



APLA meeting, 15 May 2026

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

Key Messages from meeting and State/Territory reports

ALIA

- **National Simultaneous Storytime** - ALIA is working with SBS as a new partner this year. SBS is the broadcaster for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and Luna Roo is a football/soccer themed book.
- NSS merchandise is selling well and still available with free partner resources available on the [website](#).
- **ALIA West to host a 2-day conference in Perth** - [The Value of Us: a Celebration of Collective Impact](#) is a 2-day conference bringing together GLAMR partners across Western Australia to explore shared purpose and community.
- **ABC Radio National Top 100 Books** - ALIA are once again partnering with Radio National to support promotion of their second annual book countdown. A series of hybrid author talks and panels will be run in the month leading up to voting. These would be hosted by Sarah L'Estrange, producer of Radio National's *The Book Show*.
- Voting for the countdown will take place in September and the two-day broadcast will take place in mid-October.
- **Australian Children's Laureate events with Andy Griffiths** - ALIA is working closely with the Australian Children's Laureate Foundation to line up libraries around Australia to host a series of events featuring the 2026–27 Laureate, Andy Griffiths.
- Bendigo Library hosted the first event on 21 March. The program included a morning workshop with illustrator Bill Hope, followed by an afternoon event with Andy and Bill with around 260 attendees.
- **2025 Prime Minister's Literary Awards: Creative Australia** - ALIA partnered with Writing Australia to deliver a series of library events featuring the six winners of the 2025 Prime Minister's Literary Award.
- **Spring Safe Storytime** - ALIA is partnering again with [Kids Alive for Spring Safe Storytime](#) in 2026. Registration will open in June, with the campaign launching on 1 September. Kids Alive are currently [collecting feedback](#) from last year's participants to help guide their refreshed digital packs, new activity ideas and support materials.
- **Press reader** - ALIA and PressReader have released a collaborative report [Ready to Act](#) examining how Australian public libraries are supporting media literacy in their communities —and where further support is needed.
- **Annual Public Library Statistics Report and call for case studies** - ALIA and NSLA are in the process of creating the 2024-25 Annual Public Library Statistics Report. This report is released annually to provide insights and to advocate for the value of public library services across the country, and the importance of a local library to its community (see the 2024-2024 report [here](#)).
- **Submissions** - ALIA staff are currently preparing submissions to the government's consultations on [Modernising and Harmonising Classification Standards](#) and [developing a New National](#)

[Cultural Policy](#). ALIA is consulting with its members on its position to each of these consultations and contributing to submissions by both Books Create and Australia Reads on the National Cultural Policy.

- **EOI for AI Working Group** - ALIA is putting together a Working Group to look at the challenges and opportunities that artificial intelligence (AI) presents to library and information services (LIS). You can find out more about eligibility and the commitment on our [website](#). Expressions of Interest are due by 31 May.

ACT

- The Libraries ACT strategic framework has been approved and will be released shortly.
- Libraries ACT/APLA will deliver the Public Library Proficiency program in the second half of 2026.
- A 12-month [trial of Convo](#) has been introduced across Libraries ACT branches. Convo is a Deaf-owned company that offers on-demand Auslan interpreting services with the customer using their smartphone or tablet for real-time interpreting (no app needed).
- Libraries ACT is introducing a new monthly community newsletter. Subscribe [here](#).
- Libraries ACT is hosting a [workshop for The Matter of Facts](#) on 28 May with ABC Canberra's Adrienne Francis co-presenting.

NSW

- NSW libraries continue to adapt services, strengthen collaboration and respond to growing demand, while managing pressures on facilities and resources.
- Staff training and professional development has focused on practical skills and leadership to support changing services. This has included de-escalation training and managing complex interaction, Tech help hacks for supporting seniors, Respect and Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Cultures and Country in Australian Libraries, Disability Confidence Training for library and museum workers in the region.

