

QUEENSLAND PUBLIC LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

ABOUT QPLA

Queensland Public Libraries Association is the peak representative body for public libraries in Queensland. QPLA liaises with key stakeholders and decision makers on current issues; coordinates professional development and networking opportunities for members; promotes the role and value of public libraries and facilitates cooperative projects at local, state and national levels.

OUR VISION

A powerful network of valued, diverse and resilient public libraries for Queensland

PURPOSE

QPLA exists to leverage the scale, represent the diversity and strengthen the network of Queensland Public Libraries by:

* Providing representation, advocacy and support for members at local, state and national levels
* Creating and facilitating opportunities for public libraries and stakeholders to collaborate, co-operate and share information and ideas
* Championing the achievements of member libraries through recognition and awards programs and showcasing best practice
* Supporting Professional Development through coordination of conferences, workshops and networking events

OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES

* Increased community and government awareness of the role and value of public libraries
* Proactive and innovative systems and processes
* Well-informed members of an active network
* Responsive, accountable governance and a sustainable association.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN QUEENSLAND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

* Member library services and councils
* Queensland public library users and the wider community
* State Library of Queensland
* Local Government Association Queensland, including Local Buy
* State Government
* Other public library and local government associations
* Australian Library and Information Association

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT:

Queensland public libraries have evolved to be many things to many people. Their Councils are often financially challenged and this is reflected in an even greater requirement for libraries to present a strong value proposition. While budgets are under pressure public libraries are more popular than ever before, with more than two million registered library users in Queensland.

As placemakers, community hubs and technology trendsetters, Public libraries are strategically positioned to thrive in the new economy of Lifestyle and Liveability and the Smart City movement. To achieve their potential they need:

* Their role to be valued and understood in a 21 century context
* A modern voice that amplifies the already positive library brand
* Greater visibility of their positive impact within Councils and the community
* Continuing staff development in areas of leadership, digital capability, diversity of professional skills and remuneration that reflects the work performed.

Public libraries operate within the context of the new Vision for Queensland public libraries – Realising Our Potential; the ALIA Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Public libraries; the Queensland Guidelines and Standards for Public Libraries; as well as the legislative and policy framework relevant to local government.

MISSION

With this background, QPLA’s mission is to represent the interests of public libraries across the state through:

* Representation, advocacy and support that recognises the diversity of libraries within the state while also respecting their independence
* Collaboration, cooperation and sharing of ideas and information
* Recognition of achievements and showcasing best practice
* Professional Development and networking

QPLA works collaboratively with the State Library of Queensland and other library associations to represent, advocate, recognise and progress public library services and develop strategic partnerships with state and federal governments, businesses, not-for-profits and other stakeholders.

The QPLA operates through an Executive Board and regional branch structure and is primarily funded by institutional membership fees.

ISSUES

The opportunities and challenges for Queensland’s public libraries include:

* The need to reinforce and strengthen our public library network, ensuring that QPLA membership covers the majority of the state’s public libraries
* Diversity in public libraries – rural, regional and metropolitan
* Measuring and reporting on the impact of services in addition to usage and inputs.
* Maintaining an effective and productive relationship with the State Library of Queensland
* Continuous development of staff to ensure they are skilled for the future
* Development of current and future library leaders, including succession planning
* Achieving the service levels identified in the extensive range of public library service guidelines and standards – at state and national levels
* Working in an environment characterised by increased expectations, technological change and constrained funding
* Exercising a modern social voice through library managed social media channels
* Leveraging public libraries extensive community reach through their physical spaces and online
* Increased agile service delivery such as pop up and other outreach activities
* Leveraging our strong alignment to the new Lifestyle and Liveability economy and the Smart City movement
* Library facilities which strengthen local identity and are fit for providing modern library experiences and place-making
* Variability in quality of ICT infrastructure across local government to support modern library operations and customer expectations
* Competitive salaries to attract and retain talented library staff and managers
* Ongoing cycle of review for Public Library Guidelines and Standards
* Collaboration with other library industry associations to represent, advocate, showcase and lobby on behalf of public libraries on matters of state and national significance
* Leveraging strategic partnerships with other bodies such as government at federal and state level, other areas of local government (education, cultural and community development), universities, industry vendors and other businesses, community groups and other organisations
* Contributing to Australian libraries’ achievement of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

ROLE

The QPLA committee are experienced senior staff currently working in public libraries throughout Queensland. The committee has identified the challenges and opportunities of the current environment and reviewed the feedback from library staff and stakeholders gathered through the process to develop a new vision for Queensland public libraries. This has enabled the committee to review the Association’s role in terms of representation, advocacy and support; recognition; collaboration, cooperation and sharing; and professional development and networking for leaders and staff. The committee also embraces good governance and sustainability of QPLA as an organisation.

