

## APLA meeting, Wednesday 21 May 2025

The in person/online meeting included representatives from all jurisdictions.

### Key Messages from meeting and State/Territory reports

#### ALIA

##### Public library programs and promotions

- ALIA and the Office of Community Cohesion are working together to deliver a *Libraries as Social Cohesion Hubs* program in 115 public libraries and 10 university libraries throughout Australia. An EOI will be going out in June.
- ALIA and the Department of Health and Aged Care will once again be calling for EOIs from 30 public libraries to host an *Aged Care Reforms Hub* in 2025.
- ALIA is developing a partnership with *Kids Alive Do the Five* to promote water safety via public libraries in the first week of September.
- On 23 May 2025, ABC Radio National launched the inaugural [Top 100 Books of the 21st Century](#) as voted by listeners.

##### Library and Information Week 2025

- [Library and Information Week](#) will take place 28 July to 3 August 2025 with the theme *To read or not to read – literacy matters*. ALIA will be providing social media tiles, printable posters and signature blocks for people to use and encouraging everyone to share their programs during the week. ALIA will also be putting on free events for members.

##### Mentoring

- Applications are now open for the ALIA Mentoring Scheme 2025/26. Closing date is 29 June. More information on the [website](#).

##### Research

- ALIA is an industry partner on a number of ARC linkage grants, partners with academics and practitioner researchers, and provides research translation platforms, and avenues to support the research community and its activities. ALIA has created a new webpage, [Research initiatives and engagement](#), featuring current and recent research projects.
- Charles Sturt Libraries Research Group will be convening an [Australasian Public Library Conference](#) from 1-3 July 2025. The online conference will showcase recent research related to public libraries and registration is free.

- The ARC funded project [Australian public libraries and social capital: an exploratory study](#) led by Professor Tina Du from CSU and Professor Helen Partridge from Deakin University aims to investigate the role of Australia's public libraries as creators of social capital.
- ALIA and APLA have agreed to support Associate Professor Jane Garner's research into occupational violence which will include a national survey of public libraries.

## **ACT**

- An Independent Working Group (IWG) has been established to address the challenges facing Libraries ACT and to provide recommendations.
- Libraries ACT staff have undertaken professional development activities, including Manual Handling Training, Mental Health Awareness, Copyright training and Cataloguing courses.

## **NSW**

- [SWITCH Conference](#) will be held 11-14 November 2025 in Penrith, NSW. A [draft program](#) is available.
- [Now and for their futures: Libraries brain building in the early years national forum](#) took place in Queensland 21-22 May 2025. Information from the forum will be shared across Australia.
- Nominations for annual awards, scholarships and bursaries are now open.

## **NT**

- Alice Springs, Litchfield, and Darwin Councils are planning significant library redevelopments/relocations with LANT support.
- The second ALIA GLAM Top End group event for 2025 was held on 15 May 2025 and included tours of both the CDU and LANT libraries at Danala, as well as exhibitions and the CDU Art Gallery on site.
- LANT's new partnership with Children's Discovery and Questacon has now kicked off, with a pilot program involving staff training and the distribution of Little Bang Discovery activity kits at select NT locations. The initial training was delivered in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin, and was very successful with good participation and engagement with the program from the library sector.
- LANT hosted the NSLA Board in the new Danala site for meetings on 10-11 April 2025, where a highlight was the presentation of our new ICIP Protocols to a very positive reaction from board members.
- Submissions for the [2025 Northern Territory Literary Awards](#) have closed and are currently being prepared for assessment by the judging panel. The shortlist will be announced in August 2025, with the official awards ceremony scheduled for September.

