

One Workforce

Transforming the South Australian public library network from the inside out



**LIBRARIES
OF SA**

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FOREWORD

Public Library Services and Public Libraries South Australia are pleased to present One Workforce – a workforce plan for the South Australian public library network. Funded by a Local Government Association (LGA) Research & Development Scheme Grant, we have worked collaboratively with Wendy Perry of Workforce Blueprint to deliver a workforce plan that will be used as the basis for recruitment, professional development and skills training over the next 3-5 years.

One Workforce contributes to the delivery of a sustainable future for the public library network and is recommended as a key action in Tomorrow's Libraries: Future Directions of the South Australian public library network. The adoption of One Workforce will ensure that the public library network maintains a culture of change and is equipped to provide outstanding services into the future.

One Workforce:

- identifies emerging workforce issues
- provides strategies to underpin the future success of the network
- enables councils to better conduct library strategic planning to meet community needs
- provides library managers with information to assist with future recruitment of library staff
- establishes a core set of competencies for library staff that can be used for performance management and professional development

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The following individuals and organizations have been involved in the development of this plan:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

To achieve the shared vision for Tomorrow's Libraries and success for the future directions of the South Australian public library network, developing the library workforce is key.

Through the One Workforce project a preferred scenario has been designed outlining the desired future library workforce in 3-5 years' time:

Our library workforce are dynamic 21st century information specialists. We are innovative and respond quickly to changing community needs, and are committed to providing the best possible customer experience.

This is underpinned by the goal to 'Deliver a sustainable future' and 'Empower staff to provide outstanding service'.

Linked with the Tomorrow's Libraries framework this includes the following

'Recommended Actions':

- grow the digital skills for staff across the State, leveraging where possible from existing resources and providers
- work with the providers of professional library qualifications to ensure all library staff have access to the knowledge and skills needed for 21st century libraries
- develop a workforce plan to maintain a culture of change and meet future staffing needs and skills development
- develop a three year professional development plan that takes account of new skills such as community engagement and content curation to ensure a systematic approach

One Workforce also aligns with the network's digital strategy, recognising the need to build capacity through a significant investment in digital skill development for library staff. Activities will include the development of digital training resources for all libraries to access, provision of digital leadership training for library managers and digital coordinators, as well as customer services training for the digital environment. These initiatives are closely aligned with the outcomes of the workforce strategy and will be incorporated into the staff training and development program.



One Workforce Objectives

The One Workforce project will:

- identify emerging workforce issues such as skills shortages and risks faced through staff exiting the industry
- develop a range of broad workforce strategies that will underpin the future success of the network
- develop a workforce plan to maintain a culture of change and meet future staffing needs and skill requirements

The primary objectives for this project are to deliver a workforce plan that will:

- enable councils to better conduct strategic planning for their library services to meet community needs
- provide library managers with information to assist with the recruitment of library staff
- establish a core set of competencies for library staff that can be used as the basis for performance management and professional development

Through the One Workforce project there has been an extraordinary degree of collaboration and positivity, and this strength of collaboration across the sector, is second to none compared with other industries in our experience.



Key Findings

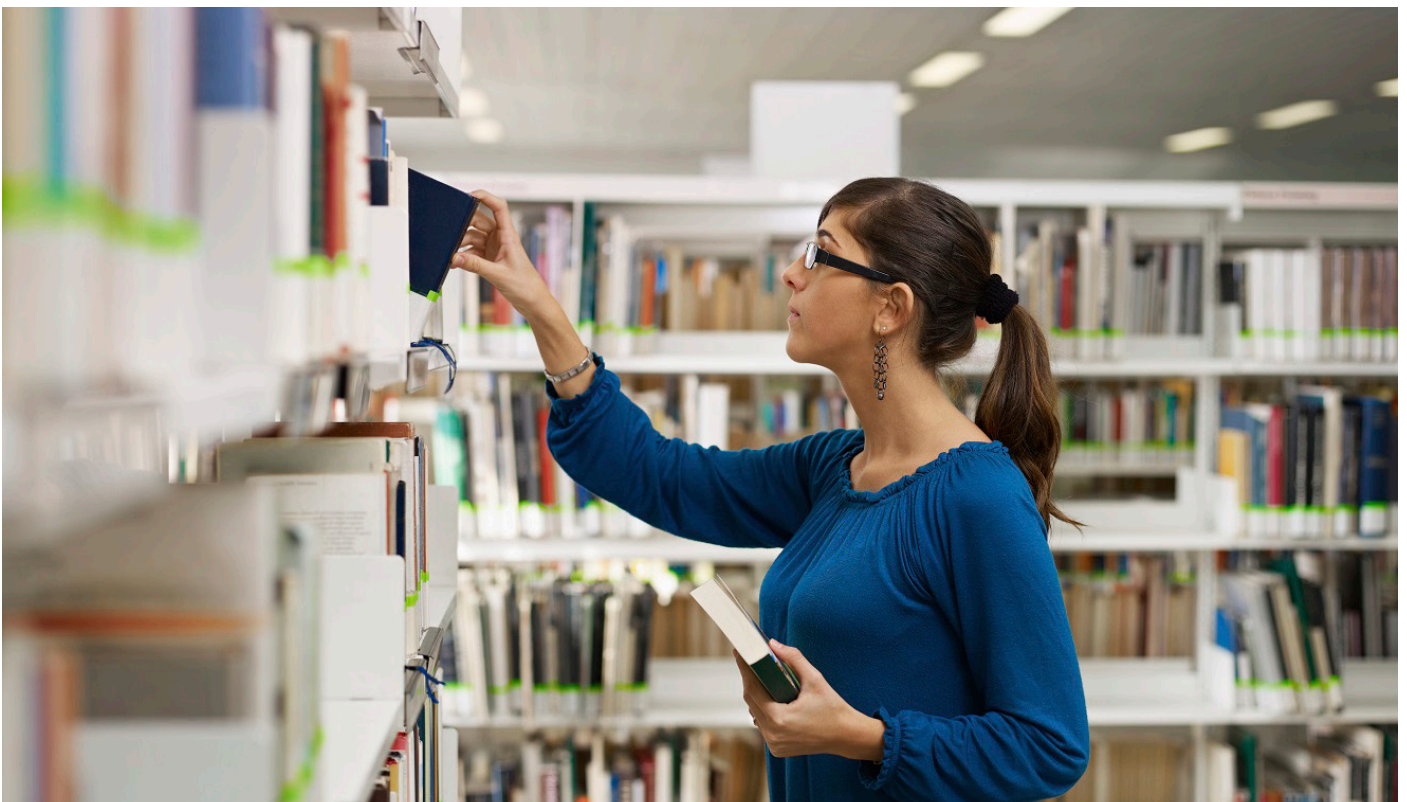
An imperative for the South Australian public library workforce is to transform from the inside out or risk becoming irrelevant, unsustainable and missing the mark on community needs.

