

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

REGIONAL POLICY CONSULTATION

SUBMISSION TEMPLATE

Please refer to the Regional Policy Consultation Guidance Note before completing this Submission Template. Deadline for all submissions is 5pm Fiji Time, Friday 9 February, 2018.

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

Name of individual or group making this submission:

Australian Library and Information Association

Name of Primary Contact for submission:

Sue McKerracher, ALIA CEO

Email address of primary contact:

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Phone number of primary contact:

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2. Title and Summary

Please provide the title and a brief summary of your submission including any key recommendations.

Please limit your response to no more than 150 words.

Promoting access to information for all: how the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) is working to support neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region through:

- Accreditation of library and information science education*
- Promoting professional networks, information sharing and capacity building*
- The development of Blue Shield national committees*
- Delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*

3. Key Issues

What is the key issue or challenge that you seek to highlight in this submission? In responding to this section, consider the following questions:

- ❖ *What is the issue or challenge, and what are its causes?*
- ❖ *Why has this issue not been resolved so far, from your perspective?*
- ❖ *Can this issue be addressed at the national level, for instance, by your national government or through your national development strategy, or does it require the collective and regional action of the Pacific Islands Forum member countries in order to be addressed?*

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Access to information is essential for every citizen, to support education, health, wellbeing and participation in society. However, there are many factors inhibiting the free flow of information for all.

Libraries help bridge the gap for those who cannot afford to buy books; do not have an internet connection; lack the necessary reading, research or digital literacy skills, or encounter other barriers to participation. The role of libraries is explored in greater depth in the National and State Libraries Australasia submission, provided separately.

Librarians in the Pacific region come together through local alliances and through the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. These alliances are supported by library leaders in Australia and other neighbouring countries.

Collaboration across the region between established and emerging nations will help progress access to information for all at a faster rate and this is very much in line with libraries' international commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

4. Proposed Solutions

Do you have a proposed regional policy recommendation to the issues outlined in your response to Question (3) above? In responding to this section, consider the following questions:

- ❖ *What is the proposed regional policy solution or recommendation?*
- ❖ *Does this policy solution require the oversight of Forum Leaders?*
- ❖ *How does the proposed regional policy solution address the issue(s) presented in section (3) above?*
- ❖ *In your view, who are the main beneficiaries of this proposed regional policy?*
- ❖ *Has a regional policy initiative of this kind been carried out previously?*
- ❖ *Are there risks in implementing this regional policy initiative?*

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

ALIA is already engaged with libraries in the Pacific Region in a number of ways:

1. Accreditation of library and information science education

A panel of library leaders from Australia visited the University of the South Pacific in Suva in October 2017 to assess the library and information Diploma for ALIA accreditation. We are pleased to work with educators in Fiji and the Pacific to enable more people to study library and information science and to gain the qualifications that will help them increase their communities' access to information.

2. Promoting professional networks, information sharing and capacity building

2.1 Asia-Pacific Library and Information Conference 2018

From 30 July to 2 August, ALIA will be hosting the Asia-Pacific Library and Information Conference (APLIC) on the Gold Coast in Queensland. The conference is a partnership between ALIA, the Library Association of Singapore and LIANZA. Speakers from across the Pacific have already been confirmed and we hope to welcome many delegates from the region.

2.2 Our Global Goals 2018

On 29 July, ALIA will be holding an Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Summit for library leaders, at the Gold Coast Convention Centre. Bursaries are available for participants from the Pacific Region to assist with travel and accommodation.

2.3 INELI Oceania

ALIA is a partner in INELI Oceania, the Gates Foundation-funded initiative to support the next generation of library leaders in the Pacific.

3. Blue Shield

ALIA was a founder member of Blue Shield Australia in 2005. In recent years, we have been pleased to provide advice and guidance to others in the region who are interested in developing their own national committees to promote disaster planning and awareness for cultural institutions.

4. UN Sustainable Development Goals

In addition to the Summit described at 2.2, ALIA is keen to work with other organisations across the region to progress access to information, universal literacy, and the protection of cultural heritage – all targets sitting under the 17 Goals.

These activities are directly focused on library and information professionals in the first instance, but the benefits are passed on to children, students, families, job seekers, seniors – every member of society.

Based on ALIA's experiences through the activities described above, our recommendations are:

- That the Regional Forum formally recognise the importance of access to information for all*
- That the need for library collaboration across the Region be acknowledged and supported*

5. Attachments

You may attach 3 additional documents to support this submission.

Please limit each attachment to no more than 3 pages.

END OF SUBMISSION TEMPLATE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SUBMITTERS:

Public Accessibility of Submissions

All submissions, inclusive of all attachments, will be uploaded to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat website and will be made publicly available. Contact details will be removed prior to upload.

Guidelines and Contact Details

For further information on completing this template, consult the Regional Policy Consultation – Guidance Note or contact the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat:

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