**REPRESENTATION, ADVOCACY & SUPPORT**

QPLA is an active participant in national and state-based advocacy programs led by the sector’s peak national bodies and works with the State Library of Queensland and the Australian Public Library Alliance. QPLA provides feedback that represents the diverse views of member libraries while respecting their independence and supports members in their advocacy with councils, providing evidence and resources for library managers. In these and other ways, QPLA plays a vital role in advocacy, representation and support for Queensland public libraries.

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| **Objectives** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** | **Performance indicators** |
| Increased community and government awareness of the role, value and needs of public libraries through the provision of trusted and reliable representation, advocacy and support. | President of QPLA, or their proxy, to attend SLQ Public Library Advisory Group meetings to represent the range of interests of Queensland Public Libraries. This includes updates to PLAG on matters related to Queensland public libraries and APLA. | Ongoing | QPLA President, or proxy, to attend all PLAG meetings. |
| QPLA representative nominated and involved in reviews of SLQ standards and guidelines, grant reviews, state-wide programs and visioning activities etc. | Ongoing | QPLA committee member is nominated to represent and contribute to reviews and report to the committee on progress or issues. |
| QPLA President, or their proxy, represents the interests of Queensland Public Libraries through involvement in the Australian Public Library Alliance (APLA) and associated initiatives. | Ongoing | QPLA President, or proxy, participates in all APLA meetings including teleconferences, planning meetings and relevant initiatives. |
| Use QPLA and stakeholder communication channels to promote the role and value of Queensland public libraries and secure sustainable funding. This includes raising the profile of Queensland’s public libraries within their community, local and state governments, stakeholders within the library industry and other relevant organisations in the corporate and not-for-profit sectors. | Ongoing | Active use of QPLA communication collateral and channels, including website, social media, YouTube etc. |
| In the lead up to State and Local government elections inform candidates of the value of Public Libraries in Queensland. | 2020  2022 | Information prepared and sent to candidates prior to election. |

**RECOGNITION**

Recognising and celebrating the achievements of Queensland’s public libraries has been a significant strength of QPLA and this remains a focus for the association.

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| **Objectives** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** | **Performance indicators** |
| Recognition and promotion of outstanding achievements and innovation in public library services. | Coordinate the Queensland Local Government of the Year Award | Annually | QPLA project group established and coordinates awards program. Number of entries received for the awards. |
| Recognise excellence in Queensland public libraries by providing opportunities to highlight their achievements and innovative programs, for example, coordinate Poster session for the biennial conference which includes delegate voting for best poster. | Ongoing | The QPLA biennial conference to include a Poster session which includes delegate voting for best poster. |
| Promote the achievements of Queensland public libraries through the QPLA website, social media, newsletter etc. and other media such as Public Libraries Connect; ALIA, APLA news etc. | Ongoing | Website updated on a monthly basis; newsletter and other media carry regular stories highlighting achievements and innovation. |

**COLLABORATION, CO-OPERATION & SHARING**

QPLA fosters collaboration between member libraries, the State Library of Queensland and the LGAQ. Through its membership of APLA, QPLA collaborates with other similar State and Territory associations and participates in national initiatives that benefit Queensland public libraries and their users. Sharing ideas and best practice remain a focus for the association.

