



The Future of Public Libraries Forum Report

Building on the Bookends Scenarios

Prepared by



THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES FORUM

Building on the Bookends Scenarios



With Oliver Freeman and Allan Ryan
The Neville Freeman Agency
Sydney 29 August 2014

a scenario thinking workshop

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Purpose

The Future of Public Libraries Forum has been devised to provide library managers in the NSW public library network with the opportunity to build on the Bookends Scenarios that the network created in 2009.

This building process is particularly interested in identifying emergent new futures and in surfacing new strategic initiatives in response which, together, increase the network's ability to be resilient in a turbulent and uncertain world.

Forum Report

The Report summarises the conversation of the delegates at the Forum on 29 August 2014. It will also be used as a key input for a strategy-building workshop in October 2014

Delegates

Alison Smyth, Albury Library Museum
Amanda Wallace, Richmond-Tweed Regional Library
Anne Doherty, State Library of NSW
Ben Carter, Leichhardt Library Service
Cameron Morley, State Library of NSW
Carmelina Nunnari, Wollondilly Shire Library Service
Catherine Johnston, Coffs Harbour City Library and Information Service
Christine Bolton, Riverina Regional Library
Colette Stapleton, Richmond-Tweed Regional Library
Deborah Lisson, Ku-Ring-Gai Library
Enzo Accadia, Coffs Harbour City Library and Information Service
Frances Sims, State Library of NSW
Heather Davis, Waverley Library
Jan Richards, Central West Libraries
Jenn Martin, Woollahra Library and Information Service
Jill Webb, Ryde Library Service
Jody Rodas, Waverley Library
John Bayliss, Macquarie Regional Library
John Taggart, Manly Municipal Library
Justin Yeomans, Kogarah Council Library
Kate Stewart, Stanton Library
Katey Allwell, Central Northern Regional Library
Kay Delahunt, Central Northern Regional Library
Keryl Collard, Maitland City Library
Lisa Marschall, City of Botany Bay
Martin Boyce, Sutherland Shire Public Libraries and Information Service
Melissa Schriever, Liverpool City Library
Melissa Sherlock, The Hills Shire Library Service
Michelle Simon, Canterbury City Library
Michelle Stuart, Goulburn Mulwaree Library
Mylee Joseph, State Library of NSW
Paula Pfoeffler, Canterbury City Library
Rebecca Cowie, Maitland City Library
Robyn Owens, Bankstown City Library and Information Service
Ross Balharrie, NSW.net
Sue McKerracher, ALIA
Susan Killham, Western Riverina Community Library
Tara Klein, City of Canada Bay Library Service
Vicki Edmunds, Blue Mountains City Library

Interrogating the Future

We like to interrogate the future with a clear purpose in mind. The Bookends Scenarios framing questions in 2009 were as follows:

THE FRAMING QUESTIONS Why do we interrogate the future ?



THIS IS WHAT WE ASKED IN 2009

- What professional skills & attitudes will public library staff in NSW be demonstrating in 2030 in order to be successful in the alternative futures in which they might operate?
- Where will the leadership and funding that drives this success come from?

How Should The Framing Questions Be Adapted For 2014

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The group was then asked to reflect whether the 2009 framing questions needed to be adapted in 2014 while retaining 2030 as the 'end point'.

The consensus is that the questions retain their authenticity five years on particularly as the skills and attitudes needed in the future are changing ever more quickly as technologically transforms the environment. The flexibility that these skills and attitudes bring with them suggests that talking about 'public library staff' is too narrow. This definition needs to embrace everyone working in and with public libraries.

As for what these skills and attitudes might be, the group suggested that people working in libraries would need above all to show curiosity, creativity and a willingness to learn, innovate, partner and collaborate from within and outside the library network. They will need to be proactive on the marketing front and entrepreneurial, while recognising engagement with library users as the driving force for the future. Delegates stressed the importance of customer service skills – being open, non-judgmental and welcoming - especially towards the socially marginalised, like the homeless. Libraries are also one of the few democratic tools available in communities, a role that demands leadership and advocacy.

What has happened in the external environment since 2009?

(I) NSPECT Environmental Scan 1

What has happened in the external environment since 2009?



