



THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL

The United Nations 2030 Agenda is a framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals that span economic, environmental and social development. As HEATHER WELLARD reports, libraries are key institutions to help achieve the goals.

Public access to information enables people to make informed decisions that can improve their lives. Access to information has been recognised in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under Goal 16. The target is 16.10: *Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.*

Libraries provide information and ICT (information and communications technology) infrastructure, helping people develop the capacity to use information effectively



and preserve information to ensure ongoing access for future generations. They provide an established, trusted network that can reach out to the population.

Libraries and access to information contribute to improved outcomes in the SDGs by promoting literacy (including digital literacy), closing gaps in information needs, providing delivery sites for government programs and services, advancing digital inclusion by providing ICT, serving the research and academic community, and preserving culture and heritage.

While the SDGs are universal goals, each country will be responsible for developing and implementing national strategies to achieve them and will be expected to track them and report their progress. As these national plans are developed, libraries stand ready to serve as partners to help meet the goals.

WHAT IS ALIA DOING?

ALIA is already in discussions with the Federal Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) about libraries doing the following:

- supporting the freedom of access to information outcomes;
- providing examples of success, which can

be used as part of Australia's reporting; and

- helping to communicate the 2030 agenda to the general population.

The ALIA Board has reviewed its own Constitution and there will be an opportunity for Members to vote for a new Object of the Association related to the SDGs at its AGM in May.

ALIA has also signed an international advocacy agreement with IFLA. By signing the agreement with IFLA, ALIA has committed to carry on advocacy work on how libraries are helping Australia, and the other UN Member States, to achieve the SDGs.

Sue McKerracher, Chief Executive Officer of ALIA, said: 'In the context of the UN 2030 Agenda, ALIA believes that increasing access to information and knowledge across society, assisted by the availability of ICT, supports sustainable development and improves lives.'

It's an exciting time to think global and act local. 🌐