



National and
State Libraries
Australasia

NSLA Indigenous Cultural Capability Audit

2023-2024

| DOCUMENT INFORMATION | |
|----------------------|--|
| Author(s) | NSLA Office |
| Purpose | To share the findings from the 2024 NSLA ICC Audit |
| Related documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NSLA Indigenous Cultural Capability Audit 2023 |



Introduction

National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) began holding an annual Indigenous Cultural Capability Audit in 2020-21 as a way to continue work in this area at the conclusion of the formal [Culturally Safe Libraries Program](#). NSLA committed to undertaking an audit for five years, with 2023-24 being the penultimate audit. Initially the audit was completed by Australian members of NSLA, but in 2023 the audit was extended to include Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa, The National Library of New Zealand.

The audit is mapped to the [ATSILIRN Protocols](#) developed in Australia, and when the audit was extended to Aotearoa New Zealand in 2023, the survey language was adapted for the Māori context with questions specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities left blank to keep question numbering consistent. Throughout the report we have adopted the term 'First Nations' in reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori peoples.

The aims of the audit are:

- Tracking and transparently reporting on the progress of cultural capability (structures and policies for building cultural competency) in NSLA libraries
- Holding NSLA libraries to account in making necessary improvements to policies and practices regarding cultural capability

Publicly reporting the audit results helps to fulfil NSLA member's obligations to the broader library sector, both as sector leaders and according to our commitments under the UN Sustainable Development Goals to transparently demonstrate and promote cultural capability.

NSLA has been using the same audit questions since inception. This offers consistency, but also limitations. It has emerged over the course of the audits that questions may be interpreted differently year-to-year as our understanding of complex issues and concepts (e.g., Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property, affirmative action strategies) evolves and grows. NSLA has also become aware that in some cases current and historical data is incomplete or inaccurate. Where it is possible to correct the data for 2023-2024 NSLA has done so; for previous years the decision was made not to remedy the data.

Summary of findings

Workplace

1. Since 2021, five Australian libraries have seen an increase in the percentage of the library's workforce identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. However, since the 2023 audit, six of the ten NSLA libraries saw a decrease in the percentage of their workforce identifying as First Nations. It is important to note that that this data does not account for changes to organisation-wide staffing levels across years which may have impact on these figures.



2. There has been a decrease in the number of libraries reporting that they offer cultural capability training to new staff, however this is in response to investigation of or transition to new training options.
3. In the past year, three additional libraries report having documented action strategies specifically for the recruitment and promotion of First Nations staff, with a total of seven libraries now having strategies in place.
4. As with previous years, most libraries rely on existing standard codes of conduct, internal WHS and HR polices to manage breaches of cultural safety, workplace racism and lateral violence in place of specialised mechanisms and policies.

Community engagement

5. As in previous years, fewer than half of NSLA libraries (four out of ten) report having a communications strategy to reach First Nations peoples and communities, however, all but one NSLA library undertakes direct promotional activities with First Nations media channels and communities. All the libraries report having mechanisms in place to ensure that library communications are culturally safe, although these mechanisms vary in formality.
6. 2024 saw a small decrease in the number of libraries reporting having a dedicated Indigenous collections team, engagement unit or liaison officer to work with specific communities (nine out of ten, down from ten in 2023), however this was due to a vacant position. This position has now been filled.
7. The number of libraries offering dedicated space for First Nations clients has remained steady between 2023 and 2024 at six. This is up from three in 2021.
8. Flags are now on display in seven of the ten libraries (up from six in 2023), with First Nations artworks on display in all ten of the libraries.
9. In 2024, the greatest barrier to engagement with First Nations communities was identified as 'structure'. This follows on from 'budget' in 2023, 'staff skills' in 2022 and 'strategy' in 2021. As noted in the 2023 report, this may demonstrate the trajectory of cultural capability in NSLA libraries. Strategies are being put in place, staff are gaining skills, budget is being assigned and structure is now needed to ensure long-lasting and effective engagement.
10. As in 2023, all libraries participate in significant cultural events such as Indigenous Literacy Day, NAIDOC Week (Aus), and Matariki (NZ).

Overall, difficulties in engaging with First Nations communities were similar to 2023 and include:

- Low levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- Staff confidence
- Geographic barriers and digital divide
- National jurisdiction and the challenge of building and nurturing relationships with hundreds of First Nations communities.



