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Chapter 4: Cross-case analysis and findings

In this chapter we report on the cross-case analysis of the data presented in chapter three from the four case studies: the national perspective; the Australian Capital Territory (ACT); Western Australia (WA); and Queensland (QLD). Our intention in this chapter is to review the strong and enduring themes emerging from each case study and to focus on those themes that continually reappear in the evidence across all of the case studies. This chapter brings together these key themes to respond to the three main questions the evaluation was pursuing: the nature and outcomes of the partnerships; how the campaign added value; and how the benefits can be sustained. This second phase of the analysis provides the evidence that forms the platform for the final chapter where conclusions and recommendations for the future will be drawn.

The evidence within the cross-case analysis supports the view that the National Year of Reading began as an ambitious undertaking with a modest budget solicited from the Federal Government, and yet produced quite remarkable outcomes. This chapter provides the reader with a wide range of evidence about how the National Year of Reading made a difference to the reading culture of Australia. The voices of the participants were clearly enthusiastic about the campaign and yet their responses also indicate the challenges they encountered as well as the successes they achieved.

Each of the subsections that follow focuses in turn on the three research questions. The individual themes that emerged from each of the national and state/territory case studies have been reviewed as a whole with the enduring national issues that have emerged leading into key overall findings related to each of the research questions.

What follows is a series of subsections pertaining to each of the three research questions.

Research Question 1:
What are the nature and outcomes of the National Year of Reading partnerships at state, program and event level in relation to the promotion of reading as a life skill, a reading culture in the home, and the sharing of books with children from birth?

The 53 case study participants – comprising the Library Agency team members, the Project Director of the four National Year of Reading national campaigns, the state/territory steering group coordinators, the state program coordinators in ACT, WA and QLD, ambassadors and friends, and community organisations – described the nature and outcomes of 16 National Year of Reading state programs and 4 national campaigns. (The name, aim, target audience and partnering organisation of the state and national programs are detailed in Appendix 2.) Evidence from the interviews revealed the following key findings in response to the first research question.
Key Finding 1: Reaching new and target audiences

All the steering group coordinators and state program coordinators from the case studies asserted that the National Year of Reading partnerships had increased their ability to reach new audiences and target audiences. They believed that partnerships broadened their audiences’ awareness of reading needs and enhanced their ability to provide appropriate activities. Guided by the national framework, the state/territory libraries in ACT, WA and QLD developed and launched new programs for the National Year of Reading as well as continued to conduct programs that were already in place.

In the ACT, the Director of Libraries ACT decided to make the National Year of Reading the raison d’être for tackling harder targets. For example, the campaign was the stimulus to commence the Workplace Literacy Program (one of the four national campaigns), a 2-3 year project aiming to develop the literacy skills of employees in Canberra. Further examples are:

- The Canberra Kids Love2Read project, which targeted school-age children and aimed to foster their love of reading and library habits;
- The Australian National University’s Poetry Slam, which aimed to develop the literacy skills of secondary school children in Canberra.

Further, the National Year of Reading WA Stakeholder Committee coordinator stated that new targets were sought at both the state and community level with the implementation of two new programs delivered by the State Library WA (SLWA) – READ! 3 Better Beginnings and Laundry Reads. By focusing on the development of adult literacy, these programs appeared to target a new adult audience.

Similarly, the part-time project officer from the City of Mandurah Libraries, who had been employed for the express purpose of implementing National Year of Reading events, stated: ‘My focus was very much on things to do with reading and literacy and library promotions that might happen outside the libraries’. Her initiatives included:

- Establishing the First Wednesday Book Club – members of the group acted as supporters to disseminate information about various programs and activities to the community;
- Visiting the Parents Place, a local health centre, every fortnight and reading to children while they waited for their immunisations and taking the opportunity to talk to parents and distribute brochures about library activities.

In QLD, Dads Read was the State Library of Queensland’s (SLQ) flagship program for the National Year of Reading. It targeted fathers, but its message embraced all family members and emphasised the importance of reading to children daily. In addition, the Queensland University of Technology’s (QUT) Crossing the Boundaries With Reading project targeted secondary school students from low socioeconomic and culturally diverse areas.

The founder partners and the Library Agency project managers explained that a vital aspect of partnerships was to engage high-profile individuals such as authors and sporting personalities as ambassadors to the National Year of Reading as well as corporations, such as the Walt Disney Company, to engage with children and families via less traditional channels. For example, the representative from Madman Entertainment claimed that the National year of Reading had enabled them to ‘Engage young readers with exciting, interesting storytelling of the comic form and culture from around the world. We feel that a pre-existing segment of our target audience, particularly manga and anime fans, became active through the Read This! competition’.

The design of the four national campaigns also helped to harness new target audiences. For example, one of the founder partners described how the National Year of Reading in the Workplace had enabled Indigenous literacy to be targeted. While one of the coordinators of the National Year of Reading in the Workplace outlined how different audiences had been engaged through the following new activities:

- Workshops;
- Radio interviews;
- Working alongside employees in a local factory;
- Encouraging workers to write their own stories.

The author ambassadors passionately endorsed the National Year of Reading as a means of reaching new target audiences. One author ambassador talked about the importance of encouraging young males to read and profiling e-books as a new way of encouraging literacy. Another described the importance of dual languages books as a means of involving Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse families. Two author ambassadors described how they had extended their work through schools, libraries and festivals into remote as well as metropolitan and rural communities.

Key Finding 2: Linking national, state and local programs

The Library Agency’s National Year of Reading Project Director contended that the four national campaigns had been embraced and extended at state and local level, thus strengthening the key messages. Overall, by December 2012 over 4,000 events and activities had been registered under the National Year of Reading banner. Founder partners described the role of the state libraries as:

- Connecting with the national campaigns;
- Disseminating these campaigns through state and local events; and
- Supporting the key messages of the National Year of Reading.

In the ACT, because Libraries ACT incorporates the group of public libraries in Canberra, messages did not need to be disseminated through as many levels. The National Year of Reading provided the basis for some new programs, and all of the ACT programs were conducted under the National Year of Reading banner. According to the Libraries ACT director, ‘It’s given us a good focus and ... a really good reason to go and talk to others’. The director thought that developing partnerships at a local level enhanced linkage between local, state and national programs, helped promote the key messages, and strengthened the programs themselves.
For example, the National Year of Reading branding gave the Poetry Slam event a higher profile.

SLQ’s approach to disseminating key National Year of Reading messages was guided by their recently established literacy framework, which guided all literacy activities in 2012. The framework advocated community participation and so had a wider reach than the state library. The National Year of Reading Queensland State Consultant Committee coordinator explained how the framework influenced programs:

So we did school holiday programs, across-the-year workshops and training for children and young people, theatre performance, dedicated space and program for children in The Corner. They were all run under the Libraries for Literacy Every Day, Every Way 2011/2014 literacy framework and we based those on an actual policy that we had for literacy here at the State Library of Queensland which advocated community participation, collaboration and building communities and practice.

In addition, SLQ partnered with Education Queensland to deliver the Ready Reader program at state libraries and in the regions of QLD. This program aimed to empower parents through providing them with skills to help their children with reading. SLQ has had the active role in promoting the National Year of Reading, as described by the National Year of Reading program director:

I would say the state library has had a much more active role about promoting the National Year of Reading to other departments and interested parties. We just presented at a reading conference for school librarians in May; and there’ll be a presentation at the My Language conference from another SLQ staff member. So we have really looked to push the National Year of Reading focus at a bigger industry level.

Conversely, in WA the responsibility for disseminating the key messages emanating from the National Year of Reading resided at the local level. In WA, local libraries branded all their programs with the National Year of Reading message, including programs that were already in existence. The general manager of the State Library Foundation of WA (SLFWA) asserted that the National Year of Reading message was pervasive because events and activities happened under the same banner,

I’d pick up my local paper and the local library was doing something under that banner. I think it’s been really empowering not relying on one organisation in each state to do it all – it’s been much devolved. I think that’s been the really important factor, because what it’s meant is that there are ongoing [local] activities.

In all four case studies there was a deliberate attempt, where possible and appropriate, to link events to emphasise the importance of the National Year of Reading key messages. For example, the national campaigns were the catalyst for local events, such as the Piyama Party – held in WA as an offshoot of the national Reading Hour campaign.

The director of the four national campaigns described several strategies for delivering their key messages, as illustrated by the following examples:

- Are We There Yet? (a component of the One Country Reading campaign) relied on a competition to generate involvement from the community;
- the Public Library Membership Drive campaign sustained its key messages over time by providing centrally accessed collateral for libraries to use as the basis for their own promotional materials; and
- The Reading Hour generated a sense of excited anticipation amongst the community prior to the event.

