



## Abstracts and Biographies

### Cloudy with a chance of ...?: What research tells us is needed to drive LIS forward (Keynote)

Prof Sylvia L. Edwards

As a profession, we have always strived to be at the cutting edge of technology; to stay relevant amidst rapid technological and societal changes. Given the rising cost of living, emerging environmental issues, developments in AI, and other significant issues we face, it is timely to reflect on what the future of libraries and information services might look like. To explore, albeit briefly, the research lessons learned over the past couple of decades and try to imagine the opportunities, strengths, and challenges of our future. This exercise may provoke and challenge us, but it should also expand and hopefully inspire our thinking about the role and importance of our future services.

#### Sylvia L. Edwards

Prof Sylvia L. Edwards works in the higher education sector as an executive coach, advisor, consultant and mentor. Sylvia's career has focused on innovation in higher education and she is passionate about the curriculum renewal required to engage our current digital native students. She is the recipient of the prestigious Australian Award for University Teaching (2006). For 8 years Sylvia worked in executive roles leading faculty reorganisation to facilitate significant change at QUT, to deliver curriculum renewal at whole of program levels and led successful implementation of a variety of innovative approaches in learning & teaching. Sylvia researches higher education leadership, information searching behaviour and information literacy, and specialises in applying her research findings in practice. She has published over 80 refereed publications, delivered over 50 academic and industry presentations, and has 29 PhD student completions.



## Empowering lived experience! What a great IDEA! (Lightning talk)

Mare Maticevski (RMIT University) and Hiba Kanj (City of Parramatta Libraries)

The submission is based on the IFLA Futures Summit presentation which explores how to reframe workforce skillset values to enhance Inclusion, diversity, equity and access (IDEA) with the power of authentic lived experiences. Lived experience underpins empathetic social-emotional intelligence. This powers interpersonal connections, understanding of diverse communities and improved representation in libraries and services. The skills identified demonstrate the great IDEA that is the future of library workforces. At the ALIA LARK Symposium the presentation is an extension and aims to identify how to improve user experience in libraries via the lens of workforce diversity where lived experience is a much-needed positive skillset. This conversation is a very current and ongoing conversation. The recently published Australian Universities Accord report underscores this focus further. ALIA Multicultural continually advocates for inclusivity in the workplace and has extended this advocacy in collaboration efforts with ALIA Disability. This continual focus in this area is punctuated by intersectional positionality of group members with lived experience.

Amplifying lived experience as a skillset will enhance user experience in libraries. This is underpinned by appropriate pedagogy of Universal Design in Learning principals for enhanced accessibility to learning experiences in academic contexts. It is also underpinned by relevant community engagement processes that enhance multicultural services in the Library information sector.

### Mare Maticevski

Mare Maticevski is a founding member and Convenor of ALIA Multicultural. She has a background in education, arts and libraries and has worked in school, public and academic libraries. She is motivated by social justice and the transformative power of education. She currently works as an Information Services Librarian at RMIT University.

### Hiba Kanj

Hiba Kanj is a Convenor of ALIA Multicultural. She is a passionate advocate for cultural diversity and inclusivity. With an extensive background in community engagement in the library and information sector, she is committed to fostering multicultural awareness, bridging gaps, and creating spaces where diversity thrives. Hiba leads the large branch at Wentworth Point Community Centre and Library at the City of Parramatta Libraries.



## Learning for real life: talking with young women about alcohol, vapes and drugs (Long presentation)

Dr Suzana Sukovic and Dr Tony Stojkovski (Presbyterian Ladies' College Sydney)

