




## Trusted Professionals

To be a trusted professional is not a responsibility that library staff undertake lightly, even when they don't consciously realise that they're doing it. From my experience, as a library professional over the past 38 years, library staff have an overwhelming commitment to service provision. This makes it virtually impossible for them to resist applying the profession's values and ethics to every challenge for the provision of accurate, timely and impartial information to every request for assistance. Tenacity is in their DNA. But library staff do so much more for the cohorts and communities they serve. They provide places for information, education, recreation and integration that enhance the liveability of their communities.

For my Truth, Integrity, Knowledge blog on what it takes to be a trusted professional, I asked some respected library colleagues for their perspective on what being a 'trusted professional' means to them, and I loved their responses. On the FAIR website ([bit.ly/2R8tSc3](http://bit.ly/2R8tSc3)) you can find the blog and the responses from our colleagues, Sarah Taylor, Library Services Manager, Shoalhaven City Council; Debbie Best, Manager, Sutherland Shire Libraries; Paul Scully, Manager Library, Museum & Customer Services, Fairfield City; Vicki Edmunds, Manager, Libraries & Customer Services, Blue Mountains City Council; and Philip Edney, Manager, Library and Community Services, City of Canada Bay.

I hope you enjoy these great examples of how library staff demonstrate why librarianship is one of the most trusted professions in Australia. 

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**ROBERT KNIGHT AALIA (CP)**  
ALIA Vice-President (President elect)  
[ALIAboard@alia.org.au](mailto:ALIAboard@alia.org.au)




## Freedom of Information

One of the underlying principles of the library and information profession is that it's a basic human right to have freedom of access to information, ideas, and works of imagination without bias or censorship. This principle upholds a number of other human rights, as information in all its forms is fundamental to understanding yourself, your place in the world, how to exercise your rights as a citizen, and learning to express yourself. Knowledge is power, so it's important that everyone has access to a choice of information, without barriers being imposed.

Our professional ideas, often developed in a time before digital disruption, may need to be examined. Information becoming more available has created new challenges. While the internet was heralded as the engine of human liberation, these high ideals do not always play out this way.

In my full Truth, Integrity, Knowledge blog on the FAIR website ([bit.ly/2R8tSc3](http://bit.ly/2R8tSc3)), I delve into the work library and information professionals do to ensure that information is free of bias, manipulation and interference; information is accessible; information is not restricted; and that government decision making and records are made available to the public.

We have the technical means for many people to access what they want, whenever and wherever they may choose. However, many individuals continue to need support in accessing information, one of the key functions of our profession. In order to support freedom of information more broadly, we all need to be active participants in the ethical, legal, commercial and political debates around this issue. 

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**HELEN EBSWORTH AALIA (CP)**  
ALIA Board Director  
[ALIAboard@alia.org.au](mailto:ALIAboard@alia.org.au)

See page 18 for your 10 ways library and information professionals promote truth, integrity and knowledge poster.