

INCITE



MAR/APR
2021

Vol 42
Issue 2

DIGITAL ONLY EDITION

MARIKA SIMON
TEACHER LIBRARIAN AWARDED
UNIVERSITY MEDAL

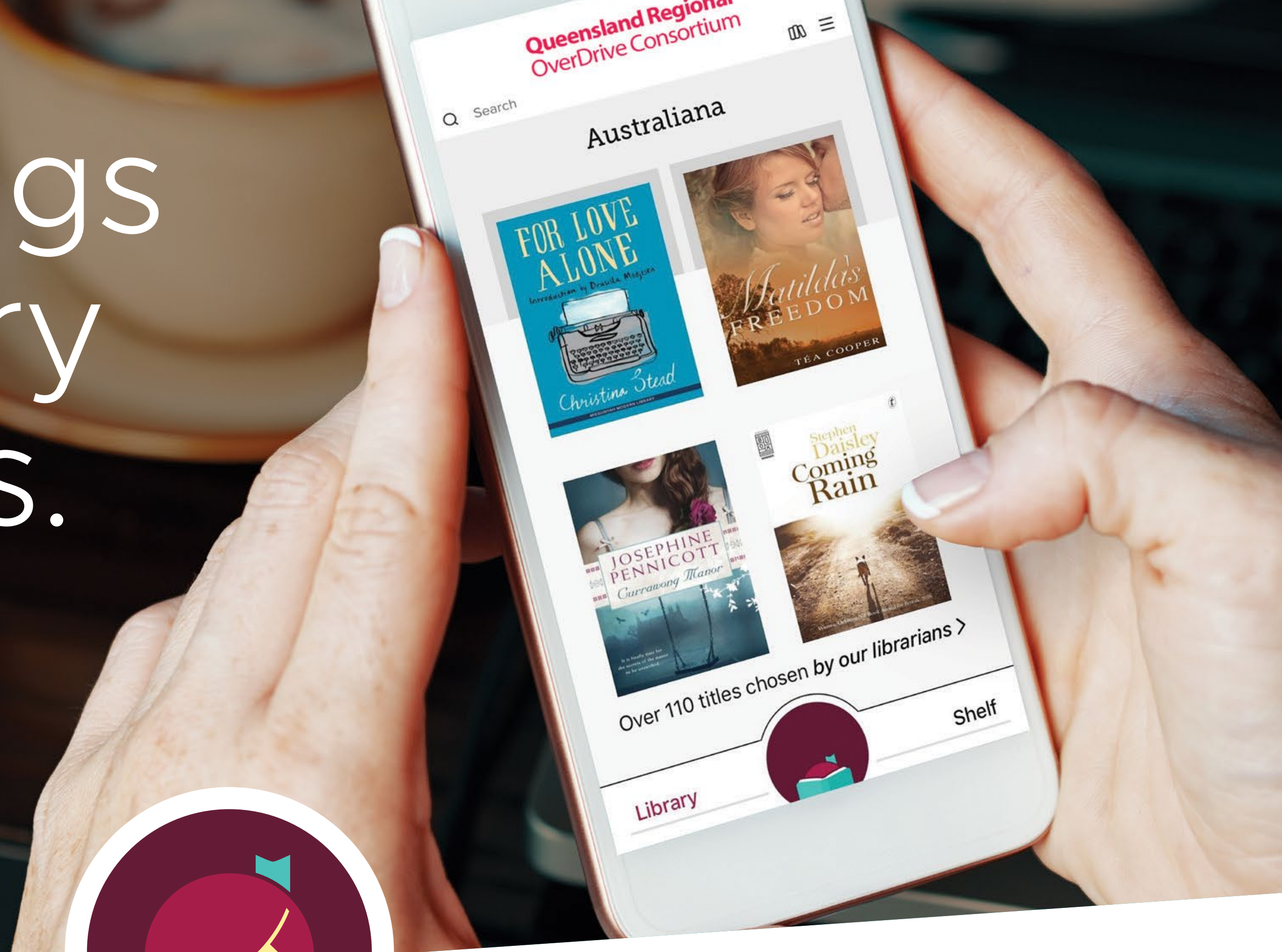
EDUCATION ISSUE

The magazine for library and information professionals

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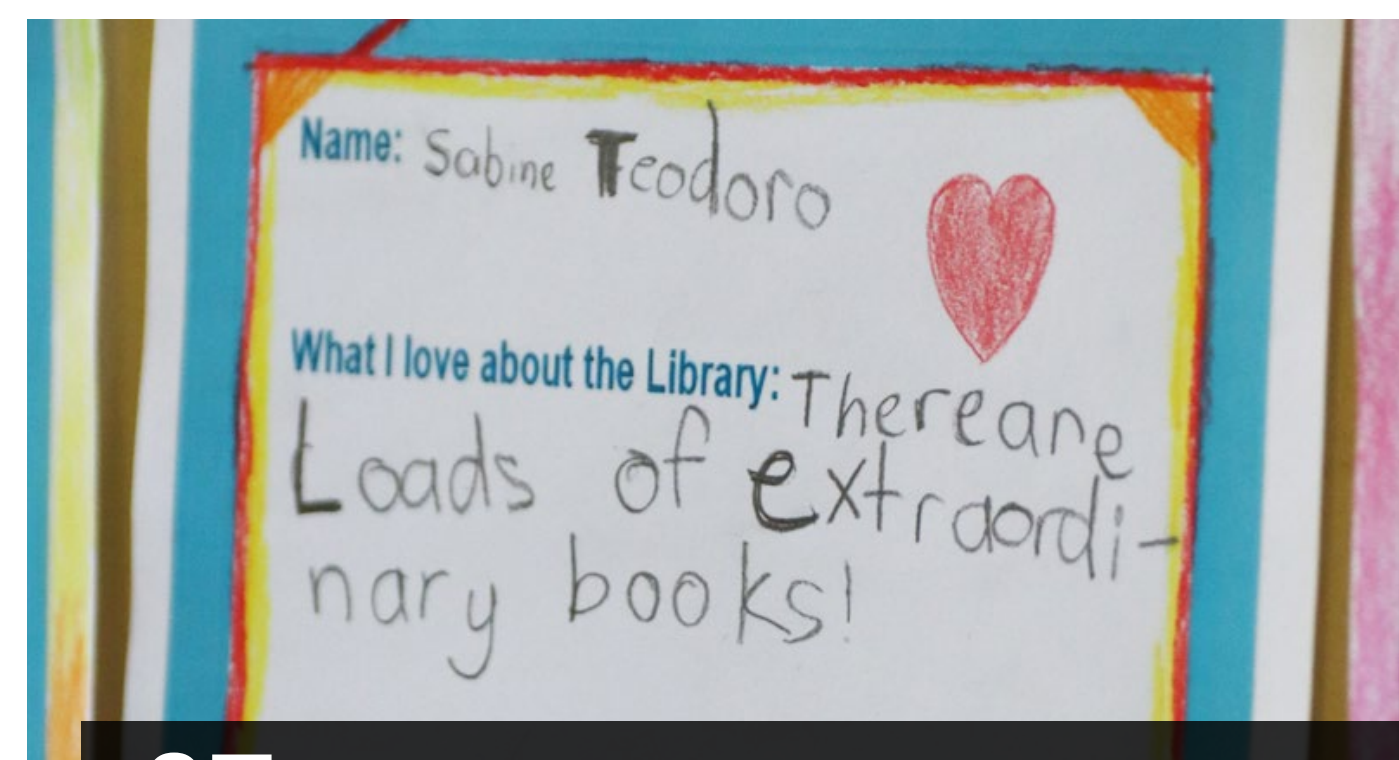
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FROM THE EDITOR

Following the January/February theme of Qualifications, we explore the related theme of Education. As Editor, I was a little concerned that these themes may be too closely related, and that we would have more of the same stories in this issue.

However, this did not end up being the case. Whilst the last issue's theme focused strongly on the opportunities brought about by pursuing qualifications, this issue looks at education more in terms of being a professional field of practice, and an activity in which we all undertake in our ongoing lives.

There was a strong response from library services in educational institutions; universities, TAFE, and schools. But that is certainly not to underplay the educational role of librarians and information professionals in other settings, particularly in supporting lifelong learning in their communities. Wherever we work, education is a constant in our lives, and takes many forms, both in our own professional development and the services we deliver. So, what are you going to learn today? 



ANDREW FINEGAN AALIA (CP)
INCITE Editor

 **EMAIL**
incite@alia.org.au

INCITE SUBMISSION DEADLINES 2021

May/June 2021

Open space

8 March 2021

July/August 2021

I believe (digital only)

18 May 2021

September/October 2021

Imagining the future

13 July 2021

November/December 2021

Risk (digital only)

21 September 2021

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INCITE is the magazine of the Australian Library and Information Association. It presents perspectives on issues relating to library and information science.

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AUSTRALIAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATION

ABN 40 090 953 236

Street address
ALIA House, 9-11 Napier Close
Deakin ACT 2600

Postal address
PO Box 6335, Kingston ACT 2604
Ph: 02 6215 8222
Fax: 02 6282 2249

enquiry@alia.org.au
www.alia.org.au

INCITE Editor
Andrew Finegan AALIA (CP)
02 6215 8222
incite@alia.org.au

INCITE Designer
Anna Nadarajah
anna.nadarajah@alia.org.au

INCITE Advertising
Christina Granata
02 6215 8214
events@alia.org.au

YOUR LOCAL ALIA CONTACT

State and Territory Managers are ALIA representatives in each state/territory. Their duties include being a point of contact for members and non-members.

ACT, NT and TAS: The team at ALIA House
02 6215 8222
membership@alia.org.au

NSW: Rob Thomson ALIATec (CP)
0423 184 737
rob.thomson@alia.org.au

QLD: Stephen Harris AALIA (CP)
0410 998 989
stephen.harris@alia.org.au

SA: Jeannine Hooper AALIA (CP)
0437 167 050
jeannine.hooper@alia.org.au

VIC: Margie Anderson AALIA (CP)
0404 471 404
margie.anderson@alia.org.au

WA: Niamh Quigley AALIA (CP)
0480 245 523
niamh.quigley@alia.org.au

ALIA EXECUTIVE

Sue McKerracher
CEO
sue.mckerracher@alia.org.au

Nicole Barnes
Business Director and
Company Secretary
nicole.barnes@alia.org.au

Christina Granata
Director of Conferences
and Events
christina.granata@alia.org.au

Trish Hepworth
Director of Policy and Education
trish.hepworth@alia.org.au

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board members welcome your comments and feedback. Please feel free to contact a Board member at any time.

Email: ALIAboard@alia.org.au
with your comments.

Viv Barton AALIA (CP)
President
0417 968 822
ALIAboard@alia.org.au

Vicki Edmunds AALIA (CP)
Vice-President
0414 195 055
ALIAboard@alia.org.au

Clare Thorpe AALIA (DCP)
Institutional Director
0407 006 560
ALIAboard@alia.org.au

Stefanie Gaspari ALIA Allied Field
Director
0403 205 606
ALIAboard@alia.org.au

Justine Hyde ALIA
Director
0410 613 064
ALIAboard@alia.org.au

Kim Sherwin AALIA (CP)
Director
0403 873 983
ALIAboard@alia.org.au

Emily Wilson AALIA (CP)
Director
0415 978 506
ALIAboard@alia.org.au



ISSN 0158-0876 (print)
ISSN 2202-347X (online)

EDUCATION

Welcome to the March/April issue of *INCITE*. This year's presidential theme, Education, has been embraced by ALIA and Members as a means to empower our profession as leaders through continuing professional development and lifelong learning. The launch of the Professional Pathways initiative has been a highlight. Integrating professional development and education, this initiative will create a strong future and ensure long-term sustainability for the profession and LIS education.

Sincere thanks to everyone who has participated in the recent town hall meetings and summit by providing valuable feedback on the Professional Pathways initiative. We have discussed the values of continuing professional development, encouraging and welcoming diversity in the workforce and sector, promoting the value of the profession and library qualifications, flexible career paths and the need for contemporary LIS education that produces future-ready graduates.

For me, education goes much deeper. I believe that education is an essential and fundamental right that empowers all individuals to understand, critically analyse, make informed decisions and effectively participate in society.