In Australia, like in many other countries, a reduction in smoking and drinking among young people has been documented over a period of a couple of decades. Some trends, however, are less encouraging, with recent survey results showing a substantial increase in substance use among young women, including vaping, drinking, and the use of illicit drugs (AIHW a, b, c, 2024). Although drug education is mandatory and there are numerous information resources available to educate young people, there seems to be a disconnect between what young women are learning from official sources and what is happening in reality. This latest trend also raises questions about the timing, content, and style of school drug education, and information provision in general. Our objective was to address this gap by conducting research on adolescents' recreational substance use and their epistemic wellbeing, exploring how young women perceive substance use and the information they receive. We conducted a survey and focus groups with young women from Year 9 to post-secondary education asking them about their experiences with peers, their opinions, attitudes, and influences related to substance use. Our main aim was to understand what and how they wish to learn about substance use, and what they perceive as a gap in their understanding. Our data provide a rich insight into girls' information worlds, pointing towards a gap between what and how they learn about drinking, vaping and drugs, and what they think they need to know to be prepared for real life. In this presentation, we will overview some key findings from our study and discuss recommendations for education programs and information services. Families and peers have a critically important influence on young women, so we will discuss implications for parent education and holistic approaches to drug-related information provision. For school and public libraries, and other information providers the study offers important indicators on how to promote drug literacy and support the epistemic wellbeing of adolescents.

### References

AIHWa (16 April 2024) Health of young people, Australian Government. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare., accessed 19 May 2024. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/health-of-young-people>

AIHWb (29 February 2024) Young people's use of vapes and e-cigarettes, Australian Government. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare., accessed 19 May 2024. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/smoking/young-peoples-vapes-e-cigarettes>



AIHWc (23 April 2024) Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia, Australian Government. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, accessed 19 May 2024.  
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol/alcohol-tobacco-other-drugs-australia/contents/priority-populations/younger-people>

## Suzana Sukovic

Dr Suzana Sukovic is the Director of Research and Publication at Presbyterian Ladies' College Sydney, and an Industry Fellow at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, UTS. She has held leadership positions across the secondary, tertiary, and workplace education sectors, including library, research, and teaching roles. Suzana is an active practice-based researcher with interests in AI in education, adolescents' information behaviour and epistemic wellbeing, transliteracy, boundary crossing, and interactions with technology. Suzana has been the founder and Convenor of ALIA LARK since 2012, and a member of IFLA's Library Theory and Research section. Through these roles, she has promoted research within library and information practice at both national and international levels.

## Tony Stojkovski

Dr Tony Stojkovski is the Assistant to Head of Curriculum at Presbyterian Ladies' College Sydney, with a background in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) teaching and leadership.

## The role of gamification in motivating reading for enjoyment in Year 7 girls (Long presentation)

Dr Helen Weston (Loreto College Coorparoo)

Although recent research indicates that girls are more proficient readers than their male counterparts, evidence also suggests girls are losing interest in reading for enjoyment in Australia. I pursued the Action Research approach to explore reading for enjoyment trends in secondary school girls. My research addressed the issue of girls who say they are not interested in reading and believe that they cannot find anything of interest to read. The study explored the introduction of gamification to a reading program for Year 7 girls in an independent Catholic girls' school.



Students played a series of online and offline games based on novels, authors, and genres and collaborated in teams to agree on answers. They also collaborated to generate content that was used to create some of the games. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using interviews, library circulation statistics, surveys, and observations. Three themes were identified from my data: gamification fosters joyful competition; competition fosters joyful collaboration; and collaboration fosters reading for enjoyment opportunities. The findings indicate that the girls were competitive in a gamification environment; however, the collaborative nature of the process and approach was also responsible for many moments of joy. In turn, “collaborative joy” generated a renewed motivation to read for enjoyment, and further opportunities to identify areas for research have been highlighted, such as the need to monitor data that identifies consistency over intensity in reading.

Action research is cyclical and is an approach that can be adapted to suit your time and resources. This presentation will share the growing concern about dropping literacy rates among girls and how LIS in schools can move forward in turning this around. Additionally, this presentation will share how to move forward after identifying a problem that needs solving in your LIS program by implementing a strategy such as Action Research.

## Helen Weston

Dr Helen Weston is currently Program Leader, Library and Research at Loreto College, Coorparoo, Queensland. Helen has worked in school libraries across Queensland and overseas where she completed extensive research on culture and information use. Her current research is grounded in the role of gamification in motivating students to read for enjoyment and the way students use information to learn. She is championing the cause of Citizen Science Corners in libraries and was awarded the QLD College of Teachers Innovation Award 2023 for this initiative. Helen is also the Convenor of the Australian Library and Information Association's School Library Special Interest Group. She is a casual lecturer for the University of South Australia's Information Management course.



