TREND SETTING

F or many of us, thinking about the library of the future begins with thinking about the future of the library as space and place. But that is only part of the equation, as the LIS sector has had to adapt to new and different ways communities want to access information and use services.

Ultimately it's up to us as to how we adapt to trends and help better improve access to our services. Here are some ideas to get you thinking.

Trend spotting

Look for trends within other communities around the world. Think about how you can integrate into your own plans the innovative services and ideas that you've seen other LIS professionals use, and which would support your community.

Helping to connect

Makerspaces are a continuing trend and are becoming increasingly important within libraries. Libraries are growing in importance as places for collaborating, meeting people to generate ideas, and coming together for learning and communicating. The LIS sector connects people with information and services.

Bridging the divide

Libraries will always evolve, but right now they are building a reputation as a point in our communities that provides services for everyone, regardless of the socioeconomic or cultural background of users.

Adapting to needs

The LIS sector shoulders the responsibility for the preservation of knowledge. This is becoming increasingly apparent as we look to libraries to protect our past while we build the digital repositories of the future.

Educate, Educate, Educate

It is imperative that we stay on top of what's happening around the world in our industry. Continual education helps us all stay up to date, no matter what your role. Supplement your skills and you will find it invaluable to your work.

ALIA is for you

Use your ALIA membership to access ALIA's centralised information, and links to news, reports and articles. ALIA can help connect you to information about new trends and how others are adapting to them.

It's all about your community

Your community is why you love your job. It should be the key idea behind everything you do. Look for ways you can research the changes and trends that are happening in your community. Survey your community about your environment, your operations, the services you offer and the user experiences of community members.

Technology

Technology continues to change how we work – robotics, smartphones, computers, the internet, social media, transport, 3D printers. All these changed and are still changing, how we offer our information and services. Think about the mobility of information or how people learn through connected information or learning in the wild.

Ask yourself

- How are current trends affecting you, your library and your users?
- How can your physical space change to adapt to the digital space?
- What new revenue streams can you develop to help support and harness new technologies?
- How can your services help minorities within your communities? What about sensory storytime for kids with disabilities or better services to meet the needs of ESL students?
- How can you inspire your community to think differently about your library and the services you provide?
- How can you use new opportunities such as crowdsourcing to help you create better services?
- Librarians are working to create their own trend of returning their users to the physical space of the library. What are you doing to help your library become a hub of activity?