The impacts of COVID-19 shutdowns and the rise of online learning have further exacerbated inequalities to accessing quality education and widened the digital divide. Libraries have been forced to close when they've been needed the most, particularly by our most vulnerable communities. Ongoing physical distancing measures are limiting access to public PCs, digital resources, study groups, social networking, programs and lifelong learning opportunities. Despite these challenges, libraries are continuing to develop innovative and inclusive ways to deliver much-needed resources, programs and services.

The role of libraries in supporting media literacy, education and critical thinking has been formally recognised following ALIA's appearance at the Senate inquiry into Nationhood, national identity and democracy in November 2020. The Committee has recommended 'that the Australian government works with the Australian Media [Literacy] Alliance, through a co-design process to develop a national strategy to tackle fake news and misinformation. This process should be facilitated through the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.'

The education theme presents an opportunity to reconfirm libraries as key institutions that support the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which encompasses people, prosperity, partnerships, a protected planet, and a peaceful inclusive society to transform our world and ensure no one will be left behind. Libraries contribute to the SDGs by ensuring access to information, social and digital inclusion, inclusive and quality education, and promoting universal literacy and opportunities for lifelong learning and personal growth.

As always, I encourage you to participate in ALIA's PD Scheme – there is a wide variety of training and development modules on offer. I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *INCITE*. 🌟

VIV BARTON AALIA (CP)
ALIA President 2020-2021



 **EMAIL**
viv.barton@stirling.wa.gov.au



DIRECTLINE

Library and information services are integral to the education of Australians. Our formal education facilities, schools, TAFEs and universities, all rely on the skills and expertise of library and informational professions to support and deliver educational outcomes. Meanwhile public libraries play a key educational role for those not enrolled in formal schooling, from programs for babies and toddlers through to adult learning.

ALIA is a strong advocate of libraries' role in information and media literacy, recognising in particular the potential to reach at-need groups who are not in touch with the formal education system. With conspiracy theories flourishing online, and platforms struggling to deal with mis- and disinformation, it is more important than ever that all people in our communities have the understanding and tools needed to navigate the online world successfully. ALIA will continue to place libraries at the centre of solutions and is keen to work with our partners in the [Australian Media Literacy Alliance](#)

(of which ALIA is a foundation member) towards a national strategy, as was recommended in the recent Senate inquiry.

The rise of disinformation is not the only new challenge facing libraries. As I tuned into ALIA's Information Online 2021 Conference, with its themes of access and control, I was struck again by the way that library and information services are at the forefront of pressing ethical issues that were not part of the education landscape just a few decades, or in some cases a few years, ago.

The insightful and challenging panel presented by First Nations practitioners and academics, followed by the powerful presentation from Professor Marcia Langton, clearly laid out the opportunities for libraries to be allies in the reconciliation process, while also highlighting the many areas where change and growth is needed. Other presentations spoke to the importance of ethical and robust data management, challenges for artificial intelligence and the need for public libraries to maintain and strengthen their role in social cohesion. These are critical

questions that library and information professionals are being called upon to answer.

The library and information sector is lucky to have some great educators working in our universities and TAFEs. ALIA accreditation means that people can be assured that the education provided will equip graduates with the skills they need to tackle today's workforce. But we also acknowledge that in an ever-changing landscape there needs to be constant refreshing of courses, as well as new training and professional development opportunities. ALIA's Professional Pathways initiative will be a key component in this ecosystem, ensuring that library and information professionals are supported to access the training and education they need for the future. 🌱

TRISH HEPWORTH
ALIA Director of Policy
and Education



 **EMAIL**
trish.hepworth@alia.org.au

LIBRARIES ARE LOVED

As 14 February came around for 2021, library staff joined with their communities to once again express their appreciation for libraries on Library Lovers' Day. This year, ALIA encouraged people to 'make a date with your library', as many libraries have been looking to reconnect with their community in the new year. Whilst some libraries were still limited to connecting

online, due to restrictions on gatherings, there was still a stellar series of events and activities. Highlights (pictured) included:

- a (book) matchmaker service at Tomaree Library & Community Centre, NSW
- a Library Lovers Lounge at Orange City Library, NSW
- craft activities at Tenison Woods College, SA
- free beeswax wrap workshops at Sunshine Coast Libraries, Qld
- a special visit to Gungahlin Library, ACT from local drag queen, Dionysus Sin.

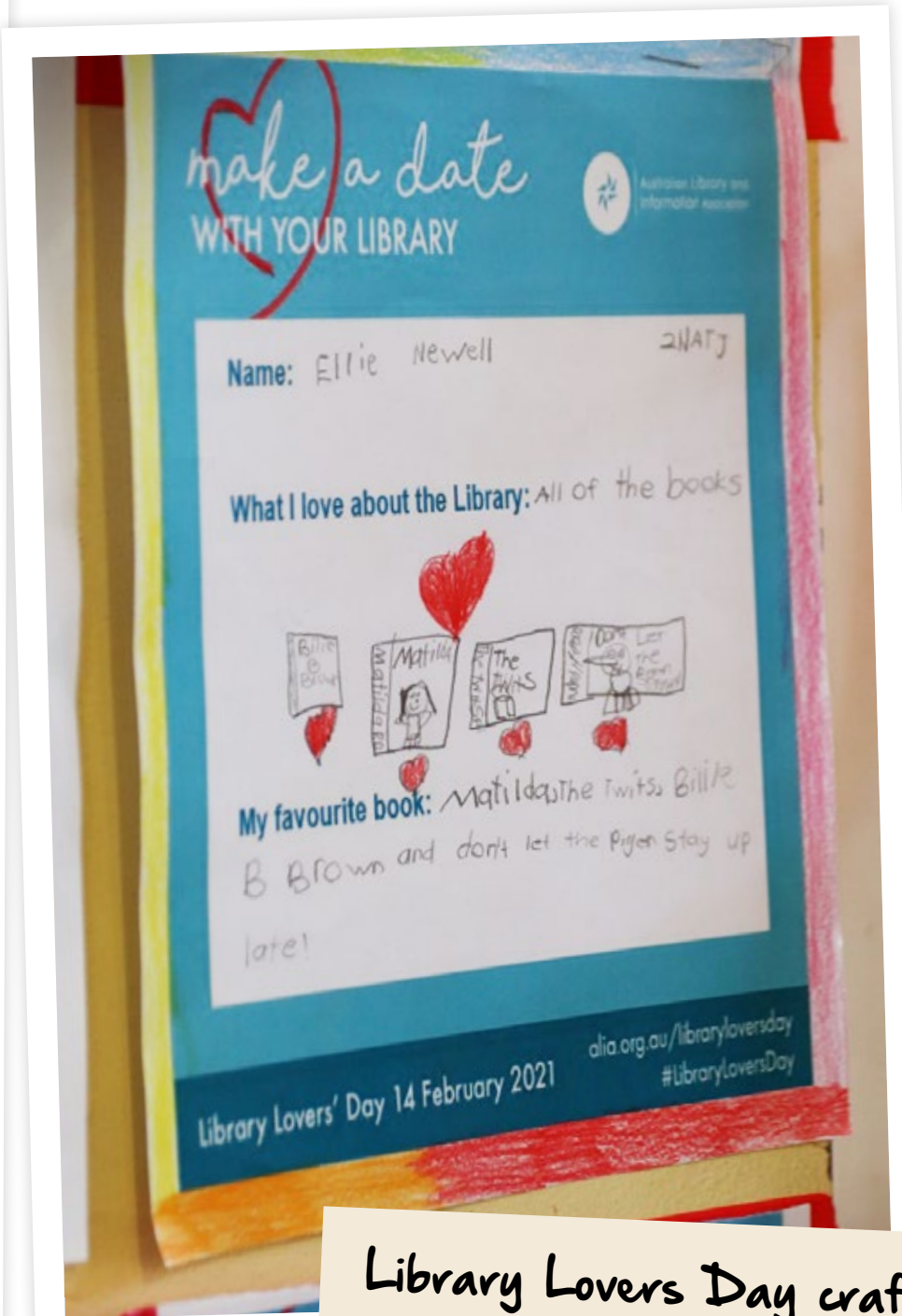
Events like these, along with many messages of support on [social media](#), highlighted the importance of libraries through this annual campaign. ALIA would like to thank everyone who celebrated, and we hope to see you all again in 2021. 🌟



Matchmaker service at Tomaree Libraries



Lego in the Library Lovers' Lounge, Orange City Library



Library Lovers Day crafts at Tenison Woods College



Beeswax wraps at Sunshine Coast Libraries



Dionysus Sin at Gungahlin Library

'Life is beautiful, and we are very, very, very gazillion lucky to be here.'

COSMIC PERSPECTIVES

Sending a book into space may seem like an outlandish venture, but at the heart of this year's National Simultaneous Storytime is a message to inspire young people to look to the stars, and a mission to cultivate curiosity in all things scientific.



Author and illustrator Philip Bunting.

When ALIA decided that its National Simultaneous Storytime would be held in space in 2021, it was essential that the right book was chosen to send to the International Space Station – a book that was creative and entertaining, but also one that engaged young readers in a way that would inspire them to connect with scientific themes.

So, when Philip Bunting was approached with the task of writing and illustrating this book, he was thrilled at the opportunity. 'I still have a sneaking suspicion that all of this is actually a dream. It is incredible.' This isn't Philip's first foray into questions of science. His earlier picture books *Who Am I?* and *How Did I Get Here?* take young readers on an exploration into the ways they see themselves and the world they live in, through a scientific lens. 'For younger readers (and the rest of us), it is increasingly important that scientific understanding is translated through a relevant medium,' Philip explains. 'There is so much wonderful information and data available today, but it can often pass us by if not well-distilled in an age-appropriate, engaging way.'

Similarly, his book *Give Me Some Space!* follows a young girl Una as she expresses her lifelong love for all things astronomical. Una dreams of leaving her boring life on Earth behind, to follow her mission to find life in space. More than simply a creative conceit, the book was created in consultation with astronomy specialists and a NASA astronaut, ensuring that everything portrayed in the book was scientifically accurate.

The book culminates with Una gaining what astronomers call a 'cosmic perspective', where seeing the Earth as a single, delicate entity profoundly shifts her viewpoint. It is a moment that Philip also works to evoke for his readers: 'Reading about science – in this case, astronomy – and asking the big questions, can have the same effect on young minds (without the risks of blasting yourself through

the stratosphere in a giant aluminium loo roll tube). An understanding of the sciences offers a cognitive and spiritual shift in perspective, giving kids a more complete view of their place in the universe.'

The book, *Give Me Some Space!* will be read by an astronaut at the International Space Station, and broadcast to more than a million kids around Australia at 11am on Wednesday 19 May 2021.

ALIA, along with the Australian Space Agency and the Office of the Chief Scientist, and with help from Science Time From Space, will also be running an interactive experiment from, where school age participants can help collect data that will help them better understand how temperatures around Australia vary, and how this relates to climate change. 🌟

To sign up for National Simultaneous Storytime, buy merchandise and copies of the book, and receive more information about the experiment, go to www.alia.org.au/nss



Australian Library and
Information Association

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LIANZA



Wednesday 19 May 2021

National Simultaneous Storytime *From Space!*

This year's story *Give Me Some Space!*
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from the International Space Station.

#NSS2021 #1MillionKidsReading

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ALIA BOARD ELECTION 2021

IT'S TIME TO VOTE IN THE ALIA BOARD ELECTION!

IN 2021, MEMBERS CAN VOTE FOR DIRECTORS IN TWO CATEGORIES:

- President
- General director (two vacancies)

The nine highly qualified candidates have experience in a range of library sectors and are located in most States and Territories. Voting opens on 1 March and concludes on 16 April. For more information about the election candidates and the voting process, visit the ALIA website at www.alia.org.au/elections.

The successful candidates will take office following our Annual General Meeting which will be held on Monday 24 May 2021.

Details about the Annual General meeting can also be found at www.alia.org.au/AGM.

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EDUCATION

The connection between librarians and education is undeniable. For many people, their earliest and most vivid recollections of a librarian come from visiting their school library. Throughout their journey from primary school to secondary school and graduation, the librarian is there to develop their reading habits, and embed information literacy and research skills to support their studies. On to higher education, librarians continue to support students through their academic pursuits. Meanwhile, in the community, a myriad of programs is available in public libraries to support lifelong learners, whether it be sharing their love of reading, building new technological skills, or supporting early childhood literacy for new parents. And so, the cycle continues.

