

Torona Kaupekātia: Reaching Out

Libraries and Archives Workforce Development Plan

Te kano ki te rau Report summary

Libraries have evolved from traditional book-lending institutions into community information hubs providing internet access, meeting spaces and social services. Archives are the vital repositories of public and private documents and records, manuscripts and maps, and manage all kinds of information. Together, these institutions play essential roles in preserving and providing access to Aotearoa New Zealand's taonga, history and knowledge.

However, the workforce in these sectors faces challenges around representation, diversity and retention.

Current workforce profile

The sector employs approximately 6,200 people across public, tertiary and specialty libraries and archives. While there has been slight improvement in diversity between 2015–2022, significant underrepresentation persists for Māori (710), Asian (740) and Pacific peoples (340) compared to population demographics. Most concerning is the high turnover rate among new entrants within two years.

Key challenges

The sector faces several workforce challenges that limit diversity and retention: career information reaches students too late in their education, and training programmes are largely based on European approaches, making it harder for people from different backgrounds to see themselves in the profession, and affecting members of the workforce seeking to develop cultural knowledge and skills.

Sector transformation

This plan addresses workforce challenges through the metaphor of nurturing new growth in a forest, emphasising partnerships with iwi and Pacific communities, improved cultural competency for the greater workforce, and visible career pathways from an early age.

Kia pai i te hua

Strategic goals and recommendations

Ngā kerī

Toi Mai actions

Toi Mai to:

- review the existing New Zealand Certificate in Library Practice (Level 3) and consider how the qualification can be updated to provide assessment in the workplace, such as skill standards; and research possible ways of developing vocational NCEA pathways.
- investigate further options for work-based learning at a sub-degree level in the libraries and archives sector.
- work with LIANZA and Open Polytechnic to consider how to map Te Tōtara to vocational qualifications to create career pathways and support for high school students and tertiary students interested in pursuing a library career.

Ngā kō

Our recommendations

Toi Mai recommends

- that Open Polytech partner with SLANZA to explore ways of promoting individual library and archives courses to school librarians
- that library qualifications are developed and/or reviewed to enable them to be eligible for vocational pathways, such as trades academies
- that iwi Māori, hapū and Pacific communities are consulted about their training needs and cultural values during the review of VET qualifications and the development of new qualifications by the future Industry Skills Board to which vocational library and archive qualifications are assigned
- that cultural frameworks for managing Māori and Pacific taonga are based on mātauranga Māori and incorporate te reo Māori and Pacific values and knowledge when relevant VET qualifications are developed or reviewed
- that National Library, Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand, Te Paerangi National Services, Kāhui Kaitiaki, and Museums Aotearoa convene a working group that includes iwi and Pacific representatives to discuss skills needed for the future and agree on common areas of training for the GLAMMI sectors.