



AUSTRALIAN
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ALLIANCE

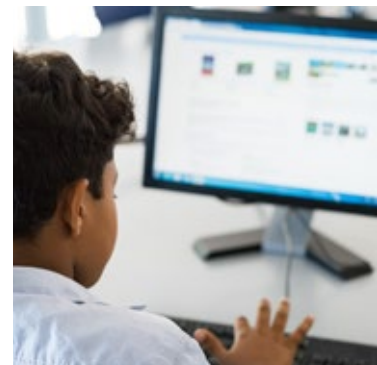
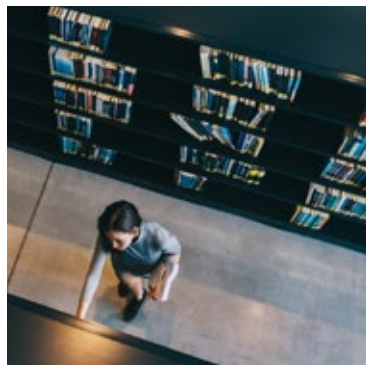


Australian Library and
Information Association



Australian Public Library Alliance Achievements

2016–2018





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Australian Public Library Alliance Achievements 2016–2018

Canberra ACT, Australian Library and Information Association, February 2019

www.alia.org.au

Achievements 2016-2018

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 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, was the primary outcome of the summit and was ratified by the signing of a Memorandum of Collaboration in July 2010, which has been renewed twice since, in 2014 and 2017.

In the three calendar years 2016-2018, APLA has many achievements to celebrate.

- We have made significant advances in the further development of national standards and guidelines for public libraries, together with new outcome measures to demonstrate the value and impact of library services.
- We have established the significant contribution of public libraries in Australia to at least 10 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and published case study-based reports on libraries' role in STEM, the digital economy and the smart cities agenda.
- We have run highly successful campaigns encouraging readers of all ages. Every year we have delivered the Summer Reading Club and National Simultaneous Storytime. In addition, we have partnered with publishers, authors and booksellers to make the Australian Reading Hour into a major book industry initiative. As a one-off, we supported the Chief Scientist's Storytime Pledge in 2017-2018.
- We have provided submissions to 13 federal government and agency consultations and engaged in discussions with the Department of Communications and the Arts, Education, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Social Services, the Office of the eSafety Commissioner, Australian Digital Health Agency and other policy-making bodies.
- We have run high profile media campaigns around Library Lovers' Day and Library and Information Week.

- We have highlighted how public libraries in ensuring online safety for children and all members of the community, partnering with the Alannah and Madeline and Telstra Foundations to roll out eSmart Libraries; with the Department of Social Services and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to embed the role of public libraries in the Be Connected program; with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to trial eSafe Spaces, and participating in Stay Smart Online Week.
- We have published regular monthly newsletters for public library subscribers.
- We have rolled out the public library specialisation as part of the ALIA PD Scheme for library and information professionals and provided a proficiency scheme for non-library qualified staff working in public libraries. Public library streams at ALIA conferences have provided further opportunities for professional development.

Many of these activities are ongoing and further initiatives are under discussion, for example engagement with the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the lead up to Census 2021, piloting an early years STEM program 'Maths Fun' with The Smith Family, collaborating with health libraries on a consumer health literacy initiative.

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).

Chair's introduction

The ALIA Australian Public Library Alliance is a rare beast. It is an effective network of organisations that come together and make things happen, on a wholly voluntary basis. There is no legislative or financial requirement for us to work collaboratively – but we do. And we use our combined critical mass to deliver outcomes we couldn't deliver on our own.

I have been proud to chair the Alliance since its inception in 2009, and over the last decade, there has been much to celebrate. In July 2019, we will celebrate the 10th anniversary of our initial decision to collaborate and this latest report on our achievements shows the strong benefits of working cooperatively now and into the future.

I would like to thank the individual members of the alliance for their personal contribution, commitment and unfailing enthusiasm, and I would like to commend my colleagues who are responsible for the state-based associations and territory libraries, for their continuing to support of this forum. We have also greatly valued the involvement of National and State Libraries Australia members in much of our work, and our major project and reports would not have been possible without their generous participation.

