

# Every library has a part to play

**L**ibraries can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals no matter how daunting it might seem at first writes KEZIAH DOUGHTY.


As I started browsing the ALIA's report [Australian libraries support the Sustainable Development Goals](#) I thought, 'my library can't contribute to this; how can it have global vision?' By the time I got to the end of the document however, I had changed my mind. Campion College Library is a small academic library with a specific focus on liberal arts, yet I realised that our practices and goals did align with issues relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and could contribute to a global vision for libraries.

The library has a strong emphasis on print resources and seeks to preserve and use these to their best advantage. Communicating the value of historical resources that can only be accessed physically is one way in which we take an active role in preserving our heritage.

Supporting students to develop information literacy within the liberal arts program is another priority. The value placed on print resources requires staff to educate and model excellent print literacy. As Arizona State University Library

noted in its report [The Future of the Academic Library Print Collection: A Space for Engagement](#), one of the roles that libraries has is to enable their students to be effective and resourceful users of both digital and print resources. When used well, print collections can be valuable pedagogical tools to teach the importance of locating and evaluating materials, and recognising their historical or cultural value.

Not only does the library aim to supply its students and staff with resources and skills, the resources are also available to other academics via interlibrary loans. Some of the books in our collection are widely travelled. It brings me joy to know they've enriched readers across the country and beyond, contributing to the wider academic community. This is something I hope will continue in the future as we develop partnerships with other libraries and individuals.

Reflecting on the SDGs, I now realise the part that each library has to play and the role that every information professional can fill in shaping a global vision for libraries. No matter how small or how specialised, we can all contribute in our own way. 

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# Preserve the best by preparing for the worst

**C**reating an emergency management plan for special collections contributes to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 of the United Nations, as explained by JOHANNA GARNETT.

Funding cuts, climate change, conflict, and natural disasters are impacting on global cultural heritage, including collections held by libraries. Many Australian libraries hold a diverse array of special items considered culturally or historically important and there are many examples of disruptive events affecting libraries. The correct resilience building measures can protect collections while also contributing to the international agenda for disaster risk reduction.

The [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) is the leading guide for reducing the impact of disasters globally. The Framework is a voluntary, non-binding agreement signed by 185 member states of the United Nations. It recognises that states have the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared

with other stakeholders such as local government, community organisations and the private sector. Priority 3 of the Framework states that 'the protection, or support of the protection, for cultural and collecting institutions, and sites of historical, cultural heritage and religious interest is important.' Yet a 2017 study of Australian university libraries, found over 90% of respondents had no written emergency management plans for their special collections.

Reducing risk and consequences must form part of policies, plans, programs and processes to ensure protection of collections for future generations. Librarians and library staff will often be the 'first responders' when disasters occur. They are therefore key players in preserving state, national and global heritage and thereby contributing to the objectives of the Framework. 

(EDITOR'S NOTE: see Sue McKerracher's article on page 7 for information on Blue Shield Australia's MayDay campaign on disaster planning.)

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