In the following articles, library and information professionals share their experiences of being educators, providing educational resources, and working in educational institutions. A recurring theme that has emerged is the importance of teacher librarians in schools: we interview CSU University Medal recipient Marika Simon on her journey to becoming a teacher librarian; Dr Margaret Merga's research highlights the multi-faceted nature of teacher librarian roles; and a double-page feature presents the important work that ALIA Schools has been doing for teacher librarians. As dual-qualified professionals – both in education and information studies – teacher librarians set the professional standard as educators in the library world.

But education doesn't stop in school libraries. Whether they be TAFE or university libraries, public libraries, research libraries or special libraries, their collections and services support education in many different forms. Every interaction in a library has the potential to become an educational opportunity – what will yours be? 



IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

MAY/JUNE 2021

OPEN SPACE

Library spaces – be they physical or virtual – are where communities come together and connect with the library's collections and services. For many librarians, the idea of these spaces being open is an important one, whether it be in creating physical access for all, being open to new ideas, or removing digital barriers to online content.

Many libraries will also be thinking about how they can create and adapt spaces that are open and safe for their workers and their community through the pandemic, and we'd love to hear about your strategies for maintaining these spaces.

This issue will also tie in with the ALIA National Simultaneous Storytime's theme and celebrate new open spaces in the ALIA Library Design Awards. 

A CROWDED ROLE

Following her recent research, **Dr Margaret Merga** shares her observations on some of the most common aspects of teacher librarian roles.

Teacher librarians (TLs) make a valuable contribution to student learning. However, they face [barriers](#), as 'limited time and competing demands, crowded curriculum, low teacher valuing, low student engagement, skills and motivation, issues with parental support, limited space and constrained budget' all pose threats to TLs effectiveness.

After exploring the competing demands that TLs must juggle in my [recent book](#), I decided to do further research that explored [the role of the TL in Australia](#) and of [school librarians in the United Kingdom](#).

To comment on the nature of the TL role in Australia, I reported on aspects of the role that were found across at least a quarter of 40 recent job description documents. While I found that the role is [extremely complex](#), requiring expertise across a diverse range of areas, there were three common aspects of the role:

TEACHING AND FACILITATING LEARNING

TLs are perhaps first and foremost expected to be teachers, and teaching was the only aspect of the role that occurred across all of the job descriptions. TLs were expected to plan for teaching and adopt a range of teaching strategies. They were expected to teach in 'library areas' (eg literature, literacy, information literacy, digital citizenship) as well as 'core curriculum areas' (eg English).

COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK

The second most common expectation in the documents was that TLs be team players. This involved supporting staff with resourcing, and collaboratively planning units of work. TLs work cohesively as part of a team with other library staff, and model collaborative skills to support the professional learning of other staff in collaboration.

LITERACY EDUCATION

The literacy educator aspect of the role was complex, and it is particularly important given that schools face constant pressures to improve students' literacy performance.

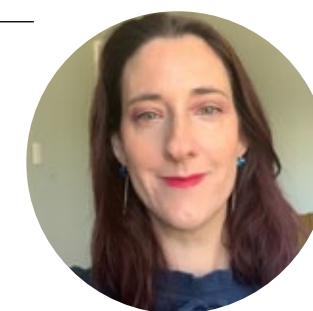
As literacy educators, TLs were commonly expected to:

- link literary texts with curriculum units
- design and deliver reading programs
- promote literacy and literature to students in collaboration with other staff
- provide training for staff and parents in reading, literacy and literature
- develop strategies to foster a love of reading
- promote a diverse range of texts, from varied cultural perspectives
- conduct book talks and guide students' recreational reading choices

- promote the benefits of regular reading
- create displays and events to encourage reading
- promote literature to staff
- make informed choices about collection development and promote new acquisitions to engage students
- possess an extensive knowledge of children's literature
- foster and maintain a school culture that supports reading engagement
- provide an environment that supports and encourages reading.
- model reading for pleasure.

The role of the TL in Australia is demanding and diverse. Any development of professional pathways for school library staff should not make it easier for schools, departments and governments to replace TLs with less qualified staff, as their expertise is both unique and needed. For TLs to be able to support student learning, their contribution needs to be recognised and aided by school leadership. 🌟

DR MARGARET MERGA
Senior Lecturer in Education
Edith Cowan University



 **EMAIL**
m.merga@ecu.edu.au

 **TWITTER**
@MKMerga

EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS OF THE FUTURE



Students attending classes at CSU's residential school.

As educators of library and information science professionals, the academic staff in the School of Information Studies at Charles Sturt University are very aware that our graduates are likely to take on roles that require them to teach others in many different environments. We recognise the importance of developing teaching design and delivery skills in our students and currently offer subjects that do just that. These subjects are focused specifically on teaching information literacy skills, developing education programs for community outreach, and designing and delivering educational programs for children and young adults.

Amongst those who are learning specifically to be professional educators are our Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) students. These students will become leaders in curriculum and learning program design. They learn to evaluate, support and improve student learning and teaching needs in modern learning environments, and to incorporate information literacy, literacy learning outcomes and digital technologies into the curriculum. What they all have in common is the development of skills that allow our students to understand their users' education or training needs and to then design, deliver and evaluate training programs to meet these needs.

We feel very fortunate indeed to have the opportunity to help send graduates into their chosen professions with the skills and knowledge required to enable them to be effective teachers and trainers in the workplaces that are lucky enough to employ them. 🌟

DR JANE GARNER AALIA

Lecturer, School of Information Studies
Charles Sturt University

 **EMAIL**
jagarner@csu.edu.au

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Let's talk SCHOOL LIBRARIES

This month, INCITE asked school library workers about what they felt was the biggest change in school libraries in recent years, and how they have needed to manage this change.



**ROHISA IQBAL AALIA (CP)
LIBRARIAN, HOPPERS CROSSING
SECONDARY COLLEGE**

The library plays the role of an information hub, no longer just a book storage area. Online resources have reduced the need for many physical books to support curriculum. As a school librarian, most of my time is spent making information accessible and training users rather than shelving, circulating and book processing.

Constant upskilling is essential to stay ahead of information trends. Librarians are the interface between unprocessed information and end users. I continually refresh my understanding of information retrieval, curation and digitization, and cultivate creativity, adaptability, and the ability to engage users.



**SUSAN GRIEVE ALIATEC (CP)
COLLEGE LIBRARIAN, TARNEIT P-9 COLLEGE**

We have had massive growth with more than 2,100 students and 210 teachers, so we need to be a welcoming place for everybody across the whole school. Whilst books remain at our core, we have developed programs to help students and teachers find and use information online.

Our space is now used for many activities: classes, office work, performances, professional development, team teaching, and the usual morning and recess breaks. We are not silent – we buzz with activity and excitement and though we have changed we still promote literacy as our keystone to the love of reading.

**FRANCES MUGGERIDGE AALIA (CP)
HEAD OF LIBRARY SERVICES, HAILEYBURY RENDALL SCHOOL, DARWIN**

The biggest change in school libraries I've seen over the last 15 years or so is the introduction of ebooks, eaudiobooks and other electronic resources, and their integration into catalogue search results. This has presented challenges in balancing the print collection and the electronic collection (one does not replace the other – they should be complementary), managing user expectations ('Why can't I borrow it if someone else has it? It's online!'), and budget constraints, as electronic resources are often far more expensive than the equivalent print resource.





AMBER SORENSEN AALIA
TEACHER LIBRARIAN, CHERRYBROOK
TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL

The ever-changing pace and scope of technology continues to revolutionise the way in which information is consumed and created. The challenge is to cut through the noise of the online world. We are creating how-to guides to develop student information fluency skills. Our library website has links to a variety of electronic resources, including subject guides. Our Instagram account raises awareness of our resources, services and events, while connecting us with people and libraries across the globe. This digital presence is essential in supporting our core clientele – students, teachers and parents.



LOTTE TEN HACKEN AALIA
(CP) TEACHER LIBRARIAN
TEACHER LIBRARIAN, THE GAP
STATE SCHOOL

With so many new technologies, I need to continually update library resources, from digital texts to robotic devices, and regularly upskill to support others in using these resources. School libraries are places to meet, learn and explore – with increasing access to information tools and spaces.

Another (wonderful) change is a growing impetus to ensure diversity across the collection, both in terms of content and authorship. It is essential to constantly develop the collection, removing resources that are culturally inappropriate or simply inaccurate – especially Australian history books – and replace them with appropriate, inclusive and relevant texts.

LISA PERRIAM AALIA
LIBRARY ASSISTANT, SCOTCH COLLEGE (WA)

I believe the biggest change to school libraries has been the emphasis on wellbeing. I have observed several opportunities to increase student wellness: one-on-one assistance with online projects; identifying and responding thoughtfully to social challenges; and developing options for neurodiverse students. Kind and sensitive library staff are trained to recognize when there is a need to help students beyond the traditional academic scope, more so now than when I was a student. Building individual reading profiles, establishing rapport with the students, and liaising with parents, are some of the ways we mitigate risk within our library.



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CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY

In December 2020, Charles Sturt University graduate **Marika Simon** was awarded the University Medal, acknowledging excellence in completing her Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship). INCITE Editor **Andrew Finegan** spoke with Marika about this important step on her journey into teacher librarianship.

Firstly, congratulations on completing your teacher librarianship degree. How did you find the experience of returning to university?

It had been over 20 years since I had last studied prior, so switching to an online model was very different and very challenging. In my previous studies, I would always attend lectures, which would carry me 75-80% of the way. I'm a very interactive person, and not having lectures meant adjusting my learning style. Figuring out my own pacing and finding ways to create learning opportunities that suited my style were big issues.

You've already had a substantial career working as a teacher. How did this experience inform what you studied in teacher librarianship?

My experience as a teacher definitely informed how I approached the coursework. One thing that surprised me was the breadth of educations that were encapsulated in the teacher librarian role – definitely in terms of teaching and inquiry. The concept of teacher librarian as a technology leader was also a new perspective for me. That may be a great potential model – but doesn't suit all teacher librarians or all contexts. I'm strong with technology, but right now that's not a key priority for my context.

The variety of reality needs to be represented in the coursework. I worry for those who have stars in their eyes and the expectation of 'this is what I should be doing'. I am glad that I have the experience that I can take that shining ideal and put it up there, and then push up my sleeves and get on with the work.

How did you balance work, study and family life through your coursework?

In my first year, I had just finished up a temporary role in primary teaching, and I could still take on casual work. I was writing for the *School Magazine*, which I could also do at home, so that allowed me with the space that I could use to really focus on my studies. My kids were also teenagers, so I could do my school when they were at school and still have family time – except when assignments were due.

Halfway through the course, I got a job as a teacher librarian. It was really great timing, because I had a basis for what was involved – that feeling of 'okay, I have an idea of what I'm meant to be doing' – and the passion to put it in practice. I could inform my study with experience, and experience with my study.

Working three days a week also meant that I had two days dedicated to study and family balance. My heart goes out to people trying to study with full-time work. My family were very supportive and helpful – but also very glad when I finished.

Congratulations on receiving the University Medal. Do you have any advice for current students on how to consistently achieve excellent results?

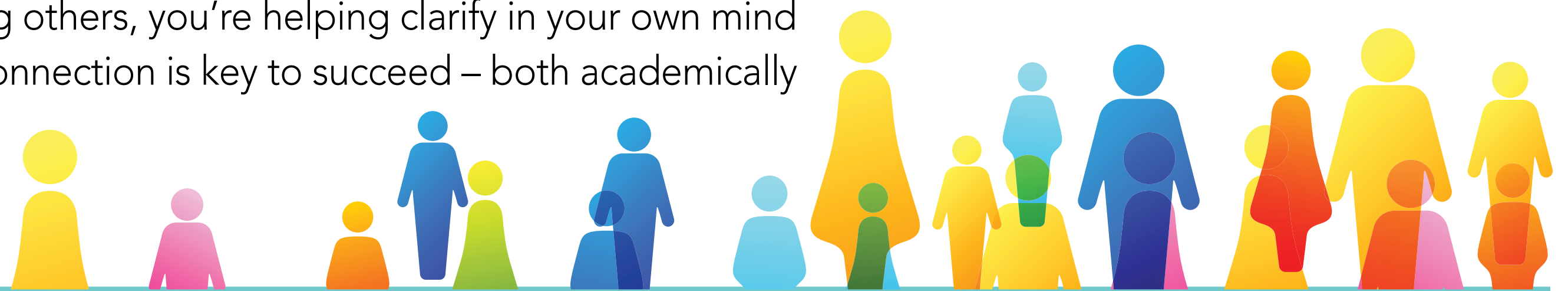
Invest yourself as much as you can in it. The more that you care and the more that you dive in, the more you get out of it.


