



Statement on libraries and literacies

ALIA objects addressed

To promote and improve the services provided by all kinds of library and information agencies

Principle

Rapid social change, the emphasis on lifelong learning, the increasing rate of technological development and the movement towards an information-based society are factors which suggest, as never before, that literacies are an essential instrument for effective participation in society.

The scope for access to information resources is growing and will be increased enormously as communications technology becomes more sophisticated. Nevertheless, the communications media of the foreseeable future will continue to assume the user's capacity to read and understand the written word.

The illiterate person can be substantially disadvantaged. It is essential to democratic processes of government that citizens have the skills and opportunities to inform themselves on matters of community and national interest and participate in the decision-making process. It must be acknowledged that information literacy is part of a continuum of literacies that includes oracy if it is to have the power to promote social inclusion for all people. (Alexandria Proclamation, 2005)

The Australian Library and Information Association believes that:

- Libraries are lifelong learning centres with education as an essential part of their mission and should acknowledge their responsibility for supporting and supplementing education within their communities, in a variety of formal and informal as well as cultural contexts (Schamber, 2006)
- Libraries must actively commit time and resources to coordinating literacy activities at all levels and to promote literacy among all members of their community, users and non-users alike.
- Libraries are part of the solution to many community problems. Libraries help children and adults become literate, productive citizens and help people of all ages lead more satisfying lives.

Adopted 1979. Amended 1996, 2006.

