

**Presentation title:**

Resource Sharing: Is the party over?

**Authors:**

Margarita Moreno; Monika Szunejko and Nikki Darby

**Abstract:**

Before AirBNB and Uber, libraries were the original sharing economy: sharing books, stories, information and expertise. Systems were built to facilitate resource sharing and libraries worked together to create large-scale platforms to share across their borders. Interlibrary lending has been an integral and expected part of library services for years. Today the ILL ecosystem is fragmenting. Collections, technology and legal frameworks of copyright continue to change and the demands on library budgets are complex. User experiences are driving access models, peer-to-peer sharing services are active if not often legal, supplier options have grown, often it is simpler to buy instead of borrow. The Australian ILRS Code is under revision, the LADD platform is shifting, and the ILL systems and networks specified in the 1990s are tired.

Resource sharing in Australia is complex and fragmented, and is evolving without planning or structure. The concept of network collaboration to facilitate interlibrary loan at scale is at a crossroads. Informed by their activities and research into ILL options, three library services (a university library, national library, and national service provider) partner to present ILL futures through a series of scenarios to answer the questions: Is the ILL party over? What do Libraries need to do to make access happen in the 21st century? Where do you fit into the new paradigm? The session is bold, creative, big picture, provocative and interactive.

**Introduction**

From the foundations of interlibrary lending to provide access to resources for information seekers by expanding the reach of local library collections to the development of national resource sharing infrastructure that facilitates international interoperability between Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery (ILL/DD) systems, this paper explores the evolving marketplace for interlibrary lending and document delivery services in a 21st century information ecosystem.

Focussed on the Australian context, this paper starts with a survey of the history of national resource sharing practices and explores the evolving environment from a user perspective (adopting a Researcher persona). The timeline of key moments in resource sharing history in Australia paints a picture of the growing complexity of the Australian national resource sharing landscape and explains the impact of decisions made over time.

National services built upon the national bibliographic database and associated services were intended to create economies of scale and provide a unified platform from which Australian libraries could search, find, and get resources to fulfil user needs.

Today, the Australian resource sharing environment has grown into a complex organism where sector-based choices define how resources are sourced, shared and services are budgeted. The centralised and orderly resource sharing 'dinner party' of the 1980s has grown into a wild bohemian party characterised by greater consumer choice, alternative technologies, the growth of local and sectoral networks, systems consolidation, and fragmented sectoral interests.

In recent years, resource sharing in Australia has evolved without coordination, planning or structure leading to increased complexity and potential disorder. This complexity may be adding 'waste,

confusion and cost<sup>1</sup> at a time when libraries are experiencing budgetary constraints and are searching for more simplified, cost effective and efficient ways to manage their resource sharing services and fulfil the needs of their communities.

Can the current national infrastructure continue to sustain the resource sharing party in this complex environment? The paper concludes by proposing an evaluation framework to assess how libraries can take best advantage of a national resource sharing platform, and assess future requirements for a national resource sharing platform.

### The collections context

Historically libraries have built collections with two principle aims, preservation and access to enable researchers to meet their information needs today and into the future. However, no library is able, nor can afford to, collect everything their users may need and have relied on Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery (ILL/DD) to fill these gaps in their collection and support their researchers' information needs.

Researchers have typically met most of their information needs through their library's collections or the collections of other libraries via ILL/DD. In the academic world, access to information has also been supported via colleagues and peer networks. Technology has shattered this 'stay close to home' resource sharing model and today information is more diverse and scattered, accessible through a myriad of numerous avenues and in multiple formats globally. This complexity continues to change libraries, their collections and the services they offer their clients.

### The Researcher's tale

To define 'the researcher' the authors identified four different personas based on the nature of the research combined with the collections to which they may have access:

- Academic Researcher
  - May be affiliated with or have access to a University or National, State, and Territory (NSLA) libraries.
  - Their home library's collection is likely to have depth and breadth in their research area
- Policy analyst/professional researcher
  - May have access to Special libraries and could be a lawyer, doctor, or policy writer.
  - Their library collection will usually have depth in the institution/department's particular field of expertise but is unlikely to support wider research.
- Recreational researcher/reader
  - May have access to Public libraries which will typically have generalist collections, with perhaps some areas of specialisation, and may need to access other library collections for any depth in research.
- Independent researcher
  - May be affiliated to a National, State, or Territory library in the National and State Libraries of Australia (NSLA) consortium.

---

<sup>1</sup> Thomsett, R. Complex is Cool. Simple is scary. <https://www.sevenconsulting.com/complex-is-cool-simple-is-scary/> p.4 'By adding unnecessary complexity, we have added waste, confusion and cost.' p.15 'This law states simply that when matter moves freely, entropy (disorder, complexity) in a closed system increases.] Accessed 25/01/2019

- These collections have breadth and in some areas depth, such as unique collections, Australiana and areas covered by legal deposit.

The differences between these researchers is usually the depth/breadth of the collection their home library holds in their particular research field and the ILL/DD options they provide.