Make sure you really understand what the assessors are looking for, if you don't know, or you're not sure, ask your lecturer – or your classmates. Sometimes there are things that you fall in love with, but don't actually serve the piece, so be ready to sacrifice the good things you write for what you need to have.

Connection and community are key. I don't think I would have achieved these results if I hadn't reached out to other students in my cohort and set up a social media group to support one another. If you're somebody who's good at explaining things, help other people. By helping others, you're helping clarify in your own mind what you need to do. Finding that connection is key to succeed – both academically and for your career.

So, what's next?

After finishing my degree, getting my toes wet as a teacher librarian, it's time to come out of my shell by participating in my teacher librarian networks and maybe writing articles. It's so important to keep sight of the bigger library world. I loved the experience of my study visits; the chance to see different kinds of libraries and connect with that larger community. Frankly, that's why I stay as a member of ALIA, rather than just with other school library associations – I want to stay connected with that community and be a part of that bigger world. 🌐







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ALIA SCHOOLS: SUPPORTING TEACHER LIBRARIANS

Teacher librarians are unique because they are required to hold qualifications in both education and librarianship. The joint [ALIA-ASLA statement on teacher librarian qualifications](#) has this to say:

'As a member of a school's teaching team, the teacher librarian has a role in the planning, implementing and evaluating of educational policies, curricula, outcomes and programs, with particular reference to the development of students' information literacy.'

This means that teacher librarians are required to meet the annual teacher registration requirements of their state or territory as well as adhere to ALIA's core values and principles.

[ALIA Schools](#) supports teacher librarians to meet these obligations through




the publication of resources and a comprehensive program of professional development in the fields of both education and librarianship.

Recent publications:

- [AITSL Standards for teacher librarian practice](#) was a response to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) publication Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- [A Manual for Developing Policies and Procedures in Australian School Library Resource Centres, 2nd edition](#) provides library staff with a practical approach to improving professional librarianship skills and practice.

Every year ALIA Schools develops a well-regarded program of professional

development seminars which are responsive to innovation in both the education and library sectors.

Positioned in both education and librarianship, teacher librarians are ideally placed to teach the skills necessary to develop lifelong learners. It is the core business of teacher librarians to create opportunities for whole school community collaboration in pursuit of high standards in information literacy and a thriving reading culture. 

ANNE GIROLAMI FALIA (CP)

Convenor
ALIA Schools



EMAIL

agirolami@mercycoburg.catholic.edu.au

FINDING THE TEACHER LIBRARIAN BALANCE




How does the teacher librarian balance the time between teaching and librarianship duties? Where is their place in the school landscape?

The ALIA School Libraries Advisory Committee, formed in 2014, was challenged to answer these questions and a project emerged from these

considerations: to provide guidelines on the time allotment for teaching and library tasks. Work commenced in 2017 and the project involved examining background documents, negotiating key discussions and drafting a written document. These guidelines will play a key role in educating and informing school principals about the time allocations that a teacher librarian requires to complete teaching and librarianship tasks and how this adds value to the school community.

As part of the process, the Committee reached out to teacher librarians in schools across Australia. The resultant draft document has received rich and varied feedback from practitioners in both the primary

and secondary sectors. Currently, the Committee is in the process of refining the guidelines to reflect that feedback and they will be forwarded to the ALIA Board for ratification some time in Term 2, 2021. When the document is released, it should promote robust discussions about how teacher librarians can support students and colleagues as they engage with literacy, information and research. 

DR HELEN WESTON

Teacher Librarian
ALIA School Libraries
Advisory Committee



EMAIL

westonh@loreto.qld.edu.au

EXPANDING INFORMATION LITERACY



Critical and creative thinking is one of the general capabilities in the Australian Curriculum that all schools must address. Students are expected to 'generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, seek possibilities, consider alternatives and solve problems'. School libraries are uniquely positioned to support students with this area.

Although teacher librarians embed information literacy skills into curriculum, such as using databases, appropriately

referencing research material, and ethically sourcing creative commons licensed materials, information literacy programming is about more than promoting information resources. Teacher librarians can also teach students to discern when information is reliable and of high quality, take notes effectively, knowing which method works best for the individual, apply skim-reading strategies to effectively engage with texts, and differentiate between these learning activities.

At Our Lady of Mercy College Heidelberg, the teacher librarian works with teachers and learning leaders to evaluate our students' current information literacy skills and finds opportunities to enhance students' skills. We have developed a scope and sequence document to track skills

across year levels. Where possible, we introduce a particular skill via classwork and assignments that students are already undertaking and then revisit the skill in another subject. The aim is that students understand that a particular skill is relevant across all subjects, not just for the activity where the skill was initially introduced.

Active promotion of the work that is being undertaken to improve students' information literacy skills must be shared with staff, students and parents/carers where possible, to ensure that these important cross-curricular skills remain a priority in school settings. 🌟

ANNA APFELSTEDT AALIA (CP)
Teacher Librarian
PD Coordinator, ALIA Schools



 **EMAIL**
aapfelstedt@olmc.vic.edu.au

NURTURING CONFIDENT READERS

A core role of the school library is to nurture confident readers, and collections, teaching programs and the physical space all play a part.

In a school library, students have agency and can find their own image and voice reflected in what they are reading. In contrast with the classroom, where the reading is usually prescribed or students may be restricted to a reading level, carefully curated school library collections allow students to follow their passion and read in whatever direction they desire.

A library reading program that explicitly teaches reading comprehension skills may assist weaker students, while capable readers will benefit from discussing their reading.

These discussions can be informal chats, conferencing in a reading program, or guided discussions with other students. Comprehension is deepened when students can discuss the ideas and opinions arising from their reading.

By getting to know students, the teacher librarian can guide them in their reading journey. You know you've got it right when students return for more recommendations, 'because Miss knows what I like to read.' Genrifying collections and creating responsive OPACs also helps students build confidence in making their own reading choices.

Physical space can also contribute to the development of lifelong readers. To succeed in senior school and beyond,



students must learn to sit quietly and read for longer. Inviting nooks and quiet spaces encourage students' reading stamina.

Reading is not an end in itself but the start of a greater understanding of the world. We want our students to participate in the wonder that reading can afford. What better way to start than in the school library? 🌟

GABRIELLE DOUGLAS
Head of Resource Centre
Marian College, Sunshine
West, Victoria



 **EMAIL**
gdouglas@mariansw.vic.edu.au



Blended learning in the library at St Thomas of Villanova Parish School, Mareeba

LEARNING TO BLEND IN

Schools in the Diocese of Cairns have found that blended learning combines the best of face-to-face and online learning, enabling students to develop digital skills in relevant contexts. As a consultant for libraries, **Anna Seidl** investigates how this shift towards digital learning can be used to increase the integration and effectiveness of libraries.

Amidst the innovations in education occasioned by COVID-19, blended learning has risen to prominence in F-12 education, with [Forbes](#) labelling it an educational 'revolution'. Blended learning simply means combining elements of traditional, face-to-face teaching with elements of online learning. Blended learning can take [many different forms](#), including station rotations, where students rotate through face-to-face and online activities, or flipped learning, where students absorb content through videos or readings outside the classroom, freeing lessons for interactive activities and discussions. This provides students with greater flexibility and some control over where, when and how they undertake tasks. These principles can also be applied in the school library, through learning management systems, resource guides, and blended library instruction.

A learning management system (LMS) is core to our schools' blended

learning strategy. LMS's, such as Canvas and Google Classrooms, are online learning environments where teachers undertake many teaching duties online. LMS's allow staff to collaborate in creating lessons, uploading resources, communicating with students and seeking feedback.

From a library perspective, the key benefit of a LMS is as a platform for collaboration with teaching staff. Library staff have found it rewarding to develop an expertise with their school's LMS, as this enables them to value-add to learning in the digital space. Strategies implemented by our schools include:

- **Obtaining administration or access rights to classes:** This enables library staff to view curricula and assessments for each class, facilitating collaboration with teachers. For example, library staff use the LMS to track topics being taught, and in consultation with class teachers, shares links to relevant online resource and catalogue records directly onto the topic page.
- **Creating a strong library presence:** We have ensured that icons for key electronic library resources, such as the catalogue and eBook platform, appear in the course template. Icons are then reproduced on each course page, making library resources easily accessible. Some schools have created a dedicated library page inside their LMS, where they provide library information, resources, podcasts, virtual tours and competitions.
- **Maximising integrations:** Many digital resources, such as ClickView, TurnItIn and Britannica Online, integrate with numerous LMS platforms, which increases resource usage.
- **Assisting colleagues:** Library staff can support their colleagues in areas such as technical skill development, design considerations and copyright advice.

We used [LearnPath](#) to create online curated resource guides on curriculum topics and information literacy topics. We included print resources in online guides, by including links to catalogue records. Resource guides have proven popular with teachers and are particularly effective when linked directly into students' courses. Other products such as [LibGuides](#) or even free website builders may also be used for this purpose.

Our next challenge is to consider how to blend our own library classes, using a mix of in-library and online activities. This will help us deliver more library instruction to more students. Online quizzes and discussions, videos, screencasts and shared documents – these are just some tools we will use to achieve an effective blend. 🚫

ANNA SEIDL AALIA (CP)

Consultant, Digital Learning and Library Services
Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns



EMAIL
aseidl@cns.catholic.edu.au

SEVEN EASY PIECES (OF INFORMATION)


A concept introduced by Professor John Sweller, *Cognitive Load Theory (CLT)* provides a framework by which we can understand why people learn and think the way they do. **Lizelle Smith** explains how CLT can assist librarians, especially academic librarians, when selecting resources for their students and staff.

To support training methods and learning tasks, the library team at Sheridan Institute of Higher Education have published *Cognitive Load Theory in Academic Libraries*, a workplace training and learning guide for library students and librarians. Whilst written for academic libraries, this guide can also be used in other libraries as a workplace training tool.

Providing definitions of human cognition, cognitive architecture, schemas and CLT effects, one of the main points included in the guide is that a person can only process 'seven pieces of information at a time in 20 seconds.' Thus, it is very important to understand that people process information in a different manner, especially when learning a new library task, procedure or method. As library professionals, we need to take this in consideration when working with library placement students or new staff.

Furthermore, the guide explains how CLT can be applied in a learning and teaching environment. It includes CLT examples for educators and learners, descriptions of the effects, strategies, and application of the effects. The information

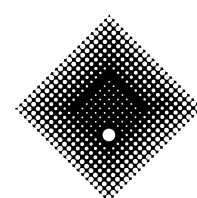
in the guide has been backed up by recent academic research. The guide is also part of an in-depth scholarly journal article that will be published in the near future.

The guide can be downloaded from the Sheridan Institute of Higher Education's [library catalogue](#), and is also available through [Trove](#). For more information about any of the information provided in the guide, please contact Lizelle Smith below. 

LIZELLE SMITH AALIA (DCP)
Director of Library and
Information Services
Sheridan Institute of
Higher Education



 **EMAIL**
lsmith@sheridan.edu.au



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TAFE VICTORIA



IS IT REALLY OPEN?

Library and information professionals have been championing the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Creative Commons (CC) licensed materials in educational settings for many years. **Meredith Beardmore** investigates how CC videos are shared online, and some of the barriers that currently exist for them to become truly open.



The recent increased urgency for students and teachers to have easily accessible online materials helped push the trend of OERs and CC materials. In addition to sourcing and adapting course materials, they are a valuable resource for librarians in creating information literacy sessions and learning resources. After all, a community of openness and knowledge sharing between librarians and libraries is a cornerstone of the profession; something that is vital in fostering the 'free flow of information and ideas' captured in ALIA's core values.

As a liaison librarian at a dual VET and higher education institution, I saw an increase in demand for video content in 2020. I also had a project where I needed to replace YouTube content within a mandatory learning module. YouTube is used widely by our teachers and students, but for our students in China it meant that significant chunks of content were inaccessible. I thought this should be an easy enough fix; all of that wonderful CC content was out there ready for me to adapt. I couldn't be more wrong.

Almost all of the CC material I wanted to use was hosted on YouTube, which gave rise to a fundamental issue: YouTube's Terms of Service prohibit downloading videos. This is not really in the spirit of CC - how can I adapt and remix content easily if I can't download it? Previously this was an option: a 'Remix this video' link found under the CC license field in a video's description. This enabled a user to edit and reuse that video within YouTube's Video Editor. Users were locked into the YouTube platform but were still able to actually access and edit CC videos into their own work. The 'Remix this video' is no longer available on YouTube, nor is the ability to search for CC videos within the editor. So what are the alternatives?

