Foreword from the State Librarian

State Library of Queensland and the Queensland-wide network of more than 318 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres, is committed to building literacy through innovation and collaboration, so everyone in the state can actively participate in the social, economic and cultural life of their communities.

In 2011, State Library co-developed the first Libraries for literacy framework to articulate how public libraries help boost literacy. This framework provided a guide for the development of community-centred literacy services delivered by, or as partnerships between, Queensland public libraries, state and local government and relevant literacy providers.

Recent data suggests a continued role for community-centred literacy services. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has reported positively that between 2006 and 2012 the proportion of Australian adults with lower literacy decreased from almost 46 to just over 44%. However, the proportion with lower numeracy increased from 51 to over 54%.

A 2014 review found the framework’s principles, literacy definitions and annual reporting process were still relevant and should be retained. It also noted the first-of-its-kind framework was user-friendly and a useful advocacy tool and support mechanism for funding applications. However, the review also showed streamlining content, removing repetition and improving the measures of success would strengthen the framework.

Highlighted opportunities to better align with new government priorities and help build stronger collective ownership included:

- showcasing literacy services, including through social media
- demonstrating competent service provision (including adult literacy services) to audiences, governance and funding bodies
- applying a partnership approach to the development and delivery of services
- identifying the gaps in service delivery and developing strategies to fill these gaps
- offering modular professional development, potentially online
- using, sharing and learning from good practice examples and materials
- improving data collection and using existing data to build advocacy, including through narrative and participant stories.

Our focus on literacy will continue — further boosted by the four-year $20 million family literacy initiative, Best Start, recently announced by the Premier of Queensland. These additional funds will greatly enhance the children's literacy services public libraries across the state will be able to provide.

I have carefully considered these challenges and opportunities and commend Libraries for literacy – every day, every way: 2015–2018. May it continue to guide effective collaboration between public libraries, state and local government and educators; to enrich lives by fostering the sense of discovery and belonging only literacy can bring.

Janette Wright
CEO and State Librarian
State Library of Queensland
Literacy today

We live in a knowledge-rich society, characterised by a wealth of ideas and information. The ability to understand, communicate and transfer this abundance of information is built upon the foundation skills of reading and writing. However, literacy today has broadened in scope: it is multimodal, tied to technology and culture, and people need to acquire an increasing range of literacy skills to communicate effectively in a digital environment.

Libraries for literacy — every day, every way

Public libraries are transformative places and literacy is the bedrock of their ethos and rationale. With a focus on engagement, discovery, reading and belonging, libraries offer a specialised workforce, infrastructure, programs and collections to aid literacy support in communities.

Libraries for literacy — every day, every way is a framework for the development of responsive literacy services aimed at addressing a number of population sectors, to be delivered by State Library of Queensland in partnership with Queensland public libraries and literacy providers.

By creating this literacy framework, State Library is proactively supporting state and national education agendas and affirming public libraries as valued, community based literacy and learning enablers.

In September 2014 the Queensland Government announced public libraries would be among the recipients of $20 million, issued over four years, to implement Best Start — a family literacy initiative for Queensland.

Through their targeted programs and services, public libraries are well placed to respond to the local needs of children and families, providing free, ongoing, year-round access to resources and services that support language, reading and literacy.

Best Start resources will include:

- more places at public programs including baby bounce, rhyme time and storytelling sessions
- information toolkits for parents and caregivers of young children
- a state-wide awareness campaign
- a program to enable library staff to partner with local early childhood sector workers
- central coordination, support and evaluation from State Library of Queensland.

Guiding principles

Four principles guide the goals of Libraries for literacy — every day, every way. They aim to maximise relevance for urban, regional, rural and remote communities, and have been shaped by consultation with government and non-government organisations, public libraries, academic institutions and peak bodies.

