
LEARNING

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

2015 - 2020



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Learning Strategic Framework has been devised to define and describe one of three core library activities proposed in the *Yarra Plenty Library Strategic Plan 2013-17*.

VISION

To work with partners to cultivate a fluid, responsive learning community that facilitates opportunities for collaborative and continuous education.

YPRL STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-17

Programs: reading/meeting/learning

We offer programs, activities and learning opportunities that make a difference to people's lives in order to improve their wellbeing.

We will:

1. Develop programs and opportunities to foster and encourage reading and literacy
2. Develop and facilitate learning programs consistent with evolving community needs
3. Develop and promote learning activities that complement the learning offerings of other learning providers and continue to develop strong relationships with them
4. Promote branch libraries as meeting places for reading, learning and culture

STRATEGIES

The five key objectives of this strategy are:

1. Provide serendipitous learning opportunities
2. Facilitate connected and informed citizenry
3. Provide dynamic collections
4. Facilitate partnerships and collaborations
5. Provide creative spaces



BACKGROUND

YPRL has offered many learning programs over the past few years. Until recently these programs were not well coordinated or marketed. There has been an increasing demand for digital literacy training especially for older people and this demand is increasing as more services are only available online.

The problems that need to be solved have been identified as:

- Level of digital literacy in the community
- Inequitable access to technology
- Need for lifelong learning / reskilling opportunities for retired / retrenched
- People need / want personal help
- Lack of facilities for affordable high touch / individualised learning
- YPRL Learning offerings not packaged
- Marketing of learning programs is ad hoc
- Lack of knowledge, collaboration and partnerships with other learning providers in the region



LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIC PLANS

All these Strategic Plans recognise libraries as key places for community learning.

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CITY OF WHITTLESEA MUNICIPAL LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGY 2013-16

(from Council website)



Our Lifelong Learning Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2016 aims to guide us in developing a strong and positive learning culture within the City of Whittlesea and improving learning outcomes for our community members.

Lifelong learning refers to the activities a person performs throughout their life to improve their knowledge, skills and competence.

Research shows that people who engage in lifelong learning are more likely to have better employment opportunities, higher incomes, better health and greater ability to manage their money.

Evidence indicates that by enhancing the individual and collective learning opportunities in our community, we can help improve:

LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIC PLANS CONT...

- community connections
- skills for life and work
- employment outcomes
- confidence
- health and wellbeing

YPRL is a partner with Council on this initiative.

NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL POSITIVE AGEING STRATEGY 2013-2018 (from Council website)



Nillumbik's Positive Ageing strategy includes lifelong learning:

Participation and social connectedness

It is important for older adults to be able to participate in and contribute to their community, as participation affects a person's identity, dignity and self-fulfillment. The participation of older adults in society can be achieved through many pathways (workforce, lifelong learning or volunteering), and has positive ramifications for both individuals and the wider community (Family and Community Development Committee, 2012)...Community involvement opportunities include enrolling in a short course through Living & Learning Nillumbik, attending an event with Yarra Plenty Regional Library, taking the grandchildren to Edendale, viewing exhibitions run by the Arts and Cultural Services Team or volunteering to drive one of Council's community transport buses.

VICTORIAN LIBRARIES 2030

The Victorian Public Libraries 2030 report identified that as the community's local source of communal information and 21st-century literacies, public libraries have the opportunity to play a significant role within their communities in the future.





FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

This framework was primarily informed by research and two workshops, one with library staff and one with partners and potential partners including Member council officers.

The scope of the framework is to develop a five year plan to guide learning programs while recognising that public libraries are informal learning providers and that programs delivered at the library can lead to more formal educational pursuits and to other learning providers in the community. The library aims to be a comfortable, friendly and accessible place for people to learn new skills and enhance their wellbeing.

We seek to facilitate learning opportunities by working in partnership with other local providers and by utilising volunteers. We wish to encourage serendipitous and self-directed learning. We also provide support for formal education through our collections.



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

DEMOGRAPHICS

This is an overview of the demographic characteristics of the three member councils. The number of couples with children is higher than average in all three municipalities; there is higher educational attainment in Banyule and Nillumbik; there is a much higher proportion of NESB people in Whittlesea and much lower in Nillumbik; and there is a lower SEIFA index score in Whittlesea.