*Natural Social Political Economic Cultural Technological
Each Group Is Assigned A Topic And Brainstorms It*

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NATURE

Since 2009, we have experienced an increase in community environmental awareness and the personal responsibility that goes with it. This means environmental issues have become more significant as moral drivers for changes in social behaviour and in the use of public resources, including library spaces.

Ironically as social awareness deepens, political resolve weakens. Government policy changes on environmental issues (emissions trading, carbon tax, pricing externalities) may reflect an increase in awareness but it comes with a decrease in active leadership.

Both an abundance and lack of water has impacted in regional areas – witness the Brisbane floods of 2011 and the fact that traditional water supplies are projected to dry even more by 2030.

Mining which was booming five years ago is now experiencing an equally rapid decline – with a deep impact on local communities and, by implication, on council funds.

SOCIETY

Fracking (coal seam gas exploration) is a new environmental issue that is affecting the stability of regional communities. And we have seen a general deepening of issues that are increasing the so-called social divide between rich and poor, the socially advantaged and disadvantaged, the employed and the unemployed. The commission on child abuse was not envisaged in 2009 and, generally, we have seen greater concerns with human rights including the debate about same sex marriage, privacy and the rights of ethnic minorities.

The development of the NBN has social implications that will not be resolved for some time while the fibre to the node or to the home question remains unresolved.

Despite the traditional rural/urban divide, Australia will continue to see increasing urbanisation as its population grows to around 35 million by 2050. This urbanisation is of rural areas as well as the densification of existing urban spaces.

Our population continues to age with corresponding increases in the retirement age.

Makerspaces have fully emerged since the Bookends Scenarios went to press. They represent the democratisation of design, engineering, fabrication and education and share many of the social values that public libraries represent. Social collaboration in all its forms is now a high-ticket item that is shaping the future in new and unexpected ways.

We anticipate a further deepening of the return to home-made items, increased interest in crafts, community gardens, locally purchased produce, recycling and an increase in the use of farmers markets.

Australia's policy to immigrants and boat people is highly fluid but is largely driven by external drivers like ongoing instability/conflict overseas leading to an increase in the desire to come here. Further changes in opinion/government policy regarding refugees are expected.

Although austerity measures since the GFC have not been harsh in Australia, we will continue to see cuts to education funding and corresponding increases in fees.

POLITICS

Everything is dollar driven - we are an economy not a society!

This scepticism was evident in many of the conversations. On the political front there wasn't much good news to report. Politics is nasty and poll driven; we see the rise of the dumb and the dumber, of apathy and ignorance. There is a lack of real leadership and short-termism is the go. Sexism is rife. Politics is slogan driven, lacking substance and short-sighted and favours reactionary populist approaches.

The major parties have been unable to distinguish themselves from each other and, add to this the charges of corrupt behaviour, then the smaller single-issue parties have benefited. We vote governments out rather than vote them in.

Social media have gained strength in the last five years especially organisations like *Get Up*.

Generally, politics is becoming more Americanised with an increased emphasis on emotive language and personalities.

ECONOMICS

The GFC has promoted austerity, outsourcing and privatisation. The digital economy has burgeoned in the last five years and we see crowd-funding and crowd sourcing become stronger.

There has been a reduction in local manufacturing as the shift from West to East gathers momentum, globally. Our financial sustainability is under pressure with the need to create the sustainable funding of government services.

As in other social sectors, the divide between the haves and have nots seems to be increasing in the economy.

CULTURE

Although the digital divide is a prominent aspect of our culture - what about those that don't have the same levels of access? - things digital are a catalyst for change.

The impact of social media is becoming evident at a national and global level – especially in the rise of immediacy and its impact on such things as literacy and education. On the other hand the development of things like MOOCS pull the impacts in the other direction.

The concept of the 'selfie' with its attendant narcissistic and vanity culture, captures the growing tension between being digitally connected and privacy.

The digital world is promoting a copyright averse culture that is threatening traditional publishing and lending models. But the social engagement of popular culture and its explicit nature are nevertheless democratising information.

Since 2009 there has been a dramatic increase in social gaming which itself suggests the development of tribalism on the Net.

TECHNOLOGY

The DIY digital culture has made creators of us all. Blogging, photographing, maker spaces, apps and websites are proliferating exponentially.

