



# FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION SUMMIT

More than 50 library leaders from across Australia and New Zealand came together at the State Library of NSW on October 14 at ALIA's Future of the Profession Summit to reflect on the information and issues raised by you, our members through the 2013 National Advisory Congress meetings nationally and through submissions to this important ALIA project.

Noted futurist Mark Pesce facilitated the meeting and used his keynote address, titled Our Hyper-Connected Future, to set the scene. In his words,

**"Let me begin this morning with the good news: you've won. The culture of shared knowledge which is the essence of the message and purpose of the library has now become an established feature of global culture. The light of knowledge shines more brightly than ever before, from two billion smartphone screens."**

Mark went on to frame the day's discussion by illustrating how far our industry and access to information has come, and asking those attending what this relatively new world of easy access to information means for our sector.

"We got the world of our dreams, a world of nearly infinite knowledge nearly universally available", he said.

**"The price of this victory is an existential crisis of the first order: in the new culture of shared knowledge, what is a library?"**

In a culture of shared knowledge, he suggested the library turns into a generator of value and that libraries and library and information professionals will have a role to play acting as filters, while we can also become the "solvers of problems automated systems like Google cannot solve".

David Alexander, Managing Director (Federal) of top lobbying firm Barton Deakin, was up next to discuss what the future will look like with a new government in power. Though it was too soon after the election to talk about specific policies, David talked about politicians' natural affinity with libraries and touched on many ways to get them involved and engaged in the future.

Kate Byrne, Amy Croft and Crystal Choi then took the stage with an energetic and inspiring view of what their futures might look like in the industry. Currently working in university and school libraries, they described a flexible approach to careers, including the need to keep skills and practice up-to-date, and the non-traditional opportunities opening up around us.

They summed up their discussion by pointing out that a positive way forward would involve a combined effort from associations, educators, organisations and individuals.

Mark then returned to chair a panel of experts from five different sectors across the library and information services industry, including Alex Byrne, State Librarian of NSW, Anne Girolami of the ALIA Schools Group, Jan Richards from ALIA's Public Libraries Advisory Committee and a past president of ALIA, Kym Holden from the Australian Government Library Information Network and Special Libraries Australia and Judy Stokker of the Council of Australian University Librarians.

There were challenges identified around professional skills, library spaces, technologies, collections and services to users, and while the panel represented different sectors, there were many commonalities. The meeting then broke into workshops and returned to share their shared views about some important aspects of the future of the profession.

This was an illustration of the future from just one group:

**"It's 2028; I am entering a town I have never visited before. On my handheld device there's an invitation welcoming me and telling me where things are. It offers me pictures and information about the town, created from library, gallery and museum collections. When I walk past statues, trees, even paving stones, there are options to view information about them – it's all been created by the GLAM institutions providing their unique collections and materials."**

The ideas and information collected at the Summit while now be compiled with the information we have collected on our wiki, at the National Advisory Congress events around the country and through submissions, to create a final report, which will be published in March 2014.

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Read Mark Pesce's keynote address – just follow this QR code. <http://bit.ly/Hi9jph>



Check out the Summit on Storify here. <http://bit.ly/Hc55jJ>



# WHAT THE DELEGATES HAD TO SAY

**Kate Byrne**

@katebyrne

@mpesce We're past the era of the digital native we're in the era of the sharing native being connected means sharing as given #aliafutures

10:08 AM - 14 Oct 2013



**Laurinda Thomas**

@laurindathomas

We are in the era of knowledge hyperabundance - which is not the same as a golden age of information #aliafutures @mpesce

10:23 AM - 14 Oct 2013



**Justine Hyde**

@justine\_hyde

Using terms such as social justice and equity are politically loaded and won't resonate with conservative governments #aliafutures

11:41 AM - 14 Oct 2013



**Crystal Choi**

@crystallibrary

Tip from David Alexander- build political goodwill BEFORE austerity measures take away library services #aliafutures

11:30 AM - 14 Oct 2013



**Julia Garnett (NSW)**

@ALIASmNSW

Expertise is our brand, not books. A librarian without a library is still a librarian. @katebyrne #aliafutures

11:58 AM - 14 Oct 2013



**Angela Vilkins**

@vilkins

Build better strategic partnerships - could be internal as well as external #aliafutures

12:00 PM - 14 Oct 2013



**Alex Byrne**

@libswell

6 values and principles: 1 we are defined by our expertise, by what we do, owning what we can offer #aliafutures

11:58 AM - 14 Oct 2013



**Alex Byrne**

@libswell

@crystallibrary 3 developing client expertise to empower them to achieve their goals #aliafutures

12:01 PM - 14 Oct 2013



**Alyson Dalby**

@alysondalby

Evidence based librarianship getting a plug at #aliafutures use evidence, but in an intelligent, considered way.

12:04 PM - 14 Oct 2013



**Alex Byrne**

@libswell

@amycroft 5 using technology to connect and communicate #aliafutures

12:07 PM - 14 Oct 2013



**Paul Nielsen**

@paulnielsen

We need to better share our #epicfails to improve and change service delivery @amycroft #aliafutures

12:04 PM - 14 Oct 2013



"Books will start leaving the [university] building and so will the librarians, we will work on a diffused basis."

"Libraries in private schools will continue to be used as a selling point for the schools."

"More digital collections, more consortia, smaller library budgets – we will need to look at new arrangements, for example exploring models of working with authors who self-publish."

"We will have to decide our curatorial role. There will be so much content we will have to decide whether a shopping list is a throwaway item or a vital piece of social history."

"We're making access to information very easy for our users but in doing so, we're making ourselves invisible. Librarians stand between chaos and a coherent user experience."

"Everyone is automatically a member of the library."

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