Each campaign harnessed different tools to reach its audiences. More will be said below about those tools, especially the increased use of social networking media.

The director of the four national campaigns stressed that the contributions of partners was crucial in raising the profile of the campaigns and adding to their impact across diverse audiences. Some examples of partnerships include:

- Vision Australia (Are We There Yet?);
- Scholastic, the Walt Disney company, the Big Issue, ABC local radio and Dymocks Bookstores (The Reading Hour);
- Bookshops and author ambassadors (Our Story); and
- Good Reading Magazine and Madman Entertainment (Read This!).

Each campaign harnessed different tools to reach its audiences. More will be said below about those tools, especially the increased use of social networking media.

Key Finding 3: Creating new partnerships and strengthening existing ones

The National Year of Reading fostered a large number and a variety of partnerships, with and without funding. In total, just over 230 partnerships were established across Australia. There were 51 national and 60 state/territory ambassadors that contributed to partnerships. The National Year of Reading program coordinators in each state/territory identified the range of organisations they had developed partnerships with in relation to their responsibility for specific programs. These included partnerships with:

- Local government departments;
- Local government authorities;
- Local government councils;
- Charitable foundations;
- Commercial enterprises;
- Local health centres;
- Performing arts centres;
- Publishers / bookshops;
- Literacy / writers centres;
- Tertiary education providers;
- Media broadcasters;
- Primary and secondary schools;
- Not-for-profit organisations;
- Local community groups.
Many of these partnerships involved links with other organisations, which extended the reach of programs and events and reinforced the key reading and literacy messages across communities.

In WA, examples of funded and non-funded partnerships were:

• At the state level, the Love2Read Café was established through funding from a new partnership with the McCusker Foundation;
• At a local level in Mandurah, different partnerships were created between the City of Mandurah Libraries and: the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre; The Parents Place; and the Mums of Mandurah, which is a not-for-profit business and social network of mothers in town.

Likewise in the ACT, many new partnerships were developed with Libraries ACT. The director of Libraries ACT spoke of their concerted effort to create new partnerships:

'We've used National Year of Reading as a way of advocating to other parts of government and it's given us legitimacy to go and talk to [government departments such as] Community Services, Education, Health, and Economic Development...'

This resulted in partnerships between Libraries ACT and:

• The Canberra Museum and Gallery;
• The National Library;
• ACT Education and Training Directorate;
• Canberra Theatre;
• Volunteering ACT;
• The Australian National University;
• The Writers' Centre.

Additionally, the partnership with the teacher librarianship program at ANU and local secondary schools had commenced the year prior to the National Year of Reading, but it was strengthened during that year.

SLQ was also proactive in seeking new partnerships to market the brand of the National Year of Reading. According to the director of SLQ, the Queensland State Consultative Committee:

• Approached Education Queensland and The Courier Mail – two very powerful organisations with the outcome of partnerships being established;
• Created new partnerships with the Crèche and Kindergarten Association, Flying Start Team, Family Day Care, Toyota Cowboys, Queensland University of Technology, Griffith University, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Children's Book Council QLD, Channel 7, and Playgroups Queensland; these partners promoted the Dads Read program and other reading/literacy programs in the state.

Nationwide there was also evidence that partnerships provided mutual benefits to each partner and in some instances partnerships occurred between partner organisations. For example, a founder partner reported:

We have certainly improved our networking relationships within the Federal Government, state libraries and public library associations in Australia. We will be able to build closer relationships with commercial partners of the National Year of Reading and a greater level of understanding of the broader ecosystem that supports literacy and libraries in Australia.

To illustrate her point, the founder partner explained that the Walt Disney Company partnered with Dymocks on two new national events, Story Time Competition and Disney Junior Reading Hour, and Disney worked with Scholastic on one of the One Country Reading competitions.

One of the author ambassadors explained how his involvement in the National Year of Reading had increased his networks with schools, tertiary education and libraries. In addition, one of the ambassadors, the regional advisor of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) Australia East & NZ, spoke of his company's strategic partnerships, 'I have established a new structure where there is a liaison person in SCBWI who works with key organisations. Notably we have extended our relationship with the CBCA, Room to Read, Books in Homes, and Sydney Story Factory.'

It was clear that many of these new partnerships were created as a direct consequence of the National Year of Reading. Across the majority of participants there was an overwhelming enthusiasm and commitment to the continuation of partnerships. Participants cited the success of partnerships in terms of producing reading and literacy outcomes as central to future collaboration. As a result of the partnerships, some programs in the states/territories addressed the needs of disadvantaged groups within the community. However, several participants expressed the view that literacy programs needed to be more inclusive, targeting those communities most at risk.

In addition, one of the author ambassadors was concerned about the inclusion of three cabinet ministers as National Year of Reading ambassadors who, he claimed, 'supported a decision to cancel a literacy program relied upon by thousands each year'.

**Key Finding 4: Supporting additional aspects of literacy**

It was interesting to see the extent to which National Year of Reading programs and events incorporated additional aspects of literacy, such as visual literacy and digital literacy. For example, various programs conducted by SLQ had a multi-literacy and multi-modal perspective. The National Year of Reading Queensland State Consultative Committee coordinator stated, 'We get children and young people involved in telling stories in different ways, such as stop/start animation workshops, photographic workshops, creative writing workshops and dramatic drama workshops'. She noted also that the Disney Junior Reading Hour included bookshop sessions involving storytelling, arts and crafts, dress ups and playtime sessions. Writing competitions and poetry events also featured strongly across the states/territories.

**Key Finding 5: Embedding state and territory literacy aims within the National Year of Reading**

The founder partners explained that one of the key aims of the National Year of Reading was to advocate for public libraries as a vehicle to promote the importance of literacy. They explained that all of the programs that were already in place in each state/territory became part of National Year of Reading programs, however the National Year of Reading...
enabled them to capitalise on and extend their programs. The National Year of Reading steering group coordinators explained how the National Year of Reading enabled them to tailor their programs and events to the mission statement and aims of their state/territory library. For example:

- In QLD the National Year of Reading provided an extended platform for the newly released literacy framework, which aims to support community literacy services in libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres across Queensland;
- In WA the National Year of Reading provided an opportunity for the State Library to expand its role in promoting literacy through WA by focusing on ways of providing literacy support within the state and local libraries;
- The ACT had implemented programs and events through the National Year of Reading that reflected a developing focus on literacy in the community.

Key Finding 6: Providing a unifying brand to promote the key messages.

As mentioned above, in 2012 each state/territory branded both new and existing programs as National Year of Reading activities. According to the National Year of Reading state steering group coordinators, this was a deliberate attempt to promote and consolidate the key National Year of Reading messages. Hence the Love2Read logo, synonymous with the National Year of Reading, appeared on a variety of promotion materials, newsletters, programs, souvenirs and websites. Examples of how state-based programs were branded in the state/territory case studies include:

- Programs routinely offered by Libraries ACT received the National Year of Reading branding as did new initiatives, such as Canberra Kids Love2Read and Canberra's Longest Bookmark;
- In WA, new programs, such as Love2Read Café, Laundry Reads and the Read Out Loud Event, and the ongoing READ! and Better Beginnings programs were promoted as part of the National Year of Reading;
- In QLD the biannual Out of the Box Festival for Children was named as a National Year of Reading event, as were several other programs, including Dads Read.

The coordinator of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation reported that she felt proud to be part of the National Year of Reading because its brand had the potential to raise awareness of Indigenous literacy. Likewise, a representative of Independent Aboriginal Press saw the potential for National Year of Reading to recognise and promote Aboriginal writers and Aboriginal literacy. In addition, three author ambassadors talked about how the National Year of Reading was a 'natural fit' with their work, and how branding their activities in a variety of ways helped to promote their key messages.

The state program coordinators noted that the advantage of being part of a nationwide program was increased media coverage and publicity, thus raising the public profiles of their programs and events. In addition, the Library Agency's National Year of Reading Program Director and Media Manager argued that the National Year of Reading branding consolidated and reinforced its key messages.

In WA, the steering group coordinator expressed the view that the unifying brand of National Year of Reading strengthened relationships between the SLWA and local libraries, which had been aided by staff from the SLWA visiting local libraries at the beginning of the year to demonstrate support for their programs and events.

Key Finding 7: Creating momentum that drove the National Year of Reading

The majority of participants in the evaluation mentioned the enthusiasm, commitment and creativity of those involved in the National Year of Reading. For example, representatives of national partners Scholastic, Dymocks and Madman Entertainment claimed that the national programs they were involved in had created 'real excitement' within their organisations. The Library Agency's project manager responsible for media and data collation claimed, 'Our partners have been very able, willing, and enthusiastic about picking up the ball and running with it; they have done incredibly creative and wonderful things to promote the National Year of Reading.' In addition, the National Year of Reading project director explained that she felt the commitment to the National Year of Reading had been generated because of the inclusive, collaborative nature of partnerships at all levels.

