



# PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS

[professionalpathways.alia.org.au](http://professionalpathways.alia.org.au)

## Consultation paper submission: NSLA

**Name:** Barbara Lemon (on behalf of Vicki McDonald, Chair of NSLA)

**Organisation or group:** National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA)

**Are you responding on behalf of your organisation? Y**

**Do you give permission to make this submission public? Y**

The Professional Pathways [Consultation Paper](#) invites you to respond to a number of questions about the draft framework and future career pathways in the LIS sector. To aid your response to the Paper, the questions are reproduced below. You do not have to answer every question. If you prefer to write a submission in a different format that is also fine but please include the information above in your submission.

Submissions should be emailed to [professionalpathways@alia.org.au](mailto:professionalpathways@alia.org.au) with the word “submission” in the subject line. Submissions are due by 31 October 2022.

Further information is available from the Professional Pathways website or by emailing [professionalpathways@alia.org.au](mailto:professionalpathways@alia.org.au)

# Professional Pathways: Response from National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA)

National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the August 2022 consultation paper as part of ALIA's Professional Pathways Frameworks Project. [NSLA](#) is a coalition between the national, state and territory libraries of Australia and New Zealand:

- National Library of Australia
- National Library of New Zealand
- State Library of New South Wales
- State Library of Queensland
- State Library of South Australia
- State Library of Western Australia
- State Library Victoria
- Libraries ACT
- Library & Archives NT
- Libraries Tasmania

## Professional recognition and career pathways

NSLA member libraries support the overall intent and direction of the Professional Pathways program. We commend the ALIA team for its rigorous, consultative and evidence-based approach to tackling a set of very complex issues in a way that promises to shape and strengthen our future as a profession.

As the largest employers of non-librarian professionally qualified staff in the sector, we are aware of the need for a comprehensive Australian framework of knowledge, skills and behaviour that provides direction and focus for all who work in libraries to shape their own learning and development. We are also acutely aware of the specific skills that constitute professional librarianship, and the continuing need for those skills even as library systems and services evolve.

NSLA supports the introduction of alternative pathways to the library profession in addition to the continuation of current pathways, with formal LIS teaching courses (undergraduate and postgraduate) remaining strongly supported and widely available for all who seek this pathway.

We welcome the opportunities that these additional pathways will provide in recognising employees from diverse educational backgrounds. We note the importance of defining the qualifications required of a 'library professional' (as distinct from a librarian) as part of the next stage of the Professional Pathways program.

Professionals in the library sector, as in any other sector, must commit to ongoing professional development. NSLA supports a program of professional recognition based on qualifications, training and experience. Demonstration of capacity and appetite to continue learning, regardless of seniority, is an important consideration in recruitment and promotion. We would support a model that provides consistent language, accreditation and validation of different kinds of professional learning delivered by a range of providers.

## Prototype framework

NSLA supports the conceptual design of the framework as an effective way of capturing a wide array of potential career paths while illustrating their inter-relatedness, and linking all paths back to the central tenets of the library profession.

We would emphasise the importance of engaging with unions and employer associations in refining and implementing such a framework. We recognise its potential as a tool both in course accreditation and in the performance review process for staff seeking to develop skills and identify career paths.

## Section 2.2: Foundation Knowledge domains and core values

We consider that the ten core values for the library profession remain relevant for the LIS sector today, and we agree with the range and scope of the Foundation Knowledge domains.

We strongly endorse the inclusion of 'ethics and values' to ensure a continued understanding of the context of the profession. We would also support mandatory training in cultural capability relating to First Nations peoples and histories for all who work in the library sector.

### **Section 2.3: Professional Knowledge domains**

We agree with the range and scope of the Professional Knowledge domains presented in the consultation paper, with the exception that skills relating to management of heritage collections and relevant to larger collecting institutions and research libraries are lacking.

These skills are required not only in national, state and territory libraries but in university libraries and in public libraries holding community heritage collections, representing a large employment pool.

Two specific suggestions are:

1. Reduce the scope for the 'Information Management' domain, which is deceptively large. Shift several components into a new category of 'Collection Management', or similar. This new category – as distinct from management of metadata, digital repositories and IP in 'Information Management' – could include physical conservation and storage, digital preservation of original materials (a specialist area in itself), curatorial skills and management of collection donations.
2. Extend the scope for 'Leadership and management' to include relationship management with philanthropic donors and funding bodies.