Mobile technology (smaller, smarter, more access to information, constant connectivity, more 'grunt', and soon wearable technology) makes the digital culture a 'liquid' experience.

Social media is the fast innovator as it facilitates online relationships, breaks business models of traditional mass media - *YouTube* is more popular than TV, *Twitter* is killing traditional newspapers and TV news).

Attitudes to copyright and privacy have changed (think NSA / metadata / Wiki leaks)
The big question is who owns the Cloud (access / privacy of information / monopolisation / library services that use it / data mining / personal info for apps etc is stored in cloud / security).

What is going to happen in the external environment 2014-2030?

(I) NSPECT Environmental Scan 2

What is going to happen in the external environment 2009- 2030?



*Panel Session with Libby Baulch; Alex Byrne; Oliver Freeman
Angelo Loukakis; Sue McKerracher;
Jan Richards and Andrew Tink*

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Libby Baulch – Policy Director, Copyright Agency/ Viscopy
Alex Byrne – State Librarian & Chief Executive, State Library of NSW
Angelo Loukakis – Executive Director, the Australian Society of Authors, author and publisher
Sue McKerracher – Executive Director, ALIA, Canberra
Jan Richards – Manager, Central West Libraries, Orange and Local Government representative on the Library Council of NSW
Andrew Tink – Former MP, Member of the Library Council of NSW

(The conversations are reported under the Panelists names but include contributions from other Panelists on the topics)

ANGELO LOUKAKIS

One of the historical roles of the library in society was as an agent against authority. Libraries must continue to take a radical stance and stake a claim against modern forms of superstition, and contemporary power and self-interest.

The new library will recapture and retell the story of the library for the times and circumstances it faces.

As Australian authors are under more pressure to provide material for free they are being less remunerated and this pressure looks as if it will deepen. It would be good if we could extend PLR/ELR to all formats, including electronic. The foundation of authorship is reading and this is a major role for libraries to foster.

We need to be more aware that the private providers on the Internet like Google, Apple and Amazon have relentless commercial interests. When knowledge is distributed as 'data' it is limited by commercial imperatives rather than expanded in a democratic way. This may mean the de-democratisation of knowledge is at play; particularly as the idea that Google *is* the Internet is wrong.

The Google browsing algorithms are not 'neutral' but reflect one way of accessing knowledge. Google is not altruistic.

Governments tend to allow market forces to set the stage rather than raising taxes to do it themselves.

We can sharpen the current and future civic role of public libraries by reasserting the principles of the public good, and enhancing the availability of all knowledge to the broader community. Public libraries provide structure to knowledge and enable its access in a non-commercial environment.

Everyone working in a library needs to be able to tell the greater library 'story' and understand its core values – such as the value of things shared.

ANDREW TINK

We are in the middle of the most profound revolution since the invention of the printing press. It's unpredictable and challenging and the solution to these challenges is to be flexible. Innovation is needed to make best use of staff and spaces.

Library staff need not be defensive about this flexibility nor the advocacy of their role in society. Language is important so you need to put things in the right language not only for politicians but also in the regulatory framework such as the Library Act thus enabling the Library Act to make a statement of values. We don't do a good job of explaining or measuring the value or impact we have on people's lives or demonstrating this impact.

Library people need to be relevant to their clients; if your clients value you, the politicians will take notice. Libraries require people with a diversity of skills to survive.

The point of difference for libraries is twofold: First is their local nature and the legacy of local studies. The digitisation, for example, of local newspapers and other local records is very important. Second, is the democratic role of libraries to provide access to information for people the wrong side of the digital divide or who have been left behind in other ways. Combatting the digital divide is an important challenge to libraries – it's a big role now and will continue to be in the future.

We also see the loss of collaborative learning in a formal education setting as something public libraries can take on.

JAN RICHARDS

Our future is nothing without the people who work in libraries.

Australian libraries are highly respected overseas but, nevertheless, we need to look at ourselves and take action otherwise we won't continue to exist.

We must embrace change, especially technological change while remembering that technology is an enabler, and not an end in itself. It's more about the philosophy behind the technology. Let's think globally, act locally, and engage in activities that make the best use of our resources and focus on local communities.