The Library workforce of the future will include many roles - information specialist, coach and mentor, facilitator and learner, online collaborator and innovator. People will come to libraries for advice, coaching and ongoing support – as they make their way through their own self-learning and encounter new technologies.

Over the last decade, librarians have been required to perform a number of different roles or perform a number of tasks alongside their areas of specialization and emerging technologies are driving changes to service delivery and the structure of the workforce.

Leading the library workforce through these changes will be a significant challenge. Leadership, skills development, partnering, engaging with the business sector and community, fostering a culture of change and innovation are a core focus for the Public Library Network into the future. Adopting a new way of teaching and delivering information will also be important requiring advanced digital skills, and the ability to use emerging tools and applications. Navigating and curating content while fostering a community connection will also be crucial.

The South Australian Public Library Network (SAPLN) aims to provide libraries that are welcoming and free places for all, continuing to ‘put community at the centre.’ A place where learning, participation, creativity and innovation intersect – bringing together both the physical and digital worlds.



However, there is a gap between the library workforce now and the one needed over the next 3-5 years, often highlighted by the tensions that are apparent between traditional and future workforce attributes as outlined in Table 1.

The following table reflects the comments made and descriptors used by library managers during the one-on-one interviews for the One Workforce project. Feedback suggests that around a third of the current library workforce might identify with the traditional attributes, a third with the future attributes, and a third in the middle cohort requiring support and development. Those that identify with the traditional attributes may be managed to **transition** out of the sector and recruitment for new roles will need to be based upon the future attributes. These future attributes will need to feature in library courses influencing student and new employee recruitment.

Table 1: One Workforce Tensions and Attributes

Traditional	Future
Stable	Curious
Introverted	Conversationalist
Technology phobic	Brave dabbler
Disengaged	Cheer leader
Rules based	Open minded
Social media critic	Social media contributor
Specialist	Multi-skilled
Conservative	Contemporary

Whether these tensions are a result of past recruitment, or a dated perception of libraries, the future library workforce will need to embrace the future attributes and recruit for cultural fit.



This is highlighted by comments from one of the library managers interviewed through this project who said, “There are wonderful people who work in libraries while others are lacking, we need to have a bit of spark, enthusiasm and energy, motivation, with people excited about their work – a can do person.”

Especially when it comes to technology, a “Brave dabbler” is an experimental learner, a trainer and coach – they give it a try first and learn alongside their customers. They are open to new ways of doing things including work flow, have an open mind and say yes first, and then work things out.

This is contrasted with those who are rules based, less experimental and more cautious when faced with change. A lack of confidence or interest may see these staff avoiding new technologies and learning, situations. That being said there is a sense from some library staff, that learning is constant and hard to keep up with, potentially overwhelming and that new tasks are continually being added to library roles.

From feedback gained through interviews with library managers, there are questions on where the future library workforce expertise should lie – is it in library content, as technology experts, is multi skilling best or specialisation?

As outlined in the One Workforce Action Plan (Appendix 1) there are priority workforce development needs across four key areas being:

- **Attraction and recruitment**
- **Career development and human resource management**
- **Upskilling**
- **Succession and transition**

These findings lead to having a structured, systematised approach to understanding the library workforce in South Australia now and into the future, with an evidence based, pragmatic, action plan to address workforce gaps and issues from 2016-2020 as outlined in this report.



Methodology

The methodology for this project marries with the Australian Standards 5620 : 2015 Workforce planning and Workforce BluePrint's **TAKE ACTION** system for workforce planning and development. This began with the design of a project plan covering milestones, deliverables, communication, outcomes and potential risks and working through the **TAKE ACTION** system. The **TAKE ACTION** system starts with understanding:

The full picture, reviewing existing information, and uncovering any other information that may be useful to inform the future workforce and requirements.