## Climate change, community and digital archives: research collation and creation (Lightning talk)

Clare Thorpe (Southern Cross University)

This is a story about a partnership between a librarian and a historian who decided to build a digital open access archive to support their community to have better access to information about the local river catchment. This good idea led to \$16,000 awarded in grant funding, a steep learning curve about archival practice, two peer-reviewed journal articles exploring the role of digital archives as a agent of community resilient in climate change affected regions, and an accessible digital archive of 89 records, research outputs and digitised artefacts (and growing). Our project is not a traditional research project, it has evolved organically and sparked an unexpected interest in archival practice, leading to new research and engagement opportunities in our university and new roles, skills and responsibilities within the university library team.

### Clare Thorpe

Clare Thorpe is an award-winning library leader, research-practitioner, and non-executive board director. She has worked in academic and state libraries since 2001. Clare is the Director, Library Services at Southern Cross University. She is passionate about building and contributing to the evidence-base of library and information science through research, practice and knowledge sharing.

## How do we know if policies and initiatives encouraging OERs work? A proof of concept study (Lightning talk)

Dr Danny Kingsley (Deakin University), Sarah Barkla (University of South Australia), Dr Kay Steel (Federation University) and Richard White (University of Otago)

This talk describes a (hopefully reproducible) approach to understanding whether policies and initiatives that encourage OER use result in an increase in adoption. The study is comparing institutions in Australia and New Zealand that currently have policies and initiatives against equivalent institutions without these incentives. The study is using data obtained from OAPEN library of open access books and Open Syllabus (which in turn uses data from The Library of





Congress, Open Library, OpenAlex, and open access databases such as the Directory of Open Access Books and Open Textbook Library).

Currently across the board, use of OERs in syllabi is increasing, but off a very small base. Open Syllabus indicates the percentage of open textbooks and open monographs being assigned as reading in the syllabi it has analysed as being lower than 1.5% in Australia and under 1% in New Zealand. Initial analysis of monographs being used seem to indicate championing by individuals rather than a systematic approach. This study is attempting to provide some comparative data to demonstrate the effectiveness or otherwise of OER initiatives.

It is hoped the method developed for this study will be able to be adopted at individual institutions to assess progress, and potentially also at country or region level.

## Danny Kingsley

Dr Danny Kingsley is an Australian-based thought leader in the international scholarly communication space. She is Director of Library Services (Information) at Deakin University and an Ambassador for the OAPEN Library of open access books. She has consulted for multiple Australian universities since returning from the UK where she was Deputy Director of Cambridge University Libraries from 2015-2019. Her research centres on scholarly communication including the academic reward structure, scholarly infrastructure and open access advocacy. She established Open Access Australasia in 2013. She sits on multiple committees, including the Australian Academy of Science National Committee for Data in Science and the FORCE11 Board of Directors.

## Sarah Barkla

Sarah Barkla is the Manager of Library Services at the City East campus of UniSA. She spent twelve years working at the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford in various roles. She holds multiple qualifications including a Master of Library and Information Management from UniSA, and an Honours degree in Classics from the University of Adelaide.

## Kay Steele

Dr Kay Steele is Team Leader Library Research Services at Federation University and a Distinguished Certified Professional of the Australian Library & Information Association. Her professional interests include: research data management, data repositories, trusted



repositories, FAIR data and research outputs, Open Access publishing, OA licensing, researcher spaces, eResearcher skills development. Her research interests include: labour history, regional peak union councils, union council agency, historical research method.

## Richard White

Richard White is the Manager of Copyright and Open Access at the University of Otago. He has a long interest in open issues and is currently participating in the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) Open Educational Resources Collective, was a member of the International Open Access Week Organising Committee 2022-23, and has been a member of the State of open access in Aotearoa New Zealand (Council of NZ University Librarians, CONZUL) project, co-authoring a peer reviewed paper on the work.

