ONLINE GALLERY
INSPIRES BETTER
LIBRARY DESIGN

(Top and Right)
John Phillips Library –
Western Sydney University
(Above and bottom right) University
of Queensland, Law Library

You've decided to refurbish or rebuild your school or university library, but where should you go for inspiration? WENDY ABBOTT points you to an online Australian gallery that showcases bold and creative library design in academic communities.

In 2015, the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) Learning and Teaching Advisory Committee launched the Library and Learning Spaces Image Gallery, (clatac.wordpress.com) which shares best-practice in Australian academic library design. The gallery presents images of the bold and creative library spaces being designed to meet the visions and diverse needs of Australian university communities. Each set of images includes the name of the architect, date of the project, copyright and permissions details, and contact details for further information. The gallery also includes resources for library space planning and video clips of recently completed and forthcoming library and learning spaces.

The gallery graphically demonstrates how libraries are responding to the digital era and the sweeping changes driven by new information technologies and evolving concepts of libraries as social space. Far from succumbing to threats of obsolescence, libraries are reconceptualising their role and transforming their physical spaces from the tradition of housing print collections into multidimensional environments. *The NMC Horizon Report: 2017 Library Edition* describes this new library environment as 'a fusion of physical, social and digital spaces' that can meet the entire needs of their communities today and into the future.

Australian academic libraries have been in the vanguard of identifying best practices in design in response to changes in the learning, pedagogical and research landscape. New physical spaces are being created to foster collaboration, individual study and point-of-need services. Libraries are, at the same time, adapting to the digital environment, for example, by enabling students to use their own devices to interact with the digital world. Spaces must also be flexible to accommodate ongoing innovation in teaching and research practices.

Over the past decade, several Australian universities have built new libraries and many other libraries have been upgraded. These new and refurbished libraries continue to be some of the most intensively used student learning facilities within their communities.

The Library and Learning Spaces Image Gallery provides a unique and valuable resource for anyone embarking on new library design projects. The CAUL Learning and Teaching Advisory Committee acknowledges the many contributions of university libraries that have shared images reflecting the exciting innovations in academic library design.

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ALIA 80 YEARS STRONG