The next step is to gather evidence **At this time** on the current workforce profile, undertake a skills stocktake and identify critical job groups (hard-to-fill, knowledge/skill shortages).

Know what you want is the step where you identify the workforce you want into the future using a scenario planning process. Here existing PLS data and information relevant to *Tomorrow's Libraries* was used to determine workforce implications and issues for the future. Meetings with nine library managers and staff across the network provided an opportunity to check and validate existing information, gather evidence on current workforce needs, test the preferred scenario and identify future workforce needs.

Evaluate the gaps follows where all evidence and data collected is analysed, supply gaps and risks are identified between the current and future workforce.

Approaches to address the gaps with workforce development strategies are identified and detailed in the Workforce Action Plan.

Coaching and mentoring support can be provided to library managers and staff to develop a more detailed understanding of workforce planning and development and work with colleagues on a library workforce action plan.

Timelines for workforce development strategy implementation will be prioritized for agreement by stakeholders.

Inspiration is important to consider in a project like this and via a stakeholders forum the final results of the project will be shared gaining commitment to implement the outcomes i.e. the One Workforce Action Plan.

The working party may also be involved in **Ongoing review and consideration** of when the plan needs to be reviewed and updated for the **Next workforce plan**.

Applying the **TAKE ACTION** system provides an evidence base for understanding the library workforce needs and requirements.

1. THE FULL PICTURE

The full picture included reviewing existing information and research:

- South Australian Public Library Network (SAPLN) (2015) Tomorrow's Libraries: Future Directions of the South Australian Public Library Network Report
- State Government's Seven Strategic priorities
- The 10 Economic Priorities
- Empowering Staff Project
- Public Libraries South Australia (PLSA) Workforce Planning Survey (February 2014)
- School Community Library Forward Planning Project
- Hallam, Gillian (2014) Victorian public libraries: Our future, Our skills Research Report. State Library of Victoria

This research identified that the following capabilities will need to be considered when developing a future library workforce:

- administration and staff management
- leadership and business acumen
- expertise in the use of technology and teaching others
- community development and engagement
- customer service, including regular contact with community members about a diverse range of government service issues
- data collection and analysis
- ethics and values, empathy, teamwork, self-management and flexibility
- community programs for all demographics
- marketing and events to promote library services
- project management
- accessing digital resources
- partnership and relationship development that add value to services and innovation opportunities
- literacy development



2. AT THIS TIME – CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE AND ISSUES

A workforce survey was conducted by Public Libraries South Australia (PLSA) for the Workforce Planning Project in 2014. These survey results were checked with people across the sector to confirm that the survey profile and views hadn't shifted dramatically since 2014. Face to face meetings with library managers and leaders were held across eight library services to validate and add to these results.

The intent of the survey was:

- to define and understand the current public library workforce
- to provide a snapshot of staff views about now and the future
- to enable the development of a framework for library leaders and decision makers to help them anticipate and prepare strategically for the future

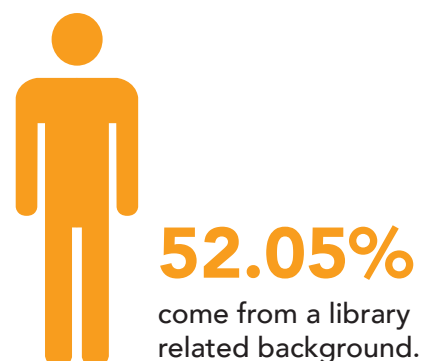
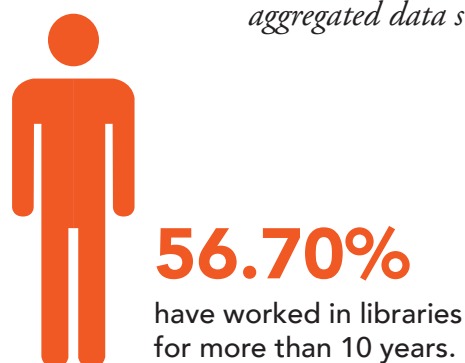
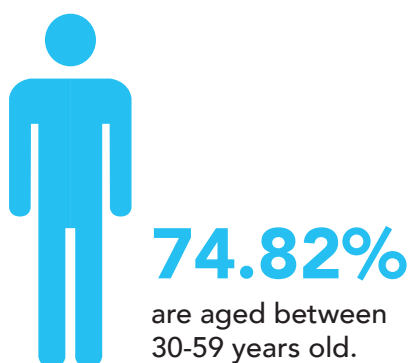
All library staff were invited to participate in the online survey (potentially reaching 725 Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including full time, part time, casual and trainees. 411 responses were received.

The South Australian age profile of the respondents shows a distinctly mature workforce, with nearly 43% over the age of 50. In the context of workforce planning, the number of older workers heading towards retirement is of particular interest.

Library work is highly feminised with women making up nearly 87% of library workers. The workforce is very stable, with little movement as nearly 57% of the workforce have worked in libraries for longer than 10 years. More than half of the workforce come from a library related background (either from another library, library industry, new graduate or traineeship).

DEMOGRAPHICS

aggregated data survey results



The library sector has a very high proportion of permanent staff (over 83%) and, considering that the library industry is undergoing significant change, perhaps there are opportunities to have more flexible structures and work.

