CITY OF
DARWIN

LIBRARIES FOR PEOPLE
Library Strategy
2020-2024

Executive Summary

City of Darwin Libraries deliver services to a resident population of 82,886[1] as well as large numbers of temporary residents, travellers, and visitors. The four library branches employ approximately 36 staff who service nearly 500,000 visits per annum, maintain a collection of 80,000 items, and provide programs and activities that are attended by 37,000 people.

Libraries world-wide are in a period of rapid change. Technology can perform many transactional tasks that were previously done by librarians (such as issuing books); Library Management Systems (LMS) provide excellent data that support strategic collection development; and cloud-based storage allows deduplication of tasks across multiple sites. The traditional measures of library performance (membership and loans) no longer tell the full story about library activity: there is a general downward trend in these traditional measures at the same time as we are seeing increased use of library space by 'non-members, and non-borrowers'.

In past times, the greatest competitors to libraries were book shops. Now it is smart devices, with instant access to information (although not necessarily reliable information) and high customer expectations for seamless and engaging user experience (UX). A successful future for libraries will depend on a better understanding of, and more rapid response to UX demands, which will affect our online services (Wi-Fi, e-resources, web), promotion, and how we use space in our libraries to create community and knowledge hubs with a wow factor.

This Strategy acknowledges the excellent services provided by City of Darwin Libraries, reflects on the wider changes in libraries and our society, and sets out actions that will drive efficiency and innovation so that we have the resources and capabilities to continue to deliver a first-class library service for our community.

The Strategy focuses on structures that promote strategic initiatives, branch development, user experience, and raising our awareness and responsiveness to specific groups such as new residents, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and homeless people. In summary, our key strategies are:

· develop a Branch Development Plan

· make sure our collection works hard

· develop a Program Plan

· provide consistent service standards across all branches

· introduce a staffing structure that reflects the shift away from transactional tasks

· be involved in the decisions Northern Territory Library makes about us

· engage new residents and visitors

· improve online findability

· library services that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations

· provide better access for homeless people

· support *Young Darwin*

· engage with volunteers to expand our programs.

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[1] *ABS ERP 2019*

Contents

Introduction

City of Darwin's libraries are community hubs where people go to borrow books, enter the virtual world, meet for recreation, gather and share information and a love of learning.

Our libraries are the largest public library service in the Northern Territory. They are used by visitors, students, FIFO and other workers and by businesses as well as by Darwin residents.

The Darwin community values our libraries and the skilled and passionate staff who run them. Across four locations in the municipality, our libraries provide diverse programs and activities that attract more than 500,000 visits a year.

This *Libraries for People – City of Darwin Library Strategy 2020-2024* outlines how are libraries are changing and evolving.

If you haven't been to your local library for a while I encourage you to explore the diverse services on offer.

KON VATSKALIS,
Lord Mayor City of Darwin

So why do we need a Library Strategy?

The world of libraries is changing rapidly, primarily driven by:

- Increased competition with other sources of information, books and entertainment becoming readily available online
- The continued demand for individuals to be digitally literate in order to successfully participate in the information society; with libraries increasingly becoming the primary or only access point for some to become digitally literate and to have access to the digital world. Digital technologies that have improved library processing efficiencies
- An increase in customer use of library services like events, meeting and activity spaces, PCs, printing, Wi-Fi and e-resources; with fewer people joining as members or borrowing materials.

Libraries have, and will continue to adapt to these trends, but if we simply adjust to the next challenge, we're always playing catch up. City of Darwin values its libraries, which are reflected in its strategic plan Darwin 2030 – *City for People. City of Colour.* Library services are a key service to help create a Smart and Prosperous City (SD4).

The requirement to develop this strategy was identified by Council in the 2019/20 Municipal Plan and Budget. For the City of Darwin to be a leading-edge provider of library services, it needs to anticipate the emerging operating environment and develop goals and actions that will deliver a strong and relevant future.

The development of this strategy is founded on extensive engagement with library users in 2017/18. Further, key internal and external stakeholders including Elected Members, staff, Charles Darwin University and the Northern Territory Library have been consulted in shaping this strategy. Significant research and review of industry data and reports, considered experience of other capital and regional cities, and benchmarking against the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) standards has informed this strategy.

