



GLOBAL VISION DISCUSSION

Report of the ALIA Australian Public Library Alliance *How a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future*

6 July 2017



AUSTRALIAN
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ALLIANCE



Australian Library and
Information Association



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Introduction

On 6 July 2017, in Geelong, Victoria, 12 library leaders participated in a conversation about how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future. Together we represent 360 years of library experience.

The Australian Public Library Alliance is part of the Australian Library and Information Association and represents 94% of all public libraries across Australia. The meeting was the annual strategy and planning event, and it took place at the award-winning new Geelong Library and Heritage Centre.

A vision for libraries

Libraries enable literate, informed and participative societies. When we look at the future, according to the debates in Geelong, this means that libraries lead in literacy; librarianship is a sought after profession; libraries are valued by the community and benefit from government and philanthropic investment.

"Librarian negotiates world peace."

"More libraries than McDonald's – no fries – supersized."

"Copyright fixed, final barrier removed!"

"Your library, your way."

"World literacy at an all time high."

"Libraries top philanthropic hit list!"

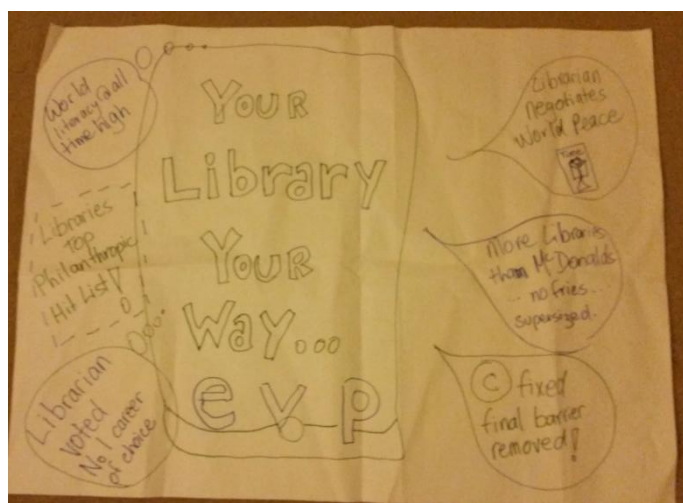
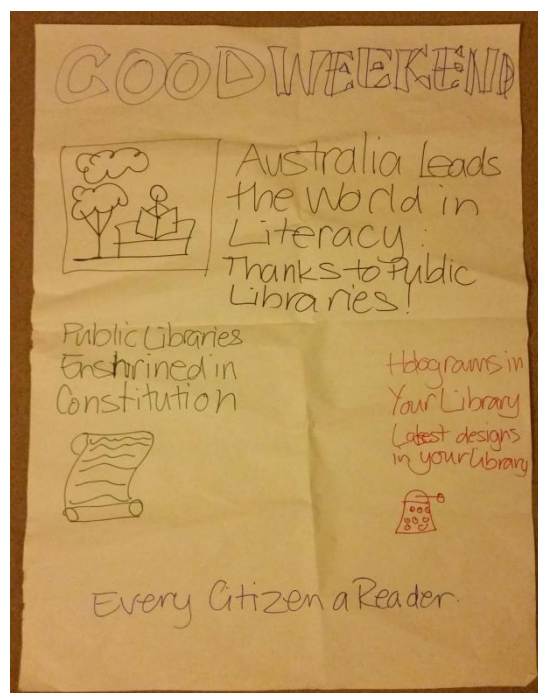
"Librarian voted number one career choice."

"Australia leads the world in literacy, thanks to public libraries."

"Public libraries enshrined in constitution."

"Every citizen a reader."

