



What a difference
a year made!



An evaluation of the
National Year of Reading
2012 in Western Australia,
Queensland and the
Australian Capital Territory





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2012 in Western Australia, Queensland and the
Australian Capital Territory.

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The four case studies that lie at the heart of this evaluation project resulted from the generosity and openness of staff from the Library Agency, State Library of Western Australia (SLWA), the State Library of Queensland (SLQ) and Libraries ACT who willingly gave so much of their time to help in linking us to the partners, programs and organisations participating in the National Year of Reading in their state/territory. These case studies are so much richer because of the willingness

of the library staff and their partners to share their reflections about the innovative and creative programs they have implemented in the name of the National Year of Reading. In so doing, they have allowed their passion for their work to shine through.

The Evaluation of the National Year of Reading project provides a profile of the activities undertaken at the national level and by three states/territories during the course of the National Year of Reading. As such, the report provides a representation of what actually occurred during the National Year of Reading and the reader should remain mindful that there were many more activities and programs which were not reported on here. Having read the case studies and relevant sections of the report, the participants kindly gave their permission for us to publicise the results but our interpretation and deductions from the data are not necessarily shared by them. Nor do views expressed in this report necessarily represent the views of the Office for the Arts or the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport.

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Executive summary



What is the report about?

This report is an evaluation of how the National Year of Reading helped to build a reading culture across the nation. The evaluation was undertaken by The Centre for Research in Early Childhood Education, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia. The report describes the nature and outcomes of the National Year of Reading in the four case studies, including a consideration of what participating organisations delivered beyond what would normally be expected of them. The findings lead to a series of conclusions about the program's successes, challenges and legacy followed by recommendations about how these successes can be sustained and extended beyond 2012.

What was the National Year of Reading campaign?

The National Year of Reading campaign was initiated by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). A founder partners body comprising members of State Libraries and Public Library Associations from around the country was established to access funding and to drive the initiative. Federal government funding for the National Year of Reading was successfully sought from the Office for the Arts (the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government,

Arts and Sport) and the Library Agency was contracted to operationalise and coordinate the National Year of Reading in 2012. The National Year of Reading ran from January to December 2012.

The purpose of the National Year of Reading was to help build a nation of readers, augmenting and adding to the wealth of ongoing reading initiatives across Australia. It aimed to establish a reading culture in every home and encourage parents and caregivers to share books with their children everyday. In addition, it aimed to promote the benefits of reading as a life skill and catalyst for well-being through a multiplicity of reading initiatives and venues across Australia. In order to achieve this, the National Year of Reading sought to create a unified national framework that allowed for flexibility at state/territory and local level. This framework was built on the following three principles:

1. Partnerships

A network of support was established across Australia that included 15 founder partners, 51 national and 60 state/territory ambassadors and 79 friends. These partnerships were pivotal to the success of the campaign as they played a key role in raising awareness of the National Year of Reading and in encouraging involvement in reading programs and events across Australia. In addition, partnerships at a local level between local authorities, libraries, media, publishers,





business partners, education institutions and community organisations were essential as they would drive the programs, events and activities that promoted the National Year of Reading messages.

2. Strong identity

The Love2Read logo was developed to represent the National Year of Reading and to ensure that National Year of Reading programs and events were easily identifiable and highly visible. It was made freely available from the National Year of Reading Love2Read website and could be used with or without the 'National Year of Reading 2012' text. The National Year of Reading website was developed to create a virtual community, mirroring the partnerships, connecting and updating participants across Australia, providing a central source of information and resources and providing a platform for discussion and comment.

3. Different levels of implementation

Programs and events were delivered at a national, state/territory and local level to ensure maximum local involvement. Four national campaigns were implemented and the states/territories organised a range of National Year of Reading events and activities led by their main library. These acted as a catalyst for a host of local level events developed through partnerships between government, non-government and community organisations. This framework enabled the generation of support and momentum at a national level, while devolving ownership of local initiatives to the 'grass roots' level.

What did we do?

After extensive consultation with the Library Agency, Western Australia (WA) the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and Queensland QLD) were identified as representative evaluation sites. These sites formed the basis of our investigation of state/territory and local partnerships and the programs and events they were promoting. In addition we invited key stakeholders from the Library Agency, the founder partners, a number of National Year of Reading ambassadors and national campaign partners to take part in the evaluation. These formed the basis of our national perspective on the National Year of Reading and the following three questions formed the basis of our evaluation:

1. What is the nature and outcomes of National Year of Reading partnerships at a national, state, program and event level in relation to the promotion of the importance of reading as a life skill, the importance of a reading culture in the home, and the importance of sharing books with children from birth?
2. How has involvement in the National Year of Reading added value to the outcomes within and between participating organizations that are normally achieved in a year?
3. How will the partnerships and programs be sustained and developed beyond 2012?

Given the organic and multi-layered approach to the National Year of Reading a qualitative case study approach was utilised, using interviews to explore the nature, impact and

sustainability of the National Year of Reading at a national, state/territory and local level. In addition, in order to capture the richness and diversity of programs and events, a desk-based review of photographic evidence of artefacts and illustrations of practice was also undertaken. We explored the national perspective through the Library Agency, founder partners and ambassadors and profiled the National Year of Reading at a local level in WA, the ACT and QLD. These were presented as individual case studies, which include key findings for each one. We then undertook a cross case analysis to synthesise the key findings from each case study in relation to the three research questions. These findings formed the basis of our conclusions and recommendations.

What did we find?

The National Year of Reading substantially met, and in many cases exceeded, aims and expectations. The National Year of Reading was very successful in creating a campaign that promoted reading across Australia at a national, state/territory and local level. It is clear that there are many ways in which the National Year of Reading contributed towards building a nation of readers, details of our findings are presented in chapters three and four, however in essence the National Year of Reading made a difference through:

1. State/territory library led partnerships which enhanced the capability and capacity of agencies through their partnerships to build a stronger, more unified national literacy network. By the end of 2012 over 230 partners had committed to the National Year of Reading. Many of these partnerships were multi-layered, making connections at national, state/territory and local levels through associations with libraries.
2. The delivery of more than 4,000 programs and events nationwide to over 200,000 people in diverse communities and through multiple media platforms facilitated through libraries. Significant return on investment was gained through media exposure, local grants and in-kind agency support. New audiences were reached and existing audiences consolidated.
3. Raising the status and visibility of reading and literacy nationwide through the central coordinating role of libraries, the use of ambassador role models and establishing a reading 'brand' that provided a central focus for partnership agencies and unified their work.

These aspects are discussed in detail in the final chapter of this report.

What legacy has been generated?

The National Year of Reading has generated a range of enduring legacies. It has created a national infrastructure of agencies led by state/territory libraries reinforcing existing partnerships, developing new partnerships, and increasing the capacity of each partner agency. It has established a well-recognised national brand and associated reading with key community role models. Finally, it has established a national family and community reading agenda, and cross-sector agency support to extend this agenda beyond 2012.



What conclusions did we reach?

1. The national framework was central to the success of the National Year of Reading.

The framework provided an overall structure for the successful implementation of the National Year of Reading. The framework gave guidance and support yet allowed for local ownership and flexibility. This helped to unify and promote the central aims of the National Year of Reading across Australia. In particular, the national campaigns used branding and ambassadors to create a powerful link between the agencies, while providing opportunities for local initiatives.

2. Libraries were at the heart of the development, delivery and success of the National Year of Reading.

Libraries coordinated the National Year of Reading at state/territory level and liaised with national campaign coordinators. Partnerships with libraries at state/territory level enabled the campaign to be implemented at a local level. Libraries were the catalyst for promoting and supporting programs and events, while increasing library membership and raising their profile as literacy educators. This was achieved through the formation of a state/territory library steering group representative, who coordinated library initiatives and made links with other local organisations. Libraries benefited from their engagement by redefining their core strategic future, finding new partners, increasing potential membership, and engaging in community programs and events.

3. Partnerships were crucial to the implementation and outcomes of the National Year of Reading.

An extensive network of diverse partners at the national, state/territory and local level was established through the national framework. These partnerships provided a vehicle through which programs and events were delivered and interlinked, thus reinforcing the key reading messages and practices within and across different communities. Many of these partnerships were new and 'non traditional', forging links between previously disparate organisations. These partnerships increased capacity to deliver reading outcomes while simultaneously building the capability of each agency.

4. Key messages were delivered to new and target audiences.

The National Year of Reading generated a wealth of more than 4,000 programs and events from community led activities to national events. The national campaigns created excitement and anticipation and provided a catalyst for localised events, while incorporating key reading messages into local priorities. The national campaigns were designed to engage different target audiences, focusing on particular messages and disseminating effective practice. The sheer number and variety of initiatives meant that many families and individuals were surrounded by the key messages as part of their everyday lives.



Several newly established partnerships enabled the reach of the programs to be extended to new audiences. However, not all partnerships were equally successful due to the complexity of collaboration across agencies, funding issues and workload implications. The importance of culturally and linguistically appropriate initiatives was seen as central to the promotion of key reading messages in Aboriginal and in culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities. The importance of involving those groups that are traditionally 'hard to reach' and supporting organisations and communities to 'close the gap' was seen as imperative to future national reading campaigns. This involved consolidating the learning that had been accumulated about the challenges partners had faced.

5. Evaluation needed to be extended.

A number of program and event coordinators were involved in monitoring and evaluating the success of initiatives especially in relation to the number of participants attending events and, to a lesser extent, the program outcomes from the participants perspectives. This was often augmented with anecdotal evidence about the success of the program or event. However, it was clear that the coordinators were keen to develop a more rigorous way of evaluating the outcomes, in order to replicate the most effective elements and extend the initiative.

6. National communication resources were important to sustaining a network of partnerships.

The campaign utilised media extensively to make reading practices more visible and a variety of media, social media and information technology was used to promote and sustain programs and events. This included the use of new technology such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and You Tube which were used to target specific groups. The Love2Read website generated a brand and logo that has become a well-recognised and powerful symbol. State/territory libraries supplemented the national communication strategy by utilising existing resources to maintain networks across their partner agencies and to connect to participants. Branding new and existing library activities under the National Year of Reading banner resulted in an increase in promotion, publicity and media opportunities that have the potential to both extend beyond 2012 and to make connections between complimentary agencies.

7. Funding was a significant factor in the development and delivery of the campaign.

Funding for the National Year of Reading came from the founder partners, federal, state/territory and local government and philanthropic and corporate sponsors. Although not all initiatives required funding, the implementation of some programs was determined by the availability of funding. In addition, although the National Year of Reading was supported through the enthusiasm and dedication of both volunteers and professionals, in some cases - particularly in coordination roles, this created additional work. Continuing the campaign beyond 2012 will require the founding partners to determine what form a national coordinating trust should take and to develop the strategy to gain ongoing funding.

8. Bi-partisan support was identified as important to future of the National Year of Reading.

At the national level, the process of accessing federal funding enabled relationships to be established with senior politicians and necessitated the involvement of the Governor General and state/territory government leaders. While this was very beneficial for the National Year of Reading in terms of media exposure, it might also have generated perceptions about the political alignment of the brand with specific parties or leaders. In terms of future planning, participants in this evaluation project indicated that a cross-party commitment to prospective campaigns would offer the advantage of positioning the initiative in a politically neutral context.

9. Interest from other countries was generated by the National Year of Reading.

Much has been learned from the multiple program and events delivered during the campaign. The campaign has been viewed with interest by other national bodies and ambassadors have been invited to events in Asia. Future initiatives would benefit from developing national relationships with other developed countries with a view to pooling ideas, comparing and contrasting achievements and learning from other national initiatives, and sharing collaboration across media platforms. Additionally, insights from other National Year of Reading initiatives could be used to strengthen the development of programs that target audiences traditionally identified as 'hard to reach' or 'at risk'.

In conclusion, the government has recently committed to significant targets to raise Australian educational standards and reading is a critical foundation platform for the achievement of those targets. The National Year of Reading through state/territory libraries has been instrumental in focusing and involving a wide range of stakeholders in reading outside the school environment - in the home, workplace and community. In short, it has made a difference.

Modest national funding has been significantly leveraged to create a vibrant national campaign with impressive numbers of participants involved and high profile media personalities fronting media events that potentially reached many homes in Australia. A robust national network has been created and grown in capability through the experience of delivering more than 4,000 programs and events to over 200,000 people. The Love2Read brand has been nationally established and it linked the agencies and participants in a universal purpose to generate a social culture of reading which has the potential to pervade every home. Harnessing this development to generate further growth will require improved evaluation systems, decisions about a national coordinating trust, and ongoing funding sources. Future initiatives will need specific strategies to target those groups that are most excluded from reading practices, distant from resources, and performing poorly in comparative national literacy assessments. The energy of this campaign has generated a national network and a brand that has created a platform for establishing reading as a visible and important social practice and placed libraries at the centre of change. However, this is only the beginning and expanding this platform would support not only the development of a nation of readers, but also help meet educational targets for the future.





Chapter 1: Introduction



Purpose of the report

The Centre for Research in Early Childhood Education at Edith Cowan University was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the National Year of Reading 2012, with a focus on case studies of three states and territories: Western Australia (WA), Queensland (QLD) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). The report includes profiles of the National Year of Reading at a national and state/territory level (chapter three), followed by a cross-case analysis to elaborate the key findings (chapter four). Finally, conclusions and recommendations are presented to inform the future development of policy and practice (chapter five).

Overview of the National Year of Reading

Context

The idea for a National Year of Reading was adopted at the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Public Libraries Summit in 2009. Although no funding had been secured, freelance communications specialist Sue McKerracher offered to work on an in-kind basis to scope the project, initiate partnerships and develop the business case for an approach to government and other potential funding sources. She created an identity, the Library Agency, for the central coordinating team, ensuring that although the word library would not feature in the National Year of Reading branding, it would be clear to stakeholders that libraries were the driving force behind the campaign.

A group of 15 founder partners was established, together contributing \$89,500, which was used to develop the campaign branding and print collateral (16%), set up the website (30%), cover the fees of a fundraising advisor and reader development professional (23%), and pay travel and office costs for the team working on the project during 2010 (31%).

We had a huge response, which is great, and having the two Ministers, and the Prime Minister, at our launch was such a huge boost. It was fantastic, and helped us get into the traditional media, which can be really hard.

Library Agency team member





With the assistance of the founder partners, \$1.396 million of federal government funding for the National Year of Reading project was successfully sought from the Australian Government including the Office for the Arts (in the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport); the Australia Council and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). With ALIA acting as the auspice body for the funding and the founder partner group overseeing and directing the project, the Library Agency was contracted to carry out and coordinate the National Year of Reading in July 2011. The Library Agency reported monthly to the founder partners on National Year of Reading activities and initiatives and ALIA provided regular financial updates.

National organisational structures

Several roles were created within the Library Agency to oversee the implementation of the National Year of Reading. The director (Sue McKerracher – 0.5 FTE) was responsible for setting the strategic direction of the National Year of Reading, liaising with the founder partners, promoting the National Year of Reading to major partners and the media, and raising the profile of the National Year of Reading as a campaign at a government level.

The project director (Robyn Ellard – 1 FTE) was responsible for coordinating four national campaigns (*One Country Reading*, *The Reading Hour*, *Public Library Membership Drive*, and *National Year of Reading in the Workplace*), and events such as the launch of the National Year of Reading and the final legacy event.

One project manager (Brenda Currie – 0.6 FTE) acted as the liaison and point of contact for National Year of Reading ambassadors, partners and friends; and another project manager (Donna McDowell – 0.6 FTE) was responsible for utilising social media, documenting and cataloguing National Year of Reading events, and managing media data to do with social media, the National Year of Reading website and the National Year of Reading calendar.

There was also a library liaison role (Karen Ward-Smith – 0.1 FTE) and support from a reader development professional (Paula Kelly, project contract from July to December 2010) and a corporate relations expert (Bronwyn Lewis, project contract during 2012).

State/territory organisation structures

The organisation structures of each state/territory differed slightly according to the context and needs of their population. However, in essence each state and territory created a steering group, which included a founder partner, who represented their state/territory at the national level. Steering group members liaised with national partners and local partners to facilitate collaboration between organisations on the development and delivery of programs and events. Additional supporting groups were established in each state/territory depending on their needs and goals. These are explained in detail in each case study.

Funding

While the level of funding that was received to implement the National Year of Reading was a significant amount and it funded some aspects of the national campaigns and events, it was not enough to run a fully funded national campaign that would reach communities at a local level. The National Year of Reading in the UK received £4 million from government in 1998 (National Literacy Trust, 2008) and slightly more than £3 million in 2008 (National Literacy Trust, 2011), while the budget for Australia was originally \$7 million. However, the total cash raised (excluding in-kind support) was \$1.7 million, of which \$1.396 million came direct from the Australian Government and the remainder from the founder partners, Sidney Myer Fund and the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund.

The rationale for the National Year of Reading was based on concern about the levels of literacy across Australia. Organisers cited the findings from several industry surveys and reports, which highlight workers' low levels of literacy and numeracy and how this negatively impacts business productivity and workplace safety. The *Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006), conducted in 2006, showed that 46% of working age Australians had difficulty with everyday tasks such as reading newspapers, making sense of timetables, and filling in Occupational Health and Safety forms. The *National Workforce Literacy Project: Report on employers views of workplace literacy and numeracy skills* (Australian Industry Group, 2010) found that more than 75% of employers reported that their businesses were affected by low levels of literacy and numeracy. In addition, the *No More Excuses* report published by Industry Skills Councils & AgriFood Skills Australia in 2011 echo these findings, stating that millions of Australians have insufficient language, literacy and numeracy skills to benefit fully from training and to participate effectively at work; what is more worrying is that the situation appears to be worsening.

Research also shows that families are particularly important contexts for learning literacy and various studies have shown the positive stimulating effects of parental involvement in family literacy programs (van Steensel, McElvany, Kurvers & Herppich, 2010). Parents have the capacity to act as role models and supporters for their children's literacy development through reading. This is significant given the concern about literacy levels in the early years demonstrated by national literacy assessments. Although assessment data must be treated with caution, some general trends are evident. For example, the Australian Early Development Index (Centre for Community Child Health & Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, 2009), suggested that almost 23% of five year old children are developmentally vulnerable or at risk in their (school based) language and cognitive skills and the NAPLAN data showed that achievement gaps between the most advantaged and disadvantaged students remain (ACARA, 2012). Clearly, the aims of the National Year of Reading encompass the development of literacy from birth across a range of diverse communities and supporting families and adults has the potential to influence early literacy learning.'



PRIME MINISTER JULIA GILLARD OFFICIALLY
LAUNCHES THE NATIONAL YEAR OF READING



ABC JOURNALIST JENNIFER BYRNE

Consequently, the National Year of Reading aimed to create a national campaign to raise awareness of the importance of reading and to highlight the capacity of libraries to play a positive role in developing the levels of literacy in Australia and in fostering a culture of family reading in Australian homes. A further objective was for the National Year of Reading to bring together, showcase, and build on the literacy and reading events that were already happening across Australia. The aims of the National Year of Reading were:

1. For all Australians to understand the benefits of reading as a life skill and a catalyst for wellbeing
2. To promote a reading culture in every home
3. To establish the aspirational goal for parents and caregivers to share books with their children every day.

The National Year of Reading was launched at the National Library of Australia on 14 February 2012, by Prime Minister Julia Gillard. The National Year of Reading was built on the following three principles:

1. Partnerships

A network of support was established across Australia that included 15 founder partners and a substantial group of ambassadors and friends of the National Year of Reading. These partnerships were formed to create a three-tiered approach to implementing the National Year of Reading. National initiatives would be delivered across Australia through libraries, which would develop additional programs and events at the state/territory level. These would foster local initiatives, thereby encouraging local autonomy and ownership of programs and events.

William McInnes was the Patron of the National Year of Reading, supported by 111 high profile ambassadors and over 70 friends, including writers, musicians, artists, sportswomen/men, radio and television personalities, professionals from medical and education and politicians. Several sporting teams also gave their support to the National Year of Reading. Ambassadors and friends promoted the National Year of Reading through their work and each week during 2012 an ambassador was profiled on the Love2Read website; friends were also profiled, describing their involvement in the National Year of Reading and in promoting events.

National partners also included publishers (Scholastic), a multinational mass media corporation (the Walt Disney Company), and the ABC national television/radio (Jennifer Byrne) and ABC local radio. In various parts of the country, links were made between the National Year of Reading and school systems. The presence of National Year of Reading partners helped to raise awareness of the campaign, make links with organisations, promote programs and events and sustain its key aims. The creation of a network of partners and communication channels increased the opportunities to reach families and individuals across the nation.



2. Strong identity

The Love2Read logo was developed to ensure that the National Year of Reading was easily identifiable and highly visible. The Love2Read logo and banner appeared on books, posters, advertisements, partner websites and other marketing products. A Love2Read magazine was also developed, and made available for free, from the National Year of Reading Love2Read website. The logo was specifically designed to be used beyond 2012 and was available for all partners and individuals to use in the promotion of programs and events. The website was developed to create a virtual community, mirroring the partnerships, connecting and updating participants across Australia. It provided a central source of information and resources and a platform for discussion and comment. It also linked to partner websites and advertised ongoing events across Australia.



National Year of Reading 2012

3. Different levels of implementation

The structure of the National Year of Reading was designed to ensure that programs and events were developed and delivered at national, state/territory and local levels. This three-tiered approach was designed to create a shared focus within a flexible framework, giving states/territories and local communities autonomy to develop programs and events that reflected the literacy needs of their target audiences. Four national campaigns were created to reach different target audiences (see details of national campaigns in chapter three). Each national program was designed to be implemented in a different way:

- *Are We There Yet?* (a component of the campaign *One country Reading*) was designed to travel around Australia;
- The *Reading Hour* was designed to be held simultaneously across the country on a particular day or week;
- The *Library Membership* campaign was designed to run for 12 weeks;
- The *National Year of Reading in the Workplace* campaign was held at different times during the year in workplaces in each state and territory.

It was intended that each state/territory library would develop initiatives linked to the national campaigns and these would stimulate local partners to create events in their communities. In addition to the momentum created by the national campaigns, the structure of the National Year of Reading was designed to support the creation programs and events that reflected the literacy and reading needs and goals of local communities.





Chapter 2: Research method




As stated previously, the Centre for Early Childhood Research at Edith Cowan University was commissioned by the Library Agency to undertake the evaluation of the National Year of Reading. The primary aim of this study was to provide a descriptive account of the National Year of Reading in three states/territories across Australia. Since the National Year of Reading was iterative in nature, we did not intend to capture the campaign in its entirety; rather our research represents a snapshot in time of the National Year of Reading partnerships, programs and events. Data collection took place between May 2012 and October 2012.

At the commencement of the evaluation, we worked with the Library Agency to determine the terms of reference, evaluation model and research questions. After extensive negotiation, it was agreed that the aim of the research was to document the way in which the National Year of Reading was implemented at national, state/territory and local levels. We undertook four case studies conducted in WA, the ACT and QLD and at a national level. Thus the participants in the study were all involved in the promotion and delivery of the National Year of Reading through various roles. Although our research was essentially qualitative, we were able to draw on the statistical data collected by the Library Agency. In essence we aimed to document the perspectives of the of the National Year of Reading partners in order to explore the following questions:

1. What is the nature and outcomes of the National Year of Reading partnerships at state, program and event level in relation to the promotion of reading as a life skill, a reading culture in the home, and the sharing of books with children from birth?
2. How has involvement in the National Year of Reading added value to the outcomes normally achieved within and between participating organisations?
3. How will the National Year of Reading partnerships and programs be sustained beyond 2012?

Using the results of our extensive case studies we were then able to suggest how the National Year of Reading had made a difference to the reading culture of Australia. In order to construct an understanding of 'what happened' in the National Year of Reading across Australia, we undertook a qualitative case study approach, using interviews and surveys to explore the nature, impact and sustainability of the program at national, state and local levels. The interviews were designed to explore participants' experiences and provide insights into their perspectives, practices and outcomes. To gain further insight into programs and events, we undertook a desk based review of artefacts and illustrations of practice. The documentation of social networking sites and photographs enabled us to capture rich, contextualized data, which illustrated both processes and practices in the development of National Year of Reading partnerships.



An Advisory Group was convened from universities across Australia, whose members would give advice about the methods, analysis and interpretation of data. The following eight academics were invited to join the Advisory Group:

- Associate Professor Helen Nixon, Queensland University of Technology;
- Associate Professor Kaye Lowe, University of Canberra;
- Associate Professor Valerie Faulkner, University of Western Australia;
- Associate Professor Susan Hill, University of South Australia;
- Dr Louise Paatsch, Deakin University;
- Ms Deborah Prescott, Charles Darwin University;
- Adjunct Professor Len Unsworth, University of New England;
- Associate Professor Mary Mackin-Horarik, University of New England.

The academics listed above accepted our invitation to join the Advisory Group, with the exception of Adjunct Professor Len Unsworth and Associate Professor Mary Mackin-Horarik who were unable to participate. Two teleconferences were conducted with the group to discuss the pre-evaluation and post-evaluation phases of the project.

At the initial teleconference held in March 2012, the research team sought feedback from the group on the intended methods and analysis. Generally, members of the group expressed the view that the methodology was appropriate and addressed the research questions. They made the following suggestions about the data gathering and timeline for the project:

1. The research team should help participants to prepare for the interview by forwarding the interview questions ahead of time and by providing examples of possible indicators of 'value addedness'.
2. The research team should ask the participants how to best describe the work they had done in the National Year of Reading.
3. The research team should try to interview participants before and after they had delivered targeted programs and events.

We were able to implement recommendation one and two, but the third recommendation proved to be more difficult due to time constraints and availability of participants. However, participants were asked to review and provide feedback on each case study as it was completed. Following the main data gathering phase of the project, a second teleconference with the group was conducted in October 2012 to discuss the analysis of data. Members commented on the wealth of data at national, state and local level and endorsed our method of analysis.

Data collection

Altogether 53 participants agreed to take part in the research. These participants were a representative sample of the National Year of Reading at national, state/territory and local level. A table of the interviews, document collection and surveys is provided in Appendix 1. Surveys were based on interview questions when participants were unavailable for a one-to-one interview.

National level interviews and surveys

At the national level, interviews and/or surveys were conducted with the following stakeholders:

- The Library Agency's project management team

This comprised the National Year of Reading Project Director and project managers responsible for ambassador and partner liaison as well as social media and data collation. We asked them about the nature of their roles and responsibilities, the logistics of the National Year of Reading, and issues they faced in promoting and implementing the project across Australia. In addition, we also asked about the outcomes of the National Year of Reading to date and how other national literacy campaigns informed the National Year of Reading.

- Representatives of Australia-wide partners

These included partners associated with the delivery of national campaigns, such as: Good Reading Magazine, Madman Entertainment and the State Library Victoria; the Walt Disney Company, Disney Junior, Dymocks Bookstores, Scholastic, the Indigenous Literacy Foundation and the Institute for Aboriginal Development Press. Interviews were conducted to explore the development of partnerships, and how the National Year of Reading had helped to achieve their aims and created new opportunities to further their mission. Participants were also asked about the added value of the campaign in relation to the development of new initiatives and partners, audience development and funding, and increased book sales. Strategies and structures to support sustainability and extension of partnerships were also explored.

- Founder partners

Altogether there were 15 founder partners. The Chair of the founder partner group was interviewed, and the remaining 12 members were surveyed. We asked about their role in overseeing and directing the National Year of Reading and what they hoped to achieve and contribute. We also asked about partnerships and/or networks they had formed through the National Year of Reading and the outcomes of these liaisons. We asked in what way the National Year of Reading had influenced their organisations and if they saw a future beyond 2012 for the National Year of Reading.

- Ambassadors and author ambassadors

There were over a 100 National Year of Reading ambassadors. We sent surveys to the author ambassadors nominated by the Library Agency and invited three of them to be interviewed. We asked about their involvement in the National Year of Reading, partnerships they had formed, and what they hoped their commitment to the National Year of Reading would achieve. We also asked if the National Year of Reading had added to their profile, and if they intended to sustain and/or extend partnerships formed during 2012.

State/territory-level interviews

Where possible, interviews were conducted with the following participants for each state/territory:

- The chief executive officer or director of the state/territory library;
- The National Year of Reading state/territory steering group coordinator;



- A National Year of Reading state/territory steering group member;
- Three key partners nominated by the National Year of Reading steering group coordinator;
- Three program coordinators;
- A representative from the state/territory's public library association or lead body.

Each nominated person was interviewed individually, having received the questions prior to the interview. As with the national partners, they were asked: about their involvement in the National Year of Reading, what they had achieved, and if they were intending to sustain or extend the partnerships they had created within their state, organisation and/or community.

In particular, the state/territory steering group coordinators were asked how the National Year of Reading had helped them to reach their target audiences, how they were monitoring and evaluating programs, and whether the National Year of Reading had added to their profile locally and nationally. Where appropriate, library staff were also asked about the four national campaigns (*One Country Reading*, *The Reading Hour*, *Library Membership*, and *The National Year of Reading in the Workplace*) and how the campaigns were implemented at the state/territory level. We asked if they felt the national campaigns had benefitted their state/territory and what structures had been developed to support the sustainability and extension of partnerships.

Desk-based research

A desk-based review of National Year of Reading documentation was undertaken to gain insight into the implementation and outcomes of the National Year of Reading. The use of social media sites were also documented as a means of identifying the role of information technology in linking organisations and communities and promoting the National Year of Reading. Photographs of artefacts and resources were taken to support documentation.

Analysis

In the first phase of analysis, documented in chapter three, we coded the data from each case study under each research question and created a profile of the range and nature of programs, events and partnerships at a local, state/territory and national level. From this we identified findings in relation to each individual case study. Written responses to questions were clarified by email or a phone call. The process of creating resources was documented and photographs of resources were used to illustrate and substantiate claims. Documentation was analysed to illustrate the processes and practices that contributed to the effective implementation and outcomes. Quotes from the participants were categorised and used to exemplify findings.

In the second phase of analysis, discussed in chapter four, we categorised the data generated across the four case studies under each research question, grouped in relation to the role of each set of participants, at a national, state/territory and local level. We then identified the strong and enduring themes that emerged across each case and set of participants. These themes were interrogated to elicit key overall findings in relation to each research question.

We then used the findings from the second phase of the analysis to inform the final chapter, chapter five, which identifies what difference the National Year of Reading has made in terms of creating a nation of readers, what legacy endures from the campaign, and what overall conclusions and recommendations can be drawn from the evidence of the evaluation.

Limitations of the study

We acknowledge that many partnerships continued to grow and new partnerships and programs and events emerged after the completion of the data collection. We also acknowledge that it was impossible to gain access and information to all the initiatives and partnerships that grew out of the National Year of Reading in WA, the ACT and QLD. However, by gathering data from national, state/territory and local participants we endeavoured to capture a broad perspective of the National Year of Reading.

It is important to re-iterate that this study was not about the outcomes of the National Year of Reading in relation to the families and individuals who took part in programs and events. This was undertaken to some extent by the program and event coordinators and the Library Agency.

Participant/s is used through-out this report to refer to the people who were involved in the promotion and delivery of the National Year of Reading.

Program/s and *event/s* are used through-out this report to refer to the programs, events and activities that were implemented during the National Year of Reading.





Chapter 3: Profiles of the National Year of Reading



Chapter three presents the data as a series of case studies that profile the partnerships, programs and events that were implemented during the National Year of Reading at the national level and for the ACT, WA and QLD. In general, each profile provides information about: the context; the organisational structures put in place to support the implementation of the National Year of Reading; the partnerships that were developed; the programs and activities that were implemented; the methods used to reach target audiences; the methods used to monitor and evaluate programs and activities; the state/territory library membership drive; and the legacy that has resulted from the National Year of Reading. In addition, each state/territory library nominated several partners to participate in the evaluation and these same aspects are reported on for each partner program.


Profile One: National Year of Reading at a national level

For the national profile, information about the context and background to the National Year of Reading as well as the funding and organisational structures put in place to support its implementation have already been discussed in chapter one. Consequently, in this section information is given about the national level partnerships and programs and how they were implemented and monitored during the National Year of Reading, how target audiences were reached, and the resultant legacy.

National partnerships and programs

As stated previously, the National Year of Reading was adopted at the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Public Libraries Summit in 2009 and the founder partners group along with the Library Agency were charged with managing and implementing the National Year of Reading campaign. While a significant level (\$1.396 million) of federal government funding was accessed for the National Year of Reading this was not enough to run a fully funded national campaign that would reach communities at a local level. Consequently, a 'grassroots' approach was taken and the National Year of Reading was set up to function in a flexible, organic way so that it grew from people's networking efforts and their shared ideas. Consequently, National Year of Reading organisers focused on creating and making available the resources that organisations and participants in the National Year of Reading would need to run their own local programs and events. The Library Agency team considered that utilising a 'grassroots' approach allowed the National Year of Reading to achieve \$7 million-worth of value on a budget of \$1.7 million.

With such an approach, it was imperative that the Library Agency generate a large network of partners with whom to collaborate on National Year of Reading projects and activities as well as to help to spread the key messages of the National Year of Reading. Initially, many of the partners were formed from the network of connections that the founder partners and the Library Agency team brought with them to



the project and subsequently this evolved as new partners recommended other partners and the National Year of Reading initiative became better known.

Linking with the National Year of Reading was seen as a way to enrich what potential partners were already doing and different levels of partnership were created to suit the capacity of organisations and individuals who wished to become involved. Commercial, not-for-profit, government, and private sector organisations were categorised as partner organisations and individuals were categorised as friends of the National Year of Reading. There were no costs associated with partnering with the National Year of Reading, however, there was an expectation that partners would actively endorse key messages about the pleasure of reading and the need to improve literacy levels in Australia.

For organisations and individuals, the main advantages of partnering with the National Year of Reading centred on increasing their profile by: linking their name with a major national event; taking advantage of media interest throughout 2012; using the opportunity to connect with new audiences; making a positive impression with the Australian reading public; creating a competitive advantage; increasing their reach and profile in government and funding circles; helping to make a positive difference; and bolstering the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) credentials of commercial organisations. In addition, partners were able to: access National Year of Reading design materials; publicise their activities via National Year of Reading media (website, Facebook, wiki, e-newsletter, Twitter) and wider media releases; and make connections with other National Year of Reading partners and potential funders.

Potential partners were also able to select the level of commitment that they could give to the National Year of Reading. At the simplest level this called for a public endorsement of the National Year of Reading in the form of a letter, a quote, a logo or a link that could be placed on the Love2Read website. Partner organisations could also become more active by: promoting the National Year of Reading via their 'owned media' (websites, newsletters and other forms of communication) and using National Year of Reading branding on their own programs and activities; participating in national programs and in events implemented at a state/territory and local level; or creating, funding and delivering their own National Year of Reading programs. Friends of the National Year of Reading were encouraged to: download and use the National Year of Reading email signature; use the National Year of Reading button to make a link to the Love2Read website (<http://www.love2read.org.au>) from their website, Facebook page, or blog; volunteer

In some ways it's not the National Year of Reading that's important; it's actually raising the profile of our partners. So for instance, when we designed our website, the web designers wanted everybody to come to our website, and then stay within our website, which is the traditional business model. We said we're not a traditional business. What we want is for people to come to our website because they've heard of the National Year of Reading, but then be directed off to one of our partners, because actually they're the people who are doing the work and they're the people who will be around after 2012".

Library Agency team member

at National Year of Reading activities; and help spread the word about the National Year of Reading through their book groups, clubs, social networks, colleagues, family and friends. By November 2012, 231 partner organisations and 79 friends had added their logo to the National Year of Reading website as well as a link to their own webpage.

In addition to the partner organisations and friends of the National Year of Reading, a number of ambassadors were also invited to help promote key messages. High profile members of the public such as politicians, business people, journalists, authors, illustrators, educators, musicians, philanthropists, poets, photographers, chefs, sports men and women, and sports teams were invited to become national or state/territory ambassadors to the National Year of Reading. William McInnes, celebrated actor and writer, agreed to become the patron for the National Year of Reading. Ultimately, 111 ambassadors (51 national and 60 state/territory ambassadors) gave their support to the National Year of Reading (see Appendix 2).