Library collections are complex, built over years often using the 'just in case' principle, where large collections on different topics were collected with the expectation that their researchers would have ready access to this information. Budget pressures, the proliferation of publishing and the advent of 'e' have forced libraries to change their collecting strategies, re-focussing on specific and locally designed areas (usually guided by a local Collection Development Policy), using acquisition-on-demand and e-preferred models for acquisition.

Today, the researcher, irrespective of their home library, has access to a myriad of sources of information and can take advantage of multiple affiliations that effectively create access to a personal constellation of resource. Furthermore, the library catalogue is not the starting place for research enquiries<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 1, captures the plethora of options available to researchers and the complex decisions they must navigate to find quality information. In the past the researcher may have lamented the lack of information. Today the researcher is more likely to struggle with the explosion of information faced, along with the benefits and barriers they may experience in accessing this information. On the one hand the Researcher encounters collections built by institutions - legacy collections typically in print, increasingly electronic, new collections via subscription with some limitations, embargo periods and ILL/DD restrictions, traditional ILL/DD services, acquisition on demand models, access tokens etc.; and on the other hand the researcher encounters resources available via open access models (there are increasing calls for publicly funded research to be publicly accessible and lodged in the public domain) and digitised content. The Researcher has faced an explosion of options, and libraries have engineered systems and services to facilitate (and often control) the Researcher's access to this information.

---

<sup>2</sup> OCLC (2009). Online Catalogs: what users and librarians want: An OCLC report. <https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/reports/onlinecatalogs/fullreport.pdf> p.2: 'OCLC Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources looked further into people's information-seeking behaviors and preferences with respect to libraries, most notably revealing the trend of information seekers to begin a search for information with a search engine (84%) rather than on a library Web site (1%).'

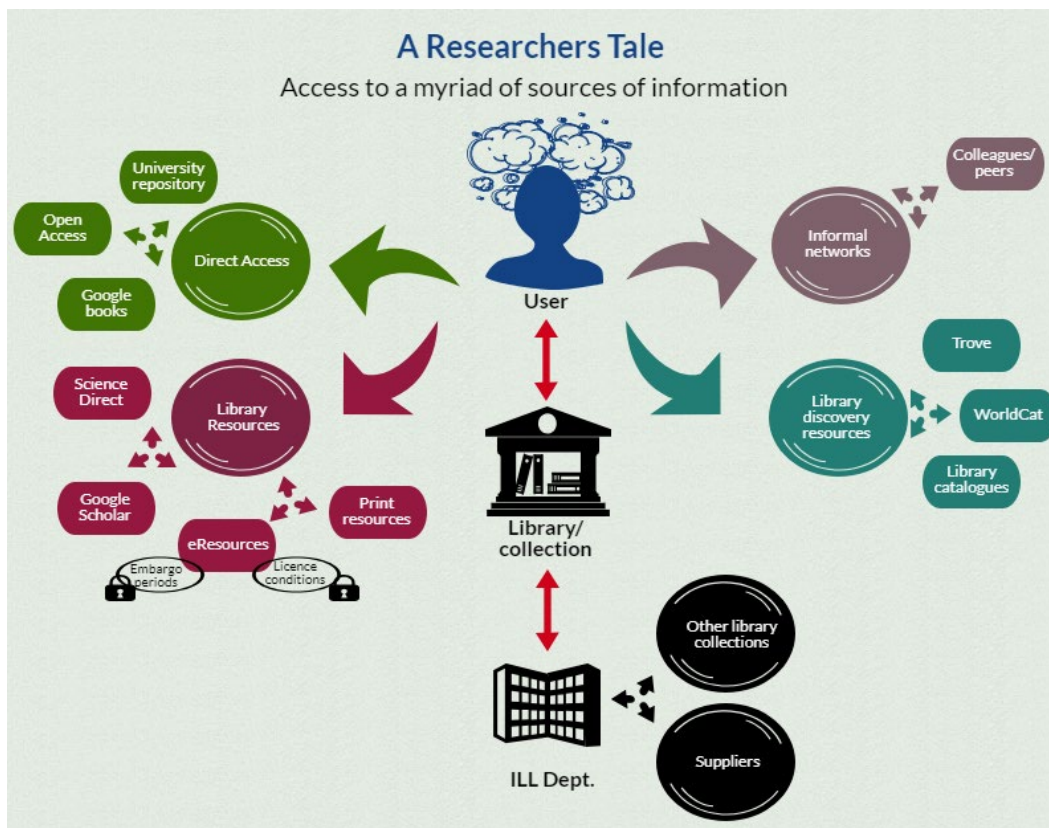


Figure 1. The complexity the researcher navigates to find the information needed.