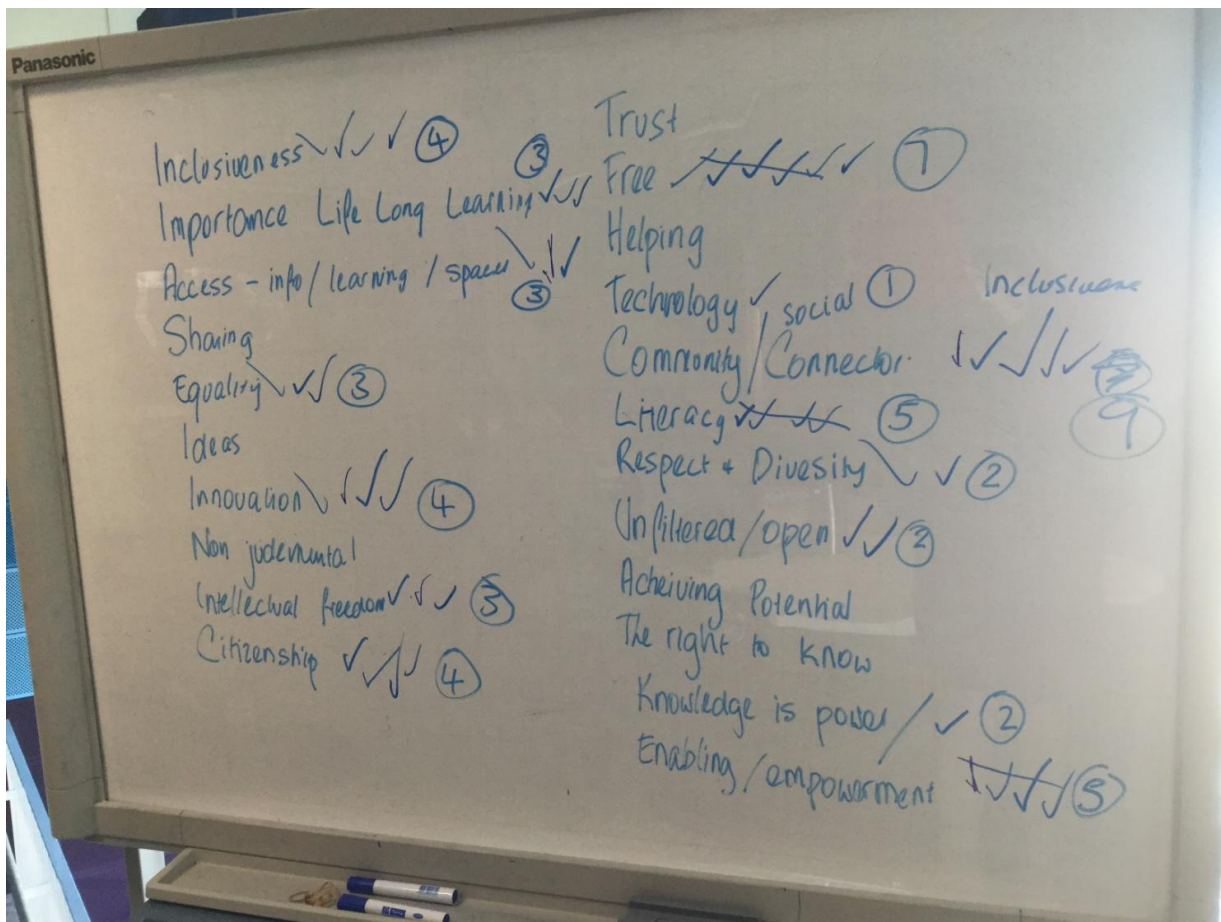
"Holograms in your library. Latest designs in your library."



The core values of libraries (Q4):