Collections

11. There continues to be a steady increase in libraries reporting separate First Nations collections policies, averaging an increase of one library per audit year, (now at seven out of ten libraries).
12. There has been a significant increase in the number of libraries reporting having a formal policy for the recognition and protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) with five libraries having ICIP policies in 2024, up from two in 2023.
13. In 2024, there was a small decrease in the number of libraries reporting having a documented process for consultation with First Nations communities in regard to development and management of collections (four out of ten, down from five out of ten in 2023).
14. There has been an increase in the number of libraries reporting that they have a documented policy for the identification and appropriate handling of secret and sacred or offensive materials at six out of ten, up from three in 2023 and 2022, and four in 2021.
15. In 2024, all ten NSLA libraries report routinely allocating language designators and culturally appropriate names, places and subject descriptions to new materials (up from nine in 2023). This is also the case with retrospective updating of catalogue records for items with First Nations content (ten libraries in 2024, up from eight in 2023).
16. In 2024, an additional library (six out of ten) reported offering a right of reply to communities regarding collection description (up from five in 2023).
17. All libraries continue to report promoting awareness of First Nations collections through collection guides, exhibitions, programs, websites etc.
18. There was a decrease in the number of libraries reporting that they have agreed to the repatriation of original records or provision of copies to First Nations communities as a result of consultation (six out of ten, down from eight in 2023). Respondents variously interpreted the question to refer to the last 12 months or at any time, which may account for the change across 2023 and 2024.

Programs and services

19. The majority of NSLA libraries (eight out of ten) report having some form of mechanism to ensure that their programs and services are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of First Nations communities, although these can be informal.
20. Only three NLSA libraries report mechanisms in place to seek feedback on library programs and services specifically from First Nations community members, however all ten NSLA libraries report having actively partnered with First Nations communities, organisations, groups or cultural representatives within the last 12 months.
21. There was a small decrease in the number of libraries reporting the involvement of First Nations people in the design and delivery of education and training programs relating to Indigenous collections and services (seven out of ten in 2024, down from eight in 2023).



22. Five NSLA libraries report delivering programs in First Nations languages (up from four out of ten in 2023).

Policies and procedures

23. Three libraries report having adopted their own library-specific Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) or dedicated First Nations engagement strategy (up from one in 2023). Of the libraries that do not have a library-specific RAP, some are subject to RAPs in place in parent departments, while others are in the process of developing RAPs and in Aotearoa New Zealand '*much of Māori engagement is iwi, context or collection specific*'.
24. As of 2024, five NSLA libraries identify and report on their own library specific performance measures to support First Nations employment (up from four in 2023). There was also an increase in the number of libraries identifying and reporting on performance measures for First Nations collections and programs (five out of ten, up from three in 2023).
25. Over half of NSLA libraries (six out of ten), report reviewing and updating corporate policies and procedures to better incorporate First Nations cultural competency protocols and principles. This included adopting ICIP policies, ongoing updates to existing policies and developing strategic plans.
26. Procurement policies including First Nations service providers remain steady and continue to be in place in nine out of ten libraries.
27. In 2024, four NSLA libraries reported that representatives from First Nations communities were invited to participate in the development of their most recent strategic plan, with respondents referring either to specific strategies or the library's overarching strategic plan.

Detailed results and aggregated data are presented in Appendix 1 below.

Thanks to our NSLA member library representatives:

Kim Brunoro (NLA), Catherine Wagner (SLSA), Ania Tait & Don Christophersen (LANT), Bec Henson (SLV), Wayne Meyrick & Anna Raunik (SLQ), Michael Christie (TAS), Richard Neville (SLNSW), Antoinette Buchanan (ACT), Shahna Rind (SLWA), Tim Kong (NLNZ).



APPENDIX 1: Detailed results by section

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Section 1: Workplace

3. How do libraries demonstrate formal recognition of First Nations as Traditional Custodians and Kaitiaki?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Entrance includes acknowledgement of Country | 4 | 4 | 8 | 8 |
| Homepage includes acknowledgement of Country | 6 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Email footers include acknowledgement of Country | 5 | 9 | 7 | 7 |
| Spoken acknowledgement of Country at all significant gatherings | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Major events include formal role for local First Nations community | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 |

Examples:

- *The National Library's ICIP Protocol articulates the organisation's recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Australia and embeds that acknowledgement across all of the Library's work.*
- *Although there is not a prominent acknowledgement of country located at the State Library entrance there is a greeting stone located on entry. Acknowledgement of country is on website homepage but in the page footer and is prominently displayed within the indigenous collection services page <https://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/collections/indigenous-collections>*



4. Percentage of libraries' workforce identifying as First Nations

| % of workforce identifying | 2021 Number of libraries | 2022 Number of libraries | 2023 Number of libraries | 2024 Number of libraries |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <1.0% | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 1.0-2.99% | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.0-5.99% | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| >5.99% | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 |

5. First nations representation in libraries' executive team and board members

| % of executive team and board members | 2021 Number of libraries | 2022 Number of libraries | 2023 Number of libraries | 2024 Number of libraries |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <1% | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| 1-15% | 2 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| 16-25% | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| >25% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| # of executive team and board members | 2021* Number of libraries | 2022 Number of libraries | 2023 Number of libraries | 2024 Number of libraries |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 0 | n/a | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 1 | n/a | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| 2 | n/a | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| >2 | n/a | 0 | 0 | 0 |

* Question not asked in 2021

The total number of First Nations peoples serving on libraries' executive teams and boards decreased by one from 2023 to 2024. Significant changes in percentages may be due to changes in composition of executive teams and boards.



