

The NSW public library network has reached a new level of unity. At specially convened meetings recently held in Sydney, the two peak bodies representing the sector have resolved to join forces in a new association – the NSW Public Libraries Association. An agreement signed on 20 June brought the new association into being.

The move comes after 25 years of separate representation for metropolitan and regional libraries, a situation that has enabled successive governments to play metropolitan and regional communities off against each other, according to Councillor Graham Smith, past chairman of Public Libraries NSW, which previously represented rural and regional areas.

'The funding campaign currently underway, under the leadership of a joint committee, was a significant factor in convincing the membership to move towards a united association,' he said.

Councillor Veronique Marchandeau, previously president of the NSW Metropolitan Public Libraries Association, said councils across NSW supported the change and the strong base it has now created to lobby the NSW government to ensure sustainable funding for future years.

The first conference and annual general meeting of the unified association will be held in Mudgee in November.



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