This strategy has been designed to ensure that Council is able to endorse clear goals for the future and implement the actions in a planned way informing future budget deliberations.

Libraries of the future

Library services are changing rapidly.

Borrowing is still important, and will continue to be important, but the most obvious change can be seen in the vibrant life of the library, with customers voting with their feet to use libraries in ways that suit their information and connection needs.

Similarly, the work of the library has shifted from transactional tasks like issuing books, to more complex tasks that involve designing and developing new programs, creating community spaces, helping customers to navigate knowledge and digital access, and managing collections that appeal in content and format.

If we take a walk through a contemporary library we will find people using the library's Wi-Fi, groups of teenagers playing music on their devices, people studying in quiet areas, tradies preparing resumes and quotes using the library's computers and printers, seniors sipping coffee while they read newspapers and magazines, parents chatting while their small children play, a visiting author talking to a class of school children, and a community group holding a meeting.

If we look harder, we'll also see people dropping books into the return chute, using PCs to search the catalogue, browsing the shelves, and using the self-check equipment to borrow materials.

Our libraries are community, business, and information hubs.

There are a number of trends that influence our Library Strategy:

- Libraries are centres of local connection and learning, and should be **available where and when people need them.**

- Increasingly, libraries are joining with community centres, Council services and co-working spaces to provide **integrated community, information, and service hubs.**

- On the other hand, library services are not locked into branch facilities – **libraries can go anywhere.**

- Compared to traditional library services, the **collection is now a smaller part of the overall suite of offerings** and there is more focus on programs, events, and one-to-one customer support for information as well as how to use library equipment and customers' own digital devices.

- The traditional measures of library performance (membership and loans) are trending downwards, but foot traffic and online access is increasing – we need to **measure and report on library performance in a way that reflects customer expectations and behaviour.**

- A multi-branch library service should have a **cost-effective core** that reduces duplication and develops specialist skills to service all branches, as well as **each branch offering services and programs relevant to their local communities.**

- With increased pressure on budgets and cloud-based data storage, **centralised services like collection management, procurement and financial management** makes sense, and customers benefit from streamlined, coordinated services.

- Mundane **transaction tasks will be continue to be automated or outsourced,** releasing staff for interaction with customers as well as strategic analysis, planning and delivery (e.g. collection development, targeted programs).

- **UX (user experience) drives customer engagement.** Libraries are competing with big online companies that offer similar services (e.g. Amazon), so our web interface needs to be simple and effective to retain today's e-savvy customer.

- **Digital technologies** are changing the way people communicate, access information, innovate and learn. This affects libraries in two ways: some customers are demanding new digital services while other struggle to engage with the digital world; and library technologies and customer requirements mean that staff need to embrace new technologies and continually adapt to change.

- The transition from face-to-face government, banking and commercial services to **self-managed online applications has left many people behind.** Public libraries are the go to point for assistance, with over 10 million information enquiries to public libraries across Australia each year (ALIA, 2017).

- We can expect to constantly update our thinking and approach as library operating environments and customer expectations evolve. Staff **skill requirements are changing** and we need to develop staff so that they can adapt to new roles and tasks. Things are changing quicker than they can be documented, so collaboration with other library services is an important part of our learning process.

- There is now excellent data (e.g. LMS reports, ABS data, tracking in-library activity) to support decision-making, so **hard evidence** should play a stronger role in library service planning. But we can't simply rely on data. Customer input – particularly in relation to user experience – will provide valuable insights into demand patterns and service response.

- Libraries need to understand, adapt to, and **communicate their changing role and relevance.**

- Council/Library policy should identify whether libraries are providing **equitable services to the entire population, or giving priority to cohorts with the greatest need.** Clear guidance will ensure resource allocation and service design aligns with Council and funding partner directions.

Darwin's unique community

Darwin's tropical location, remoteness and capital city role make it a community that is unique in Australia. These aspects need special consideration in the Strategy.