NATIONAL YEAR OF
READING PATRON
WILLIAM MCINNES

Being asked to be Patron of the Year of Reading is as great a pleasure as it is an honour. It's easy to be blasé about reading and books – easy to take them for granted. Yet when I think about it, reading to me is the key to so much. The key to a wider reach of information, a path to learning, the joy of entertainment and the exciting of the imagination. It's just so much fun. Helping to encourage people to remember that and maybe to discover that, is something I look forward to very much.

William McInnes, National Year of Reading patron



AUTHOR AMBASSADORS TANIA MCCARTNEY,
HAZEL EDWARDS AND DR ANITA HEISS

Ambassadors supported the National Year of Reading by making personal appearances or by lending their profile and image to marketing collateral such as video clips, posters and media releases. For example, as patron of the National Year of Reading, William McInnes made a video to endorse the key messages (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4s7CLYRS04s&NR=1&feature=endscreen>). A good example of the willingness of ambassadors to support the National Year of Reading is also evident in the way Alison Lester, children's author and illustrator, gave permission in July 2010 for her book *Are We There Yet?* to be used to as a major theme for the National Year of Reading.

Many of the ambassadors to the National Year of Reading were authors and/or illustrators and were referred to as author ambassadors. With their obvious enthusiasm and a wealth of experience in the field of reading and literature, they were a natural fit for the role of ambassador to the National Year of Reading. The author ambassadors considered that promoting reading to the community and sharing the process of writing and illustrating texts was a core part of their business. In addition, most author ambassadors publicised their activities and those of the National Year of Reading via their own networks and webpages and this, in conjunction with traditional media coverage, served to increase the reach of the National Year of Reading.

Over the course of the year, the author ambassadors gave much of their time to local and national activities. Typically they visited schools, libraries, universities and festivals in metropolitan, rural and remote communities where they talked about and delivered workshops about reading, writing and illustrating and involved themselves with associated events such as readers' and writers' festivals and fundraisers to promote the National Year of Reading.

As an author I had been looking forward to this year since hearing about it last year. It seemed such an exciting dedication, a whole year devoted to promoting reading. I looked forward to doing what I do every year, getting kids excited about books, and seeing it expand into the wider community. I spend at least half of my professional time in schools, at festivals and conferences talking to kids and adults about writing, books and why getting kids to read is so important. The National Year of Reading added much more of a focus to what I do and made lots more people stand up and take notice of what I think is fundamentally important to a child's life and success.

Deborah Abela, NSW National Year of Reading ambassador

It has helped Kids Book Review, of which I am founder. I have dedicated three years to building this site which specialises in children's literature, reviews, interviews, resources for parents and teachers. It has also helped me as an author to connect with more children and show them how fabulous it is to write and read and hone these skills.

Tania McCartney, ACT National Year of Reading ambassador



When considering what the role had added to what they normally do, the author ambassadors reported that it had given a title to a role that they had already assumed and that it had increased the number of activities that they had been involved with throughout the year. They also articulated how the role of author ambassador had helped to spotlight their own enterprises and to raise their profiles as authors with a larger audience. Most author ambassadors reported that they had made many more valuable connections with individuals and organisations who shared their interest. They also reported increased partnerships with libraries, schools and universities and that these partners had expressed an interest in further collaboration. However, feedback from one author suggests that the lack of promotion on the part of some libraries meant that their author events were not well attended and that ultimately they had to work with their publisher to ensure subsequent events were successfully promoted. Ultimately, the author ambassadors felt that the National Year of Reading had lent a greater focus to the work they did in the community and that the initiative had been a very successful one.

Finding 3.1.1

A 'grassroots' approach allowed the National Year of Reading to achieve \$7 million-worth of value on a budget of \$1.7 million.

The campaign was designed to function in a flexible, organic way so that it grew from people's networking efforts and their shared ideas. Resources that organisations and participants in the National Year of Reading would need to run their own local programs and events were created and made freely available.

The success of the 'grassroots' approach was dependent on the development of a large network of partners collaborating on National Year of Reading projects and activities as well as helping to spread the key messages of the campaign.

Partnerships were created on several levels, including partner organisations, friends and ambassadors. The author ambassador role was one that most authors assume is part of their core business. They felt the National Year of Reading was successful and that their involvement had promoted their own enterprises, raised their profile as an author, and increased their partnerships and opportunities for future collaboration. Author feedback also highlighted unevenness in the promotion of national National Year of Reading events.

Reaching the target audience

A wide range of tools were used to reach quite different audiences. The main aim of the National Year of Reading campaign was to reach the general public so as to elevate the importance of a reading culture in every home. However, given the levels of available funding, it was also necessary to reach an audience of reading professionals to help deliver the key messages of the National Year of Reading to the general

public. The Library Agency used slightly different tools to promote the National Year of Reading to these different audiences.

The National Year of Reading website, Love2Read, was set up in 2011 as the public face of the National Year of Reading and was the key tool for attracting the attention of, and communicating with, the general public. Love2Read was a comprehensive website that also served as a central resource for the various stakeholders involved in the campaign. It housed documents, guides, and suggestions about how to become involved in the National Year of Reading and provided points of contact for the public to obtain further support. In addition to accessing the Love2Read website, the general public could also subscribe to a monthly e-newsletter which provided information about current and upcoming National Year of Reading events. While it was difficult to quantify the impact of social media, the Library Agency team considered it a very important element of a media strategy because of its currency and potential to 'go viral'. Consequently, Facebook and Twitter were also used throughout the National Year of Reading campaign as a way to reach those members of the public who preferred to communicate via that medium.

To reach the target audience of reading professionals, the Library Agency set up a wiki space (<http://love2read2012.wikispaces.com/>) that allowed users to access a complete range of resources to assist their promotion of the National Year of Reading. This included essential support documents that provided: background documentation to do with the National Year of Reading; relevant research and fact sheets; the key messages about the National Year of Reading; an overall guide to the National Year of Reading; an overview of the national programs; guides for setting up National Year of Reading steering groups and accessing supporters and ambassadors; ideas for events; media templates; and downloadable resources including logos, banners, animated gifs, advertisements, collateral (posters, flyers, bookmarks, stickers), presentations, a template funding application, and merchandise. The Library Agency also communicated regular updates to reading professionals via email, which provided professionals with 'behind the scenes information' about program launches, and the resources or tools that they needed to make the most of the National Year of Reading.

Finding 3.1.2

In terms of communication, it was important to recognise the difference between participants who would help deliver the National Year of Reading campaign events and activities and the general public.

The Love2Read website provided a one-way information conduit for the public, while the Love2Read wiki provided a communication channel that could be used to share information and resources among stakeholders.

The use of online media and distribution methods kept costs down while expanding the reach of the campaign.

National campaigns implemented during the National Year of Reading

Four national campaigns were implemented during the National Year of Reading were: *One Country Reading*, *The Reading Hour*, the *Public Library Membership Drive*, and the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace*.

Campaign 1: *One Country Reading*

The *One Country Reading* campaign aimed to engage current readers and to help them to re-discover the joy of reading. It comprised three different programs, *Our Story* for adults, *Read This!* for teenagers, and *Are We There Yet?*, for children.

Our Story

The *Our Story* program was aimed at an adult audience and it set out to identify a set of eight books representing the remote, regional, suburban and metropolitan aspects of Australia, which could be collated as the National Year of Reading 2012 collection.

This collection of books, if read together, would articulate the Australian experience. The aim was to use this collection to encourage keen readers to try something different, to expand their reading choices, and to connect readers all around Australia who would share the stories – a kind of giant book group.

The shortlists for each state and territory were promoted with posters and flyers in public libraries, online through thereadingroom.com, via local media (*The Age* ran excerpts from all the books on the Victorian shortlist), and by Jennifer Byrne and the *First Tuesday Book Club* team, on ABC2.

A panel from each state and territory selected eight books that were either written by local authors or were set in the local area. A shortlist of titles for each state/territory was then promoted to the reading public in each state who were asked to vote for the book that they thought best represented their state/territory. The public were able to vote in person at public libraries or online via the ABC Arts Gateway and more than 16,200 votes were ultimately received. The eight winning titles announced at the launch of the National Year of Reading in February 2012 were: *The Idea of Home*, John Hughes, NSW; *Jasper Jones*, Craig Silvey, WA; *Listening to Country*, Ros Moriarty, NT; *Smoke and Mirrors*, Kel Robertson, ACT; *Time's Long Ruin*, Stephen Orr, SA; *Wanting*, Richard Flannagan, TAS; *Well Done, Those Men*, Barry Heard, VIC; *The White Earth*, Andrew McGahan, QLD.

Subsequently, the *Our Story* collection was displayed in bookshops and libraries and following the announcement of the winners, the National Year of Reading also funded author tours and ambassador visits to libraries and community



OUR STORY ACT WINNER KEL ROBERTSON
WITH PRIME MINISTER JULIA GILARD

centres in metropolitan, regional and remote parts of the country. Touring authors included John Hughes, Barry Heard and Stephen Orr. In addition, the public were encouraged to read the *Our Story* collection and to participate in a national book group by joining a book club or taking part in the online discussion about the collection that was hosted by The Reading Room, a website dedicated to reading and disseminating information about books.

Data concerning the number of votes cast and the value of the media coverage achieved by the *Our Story* program will be carried out in conjunction with the overall National Year of Reading report at the end of 2012. The Library Agency team reflected that since the campaign was always intended to be a National Year of Reading, not a National Year of Literacy, it was important to engage with keen readers as well as with those who struggled with the written word. They state that *Our Story* brought in viewers of the *First Tuesday Book Club* and users of the ABC Arts Gateway and, from September 2011, it established the campaign as a serious contender for the attention of book lovers across Australia.

Finding 3.1.3

Our Story, part of the *One Country Reading* campaign, successfully targeted adult book lovers across Australia. This initiative also helped profile established and emerging authors and contributed to the discussion about the excellence of Australian writing.

Read This!

The national *Read This!* competition invited 12-18 year-olds to nominate a book they thought their peers should read during the National Year of Reading and then to present a convincing argument for their choice which was also a creative response to the story. The *Read This!* project was based on the Creative Reading Prize, part of the annual Inky Awards for youth literature run by the Centre for Youth Literature (CYL), an arm of the State Library of Victoria (SLV). The Creative Reading Prize was introduced as an idea by Paula Kelly, reader development manager at SLV, who advised the Library Agency on the *One Country Reading* program in 2010. It was a useful strategy for engaging a teen audience in the promotion of reading, and by building on this approach the *Read This!* project team had access to a

The whole idea is that peer to peer promotion is the best way of getting teenagers to read books... We knew we had a community of users there, we thought, okay, we know how to make that work in an online environment, we know that kids are excited about providing creative response to reading, we know that it engages them in a conversation about recommending those books to one another.

State Library of Victoria staff

readymade platform for working in the online environment, for engaging with a youth target audience and with an existing community of users.

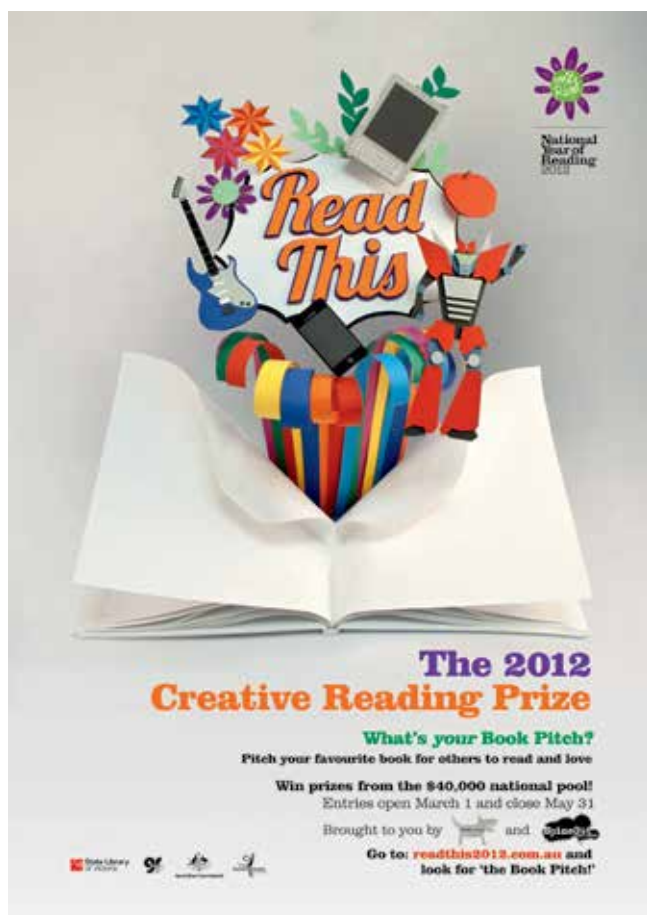
The *Read This!* project was coordinated and led by the CYL in collaboration with the Library Agency, Good Reading Magazine and Madman Entertainment. The project was also supported by state/territory libraries in terms of identifying and selecting a panel to judge shortlisted entries from their state or territory. The CYL played a lead role in the development, planning and implementation of the project, overseeing the logistics of the competition and providing overall guidance of the day to day project management. Good Reading Magazine provided promotional support through spineout.com.au, its online youth literature site, and the hosting and technical advice for the *Read This!* 2012 project website (<http://readthis2012.com/>). Madman Entertainment provided the creative design elements including the branding and posters, and highly desirable writer-artist signed manga titles accessed from its Japanese publisher partners as prizes.

Project organisers mostly used technology and online spaces to engage young people in the competition. A dedicated *Read This!* project website was developed and branded especially for the competition and was used to promote the project, collect and display submissions and announce the winners. The SLV's insideadog website was used to post a series of blogs to highlight impressive entries and provide links back to the *Read This!* website. The insideadog website Facebook and Twitter accounts were also used to promote the competition. By utilising the insideadog website and social media accounts in this way, the CYL was able to reach its existing online audience as well as youth literature professionals such as teachers, librarians and publishers who could help engage the target audience. Additionally, Madman Entertainment promoted the *Read This!* project through its retail and trade partners, public pop culture events, newsletter, website and social media.

The *Read This!* competition ran from March to May 2012 and young people submitted their entries online. A panel of judges from each state/territory library reviewed the entries to the competition to determine which was the most creative and persuasive in advocating for the entrant's chosen book.

Ultimately, more than 320 online entries to the *Read This!* competition were received from around Australia. This showed that significantly more young people had engaged with the *Read This!* competition compared with the Victorian based *Creative Reading* competition which had generally attracted 30-40 entries a year. The SLV staff believes that, while only a small number of teens respond to the *Creative Reading* competition each year, the many thousands of young people who engage with insideadog are influenced by the recommendations made by their peers.

The entries to the competition took the form of poems, crossword puzzles, videos, book reports, newspaper articles, artworks and board games. A significant number of these were of the manga and anime genre and Madman staff deduced from this that a pre-existing segment of Madman's target audience was active in the competition. In addition, it was evident that a number of schools had participated in the competition, submitting whole-class entries.



READ THIS COMPETITION POSTER

SLV staff reflected that their participation in the *Read This!* project had enabled them to develop and strengthen relationships with their project partners. More specifically, the project provided them with the opportunity to build networks with local operational staff in the respective state and territory libraries, a partnership that previously had only been developed at a management level. Most of the feedback that the SLV staff had received about the project from their state/territory library counterparts was positive and indicated that they had enjoyed the opportunity to link with the young people, schools and public libraries in their state. However, it was also evident from the data gathered for this study that while state/territory libraries were happy to support the project and to assist with the judging, some staff were surprised that they were asked to be involved in national activities and programs without receiving any additional resourcing.

Madman staff saw the *Read This!* competition as an opportunity to raise awareness of the manga and graphic

novel genre and they stated that they would like to continue the partnership with CYL beyond the National Year of Reading as a way to continue to build awareness of the genre. The partnership between Madman Entertainment and the CYL has also resulted in one of the Madman authors being engaged as an official blogger on the insideadog website whilst also having one of their books nominated for an Inky Award.

While the SLV staff have yet to review the *Read This!* project, they feel confident that they will seek further opportunities to develop their partnership with Good Reading Magazine and Madman Entertainment given the obvious success of the project. The SLV staff feels that this project has added to their national leadership role in engaging young people and supporting youth literature. They would like to use this role to continue implementing a national *Creative Reading Prize* beyond the National Year of Reading and will seek further partnerships and resourcing in order to continue that work.



Finding 3.1.4

While direct participation in the *Read This!* competition came from 320 young people, this represented only a small percentage of the young people who actually accessed the website and book promotions and who would have been aware of the initiative.

Partner organisations involved in *Read This!* described the project as providing the opportunity to strengthen their relationships with other partners. State library staff working at the operational level found it especially useful to work collaboratively with their peers in other states and territories.

The expansion of the competition in 2012 provides the opportunity for the CYL to build on the national profile of the activity.





ARE WE THERE YET AUTHOR AND NATIONAL YEAR OF READING AMBASSADOR ALISON LESTER

Are We There Yet?

Alison Lester is a National Year of Reading ambassador and an Australian author/illustrator who has published over 25 children's picture books and two young adult novels. She visits remote Australian communities each year and uses her books to encourage children and adults to write and draw about their lives. The National Year of Reading program, *Are We There Yet?*, was based on her book of the same name which centres on a road trip that Alison and her family made in a camper van around Australia.

The *Are We There Yet?* program comprised a national travelling exhibition, posters and display materials for public and school libraries, as well as a competition for the under 12 age group. The touring exhibition displayed Alison's original artwork and documented the developmental stages of the book via the family's photographs and travel diaries, the first illustrations, the text and design drafts, and the finished work itself. A variety of age-appropriate education resources were provided for children to complete at the exhibition and National Year of Reading partner, Vision Australia, prepared accessible versions in DAISY text and Braille that were included in the exhibition.

An *Are We There Yet?* online competition was held for children from two to 12 years of age who were invited to describe their home or a favourite place they had visited in Australia in a short story, letter or original artwork. The competition was set up in four categories – pre-school, prep and year 1, years 2 and 3, and years 4, 5 and 6. The *Are We There Yet?* competition moved around the country with the exhibition and a separate competition was held for each state. Entries to the competition were judged by Alison Lester and there were school as well as individual prizes given. The school prizes included visits from other well known Australian children's authors and illustrators.



ARE WE THERE YET EXHIBITION





The *Are We There Yet?* exhibition toured the country over the course of the National Year of Reading, stopping at one location in each state. The exhibition opened in February at the Northern Territory Library and, subsequently, it travelled to: the Civic Library in the ACT in March; the Butter Factory in Queensland in May; the Kingston LINC in Tasmania in June; the Wattle Range Library in South Australia in July; the Newcastle Library in New South Wales in August; the Wanneroo Library in Western Australia in September; and finally the Melbourne City Library in Victoria in November.

In addition to the coverage offered by the Love2Read website, the exhibition was promoted by state/territory libraries to schools, public libraries and the general public and in some cases local bookshops also promoted the exhibition. Promotional material provided courtesy of the National Year of Reading included bookmarks, posters, activity sheets, and teacher notes, all of which supported visitors to the exhibition. Additionally, the exhibition provided teachers with an opportunity to engage with students in a number of ways, for example the development of an *Are We There Yet?* board game and an online 'Google lit trip' from the south of Australia to the Top End (school in Tasmania).

Reports written by state/territory libraries indicate that the exhibition was well attended by the general public as well as by school groups. Library staff provided talks to schools and other interested groups and Alison Lester attended some exhibitions to talk about her work and to participate

in library-based activities. Some libraries also incorporated themes and activities relating to the exhibition into their school holiday or other regular in-house programs. The libraries involved with the *Are We There Yet?* program generally reported that the exhibition was very well received and that sessions involving Alison Lester were particularly popular. Visitor feedback articulated a great appreciation for the quality of the artwork and for the opportunity to see how the book was created. The exhibition also inspired people to create their own pictures and to keep travel diaries of their own adventures. The Library Agency staff considered that at another level, *Are We There Yet?* also provided a question for stakeholders – are we there yet as a reading nation? They report that this theme was explored in a number of debates and discussions throughout the year.



A fabulous opportunity to see how a book evolved.

Visitor, AWTY exhibition, Libraries ACT

I want to write a book now about my upcoming trip to Fiji!

Visitor, AWTY exhibition, Libraries ACT

Finding 3.1.5

By profiling the stages in the development of one leading Australian children's picture book, from concept and initial drawings through to the final publication, the touring exhibition exposed thousands of children and families to the creative process. It inspired some visitors to create their own pictures and travel diaries, and it provided teachers with an opportunity to engage with students in a number of ways.

This initiative not only profiled Alison Lester's work, it also drew attention to the work of many writers for children and young people. In addition, it prompted stakeholders to consider the question – '*Are We There Yet*' as a reading nation?



PARTICIPANTS IN THE READING HOUR EVENT IN MELBOURNE

The Reading Hour itself is for everyone and there will be activities for all age groups, but there will be a special message for families. The phrase '10 minutes a day, an hour a week' is our 'slip, slop, slap'. It's the take away message that we hope will become the accepted norm. We know it's not always possible for parents to share a book at bedtime with their children, but if they can manage 10 minutes most nights, their child will have the best chance of becoming a good reader, with all the social and educational benefits that brings. Most of our brain development happens between birth and three years of age, so it's not enough to assume that children will learn to read when they get to school. Parents need to share stories and rhymes right from day one – and a good way of finding out more is to join Storytimes, Rhymetimes, Baby Bounce and toddler sessions at their local library.

Margaret Allen, Chair National Year of Reading founder partners, CEO and State Librarian SLWA

Campaign 2: The Reading Hour

The *Reading Hour* was a National Year of Reading event held on Saturday 25th August, 2012. *The Reading Hour* was considered a focal point for the National Year of Reading and a national call to action. The aim of project was to engage people in the idea of regular reading and to promote key messages about the importance and benefits of reading with children and of developing a culture of reading in the home. More specifically, *The Reading Hour* encouraged the public to: share a book with their child for 10 minutes a day; restore their work-life balance by taking a break with a book at lunchtime; get together with friends to read and talk about their favourite books; and incorporate a reading hour into the school week.

As with other National Year of Reading initiatives, state/territory and public libraries were encouraged to support the promotion of *The Reading Hour* via their networks and to develop partnerships to implement local initiatives. At the same time, the Library Agency developed partnerships with a range of organisations to implement events at the national level. The major partners involved in *The Reading Hour* project at this level were Scholastic, the Walt Disney Company, the Big Issue, ABC Local Radio and Dymocks bookstores, and each of the partners chose to contribute to the campaign in different ways.

Both Scholastic and the Walt Disney Company are recognised publishers of children's books in Australia and





DRESSING UP AT THE NSW READING HOUR EVENT

worldwide. For these companies, supporting teachers, parents and schools in their efforts to develop a lifelong love of reading in children is core business. Scholastic, in partnership with Disney's Marvel brand, held a *Reading Superheroes* competition to celebrate *The Reading Hour* and invited school aged children to nominate their reading superhero for a chance to win Apple and Scholastic prize packs. Scholastic and the Walt Disney Company received over 13,000 responses from children nominating their reading superhero and received positive feedback from librarians about the competition idea.

In addition to its partnership with Scholastic, the Walt Disney Company worked with Dymocks on two other national events. This included a competition where customers were asked to draw their favourite storybook character to win a Disney prize pack, which was awarded to winners in each of the 70 Dymocks stores as well as at Disney Junior *Reading Hour* parties. The events were held in 10 Dymocks stores across Australia and featured storytelling, arts and crafts, dress ups and playtime sessions.

Disney Junior also supported *The Reading Hour* event by producing a top quality, cleverly animated spot (video advertisement) that targeted families and reinforced the key messages to read together for 10 minutes a day and an hour a week. The Disney Junior advertisement was played on-air and online over the course of the National Year of Reading and libraries were also encouraged to play the advertisement to help promote *The Reading Hour*.

The Big Issue is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that develops enterprises and programs that support homeless, marginalised and disadvantaged people to make positive changes in their lives. Through initiatives like *The Big Issue* magazine the organisation provides opportunities for people to earn their own income while building confidence and their capacity to help themselves. A special fiction edition of *The Big Issue* was launched on the 25th August to celebrate *The Reading Hour*. This edition featured stories both from open submissions and commissioned pieces from well-known authors, and was the official publication for *The Reading Hour*.

To celebrate *The Reading Hour*, ABC Local Radio ran a competition to find a National Year of Reading champion in each state/territory. Young people between the ages of 8 and 12 years were asked to write a short story of no more than 500 words that included the trigger word 'RADIO' and featured radio in some way. Major prize winners from each state received: return flights and accommodation to Melbourne for the winner and a parent or guardian, including transfers and meals; \$50 spending money; a day of tours to the National Sports Museum, the Wallace and Gromit exhibition at the Scienceworks Museum, and the opportunity to be a special guest as the Young Reading Champion for their state at the Melbourne Writers Festival *Reading Hour* event in Federation Square to help countdown to *The Reading Hour* at 6pm. Second prize winners received a set of books that was equivalent to their height and third prize winners received an ABC Shop gift voucher.

Entries to the competition were submitted by August 5 to ABC Local Radio in each state, more specifically: 666 ABC Canberra; 774 ABC Melbourne; 891 ABC Adelaide; 720 ABC Perth; 783 ABC Alice Springs; 702 ABC Sydney; 936 ABC Hobart. Each station selected a panel of judges for their state to create a shortlist of entries which were read and recorded for radio. In total, thousands of entries were received across Australia.

ABC Local Radio staff in Victoria considered the event to have been a success and were keen to run the competition again in 2013. They felt their participation in *The Reading Hour* reinforced existing partnerships with the Melbourne Writers Festival and their association with the National Year of Reading and the positive messages generated about reading facilitated access to their target market of parents and families.

Kumon Australia and New Zealand is an education provider with a large network of education centres and an equally large student base. The Kumon objective to promote regular reading and literacy as an essential life skill was a natural fit with the objectives of *The Reading Hour*. Kumon promoted *The Reading Hour* by encouraging its students and families to participate in events that were held at their local libraries and Kumon hosted *Read Together* groups in public libraries for their students and families from multicultural backgrounds.

With its similar focus on reading the MS Readathon project was also a good fit with *The Reading Hour*. MS Readathon is an annual fundraising project run by Multiple Sclerosis Australia, which seeks to engage children and adults in reading whilst also improving public awareness of





AUTHOR AMBASSADOR
FELICE ARENA PERFORMS
AT THE NSW READING HOUR EVENT



multiple sclerosis and raising money for people living with the disease. For 2012, Multiple Sclerosis Australia ran a special one day event on 24th August called *60 MinuteS for MS* which invited schools to organise reading activities to celebrate *The Reading Hour* as well as to raise funds for multiple sclerosis research.

A website dedicated to *The Reading Hour* (www.thereadinghour.org.au) was developed and used to promote events, partnerships and the key messages of the project. The website incorporated downloadable messages in support of *The Reading Hour* from high-profile Australians including the Governor-General and from ambassadors, such as the Giggly Kids. It included videos of author ambassadors discussing the importance of reading as well as *The Reading Hour* video developed by Disney Junior. A downloadable widget in the form of an on-screen clock was also made available for people to countdown to *The Reading Hour*. The National Year of Reading wiki provided a great deal of support to libraries and other professionals who wanted to create their own events for *The Reading Hour*. As well as promoting the events organised by National Year of Reading organisers and the partners to *The Reading Hour* project, the wiki space provided suggestions and guides for developing events and collateral such as posters and logos for promotional purposes.

Other websites and webpages were also developed specifically for *The Reading Hour* to promote related activities, including the Scholastic *Marvel Reading Superheroes* website and the MS Readathon's *60 MinuteS for MS* webpage. These websites linked to social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter. Partner organisations also used their existing channels and social media platforms to promote events and activities to their customers. Scholastic promoted *The Reading Hour* through its network of book fairs and school book clubs.

The Reading Hour itself was promoted as being between 6pm to 7pm on 25th August, however, many state and local level celebrations occurred across the course of the day to suit the different time zones across the country. Additionally, since *The Reading Hour* was on a Saturday, events were held in the preceding week when organisations, especially schools, were celebrating Book Week, the annual children's festival promoted by the Children's Book Council of Australia. Some examples of the different projects and events are given here.

The CEO's Reading Hour is an example of a local level project that focused on raising the profile of the National Year of Reading and of *The Reading Hour* in the context of the workplace. *The CEO's Reading Hour* was a project that encouraged CEOs in Canberra to champion the National Year of Reading and to promote *The Reading Hour* event to the large numbers of staff within their organisations. Some examples of the activities that were undertaken in the lead up to *The Reading Hour* include: adding a book review segment to the agenda of the senior leadership team's weekly meetings; utilising in-house newsletters to remind staff about the National Year of Reading and to encourage them to participate in *The Reading Hour*; encouraging staff to set up mini libraries in different workplace locations so that they could swap books and share their interest in reading. The projects organisers report that staff seemed to enjoy

It's a little like a mini library and people can bring books in, it's an honour system, it was loaded up with a bunch of books and the idea was for people to come and just browse, spend time, take the book home, have a read, bring it back and perhaps bring some more books back. So it was a bit of a revolving sort of library there. And the feedback is that people are using it and think it's a good idea.

Participant, *CEO's Reading Hour*



THE NSW READING HOUR CO HOSTS,
AUTHOR MORRIS GLEITZMAN AND
ABC REPORTER JUANITA PHILLIPS

rediscovering reading and that reading for pleasure had enabled them to take time to relax. Staff had also found that sharing books had given them a reason to interact with their colleagues about something that was not related to their work.

The Reading Hour Pyjama Party held by the City of Mandurah in WA is a good example of a local level event that was organised by a public library to celebrate *The Reading Hour*. Almost 500 children and families dressed up and took part in a free event on 25th August at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre. After sharing supper and looking through a range of reading related displays, a number of locally identified 'reading champions' read their favourite storybooks to the crowd, including local Member of Parliament David Templeman who dressed in a pair of colourful pyjamas.

In Brisbane, the State Library of Queensland (SLQ) held a reading celebration to mark *The Reading Hour*. This included a daytime family event which featured children's creative activities, hourly readings and physical performances of stories within the SLQ. Satellite events were also held in local libraries around Queensland. SLQ staff decided that the family component of the event should be held during the day rather than the national early evening timeslot, given that families were more likely to engage with daytime events during the winter months. In the evening an 'up-late' *Reading Hour* event was held for adults, called *The Reading Hour: Love, Lust and Loathing*. This was an after-hours event with

authors, readings from adult books, and wine and cheese that was designed to engage adults in the National Year of Reading celebrations. Schools throughout Queensland also held a range of *Reading Hour* events and activities which were promoted through a National Year of Reading partnership developed by SLQ with Education Queensland (EQ). EQ staff noted that *The Reading Hour* was a high profile but also easy and fun way to for schools to promote literacy messages to their students and parents.

The Library Agency, in conjunction with its major partners, organised a day of fun at the Urban Screen at The Concourse, Chatswood, Sydney, which included Marvel reading super heroes and prize giveaways. This event was beamed live to the Cultural Centre Screen in the Perth Cultural Centre.

I think it's been really well received, you know, in just talking to different librarians and teachers, and it's a natural tie in with things. I think it's given a real focus to developing literacy, and I can see that it's created a real excitement, which I think has been a very positive thing.

Representative from partner organisation to *The Reading Hour*



NSW READING HOUR FACEPAINTING

When reflecting on their involvement in *The Reading Hour*, the partner organisations described the project as complementing their focus of promoting reading and literacy and being a good fit with many of their aims. Scholastic noted that activities associated with *The Reading Hour* and the promotion of reading may have happened regardless of the National Year of Reading, but being linked to the campaign had added a new angle and a level of enthusiasm. Additionally, Walt Disney Company staff believed that their participation in *The Reading Hour* reflected their goal of helping to educate caregivers on the importance of reading to the children in their lives.

The project also provided partners with the opportunity to form new and strengthen existing links with like-minded organisations. Disney staff noted that their involvement in *The Reading Hour* helped to strengthen existing partnerships with retailers and licensee partner organisations. Additionally,

Scholastic staff reported that they had developed two new partnerships with charity organisations as a result of their involvement in the National Year of Reading. The addition of their profiles to the National Year of Reading website has also resulted in a major distribution of books to communities. They stated that these new partnerships will continue beyond the National Year of Reading and that future projects that build on the aims of *The Reading Hour* are already at the planning stage.

The Library Agency staff report that feedback about *The Reading Hour* has been supportive and that the public would be keen to attend another such event in 2013. They hope that the key messages developed and promoted as part of *The Reading Hour* will ultimately have a positive impact on the literacy skills and values of families, and increase the amount of reading enjoyed by children and families.

Finding 3.1.6

The Reading Hour provided an anchor event in the second half of 2012 and introduced the call to action 'sharing a book for 10 minutes a day, an hour a week, is all it takes to give your child the gift of reading'.

It was a simple yet effective idea that caught the imagination of communities across Australia. Adopting a broad framework (the 'grassroots' approach) meant there was room for local initiatives as well as major national competitions and events. This created opportunities for high level partnerships and collaboration, based on shared goals.

Partner organisations to the national *Reading Hour* described the project as complementing their existing work in promoting reading and literacy, particularly to families and children. They reflected that *The Reading Hour* provided them with the opportunity to make both new and strengthened links with other like minded organisations.

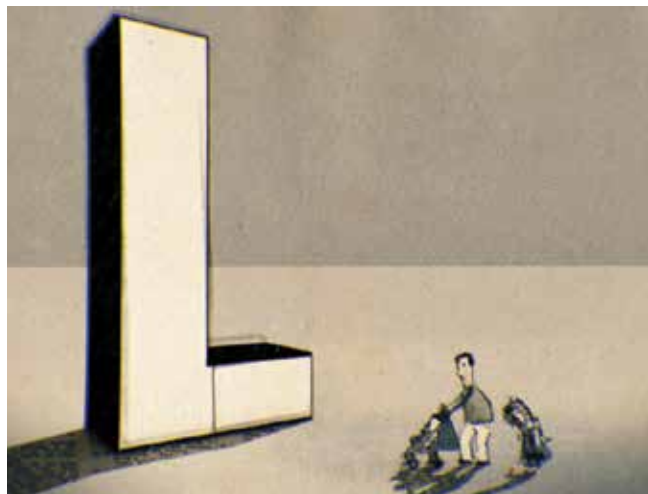
The Reading Hour projects and activities were promoted primarily using online tools, including specially created websites, social media and video clips, which gave maximum impact from a limited budget.

Feedback from many different sources indicated that *The Reading Hour* was a success and that such an initiative should be continued beyond 2012.