This report takes you through our many activities. One of the highlights was, of course, the dinner at Parliament House, in Canberra, in November 2016, at which we officially launched the *Australian Public Library Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures* which is widely acclaimed as world's best practice.

This also gave us an opportunity to entertain stakeholders with whom we have built strong relationships – organisations concerned with local government, digital inclusion, early literacy, the book industry, arts, heritage and culture. ALIA APLA has invested time and resources in developing these strategic relationships, which help extend the reach and profile of public libraries and support our advocacy with governments.

I believe we have made significant advances against our goal of being "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 public libraries' role for future generations." After reading this report, I am sure you will feel the same way

Jan Richards AM

Chair, Australian Public Library Alliance
January 2019

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National Collaboration

Strategic framework

ALIA APLA developed a national strategy and plan for 2015-2018 which resulted in the following activities. In December 2018, APLA representatives met at ALIA House to work on a new national strategy and plan for 2019-2022.

Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures

Building on the national standards and guidelines for Australian public libraries, developed by Libraries Alive! In 2010 and 2012, I & J Management Services was commissioned to produce the new the [Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries](#) in 2016.

Consultation workshops were held in Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, and the final publication drew on the input and views of Australia's public library sector and local and international practice.

The report was launched at as gala dinner at Parliament House, in Canberra, on 7 November 2016, with special guests Shadow Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus and Assistant Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science Craig Laundry. Guests included government representatives, GLAM colleagues, authors, publishers and other stakeholders.



Lobbying and Advocacy

Engagement with government

APLA has been actively involved in discussions with the Australian Government and its agencies around a number of topics, including digital inclusion, smart cities, health and online safety. Between January 2016 and December 2018, we made the following submissions on behalf of public libraries:

- Submission in response to the [Australian Taxation Office Digital by Default Consultation Paper](#) | January 2016
- Submission in response to the [Review of the Australian Communications and Media Authority Draft Report](#) | June 2016
- Submission in response to the [Australian Government Smart Cities Plan](#) | June 2016
- Report produced for the Australian Government consultation entitled [Digital Economy Opening the Conversation, Australian libraries, the digital economy within everyone's reach](#) | November 2017
- Submission in response to the [WA Public Libraries Strategy Consultation](#) | March 2018
- Submission in response to the Australian Government Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee [Inquiry into the United National Sustainable Development Goals](#), with attachment [Australian libraries support the Sustainable Development Goals](#) | March 2018
- Submission in response to the Australian Digital Health Agency consultation: [National Digital Health Strategy Framework for Action](#) | April 2018
- Submission in response to the Australian Bureau of Statistics [2021 Census consultation](#) | April 2018
- Submission to the Australia Government review of the [Enhancing Online Safety Act 2015 and Online Content Scheme](#) | July 2018
- Submission in response to the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee [review into telecommunications services in regional, rural and remote parts of Australia](#) | August 2018
- Submission in response to the Australian Human Rights Commission project on [Human Rights and Technology](#) | September 2018
- Submission in response to the ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services [Inquiry into ACT Libraries](#) | September 2018
- Submission in response to the Meeting of Cultural Ministers National Arts and Disability Strategy Discussion Paper December 2018

As previously mentioned, APLA's big ticket engagement with federal government was through the launch of the [Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries](#) at Parliament House, Canberra, on 7 November, 2016.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

Since Jan Richards, the Chair of APLA, signed the IFLA Lyon Declaration in 2014, ALIA has been actively engaged in advocacy around the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in Australia and internationally.

On behalf of APLA, ALIA has engaged in discussions with the Federal Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) about public libraries:

- supporting the freedom of access to information outcomes;
- providing examples of success, which can be used as part of Australia's reporting; and
- helping to communicate the 2030 agenda to the general population.

ALIA has also established a good relationship with the United Nations Information Centre in Canberra and with the United Nations Association of Australia.