### The Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery scene

Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery (ILL/DD) is a labour-intensive process. While automated ILL/DD processes are used in many libraries, ILL/DD still requires staff to research, find, retrieve, copy and send material to fill requests. ILL/DD Services have changed and adapted as researchers needs, technology, collections and publishing have transformed over time. Libraries report that staffing continues to be the highest cost for libraries in providing ILL/DD, followed by postage and systems/equipment<sup>3</sup>

The introduction of a national resource sharing service in 1990 based on the Australian National Bibliographic Database (ANBD) and Payment Service (originally called ABN ILL, then Kinetic Document Delivery and now Libraries Australia Document Delivery) was intended to deliver economies of scale and create efficiencies for libraries by reducing manual processes, automating and streamlining procedures, and negotiating national access to a wider range of resources from which to borrow. This would appear to be a set of national resource sharing ambitions that libraries across the country could participate in and maintain into the future.

So what has changed over the last thirty years? Figure 2, below shows the key developments that changed the ILL/DD environment in Australia, the steady increase in automation, the growing complexity in local, national, and international systems, and the evolution of the resource sharing environment and libraries' response to those changes.

<sup>3</sup> ALIA Interlibrary Lending Advisory Committee (2018). Snapshot of the Australian Interlibrary loan environment, p.5.

<https://www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/ALIA%20ILL%20AC%20Report%20of%20the%20Survey%20conducted%20in%20April%202018%20-%20Final%20Dec%202018.pdf>