Campaign 3: Public Library Membership Drive

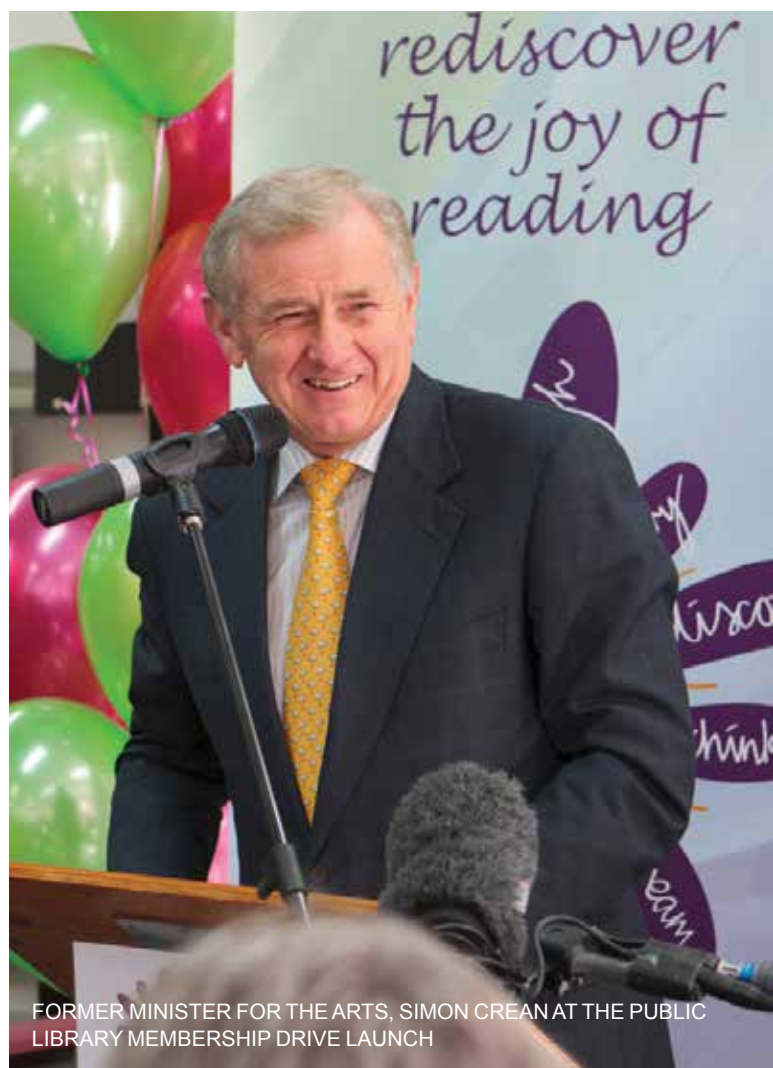
The *Public Library Membership Drive* was launched during ALIA's Library and Information Week in May and ran for 12 weeks until August, 2012. The aim of the project was to inspire people to take a fresh look at their public library so that they would become motivated to engage or re-engage with it. The campaign intended to raise the profile of public libraries by promoting: a reading culture in the home; libraries as welcoming and socially inclusive places; the joy of reading; and reading as an essential and achievable life skill. The primary target groups for this project were low income families, new migrants, lapsed readers and non-readers.



National Year of Reading organisers had hoped that the *Public Library Membership Drive* would also foster collaboration and stronger connections between public libraries and potential partners such as schools and bookstores. They encouraged public libraries to hold open days and special events to spotlight their presence and the services they offer. In addition, a public relations campaign was made available from the National Year of Reading wiki (<http://love2read2012.wikispaces.com/Library+membership+campaign>) for state, territory and public libraries to take up and use as the basis for their own 'grassroots' campaigns to promote membership.

The National Year of Reading webpage (www.love2read.org.au/libraries) was utilised as the public interface for the library membership campaign. In addition, the public relations campaign resources incorporated a broadcast quality animation and a television advertisement that had been specially commissioned for Australian public libraries; a National Year of Reading app for iPhone or iPad and a promotional poster; downloadable posters, new member growth charts and invitations; still images from the animation; a Wordle image; event and activity suggestions; a template media release and short article for library council newsletters; and the ALIA *Little Book of Public Libraries* in pdf format.

In order to ascertain how the campaign had impacted library usage and membership numbers, National Year of Reading organisers encouraged libraries to collate data from 2010



FORMER MINISTER FOR THE ARTS, SIMON CREAN AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP DRIVE LAUNCH





to 2012. More specifically, they asked libraries to: track the difference between new memberships, door, and loan statistics from January to June in 2010, 2011 and 2012; state which National Year of Reading activities had been implemented and which had been of benefit; and identify any factors that may have artificially increased or depressed the difference in year-on-year membership growth.

At time of publication, data was not yet available, but media coverage gave the following snippets of information:

- Tumut Library, NSW, reported a 50% increase in library patronage between February and November 2012 (Tumut and Adelong Times, 30 November 2012);
- West Gippsland Regional Library Corporate, VIC, noted an increase in membership from 35,730 in 2011 to 36,157; 30% more online renewals; 24% more attendees at Baby Rhyme Time and a 70% increase in wifi usage (Great Southern Star, 13 November 2012);
- Fraser Coast libraries, NSW, signed up 2,113 new members, while neighbouring Bundaberg libraries increased membership by 1,117 (Fraser Coast Chronicle, 3 November 2012);
- 500 new members for Harvey shire libraries, WA (Harvey-Waroona Reporter, 11 December 2012);
- Lake Macquarie libraries, NSW, increased membership by 8%, to more than 60,000 (Newcastle Star, 19 December 2012).

Finding 3.1.7

Initial indications are that the *Public Library Membership Drive* has had a significant impact on the profile of public libraries in their communities and that it has encouraged more residents to become registered library members; more people to participate in library events and activities, and more people to take advantage of online services.

The resources provided to libraries for the Public Library Membership Drive were designed to have a life beyond 2012.

Campaign 4: National Year of Reading in the Workplace

As its name suggests, the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace* campaign centred on engaging with people in the context of their work environment. The campaign was developed in response to the need to develop the literacy skills of large numbers of Australian workers as evidenced by the findings of industry surveys and reports (ABS, 2006; Australian Industry Group, 2010; Industry Skills Councils & AgriFood Skills Australia, 2011). The campaign involved the *Writers-in-Residence* project which was part-funded under the Workplace English Language and Literacy Program by the Australian Government, through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The aim of the project was to work with employers in each state/territory to create writer-in-residence programs where established authors would be engaged to work with employees to help them to tell their stories. The project presented the opportunity to engage with a new set of partners in the area of industry whilst also leveraging off existing National Year of Reading partnerships with writers' centres and other organisations around Australia.

In 2011 and 2012, funding was made available to each state/territory to run a *Writers-in-Residence* project. The organisation managing the project was expected to contract an author to work for 10 days in the context of a workplace and for a further 10 days after the residency was complete. The writers-in-residence were expected to deliver a workshop for employees who were interested in producing their own work and to deliver a pre-agreed number of their own pieces from the writers-in-residence experience. National Year of Reading organisers envisaged that the writing workshops would cater for employees who wanted to develop their creative skills and for those who struggle with reading and writing but welcome the opportunity to tell their story with the help of an author or illustrator. It was anticipated that the writing produced from each project would be published on the National Year of Reading website.



NT INDIGENOUS PARK RANGERS PARTICIPATE IN WRITERS IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

The SA Writers' Centre has been delighted to be involved in the National Year of Reading Writers-in-Residence project. The selection of the writer and location has proved to be fruitful and rewarding, with Stephen producing a number of short stories based on his residency in the Riverland area. The stories are not only beautifully crafted, but deeply evocative of the individuals, communities, history and contemporary issues in the region. They are a testament to the value of such a project, one that importantly also leaves in place outcomes around community skills development and network building. I hope to see such projects continue into the future, and to forge more collaborations between public libraries and the SA Writers' Centre.

Sarah Tooth, SA Writers' Centre



Writers-in-Residence projects were rolled out from 2011 to 2012 in unique ways. The first writer-in-residence was Kaye Aldenhoven, a poet and short story writer, who was engaged by the Department of Natural Resources Environment the Arts and Sport in the Northern Territory (NT) in 2011 to work with Indigenous park rangers at Mary River National Park, mid-way between Darwin and the Kakadu National Park, as well as the Garig Gunak Barlu National Park on the Coburg Peninsula. A further seven writers were engaged in the remaining states/territories over the course of 2012. In Victoria, the project was coordinated by Australian Poetry and Emilie Zoe Baker was selected to work as a poet-in-residence at Museums Victoria. Similarly, the State Library of Queensland partnered with Social Money Solutions to engage poet David Stavanger to work with the employees of various charities. In New South Wales, the NSW Central West Libraries partnered with the NSW Department of Primary Industries to employ a writer to work with the employees of large farms. The WA Writers' Centre partnered with Read Write Now! to engage various authors to work on-on-one with adults in the workplace who were struggling with literacy. Libraries ACT employed writer Andrew Croome to work with employees from Mount Stromlo Observatory. The SA State Library partnered with the SA Writers Centre and employed writer Stephen Orr, winner of the SA *Our Story* nomination, to work with employees at Berri Estates and Banrock Station on the Murray River as well as with the Aboriginal elders who are the traditional owners of the land at Banrock Station. In Tasmania, the Tasmanian Writers Centre engaged playwright, Sean Monro, to work with bus drivers from Metro Tasmania. Sean's written response to his writers-in-residence experience is given on page 32.

As each project was completed, the organisers submitted reports to the Library Agency giving feedback on the implementation and success of the project which will be collated into a formal report for DEEWR and incorporated into the report on the National Year of Reading.



Residency Metro Tasmania

Writer in Residence: Sean Monro

Some observations

Metro were very supportive. They gave me access to all levels of staff, from the workshop crew, to drivers, radio operators, police, management, archives, CEO and board meetings. They were generous with their time and seemed genuinely interested in improving communications within the organization and to have the organization itself documented thoroughly.

I found the people I spoke to honest and more than willing to share.

The drivers and workshop crew were very focussed on describing the job at hand or experiences they had had. Management were often curious about what the drivers had said- particularly if they'd complained. I told management the vast majority of the people I interviewed had positive things to say. Most of the staff are very loyal and have been there for many years. They like their jobs! Management seemed proud and a little surprised by this. Some put it down to the fact that people felt more comfortable talking to an outsider. I felt it was more than that. They liked sharing their stories! I'm sure they would have shared their stories with management if asked.

I accumulated somewhere between twenty-five and thirty thousand words worth of notes during the residency. I was surprised to see just how quickly it accumulated. There were intriguing stories or anecdotes or incidents nearly every day.

As a writer it was fascinating to listen to the different rhythms, levels of language usage and speech patterns that were employed by people performing different jobs. Some used language for humour, some to reinforce their authority, and some to inform.

I found the whole experience eye-opening in terms of what's involved in keeping a fleet running on time, the social structure of a large business/service provider and how different roles or jobs created such divergent impressions of what Metro is and what it should be.

There was a tremendous amount of oral history lurking just below the surface, stories from people who had been driving buses for decades. They had seen children grow up into adults, terrible crashes and deaths, sunsets over the river, snow on the mountain, ferried men up the same mountain to fight devastating bushfires... and systemic changes in the fleet- from trams and trolley-buses through to the modern articulated buses. Often these events were described with great detail... it felt like a tale was being handed down to be kept safe.

I was not expecting to discover such a commitment to service. Sure Metro staff were doing a job, but they also saw themselves as helping people get around, providing a valuable service to the community. It was part of why they did what they did...and in a way, who they were.

I am looking forward to sharing the creative writing workshops with the Metro staff at the end of this month!

AUTHOR SEAN MONRO'S RESPONSE TO HIS *WRITER IN RESIDENCE* EXPERIENCE

Finding 3.1.8

The *National Year of Reading in the Workplace* campaign aimed to engage with people to develop their literacy skills in the context of their workplace. There was some resistance from employers approached in the first instance, who blocked the notion that their workforce might include people who struggle with literacy issues. However, the organisations that chose to participate found it brought unexpected benefits. *Writers-in-Residence* uncovered positive aspects of the business that had not previously come to light; they discovered that employees were motivated by factors other than pay, terms and conditions; they enabled individual staff members to express themselves and to tell their own stories.

While this initiative could not turn around the issue of illiteracy in the Australian workforce in one year, in workplaces in each state and territory, it raised awareness of people's struggle with reading and writing and gave employers a new perspective on how this might change over time, using positive creative influences



Indigenous Programs

The National Year of Reading was used as a platform to promote as well as to support the work of a number of organisations that sponsor Indigenous literacy, particularly in regional and remote communities. This included the work of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF), IAD Press, The Smith Family and the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF). The Love2Read website featured information and web links to each organisation, and encouraged stakeholders to support their work, projects and campaigns.

Indigenous Literacy Foundation

The Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) is an independent charity that endeavours to improve the literacy levels, lives and opportunities of Indigenous Australians living in remote and isolated regions. The ILF was formed by a small group of volunteers in 2005 and has grown into a foundation with support initially from the Fred Hollows Foundation and more recently with the support of the Australian book industry. In the past four years the ILF has sent over 85,000 books to more than 230 communities across Australia but predominantly in Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. These books and other literacy resources are distributed to a variety of stakeholders such as school libraries, women's crèches and youth drop-in centres as well as via partner organisations like Mission Australia, government health departments, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Currently, the ILF is working with four communities to support them to raise literacy levels through community driven projects.

The ILF also organises a range of projects and events to help increase awareness of Indigenous literacy issues and to raise funds for its work. One such event is the *Great Book Swap* which targets schools, libraries, bookshops, book clubs and businesses. Participants are encouraged to plan a day when individuals can bring a book and swap it with their friends and colleagues, while also making a gold coin donation for the ILF. Participants are also encouraged to hold their event on Indigenous Literacy Day. The ILF also supports Indigenous Literacy Day by organising a range of other events and fundraisers, and it encourages publishers and booksellers to donate a small portion of the profits made on this day to support the work of the ILF.

During the National Year of Reading, the ILF promoted its involvement with the campaign on its website and through existing social media platforms. Staff at ILF noted it was difficult to detail quantifiable outcomes from their involvement in the National Year of Reading, but they are hoping that it has resulted in raising ILF's profile with a range of stakeholders, in particular libraries. More specifically, the ILF was hoping that its partnership with the National Year of Reading would result in increased engagement with their projects such as the Great Book Swap and Indigenous Literacy Day, but the response from libraries was unfortunately very small. However, staff was appreciative of the opportunity for cross promotion, were proud to be part of the National Year of Reading and felt that it was a very positive initiative.

IAD Press

IAD Press is a boutique publishing house that is located in Alice Springs and is the publishing arm of the Institute for Aboriginal Development. It is a not-for-profit organisation that has been operating for over 35 years, making it Australia's oldest Indigenous publishing house and the foremost publisher of Indigenous language resources. The goal of IAD Press is to celebrate more than 50,000 years of stories from the heart of Australia by producing quality publications of cultural integrity. More than supporting literacy development, IAD Press seeks to support Aboriginal communities to reconnect people back to the ownership of their language, to translate these into a written form, and then to make them as available as possible to wide range of audiences. To this end, IAD Press utilises a highly consultative process with authors and contributors, ensuring all publications represent an authentic Indigenous perspective.

To celebrate the National Year of Reading and Indigenous Literacy Day, the IAD Press partnered with National Year of Reading and the Copyright Agency Limited to organise the first Sharing Our Stories – Anwerne-kenhe Ayeye Festival in Alice Springs in September 2011, followed by a second festival of Indigenous reading, writing and storytelling in September 2012. The events included Indigenous storytellers sharing their culture through spoken word, art and song, as well as workshops on digital publishing that were co-presented with the Northern Territory Writers' Centre. In addition, the IAD Press' 2012 Jukurrpa Diary was branded as the official National Year of Reading Diary.



NATIONAL YEAR OF READING AMBASSADOR BOORI MONTY PRYOR ATTENDED THE ILF'S GREAT BOOK SWAP AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

For Aboriginal people, literacy is not just about English words written on pages. There's a history and tradition of literacy that has embraced a whole range of art form practices, telling and sharing stories, for centuries... So our commitment is, I suppose, bigger than the idea of encouraging literacy, it's about connecting people to the authentic Aboriginal voice on many levels, manifest as printed books, audio recordings, songs, film, other things.

IAD Press staff





Having recently undergone a significant restructure and staff change, IAD Press staff reported that they did not have the capacity to fully involve themselves in National Year of Reading activities. One of the most significant outcomes of their involvement in the National Year of Reading was a new partnership with the Northern Territory Library (NT Library), a link made through the National Year of Reading team. The NT Library had secured funding for an Indigenous Language Support Program which involved working with the Arrernte people who are the traditional owners of Mparntwe (Alice Springs). Given the IAD Press had an established relationship with the Arrernte elders, the two organisations decided to work together to develop the project. It is anticipated that through their participation in the project, the Arrernte people will develop a new connection with libraries. The NT Library partnership has also led to a new relationship between IAD Press and the local Alice Springs public library.

When considering the impact of the National Year of Reading, one partner commented that there was great value

in having Indigenous literacy organisations as National Year of Reading partners and having the opportunity to be linked together to work towards the National Year of Reading aims and objectives. They also noted that if any substantial progress is to be made towards increasing the literacy levels of Indigenous children nationally, there needs to be a major investment in literacy projects that are community driven and owned. It is the hope of these partner organisations that their connection with the National Year of Reading has raised awareness, particularly amongst libraries and other organisations, of the key issues impacting on Indigenous literacy and the link this has to the wellbeing of Indigenous people. It was also hoped that the National Year of Reading may have supported Indigenous organisations to increase the public's exposure and access to the breadth of Aboriginal stories and voices in Australia. Whether or not the National Year of Reading has actually achieved these goals is unknown and difficult to quantify in the short or long term, but the local partnerships and projects that have resulted will have an impact on the Indigenous communities involved.

Finding 3.1.9

The National Year of Reading was used as a platform to promote the work of a number of organisations and projects supporting Indigenous literacy. This was viewed positively by the organisations involved, but it is difficult to quantify the effect this has had.

Certainly new partnerships were formed, for example the collaboration between IAD Press and the NT and local Alice Springs libraries that will result in a language development program with the Arrernte people.

It is hoped that National Year of Reading's focus on Indigenous literacy will result in an increased awareness of the issues to do with Indigenous literacy, and the need for more support for Indigenous people to have ownership of the telling, publishing and distribution of their unique stories and voice.



Monitoring and evaluation

The Library Agency team monitored the impact of the National Year of Reading in the media over the course of the year and, even though an impact review of the data could not be completed until the year's end, they consider that the use of media had been very successful given the 'grassroots' nature of the campaign. For example, the National Year of Reading Launch in Canberra on February 14, was attended by the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, the former Australian Government Arts Minister, Simon Crean, and the School Education Minister, Peter Garrett, and this provoked a great deal of interest from the traditional media and provided a great boost to the campaign launch. At the same time, a large number of media interviews were completed by founder partners and National Year of Reading organisers at the national level and the Library Agency estimated the total media coverage across the year to be worth approximately \$26 million. This figure included regular mentions on ABC 2's *First Tuesday Book Club* and ABC Local Radio, and the publication of excerpts from the *Our Story* Victorian shortlist in *The Age*, but it did not include free airtime on Disney Junior (*The Reading Hour* spot), *The Big Issue*'s special fiction edition coinciding with *The Reading Hour*, the broadcasting of a library advertisement by SBS (a grant from the SBS Foundation), Channel 7's support for Queensland's *Dads Read* program and Queensland cinemas airing the library animation produced as part of the *Public Library Membership Drive*.

Although there was less coverage by the major state and national newspapers, the campaign featured regularly in many local community papers as the National Year of Reading progressed. Most of the media coverage was generated at the grassroots level and focused on the collaborative efforts of local libraries, bookstores, community groups and participants in the National Year of Reading. The capacity for partners to leverage off the National Year of Reading in this way was considered a significant outcome

It has meant that our partners have been very able and willing and enthusiastic about picking up the ball and running with it... that they have done incredibly creative, and wonderful things to promote the National Year of Reading... and I think that that sort of broadness of vision and that enthusiasm is to do with the fact that it's been very easy for people to do, that they haven't had to jump through hoops to get involved with it.

Library Agency team member

by the Library Agency team and they were hopeful that partnerships initiated during the National Year of Reading would be sustained beyond 2012.

The success of the National Year of Reading activities and events implemented at the national level will be ascertained by analysing the reports received from organisations participating in the different campaigns as well as the data concerning levels of engagement. The Library Agency team collated statistical data relating to the expressions of interest received for each event, attendance at events, and entries received for competitions which will make it possible to gauge how the profile of the National Year of Reading has increased. In addition, as the public registered their events and activities on the National Year of Reading calendar, the team was able to monitor the number of events that were implemented across Australia at the local level. In November 2012, there were more than 3,700 events and activities listed on the National Year of Reading calendar and by the end of the year, the number exceeded 4,000.

Finding 3.1.10

The objectives of the National Year of Reading were based on raising awareness of the importance of reading as a life skill and a catalyst for wellbeing, which meant that media coverage was an essential part of the campaign.

On a purely cash basis, it is estimated that media coverage returned more than \$15 worth of value for every \$1 invested in the campaign (\$26 million worth of media coverage, \$1.7million funding). Through ABC TV and Radio, the campaign reached millions of viewers and listeners; through Disney Junior, *The Reading Hour* message reached millions of families. At a local level, there was a high volume of sustained coverage in local newspapers, on local radio and through online media.

There were insufficient funds to carry out pre- and post-campaign attitudinal studies, but the level of media coverage suggests that the key messages of the National Year of Reading, including 'a reading culture in every home' and 'share a book with a child for 10 minutes a day, an hour a week' must have achieved some level of penetration.



Legacy

The role of the Library Agency has been to implement the National Year of Reading on behalf of and in conjunction with the founder partners. To this end several key initiatives have been implemented and a range of powerful resources produced to facilitate interaction and collaboration between individuals, community groups, and organisations at the local, state and national levels. As a consequence, a great number of partnerships have been created during the National Year of Reading. Given that the Library Agency fulfilled its role at the end of 2012 and the National Year of Reading drew to a close, the decision to sustain these partnerships beyond the National Year of Reading will be wholly that of the partners involved.

While the National Year of Reading has been conceptualised and guided by the founder partners, the Library Agency team stated that there had been very few parameters placed around the partnerships and events that were associated with the campaign. The main aims of the National Year of Reading - to highlight national literacy issues and to encourage, promote and celebrate the joy of reading, provided a broad framework for the campaign and participants were encouraged to build networks, create partnerships and work collaboratively to implement activities, projects and events to fit their particular contexts. The Library Agency team have also supported their partners' efforts to promote the National Year of Reading

We've been very clear ... obviously we have a number of partners that work in the same field, you know, bookshops that are in the same suburbs and those sorts of things, but we've been very clear that this is very collaborative, it's not competitive and it's not exclusive. So it's literacy in all of its shapes and forms, and it's all okay. Absolutely. Anything, anywhere, anytime.

Library Agency team member

by making a range of tools and collateral freely available to them whilst also cross-promoting their partners' business on the Love2Read website. The Library Agency team believed this kind of collaboration, particularly the free use of the National Year of Reading logo and collateral, founded a sense of trust and made it easy for people and organisations to become involved with the campaign. As a result, a great range of collaborations and partnerships were generated, and the reach of the National Year of Reading extended to quite diverse sections of the community. In addition, the Library Agency team believed the collaborative nature of the campaign fostered a non-competitive focus and a sense of inclusivity and that this gave people the freedom to be creative and ensured a diversity of programs. The Library Agency team considered the trust generated by the collaborative efforts of stakeholders to be an important aspect of the legacy of the National Year of Reading.

Many resources and a good deal of collateral were created to support the branding of the National Year of Reading. One of the most recognisable pieces of collateral was the National Year of Reading logo which was an effective drawcard for new partners. The image of the flower on the logo is seen by National Year of Reading organisers as a powerful symbol and one which has the potential to make connections between quite different reading organisations and for this reason the founder partners consider that it should continue to be used beyond 2012. Similarly, *The Reading Hour* advertisement created by Disney is also seen as an important piece of collateral. The founder partners are hopeful that *The Reading Hour* might continue as a national event, in which case the Disney advertisement could continue to be used to generate the key messages concerning reading and the development of a reading culture.

As the National Year of Reading drew to a close, the National Year of Reading founder partners and the Library Agency team were considering how the National Year of Reading brand and the logo might be utilised beyond the National Year of Reading and how some of the projects that were successfully implemented in 2012 might be sustained. Additionally, the founder partners recognised the importance of libraries maintaining the momentum they gained from the National Year of Reading and the boost that this gave their profiles.

Finding 3.1.11

A strong logo was essential to unite the campaign, and making it freely available promoted the values of generosity, trust and collaboration. This extended to the wide range of tools and collateral that was developed for the National Year of Reading.

Participants were encouraged to build on the resources created centrally, and they had the opportunity to promote their own organisations and projects via the National Year of Reading website. The trust generated by the collaborative efforts of stakeholders will be an important aspect of the legacy of the National Year of Reading.

A great range of collaborations and partnerships was generated and the reach of the National Year of Reading extended to quite diverse sections of the community. Ultimately, the decision to sustain these partnerships beyond the National Year of Reading will be wholly that of the partners involved.

The collaborative nature of the campaign fostered a sense of inclusivity and encouraged a creative and diverse set of programs.

The National Year of Reading founder partners and organisers will consider how the brand and logo might be utilised and how successful projects might be sustained beyond 2012.





Profile Two: National Year of Reading in the Australian Capital Territory

Context

Libraries ACT is a business unit found within the Parks and City Services Division of the Department of Territory and Municipal Services Directorate (TAMS) of the ACT Government. It delivers public library services to the ACT community and is the only public library service in Canberra. Libraries ACT serve a population of over 350,000 people and it encompasses nine public libraries (Belconnen, Civic, Dickson, Erindale, Gungahlin, Kingston, Kippax, Tuggeranong, Woden), two mobile libraries and the ACT Heritage Library. The vision of Libraries ACT is to inspire lifelong learning and community engagement in the ACT and, more particularly, to celebrate literacy, learning, and the pleasure of reading.

The director of Libraries ACT, Vanessa Little, considers one of the central roles of the library is to respond to the literacy needs of the community it serves. Whilst Canberra is viewed as one of the most highly paid and highly educated communities in Australia, the 2006 *Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006) shows that 32% of the population in the ACT have poor or very poor literacy skills. The lack of literacy competence of blue collar workers has been identified as an issue by employers in Canberra and the emergence of social issues is becoming more evident.

The focus on functional literacy signifies a new approach to the way that Libraries ACT conducts its business. Rather than passively waiting for the public to access the library, a lot more of the work of the library is linked to the community context. To support this more active approach, Libraries ACT has restructured the roles of its professional staff and is driving its focus on areas of specialisation (early childhood literacy, adult literacy, health and wellbeing, arts and culture, government and legal, heritage and Indigenous, ICT, multicultural, schools, seniors, and youth). The library's staff are increasingly working with the community groups and organisations associated with their area of specialisation to help determine what are the real issues for the groups and how the library can collaborate with them to address those issues.

Consequently, while Libraries ACT provides sophisticated, high level library services that meet the needs of the well educated and highly literate part of the community, it is also endeavouring to provide services that address economic and social disadvantage that support people to deal with functional literacy issues and to '*learn their way out of poverty*'. The programs and activities that were implemented to celebrate the National Year of Reading reflected this focus, with events being offered that celebrated reading as well new initiatives that focused on community development.





ACT CHIEF MINISTER KATY GALLAGHER ANNOUNCES THE ACT NATIONAL YEAR OF READING AMBASSADORS IN DECEMBER 2011

Organisational structures

In late 2011, Libraries ACT established a steering committee to advocate for the National Year of Reading and to facilitate collaboration between organisations on the development and delivery of programs and events. The rationale and function of the National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee was defined by the terms of reference for local steering groups that was set out in the National Year of Reading framework. The purpose of the National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee was to: engage with participants, advocate and facilitate across the public and private sectors; make the best use of local connections and partnerships created in response to the National Year of Reading; and maintain the balance of emphasis on both readers and non-readers of all ages and from diverse cultural backgrounds. Additionally, the role of the National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee was to: spread the word about the National Year of Reading; guide the planning, development and delivery of local initiatives, especially activities which targeted the significant percentage of the Australian population with low literacy levels; apply for funding for these initiatives; and support local delivery of national programs.

The National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee comprised a network of 23 partners from both the public and private sectors, including representatives from: ACT Council of Social Services; ACT Bilingual Education Association; ACT Government Community Services Directorate – Office for Children, Youth and Family Support; ACT Government Community Services Directorate – Arts ACT; ACT Government Education and Training Directorate; ACT Writers' Centre; Australian Catholic University; Alexander Maconochie Centre; Canberra Institute of Technology; Canberra Multicultural Community Council; Children's Book Council, ACT branch; University of Canberra; Malbon House Publishing; and The Smith Family.

A second larger network called the Facilitators Group was also created to increase the reach of the National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee. This group comprised professional organisations and individuals interested in supporting events to do with the National Year of Reading. In addition, high-profile Canberrans were recruited as ACT ambassadors to help raise the profile of the National Year of Reading and to reinforce key messages about the importance of literacy and reading.

Partnerships

The National Year of Reading gave Libraries ACT the impetus to activate and strengthen its existing partnerships by collaborating on programs and events that celebrated the National Year of Reading 2012. New partners were identified through Libraries ACT's community networks, the networks set up by the Steering Committee and the Facilitators Group, and via referrals from the other National Year of Reading founder partners. Some of the organisations working in partnership with Libraries ACT included: the Australian National University Student Equity Division, Canberra Museum and Gallery, the National Library of Australia, ACT Education and Training Directorate, the Canberra Theatre Centre, and Volunteering ACT.



MEMBERS OF THE CANBERRA ROLLER DERBY LEAGUE PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL SIMULTANEOUS STORY TIME

Finding 3.2.1

Even though it has some of the most advantaged communities in Australia, Canberra also has a developing 'underclass' of citizens considered to be functionally illiterate. Libraries ACT used the National Year of Reading as an opportunity to focus attention on this issue and to adopt a more active role in tackling the literacy gap.

By collaborating on National Year of Reading events and using existing and new networks developed during the National Year of Reading, Libraries ACT activated and strengthened existing community partnerships and developed new partnerships in order to address emerging social issues.

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

In 2012, the programs routinely offered by Libraries ACT were branded National Year of Reading. A number of these programs focused on the development of language and literacy in the early years and emphasised learning as fundamental to child development. Such programs included: *Giggle & Wiggle*, intended for the 0-2 age group and focused on learning early literacy concepts through language play; and *Story time*, an opportunity for 3-5 year olds to enjoy stories, rhymes and songs. During the National Year of Reading, there was a significant increase (approximately 40%) in the numbers of participants in the *Giggle & Wiggle* program. Libraries ACT also sought to engage older children in a range of literacy activities such as holiday programs, book discussion groups and the Canberra's Own Outstanding List (COOL) Awards, catering for the interests of 5-12 year olds.

During the National Year of Reading, Libraries ACT initiated a range of projects with its community partners in addition to the programs and activities offered in-house. Some examples of these programs are given here.

The Workplace Literacy Program

While most projects were conducted during the course of 2012, the *Workplace Literacy Program* would not be delivered until 2013. The program comprised a long term community literacy initiative that Libraries ACT, together with a range of employers of blue collar workers, embarked on during the National Year of Reading. The purpose of the program was to address adult literacy in the context of the workplace. The program would be tailored to workplace needs and centred on the provision of an online workplace health and safety program, which served to increase participant's knowledge of health and safety processes and procedures whilst also improving their literacy and ICT skills. Academic staff from the University of Canberra were to be contracted to develop the online learning tools for the program and laptops were to be made available to participants. In addition, the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) was expected to run a development program for TAMS supervisors and managers to teach them how to recognise people with literacy problems and how to encourage them to access the *Workplace Literacy Program*. Depending on the size and the literacy needs of the workforce, it was anticipated that literacy tutors might be embedded into workplace contexts in the longer term. At time of publication, project proposals had been developed by the University of Canberra and CIT partners and a funding application had been prepared for TAMS senior executives.


Canberra Kids Love2Read

The *Canberra Kids Love2Read (CKLove2Read)* project is a Libraries ACT initiative that was developed to foster the love of reading in younger school-age students and to encourage the habit of visiting the library. The program targeted year one students from five public primary schools who were bussed or walked to their closest public library over the course of the year. While the schools self-selected to be involved in the *CKLove2Read* program, schools with students from lower socio-economic backgrounds were encouraged to join the program.

The aim of the *CKLove2Read* program was for each school to visit their closest library once a month in order for the students to borrow books and participate in enjoyable, educational activities that related to reading, literacy and the library. Libraries ACT presented each of the schools involved in the program with a set of books for their school library and the year one students were presented with a special reading pack containing a library bag and a book.

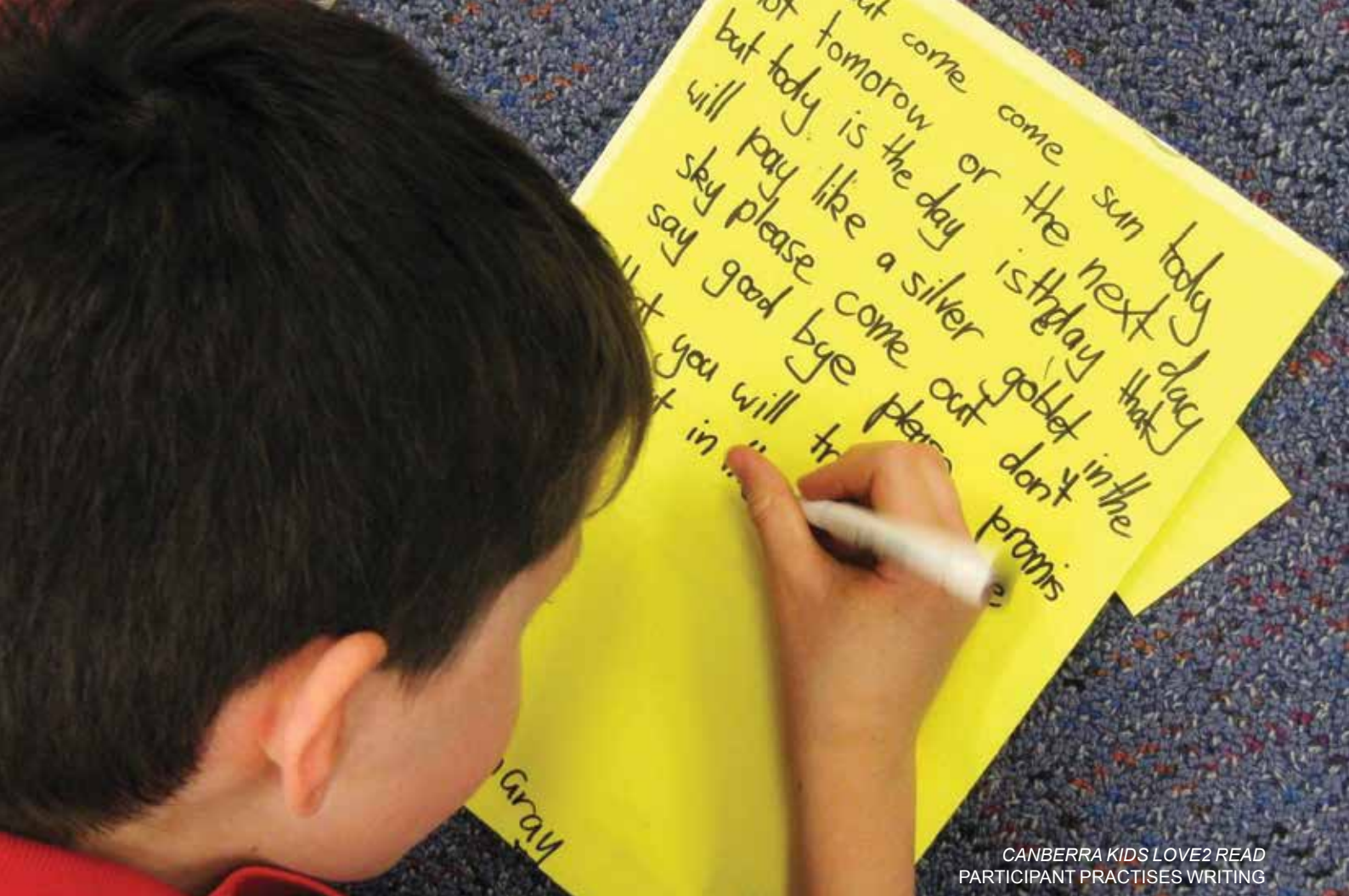
While the *CKLove2Read* program was a pilot project, it was a good example of a successful collaboration between Libraries ACT and its community partners. Many of the books that were gifted to the students and schools were donated by children's author Tania McCartney, an ACT ambassador for the National Year of Reading, or by a group of publishers whose support Tania had gained for the project, including: Hardie Grant Egmont; Pan Macmillan; Harper Collins; Walker Books Australia; New Frontier; Wilkins Farago; Ford Street Publishing; Hachette Children's Books; Scholastic, and the National Library of Australia. Additionally, sponsorship from FE Technologies made it possible to provide buses for schools that were not within walking distance of their public library.

