

Torona Kaupekātia: Reaching Out

Libraries and Archives Workforce Development Plan
public consultation feedback summary

Toi Mai Workforce Development Council undertook a review of the Libraries and Archives workforce in the first half of 2025, supported by semi-structured interviews with industry members and quantitative workforce information. A draft of the plan, *Torona Kaupekātia (Reaching Out)*, which included proposed actions and recommendations, was circulated for public consultation for three weeks in July and August 2025. This feedback is summarised below and includes any developments or changes to the actions and recommendations in the plan as a result of the feedback, which where applicable are indicated after each point.

Given the proposed timeframes and the dissolution of Toi Mai Workforce Development Council on 31 December 2025, Toi Mai proposes the future Industry Skills Board that takes over the GLAMMI sector continue the work recommended in the actions and recommendations.

Ngā keri Actions

Toi Mai will 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.

Respondents highlighted that workplace-based assessment would be especially beneficial for school librarians and those already working in the sector who need flexible study options. There was enthusiasm for the connection to vocational NCEA pathways, with suggestions that early exposure to library and information management concepts could help attract younger people to the profession. However, feedback noted that the qualification has not been actively offered by providers, suggesting implementation challenges need to be addressed alongside the review process.

Toi Mai to investigate further options for work-based learning at a sub-degree level in the libraries and archives sector.

Feedback highlighted that Open Polytechnic's rolling enrolment system effectively supports this approach, allowing learners to start courses throughout the academic year while working. Several submissions noted that promoting this existing flexibility could make roles more attractive to potential entrants. The feedback suggested that formalising these arrangements through structured work-based learning programmes could address workforce development needs while supporting current practice.

Toi Mai recommends that the ISB continue to do this work.

Toi Mai to 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.

Submissions sought clarification about whether Te Tōtara would be mapped to all library and information management qualifications, including archives-focused programmes, noting that records management students may not be pursuing library careers specifically. The feedback emphasised the need for clear definitions of what constitutes a "library career" versus other information management pathways. Respondents supported the general principle of creating clearer career pathways but stressed the importance of ensuring the framework accommodates the diverse range of roles and specialisations within the broader information sector.

Given the timeframes and with Toi Mai set to be disestablished, on 31 December 2025, Toi Mai proposes the future ISB work alongside LIANZA and Open Polytechnic to support this work.

Ngā kō Recommendations

Toi Mai recommends:

- **that Open Polytech partner with SLANZA to explore ways of promoting and providing individual library and archives courses to school librarians.**

Multiple submissions confirmed that Open Polytechnic has an existing partnership with SLANZA, offering discounted rates for school librarians and providing access to individual courses through Certificates of Proficiency. The feedback noted that seventeen of twenty-four courses in the full LIS portfolio are available for individual study. However, submissions highlighted that consultation with schools and SLANZA during the plan's development appeared minimal, with SLANZA notably absent from the organisations consulted despite being the representative body for school librarians.

Toi Mai organised a hui with LIANZA, SLANZA, Open Polytechnic, Victoria University of Wellington and union representatives in May 2025 prior to releasing the draft workforce development plan and shared the proposed actions and recommendations during that time.

- **that library qualifications are developed and/or reviewed to enable them to be eligible for vocational pathways, such as trades academies.**

Feedback sought more specific information about which sectors would be involved, what level of qualifications would be targeted and how these pathways would operate in practice. While respondents supported the concept of expanding access to library qualifications through vocational pathways, they emphasised the need for detailed planning to ensure such programmes would be viable and meet both student and industry needs.

- **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.**

Submissions detailed comprehensive engagement with Māori and Pacific communities during programme development between 2017–2019, including involvement of bicultural and Pacific advisors in course development, ongoing stakeholder advisory groups, and partnerships with organisations like Te Rōpū Whakahau and the Pacific Information Management Network. The feedback emphasised that this ongoing consultation demonstrates the sector’s commitment to incorporating diverse cultural perspectives.

- **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.**

Submissions provided detailed evidence of how mātauranga Māori and cultural frameworks are already embedded in library and information studies programmes, including specific courses like “Te Ao Māori in the Information Environment” and assignment work involving Māori and Pacific collection management. The feedback emphasised the importance of continuing and strengthening these approaches while ensuring they reflect authentic cultural values and practices rather than tokenistic additions.

- **that National Library, Te Rua Mahara o 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.**

Submissions noted ongoing collaboration between national institutions and representation from iwi and Pacific organisations in various advisory capacities. However, the feedback emphasised the distinct nature of archival and library professions, cautioning against overgeneralisation that might diminish the unique skills and theoretical foundations of each field. The response highlighted the need for such working groups to recognise professional diversity while identifying genuine areas of convergence across the GLAMMI sectors.

Toi Mai has updated this recommendation and included LIANZA, Te Rōpū Whakahau and ARANZ.

Additional feedback

Pay equity

Context from the plan

The plan identified low salaries as a significant workforce challenge, noting that two pay equity claims were lodged – one for library assistants in tertiary libraries (over two years ago) and another for public library assistants (six years ago) – seeking to address low pay rates in this female-dominated workforce. The plan noted that changes in legislation enacted under urgency prior to the 2025 budget meant neither of these claims could progress and would need to be refiled under stricter criteria, with significant impact expected on morale and recruitment.

Feedback on pay equity

While pay equity was not explicitly addressed in the formal recommendations, feedback submissions touched on this issue as a critical workforce challenge. The feedback implicitly supported the plan's recognition that pay equity remains a significant barrier to recruitment and retention. One submission acknowledged the proactive leadership shown by some employers, specifically noting Christchurch City Council's commitment to pay equity for 290 library staff despite the legislative changes (which was also noted in the draft plan). This feedback reinforced the plan's assertion that addressing pay equity is essential for improving workforce sustainability and attractiveness, particularly given the sector's challenges with high turnover rates and difficulty recruiting diverse candidates.