One-size fits all doesn't work - libraries should suit the community they serve. We need to engage with community – build partnerships - recognise social conditions - seize opportunities We need to be politically aware and astute. We need to engage with local government

We need real advocacy skills - this is essential. We need to talk about the value that we add to the community - not just how many kids come to story time.

We should all be on the same page and we need to stay relevant - to be prepared to step up and take leadership roles

LIBBY BAULCH

Copyright issues are made complex by the rise of technology and the demands of owners of creative works. We are moving away from detailed regulation applying to individual works and looking at principle/standard based regulatory environments.

Many issues can be dealt with without regulatory change - memorandums of understanding (trust and relationships are important).

Public interest issues when private entities get involved - enterprises have resources and knowledge, but do they have the same values/interest of the community in mind?

Distinguishing between professional and amateur content - how do we decide what is or should be available for free... but more importantly who decides?

Will we see places for creators and users to interact and negotiate terms of use - a bottom up, user-focused approach to copyright as is being developed in the UK?

Traditional territorial boundaries are breaking down but there is also a fear that territorial boundaries will increase and a proliferation of licenses and formats will ensue - which way will it go?

Principle / standard based approaches to copyright could work well in a dynamic technological world that is changing and requires agility / flexibility as new things develop.

SUE MCKERRACHER

People have multiple identities, our physical selves and increasingly our digital identities - in the future with wearable technology we will be carrying our digital selves everywhere we go.

The idea of a "culture of self" via social media seems to contradict the idea of common good, yet there are many examples of community engagement and collectivism online.

Advances in artificial intelligence and algorithms are creating new threats to traditional roles like journalism, advertising copywriters and librarianship – in fact any job that creates and curates information.

Technology is an enabler (creativity, communicating, access). The Internet of things and ambient technology mean we can look for a future, where the surfaces all around us will be activated. We will be constantly logged in to our digital worlds.

We won't only live once; we will experience many digital lives. Everything is moving forward - the question for libraries is how do we continue to add value?

The differentiation between screen-time and play-time for kids is blurring. Maybe our kids will have shorter attention spans but that might be helpful when we wear technology and take in lots of information and interact with our multiple digital selves as we move around.

How will we know when we are interacting with artificial intelligence or a real person in future? Some business news reports are already written by algorithms.

ALEX BYRNE

Libraries are about negative spaces - the spaces between people, knowledge and activities - in communities. Libraries bring people together to create a place for communities to explore the 'unknown unknowns.'

Libraries are a key enabler. Ours is a golden age where libraries are shaped by their communities and, in turn, shape those communities.

Passion is the unifying force of our profession as each library serves a distinct community and meets community needs.

Our challenge is to think locally and rigorously in systems terms, back it up through national and international collaboration with clear goals for libraries moving forward.

Politicians will support libraries if the local community support libraries and we can clearly articulate this

What futures are emerging?

EMERGEN CE



What Futures Are Emerging?

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As we move forward to 2030, we are living in a world in which public libraries are the last truly democratic institution.

People are increasingly dependent on a growing technology and communications infrastructure and we are serving a transient population that is competing for space as it engages with massive amounts of data.

These increases in the demand for connectivity, social media and information technology look unstoppable. But the digital divide remains. The once literate are becoming less so as the digital and visual literacy declines. A by-product of this is the development of generations with poor eyesight - due to over dependency on screens.

However, the semantic web revolution has been realised in a world where technology increasingly solves the world's issues such as the need for renewable energy from solar and water power. Ironically, it has been the inexorable rise in traditional energy costs that have paved the way for alternative energy to increase its market share.

Of course, access to transport is affected by the price of fuel. The advent of major roads as cool highways has helped to make travel more productive.

The push-back against consumerism is gathering strength and we expect the future to favour the move from consumerism to collaborative consumption. Collaboration and partnerships are becoming more significant at a state and local level. Nevertheless, convenience is still king.

This is a world full of dynamic tensions. Life is becoming increasingly paradoxical. We are not alone - a new spirituality takes hold.

Trans-national corporations exert increasing commercial control of information in which our privacy is emerging as the new currency. Library users are dealing with a job market that is restructuring with the shift from manufacturing to services and from analog to digital. The mining boom is over.

Education has changed dramatically. With MOOCs, personalised curricula and the rise and rise of online learning and tutoring. Less people enter formal higher education due to increasing costs and the user pays model that is now well established. People are even competing with artificial intelligence for jobs.