1. Inclusive community connector
2. Empowerment/intellectual freedom
3. Free
4. Literacy
5. Innovation

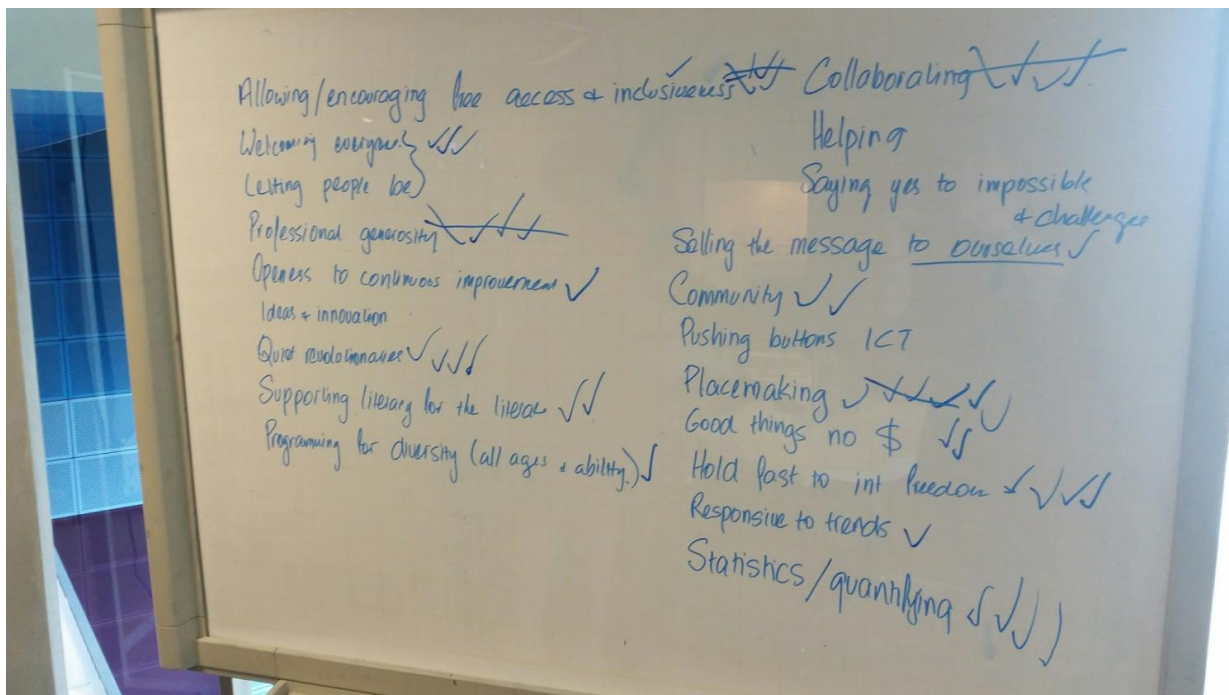
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Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):

1. Placemaking
2. Free access/inclusiveness
3. Professional generosity
4. Collaboration
5. Quantifying/evaluating/statistics

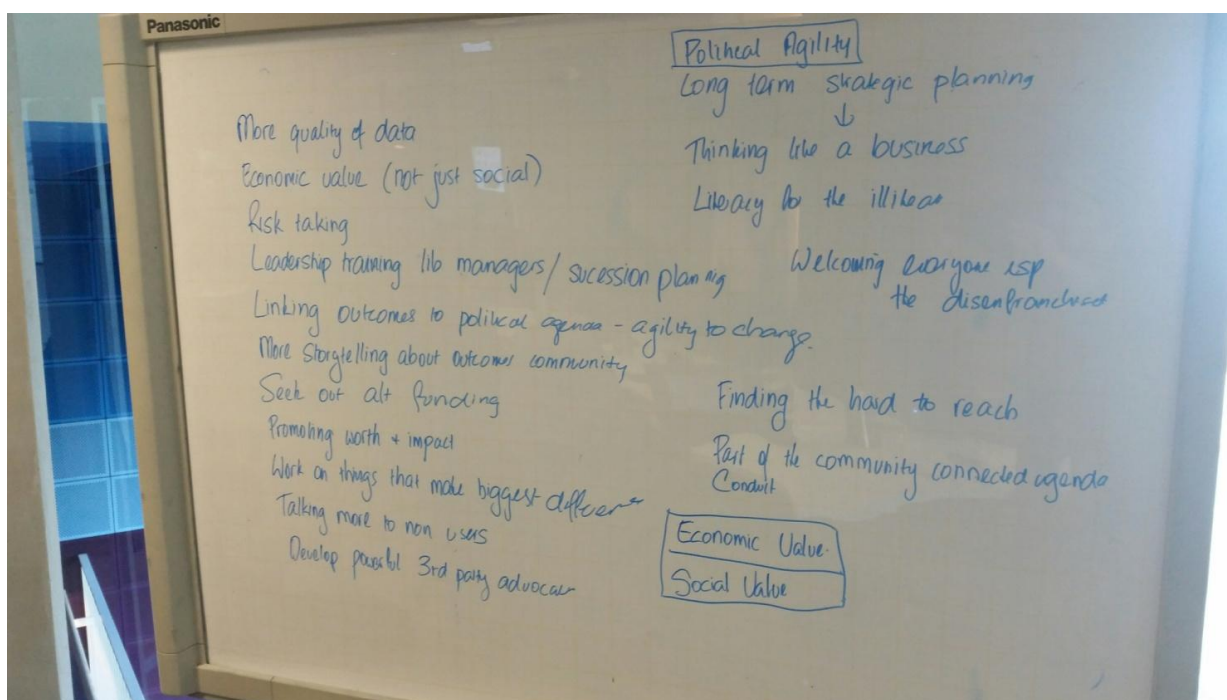
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Libraries should do more of (Q6):