It is absolutely important to bring permanent employees along on the change journey. Responses to the survey questions about the future of library services indicated that the majority of staff were very aware of these imminent changes and acknowledge a different skill set is required in future.

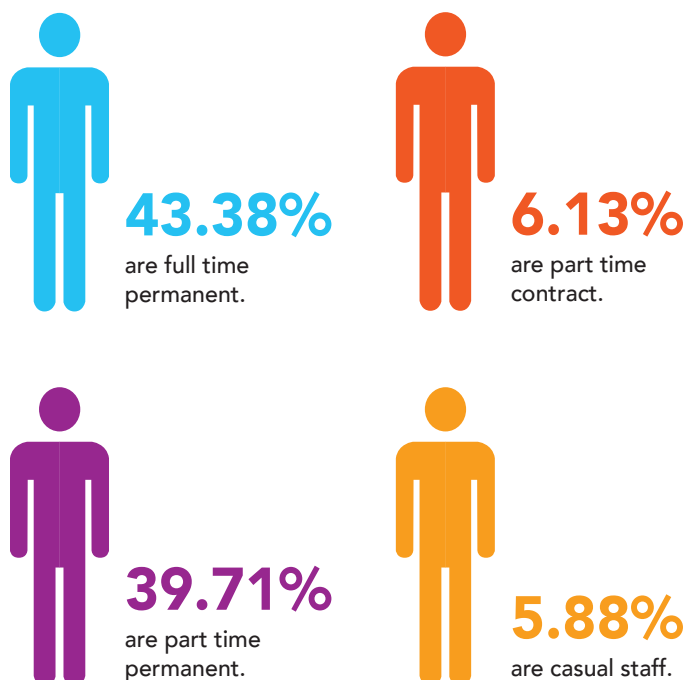
Interestingly of the non-retirement age group (under 50's) over 30% indicated they plan to leave the library industry within the next 10-15 years and over 48% of this particular group indicated they will do so to seek greater career opportunities.

From the survey, 16% of the whole workforce indicated collections as their core role and from the interviews this seems to be the area that is likely to change the most, alongside the growth in programming.

For collections, further consideration needs to be given as to how this is managed across the state, where there might be efficiency gains and customer benefit. The potential for specialist collections and/or virtual collections may have an impact on this role and the skills required. It was interesting to note that 32% of staff surveyed indicated they may exit their current role in the next 5 years. Further data show that it is a combination of retirement (51.22%), but also a desire to advance their career (35.37%).

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

aggregated data survey results



ROLE DIVERSITY

aggregated data survey results



Of those that indicated they are unsure or have no plans to move from their current role, the majority work in customer service (22.65%) and collections (15.47%);

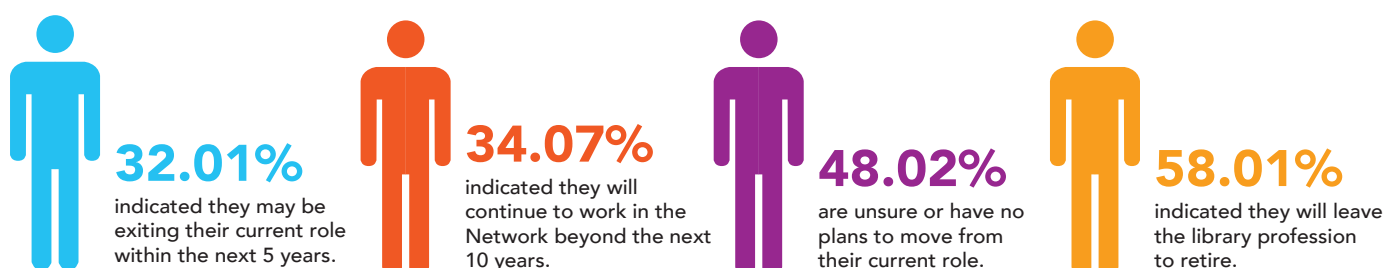
- 37.27% come from a non-library related industry
- the majority have worked in libraries between 10 – 20 years
- well over half of the survey participants indicated they chose libraries as a career choice, and over 81% of them are permanently employed
- nearly 58% of this group are between 30 – 49 years old
- 46% of this group indicated they are NOT interested in taking on added responsibility
- when asked for their reasons for leaving the library industry, 56% indicated retirement, 24% **career development**, 23% better pay and 22% better career opportunities elsewhere

The breakdown of the retiree's data is as follows:

- 21% work in collections, 18% in School Community Libraries, 14% in customer service and 7% indicated they are a manager
- 50% of this group have worked in libraries for over 20 years
- 54% are part time permanent (the majority work over 20 hours per week) and 36% are full time permanent staff – a 90% permanency rate!
- 78% are over 50
- of this group 35% plan to exit their current role within the next 5 years
- 52.49% is planning to stay in their current role for the next 10 - 20 years
- 74% indicated they are NOT interested in taking on added responsibility

FUTURE PLANS

aggregated data survey results



In summary, workforce retention is high and it is hard to move on underperformers due to the permanent nature of the workforce with industrial relations issues to consider. From the survey and validation meetings there were a number of suggestions:

- implement a customer centric approach to providing front of house services, for example removal of front counter, roaming staff and self-check machines
- design a framework for skills exchange and development opportunities across the network i.e. secondments or exchange between libraries
- ensure library roles are advertised widely and in social media
- negotiate changes to the content of the diploma qualification to reflect contemporary public library requirements
- build a mix of cognitive skill (literacy, numeracy), technology skills, and behavioural skills.
- project a modern image of library services and job roles
- better manage work placements and expand program to other courses e.g. technology and occupational therapy, community development, media, teaching etc.
- develop partnerships for programming
- assist to **transition** people out of the library sector who are keen to pursue other opportunities that better suit their skill set.
- investigate greater sharing of resources across regions
- expand understanding and use of social media channels beyond Facebook



The experience of some library managers is that funding for library services is shrinking, and some councils expect more to be delivered with less resources while there is an even greater expectation from the community to see an increase in service provision, without necessarily paying for it.

