

THE LIBRARY AGENCY

AN OUTLINE PROPOSAL FOR 2010

Prepared for PLAssoc

Sue McKerracher 16 November, 2009

**An independent unit serving
Australian libraries**

```
graph TD; A[An independent unit serving Australian libraries] --> B[Working on behalf of sector associations]; B --> C[Lobbying on behalf of public libraries];
```

**Working on behalf of sector
associations**

**Lobbying on behalf of
public libraries**

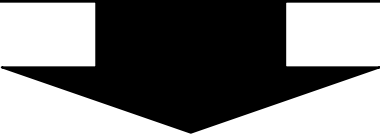
Imagine an independent unit, working title The Library Agency, acting on behalf of ALIA, PLA and PLAssoc, with the involvement of NSLA, to lobby influencers and decision-makers in government and other critical organisations

The Library Agency would deliver:

- A national vision and framework for public libraries in Australia
- A program of lobbying for public libraries at State and Federal level

It would also provide a mechanism for public libraries to negotiate with Federal Government for a National Year of Reading

Lobbying on behalf of existing public library bodies



ALIA, PLA, PLAssoc, FOLA are all in agreement that public libraries need the ear of Federal Government but as separate bodies, with different structures, it is difficult for these bodies to act in unison

An independent agent acting on behalf of all groups, collating ideas and building on the work of the individual organisations could be the answer

The Library Agency would welcome input from all quarters and as an objective third party would negotiate a common platform for lobbying, enabling the library sector to present a united front to the Federal Government

This would flow through submissions to Government on key topics such as the National Broadband Network

There would also be the opportunity to identify and draw on existing and new academic research, much of it funded by Government departments

All public library bodies agree to participate

```
graph TD; A[All public library bodies agree to participate] --> B[Shared vision and national framework for public libraries]; B --> C[Business case for Federal Government funding to deliver national programs];
```

Shared vision and national framework for public libraries

Business case for Federal Government funding to deliver national programs

Work has already started on a vision and national framework for public libraries, following on from the ALIA Public Libraries Summit in July

Initial contact has been made with Rudd Government ministers and back-benchers, with meetings arranged for December and February 2010

The vision and framework will be turned into a business case, inviting the Federal Government to fund a few national programs – early discussions have suggested marketing as a possible option and a National Year of Reading in 2012

Support for individual States and Territories



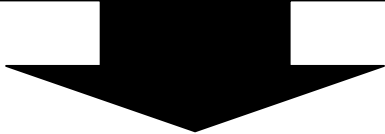
In order to create a strong national voice for public libraries, The Library Agency would need a detailed overview, based on a clear understanding of the issues in each of the States and Territories

In several States and Territories lobbying and advocacy at this government level is already fully covered and The Library Agency would be briefed by the State Association executives

In others, The Library Agency would provide support for local lobbying in the form of advice, fact sheets, key messages, tailored communications, contact with politicians and campaign planning

In addition, a shared public library newsletter could be produced, with the opportunity for each State and Territory Association to tailor it to the local audience by adding its own stories

Deliverables for public library partners



Independent agency, working on behalf of all partners

Aggregating the ideas and resources of all participants in the public library sector

Enabling the sector to approach Federal Government with a united voice

RELATIONSHIPS

Establish active relationships with at least three Federal Government contacts

Create the opportunity for library sector spokespeople to meet with them

Provide the basis for further relationship-building with elected members and ministerial advisers

CONSENSUS

Complete the production of a shared vision and national framework for public libraries, aligned with the new National Standards

RESOURCES

Maintain a library of media cuttings, research, statistics, quotes, fact sheets and disseminate this information via the partner networks

Shared public library newsletter

NATIONAL PROGRAMS

Produce a business case for up to three national public library programs, including a National Year of Reading, endorsed and at least part-funded by the Federal Government

REGIONAL SUPPORT

Lobbying advice, campaign planning and support material for States and Territories where required

The Library Agency proposition



UK experience and credentials

Proven performance with the ALIA Disaster Recovery program and Little Book of Public Libraries

All 2009 projects delivered on time and within budget

PLAssoc's agenda, actioned by a 'tried and tested' professional who understands the sector and is keen to work collaboratively with all the public library bodies

A client-agency relationship based on friendly, efficient service with a clear set of deliverables

Excellent results and the achievement of PLAssoc's goals, to the credit of the organisations, their management committees, executives, administrators and members



To whom it may concern

Reference for Sue Meeson

Sue Meeson worked for the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) on a full-time consultancy basis from June 2004 to September 2005, during which period I was very pleased with her work. Her role with us was to develop a marketing strategy and action plan to support and enable the definition of a common identity and agenda for all public libraries in England as part of the Framework for the Future programme.

Sue carried out this work to a very high standard. She was quick to build up a good understanding of our sector, and her professional marketing expertise ensured the development of a first-rate strategy and plan. In particular, her excellent communication skills meant that she was able to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including senior local authority officers, government ministers, commercial organisations (e.g. PR and marketing companies), library staff etc.

Sue was also a very welcome addition to our small team, relating well to colleagues and always willing to share her knowledge and expertise. We were very sorry to see her leave at the end of her term with us, and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend her work to others.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Stevens'.

Andrew Stevens

Framework for the Future Manager
Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

andrew.stevens@mla.gov.uk

THE LIBRARY AGENCY

Sue McKerracher

M: 0404 456749

T: 03 9890 3345

E: suemckerracher@aol.com