



*Library and Information Association
of New Zealand Aotearoa
Te Rau Herenga O Aotearoa*

Arts, Culture and Heritage Portfolio

BRIEFING FOR THE INCOMING MINISTER

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1. Executive Summary

Libraries play a critical role in society, ensuring equity of access to information and assisting in bridging the digital divide. They also play an important part in the capture of our shared heritage and the telling of our national story.

Key benefits delivered by libraries include:

- Increased literacy and educational outcomes for communities
- Improved societal well-being
- Improved economic outcomes, especially in rural regions

We are delighted that the Labour Party Manifesto recognises this important role, and we support the following:

- Increase funding to speed up critical digitisation of heritage collections across New Zealand so existing collections are available online as quickly as possible
- Support Archives NZ, the NZ Film Archive, as well as public and private galleries, libraries, archive organisations and museums to work collaboratively to develop a smart and consistent approach to archiving cultural materials nationally and in the community
- Commit to Archives New Zealand and the National Library being provided with an alternate governance model providing greater independence; which may sit outside the Department of Internal Affairs
- Implement legislation in line with UNESCO Guidelines on Libraries to have free public library services enshrined in law

2. About us

The New Zealand Library Association Inc, (LIANZA) is the national organisation supporting organisations and professionals working in library and information services throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. LIANZA represents 379 institutions and 1418 individuals.

Founded in 1910 the Association serves and promotes the interests of the Aotearoa New Zealand library and information industry. It advises and advocates on developments in libraries; promotes excellence and quality in librarianship with a range of awards and recognition; supports reading, authors and publishers through its long standing book awards, including the oldest award in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Esther Glen medal; and encourages lifelong learning for those working libraries through its professional registration scheme and professional development opportunities.

LIANZA maintains links with national and international bodies with similar values and objectives. It has a partnership with Te Rōpu Whakahau, and is a member of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

3. The role and impact of libraries

Libraries play a key role in the communities they serve, creating equity of access to information both digitally and physically, enabling civic participation, supporting reading for pleasure, and enhancing community social and economic outcomes.

Literacy is a significant focus in central government strategy, from the TEC initiative to improve literacy of university graduations to the Department of Corrections initiative to improve literacy of offenders. In addition to language literacy libraries support the new literacies including digital literacy, information literacy, and media literacy.

As the boundaries of privacy and data protection continue to be redefined a key component of digital literacy that libraries will support, will be in helping community members manage and protect their privacy in the digital world.

Reading for pleasure has been demonstrated to have significant positive societal outcomes in addition to improving literacy within a community, such as supporting economic development, and enhancing empathy and mental well-being. Reading for pleasure on the part of school children during holidays also prevents the “Summer reading loss”. It has been shown that children who do not have access to reading material over school holidays can end up several years behind their peers with regard to literacy levels by the time they graduate from high school. Libraries play a critical role in ensuring all aspects of society have access to material to enable reading for pleasure. In addition librarians are able to curate collections designed to appeal to the tastes, information needs, and reading levels of the communities they serve.

Libraries also have an essential role in collecting, preserving, curation, and sharing the history and memories of a city and its communities. This not only supports community groups in capturing and telling their story, but also supports the growing trend of heritage tourism.

From a purely financial perspective ROI studies across public, health, tertiary, and special libraries shows an ROI that ranges from 3:1 to 17:1 – a fantastic return on investment for every dollar spent.

Finally libraries play a critical function in the provision of a commercial free community space, where all parts of the community can meet on an equal footing. A recent report to Auckland Council notes that “A key tenet of the new ‘future libraries’ being developed around the world... is the importance of ‘library as public space’.” As the last non-commercial space available to many within the community the library has an incredibly important role in engaging with and meeting community needs.

Specific examples of library success in these areas are:

- Digital literacy (training classes in basic computing, using e-devices, managing privacy on the internet and social networks)
- Better economic outcomes (CV and resume support, assisting with job applications, access to the web)
- Better societal outcomes (treatment for mental illness through the books by prescription scheme; Engagement with people experiencing homelessness to support their use of reading and technology to connect with their families or networks; Support for migrants and

refugees through information and provision of content and programmes in their languages supports their successful integration and sense of belonging)

- Improved literacy and better test results for school children (where a professional school librarian is providing value add services in their library)
- Assisting with university preparedness (through the Tertiary Prep Programme)
- Better health care (contributed to avoidance of adverse patient events through a change in the way that protocols were disseminated by health librarians in the DHB setting).
- Improving PBRF results in the tertiary setting (through the development of technology that aids academics in tracking and measuring the impact and reach of their scholarly publications)
- Maintained and even increased reading levels over school holidays (programmes evaluated confirm this)

4. The Future of Libraries and the National Library Strategy

In 2015 LIANZA held the Future of Libraries Summit. LIANZA brought key stakeholders and members of the Aotearoa New Zealand Library and Information profession together to develop a shared future for Aotearoa New Zealand Libraries. The report from that day and documented outcomes can be found here: <https://lianza.org.nz/our-work/projects/future-libraries-summit>

The profession indicated clearly through their feedback that they expect National Library to take a leadership role, in partnership with other peak sector bodies, in delivering that future. We were delighted to see that the National Library Strategic plan, *Turning Knowledge into Value – Strategic Directions to 2030*, contained some of the key themes raised during this planning day and also indicates that the National Library will be assuming that leadership role.

