

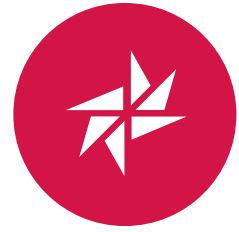
# FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION: ACTION LIST

In 2013, we set out to investigate the big questions about our future.

- 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 received challenging, insightful, inspiring responses to our request for feedback at events held all around Australia. As a result, we have been able to identify themes and develop actions that will support positive outcomes. The findings from the project have been produced as seven reports, available as pdf downloads from the ALIA website [www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession](http://www.alia.org.au/futureoftheprofession).

This is a summary of the actions arising from these reports. ALIA looks forward to working with the sector associations to deliver strong outcomes from this highly collaborative project.



## The profession

- 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.

## The sector

- 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.

## Collecting institutions

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

## **Public libraries**

- 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.

## **School libraries**

- 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.

## **Special libraries**

- 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.

## **University libraries**

- 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.

## **VET libraries**

- 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



### The profession

- 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.

### The sector

- 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.

### Collecting institutions

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

### Public libraries

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

### School libraries

- 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.

### **Special libraries**

- 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.

### **University libraries**

- 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, by promoting this as a career choice for graduates from other disciplines.

### **VET libraries**

- 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 ORGANISATIONS



### The profession

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

### The sector

- 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.

### Collecting institutions

- The collecting institutions will maintain their leadership of the sector, helping to identify new ways of engaging with communities and supporting learning networks.
- These libraries 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.

### Public libraries

- 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.

### **School libraries**

- 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.

### **Special libraries**

- 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.

### **University libraries**

- 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.

### **VET libraries**

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