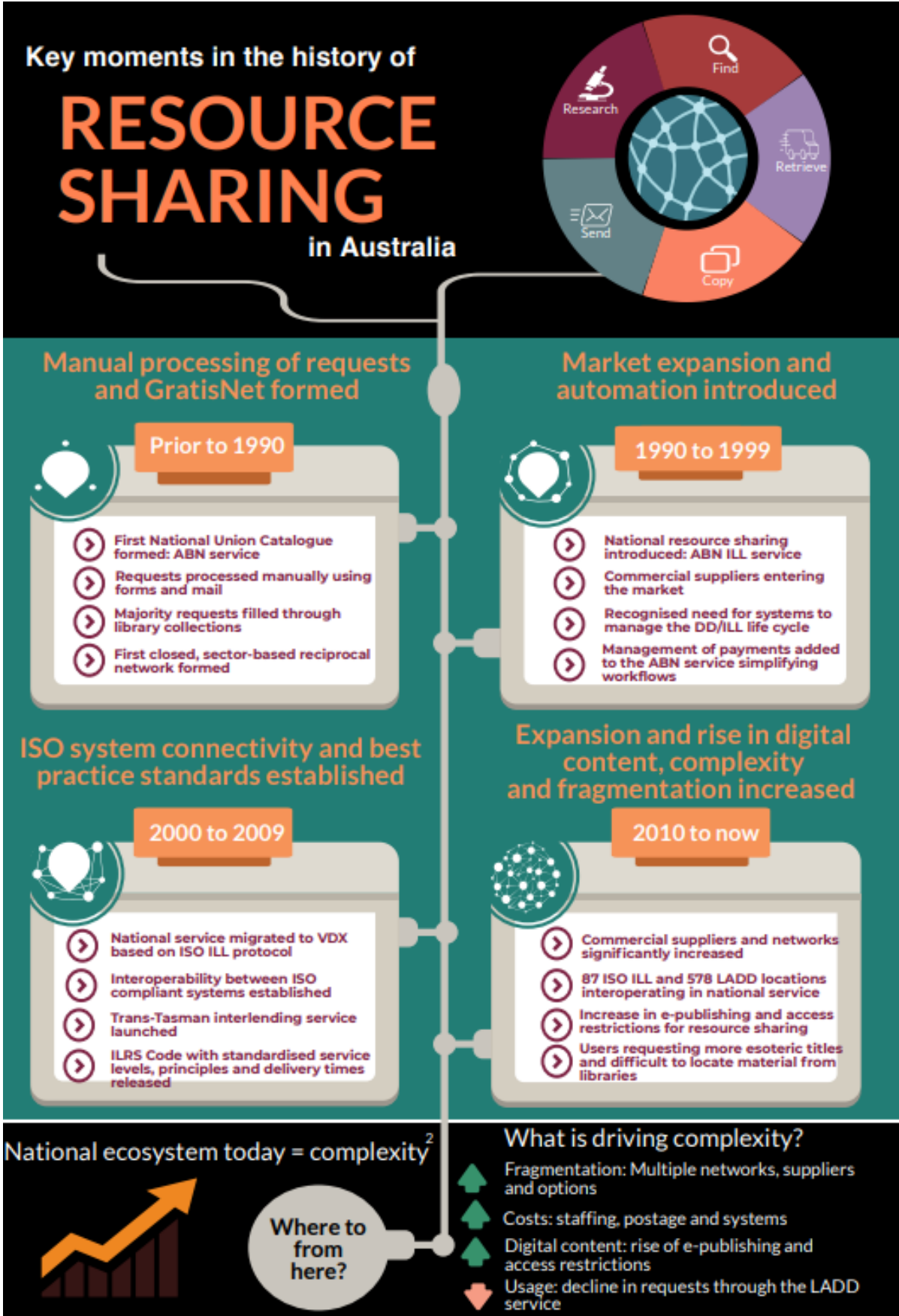


Figure 2. Key moments in the history of Resource Sharing in Australia

The national resource sharing model developed in Australia relies on a Centralised/Decentralised infrastructure, where the backbone of the system is the national bibliographic utility (the Australian National Bibliographic Database), supporting ILL/DD management and payments services. The Australian model is centralised as approximately 700 libraries use the system directly to manage their ILL/DD requests or interoperate with the network to exchange requests and to take advantage of the payments service, and is decentralised because approximate 80 libraries are using their own ISO ILL compliant <sup>4</sup> ILL/DD management system to manage not just their LADD requests but to also manage requests to other services. This model is both unique and complex and has worked well for the past 18 years, however, the ILL/DD landscape has changed considerably with new players on the market, changes to publishing and technology.

Over the past 30 years ILL/DD has become more complex and fragmented. Today, traditional ILL/DD is but one of a menu of options libraries use to meet their client's needs. ILL/DD between libraries is still an important pathway in supplying material to clients; however increasingly libraries are choosing faster and more efficient processes to fulfil their researchers' needs.

So what does ILL/DD look like today? Figure 3 below depicts the complexity of the ILL/DD environment in 2019 from a library user perspective. Just as complex, from the perspective of library system administration, managing this level of complexity within a single system is challenging. Libraries needs are not homogenous and attempts to coalesce services into a centralised model often deliver a 'lowest common denominator' service. Libraries with sophisticated workflows and needs require more from the service and seek alternatives outside the model.

---

<sup>4</sup> ISO ILL protocol information. ISO 10160:1997 Information and Documentation - Open Systems Interconnection - Interlibrary Loan Application <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/iso/ill/standard.htm>



Figure 3. The ILL/DD scene: A complex decentralised/centralised resource sharing environment in Australia

### Who is at the resource sharing party?

What are the characteristics of a modern ILL/DD unit in 2019 and what issues/problems are they attempting to solve for their particular library sector.

Library Sector	Characteristics	ILL/DD environment
Academic libraries	Strong support for research. Typically have extensive legacy print collections and increasingly e-collections	Use a combination of systems to manage their ILL/DD requests.

	<p>(over 80% of new collections are 'e'); are managing budgetary pressures - 6% increase in e collection costs each year, changes in academic publishing, issues associated with managing large datasets and competition for space - storage of print versus study spaces for students.</p>	<p>More than likely have their own ILL management system, Relais, VDX or Alma, will belong to LADD, OCLC, increasingly use RapidILL, and have reciprocal arrangements with other Academic libraries, e.g. Bonus+, Caval Borrow.</p> <p>Will seek ILL/DD services worldwide, e.g. Subito, Article reach etc. and use purchase on demand options as needed to supplement/instead or ILL/DD services.</p>
<p>Special libraries</p>	<p>Good to strong support for specialist research.</p> <p>Libraries have good collections in specialist areas in print and 'e'.</p> <p>Are facing increasing budgetary pressure and/or closures.</p> <p>There are some differences between specialisations, e.g., Law libraries appear to be better supported, whilst government libraries are increasingly disappearing. With closures there is increased pressure on survivors. This situation is likely to continue with organisations increasingly experiencing pressure from 'everything is on the internet, isn't it? syndrome' and are willing to find solutions outside the box.</p>	<p>May use a combination of systems to manage their ILL/DD requests.</p> <p>Typically, subject specialist libraries will use a subject specialist network such as Gratisnet, ALIES (Australasian Libraries in Emergency Sector), ALLA (Australian Law Librarians Queensland division), LiLLi (legal Inter-Library Loans exchange), QShare (Queensland government special libraries) to name a few.</p> <p>May be using RefTracker or online forms to capture their user requests.</p> <p>Many have reciprocal arrangements and many also belong to LADD. Some use purchase of demand or use tokens to access e-resources.</p>
<p>Public libraries</p>	<p>May have strong ties to their state library (depending on the state); are increasingly experiencing budgetary pressures from councils.</p> <p>Typically have a mixed collection: general reference, Fiction, multi-media and possibly a local history collection.</p> <p>E-collections are growing however not all libraries have access with reasonable conditions and not all titles are available, e.g. best sellers are often excluded from library service or they are quoted high</p>	<p>Public libraries support ILL/DD but mostly request loans, they are likely to have reciprocal arrangements with other nearby libraries, within a region or state-wide and cost is an issue.</p> <p>Are less likely to have an ILL/DD system to manage requests and are more likely to use LADD for their ILL/DD services or their State Library service.</p>



	costs, or multiple copies for all title not just best sellers.	
NSLA libraries	<p>Typically provide ILL/DD services to support their state's public libraries (State Libraries) and/or offer services nationally.</p> <p>Have strong unique collection, excellent legacy collections in print and offer e-resources usually to registered users (state/national).</p> <p>Participate in NED the National E-Deposit network for Australian E-Legal deposit.</p> <p>Most are net suppliers and offer ILL/DD services to their library patrons/users.</p>	<p>Use a combination of systems to manage their ILL/DD requests.</p> <p>More than likely have their own ILL management system, Relais, VDX or Alma, and will belong to LADD.</p> <p>Support ILL/DD requests from libraries, have strong support for public libraries (States) and in some cases offer services directly to individual - access to their collections and true ILL/DD services from worldwide sources, e.g. the NLA Copies Direct Service.</p>

This sectoral diversity raises a number of challenges for a national system that aims to facilitate ILL/DD services amongst these disparate libraries.