6. Do libraries have First Nations-specific governance structures such as Indigenous Advisory Board, Elders' Council?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 4 | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| No | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Notes:

- One library is looking to re-establish a previously disbanded Indigenous Advisory Board, while another library no longer has an Aboriginal Reference Group, and liaises with First Nations staff in its place.
- Some positive responses refer to engaging with First Nations groups not part of formal governance substructures.

7-8. Do libraries provide cultural capability training for all staff, and if yes, is this training mandatory?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 8 | 7 | 10 | 8 |
| No | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 |

Notes:

- Of the eight libraries who provide training, six report it as mandatory.
- Several libraries are looking into new options for this training, with some choosing to not provide training while this is being undertaken.

Examples:

- *New Cultural Awareness and Cultural Capability training is being developed by our parent Directorate at the moment.*
- *Cultural awareness training is provided to all staff as mandatory training and is part of induction training. Attending cultural events is also encouraged by the Executive team and is part of all staff's Performance Development Plan (PDP) for discussion and promoting event attendance during work time.*
- *Training is included in the Department of Internal Affairs onboarding and includes tours of He Tohu, training in Taura Herenga Waka. The DIA's Inclusion & Diversity strategy, includes annually prescribed individual learning for all staff, including a module called Mana Āki. This is an e-learning programme that helps to develop intercultural competence. The introduction of the Mātauranga Māori standards into NLNZ BAU. These standards are designed to be implemented and embedded into daily practise, with a focus on protection, promotion, and preservation of mātauranga Māori.*

Note: The NSLA Office believes there may be some errors with the current and historical data for this question.



9. Do libraries have documented affirmative action strategies specifically for the recruitment and promotion of First Nations peoples?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 5 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| No | 4 | 6 | 6 | 3 |

Examples:

- *As a RAP commitment Libraries ACT examines each vacancy for the possibility of identification.*
- *The National Library has an Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Action Plan, which has been reviewed by the Australian Public Service Commission*
- *State Library of Queensland First Nations Recruitment & Retention strategy is pivotal to our ongoing ambition and aligns with Qld Governments Recruit for Diversity practices and Recruitment & Selection Directive.*

10-11. Are there support networks available at the libraries for First Nations staff, and if so, do they assist with career progression?

Career progression:

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 6 | 4 | 6 | 7 |
| No | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 |

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| No | 2 | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| N/A | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 |

Examples:

- *The National Library has an internal network of its First Nations employees - LINK (the Library's Indigenous Network of Knowledge).*
- *Fortnightly "Yarn Up" meetings are held with all State Library First Nations staff. These catch ups are voluntary and provide a safe space for First Nations staff to come together and discuss their work and any other topics of interest. Standing up the newly created Diversity & Inclusion advisory group will provide further support networks.*
- *Tangata Whenua Rōpū: is a network of Māori staff employed by the Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua. The rōpū exists to provide support and whakawhanaungatanga to Māori staff. Te Rōpu Māori Caucus (TRM) is a longstanding Māori staff network, which is part of Community Operations. Pou Ārahi The Pou Ārahi unit provides advice and support on how the Branch can work effectively with Māori, especially through its Operations and Policy functions. There are waiata, kapa haka and language learning support groups that meet formally and informally across the library.*



12. What mechanisms are in place at the libraries to respond to breaches of cultural safety and workplace racism?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| Some | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| None | 8 | 6 | 10 | 9 |

Notes:

- Respondents spoke of standard Human Resources policies, and mandatory cultural awareness training, but only one library referenced documents or principles that specifically address First Nations peoples and cultural safety.

Examples:

- *Whilst there are none that are specific to the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members, mechanisms are provided to staff via wellbeing and WHS policies, strategies and supports by our parent department.*
- *DIA's "Strategic Framework for Working Effectively with Maori" includes mātaḗpono/principles that are woven through the way people are expected to work within NLNZ. Within this work, there are a number of statutory obligations that relate to Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, that are expressed in legislation that the Department administers, including National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa) Act 2003.*

13-14. What mechanisms are in place at the libraries to recognise and respond to lateral violence? How are they communicated?

Notes:

- As with Question 12, respondents spoke of standard Codes of Conduct and Unacceptable Behaviour Policies, with no reference to mechanisms specifically addressing First Nations peoples and lateral violence.