NT

- Recent weather events in the NT have affected all areas of government, with key staff being pulled from regular duties into emergency management. Many flood-affected community members have been flown into the Darwin area, putting additional pressure on essential services and community programs.
- The NT 2026-27 budget was announced on 5 May. Overall funding for arts and culture (including libraries) remains largely unchanged.
- Six representatives from the NT library sector attended ALIA National Conference 2026. These representatives will participate in a debrief workshop upon their return, hosted by the ALIA Glam Top End group, to share their learnings, inspirations and highlights with the sector.
- 24 participants participated in the second round of free IFLA training *Measurement, Evaluation and Demonstrating Impact of Library Services* at the end of April. Participants came from all over the greater Darwin region.
- The first LMS User Group meeting for 2026 will be held on 20 May in Alice Springs. This is an opportunity for representatives from across the library sector to engage with our LMS vendor (OCLC WorldShare) directly, hear about new enhancements and raise any concerns/issues they may have.
- LANT's Library Sector Services team has compiled the *Libraries Connecting Communities* Annual Highlights Report for 2024-2025 and presented it to the departmental executive team. This will

shortly be available to the public, published on [LANT's website](#) along with past years' reports. The annual report showcases the great work being undertaken in NT public libraries each year across the Territory.

- Along with many other NT Public Libraries, LANT is participating in [National Simultaneous Storytime – Luna Roo](#), for the first time on 27 May in our beautiful new children's area.

QLD

- The QPLA/SLQ Library Leaders Program concludes in May, with the cohort attending the ALIA National Conference as the final milestone in their eight-month leadership journey. Now in its second year, the program has continued to build leadership capability across Queensland's public libraries through structured mentoring, project-based learning and sector-wide collaboration.
- Planning is well underway for the 2026 QPLA LEaD Conference, to be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor, Brisbane in October. Nicole Hunt will continue in her role as Conference Convenor, ensuring continuity and strong sector leadership as preparations progress.
- On 5 May, QPLA welcomed Dr Beth Wahler to Brisbane for a full-day workshop attended by around 60 delegates. The session delivered practical, trauma-informed strategies for navigating challenging visitor interactions, strengthening communication and supporting staff wellbeing.
- QPLA has opened applications for bursaries to attend the QPLA LEaD Conference, taking place in Brisbane from 14–16 October 2026. To support ongoing professional development for Queensland public library staff, QPLA is offering five bursaries, each valued at up to \$2,000 (ex GST), to assist with full registration, travel and accommodation.
- Applications are now open for the Cheryl Haughton Scholarship 2026–27, supporting ongoing professional development and leadership growth within Queensland public libraries. This scholarship provides a valuable opportunity for eligible staff to pursue advanced learning, sector engagement and career development. Further details are available through QPLA.

SA

- The current Collaboration Agreement between the Libraries Board and LGA SA is due to expire in June 2026. The LGA are seeking to negotiate directly with the Minister for Arts (instead of the Libraries Board) and are wanting the re-introduction of annual indexation. The current agreement (4 years) did not have annual indexation included and this has eroded the funding available to libraries, with an additional levy added this year to help offset the courier costs for the One Card network. It is estimated that Councils have collectively missed out on \$11.5 million in funding over the life of the agreement.
- PLSA Executive have recently written to the recently appointed Minister for Arts Kyam Maher MP and Assistant Minister for Arts Sarah Andrews MP, congratulating them on their appointment and inviting them to meet with the Executive to discuss how libraries can help the government to advance their objectives for the state.
- Approximately 7 staff from the SA Public Library Network attended the ALIA Conference, including 5 of our PLSA Executive Committee. It was a fantastic opportunity to hear from high quality speakers, as well as hearing from everyday librarians who have developed new initiatives.
- The Barossa Council Public Library is taking their mission of spreading the Words Grow Minds message directly to the aisles of local supermarket cooperative, Barossa Fresh. The "Read, Talk, Play, Shop" community campaign encourages parents and caregivers of pre-school children to interact with their children while they shop. Find out more [Shop talk • The Barossa Council](#)

- Light Regional Council Library Service has recently launched South Australia's newest library at Hewett. Council endorsed the introduction of a library and customer service presence at the Hewett Centre for an 18-month trial through to July 2027. A free community open day was held on the morning of Sunday, 22 March with more than 200 people coming through, with many of them staying for the 3-hour event.

