

WAYS TO IMPROVE LIBRARY SERVICES TO YOUR LOCAL INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE

Libraries across Australia are focused on improving services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, whether they live in cities, towns or remote communities. ALIA has developed a report with examples of initiatives that are currently underway to highlight opportunities for further improvement in this area. The report, *Improving library services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples* (bit.ly/2SxGkrs), shows libraries that are maximising the use of their facilities, developing thoughtful programs, taking a more respectful approach to collections and expanding professional development opportunities for library and information professionals. It provides ideas for other libraries, and it prompts discussion about ways in which Australian libraries can work together to make further progress. As 2019 is UNESCO's International Year of Indigenous Languages (en.iyil2019.org) we've pulled out a couple of examples from the full report so you can see some of what libraries around the country are doing to promote Indigenous languages.

Introducing local languages – Libraries ACT

Libraries ACT runs the nine public libraries in Canberra and also provides extensive online services, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathfinder. This features books and other items, created for, by and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In 2017, the library service celebrated Mother Language Day with a special storytime hosted by Glenn Freeman from the Koomurri Ngunnawal Aboriginal Corporation. More than 50 children and their caregivers heard the story of why the emu can't fly, learned some Ngunnawal words and shared *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* in the Ngunnawal language. Following this event, Libraries ACT has continued to incorporate first language in programs and has developed an acknowledgement of country specifically for children.

Indigenous Languages Project: Yuwibara – State Library of Queensland

The State Library of Queensland proudly supports the revival of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Since 2006, the project has supported 105 languages and dialects from across Queensland. Many of these are considered endangered and require urgent support. Within the project, the library networks across Indigenous Knowledge Centres and Indigenous Language Centres to provide local assistance. One such example has been the Yuwibara language of the Mackay Region which was considered 'lost'. Since 2015 the library, in partnership with Mackay Regional Libraries, has assisted Mackay communities to rebuild their language from historical sources. The outcome will be a community dictionary and language app with more than 1,000 words from Yuwibara and neighbouring languages. 🌐



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