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| **Objectives** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** | **Performance indicators** |
| QPLA and SLQ have a productive and collaborative relationship that works towards the common good and respects the independence and objectives of each organisation. | Engagement with SLQ through membership of PLAG and involvement in working groups and initiatives.  Note: the PLAG Terms of Reference | Ongoing | QPLA President, or their proxy, attend all PLAG meetings.  QPLA representative is involved in SLQ working groups and initiatives. For example, revisions of Public Library Guidelines and Standards, First 5 Forever and Collections grant reviews and reporting, vision and strategy working groups. |
| Leverage strategic relationships and partnerships with other organisations. | Collaborate with other public library associations and third-party organisations through APLA and ALIA to develop the national vision and framework for public libraries, provide feedback, promote and or implement projects and initiatives that develop programs, products and services and advocate for libraries including sustainable funding. Examples include providing information to support reports and advocacy, communication using all parties’ networks, support for national programs such as The Australian Reading Hour, Summer Reading Club, UN Sustainable Development Goals, collaboration with Australian Government agencies. | 2018-2022 | Involvement through APLA and ALIA in support of reports and advocacy, national campaigns and initiatives, such as Australian Reading Hour, Summer Reading Club, SDG awareness and reporting etc. |
| Build and strengthen strategic partnerships with LGAQ, (including Local Buy), state government departments, ALIA, APLA and other organisations and stakeholders. | 2018-2022 | Partnerships explored and implemented where feasible. |
| Deliver the agreed terms of reference with APLA in the Memorandum of Collaboration 2017/18-2020/21 | Annually | QPLA activity supports the terms of reference agreed with APLA. |
| Facilitate staff exchanges between local government areas | As requested | Process established by QPLA to facilitate exchanges is used. |

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & NETWORKING**

Professional development is essential if library leaders and staff are to keep their knowledge and skills future ready. QPLA runs a successful program of PD events and activities – the flagship being the QPLA biennial conference.

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| **Objectives** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** | **Performance indicators** |
| Providing professional development and networking opportunities. | Organise and deliver the QPLA biennial conference in partnership with a local government. | 2019 and 2021 | QPLA biennial conference event takes place |
| Organise and deliver the QPLA biennial Professional Development Intensive in partnership with a local government. | 2018, 2020 and 2022 | QPLA biennial PD Intensive takes place |
| Where appropriate, QPLA will consider supporting a limited number of bursaries, in conjunction with a selection process, to enable staff from QPLA member libraries to attend conferences and or PD events. | 2018-2022 | Bursaries considered and implemented as appropriate. |

**GOOD GOVERNANCE & SUSTAINABLE ASSOCIATION**

QPLA is a successful association of long-standing which directly represents the majority of the state’s public libraries. The Association welcomes membership from all Queensland local governments. The committee will operate the association in an efficient and effective manner and in compliance with the QPLA Constitution.

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| **Objectives** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** | **Performance indicators** |
| Build capacity to deliver the activities described in this strategic plan. | Identify within the budget funding for paid administrative, executive, accounting, research and report writing support. | 2018-2022 | Appropriate staffing resources are in place. |
| Establish project and working groups as appropriate to support the objectives of the association, for example, to coordinate professional development, bursaries, input into reviews etc. | 2014 and ongoing | Project and working groups are established and operating as required. |
| Review QPLA communication channels and actively manage to ensure information is current, distributed efficiently and the association is engaging with members and stakeholders. | Ongoing | Annual review of communication channels. |
| Identify potential alternative sources of income e.g. grants. | Ongoing | Alternative funding sources pursued when available |
| Promote membership of the association. | Implement initiatives to increase membership and enhance communication with members and stakeholders. | Ongoing | Membership database is up to date  Regional representatives are in contact with members throughout the year  Marketing materials promoting membership are current and attractive. |
| Maintain an efficient and effective organisation. | Review QPLA governance framework. | 2018-19 | Review of QPLA Constitution completed and framework adopted at an AGM. |
| Meet governance requirements identified in the QPLA Constitution | Ongoing | Compliance with governance requirements |
| Implement efficiency initiatives identified and approved by the committee, for example to support event management, meetings, document management etc. | Ongoing | Initiatives are implemented and comply with the QPLA Constitution. |
|  | Meet requirements of MOU between Local Buy and QPLA | Annually | QPLA requirements completed.  Payment from Local Buy to QPLA receipted |
|  | Review the MOU between Local Buy and QPLA. | 2018 and 2020 | MOU is reviewed and agreed if terms are acceptable to the parties.  Current MOU 18/7/16 – 17/11/18. |