

the last word

A hundred years from now...

Incoming ALIA State Manager for New South Wales Vassiliki Veros has a vision for a sustainable future firmly grounded in an active here and now.

When I started writing this column, I thought about Senator Bob Brown who famously said that there should be a sign outside Parliament House reading "One hundred years from now will people thank you for the decisions you make today?".

I would like to think that, as information professionals working towards sustainability, this sentiment drives our decisions in service delivery and professional development.

As library and information professionals, we make decisions that impact not only our generation but the generations who have yet to be born. It is not only the preservation of information in a range of available platforms – from print to digital to visual aids. It is also developing the ideal of cultural spaces, where people meet to share ideas and take part in their community's activities, whether that's in a public, academic or special library, or as an information professional collaborating and creating in schools, museums, companies and the media. Sustainability means adapting our services and our skills to meet the changing needs of our communities.

I believe in a hundred years cultural historians will be glad that librarians documented, preserved and continued their delivery of gaming, reference, local history and children's storytime in libraries and society. In a hundred years, digital archivists will be accessing records that were never produced tangibly- yet were progressively upgraded to meet the requirements of the era in which the information they contain was being used. I believe in a hundred years, people will be glad that their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents grew up in an information environment that consciously instilled a love for reading and cultural endeavours.

I believe this because we are grateful now for the generations of information professionals who went before us and engendered this love for organising

and understanding knowledge, information and the written word. In a hundred years, I believe the leadership, advocacy and mutual support and the empowerment that ALIA brings to the library and information profession will be appreciated for the continued development of ideas and skills the Association fosters, ensuring our members' careers remain sustainable in this fast-changing work environment.

As a profession, we are the rock-stars of the information era. We have understood the changing information environment and adapted to the needs

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of our organisations and our users. We are embedded throughout our community in different guises, ranging from librarians and information architects to media researchers, information managers, web content producers,

content managers, new media developers, database designers, collection developers, project managers, reader advisors, digital rights managers, and content aggregators. We create, grow and manage public spaces for communities to gather and use the collections we have developed.

With the foresight of our predecessors, and our sights set on our successors in a hundred years, we are even now developing an amazing wealth of experience for our profession and an invaluable place in Australian culture.

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