Public libraries and the Northern Territory Library

The Northern Territory Library (NTL) is the Territory Government's public research library with a focus on the history and culture of the Northern Territory. Through the Department of Tourism and Culture it distributes Territory Government funding to Public Libraries, either to Local Government to operate its public library services (as in the case of City of Darwin), or in remote areas by providing public library services directly to the community. NTL coordinates bulk purchasing such as procurement of the Library Management System (LMS) and library materials. It also receives public libraries' data for performance reporting and works with public libraries across the Territory to develop library skills and capabilities.

Darwin's transient population

Darwin's population profile has a number of features that influence public library services:

- Its overall population numbers are relatively stable – so there is time to understand and adapt to customer needs.
- However, the population has higher turnover and proportionally more residents who have recently moved to the city than the Australian average (driven largely by defence deployment, fly in fly out industries, a strong seasonal tourism industry, international students, and a large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population who live outside of Darwin but visit for extended periods).
- Darwin has a large student population, including many international students.
- New and temporary residents have different requirements of public libraries than permanent residents.

New arrivals' most immediate priorities are often internet access, to be able to charge their devices, use the public PCs and printers, and to find out about local events and services. For many visitors, air conditioning is also a strong attractor. Traditionally, these ways of using the library have not been measured, and yet they are a significant consideration in terms of library design, opening hours, and staff roles and knowledge.

People who have moved to Darwin for extended periods continue to use the libraries for computers, internet and air conditioning. They also want to connect with communities, have access to educational and social programs, and to borrow materials. Their requirements are closer to those of a traditional library service but it takes more effort to connect with constantly changing newcomers to inform them about the services available.

Student demand for individual and group study space is high, and expected to grow with the development of the Darwin City Deal for the Civic and Education Precinct. The co-location CDU/NTL/City library will have 'state of the art' technologies and a strong focus on student spaces, this will provide insights for the use of space in other branches.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Darwin has the highest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of any Australian capital city at 10.1% of the resident population (ABS 2018). There is a large cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who visit Darwin from other parts of the Northern Territory for extended periods and who sleep rough, or who live in the long grass. While these people can be classed as 'temporarily homeless', we need to respect cultural accommodation preferences.

We should be approaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services from the perspective of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. So getting people into the library may not necessarily be our focus. If we use a strengths-based approach and explore opportunities to share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and make our library entrances culturally engaging, we may encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to use branch services, but we may also find that the best outcome is achieved by taking library services out into the community.

A number of initiatives have been implemented over the years to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement. However there has been no consistent focus on this cohort, which has become a priority for this Strategy.

Many agencies and service providers have excellent long term relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, so City of Darwin Libraries does not have to reinvent the wheel. Partnerships with respected service providers to leverage existing services or co-design services, along with dedicated resourcing, will ensure library services better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Maintaining consistency in our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and service partners will be an important factor in our success, we need to think about succession so that our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and service providers are not reliant on a single staff member.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ARTIST DION BEASELY AT LIBRARY CARD LAUNCH

Homelessness

Homelessness in the Northern Territory is 12 times higher (per capita) than the rest of Australia with young people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over-represented in the homeless population.

Libraries provide a free, safe place to access information; relax out of the weather, charge devices, access free Wi-Fi and use computers for government and other services. While the needs of homeless people should be considered in the design of libraries, library services, and outdoor spaces - we should recognise that library resourcing is limited and where possible partner with other providers (e.g. Orange Sky Laundry) to leverage existing services.

The provision of services such as electricity and Wi-Fi in external spaces near our branches is highly desirable for homeless people and travellers. We need to be careful that inappropriate use of these facilities by a minority does not jeopardise access for everyone, and solutions such as automatically turning off power at night should be considered before new initiatives are abandoned.

Changing with the times

The objectives and actions in the Library Strategy involve a number of key changes.

Branch design and development

In developing this strategy, comprehensive modelling of branch location against current and projected population, including consideration of transport patterns, socio-economic factors and future development (e.g. *Darwin Mid Suburbs Area Plan*, 2016) was undertaken. This research found that we have the right number of branches and they are in the right suburbs, but not necessarily at the right site.

Of the four branches, only Casuarina meets contemporary expectations of space, quality and location. Future development of the other branches is complicated by external forces:

· The City Deal proposal to integrate Northern Territory Library, Charles Darwin University Library and the Darwin City Library in an integrated tech-enabled smart campus that is designed to be open, accessible, and 'sticky' (i.e. encourages people to linger and collaborate) with open boundaries between community, university courses, and public library programs.