## The IFLA Guidelines for Professional LIS Education Programs: Research Informing the Guidelines and the Guidelines Informing LIS Research (Long presentation)

Dr Saif Al Jabri (SQU) and Jasenka Pleško (The City Library of Zagreb)

The BSLISE (Building Strong Library and Information Science Education), a working group and initiative of the IFLA Section on Education and Training (SET), Section on Library Theory and Research (LTR), and the LIS Education in Developing Countries Special Interest Group, has undertaken significant research to develop guidelines aimed at enhancing Library and Information Science (LIS) education globally.

### Guidelines Development

The development process of these Guidelines involved extensive literature reviews, surveys, and consultations with LIS educators, practitioners, and stakeholders across the world's regions. Key focus areas included curriculum content, pedagogical approaches, foundational knowledge areas (FKAs), governance, student matters, professional development, and program review, among other matters.

### Implications for LIS Research

The IFLA Guidelines have several profound implications for LIS research:

1. Harmonization and Benchmarking: The Guidelines provide a framework for harmonizing LIS curricula globally, facilitating benchmarking and comparative studies across different educational institutions and regions.





2. Curriculum Development: Researchers can use these Guidelines to explore innovative curriculum designs that integrate emerging technologies and address new information challenges.
3. Competency and Developmentally-Based Education: The focus on foundational knowledge areas shifts research attention towards evaluating the effectiveness of competency and developmentally-based education in LIS.
4. Global and Local Balance: The Guidelines highlight the importance of balancing global standards with local needs.
5. Professional Development and Lifelong Learning: The Guidelines underscore the need for ongoing professional development and lifelong learning.

In summary, the research conducted by the BSLISE working group has culminated in the development of Guidelines that are poised to significantly influence LIS education and research. By fostering harmonization, promoting innovative curriculum development, and addressing the global-local balance, these guidelines provide a robust foundation for advancing the field of Library and Information Science.

### Saif Al Jabri

Dr Saif Al Jabri has more than 25 years of experience in library management. He has worked in different levels of library management and administration. He has an optimistic vision of library development and its future role and he always encourages young people in the Arab region to enter the field and join the world of knowledge professionals. Beside his duties in library administration, he teaches in the Business Communication and the Information Studies departments. Currently, he chairs the MENA Regional Division Committee, IFLA and plays an active role in the LIS field in the MENA region, as well as serving as a member of the Literacy and Reading Standing Committee. Saif is one of the founders of the BSLISE (Building Strong Library and Information Science Education) working group when he was chairing the IFLA Section on Education and Training (SET) Standing Committee.

### Jasenska Pleško

Jasenska Pleško has been working in the libraries of the city of Zagreb, Croatia, Europe, for over 30 years. She is the Subject Analysis Coordinator at the City Library of Zagreb. Her area of interest besides subject analysis is the training and lifelong education of librarians. She chaired the Commission for Education and Lifelong Learning of the Croatian Library Association several times. She is a member of the IFLA Education and Training Section in her second term. Since 2022, she has been the president of the Croatian Library Association.



## LIS publishing (Panel)

Prof Susmita Chakraborty (University of Calcutta, LTR SC), Dr Steven Witt (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, LTR SC) and Dr Mary Anne Kennan (Charles Sturt University)

### Susmita Chakraborty

Professor Susmita Chakraborty works at the Department of Library and Information Science, the University of Calcutta. She is the Chair of IFLA's Library Theory and Research Section.

### Mary Anne Kennan

Mary Anne Kennan is a semi-retired academic, whose last full-time role was as Associate Professor of Information Studies at Charles Sturt University. She continues as a researcher and her research interests focus broadly on scholarly communication; education of, and roles for, librarians and information professionals; and the practices of information sharing and collaboration in various contexts. She is the Editor of the *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* (JALIA). E-mail: [mkennan@csu.edu.au](mailto:mkennan@csu.edu.au)

### Steven Witt

**Dr Steven Witt is the Head of the International and Area Studies Library at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign**, where he is also the subject specialist for Global Studies and Japanese. In addition, he has been the Director of the Center for Global Studies (CGS) at the University of Illinois since 2015. In 2018, the Center was designated a US Department of Education National Resource Center for the 5th consecutive time. Witt is also editor of *IFLA Journal*, the flagship journal of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

