



GOOD PLAN BUT IT'S TAKING TOO LONG

A commitment to continuing professional development is a commitment to ensuring that we as librarians remain focussed on our changing world as well as our changing industry. ALIA Sydney, as a group dedicated to continuing professional development in the library and information sector across Sydney, endeavours to provide opportunities for our community to engage with the changes that are happening all around us. When UTS Library approached us with the opportunity to contribute another perspective to their 2020 *Academic Library Symposium*, the Horizon Workshop for academic librarians of the future was born.

Working together with the ALIA NSW State Manager, Alyson Dalby, my goals in constructing the Horizon Workshop were seemingly quite simple, to gather academic librarians in the earlier stages of their careers and facilitate discussion about who the academic librarians of the future should be, and more practically, what support will be necessary to realise that outcome. Our delegates were selected from a range of institutions across academic libraries in Sydney to ensure coverage was as broad as possible. However, they participated in the workshop as individuals, not representatives of their organisations, and, to allow relaxed discussion, their anonymity was ensured. A program was constructed with plenty of time for open discussion and a toolkit of talking points was prepared.

However what we found in the workshop was not what we were expecting.

New – possibly startling - ideas that will build a strong future might have been what we desired to find, instead, we realised that we do believe that the industry has been on the right path for some time but we've been on it for far too long.

We should have arrived at our destination by now, and we haven't, and the status quo persists. In too many cases, the foundations of trust and respect still feel like distant goals and opportunities to demonstrate diversity, creativity, innovation and leadership were much talked about but in reality were few and far between.

But we can be revolutionary. We can change into the professionals we need to become but we need to address the foundations first. To achieve this, trust and bravery will be required in equal measure for both teams to come to the table. Risks will be necessary but we can work together to make them calculated ones. I'm pleased to say that I have noted many of the participants of the workshop have, in the time since, been forging forward either in their own workplaces or in the wider profession and I for one, can't wait to see what the next step will be.

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Awesome chairs please: students of the future from Leichhardt High School in Sydney plan the Library of the Future at UTS (photo: UTS Library)