Nation*, and in 2014, APLA members accepted free copies of Telstra's Everyone Connected DVD into their collections, making them available to library users who are less familiar with new technologies and the internet.

CAMPAIGNS

NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2012

APLA was the originator of the National Year of Reading – an important outcome of the Public Libraries Summit 2009. APLA and the State Libraries were the driving force behind the campaign to turn 2012 into the National Year of Reading, linking together all the great things that were already happening around books, reading and literacy, and giving them an extra boost, with inspirational programs and events taking place across the country.



**National
Year of
Reading
2012**

We partnered with government, the media, writers, schools, publishers, booksellers, employers, child care providers, health professionals and a whole host of other organisations that shared our passion for reading.

Our vision was of 'Australia, a nation of readers' and our three goals were:

- For all Australians to understand the benefits of reading as a life skill and catalyst for wellbeing
- To promote a reading culture in every home
- To establish an aspirational goal of sharing a book with your child every day

We purposefully described this as a National Year of Reading, not a National Year of Literacy, but pockets of low literacy around Australia provided our rationale for raising awareness of the importance and benefits of reading.

Our target audiences varied for different programs within the overall campaign. For *One Country Reading* we targeted under 12s, teen and adult readers; for the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace* and *Adult Learners' Week* we targeted adults with low literacy; for *Dads Read*, we targeted parents from low socio-economic groups; for *The Reading Hour* we especially targeted parents of very young children (0–5); for our Indigenous literacy programs, we targeted people with low literacy in remote communities.

Family literacy was a key target for the National Year of Reading. By giving parents and caregivers the confidence and skills to share books with their children – whether or not they themselves are readers – we knew we could help to break the cycle of disadvantage.

The National Year of Reading 2012 was about children learning to read and keen readers finding new sources of inspiration. It was about supporting reading initiatives while respecting the oral tradition of storytelling. It was about helping people discover and rediscover the magic of books. And most of all, it was about Australians becoming a nation of readers.

The whole campaign was based on a highly consultative, evidence-based approach involving the National Year of Reading founder partners in setting the goals and objectives of the campaign.

Although the National Year of Reading needed to reach readers and non-readers, to have critical mass and be part of the mainstream rather than sidelined as a program for marginalised Australians, the underlying intention of the campaign was to reach people experiencing disadvantage and low literacy. For the public library membership drive, for example, we targeted:

- Those who can't afford to buy all the books they want to read
- Migrants looking for a point of connection with their new surroundings
- Parents who might not have thought of reading as a family activity
- Elderly residents (promoting a healthy mind as well as a healthy body)
- Young adults who may have got out of the habit of reading for pleasure
- Non-readers seeking help to improve their literacy skills
- People who don't have their own computer at home

The cost of the campaign at a national level was \$1.7 million. In addition, we estimate there was \$5.6 million-worth of in-kind support. Partners contributed what they felt the project needed or deserved (Disney Junior, for example, produced a high quality TV advertisement for The Reading Hour and ran it free on the Disney Channel in the run up to The Reading Hour). For most recipients, the cost of participation was free.

The promotional tools were primarily shared branding (available to all free of charge); print collateral including posters, bookmarks, wallcharts, available free to libraries; free downloadable versions of the print material for other partners; our highly active website www.love2read.org.au, updated at least twice a week, and our even more active social media sites – 12,000 online followers for Love2Read Facebook, Twitter and our e-newsletter. PR was incredibly important, as we had no budget for advertising. In terms of editorial coverage and free advertising alone, we gained \$26 million-worth of media coverage.

We know that more than 2,000 libraries across Australia participated, running more than 4,000 events across the year, involving more than 200,000 active participants.

Our original budget for carrying out the campaign was \$7 million and, thanks to a highly active program of partnerships, we managed to pull off nearly all the activities we wanted to do at a national level on the much reduced figure of \$1.7 million.

- If we just look at the \$1.7 million invested against the value of the media coverage generated and the in-kind support provided, this gives us an ROI of \$18.59 for every \$1 invested.
- If we look at the \$1.7 million against the 200,000 direct participants alone (ignoring the wider community awareness raising), it has cost just \$8.50 per person for a potentially life-changing experience.

Edith Cowan University carried out an extensive evaluation of the National Year of Reading, which confirmed the success of the campaign.

THE READING HOUR, ANNUALLY FROM 2012

The Reading Hour is an important legacy from the National Year of Reading. It is an annual event, which takes place each August in hundreds of schools, homes and libraries across Australia. The message for parents is 'share a book for 10 minutes a day, an hour a week, and help your child develop a lifelong love of reading', but The Reading Hour is an event for all ages.

Our national ambassador for The Reading Hour is author-actor William McInnes, and the Copyright Agency provides funding for many other writers to appear at library events – 85 in 2014.