Most participants in the evaluation singled out partnerships as a key contributor to the National Year of Reading success, noting in particular:

- Some 'unexpected' partnerships emerged outside 'normal' working boundaries;
- Inter-agency collaborations that strengthened the reach and impact of various reading programs and the key National Year of Reading messages;
- A symbiotic relationship between partnerships at some events.

An example of the last point was given by the General Manager of the SLFWA:

We have been able to partner with the Awesome Festival and have built a really strong partnership. The partnership may have happened regardless, but National Year of Reading has given it so much more impetus. We've been able to bring what would have been just an author's read-to-kids activity to something bigger than Ben Hur, and we're linking it to teacher resource material and all sorts of things that probably otherwise wouldn't have happened. So I think it's certainly enriched that new partnership.

Despite the overwhelming support for the National Year of Reading, several state program coordinators expressed concern that its programs and events had created an additional workload for library people. They gave examples of how and why extra work was generated:

- Getting publicity materials out to all the local libraries;
- Identifying, contacting and organising competition judges and state ambassadors; and
- Liaising to identify a local workplace and local writers for the National Year of Reading in the Workplace campaign.

However, involvement in the national programs did not always result in an increased workload. In WA, one of the state program directors reported that because partnerships had already been established with Writing WA, the implementation of two of the national campaigns actually eased the workload.
One of the founder partners commented that the founder partner role had added considerable workload to the Australian Library and Information Association in terms of managing the implementation of the National Year of Reading programs via a contracted partner and fulfilling the financial management, reporting and acquittal aspects of the program. And several participants commented that, had funding been available, libraries would have benefited from having additional staff to attend to specific aspects of the national campaigns — as was done at Mandurah Library in WA. (More is said about funding below.)

**Key Finding 8: Harnessing the power of technology**

The National Year of Reading campaign utilised information technology in two main ways — via web pages and social media. Over 200 websites were identified that included the National Year of Reading logo. Examples of programs that made strong use of websites were:

- The Indigenous Literacy Foundation which linked with the National Year of Reading through its website;
- Several of the SLQ’s programs which had a strong emphasis on 0-16 literacy. The programs were posted online so they could be accessed by other libraries, children in outreach communities, and children in communities outside of SLQ;
- The State Library of Victoria’s ‘insideadog’ website which featured blogs from writers in residence and information about the Inky Awards, the teenage judges, and book reviews; and
- Corporate partners the Walt Disney Company, Scholastic and Madman Entertainment used web pages to post activities, promote programs and competitions, and include other information.

Each state/territory used a variety of media and information technology to promote their National Year of Reading activities and events, including:

- SLQ, which believed that the Love2Read Facebook page provided an excellent vehicle to converse with the public about reading, literacy and related topics;
- Libraries ACT, which used a suite of strategies to publicise and promote their activities to the public, including local mainstream media, printed posters and flyers and electronic media such as emails, library websites, e-newsletters and an events bookings website;
- Libraries ACT also increased their use of social media — blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and You Tube — to reach a broader range of people and raise the profile of National Year of Reading projects and events; and
- SLWA, which used its existing marketing tools to promote its National Year of Reading activities, such as networks, partnerships, print media, mainstream and social media.

**Key Finding 9: Harnessing the power of media and multimedia organisations**

The media played an important role in supporting the National Year of Reading nationally and within each state/territory. For example, high-profile national media coverage, such as the ABC Radio National Life Matters program with Richard Aide and the ABC1 television’s The Book Show with Jennifer Byrne, helped to raise and maintain the National Year of Reading national profile.

Each state/territory had important contacts with the media, as follows:

- Libraries ACT monitored the media to ensure that reading events were publicised, and used a regular fortnightly spot on local ABC radio to focus on National Year of Reading events. The ABC presenter was also a National Year of Reading ambassador;
- In addition, Libraries ACT’s extensive media network included a whole-of-government email network, Canberra Times promotions, and notifications to all Education Department schools, home schoolers and the culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- In QLD, Channel 7 was a strong partner of the Dads Read program and the SLQ issued National Year of Reading posters, billboards, large banners across city bridges, and advertising in Queensland Clubs Magazine; and
- In WA, the state program coordinator claimed that extensive media coverage generated debate and discussion in the community about the importance of reading. She also reported that the National Year of Reading was generating increased media interest, ‘...certainly our events got radio coverage ... the radio stations were keener to talk to somebody and pick it up as part of a bigger picture around Australia.’

Nationwide, the National Year of Reading story featured regularly in local community papers. Desk-based analysis indicated that much of this media coverage had been generated at the grassroots level, focusing on the collaborative efforts of local libraries, bookstores, community groups and National Year of Reading participants. As mentioned above, the capacity for partners to leverage the National Year of Reading was considered a significant outcome by the state/territory steering group coordinators and the program coordinators.

**Key Finding 10: Creating a multi-tiered organisational structure**

The chair of the founder partners group, which comprised representatives from State and Public Libraries from around the country, explained that the organisational structure for the National Year of Reading set up an inclusive framework in which to work. This was evident from the range of organisations that were involved in the National Year of Reading from its inception. It was evident from the majority of participants interviewed that the central coordination, with key personnel from each state enabled the focus of the campaign to be negotiated and clearly articulated. This central coordination led to the identification of three key messages about:

1. The importance of reading as a skill for life;
2. The importance of having a reading culture in the home; and
3. The importance of sharing books with children from birth to help foster a love of books and reading.
The state/territory steering committee members and the national and state National Year of Reading program coordinators explained how these key messages were sufficiently broad enough to permeate National Year of Reading activities but also specific enough to form the basis of particular programs and events, targeted at specific audiences.

The state/territory steering group coordinators agreed that central (national) coordination of the National Year of Reading gave participants direction and support for their planning, development and delivery of programs and events, while allowing them the scope to create their own initiatives. It was evident from the several state/territory steering group coordinators and state program coordinators interviewed that they felt part of a national network, which was re-enforced through their links with the national founder partner group and their involvement in the national campaigns. The state/territory libraries that were the focus of the case studies set up the following structures for the National Year of Reading:

- ACT established a Steering Committee comprising 23 members as well as a Facilitators Group to increase their reach and work at all levels;
- In WA, a Stakeholders Committee was established to take responsibility for the implementation of the National Year of Reading and comprised of representatives from the SLWA and SLFWA along with members from key government departments and organisations; and
- The SLQ formed a State Consultative Committee, with representatives from key organisations, to ensure planning was inclusive, appropriate and multifaceted.

Key Finding 11: Maintaining connections through the Love2Read website

The Love2Read website reinforced the key messages listed above and provided a means of connecting, supporting and promoting the National Year of Reading programs and events across Australia. It also:

- Provided a catalyst for the development and sharing of ideas;
- Provided resources for new initiatives and enabled participants to link their events with national campaigns;
- Enabled coordinators to choose events to develop or join and promote; and
- Enabled rural and remote communities to take part in the National Year of Reading.

One of the author ambassadors argued that one of the most significant aspects of National Year of Reading was the development of social media to publicise aspects of reading activities available nationally. He explained:

> I've concentrated via my website, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to provide photos, news and links for various groups. The #NYR12 hash tag has been a quick tool. I think you should check out the record of these as evidence of the growing interest in reading.

Key Finding 12: Monitoring and evaluating the success of programs

There was evidence that a number of participants were involved in monitoring and evaluating the success of their programs or events. Most participants gathered quantitative data, such as attendance numbers. Many participants also gathered qualitative data through program evaluations and through anecdotal observations. In addition, several participants explained how they monitored the use of social media, especially Facebook and Twitter, as they found it relatively easy to access quantitative data from these social media platforms.

Because of their unique role, the author ambassadors had a different view of the success of the National Year of Reading. Four of the author ambassadors claimed that the programs, events and activities they had been involved in had been embraced with open arms by teachers, librarians, parents and children and were perceived to be very successful.

However, many participants indicated that measuring the success of programs was important but problematic. They voiced concerns about the appropriateness and legitimacy of data they collected and ultimately how useful it was for informing outcomes and further development. Several participants talked about their intention to develop their own evaluation tools as part of the continuing implementation of programs. Six of the program coordinators also talked about the need to carry out an evaluation of what they had gained from partnerships, in order to determine future relationships. Another raised the question of what, when and how evaluation should take place.