The majority of survey respondents indicated overwhelming agreement with statements in the survey regarding future changes in library services.

“If we know that our services are going to change, and we know that we are expected to do more with less – how are we going to shift our library services if our staff are not willing to take on additional responsibility? What we do not know is if this group is willing to learn new skills and apply it in their current roles. Further information needs to be sought from our network to understand this better.”



Numerous current workforce issues and gaps were uncovered in meetings with library staff in addition to the survey results including:

- business processes, management and systems
- change management – foreseeing change, identifying the potential impacts, proactively managing communication, all with a positive attitude
- collection development and selection to meet community needs
- digital literacy, new technologies (i.e. apps), social media, and hardware management
- the ability of libraries to engage non-library users
- getting out of the building – exploring activities & events
- changing culture and skill requirements
- development of a network of staff and volunteer trainers across the sector for specialist topics
- lack of career progression and pathways
- marketing and promotions – understanding customer segments, using a variety of marketing channels, building and implementing a promotional campaign
- new graduate's capabilities with feedback on qualifications indicating there is too much of a focus on cataloging and old school knowledge. Instead there needs to be a balance on communication skills, new technologies and customer interaction with work placements providing experience across different domains
- partnerships – strategic development over the long term, internal and external
- pay scales and the value of the roles
- disconnect between community expectations for more services and council's ability to deliver within budget constraints
- the role of the 'Library Manager' is disappearing and instead some libraries are managed by a Manager with a diverse management portfolio
- growth in programming highlights the need to share ideas and resources across regions; e.g. across the Fleurieu with a library taking a leadership role
- understanding learning styles and applying this knowledge when interacting with customers, including coaching and mentoring, or delivering training
- lack of agreement amongst library staff on whether library qualifications are needed. However universal agreement on the need for ongoing professional development is required
- reader's advisory **upskilling** in specialist collections to address community needs
- recruitment of new staff – how, when and where, what mechanisms can be used?
- skills for conversations – being able to approach customers and community members, engage in conversations, being confident about adding value to customer's experience and explaining things well
- **Succession** planning (NB. the City of Adelaide Library is doing this well) with team engagement, coaching and mentoring, teaching/training, and instructing others (across the network this was a strength)

All of these issues need attention, however the

2014 survey uncovered that 50.62% are not interested in taking on additional responsibility. This highlights that a robust communication and workforce engagement strategy is needed and the One Workforce Action Plan (Appendix 1) must address staff resistance and be framed to gain widespread support and agreement. Alongside the implementation of workforce strategies, there is the need for leaders to support cultural change and transformation from the inside out.

following three broad workforce strategies have been identified:

Current workforce:

Boost and build to assist staff to further their careers, and broaden their skills

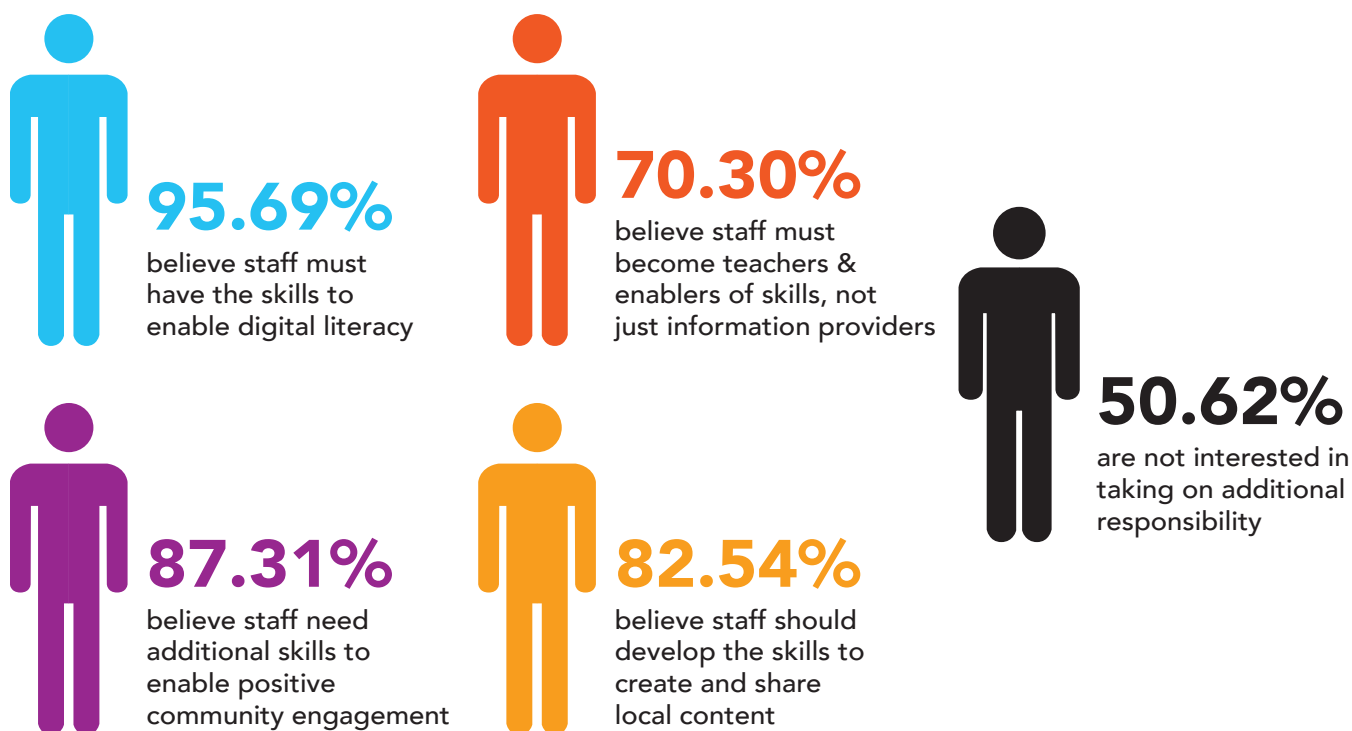
Diversity:

Attracting, selecting and retaining staff with a wide range of skills

Succession planning:

To fill the gap left by retirees

FUTURE TRENDS



From the survey and meetings with staff, the

3. KNOW WHAT YOU WANT - WHAT WILL THE SA PUBLIC LIBRARY WORKFORCE LOOK LIKE IN 2020?

To draw out a preferred picture for the South Australian library workforce in 2020, a library workforce futures forum was facilitated in April 2016 with members of the project reference group answering this question, 'What will the SA Public Library workforce look like in 2020?' And resulting in the following scenario;

'Our library workforce are dynamic 21st century information specialists. We are innovative and respond quickly to changing community needs, and are committed to providing the best possible customer experience.'

The answer to this question was based upon a shared view of the proximate environment in 2020 where the South Australian economy is adjusting from manufacturing and mining, moving to innovation, tourism, produce, services, education, and renewable energy having experienced a potential crisis point by 2020.

By this time the Holden workforce would have disappeared and with economic issues around towns like Whyalla, there may be more people taking early retirement and/or more working on a part time or casual basis. This will also be impacted by more businesses outsourcing tasks and those providing freelancing services. The growth of the peer to peer economy, portfolio workers and global teams will require the reinvention of towns and cities with smart workforces.

With digital literacy being a fundamental skill for all citizens, there could be a leadership role for libraries in creating a community of digital learners that can problem solve, enabling communities to adopt new technologies as they are implemented, learning how to consume digital services. The question becomes, 'Will libraries own this space?'



There will be many redundant skill sets with **upskilling** required, more global workforce flexibility and contract work, with entrepreneurship as a focus and technology as an enabler, especially mobile technology. In terms of unemployment, it is envisaged that many entry level roles will be automated or disappear, impacting on a lower income earning demographic where higher level skills are required, so increasing the workforce participation gap.

South Australia is becoming a lifestyle choice for people from eastern states as well as a city vs. country shift and with increased workforce turnover due to retirements there is an expectation of flexibility.

People working in libraries may not have library qualifications or see libraries as a long-term job or career choice. In fact, looking at workforce demand vs. supply into the future, as things stand now there is a likelihood of an oversupply and perhaps of people who don't have the future capabilities required. It is expected that there will be fewer people overall in the library workforce of around 15% (NB. Could range from 10-20%) and an oversupply of people wanting to work in the library sector by 2020. But new partnerships and opportunities, as well as an emerging role perhaps around digital literacy for communities, could potentially increase the workforce if libraries are proactive in seeking technology partners, business and community engagement, and embracing the digital citizen agenda.

There are a number of driving forces impacting on the future library workforce as outlined in the following table.

Table 2

Certain	Uncertain
Reducing resources and financial investment	Population and immigration change
Technology advances and discoveries	Customer demands and needs or expectations
Workforce demographics shifts	Government policy – persuasion, support and/or budget
Globalisation impacting collections and partnerships	



When validating the preferred future scenario for the South Australian library workforce, which was originally drafted by the One Workforce project reference group, there were some slight changes and consideration of:

- specialist vs. professional language
- seeing change positively, as a way to grow, enabling us to learn, adapt and challenge ourselves
- being confidently adaptive and embracing the challenges that enable us to improve the customer experience

There was consistent feedback from the interviews that a sustainable library workforce into the future may imply a 15% reduction on current sector wide numbers and/or numbers could remain as the status quo. However the project reference group agreed that if libraries explore future partnerships and opportunities then they could see growth and

ownership of a new space in leading digital citizenship and capability development.

The workforce implications for the preferred scenario include the need to provide opportunities to learn with levels and standards for competencies/capabilities built into job descriptions. As job roles become broader, perhaps the titling of roles needs to reflect the focus and intent of the role, which can also lead to better marketing of libraries as a career path. Some people may leave the sector, requiring support for **transition** with peer mentoring and knowledge transfer strategies, especially if they are managers.

Measuring performance of libraries against standards, with a greater emphasis on the national public library standards, will help to improve capabilities, potential investment and outcomes.