Kingsford Smith School (KFS) was one of the schools that participated in the *CKLove2Read* program. The school is located close to the Kippax Public Library and the teacher-librarian at the school was keen for the students at KFS to become members of the library. This aim coincided well with *CKLove2Read* initiative which was operating at the Kippax library and the Year 1 and 2 students were able to join in with the program. While the teacher-librarian had organised the initial visit, the school's classroom teachers were encouraged to make repeat visits and, even though only a few subsequent class visits were made, the school was happy that close to 400 year one to nine students became members of the Kippax Public Library in 2012. In addition, the parents of some of the younger students made repeat visits to the library with their children and quite a number of the school's senior students would drop in to use the public library computers. At the time of writing this report, the *CKLove2Read* program was under evaluation to determine whether it would operate in 2013.



We had a really lovely story told to us just last week about a young boy who had come to one of the libraries on his school visit and then on the Sunday appeared at one of the other libraries with his mother and said, "Hello, do you remember me?", and the librarian who was there was the one that he'd been engaging with during his school visit. And his mother was asking questions about the library because they hadn't been to the library before as a family. So, it was exactly the response we want to get out of that project.

Libraries ACT staff member



CANBERRA KIDS LOVE2 READ
PARTICIPANT PRACTISES WRITING

Canberra Readers' Festival

Libraries ACT caters for an increasing number of independent book clubs by loaning sets of books and in 2012 there were over 170 independent book clubs that used the service. Many of the book club members also attended author talks run by the library and Libraries ACT staff felt that such an audience would also be supportive of a readers' festival, particularly if they could attract the authors that the book clubs were reading. Consequently, the inaugural *Canberra Readers' Festival* was organised by Libraries ACT as a special event for the National Year of Reading. It aimed to inspire, entertain, get people excited about books and the power of reading, and provide opportunities to discuss and share views about books.

The festival was held at The Playhouse on Saturday 22nd September. Participating authors were: Kate Grenville,

Anita Heiss, Melina Marchetta, Hazel Edwards, Kel Robertson, and Frank Moorhouse. Media coverage was positive in the lead up to the festival, with print and radio stories run, and several of the participating authors interviewed. The high-profile nature of the authors helped generate interest in the festival and was also demonstrated in the audience response to the quality of speakers and their mix of informative and entertaining talks. The topics chosen by each author resulted in an unplanned synergy between the sessions in the day-long program. A Twitter conversation with the hashtag #CRF2012 took place across the day, and several post-festival blog reports were posted by participants, including ACT National Year of Reading ambassador Tania McCartney. The response of festival participants was positive, and there was enthusiasm for it to become a regular event. Comments demonstrated approval of the mix and quality of speakers, the venue's intimate atmosphere, and how easy it was to hear the speakers. Based on participation and feedback, the inaugural *Canberra Readers' Festival* was considered a success in engaging with passionate readers, and there was a demonstrated demand for it to become a regular event. Some aspects of the festival were identified for improvement, and there was potential to explore further partnership and/or sponsorship opportunities to make the festival more financially viable.

As the ACT winner of the National Year of Reading's *Our Story* competition, author Kel Robertson was invited to participate in the inaugural *Canberra Readers' Festival*. While his profile with readers might not have been as high as that of other speakers, his entertaining talk resulted in his book *Smoke & Mirrors* selling the second most copies at the

The librarians really welcomed the opportunity to orientate the students to the benefits of being a member of the public library system, talking about all the things that that brings with it, and then they'd have a little bit of book reading or some other activity that they'd planned that was part of the National Year of Reading celebrations.

Teacher-librarian, Kingsford Smith School

festival and Anita Heiss' autobiography *Am I Black Enough For You?* sold the most copies. As a result of his participation in the festival, Kel's *How to Write Crime Fiction* workshop, held at Civic Library on 15 November was well subscribed. Feedback from the festival's participants demonstrated their appreciation and enthusiasm for the event as well as their desire to see the festival run again in 2013.

Canberra's Longest Bookmark

The project, entitled *Canberra's Longest Bookmark*, captured the attention of the Canberran community when the Dickson Library set a challenge for the local knitting group and other Canberran knitters to knit a giant bookmark as a way to celebrate the National Year of Reading. The challenge was for the bookmark to stretch 4.07 kilometres from the Civic Library to Dickson Library. The community was asked to knit bookmarks of a specific dimension (21cm x 6cm) that would be knitted into a one long bookmark. It was

anticipated that over 19,000 bookmarks were needed to cover the distance and at the end of the project the bookmarks would be sewn into blankets for homeless people in the ACT. Libraries ACT staff created a Facebook page ([HelpKnitCanberrasLongestBookmark](#)) to raise the profile of the project and to help the participants communicate with each other and to keep up to date with the bookmark count. At the start of August, the Facebook tally showed that 14,559 bookmarks had been knitted. Libraries ACT staff believed that this project had enabled the community to view libraries not only as a place to borrow books but also as a place to meet and work together. The goal was reached at the beginning of October, with more than 22,000 bookmarks received from knitters in the ACT, elsewhere in Australia and even from overseas. This 'grassroots' project drew community and media attention to the National Year of Reading brand and its objectives.

Finding 3.2.2

Libraries ACT used the National Year of Reading branding to build on its existing programs, many of which emphasised the development of early language and literacy skills and fostered the engagement of children and families with their local libraries. It also introduced new initiatives. In some instances, these resulted in an increase in Libraries ACT program attendance (*Canberra Kids Love2Read*), in others it engaged new partners and new audiences (*Workplace Literacy Program* and *Canberra's Longest Bookmark*).

Libraries ACT used the attention generated through National Year of Reading branded activities to promote the breadth of its service for readers and non-readers, including presenting libraries as community hubs and meeting places.

Libraries ACT used the National Year of Reading as a catalyst to hold a *Canberra Readers' Festival* which aimed to make people excited about books and the power of reading, and resulted in successfully engaging passionate readers who expressed an interest in attending similar future events.

For the National Year of Reading, Libraries ACT has collaborated with a diverse range of commercial, community and education partners to develop and deliver targeted programs, leveraging off the interests of existing library audiences.



VOLUNTEERS WITH PART OF
CANBERRA'S LONGEST BOOKMARK



Reaching the target audience

Libraries ACT drew on a suite of strategies to publicise and promote its activities to the public. The library staff worked in conjunction with the TAMS Directorate media team to access local radio, television, and newspapers. For example, Libraries ACT publicised its activities on *Street Beat*, a segment on local FM radio that delivers free community messages, and through a fortnightly time slot on ABC Local Radio where staff talked about library matters and events or about different aspects of the library's collections. The library also made use of *Lit Bits*, a Saturday column in the *Canberra Times* newspaper, to promote books and reading related events and services. From time to time it also paid to advertise in the ACT Government Community Noticeboard section of the paper.

As well as the printed posters and flyers that advertised events in each branch of the library, Libraries ACT staff used electronic media to promote events to specific community groups. For example, the staff sent notifications to schools via the Directorate of Education, whole of government emails to members of the ACT public service, and more direct emails to the multicultural community or the Home Education Networks. In addition, Libraries ACT kept the community informed of its activities via the library website and had an e-newsletter which the public subscribed to. The library also used an event bookings website, which helped promote planned events, as the community could subscribe to an RSS (Rich Site Summary) feed.

The library also made use of social media to reach a broader range of people, which included utilising a Libraries ACT blog and having a presence on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube. At the time of publication, the Libraries ACT staff was in the early stages of evaluating how effective social media had been as a tool for promoting their activities. Like many organisations they tended to draw qualitative feedback from its use and to infer coverage from the numbers of followers that they attracted.

Libraries ACT staff believed that the activities relating to the National Year of Reading, had been well promoted and there had been a lot of market penetration of the National Year of Reading brand. Initial findings from research undertaken for the 2012 *Regional Libraries Syndicate Report* (Nexus Research, 2012) cited 17% brand recognition for National Year of Reading in the ACT.

Libraries ACT had drawn on its existing range of strategies to highlight the National Year of Reading logo and to endorse

the importance of reading message. They had also been able to call upon high-profile advocates and ambassadors to help to raise the profile of the National Year of Reading in the media. For example, the Libraries ACT's fortnightly timeslot on ABC Local Radio was hosted by Louise Maher, who was an ACT ambassador for the National Year of Reading. During this segment, Louise successfully spotlighted national and local initiatives to do with the National Year of Reading and when she was not talking directly with Libraries ACT staff she continued to focus on topics that were related to National Year of Reading initiatives or to reading and literacy more generally.

The networking capacity of the National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee and the Facilitators Group also proved to be a very useful way for partners to share information and to make connections with each other. The National Year of Reading coordinator regularly sent emails to the members of both networks to keep them informed of National Year of Reading events in the ACT and to pass on messages from the National Year of Reading project team. In addition, greater use was made of social media to raise the profile of National Year of Reading projects and events, including: creating a Facebook page for the *Canberra's Longest Bookmark* project; sending daily Twitter messages that highlighted a different book each day (hash tag #booktoread); and making connections to National Year of Reading partners on Twitter or Facebook and re-tweeting their tweets and sharing their posts.

Monitoring and evaluation

Libraries ACT used a range of strategies to monitor and evaluate the activities and events it organised. This included monitoring the number of bookings and the attendance at events, as well as gaining feedback about the success of programs from individual patrons and staff evaluations. Qualitative feedback was also collected at Steering Committee meetings. Additionally, data about National Year of Reading events in the ACT was gathered via the events registered on the national calendar on the Love2Read website and via the national and departmental media monitoring activities. A report on the National Year of Reading in the ACT is due for release early in 2013.

Library membership drive

In Canberra, more than 60% of the population belongs to the public library. While this is quite a high proportion of the population compared with other parts of Australia, Libraries ACT was keen to run two local membership campaigns during the National Year of Reading to target non-users or inactive users. The winter campaign commenced in July with the ACT Chief Minister, Katy Gallagher, agreeing to the cancellation of all library fines as a way of encouraging people back into the library. Additionally, Libraries ACT adjusted its policy regarding fines so that library members who needed to could extend their loans without being fined for not returning a book on time. A summer campaign was planned for December, 2012 to February, 2013. This campaign would promote the benefits of library membership using the tagline 'a library card is like your golden ticket' over the holiday period and into the new school year. It was also designed to capitalise on the National

For instance, Arts ACT are a member of our steering committee and so they put National Year of Reading events in their newsletter and our partners put the [Love2Read] logo up on their website. So I think the network is the key thing there.

National Year of Reading coordinator, Libraries ACT



Year of Reading by carrying some of the momentum into next year. With its focus on increasing library membership among young children, and indirectly that of their parents, the *CKLove2Read* project complemented the library's membership drives.

Finding 3.2.3

Libraries ACT drew on a suite of strategies to publicise and promote its National Year of Reading activities including local mainstream media, printed posters and flyers and electronic media such as emails, library website, e-newsletter and an events bookings website.

Libraries ACT increased its use of social media including blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube in order to reach a broader range of people and raise the profile of National Year of Reading projects and events. Confident usage of social media will be a lasting legacy of the campaign.

Libraries ACT called on high-profile advocates and ambassadors and drew on the networking capacity of the National Year of Reading Steering Committee and the Facilitators Group to raise the profile of the National Year of Reading, share information and help partners to make connections with each other. The relationship with these advocates, supporters and partners will also carry on beyond 2012.

Libraries ACT embarked on two local membership campaigns during the National Year of Reading to target non-users or inactive users. Figures were not available at the time of producing this report, but anecdotal evidence suggested that the initial membership drive had been a success.

to collaborate on a broader learning initiative focusing on narrowing the gap between highly educated, highly literate members of the Canberra community and the growing number of people who lack even the basic functional literacy. Thus the work begun in 2012 to establish the National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee and the Facilitators' Group and to implement programs that responded to community needs will serve as a springboard to developing broader community learning initiatives that are brokered via these networks.

Finding 3.2.4

Libraries ACT will undertake a review of its National Year of Reading participation to identify the outcomes achieved and the critical success factors that contributed to the establishment of successful projects and partnerships.

The National Year of Reading provided a context for Libraries ACT to celebrate reading and foster library membership as well as to work on projects that address issues related to functional literacy.

The National Year of Reading increased public awareness of the importance of reading and increased the profile of Libraries ACT and that of its partners.

National Year of Reading provided the opportunity for Libraries ACT to strengthen and establish an extended network of partners with whom it will continue to collaborate on programs that respond to community needs and to develop broader community learning initiatives past 2012.

Legacy

The National Year of Reading provided an opportunity for Libraries ACT to strengthen existing partnerships while developing new ones. This resulted in the cultivation of a range of partnerships with diverse community groups and organisations which had the potential to develop further, beyond the end of 2012. In addition, a review of the National Year of Reading initiatives will enable Libraries ACT to take stock of the outcomes that have been achieved and identify the critical success factors that have contributed to the establishment of these partnerships.

While the National Year of Reading provided a context for Libraries ACT to present events that celebrated reading and fostered library membership, it also provided the impetus to begin work on more difficult projects that addressed hard core literacy issues. The National Year of Reading facilitated a greater public awareness of the importance of reading and showcased the work of Libraries ACT and its partners, elevating the profile of the various entities and highlighting what they had to offer the community.

Another aim for Libraries ACT in the National Year of Reading was to establish an extended network of partners





VOICE POETRY SLAM

National Year of Reading community programs in the ACT

ANU Voice Poetry Slam

Context

The Australian National University's (ANU) *Voice Poetry Slam* project is one example of a new partnership that resulted from the networking activities of Libraries ACT staff during the National Year of Reading. The ANU Student Equity unit and Libraries ACT collaborated on the *Voice Poetry Slam* project, holding a series of poetry events in 2012. Funded via the federal government Higher Education Participation and Partnership scheme, the purpose of the ANU Student Equity unit is to engage students from low socio economic or disadvantaged backgrounds in projects that are aspiration-building as a way of encouraging them into higher education. This generally involves partnering with schools in areas of disadvantage to build curriculum enrichment programs that meet an area of focus identified by the school.

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

The *Voice Poetry Slam* project gave students from targeted public secondary schools the opportunity to participate in workshops that explored how to write and present poetry in the hip hop and rap style and to then share their writing in a public forum. '*Fundamental to the idea of poetry slams is the recognition that everyone has different things to say, and different ways of saying them. Poetry Slam is about encouraging that diversity and celebrating our differences through a common medium*' ('*Voice Poetry Slam*,' n.d.). The *Voice Poetry Slam* consisted of three smaller events (mini slams) that were hosted by Libraries ACT at Kippax, Erindale and Gungahlin libraries from April to July, and the final event (Grand Slam) which was hosted at the ANU Acton campus in August.

Reaching the target audience

The *Voice Poetry Slam* workshops and events were mostly promoted by advertising via posters and newsletters within each partner school and this was supported by a Facebook page which was dedicated to the project (<https://www.facebook.com/ANUvoiceslam?ref=hl>). The project organisers thought that the social media aspect worked well with the students who regularly engaged with the Facebook page and shared videos clips of their poetry readings. Additionally, links to the ANU Voice Slam Facebook page were added to the ANU website and the Canberra Centenary website.



I think we're all trying to achieve the same or similar things, and it strengthens all of our work if we can do that in context with each other.

Libraries ACT staff member

Monitoring and evaluation

ANU staff gathered a range of data to help them evaluate the success of the *Voice Poetry Slam* including: surveying the students attending poetry workshops; gathering anecdotal feedback from teachers in partner schools; counting the numbers of participants at each event; and surveying the audience at the Grand Slam event. A formal report about the *Voice Poetry Slam* project was compiled for funding providers and it was anticipated that a journal would be published of the students' poetry.

When reflecting on the success of the project, the ANU staff considered that some of events were more successful than others depending on the strength of their partnership with the schools involved. Some schools had established a partnership with ANU prior to participating in the *Voice Poetry Slam* project and others schools were more recent partners, with the relationship between the ANU organisers and the students needing time to develop. The slam events were most successful when a strong relationship existed between ANU staff and the students of the schools involved and the project had been well supported by the teaching staff. During the Grand Slam, ANU staff were buoyed by the way that students from schools that had been engaging with the poetry slam for some time acted as role models for students from the targeted group of newer partner schools that had only just begun to participate in the event.

The objectives of the *Voice Poetry Slam* project connected very well with the focus of the National Year of Reading and the organisers believed that the National Year of Reading branding lent authority to the project and raised its profile. While Omar Musa, one of the ACT National Year of Reading ambassadors attended the Grand Slam, the project organisers consider that they could have made more of their partnership with Libraries ACT by using the ACT National Year of Reading ambassadors to promote events and to give more publicity to the project. However, they felt they lacked the time and resources to make the most of this.

Legacy

A range of good partnerships resulted from the *Voice Poetry Slam* project and will ensure its sustainability into the future. As well as generating a new partnership with Libraries ACT in 2012, the project helped reinforce ANU's existing school partnerships and initiate several new ones. In 2013, ANU staff plan to build on what has been achieved in the National Year of Reading with their new partner schools and to continue their partnership with the Libraries ACT. Additionally, the project organisers established some new relationships with coordinators of national poetry slam events as well as with those in New South Wales during the National Year of Reading. In 2013, they hoped to cultivate these new relationships whilst also developing new partnerships with the coordinators of poetry slams in other states and territories.

Finding 3.2.5

The *Voice Poetry Slam* project was the result of new collaboration between Libraries ACT and the ANU Student Diversity Unit which aims to engage disadvantaged students in projects that encourage their participation in higher education.

The *Voice Poetry Slam* project brought in new students from public secondary schools located in areas of disadvantage. Facebook was found to be a particularly useful engagement tool for this target audience.

ANU staff believed that the National Year of Reading branding lent authority to the project and raised its profile and that they could have maximised this by drawing on ACT National Year of Reading ambassadors to promote events and to give more publicity to the project.

The National Year of Reading connection provided project organisers with the opportunity to make links with other poetry slam events in other states.

As a result of implementing the *Voice Poetry Slam* project as a National Year of Reading initiative, ANU has been able to strengthen existing school partnerships as well as to generate partnerships with new partner schools, the Libraries ACT, and coordinators of other poetry slam events which it believes will ensure the project's future sustainability.





The National Year of Reading Alexander Maconochie Centre Poetry Competition

Context

Susan Lavery is the librarian at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC), which is the only correction centre in the ACT. The AMC is run by the ACT Corrective Services, an agency with the ACT's Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS), and commenced operations in 2009. It houses close to 300 men and women who have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment or are on remand.

Susan has been employed at the AMC since it opened and is probably one of the only trained librarians working within a prison context in Australia. While most detainees have access to books and reading materials in Australian prisons the levels of available funding do not necessarily stretch to allow them onsite access to libraries. For Susan, the investment in both a library and a professional librarian by the ACT Corrective Services sets the AMC apart from other correctional institutions.

Given the strong correlation between a lack of literacy and recidivism, the ACT Corrective Services places a significant emphasis on increasing the literacy levels of detainees as part of their through care. Consequently, in her role as librarian, Susan tries to foster the interest of detainees in reading and in books by giving them as much access to the library as she can. If detainees have limited physical access to the library facilities, she packs books

onto a trolley and takes the library to them. In addition, detainees who have a computer are able to access the library collection electronically.

Susan publicises any new books that are bought for the library and she responds to reader requests by making sure her purchases reflect the interests and literacy capacities of the detainees. She spends a good deal of time networking with detainees as they access texts from the library and she pays attention to their individual reading preferences so that she can tailor her recommendations to their personal needs and preferences. Susan also keeps an eye out for individuals who consider themselves non-readers and she assembles articles, books and pictures around topics of interest to them. Susan also refers detainees with low levels of literacy to education staff for further support.

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

Susan joined the National Year of Reading ACT Steering Committee and became a member of the sub-committee for the *The Reading Hour*. While she was keen to celebrate the National Year of Reading, Susan realised there were a limited number of initiatives that she could undertake at the AMC given the constraints of the custodial setting. However, she had noticed that a large number of detainees, particularly men, wrote poetry or drew for their own entertainment and so she believed a poetry competition could be successful.

The *National Year of Reading AMC Poetry Competition* was clearly branded a National Year of Reading event and contestants were invited to write an original poem to enter into the competition. While the competition focused on writing, it also promoted reading, as each contestant was given a personal copy of a book of poems. Since most detainees had very little money, it was thought that a monetary prize would be a big draw-card for the detainees, and consequently, three first place prizes of \$100 were offered, as well as three runner-up prizes of \$50, and further three encouragement prizes of \$20. Given the prison policies

Every now and again I'll give out a 'Reader of the Month' certificate, and then I get five other people saying, "Why haven't I got one?" Genuine, external validation, without wanting anything back is often something that a lot of these guys have never experienced.

Susan Lavery, librarian AMC



concerning money, it was essential that all prize money was placed directly into the correction centre accounts of the respective prize winners. Additionally, in order to keep the competition as impartial as possible and to ensure the anonymity of the detainees, each poem that was entered into the competition was de-identified and a panel of judges external to the AMC was appointed.

Reaching the target audience

Susan promoted the event by putting up flyers and she also spoke to the detainees, particularly those who had previously shown an interest in writing poetry. Additionally, she asked staff to show their support by encouraging detainees to enter their work.

Monitoring and evaluation

The competition attracted a good deal of interest from the detainees and there were 30 entries. When the judging had concluded and the results were announced, Susan noted the winners reacted with great excitement. She also reported that some of the detainees who had not won were interested to know what they could do to improve their writing. While she would have liked to conclude the competition with some form of public recognition, this was difficult to organise in the AMC context and Susan chose instead to give the winners a certificate and to congratulate them personally.

When reflecting on the competition, Susan stated that without some kind of closing event the competition seemed to fade at the finish. Nonetheless, she had received positive feedback from some of the detainees who had enjoyed reading their book of poems. She had also noticed that many more poetry books were borrowed from the library. Susan hoped that the detainees' poems would be collated into a book to share and she planned to publish them in a periodical newsletter that she produced for the detainees. In addition, she reported that the *National Year of Reading AMC Poetry Competition* had featured in the annual report for the JACS directory.

Legacy

Susan found the National Year of Reading provided a good reason for her to try out an event to see what would work in the AMC environment. Having worked out the processes required to set up the competition and, more particularly, what the policy and guidelines are for running it, Susan

anticipated that she would run a similar competition in 2013. She felt that one of the biggest benefits of the National Year of Reading was that it re-emphasised the significance of reading and literacy to people's lives and that, overall, the partnership with the National Year of Reading had been very valuable.

INSPIRATION THY BOOK

Reading books is like mining for gold,
For gems, not to mention ancient artefacts and
Fossils of the long since departed and beautiful

If a single short story can lift me up,
From my place of mourning,
Back to battle, to my "calling",
Then what else is yet to be discovered?
In this vast storehouse of the human perception.

Why something does what it does – Our Science,
A travel guide's hilarious opinions,
What madness lurks in the hearts of Men?
What miracles also!

Gripping thriller mixed with love story,
Highest hopes, lowest heartbreaks
Triumph
Through recovery – my own personal story,
A lesson learned – Knowledge is Freedom!
It is Hope, Peace, and Security
(and power is overrated)

(Poem entered in the AMC Poetry Competition, 2012)

The reaction of those who entered and those who won was really interesting because the winners weren't always the people you thought of as especially intellectual and articulate. I had people sort of run out of the library yelling at their cohort – "Hey, guess what? I just won second prize in the poetry competition." They were really quite blown away, the ones that did win.

Susan Lavery, librarian AMC



Finding 3.2.6

Involvement in the Libraries ACT steering committee provided the librarian at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC), a correction centre in the ACT, with the inspiration and impetus to run a poetry competition for detainees.

This initiative was a new and popular element of the drive to improve the literacy levels of detainees. The number of entries suggested a high take up by detainees (approximately 10% of the centre's population).

The National Year of Reading provided a unique opportunity to pilot a library-based event in the AMC environment and now that the challenging processes and protocols for organising and running the competition are in place, it is anticipated the competition will run again in 2013.

The librarian found one of the biggest benefits of the National Year of Reading was that it re-emphasised the significance of reading and literacy to people's lives and that, overall, the partnership with the National Year of Reading had been valuable for AMC detainees.





Profile Three: National Year of Reading in Western Australia

Context

The State Library of Western Australia (SLWA) is a portfolio organisation within the WA Department of Culture and the Arts, overseen by the Minister and Library Board of WA. Located in the Perth CBD's Cultural Centre, the mission of the SLWA is to enrich the lives of Western Australians by: enabling access to resources for information, learning, enterprise and recreation; and collecting and preserving our social and documentary heritage for current and future generations.

The SLWA also provides public library collections of catalogued books and other materials, and facilitates the provision of a wide range of information services to the WA public through a state wide network of 232 public libraries managed by local governments. The partnership between state and local governments and their libraries, a key focus of SLWA, is maintained through consultation, joint decision making and agreed standards. The Library is supported by the State Library Foundation of WA (SLFWA), which builds relationships with a wide range of community and commercial partners to fund, support, create and manage SLWA projects.

The SLFWA's key roles with regard to the National Year of Reading were to coordinate the WA National Year of Reading Stakeholder Group and to seek funding to enable a range of activities to occur in 2012. The project began under the leadership of SLFWA director Bronwyn Lewis in 2010 and continued with her successor Jane King in 2012.

One of the highest profile programs developed and delivered by SLWA is the *Better Beginnings* program. Developed as an early literacy and family literacy program in 2004, the *Better Beginnings* program aims to: build awareness in the whole community of the value of reading and sharing stories with young children from birth; encourage and support parents in sharing books and activities that foster language and a love of reading with their young children; and promote the vital role of public libraries as community hubs that provide ongoing support to parents and caregivers in giving their children a love of reading.

Literacy is a fundamental issue for libraries and librarians, and it's important that we're engaged in that space. As I've said to people, 46% of the population don't have the skills that they need. If you want to look at it in really crude terms, it's a threat to libraries because if you have people who can't read, they have no need for libraries. If people haven't got the basic reading skills, they're not going to use or want the services.

Margaret Allen, CEO SLWA





Through support by Rio Tinto and the WA State Government, *Better Beginnings* has grown over the past eight years to include a birth to three years program, a four to five year old preschool program, a new pilot six to nine year old program and targeted resources for Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities. A new program to support adult literacy was rolled out in 2012 as a National Year of Reading branded pilot project.

The *Better Beginnings* program is delivered in partnership with public libraries, which has resulted in SLWA having a key leadership role in promoting literacy throughout WA. The SLWA's chief executive officer, Margaret Allen, reflected that the National Year of Reading provided an opportunity to expand this role to focus on literacy within the SLWA itself, which she views as critical for the future of the library. She noted that it is important for SLWA to advocate for the issues of low literacy within WA and nationally as a critical issue for the Australian workforce and wider community. To this end, the focus of SLWA's involvement in the National Year of Reading was to support people of all ages to engage in reading, and promote the pleasure and importance of reading.

Organisational structures

The SLWA's strategies and outcomes are delivered through four directorates: Client Services; Collection Services; Community, Learning and Discovery; and Strategic and Corporate Services. The manager of the Participation and Learning team, which sits within the Community Learning and Discovery directorate, had the responsibility to oversee the day to day implementation of National Year of Reading outcomes within the State Library. This team delivers a range of services, which aim to engage and enrich clients' experiences when they access the SLWA's resources. This includes such things as a program of annual events incorporating writing workshops for children and adults, and a selection of literacy sessions that support the public to access the SLWA's services and collections. The team also manages The Place, which is a dedicated space within the SLWA for families and children to read and to learn through play together.

In the two years leading up to the National Year of Reading, the SLFWA and SLWA identified a range of organisations who would come together to form a stakeholder group to guide the SLWA's National Year of Reading plans. The National Year of Reading WA Stakeholder Committee comprised representatives from the SLWA and SLFWA, the Public Library Association of WA, Department of Education, SLWA sponsors such as Rio Tinto, literacy focused groups such as Writing WA, and a range of not-for-profit and

business organisations with a keen interest in raising literacy levels in Australia. This group informed the SLWA's decisions about National Year of Reading activities, ambassadors, and key messages, and it assisted in the identification of potential partners, resource options and promotional strategies. Since it was important to engage members of the National Year of Reading WA Stakeholder Committee early on in the year, a meeting was organised immediately prior to the opening of the *Love2Read Café* in January 2012. Following this meeting, members of the stakeholder committee were able to join in the *Love2Read Café* launch celebrations and listen to the Culture and the Arts Minister for WA, John Day, talk about the importance of the National Year of Reading, thus giving committee members some key messages with which to advocate for the National Year of Reading during 2012.

Partnerships

Strengthening and developing partnerships was a key aim of the SLWA's involvement in the National Year of Reading. Prior to the National Year of Reading, the SLWA had a range of funding and program partners who supported and complemented their work, including Rio Tinto, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, the Perth International Arts Festival, the City of Perth and local authors. These partnerships have been strengthened through a range of National Year of Reading initiatives. New partnerships have also been formed with organisations where the SLFWA has sought sponsorship and funding for key National Year of Reading projects and initiatives, including: the Sidney Myer Fund in 2011, which supplemented funding provided by the National Year of Reading founder partners to establish the National Year of Reading; the McCusker Foundation Grant in 2011, which funded the capital costs associated with the *Love2Read Café*; the DLS Laundry Services sponsorship in 2012, which supported the *Laundry Reads* project; and the Lotterywest Grant in 2012, which facilitated *The Advertising Campaign* about the National Year of Reading, the *Read Out Loud!* community event, and support for public libraries activities throughout Western Australia. More specifically, the support for the public library network included: the development and distribution of a *Public Library Kit*, a toolkit of ideas and resources for suggested activities and events; the provision of small grants of up to \$1,000 to enable public libraries to stage an event or activity; and access to the *Writers on the Road* program. *Writers on the Road* was coordinated by Writing WA which organised for regional public libraries to host a visiting children's author or illustrator and to conduct workshops and readings for children and school groups. Eleven authors were expected to participate in the *Writers on the Road* program and it would visit 17 regional locations during the National Year of Reading.

Finding 3.3.1

The SLWA has an existing leadership role in the promotion of literacy within the WA public library system and the National Year of Reading has not only supported this public library leadership role, but also extended this to a focus on the promotion of literacy within the SLWA itself.

Strengthening and developing partnerships has been a key aim of the SLWA's involvement in National Year of Reading, and the campaign has resulted in a range of new projects, resources, activities and opportunities both for SLWA and the public libraries network.





Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

There were a number of key programs developed by SLWA as part of the National Year of Reading and some of these are profiled here.

Love2Read Café

The *Love2Read Café* was an outdoor reading room located at the entrance of SLWA in the Perth Cultural Centre. It was the SLWA's flagship initiative to kick-start the National Year of Reading. Comfortable chairs, beanbags and a range of reading materials were provided for the public to enjoy, along with a program of free events such as book signings, author talks, children's activities and live music.

Although the SLWA staff had developed the café concept prior to the National Year of Reading, they reported that the National Year of Reading had provided the impetus and opportunity to seek funding and partnerships to implement the project. A new partnership was formed with the McCusker Foundation, a charitable organisation supporting health and education projects in Western Australia, which provided funding for the infrastructure for the *Love2Read Café* project. In addition, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, a second partner to the SLWA and the organisation that manages the Cultural Centre precinct housing the library and café, provided funding in the form of a \$10,000 grant which was used to fund many of the events held at the *Love2Read Café*.

A total of 3,454 people visited the café or took part in the program of events. While the numbers varied depending on other events in the Cultural Centre and the City of Perth, SLWA staff reported that many of the café's patrons included overseas visitors, workers from the surrounding areas who were having lunch (including SLWA staff), local authors, people wishing to improve their English, avid readers, and families with small children. Feedback from the visitors to the café was extremely supportive and appreciative, with most patrons commending the SLWA for a terrific initiative.

As the first major National Year of Reading project implemented by SLWA, the successful launch of the *Love2Read Café* also drew significant interest from the media and enabled the SLWA to develop and strengthen relationships with journalists, not only for the National Year of Reading but for future events, projects and campaigns.

We are very happy to come to National Year of Reading 2012 Reading Café, especially my two little children. We come to the Reading Café to read and play with toys on every weekend, and sometimes during the week my son asks me to take him here. The people who help at the Reading Café are very friendly, they are very patient with kids and kindly encourage children to read and play with the toys. Thanks for organising such an amazing event that benefits not only for the children today but their future reading interest as well.

Patron, *Love2Read Café*, SLWA

Laundry Reads

Another unique SLWA project, developed and managed by the SLFWA, was a project called *Laundry Reads*. This National Year of Reading project was initiated by a member of the community who operated a commercial laundromat business. The business owner, concerned about the low literacy levels of her staff and the difficulty she faced in identifying potential employees with the basic literacy skills needed to work within her business, approached the SLWA with a passion to improve the reading levels of not only her employees but also the wider Western Australian community. Together they developed the *Laundry Reads* project, which provided boxes of books and reading materials to 20 public laundries in the metropolitan and country areas of Western Australia. The project was funded by the laundromat business owner herself and the SLWA donated pre-loved library reading group book sets which were placed in the public laundries. Laundry users were invited to read the books and to leave comment slips for other readers. The project aimed to inspire people to rediscover the pleasure of books and redevelop the skill of reading. The *Laundry Reads* project ran from August until October in 2012 and consideration has been given to continuing the project after the National Year of Reading with the ongoing support from the commercial partner.

The *Laundry Reads* project received strong media attention, with features on *Laundry Reads* in both *The Australian* and *The West Australian* newspapers. Both articles highlighted the critical issues of low literacy within the Western Australian community and the role of this project in addressing this need. SLWA staff reflected that this type of media helped to raise the profile of SLWA and libraries in general, presenting them to the wider community as current, relevant and responsive to the literacy and learning needs of the community.

Read Out Loud event

The SLFWA, in consultation with the SLWA and the National Year of Reading WA Stakeholder Committee, developed an application to Lotterywest to resource a major National Year of Reading event called *Read Out Loud*. Lotterywest is a Western Australian organisation that has a long history of supporting community based projects using the proceeds from lotto games.

Read Out Loud was organised as a state-wide reading event to conclude the Western Australian celebrations of the National Year of Reading in 2012. The aim of this event was to remind people of the joy and importance of reading, especially when it is shared with others. A whole day reading relay event was held outside the SLWA in the Cultural Centre on Friday 16 November and similar events organised by local libraries through the public library network took place across the state.

The SLWA's *Read Out Loud* event involved 400 readers; community members, National Year of Reading ambassadors, school children and high-profile Western Australians who took to the stage to read a range of materials from a paragraph from their favourite book, newspaper, play, poem, textbook, journal, or anything relating to the theme of the hour. The themes were inspired by those on

the Love2Read logo: explore, question, laugh, discover, dream and escape. 600 visitors attended the readings and/or participated in the family and community activities that were on offer. SLWA reported that 23 public libraries ran their own *Read Out Loud* programs and that their *Read Out Loud* events across the state attracted over 4000 participants.

SLWA staff explained that the National Year of Reading enabled them to seek and secure new and significant funding from partners such as Lotterywest, providing them with unique leverage and clear messages about the literacy needs of the community and the role that SLWA can play in meeting those needs. The background statistics and information articulated by the National Year of Reading central project team were easily transferrable to a clear business case for resources which resulted in funding for projects such as *Read Out Loud*.



The National Year of Reading has given us some leverage because it's given us a very clear message in raising money. The messages are very clear so the ask is very clear.

Jane King, SLFWA, National Year of Reading WA Stakeholders Committee coordinator



READ! Better Beginnings program

The SLWA, through *Better Beginnings*, developed a specific program for adults, particularly those with lower levels of literacy, which aimed to encourage people to discover or rediscover the joy of reading and to promote the value of reading as a life-long skill. The program was named **READ!** and was branded as a National Year of Reading project by SLWA staff, as they could see strong synergies between the aims and messages of both initiatives.

After substantial research, the pilot for the **READ!** program was developed as a two pronged reading and literacy program with an overarching campaign and a broad range of reading ideas to show that reading for enjoyment comes in many forms – including reading aloud and reading online. A second program, **READ! 3**, focused on those with low literacy, inviting participants to read three items of their choice over three months and record these in a reading diary. The National Year of Reading generated interest from the community about reading and literacy and the SLWA worked

with public libraries to capitalise on this and extend the program with outreach and partnerships with adult literacy providers, community groups and workplaces to deliver the program.