· Consideration of Council's role in activating the Darwin Mall by relocating services that drive foot traffic.

· Leases for Karama and Nightcliff are currently paid by NTL, any change in location may result in these costs being transferred to Council.

· The development of 170 units for seniors at John Stokes Square Nightcliff, and the expected resulting growth in demand for library services in Nightcliff.

· The lack of suitable alternative sites for the Karama Library.

What do visitors want? Power points for charging their devices! We need to start with the customer, to be guided by our observation and questioning skills. For example, young people know what they want in a BYOD streaming pod – so get them together, give them pizza, watch what/where they do it and ask them what would work better.

CASUARINA LIBRARY

Because external forces can drive decisions about branch location and upgrades that may not deliver the ideal outcome for libraries or the community, it is important that City of Darwin has a clear vision (i.e. Branch Development Plan) for future upgrades – thus allowing new opportunities to be assessed objectively.

Older branches were designed for experienced locals – people who know where to find the space or materials they need. We need to watch and listen to new customers to see whether popular materials and facilities are easy to locate. For example, Darwin City Library staff report that they receive many enquiries from visitors about Darwin information, but these resources are hidden at the back of the library. We need to refocus branch design on user experience – making sure customer needs are met intuitively rather than having to ask library staff – and we can provide YouTube and other video-based instruction to help customers navigate library systems and technologies.

While libraries aspire to open longer hours, we aren't necessarily resourced to deliver this, however we can monitor periods of peak demand (e.g. Nightcliff has more people wanting to use the library early as a result of a new café next door) and adjust opening hours to accommodate changes in user behaviour.

Our libraries can be anywhere – wherever people congregate. Council is already planning to use data from Smart Darwin cameras to identify the optimal location of outdoor services. A number of library services also lend themselves to outdoor delivery and make services more accessible for cohorts like Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and homeless people. We need to consider our customers' needs and interests, which range from 24/7 book swaps (using deleted library books) that may address some of the issues of materials not being returned, to 'streaming pods' with comfortable chairs and charging stations where people can use their own devices to access streamed content (e.g. Netflix, podcasts).

A hard-working collection

The City of Darwin Libraries' ratio of collection items per capita is lower than the national average, so our collection needs to work harder. We use a number of indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the collection: expenditure per capita, loans per capita, stock turnover, dead on arrival (i.e. purchased but never borrowed). LMS data capture and reporting, and consultation with library users, provides intelligence that helps us fine tune our collection, so it has the greatest impact.

Collection development needs to be centralised and coordinated, driven by data and customer (branch) input, and managed as a single resource. NTL procurement provides bulk-purchase benefits, but occurs sporadically in response to Territory Government budget cycles, which means that we may be waiting months for order delivery. A stronger Collection Development Plan will provide direction for NTL procurement.

A library collection is only valuable if customers can find what they want or have an enjoyable browsing experience. People generally know how to navigate in-branch searching (or they can easily ask a staff member), but libraries find it challenging to compete with the machine-learning features of competitors like Google and Amazon. Customers are telling us they can't understand the layout of our website, are frustrated by multiple logons, and the LMS doesn't provide intuitive search (so if a word is not spelt correctly, the search function does not provide a response). We need to continually monitor our online interface – particularly websites, catalogue search, and ease of access to e-resources – and maintain a focus on UX.

Partnerships

Libraries can extend their reach through partnerships with other Council teams, with service providers, and with community groups. This strategy highlights the use of partnerships to deliver more targeted youth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and homeless services; and expanded programming through partnerships with volunteers.

When libraries are developing partnering arrangements, it is important that they focus on the libraries' role and area of expertise, particularly knowledge, information and digital literacy, and provide these as value-add contributions, rather than take a driving role in new initiatives.

Competing in the online environment

The main competition for library customers is not book shops or google, it's 'everything else I could be doing'. This is evident in reduced loans, as people have easy and inexpensive access to streamed content that is far more extensive that anything available from their library; and time-poor lives make reading for pleasure an aspirational luxury.