These developments are complemented by alternative business models based on collaboration, interns and the higher use of volunteers. Knowledge and information are the key drivers of the Australian economy and the development of co-locations for working is commonplace.

Self-sufficiency becomes the new religion in a world where time becomes our most precious resource. There is a return to self-made creativity, from food and clothes to houses.

New graduates struggle to find jobs as conflicts arise over who has priority over them. At the other end of the job spectrum, there are changes looming to the retirement age. The ageing population influences more powerfully political and economic decisions, as it stays active longer. The average lifespan is set to increase to 150 due to genetic engineering and scientific advances.

Population growth and ageing together promote the rise of high density housing such that physical space such as space in libraries becomes a premium. Families living in higher density conditions have more need for public community spaces. Convergence of facilities is the norm for example where the public library is also government service centre and collaborates in service provision across a wide range of activities.

We are living in smarter cities with ambient technology. The rise in solo households generates a greater need for social inclusion.

On the negative side, densification has only increased the need for electronic surveillance. We are used to living in a Big Brother world provided that our loss of personal freedom is offset by an increase in national security.

Australia is, thus, experiencing a slight reduction in civil liberties but on the plus side, women have shattered the glass ceiling and are better proportionally represented in positions of power. The old bipartisan political model is being replaced by greater diversity in representation. We witness a reverse in the downward political spiral as politicians actually seem to care more about public spaces.

Migrant communities are now the majority and not minorities. The global issues see a world fuelled by the historical hatreds that have been with us for centuries. The shift in economic power from west to east is complete with China and India the dominant global economies.

Population of the world is affected more by pandemics than terrorism and outbreaks of war. This has led to the dramatic reduction in global air-travel as online service and networking is

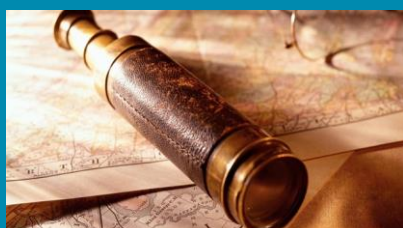
preferred to the risks of physical contact. There are no tourists visiting the Great Barrier Reef. Global engagement beyond boundaries is now the role and not the exception.

What should we be doing in response to these emerging futures?

(Using the strategic domains developed as part of the Bookends Scenarios the group considered how we might respond to the key points raised during the morning sessions.)



STRATEGIC ADAPTATION



What Should We Be Doing In Response To These Emerging Futures?

BRANDING & IDENTITY

1. Libraries need to be more politically active and to cultivate community champions and support
2. We can increase our visibility locally by improving our signage. This could be developed in the context of a recognisable national logo for public libraries, perhaps by adopting the NSW interrobang
3. Let's consider breaking down the physical boundary of libraries. Move libraries into the community, e.g. establish pop-up libraries
4. Centralise promotion for local, regional and statewide campaigns to promote value in libraries
5. Develop one library card across all NSW services
6. Improve our ability to deliver messages to our funding bodies

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. Develop partnerships with more community groups and agencies
2. Promote digital engagement (in homes and being strategic with planning activities and campaigns)
3. Identify community needs to inform programming and collection development
4. Act as a community broker by bringing people together to address community needs e.g. employment, intergenerational programs
5. Connect unemployed people within the community to opportunities and relevant people
6. Establish embedded librarians
7. Identify library space as a local / small business resource
8. Develop fix it space and maker space
9. Recognise if digital information is expensive books may be more accessible / affordable
10. Provide curated resources
11. Be purposeful in building social capital
12. Take the library out / pop up library
13. Anywhere there is wifi there is the library
14. Lending devices for social inclusion
15. Engage with crowd sourcing
16. Encourage community led collections e.g. a day in the life of...