READ! was not about teaching people to read, rather it promoted the enjoyment and value of reading for pleasure as a way to develop basic literacy skills and confident readers. This goal was reinforced by the National Year of Reading. As a universal program **READ!** was highly inclusive, providing an opportunity to work with existing readers and to reach out to those who do not usually see themselves as readers.

A suite of hardcopy promotional materials and resources was developed and a section of the existing *Better Beginnings* website was dedicated to the **READ!** program. This section contained links to adult literacy services, existing SLWA social media tools, activities and resources that included downloadable books and short stories. These resources were sent through the SLWA's network of Western Australian libraries and used to develop adult literacy partnerships and to promote reading in their local communities.

SLWA staff reflected that encouraging and supporting local libraries to lead the development of the **READ!** promotion and activities was an effective strategy, as local libraries had strong local partnerships and an understanding of their community's needs. This was particularly the case in rural and remote communities where the local library staff was in touch with businesses and was proactive in using the **READ!** collateral to promote reading and literacy. For example, Toodyay, a small country library east of Perth, worked with the proprietor of the local tearooms to set up *Eat, Drink, Read*. This program reached out to people from all walks of life and was achieved on a 'shoestring budget'. The proprietor of the tearooms was most enthusiastic about the program. She had noticed that most of her customers took advantage of the option to 'relax and enjoy a break from their busy schedules whilst having a tasty snack in the company of a good book'. She thought that using her tearooms was a wonderful way to extend the joy of reading.

Promoting the **READ!** program during the National Year of Reading also enabled the SLWA to develop and strengthen partnerships with other organisations. The SLWA worked with Fremantle Press to print three short stories by Western Australian authors as a special **READ!** and National Year of Reading branded book. These were also distributed through the public libraries network and used in a variety of ways to engage adults in reading as well as to promote libraries and the **READ!** program.

A new partnership was also formed with the Department of Corrective Services not only to support adult literacy development in three prisons, but also to offer the range of family literacy resources to parents and families during visits. This initiative was a model family literacy project where both adults and children were supported to improve and extend their literacy by sharing books together. **READ!** also reignited a partnership between the SLWA and Read Write Now, which is a community based volunteer group that supports volunteer tutors to provide free assistance to adults wanting to improve their literacy skills. The SLWA staff thought that this important partnership would continue to grow and to



READ! BETTER BEGINNINGS PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

*Local libraries have very good links in their communities... they know their community really, really well and were amongst the most active and innovative in promoting the **READ!** program.*

Staff member *Better Beginnings* Team, SLWA



promote the services that libraries offer adults with low literacy, as well as encouraging libraries to become more proactive in supporting this target group.

SLWA staff reflected that branding and promoting the *READ!* program as a National Year of Reading activity resulted in an increase in media and publicity for the program, other *Better Beginnings* initiatives and for the SLWA itself. It also provided an increased number of opportunities to promote *READ!* in National Year of Reading themed conferences in the wider community. This not only occurred in the library sector, but also in conferences for the health and education sector that have been themed National Year of Reading.

The National Year of Reading also provided a platform for engaging with new and different potential partners. For example the *Better Beginnings* team was approached by Transperth, a provider of public transport in Perth, interested in the National Year of Reading. Although a partnership project could not be developed in time for the National Year of Reading, SLWA staff will continue to talk to Transperth as a possible partner for future initiatives.

Building the capacity of library staff to support literacy services in their community was also an important aspect of the pilot program. Adult literacy awareness training was developed in partnership with Read Write Now to increase the knowledge and skills of library staff in assisting people with literacy needs. The SLWA also provided a training place for one person from each of the five libraries piloting *READ!* 3 to undertake an online reader development program.

Through the National Year of Reading, *READ!* gave libraries the opportunity to capitalise on the changing perception of education and learning by presenting a program that built

new partnerships and underpinned life-long learning and reading development.

SLWA annual program of activities

In addition to these new projects, the existing annual program of SLWA activities was strengthened by the National Year of Reading. The SLWA hosts a range of exhibitions every year but in 2012 it took the opportunity to bring the *Mirror Exhibition*, an exhibition of collages by author Jeannie Baker, to celebrate the National Year of Reading and profile this as a major event. SLWA staff report that this exhibition attracted a remarkable 9,966 visitors from July to September. Film screenings in the Cultural Centre, WA Writer's Exhibition at SLWA, and annual SLWA seminars were all branded and themed with the National Year of Reading. This enabled greater promotion of the events and initiatives to a wider audience, particularly through the use of the website and social media tools of both the National Year of Reading and SLWA.



Finding 3.3.2



National Year of Reading branded SLWA programs including the *Love2Read Café*, *Laundry Reads* program, *Read Out Loud* event and the *READ! Better Beginnings* initiative promoted the enjoyment and value of reading for pleasure and as a life skill, and highlighted it as a way to develop basic literacy skills and confident adult and child readers.

Utilising SLWA's network of public libraries to implement National Year of Reading projects such as *READ!* resulted in innovative literacy focused projects that reflected local libraries' knowledge of their communities and needs.

The clear messages and profile of the National Year of Reading enabled SLWA to seek and secure significant funding from new and existing sources, which enabled the implementation of existing ideas and the development of a range of new resources.

The National Year of Reading generated interest from the community about reading and literacy and the SLWA and public libraries capitalised on this to form different types of partnerships, for example with businesses, prisons, adult literacy providers and community groups who engaged with a diverse range of clients. These partnerships extended the reach of SLWA.

Linking new and existing SLWA activities with the National Year of Reading resulted in an increase in promotion, publicity and media opportunities which helped raise the profiles of libraries and their programs, presenting them as current, relevant and responsive to the needs of the community.



Reaching the target audience

The SLWA's target audience is very broad, encompassing all age ranges, demographics and engaging everyone from reluctant to avid readers. The SLWA used a range of existing tools to promote the National Year of Reading to its target audience, including its website and social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and the SLWA blog. SLWA staff reflected that in order for social media to be effective it must be used purposefully to engage people in conversations rather than just pushing out information. Further development of social media as a strategy for reaching audiences will be undertaken after its initial success during the National Year of Reading. Staff also reported that it was important to utilise their networks such as partners, sponsors and media relationships to promote the National Year of Reading to the wider Western Australian community.

As mentioned previously, some of the funding received from the Lotterywest grant, facilitated the development of *The Advertising Campaign* which was used to endorse key National Year of Reading messages about the importance of reading as a life skill and celebrating adult students of reading. The campaign was developed in consultation with members of the National Year of Reading WA Stakeholder Committee and SLFWA staff to identify the campaign brief, to select an appropriate agency, and to work with the creative team to produce the end product. Since the chosen media was radio, the *Campaign* designers considered that a call to action was required. A website was also set up to act as a splash page through which members of the public who had reading difficulties could access different levels of support, including: the Read Write Now organisation for adults; the Education Department of WA for school age children; and

the *Better Beginnings* program at SLWA for pre-school age children. In addition, a 1300 number which reached the Read Write Now call centre was made available to the public so that they could access call centre staff trained to handle enquiries to do with literacy difficulties.

The campaign was launched in October in the Maylands Public Library and featured National Year of Reading ambassador Janet Holmes à Court AC as guest speaker as well as an interview with an adult literacy learner, Stephen Thompson, who courageously shared his struggle with reading. Margaret Allen, CEO of SLWA, rounded off the event by reinforcing the important role of libraries as much loved public spaces and community resources. The event was well attended by SLWA board members, librarians, stakeholders, SLWA staff, media, and local government representatives, including local councillors. One on one interviews were conducted with the guest speakers and media representatives, which resulted in further media coverage, as these went to air on local radio stations 6PR and Curtain FM. The advertisements created for the campaign subsequently aired on Mix 94.5FM, 92.9FM, 96FM, 6PR, Sonshine FM 98.5, and 100.9FM Noongar Radio from October 11 until November 17 and they were also available on YouTube.

Statistics and logs maintained by the call centre and data collected on website usage by Google Analytics will provide useful information about the effectiveness of the campaign. In addition, the SLWA intended to use the key messages generated by the campaign as the cornerstone of a Christmas fundraising appeal and to utilise quotes from members of the public who might have benefitted from the campaign to generate further publicity.



NATIONAL YEAR OF READING SIGNAGE IN THE PERTH CULTURAL CENTRE



READERS DISPLAYED THEIR FAVOURITE QUOTE FROM A BOOK THEY ENJOYED ON A NATIONAL YEAR OF READING READING WALL.



Monitoring and evaluation

A range of existing strategies were used by SLWA staff to monitor the success of its National Year of Reading activities, including collecting statistics such as website and social media traffic, media monitoring and attendance at events and activities. Anecdotal feedback was also collected where possible from people accessing activities and services, as well as from partner organisations. Formal evaluations were also being completed on the *Love2Read Café* and *READ!* projects and *The Advertising Campaign*.

Library membership drive

Library membership is relatively new to the SLWA, with the public only recently able to borrow some of the materials available. While not a focus of SLWA National Year of Reading activities, staff were collecting statistics to see if there was any increase in SLWA membership during 2012.

Finding 3.3.3

SLWA used print, radio and social media to inform and engage in conversation with new and existing audiences for the National Year of Reading. This enhanced the State Library's public profile as well as promoting reading as a life skill and the role of libraries in providing new readers with support and resources.



SOUTH PERTH LIBRARY ENTRANCE

Legacy

The National Year of Reading resulted in new and strengthened partnerships between SLWA and a range of community, commercial and philanthropic partners which SLWA staff aim to develop further, beyond 2012. Important relationships have been developed with Western Australian media outlets and journalists who attended and promoted a number of key events throughout the National Year of Reading. Staff reported an increase not only in the amount of coverage achieved, but also in the level of media engagement with SLWA activities. The aim was to continue to leverage these relationships for future projects and opportunities.

The publicity generated throughout the year by these media partners raised the profile not only of National Year of Reading events, but also of SLWA's services and events in general. SLWA staff reflected that this was important in revitalising the public's image and perceptions of SLWA and in highlighting new services such as electronic resources, online databases and e-books. The Western Australian media that was generated throughout the National Year of Reading also focused on the key messages relating to the literacy needs of the community. Staff noted that the link provided between these messages and the SLWA projects and services also promoted the SLWA's role in supporting literacy and learning to the wider community. The profile and messages generated by this media not only bolstered National Year of Reading activities during the course of the year but SLWA staff believed that it would also be a lasting legacy of the National Year of Reading.

The profile and awareness of SLWA's leadership in the area of literacy was raised and strengthened both within the library itself and within the Western Australian public library system as a result of the National Year of Reading. While programs such as *Better Beginnings* paved the way for the SLWA to take a leadership role within the public library system, the National Year of Reading provided the opportunity to build stronger partnerships with public libraries and to provide them with even more resources and support. The National Year of Reading enabled SLWA staff to have more of a presence at local library events and to develop new ways of sharing information and resources. The National Year of Reading has also enabled a stronger focus on the role of the SLWA to promote and support literacy within the SLWA itself.

The key messages developed and promoted as part of the National Year of Reading provided the opportunity to advocate internally about the need for SLWA to become a stronger literacy leader in Western Australia. The SLWA staff was actively involved in events such as bookclubs and wearing T-shirts promoting the Love2Read brand. At a strategic and governance level, the SLWA Board was about to sign off on a newly developed strategic plan that described the key role of SLWA as a champion of literacy and learning within Western Australia. These issues were highlighted by the National Year of Reading.

Developing, strengthening and sustaining partnerships was a key focus for all SLWA teams and programs during the National Year of Reading and they will continue to be a focus beyond 2012. At the conclusion of the National Year of Reading, SLWA staff planned to reflect on how partnerships



I actually think we improved our relationships with a lot of journalists and media people who were interested in the National Year of Reading because it's so key to them to have people who can read. I think that's one of the things that's going to last longer than the year itself.

Anne Rennie, National Year of Reading state program coordinator, SLWA



were developed and sustained during the year so as to capture the learning for their future work. In particular, the *Better Beginnings* team planned to hold fora in 2013 that would bring together existing and potential partners organisations to examine how best to work together to support adult literacy. Additionally, the *READ!* program was being externally evaluated and the findings were to be used to further develop and refine the program partnerships.

At the conclusion of the National Year of Reading, SLWA staff and management will critically reflect on and evaluate the success of all projects and partnerships with a view

to continuing those that were successful beyond 2012. SLWA staff reported that, overall, the National Year of Reading had been a powerful tool in highlighting literacy issues as well as attracting new partners and strengthening their existing work. They felt this would have an ongoing effect over the coming years. Staff also noted that the impact of the National Year of Reading would decrease over time and a new initiative would be needed to bring the community's focus back to literacy issues, renew the key messages of National Year of Reading, and extend their client base by engaging those people who are 'hard to reach'.

Finding 3.3.4

SLWA staff believed the new media relationships developed as a result of the National Year of Reading would provide ongoing opportunities to promote activities and engage the community in SLWA services, programs and key messages beyond 2012.

The National Year of Reading gained increased publicity for SLWA, which provided an opportunity to change perceptions and raise the profile of SLWA and libraries in general and would have an ongoing positive impact.

SLWA staff believed the National Year of Reading strengthened and promoted the literacy leadership role of SLWA both within the library itself and throughout the state.

Partnerships would continue to be a focus of SLWA, with plans to capture the lessons learned during the National Year of Reading, to continue partner projects such as *Laundry Reads*, and to develop future partner fora.

SLWA staff believed another new "firework" project or initiative could be needed in coming years to provide a renewed focus on the key literacy messages.



National Year of Reading community programs in WA

City of Joondalup Libraries

The City of Joondalup is located 27 kilometres north of Perth and has a population of more than 161,000 people. There are four libraries located within the city, as well as the Books on Wheels program which takes books into the community. The City of Joondalup Libraries (CoJ Libraries) are focused on promoting their services and activities to people in their community with the aim of engaging them in life-long learning. Staff from each of the CoJ Libraries met from as early as 2010 to begin planning their involvement in the National Year of Reading, and a number of new projects developed as a result.

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

Bedtime Bundles

CoJ Libraries partnered with a local community organisation called The Spiers Centre which provides a number of services to families in the northern suburbs of Perth, including emergency relief, financial counselling and personal development programs. During the National Year of Reading, CoJ and The Spiers Centre embarked on project called *Bedtime Bundles*, which aimed to encourage the community and city staff members to support families in need. The project targeted young people in need in the 12-16 age group and the two organisations encouraged the community to donate products for a 'bedtime bundle' which included a book, pyjamas, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb and bag.

By targeting the promotion at 12 to 16-year-olds, a difficult age group to engage with, CoJ staff felt they were able to be specific and quantify the overall objectives in their marketing materials. Over the winter months, the marketing campaign utilised the CoJ website, an e-newsletter, press and radio

advertising to encourage the community to become involved in the project. Subsequently, 50 bedtime bundles were received directly via CoJ Libraries, and The Spiers Centre reported that a total of 256 bedtime bundles were donated for the year.

The philosophy behind the National Year of Reading enabled CoJ Libraries to think and progress a new initiative and partnership, which had a positive impact on the families in the community. While this was a new partnership for the CoJ Libraries, the staff was hopeful that it would lead to new partnerships with other community based organisations in the future.

Family literacy projects

The CoJ Libraries created a *Reading Resolution Card* as a key National Year of Reading resource. The card aimed to increase literacy activities in the home by encouraging children and parents to set targets about how many books they would read during the National Year of Reading and to commit to reading each week. It also contained a list of tips for parents to support their children's reading and literacy development as well as their own. In addition to this, the CoJ Libraries held a *Winter Reading Challenge*, which challenged primary school children to read at least 10-15 hours over the winter months. Participants were rewarded for every five hours they completed and were invited to record their reading in a log which was available in the library or to download online. Completed logs were then submitted to the library to go into a prize draw where presentations were made at the Children's Book Week family event. This project aimed to increase the time children spent reading and also to engage them in the libraries' and activities and services.

Strengthening existing initiatives

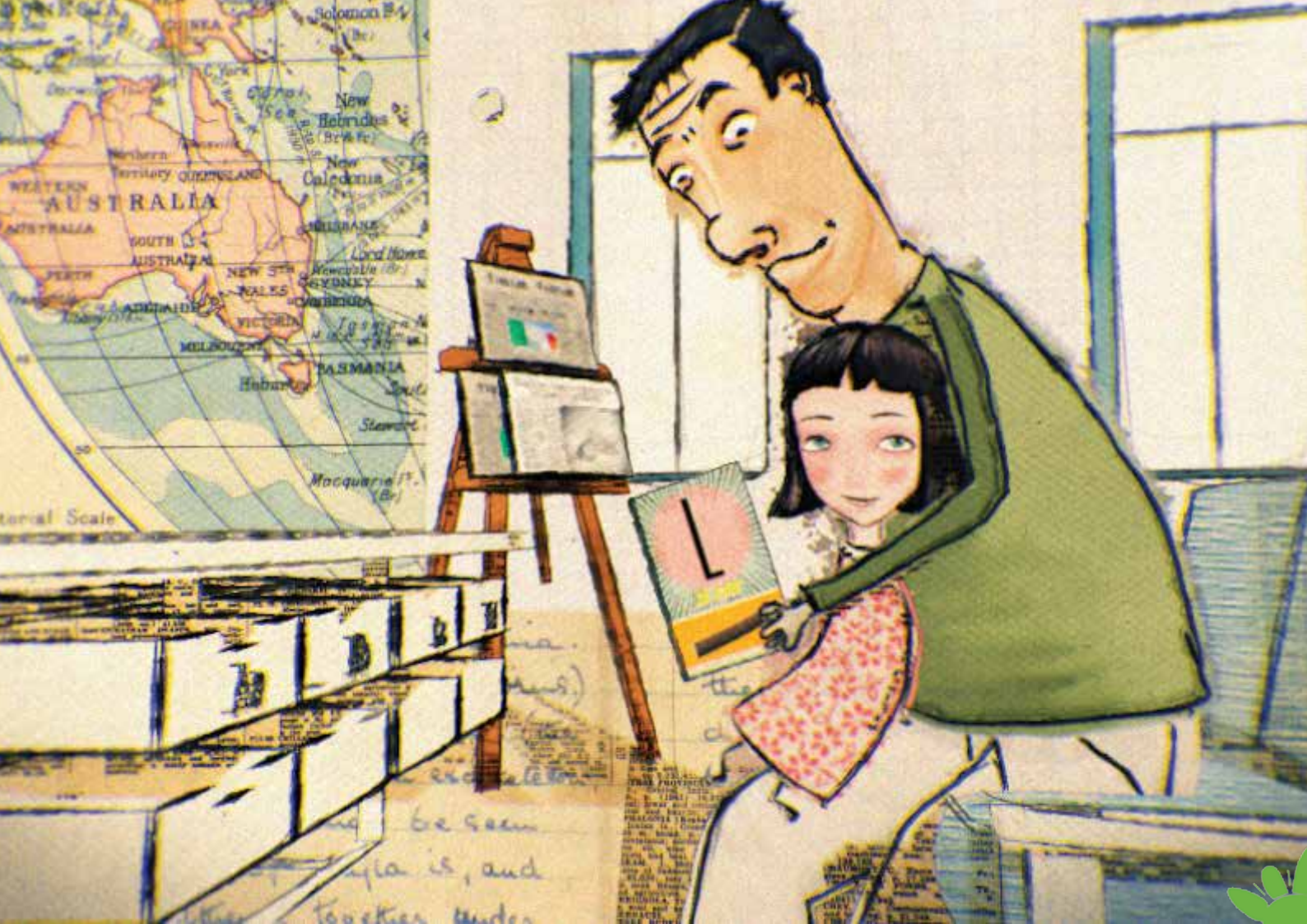
The CoJ Libraries took advantage of the National Year of Reading to strengthen and extend their promotion of ongoing library activities and events in an attempt to encourage more community members to access their local library. For example, they used the profile of the National Year of Reading to promote their *Meet the Author* events, which were presented in partnership with Dymocks. Twelve *Meet the Author* events were programmed to be held in the library or at venues throughout the city. Writers included International author Jodi Picoult and daughter Samantha, Tara Moss, Kate Morton and Phil Britten.

CoJ Libraries also increased their family programs, such as *Baby Rhyme Time for Fathers* and also *Saturday Story Time*, as a way to help engage fathers and working parents in the library's literacy activities. These programs proved very popular and their success ensured their continuation in 2013.

Furthermore, CoJ Libraries have developed shopping centre displays to promote their services to the public, using the National Year of Reading as a hook to engage people in finding out more about the libraries. Library staff reported that the National Year of Reading has provided clear, targeted messages with relevant statistics and recognisable branding that they used to promote their core business. It also provided them with the opportunity to update and create new promotional materials, linking the National Year of Reading branding and messages to their usual promotional tools and strategies.

Lake Joondalup Baptist College (LJBC) organised an amazing activity during the term for their after school craft group who embroidered bags for the 'Bedtime Bundle' and sought donations for the contents during Book Week. They provided us with 50 of the most beautiful pyjama bundles. They also did a great display. LJBC got involved because of the National Year of Reading poster - it is the centre of their display. So, not only did the library organise to donate bags from their users, but they also motivated others to do same. Many, many thanks! - Total donations of PJ bundles this year was 256!

Rhonda Adamson, CEO Spiers Centre



Reaching the target audience

CoJ Libraries use a range of methods to reach their target audiences. To reach residents, they use *CoJ Newsletters*, a fortnightly library e-newsletter, Twin Cities local radio, and hardcopy resources that are distributed throughout the community. The libraries also have a strong presence at City of Joondalup events such as the annual City of Joondalup Festival and the Little Feet family event that are organised for residents and the wider community. The CoJ Libraries also use the *City Chat* newsletter to engage with City of Joondalup staff and they create specific partner based resources like their *School Connections* e-newsletter for the education sector.

All of these channels were used to promote the National Year of Reading and the library's services to City of Joondalup stakeholders throughout the year. The City of Joondalup was still developing protocols for the use of social media as a promotional tool and, consequently, social media was not used during the National Year of Reading.

Monitoring and evaluation

The CoJ Libraries used their standard annual program of monitoring and evaluation activities to collect information on the success of their National Year of Reading campaign. This included a structured planning approach using regular

monthly reports that fed into business unit plans, linked to the city's strategic planning. Feedback forms were developed to collect comments and input from participants at all major events. A library customer survey is developed and distributed every two years. In 2012, the customer survey included a question to collect feedback on National Year of Reading activities with a view to assessing current services and programs and to gauge the local awareness and interaction with the National Year of Reading and the associated programs and services.

Library membership drive

New CoJ library membership promotional brochures and cards were developed using National Year of Reading branding as part of the yearly membership drive. Two membership cards, one for children and one for adults had been in use for many years. In 2012, the National Year of Reading logo was incorporated and advertising the cards on the National Year of Reading website encouraged other libraries elsewhere to redesign their cards. Membership booklets were also updated and incorporated National Year of Reading information and promotional photos.

Throughout the year, two "Win an e-Reader" competitions were held where all new members were entered into a draw to win an e-reader. CoJ libraries also recognised current members by automatically entering them into the draw to win





a second e-reader. Lapsed memberships were also a focus of this campaign as often patrons thought that once they had joined their local library, their membership was forever.

Six prominent train stations are located within the city boundary and this provided an opportunity to explore outreach opportunities. A series of shopping centre promotions and train station visits were scheduled, making it possible for the library staff to become more involved in the promotion. The promotion commenced in October 2012 and will continue into April 2013. The National Year of Reading enabled the campaign to become a reality and has been the catalyst to continue the promotion of key messages beyond 2012.

Membership statistics for the months January 2012 to September 2012 indicated a 10.4% increase in total members. Lapsed memberships were noted to have the higher increase in percentage. New members showed a decrease in percentage. It was through this analysis that CoJ Libraries outreach promotion moved to a new platform and will be monitored in line with the usual reporting measures.

Legacy

The National Year of Reading resources and messaging used and adapted by the CoJ Libraries will continue to be relevant and utilised beyond 2012. Staff reflected that they were able to use the National Year of Reading to promote the CoJ Libraries as a modern, 24/7 service with online resources and community services that extend beyond the building itself. CoJ staff felt that the National Year of Reading helped raise the profile of CoJ within the library sector at a state and national level. It provided the opportunity to strengthen the CoJ Libraries' connections with new and existing partners. Additionally, there were an increased number of requests for the library to provide promotional materials for community events and activities during the National Year of Reading, and this was something the library would continue to do in the future. CoJ Libraries staff considered that the increased promotion of library activities and programs provided an opportunity for staff to reflect on and celebrate their achievements and this increased their motivation to invest in future activities.

Finding 3.3.5

The National Year of Reading enabled CoJ Libraries to develop a new partnership with a key community organisation through the successful *Bedtime Bundles* project and to support people in need in the community, which staff were hopeful would lead to other community based organisations and similar projects in the future.

CoJ Libraries used the National Year of Reading to develop, strengthen and promote a range of new and existing family and children's literacy projects and resources, aiming to support parents' and children's regular reading in the home as well as engaging them in library services.

CoJ Libraries staff believed the National Year of Reading added value to their work by clarifying and increasing the messages, profile and purposes of the libraries' activities and aims.

The National Year of Reading provided the impetus to broaden the activities and partnerships of CoJ Libraries, which resulted in strengthened local area networks and an increased demand for the libraries' services.

The National Year of Reading provided an opportunity to recognise the success of the CoJ Libraries' programs and for staff to reflect on and celebrate their achievements which increased staff motivation to invest in future activities.

National Year of Reading resources, materials, the Love2Read brand and messages would continue to be used beyond 2012, namely in a promotional campaign for CoJ Libraries using the key message *Libraries for life - Explore Discover Learn* capturing the 24/7 nature of the library that extends beyond the building itself.



City of Mandurah Libraries

The City of Mandurah is located 70 kilometres south of Perth on the Western Australian coast. Once a small holiday location, it has developed into a major regional centre with a population of more than 73,000 people. City of Mandurah Libraries (CoM Libraries), comprising the Mandurah Library and the Falcon eLibrary and Community Centre, offer a wide range of information based services to the local community, including resource lending (books, music, movies), access to online resources and databases, computer access, book clubs, learning programs, school holiday activities, author visits and family literacy programs. The manager of Libraries, Learning, Arts and Culture at the City of Mandurah, John Hughes, previously managed a library service in London, and his experience of the National Year of Reading in the UK in 2008 was useful in helping the Library Agency team to scope the National Year of Reading 2012.

In addition to a range of library-based National Year of Reading activities, the City of Mandurah created a unique position for a project officer to engage the community in National Year of Reading projects and activities for the duration of the campaign. While the National Year of Reading project officer position was physically based within the Mandurah Library and funded by the City of Mandurah's Libraries, Learning, Arts and Culture Department, an appointee was sourced from outside the library system.

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

The CoM Libraries National Year of Reading initiatives were additional to the established ongoing library programs such as weekly *Rhyme-time* and *Story-time* sessions; book clubs; school holiday activities and *Writers in the Library* talks.

The National Year of Reading project officer developed a range of unique, targeted community based projects and partnerships and recruited volunteers to support activities and events during the National Year of Reading. Some of these projects and partnerships are profiled here.

The National Year of Reading initiatives were designed to: engage with a wide range of people including non-library members; present reading as a positive, fun activity; advocate for reading, literacy and learning; engage with community groups; and lay the foundations to increase literacy levels in the city.

At a local level, the CoM Libraries focussed on engaging with community groups who provided services to: parents and families; disadvantaged people and people requiring literacy support. Staff at CoM Libraries felt that many of the nationwide National Year of Reading initiatives would appeal more to people who were already highly literate and, consequently, local initiatives were primarily designed to target the "hard to reach" sector of the community who did not attend any of the libraries.

Parent support projects

At the beginning of the National Year of Reading, the project officer met with a variety of school and education personnel who identified the need to support parents to develop their own and their children's literacy skills. The project officer developed a new partnership with The Parents' Place, a

You know, sometimes it's amazing. We'll have somebody contact us from an organisation saying, "I've heard of the National Year of Reading and we'd like to be involved." And you say, "I would love to have you as a partner, and this is what the different levels are" ... ranging from just being on our website and supporting us, through to running their own major event, or supporting one of our major events... and every time someone comes to us, you rarely expect them to do anything more than just do that bottom level (link to the website). So sometimes you'll be amazed at the small partners that have really grown out of this and done something huge.

Library Agency team member

I meet quite a few people that say, "No, my kid's not into reading", and then you read to another child and immediately that child comes over to listen, and then you can have the chat with the parents. You've done something for them. I'm not just there to preach. I've got little brochures there of when Story Time and Rhyme Time are or any events I've got coming up. That has been a very useful thing to do because I'm meeting people who are not coming into the library.

National Year of Reading project officer, City of Mandurah

hub for child health and parent services such as community health nurses and Parenting WA. Twice a month, during immunisation time when parents have to wait for their appointments, the project officer would visit The Parents' Place with a resource kit of books and information. She took this opportunity to invite parents to read to their children and she would model this with the children herself. In addition, the project officer promoted the range of services available for children and parents at CoM Libraries. She also developed a partnership with a community-led group called Mums of Mandurah, who provide a range of activities designed to connect to, inform and support mothers in the Mandurah area. She attended a range of activities organised by the Mums of Mandurah to promote the importance of reading, for instance she took books to their *Teddy Bear's Picnic* and to playground visits. By linking with existing parenting networks and strategically visiting places parents frequent, the project officer was able to access new groups of parents not only to promote the importance of reading and family literacy but also to engage them in libraries for the future.



First Wednesday Book Club

One of the key National Year of Reading initiatives delivered by CoM Libraries for the community was an informal evening monthly book club called the *First Wednesday Bookclub*. The Bookclub is run out of a local Mandurah wine bar and aims to engage readers in discussions about their own reading, encouraging them to make recommendations and to share their interest in reading for pleasure. Readers are able to swap books and to learn about a range of library activities and events. The local Angus and Robertson bookshop provided new books and proof copies of soon to be released books for *Bookclub* members. The National Year of Reading project officer saw the *Bookclub* as an effective way to support keen readers to promote their love of reading to others and it also proved to be a useful way to engage volunteers to support other National Year of Reading activities.

Community events

During the National Year of Reading, there were a number of key City of Mandurah festivals and events that the project officer attended to promote the National Year of Reading and the importance of reading as well as the services that the CoM Libraries had to offer.

The biggest annual festival held in Mandurah each year is Crabfest, which draws 120,000 people to the Mandurah foreshore. In past years, CoM Libraries had a quiet reading tent available for festival goers but in 2012 the project officer wanted to develop an interactive stall that would engage the community. In the lead up to the event, she invited the community to email their favourite author or book quotes to her and, after receiving more than 250 responses, she took the quotes to a disability employment provider to have large badges made which displayed the individual quotes and the Love2Read logo. These badges were made freely available to the festival goers at the City of Mandurah Love2Read marquee, which had been especially created and purchased by the City of Mandurah for the National Year of Reading. Festival goers were also invited to write their own quotes on a large display, to sit quietly and read a book in the shade, or to find out more about the National Year of Reading and CoM Libraries. The stall was very popular, with lots of National Year of Reading badges being taken into the crowd and even being spotted on festival goers on the train after the event. The project officer felt that this event was very successful in engaging the wider public in quick but meaningful interactions that promoted reading and the services of the CoM Libraries.

Another key festival in Mandurah is the arts festival that is held each year by the Mandurah Arts Centre. The Stretch Festival was held in May 2012 and it engaged more than 8,000 people in a large number of exhibitions, events, workshops and entertainment. The National Year of Reading project officer set up a *Kids' Own Publishing Book Cubby* in the foyer of the Mandurah Arts Centre and, together with a team of 30 trained volunteers, worked with festival goers to make and publish their own books using the SLWA *Better Beginning's Books to Go* resources. This collaboration between the Mandurah Arts Centre and CoM Libraries represented a new partnership and, subsequently, the two

organisations worked together on other National Year of Reading activities such as book readings before plays and the *Mandurah Reading Hour Pyjama Party*.

The Reading Hour Pyjama Party

Mandurah's biggest National Year of Reading event was *The Reading Hour Pyjama Party* held on 25th August. This community bedtime story session was attended by 500 people. *The Reading Hour Pyjama Party* was presented in partnership with nearly 20 organisations and community groups. The event was held at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre; the City of Mandurah received a discount of \$2,500 on the venue hire and the reason given was because of all the work the National Year of Reading project officer and Mandurah Libraries had done throughout the year to add value to MPAC events (*The Gruffalo's Child* and *Blueback* story-time sessions and a writer's talk organised to tie in with the adaptation of Sonya Hartnett's novel *The Ghost's Child* to the stage).

Reaching the target audience

Utilising public events as a tool to reach a wide cross section of the Mandurah and regional community proved very useful. The National Year of Reading project officer created a unique strategy to engage with the community at each event, shaping the strategy to target the type of event and the audience it would attract. Additionally, she would support each event along with a team of volunteers that she recruited and trained. She considered that the National Year of Reading resources, which were easily adapted for local events and made centrally available by the Library Agency, were useful tools for promoting events and engaging with the community.

An outreach model was used to target members of the local community who might not currently be accessing library services. The project officer sought partnerships with local community organisations to access new groups such as parents, new arrivals to the Mandurah area, and at risk populations such as people experiencing homelessness.

Most National Year of Reading events were promoted via email through the CoM Libraries networks with minimal paid advertising in mainstream media, for example no paid advertising was used to promote *The Reading Hour Pyjama Party*. Community newspapers were used to promote National Year of Reading events, with local media releases developed for many of the activities. CoM Libraries staff reported that there was less national and state level media coverage of the National Year of Reading than they had expected and they were surprised that the majority of the media coverage had to be generated at the local level. As the City of Mandurah was still developing its social media policy, there were a number of internal barriers to using social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Consequently, the National Year of Reading project officer developed a specific National Year of Reading blog called *Read All About it Mandurah*. She considered that this was a very useful way to reach another section of the community who might not access local media for their information. She reflected that she would have liked to expand this blog to maximise its effectiveness but was limited by the resources available.





Monitoring and evaluation

The main source of evaluation data collected during National Year of Reading activities was the informal feedback received from participants at events and activities. Although statistical information on numbers of participants was also collected, the focus was on the level of participation and enjoyment demonstrated by the people attending. Positive feedback was received from volunteers involved in supporting activities who continued to be engaged in projects and events.

Library membership drive

A City of Mandurah library membership drive was planned for later in the year. This would take the form of an advertising campaign and all new members would be given USB swivel drives as a way to promote the fact that the libraries have free internet access and public computing facilities.

Legacy

At the conclusion of the National Year of Reading, the National Year of Reading project officer would make recommendations about the types of activities that could be continued past 2012 and suggest strategies for retaining the partnerships that had been made as a result of the National Year of Reading. The City of Mandurah invested in a range of materials and resources branded with the Love2Read logo not only for use in 2012, but for future projects and events. The project officer stated that CoM Libraries staff found the logo to be engaging and timeless and she thought they would continue to use it on their promotional resources in future years.

Finding 3.3.6

CoM Libraries used the National Year of Reading as an opportunity to develop initiatives designed to; engage with a wide range of people including non-library members; present reading as a positive, fun activity; advocate for reading, literacy and learning; engage with community groups; and lay the foundations to increase literacy levels in the city.

CoM Libraries felt that many of the national campaign initiatives would appeal more to people who were already highly literate so they created a National Year of Reading project officer position to identify and visit community based locations and partnership organisations in order to target “hard to reach” groups who were not engaging with library services.

As a result of National Year of Reading meetings held with a variety of school and education organisations in Mandurah, it was recommended that there would be a focus on supporting parents to develop their own and their children’s literacy skills which resulted in new partnerships and activities with a variety of local parents support groups.

An informal monthly bookclub program was used as a way to support keen readers to promote their love of reading to others as well as engage them as volunteers to support other National Year of Reading activities which increased CoM’s capacity to deliver National Year of Reading projects.

CoM Libraries used the National Year of Reading to strengthen and develop partnerships, for example holding *The Reading Hour Pyjama Party* in partnership with 20 local community organisations.