We are pleased to see a clear pathway for First Nations practitioners in the library profession.

### **Section 3.3: Micro-credentials**

There are strong opportunities for micro-credentials in the LIS sector. This is an excellent model for staff new to the sector as much as it is for experienced staff who need to refresh their skills, or for staff wishing to change direction within the sector.

NSLA member libraries see part of our leadership role as being providers of micro-credentials, or contributors to them. We would also encourage partnerships or accreditations for courses already developed by experts elsewhere in the cultural sector, such as the Digital Preservation Coalition and Australian Society of Archivists.

Examples could include:

- First Nations collection description
- First Nations collection management
- Digital preservation (e.g. National Archives UK's 'novice to know-how' online course)
- Environmental sustainability in libraries
- Conservation for specific collection formats
- Oral history: recording, transcription and access
- Introduction to libraries: history, ethics and values [for non-LIS trained staff]

We look forward to working with ALIA and our colleagues across the LIS sector in refining the proposed framework and, ultimately, in creating alternative pathways to the library profession that will help to diversity and enrich the workforce whilst upholding and supporting professional librarianship.



#### **Vicki McDonald AM FALIA**

Chair, National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA)

President-elect, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)

State Librarian and Chief Executive Officer, State Library of Queensland

Questions that we have attempted to address in this statement are in bold below:

Section	No	Question
2.2	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Do you believe that the 10 core values remain relevant for the LIS sector today? Please explain your reasons.</b>
2.2	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Do you agree with the range and scope of the proposed Foundation Knowledge domains? Please explain the reasons for your responses.</b>
2.2	<b>Q3</b>	Are there any elements that you would add, amend, or remove from the Foundation Knowledge domains? Please explain the reasons for your responses.
2.3	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Do you agree with the range and scope of the proposed Professional Knowledge domains? Please explain the reasons for your responses.</b>
2.3	<b>Q5</b>	<b>Are there any elements that you would add, amend, or remove from the Professional Knowledge domains? Please explain the reasons for your responses</b>
2.4	<b>Q6</b>	Do you agree with the range and scope of the proposed Active Professional domains? Please explain the reasons for your responses.
2.4	<b>Q7</b>	Are there any elements that you would add, amend, or remove from the Active Professional domains? Please explain the reasons for your responses
2.5	<b>Q8</b>	Are there any ways you feel the conceptual design of the draft Framework could be enhanced or changed to articulate the knowledge, skills and values for the LIS sector?
3.2	<b>Q9</b>	How could the draft Framework support LIS courses at the higher education and/or the VET level, for example in course development or ALIA accreditation?
3.2	<b>Q10</b>	To what extent do you feel that the draft Framework could serve as a resource to guide quality assurance in accrediting LIS courses? Please explain the reasons for your response.
3.3	<b>Q11</b>	<b>What opportunities for micro-credentials do you see in the LIS sector?</b>
3.4	<b>Q12</b>	<b>In what way is LIS professional recognition important to you, as an individual or as an employer? What might make professional recognition have more value and/or use in the LIS sector?</b>
3.4	<b>Q13</b>	What should professional recognition be based upon? For example, the attainment of ALIA-accredited academic qualifications, experience in the LIS sector, demonstrated skills and/or knowledge gained from other training or other sectors, or other career opportunities?
3.4	<b>Q14</b>	What distinctions do you think are important for professional recognition? Should there be distinctions between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. people with accredited qualifications in LIS and people with other qualifications or experience?</li> <li>b. librarians and teacher librarians?</li> <li>c. people at the beginning of their careers and people with more professional expertise?</li> <li>d. people who invest in ongoing CPD and those who don't?</li> </ul>
3.4	<b>Q15</b>	<b>Would you support a program of professional recognition for those working in the LIS sector? Please explain the reasons for your responses.</b>
3.4	<b>Q16</b>	Would the draft Framework be suitable to underpin a professional recognition program? Please explain the reasons for your response.
3.4	<b>Q17</b>	Would you support a system where those working in the LIS sector can demonstrate their career progression? Please explain the reason for your choice.
3.5	<b>Q18</b>	Are there ways for the draft Framework to provide a new structure for the ALIA CPD scheme? Please explain the reasons for your responses.
4.6	<b>Q19</b>	How do you see the draft Framework being applied in either your personal career or in your organisation?