SUMMER READING CLUB, ANNUALLY FROM 2011

Summer reading programs happened around Australia prior to this date, but in 2011 the State Library of Queensland took the lead in creating a nationwide Australian campaign, which has been adopted by all our APLA partners.

Now in its fourth year, the Summer Reading Club provides an annual theme to guide library-based Summer Reading Club programming; an interactive website that provides fun and engaging online activities and links for program participants; and merchandise and marketing materials, used as incentives and in the development of in-house resources to support local level programming.

The Summer Reading Club is designed to be a flexible, fun and practical program that can be adapted to suit individual library's requirements. The program can be as simple as registering a young reader's participation online to programming a series of SRC theme-based activities and events to be delivered during the summer holidays.

LIBRARY LOVERS' DAY, ANNUALLY

Each year, 14 February, we mark Valentine's Day by asking library lovers to celebrate with us in local communities. Teams run events and activities, including a blind date with a book or singles' night in the library and customers love it.

It is a great opportunity for media coverage and we take the opportunity to launch a poll or a survey in the run up to Library and Information Week in May.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION WEEK, ANNUALLY

For more than 15 years, ALIA has run Library and Information Week in May to raise the profile of libraries and information service professionals in Australia and gives libraries and information services the opportunity to showcase their resources, facilities, events, contacts and services through different programs and events to the community.

APLA has participated through surveys to find Australia's Favourite Librarian (2013), Australia's Favourite Library (2014) and Australia's Most Borrowed Books (2015). The findings from these surveys have generated significant media coverage in print and on radio.

NATIONAL SIMULTANEOUS STORYTIME, ANNUALLY

More than 500,000 children at 3,000-plus locations around Australia participate in ALIA's National Simultaneous Storytime, which takes place each year on the Wednesday of Library and Information Week.

APLA members are essential to the success of this event, which relies on the participation of public libraries around Australia to ensure that as many families as possible have access to a storytime event.

STAY SMART ONLINE WEEK, ANNUALLY

Each May or June, APLA partners with the Department of Communications to run Stay Smart Online Week promotions in public libraries across the nation. The Department provides downloadable materials for displays in libraries and for marketing the event on websites and through social media.

INTERNATIONAL GAMES DAY, ANNUALLY

International Games Day originated in the US and has been adopted by public libraries around the world. Australian public libraries have participated in the past, but in 2014 and 2015, APLA sought to put more emphasis on this campaign, providing support to the volunteer organisers of the event.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ALIA NATIONAL CONFERENCES 2010, 2012, 2014

APLA has organised the public library stream at ALIA National conferences, providing the opportunity for library and information professionals in the sector to hear about innovation and initiatives from colleagues in Australia and from overseas.

EVERY MEMBER AN ADVOCATE WORKSHOPS 2010

Free advocacy workshops – 19 in total – were delivered by ALIA in every state and territory during 2010. Public and school libraries were a focus for 10 of these workshops, with the content developed in consultation with APLA.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SPECIALISATION 2014

ALIA worked with APLA to map the special knowledge needed by library and information professionals working in public libraries. This enabled us to create a PD specialisation which encourages ALIA Associate and Library Technician Members to attain Professional Certification by formally demonstrating their commitment to specialised ongoing learning in the public library sector.

Because of the diversity within public libraries we have developed sub specialisations to cater for the range of competencies required in current public library practice. These sub categories include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Accessibility (disability/home and mobile library/older Australians)
- Child/youth services
- Community engagement
- Cultural diversity
- Digital literacy
- Local studies/genealogy

Participants can choose to undertake the general public library specialisation or any one or more of the sub specialisations. The competencies and specialties are supported by public library skills audit checklists; these skills audit checklists provide the framework for participants to identify gaps in their knowledge and skills and the creation of training courses and units.

After one year of compliance, members of the ALIA PD Scheme Public Library Specialisation are entitled to use the additional post nominals: AALIA (CP) Public Library or ALIATec (CP) Public Library.

After completion of each ALIA PD Scheme triennium (three years), a member of the Public Library Specialisation is eligible to apply for a Certified Professional Certificate and to have their name displayed in the list of Current Certified Professionals on the ALIA website and in the *ALIA Annual Report*.

PUBLIC LIBRARY PROFICIENCIES 2014

As the professional body for the library and information sector, ALIA promotes librarian and library technician qualifications, but ALIA APLA recognises that in the changing job market we have an increasingly diverse workforce.

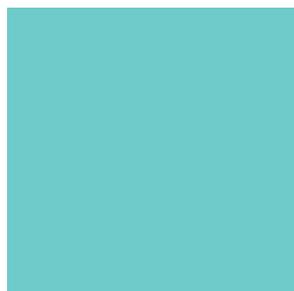
Public library proficiencies provide learning opportunities for non-library and information qualified staff who work in libraries and are interested in developing core public library knowledge and skills. As with the specialisation above, APLA members have helped map the areas to be covered and have helped create a foundation program for staff from different disciplines.