The group identified four future critical job roles as:

1. Collections including curation and development to meet needs of the community
2. Digital and Technology including library systems administration
3. Customer Service Operations
4. Program Coordination and Development

For collections roles, development areas identified included selection and collection development, and managing specialist collections. These roles include collection management with a strong emphasis on the use of data (i.e. demographics, and loan patterns) for business decision making. There will be a greater need for staff to respond to community needs through the use of data collection and analysis.

This was in the context of the core of library services being delivered face to face focusing on customer engagement, literacy and learning (especially for children's programs), management, adult programming, education and learning, English as a Second Language and multiculturalism, and information literacy. These services are underpinned by the ability to impart learning experiences, to instruct, guide and teach.

One member of the network provided the following feedback,

“I was looking at the critical roles and thinking of the future, and while I agree that collections will be critical, perhaps not as they are. The development of them could definitely be at a more regional level, and with the focus changed entirely from the management of ‘stock’ to being more facilitators between the existing 1LMS collection and the community. Reporting will give us loan stats, age of collection, turnover, rotation etc. and the community have opportunities to make requests, perhaps even directly to purchasers/suppliers with future systems. But I see this role as more of a networking/community role really working with groups/individuals at a local level to see what would get them in to the library, or gaps which exist for them, or promotion. Less MARC record, labelling, back shop, to more out there, networking, selling...”

Technology systems support was identified as critical because, “...excellent customer service is heavily dependent on technology working properly. We’ve twice been moved to depending (theoretically) on Council IT only. Both times we’ve moved back to support within the Library Service because:

- council IT generally finds the variety of systems and way in which used too complex
- response times too slow for staff and for customers
- often meet can’t do rather than can do attitude.”

The Team Leader for Customer Service was highlighted as,

“... customer service can be provided by a wide range of staff with differing skill levels but should still be consistent and positive. Also need an eye on how practices within different units can affect customer service. Many libraries also combine Council customer service so it can be challenging.”

Given the pressure on budgets and the community demand to be engaged in community activities, collections and co-creation of programs, the management of workforce resources including volunteers will be an increasingly important and difficult role.



From action research and interviews with library managers, future critical capabilities for the library workforce were identified as follows:

- ability to instruct, guide and teach
- digital services
- management of the library – resources, team, politics, managers and team leaders
- being non-judgmental and inclusive
- managing risk
- strategic planning and thinking
- training, coaching and mentoring in a digital literacy context – for customers and staff

On the point of management capabilities, it is understood that wide ranging skills are required, being able to understand libraries as well as the Council environment and politics, staffing, finance, fund raising, and community interactions. Managers need also to look at libraries as a business with positive social outcomes and learn from others by looking at what businesses other than Council and libraries are achieving and how. As e-resources are growing, training, coaching, and mentoring of customers and staff is essential along with knowledge of emerging trends and technologies.

Perhaps more a practice than a capability, is to ensure that library staff continue to exercise the professional values of librarianship including:

- equity of access
- freedom of expression
- right to know
- trust

Ensuring staff are well trained in inclusive behaviours and actively meeting the changing needs of the community is important.

Managing risk, working within the parameters in place from a Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) perspective but working in that space in a nimble, positive and interpretive way, making it accessible and less scary, with confident staff who are neither lone rangers with risk unmanaged, nor timid mice who are worried about using a stapler. Everyone needs to be capable of this, it's not opt in/opt out. And it's not cool, but maybe we can make it like that!





Following the futures forum the project reference group identified that further information was required from the network in order to forecast future job roles. This information was gathered from 26 libraries in May 2016.

The results of this exercise indicated that libraries anticipated limited change in these roles over the next three years.

When responding to the question, 'How is your FTE split over Library Operations, Library Collections, Literacy and Learning?'

- Library Operations – most indicated 50% but responses ranged from 30-60%
- Collections - most indicated 25% but responses ranged from 10-45%
- Literacy and Learning – most indicated 25% but responses ranged from 10-55%

Over the next 12 months libraries expect to increase staffing but only by a small percentage. The change in workforce split over this time was expected to be the same for most libraries however a small number indicated they would increase their workforce numbers in Literacy and Learning. When considering the likely scenario in two years' time libraries indicated little change in

staff numbers, with only a very slight increase. Future workforce issues were identified from action research, survey results and interviews as follows:

- aging workforce with staff heading into retirement with significant knowledge
- breakdown of barriers within council and the ability of library leaders to influence internally
- broad base of skills required in the future vs. specialists skills of the past
- caliber and diversity of recruits needs to expand
- change management needed across the sector to develop a new culture
- coaching and mentoring of emerging managers and leaders
- workforce capacity to assist the community to participate in the digital environment
- dealing with intergenerational groups
- lack of diversity in the workforce
- fluid work structure and flexible work arrangements
- future proofing the network by building emotional resilience within the workforce
- library services are seen as less critical and complex than other council services

- manual handling and WHS training with risk management approaches shared across the network
- need for more people to be open minded and have an innovative headset
- trend towards additional portfolios being incorporated into the library manager role
- pay scales are not reflective of the ALIA guidelines
- counter a perception that “anyone can do the library customer service role”
- people and project management capacity
- political positioning in context of council and budget (cuts)
- lack of capacity to explore future services and opportunities
- failure to fully capitalise on the potential offered by the One Card collection
- capability development in partnership building

Research from other industry sectors indicates that the following capabilities will be important in all workforces:

- Adaptability and Emotional Management
- Communication and Influence
- Digital and Social
- Cultural and Global
- Purpose and Vision
- Learning and Mastery
- Intelligence and Imagination
- 21st Century STEM
- Career and Workforce

The evidence from the previous steps in the workforce planning and development system now lead into the identification of gaps, priorities, responsibilities and recommended workforce development strategies, based on the findings of the research, and in response to the risks, trends, key themes and supply gaps.