Key Finding 13: Funding viability

The modest amount of federal funding (1.396 million dollars) for the National Year of Reading was handled by the founder partners, with further funding generated from state/territory and local governments and philanthropic and corporate sponsors. Advice and a template for funding submissions were provided on the National Year of Reading wiki. Some participants reported that not all initiatives required funding; however, it was deemed that the future of some programs depended on the availability of funding. Others claimed that participation in the National Year of Reading gave them the leverage to generate funding and were optimistic about its continuation. (See more on funding in the next section.)

On the other hand, three participants voiced concerns about the loss of funding at the end of the National Year of Reading and its impact on the sustainability of particular programs.

In addition, both the Indigenous Literacy Foundation and the independent publishing arm of Institute of Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs cited the lack of funding and limited personnel as problematic in their involvement with the National Year of Reading, especially for promoting programs and events and forming partnerships. Changeover of staff in 2012 was also seen as a problem for this organisation to establish partnerships. After encountering some organisational difficulties and a major restructure, the director of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation stated optimistically, 'We're re-emerging and it's pretty exciting times for us; although we would have liked to do more with National Year of Reading'.

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Research Question 2:
How has involvement in the National Year of Reading added value to the outcomes normally achieved within and between participating organisations?

Key Finding 14: Adding value
Participants in all four case studies reflected on how the National Year of Reading had added value to their existing work on literacy, this included:

- Providing a context and impetus to work on more difficult projects that addressed hard-core literacy issues;
- Giving a reason to engage with new partners or strengthen their relationships with existing partners; and
- Triggering the implementation of projects at the local level, such as the AMC Poetry Competition in the ACT, the Crossing the Boundaries With Reading project in QLD, and the City of Mandurah and City of Joondalup Libraries' activities and events in WA.

The high profile of the National Year of Reading also enabled state libraries and organisations to successfully extend and seek new funding opportunities, sometimes in collaboration with other partners. For example:

- SLWA was well supported by the SLFWA whose role was to seek out sponsorship and funding;
- SLQ was able to source sponsorship for its Dad’s Read program via its National Year of Reading partnership network; and
- Staff from QUT thought that positive audience feedback in their Crossing the Boundaries With Reading project would help to secure future funding.

Both the SLWA and the SLQ developed specific marketing strategies to engage as many audiences as possible. For SLQ, this included the development of dedicated branded print media, online content, banners, billboards, and branded clothing, and the use of media partnerships, databases and partner networks to promote the National Year of Reading activities. The SLWA hoped that the new media relationships that resulted from the National Year of Reading, especially with print media journalists, would provide opportunities beyond 2012.

Key Finding 15: Increasing the profiles of libraries and their partners
Each of the state/territory libraries considered the National Year of Reading had increased their promotion, publicity and media opportunities, which helped to raise their profiles with governments and other organisations. For example:

- The coordinator for the WA Stakeholder Committee asserted that the National Year of Reading was ‘A hook that we used to deliver events, to go and talk to other organisations, and to raise our profile in government’; and
- The director of SLQ said that the National Year of Reading ‘...raised our profile with Education Queensland and with the Department of Communities’.

Some library participants considered that the National Year of Reading had extended their reach, lent authority to their work, and helped to raise their profile. Librarians also reported that when audiences visited the library for specific National Year of Reading events, such as travelling exhibitions or author visits, this gave them the opportunity to promote their library and introduce visitors to the wealth of library resources and programs.

Some participating organisations felt that the National Year of Reading had raised their profiles with libraries and the public in general. For example, the director of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation claimed the National Year of Reading had resulted in ‘raising profiles with libraries; [we are] now in a lot more libraries across the NT’.

Several of the author ambassadors indicated that their involvement in the National Year of Reading had:

- Raised their profiles nationally and internationally;
- Given them an opportunity to convey messages as part of their passion for and commitment to writing; and
- Developed new relationships that had the potential to become partnerships and opportunities for future collaboration.

Key Finding 16: Extending partnerships
As indicated above, the development of partnerships was a feature of the National Year of Reading. Representatives of media corporations, national media, and national bookstores indicated that the National Year of Reading had enabled them to strengthen partnerships and create new links with similar organisations, adding to their profiles and audiences. For example, Playgroups Australia in Queensland felt that the National Year of Reading had been the catalyst for sharing information with parents about what their partners (SLQ and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre) have to offer families. At a state and local level, organisations made links by branding ongoing programs under the National Year of Reading banner, which had a significant impact on the nature and design of programs.

For most participants, involvement in implementing local-level National Year of Reading projects provided them with the opportunity to generate new partnerships with like partners. For example:

- Activities undertaken by both City of Joondalup Libraries and City of Mandurah Libraries provided the impetus to broaden their activities and partnerships, resulting in strengthened local area networks;
- Project organisers of the Voice Poetry Slam project in the ACT were able to make links to coordinators of state and national poetry slam events, which they believe ensured the project’s future sustainability; and
- The high profile involvement of Riverbend, a book store in regional Queensland, in the National Year of Reading served to reinforce its relationship with libraries, which it hopes will continue beyond 2012.

Research Question 3:
Will the National Year of Reading partnerships and programs be sustained beyond 2012?

Key Finding 17: Extending programs and partnerships
Participants indicated that programs and partnerships would be extended if the program added value to what was already happening, was of mutual benefit to the partners, and was structured as a long-term arrangement.
For example, the partnership between the City of Mandurah Libraries and The Parents Place in Mandurah is likely to continue because the staff working at the Parents Place saw the benefits of the program and wanted a long-term partnership. With respect to the Laundry Reads corporate sponsorship, the SLFWA General Manager said ‘We’ve structured the partnership with Laundry Reads as a long-term thing, there will be longevity in it.’

Furthermore, partnerships will continue in some cases because the participants are keen to keep sharing information and working together without the need for funding. However, as mentioned above, some partnerships will inevitably be reliant on funding and for that reason may not continue, as in the QUT’s Crossing Boundaries with Reading program.

**Key Finding 18: Extending new programs**

Participants also articulated the conditions under which programs would continue beyond 2012. For example:

- In WA, the decision has been made to continue with the Love to Read café, however, sponsorship will be needed beyond 2013; and
- The National Year of Reading program manager at Libraries ACT stated that while some programs will continue that were delivered in partnerships with external stakeholders, the Canberra Kids Love to Read program could only be continued with new funding.

In other instances, programs were planned as long-term activities; for example, the ACT Literacy in the Workplace program was designed as a 2-3-year project, and Libraries ACT is aiming to apply for Workplace English Language and Literacy funding to support the program’s continuation.

At the national level, the steering committee for National Year of Reading is hoping to continue beyond 2012, possibly under another name, in order to continue to support partnerships, the sharing of information, and reading/literacy communities working together in different ways.

**Key Finding 19: Building on social media**

As mentioned above, several participants commented on the power of social media to publicise National Year of Reading events and to raise the profile of libraries in particular and literacy in general. Several interviewees mentioned the impact of the branding of the National Year of Reading and indicated that they intended to continue to use the logo in 2013.

**Key Finding 20: Harnessing political power**

The Library Agency team, the founder partners and one of the author ambassadors all talked about the need to continue to maintain relationships at the federal agency level to ensure continued funding support for activities that are beneficial to the aims of both parties. They stated that they would continue to promote the interests of the sector to the political contacts, which have been well established, however, they also recognised that the effectiveness of those contacts will be impacted by elections.

**Summary**

In this chapter we have endeavoured to synthesise the findings of the four case studies outlined in chapter three. Our aim was to construct a national overview of the impact of the National Year of Reading. This chapter has illuminated how the National Year of Reading has reached new audiences, linked existing partners, and drawn in new partners. The momentum has rejuvenated these partnerships and united them round a brand, introducing partners to new technologies, media opportunities and potential funding partners.

In terms of value adding, the initiative has increased the profile of libraries by placing them in a leadership role, focusing them on what must be key future strategic objectives, and simultaneously extending their community and funding relationships. In terms of sustaining the initiative, the evidence suggests that while the initiative has illuminated specific programs with a high community impact, they can only continue with renewed funding. However, contact with the media and social media platforms have been established and can be leveraged in the future.

In addition, the national nature of this initiative has generated relational contact with a wide range of political and media figures and paved the way for using such a strategy in the future to provide a visual stage for activities. Not only has the National Year of Reading made an impact by raising the profile of reading in the community and within families, but it has also presented media personalities as readers, often in their family role. There were dual benefits here both for the initiative and for the individuals. The National Year of Reading has highlighted reading a normal family and community activity, a part of everyday Australian culture. This dual focus on families and on personalities is a strategy that can be sustained into the future.