In 2018, ALIA ran the Asia-Pacific LIS Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), alongside the Asia-Pacific Library and Information Conference on the Gold Coast. More than 50 library leaders, many of them representing public libraries in the Asia Oceania region, attended the Summit.

Out of this came an [ALIA SDG toolkit](#), which included an earlier ALIA APLA report highlighting case studies of how Australian public libraries are supporting the SDGs, together with a template to enable public library services to produce their own local version of the report.

On 30 October, NSW's Newcastle Regional Library ran a local SDG Summit, with speakers from IFLA, the UN and local government. More public libraries around Australia have expressed interest in pursuing this agenda in 2019 and beyond.

National Early Literacy Summit

More than 130 participants from the government, not for profits, charities, libraries, early childhood, health, speech therapy, education, indigenous literacy, publishers, booksellers, social enterprise and other stakeholder groups gathered in Canberra on 7 and 8 March 2016 for the two-day [National Early Literacy Summit](#).

Organised by ALIA APLA, National and State Libraries Australasia, Early Childhood Australia and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, this was the first such gathering in more than a decade and the program of 14 speakers and 12 expert panellists prompted intense debate and discussions.

In summary, the participants agreed to form a coalition with the purpose of developing a national conversation around early language and literacy and a focus on the scoping and development of a National Early Language and Literacy Strategy for Australia. The coalition received a grant from the Ian Potter Foundation in the second half of 2018 to support this work.



Campaigns

Australian Reading Hour

The Reading Hour was an important legacy from the National Year of Reading in 2012. It was an annual event, which took place each August in hundreds of schools, homes and libraries across Australia. The message for parents was “share a book for 10 minutes a day, an hour a week, and help your child develop a lifelong love of reading”.

In 2017, ALIA and book industry partners moved the event to September and broadened it into the [Australian Reading Hour](#) for all ages. In 2018, the campaign was supported by the Australian Publishers Association, the Australian Booksellers Association, the Australian Society of Authors, Better Reading, the Copyright Agency and the Australian Government Department of Communications and the Arts.



Summer Reading Club

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.

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. Themes were Heroes and Villains (2016), Game On (2017) and Curious Creatures (2018).



Library Lovers' Day

Each year, 14 February, we mark Valentine's Day by asking library lovers to celebrate [Library Lovers' Day](#) 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, or create some other highly newsworthy element.

In 2016 and 2017, we highlighted the displays organised in libraries around Australia. For 2018, we sent Valentine's Day cards to federal government MPs and Senators, and asked authors, politicians and library users to write love letters to libraries. This resulted in a short speech on the value of libraries in the House of Representatives and we launched the [Library Lovers' Little Book](#) in time for Library and Information Week.



Library and Information Week

Since 1997, 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.

Themes have been Discover More (2016), Celebrate (2017) – coinciding with ALIA's 80th anniversary – and Find Yourself in a Library (2018).



National Simultaneous Storytime

Through a partnership with LIANZA in 2018, [National Simultaneous Storytime](#) involved more than 1 million children and caregivers at 8,000-plus locations around Australia and New Zealand. The campaign has taken place each year on the Wednesday of Library and Information Week, since 2001, but this was the first year it was a joint ANZ initiative.

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.

Chosen books have been *I Got This Hat*, by Jol and Kate Temple, illustrated by Jon Foye (2016); *The Cow Tripped over the Moon* by Tony Wilson, illustrated by Laura Wood (2017) and their sequel, *Hickory Dickory Dash* (2018).



Cybersafety campaigns

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. APLA also supports the Office of the eSafety Commissioner's Safer Internet Day and other annual cybersafety events.

Other campaigns

International Gaming Day originated in the US and has been adopted by public libraries around the world. Australian public libraries have participated in the Day, which in 2018 became [International Games Week](#).

In May each year, [Blue Shield Australia](#), of which ALIA is a founder member, encourages all types of libraries to revisit their disaster planning for MayDay.

In December 2017, ALIA APLA supported the [Chief Scientist's Storytime Pledge](#), using the opportunity to promote libraries contribution to the STEM agenda and the digital economy.