TAS

- Tasmania Reads 2026 was delivered from 22 - 28 March under the theme and call to action *Reading Connects Us All: Be Part of the Story*. Libraries Tasmania and community partners delivered 60 events to 2,500 attendees across the state. Programming included author talks, outreach activities, book chats and workshops.
- The recent 2026 Public Library Census showed increased positive feedback across all measures of the value to people provided by Libraries Tasmania, including reading and digital skills, access to government services and improvements to wellbeing.
- The annual Client Survey conducted in March received 3,312 responses. The headline measure was the overall satisfaction: last year we had a record satisfaction level of 95.5%, and this year we've set a new high of 95.8%.
- A recent reader engagement workshop focused on practical ways libraries can grow reading culture through stronger reader advisory. Key takeaways emphasised welcoming, low-pressure conversations that build confidence; validating all formats (including audiobooks); using open-ended prompts about mood and interests; and reducing "choice overload" through small, curated and themed displays.
- A Reading Culture Forum was delivered on 23 March 2026. The forum contributed to the scoping for Libraries Tasmania's Building Tasmanian Reading Culture initiative by providing a structured forum to consider relevant evidence and Tasmanian perspectives on strengthening reading culture statewide.
- 55 young people aged 15 to 25 years took part in Libraries Tasmania youth engagement workshops, helping to shape our library services, programs and spaces. The two-hour interactive workshops were facilitated by the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT).
- On 12 April StoryBox Library visited Glenorchy Library for a full day of filming in the children's area. The visit featured writer, actor and comedian Susie Youssef, who recorded three new StoryBox Library stories onsite: *Frogs Are Our Friends*, *Bob and Dob*, and *I'd Rather Be a Shark*. The collaboration highlights the strong partnership between Libraries Tasmania and StoryBox Library, promoting early literacy through high-quality digital storytelling while celebrating the role of public libraries as contemporary and creative community spaces.

VIC

- The recent Victorian State Budget recorded no change to the Public Libraries Funding Program for 2026-27.
- In collaboration with State Library Victoria, PLV delivered a Leadership Learning Forum with on 4 May, which was attended by 150 senior library managers.
- Prevention United is offering free half-day training, *Introduction to mental health promotion for public libraries staff*.
- In May, the [Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife](#) program is being implemented in public libraries. This program is a collaboration of PLV, Zoos Victoria and the RSPCA Vic.
- PLV has finalised the [Early Years Toolkit for Multilingual Families](#), a statewide resource designed to support libraries to deliver inclusive, language-rich early years programs for children aged 0–5 and their families.

WA

- Consultations are underway to renew Local Level Agreements between State Library of Western Australia and individual Local Governments. PLWA are working with the Western Australian Local Government Association and the Public Libraries Working Group to finalise the draft agreements for wider consultation with Local Government CEOs.
- The upcoming Privacy and Responsible Sharing of Information Legislation on 1 July 2026 – ensuring library staff are involving themselves in creation of notices and understand their obligations. Similarly ensuring library staff are maintaining contact with relevant teams and agencies dealing with the *Child Safeguarding Project* and are at the forefront of decision making in their workplace.
- PLWA awaiting responses to RFQ to develop an advocacy plan and potentially a marketing plan for future budget proposals to State Government and others.
- The recent release of the results of the first statewide survey based on the South Australian model contains a good range of data that supports the assumptions of the positive outcomes libraries are achieving. Second year survey is to be rolled out in July for a 3 month period.
- PLWA had a screening of the documentary *The Librarians* following the May general meeting with approximately 40 people from various LGs and State Library.
- Nominations are currently open for the Library Board Awards for Innovation and Collaboration, and a new North Family Early Literacy Award. Libraries from across the State are eligible for both awards with the presentations occurring during Library and Information Week.