Evaluation of the Libraries Australia Forum 2012
National Library of Australia, Canberra

The 2012 Libraries Australia Forum was held at the National Library of Australia (NLA) in Canberra on 25 October 2012. The Forum was the key part of two days of related events including the Libraries Australia Advisory Committee (LAAC) meeting, a Libraries Australia ISO ILL Partners Meeting and four library tours on 24 October.

There were 155 attendees for the Forum this year, compared to 165 in 2011. This included 14 National Library staff. The Forum was promoted via the regular channels – messages to the Libraries Australia and Libraries Australia Document Delivery mailing lists, at State User Group Meetings and on the Libraries Australia website.

The opening address and welcome was given by the Assistant Director-General, Resource Sharing, Dr Marie-Louise Ayres. Keynote speakers at the Forum were Merrilee Proffitt, Senior Program Officer, OCLC Research, who spoke about special collections in the digital age; Judy Stokker, Director, Library Services, Queensland University of Technology who spoke about institutional repositories; and Bill Macnaught, National Librarian, National Library of New Zealand who spoke about the challenges and future direction of the National Library of New Zealand.

Libraries Australia 2012 Forum speakers (L to R), Laurel Paton, Judy Stokker, Marie-Louise Ayres, Joanna Meakins, Merrilee Proffitt and Bill Macnaught

Attendees were asked to fill out an evaluation form prior to departing from the Forum. This report summarises these evaluation forms.

In total, 87 responses were collected from attendees. This equates to a 56% return rate from the total number of attendees, a 7% decrease from 63% in 2011.

**Attendance**

There were 155 attendees for the Forum in 2012, compared to 165 in 2011. This included 14 National Library staff.

**Figure 1: Attendance 1999-2012**

Overall Meeting

Ninety one per cent of respondents to the evaluation rated the Forum overall as Above Average or Excellent. No respondents gave a Below Average or Poor rating in response to this question.

Comments included:

- *A very useful window to the wider library world. Contact with other people invaluable.*
- *There should be an annual LAF. To not have one would be a mistake.*
- *The breath of topics and outlooks was really stimulating and though provoking. Access to speakers in breaks also terrific. The size of the event makes it very accessible.*
Parallel sessions

The parallel sessions were well received, with 68% of respondents rating the sessions as either Excellent or Above Average. No respondents gave a Below Average or Poor rating in response to this question.

The three parallel sessions were (a) interlibrary loans and document delivery covering best practice ILL and LADD issues, and the upcoming upgrade to VDX 6.0; (b) Cataloguing and CBS developments which discussed RDA, the CBS upgrade and the new minimum record standard; and (c) Trove Tips and Techniques.

Some comments about the sessions were;

- Cataloguing interactive; gave me ideas on a practical level about my processes.
- Trove because it gave me some helpful hints.
- Docdel breakout session general discussions very productive.
- Interactive sessions should be longer (one hour is not enough).
Quality of Presentations

Ninety four percent of respondents rated the quality of presentations either above average or excellent. Six percent rated the quality as Average and no respondents considered the presentations to be below average or poor.

Some comments:

- *1st sessions were engaging & interesting topics, with good future perspectives.*
- *Each of the keynote speakers added a lot of value also Marie-Louise’s talk.*
- *Search Redevelopment: updates on progress are good.*

![Figure 4: Quality of Presentations 2009-2012](image)

Meeting Content

Eighty eight percent of respondents rated the content as above average or excellent. Twelve percent rated the meeting content as average, and no respondents rated the content as below average or poor.

Comments included:

- *All sessions were extremely informative. The interactive session was particularly beneficial as was Bill Macnaught’s.*
- *Found each session useful because relevant to current activities in my library especially open access and repositories, also Trove searching for stats of my library.*
- *All useful, enlightening, nice to discover new topics to think about.*
Opportunities for discussion

Eighty six percent of respondents rated the opportunities for discussion excellent or above average. Fourteen percent rated these opportunities as average, and no respondents rated the content as below average or poor.

Some example comments include:
- My first LA forum – I enjoyed it, met some great people.
- Just a little longer for breakout session to incorporate more talk.
- Network afternoon tea too long.

Meeting Venue/Catering

Eighty three percent of respondents found the venue excellent or above average, and 16% found it average. 1 respondent rated the Meeting venue/ catering as below average. This respondent commented on the choice of food for gluten free delegates.
Some comments regarding the venue/ catering included:

- *Conference Room level 4 was too hot.*
- *Catering for special diets was excellent.*
- *Longer ILL/DD interactive session in a larger room.*

### Analysis of Attendees by State/Territory, by Sector and by work area

Seventy-six percent of attendees were from ACT (38%), NSW (18%) and Victoria (20%).

### Figure 7: Meeting Venue/Catering

Forty-two percent of respondents identified themselves as working in the Technical Services area of their library:

### Figure 8: Registrations by State 2010-2012
Thirty-six percent of respondents were from the Education sector:

**Figure 9: Attendees by work area 2012**

**Figure 10: Attendees by sector**

**Recommendation**

The Committee to note the report.

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