PROGRAMS

ESMART LIBRARIES

Launched in 2012 by former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, eSmart Libraries is an \$8 million, multi-year partnership between the Alannah and Madeline Foundation, Telstra Foundation and Australian public libraries.

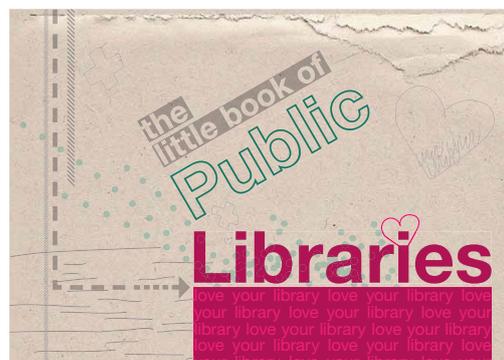
APLA has provided expert members of the eSmart Libraries reference group and is helping to roll out the program across Australia, ensuring libraries and library users develop the skills everyone needs for smart, safe and responsible use of technology.



PUBLICATIONS

THE LITTLE BOOK OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES 2009

ALIA designed this lively and exciting little book to provide a simple summary of why libraries are so important, giving library supporters the words and ideas they needed to champion the cause. We launched the book at the ALIA Public Libraries Summit and handed it out to politicians, bureaucrats and other stakeholders. Public libraries bought further quantities of the publication for councillors, local government executives, other decision-makers and influencers.



The book was deliberately written in a language that was aligned with government priorities but easily appreciated by people from a non-library, non-governmental background.

APLA NEWSLETTERS

Every month APLA sends an enewsletter to more than 800 subscribers. The newsletter not only contains news about ALIA APLA public library initiatives, but also provides information about what's happening in public libraries internationally, related topics of interest and forthcoming events. It is free to subscribe.

ALIA FUTURES

The impact of unimaginable technologies, the concept of community-created content, and a library card for every child at birth were just a few of the possibilities described in the ALIA Futures report relating to public libraries. APLA members participated in a year-long consultation, involving other leaders in the field and a broad range of contributors, to help identify future trends.

The ALIA Futures report has helped inform APLA relationships with government, business and communities, and it has helped shape the future strategy for Australian public libraries.

ALIA's Future of the Library and Information Science Profession project for Australia complements a worldwide initiative by the International Federation of Library Associations — the IFLA Trend Report.

RESEARCH

INTERNET ACCESS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

From 2002 to 2013, ALIA published seven reports on internet access in public libraries, providing the most comprehensive indication of how public library internet services have been managed, delivered and used throughout Australia over the past decade.

The 2013 survey included supplementary questions exploring recent trends, initiatives and government policy. The survey considered a range of questions relating to the provision of internet access in public libraries including: how internet services are delivered and supported; development and implementation of internet use policy; education and training; complaints from users about internet content; the use of filtering software with specific reference to the use of the internet by children; monitoring of internet use and the likely impact of the NBN.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES 2014

In 2013, we asked an independent firm of economists, SGS Economics and Planning, to carry out an investigation into the return on investment of Australian public libraries, building on the work the firm carried out for the State Library of Victoria and the State Library of Queensland.

SGS found that Australia's public libraries deliver benefits that are worth nearly three times the cost of running them – a net annual benefit of some \$1.97 billion. To quote the report, published in 2014, 'Importantly, the level of investment in public library services does not display a pattern of diminishing returns ... the larger the investment made into public libraries, the larger the benefits derived by the respective communities. Collectively these findings provide a strong basis for arguing for increased levels of funding for public library services.'

The launch generated significant media coverage for public libraries and the report has become an important advocacy tool for library managers with their councils.

RECOGNITION

LIBRARY STARS 2010

In 2010, Library Stars awards were presented to leading public libraries at the ALIA Access 2010 conference in Brisbane. The awards recognised new, exciting and inspirational programs that were taking place in Australian public libraries. The title 'Library Star' was given to those libraries that had developed outstanding programs and activities in four categories – children and early literacy, digital citizenship, social inclusion, and health and ageing.

In 2014, APLA presented a Library Stars satellite event alongside the ALIA National Conference in Melbourne. Best practice programs were showcased at the Library at the Dock before an audience of approximately 200.

ALIA BOARD AND FELLOWSHIP

The achievements of APLA have confirmed the importance of the public library sector within ALIA and this has been reflected by the appointment of Directors from the APLA committee: Jan Richards (APLA Chair) and Vanessa Little (Libraries ACT), as Presidents in 2009–2010 and 2012–2013 respectively, and Marian Morgan-Bindon (Queensland Public Libraries Association) as Director for the 2014–2016 term.

In addition, an ALIA Fellowship was conferred on Jan Richards in 2014, in recognition of her role in bringing about the Public Libraries Summit in 2009 and achieving a Memorandum of Collaboration in 2010.



