

Vote for a more sustainable future



Our profession has long supported social good as well as pragmatic professional goals. It is not surprising that the first Object of the Australian Library and Information Association's 1989 Constitution was: 'To promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy and democracy.'

In our 80th year, 2017, the ALIA Board is proposing that we add **environment** to the first Object. Climate change is real and our environment will increasingly affect decision-making in all areas of society. Our recent ALIA Library Design Awards entries displayed overwhelmingly the importance placed on the environment.

This leads on to the broader impact of sustainability. The ALIA Board is also proposing the inclusion of an additional Object to the Constitution:

To endorse the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in response to the many challenges faced by the world today and into the future.

The ALIA Board is asking you to support the addition of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the principles of the Declaration of Human Rights to the heart of our Constitution.

The relationship between libraries, human rights and the SDGs stems from the unique position libraries hold in the information sector. Because libraries support people's access to vital information, they are democratic institutions – serving as social, educational and developmental equalisers. Libraries are essential institutions that combat information inequality.

Formally supporting these principles is a logical step for an evolving Association. IFLA has included United Nation's Article 19 in its Statutes, and we have had policies on 'freedom to read' since 1985. Supporting Article 19 incorporates important principles of access to information that are being increasingly challenged.

Article 19 – Universal Declaration of **Human Rights**. Everyone has the **right** to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

The ALIA Board urges you to vote in favour of these changes at the ALIA AGM in May, not only in the tradition of our Association supporting social good but also in the interest of the profession supporting a better global environment and a more sustainable future for all. 🌱

The proposed change to the Objects of the ALIA Constitution are:

- (a) To promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy, **environment** and democracy;
- (b) To promote and improve the services provided by all kinds of library and information agencies;
- (c) To ensure the high standard of personnel engaged in information provision and foster their professional interests and aspirations;
- (d) To represent the interests of Members to governments, other organisations and the community;
- (e) To encourage people to contribute to the improvement of library and information services through support and membership of the Association; and
- (f) To endorse the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in response to the many challenges faced by the world today and into the future.**