Videos can be downloaded using a third party tool, but this violates YouTube's Terms of Service. The only other alternative is to contact the creator directly and organise a transfer outside of the YouTube platform. Sometimes this will work, but often you're left without a response. Perhaps there is another

solution but after many hours and days of searching, it's clearly not easy to find – I invite fellow librarians to write in if they have one.

In the meantime, I would encourage librarians and creators of CC content to carefully consider where they host their video content. Vimeo, for instance, has many more options allowing creators to share their content. As library and information professionals we have to be leaders and advocates not only in new technologies but also in ensuring technologies are fair and accessible – even (or especially) if this means we encourage our users to consider an alternative to big tech. 🚫

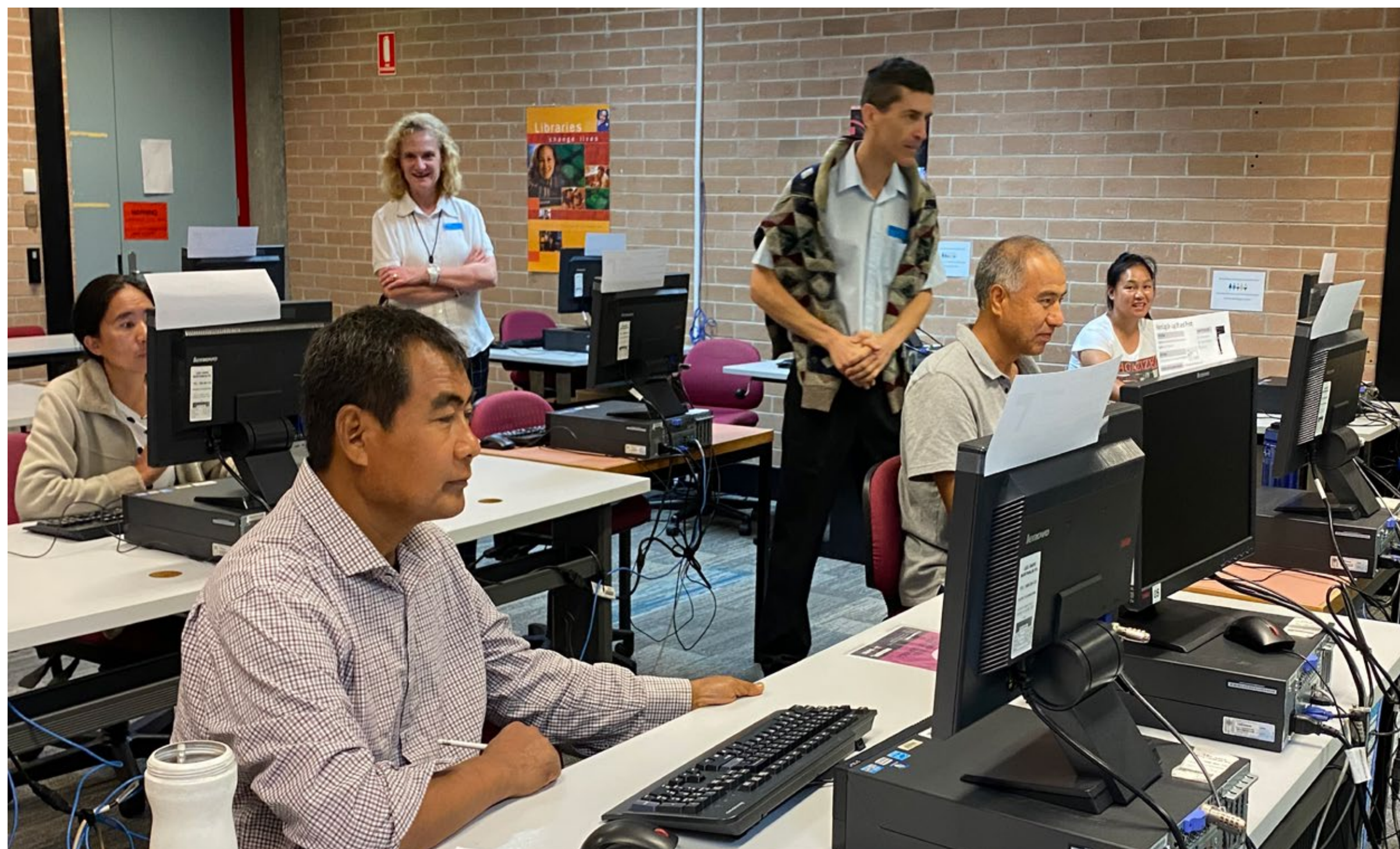
MEREDITH BEARDMORE

Liaison Librarian
Melbourne Polytechnic



EMAIL
meredithbeardmore@
melbournepolytechnic.edu.au

A COLLABORATIVE VENTURE



ESOL students engaged in class activities. First row left to right: Pleh Reh, Abdul Rahim Shahbuddin, Robert Ivancic, A Ling. Second row left to right: Mi Meh, Angela Conte.

Toward the end of 2020, a group of eager students started attending digital literacy classes at the TAFE NSW Wollongong Library. Robert Ivancic shares how teaching and library staff worked together, not only to create sessions designed to improve digital literacy skills, but also support the culturally and linguistically diverse community in the Illawarra.

The students, enrolled in the Certificate I and II of Spoken and Written English, attended a wide range of digital literacy classes. These included: using the student portal and TAFE email; word processing; searching the library catalogue and internet. Each session lasted 90 minutes and included practical activities that reinforced the students' learning needs. This is the second year that this program has been run and will hopefully continue in 2021.

Lower-level English speakers of other languages (ESOL) students face the combined challenge of learning English and learning to use technology. Given that library computer facilities are regularly used by ESOL students and teachers, building a relationship

with teachers is an essential step in promoting information and digital literacy. I asked the question, 'How can we make the lives of teachers easier?' One of our regular teachers suggested that we offer digital classes during term breaks. By running smaller classes with more staff, we could improve student use of digital hardware and software. The suggestion was enthusiastically accepted, but the new question was whether students were willing to come in during their own time? In 2019, a pilot project using one class was run at the end of semester two. The project was so successful that students from other classes dropped in without registering!

This success helped forge a growing relationship between library

staff and the ESOL faculty. Regular contact was key to maintaining this relationship, with promotion of services and resources through the year. In 2020, teacher Jen Panucci became our unofficial faculty liaison. We decided to run another series of digital classes at the end of semester two and she suggested we extend the invitation to all lower-level ESOL classes. Jen was instrumental in communicating, coordinating and coaxing her fellow teachers to promote these end of year classes.

Teacher involvement was integral to the success of the program. Some teachers kept in regular contact with their students, sending personal reminders in case they forgot. The classes were flexible, in that students could just drop in and attend one class or more.

Asking students questions during class had the benefit of encouraging spontaneous conversation. At the end of a session on using the catalogue, library staff helped students find books in the collection. This joint activity not only encouraged us to chat with each other, but it was also a great way to introduce students to some hidden resources in the collection, like demonstrating Foxton reader QR codes linked to audio recordings.

Collaboration is hard work, but if we are to survive and prosper in libraries, collaboration should be constantly at the forefront of our thoughts and actions. The delivery of education has changed and continues to evolve. With this in mind, we ourselves as a profession continue to evolve. 🌱

ROBERT IVANCIC

Library Technician
TAFE NSW Wollongong Library

 EMAIL
robert.ivancic@tafensw.edu.au

QUICK AND DIRTY DOES THE JOB

James Cook University librarians worked virtually to provide information literacy (IL) support for a postgraduate class in public health taught entirely online to health and medical professionals. **Bronwen Forster and Janet Catterall** describe how a simple and straightforward approach can help achieve positive results under pressure.

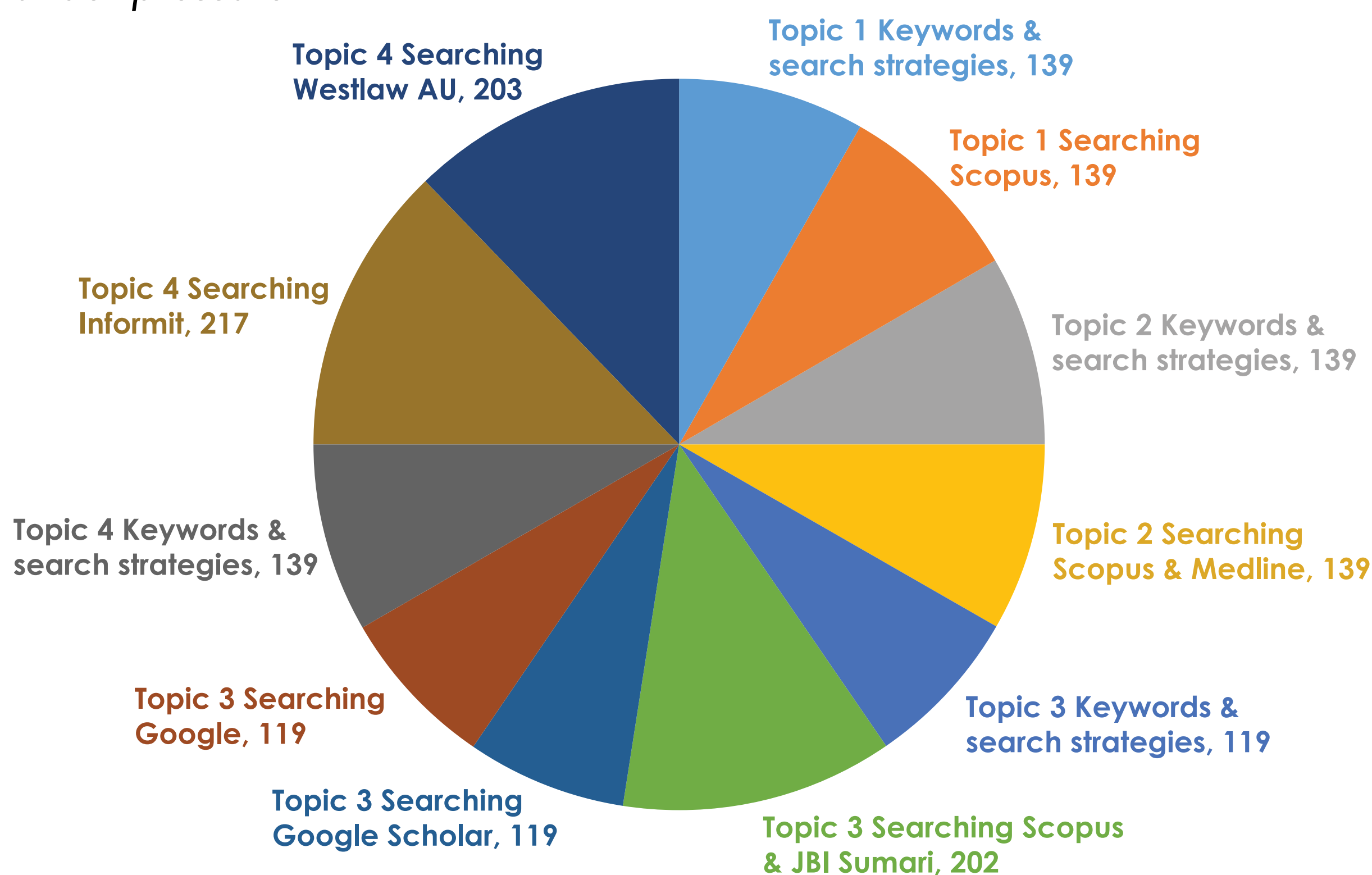


Chart showing the number of views for each video. Usage statistics obtained from the learning management system.

With the switch to online learning during COVID-19 restrictions, the lecturer urgently needed videos to support searching databases for quality literature for students' written assessments. To meet this demand, we created short video recordings featuring a conversation between two librarians who explained skills before demonstrating them live.

This series of five- to ten-minute videos, recorded using Zoom, employed a question-and-answer style to demonstrate how to develop and use search strategies with relevant databases. Four 'breaking down the topic' videos and seven 'live searching' videos were recorded with Zoom's

whiteboard and screen-sharing features.

For our topic-based videos, we prepared a rough outline to guide presenter interaction. The conversation was briefly rehearsed: who would say what, who would contribute to the whiteboard and when, and so on. A single practice run completed the preparation, and the recording was made in a single take. From developing the script to recording, it took less than 30 minutes for each video.