CoM National Year of Reading activities were developed and delivered to promote library services and the importance of reading as a life skill at community events of all sizes, which proved to be a useful way of engaging with a larger and more diverse section of the community.

CoM Libraries staff expected that a greater level of media attention and promotion of the National Year of Reading would have been generated at the national and state levels, but generated their own promotion using media releases, networks and a specific National Year of Reading blog developed to reach the local audience.

Promotional materials and resources for the National Year of Reading that were nationally developed but locally adaptable were found to be very useful in promoting activities in the City of Mandurah.

National Year of Reading materials and messages as well as the Love2Read brand will continue to be used beyond 2012 as staff felt the resources would have long term impact and applicability.

The National Year of Reading project officer will make recommendations about the types of activities that could be continued past 2012 and will suggest strategies for retaining the partnerships that have been made as a result of the National Year of Reading.





Profile Four: The National Year of Reading in Queensland

Context

The State Library of Queensland (SLQ) is described as a 'knowledge bank' and vital community resource, both a physical and a virtual place for sharing, learning, collaborating, and creation. It is located within the South Bank Cultural Centre in Brisbane, a key arts precinct on the southern bank of the Brisbane River, incorporating galleries and performance spaces. SLQ sits within the Queensland Government's Department of Premier and Cabinet and is administered by a State Library Board. The SLQ plays a lead role in state-wide library services and has partnerships with over 340 public libraries, including 22 Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs).


SLQ's Public and Indigenous Library Services supports local government and communities to deliver library services to public libraries, the country lending service and IKCs throughout Queensland. Its focus is to raise the profile of literacy and the vital role that libraries and IKCs play in building literacy in the community, in particular in the areas of digital literacy and for children and families. To this end, SLQ developed a literacy framework document entitled *Libraries for Literacy*, which outlined key guiding principles, goals and indicators that were designed to direct the development of community literacy services in libraries across Queensland.

The National Year of Reading was seen as an ideal vehicle to celebrate and extend on the newly released literacy framework. Whilst implementing National Year of Reading activities SLQ was able to promote key literacy messages that highlight family literacy and the importance of reading to children, particularly before the age of two. SLQ endorsed the legitimacy of reading anything that was pleasurable, no matter what the format, and emphasised the important role that literacy played in an increasingly online world. There was a focus on encouraging people with low levels of literacy to access support to increase their reading skills, thus promoting the message that literacy difficulties are not linked to a lack of intelligence and can be overcome.

Literacy and Young People's Services, a key division of the Public and Indigenous Library Services, is dedicated to the support of literacy for young people aged 0 to 16. This team manages The Corner, which is a dedicated 0 to 8 year old

Public libraries are transformative places and literacy is the bedrock of their ethos and rationale. With a focus on engagement, discovery, reading and belonging, libraries offer specialised workforce, infrastructure, programs and collections to aid literacy support in communities.

SLQ *Libraries for Literacy* framework



Being a formal ambassador has made no difference this year – I spend most of each day encouraging literacy, responding to tens of thousands of requests and questions each year, have given more papers and workshops than I have time to count, and donated about \$10,000 worth of books and at least 12 hours a day... for the last two months have not quite had enough time to sleep. Has the National Year of Reading made a difference? Yes, in that I have been getting dozens of requests a day instead of tens, but as I was already doing somewhat more than I can manage it has made no difference to the work done. There are thousands of photos, dozens of papers, a quiver of articles in various media. All in all, far too successful.

Jackie French, ACT National Year of Reading ambassador

children's space located within SLQ. Resources accessed in The Corner provide different types of play for children aiming to build the foundation of literacy skills for children. Programs that are run in The Corner include Rhyme Time, Rockabilly Singing Sessions and an arts program which sees a dedicated arts worker delivering daily arts activities such as visual literacy, storytelling or constructing artefacts in response to a narrative. The Corner also has an online toolkit and outreach program, which is linked to themes drawn from SLQ collections and events. All the resources associated with each theme are available online, and displays and activities delivered in The Corner can be recreated in other public libraries. The Literacy and Young People's team also has a range of programs for children aged 9-16 that include literacy as a theme. These include scriptwriting workshops, author talks, and a range of school holiday workshops on topics such as animation, creative writing and drama.

Each year, SLQ coordinates a Summer Reading Club for children and their families that aims to engage young people in reading, writing, games and activities either online or at their local library.

Organisational structures

SLQ played a lead role in the state-wide promotion of the National Year of Reading, particularly to libraries. SLQ formed the National Year of Reading Queensland State Consultative Committee, hosting two coordination meetings to promote opportunities for organisations to engage in the National Year of Reading messages, ideas, projects and brands. Between 25 and 30 people attended these meetings, representing organisations such as public libraries, Education Queensland, Department of Communities, Queensland Museum, Playgroup Queensland, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, the School Librarians Association, and the Queensland Book Council. During the National Year of Reading, the group met quarterly and this networking opportunity resulted in a number of strengthened and new partnerships and projects.

Partnerships

The SLQ developed partnerships with a variety of organisations both prior to and as a result of the National Year of Reading. These included: The Brisbane Writers Festival, Education Queensland, local government and state government departments, National Film and Sound Archives, National Library, Queensland Conservatorium, and the Queensland Writers Centre. Media partnerships were also important for SLQ, and during the National Year of Reading new partnerships were formed with key media outlets through networks within the media itself. For example, an existing relationship with Channel 7 developed into a partnership for the *Dad's Read* project. A Channel 7 director then contacted his colleague, the editor of *The Courier-Mail* newspaper in Queensland, which led to more sponsorship and media coverage of the National Year of Reading through print media. SLQ's aim for all these partnerships was to deliver new services, enrich existing services and provide the public with greater access to collections.



Finding 3.4.1

SLQ played a lead role in the state-wide promotion of the National Year of Reading, particularly through the formation and management of National Year of Reading Queensland State Consultative Committee with representatives from across Queensland's literacy, education and library sector. This lead role led to new and strengthened partnerships being developed with organisations, government departments and the media.





DADS READ ACTIVITIES AT THE HYUNDAI CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL HOSTED BY PLAYGROUPS QUEENSLAND

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

Dads Read

The *Dads Read* program, developed by SLQ, aimed to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of fathers and families reading with their children, particularly in their early developmental years. The program recognised that fathers reading to their children strengthened literacy, modelled positive reading behaviour, and built children's self-esteem around reading, especially for boys. The purpose of the program was to:

- Create awareness of the important role fathers play in their children's development and the importance of reading to children from their early years;
- Encourage fathers in Queensland to read to their children and to promote the value of reading;
- Provide fathers with the tools to give them the confidence to read with their children; and
- Promote reading as a family.

The need for a program in Queensland that focused on early literacy was clearly identified in the Australian Early Development Index Data. In 2010, an initial event targeting fathers was held by SLQ to draw attention to the need for fathers to take an active role in family literacy and to highlight their role in reading to their children. From this beginning, the *Dads Read* program was developed and it was launched

as a SLQ signature program for the National Year of Reading. SLQ staff felt that branding *Dads Read* as a National Year of Reading program would intensify the campaign and add value to the program.

One of the key elements of the *Dads Read* program was the use of high profile Queenslanders, particularly sports figures, as role models to promote the key literacy messages and to engage men in the program. Channel 7 Queensland became a major supporter of *Dads Read* and Shane Webcke, a former rugby league player, coach and now Channel 7 sports reporter, became a key ambassador for the program. Subsequently, Matty Bowen, an Indigenous member of the North Queensland national rugby league team the Toyota Cowboys, became the second key figure to support the *Dads Read* program.

A range of promotional collateral featuring Shane Webcke and Matty Bowen was developed, including a 30 second community service announcement played from August to September 2012 on *Channel 7* and made available on YouTube. Further generic promotional materials that promoted the message "Reading together 10 minutes each day is an investment in your child's future" were also developed. Promotional collateral also included: flyers, posters, helium balloons, bookmarks, stickers, handouts that listed *10 Reading Tips*, and *Must Read* lists. Feedback from one SLQ partner organisation was positive about the quality of the resource packs that were made available. However, it was also noted that the cost of purchasing these packs put them out of reach for some organisations.

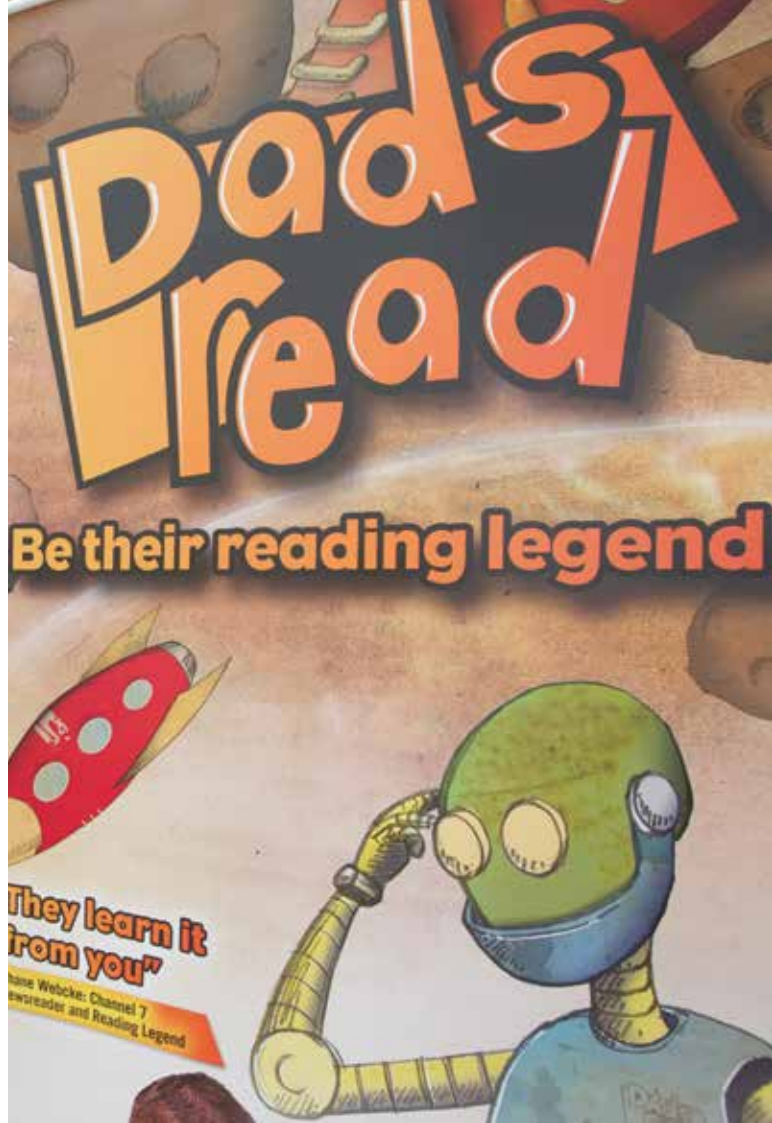
The *Dads Read* program was promoted through a series of key events in 2012. The first was held in January in Townsville for the North Queensland Toyota Cowboys team fan day. Townsville City Libraries assembled a large *Dads Read* branded tent for the event so that a number of retired Toyota Cowboys players could read to children. Children were also able to make books and participate in arts-based literacy activities, and many dads read to children. The key *Dads Read* messages were promoted throughout the day and a range of *Dads Read* promotional material was distributed to families. The Townsville City Libraries also used this event to promote their library membership drive. This event and the partnership with the Toyota Cowboys also led to Matty Bowen speaking at a home game in August where he promoted the key *Dads Read* messages in a speech to a 40,000 strong crowd during an on-field interview.

SLQ promoted *Dads Read* at a number of other key Queensland events, including the Hyundai Children's Festival hosted by Playgroups Queensland. This festival not only celebrates the work of the Playgroups Queensland organisation but it also acknowledges the work of all playgroups across the state. Once again, SLQ hosted the *Dads Read* tent and provided a range of promotional materials and support for parents. In addition, a large storytelling chair was set up and three actors gave dramatic interpretations of the stories that they read. At a 'Little Literati Station', children were also given the opportunity make their own stories into books with the help of an arts worker. These books were taken back to SLQ to form part of the children's collection.

A *Dads Read* presence was also evident at the Crèche and Kindergarten Association's state-wide open day when around 140 of the 400 Crèche and Kindergarten Centres opened their doors to their communities. Each centre featured *Dads Read* promotional materials and literacy based activities in their reading corners. A Family Day Care Centre event held later in the year also featured *Dads Read* materials. SLQ staff believed these were important events to access as they provided SLQ with the opportunity to promote the programs to a diverse range of families who make use of different models of childcare and early childhood services within their communities.

Dads Read also featured as part of the NAIDOC week event held at Musgrave Park Cultural Centre in Brisbane. The *Dads Read* storytelling tent was once again set up and Indigenous stories were celebrated with a number of Indigenous dads acting as role models for reading. While SLQ planned to have a strong presence at the annual Queensland Multicultural Festival in Brisbane, the event was cancelled due to state government funding cuts, which disappointed SLQ staff who were keen to engage with fathers from culturally diverse communities. However, Fathers' Day provided another opportunity to celebrate *Dads Read* and SLQ hosted a picnic on the lawn outside the library the day before Fathers' Day and set up a range of family and children's activities.

SLQ also encouraged and supported Queensland public libraries to hold their own *Dads Read* events and activities in their local communities. Goondiwindi Library hosted a weekly *Dads' Night* where fathers attended the library and read to their children as well as to children who might not have had a male role model in their immediate families.





The Reading Hour

SLQ held a reading celebration to mark *The Reading Hour* in August. A family program held within SLQ during the day featured children's creative activities, hourly readings and physical performances of stories. Satellite events were also held in local libraries in Queensland including on the Sunshine Coast and at Deception Bay. This event was carried out in partnership with local libraries and the Children's Book Council of Queensland. The family component of the event was held during the day rather than the national 6-7pm timeslot as staff felt that during the winter months families were more likely to engaged with daytime events. In the evening, an up late *Reading Hour* event was held for adults, called *The Reading Hour: Love, Lust and Loathing*. This was an after-hours event designed to engage adults in celebrating the National Year of Reading with authors, readings from adult books, and wine and cheese.

Out of the Box

The Out of the Box Festival for Children is a biannual Queensland event delivered by the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC). In 2012, *Out of the Box* was themed as a National Year of Reading event, encouraging children to discover and rediscover the magic of books and story, narrative and performance. The festival included over 90 free events, 70 theatre performances and more than 120 workshops for children in locations throughout the Cultural Precinct in which SLQ is located. For this festival, SLQ partnered with QPAC to create a suite of activities and events for children and families that were designed to highlight the library and its programs, as well as to promote key messages about the importance of literacy. SLQ developed a new partnership with Griffith University, which provided a 22-actor children's theatre performance and associated workshops for the weeklong event. To coincide with this, SLQ hosted *The Odditorium*, a travelling Powerhouse Museum exhibition linking museum artefacts with a range of imagined stories inspired by author/illustrator Shaun Tan. Children used headphones to tour the library and listen to *The Odditorium* narrative. During the exhibition, different performers would pop up in spaces throughout the library that were designated as creative spaces where the children would not interrupt the other library users. The children created an oversized *Choose Your Own Oddventure* book with the SLQ arts workers, which was digitised and distributed back to them.

Education Queensland Programs

As a result of discussions through the National Year of Reading Queensland State Consultative Group, SLQ and Education Queensland (EQ) formed a new partnership. The EQ's Flying Start school readiness team has a program called *Ready Readers* that engages volunteers to support young readers in the early school years. By April 2012, this program had trained over 3000 volunteers and EQ then focused on the development and delivery of *Ready Readers* parent workshops. The *Parent Ready Reader* program provides training for parents with children in the early years of childhood and is specifically designed to provide tips and strategies for integrating literacy activities into daily family life. Parents also learn about the reading process so they can assist their children with literacy development. As a result of this new National Year of Reading partnership, SLQ delivered the *Parent Ready Reader* program in SLQ's The Corner as well as in a number of public libraries in Central Queensland, Rockhampton and the Darling Downs.

EQ promoted National Year of Reading events and activities such as *The Reading Hour* as well as links between National Year of Reading and Literacy and Numeracy Week and other National Year of Reading events that might have been of interest to families. This was done primarily through the EQ website which had a dedicated National Year of Reading page as well as through school networks and social media such as Twitter and Facebook. EQ distributed promotional materials which encouraged schools to engage in National Year of Reading activities and suggested different ways that classes could celebrate the National Year of Reading.

Annual SLQ programs and events

SLQ had a variety of existing programs, partnerships and initiatives that were branded as National Year of Reading events and activities, including: writers' workshops; *Storylab* school holiday programs; events in the *Deepen the Conversation* lecture series; *The Reading Garden* outdoor space; SLQ's *Young Writers Awards*; *Brisbane Writers Festival*; and exhibitions such as the *Look! Art of Australian Picture Books Exhibition*, which was a travelling exhibition and related holiday program being hosted by SLQ in The Corner.

Finding 3.4.2

SLQ's National Year of Reading branded initiatives, particularly the flagship program *Dads Read*, had a major focus on family literacy and raised awareness of the importance and benefits of parents reading with their children.

A new partnership between SLQ and Education Queensland, prompted by the National Year of Reading campaign, resulted in the promotion of National Year of Reading activities in Queensland schools as well as the delivery of EQ's *Ready Readers* parent workshops in SLQ and other public libraries.

SLQ created a National Year of Reading presence at a number of large community events promoting their programs and the messages of National Year of Reading, as well as generating their own events.

SLQ branded its existing suite of programs and activities as National Year of Reading programs and events. Many of these programs targeted the development of early language as well as providing a range of literacy and arts focused programs for school-age children.



PARTICIPANTS ENJOY THE READING GARDEN

Reaching the target audience

SLQ developed a National Year of Reading marketing strategy that included placing banners on bridges in the Brisbane CBD and using billboards to promote National Year of Reading messages and events. National Year of Reading information was distributed through SLQ's networks such as the *Clubs Queensland* newsletters, community sector networks, schools database and The Corner's database of more than 5,000 families. National Year of Reading branding featured on all of SLQ's usual promotional materials and print media. In addition, SLQ staff wore badges to promote the National Year of Reading and on dedicated days they wore National Year of Reading branded t-shirts within the library.



LOVE2READ BUSWAY BANNER IN BRISBANE

Key partners also utilised existing media tools to promote the activities of the National Year of Reading, for example, the Crèche and Kindergarten Association used regular newsletters and Playgroup Australia's *Totline* magazines. Playgroup Queensland promoted the National Year of Reading through its network of more than 1,100 playgroups and associated families, using its website, e-news tools and heavily accessed Facebook page with more than 2,000 'friends'. Channel 7 provided sponsorship for advertisements on its channel to promote *Dads Read*, which also linked to the National Year of Reading.

SLQ utilised a range of media to promote the National Year of reading. Staff used regular ABC radio spots to reach their audiences and print media was also important, particularly given the strengthened partnership with Queensland's major newspaper – *The Courier-Mail*. High profile Queenslanders, such as the *Dads Read* ambassadors, also helped to raise the profile of the National Year of Reading in the media. When Australian Government MP Kevin Rudd attended The Corner as part of the *Dads Read* project his visit made the front page of many newspapers as it coincided with the national leadership challenge. While the media did not focus much on the reason for his visit to SLQ, staff felt that it still provided very valuable coverage for the National Year of Reading. Further controversy generated considerable activity in both the social and mainstream media and highlighted the National Year of Reading when the newly elected Premier of Queensland announced a funding cut to the Queensland Literary Awards.



Social media was another vehicle that was used to promote the National Year of Reading and SLQ programs. SLQ used Facebook, Twitter and blogs to promote National Year of Reading. One SLQ staff member noted that the Love2Read Facebook page provided an excellent vehicle to engage the public in conversations around reading, literacy and related topics, which she would like to see continue after 2012. SLQ also used its own website to promote the National Year of Reading, developing specific *Dads Read* and National Year of Reading web pages.

Events became an important means for promoting the National Year of Reading and engaging a range of target audiences in National Year of Reading programs. In addition to the many *Dads Read* themed events, SLQ hosted a *Business Breakfast* to launch the National Year of Reading and the *Dads Read* project, which was attended by more than 100 representatives from business and government. This was a major event that was conducted in conjunction with the Queensland Library Foundation, the library's fundraising arm. While the aim of the event was to launch the National Year of Reading and promote the *Dads Read* project to a mostly male audience, it was also to raise the profile of SLQ and potentially increase funding. Again, high profile personalities were used as a draw card with Gerrard Gosens, an Australian Paralympian and ambassador for *Dads Read*, speaking at the event. Another key event was a literacy forum that was held for public library staff to promote the key National Year of Reading literacy messages, particularly the

importance of oral language development and family literacy. This event was used to encourage libraries to develop reading and creative spaces within their libraries and to engage children in reading and oral language development opportunities.

By using diverse marketing strategies, many of which were previously untried by SLQ, the library aimed to reach as many people as possible and to appeal to a range of different audiences.

Monitoring and evaluation

SLQ has evaluated its National Year of Reading projects and events primarily through monitoring attendance. The staff collated the numbers of attendees at events and the quantity of promotional materials being distributed through those events and associated networks. This data showed very high numbers of the public had engaged in activities, for example more than 3,000 people attended the *Dads Read* tent at the Playgroup Queensland event during National Playgroup Week. Photos were collected to document the high level of engagement of families and children at each event.

SLQ staff received anecdotal evidence that their projects had had an impact on the reading behaviours of the public when attendees at the *Business Breakfast* reported that they were inspired to return home and read to their children. Media feedback indicated that there were positive responses from journalists and that the public National Year of Reading messages were attracting attention. The SLQ will conduct additional evaluations at the conclusion of National Year of Reading, with plans to collect further information about the amount and type of literacy programs run by libraries as well as feedback on the impact of libraries programs and how they can be improved.

Library membership drive

At the time of writing this report, SLQ were in the process of analysing the data they had collected to do with the library membership campaign. However, anecdotal information shows that when Fraser Coast and Bundaberg libraries ran a competition over the course of the membership drive to see who could attract the most new members, Fraser Coast was the winner. However, both libraries reported significant new memberships as a result of the competition.



Finding 3.4.3

SLQ developed a National Year of Reading marketing strategy utilising a range of new methods and tools which aimed to engage as many different audiences as possible, including the development of dedicated branded print media, online content, banners and billboards, branded clothing, media partnerships and the use of databases and partner networks to promote National Year of Reading activities.

SLQ felt that National Year of Reading social media, particularly the Love2Read Facebook page, provided an excellent vehicle to engage the public in conversations around reading, literacy and related topics.

National Year of Reading provided the opportunity for SLQ to increase its presence at community events as well as engage high profile Queenslanders to promote National Year of Reading messages and activities, which resulted in SLQ expanding its reach to new and more diverse target audiences.

SLQ primarily used attendance numbers to monitor the success of its National Year of Reading activities and received some anecdotal evidence, which indicated a positive response to activities and messages.

Legacy

SLQ staff believe one of the most important outcomes from their involvement in National Year of Reading was that it raised the profile of SLQ with the key players in the literacy and libraries sector. More specifically, the National Year of Reading raised the profile of the work being done by the Literacy and Young People's team, particularly in The Corner and even within the library itself. The staff felt that the National Year of Reading also raised the profile of libraries within the education sector, showing that Queensland libraries are spaces that support and build literacy, especially for children and families. Staff believed that the direct, succinct messages of the National Year of Reading were instrumental in achieving this.

SLQ staff noted that, as well as being an ideal way to reinforce SLQ's newly released literacy framework, the National Year of Reading provided stronger recognition of the importance of literacy and reading within the SLQ organisation itself. This was particularly the case for the SLQ Board since the chair was a National Year of Reading ambassador. SLQ staff believe that the National Year of Reading has helped the Board to re-focus on the range of issues relating to literacy and to consider how the library is positioned to respond to them. Additionally, as some of the staff at SLQ do not consider it is the role of the library to work in the literacy space, the link between libraries and literacy will continue to be promoted within the organisation after the National Year of Reading has ended.

SLQ staff consider that the National Year of Reading partnerships and programs, such as *Ready Readers* and *Dads Read*, has allowed them to strongly promote key messages about the importance of the role of the family in building children's literacy and to up-skill parents so they have the knowledge and confidence to do this effectively. They feel that this has promoted both the joy and pleasure of reading with children as well as highlighting the important link between oral language and literacy. The staff have also strongly reinforced the key message that the more children read or are read to, the better their reading will be, and they hope this will have a lasting impact beyond 2012.

Due to the range of events held at SLQ during the National Year of Reading, the staff considered that the library was now viewed as a site for significant events, particularly those involving literacy. They hoped this helped change the public's perceptions of libraries, and SLQ in particular, from a place of books to a place where people can access a range of experiences and skills through books. The SLQ Communications and Marketing Department saw the National Year of Reading as an opportunity to connect with and build stronger relationships with the media and to focus attention on the work of SLQ.

Another legacy from the National Year of Reading was the strength of the relationships that were developed during the year. SLQ staff noted that this aligned with the SLQ's future focus on developing true partnerships with other organisations and working collaboratively to achieve outcomes which they hoped would result in the delivery of new services, enrichment of existing services and greater engagement with the public. Staff reflected that the QLD State Consultative Committee formed during the National



We wanted to own some serious literacy space in communities and across education and child care sectors, and we wanted to be acknowledged as having best practice models and in a formal space, and that we have highly scaffolded, well researched scholarly approaches to children's learning in the space of literacy and reading, and I think National Year of Reading has drawn attention to that."

SLQ staff member



Year of Reading provided a unique networking opportunity which resulted in new and strengthened partnerships between organisations as well as a number of projects being developed and delivered for the National Year of Reading and beyond. In particular, the National Year of Reading provided the opportunity for an increased number of key organisations working in the literacy space in Queensland to embark on partnerships with SLQ, which had not happened to the same extent prior to this. Staff reflected that to date these relationships had been informal and that beyond the National Year of Reading it would be important to formalise these partnerships by defining the benefits and roles for each organisation. SLQ staff noted that the state government spending cuts experienced in Queensland might have an effect on the library's ability to build on the legacy of the National Year of Reading, but that they would seek to prioritise partnerships and projects if needed.

Other organisations that had partnered with SLQ also believed there would be a legacy beyond 2012 as a result of their involvement in the National Year of Reading. For example, Playgroup Queensland staff reflected that their participation on the QLD State Consultative Committee had resulted in raising the profile and reach of their organisation. It also provided them with beneficial links to other sectors and organisations, such as the women's and mental health services that could support playgroup members who were experiencing post natal depression. With the number of school-based playgroups increasing from 30 to 193, Playgroup Queensland's involvement in the National Year of



Reading resulted in its engagement with a greater number of schools. Additionally, it formed a new partnership with QPAC and was involved for the first time with the *Out of the Box* festival. Playgroup Queensland staff reported that participation on the National Year of Reading QLD State Consultative Committee strengthened relationships with regional Queensland public library representatives and that this enabled them to link playgroup members to library services and activities across Queensland.

Education Queensland was another partner organisation that considered their involvement in National Year of Reading had added value to their work. EQ staff noted that the National Year of Reading provided them with the opportunity to develop a vital link with SLQ, which helped to raise the profile of EQ in the area of literacy. They believed that children and the education system would continue to reap the benefit of the National Year of Reading as more literacy messages were promoted and more parents came to value literacy. EQ staff felt sure that they would continue to look for opportunities to build on their partnership with SLQ in the future.

For SLQ, there are a number of projects and partnerships that will continue beyond the National Year of Reading. The *Dads Read* program would continue for at least another two years, and at the time of writing this report, discussions were underway with Playgroup Queensland about future focal

points, including working with a playgroup for fathers who have sole custody of their children and another for fathers caring for children while their wives are away serving in the armed forces. There has also been some discussion with the Crèche and Kindergarten Association partnership that could lead to other library services and resources, such as a version of The Corner, being housed in non-library Crèche and Kindergarten Association spaces. In addition, EQ's *Ready Reader* program will continue and SLQ hoped it might extend to an Office of Early Childhood partnership. The new *Out of the Box* festival partnership with Griffith University appeared to be ongoing with the possibility of performing arts students continuing to develop children's theatre at SLQ and within the Cultural Precinct. This is a mutually beneficial partnership as the university will continue to access an authentic, assessable performance event for their students and SLQ will be able to provide affordable children's theatre for families.

Overall, SLQ staff considered that even with limited resourcing, the National Year of Reading has demonstrated that it is possible to do something high profile at a national level, and that they would not have achieved the same exposure at a state or local level. They also believed that at some point in the future there would need to be another big national idea to continue to drive the key messages of the National Year of Reading.

Finding 3.4.4

The National Year of Reading reinforced SLQ's newly released literacy framework and helped raise the profile of SLQ and its focus on literacy with the key players in the literacy, education and libraries sector, as well as within the SLQ Board, which SLQ hoped would continue to have an effect past 2012.

SLQ believed that its National Year of Reading campaigns, programs, parent workshops and key messages about the importance of the role of the family in building children's literacy added value to its existing work and would have an ongoing impact on family and children's literacy.

SLQ felt that the National Year of Reading events changed the public's perceptions of libraries and SLQ in particular, and raised the profile of its work within the community.

SLQ strengthened and developed relationships with a range of partners that would continue past the National Year of Reading where resources allow. Staff hoped this would result in the delivery of new services, the enrichment of existing services and an increase in engagement with the public.

SLQ partner organisations felt that their involvement in the National Year of Reading, particularly through the partnerships and projects developed as a result of their participation in the QLD State Consultative Committee, added value to their programs, raised their profiles and increased their reach.

A number of National Year of Reading programs and partnerships will continue past 2012 including the *Dads Read* program, EQ Ready Readers workshops, Griffith University children's theatre performances and new activities with Playgroup Queensland and the Crèche and Kindergarten Association.

SLQ staff believed that the National Year of Reading had enabled a level of exposure that would not have been achievable at a state or local level and would like to see another way of driving the messages at the national level.





National Year of Reading community programs in QLD

Riverbend Books

Context

Riverbend Books and Teahouse (Riverbend) is located in Bulimba, Brisbane. It is an independent bookseller that has been operating for thirteen years. Riverbend aims to encourage a culture of reading in the local and wider community, and it runs an extensive program of author events, children's events, book clubs and workshops that are delivered to a wide variety of groups including: teacher-librarian networks, social groups, work colleagues, and book clubs. Riverbend has won the award for Queensland Independent Bookshop of the Year six times and the award for the Australian Independent Bookshop of the Year twice. Riverbend has a strong focus on children's literacy with 34% of its stock dedicated to children's books, as compared with other bookshops which stock 14% on average. Owner Suzy Wilson, who has a background in teaching and education and founded the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, became a National Year of Reading ambassador. She took the opportunity to involve Riverbend in a range of National Year of Reading activities.

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

One key project involved a partnership between Riverbend and the Gateway Learning Community (GLC), which comprises seven local state schools. The aim of the project was to promote public education and to provide enriched opportunities for learning by connecting to school communities, businesses, parents, teachers and students. Representatives from each school were invited to meet at Riverbend to discuss how the bookshop and GLC could work together to promote literacy and the National Year of Reading. Parent workshops were identified as an area of focus and Suzy Wilson delivered six workshops which emphasised to parents the importance of reading to children and provided them with knowledge about the progression of literacy development in young children. The workshops were delivered on school sites and were well attended by parents who provided positive feedback about the sessions. These workshops also led to further opportunities for engagement when parents visited the bookshop for advice about books, and one of the schools set up a book club for young students. The bookshop's usual suite of events and activities were also branded and promoted as National Year of Reading events. These included children's storytelling sessions and a *Hunger Games* trivia night.



There are so many ways libraries and booksellers can be working together and sharing the rich resources that are available to us... Programs like this can continue profiling and raising the awareness of the work of authors. Libraries are absolutely critical to the longevity of our authors... I think it encourages us all to think more as a community because we've all got a lot more to gain.

Suzy Wilson, Riverbend Books

Reaching the target audience

National Year of Reading branding featured on many materials developed and distributed by Riverbend during 2012. National Year of Reading banners were displayed at the multiple monthly events that were both hosted and attended by Riverbend during the year. The key messages of the National Year of Reading, particularly relating to the importance of reading to children, were presented by Riverbend staff whenever possible during the year. Social media was also used in the promotion of the National Year of Reading and associated events, particularly on the Riverbend Facebook page. Staff reflected that about 15% of event bookings came directly through the Facebook page and some events for younger target audiences were exclusively

advertised on Facebook. Although Facebook could be resource intensive, the staff felt that it was a necessary business tool to maintain engagement with the community.

Monitoring and evaluation

While it was difficult for Riverbend staff to quantify the impact that the National Year of Reading had on its outcomes for the year, they knew that the parent workshops had been well attended and the participants had engaged very well with them. Parents also visited the bookshop after their participation in the workshops to seek more advice on books for their children. Additionally, Riverbend staff had received positive feedback about the children's events that had been run and the attendance for these events had also been good.

Legacy

Riverbend's owner Suzy Wilson reflected that she hoped the high profile involvement of a bookshop and bookseller in the National Year of Reading would help validate their important position in the community and within the literacy space. She hoped that a bridge had been built between bookshops and libraries, and she looked forward to working more closely with public libraries and to sharing the rich resources available to both organisations. She noted that there were many benefits for publishers, booksellers and libraries in continuing to work together, particularly in supporting authors who play such a key role in the success of all of these stakeholders.

Although the partnership between Riverbend and the GLC schools was not new, Riverbend staff noted that this National Year of Reading project resulted in them working more closely together and Suzy Wilson anticipated that this will continue beyond 2012.

Finding 3.4.5

Queensland bookshop Riverbend Books' active participation in the National Year of Reading, through online activities, the owner's role as an ambassador and the branding of new and existing events introduced a new dynamic into the store's program.

Riverbend developed a collaborative National Year of Reading project with the Gateway Learning Community to deliver parent workshops about developing children's literacy skills which resulted in promotion of the bookshop, strengthening of the partnership and a likely increase in parent skills and knowledge.

Riverbend staff hoped that the high profile involvement of a bookshop in the National Year of Reading helped validate and promote booksellers' important position in the literacy space, in particular strengthening the relationship between bookshops and libraries which will go beyond 2012.





Crossing Boundaries with Reading: Queensland University of Technology, Marsden State High School, Logan City Council Libraries, School Library Association of Queensland

Context

The *Crossing Boundaries with Reading* project was funded by a Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Engagement Innovation Grant and involved QUT staff and community partners from Marsden State High School and Logan City Council Libraries. It was led by Dr Hilary Hughes from the Child and Youth Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). Dr Hughes is senior lecturer for the Master of Education, Teacher Librarianship. She has previous experience as a librarian and information literacy educator.

The *Crossing Boundaries with Reading* project was developed for the National Year of Reading as a program of activities to promote reading, digital literacy and creative expression among high school students in a low socio-economic, culturally diverse community. The project was developed collaboratively using the National Year of Reading as a stimulus and was driven by a desire to engage a group of QUT students and staff in the celebrations and key messages of the National Year of Reading.

Programs and activities implemented during the National Year of Reading

The *Crossing Boundaries with Reading* project involved students at the Marsden State High School engaging in reading in ways that built on their interests, particularly using manga as an engagement tool. This school was selected principally because it is located in low socio-economic area and has a culturally diverse population, a fairly high proportion of which do not go on to tertiary study. Since the school already had a manga club, it seemed expedient to build on the students' existing engagement with the manga genre. In addition, because of its visual nature, manga was accessible to students who lacked high levels of literacy and it also provided the opportunity for students to develop cultural perspectives and understandings in a subtle way. The project's theme of crossing boundaries was reflected in the aims of the project to support students and teachers to cross technological, cultural, educational, community and personal boundaries as they engaged in reading and reading related activities.

The project was officially launched on August 22 at Marsden State High School library with an event that enabled the project team to draw together the various project partners and also to provide students with a focus for the project. On the launch day, students engaged in a manga digital storytelling workshop with guest presenter David Lovegrove,

Being an ambassador gave me a good chance to think through the importance of literacy, as well as reading, and inspired me to take strong action connected with state government funding cuts. This led me to write a blog post read by over 10,000 people and to do close to 20 media interviews, in a week when literacy was discussed widely in Queensland. I would like to say it reversed the government's decision to cancel their adult literacy program, but it didn't.