Section 2: Communications

15. Do you have a communications strategy to reach First Nations peoples and communities?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| No | 6 | 7 | 7 | 6 |

Examples:

- *Libraries ACT employees an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Coordinator in the Outreach Team. This position has been vacant for a year and just recruited to. A comms strategy will be part of the duties of the new coordinator.*
- *The internal Culturally Safe Libraries & Archives Working Group, guided by "Raising the Bar: Our journey to becoming a culturally safe library and archive," acts as a forum for advice on how we communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.*
- *Every program/event is driven by Interpretation Strategy and has its own communication plan so will consider Aboriginal people and communities*

16. Does the library promote programs, services and collections directly and deliberately to First Nations media channels and Indigenous communities?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 3 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| No | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| N/A | 6 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

Examples:

- *Yes very much so when appropriate. IEB aims to collaborate and support communities.*
- *One example would be the United Aborigines Mission Archival records - collection and community consultation. Community Consultation meeting - United Aborigines Mission Archival Records | State Library of South Australia (slsa.sa.gov.au) Are you a former resident of... - State Library of South Australia | Facebook. through its Aboriginal Reference Group is actively engaged with the community*
- *This is achieved via regular interaction with the peak bodies (Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and the Tasmanian Regional Aboriginal Communities Alliance), as well as Tasmanian Aboriginal people who engage regularly with our collections and services.*



17. What mechanisms are in place, if any, to ensure that library communications (including social media) are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of First Nations communities? Can you provide examples?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| Some | 6 | 8 | 10 | 10 |
| None | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Examples:

- *All social media posts and other communications with Indigenous content are created by or in close collaboration with the Indigenous Engagement Section. For example, publicity for the Library’s Deadly Dialogue events was created by Indigenous Engagement staff, and uploaded and managed by our Communications and Marketing Section. Programming and events like NAIDOC, Reconciliation Week events and other Indigenous-related events are informed, developed and hosted by Indigenous Engagement staff.*
- *Informal but fairly robust procedures. Media & Comms teams do survey social media and will always reference if there are questions. There are good relationships between IEB and the Comms team.*
- *Communications are developed via consultation with our internal Culturally Safe Libraries & Archives Working Group and the Aboriginal Education Services unit in our parent department. One Examples include communication around leave and working conditions during Australia Day, and approaches to providing information to the community in the lead up to The Voice Referendum.*

18. Does the library have a dedicated Indigenous collections team, Indigenous engagement unit, or Indigenous liaison officer to work with specific communities?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 6 | 8 | 10 | 9 |
| No | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

Notes:

- *The decrease in the number of libraries responding yes to this question was due to a vacant position. At the time of writing this report, the position has been filled.*

Examples:

- *the Library does have an Indigenous Engagement Branch and also a curator embedded within the acquisitions team. The branch now focuses on community engagement, but does also support and advise on collection acquisitions.*
- *Manager Aboriginal Engagement (Executive Services), Storylines Program Coordinator and Senior Library Officer: Storylines (Library Services).*



- *We have a number of individuals who work to connect with Māori communities around particular projects such as Books in Māori and within the Alexander Turnbull Library. These roles are Māori Advisor Digitisation, Māori Curator, Field Conservator, Research Librarian Māori.*

19. Does the library provide a dedicated space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Māori clients, or actively encourage use of its facilities by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Māori communities?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 3 | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| No | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

Examples:

- *kuril dhagun is a space designated for First Nations communities to meet, gather and celebrate culture by sharing First Nations knowledge and stories. kuril dhagun provides access to First Nations peoples who seek to engage with State Library services, resources and collections. It is also a culturally appropriate venue for First Nations community members, community groups and organisations to host their cultural events, meetings and other activities*
- *The VIRC provides a dedicated space and access to the Library's services, resources and collections. The Library's Indigenous gallery, which is led by the VIRC, hosts a changing program of exhibitions and events that celebrate the stories of Indigenous Victorians and provide meaningful experiences for visitors to connect with material held in the Victorian State Collection. The recently closed Beruk exhibition was made possible through deep collaboration between the VIRC, the Library, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal*

20. If yes, are/were First Nations staff or community members involved in the planning and design of these spaces?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 4 | 4 | 6 | 7 |
| No | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| N/A | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

21. Are First Nations flags on prominent display at the library?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 5 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| No | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |



22. Are artworks by First Nations peoples on display?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 9 | 8 | 10 | 10 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

23. What are the greatest barriers to engagement with First Nations communities for your library?

| Frequency of scores 2024 | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th |
| Budget | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Structure | 6 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Staff awareness | 0 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Staff skills | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Strategy | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 |

Greatest barriers to engagement with First Nations communities across years:

| 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 |
|-----------|--------|--------------|----------|
| Structure | Budget | Staff skills | Strategy |