4. EVALUATE THE GAPS

The analysis has identified many gaps when considering the current and future library workforce. In this section and the next, the gaps have been clustered and themed into four key areas.

1. Attraction and Recruitment

- calibre of new recruits
- challenge to recruit library managers in country locations
- critical job roles require specific workforce development strategies to attract and retain skilled people
- future workforce requirements – need to build a workforce that is diverse, highly sought after, well qualified, skilled and well paid
- lack of career progression opportunities
- pay scales and perception of the library customer service role
- poaching of skilled team members

2. Career Development and Human Resources

- complexity of job roles and lack of position description templates to reflect contemporary requirements
- lack of **career development** and planning for individuals in context of the network
- lack of understanding about the key connections and expertise that lies within the network
- unclear picture (for some) of the gap between the current and the future workforce needed
- tentativeness about exploring co-funding of specialist roles/needs across regions

3. Upskilling

In the One Workforce Action Plan (Appendix 1) the gaps and actions relating to the **upskilling** theme have been grouped into the following categories:

21st Century Capabilities

- attitude (negative) towards taking on added responsibility and learning new skills
- digital literacy level and utilisation of e-resources
- lean thinking and entrepreneurial capabilities
- new discovery technologies
- marketing and promotional skills
- qualifications – review and input to match future workforce requirements

Collections and Content

- collection development capability
- conflict management skills
- data analysis skills
- program development and coordination capabilities
- readers advisory expertise
- skills for conversations

Library Leader

- leadership and management capabilities in managing a culture of change
- partnership development capabilities
- strategic thinking ability

4. Succession and Transition

- ability to manage **succession** planning, career **transition** (viable pathways) and knowledge transfer



5. ACTION

collaboration across South Australian libraries. Compared to other industry sectors, there is a high degree of confidence and enthusiasm to implement a practical 3-year One Workforce Action Plan, outlining professional development activities. In conjunction with all stakeholders including ALIA there are development needs that can be managed through a statewide approach.

The One Workforce Action Plan (Appendix 1) provides further detail on skills gaps/issues, desired outcomes and proposed workforce development strategies. A summary of the key actions contained in the plan are outlined below.

Attraction and Recruitment

- change the perception of library roles through blogs, podcasts, social media and work experience, plus record 'A day in the life of' videos
- define pathways for future graduate recruits by engaging with the education sector to promote libraries as a potential career opportunity (i.e. technology, media, community engagement etc.).
- promote libraries to the future workforce through engaging with schools, students, teachers and parents, Vocational Education and Training, and higher education institution partnerships
- expand work experience and volunteer programs through partnerships and local connections



Career Development and Human Resources

- identify in-house (across the network) experts and trainers
- establish a central repository for position descriptions and share across the network
- explore opportunities for greater staff rotation and temporary secondment opportunities across the network

Upskilling

- align professional development opportunities to the ALIA continuous professional development program.
- explore linking ALIA accreditation with performance development programs.
- provide opportunities for project based learning including general training on risk assessments for activities and events. This could include promotion, delivery and management of the event itself as well as the related budget and resources; how to work with other groups and manage partnerships, donations, friends groups and funds; managing tense moments, balancing connections and relationships working with challenging people and groups; and negotiation skills.
- provide development opportunities for staff to learn about service models in other libraries and/or other industries.

- facilitate an innovative hack event for library programming and strategic planning that focuses on 'action' i.e. the development of a strategic plan, design of a new program schedule that taps into connections, ideas and the experience of others in a similar role across different libraries.
- deliver a Library Futures series that incorporates digital literacy and new discovery technologies, e-resources, lean thinking and entrepreneurship, 21st Century Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
- provide opportunities for staff to develop knowledge and skills in social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Periscope, Pinterest, Snapchat, Twitter
- provide tech try and learn sessions to increase understanding of the digital environment including the use of apps, hardware and social media
- provide greater training for state-wide e-resources

Succession and Transition

- share information and policies on flexible work arrangements including phased retirement and develop knowledge transfer strategies for experienced team members working with people new to the library workforce

CONCLUSION

The South Australian Public Library Network workforce must transform from the inside out and at a faster rate than the change that is happening around the sector. This means carving a distinct role in developing digital literacy, being at the forefront of new discovery technologies and designing creative programs that meet emerging community needs.

Being comfortable with change, providing outstanding service, proactively addressing current and future workforce needs forms the basis of the One Workforce where traditional approaches are overtaken by future attributes.

Developing 21st Century capabilities through upskilling, promoting library roles to enhance attraction and recruitment, planning and managing careers for the longer term, and assisting people through succession and transition, are priorities in the 'One Workforce Action Plan'.

The next three years will be crucial for the public library workforce in South Australia, with the opportunity to demonstrate untold value to the communities that they serve and to prepare people for an uncertain future, where digital and social literacy will be a key to success in life.