GOVERNANCE & REGULATION

1. Manage the convergence / co-location of GLAM sector and potential streamlining of efficiencies and audiences
2. Establish statewide / national consortia - one card, one eplatform
3. Exploit the potential to streamline and rationalise purchasing across libraries
4. Build more negotiating power with publishers
5. Revisit the Library Act to include vision & values
6. Encourage Government engagement with the LIS sector regarding eservices and enter into agreements including possible funding / training / consultation and establishment of sites
7. Protect the privacy of client through third party providers reacted to on a united front to prevent leak of data
8. Use and contribute to existing standards and guidelines & use for service delivery plans

LEADERSHIP & INFLUENCE

1. Become advocates for the disenfranchised
2. Social bonds suggest the need for commercial investment in social inclusion
3. We need to politicise the profession
4. Let's contribute to the health of local Government – be concerned about the quality of councillors and their ability to advocate on behalf of library services and promote the relevance of the library to the community - including the councillors and senior execs. This entails establishing local council, library and community engagement divisions operating from within the library.
5. Encourage the need for current leaders to provide more training and opportunities for early career staff
6. Abandon story time photos - shatter the stereotype
7. Define the role of non-library trained staff
8. Get Leaders involved with their professional organisations
9. Make librarians activists for civil liberties, social change and human rights
10. Establish partnerships with others seeking funds e.g. approaching Government with charity organisation in partnership
11. Encourage librarians to engage with politicians and local causes
12. Develop the library as a platform for partnerships with creatives such as authors and artists
13. Train library leaders to be more politically savvy
14. Establish advocacy for funding at all levels
15. Change the way the library is viewed - re-branding?
16. Managing MOUs and professional relationships with the community
17. Develop the library manager role as advocate - to council, community and staff - constantly sharing the vision
18. Demonstrate the impact of libraries through key performance indicators
19. Accept leadership from any position
20. Work effectively within the library industry to change perceptions
21. Be more active in the profession and build awareness of national issues
22. Increase professional development to find new leaders
23. Practise continual ongoing community consultation - no more surveys!
24. Develop advocacy for open access vs. user pays
25. Remember that professional networks rule - creating opportunities for sharing and building vision across all levels in the industry
26. Establish mentoring for all new employees – and encourage upskilling

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Make active advocacy replace cataloguing
2. Create an iTunes University
3. Establish mandatory retirement for librarians at 40 when they become mentors
4. Continue compulsory professional development
5. Make the State Library take a more active role in sourcing, developing and providing online professional development
6. Increase opportunities for networking across all levels of the organisation
7. Get with MOOCs
8. Qualifications are not a lifetime ticket; practice is the key
9. Ensure we tell the right story to attract the right people
10. Make mentoring available through library industry bodies
11. Ban twin sets, buns, pearls and homy specs!

12. Abandon library specific university qualifications

RESOURCES

1. Develop niche subject collections that are relevant to local communities
2. Staff – more IT specialists are needed + up skilling of staff
3. Redefine the roles of staff to suit community requirements
4. Digitising of collections - need funding, skills and software
5. Library to create original content - bring their community to the world via online content.
6. Provide 24 hr access both physically and online – staff and technology needed.
7. Make the use of buildings and spaces both flexible and engaging
8. Library buildings are shared community spaces which need to be multifunctional
9. Our spaces need to be 'user centric' offering recording studios, maker spaces, smart walls/interactive technology, collaborating learning spaces.
10. Our buildings need to offer a secure location to escape from the likes of the zombie horde!
11. We need to outsource programs and skills and enable the community to run its own programs with the library as facilitator

RESOURCING

1. We need to increase our partnerships - but how they are to be resourced/found remains unclear
2. Increase sponsorship
3. Increase outsourcing
4. Develop shared services (within and between local councils)
5. Ensure the multi-skilling of staff to work across council areas
6. Build the value of the relationship between libraries and their public because we are a public facing institution
7. Expand the use of volunteers

What should we be doing to create a better future?

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION



What should we be doing to create a better future?

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BRANDING & IDENTITY

Let's propose a logo to the PLCC and develop simple brand guidelines for the library use of logos.

We should improve the context around reporting numbers (KPIs) to funders so they better understand our achievements and we should engage brand consultants to help us improve how libraries tell their stories.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We might introduce community brokering training outside library specific skills e.g. mental health, autism spectrum, family services, hearing and vision loss as well as the training and development of resources to support new partnerships e.g. MOU templates, negotiation skills, funding agreements.

Let's also introduce a digital engagement dashboard and advocate for more space for community activities. We might also want to improve the sharing of the language of library terms commonly used across the network to help customers feel more connected.