24. Please list any other barriers to engagement.

- *National jurisdiction. Being a national organisation presents the challenge of building and nurturing relationships with the hundreds of First Nations communities represented in the collection. With a small team, this does pose a significant barrier to meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Staff confidence. While this is improving with the implementation of the ICIP protocol, there is a degree of hesitation among staff outside of the Indigenous Engagement section to take proactive steps in Indigenous engagement, largely for fear of making mistakes or offending people. Misconceptions of the intent of the ICIP protocol and the processes around its implementation. Ongoing work to develop an ICIP communication strategy aims to address common concerns and highlights the important consequences of implementing the protocol.*
- *Lack of Aboriginal employees.*
- *Geographic- Access to SLWA services and collections online – digital disadvantage of access to cheap reliable internet, access to appropriate technology and access to learning on how to use a digital library*



25. Does the library participate in significant cultural events, such as Indigenous Literacy Day, NAIDOC Week, and Sorry Day? If yes, please give examples.

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 9 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Examples:

- *The library regularly participates in external cultural events, partnering with community organisations and actively encourages displays for days of celebration.*
- *State Library is a regular participant in NAIDOC celebrations in the library and in communities across Brisbane, Cairns and beyond. The First Nations Strategy focuses on celebrating First Nations public programming by curating an annual public program that celebrates and makes visible First Nations knowledge, culture, perspectives, communities, and businesses*
- *Partnership events for National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week. E.g. Galup VR experience*
- *Matariki is celebrated at team level and as individuals, there are waiata groups and other opportunities within DIA. Te Wiki O Te Reo Māori events are at times hosted in the library.*

Section 3: Collections

26. Does the library have a separate Indigenous collections policy (or a specific section within its broader collections policy) that supports acquisition of material by and about First Nations peoples?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| No | 6 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

Examples:

- *The National Library does not have a separate Indigenous collecting policy but does have a set of First Nations collecting principles, which are referred to in the Library's Collection Development Policy*
https://www.nla.gov.au/sites/default/files/collection_development_policy_revised_2_july.pdf
- *<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/about-library/services/indigenous-engagement/indigenous-collecting>*
- *a specific section in the Collection Strategy and have identified as a priority collecting area*



27. Does the library have its own, formal policy for the recognition and protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) as part of collection management?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 5 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| No | 4 | 6 | 8 | 5 |

Notes:

- Of the libraries who do not currently have formal independent ICIP policies, some are in the process of implementation while others included ICIP within existing strategies and policies.

Examples:

- *The National Library's ICIP protocol was published in February 2023 and is being proactively implemented by all staff and teams. The principles underpinning the ICIP protocol are being applied in work around collection acquisitions, description, digitisation and access.*
- *Partially implemented, but not formally signed off. Most of our policies and procedures are informed by it.*
- *We have adopted the NSLA Policy Statement and Guidelines for Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) and continue to be guided by the ATSILIRN (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network) Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services in relation to the treatment of culturally sensitive collections.*

28. Does the library have a documented process for consultation with Indigenous communities or iwi Māori in regard to development and management of its collections (including digital materials), including a cultural permissions process?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| No | 6 | 3 | 5 | 6 |

Examples:

- *Our Aboriginal Reference Group is established to support the Library when it undertakes such work & in the formation of policies and procedures*
- *Our processes have and continue to be developed based on consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community via the peak bodies (TAC, TRACCA) and Tasmanian Aboriginal people who engage regularly with our collections and services.*
- *We do consult and develop agreements with communities, but do not yet have a documented process.*



29. Does the library have a documented policy for the identification and appropriate handling of secret and sacred or offensive materials, in both physical and digital environments?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 4 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| No | 5 | 6 | 7 | 4 |

30. Does this involve consultation?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 4 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| N/A | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 |

Examples:

- *Yes. Our processes have and continue to be developed based on consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community via the peak bodies (TAC, TRACCA) and Tasmanian Aboriginal people who engage regularly with our collections and services.*
- *Ad hoc community consultation is undertaken in regard to identification and appropriate handling of secret and sacred or offensive collection materials. A co-collecting/co-curating framework is in development.*
- *Based on consultation and the wishes of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal Communities, we identify and involve appropriate people in handling of materials, and noting of specific access restrictions and permissions. We also have processes (not fully documented) around handling of digital material with cultural restrictions (secret/sacred) from acquisition (when we first receive the files by whatever means) to “ingest” - i.e. when the files are formally/officially processed and part of our digital collection in our systems.*



31. Are collections teams routinely allocating language designators and culturally appropriate names, places and subject descriptions to all newly acquired materials, using Indigenous thesauri such as the AUSTLANG database and AIATSIS thesaurus of Indigenous place names?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 8 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| No | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Examples:

- *This is built into our contracts with all library suppliers as well as a practice of the original cataloguer at the ACT Heritage Library.*
- *The Library is committed to strengthening the discoverability and promotion of First Nations language materials. It also ensures all newly acquired Library materials are allocated appropriate language designators and culturally appropriate names and subject descriptions.*
- *We apply headings from Ngā Upoko Tukutuku when the work is written in te reo Māori or is bilingual, with one of the languages being te reo Māori, and/or at least 20% of the content is for and/or about Māori. We will also add the headings to records at the request of the Research Services team or the Curators. The language code for te reo is added to the appropriate fields of the descriptive record to support searching and filtering in catalogues. ----- Yes. Alexander Turnbull Library is actively involved in maintaining and contributing to both Ngā Upoko Tukutuku and the Iwi Hapū Names List. Alexander Turnbull Library continues to work updating this metadata within the CMS.*

32. Have collections teams been retrospectively updating catalogue records for materials with unsuitable subject headings and other metadata?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| No | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Examples:

- *As problematic subject headings and metadata come to light. Project work has been done on larger parts of the collection in previous years*
- *Ad hoc but addressing backlogs/retrospective will be actioned this FY*

33. Is there a mechanism specifically for First Nations peoples to have a 'right of reply' to collection descriptions that pertain to themselves or their communities?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| No | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 |



| | 2021 | | 2022 | | 2023 | | 2024 | |
|--------|------|----|------|----|------|----|----------|----------|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| ACT | | x | | x | | x | | x |
| NLA | | x | x | | x | | x | |
| NSW | x | | | x | x | | x | |
| NT | | x | | x | | x | x | |
| QLD | x | | x | | x | | x | |
| SA | | x | | x | | x | | x |
| TAS | | x | | x | x | | x | |
| VIC | x | | x | | | x | | x |
| WA | x | | x | | x | | x | |
| NZ | | | | | | x | | x |
| Totals | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 4 |

Examples:

- *This was investigated and there is no safe or culturally appropriate way to achieve this through the library catalogue.*
- *There is a mechanism in Trove for users to notify us of sensitive material and provide additional information about items. Work has begun on creating similar mechanisms with the Library's webpage and catalogue.*
- *Yes: this is an important part of IEB's work. Keeping Culture / Murkutu is all about right of reply. The intention is to develop this area significantly. (NSW)*
- *Right of Reply policy is in draft.*
- *This work is being guided by principles and procedure developed for the Stolen Generations and survivors of forced adoption and out of home care policies more broadly.*

34. Does the library promote awareness and use of First Nations collections through collection guides, finding aids, tours, websites and exhibitions?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 9 | 8 | 10 | 10 |
| No | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Examples:

- *The ACT Heritage Library provides a bibliography of collection material related to the Aboriginal People of the region and created a resource for information regarding the Voice Referendum.*
- *"There is a dedicated space in kuril dhagun to display collections and exhibitions. We have a commitment to embedding First Nations perspectives in all exhibitions. The Schools Engagement team and curriculum support includes First Nations schools learning resources and has a dedicated First Nations teacher. We have a commitment to include First Nations content*



on State Library's homepage. First Nations content is showcased on our Collections pages, Discover/Browse pages, Family History and Events. Who's your Mob Family History videos are released and support people to discover / research their family history."

- Yes. Eg. Website, Indigenous Collections Pages and Library guides. Partnering with Community groups to runs Aboriginal Family history workshops and to take reference inquiries personally.
- Beruk exhibition (closed July 2024). The next exhibition on Treaty is in development. SLV has several collection guidelines that focus on collections relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

35. Has the library agreed to the repatriation of any original records or provision of copies to First Nations communities as a result of consultation?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 6 | 6 | 8 | 6 |
| No | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 |

Notes:

- Respondents varied in interpreting whether the question referred to the last 12 months or at any time. This may account for the change in numbers between 2023 and 2024.

36. If yes, has it assisted any communities in establishing or maintaining knowledge centres for repatriated records?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 5 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| No | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| N/A | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 |

Section 4: Programs and services

37. What mechanisms are in place, if any, to ensure that library programs and services are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of First Nations communities?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| Some | 5 | 7 | 8 | 8 |
| None | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

Examples:

- Programs are developed by, or in consultation with, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Coordinator
- First Nations staff give advice



- *Informal consultation with Indigenous Collections staff and consultation with Aboriginal Reference Group, Healing Foundation and Relationships Australia*
- *Library programs and exhibitions are informed by a consultation and approval process with the Victorian Indigenous Research Centre. The VIRC provides culturally safe services.*
- *The Public Engagement team aims to revolve its services and events around He Tohu. These programmes begin with karakia; every guided tour begins with Te Wehenga and telling the Māori creation story – indigeninising the space; we offer all guided tours to sing waiata inside the document room; we explain the waiwhakanoa bowls and encourage visitors to use them when exiting the document room; when we have Kura Kaupapa or VIPs visit, we welcome them with a mihi whakatau. The hosted onsite and online 'E oho' series of talks always start with a karakia, mihi, waiata and provides a safe space for questions and debate of Māori issues and a platform for Māori perspectives*

38. What mechanisms are in place, if any, to seek feedback on library programs, services and communities specifically from First Nations community members?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| Some | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| None | 6 | 4 | 8 | 7 |

Notes:

- Most libraries speak of general feedback surveys, but do not identify mechanisms specifically for First Nations community members.