1. Political agility
2. Training and succession planning
3. Recognising both the economic and social value of libraries
4. Long term strategic planning
5. Finding sources of alternative funding

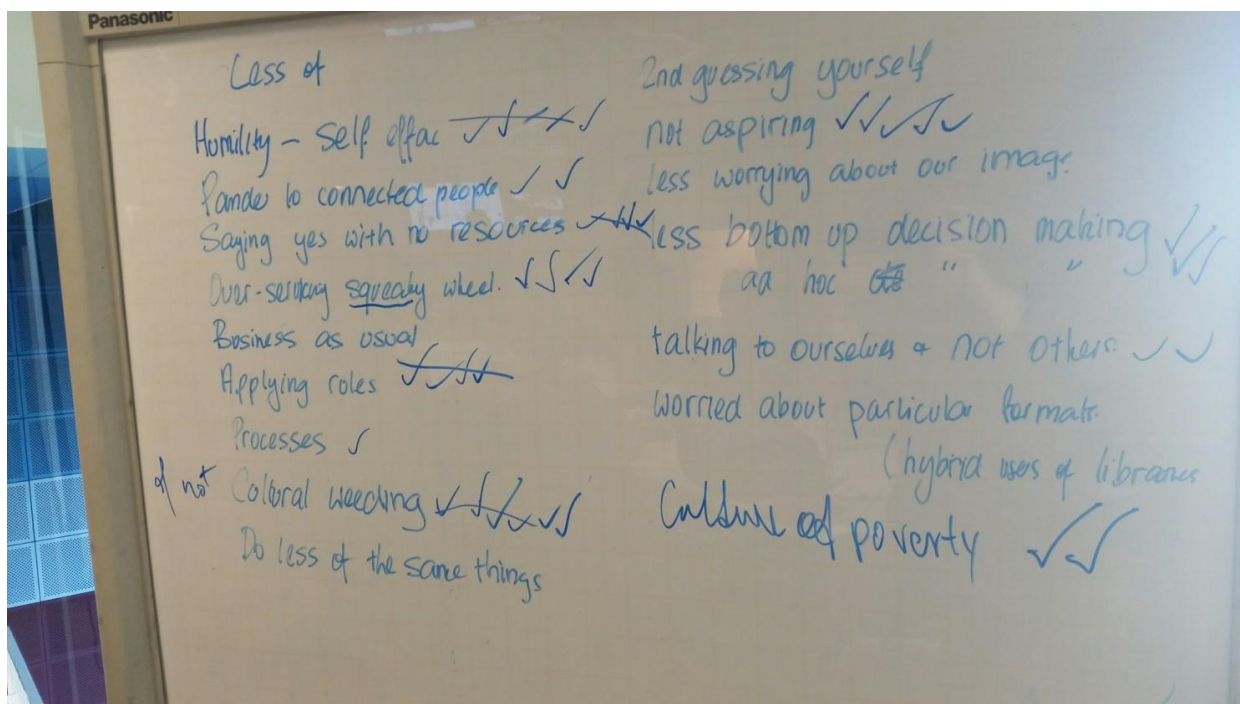
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Libraries should do less of (Q7):

