

# INTRODUCTION

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# VISION, PURPOSE AND ENDURING VALUES

## VISION

Inspiring possibilities through knowledge, stories and creativity

## PURPOSE

Founded in 1896, State Library of Queensland is the leading reference and research library in Queensland. State Library is responsible for collecting and preserving a comprehensive collection of Queensland's cultural and documentary heritage, providing free access to information for all Queenslanders, and for the advancement of public libraries across the state.

## OUR ENDURING VALUES

- We provide free and equitable access
- We share
- We seek diverse voices
- We belong to the community

State Library is the trusted custodian of Queensland's cultural, intellectual and social achievements, as well as historic and contemporary collections. These collections, and the people and communities they represent, inform programming, public engagement and partnerships. State Library is a place of experimentation, possibility and inclusion, where knowledge empowers and diversity is celebrated.

State Library plays a lead role in serving all Queenslanders, through statewide library services and our partnership with local governments which operate more than 320 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKC).

Governed by the Library Board of Queensland, State Library is based in South Bank (Brisbane), with offices onsite and in Cannon Hill (Brisbane) and Cairns. Queensland Library Foundation raises funds to support State Library's collections and services.

State Library provides visitor services and marketing for Anzac Square Memorial Galleries, under an operating deed between Brisbane City Council (trustee) and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC). Funding is provided to State Library by DPC.

### State Library's role includes:

- collecting and preserving a trusted record of Queensland
- encouraging research to deepen the knowledge of Queensland's past and present
- recognising the unique knowledge and culture of First Nations people, and working with communities to ensure their history and culture are preserved
- interpreting Queensland stories through exhibitions, events, discussion and debate
- developing an inclusive library service, addressing diverse needs, strengthening opportunities for the expression of ideas and fostering the appreciation of difference
- providing access to collections and services in a range of formats and channels, so they are available to all, regardless of geographical location
- advocating for public libraries and partnering with local government to provide Queenslanders with the opportunities to participate fully in the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of society.

# GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMMUNITY

State Library is committed to the Queensland Government's objectives for the community:

- **Good jobs:** Good, secure jobs in our traditional and emerging industries. State Library is investing in skills by providing all Queenslanders with free access to online learning resources.
- **Better services:** Deliver even better services right across Queensland. State Library is connecting Queensland through our partnership with local government to deliver public library services and Indigenous Knowledge Centres. We foster greater social inclusion through documenting and making accessible Queensland's diverse history and stories, and we build Queenslanders' digital capabilities. State Library is backing our frontline services by delivering world-class reference and information services.
- **Great lifestyle:** Protect and enhance our Queensland lifestyle as we grow. State Library honours and embraces our rich and ancient cultural history by enabling truth-telling through our diverse and rich collections, community engagement and exhibitions. State Library's partnerships are growing our regions by enabling deeply local service provision in public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres.

State Library plays a lead role in delivering the Government's arts policy, *Creative Together: 2020–2030: A 10-year Roadmap for arts, culture and creativity in Queensland*:

- **elevate First Nations arts** – by sharing and celebrating First Nations perspectives through language revitalisation, knowledge creation and truth-telling in culturally informed and respectful ways
- **activate Queensland's local places and global digital spaces** – enabling statewide access to collections and integrating rich digital experiences into programs, learning initiatives and exhibitions
- **drive social change and strengthen communities** – partnering with local government to realise the potential of libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres as vibrant community hubs building community resilience
- **share our stories and celebrate our storytellers** – as a memory institution, intentionally seek, collect and share authentic Queensland stories, and nurture and celebrate emerging writers.

As a member of National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA), State Library influences and supports NSLA's Strategic Plan 2023–26: Leading together, as well as supporting the policies of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).

# CHAIRPERSON OF THE LIBRARY BOARD OF QUEENSLAND

I am so pleased to present my first report as Chairperson of the Library Board of Queensland, having taken up the position earlier this year after first joining the board in 2022.

I would like to thank previous Chairperson Professor Andrew Griffiths for his exemplary leadership over his 7-year tenure. For me, this past year has been a chance to experience up close the place State Library holds in the hearts of so many people across the state, and the power of libraries to inspire, comfort and educate.