Our customers expect slick, attractive online interfaces, yet library software is old-fashioned, clunky, and riddled with separate logins. We recognise that libraries lack the enormous budgets of direct competitors like Amazon, and that publishers of online content largely control library login arrangements, but we can control the look and feel of our websites and online presence.

Travel apps are a trusted source of information, and although library staff report high traveller/tourist use of our libraries, we are poorly represented on travel apps (e.g. *Wikicamps* shows only 5 users, a low 3.5 star rating, and no contact details). The importance of social media in communications and promotions is often overlooked by library services, and responsibility for posting and monitoring is ad hoc and under-resourced. If we are to compete with online information and entertainment, we need to pay attention to – and adequately resource – our web, app and social media presence.

Consistency

This Strategy continues City of Darwin Libraries' shift from traditional library services to a more flexible, customer-centric approach. In order for this to be effective, we need efficient systems and to be consistent in how we apply them across all branches. This strategy has been developed using a project framework of design, do and get on with the next stage.

Focusing on target audiences

We are unable to provide everything for everyone, although keeping the doors open ensures the entire community has access to a library. To be effective, we need to identify target audiences, people who:

- Understand and want library services.
- Don't have the resources to access these services in other ways.
- Will benefit most from our services.

Our core customers (families, children, seniors, students) will continue to be important – and receive the bulk of our attention and resources.

Because families, children, seniors and students are our core business we have not highlighted them in our strategy, rather the strategy focuses on additional target audiences that need our attention:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Young people
- Homeless people
- New residents and travellers
- People who use library space but don't become members or borrow
- Volunteers
- No-shows and non-returners

This iteration of the Strategy (ie. 2020-2024) focuses on improving services for these audiences. Scheduled reviews of the Strategy should consider whether these target audiences remain our focus (i.e. we may have solved the problem of the no-shows and non-returners), and whether any new target audiences have emerged.

Service priority hierarchy

The success of this strategy is founded on developing a service priority hierarchy as follows:

- Keep the doors open
- Answer customer enquiries (collection, ICT, facilities)
- A collection that works hard and appeals (to searchers and browsers)
- A balanced programming strategy that services core and target audiences and engages volunteers
- The right spaces for different customer groups/uses in our libraries
- Engaging new residents and visitors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and homeless people (via partnerships)

The Strategy

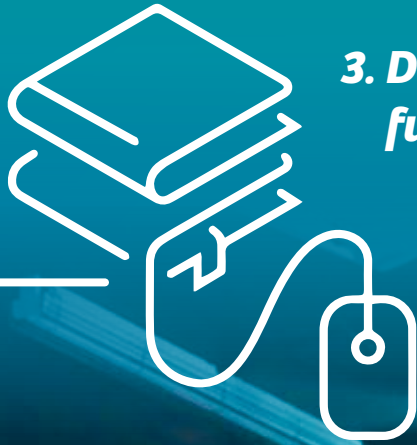The Library Strategy will be delivered through three focus areas:

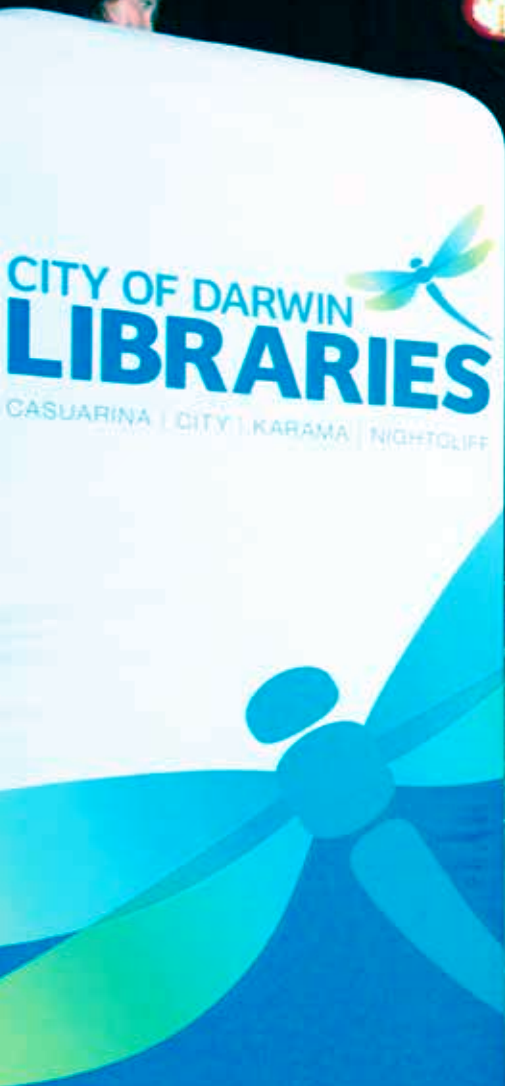**1. An integrated, efficient library service**
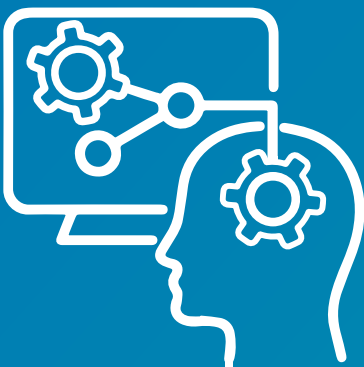
2. Engaging target audiences

3. Designing the future through UX

The actions, measures and timelines for each of the strategic directions are shown in this section – with implementation timelines to follow.

GET THAT JOB'
– BECOME A DJ
WORKSHOP

Strategic Direction

An integrated, efficient library service

1

Currently, City of Darwin Libraries operates as four separate branches, with staff rotated between branches. Cloud-based storage and integrated online systems (e.g. finances, LMS, collection management) allow work that was previously done at each branch to delivered by one person located at any branch.

The Library Strategy focuses on de-duplicating and automating back-of-house functions, thus releasing staff for customer-facing roles and strategic projects and initiatives. To maximise the use of our skills and resources, we need to monitor and adopt solutions that allow better utilisation of skilled library staff (e.g. transactional tasks are being replaced by self-check, shelf-ready, and other automated and outsourced solutions). To maintain skills and experience, staff rotation will continue, and we will identify innovative strategies to learn from iconic public libraries across Australia.

Theme	Actions
1. A new staffing structure based on a three level framework of strategic projects and keeping the doors open	1. Develop and adopt a **new staffing structure** and FTE allocation at branches to 'keep the doors open' and respond to customer enquiries 2. **First rotation of staff** assessed in light of new staffing structure 3. Provide staff development opportunities so that staff can gain a **broader understanding of the public library environment**
2. Key library activities are centralised	1. Develop and implement cross-service **Collection Development Guidelines** with centralised collection management. 2. Develop and implement a **Programming Plan** that considers target audiences and programming gaps across all target audiences. 3. Use door count data and customer feedback to adjust branch **opening hours**, opening hours for all branches are well publicised
3. We are focused on efficiency gains to release staff for strategic and customer-facing roles	1. Identify efficiency and resourcing gains from outsourcing, automating or **redesigning transactional tasks** to release staff for strategic and customer-facing tasks 2. Develop and enforce **consistent service standards** and messages for staff assisting customers using PCs and BYODs, and communicate to customers 3. Negotiate **policy alignment** with neighbouring Councils' public libraries (e.g. loan periods, penalties, payments)
4. A Branch Development Plan ensures equitable services across Council, and guides investment planning	1. Develop a costed 20 year **Branch Development Plan** that sets priorities and addresses trends in customer use of library space, equity, population change, core and target cohorts and scheduled upgrades
5. Strategic Plan Review	1. Do an **annual progress review** of the Library Strategy, and a major review by the end of 2023

Strategic Direction

2

Engaging target audiences

We can't provide the same level of service to every Darwin resident or visitor, we'd never have the resources to do that. So we need to decide where to focus our energy. In preparing this Strategy, people consistently identified the need to do more with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to be more effective in addressing the needs of homeless people, young people and newly-arrived residents.