1. Taking on more without dropping things off – over extending ourselves
2. Humility, self-effacing
3. Not aspiring to senior positions/take on responsibility
4. Applying rules in a heavy handed way
5. Saying yes without the necessary resources

Comments:

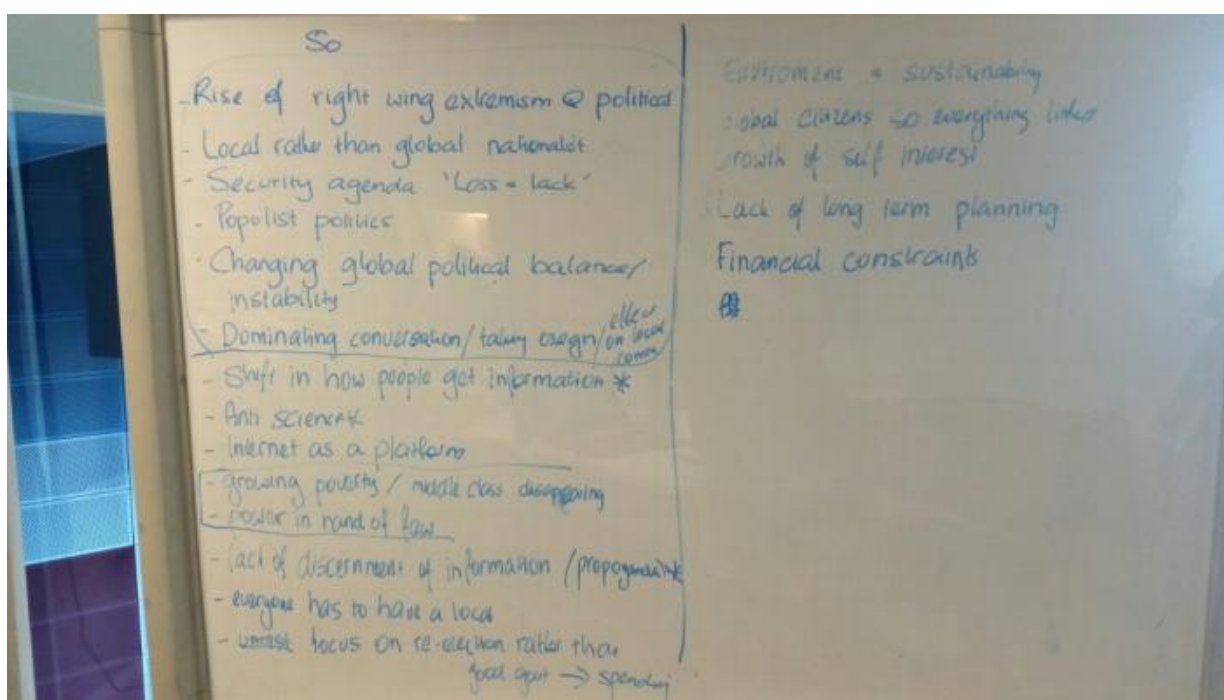


Challenges and solutions

The main challenges to society (Q8):

1. Global political instability
2. Access to accurate information
3. Growing inequality (polarisation of poor and rich)
4. Environmental sustainability
5. Technological disruption; privacy and Big Brother in a digital environment