As we emerge from the significant global and local disruptions of the past few years, it is clear State Library's role as an accessible archive of knowledge and community hub is more important than ever. It has been a privilege to witness a number of key events and achievements, all of which speak so clearly to how State Library continues to inspire possibilities through knowledge, stories and creativity.

One of my first official engagements as chairperson was to attend the launch of the 61st Brisbane Writers Festival. It was a great precursor to an outstanding event. This year the festival welcomed more than 15,000 book lovers, numbers not seen since pre-pandemic times.

The Future libraries: Better communities symposium brought together library practitioners, local council members, government and industry partners to continue State Library's work with local government to enhance the role of public libraries in building community capacity, cohesion and resilience. It is exciting to be at the start of the development of a 10-year roadmap that will be so important in positioning Queensland public libraries as key community and cultural hubs.

It is always wonderful to see State Library's collections recognised nationally and internationally. This year the Dr Barbara Piscitelli AM Children's Art Archive 1986-2016; 2020, held by State Library, was added to the prestigious UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register. The collection is the most comprehensive and significant resource for the study of children's art in Australia.

The Yuuingan Dhillia Yari Queensland Indigenous Languages Symposium provided a platform to look towards the future and share strategies, initiatives and best-practice models to ensure the ongoing revival of Indigenous languages for and by the next generation. The symposium's focus of empowering youth leadership in First Nations languages was a positive approach – it was terrific to see young people engaging in activities that will lead to the growth of Queensland languages.

A future-proof knowledge archive is one that is robust, reliable and resilient to disruption, which is why I have been so invested in State Library's Storage Area Network (SAN) replacement project. The project involved the implementation of a state-of-the-art storage solution for State Library's extensive digital collections, ensuring Queensland memories will be available now and well into the future.

This coming year brings the implementation of a new Strategic and Operational Plan, endorsed by the Minister for Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts, The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP. I am proud to say the board has been involved in developing these plans, with Queenslanders also given the opportunity to shape the plans through public consultation. I would like to thank the Queensland Government, and in particular Minister Enoch, for continuing to champion the world-class work of State Library.

This year the board welcomed new members Ms Kim Hughes and Ms Courtney Talbot, who bring a wealth of experience to their roles. I would also like to farewell and thank board members Professor Marek Kowalkiewicz and Ms Julia Leu for their commitment and insights.

Finally, I thank Ms Vicki McDonald AM FALIA and the team at State Library for their dedication and hard work.



**Mrs Debbie Best**

Chairperson  
Library Board of Queensland

# STATE LIBRARIAN AND CEO

Preparation for the annual report gives me the opportunity to pause and take stock of the previous 12 months.

It was a year that marked the enthusiastic return of visitors to State Library, and of course to the greater Cultural Centre, a year that was not disrupted by the global pandemic or floods, a year where the word 'normal' contained promise and opportunity.

Personally, there is no greater joy than to see the library full of life: from groups of students on school excursions to curious people enjoying a coffee before visiting one of our exhibition spaces, to the convoy of prams parked at The Corner as families arrive for story time.

I am pleased to report visitation to State Library has exceeded projections for the year with over 5.7 million onsite and online visitors. This is a testament to the commitment and dedication of my State Library colleagues in delivering exceptional services every day, and to our many supporters and partners, who help make State Library's achievements possible.

One of the highlights of the year was undoubtedly the *Queensland to a T* exhibition, where over 200 tea towels from the Glenn R. Cooke Souvenir Textiles Collection showcased the vibrancy and diversity of our collections. It captured the imagination of visitors, offering a window into our state's history and culture. Similarly, the ambitious *Meet the artists* exhibition brought together 8 Queensland artists from the James C. Sourris AM Collection of Artist Interviews, highlighting their remarkable stories and artworks. Both exhibitions exemplified the power of storytelling and the profound impact it can have on developing a sense of connection to our unique Queensland identity.

First 5 Forever continues to thrive, embodying the strength of our partnerships with local government and the public library network throughout the state. By providing early literacy programs and resources to families, we are fostering a love for reading and learning right from the start. I am proud that every baby born in Queensland this year receives a free Stories for Little Queenslanders book through the Bounty Bag network. I thank the Queensland Government for entrusting the coordination of First 5 Forever to State Library and our local government partners. This vital funding is helping to shape the lives of countless families and ensuring a bright future for their children.