However, while the initial government funding for the initiative may have been modest, the enthusiastic work by the Library Agency team, the founder partners and the state/territory partners was able to produce a veritable well of funding and resources for multiple activities across Australia. They created a truly national perspective of what is a critical national issue; generating reading and literacy as an integral part of Australian national culture, so it underpins the development of a ‘clever nation’. While there is much that can be sustained, there is also much that can be lost if future funding is not available to sustain the most effective partnerships and best initiatives as a platform for continued national development.

This initiative has placed libraries and library strategies at the heart of current social development programs, aligned with the current government educational targets, cooperating nationally, and uniting community groups around a core social necessity. This chapter has outlined how the campaign has built the capacity of national partnerships, added value to existing activity, and how such benefits can be extended. The cross-case analysis presents a picture of the National Year of Reading generating a cohesive national network, library led, which is underpinning the normalisation of a key social skill that should be sustained into the future.
Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

The previous two chapters presented case study findings from the national perspective, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), Western Australia (WA) and Queensland (QLD) and the overall findings derived from the cross-case analysis. This chapter presents the impact and legacy of the National Year of Reading, followed by conclusions and recommendations.

What difference did the National Year of Reading make to building a nation of readers?

Evidence from the participants in this study clearly suggests that the National Year of Reading has been very successful in creating and sustaining partnerships, developing diverse programs and events at a national, state/territory and local level and engaging over 200,000 people in reading initiatives. The voices in this study indicate that the impact of these initiatives has been universally positive and delivered nationwide. A combination of involving stakeholders in activities, using key figures to role model good practice, and establishing reading brands nationwide have had both an immediate impact and also embedded the infrastructure for a continued sustained impact. The data from the study provides strong evidence that the aims of National Year of Reading have been substantially met and expectations in many cases exceeded. It is clear that there are many ways in which the National Year of Reading contributed to building a nation of readers, in essence the National Year of Reading made a difference to:

- The capacity of organisations to deliver reading/literacy outcomes led by state/territory library partnerships;
- The number and variety of reading/literacy programs and events delivered through partnerships facilitated by libraries;
- The status and visibility of reading/literacy across Australia.

1. The capacity of organisations to deliver reading/literacy outcomes led by state/territory library partnerships.

   The evidence suggests that the National Year of Reading:

   - Encouraged the state/territory libraries to create a web of interlinked agencies which provided opportunities to test and try out new ways of working, developing and disseminating effective reading practice;
   - Engendered capacity building for each individual agency by learning about the practices of other agencies in the reading web and through sharing new technologies;
   - Fostered new and non-traditional partnerships that formed to meet the diversity of readers' needs;
   - Broadened the connections of each associated agency and opened up channels to particular audiences who had not previously been involved in reading initiatives;
   - Raised the profile of libraries as organisations that support literacy and have free access to reading resources;
• Challenged libraries to increase membership through innovative events;
• Approached and engaged partners pro-actively because of the clear focus on reading and shared outcomes.

There is a wealth of international evidence indicating that in order to achieve effective literacy outcomes for children and families there is a need for organisations to build partnerships that lead to sustainable collaboration (Bruder 2010; Flottman McKernan and Tayler 2011; Lumsden 2005). Where the knowledge and experience of professionals in complementary fields is shared, this is beneficial to children, families and the professionals involved (Bruder 2010; Lumsden 2005). Furthermore, collaboration can lead to enhanced professional knowledge and a strengthening of programs as professionals jointly reflect on their practice (Wesley and Buyssse 2001).

For example, the evaluation of the National Year of Reading in the United Kingdom, identified partnerships as central to the substantial outcomes that were achieved and sustained (Rankin, Brock & Matthews, 2009). In Wales, partnerships not only engendered events and activities, but also helped to break down barriers to reading held by some groups (Arad Consulting, 2008). In particular, partnerships between health care professionals and library professionals, and teachers and library professionals have been central to the implementation of a number of early literacy programs throughout the world, such as Bookstart in the UK, Read Out and Read in the USA and Better Beginnings in Australia. The professional involvement of child health nurses has been particularly effective in delivering early literacy programs to hard-to-reach and marginalised families (Hewer and Whyatt 2006; Klass et al. 2003). In other instances, health care professionals and teachers have been important in linking parents to their local libraries as a means of broadening their access to other literacy resources. Research suggests that helping parents access library activities and membership not only supports literacy, but helps to sustain family literacy programs (Evans Shaw and Bell 2000). Citing evidence from several early literacy intervention programs Bundy (2004), argues for the key role of public libraries in supporting early literacy development through the provision of a wide range of resources specifically aimed at promoting early literacy. The partnerships created through the National Year of Reading appeared to mirror these structural recommendations.

2. The number and variety of reading/literacy programs and events delivered through partnerships facilitated by libraries.

The evidence suggests that during the National Year of Reading:
• Over 200,000 people attended events across Australia;
• Over 4,000 events and activities were organised by the multiple partnerships;
• The initiative attracted an additional $5.6m of in kind support and over $28m of media coverage from high-profile and ambassador events. This suggests the final return on investment was in the order of $20 dollars of value for each dollar of government funding;
• The high numbers of people involved in new events indicates that the activities reinforced the key messages with established audiences;
• The high numbers associated with the events indicates that the activity reached new audiences, extending the web of community literacy;
• There was an increase in the opportunities for disseminating key reading messages to a wider audience for each participating agency;
• The multiplicity of events has drawn a wide variety of agencies into the national reading web, further building national capacity.

The National Year of Reading focused agencies and families on the importance of literacy. Literacy begins at birth as the baby is inducted into family and community literacy events (Gillen & Hall, 2003; Landry & Smith, 2006; Sulzby & Teale, 1991). These interactions form the foundations of later literacy development. Beliefs about the importance of literacy and reading in particular and having the confidence to enact beliefs through shared literacy practices have a significant impact on children’s growth and development in early literacy (Baker & Scher, 2002; Senechal & LeFevre, 2001; Snow, et al., 1998). Evidence suggests that involving parents and their children in reading and literacy events, demonstrates effective ways of sharing books and talking about literacy and helps to:
• Reinforce or create beliefs about importance of reading and literacy;
• Create confidence in sharing books;
• Access appropriate books for children and build reading resources;
• Build on what parents already know and can do in literacy;
• Create intergenerational book sharing practices.

The role modelling of the National Year of Reading supported these literacy outcomes. The practices embedded in the events such as increased frequency of shared book reading, routinely reading, re-reading a book, as well as giving children individual attention through one-to-one interaction during shared book reading, have all been found to potentially increase interest and enjoyment of books (Kassow, 2006; Kuo, Franke, Regalado, & Halton, 2004). Fostering children’s ability to choose books and develop favourite books has also been identified as an important aspect of early literacy development (Wilkinson, 2003). The National Year of Reading embodied these strategies within many of the programs and activities that were delivered.

The reading needs of adolescents and adults were also carefully considered and addressed through National Year of Reading activities. Data from the 2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics revealed that slightly less than half of adult Australians cannot read confidently (Ellard, Kelly & McKerracher, 2012). They have a literacy level that is insufficient to meet the demands of functional life in Australia’s current knowledge economy and may have difficulty reading newspapers and filling out forms. In addition to the importance that functional literacy has in everyday life, reading for pleasure is also acknowledged by educators and policymakers as being a beneficial activity for adults. Reading for pleasure provides a source of entertainment, actively engages the mind, and enhances the development of analytical thinking through
processing recreational reading, their literacy and learning skills improve, as does their self esteem. They tend to have more social confidence and there are often other benefits to their families (Morris, Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2005). In addition, improving the literacy of adults helps to improve their sense of worth and enables them to participate as active members of the community (Cassidy, Valadez, Garrett & Barrera, 2010) as well as their families.

Various studies in the United States since 2004 have suggested that the activity of reading for pleasure by adults is of concern (Mahaffy, 2009), however surveys conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2004 and 2008 have provided indications that adult reading habits can be reversed. In the United States, a number of programs targeting recreational reading at college and university level have had success with young adults in encouraging them to read and discuss books that are outside their formal studies. One such program was the Porch Reads conducted at the University of Dayton. Strong literacy skills are particularly important for adolescents and young adults as they are crucial to gaining adequate employment (Cassidy, Valadez, Garrett & Barrera, 2010).

In the United Kingdom and the United States in recent years, there has been attention given to promoting adult reading, both functional and recreational, through national reading campaigns. The Big Read was a month-long national event conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States that enabled communities across the country to celebrate and encourage reading. The event had funding, publicity and support and was deemed to be very successful with adult attendance and participation increasing over its duration (Mahaffy, 2009). The federally-funded Grandparents and Books program had many mutual benefits for all participants (Walter, 2012). Their reading skills improved and there was a sharing of skills, knowledge and experience as well. The National Year of Reading campaign in the United Kingdom in 2008 had numerous benefits for many members of the community. Conducted under the theme of ‘Stronger and Safer Communities’, the year-long campaign included many projects that supported family groups and also targeted adult groups considered to be hard to reach. Innovative outreach programs focused on homeless people, new immigrants, and adults with mental health problems. These programs had a strong focus on inclusion. The campaign enabled local libraries to establish themselves as hubs in the community for people to attend reading events, workshops and festivals (Rankin, Brock & Matthews, 2009).