These principles determine literacy support should be:

- **Equitable and inclusive** — providing optimal services, programs and resources for all people at all stages of learning, acknowledging context and respecting cultural diversity.
- **Community centred** — reflecting local context and aligning with local needs; acknowledging literacy and learning are central to robust and resilient communities.
- **Collaborative** — enabling the community, government, business and education sectors to work together to extend the reach of literacy support and solve complex social issues.
- **Sustainable** — ensuring appropriate resources, partnerships and evaluation tools are available.
Goals

*Libraries for literacy — every day, every way* seeks to guide the development of community literacy services delivered in partnership with public libraries, state and local government, and relevant literacy providers. Together, we will work within this framework to:

1. **Advocate greater understanding** of literacy across all age groups, including family literacy and the value of reading to children, and parents’ effect on early childhood cognitive, language, emotional and social development.
2. **Strengthen data collection** to build advocacy through narrative and participant stories to elevate the role of State Library and public libraries in providing literacy support.
3. **Showcase, share and use good practice in community literacy services** to maximise the value and skills of State Library and public libraries’ literacy services to promote social, cultural and economic sustainability.
4. **Apply partnership approaches** across many sectors including health, education, community, technology industry and library sectors to build sustainable literacy improvement opportunities.
5. **Promote social inclusion**, supporting people in low literacy groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people living in rural and remote areas, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
6. **Build effective workforces** by developing and offering professional development opportunities in modular formats, including face to face and online, to deliver sustainable literacy services.

Evaluation framework

State Library will report on its own activities and those carried out by public libraries as part of the *Best Start* family literacy initiative, alongside other efforts aimed at improving literacy across Queensland. The measures used to report on literacy will include:

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<th>GOAL</th>
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| 1.   | • Number of family literacy programs hosted by public libraries.  
      | • Number of attendees at family literacy programs hosted by public libraries. Number of public libraries that record feedback from family literacy program participants. |
| 2.   | • Literacy program data collated through annual State Library public library performance measurement process.  
      | • Number of literacy programs hosted by public libraries, including family and adult literacy programs. |
| 3.   | • Literacy goals embedded in strategic planning as core public library business.  
      | • Community participation in literacy service development.  
      | • Number of public messages showcasing community literacy, including through social media and online.  
      | • Community satisfaction with programs delivered (anecdotal). |
| 4.   | • State Library advocacy of libraries as community literacy and learning places in state and local learning agendas and programs.  
      | • Number of collaborative programs established with literacy providers. |
| 5.   | • Number of programs delivered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people in rural and remote communities, and/or people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds by State Library and public libraries. |
| 6.   | • State Library hosting an annual cross-sector literacy forum.  
      | • Number of professional development programs delivered to public library and early childhood workforce annually. |
Libraries for literacy — every day, every way
Supporting documents

State Library of Queensland, partner national, state and territory libraries, public libraries, agencies across government, and some independent literacy providers have prepared documents supporting the delivery of community-centred literacy services. Key documents that should be read in conjunction with this framework are:

- National and State Libraries of Australasia (NSLA) position statement on literacy and learning
- The Next Horizon: VISION 2017 for Queensland public libraries
- Belonging, Being and Becoming — The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, describes the principles, practices and outcomes that support and enhance young children's learning
- Lifelong learning framework — State Library of Queensland’s statement about the capacities of the lifelong learner

Literacy definitions

**Foundation skills** — language, literacy, numeracy and employability skills in the information age.

National Foundation Skills Working Group 2011

**Early literacy** — knowledge and skills (developed up to age eight) required to become a successful reader and writer. These include cognitive development of the brain and its responsiveness to the caretaking environment, language development, listening and oral skills and relationship building with family and society.

**Family literacy** — encompasses the daily literacy practices of parents/carers, children, traditional and non-traditional families while negotiating relationships, both within the family and the broader community.

**Adult literacy** — the “ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.”

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

**Digital literacy** — the ability to confidently and critically use digital information sources, communication tools and networks for learning, communication, collaboration and creation.


**Information literacy** — enables people to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information.”


**Transliteracy** — the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks.

The Transliteracy Research Group, Prof. Sue Thomas of De Montfort University, Leicester, UK [http://nlabnetworks.typepad.com/transliteracy/](http://nlabnetworks.typepad.com/transliteracy/)