### The resource sharing party – a moving feast

What are some of the challenges facing the ILL/DD?

#### Budgetary

Budgetary pressures are not new to the library community. However, since the Global Financial Crisis in 2008 the impact on library budgets has increased. In 2010 the Nicholas and Rowlands conducted a survey of over 800 libraries world-wide and described their findings in 'The impact of the economic downturn and libraries: Survey findings'<sup>5</sup>. The results in some ways foreshadowed many of the changes and challenges affecting libraries today: reductions in staffing, the accelerated move to 'e' preferred combined with reviewing collections, reductions/re-scoped services, development projects reduced/shelved. These challenges have been felt by all library sectors. More recently, government reviews have resulted in the closure of many government libraries, for example in WA alone, 44% of government libraries<sup>6</sup> have closed. In a service industry such as libraries reliant on a sharing economy such as ILL/DD this can have a devastating impact.

#### Change in demand, changing demands

<sup>5</sup> Nicholas, David & Rowlands, Ian & Jubb, Michael & Jamali, Hamid R. (2010). The impact of the economic downturn on libraries: With special reference to university libraries. The Journal of Academic Librarianship. 36. 376-382. DOI: 10.1016/j.acalib.2010.06.001.

<sup>6</sup> Based on authors analysis of the WA government directory. [https://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/wa-government-libraries-directory---september-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=4607721c\\_12](https://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/wa-government-libraries-directory---september-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=4607721c_12)

As discussed above, information today is dispersed and can be accessed via a range of channels: in library collections, from publisher/vendor services, on the internet, and from licit formal and informal networks. Demand for library services is changing as the information available to users has changed. Today users are requesting what they are unable to find for themselves and/or is difficult to locate. For some users libraries are part of the 'last resort' when other preferred individual channels fail. Consequently the volume of ILL/DD requests are decreasing albeit unevenly across library sectors.

Feedback from libraries to the ALIA ILL Advisory Committee<sup>7</sup> highlights that users are requesting more esoteric titles and difficult to locate material. There is significant intra-sectoral ILL/DD traffic to support research activities between academic, special, and NSLA libraries. This means that library collections are a source for 'long tail' resources and libraries will still have a role in ILL/DD for the foreseeable future. Notwithstanding the challenges of authentication to eResources, the 'easy' stuff is available via eResources purchased by their library or on the net – open access, Google books, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and other packages.

Demand driven acquisition for both 'e' and 'p' has cemented libraries' move from a 'just in case' model to a 'just in time' model. While ILL/DD can sit alongside purchase on demand in a 'just in time' model sometimes it is less costly to purchase an item than to go down the ILL/DD path. As more material is available in eResources either directly from the publisher or from an aggregator the demand for ILL/DD decreases. In addition the Copyright Act tends to favour protection for born digital materials and libraries need to check if the material is available in e-format before copying.

### Technology change

Technology in libraries has come a long way, in the space of 30 years libraries have moved from card catalogue and manual forms to sophisticated systems that manage workflows, metadata, and digital objects. Services such as Trove bring together the Australian corpus and OCLC's WorldCat collects the metadata and provides services to thousands of libraries around the world. Libraries have automated their catalogues, participated in networks, joined different services and look towards technology to reduce their costs. The current Libraries Australia Document Delivery services is run on VDX which OCLC has indicated has reached its end of life. As Figure 3 shows, technology is all pervasive and continually changing. The researcher today is used to finding information readily and is often tech savvy, wanting access anywhere anytime and libraries seek ways to enable this type of access.

### Publishing changes – control over access to content?

The rise of e-publishing in the last two decades has brought both challenges and benefits (namely offsite access anywhere/anytime). The e-publishing environment has raised a number of issues for libraries that highlight the often inexplicable inequity between print and electronic formats:

- Embargo periods ranging from 6 months to 3-5 years for the e-version whilst the print version has the usual copyright restriction but is accessible to the reader;

---

<sup>7</sup> ALIA Interlibrary Lending Advisory Committee (2018). Snapshot of the Australian Interlibrary loan environment.