GOVERNMENT & REGULATION

Above all is the need to work collaboratively and collectively at the national, state and local level. Particularly needed is collective political engagement. We should seek to add value to the Library Act, just as libraries add value to their communities

We need to advocate for copyright and for statutory licence agreements for digital. We need to stress the need for equitable open access to information and build a federally funded library network that attempts to create Australian information and literacy content that is synchronised with the public library network.

LEADERSHIP & INFLUENCE

We must develop strategies for cooperative purchasing and explore new business models for the sector.

We have hidden value in the cohort of retired librarians that can be developed to encourage people to run for Council, to form mentoring teams and help in compulsory continuous professional development.

We must manage poor performance more effectively by identifying new champions who can run with the pace of change and harness emerging trends and technologies. We must examine existing staffing structures and move to project based teams that provide collaborative and innovative programs that reach outside the normal library team.

We need to devolve leadership and encourage younger people to leadership roles within the community. We need to develop an elevator pitch that all library staff know and strengthen our links with bodies like ALIA.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It's time to focus on the bigger picture by changing our story and the way we represent and talk about ourselves.

We need to talk to training institutions like the State Library and ALIA to create shared understanding in terms of the skills required. We need new courses in partnership brokering, community conversations, lobbying and advocacy.

This will involve valuing skills and qualifications other than librarianship and reducing the rigidity of current recruitment processes. This could involve multi-skilling of staff across Council activities with job swaps.

Let's make working in libraries sexy!

RESOURCES

It's time to introduce a NSW library card – reflecting the power of the state and a unified service – because users no longer recognise the local boundaries that we currently work within.

We need to establish a statewide digital library - accessed via the NSW library card.

Pursue statewide consortia to gain access to enterprise level products - e.g. 250 licenses for high quality digital signage and software (currently financially out of reach for most Councils)

Let's share the pitch (vision, values, and outcomes) far and wide as we identify and espouse clear roles and philosophy that are flexible and agile. Sharing involves identifying new partners and going and talking to them not only about outcomes for users but about exploring beneficial mutual returns on investments and developing shared services models – e.g. working with GLAMS

We need to 'de-silo' our libraries and break down the barriers within councils, but also within similar organisations.

Above all keep libraries free and accessible a place for connecting with other users enablers and facilitators.

RESOURCING

We need to reassess the performance of our collections in terms of space management.

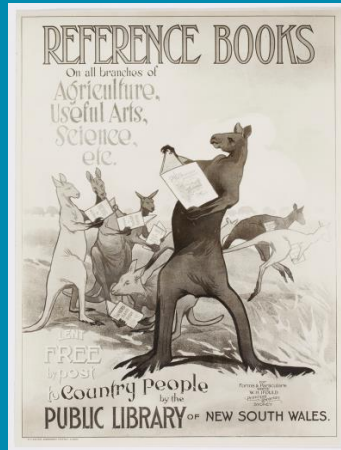
Staff structures need to adapt to changing skills requirements and to be more fully utilised with regard to existing talents.

Let's cultivate our advocates and community champions so as to raise library awareness. We might introduce community led collections and community buying days and generally engage with the community to create original content which we can then bring to a wider audience. The universal library card will encourage the community to share community resources.

Last but not least, establish a statewide policy for digitisation of collections with a universal LMS.

In light of these emergent futures how should the Act be amended, or what?

THE NSW LIBRARY ACT 1939



In Light Of These Emergent Futures How Should The Act Be Amended, Or What?

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The meeting did not recommend any specific changes but noted one or two issues.

We should introduce a value statement at the beginning of all library / council guidelines. The statement of operations needs to ensure that funds provided by the Government are transparently spent on library services.

Guidelines associated with the Act help to ensure appropriate levels of service. Clarification might be needed about public access computers. Is this restricted in any way by the Act?

What is the one thing we need to do now about the future of public libraries in NSW?

The Final Zing ...



What Is The One Thing We Need To Do Now About The Future Of Public Libraries In NSW?

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Delegates were asked to contribute their recommendations individually and not as a group. These are presented with minimal editing.