Each topic was analysed through a thought process of question-and-answer [brainstorming between the presenters](#). Each video began with a 'hello' from each librarian and presentation of the topic followed

by a breakdown on the whiteboard. Search strategies followed, including opportunities to demonstrate phrase searching, truncation and nesting of similar terms.

Videos describing databases similarly emphasized the decision making behind searching, and the live navigation of the interface. [The conversation between the librarians](#) proved highly effective in bringing out this dimension.

Feedback from students and staff was extremely positive. Usage statistics showed students clicked on the eleven videos an average of eight times each. One student said she felt like she was in a live tutorial and part of the conversation. She would pause the video, apply the skills to her own search, then play the video, continuing in that manner until her task was completed. Markers indicated higher quality sources were cited by students than in previous years, with nearly all students including their search strategies in their final report. Having a supportive and enthusiastic lecturer who gave us complete access to the students was, of course, fundamental.

The videos allowed maximum reach to students at point of need, with modest librarian time needed. They were not highly polished or finely edited. However, students commended the conversational style and spontaneous live searching, indicating that the 'quick and dirty' nature of the videos was irrelevant. A small investment of time significantly improved student IL ability and results. In this case, less was so much more. 🌟

BRONWEN FORSTER AALIA & JANET CATERRALL

Liaison Librarians
James Cook University Nguma-bada
(Cairns campus)

EMAIL
bronwen.forster@jcu.edu.au

EMAIL
janet.catterall@jcu.edu.au

BRINGING THE STATE LIBRARY INTO THE CLASSROOM



Exploring images from SLSA's digital collection

At the State Library of South Australia, we strive to co-design inclusive learning experiences for school learners and educators that support them to critically engage with an increasingly complex world of information and inquire into the diverse and changing stories of people, places and events in South Australia. One recent initiative has been the Digital Visits program.

As educators, we have been

challenged to reimagine effective and efficient models of educational engagement. In the global shift to digital learning, the Education Team at the State Library of South Australia has been committed to actively explore the new potential that digital learning can offer, whilst ensuring that the integrity and richness of the learning experience is not compromised. Our decision making has been informed by research, trials and feedback from educators and learners.

Digital Visits utilises video conferencing technologies to bring the State Library directly into classrooms across the state. They have been intentionally designed to enhance learning with thoughtful inclusion of sound and video, and collaborative processes that facilitate deep thinking, discussion, inquiry and reflection. Elements have been co-designed in partnership with children and young people to include their voices and enhance relevance and engagement. As with all our educational programs and resources, Digital Visits promote the development of information literacy skills, providing opportunities for learners to build capabilities in locating, selecting, analysing, synthesising and evaluating primary and secondary source materials and critically inquiring into stories and perspectives.

Want to find out more? We would love to hear from you. 🗨️



Sharon

Leisel

SHARON MORRIS & LEISEL UNDERWOOD

Education Officers, State Library of South Australia



EMAIL
sharon.morris@sa.gov.au



EMAIL
leisel.underwood@sa.gov.au

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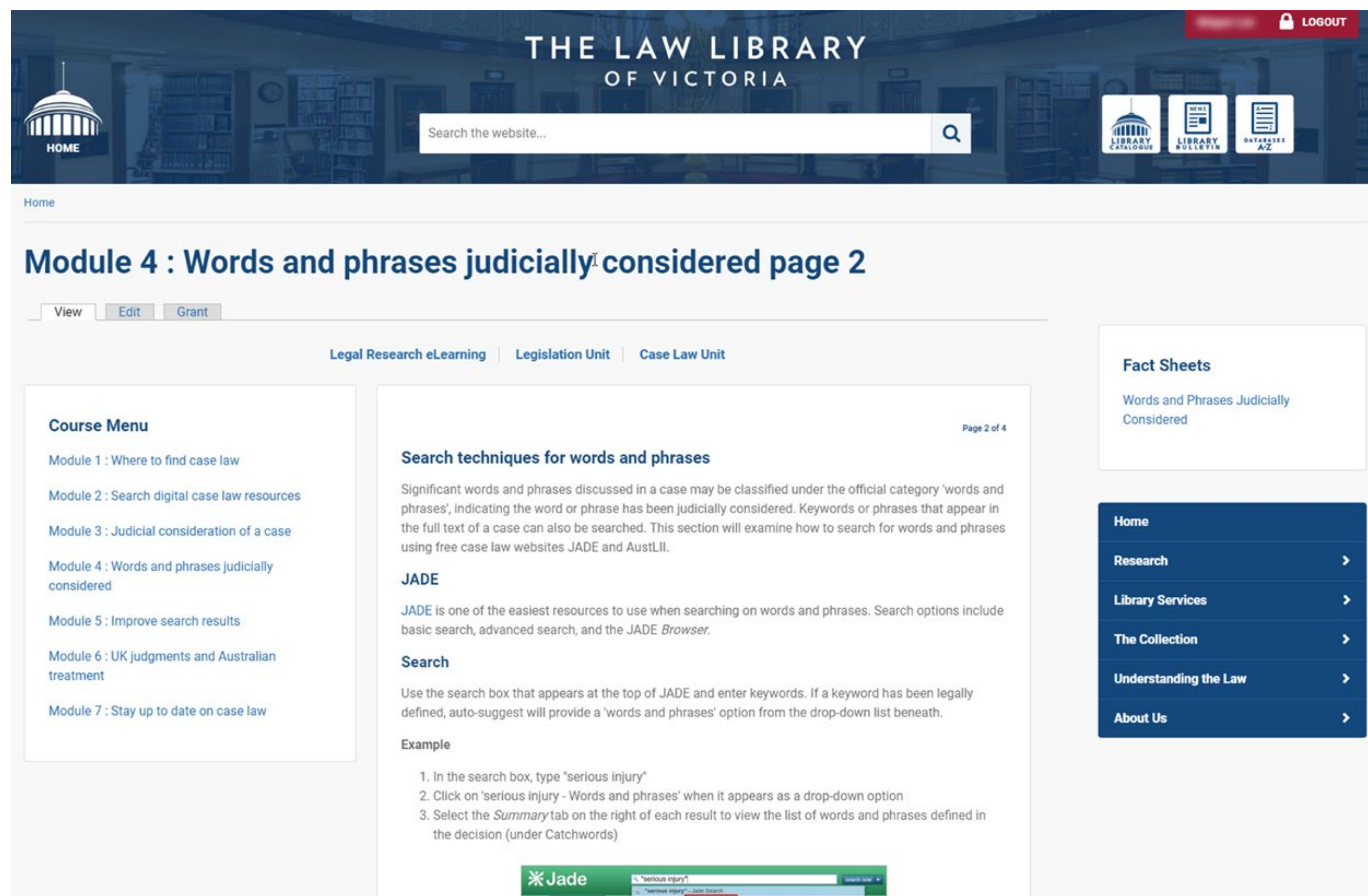
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ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS



Module 4 Words and Phrases Judicially Considered – screenshot of elearning content example

Legal research is a foundational and life long professional skill, and has always been a part of legal practice. With regular and ongoing change to legislation, judge-made law, and technology, staying current is vital. Given these challenges, and the risk of using outdated information, Renée Naylor describes the value and importance that the Law Library of Victoria places on education, through their legal research training programs.

The Law Library of Victoria supports the information and research needs of the Victorian legal community, which includes legal professionals, judicial officers, court staff, and law librarians. With funding from the Victorian Legal Services Board, this support now includes elearning modules, launched mid 2020 on the Law Library of Victoria website. The modules explain how to use authoritative resources, highlight helpful tips and techniques, and demonstrate how to perform complicated research tasks.

The legal research elearning units are flexible and self-paced, designed to fit in with and support busy legal professionals at different points in their career. They provide a structured learning environment to introduce new

skills and knowledge, with topic-focused modules that strengthen and extend existing legal research knowledge. These units qualify for formal learning by providing two points for continuing professional development (CPD) with the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner.

To help achieve these goals, learning objectives were created for each module, supporting underlying course competencies. For example, by the end of a course, learners will have:

- an understanding of text-based retrieval systems that make up expert legal research systems
- a thorough knowledge of online content currently available
- an ability to undertake typical legal research tasks, such as

updating case law and tracking amended legislation.

To ease the transition between physical and digital training, we adapted the experiences of in-person training, such as handouts, audio visual engagement, and active participation, by creating downloadable fact sheets, short videos, and interactive quizzes.

This material is also incorporated into the Law Library's training program. Throughout the year, the library offers training to the public, the legal community, law associations, and legal organisations. These include virtual tours of the library collection and website, practical demonstrations of resources, and seminars that focus on a specific area of law or research task. Traditionally held in person at the library, in 2020 these sessions were conducted via Zoom, with staff quickly developing new technical and presentation skills.

By offering a blended approach to training in the form of elearning and Zoom sessions, the Law Library has been able to significantly expand its reach; for the first time, suburban and regional lawyers can easily attend events. This approach ensures equitable access to legal research training across Victoria.

In 2020 almost 5,000 people participated in the Law Library's elearning and training program. With more than 22,000 legal practitioners alone in Victoria, those numbers are expected to grow, as will our offerings. The elearning content will be expanded and moved to a dedicated elearning platform, and the training program will continue with both online and in-person sessions, allowing us to cater for all learning preferences. 🌐