The opening and refurbishment of Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKC) will further strengthen culture and enrich communities in Mapoon, Napranum and Mornington Island. IKCs offer Queensland communities access to collections, programs and online services in partnership with local councils. This annual investment supports collection materials, programming and professional development.

State Library is deeply committed to respectful processes of truth-telling as Queensland progresses a Path to Treaty. State Library is proud to host the Interim Truth and Treaty Body (ITTb), which was established in August 2022 as an independent interim body to maintain the momentum on Queensland's Path to Treaty. The support provided included the use of premises, information and communications technology support, and the development of ITTB's website.

This year also saw the successful completion of the conservation project for the Central Queensland Separation League Petition 1892-1893 – a valuable family history record of around 4,000 women who signed the petition and an important piece of our Queensland heritage. We are also pleased that work has commenced on the transcription of the Colonial Secretary correspondence relating to Moreton Bay and Queensland 1822-1860, making these records accessible to all Queenslanders. These ongoing efforts are integral to our commitment to preserving our history for future generations.

We continued to innovate and enhance our digital offerings. The new Anzac Square Memorial Galleries website allows users to explore and understand the sacrifices and experiences of our servicemen and servicewomen. Additionally, Live at the Library demonstrates our continuous efforts in delivering quality digital content to regional and remote communities. Live at the Library is an interactive experience that allows school students to view rare library collections streamed live into their classrooms with the opportunity to ask questions.

I would like to thank Debbie Best for her strong leadership, and I also express my gratitude to outgoing Chair Professor Andrew Griffiths for his steady stewardship of the Library Board. Thank you to the board members and the Queensland Library Foundation Council for their invaluable guidance and support.

This annual report outlines our significant achievement across the last 12 months. It is an absolute privilege to work with the executive and all colleagues as we strive to deliver outstanding library services to Queenslanders. I applaud their passion and commitment and extend my personal thanks.



**Ms Vicki McDonald AM FALIA**  
State Librarian and CEO  
State Library of Queensland

# ABOUT THE LIBRARY BOARD OF QUEENSLAND

The Library Board of Queensland, established in 1943, is the governing body of State Library of Queensland and draws its powers from the *Libraries Act 1988* (Qld) (*Libraries Act*). The object of the *Libraries Act* is to contribute to the cultural, social and intellectual development of all Queenslanders.

The legislated guiding principles for achieving this are:

- leadership and excellence should be demonstrated in providing library and information services
- there should be responsiveness to the needs of communities in regional and outer metropolitan areas
- respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures should be affirmed
- children and young people should be supported in their understanding and use of library and information services
- diverse audiences should be developed
- capabilities for lifelong learning about library and information services should be developed
- opportunities should be developed for international collaboration and for cultural exports, especially to the Asia Pacific region
- content relevant to Queensland should be collected, preserved, promoted and made accessible.

The functions and powers of the Library Board are listed on page 46. Biographies of Library Board members are detailed on pages 41-42.

In addition to regular meetings of the Library Board, members represented State Library at official functions throughout 2022-23. One committee and 2 advisory groups advise and inform the Library Board on issues that arise within their brief. These bodies also act as important consultative mechanisms with the broader community. The members of the Library Board committee and advisory groups are listed on pages 44-45.

The Library Board periodically travels outside Brisbane to stay informed about regional issues and to strengthen its relationship with local councils and the community.

Under section 7 of the *Libraries Act*, in appointing a Library Board member, regard must be given to the person's ability to contribute to the Library Board's performance and the implementation of its strategic and operational plans. Under section 9 of the *Libraries Act*, a person is not eligible for appointment as a member if the person is not able to manage a corporation because of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), Part 2D.6.

In 2022-23, there were 6 Library Board meetings. The table in Appendix A outlines all board members, appointment terms, meeting attendance in 2022-23, remuneration and expenses.

## Observers

The State Librarian and CEO attends all meetings of the Library Board as an observer unless excused or precluded by the Library Board as per section 15 of the *Libraries Act*.