1. We need to think, plan and act as one network
2. Public librarians are a dying breed. What skills will managers of our libraries in the future need to ensure success for our community?
3. Have everyone singing from the same songbook with regards to the importance of public libraries in the future - all library staff, community advocates and politicians need to hear the same message and then pass it on as doctrine
4. Improve the funding formula to enrich all public libraries
5. Develop a set of performance indicators that describe community impact in a way that demonstrates public libraries delivering on key goals for local government (break the reliance on quantitative measures like loans and start to consider qualitative impact)
6. Develop a shared pitch and spread it far and wide
7. Develop, and deliver, a major campaign telling the library 'story'
8. Enter discussions with ALIA regarding professional recognition of other qualifications and experience, so that talented staff are not excluded from promotions
9. Government funding to bring all public libraries to agreed standard - staff and resources
10. Communicate our value within our communities- make sure that the library is part of the conversation at every level

11. Establish a statewide promotion of libraries to get the message out to people that we are here to stay. We are interesting, diverse and creative spaces and we are FREE
12. The public library is the cornerstone of information access and equity as the divide between the haves and have-nots expands. The public library needs to be the bridge that connects all members of the community
13. Encourage varied skills sets and recruit with this in mind
14. Think about technological literacy in a broad sense and encourage staff to develop new skills.
15. Learn how to connect with external organisations that can dovetail with you and fill the gaps in your own organisational knowledge - often council I departments aren't cutting it!
16. Consult and go outside the library/government world for advice/perspective/what is possible
17. Find a way to change the playing field. Explore how we can actually take seat at the table where the decisions are made. We are constrained by who we are and what we are part of to conform and we need to fix on a new vision and step outside these constraints
18. Forget "free the book", "free the librarian"!
19. We need to recruit and train staff from diverse skill backgrounds to be open to learning and development, flexible and adaptable, to be part of a team that is part of and serves its local community in the context of a co-operative state network
20. Enable branches and services to evolve (could be to grow or shrink) - be more responsive to local needs while never abandoning the core values of a free library service underpinning an informed democracy
21. Work to show governments how libraries help communities in multiple ways
22. Statewide, loans have declined across the last few years so promotion of reading requires a united approach and leadership at a high level
23. Unite libraries across the states, backed by the Federal Government as an essential part of every Australian's future.
24. Conduct knowledge and information audits to ensure valuable knowledge and information is not lost when a generation of librarians retire or the younger generation begin to job hop.
25. We need to access non-users and show that we ARE still relevant to modern society and DO respond to community needs. Most of the time we are preaching to the converted.
26. Facilitate philanthropy and broker sponsorship of public libraries by corporations (e.g. mining)
27. Learn more about how our community uses the library. Collect detailed data on usage, user experience, etc. to ensure each library is relevant to its community needs.
28. Change the way we speak about ourselves; use words/terminology that are relevant and resonate with our communities. Do away with the jargon. Kill Dewey!
29. Change the funding model
30. Create a library service which encourage bottom up or grass roots leadership from the community in participating in all aspects of the library and the profession.
31. To establish a statewide framework that ensures third party privacy access is protected
32. Implement a national (and compulsory) professional development scheme for professional staff - including non-library degrees (and optional for non-professional) so that the profession does not stagnate
33. Unleash our passion and bravery - become activists and advocates
34. Raise our library profile within our community - strengthen partnerships
35. Digitise all your unique resources and make accessible, embrace every technology and material your users use, and if needed up skill staff in all these areas, do everything you can to get this done in order to stay relevant.
36. Believe in libraries value in the wider context. Both community and internal staff need to all have a strong understanding of the huge value we offer. We rock!

37. Stand up and be counted - get visible to politicians and community leaders. Have meaningful discussions with our community members to find out what they want
38. Continue to facilitate partnerships which will strengthen and expand service delivery and improve community engagement
39. Take our service offsite, increase community partnerships and strengthen our place in the local community

Finally suggest a new tag line for public libraries

- To infinity and beyond!
- Libraries... we deliver
- Making the future
- Toward the future together
- I will survive
- Engage, Cooperate, Grow
- Public libraries: valued and visible engines for community development
- Regenerate or die
- Libraries powering the community
- Sleepers awake!
- Change starts now!
- Be bold, be practical, be different and don't fear failure!
- Libraries love you!
- Libraries. Not just relevant - a public necessity.
- The future is now
- The future: from crying to applying