Nick Earls, QLD National Year of Reading ambassador

a professional manga artist. Prior to the launch, students had participated in a competition to develop a logo for the project. The winning entry by Utah To'omaga was displayed on the project website and was adapted for the website banner. Between September and December a range of other manga and digital literacy workshops were held for students and teachers, as well as workshops on developing texts which also contained some promotion of books and reading.

Students crossed educational boundaries when they participated in a visit to the QUT Kelvin Grove campus on 24 October to explore the different ways reading was important to the university community, as well as to gain a taste of university life and find out about university pathways. The Marsden students enjoyed a series of workshops, where they designed personal story postcards, created some creative mathematical patterns, wrote interactive poetry and played in the library's high tech games lab. They all received vouchers for lunch in the student canteen. The visit provided an opportunity for QUT cross faculty collaboration, with the day's program run by a team comprising students from the Bachelor of Education and MIT (Library and Information Science) programs; a Creative Industries PhD student; academic staff from the Education Faculty, Design School and Information Systems School; and QUT librarians.

The project concluded in December when the students were involved in a series of workshops over three days, when they each drew and wrote a manga comic strip; created a felt hero or mask; and learned to use a range of social media tools for simple digital storytelling. A special highlight was a hands-on session with National Year of Reading Queensland ambassador and author of young adult fiction,

Tristan Bancks, who entertained and further inspired the students to tell their own stories of crossing boundaries. A final high profile event at Marsden Public Library involving all key stakeholders and the students' families was held on 13 December to celebrate the achievement of the project and showcase the varied artwork and digital stories created by the students during the program.

Dr Hughes reflected that this National Year of Reading project had provided the opportunity to strengthen and develop partnerships both within and external to QUT. The involvement in the project of stakeholders and collaborators from other QUT faculties had strengthened internal partnerships. While the involvement of Marsden State High School in the project had resulted in new and stronger relationships between QUT staff and the school's library staff, the English and Art teachers and the principal. The involvement with Logan City Libraries was another important partnership that had been extended as a consequence of the project, and Dr Hughes hoped to continue to develop strong links between QUT, school and public libraries and the School Library Association of Queensland.

Reaching the target audience

One of the principle ways that QUT staff engaged with Marsden School students was to spend time developing relationships with them both through organised events and informal visits to the manga club. A dedicated project website had been developed that contained information about the project and acted as a showcase for students' work and achievements. The *Crossing Boundaries with Reading* project featured on the National Year of Reading site and articles about the project were published in professional journals, such as the Australian Library and Information Association's *Incite* journal, the School Library Association

of Queensland's newsletter, QUT publications and school newsletters. Social media was only used to a limited degree due to restrictions that had been set on the use of social media tools in Queensland state schools.

Monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation schedule was developed for the *Crossing Boundaries with Reading* project. This included the teachers and students at the school evaluating the sessions and the overall project using questionnaires and QUT students completing some case studies and journaling their experiences of working on the project. In addition, the project team were also developing their own reflective responses as well as conducting interviews with stakeholders. The results of this data collection will be collated and distributed at the conclusion of the project.

Legacy

Since the project was funded by a one year QUT Engagement Innovation Grant as a major contribution to the National Year of Reading, it ceased at the end of 2012. However, the project team was hopeful that as a result of this project they might be able to secure additional external funding to continue the work, for example via an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant. Regardless of future funding, the QUT staff hoped that the linkages and partnerships made during this National Year of Reading project would continue in some capacity after 2012. They believed that the project had resulted in the Marsden teacher librarian and the school library having an increased profile within the school, particularly amongst the school's leaders. This project had been part of a bigger program of National Year of Reading events at Marsden SHS library and the teacher librarian had already made plans to build on the project in 2013.

Finding 3.4.6



Queensland University of Technology developed and delivered a National Year of Reading project which successfully engaged QUT and community partners in a program of manga based literacy activities, workshops and events to promote reading, digital literacy and creative expression among high school students in a low socio-economic, culturally diverse community high school.

QUT staff reflected that this National Year of Reading project provided the opportunity to strengthen and develop partnerships both within QUT and the project team, as well as between QUT and a range of partners, which they hoped would continue past 2012.

QUT staff felt that the project had resulted in the school teacher librarian and school library having a higher profile and more influence within the school, particularly with the school leaders, which could be built upon in coming years.





Chapter 4: Cross-case analysis and findings



In this chapter we report on the cross-case analysis of the data presented in chapter three from the four case studies: the national perspective; the Australian Capital Territory (ACT); Western Australia (WA); and Queensland (QLD). Our intention in this chapter is to review the strong and enduring themes emerging from each case study and to focus on those themes that continually reappear in the evidence across all of the case studies. This chapter brings together these key themes to respond to the three main questions the evaluation was pursuing: the nature and outcomes of the partnerships; how the campaign added value; and how the benefits can be sustained. This second phase of the analysis provides the evidence that forms the platform for the final chapter where conclusions and recommendations for the future will be drawn.

The evidence within the cross-case analysis supports the view that the National Year of Reading began as an ambitious undertaking with a modest budget solicited from the Federal Government, and yet produced quite remarkable outcomes. This chapter provides the reader with a wide range of evidence about how the National Year of Reading made a difference to the reading culture of Australia. The voices of the participants were clearly enthusiastic about the campaign and yet their responses also indicate the challenges they encountered as well as the successes they achieved.

Each of the subsections that follow focuses in turn on the three research questions. The individual themes that

emerged from each of the national and state/territory case studies have been reviewed as a whole with the enduring national issues that have emerged leading into key overall findings related to each of the research questions.

What follows is a series of subsections pertaining to each of the three research questions.

Research Question 1:

What are the nature and outcomes of the National Year of Reading partnerships at state, program and event level in relation to the promotion of reading as a life skill, a reading culture in the home, and the sharing of books with children from birth?

The 53 case study participants – comprising the Library Agency team members, the Project Director of the four National Year of Reading national campaigns, the state/territory steering group coordinators, the state program coordinators in ACT, WA and QLD, ambassadors and friends, and community organisations – described the nature and outcomes of 16 National Year of Reading state programs and 4 national campaigns. (The name, aim, target audience and partnering organisation of the state and national programs are detailed in Appendix 2.) Evidence from the interviews revealed the following key findings in response to the first research question.



Key Finding 1: Reaching new and target audiences

All the steering group coordinators and state program coordinators from the case studies asserted that the National Year of Reading partnerships had increased their ability to reach new audiences and target audiences. They believed that partnerships broadened their audiences' awareness of reading needs and enhanced their ability to provide appropriate activities. Guided by the national framework, the state/territory libraries in ACT, WA and QLD developed and launched new programs for the National Year of Reading as well as continued to conduct programs that were already in place.

In the ACT, the Director of Libraries ACT decided to make the National Year of Reading the *raison d'être* for tackling harder targets. For example, the campaign was the stimulus to commence the *Workplace Literacy Program* (one of the four national campaigns), a 2-3 year project aiming to develop the literacy skills of employees in Canberra. Further examples are:

- The *Canberra Kids Love2Read* project, which targeted school-age children and aimed to foster their love of reading and library habits;
- The Australian National University's *Poetry Slam*, which aimed to develop the literacy skills of secondary school children in Canberra.

Further, the National Year of Reading WA Stakeholder Committee coordinator stated that new targets were sought at both the state and community level with the implementation of two new programs delivered by the State Library WA (SLWA) – *READ! 3 Better Beginnings* and *Laundry Reads*. By focusing on the development of adult literacy, these programs appeared to target a new adult audience.

Similarly, the part-time project officer from the City of Mandurah Libraries, who had been employed for the express purpose of implementing National Year of Reading events, stated: *'My focus was very much on things to do with reading and literacy and library promotions that might happen outside the libraries'*. Her initiatives included:

- Establishing the *First Wednesday Book Club* – members of the group acted as supporters to disseminate information about various programs and activities to the community;
- Visiting the Parents Place, a local health centre, every fortnight and reading to children while they waited for their immunisations and taking the opportunity to talk to parents and distribute brochures about library activities.

In QLD, *Dads Read* was the State Library of Queensland's (SLQ) flagship program for the National Year of Reading. It targeted fathers, but its message embraced all family members and emphasised the importance of reading to children daily. In addition, the Queensland University of Technology's (QUT) *Crossing the Boundaries With Reading* project targeted secondary school students from low socioeconomic and culturally diverse areas.

The founder partners and the Library Agency project managers explained that a vital aspect of partnerships

was to engage high-profile individuals such as authors and sporting personalities as ambassadors to the National Year of Reading as well as corporations, such as the Walt Disney Company, to engage with children and families via less traditional channels. For example, the representative from Madman Entertainment claimed that the National year of Reading had enabled them to *'Engage young readers with exciting, interesting storytelling of the comic form and culture from around the world. We feel that a pre-existing segment of our target audience, particularly manga and anime fans, became active through the Read This! competition...'*.

The design of the four national campaigns also helped to harness new target audiences. For example, one of the founder partners described how the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace* had enabled Indigenous literacy to be targeted. While one of the coordinators of the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace* outlined how different audiences had been engaged through the following new activities:

- Workshops;
- Radio interviews;
- Working alongside employees in a local factory;
- Encouraging workers to write their own stories.

The author ambassadors passionately endorsed the National Year of Reading as a means of reaching new target audiences. One author ambassador talked about the importance of encouraging young males to read and profiling e-books as a new way of encouraging literacy. Another described the importance of dual languages books as a means of involving Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse families. Two author ambassadors described how they had extended their work through schools, libraries and festivals into remote as well as metropolitan and rural communities.

Key Finding 2: Linking national, state and local programs

The Library Agency's National Year of Reading Project Director contended that the four national campaigns had been embraced and extended at state and local level, thus strengthening the key messages. Overall, by December 2012 over 4,000 events and activities had been registered under the National Year of Reading banner. Founder partners described the role of the state libraries as:

- Connecting with the national campaigns;
- Disseminating these campaigns through state and local events; and
- Supporting the key messages of the National Year of Reading.

In the ACT, because Libraries ACT incorporates the group of public libraries in Canberra, messages did not need to be disseminated through as many levels. The National Year of Reading provided the basis for some new programs, and all of the ACT programs were conducted under the National Year of Reading banner. According to the Libraries ACT director, *'It's given us a good focus and... a really good reason to go and talk to others'*. The director thought that developing partnerships at a local level enhanced linkage between local, state and national programs, helped promote the key messages, and strengthened the programs themselves.



For example, the National Year of Reading branding gave the *Poetry Slam* event a higher profile.

SLQ's approach to disseminating key National Year of Reading messages was guided by their recently established literacy framework, which guided all literacy activities in 2012. The framework advocated community participation and so had a wider reach than the state library. The National Year of Reading Queensland State Consultative Committee coordinator explained how the framework influenced programs:

So we did school holiday programs, across-the-year workshops and training for children and young people, theatre performance, dedicated space and program for children in The Corner. They were all run out of the Libraries for Literacy Every Day, Every Way 2011/2014 literacy framework and we based those on an actual policy that we had for literacy here at the State Library of Queensland which advocated community participation, collaboration and building communities and practice.

In addition, SLQ partnered with Education Queensland to deliver the *Ready Reader* program at state libraries and in the regions of QLD. This program aimed to empower parents through providing them with skills to help their children with reading. SLQ has had the active role in promoting the National Year of Reading, as described by the National Year of Reading program director:

I would say the state library has had a much more active role about promoting the National Year of Reading to other departments and interested parties. We just presented at a reading conference for school librarians in May; and there'll be a presentation at the My Language conference from another SLQ staff member. So we have really looked to push the National Year of Reading focus at a bigger industry level.

Conversely, in WA the responsibility for disseminating the key messages emanating from the National Year of Reading resided at the local level. In WA, local libraries branded all their programs with the National Year of Reading message, including programs that were already in existence. The general manager of the State Library Foundation of WA (SLFWA) asserted that the National Year of Reading message was pervasive because events and activities happened under the same banner,

I'd pick up my local paper and the local library was doing something under that banner. I think it's been really empowering not relying on one organisation in each state to do it all – it's been much devolved. I think that's been the really important factor, because what it's meant is that there are ongoing [local] activities.

In all four case studies there was a deliberate attempt, where possible and appropriate, to link events to emphasise the importance of the National Year of Reading key messages. For example, the national campaigns were the catalyst for local events, such as the *Pyjama Party* – held in WA as an offshoot of the national *Reading Hour* campaign.

The director of the four national campaigns described several strategies for delivering their key messages, as illustrated by the following examples:

- *Are We There Yet?* (a component of the *One Country Reading* campaign) relied on a competition to generate involvement from the community;
- the *Public Library Membership Drive* campaign sustained its key messages over time by providing centrally accessed collateral for libraries to use as the basis for their own promotional materials; and
- *The Reading Hour* generated a sense of excited anticipation amongst the community prior to the event.

Each campaign harnessed different tools to reach its audiences. More will be said below about those tools, especially the increased use of social networking media.

The director of the four national campaigns stressed that the contributions of partners was crucial in raising the profile of the campaigns and adding to their impact across diverse audiences. Some examples of partnerships include:

- Vision Australia (*Are We There Yet?*);
- Scholastic, the Walt Disney company, the Big Issue, ABC local radio and Dymocks Bookstores (*The Reading Hour*);
- Bookshops and author ambassadors (*Our Story*); and
- Good Reading Magazine and Madman Entertainment (*Read This!*).


Each campaign harnessed different tools to reach its audiences. More will be said below about those tools, especially the increased use of social networking media.

Key Finding 3: Creating new partnerships and strengthening existing ones

The National Year of Reading fostered a large number and a variety of partnerships, with and without funding. In total, just over 230 partnerships were established across Australia. There were 51 national and 60 state/territory ambassadors that contributed to partnerships. The National Year of Reading program coordinators in each state/territory identified the range of organisations they had developed partnerships with in relation to their responsibility for specific programs. These included partnerships with;

- Local government departments;
- Local government authorities;
- Local government councils;
- Charitable foundations;
- Commercial enterprises;
- Local health centres;
- Performing arts centres;
- Publishers / bookshops;
- Literacy / writers centres;
- Tertiary education providers;
- Media broadcasters;
- Primary and secondary schools;
- Not-for-profit organisations;
- Local community groups.





Many of these partnerships involved links with other organisations, which extended the reach of programs and events and reinforced the key reading and literacy messages across communities.

In WA, examples of funded and non-funded partnerships were:

- At the state level, the *Love2Read Café* was established through funding from a new partnership with the McCusker Foundation;
- At a local level in Mandurah, different partnerships were created between the City of Mandurah Libraries and: the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre; The Parents Place; and the Mums of Mandurah, which is a not-for-profit business and social network of mothers in town.

Likewise in the ACT, many new partnerships were developed with Libraries ACT. The director of Libraries ACT spoke of their concerted effort to create new partnerships: *'We've used National Year of Reading as a way of advocating to other parts of government and it's given us legitimacy to go and talk to [government departments such as] Community Services, Education, Health, and Economic Development...'* This resulted in partnerships between Libraries ACT and:

- The Canberra Museum and Gallery;
- The National Library;
- ACT Education and Training Directorate;
- Canberra Theatre;
- Volunteering ACT;
- The Australian National University;
- The Writers' Centre.

Additionally, the partnership with the teacher librarianship program at ANU and local secondary schools had commenced the year prior to the National Year of Reading, but it was strengthened during that year.

SLQ was also proactive in seeking new partnerships to market the brand of the National Year of Reading. According to the director of SLQ, the Queensland State Consultative Committee:

- Approached Education Queensland and The Courier Mail – two very powerful organisations with the outcome of partnerships being established;
- Created new partnerships with the Crèche and Kindergarten Association, Flying Start Team, Family Day Care, Toyota Cowboys, Queensland University of Technology, Griffith University, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Children's Book Council QLD, Channel 7, and Playgroups Queensland; these partners promoted the *Dads Read* program and other reading/literacy programs in the state.

Nationwide there was also evidence that partnerships provided mutual benefits to each partner and in some instances partnerships occurred between partner organisations. For example, a founder partner reported:

We have certainly improved our networking relationships within the Federal Government, state libraries and public library associations in Australia. We will be able to build closer relationships with commercial partners

of the National Year of Reading and a greater level of understanding of the broader ecosystem that supports literacy and libraries in Australia.

To illustrate her point, the founder partner explained that the Walt Disney Company partnered with Dymocks on two new national events, *Story Time Competition* and *Disney Junior Reading Hour*, and Disney worked with Scholastic on one of the *One Country Reading* competitions.

One of the author ambassadors explained how his involvement in the National Year of Reading had increased his networks with schools, tertiary education and libraries. In addition, one of the ambassadors, the regional advisor of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) Australia East & NZ, spoke of his company's strategic partnerships, *'I have established a new structure where there is a liaison person in SCBWI who works with key organisations. Notably we have extended our relationship with the CBCA, Room to Read, Books in Homes, and Sydney Story Factory.'*

It was clear that many of these new partnerships were created as a direct consequence of the National Year of Reading. Across the majority of participants there was an overwhelming enthusiasm and commitment to the continuation of partnerships. Participants cited the success of partnerships in terms of producing reading and literacy outcomes as central to future collaboration. As a result of the partnerships, some programs in the states/territories addressed the needs of disadvantaged groups within the community. However, several participants expressed the view that literacy programs needed to be more inclusive, targeting those communities most at risk.

In addition, one of the author ambassadors was concerned about the inclusion of three cabinet ministers as National Year of Reading ambassadors who, he claimed, *'supported a decision to cancel a literacy program relied upon by thousands each year'*.

Key Finding 4: Supporting additional aspects of literacy

It was interesting to see the extent to which National Year of Reading programs and events incorporated additional aspects of literacy, such as visual literacy and digital literacy. For example, various programs conducted by SLQ had a multi-literacy and multi-modal perspective. The National Year of Reading Queensland State Consultative Committee coordinator stated, *'We get children and young people involved in telling stories in different ways, such as stop/start animation workshops, photographic workshops, creative writing workshops and dramatic drama workshops'*. She noted also that the *Disney Junior Reading Hour* included bookstore sessions involving storytelling, arts and crafts, dress ups and playtime sessions. Writing competitions and poetry events also featured strongly across the states/territories.

Key Finding 5: Embedding state and territory literacy aims within the National Year of Reading.

The founder partners explained that one of the key aims of the National Year of Reading was to advocate for public libraries as a vehicle to promote the importance of literacy. They explained that all of the programs that were already in place in each state/territory became part of National Year of Reading programs, however the National Year of Reading

enabled them to capitalise on and extend their programs. The National Year of Reading steering group coordinators explained how the National Year of Reading enabled them to tailor their programs and events to the mission statement and aims of their state/territory library. For example:

- In QLD the National Year of Reading provided an extended platform for the newly released literacy framework, which aims to support community literacy services in libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres across Queensland;
- In WA the National Year of Reading provided an opportunity for the State Library to expand its role in promoting literacy through WA by focusing on ways of providing literacy support within the state and local libraries;
- The ACT had implemented programs and events through the National Year of Reading that reflected a developing focus on literacy in the community.

Key Finding 6: Providing a unifying brand to promote the key messages.

As mentioned above, in 2012 each state/territory branded both new and existing programs as National Year of Reading activities. According to the National Year of Reading state steering group coordinators, this was a deliberate attempt to promote and consolidate the key National Year of Reading messages. Hence the Love2Read logo, synonymous with the National Year of Reading, appeared on a variety of promotion materials, newsletters, programs, souvenirs and websites. Examples of how state-based programs were branded in the state/territory case studies include:

- Programs routinely offered by Libraries ACT received the National Year of Reading branding as did new initiatives, such as *Canberra Kids Love2Read* and *Canberra's Longest Bookmark*;
- In WA, new programs, such as *Love2Read Café*, *Laundry Reads* and the *Read Out Loud Event*, and the ongoing *READ!* and *Better Beginnings* programs were promoted as part of the National Year of Reading;
- In QLD the biannual *Out of the Box Festival for Children* was named as a National Year of Reading event, as were several other programs, including *Dads Read*.

The coordinator of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation reported that she felt proud to be part of the National Year of Reading because its brand had the potential to raise awareness of Indigenous literacy. Likewise, a representative of Independent Aboriginal Press saw the potential for National Year of Reading to recognise and promote Aboriginal writers and Aboriginal literacy. In addition, three author ambassadors talked about how the National Year of Reading was a 'natural fit' with their work, and how branding their activities in a variety of ways helped to promote their key messages.

The state program coordinators noted that the advantage of being part of a nationwide program was increased media coverage and publicity, thus raising the public profiles of their programs and events. In addition, the Library Agency's National Year of Reading Program Director and Media Manager argued that the National Year of Reading branding consolidated and reinforced its key messages.

In WA, the steering group coordinator expressed the view that the unifying brand of National Year of Reading strengthened

relationships between the SLWA and local libraries, which had been aided by staff from the SLWA visiting local libraries at the beginning of the year to demonstrate support for their programs and events.

Key Finding 7: Creating momentum that drove the National Year of Reading

The majority of participants in the evaluation mentioned the enthusiasm, commitment and creativity of those involved in the National Year of Reading. For example, representatives of national partners Scholastic, Dymocks and Madman Entertainment claimed that the national programs they were involved in had created 'real excitement' within their organisations. The Library Agency's project manager responsible for media and data collation claimed, '*Our partners have been very able, willing, and enthusiastic about picking up the ball and running with it; they have done incredibly creative and wonderful things to promote the National Year of Reading.*' In addition, the National Year of Reading project director explained that she felt the commitment to the National Year of Reading had been generated because of the inclusive, collaborative nature of partnerships at all levels.

Most participants in the evaluation singled out partnerships as a key contributor to the National Year of Reading success, noting in particular:

- Some 'unexpected' partnerships emerged outside 'normal' working boundaries;
- Inter-agency collaborations that strengthened the reach and impact of various reading programs and the key National Year of Reading messages;
- A symbiotic relationship between partnerships at some events.

An example of the last point was given by the General Manager of the SLFWA:

We have been able to partner with the Awesome Festival and have built a really strong partnership. The partnership may have happened regardless, but National Year of Reading has given it so much more impetus. We've been able to bring what would have been just an author's read-to-kids activity to something bigger than Ben Hur, and we're linking it to teacher resource material and all sorts of things that probably otherwise wouldn't have happened. So I think it's certainly enriched that new partnership.

Despite the overwhelming support for the National Year of Reading, several state program coordinators expressed concern that its programs and events had created an additional workload for library people. They gave examples of how and why extra work was generated:

- Getting publicity materials out to all the local libraries;
- Identifying, contacting and organising competition judges and state ambassadors; and
- Liaising to identify a local workplace and local writers for the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace* campaign.

However, involvement in the national programs did not always result in an increased workload. In WA, one of the state program directors reported that because partnerships had already been established with *Writing WA*, the implementation of two of the national campaigns actually eased the workload.



One of the founder partners commented that the founder partner role had added considerable workload to the Australian Library and Information Association in terms of managing the implementation of the National Year of Reading programs via a contracted partner and fulfilling the financial management, reporting and acquittal aspects of the program. And several participants commented that, had funding been available, libraries would have benefitted from having additional staff to attend to specific aspects of the national campaigns – as was done at Mandurah Library in WA. (More is said about funding below.)

Key Finding 8: Harnessing the power of technology

The National Year of Reading campaign utilised information technology in two main ways – via web pages and social media. Over 200 websites were identified that included the National Year of Reading logo. Examples of programs that made strong use of websites were:

- The Indigenous Literacy Foundation which linked with the National Year of Reading through its website;
- Several of the SLQ's programs which had a strong emphasis on 0-16 literacy. The programs were posted online so they could be accessed by other libraries, children in outreach communities, and children in communities outside of SLQ;
- The State Library of Victoria's 'insideadog' website which featured blogs from writers in residence and information about the Inky Awards, the teenage judges, and book reviews; and
- Corporate partners the Walt Disney Company, Scholastic and Madman Entertainment used web pages to post activities, promote programs and competitions, and include other information.

Each state/territory used a variety of media and information technology to promote their National Year of Reading activities and events, including:

- SLQ, which believed that the Love2Read Facebook page provided an excellent vehicle to converse with the public about reading, literacy and related topics;
- Libraries ACT, which used a suite of strategies to publicise and promote their activities to the public, including local mainstream media, printed posters and flyers and electronic media such as emails, library websites, e-newsletters and an events bookings website;
- Libraries ACT also increased their use of social media – blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and You Tube – to reach a broader range of people and raise the profile of National Year of Reading projects and events; and
- SLWA, which used its existing marketing tools to promote its National Year of Reading activities, such as networks, partnerships, print media, mainstream and social media.

Key Finding 9: Harnessing the power of media and multimedia organisations

The media played an important role in supporting the National Year of Reading nationally and within each state/territory. For example, high-profile national media coverage, such as the ABC Radio National *Life Matters* program with

Richard Aids and the ABC1 television's *The Book Show* with Jennifer Byrne, helped to raise and maintain the National Year of Reading national profile.

Each state/territory had important contacts with the media, as follows:

- Libraries ACT monitored the media to ensure that reading events were publicised, and used a regular fortnightly spot on local ABC radio to focus on National Year of Reading events. The ABC presenter was also a National Year of Reading ambassador;
- In addition, Libraries ACT's extensive media network included a whole-of-government email network, *Canberra Times* promotions, and notifications to all Education Department schools, home schoolers and the culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- In QLD, Channel 7 was a strong partner of the *Dads Read* program and the SLQ issued National Year of Reading posters, billboards, large banners across city bridges, and advertising in Queensland Clubs Magazine; and
- In WA, the state program coordinator claimed that extensive media coverage generated debate and discussion in the community about the importance of reading. She also reported that the National Year of Reading was generating increased media interest, '*... certainly our events got radio coverage ... the radio stations were keener to talk to somebody and pick it up as part of a bigger picture around Australia.*'

Nationwide, the National Year of Reading story featured regularly in local community papers. Desk-based analysis indicated that much of this media coverage had been generated at the grassroots level, focusing on the collaborative efforts of local libraries, bookstores, community groups and National Year of Reading participants. As mentioned above, the capacity for partners to leverage the National Year of Reading was considered a significant outcome by the state/territory steering group coordinators and the program coordinators.

Key Finding 10: Creating a multi-tiered organisational structure

The chair of the founder partners group, which comprised representatives from State and Public Libraries from around the country, explained that the organisational structure for the National Year of Reading set up an inclusive framework in which to work. This was evident from the range of organisations that were involved in the National Year of Reading from its inception. It was evident from the majority of participants interviewed that the central coordination, with key personnel from each state enabled the focus of the campaign to be negotiated and clearly articulated. This central coordination led to the identification of three key messages about:

1. The importance of reading as a skill for life;
2. The importance of having a reading culture in the home; and
3. The importance of sharing books with children from birth to help foster a love of books and reading.



The state/territory steering committee members and the national and state National Year of Reading program coordinators explained how these key messages were sufficiently broad enough to permeate National Year of Reading activities but also specific enough to form the basis of particular programs and events, targeted at specific audiences.

The state/territory steering group coordinators agreed that central (national) coordination of the National Year of Reading gave participants direction and support for their planning, development and delivery of programs and events, while allowing them the scope to create their own initiatives. It was evident from the several state/territory steering group coordinators and state program coordinators interviewed that they felt part of a national network, which was re-enforced through their links with the national founder partner group and their involvement in the national campaigns. The state/territory libraries that were the focus of the case studies set up the following structures for the National Year of Reading:

- ACT established a Steering Committee comprising 23 members as well as a Facilitators Group to increase their reach and work at all levels;
- In WA, a Stakeholders Committee was established to take responsibility for the implementation of the National Year of Reading and comprised of representatives from the SLWA and SLFWA along with members from key government departments and organisations; and
- The SLQ formed a State Consultative Committee, with representatives from key organisations, to ensure planning was inclusive, appropriate and multifaceted.

Key Finding 11: Maintaining connections through the Love2Read website

The Love2Read website reinforced the key messages listed above and provided a means of connecting, supporting and promoting the National Year of Reading programs and events across Australia. It also:

- Provided a catalyst for the development and sharing of ideas;
- Provided resources for new initiatives and enabled participants to link their events with national campaigns;
- Enabled coordinators to choose events to develop or join and promote; and
- Enabled rural and remote communities to take part in the National Year of Reading.

One of the author ambassadors argued that one of the most significant aspects of National Year of Reading was the development of social media to publicise aspects of reading activities available nationally. He explained:

I've concentrated via my website, Twitter, Facebook and Linked In to provide photos, news and links for various groups. The #NYR12 hash tag has been a quick tool. I think you should check out the record of these as evidence of the growing interest in reading.

Key Finding 12: Monitoring and evaluating the success of programs

There was evidence that a number of participants were involved in monitoring and evaluating the success of their programs or events. Most participants gathered quantitative data, such as attendance numbers. Many participants also gathered qualitative data through program evaluations and through anecdotal observations. In addition, several participants explained how they monitored the use of social media, especially Facebook and Twitter, as they found it relatively easy to access quantitative data from these social media platforms.

Because of their unique role, the author ambassadors had a different view of the success of the National Year of Reading. Four of the author ambassadors claimed that the programs, events and activities they had been involved in had been embraced with open arms by teachers, librarians, parents and children and were perceived to be very successful.

However, many participants indicated that measuring the success of programs was important but problematic. They voiced concerns about the appropriateness and legitimacy of data they collected and ultimately how useful it was for informing outcomes and further development. Several participants talked about their intention to develop their own evaluation tools as part of the continuing implementation of programs. Six of the program coordinators also talked about the need to carry out an evaluation of what they had gained from partnerships, in order to determine future relationships. Another raised the question of what, when and how evaluation should take place.

Key Finding 13: Funding viability

The modest amount of federal funding (1.396 million dollars) for the National Year of Reading was handled by the founder partners, with further funding generated from state/territory and local governments and philanthropic and corporate sponsors. Advice and a template for funding submissions were provided on the National Year of Reading wiki. Some participants reported that not all initiatives required funding; however, it was deemed that the future of some programs depended on the availability of funding. Others claimed that participation in the National Year of Reading gave them the leverage to generate funding and were optimistic about its continuation. (See more on funding in the next section.) On the other hand, three participants voiced concerns about the loss of funding at the end of the National Year of Reading and its impact on the sustainability of particular programs.

In addition, both the Indigenous Literacy Foundation and the independent publishing arm of Institute of Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs cited the lack of funding and limited personnel as problematic in their involvement with the National Year of Reading, especially for promoting programs and events and forming partnerships. Changeover of staff in 2012 was also seen as a problem for this organisation to establish partnerships. After encountering some organisational difficulties and a major restructure, the director of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation stated optimistically, 'We're re-emerging and it's pretty exciting times for us; although we would have liked to do more with National Year of Reading'.





Research Question 2:

How has involvement in the National Year of Reading added value to the outcomes normally achieved within and between participating organisations?

Key Finding 14: Adding value

Participants in all four case studies reflected on how the National Year of Reading had added value to their existing work on literacy, this included:

- Providing a context and impetus to work on more difficult projects that addressed hard-core literacy issues;
- Giving a reason to engage with new partners or strengthen their relationships with existing partners; and
- Triggering the implementation of projects at the local level, such as the *AMC Poetry Competition* in the ACT, the *Crossing the Boundaries With Reading* project in QLD, and the City of Mandurah and City of Joondalup Libraries' activities and events in WA.

The high profile of the National Year of Reading also enabled state libraries and organisations to successfully extend and seek new funding opportunities, sometimes in collaboration with other partners. For example:

- SLWA was well supported by the SLFWA whose role was to seek out sponsorship and funding;
- SLQ was able to source sponsorship for its *Dad's Read* program via its National Year of Reading partnership network; and
- Staff from QUT thought that positive audience feedback in their *Crossing the Boundaries With Reading* project would help to secure future funding.

Both the SLWA and the SLQ developed specific marketing strategies to engage as many audiences as possible. For SLQ, this included the development of dedicated branded print media, online content, banners, billboards, and branded clothing, and the use of media partnerships, databases and partner networks to promote the National Year of Reading activities. The SLWA hoped that the new media relationships that resulted from the National Year of Reading, especially with print media journalists, would provide opportunities beyond 2012.

Key Finding 15: Increasing the profiles of libraries and their partners

Each of the state/territory libraries considered the National Year of Reading had increased their promotion, publicity and media opportunities, which helped to raise their profiles with governments and other organisations. For example:

- The coordinator for the WA Stakeholder Committee asserted that the National Year of Reading was 'A hook that we used to deliver events, to go and talk to other organisations, and to raise our profile in government'; and
- The director of SLQ said that the National Year of Reading '...raised our profile with Education Queensland and with the Department of Communities'.

Some library participants considered that the National Year of Reading had extended their reach, lent authority to their work, and helped to raise their profile. Librarians also reported that when audiences visited the library for

specific National Year of Reading events, such as travelling exhibitions or author visits, this gave them the opportunity to promote their library and introduce visitors to the wealth of library resources and programs.

Some participating organisations felt that the National Year of Reading had raised their profiles with libraries and the public in general. For example, the director of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation claimed the National Year of Reading had resulted in '*raising profiles with libraries; [we are] now in a lot more libraries across the NT*'.

Several of the author ambassadors indicated that their involvement in the National Year of Reading had:

- Raised their profiles nationally and internationally;
- Given them an opportunity to convey messages as part of their passion for and commitment to writing; and
- Developed new relationships that had the potential to become partnerships and opportunities for future collaboration.

Key Finding 16: Extending partnerships

As indicated above, the development of partnerships was a feature of the National Year of Reading. Representatives of media corporations, national media, and national bookstores indicated that the National Year of Reading had enabled them to strengthen partnerships and create new links with similar organisations, adding to their profiles and audiences. For example, Playgroups Australia in Queensland felt that the National Year of Reading had been the catalyst for sharing information with parents about what their partners (SLQ and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre) have to offer families. At a state and local level, organisations made links by branding ongoing programs under the National Year of Reading banner, which had a significant impact on the nature and design of programs.

For most participants, involvement in implementing local-level National Year of Reading projects provided them with the opportunity to generate new partnerships with like partners. For example:

- Activities undertaken by both City of Joondalup Libraries and City of Mandurah Libraries provided the impetus to broaden their activities and partnerships, resulting in strengthened local area networks;
- Project organisers of the *Voice Poetry Slam* project in the ACT were able to make links to coordinators of state and national poetry slam events, which they believe ensured the project's future sustainability; and
- The high profile involvement of Riverbend, a book store in regional Queensland, in the National Year of Reading served to reinforce its relationship with libraries, which it hopes will continue beyond 2012.

Research Question 3:

Will the National Year of Reading partnerships and programs be sustained beyond 2012?

Key Finding 17: Extending programs and partnerships

Participants indicated that programs and partnerships would be extended if the program added value to what was already happening, was of mutual benefit to the partners, and was structured as a long-term arrangement.

For example, the partnership between the City of Mandurah Libraries and The Parents Place in Mandurah is likely to continue because the staff working at the Parents Place saw the benefits of the program and wanted a long-term partnership. With respect to the *Laundry Reads* corporate sponsorship, the SLFWA General Manager said 'We've structured the partnership [with Laundry Reads] as a long-term thing; there will be longevity in it.'

Furthermore, partnerships will continue in some cases because the participants are keen to keep sharing information and working together without the need for funding. However, as mentioned above, some partnerships will inevitably be reliant on funding and for that reason may not continue, as in the QUT's *Crossing Boundaries with Reading* program.

Key Finding 18: Extending new programs

Participants also articulated the conditions under which programs would continue beyond 2012. For example:

- In WA, the decision has been made to continue with the *Love to Read café*, however, sponsorship will be needed beyond 2013; and
- The National Year of Reading program manager at Libraries ACT stated that while some programs will continue that were delivered in partnerships with external stakeholders, the *Canberra Kids Love to Read* program could only be continued with new funding.