Examples:

- *LANT seek advice from Specific communities or individuals*
- *A Local Government Customer Satisfaction survey is used to gather feedback on library programs and services, and this includes all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils. Feedback is sought from audiences after events and/or exhibitions*
- *Feedback is sought and provided from members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community during the planning, delivery and evaluation of programs and services, as well as through broader surveys.*
- *Nothing specifically aimed at Māori communities, just a generic email address is available - which is shared after each He Tohu webinar or E oho online view to give feedback if they wish.*

39. Please give an example of feedback you've received through these channels in the last year

- *Results from our February 2024 Public Library Census show that of those respondents who identified as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:*
 - *100 per cent agreed with the statement "I feel safe at the library"*
 - *96 per cent agreed with the statement "I feel part of the local community at the library"*



- 90 per cent agreed with the statement "Using the library improves my wellbeing."
- Feedback gathered by the Job Trail consultation indicates families are making use of the resources provided in the Little Fulla Yarns packs and that the materials are culturally appropriate. Further anecdotal feedback has been received via our Kimberley based staff member when visiting playgroups and relevant kindy programs in the Kimberley. - In 2023-24, 89.5% of respondents who indicated they identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander were either Satisfied (39.5%) or Very Satisfied (50%) overall with the quality of services and facilities provided by the State Library. (Of the remaining responses, 2 (7%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 1 (3%) didn't provide answer to this question.) - Comments from the 2023-24 Client Survey:
 - "you have done so much for the Indigenous community just by saving our documented history and photos its awesome"
 - "I feel like the library has a high level of customer care and a wonderful selection of borrowing items"
 - "I'm value the photo collection of Aboriginal family members who grew up in Mt Margaret mission. Having the ability to see these old photos helps me to research my history."
 - "Showcasing articles and history via Facebook is really cool. It brings a lot of excitement to my home town and family when we can see old photos shared."

40. Have programs and services staff at the library actively partnered with any First Nations communities, organisations, groups or cultural representatives in the last 12 months?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 9 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| No | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Both no responses attributed to SLV (2022, 2023)

Examples:

- The Library has partnered with several First Nations communities and organisations this year. Examples include partnering with Indigenous photographers to capture images from the 2023 Referendum and bringing seven First Nations interviewers into our oral history program. The Library also engaged with the family of Margaret Tucker to launch her re-published autobiography *If Everyone Cared Enough* on 15 May 2024. We held Aboriginal Story Telling with Larry Brandy from 8 to 9 March 2024 and, on 25 August 2023, we held a book event "In conversation with Brenda Matthews".
- The Library has partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, for example the Blak and Bright Festival. Our children and families programs regularly include representation through individual presenters, artists and organisations. The Library's Mirror exhibition programming included community engagement. Beruk exhibition - deep collaboration between the VIRC and the Library saw strong relationships fostered with the



Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and the Victorian Aboriginal community.

- *- Galup VR Experience, Helen Milroy Crow Baby exhibition, 2 X The Voice Referendum Panel Discussions, Sheiks, Fakes and Cameleers panel discussion, 2 X regional Storylines workshops (delivered in eight regional towns), The Write Club community writing partnership, Perth Writer's Festival Aboriginal writer's panel, Designing on Country Aboriginal design exhibition, Perth Comic Arts Festival (which included a showcase for visiting regional Aboriginal artists) Aboriginal Medical Services in the Kimberley and the Pilbara are distribution partners for the Little Fulla Yarns packs. State Library staff (Client Services) work with State Records Office and Aboriginal History WA to support clients using the Cultural Space to access records and services.*
- *The 'E Oho' series continues to be done in partnership with Māori leaders and experts. <https://natlib.govt.nz/events/e-oho-waitangi-series> We engage, as and when appropriate with Te Āti Awa representatives to have tikanga applied during events and programmes. One example of this was having representatives say karakia and waiata before beginning work on the building, as part of the enabling structure work to connect the library to the new archives facility. Another example was when collection "The Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives" - an online collection with it's own site and branding was closed and the content migrated to <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/parliamentary/appendix-to-the-journals-of-the-house-of-representatives> The team worked with local Māori representation to provide a space for guests from the Parliamentary library and wider community to come together, to acknowledge the closing of one season and the opening of another.*

41. Are First Nations peoples involved in the design and delivery of education and training programs relating to Indigenous collections and services?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 6 | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| No | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 |

Examples:

- *First Nations authors and contributions are prioritised within the Library's publishing program where cultural content is present and First Nations voices are central. The National Library's Education team has an Indigenous staff member who will regularly lead research and writing around First Nations content on the Digital Classroom. Consultation is undertaken with the Library's First Nations Education and Research Reference group, as well as the Library's Indigenous Engagement team where any First Nations content is planned to be used. The Library delivers webinars for Trove partner organisations that take an in-depth look at cultural content, collection management and other services. The Library's Indigenous Engagement team prepares and delivers webinars relating to First Nations content. The Library has also partnered with Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to deliver a webinar and*



guidelines on enhancing the findability and cultural integrity of records relating to First Australian material.