Ms Vicki McDonald AM FALIA, State Librarian and CEO, State Library of Queensland

Mr Scott Martin, Executive Director, Business Performance and Infrastructure, Arts Queensland, Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts.

## Secretariat

Ms Jennifer Genrich, Manager, Executive Services, State Library of Queensland

# PHILANTHROPY

## QUEENSLAND LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Generous support from donors, sponsors and grantors through Queensland Library Foundation (the Foundation) directly contributes to the breadth of work undertaken by State Library.

The Foundation acknowledges and greatly appreciates the trust and ongoing generosity of all supporters. Donations through the Foundation in 2022–23 helped State Library to conserve historical and culturally significant items and increase physical and digital access to the collections.

### Donor engagement

Through a range of engagement events, donors gained a deeper understanding of State Library collections and programs. The annual Crowd Giving event in October 2022 was an opportunity to share the diversity of State Library activities with new audiences. The guests voted for the acquisition of a 3D digital scanner with \$30,000 raised collectively through the event. The scanner will enhance online access to objects in the collection.

The Foundation again welcomed its Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, and Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD at the special end-of-year event in November 2022. The event is held to thank supporters and celebrate State Library's achievements.

### Queensland Literary Awards

The Queensland Literary Awards, held in September, showcased outstanding authors from across Australia. The awards were made possible by philanthropy and sponsorship. The Foundation acknowledges the support provided by Queensland Government, The University of Queensland, Griffith University, University of Southern Queensland, University of Queensland Press, Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund, *The Courier-Mail*, Neil and Jenny Summerson, and Susan Hocking and Ian Mackie.

### Queensland Memory Awards

The Queensland Memory Awards recognise significant contributions to the investigation, preservation and celebration of Queensland history. Fellowships are awarded to support researchers, creatives, historians and writers to interpret the collections of John Oxley Library at State Library. The Foundation funded the premier prize, the John Oxley Library Fellowship, valued at \$20,000, along with the John Oxley Library Community History Award, valued at \$5,000. The Foundation also funded the inaugural Rainbow Research Fellowship, valued at \$15,000, which supports research and creation of new knowledge about Queensland's LGBTQIA+ histories and communities. The Foundation acknowledges the ongoing generosity of Dr Cathryn Mittelheuser AM, the Boughen family, the Mellick family, the Siganto Foundation and Queensland University of Technology.

### Saving Queensland history

Conservation of the *Central Queensland Separation League Petition 1892–1893* was completed in 2023, thanks to the support of donors. The scroll will be digitised and made accessible online. Viewing the scroll was one of the highlights for donors who participated in the President's Circle behind-the-scenes tour of the conservation laboratory in May 2023.

The Reel Rescue project continues the race against time to preserve and digitise thousands of moving images and audio items. This remains an ongoing funding priority for the Foundation and featured in the June 2023 end-of-financial-year appeal.

### Partnerships, sponsorships and grants

Donations are gifts received from people with philanthropic intentions to support initiatives at State Library. The Foundation recognises the significant support provided in 2022–23 by Gina Fairfax AC and Tim Fairfax AC, Courtney Talbot, James C. Sourris AM and Ashleigh Barty AO.

Sponsorship relationships (cash and in-kind) are entered into through formal agreements which outline agreed revenue to State Library. Grants received through competitive application processes are assessed on merit, with revenue provided to the Foundation at the grantor's discretion.

Total revenue received from donations, sponsorships and grants via the Foundation in 2022–23 was \$1.3 million. In-kind revenue received is reported in Note B1-2 of the Financial Statements (see page 59).

Queensland Library Foundation was established on 24 June 1987 as an entity of the Library Board of Queensland, in accordance with the powers defined by the *Libraries Act 1988* and launched to the public on 5 May 1988. The Foundation is a not-for-profit company, Limited by Guarantee, registered under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), Deductible Gift Recipient status (DGR Items 1 & 4).

### Council members, attendance, remuneration and expenses

Four Queensland Library Foundation Council meetings were held in 2022–23. See Appendix B for a list of council members, appointment terms, meeting attendance in 2022–23, remuneration and expenses.

# STRATEGY

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-26

The Strategic Plan 2022-26 details objectives for State Library to deliver our vision.