## The Future of LIS in Australia-NZ: Co-designing Real-World Solutions through Research-Practice-Education Partnership

Dr Mary Anne Kennan (Charles Sturt University), Edward Luca, (The University of Sydney Library) and Dr Bhuva Narayan (University of Technology, Sydney)

The decline in the number of educational institutions offering qualifications in librarianship has created a significant challenge for LIS research and the profession. In addition, the merging of previously independent LIS schools to form part of other, generally larger, academic units within their parent institutions has resulted in a reduction of LIS educators as



they share teaching with non-LIS educators in multidisciplinary or multi-field schools, reducing the ability of LIS educators to advance LIS approaches in these areas of study (Kennan, Carroll, & Thompson, 2018). These changes in Australian higher education and other factors such as shifting funding priorities have seen a decline in LIS programs in Australia from a high of 16 in 1988, to 10 by 2008 (Wilson et al 2012), and now only three in 2024 accepting new students. Similarly, in New Zealand, there are only two LIS programmes left.

This decline in LIS programs impacts the academic opportunities available to LIS doctoral graduates, pushing them towards alternative professions. It also affects succession planning within the LIS discipline in universities which will flow on to LIS education. Concurrently, libraries are grappling with a shortage of qualified librarians due to the shrinking pool of graduates. The most recent data notes reducing staffing levels in academic libraries and volatility around organisational change and restructuring (Australian Library and Information Association, 2021). This complex set of challenges has also led to a reduction in research activities by both academics and practitioners and diminishing collaborative efforts.

Addressing these challenges necessitates active engagement, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among LIS stakeholders. In response, we attempt to engage with fellow researchers, educators, and practitioners at several events. The panel will begin with brief presentations from each of the panelists. Following that we will seek anonymous input from the participants via Menti, an interactive presentation tool, an activity for which we have received ethical clearance from the UTS Ethics Committee. Symposium participants are welcome to attend the Panel without participating in the Menti activity if they so wish. The Menti activity will include questions about what concerns Symposium attendees about the state of LIS, what topics concern attendees most about LIS education, practice, and research, and what topics they would like to discuss further. Before the discussion arising from the Menti activity, we will share the findings from a similar presentation at the RAILS 2023 conference in Wellington, we can see if concerns are similar or different, and then have some time to discuss as a group some of the issues raised and potential solutions.

#### References

Australian Library and Information Association. (2021). ALIA LIS education, skills and employment trend report 2020 [Text]. <https://read.alia.org.au/alia-lis-education-skills-and-employment-Trend-report-2020>

Kennan, M. A., Carroll, M. & Thompson, K. M. (2018). Letting go, holding on, or re-envisioning? Challenges and opportunities for LIS education in Australia. In J. Percell, L. C. Sarin, P. T. Jaeger, & J. C. Bertot, *Re-envisioning the MLS: Perspectives on the future of library and*



*information science education*. Emerald Publishing Limited.

Wilson, Concepción S; Kennan, Mary Anne, Boell, Sebastian K.; Willard, Patricia (2012). From Practice to Academia : 50 Years of LIS Education in Australia. In Amanda Spink & Diljit Singh, (eds.) *Library and Information Science Trends and Research: Asia-Oceania*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 15-45.

## Mary Anne Kennan

See page 10

## Edward Luca

Edward Luca is a library leader and researcher. As Associate Director, Academic Services at the University of Sydney Library, he leads the liaison librarian teams providing education and research support services. Edward writes and speaks on topics including academic librarianship, scholarly publishing and design thinking. He is an Associate Editor for the *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* (JALIA) and an advocate for practice-based research in libraries. In his free time, Edward is busy writing up his PhD thesis in Business Information Systems at the University of Sydney Business School. His PhD explores the role of metrics and managerialism in shaping the research choices of academics.

## Bhuva Narayan

Dr Bhuva Narayan is Associate Professor of Communication, and Director of Graduate Research at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). Her research interests include Human Learning, Information Behaviours, Information Avoidance, Digital Literacies, Personal Information Management, Scholarly Communication and Open Access. She is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* (JALIA).