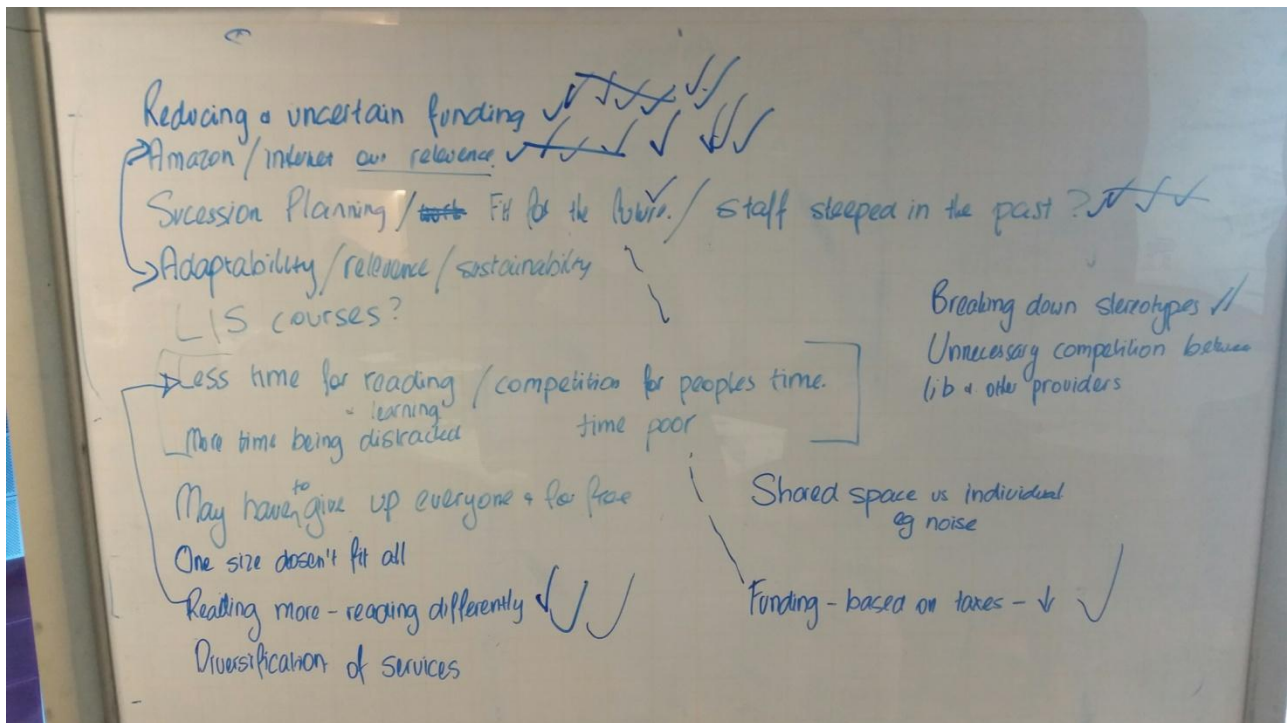
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The main challenges to libraries (Q9):

1. Relevance in the face of Amazon, the Internet
2. Reducing and uncertain funding
3. Succession planning and staff steeped in the past
4. People reading more/less time for reading – and reading differently
5. Breaking down stereotypes

Comments:

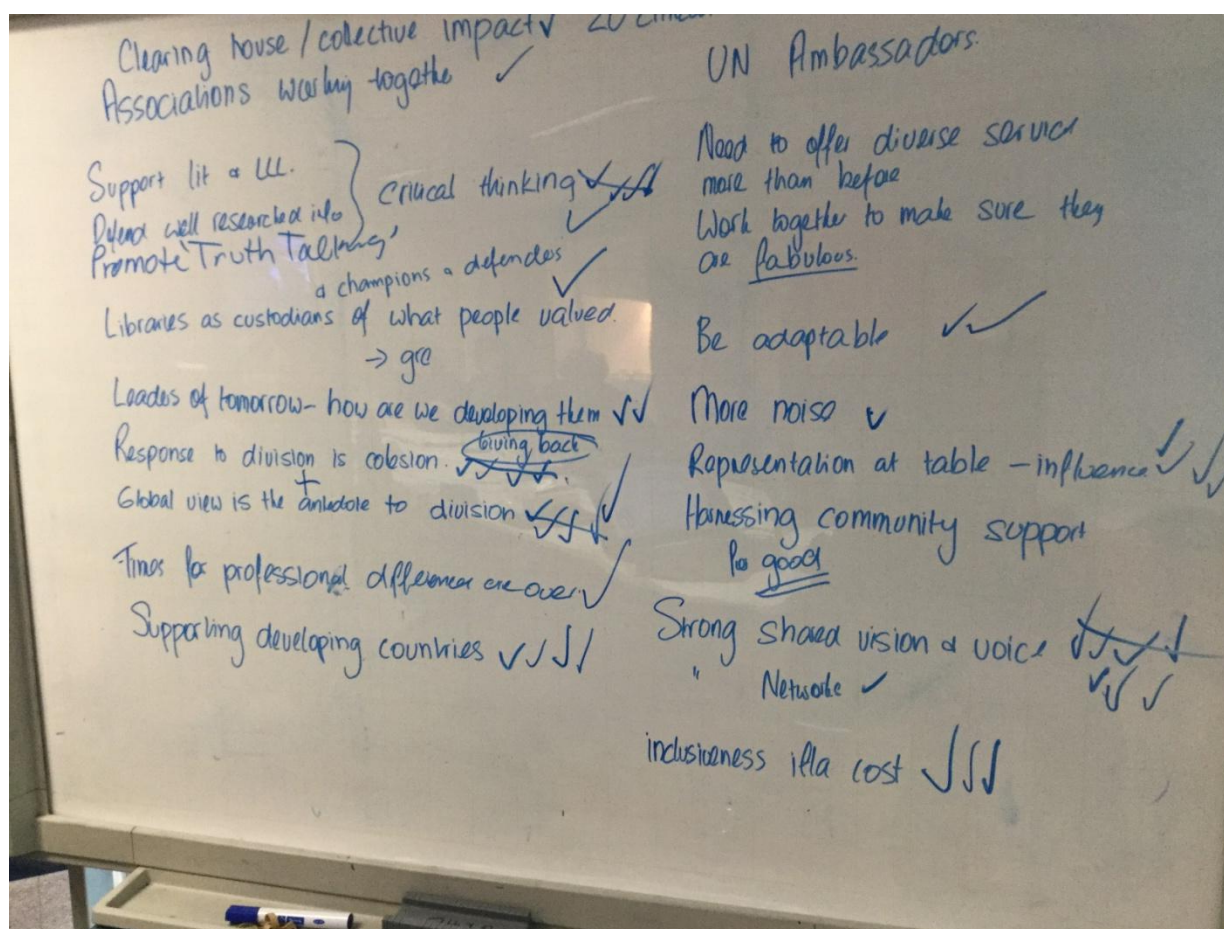


How a united library field can make a difference

How should a united library field help meet the challenges identified (Q11)?

1. Global view is the antidote to division
2. Strong shared vision and voice
3. Build on the role of public libraries as a place for critical thinking; promoting truth talking
4. Supporting developing countries
5. Influence and representation at the table

Comments:



The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):

1. *Shared vision, united voice*
2. *Understanding, appreciation and acceptance of common ground and differences*
3. *Collaboration around core values and to promote equity of access to information*
4. *Compelling narrative and data for libraries' contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals*
5. *Clear action plan, roles and responsibilities*

A global conversation

This report is created in an interactive process, in Geelong, Victoria on 6 July, 2017. It is part of a global conversation initiated by IFLA on how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future.

Over the course of two years (2017-2018), IFLA will involve as many librarians and others as possible in this global conversation. Participants are encouraged to continue the conversation in their own networks and organization and share the results with IFLA. At the end of 2017, the first results of all the workshops and online discussions will be turned into a *Global Vision Report*, which in turn will be adapted into concrete strategies, processes and work programmes in 2018.

To learn more about the global conversation, and download supporting materials to support your own activities, visit globalvision.ifla.org.

Stay tuned for news about the IFLA Global Vision discussion following [#iflaGlobalVision](https://twitter.com/iflaGlobalVision) and make sure to cast your vote in August when the online voting platform is available on <https://globalvision.ifla.org>.