### Trusted content

**Collect, preserve and provide access to trusted content**

#### Strategies:

- Intentionally collect a trusted record of Queensland
- Seek and share diverse stories
- Encourage and collaborate on research to deepen knowledge
- Engage with people as seekers and creators
- Preserve the collection for future generations

#### Performance indicators:

- Additions to Queensland Memory collections
- Use of collections

### Shared experiences

**Grow our audience through rewarding experiences**

#### Strategies:

- Improve access, so it's easier to find and use information
- Empower our clients to create, participate and learn
- Scale services to reach new audiences
- Deliver and promote lifelong learning opportunities
- Advocate for public libraries and partner with local government to enable a thriving network of public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres

#### Performance indicators:

- Visits to State Library onsite and online
- New members
- Local government satisfaction with State Library service delivery

### Future-focused people and processes

**Enable continuous improvement and innovation**

#### Strategies:

- A culturally diverse workforce, with different skillsets, experiences and thinking styles
- Share, understand and challenge our own and others' work so we continue to transform
- Evaluate our services and share compelling stories of impact
- Attract investment and partnerships

#### Performance indicators:

- Overall visitor satisfaction with services and programs
- Average cost per visit

The Strategic Plan was updated in November 2022 to reflect a new Statement of the Queensland Government's objectives for the community.

## STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

We have the opportunity to:

- reach Queenslanders statewide due to our proven experience and capability in digital delivery
- contribute to digital inclusion due to our proven experience in digital delivery and effective partnerships
- make a significant contribution to Path to Treaty and truth-telling due to our diverse and rich collections, experience in community engagement and strong partnerships
- meet and anticipate future client demand through optimising the building spaces, due to the resilience of the Millennium Library Project design and our ongoing service planning.

## STRATEGIC RISKS

Strategic risks are:

- changing community needs and expectations, technology and learning styles – We must meet changing client needs to sustain audience growth. We will continue to transform, innovate and deliver relevant services.
- information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and security – We must provide trusted, reliable and secure ICT services and enable access, preservation, and delivery of digital collections. We will continue to develop strategies and capability, and prioritise funding to update ICT infrastructure.
- business continuity – We must manage the impacts of disasters including COVID-19 and extreme weather events. We will continue to review and update our risk mitigation and business continuity plans.
- digital inclusion – We must work to ensure Queenslanders statewide are able to access our online services and contribute to the digital economy. We will work with our partners to build digital inclusion and engagement.
- transformation of library collections, services and programs to meet the digital age and changing community needs – We must ensure the community understands the value of libraries in a rapidly changing environment. We will build awareness of the role and value that libraries provide.



## OPERATIONAL PLAN 2022-23

The 2022-23 Operational Plan details the focus activities for State Library:

- Intentionally seek, collect and share authentic Queensland stories
- Share First Nations perspectives through language revitalisation, knowledge creation and truth-telling in culturally informed and respectful ways
- Deliver online and onsite experiences that empower, stimulate and enrich
- Partner with local government to enhance the role of public libraries in building community capacity, cohesion and resilience
- Invest in our people to enable us to do our best
- Achieve fit-for-purpose digital services and effective business models
- Increase revenue through philanthropy, sponsorships and own-source revenue initiatives

There were no modifications to the Operational Plan 2022-23.

## PLANS AND PRIORITIES FOR NEXT REPORTING PERIOD

The vision for State Library in the 2023-27 Strategic Plan is to be a library of influence, inspiring and connecting people through knowledge, storytelling and creativity. The priorities will be shaped by 4 objectives: Collecting memories, Enriching experiences, People and communities and Responsive innovation.

The 2023-24 Operational Plan identifies 6 operational strategies as priority areas for the next reporting period:

- Engage and amplify a process of truth-telling and healing, by enabling treaty readiness through First Peoples' stories, cultural safety of our staff and culturally safe services for all Queenslanders.
- Strengthen our offer as a cultural destination.
- Implement an audience development strategy to increase engagement with regional Queenslanders.
- Attract, retain and invest in a skilled, diverse and culturally responsive workforce.
- Increase community engagement with Queensland public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres through the delivery of a marketing campaign.
- Plan and deliver fit-for-purpose, safe and secure digital systems.