<https://www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/ALIA%20ILL%20AC%20Report%20of%20the%20Survey%20conducted%20in%20April%202018%20-%20Final%20Dec%202018.pdf>

- Licence conditions limiting access, from eliminating access for ILL/DD purposes through to prescribing delivery methods that create barriers in the digital environment;
- Continual increases in fees for e-content, on average 6% per year – resulting in libraries reviewing and cancelling subscriptions; and
- Limiting libraries (particularly public libraries<sup>8</sup>) access to purchasing e-books or placing unrealistic pressures to purchase multiple copies of all titles not just best sellers.

The continued move by libraries to e-preferred acquisition has consequences in limiting options for resource sharing. It remains to be seen how much these access restrictions will be offset by the Open access movement particularly given the strong push to have publicly funded research readily available to the public.

Furthermore, with electronic legal-deposit and the development of the National E-Deposit Service (NED) NSLA libraries will collect this material in 'e' format. However, access to this material for ILL/DD purposes is problematic. The NED service is due to make its public appearance in the first half of 2019 yet access to this material is limited to onsite at the collecting NSLA library and under limited circumstance via ILL. In some cases publishers are granting open access either immediately or after a certain period to their publications (usually non-commercial). Much of this material is also available to libraries through their e-resources packages but not always. Given the strong protection in the Copyright Act to born digital material how will libraries access this material?

#### **Copyright – removing or adding barriers?**

Copyright changes in 2017 require libraries to check if the material is available electronically before supplying via ILL/DD. Access to born digital material is more stringent than print and contractual arrangement often include restrictions that affect resource sharing; embargo periods, no ILL/DD, and printing requirements. Recent changes to the Copyright Act to change perpetual copyright in manuscript collections have been positive yet it will be interesting to see what impact this, and the changes relating to orphan works will have and what demand there will be for access to this material.

#### **Open Access – the answer?**

Open access has been around for over 20 years and steadily growing. However, over the last decade there has been a significant push for publicly funded research to be available in open access within a reasonable timeframe. For example in 2008 the National Institutes of Health (NIH) mandated that any research funded by NIH and submitted to PubMed should be publically available no later than 12 months. Over time several different models of open access have developed: Green/free open access where the author archives the peer-reviewed article in an institutional repository or centralised open access repository; publishing in an open access journal where the author pays an article processing charge often referred to as the Gold model/standard, and hybrid models where some of the articles are open access in a subscription journal, typically also requiring the payment of a publication fee. The impact of open access publishing models on ILL/DD and the Australian resource sharing environment remains to be seen.

---

<sup>8</sup> ALIA (2014). Comparison of ebooks and e-lending in Australian Public Libraries 2013 v 2014. [https://www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/APLA-Ebooks-and-Elending-2013-vs-2014\\_0.pdf](https://www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/APLA-Ebooks-and-Elending-2013-vs-2014_0.pdf)

## Changing players – library sectors make their choices

When Libraries Australia Document Delivery (LADD) Service was introduced almost 20 years ago, libraries were just beginning their automation journey, and today the ILL/DD scene is very different.

For many in the university sector RapidILL<sup>9</sup> developed as a very fast, cost effective article requesting/delivery through Interlibrary Loan services and has become their premier service where all requests are routed through RapidILL and supply is typically within a few hours or overnight. Any items not supplied are then routed to LADD or OCLC for supply.

Public libraries usually look for free interlibrary loans so they usually rely on their reciprocal networks for the bulk of their supply. And special libraries have had to become resilient with many closing or downsized. They have found creative solutions such as purchasing tokens to eResources, purchase on demand (eResources or print) direct from publishers, to supplement the more traditional approaches to resource sharing and keep their costs down.

In general, the pressure is on. Figure 3 shows the market place is complex, and the budgetary constraints are pushing libraries to consider the costs and sustainability of their service. In a collaborative space, sharing the burden is the aim but some libraries are feeling the pressure of being net suppliers and are questioning whether this role fits within their accountability remit and budgetary envelope.

## Where to next? It takes a village

The current state of complexity in the national resource sharing model provided by Libraries Australia and supported through the subscriptions of 700 Australian libraries is unsustainable. It is not just the scale and costs of facilitating interoperability between systems and networks, drawing together the diversity of players, or the prospect of migrating the entire Australian systems environment off VDX to a new platform, which are immense, but also the need to develop a model that is flexible and sustainable into the future.

While the National Library is rethinking the business and provisioning model for its national collaborative services such as Libraries Australia, Trove, National E-Deposit, etc. it is time to re-think the Australian resource sharing marketplace and seriously consider alternative options to ensure the best of the Australian resource sharing scene is preserved, and the expensive complexity of the ecosystem is stripped back.

Following the joint ALIA/National Library of Australia Share it! Resource Sharing Futures Conference<sup>10</sup> in May 2018 the National Library established a Resource Sharing Futures Project to define the vision of national resource sharing and determine next steps in consultation with the Australian resource sharing community and stakeholders.

