



Australian Library and
Information Association



AUSTRALIAN COALITION
FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

ALIA ACSL Statement on School Library Funding and Resource Provision

Purpose

To provide guidance on the provision of school library funding and resources incorporating staff expertise, facilities, programs and services for the delivery of a quality education.

Principle

Funding and resourcing the school library is an investment which directly supports the educational and wellbeing goals of a school community.

To successfully fulfil its educational mission for all school community members, a school library requires staff expertise, adequate facilities, and support for programs and services.

Provision of funding

To maintain the relevance and effectiveness of a school library's instructional and information resources, the school library requires a budget that considers and is reflective of local needs. Budgets allocated to the school library should align with the school's local context and support the development of students, teachers, staff and the wider school community.

Analysis and evaluation of the funding that reports on how the budget has been used and whether the funds spent on collections, programs and services have been sufficient to achieve school priorities are part of an annual process.

Provision of staff expertise

The quality and impact of school library programs and services primarily depends upon the staff expertise available within and beyond a school library. Qualified teacher librarians, librarians, and library technicians have specialised knowledge to address and fulfil the many functions and purposes of the school library. To meet the educational goals of a school community, it is essential to have:

- qualified staff in sufficient numbers and with reasonable employment hours according to the size of the school and its unique needs
- well-defined duties and responsibilities for staff, with properly regulated conditions of employment and compensation that reflect the specialist role expectations of each position
- regular professional development for school library staff to ensure that skills and knowledge are maintained
- an expectation that study will be undertaken to achieve a relevant qualification, if not already attained.

Provision of facilities

A school library is a physical and digital learning and wellbeing space where teaching, research, reading, inquiry, critical thinking, imagination and creativity are all made possible by access to programs and services and an organised collection of resources.

Facilities encompass the physical and digital resources of a school library, including the space, equipment, and collections of resources. School library facilities can extend into the school and the community. To meet the educational goals of a school community, it is essential to have facilities that:

- prioritise accessibility through their location and size
- provide areas for current and future print and non-print collections, learning technologies, study and reading
- include adequate workspaces for library staff to undertake specialised duties
- host the necessary technologies required for effective library operations.

Provision of programs and services

A school library contributes to the educational and social goals of a school such as student engagement, inclusion of diverse learners, and relationships with the broader community.

Therefore, it is essential to have library programs and services that are:

- designed by qualified staff in close cooperation with other school stakeholders such as school executive, teachers, support staff and students
- reflective of the ethos of the school and its wider community
- responsive to the priorities and strategic plan of the school
- integrated into and supportive of the whole school curriculum. This may include literacy and reading promotion, digital, media and information literacy, inquiry-based learning, critical and creative thinking, technology integration, sustainability, professional development for staff, and appreciation of literature and culture.

Related documents

ALIA ACSL Statement on School Library Staffing (2024)

Hay, Lyn (2023). *ALIA Professional Pathways school libraries research report*.

<https://read.alia.org.au/alia-professional-pathways-school-libraries-research-project-report>

IFLA School Libraries Section Standing Committee (2015). *IFLA School Library Guidelines*, 2nd revised edition. <https://repository.ifla.org/handle/123456789/58>

Softlink. (2024). *The 2023 Softlink Australia, New Zealand and Asia-Pacific school library survey report*. [2023 Australian School Library Survey report – Softlink \(softlinkint.com\)](https://softlinkint.com)

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Replaces: *ALIA ASLA Statement on School Library Resource Provision* (2016) and *ALIA ASLA Statement on School Library Resource Centre Funding* (2016)

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