We are strongly in support of this strategy, developed after significant community engagement, and believe the three strands: Taonga, Mōhio tangā (Knowledge), and Pānui (Reading) deliver on the purpose of National Library as outlined in the Act. We are excited to see the changes National Library is rolling out in order to deliver on these critical outcomes.

If realised the current National Library strategy *Turning Knowledge into value: strategic directions to 2030* will support and enhance these outcomes for New Zealand communities, however, there are many constraints within the existing structure. Libraries are not currently resourced at a level in line with their value-proposition to society, the legislation environment is not conducive to effective library and information services, and system constraints impede progress.

However, due to the efficiency regime that National Library (like the whole of government) has been operating under since the 2008 global financial crisis, existing workstreams are already under-resourced. National Library has indicated they will partner with the sector to identify those areas for priority in resource allocation, however, in order to realise this transformation strategy we believe that central government will need to re-imagine current funding models.

5. The National Library Act (2003)

The National Library Strategic plan clearly delivers on the outcomes expected for the library as articulated by The National Library Act (2003):

1. Collect, preserve, and protect documents (particularly those relating to New Zealand) and ensure they are accessible for all the people of New Zealand
2. Supplement and further the work of other New Zealand libraries
3. Work collaboratively with other institutions having similar purposes

The National Library Act implies a close working relationship between the Minister and the National Librarian and articulates a need for the National Librarian to drive sector collaboration. This is supported by an expectation that the National Librarian take on a strong leadership role within the sector.

The Labour Manifesto recognises this articulating a need for both National Library and Archives New Zealand to have independence and influence in order to fulfil their legislated role. Greater autonomy and focus provided to National Library operations would support other directions of the new government.

There is a commitment to increase funding to speed up critical digitisation of heritage collections across New Zealand so existing collections are available online as quickly as possible, but this requires coordination amongst collection holders, and continued development of technology that allows easy and useful access to the content which in turn requires National Library leadership and resourcing.

Progress against “Supplementing and supporting the work of other libraries”, and in particular public libraries has also slowed down. LIANZA urges the new government to allow National Library to reinvest time, focus and resourcing for this critical activity which in turn supports stronger communities, through equitable information access for New Zealanders by assisting in the removal of capability and technology access barriers.

While there have been some benefits from the positioning of National Library within DIA the work that National Library undertakes is not core business for DIA.

We would welcome alternate governance models that better support the strategic outcomes of the National Library.

7 Legislation for Public Libraries

As per the Labour Party Manifesto we strongly support the introduction of a Public Library Act, in the vein of the National Library Act, enfranchising in law the benefits that public libraries offer communities.

We believe that legislating community access to Library Services is critical.

The UNESCO Public Library Manifesto states that:

To ensure nationwide library coordination and cooperation, legislation and strategic plans must also define and promote a national library network based on agreed standards of service.

Until the Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Bill was passed in 2012 local government authorities had responsibility for the four well-beings (social, economic, environmental, and cultural) of their communities. These priorities were removed being cited by the government at the time as unrealistic. SOLGM make the point that cultural, social, and community activities may no longer be appropriate under this act. At the same time the ability of councils to use development contributions to fund libraries was removed. While Libraries are still described as a core service, legislation providing both protection and funding has been weakened.

The following are countries that have Acts that allow for the provision of effective library services:

- Finland <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/finnish.htm>
- Catalonia, Spain <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/spain.pdf>
- Czech Republic <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/czech.htm>
- Denmark <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/danish.htm>
- Norway <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/norway.htm>
- Philippines <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/philippinesact.pdf>
- Sweden <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/swedish.htm>
- Australia <http://www.nsla.org.au/publication/annual-australian-public-library-statistics>

Many of these countries also have more collaboration between school and public libraries by virtue of their governance and funding models, which supports a life-long learning approach.

6. Copyright

Effective copyright legislation supports the use and reuse of information, and is a critical component underpinning societal innovation. It is important to get the balance right, ensuring that rights-holders / creators are rewarded for their work, while still enabling the innovation that arises from building on others ideas. Where a regime is too restrictive innovation is stifled, however, where a regime is too permissive rights holders are not incentivised to create.

Aotearoa New Zealand was scheduled to hold a copyright review in 2013, however, this was delayed due to the TPP negotiations, and the review process began in July of this year. This review will be critical to restoring a balance between the rights of copyright holders with those of users of

copyright materials, and we are delighted that as per the Labour Party Manifesto there is intent to proceed with the review.

We recommend that a “Fair Use” regime be implemented as part of this review, ensuring that this balance between creator and consumer is restored.

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