Professional Development

Between 2016 and 2018, ALIA has rolled out the public library specialisation and public library proficiencies program.

Public library specialisation

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 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

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.

The public library proficiency program has been run in ACT, South Australia and Tasmania, between 2016 and 2018.

Programs

Be Connected

On behalf of APLA, ALIA has worked with the [Department of Social Services](#), the Office of the eSafety Commissioner, the Be Connected National Network Manager (the [Good Things Foundation](#)), and libraries across Australia to ensure that libraries are taking advantage of \$20 million-worth of Be Connected grants and online resources to support digital inclusion programs for older Australians. The program roll out began in 2017.

eSmart Libraries

Launched in 2012 by former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, [eSmart Libraries](#) was an \$8 million, multi-year partnership between the Alannah and Madeline Foundation, Telstra Foundation and Australian public libraries, which was scheduled to end in June 2018. However, the Alannah and Madeline Foundation was able to extend the program indefinitely and will be supporting more than 1100 public libraries which are on the eSmart journey.

Voter Information Sessions

In March 2016, ALIA APLA was approached by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to coordinate the delivery of community electoral information sessions around the nation, in the lead up to the federal election. The AEC was keen to engage with communities in new ways to lower the level of informal voting in electorates where this had been higher than the state or territory average in previous elections.

Our commitment was to deliver at least 84 sessions and in the event, public libraries in ACT, NSW, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia, delivered 116 sessions at 64 library locations. In addition to English, sessions were delivered in 15 community languages: Gujarati, Farsi, Swahili, Cantonese, Dinka, Hindi, Arabic, Somalian, Mandarin, Dari, Vietnamese, Chinese, Spanish, Arabic and Turkish.

While we would have liked more people to participate in person, the program helped raise community awareness of the importance of voting, and in at least two of the electorates – Fairfield, NSW, and O'Connor, WA, the level of informal voting significantly decreased.



Publications

Library Lovers' Little Book

For Library and Information Week in 2018, we launched the Library Lovers' Little Book, which was made available to public libraries to purchase and distribute locally.



Advocacy reports

Between 2016 and 2018, ALIA published a number of reports and produced a range of material designed to support public library advocacy, including:

- The Digital Economy
- How public libraries contribute to the STEM Agenda
- 10 ways libraries power Smart Cities
- Australian libraries support the Sustainable Development Goals

These reports remain relevant and topical for public libraries wanting to promote the positive impact of their library service.



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.



Research

Australian Digital Inclusion Index

The first Australian Digital Inclusion Index was released in 2016, as a joint venture between Telstra, RMIT University and the Centre for Social Impact, Swinburne, powered by Roy Morgan Research. ALIA APLA is represented on the Research Advisory Committee).

eLending Project

ALIA APLA has been a partner in the eLending Project, an ongoing research program funded through an Australian Research Council Linkage grant. The project is led by Associate Professor Rebecca Giblin, out of Monash University, and studies the legal and social impacts of library lending of ebooks.

Recognition

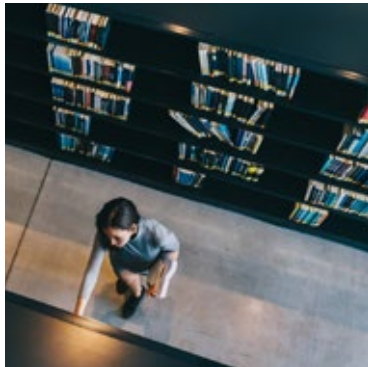
ALIA Board

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: Marian Morgan-Bindon (Queensland Public Libraries Association) as Director for the 2014-2016 and 2016-2018 terms; Robert Knight (NSW Public Library Association) as Vice-President, President-elect for 2018-2020.

Outstanding Achievement Award

A special award was made posthumously to John Murrell on 25 July 2016, recognising his outstanding contribution to public libraries in West Gippsland, in Victoria, and indeed nationally through his roles as CEO of West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation and President of Public Libraries Victoria Network.





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