RENÉE NAYLOR

Library Education Coordinator
The Law Library of Victoria



EMAIL
renee.naylor@courts.vic.gov.au

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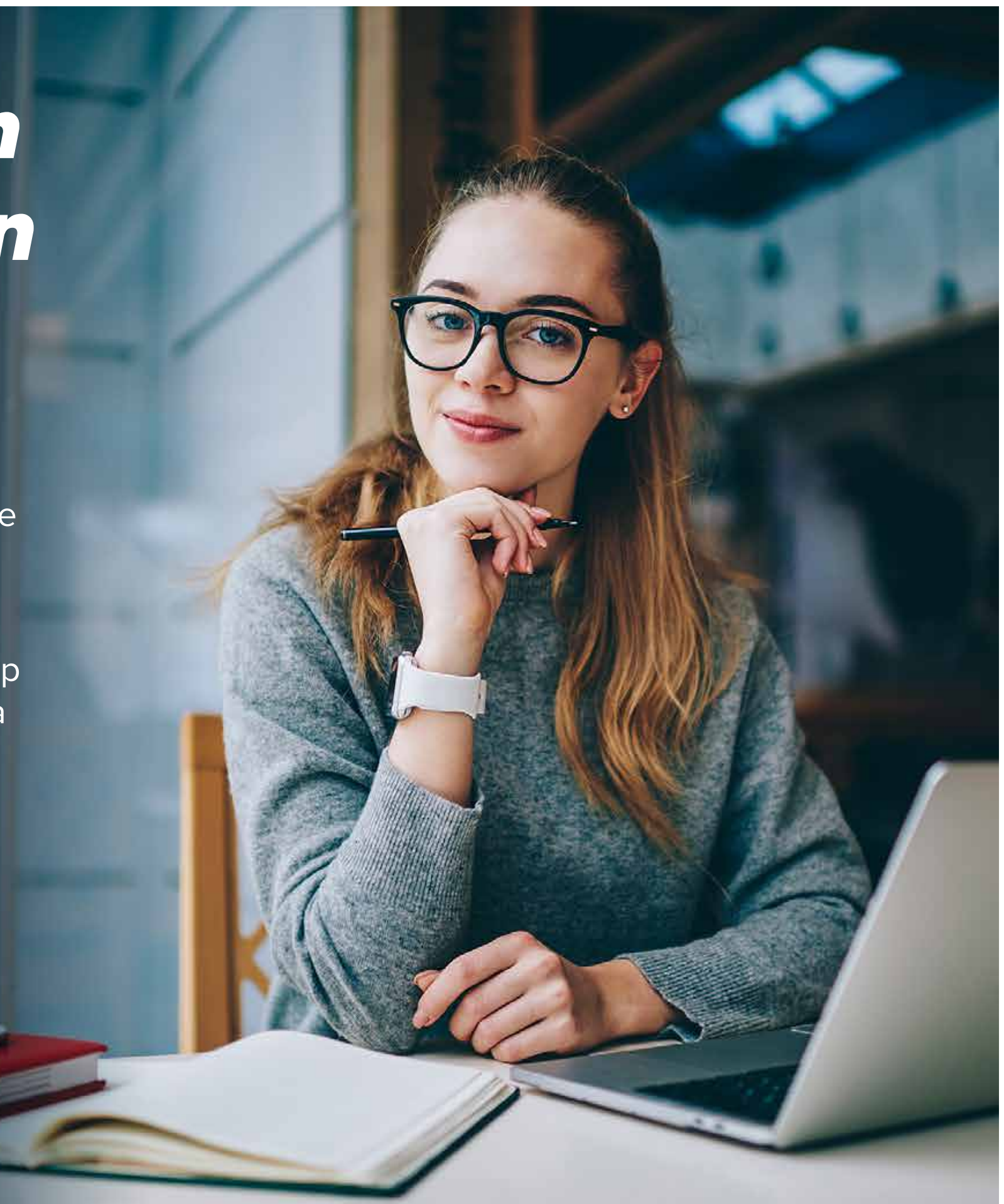
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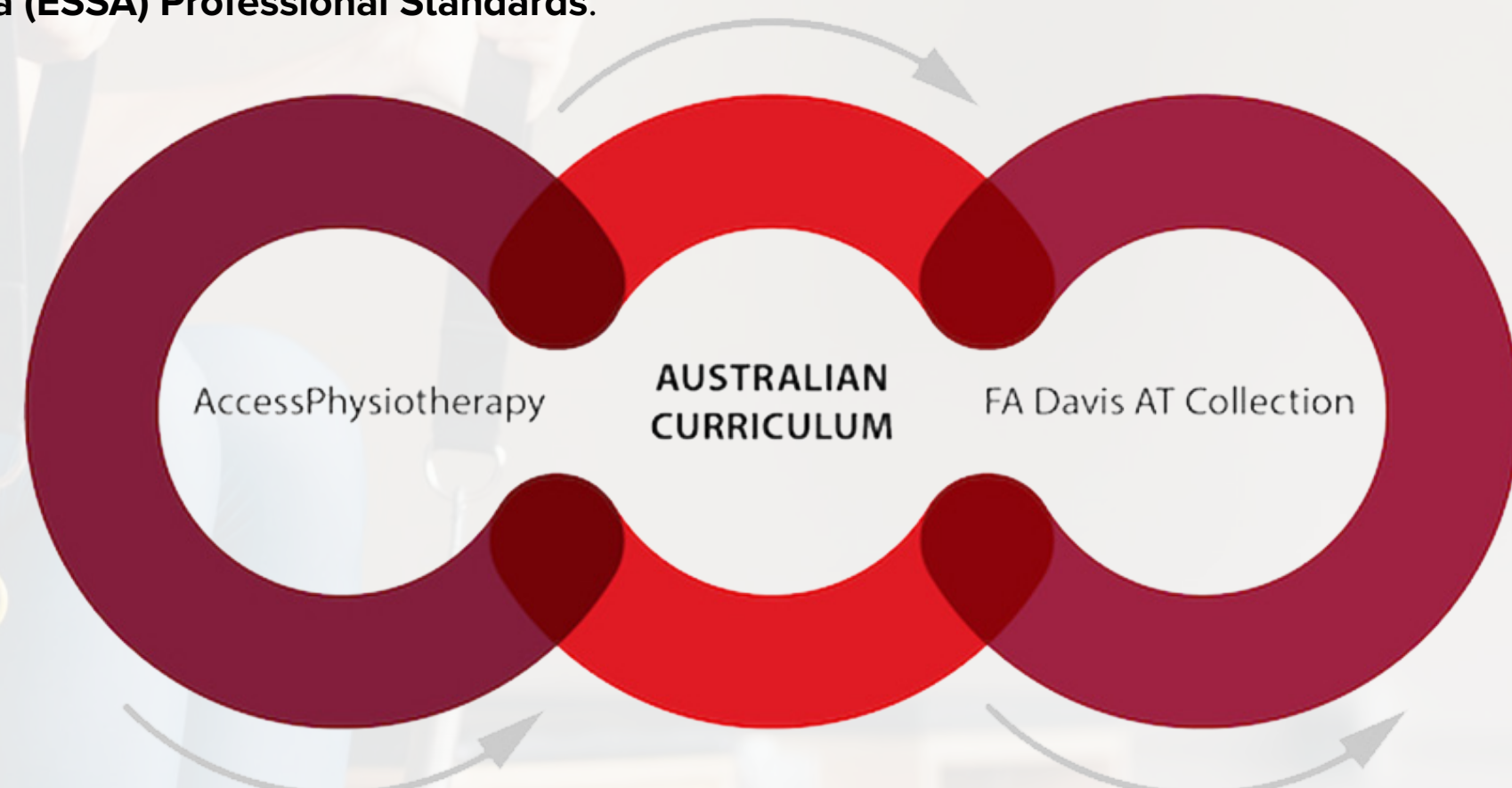


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professional_anz@mheducation.com

EVERY DAY A NEW OPPORTUNITY

There's a very good reason public libraries are always spruiking themselves as the place to go for lifelong learning. As Melinda Allan points out, educational offerings of today's libraries are as diverse and exciting as the communities we serve; all you have to do is flick through the 'what's on' section of a library website to discover that when it comes to learning, there really is something for everyone.

Having had the privilege of working in public libraries for the past ten years, I've come to realise that library staff benefit from this lifelong learning ethos as much as – or perhaps even more than – our customers. My passion for reading and literacy inspired me to become a librarian in the first place, but little did I know when I began this career what kinds of interesting and unexpected things I would learn along the way.

In terms of professional development, the opportunities are endless. The library and information sector offers an ongoing myriad of workshops, seminars and conferences, tackling everything from leadership to early literacy. When I once mentioned to a friend that I was attending a seminar at the State Library of Victoria, she asked in half-earnest if we were going to be discussing the Dewey Decimal System all day. My friend would probably be surprised to learn that some of the topics covered on the day were

STEM programs including robotics and coding, trends in the publishing industry and delivering storytimes to vulnerable groups.

As a librarian focusing on children's services, I've been lucky enough to gain an education in early childhood literacy development. Books, journals, workshops, seminars and on-the-job-learning have all worked in harmony to equip me with the skills knowledge and skills to serve our youngest patrons. Every day at work, I'm surrounded by colleagues who are developing their own unique educations: honing leaderships skills, learning coding, brushing up on effective social media use, events management, collection development, facilitating writer's groups, running festivals – the list goes on.

When it comes to the programs and events that public libraries run for our customers, education is always at the heart of our offerings. Through my role in organising and facilitating a

kaleidoscope of library programs, I've gained an education in areas I may not have thought to explore otherwise. Some of the things I've learnt: the art of researching a historical novel, creative gift wrapping, charcoal drawing, local history, writing comedy, cake decorating, songwriting and much more.

Public libraries offer so many wonderful learning opportunities for the public, and as librarians, we are lucky enough to learn right alongside our customers. It's a privilege to work in an industry that values education and fosters lifelong learning in both its patrons and staff. Every day in a public library is different, and every day offers a new opportunity to learn. 🌟

MELINDA ALLAN

Reading Coordinator, Eltham Branch
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

 EMAIL
mallan@yprl.vic.gov.au

MORE THAN WORDS

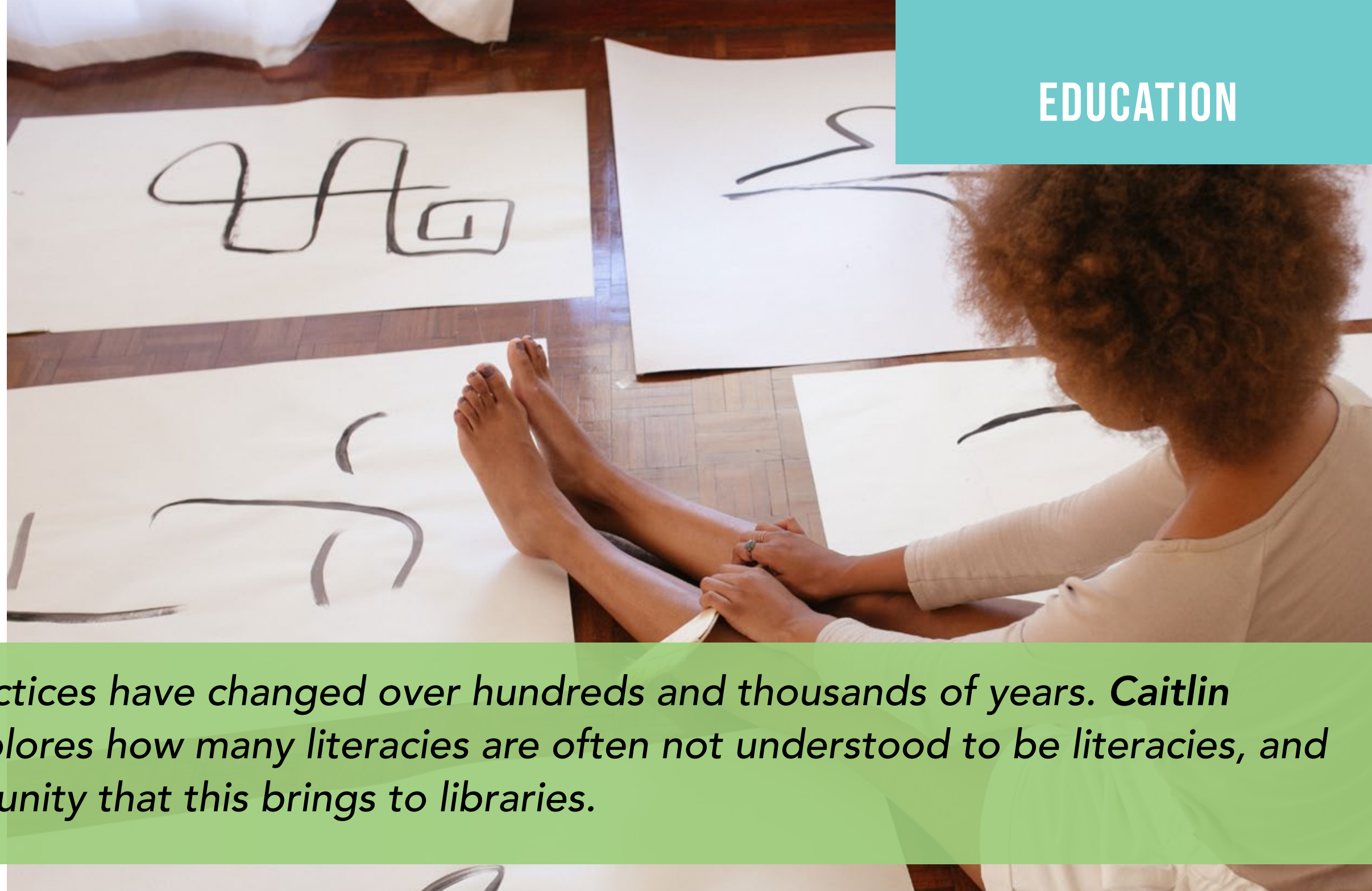


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Literacy practices have changed over hundreds and thousands of years. **Caitlin Winter** explores how many literacies are often not understood to be literacies, and the opportunity that this brings to libraries.

Not too long ago in human history, there was no written language at all, and literacy practices were primarily verbal communication and body language based. Some may be surprised to find speaking, listening, and interpreting facial expressions or body cues described as 'literacy'.

However, modern literacy researchers, theorists and even the Australian Curriculum define literacy as communicating and making meaning of the world through tools, systems, and language in all its forms. This is because the ways we communicate change across time, place and space, and continue to grow in diversity and complexity in the globalised digital age.

Making meaning of the world is entirely dependent on an individual's context, such as the culture, time period, language, religion or social system they are raised in. Some cultures have a long history of written text, whilst others tend to place greater value on oral storytelling, song, dance, and art as a means of communicating. Libraries have long demonstrated their value of these types of literacies through art programs, storytelling sessions, poetry slams, exhibitions and performances.

Literacy programs in libraries are strongly associated with written texts and books, and most community members understand this connection inherently when they think about public libraries. But what if they began to value those other types of literacy just as much, such as singing with their children or teaching someone how to decorate a birthday cake that screams 'I love you!' Better yet, what if they saw these types of literacies just as relevant to libraries as books?