The benefits identified by international events promoting reading were also shown to have been prevalent in the National Year of Reading in Australia. Partnerships between secondary schools and various libraries sought to enhance the literacy skills of adolescents during class time and beyond. Programs and events conducted by local libraries also sought to enhance the literacy skills of adults and support their enjoyment of recreational reading. In many instances, state/territory programs proactively sought to include ‘hard to reach’ targets through outreach programs and there was a strong recognition by many stakeholders that the campaign would support innovative practices and deliver positive outcomes.

3. The status and visibility of literacy and reading across Australia

The evidence suggests that the National Year of Reading:

- GENERATED A NATIONAL STRUCTURE, INTEGRATING STAKEHOLDER GROUPS WITHIN ONE HIGH PROFILE NATIONAL BRAND TO SUPPORT LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAMPAIGN;
- RAISED AND MAINTAINED THE IMPORTANCE OF READING ACROSS AUSTRALIA THROUGH A CONSISTENT MIX OF INTEGRATED NATIONAL MEDIA AND LOCAL INITIATIVES;
- INCREASED ORGANISATIONAL CONFIDENCE IN STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT AND OPENED GATEWAYS FOR CROSS-SECTOR INVOLVEMENT;
- PROVIDED A PLATFORM FOR PARTICIPANTS TO MAINTAIN LITERATE COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS;
- ENGAGED NEW PARTICIPANT GROUPS WITH READING PRACTICES;
- MOTIVATED READERS THROUGH ASSOCIATING READING WITH ICONIC PERSONALITIES AND ROLE MODELS;
- ENSURED THAT THE KEY READING MESSAGES SPREAD THROUGH MEDIA OUTLETS FROM THOSE ALREADY ENGAGED WITH READING PRACTICES AND PERMEATED THE MAJORITY HOUSEHOLDS.

A key impact of the National Year of Literacy has been raising the status and visibility of reading as a social practice. The ultimate goal is to install reading as an accepted family, social and cultural practice. This is especially challenging as text now appears in increasingly diverse forms and across multiple delivery platforms. Establishing a reading brand has been a significant strategic success of the National Year of Reading. Hood and Henderson (2005) in their review of library banding in the UK suggest that branding is particularly important where a service is undergoing transformation, with children reading more on line than on paper. They indicate that a brand such as Love2Read when established as a symbol in the community will continue to engage participants as the brand re-defines what reading is and how it is done. Additionally, and events associated with the brand carry a clarity of purpose and guarantee of quality. The Love2Read logo has developed national awareness of the 2012 reading brand. Through the brand, agencies have established awareness of events, promoted events, and generating clarity of expectation in the target audiences. They have also gained the loyalty of some groups. This loyalty may be transferred to subsequent branded programs and events that may be considered prestigious by some participants, building their social connections and social esteem. On the one hand continued promotion of the brand will build community recognition, impact on reading cultures and leverage what has already been established. On the other hand more limited use of the brand may result in an increasing lack of visibility and a diminishing clarity in what is on offer or a reducing in the trust of the brand through reduced quality.
Building perceived prestige into the reading brand has been leveraged by the use of high profile ambassadors nationally and within each state/territory. A recent library survey by Clark, Osbourne and Dugdale (2009) highlighted the importance of role modeling with 78% of children indicating that they had a role model and were inspired by the actions of their role model. While their role models were predominantly family members, children also indicated being motivated by media personalities. Using ambassadors as role models reading with children and mirroring a family setting has therefore been an effective way to maximise visual impact and change culture.

While researching methods of social and cultural change is often frustrated by the associated multiple variables, research into educational change supports the National Year of Reading approach of pursuing a broad structural framework that can be interpreted according to local situations and needs. In contrast to a one-size fits all approach, strong local involvement in change activities produces cultural change that will become embedded. McLaughlin (1990) insists that lasting changes in social practice requires 'mutual adaptation' where local agents 'translate' the national guidelines into appropriate local practices. In doing so, they not only customise the activity to community needs but simultaneously gain local ownership and the associated motivation that derives from shaping the practice requires. The National Year of Reading effectively mirrored this approach through using a broad strategy that balanced overall directional control with space for participative local ownership.

What are the legacies from the National Year of Reading?
There are a number of legacies from the National Year of Reading, including:

• Developing increased capacity and infrastructure within and between each participating agency led by libraries;

• Providing the impetus for stakeholders to strengthen existing or activate new partnerships through the range of collaborations facilitated by libraries that target the needs of particular communities;

• Creating a National Year of Reading brand which is a well recognised and powerful symbol and that has the potential to continue to make connections between different reading organisations and different service providers. National branding has increased the promotion, publicity and media opportunities which have the potential to extend past the National Year of Reading;

• Raising awareness and creating an agenda about the importance of reading and the potential for literacy to improve the quality of people's lives;

• Delivering a national campaign that was seen to be successful and developed the momentum and determination to extend beyond 2012, through the role of libraries as leading agencies in creating a nation of readers.

Conclusions
A number of conclusions have been derived from the findings, which in turn led to a series of recommendations. These are described in the following section.

Conclusion 1: The national framework was central to the success of the National Year of Reading.
The National Year of Reading established a broad framework and set of resources that were taken up and replicated at national, state/territory and local levels, which extended the reach of the program and generated grassroots activity. The success of the grassroots approach was dependent on the development of a large network of partners facilitated by libraries that could be drawn upon to collaborate on National Year of Reading projects and programs and events as well as to help spread the key messages of the National Year of Reading. Ultimately, the National Year of Reading itself was the result of collaboration between an extensive network of diverse partners at the national, state/territory and local level. These partnerships provided a vehicle through which programs and events and events that were formed under the National Year of Reading umbrella were ultimately delivered.

This evaluation shows how vital it is for a national support network to give guidance and support yet allow for local ownership and flexibility. The National Year of Reading provided by the Library Agency and founder partners in conjunction with the National Year of Reading Love2Read branding helped to unify and promote the central aims of the National Year of Reading. It also created a powerful link between the states and territories across Australia, while creating opportunities for local ownership.

Recommendation 1
Maintain a Love2Read support network that gives guidance and support yet allows for local ownership and flexibility, through a rolling program of national reading.

Conclusion 2: Libraries were at the heart of the development, delivery and success of the National Year of Reading.
While the state/territory libraries in the study saw the promotion of literacy as an intrinsic part of their role, the National Year of Reading allowed them to take a lead role and to work more actively with their respective communities to address literacy related issues. The National Year of Reading has shown that libraries not only promote the public's engagement with, and enjoyment of, reading but they also work to increase the levels of functional literacy in their local communities.

It was evident that local libraries catered for the needs of diverse populations and were taking an increasingly active role in working with communities to identify and address literacy issues. The National Year of Reading provided a reason for libraries to celebrate reading, to foster library membership and to work on projects that addressed community related literacy issues. It provided a platform for libraries to re-activate and strengthen existing community partnerships and to form affiliations with new kinds of businesses, organisations and individuals who serve a
different range of clients, enabling them to extend their reach. The National Year of Reading clearly raised the profile of libraries, in several ways that included:

- Increasing public recognition that local libraries cater for the needs of diverse populations and are taking an increasingly active role in working with communities to identify and address literacy issues;
- Providing a reason for libraries to celebrate reading, to foster library membership and to work on projects that address community related literacy issues;
- Providing a platform for libraries to re-activate and strengthen existing community partnerships and to form affiliations with new kinds of businesses, organisations and individuals who serve a different range of clients, enabling them to extend their reach;
- Enabling libraries to leverage new sources of funding and resources to implement projects;
- Confirming a core strategic future for libraries.

The trust that has been created between the National Year of Reading and its stakeholders is an important legacy of the campaign. Work with schools and tertiary education institutions could be extended. For example, schools could opt to become Love2Read schools, using this as a means of supporting the new Early Years Learning Framework and Australian Curriculum. In addition, industry partners seeking alignment with a community initiative might be suitable sponsors with appropriate branding agreements. Generating new initiatives through new strategic partners is important to sustaining the National Year of Reading messages.

**Recommendation 2**

Develop strategic alliances between the library sector and education providers such as schools, tertiary education providers and industry to enhance the development and delivery of effective literacy programs.