City of Darwin Libraries are fortunate in having more enquiries for volunteering that we currently take up, so we need a different approach to how we attract, select, train, deploy and manage volunteers – in future our volunteers will focus on expanding our engagement with the community, rather than on basic in-library tasks. Today's libraries are digital, learning and social hubs and people are using library space differently – libraries need to watch and learn how people use space, and to adapt layout and fitout accordingly – and we need to design and capture better measures of 'non-loan, non-membership' patronage. A final target audience, and one that is a quirky feature of Darwin, is people who don't return items (16.6% of our materials budget is lost); and people who have booked for programs and events and don't attend.

Theme	Actions
1. We leverage library services through partnerships	1. Our Programming Plan actively **seeks opportunities to partner** with other Council teams and external providers to extend the reach and quality of our programs
2. Our libraries provide new residents and visitors with information, digital engagement, and connection to social networks	1. Develop **online marketing** targeted at new residents and promote to schools and large employers of temporary residents and visitor information services
	2. **City Library to review Darwin, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, and Northern Territory history collections** to make them more visible and accessible to visitors
	3. Work with **connection nodes for visitors and new residents** (e.g. Defence Expo, large employers, Visitor Information Services) to raise awareness of the range of library services
	4. Put information about the services that visitors and new residents use 'front and centre' on the library **web page**
	5. Include new and temporary resident requirements in program **planning** and involve volunteers in designing and delivering programs
3. Libraries are more relevant and engaging for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities	1. Work with trusted services and agencies that have good relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to develop opportunities to **partner in the delivery of library services** (both at branches and in the community)
	2. Understand the way **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would like to use our libraries** (including entrances and external space) and redesign space and services to make libraries more engaging for this cohort
	3. Actively encourage **employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** in our library service
4. Homeless people have better access to library services and facilities	1. Engage with **homeless people**, and services that support homeless people, to identify library space and service adjustments that will make access to library services easier for this cohort

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5. Young people (who may also be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or homeless) have stronger engagement with libraries via redesign of library space, and collaborations with Council's Youth Team to improve access, services and communications	1. Work with Council's Youth Services Team and Youth Advisory Committee (*Young Darwin*, Goal 4.1) to activate *Young Darwin's* Goal (1.2) of identifying increased opportunities to create **youth friendly spaces** during and after hours (particularly access to IT, computers, printing – Goal 3.2), and youth art spaces (Goal 3.2)
	2. Participate in Council activities for youth week, NAIDOC and other **cultural harmony initiatives** (*Young Darwin*, Goals 1.3 and 3.1)
	3. Work with the Youth Services team identify **after school developmental activities** for young people that can be delivered in libraries or with library input (*Young Darwin*, Goal 2.1)
	4. Ensure library **events and programs** relevant to young people are listed on Council's website (*Young Darwin*, Goal 3.1)
	5. Incorporate **STEAM** into the *Programming Plan* and *Branch Development Plan*
6. Increasingly, libraries are used by people who are neither members or borrowers, we need to design space and services to support this cohort and we need more robust measures that reflect the level of resourcing invested	1. Monitor the way people use library space (including structured observation and action-based focus groups that explore different layout options) and move furnishings and equipment (e.g. charging stations, sofas) to **accommodate user layout and usage**, factor larger cost upgrades into the Branch Development Plan
	2. Factor **co-working and flexible learning spaces** into Branch planning (*Young Darwin*, Goal 2.3)
	3. In collaboration with Council, ALIA and NTL, establish a Data Design Working Group to review existing approaches and develop **robust measures** that more accurately reflect library usage and allocation of resources
7. Prioritise services for people who adhere to library expectations re returning borrowed items and event attendance	1. Establish strategies to address event **no-shows** to improve attendance levels
	2. Interrogate data re people who have borrowed and **not returned items**, and develop strategies to target cohorts that are the worst offenders – align with lending policies of neighbouring library services
8. Greater involvement, and more effective deployment of volunteers	1. Include volunteer engagement in the Programming Plan and document the volunteer skills and abilities needed to **support expanded programming**
	2. Update **volunteering information** on library websites and social media pages (including the contact details of the person coordinating library volunteers), and publicise CoDL's volunteer roles