A number of issues, trends, and sentiments emerged during Share it! Among them: there is not one inevitable future for resource sharing in Australia, however there is a need to replace the national resource sharing system in the next 12-18 months and establish the right model into the future. Of note, there was a clear sense that the library community wished to retain a national resource

---

<sup>9</sup> RapidILL a unique resource sharing system, based on easy access, load balancing and peer to peer service commitments. <https://rapid2.library.colostate.edu/Public/About>

<sup>10</sup> Share it – Resource Sharing Futures, held in Canberra 10-11 May 2018, jointly hosted by ALIA and the National Library. <https://www.alia.org.au/share-it-resource-sharing-futures>

sharing model. The National Library will also need to make a decision about its future role in the resource sharing framework post VDX. In order to move forward there was an identified need to develop a clear vision for the future direction of resource sharing. In order to do this the delegates to the Day 2 <sup>11</sup>strategic workshop agreed there was a need to establish a strategic Steering Group to bring together the diverse viewpoints and needs of each sector, and recommend a way forward.

The National Library has convened a Resource Sharing Futures Steering Group to develop a vision for the future of resource sharing and consider options. This group will guide this project and ensure broad engagement from the Australian library community. Broadly framed and pragmatically posited, the Resource Sharing Futures project may consider the following options for the future of national resource sharing:

- Collaborative approach to new national infrastructure - migrate the national service to a new collaboratively built platform and manage migrations.
- Vendor/ market approach to purchase new national infrastructure - migrate the national service to a new established platform and manage migrations
- No national infrastructure - decommission the national resource sharing service LADD and national interoperation of ILL systems.

#### **How will we assess options for a new national resource sharing model?**

It should be stressed that no decisions have been made at this stage and any decisions to determine the future of national resource sharing will be conducted in consultation with the Australian library community.

Early indications are that the option to decommission the national resource sharing service is improbable as the library community has indicated a desire for the National Library to continue to provide support for resource sharing, and without national infrastructure the environment is likely to further fragment. Realistically, any new resource sharing infrastructure will need to be purchased or built on existing collaborative projects/platforms. There is little appetite and capacity in the library community to build from scratch given constrained budgets and the slow-down in demand in the ILL/DD environment.

So what are the elements that a new resource sharing platform must have?

At the Share it! Conference, there was significant goodwill demonstrated among Australian libraries, as well as a desire to collaborate. There was also a general desire to move from a segmented network to a more connected network. In response, the Steering Group is now developing a vision for the future of resource sharing, establishing a set of principles and requirements for a national service. Once identified, the Steering Group will consult, evaluate and recommend a model for a national resource sharing service.

One of the objectives of this project is to ensure that any new service that is recommended is an improvement to what we already have. It is not just about shifting platforms without addressing the underlying problems and issues with the current systems and model. The model needs to provide efficiencies, be scalable and sustainable, so that Australian libraries can continue to connect collections with their communities in a simple, affordable and manageable way. In order to do this we need to determine what our minimum viable product is, and what are our essential elements

---

<sup>11</sup> Share it Resource Sharing Futures Conference (May 2018), Strategic Workshop summary of outcomes [https://www.nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/sites/nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/files/share\\_it\\_day\\_2\\_summary\\_of\\_outcomes\\_final.pdf](https://www.nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/sites/nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/files/share_it_day_2_summary_of_outcomes_final.pdf)

and show stoppers? With this in mind, the authors have developed some fundamental principles and criteria to assess different platforms and models.

### Assessment tool for a national resource sharing platform

Criteria	Ask ourselves/ considerations Does the model allow/do/assist/support libraries to:
Sustainability	Manage scalability to meet organisations with varying needs and complexity.
	Accessible to all Australia libraries large and small.
	Future proof in an uncertain environment e.g. in terms of investment, commitment and ongoing development and support.
	Adapt to change? Balancing the load
Simplicity	Manage services easily?
	Streamline options?
	Provide services to users that are easy to use? Standards based - seamless integration of services and supplier.
Cost Effective	Manage costs?
	Maintainability? Economies of scale without duplication of effort.
	Manage fit for their cost/ business models (staff control/ budget control)?
Flexibility	Choose how they interact (system, suppliers etc.)?
	Enhance their system and services?

Australian	Support an Australian view/subset of data?
	Needs of Trove? Should it work with Trove? NED?
	Work within the Australian framework (e.g. Australia dollars and copyright)?
Efficient	Use detailed holdings to locate items? Support the entire life cycle - client request to delivery.
Collaborative	Solve the problems of current system/ environment? Fit for purpose
	Connect collections with users? Sharing our collections.
	Transparent processes and agreed governance models - responsibilities and obligations of members.

It is also timely for libraries to evaluate their ongoing needs for resource sharing. The authors have devised the following library self-assessment tool to determine a library's preparedness to engage and maximise the value of a national resource sharing platform. The tool guides libraries to consider Australianness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Flexibility, Fit for purpose, and Cost-effectiveness as criteria against which they may rate their ability to take full advantage of the economy of scale of a national resource sharing platform.

The authors encourage every library assess their interaction with the current and forthcoming national service.