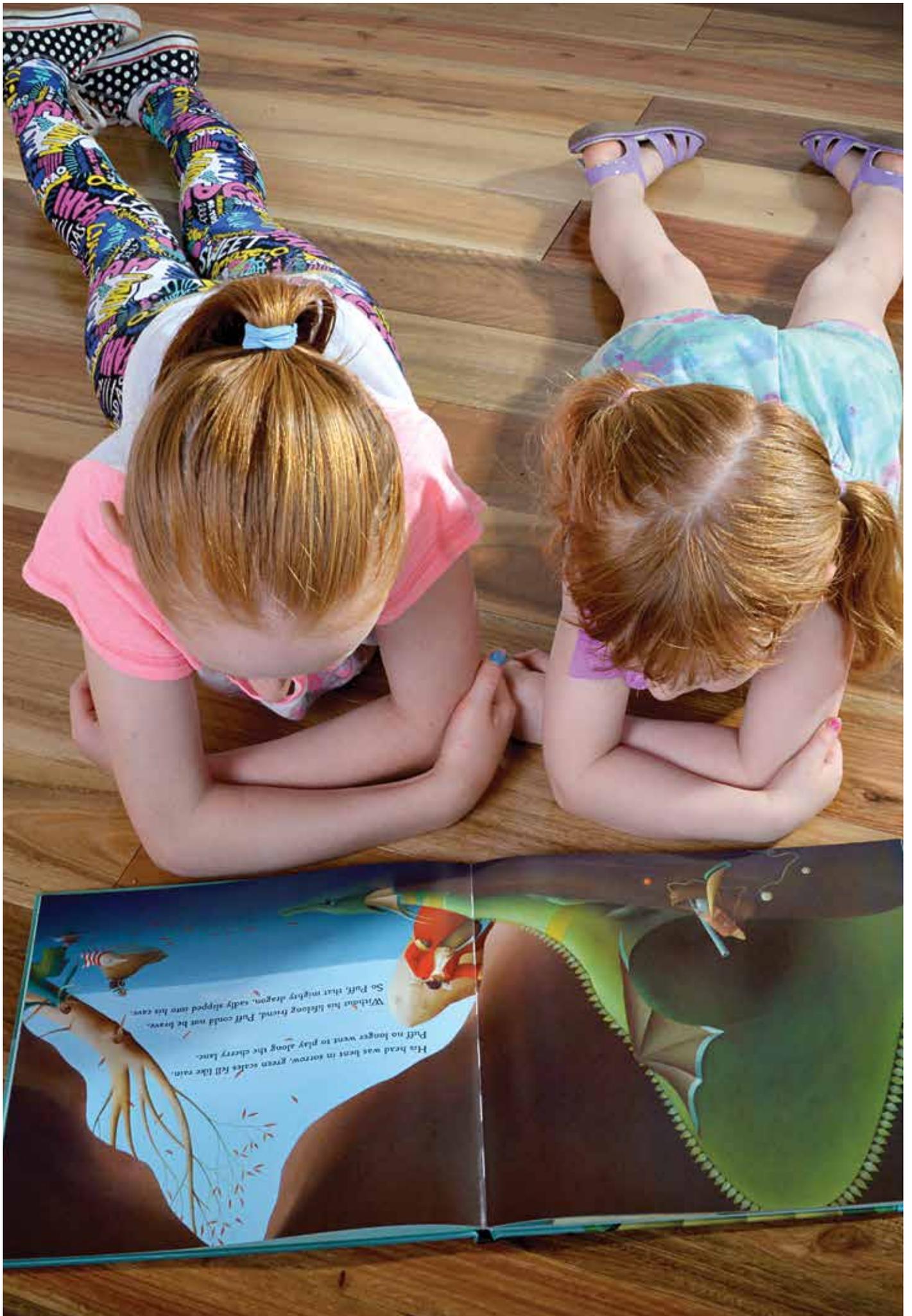
| | Banyule | Nillumbik | Whittlesea | Victorian average |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----------|------------|-------------------|
| Median age | 39 | 39 | 34 | 37 |
| Couples with children | 34% | 49% | 43% | 32% |
| Older couples without children | 10% | 8% | 8% | 9% |
| NESB | 16% | 7% | 30% | 20% |
| Bachelor or higher | 27% | 25% | 13% | 21% |
| Vocational | 15% | 19% | 17% | 16% |
| Unemployment | 4.5% | 3.6% | 5.7% | 5.4% |
| SEIFA index | 1047 | 1098 | 989 | 1010 |

TRENDS IN LEARNING, EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT:

The shift from consumer to prosumer

The distinction between the consumption and production of media has blurred. Individuals no longer simply consume media, but actively contribute to the production of content. This has in turn influenced a shift in home and work life behaviours. Work and home conventions are no longer conducted separately but broken into tasks and completed on a variable timeline, at the whim and will of the individual. (Gerhardt, 2011)





His head was bent in sorrow, green scales fell like rain,
Puff no longer went to play along the cherry lane.
Without his lifelong friend, Puff could not be brave,
So Puff, that mighty dragon, sadly slipped into his cave.