- *The book, Baby Ways is available to families in Noongar and Yawuru translations thanks to the Noongar Boodjar Aboriginal Language Centre and Yawuru Ngan-ga Language Facilitators*
- *We work with inhouse input of Māori staff when developing a programme, but at an ad hoc basis, we don't have a formal process for in person delivery.*

42. Does the library deliver any programs in First Nations languages?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 |

Examples:

- *The library has Ngunawal and Wiradjuri storytime sessions recorded and available via its Vimeo channel and the ACT Heritage Library partnered with the Winangaay Ngunnawal Language Corporation to present Ngunawal language workshops*
- *State Library holds an annual Queensland Indigenous Languages Symposium which brings together language speakers and experts, industry professionals, academics, researchers and cultural leaders for insightful and interactive discussions about reviving and using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and how we can support Queensland's many languages to thrive.*
- *2024 Tasmania Reads events included book readings in palawa kani.*

Section 5: Policies

43. Has your library adopted its own Reconciliation Action Plan or dedicated First Nations engagement strategy?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| No | 4 | 7 | 9 | 7 |

Examples:

- *Libraries ACT is an active participant in the parent Directorate RAP.*
- *The First Nations Strategy 2024-28: A plan for reframing relationships will transform State Library by reframing relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, knowledge and stories. This Strategy represents our commitment to the First Nations peoples and communities of this state. The First Nations Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2023-2025 outlines our commitment to growing and nurturing a thriving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. Plans - Corporate Information | State Library of Queensland*



(slq.qld.gov.au) We have the First Nations Strategy 2024-2028 and a First Nations Recruitment Strategy

- *The Library will be launching its Reflect RAP in October.*
- *Currently most of NLNZ led Māori engagement is iwi, context or collection specific.*

44. Does the library identify and report on its own (library-specific) performance measures to support First Nations employment?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 7 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| No | 2 | 5 | 6 | 5 |

Examples:

- *The library reports this information through the Directorate against a whole of government strategy*
- *The State Library as a Queensland Government Statutory body reports on performance measures internally through to CEO and Library board on an annual basis and through mandatory requirements as directed by the Queensland Public Sector Commission and the Ombudsman office.*
- *Under the Department Reconciliation Action Plan and to the Aboriginal Reference Group in quarterly meetings*

45. Does the library identify and report on performance measures for First Nations collections and programs?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 5 | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| No | 4 | 3 | 7 | 5 |

Examples:

- *There is a range of performance measures and key activities outlined in the Library’s Corporate Plan that either specifically address or incorporate delivery of and reporting on First Nations collections and programs.*
- *Monitoring, evaluation and reporting on performance is of critical importance and provides rigor and accountability to the commitment we have made to delivering on the strategic objectives of the First Nations Strategy. A detailed monitoring and reporting framework has been developed so that the State Library ELT can report to the IAG and Library Board on implementation.*
- *We contribute to Closing the Gap measure reporting made by our parent department and report against an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focused strategic plan priority.*



46. In the last year, has the library reviewed and updated any corporate policies and procedures to better incorporate Indigenous cultural competency protocols and principles?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024* |
|-----|------|------|------|-------|
| Yes | 3 | 6 | 5 | 6 |
| No | 6 | 3 | 5 | 3 |

* Data missing for one library.

Examples:

- *As corporate policies and procedures are reviewed, consideration is given to improving the incorporation of Indigenous cultural competency protocols and procedures. Examples include the revision of performance measures and activities under the Corporate Plan; and the implementation of the ICIP protocol through procedures for client requests, including for accessing, copying and use of Library materials.*
- *The First Nations Strategy and Action Plan was released this year. We as an organization are also going through an independent cultural audit that will look at our corporate policies and procedures in more detail and provide recommendations for the organisation to embed throughout these documents.*
- *The Repatriations/returns policy was updated and finalized to incorporate more up to date views on the practice.*
- *Adoption of the NSLA Policy Statement and Guidelines for Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).*

47. Does the library's procurement policy include First Nations service providers?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 8 | 7 | 9 | 9 |
| No | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

48. Were representatives from First Nations communities invited to participate in the development of your library's most recent strategic plan?

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| No | 6 | 8 | 7 | 6 |