



# MAKE INNOVATION YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

**F**or any organisation, preparing for the future is difficult. What new obstacles or opportunities will arise is partly a guessing game for us all. But there are a few pointers out there to guide us. We can see trends in other organisations and countries that can help us predict what we should be focusing on. Being in the right headspace helps us to freely imagine and be open to new ideas. This, in turn, helps us lead new trends, but to ride those trends and meet the needs of our members, we need to be innovative.

Innovators take calculated risks. They don't think *I can't* – they think *We can*. They go around or over obstacles, or find ways to remove them altogether. They think outside the box. They effect change and help raise the bar to even greater heights, keeping one step ahead of

the game. One of the most valuable traits of an innovator is their ability to find the strengths in the people around them. Innovators create innovators. Their ideas enthuse others and enable them to contribute to those ideas; they bring out the best in people. When we get to contribute to change, we feel connected to that process. We all achieve it together. We all buy into the plan.

Innovating is the antithesis of going with the norm. The way it has always been done doesn't mean it can't be improved. Just because our Members and clients have a perception about what our library is, doesn't mean that we can't add to that, or change the way we look, feel, or how – or what – we provide to them. Why, for example, can't a swimming pool also house a library?

A key learning tool for innovators is collaboration. Collaborating with those outside – as well as inside – our industry brings understanding and a clarity to our innovative plans. By observing what people in other industries are doing, we can work out how to apply those lessons to our industry, and how we can even improve on them, or reshape them to make something new.

The more we collaborate, the more we learn. We can build bigger and better ideas, but with all the best laid plans, we'll be less likely to achieve our goals unless we can bring our work colleagues along for the ride. Collaboration with those closest to us is fundamental to our success.

Being innovative is exciting. Innovative thinking quickly becomes a way of life. You'll find yourself approaching ideas from all sorts of places to see how you can turn them around so you can apply them to your library. It's an inspiring way to work.

I hope in 2016 as a group, or as individuals, that we can make our own trends. And why not? We can all do it together if we just open our minds and give it a go. 🌟

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