OPPORTUNITIES

The opportunities identified are:

- Leverage the strengths of the collection
- Consolidate core learning activities
- Build partnerships with other providers to facilitate and deliver lifelong learning opportunities for the community
- Develop and enhance creative learning spaces in libraries
- Develop staff skills
- Develop core set of standardised lesson plans / notes to be held in central repository



GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...

Learn@YPRL

- A consolidated program of events, services and classes that relate to learning, the Learn@YPRL brochure categorises all branch learning activities into five different categories: Get Connected, Brain Health, Genealogy and Family History, Go Green and Make@YPRL
- Promoting all the learning offerings in a single quarterly brochure allows the community to explore and discover related opportunities

Makerspaces

There are three makerspaces that provide opportunities for the community to learn specialist skills through discovery, exploration and play:

- Science and Technology Makerspace at Mill Park Library
- Textile and Craft Makerspace at Thomastown Library
- Write and Publish Makerspace at Watsonia Library

FACILITATE CONNECTED, INFORMED AND SKILLED CITIZENRY

Description:

Connected, informed and skilled citizens are community members who continuously learn, maintain and update 21st Century skills in collaborative environments, through peer learning and facilitated educational opportunities. These kinds of environments are inclusive and cater to a range of demographics, levels and abilities. Ensuring that all community members have the opportunity to learn the communication and digital skills necessary to keep them connected to government services and processes that are increasingly deployed online.

Objective:

We will provide accessible educational opportunities that allow groups and individuals to learn, update and maintain 21st Century skills. We will promote connection and community around learning, particularly for new residents, refugees and minority groups.



GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...

Current Status:

Early Literacy Programs

There are ten core early literacy programs at branch and mobile libraries that target different needs and demographics. These are Bookaroo, Baby Storytime, Toddler Time, Preschool Storytime, Just4Kids, Bilingual Storytime, Weekend Storytime, Bedtime Storytime, Mobile Storytime, AUSLAN Tale and Sign Storytime and Spectrum-Friendly Storytime.

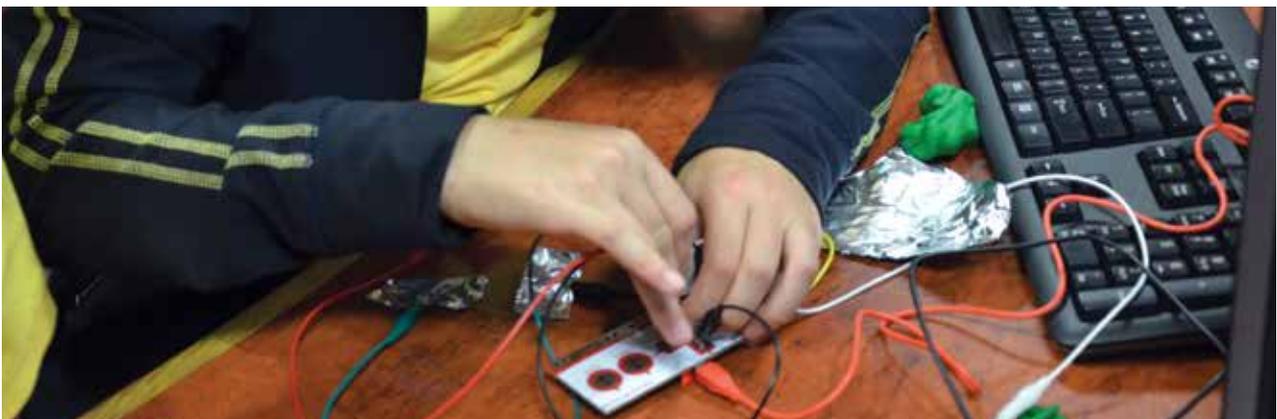
Seniors Connect

Seniors Connect is a program that trains seniors in the use of iPads, helping them gain basic technology skills so that they can better access government services and connect and communicate with friends and family.

