


A culture of innovation needs many supporters. For the Geelong Library & Heritage Centre this meant financial support from federal, state and local governments. It was a bold, ambitious plan that could be manifested only by bold designers – namely ARM Architecture. We also had a great project team led by the City of Greater Geelong, a supportive board led by Councillor Andy Richards and a visionary CEO, Patti Manolis.

Geelong residents almost can't believe that this beautiful building is here in their city. A visitor commented: 'If I had found this amazing building overseas I would have asked why we don't have something like this in Geelong. But now we do!'

During its opening weekend in November last year over 10,000 people walked through the doors and over 7,000 books were borrowed. The response was overwhelming; visitors were impressed by the spectacular and ambitious design, the vibrant colours, the engineering that went into the five-star environmentally sustainable design rating and the integration of the building with the park through its balconies and decks. One person referred to it as the 'People's Learning Palace'. We think that says it all. 

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## INNOVATION IN A CLOSED OFFICE


**B**eing part of the public service has its limitations.  
**JACINTA ANDERSON**

*shares her thoughts on what her library at the ATO can do to assist staff with their own innovation.*

I work in a sector that is crying out for innovative ideas that can be grown within a limited framework. Here's an idea – why not provide the resources to innovate the person rather than trying to change their job? What can a library offer workers to assist them in developing their skills?

Increasingly staff are looking for something to help them improve their everyday work situation. But a 3D printer, for example, isn't going to have much impact on their work, even if it's currently an exciting development with great potential. What they need is a space in which to work, and we can provide something that their cubicle can't. Libraries can give workers a space that lets ideas grow – along with the time and tools to relax their minds and allow them to reach their potential.

One of the main reasons staff come into our library is to find an alternate workspace. But this is the one option we cannot easily offer because of restrictions on where they can access a computer and log in. The idea that we can provide an alternative space for staff to work in, away from their cubicle and colleagues, has preoccupied library staff and management for years. What is our role as a library? Are we here to just to provide text, or are we here to cater to other needs of our staff? By providing them with a change of environment, we can help them to work more effectively. Having room to spread out and access to scanners and printers can allow them to give their work the attention that it needs to be done to a higher level.

This is not a new idea. Google's offices are known for providing staff with work areas that inspire thought and creativity. Who doesn't feel re-energised when they move to a different environment? Not because the work they do there is necessarily different, but because a new vibe and energy in the new environment can help them to rethink the way that everyday tasks are performed. 

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