



President's Letter

4 November 2019

Dear ALIA Member

In my time as President, I have been impressed by the exceptional level of engagement in the work of the Association by ALIA Members. At any given time, there are over 250 Members actively supporting the work of our Committees and Groups. Board members are assigned liaison duties with our Advisory Committees for TAFE libraries, research, new generation perspectives, international relations, the book industry, education, resource description, interlibrary lending, school and health libraries. Talking to my fellow Directors, I can say on behalf of all of us that we are in awe of the quality of thought and the level of activity that these committees contribute to ALIA.

A further opportunity is available as a member of the [ALIA Board](#). We are looking for four new Board Members to join the Board for two years from May 2020. The closing date to nominate is Friday 6 December 2019. Participating in the work of the Board is an interesting experience and a highly rewarding way of giving back to the sector, and I encourage you to give some thought to nominating.

ALIA has had another busy year, thanks to the support and engagement of our Members. ALIA's Truth, Integrity, Knowledge (TIK) campaign has run throughout 2019 and the final blog posts by the ALIA Board Directors are now live on the [ALIA FAIR website](#). I highly recommend reading through them and would love to hear your feedback on the campaign, through the [TIK survey](#).

In September, we were pleased to announce two book industry agreements which will benefit libraries across the nation. Endorsed by Books Create Australia, of which ALIA is a founder member, these agreements clear up some grey areas of copyright. The first is the [Jolly Postman agreement](#), named after the 1986 book *The Jolly Postman or Other People's Letters* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg. It enables libraries to photocopy the removable inserts of children's activity picture books so lost items can be easily replaced. The second is the [storytime agreement](#) about libraries hosting storytime events outside the library premises, without needing to seek permission from the copyright holder. These agreements follow on from an earlier industry breakthrough about the use of [images of book covers by libraries to promote programs and collections](#).

Australian Reading Hour 2019 was a runaway success in September. Highlights included Ambassador Matt Stanton at the Sydney Opera House; Ambassador Sally Rippin on ABC Me TV; Ambassador Karen Manbulloo in the *Sydney Morning Herald*; and MP Graham Perrett name-checking ALIA in his speech in Parliament.



Meanwhile, ALIA, along with the ALIA Australian Public Library Alliance (APLA) and ALIA Health Libraries Australia (HLA), has secured close to \$1 million in funding for libraries from the Australian Digital Health Agency to run train the trainer programs on [digital health literacy](#). The training will support library staff in public and health libraries respond to queries about government digital health programs and will run from September 2019 to June 2020.

We have been concerned for the future of government libraries and in October we ran two sponsored articles in *The Mandarin*, promoting the value and impact of special libraries. By placing our message in front of the highest echelons of government, we hope to support our special library members' local advocacy.

We have been pleased to be a founder member of the Students Need School Libraries campaign, which has run throughout 2019, and I would like to say a personal thank you to the ALIA Schools Group which provides exceptional leadership for the Association in the schools sector.

There has been so much activity over the last six months that it seems unfair to highlight just a few achievements, but one event I would like to highlight is the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) roundtable held at ALIA House on 23 September. Chaired by past-President Vicki McDonald, we were pleased to host leaders from all kinds of libraries and representatives from the museums and galleries sector. This has resulted in a draft report which is now open for consultation – and again, I encourage you to participate in this discussion.

Our work on the SDG is part of our commitment to libraries globally, through our active membership of IFLA. It was a highlight of my year to represent ALIA at the World Library and Information Congress and to co-host a reception at the Australian Embassy in Athens, celebrating the appointment of our own Christine Mackenzie as president of the international organisation.

I can promise you an equally active 2020, with our National Conference coming up from 4-8 May. I hope to see you there. And if you can't join us in Sydney, we will be running Leadership and Innovation Forums around the country with the theme **The Next Gen Leadership Scorecard – visions for success**. Leadership is the theme of my presidential year and I look forward to receiving your feedback, at the forums or in advance through the survey which is currently live.

Best wishes

Robert Knight