The pilot program was developed with Telstra and the Department of Health and delivered in 2015 through Rosanna Library, Aged Care Facilities and the Home Library Service.

Finding My Place

Finding My Place is a program for secondary school students from years 9-11. It provides an 8 week alternative learning environment focused on education, goal setting and future pathways for students who are disengaged with their studies.



GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...



The Digital Hub

The two-year federal funded Digital Hub program at Mill Park Library has now finished but the Hub and its facilities still provide a central location for the community to have an interactive Broadband experience. Many of the educational programs and classes that were conceived for this initiative still run on a regular basis.

Language cafes

We host both English as Second Language and community language circles for people to practice their language skills. There are Language cafes for French, Italian and Spanish speakers.

Writing groups

There are creative writing groups at seven branches facilitated by a staff member or volunteer. These groups offer support, advice and a fresh approach to writing and publishing.

Craft groups

Craft clubs, a spinning group and a charity knitting group meet regularly at branches to create and learn new skills.

Brain health

Board games and chess clubs run regularly at all branches.



GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...

PROVIDE DYNAMIC COLLECTIONS

Description:

A dynamic collection describes physical and online library resources that remain current and answer global trends and shifting community needs.

Objective:

We will continue to identify changing and emerging educational needs within the community and provide fluid resources that enable the community to participate fully in a nimble and increasingly global economic marketplace.

Status:*Collections*

- The collection of 461,545 items comprises books, audiobooks, CDs, DVDs, magazines, newspapers and eresources
- In 2014/15 there were 3.481 million loans
- The collection of 53,000 ebooks generated 89,300 loans
- The collection is used to support the delivery of learning events, programs, classes and activities.

Online Resources

We provide a variety of free online learning resources that provide patrons with the ability to enhance and develop their skills in:

- Language learning for English and Non-English speaking people,
- Digital literacy
- Genealogy research
- Computer skills



GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...

- Literacy and Numeracy for pre-school, primary and early secondary aged patrons
- IELTS preparation
- Resume and Interview preparation
- University level subjects and courses
- Projects to assist with creating and building
- Construction and Building codes

Our extended suite of online resources allows free access to information on:

- Legal matters
- Government and Industry statistics
- Health and medical issues
- Book reviews
- Job guides
- Financial literacy and matters

These online resources are popular and heavily used. Online resources are always accessible, they provide community members the choice of self-paced study and learning at a time that is convenient to them.

Website

The current website is a Software as a Service Solution built in Wordpress and facilitated by Bibliocommons. The user experience of the site enhances the ability to link and associate library content with online resources. Content can be curated and showcased around descriptive tags or categories, allowing for greater interactivity and discovery.





GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...

FACILITATING PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Description:

Library services complement other community and government services as well as many services in the Education and Health sectors. This section describes opportunities where those services align and can be delivered in partnership with other organisations to optimise the reach and frequency of resources amongst the community.

Objective:

We will build and maintain relationships with member councils, local services and industry-related organisations to facilitate and deliver programming and connect library patrons to other community services.

Current Status:

Community Spaces and Computer Training Facilities

Branch libraries offer a number of community spaces and facilities that can be reserved by community groups and organisations to deliver a service. U3A and PROBUS groups commonly make use of ICT facilities to deliver classes and programs to their members and many community groups regularly meet in their local branch library.

Seniors Connect

YPRL with partners Victorian Government Department of Health and Telstra. This partnership delivered a ground breaking pilot program from 2014–2105. This project was the first in Australia to lend iPads to seniors from three different distribution points, a library building, their own homes or aged care assisted living facilities, plus inclusion of personalised training.



GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...

Read With Me

The Reading Rover delivers pre-literacy programs to hard to reach and vulnerable children. The library is taken into the community to prepare children for kindergarten and school. A trained early literacy staff member organises a program of regular visits to community spaces where parents and children are gaining valuable ready to read skills. A van was purchased and is brightly and attractively decorated to promote the service throughout the community. Tubs of picture books are able to be easily moved around and the van doubles as a mini pop up library where parents can borrow books for their children.

Local schools and preschools

We work with local schools to encourage children and their families to take advantage of the services offered by libraries. Staff visit schools regularly to promote the library and many school groups visit the library. The library provides additional resources to support the curriculum as well as encouraging students to widen their knowledge.

