



## **NSLA Position Statement: Wireless Access**

### **Background**

Wireless and mobile applications and devices are driving profound changes across all industries and sectors, providing increased flexibility, convenience and control for users as well as influencing the design and use of public spaces, such as libraries. NSLA has made an explicit commitment, through the initiatives of the Re-Imagining Library Services program, to build an 'anywhere, anytime' service model that will deliver seamless and functionally integrated access to information.

While most NSLA members have already started to move towards this model, providing access for portable wireless devices within their buildings, the nature of these wireless services varies considerably and has yet to reach the desired level of seamless and functional integration.

NSLA is committed to the provision of unrestricted and multi-channel access paths to information, provided at the same operational coverage and service capacity irrespective of the delivery network, ensuring that all users have the freedom to work with the device and environment of their choice. In accordance with this commitment, NSLA endorses the following principles for the provision of wireless access.

### **Principles**

Wireless access is:

- available free of charge;
- accessible in all public areas of the library, extending outside to the immediate surroundings; and
- available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Wireless access will provide access to:

- the Internet;
- the full range of online information resources and services offered by public access computers operated by the library; and
- ancillary services provided to users of public computers such as printing and scanning facilities.

Wireless access will be offered on the basis that:

- users are not required to register or identify themselves to access wireless services<sup>1</sup>;
- users are provided with a concise, easy-to-understand service description and conditions of use; and
- users must accept the conditions of use.

## **Implementation Guidelines**

Policies, training and public communications are regularly reviewed, and updated in accordance with changing technology and trends.

Statistical data such as number of users, bandwidth usage and customer feedback are collected and analysed to inform the operational management and development of wireless services.

Wireless access services are based on widely deployed industry standard technologies (IEEE 802.11a/b/g/n protocols for wireless networking) to enable use by a wide range of mobile computing devices. Wireless networks are established and maintained in accordance with the appropriate industry standards. Security within institutions follows best-practice standards used in the open environment.<sup>2</sup> Institutions are not responsible for security of personal portable devices.

Filtering and file blocking on wireless networks is only undertaken to meet resource management, security, government legislative or other mandatory requirements.

NSLA libraries are continually experimenting with new and emerging technologies for use by the public and staff.

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<sup>1</sup> User registration and authentication represent barriers to access. There is no legal requirement to limit wireless access to registered users and wireless access in comparable situations (cafes, club lounges, conference venues) increasingly does not require user registration.

<sup>2</sup> For example, access points in public spaces to be securely mounted or in places not easily accessible to the public; use of default passwords on access points is prohibited; access points to use static IP address and configured in bridging mode to the wired network; firewalls; access points in public areas must be WiFi certified.