## QLD

- QPLA delivered the LEaD Conference 2025 in Townsville 25-28 March 2025 with over 225 attendees and more than 40 vendor partners. QPLA provided four bursaries to support delegate attendance with State Library of Queensland providing an additional nine bursaries for colleagues from across regional and remote areas.
- QPLA Board elections are currently underway with a number of terms for Executive and Regional Representative roles, including the First Nations Regional Representative role, now up for review. The new Board will be announced in July 2025.
- The jointly orchestrated QPLA-SLQ [Leadership Program](#) wrapped up in March 2025. 13 library professionals completed the six month program.
- The [Queensland Public Libraries Statistical Bulletin 2023-24](#), highlighting the positive impacts of Queensland public library services over the last financial year, has been published by State Library of Queensland.
- State Library of Queensland launched a new series of free [Digital and You](#) workshops on 8 March 2025 in Southwest Queensland with a program providing valuable opportunities for community engagement, creativity and digital skills development.

## SA

- The Local Government Association (LGA) has commenced a campaign [How Good Are Libraries](#) to showcase the value of public libraries in South Australian communities. The campaign will run over the next 12 months and highlights libraries' essential role in education, community wellbeing, digital inclusion, emergency management and economic development.
- PLSA Conference, *From Ideas to Impact* held 8-9 May 2025, inspired and challenged library staff to be courageous and take a leap to action to move forward with ideas and services that deliver impact in their community.
- Libraries SA [Firstival](#) will be held 1-31 July 2025. Library programs will be promoted across the state to encourage people to visit or reconnect with their library and try something for the first time. The aim is to increase the reach of 42,000 achieved in 2024.
- Salisbury Library has partnered with [Sonder](#) for a social worker to visit the library and engage in community programs and City of Adelaide has employed two social workers to work with staff and develop programs to support library users. These projects have increased staff engagement skills and connections with the community.
- The City of Marion received a \$40,000 grant from the Office of Ageing Well to run programs and events to encourage greater interaction between individuals of different ages including digital storytelling, recording life stories online, intergenerational children and adults' events, youth and disability events.

## TAS

- The third annual *Tasmania Reads* ran 23-29 March 2025 with a program of events around the theme *Join the Fun*. During the week, public libraries and community partners hosted 118 events for 7,449 attendees, including author talks, outreach events, book chats, and workshops.
- On 24 March, Libraries Tasmania launched a new program [Tasmanian Voices: the writers who make us](#) in the new Writers' Room space at the State Library and Archives of Tasmania. The program celebrates 21 of Tasmania's most influential literary figures. Aspiring writers now have free access to two new [Writers' Rooms](#) to use and collaborate with other creatives.
- Staff and volunteers from diverse backgrounds, including China, Colombia, France, Iran, Italy, the Netherlands, Pakistan, and Thailand, shared real-life stories and traditional foods at the Kingston Library *Cultural Quick Connect* event promoting storytelling, cultural exchange and connection.

## VIC

- The campaign to raise public awareness of free digital offerings in public libraries had more than 30,000 people using the [QR code/link](#) to the campaign landing page and one in three clicking the sign up for free button since the start of the campaign.
- A series of online training modules are being rolled out to accompany the Rainbow Libraries toolkit. The training is designed to give PLV staff the skills and confidence implement toolkit recommendations.
- Funding has been received for a new round of Statewide projects including the development of a YA Handbook for libraries, codesigned with young people, and a training program to accompany the handbook.
- The fourth annual [Warm Winter Read](#) campaign launches on 1 June and continues to 31 August 2025. The objective of the campaign is to encourage adult readers to read more regularly. The seven author ambassadors this year are: Connie Cao, Melanie Cheng, Sarah Firth, Emilia Hart, Rachael Johns, Ann Liang and Christian White.

## WA

- A report developed by WA Council of Social Services into digital accessibility in regional and remote areas has highlighted a disparity in connectivity, devices, staff and community knowledge. Recommendations from this report will be reviewed and prioritised.
- 90 library staff attended a de-escalation training session run by PLWA on 4 April 2025.
- Applications are open for libraries to nominate for the [Library Board Awards for Innovation and Collaboration](#). Nominations close 27 May 2025.
- [Energy Audit Kits](#) are now available for loan from a number of metro and regional libraries throughout the state. Library services are reporting waitlists of 15 to 50 members.