PROVIDE CREATIVE SPACES

Description:

Creative spaces are environments that allow groups and individuals to “unlock, express, develop and record creative interests.” (Tighe, 2013) These can be permanent or pop-up spaces that provide access to technology and resources that promote skill acquisition and assist in the production of ideas. The space should model the aptitude or capacity of the resources it contains to support self-motivated learning opportunities.

Objective:

YPRL will provide space and resources that promote learning, innovation and the production of ideas.



GOALS AND PRIORITIES CONT...

Current Status:

Science and Technology Makerspace

Mill Park Library hosts a makerspace that exposes the community to digital technologies and programs that are designed to engender interest and competency in the STEM academic disciplines.

It incorporates hardware and software such as 3D printers, 3D scanner, iPads, Arduino and Raspberry Pi that help people learn basic skills in areas of engineering, robotics, coding and programming, stop-motion animation and more.

Textile and Craft Makerspace

Thomastown Library hosts a makerspace that fosters learning and creativity through handicrafts, sustainability, creative play, community art projects and textiles.

The space answers the needs of a diverse and multi-cultural community with a demand for trade skills. Supported by a partnership with Neighbourhood House, individuals can learn sewing and textile skills, join craft groups for seniors and adults with special needs, expose children to creative play with the Makerkids program and donate recycled textiles and fabric scraps.

Write and Publish Makerspace

Watsonia Library utilises industry partnerships, author networks and staff expertise to assist development of creative written and literary works.

It gives individuals access to writing and research facilities, as well as programs such as the regular support groups Writers@Watsonia and Poets@Watsonia, Reflections: Writing life from Banyule memoir-writing workshops, e-publishing tutorials and the facility to self-publish works through the library's imprint



PARTNERS AND ADVOCACY

We have identified the following partners to work with in delivering this framework:

MEMBER COUNCILS

We collaborate with Member Councils in delivering and facilitating learning programs to the community.

BANYULE NILLUMBIK LOCAL LEARNING EMPLOYMENT NETWORK (BNLLEN)

Banyule Nillumbik Local Learning Employment Network works in partnership with community groups, education providers, industry and families to improve education and employment opportunities for people aged 10–19 in the regions of Banyule and Nillumbik. They have produced many successful programs including the L2P Learner Driver mentor program and the Stories of My Life initiative which partners local High Schools with Aged Care Facilities and pairs students with seniors over a number of weeks to share and record local stories.

HUME WHITTLESEA LOCAL LEARNING EMPLOYMENT NETWORK (HWLLEN) AND THE HUME WHITTLESEA YOUTH COMMITMENT

Hume Whittlesea Local Learning Employment Network engages parents and families in opportunities that assist young people aged 10-19 to complete Year 12. HWLLEN works in partnership with local industry and community organisations to ensure young people engage in challenging and relevant education. HWLLEN has worked with YPRL since 2007 to provide the successful bridging program for young people, Finding My Place.