In other instances, programs were planned as long-term activities; for example, the ACT *Literacy in the Workplace* program was designed as a 2-3 year project, and Libraries ACT is aiming to apply for Workplace English Language and Literacy funding to support the program's continuation.

At the national level, the steering committee for National Year of Reading is hoping to continue beyond 2012, possibly under another name, in order to continue to support partnerships, the sharing of information, and reading/literacy communities working together in different ways.

Key Finding 19: Building on social media

As mentioned above, several participants commented on the power of social media to publicise National Year of Reading events and to raise the profile of libraries in particular and literacy in general. Several interviewees mentioned the impact of the branding of the National Year of Reading and indicated that they intended to continue to use the logo in 2013.

Key Finding 20: Harnessing political power.

The Library Agency team, the founder partners and one of the author ambassadors all talked about the need to continue to maintain relationships at the federal agency level to ensure continued funding support for activities that are beneficial to the aims of both parties. They stated that they would continue to promote the interests of the sector to the political contacts, which have been well established, however, they also recognised that the effectiveness of those contacts will be impacted by elections.

Summary

In this chapter we have endeavoured to synthesise the findings of the four case studies outlined in chapter three. Our aim was to construct a national overview of the impact of the National Year of Reading. This chapter has illuminated how the National Year of Reading has reached new audiences, linked existing partners, and drawn in new partners. The momentum has rejuvenated these partnerships and united them round a brand, introducing partners to new technologies, media opportunities and potential funding partners.

In terms of value adding, the initiative has increased the profile of libraries by placing them in a leadership role, focusing them on what must be key future strategic objectives, and simultaneously extending their community and funding relationships. In terms of sustaining the initiative, the evidence suggests that while the initiative has illuminated specific programs with a high community impact, they can only continue with renewed funding. However, contact with the media and social media platforms have been established and can be leveraged in the future.

In addition, the national nature of this initiative has generated relational contact with a wide range of political and media figures and paved the way for using such a strategy in the future to provide a visual stage for activities. Not only has the National Year of Reading made an impact by raising the profile of reading in the community and within families, but it has also presented media personalities as readers, often in their family role. There were dual benefits here both for the initiative and for the individuals. The National Year of Reading has highlighted reading a *normal* family and community activity, a part of everyday Australian culture. This dual focus on families and on personalities is a strategy that can be sustained into the future.

However, while the initial government funding for the initiative may have been modest, the enthusiastic work by the Library Agency team, the founder partners and the state/territory partners was able to produce a veritable well of funding and resources for multiple activities across Australia. They created a truly national perspective of what is a critical national issue; generating reading and literacy as an integral part of Australian national culture, so it underpins the development of a 'clever nation'. While there is much that can be sustained, there is also much that can be lost if future funding is not available to sustain the most effective partnerships and best initiatives as a platform for continued national development.

This initiative has placed libraries and library strategies at the heart of current social development programs, aligned with the current government educational targets, cooperating nationally, and uniting community groups around a core social necessity. This chapter has outlined how the campaign has built the capacity of national partnerships, added value to existing activity, and how such benefits can be extended. The cross-case analysis presents a picture of the National Year of Reading generating a cohesive national network, library led, which is underpinning the *normalisation* of a key social skill that should be sustained into the future.



Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations



The previous two chapters presented case study findings from the national perspective, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), Western Australia (WA) and Queensland (QLD) and the overall findings derived from the cross-case analysis. This chapter presents the impact and legacy of the National Year of Reading, followed by conclusions and recommendations.

What difference did the National Year of Reading make to building a nation of readers?

Evidence from the participants in this study clearly suggests that the National Year of Reading has been very successful in creating and sustaining partnerships, developing diverse programs and events at a national, state/territory and local level and engaging over 200,000 people in reading initiatives. The voices in this study indicate that the impact of these initiatives has been universally positive and delivered nationwide. A combination of involving stakeholders in activities, using key figures to role model good practice, and establishing reading brands nationwide have had both an immediate impact and also embedded the infrastructure for a continued sustained impact. The data from the study provides strong evidence that the aims of National Year of Reading have been substantially met and expectations in many cases exceeded. It is clear that there are many ways in which the National Year of Reading contributed to building a nation of readers, in essence the National Year of Reading made a difference to:

- The capacity of organisations to deliver reading/literacy outcomes led by state/territory library partnerships;
- The number and variety of reading/literacy programs and events delivered through partnerships facilitated by libraries;
- The status and visibility of reading/literacy across Australia.

1. The capacity of organisations to deliver reading/literacy outcomes led by state/territory library partnerships.

The evidence suggests that the National Year of Reading:

- Encouraged the state/territory libraries to create a web of interlinked agencies which provided opportunities to test and try out new ways of working, developing and disseminating effective reading practice;
- Engendered capacity building for each individual agency by learning about the practices of other agencies in the reading web and through sharing new technologies;
- Fostered new and non-traditional partnerships that formed to meet the diversity of readers' needs;
- Broadened the connections of each associated agency and opened up channels to particular audiences who had not previously been involved in reading initiatives;
- Raised the profile of libraries as organisations that support literacy and have free access to reading resources;





- Challenged libraries to increase membership through innovative events;
- Approached and engaged partners pro-actively because of the clear focus on reading and shared outcomes.

There is a wealth of international evidence indicating that in order to achieve effective literacy outcomes for children and families there is a need for organisations to build partnerships that lead to sustainable collaboration (Bruder 2010; Flottman McKernan and Tayler 2011; Lumsden 2005). Where the knowledge and experience of professionals in complementary fields is shared, this is beneficial to children, families and the professionals involved (Bruder 2010; Lumsden 2005). Furthermore, collaboration can lead to enhanced professional knowledge and a strengthening of programs as professionals jointly reflect on their practice (Wesley and Buysse 2001).

For example, the evaluation of the National Year of Reading in the United Kingdom, identified partnerships as central to the substantial outcomes that were achieved and sustained (Rankin, Brock & Matthews, 2009). In Wales, partnerships not only engendered events and activities, but also helped to break down barriers to reading held by some groups (Arad Consulting, 2008). In particular, partnerships between health care professionals and library professionals, and teachers and library professionals have been central to the implementation of a number of early literacy programs throughout the world, such as *Bookstart* in the UK, *Read Out and Read* in the USA and *Better Beginnings* in Australia. The professional involvement of child health nurses has been particularly effective in delivering early literacy programs to hard-to-reach and marginalised families (Hewer and Whyatt 2006; Klass et al. 2003). In other instances, health care professionals and teachers have been important in linking parents to their local libraries as a means of broadening their access to other literacy resources. Research suggests that helping parents access library activities and membership not only supports literacy, but helps to sustain family literacy programs (Evans Shaw and Bell 2000). Citing evidence from several early literacy intervention programs Bundy (2004), argues for the key role of public libraries in supporting early literacy development through the provision of a wide range of resources specifically aimed at promoting early literacy. The partnerships created through the National Year of Reading appeared to mirror these structural recommendations.

2. The number and variety of reading/literacy programs and events delivered through partnerships facilitated by libraries.

The evidence suggests that during the National Year of Reading:

- Over 200,000 people attended events across Australia;
- Over 4,000 events and activities were organised by the multiple partnerships;
- The initiative attracted an additional \$5.6m of in kind support and over \$26m of media coverage from high-profile and ambassador events. This suggests the final return on investment was in the order of \$20 dollars of value for each dollar of government funding;
- The high numbers of people involved in new events indicates that the activities reinforced the key messages with established audiences;

- The high numbers associated with the events indicates that the activity reached new audiences, extending the web of community literacy;
- There was an increase in the opportunities for disseminating key reading messages to a wider audience for each participating agency;
- The multiplicity of events has drawn a wide variety of agencies into the national reading web, further building national capacity.

The National Year of Reading focused agencies and families on the importance of literacy. Literacy begins at birth as the baby is inducted into family and community literacy events (Gillen & Hall, 2003; Landry & Smith, 2006; Sulzby & Teale, 1991). These interactions form the foundations of later literacy development. Beliefs about the importance of literacy and reading in particular and having the confidence to enact beliefs through shared literacy practices have a significant impact on children's growth and development in early literacy (Baker & Scher, 2002; Senechal & LeFevre, 2001; Snow, et al., 1998). Evidence suggests that involving parents and their children in reading and literacy events, demonstrates effective ways of sharing books and talking about literacy and helps to:

- Reinforce or create beliefs about importance of reading and literacy;
- Create confidence in sharing books;
- Access appropriate books for children and build reading resources;
- Build on what parents already know and can do in literacy;
- Create intergenerational book sharing practices.

The role modelling of the National Year of Reading supported these literacy outcomes. The practices embedded in the events such as increased frequency of shared book reading, routinely reading, re-reading a book, as well as giving children individual attention through one-to-one interaction during shared book reading, have all been found to potentially increase interest and enjoyment of books (Kassow, 2006; Kuo, Franke, Regalado, & Halfon, 2004). Fostering children's ability to choose books and develop favourite books has also been identified as an important aspect of early literacy development (Wilkinson, 2003). The National Year of Reading embodied these strategies within many of the programs and activities that were delivered.

The reading needs of adolescents and adults were also carefully considered and addressed through National Year of Reading activities. Data from the 2006 *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey* conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics revealed that slightly less than half of adult Australians cannot read confidently (Ellard, Kelly & McKerracher, 2012). They have a literacy level that is insufficient to meet the demands of functional life in Australia's current knowledge economy and may have difficulty reading newspapers and filling out forms. In addition to the importance that functional literacy has in everyday life, reading for pleasure is also acknowledged by educators and policymakers as being a beneficial activity for adults. Reading for pleasure provides a source of entertainment, actively engages the mind, and enhances the development of analytical thinking through





processing information (Bhatt, 2010). When adults engage in recreational reading, their literacy and learning skills improve, as does their self esteem. They tend to have more social confidence and there are often other benefits to their families (Morris, Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2005). In addition, improving the literacy of adults helps to improve their sense of worth and enables them to participate as active members of the community (Cassidy, Valadez, Garrett & Barrera, 2010) as well as their families.

Various studies in the United States since 2004 have suggested that the activity of reading for pleasure by adults is of concern (Mahaffy, 2009), however surveys conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2004 and 2008 have provided indications that adult reading habits can be reversed. In the United States, a number of programs targeting recreational reading at college and university level have had success with young adults in encouraging them to read and discuss books that are outside their formal studies. One such program was the *Porch Reads* conducted at the University of Dayton. Strong literacy skills are particularly important for adolescents and young adults as they are crucial to gaining adequate employment (Cassidy, Valadez, Garrett & Barrera, 2010).

In the United Kingdom and the United States in recent years, there has been attention given to promoting adult reading, both functional and recreational, through national reading campaigns. The *Big Read* was a month-long national event conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States that enabled communities across the country to celebrate and encourage reading. The event had funding, publicity and support and was deemed to be very successful with adult attendance and participation increasing over its duration (Mahaffy, 2009). The federally-funded *Grandparents and Books* program had many mutual benefits for all participants (Walter, 2012). Their reading skills improved and there was a sharing of skills, knowledge and experience as well. The National Year of Reading campaign in the United Kingdom in 2008 had numerous benefits for many members of the community. Conducted under the theme of 'Stronger and Safer Communities', the year-long campaign included many projects that supported family groups and also targeted adult groups considered to be hard to reach. Innovative outreach programs focused on homeless people, new immigrants, and adults with mental health problems. These programs had a strong focus on inclusion. The campaign enabled local libraries to establish themselves as hubs in the community for people to attend reading events, workshops and festivals (Rankin, Brock & Matthews, 2009).

The benefits identified by international events promoting reading were also shown to have been prevalent in the National Year of Reading in Australia. Partnerships between secondary schools and various libraries sought to enhance the literacy skills of adolescents during class time and beyond. Programs and events conducted by local libraries also sought to enhance the literacy skills of adults and support their enjoyment of recreational reading. In many instances, state/territory programs proactively sought to

include 'hard to reach' targets through outreach programs and there was a strong recognition by many stakeholders that the campaign would support innovative practices and deliver positive outcomes.

3. The status and visibility of literacy and reading across Australia

The evidence suggests that the National Year of Reading:

- Generated a national structure, integrating stakeholder groups within one high profile national brand to support local implementation of the campaign;
- Raised and maintained the importance of reading across Australia through a consistent mix of integrated national media and local initiatives;
- Increased organisational confidence in stakeholders through collaborative engagement and opened gateways for cross-sector involvement;
- Provided a platform for participants to maintain literate community and social relationships;
- Engaged new participant groups with reading practices;
- Motivated readers through associating reading with iconic personalities and role models;
- Ensured that the key reading messages spread through media outlets from those already engaged with reading practices and permeated the majority households.

A key impact of the National Year of Literacy has been raising the status and visibility of reading as a social practice. The ultimate goal is to install reading as an accepted family, social and cultural practice. This is especially challenging as text now appears in increasingly diverse forms and across multiple delivery platforms. Establishing a reading brand has been a significant strategic success of the National Year of Reading. Hood and Henderson (2005) in their review of library branding in the UK suggest that branding is particularly important where a service is undergoing transformation, with children reading more on line than on paper. They indicate that a brand such as Love2Read when established as a symbol in the community will continue to engage participants as the brand re-defines what reading is and how it is done. Additionally, and events associated with the brand carry a clarity of purpose and guarantee of quality. The Love2Read logo has developed national awareness of the 2012 reading brand. Through the brand, agencies have established awareness of events, promoted events, and generating clarity of expectation in the target audiences. They have also gained the loyalty of some groups. This loyalty may be transferred to subsequent branded programs and events that may be considered prestigious by some participants, building their social connections and social esteem. On the one hand continued promotion of the brand will build community recognition, impact on reading cultures and leverage what has already been established. On the other hand more limited use of the brand may result in an increasing lack of visibility and a diminishing clarity in what is on offer or a reducing in the trust of the brand through reduced quality.

Building perceived prestige into the reading brand has been leveraged by the use of high profile ambassadors nationally and within each state/territory. A recent library survey by Clark, Osbourne and Dugdale (2009) highlighted the importance of role modeling with 78 % of children indicating that they had a role model and were inspired by the actions of their role model. While their role models were predominantly family members, children also indicated being motivated by media personalities. Using ambassadors as role models reading with children and mirroring a family setting has therefore been an effective way to maximise visual impact and change culture.

While researching methods of social and cultural change is often frustrated by the associated multiple variables, research into educational change supports the National Year of Reading approach of pursuing a broad structural framework that can be interpreted according to local situations and needs. In contrast to a one-size fits all approach, strong local involvement in change activities produces cultural change that will become embedded. McLaughlin (1990) insists that lasting changes in social practice requires 'mutual adaptation' where local agents 'translate' the national guidelines into appropriate local practices. In doing so, they not only customise the activity to community needs but simultaneously gain local ownership and the associated motivation that derives from shaping the venture for their community. The National Year of Reading effectively mirrored this approach through using a broad strategy that balanced overall directional control with space for participative local ownership.

What are the legacies from the National Year of Reading?

There are a number of legacies from the National Year of Reading, including:

- Developing increased capacity and infrastructure within and between each participating agency led by libraries;
- Providing the impetus for stakeholders to strengthen existing or activate new partnerships through the range of collaborations facilitated by libraries that target the needs of particular communities;
- Creating a National Year of Reading brand which is a well recognised and powerful symbol and that has the potential to continue to make connections between different reading organisations and different service providers. National branding has increased the promotion, publicity and media opportunities which have the potential to extend past the National Year of Reading;
- Raising awareness and creating an agenda about the importance of reading and the potential for literacy to improve the quality of people's lives;
- Delivering a national campaign that was seen to be successful and developed the momentum and determination to extend beyond 2012, through the role of libraries as leading agencies in creating a nation of readers.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions have been derived from the findings, which in turn led to a series of recommendations. These are described in the following section.

Conclusion 1: The national framework was central to the success of the National Year of Reading.

The National Year of Reading established a broad framework and set of resources that were taken up and replicated at national, state/territory and local levels, which extended the reach of the program and generated grassroots activity. The success of the grassroots approach was dependent on the development of a large network of partners facilitated by libraries that could be drawn upon to collaborate on National Year of Reading projects and programs and events as well as to help spread the key messages of the National Year of Reading. Ultimately, the National Year of Reading itself was the result of collaboration between an extensive network of diverse partners at the national, state/territory and local level. These partnerships provided a vehicle through which programs and events and events that were formed under the National Year of Reading umbrella were ultimately delivered.

This evaluation shows how vital it is for a national support network to give guidance and support yet allow for local ownership and flexibility. The national framework provided by the Library Agency and founder partners in conjunction with the National Year of Reading Love2Read branding helped to unify and promote the central aims of the National Year of Reading. It also created a powerful link between the states and territories across Australia, while creating opportunities for local ownership.

Recommendation 1

Maintain a Love2Read support network that gives guidance and support yet allows for local ownership and flexibility, through a rolling program of national reading.

Conclusion 2: Libraries were at the heart of the development, delivery and success of the National Year of Reading.

While the state/territory libraries in the study saw the promotion of literacy as an intrinsic part of their role, the National Year of Reading enabled them to take a lead role and to work more actively with their respective communities to address literacy related issues. The National Year of Reading has shown that libraries not only promote the public's engagement with, and enjoyment of, reading but they also work to increase the levels of functional literacy in their local communities.

It was evident that local libraries catered for the needs of diverse populations and were taking an increasingly active role in working with communities to identify and address literacy issues. The National Year of Reading provided a reason for libraries to celebrate reading, to foster library membership and to work on projects that addressed community related literacy issues. It provided a platform for libraries to re-activate and strengthen existing community partnerships and to form affiliations with new kinds of businesses, organisations and individuals who serve a



different range of clients, enabling them to extend their reach. The National Year of Reading clearly raised the profile of libraries, in several ways that included:

- Increasing public recognition that local libraries cater for the needs of diverse populations and are taking an increasingly active role in working with communities to identify and address literacy issues;
- Providing a reason for libraries to celebrate reading, to foster library membership and to work on projects that address community related literacy issues;
- Providing a platform for libraries to re-activate and strengthen existing community partnerships and to form affiliations with new kinds of businesses, organisations and individuals who serve a different range of clients, enabling them to extend their reach;
- Enabling libraries to leverage new sources of funding and resources to implement projects;
- Confirming a core strategic future for libraries.

The trust that has been created between the National Year of Reading and its stakeholders is an important legacy of the campaign. Work with schools and tertiary education institutions could be extended. For example, schools could opt to become Love2Read schools, using this as a means of supporting the new Early Years Learning Framework and Australian Curriculum. In addition, industry partners seeking alignment with a community initiative might be suitable sponsors with appropriate branding agreements. Generating new initiatives through new strategic partners is important to sustaining the National Year of Reading messages.

Recommendation 2

Develop strategic alliances between the library sector and education providers such as schools, tertiary education providers and industry to enhance the development and delivery of effective literacy programs.

Conclusion 3: Partnerships were crucial to the implementation and outcomes of the National Year of Reading.

It is evident that each of the states in the study - the ACT, WA and Queensland - engaged strongly with the National Year of Reading in 2012. For them, the National Year of Reading has added value on many levels and created a potential legacy that will extend beyond the National Year of Reading. It is clear that partnerships led by libraries were at the heart of their engagement in the National Year of Reading.

At the national level, several different types of partnerships were created, including: partner organisations; friends of the National Year of Reading; and ambassadors, incorporating author ambassadors. Each of the national level partners supported the campaign in different ways.

At a state level, partnerships were created with a diverse range of commercial, government and not-for-profit organisations and groups: primary and secondary schools, businesses, community groups, local and state government departments, tertiary education providers, correctional

institutions, and adult literacy providers. Collaboration on National Year of Reading events enabled state/territory libraries to re-activate and strengthen existing networks and partnerships as well as to develop new ones at the state and local level. This allowed the National Year of Reading to function in a flexible manner and to grow organically through the expansion of networks and sharing of ideas to reach as many people and contexts as possible.

In addition, the National Year of Reading's external non-library partners were very positive about their involvement and they clearly indicated that the National Year of Reading had added value to their work as well as to their profile and reach.

Recommendation 3

Support libraries to maintain the momentum gained during the National Year of Reading by leveraging and extending the networks of partnerships that they have created.

Conclusion 4: Key messages were delivered to new and target audiences.

The National Year of Reading generated a wealth of more than 4,000 programs, events and activities from community lead activities to national events. Some were ongoing, some were single events and others travelled between states. The national campaigns created excitement and anticipation and provided a catalyst for localised events, while integrating key reading messages into local priorities. The national campaigns were designed to engage different target audiences, focusing on particular messages and disseminating effective practice. The sheer number and variety of initiatives meant that many families and individuals were surrounded by the key messages as part of their everyday lives. One of the key successes of the National Year of Reading was that its four national campaigns (*One Country Reading*, *The Reading Hour*, *Public Library Membership Drive* and the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace*) were designed to promote a range of key messages to different target audiences. Additionally, the National Year of Reading was used as a platform to promote the work of a number of organisations supporting Indigenous literacy.

The collaborative nature of the campaign has fostered a non-competitive focus and a sense of inclusivity which has given providers the freedom to be creative and ensured a diversity of programs. Although there was some evidence of partnerships with organisations that support or represent marginalised groups, the continuation of the National Year of Reading through the Love2Read branding presents an ideal opportunity to extend current initiatives to increase the focus on marginalised groups.

Recommendation 4

Plan future initiatives to include more diverse sectors of the community and target groups such as people with disabilities, older people, and the marginalised through specific initiatives.



Conclusion 5: Evaluation methods needed to be extended.

Libraries tended to evaluate their programs and events by monitoring attendance and by capturing feedback from participants. Although quantitative data was captured for some initiatives to inform end-of-year reports this was not uniformly carried out. This key element of program implementation will need to be a focus for future initiatives and programs, particularly those that have secured external funding. A policy should be established that there will be an evaluation of the impact of all future programs through both qualitative and quantitative research. Evidence-based research about audience participation within programs and the subsequent impact on attitudes, practices and outcomes is vital to creating a data base to support future initiatives and evidence with which to negotiate for further funding. Evaluation should also encompass the impact of program design, implementation and outcomes on policy and practice of service providers.

There is a need for partners to identify those programs that were particularly successful and use these as a model for effective practice. This should include those programs with the greatest utility, where the most benefit was gained from the least use of resources. In addition, the partnerships could be consolidated and extended by focusing on local initiatives of significant utility that can be rolled out nationwide. In achieving further impact, it is important that partnerships use the knowledge generated by the National Year of Reading to inform the development of new programs and strategies for particular target audiences.

Recommendation 5

Build evaluation goals and processes into all planning operations and identify those events that have the greatest utility so they can be replicated nationwide.

Conclusion 6: National communication resources were important to sustaining a network of partnerships.

It is clear that the range of resources the National Year of Reading organisers created and made freely available to organisations and participants helped to plan, develop and implement the National Year of Reading programs and events. At the national level, the Library Agency used a range of channels to promote the National Year of Reading to the general public and reading professionals and this included new social media such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter. State/territory libraries supplemented the national communication strategy by utilising existing marketing tools, mainstream media as well as printed and electronic media to promote their National Year of Reading programs and events and messages to their target audiences. These resources helped to connect and maintain networks across the case study participants. State and local libraries should be encouraged to continue to utilise and add to these resources thereby maintaining and even refreshing the National Year of Reading presence whilst providing more resources for participants.

Branding new and existing library programs and events under the National Year of Reading branding has resulted in an increase in promotion, publicity and media opportunities that have the potential to extend beyond 2012. The Love2Read logo has become a well-recognised and powerful symbol that has the potential to continue to make connections between quite different reading organisations. It is already being incorporated into 2013 literacy initiatives.

Recommendation 6

The branding and wide range of support mechanisms that gave the National Year of Reading a strong and sustained presence should be continued beyond 2012.

Conclusion 7: Funding was a significant factor in the development and delivery of the campaign.

The campaign was funded both nationally and locally with many associated programs funded from in-kind resources. While some programs were new, others were re-branded or extended. The campaign required central funding for national coordination without which a unified series of programs could not have been developed. Although not all programs may require further funding and an added reading/literacy focus may be generated from realignment and linking of existing practices, or rebranding of existing activities, ultimately, further funding support from federal, state and local government will be required to capitalise on the initiatives and impetus of the National Year of Reading. Although the National Year of Reading generated tremendous goodwill and a commitment to extending the initiative beyond 2012, this will be hard to sustain without support. Continued funding will help to maintain and extend what has already been achieved and will help to secure partnerships through continued joint programs. In addition, the impact of programs and events on existing workloads through in-kind contributions needs to be carefully and realistically assessed. The founding partners should consider if the establishment of a national trust to coordinate national literacy campaigns is appropriate.

Recommendation 7

Commence planning to seek diversified funding sources for future campaigns and the viability of establishing a central coordinating trust.



Conclusion 8: Bipartisan support was identified as important to future of the National Year of Reading.

This evaluation of the National Year of Reading, while gathering significant positive evidence of strong relationships and community involvement, has also collected feedback about how some aspects of the campaign could be strengthened. In terms of planning, participants indicated that cross-party commitment to future campaigns had the advantage of positioning the initiative in a politically neutral context.

Recommendation 8

Generate a plan to lobby for bipartisan support for future campaigns, to ensure the importance of reading as a major determiner of the social, educational, economic and health of Australia is supported by all major political parties.

Conclusion 9: Interest from other countries was generated by the National Year of Reading.

While this has been a successful national initiative it also provides the springboard to compare and contrast achievements and learning from other national initiatives. This includes making links with those countries that have signalled an interest in the development and outcomes of the National Year of Reading, such as Korea, Slovenia and New Zealand. There should be a policy and funding to link to the National Year of Reading with initiatives in other countries to build partnerships with other advanced reading nations. Insights from other National Year of Reading initiatives could be used to strengthen the development of the National Year of Reading in Australia and to share resources and ideas as well as discussing ways of meeting the needs of target audiences traditionally identified as 'hard to reach' or 'at risk'.

Recommendation 9

Leverage and extend the momentum gained during the National Year of Reading by establishing links with campaigns in other countries.

The success of the National Year of Reading can be attributed to a multilayered approach. Viewed as a model, the National Year of Reading and its component parts make for a powerful case study on how to develop and implement a self-sustaining, organic model that has the potential to deliver lasting change, as opposed to a more traditional prescriptive approach which may only last for the duration of the initiative.

In conclusion, the government has recently committed to significant targets to raise Australian educational standards above those of most international competitors. Reading is a critical foundation for the achievement of those targets. Building literacy is a primary function of both schooling and of families and parenting. While schooling is socially institutionalised, the association between families, reading and libraries is far more disparate. The National Year of Reading through state/territory libraries has been instrumental in focusing and involving a wide range of stakeholders in reading outside the school environment and in the home, workplace and community. In short, it has made a difference.

In national terms, the resource funding for the campaign has been modest while the leveraging of this funding through national, state/territory and local agencies led by libraries has been impressive in terms of the multiple events delivered and the numbers of participants involved. At the centre, it has drawn together a wide range of agencies into partnerships and augmented reading as a strategic goal for those groups. The partners have been strengthened through those interrelationships and have built increased organisational capacity. For participants involved in the programs and events, there has been the introduction of new literacy practices and/or the reinforcement and extension of their ongoing practices. These practices have been sustained through being part of a national cultural activity. The Love2Read logo is an established brand and provides a national focus for libraries and families that indicates quality and fun events with a significant purpose. The use of key ambassadors has reinforced the national importance of reading and simultaneously located the practice within community and family groups.


However, a year is not enough. The strong structural partnerships, the brand and community links will require continued promotion to gain ongoing benefits in terms of improved community literacy and establish reading as a cultural norm within all social groups. Independent evaluation should be built into every continuing initiative to ensure that learning about reading programs, events and partnerships is preserved by harvesting the experiences of local ownership into national guidelines, and promoting those activities with the greatest utility. Initiatives for change are eagerly pursued by the social groups who already aspire towards and access similar ideals. Future initiatives will need to have specific strategies to target those groups most excluded from reading practices, distant from resources, and performing poorly in comparative national literacy assessment data (such as the Australian Early Development Index and National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy). A significant platform has been built for establishing reading as a visible social practice supported by a brand and multiple partnerships that now position reading as a core organisational focus and placing libraries at the centre of change. International competitors provide models for how these relations and structure can be leveraged in the future to build Australian literacy. Expanding this platform would support not only the development of a nation of readers, but also help meet educational targets for the future.



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So what we knew anecdotally and from the data is that we had people, particularly from areas of Canberra that we know suffer disadvantage, they'd get a \$20 or \$30 fine on their card and they'd just stop coming. They often didn't bring their books back either. So we wanted to make it as easy as possible for them to want to come back.

Libraries ACT, staff member

Appendix 1: Interviews, document collection and surveys



National level data	Interview	Documents	Survey
The Library Agency			
National Year of Reading Project Director, national campaigns	✓	✓	
National Year of Reading Manager, ambassador & partner liaison	✓	✓	
National Year of Reading Manager, social media & data collation	✓	✓	
Australia-wide partnerships			
One Country Reading Campaign			
Our Story			
National Year of Reading Project Director	✓	✓	
Read This!			
Good Reading Magazine (SpineOut)	Attempted	Attempted	
Madman Entertainment	✓	✓	
State Library Victoria (Insideadog)	✓ (3)	✓	
Are We There Yet?			
National Year of Reading Project Director	✓	✓	
The Reading Hour Campaign			
National Year of Reading Project Director	✓	✓	
The Walt Disney company representatives	✓	✓	
Dymocks Bookstores representatives	Attempted	Attempted	
Scholastic representatives	✓	✓	
ABC Radio Victoria representatives	✓	✓	
The Big Issue representatives	Attempted	Attempted	
The Library Membership Campaign			
National Year of Reading Project Director	✓	✓	
The Workplace Literacy Campaign			
National Year of Reading Project Director	✓	✓	
Indigenous Programs			
Indigenous Literacy Foundation	✓	✓	
IAD Press	✓	✓	
Founder partners			
Chair of founder partners	✓	✓	
12 founder partner members		✓	12 surveys / 4 responses
Author ambassadors			
20 author ambassadors	3 interviews attempted	✓	20 surveys / 7 responses

At the national level, 19 participants were contacted for interview and 18 were successfully interviewed, and a further 32 participants were sent surveys and 11 responded. In addition, the Library Agency's NYR Project Director was re-interviewed about the programs comprising the four national campaigns, including: *Our Story*, *Are We There Yet?*, *The Reading Hour*, *Library Membership* and the *National Year of Reading in the Workplace*.



State/Territory level data	Interview	Documents
Western Australia		
<i>State/territory library, National Year of Reading state/territory steering group coordinator:</i>		
Margaret Allen, CEO SLWA	✓	✓
Anne Rennie Manager of Participation & Learning, National Year of Reading WA steering group coordinator	✓	✓
Jane King, GM SLF, National Year of Reading WA steering group member	✓	✓
Representative from WA public library association	Attempted	Attempted
<i>2-3 state programs:</i>		
Better Beginnings	✓	✓
City of Mandurah	✓	✓
City of Joondalup	✓	✓
Perth Writers Festival	Attempted	Attempted
Australian Capital Territory		
<i>State/territory library, National Year of Reading state/territory steering group coordinator:</i>		
Vanessa Little, Director Libraries ACT	✓	✓
Rachel Davis, Lifelong Learning Coordinator, National Year of Reading ACT steering group coordinator	✓	✓
Sarah Steed, Programs Manager	✓	✓
<i>2-3 state programs:</i>		
The Workplace Literacy Program	✓	✓
Canberra Kids Love2Read	✓ (2)	✓
Canberra's Longest Bookmark	✓	✓
Canberra Readers Festival	✓	✓
The CEO's Reading Hour	✓	✓
ANU Poetry Slam	✓	✓
AMC Poetry Competition	✓	✓
Queensland		
<i>State/territory library, National Year of Reading state steering group coordinator:</i>		
Jane Cowell, Director SLQ	✓	✓
Jodi Finucan, National Year of Reading Program Coordinator	✓	✓
National Year of Reading QLD steering group coordinator		✓
Representative from Public Libraries Assoc	Attempted	Attempted
<i>2-3 state programs:</i>		
Playgroup Australia	✓	✓
Riverbend Books	✓	✓
Indigenous Literacy Foundation	✓	✓
Education QLD	✓	✓
Crossing Boundaries with Reading, QUT	✓	✓
At the state/territory level, 27 participants were contacted for interview and 24 were successfully interviewed. Libraries ACT staff were re-interviewed about <i>The Workplace Literacy Program</i> , <i>Canberra Kids Love2Read</i> , <i>Canberra's Longest Bookmark</i> , and the <i>Canberra Readers Festival</i> .		



Appendix 2: Table of programs and partners by state/territory documented in the evaluation

Western Australia			
Name of Program	Aim	Target audience	Partners
Love2Read Cafe	To publicise the National Year of Reading through free events located in the vicinity of the SLWA	The general public of Perth	McCusker Foundation; Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority
Laundry Reads	To improve reading levels of members of the community	General community	Commercial Laundromat business owner
Read Out Loud	To promote the joy and importance of reading, especially when it is shared	General community	Lotterywest
Read! Better Beginnings Program	To encourage reading for enjoyment; to encourage reading by those with low levels of literacy	General community; reluctant readers	Fremantle Press; Read Write Now; Department of Corrective Services
Bedtime Bundles	To support young people (12-16 years) in need through the provision of bedtime resources that included a book	Young adolescents of families in need in the Joondalup area	The Spiers Centre
Family Literacy Projects (Reading Resolution Card and Winter Reading Challenge)	To encourage parents and children to set reading targets and commit to reading	Parents and their children	
Parent Support Projects	To support parents to develop their own as well as their children's literacy skills	Parents	
First Wednesday Book Club	To promote reading for enjoyment	Adult Readers	Angus and Robertson
Community events	To encourage reading and publicise the library	General community of Mandurah	City of Mandurah; Mandurah Arts Centre
Reading Hour Pyjama Party	To promote reading	General community of Mandurah	A variety of organisations and local community groups
Ongoing Partners			
Rio Tinto, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, the Perth International Arts Festival, the City of Perth and local Western Australian authors.			





Queensland			
Name of Program	Aim	Target audience	Partners
Dads Read	To create awareness of the importance that fathers play in children's early development; to provide fathers with reading tools and encourage fathers to read to their children; to promote reading as a family	Fathers and families	Channel 7 Queensland; high profile sports figures
Reading Hour	To celebrate and promote National Year of Reading	General community of Queensland	
Out of the Box	To promote literacy, the State Library and its programs through books, stories and performances	Children	Queensland Performing Arts Centre; Griffith University
Education Queensland Programs	To support young readers in early school years; to provide strategies for parents to integrated literacy into daily family life	Parents and young children	Education Queensland
Riverbend Books and Teahouse	To provide parents with knowledge about supporting their children's literacy development	Parents of children attending state schools in the Gateway Learning Community of Queensland	Gateway Learning Community
Crossing Boundaries with Reading	To promote reading, digital literacy and creative expression in secondary	Students at a low SES culturally diverse secondary state school	Queensland University of Technology
Australian Capital Territory			
Name of Program	Aim	Target audience	Partners
Workplace Literacy Program (in planning stages)	To address adult literacy in the context of the workplace	Blue collar workers	University of Canberra; Canberra Institute of Technology
Canberra Kids Love2 Read	To encourage children's habit of visiting libraries and to foster a love of reading	Year One students from selected public primary schools	Tania McCartney (ambassador for the National Year of Reading); various publishers; FE Technologies; ACT Government Education and Training Directorate
Canberra Readers' Festival	To inspire, entertain and excite people about books and the power of reading	Book Club members and the broader community	Canberra Theatre Centre
Canberra's Longest Bookmark	To knit a giant bookmark to promote and celebrate National Year of Reading; to promote libraries as community hubs	Knitters in the Canberra community	
Voice Poetry Slam	To teach secondary students how to write and present poetry in hip hop and rap styles	Secondary students from selected public secondary schools	Australian National University; federal government Higher Education Participation and Partnership scheme
Alexander Maconochie Centre Poetry Competition	To encourage poetry writing among adult detainees in custody	Adult detainees at Alexander Maconochie Centre	



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