**Conclusion 3: Partnerships were crucial to the implementation and outcomes of the National Year of Reading.**

It is evident that each of the states in the study - the ACT, WA and Queensland - engaged strongly with the National Year of Reading in 2012. For them, the National Year of Reading has added value on many levels and created a potential legacy that will extend beyond the National Year of Reading. It is clear that partnerships led by libraries were at the heart of their engagement in the National Year of Reading.

At the national level, several different types of partnerships were created, including: partner organisations; friends of the National Year of Reading; and ambassadors, incorporating author ambassadors. Each of the national level partners supported the campaign in different ways.

At a state level, partnerships were created with a diverse range of commercial, government and not-for-profit organisations and groups: primary and secondary schools, businesses, community groups, local and state government departments, tertiary education providers, correctional institutions, and adult literacy providers. Collaboration on National Year of Reading events enabled state/territory libraries to re-activate and strengthen existing networks and partnerships as well as to develop new ones at the state and local level. This allowed the National Year of Reading to function in a flexible manner and to grow organically through the expansion of networks and sharing of ideas to reach as many people and contexts as possible.

In addition, the National Year of Reading's external non-library partners were very positive about their involvement and they clearly indicated that the National Year of Reading had added value to their work as well as to their profile and reach.

**Recommendation 3**

Support libraries to maintain the momentum gained during the National Year of Reading by leveraging and extending the networks of partnerships that they have created.

**Conclusion 4: Key messages were delivered to new and target audiences.**

The National Year of Reading generated a wealth of more than 4,000 programs, events and activities from community lead activities to national events. Some were ongoing, some were single events and others travelled between states. The national campaigns created excitement and anticipation and provided a catalyst for localised events, while integrating key reading messages into local priorities. The national campaigns were designed to engage different target audiences, focusing on particular messages and disseminating effective practice. The sheer number and variety of initiatives meant that many families and individuals were surrounded by the key messages as part of their everyday lives. One of the key successes of the National Year of Reading was that its four national campaigns (One Country Reading, The Reading Hour, Public Library Membership Drive and the National Year of Reading in the Workplace) were designed to promote a range of key messages to different target audiences. Additionally, the National Year of Reading was used as a platform to promote the work of a number of organisations supporting Indigenous literacy.

The collaborative nature of the campaign has fostered a non-competitive focus and a sense of inclusivity which has given providers the freedom to be creative and ensured a diversity of programs. Although there was some evidence of partnerships with organisations that support or represent marginalised groups, the continuation of the National Year of Reading through the Love2Read branding presents an ideal opportunity to extend current initiatives to increase the focus on marginalised groups.

**Recommendation 4**

Plan future initiatives to include more diverse sectors of the community and target groups such as people with disabilities, older people, and the marginalised through specific initiatives.
Conclusion 5: Evaluation methods needed to be extended.
Libraries tended to evaluate their programs and events by monitoring attendance and by capturing feedback from participants. Although quantitative data was captured for some initiatives to inform end-of-year reports this was not uniformly carried out. This key element of program implementation will need to be a focus for future initiatives and programs, particularly those that have secured external funding. A policy should be established that there will be an evaluation of the impact of all future programs through both qualitative and quantitative research. Evidence-based research about audience participation within programs and the subsequent impact on attitudes, practices and outcomes is vital to creating a data base to support future initiatives and evidence with which to negotiate for further funding. Evaluation should also encompass the impact of program design, implementation and outcomes on policy and practice of service providers.
There is a need for partners to identify those programs that were particularly successful and use these as a model for effective practice. This should include those programs with the greatest utility, where the most benefit was gained from the least use of resources. In addition, the partnerships could be consolidated and extended by focusing on local initiatives of significant utility that can be rolled out nationwide. In achieving further impact, it is important that partnerships use the knowledge generated by the National Year of Reading to inform the development of new programs and strategies for particular target audiences.

Recommendation 5
Build evaluation goals and processes into all planning operations and identify those events that have the greatest utility so they can be replicated nationwide.

Conclusion 6: National communication resources were important to sustaining a network of partnerships.
It is clear that the range of resources the National Year of Reading organisers created and made freely available to organisations and participants helped to plan, develop and implement the National Year of Reading programs and events. At the national level, the Library Agency used a range of channels to promote the National Year of Reading to the general public and reading professionals and this included new social media such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter. State/territory libraries supplemented the national communication strategy by utilising existing marketing tools, mainstream media as well as printed and electronic media to promote their National Year of Reading programs and events and messages to their target audiences. These resources helped to connect and maintain networks across the case study participants. State and local libraries should be encouraged to continue to utilise and add to these resources thereby maintaining and even refreshing the National Year of Reading presence whilst providing more resources for participants.

Branding new and existing library programs and events under the National Year of Reading branding has resulted in an increase in promotion, publicity and media opportunities that have the potential to extend beyond 2012. The Love2Read logo has become a well-recognised and powerful symbol that has the potential to continue to make connections between quite different reading organisations. It is already being incorporated into 2013 literacy initiatives.

Recommendation 6
The branding and wide range of support mechanisms that gave the National Year of Reading a strong and sustained presence should be continued beyond 2012.

Conclusion 7: Funding was a significant factor in the development and delivery of the campaign.
The campaign was funded both nationally and locally with many associated programs funded from in-kind resources. While some programs were new, others were re-branded or extended. The campaign required central funding for national coordination without which a unified series of programs could not have been developed. Although not all programs may require further funding and an added reading/literacy focus may be generated from realignment and linking of existing practices, or rebranding of existing activities, ultimately, further funding support from federal, state and local government will be required to capitalise on the initiatives and impetus of the National Year of Reading. Although the National Year of Reading generated tremendous goodwill and a commitment to extending the initiative beyond 2012, this will be hard to sustain without support. Continued funding will help to maintain and extend what has already been achieved and will help to secure partnerships through continued joint programs. In addition, the impact of programs and events on existing workloads through in-kind contributions needs to be carefully and realistically assessed. The founding partners should consider if the establishment of a national trust to coordinate national literacy campaigns is appropriate.

Recommendation 7
Commence planning to seek diversified funding sources for future campaigns and the viability of establishing a central coordinating trust.
Conclusion 8: Bipartisan support was identified as important to future of the National Year of Reading.

This evaluation of the National Year of Reading, while gathering significant positive evidence of strong relationships and community involvement, has also collected feedback about how some aspects of the campaign could be strengthened. In terms of planning, participants indicated that cross-party commitment to future campaigns had the advantage of positioning the initiative in a politically neutral context.

Recommendation 8

Generate a plan to lobby for bipartisan support for future campaigns, to ensure the importance of reading as a major determinant of the social, educational, economic and health of Australia is supported by all major political parties.

Conclusion 9: Interest from other countries was generated by the National Year of Reading.

While this has been a successful national initiative it also provides the springboard to compare and contrast achievements and learning from other national initiatives. This includes making links with those countries that have signalled an interest in the development and outcomes of the National Year of Reading, such as Korea, Slovenia and New Zealand. There should be a policy and funding to link to the National Year of Reading with initiatives in other countries to build partnerships with other advanced reading nations. Insights from other National Year of Reading initiatives could be used to strengthen the development of the National Year of Reading in Australia and to share resources and ideas as well as discussing ways of meeting the needs of target audiences traditionally identified as 'hard to reach' or 'at risk'.

Recommendation 9

Leverage and extend the momentum gained during the National Year of Reading by establishing links with campaigns in other countries.

In national terms, the resource funding for the campaign has been modest while the leveraging of this funding through national, state/territory and local agencies led by libraries has been impressive in terms of the multiple events delivered and the numbers of participants involved. At the centre, it has drawn together a wide range of agencies into partnerships and augmented reading as a strategic goal for those groups. The partners have been strengthened through those interrelationships and have built increased organisational capacity. For participants involved in the programs and events, there has been the introduction of new literacy practices and/or the reinforcement and extension of their ongoing practices. These practices have been sustained through being part of a national cultural activity. The Love2Read logo is an established brand and provides a national focus for libraries and families that indicates quality and fun events with a significant purpose. The use of key ambassadors has reinforced the national importance of reading and simultaneously located the practice within community and family groups.

However, a year is not enough. The strong structural partnerships, the brand and community links will require continued promotion to gain ongoing benefits in terms of improved community literacy and establish reading as a cultural norm within all social groups. Independent evaluation should be built into every continuing initiative to ensure that learning about reading programs, events and partnerships is preserved by harvesting the experiences of local ownership into national guidelines, and promoting those activities with the greatest utility. Initiatives for change are eagerly pursued by the social groups who already aspire towards and access similar ideals. Future initiatives will need to have specific strategies to target those groups most excluded from reading practices, distant from resources, and performing poorly in comparative national literacy assessment data (such as the Australian Early Development Index and National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy). A significant platform has been built for establishing reading as a visible social practice supported by a brand and multiple partnerships that now position reading as a core organisational focus and placing libraries at the centre of change. International competitors provide models for how these relations and structure can be leveraged in the future to build Australian literacy. Expanding this platform would support not only the development of a nation of readers, but also help meet educational targets for the future.