NORTH EAST NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE NETWORK

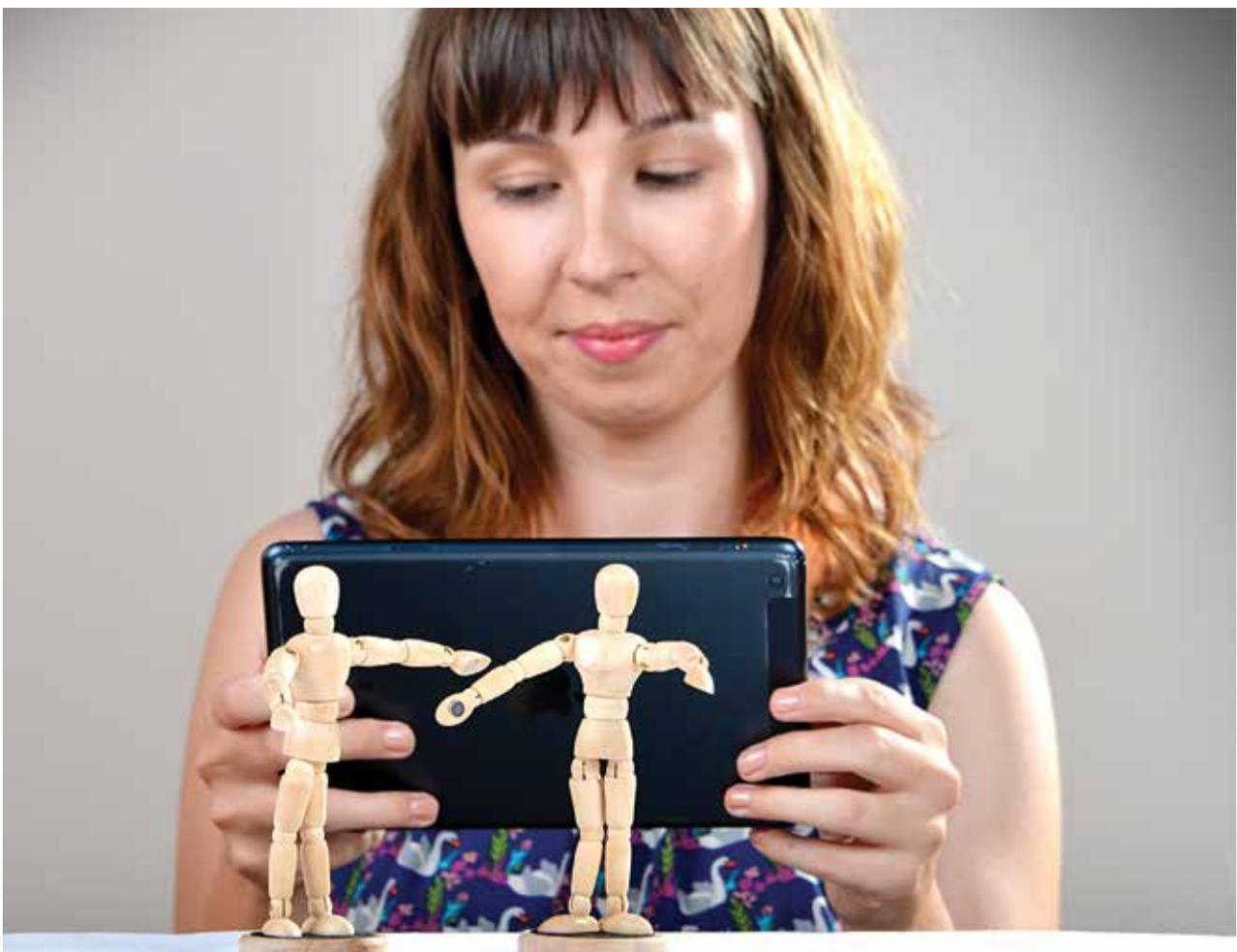
The North East Neighbourhood House Network connects and supports the Neighbourhood houses in the areas of Yarra, Darebin, Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea. These houses provide a community centre where people of all ages can meet in a social atmosphere to learn new skills and share interests. They provide a full range of health and learning services and opportunities for connection including the long-running monthly free community lunch at Olympic Adult Education.



PARTNERS AND ADVOCACY CONT...

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A)