#### Library self-assessment tool

Enablers	Criteria	To what extent does my library advocate for these activities?	To what extent does my library participate in these activities?
Good holdings (contribution to ANBD)	[Australian, Efficiency]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4

Data quality (accurate bibliographic data)	[Efficiency]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
Load balancing/ equity	[Sustainability, Flexibility]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
Principles/ best practice	[Efficiency, Fit for purpose]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
Infrastructure	[Sustainability, Cost effectiveness, Flexibility]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
Standards	[Fit for purpose]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
Interoperability with other systems/ services	[Efficiency]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
Commitment from all players (vendors/ libraries)	[Sustainability, Australian, Cost effectiveness, Efficiency, Fit for purpose]	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
TOTAL			

Rating scale: 1=not at all; 2=marginaly; 3=partially and 4=fully meets the requirements.

### Resource sharing – is the party over?

The short answer to this question is ‘no’! The resource sharing party is not over, yet. We do know that Australian libraries cannot continue on this resource sharing path of complexity and diversity that is costly to maintain, complex to navigate (for both users and libraries), and so fragmented so that efficiencies and economies of scale developed in the 1990s are no longer viable.

Resource sharing in Australia cannot design its own future without considering its connection and role in the bigger collaborative library ecosystem. Re-imagining a new national resource sharing platform in the context of revised national digital collaborative services and opportunities for new data and resource-sharing models will advance a new vision of library collaboration and sharing for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A new vision for resource sharing that utilises state-of-the-art technologies, recognises a global ecosystem, encourages open, and helps remove the barriers to access that researchers encounter on their journey.

A new resource sharing platform for Australia will ask, what does the Australian National Bibliographic Database (ANBD) look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? What does it mean for Trove? Where do



local library collections fit into a national picture? How will libraries continue to connect people and collections at a national scale, or won't they? Does it matter?

## References

- Nicholas, David, Rowland, Ian, Jubb, Michael & Jamalid, Jamid R, 2010. The impact of the economic downturn on libraries: With special reference to university (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2010.06.001>) Accessed 24/1/2019
- Charles I. Guarria, 2009. The economic crisis and its effect on libraries (Brooklyn Campus Library, Long Island University, Brooklyn, New York, USA (<https://doi.org/10.1108/03074801111136248>) Accessed 24/1/2019
- Missingham, Roxanne & Wilson, Tony, 2005. Libraries Australia: creating a new national resource discovery service, *Online Information Review*, Vol. 29, No. 3 pp. 296-310 URL
- Wells, Andrew, 1999. Kinetica: moving Australian library network services forward. ALIA Information Online 1999 Conference (Sydney, NSW Feb, 1999) <http://conferences.alia.org.au/online1999/proceedings99/205b.html>
- Jilovsky, Cathie & Robinson, Michael, 2015. Discovery to Delivery: enabling an unmediated resource discovery and delivery service in a collaborative context <http://information-online.alia.org.au/content/discovery-delivery-enabling-unmediated-resource-discovery-and-delivery-service-collaboration>
- Cathro, Warwick S, 1991. The Australian Bibliographic Network: a survey of its first decade, *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 22:4, 37-52, DOI: 10.1080/00048623.1991.10754736
- Patterson, Avril, 2008. Linchpin or weakest link? Challenges to current document delivery practice and services, *Interlending & Document Supply* 36/4, 191-195
- Share it Resource Sharing Futures Conference (May 2018), Strategic Workshop summary of outcomes. [https://www.nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/sites/nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/files/share\\_it\\_day\\_2\\_summary\\_of\\_outcomes\\_final.pdf](https://www.nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/sites/nla.gov.au/librariesaustralia/files/share_it_day_2_summary_of_outcomes_final.pdf)
- Share it – Resource Sharing Futures, held in Canberra 10-11 May 2018, jointly hosted by ALIA and the National Library. <https://www.alia.org.au/share-it-resource-sharing-futures>
- Thomsett, R. Complex is Cool. Simple is scary. (<https://www.sevenconsulting.com/complex-is-cool-simple-is-scary>) Accessed 25/01/2019
- OCLC (2009). Online Catalogs: what users and librarians want: An OCLC report. <https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/reports/onlinecatalogs/fullreport.pdf>
- ALIA Interlibrary Lending Advisory Committee (2018). Snapshot of the Australian Interlibrary loan environment. <https://www.alia.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/ALIA%20ILL%20AC%20Report%20of%20the%20Survey%20conducted%20in%20April%202018%20-%20Final%20Dec%202018.pdf>

Nicholas, David & Rowlands, Ian. (2010). The economic downturn and libraries: Survey findings. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272417219 THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AND LIBRARIES Survey findings](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272417219_THE_ECONOMIC_DOWNTURN_AND_LIBRARIES_Survey_findings)

WA Government Libraries Directory, (2018). [https://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/wa-government-libraries-directory---september-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=4607721c\\_12](https://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/wa-government-libraries-directory---september-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=4607721c_12)