

Capacity Building School Libraries

Overview

School libraries are undergoing significant transformation as they respond to rapid technological change, evolving student needs, and increasing demands for information literacy, wellbeing, and curriculum support. More than ever, school libraries are essential learning hubs where reading, inquiry, digital citizenship, creativity, and critical thinking converge. Teacher librarians are leading initiatives that help students navigate an increasingly complex information landscape, engage safely and ethically with emerging technologies, and develop the skills required for lifelong learning.

As trusted spaces within schools, libraries also play an important role in fostering belonging, wellbeing, inclusion, and equitable access to knowledge. The Capacity Building School Libraries Conference brings together library professionals, educators and leaders to explore innovative practice, emerging trends, and practical strategies that strengthen the impact of school libraries and demonstrate their value within contemporary education.

The conference will focus on these major streams:

AI, Digital Literacy and the Future of Information

Generative AI, social media, algorithm-driven content, and rapidly evolving digital tools are reshaping how students' access, create, evaluate and share information. This strand explores the changing role of school libraries in developing digital, media and information literacy skills that prepare students for an AI-enabled future. Topics may include responsible use of generative AI, misinformation, critical evaluation of information, digital citizenship, online safety, copyright and ethical content creation, emerging technologies, and strategies for helping students think critically and navigate complex information environments.

Reading, Wellbeing and Student Engagement

School libraries play a vital role in fostering reading for pleasure, supporting student wellbeing, and creating spaces where all learners feel connected and supported. This strand focuses on initiatives that build a positive reading culture, encourage lifelong reading habits, and engage diverse learners. Topics may include reading engagement, diverse literature, student voice, social and emotional learning, library programs that support wellbeing, and strategies for building welcoming, inclusive spaces that strengthen a sense of belonging.

Inclusive Libraries and Community Impact

Libraries have an important responsibility to ensure the communities they serve can access resources, programs and opportunities that reflect and support their identities, experiences and learning and teaching needs. This strand highlights approaches that promote equity, inclusion and representation through collections, services and partnerships. Areas of focus may include culturally responsive practice, Indigenous perspectives, accessibility, support for neurodivergent learners, multilingual collections, community engagement, and creating environments where every learner can thrive.

Leadership, Innovation and Library Practice

As education continues to evolve, teacher librarians are increasingly recognised as instructional leaders, collaborators, and drivers of innovation within schools. This strand explores strategies that strengthen library impact, support teaching and learning, and position libraries as essential contributors to school improvement. Topics may include evidence-based practice, advocacy and demonstrating impact, collaborative curriculum design, collection development, space design, future library models, leadership, professional growth, and innovative programs that can be adapted across diverse school settings.

But with opportunity comes responsibility. Submissions should offer:

- ✚ Hands-on, practical demonstrations, audience engagement or take-away resources that educators can adapt in their own context
- ✚ Practical insights or research-based strategies relevant to K-12 educators

Submissions will be accepted based on criteria, relevance to K-12 educators, providing a mix across the various strands and topics.