The success of the National Year of Reading can be attributed to a multilayered approach. Viewed as a model, the National Year of Reading and its component parts make for a powerful case study on how to develop and implement a self-sustaining, organic model that has the potential to deliver lasting change, as opposed to a more traditional prescriptive approach which may only last for the duration of the initiative.

In conclusion, the government has recently committed to significant targets to raise Australian educational standards above those of most international competitors. Reading is a critical foundation for the achievement of those targets. Building literacy is a primary function of both schooling and of families and parenting. While schooling is socially institutionalised, the association between families, reading and libraries is far more disparate. The National Year of Reading through state/territory libraries has been instrumental in focusing and involving a wide range of stakeholders in reading outside the school environment and in the home, workplace and community. In short, it has made a difference.
References


So what we knew anecdotally and from the data is that we had people, particularly from areas of Canberra that we knew suffer disadvantage, they’d get a $20 or $30 fine on their card and they’d just stop coming. They often didn’t bring their books back either. So we wanted to make it as easy as possible for them to want to come back.

Libraries ACT, staff member
### Appendix 1: Interviews, document collection and surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National level data</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Library Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Year of Reading Project Director, national campaigns</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>National Year of Reading Manager, ambassador &amp; partner liaison</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Year of Reading Manager, social media &amp; data collation</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Australia-wide partnerships</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>One Country Reading Campaign</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Story</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Read This!</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>State Library Victoria (Insideadog)</td>
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<td><strong>Are We There Yet?</strong></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Walt Disney company representatives</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dymocks Bookstores representatives</td>
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<td>Attempted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scholastic representatives</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Radio Victoria representatives</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Issue representatives</td>
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<td>Attempted</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Library Membership Campaign</strong></td>
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<td>National Year of Reading Project Director</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Workplace Literacy Campaign</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Year of Reading Project Director</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td><strong>Indigenous Programs</strong></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAD Press</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>12 founder partner members</td>
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<td>12 surveys / 4 responses</td>
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<td><strong>Author ambassadors</strong></td>
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<td>20 author ambassadors</td>
<td>3 interviews attempted</td>
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<td>20 surveys / 7 responses</td>
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</table>

At the national level, 19 participants were contacted for interview and 18 were successfully interviewed, and a further 32 participants were sent surveys and 11 responded. In addition, the Library Agency’s NYR Project Director was re-interviewed about the programs comprising the four national campaigns, including: Our Story, Are We There Yet?, The Reading Hour, Library Membership and the National Year of Reading in the Workplace.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Territory level data</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Documents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Australia</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>State/territory library, National Year of Reading state/territory steering group coordinator:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret Allen, CEO SLWA</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Rennie Manager of Participation &amp; Learning, National Year of Reading WA steering group coordinator</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane King, GM SLF, National Year of Reading WA steering group member</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representative from WA public library association</td>
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<td>Attempted</td>
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<td><strong>2-3 state programs:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Better Beginnings</td>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Mandurah</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Joondalup</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>Perth Writers Festival</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Australian Capital Territory</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/territory library, National Year of Reading state/territory steering group coordinator:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa Little, Director Libraries ACT</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Davis, Lifelong Learning Coordinator, National Year of Reading ACT steering group coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Steed, Programs Manager</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td><strong>2-3 state programs:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Workplace Literacy Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canberra Kids Love2Read</td>
<td>✓ (2)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra’s Longest Bookmark</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra Readers Festival</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>The CEO’s Reading Hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANU Poetry Slam</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMC Poetry Competition</td>
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<td><strong>Queensland</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>State/territory library, National Year of Reading state steering group coordinator:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Cowell, Director SLQ</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jodi Finucan, National Year of Reading Program Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Year of Reading QLD steering group coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Representative from Public Libraries Assoc</strong></td>
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<td>Attempted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2-3 state programs:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playgroup Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverbend Books</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Literacy Foundation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education QLD</td>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing Boundaries with Reading, QUT</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the state/territory level, 27 participants were contacted for interview and 24 were successfully interviewed. Libraries ACT staff were re-interviewed about The Workplace Literacy Program, Canberra Kids Love2Read, Canberra’s Longest Bookmark, and the Canberra Readers Festival.
Appendix 2: Table of programs and partners by state/territory documented in the evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Program</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Love2Read Cafe</td>
<td>To publicise the National Year of Reading through free events located in the vicinity of the SLWA</td>
<td>The general public of Perth</td>
<td>McCusker Foundation; Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry Reads</td>
<td>To improve reading levels of members of the community</td>
<td>General community</td>
<td>Commercial Laundromat business owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Out Loud</td>
<td>To promote the joy and importance of reading, especially when it is shared</td>
<td>General community</td>
<td>Lotterywest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read! Better Beginnings Program</td>
<td>To encourage reading for enjoyment, to encourage reading by those with low levels of literacy</td>
<td>General community, reluctant readers</td>
<td>Fremantle Press; Read Write Now; Department of Corrective Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedtime Bundles</td>
<td>To support young people (12-16 years) in need through the provision of bedtime resources that included a book</td>
<td>Young adolescents of families in need in the Joondalup area</td>
<td>The Spiers Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Literacy Projects (Reading Resolution Card and Winter Reading Challenge)</td>
<td>To encourage parents and children to set reading targets and commit to reading</td>
<td>Parents and their children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Projects</td>
<td>To support parents to develop their own as well as their children’s literacy skills</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Wednesday Book Club</td>
<td>To promote reading for enjoyment</td>
<td>Adult Readers</td>
<td>Angus and Robertson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community events</td>
<td>To encourage reading and publicise the library</td>
<td>General community of Mandurah</td>
<td>City of Mandurah; Mandurah Arts Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Hour Pyjama Party</td>
<td>To promote reading</td>
<td>General community of Mandurah</td>
<td>A variety of organisations and local community groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ongoing Partners

Rio Tinto, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, the Perth International Arts Festival, the City of Perth and local Western Australian authors.
### Queensland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Program</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dads Read</strong></td>
<td>To create awareness of the importance that fathers play in children's early development; to provide fathers with reading tools and encourage fathers to read to their children; to promote reading as a family</td>
<td>Fathers and families</td>
<td>Channel 7 Queensland; high profile sports figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Hour</strong></td>
<td>To celebrate and promote National Year of Reading</td>
<td>General community of Queensland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Out of the Box</strong></td>
<td>To promote literacy, the State Library and its programs through books, stories and performances</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Queensland Performing Arts Centre; Griffith University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education Queensland Programs</strong></td>
<td>To support young readers in early school years; to provide strategies for parents to integrated literacy into daily family life</td>
<td>Parents and young children</td>
<td>Education Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Riverbend Books and Teahouse</strong></td>
<td>To provide parents with knowledge about supporting their children's literacy development</td>
<td>Parents of children attending state schools in the Gateway Learning Community of Queensland</td>
<td>Gateway Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crossing Boundaries with Reading</strong></td>
<td>To promote reading, digital literacy and creative expression in secondary</td>
<td>Students at a low SES culturally diverse secondary state school</td>
<td>Queensland University of Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Australian Capital Territory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Program</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workplace Literacy Program</strong></td>
<td>To address adult literacy in the context of the workplace</td>
<td>Blue collar workers</td>
<td>University of Canberra; Canberra Institute of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(in planning stages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canberra Kids Love2 Read</strong></td>
<td>To encourage children's habit of visiting libraries and to foster a love of reading</td>
<td>Year One students from selected public primary schools</td>
<td>Tania McCartney (ambassador for the National Year of Reading); various publishers; FE Technologies; ACT Government Education and Training Directorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canberra Readers' Festival</strong></td>
<td>To inspire, entertain and excite people about books and the power of reading</td>
<td>Book Club members and the broader community</td>
<td>Canberra Theatre Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canberra's Longest Bookmark</strong></td>
<td>To knit a giant bookmark to promote and celebrate National Year of Reading, to promote libraries as community hubs</td>
<td>Knitters in the Canberra community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice Poetry Slam</strong></td>
<td>To teach secondary students how to write and present poetry in hip hop and rap styles</td>
<td>Secondary students from selected public secondary schools</td>
<td>Australian National University; federal government Higher Education Participation and Partnership scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alexander Maconochie Centre</strong></td>
<td>To encourage poetry writing among adult detainees in custody</td>
<td>Adult detainees at Alexander Maconochie Centre</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poetry Competition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>