

AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY ALLIANCE ACHIEVEMENTS

Public libraries provide an outstanding example of how local, state and territory governments can work together on a national scale and in doing so achieve the best outcomes for communities across Australia.

A new report from ALIA's Australian Public Library Alliance (APLA), the peak body for public libraries in Australia, highlights a range of national activities, from helping to keep children safe online, through to establishing benchmarks for library services, all of which have been delivered collaboratively by state and territory based library associations between 2010 and 2015.

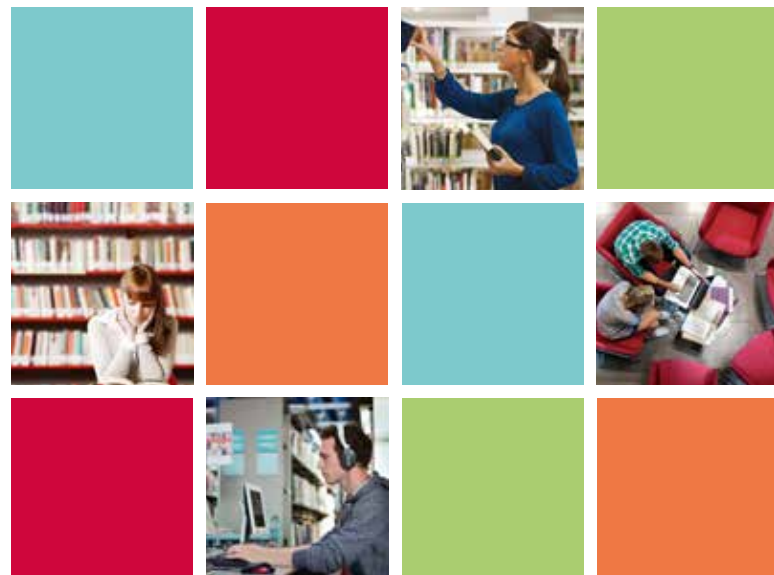
Significant achievements featured in the report include a national early literacy strategy, focusing not only on the way libraries deliver Baby Rhyme Time and Storytime programs for families, but also on their role in providing resources, spaces and connections for early childhood care providers, maternal and child health services and other agencies.

On a quality improvement front, APLA has developed national standards and guidelines for public libraries, providing essential benchmarks for library managers, councils and state governments.

The alliance has run highly successful campaigns encouraging readers of all ages. These include the National Year of Reading 2012, from which The Reading Hour emerged as an annual event. Every year APLA has delivered the Summer Reading Club and National Simultaneous Storytime, aimed at preschoolers and primary school children.

APLA has supported the book industry by promoting Australian authors and their works, and has tracked libraries' expansion into ebooks, collaborating on a national level to address the issues around lending with publishers and technology providers.

The Alliance has run high-profile media campaigns around Library Lovers' Day and Library and Information Week. They have highlighted the role of public libraries in ensuring online safety for children and all members of the community, partnering with the Alannah and Madeline and Telstra Foundations to create eSmart Libraries and



with the Department of Communications to promote Stay Smart Online.

The APLA committee comprises the chair of every state-based public library association, a senior representative from the ACT, Northern Territory and Tasmanian library services, and expert members. The Alliance represent 94 per cent of all the 1,500 public libraries across Australia.

The full report on APLA achievements in the 2010–2015 period can be downloaded from the ALIA website.

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