We can help our customers reform the public image of literacy to include all aspects of our collections and literacy. Imagine if our programs were branded 'Learn the literacy of quilting', 'Learn the literacy of rap songs', 'Learn the literacy of samba dancing'. If literacy were viewed as an expansive, all-inclusive part of life, rather than a finite skill reserved only for print, then this could bring to libraries what we've long been searching for: engagement with those who assume that public libraries are irrelevant to them. 🌟

CAITLIN WINTER

Family Literacy Coordinator
Libraries ACT

 **EMAIL**
caitlin.winter@act.gov.au

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PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS SUMMIT

A commitment to working together to support and embed ALIA's Professional Pathways initiative was the key outcome of the Professional Pathways Summit on 16 February. The initiative aims to ensure that Australia has a diverse, skilled, valued and supported library and information workforce delivering quality library and information services that anticipate and meet the needs of the population.

The virtual summit provided the opportunity for educators, subject specialists, new graduates and key library leaders from across the sector, to engage in a robust discussion about the library and information profession and its future pathways.

Inspired by a quote from Alan Kay that 'the best way to predict the future is to invent it', participants were asked to consider the provocation 'by creating a strong, diverse and future-ready workforce we are inventing the future', and consider what success might look like in their sectors, and the steps needed to mitigate risks and achieve this outcome.

There was agreement that we need to work together as a sector to support the initiative, including supporting and exploring new opportunities with our education partners in the TAFE and university sector. Gaps in current professional development and training offerings were identified, as well as a need to review and renew the skills, knowledge and ethical practice that form the core of the library and information profession. Solutions were discussed across a range of sectors and locations, and while this was only the start of the work to finalize the plan, it was inspiring to see the willingness and enthusiasm in the room.

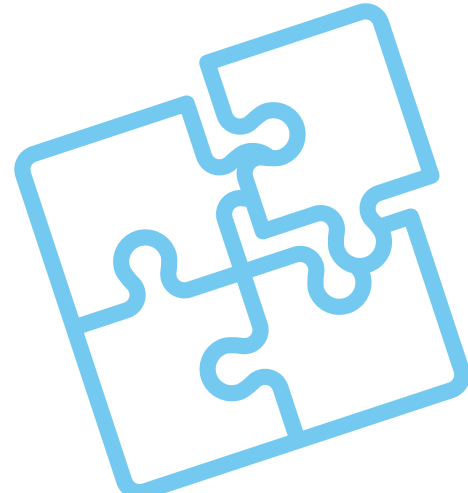
While there was excitement in the room, several groups pointed to the need to ensure that that excitement is shared more widely. Lack of understanding about what people who work in library and information services actually do was a common refrain, and with that, concerns that skills were undervalued or not best utilised. Stereotypes were identified as a barrier to understanding, as were

the words used to describe library and information services. A strong and engaging communications campaign that promotes the skills, value and opportunity of a career in library and information services was seen as essential.

The summit followed months of consultation on the draft plan, released late in 2020, including a series of open Town Hall meetings attended by hundreds of people with a keen interest in the future pathways. These Town Halls were supplemented with one-on-one conversations with people who contacted ALIA directly with ideas, concerns and opportunities.

Now that the consultation has wrapped, the hard work of developing and implementing all the component parts of the plan starts. The next public release will be a summary of the consultations, so people can see all the good – and critical – feedback that we have received over the last few months. This feedback will be worked into the final plan design. ✨

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THE LATEST FROM THE STATES AND TERRITORIES

ACT, NT
and TAS

The team at ALIA House | 02 6215 8222 | membership@alia.org.au | @ALIANational

ALIA TAS is gathering momentum, coming together as a reinvigorated statewide group, ready to recommence activity within the Apple Isle. Keep a watch on the [ALIA events calendar](#) and [ALIA TAS Group page](#) for upcoming events and updates.

We have been grateful for the input and support of our NT members for ALIA's Professional Pathways initiative. There are ALIA members all over the NT, from Darwin all the way down to Alice Springs, and we want to know how we can better support you, whether it's supporting you in your career, or connecting you with other members in your region.

ALIA CRR (Canberra and Region Retirees) Connect and Chat monthly lunches have recommenced for 2021 and what we hope will be a more connected year around the country.



SA

Jeannine Hooper AALIA (CP)
0437 167 050
jeannine.hooper@alia.org.au

The year's events program here in SA starts off in late May with 'Discover GLAMR', in which three industry professionals will discuss their role, how they got there and tips for people new to the industry. It's a great opportunity to meet staff working in the sector, so please keep an eye out for further details.

Other events planned later in the year are a mini-conference and scavenger hunt in conjunction with other groups.

This is also the start of the academic year for those continuing or starting their studies in either TAFE or University of SA and I look forward to meeting some of you via Zoom in the coming weeks



WA

Niamh Quigley AALIA (CP)
0480 245 523
niamh.quigley@alia.org.au
@newneev

2021 had an interesting start in WA with a snap lockdown and restrictions, including a few weeks of mask wearing. This has made me once again appreciate our freedoms in WA compared to the rest of the world. I'm now in the last semester of my master degree studies, in the data analysis phase of my research project on open access in the humanities. Thanks to having (and following) a research data management plan, I survived the panic of a corrupted audio interview file and was able to use a clean backup file. Good luck to all of you starting and returning to study this semester – I encourage you to step outside your comfort zone and get involved in our amazing library and information sector.



VIC

Margie Anderson AALIA (CP)
0404 471 404
margie.anderson@alia.org.au
@Imforlibraries

One of my favourite tasks as State Manager is to meet with LIS students and let them know about ALIA and how membership can help their careers. I joined ALIA as a student, and it's been a constant throughout my working life. Mentoring and supporting students has been a cornerstone of our professional community, with student talks, award presentations, study visits, professional placements; sharing our knowledge is how we roll in Victoria.

This year our local LIS education sector is changing with the last students at both Monash and RMIT universities being taught out. It's the perfect time for us to be rethinking qualifications and ALIA's Professional Pathways project could not be more relevant to us. I'm looking forward to some robust conversations with Victorian ALIA members about our future education needs.

NSW



Rob Thomson ALIA NSW (CP)
0423 184 737
rob.thomson@alia.org.au
 @RobThomson2528

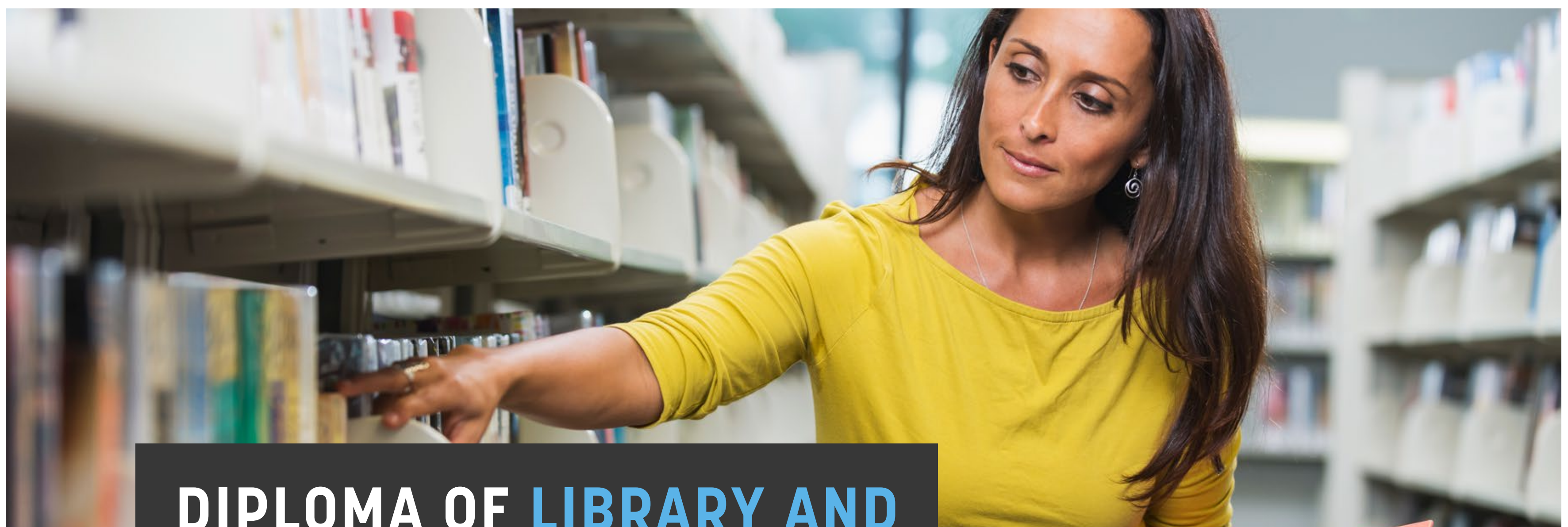
It's March already and 2021 is going to be an exciting year. As well as wanting to visit as many libraries as I can, catch up with members across NSW and promote the many PD opportunities ALIA has to offer, one of the things I would like to focus on in 2021 is reaching out to special libraries across the state. I come from a special libraries background, beginning my library career in the Port Kembla Steelworks Library, so I am aware of how isolated it can feel sometimes. I suspect that the feeling of isolation has been exacerbated with the pandemic. Special Libraries are, well, special, and I hope to visit as many as I can. So, if you are in a special library please get in touch, and we'll talk.

QLD



Stephen Harris AALIA (CP)
0410 998 989
stephen.harris@alia.org.au
 @saharris29

Hello readers, I'd like to introduce myself as the new State Manager for Queensland. In this role I hope to support all our members and the library and information profession as a whole. Advocacy for the library and information sector is key to our continuing success and influence in our communities. My professional interests are in the areas of digital literacy, games-based learning and emerging technologies. I look forward to working with ALIA Members and Groups to create a vibrant association in Queensland. With this year's Library and Information Week (May 17-21) rapidly approaching I am eager to hear what libraries both metropolitan and regional are planning. Please contact me for support and advice or just to talk about ALIA or the profession in general.



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JUNK THE JUNK SCIENCE

Disinformation is both a threat to society and an opportunity for public libraries to promote their role as sources of trusted information – but it's not as straightforward as it sounds, as **Bradley Nitins** explains.

There is often an expectation that the information in a public library collection is accurate, authentic and reliable. However, many libraries house disinformation that has been created deliberately to mislead. Whilst some might defend the selection of such collection material as a professional stance on censorship or freedom of information, this raises a confusion of semantics; that freedom of information is equal to freedom of disinformation.

Disinformation in public library catalogues covers topics such as global warming, holocaust denial, mobile phone radiation, and anti-vaccine propaganda, not to mention the many New World Order conspiracy theory books.

All disinformation causes harm. This is clearly evident in the case of anti-vaccine material, as the spread of rampant disinformation on this topic is closely tied to the spread of infectious diseases. Titles that promulgate the persistent medical myth that vaccines cause autism are well represented on public library shelves throughout Australia. For example, despite being thoroughly discredited by the medical



profession, a recent Trove search revealed that eight council library services in Australia still carry Andrew Wakefield's best-known work, *Callous disregard: autism and vaccines the truth behind a tragedy*. Moreover, Wakefield's work is just the best-known example of a sizable collection of library titles that promote the vaccine/autism myth.

It is important to differentiate this material from titles that purportedly provide factual accounts on fringe topics like UFOs or alternative therapies. These are clearly identifiable and classified in discrete sections. Our UFO material is not shelved in the aeronautical engineering section, just as flat earth theories are not shelved in the geography section.

However, disinformation spread through 'junk science' sits all too often side by side on our shelves with actual scientific works. This may be due to oversight, or it may be due to the influence of broadly based ethical principles of freedom of information and a commitment to include controversial views from all perspectives. Additional factors may include the increasing shift to community-based collection development practices and the sway of subject headings and metadata. Each of these factors has value in its proper context.

As our communities increasingly struggle with disinformation, a new focus needs to be directed towards improving our collection development practices. I encourage public libraries to be proactive in revising their collection development selection guidelines with the following considerations: the credentials of authors, the accuracy of factual content, the question of whether it will do harm and has the potential to mislead, the currency of the information for the topic, and whether the item is self-published.

At a time when public trust in authority and expertise is fast eroding, public libraries must explicitly choose authenticity and reliability over a type of information agnosticism that abandons fact checking and reality-based arguments. In doing this we will reinvigorate our historic role of fostering the informed populace essential to the effective functioning of a liberal democratic society. This is needed now more than ever. 🙏

BRADLEY NITINS AALIA
Digital Services Librarian
Logan Libraries



EMAIL
bradleynitins@logan.qld.gov.au



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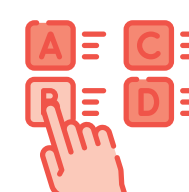
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