Strategic Direction

Designing the future through UX

3

Libraries are in direct competition with other sources of books and information, with other forms of entertainment, with the priorities of modern family life, and with physical and online companies that build their product around user experience (UX).
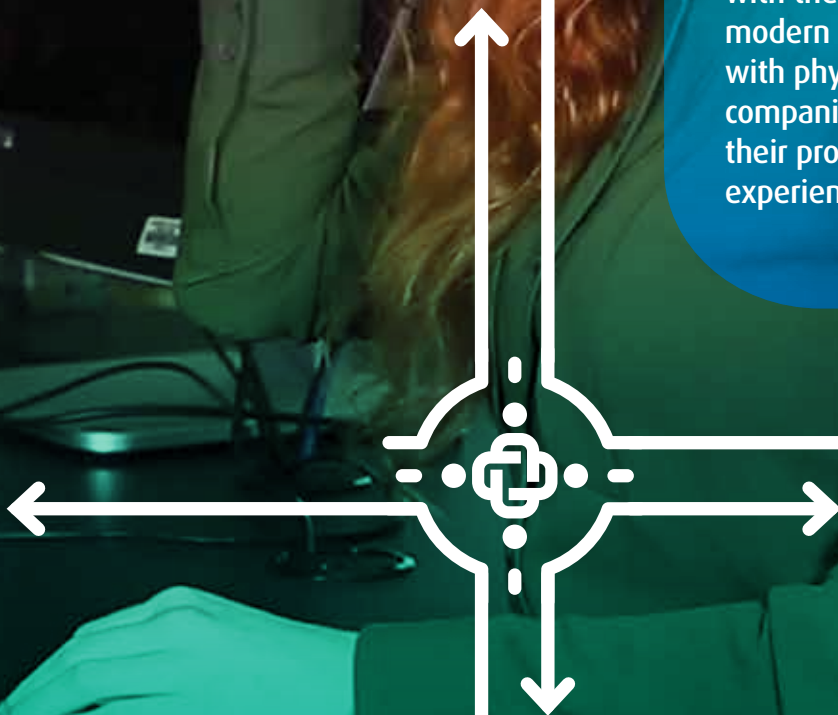
If libraries are going to compete successfully, the customer interface also needs to start with user experience. If it's not easy, instant and online, people will 'vote with their thumbs' and choose other sources of information, entertainment and learning.

Theme	Actions
1. Understanding UX	1. Use professional development opportunities from NTL and council to build **staff understanding** of the purpose of UX and the strategies to deliver highly desirable user experiences (especially for digital natives)
	2. More efficient **use of data** when conducting research into new opportunities, consider simple solutions like readily available apps and customer input to identify UX
	3. **Use visual media or other appropriate communications** to provide instruction on how to use library equipment and resources
2. Staff digital skills	1. Through training, professional development, and performance management, ensure **all staff have contemporary digital skills** for internal library systems and customer support
3. Easy online access	1. Implement **Wi-Fi printing and scan-to-email** on the standardised equipment across all branches, and provide 'how to' guides for customers
	2. Implement **online charging** of customer resource cards to simplify the payment process and improve the in-library experience
	3. Advocate for a cross-Council **online booking system** that includes library spaces, PCs, rooms and facilities
	4. Work with NTL and software suppliers to work towards **'One Click' registration, logon and shared discovery (searching)** across all platforms
4. Contemporary library website	1. Develop a **contemporary library website** which will reflect UX expectations of layout, intuitive landing pages, and one click access to all library services

5. Engage existing and new customers through focused social media	1. Develop a **Social Media** Plan that uses social media engagement to raise awareness of library activities and services
6. Flexible inside/outside spaces that have contemporary appeal	1. Establish portable **Streaming Pods** that include charging, BYOD connectivity, comfortable seating – supported by Wi-Fi, loanable devices and headphones – that can also be used in outdoor locations
	2. Use Smart Darwin intelligence and community consultation to design and install **permanent outdoor facilities** (e.g. lockers, seating, shelter, Wi-Fi, water bubblers, power) at branches with suitable external space, and other public spaces
7. Wayfinding, signage	1. Review **wayfinding** (street and transport) **signage** to ensure all branches are easy to find by people with their own transport, by people who use public transport or who walk or cycle – monitor impact on visitation
	2. Review requirements for **internal library signage** and identify cost-effective solutions that improve user experience