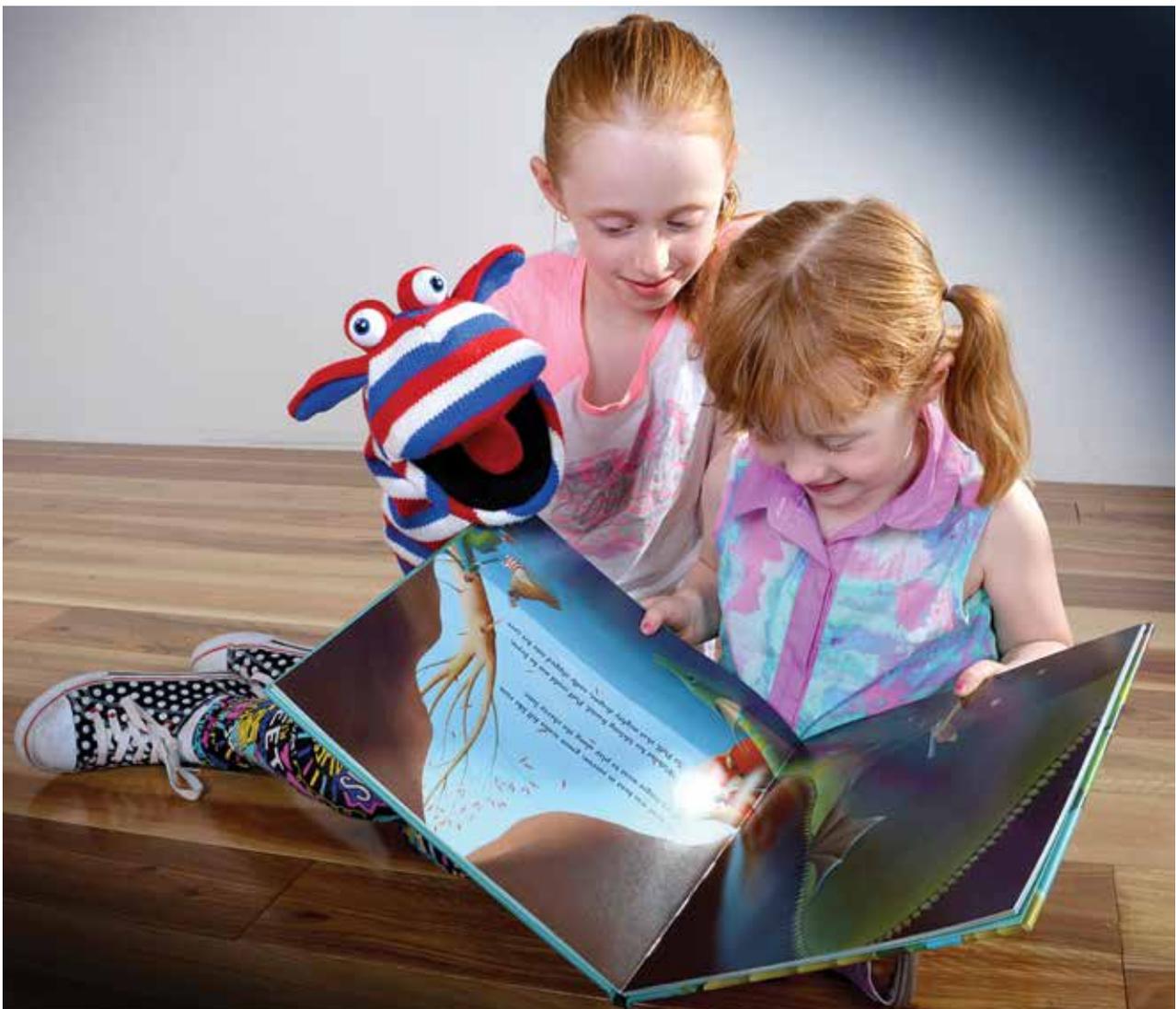
U3A utilizes volunteer tutors and course leaders to provide training and education to people aged 50 and over in a range of special interest subjects from art and history to nutrition and technology. U3A Banyule, U3A Nillumbik and U3A Whittlesea are long valued users of the library service and have partnered with YPRL to deliver many successful programs. U3A Banyule provides their members the unique opportunity to access free higher education through their partnership with La Trobe University. U3A Nillumbik was begun in 2008 and recently launched a new campus in Eltham. U3A Whittlesea has always been supportive of the library and is a valued partner in the federally funded Digital Hub at Mill Park Library.



MARKETING AND PROMOTION

There are a number of strategies to promote learning programs:

- The Learn@YPRL brochure will continue to be refined
- The website houses information about all embedded library programs and services
- The network meetings will provide a means of disseminating information
- Continued liaison with Member Councils
- Press releases to local media



STAFF TRAINING

Each branch has a Learning Coordinator, whose role it is to promote the use of the library to the community through the provision of services and programs.

Key responsibility areas for the coordinators are:

- Effectively liaising with community groups, educational institutions, key stakeholders and the wider community
- Initiating, planning, delivering and evaluating branch learning programs and activities at other library service points, including the mobile library, shopping centres, festivals and other community places
- Performing a range of library operations that support customers in a self-serve environment based on high level knowledge of library products and services, including circulation and collection maintenance duties
- Responding to a wide range of customer information and reference needs and requests by utilising the library collections, products and services
- Building partnerships with local organisations
- Planning and delivering technology related training to the public and staff

This strategy is dependent on staff that have the skills and ability to deliver learning programs to all ages and all abilities.

STAFF TRAINING MODULE/INITIATIVE

A platform for self-facilitated training for staff and volunteers that allows them to learn and maintain basic skills in library operational activities will be built.

Staff will be encouraged to participate in the Lead and Learn Statewide Development online learning module.



EVALUATION

An evaluation framework and toolkit is currently being developed for the organisation and will be released as a supplementary document in June 2016.





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Living & Learning Nillumbik

Maggie Clarke, Coordinator Living & Learning Nillumbik

North East Neighbourhood House Network

Julie Johnston, Manager North East Neighbourhood House Network

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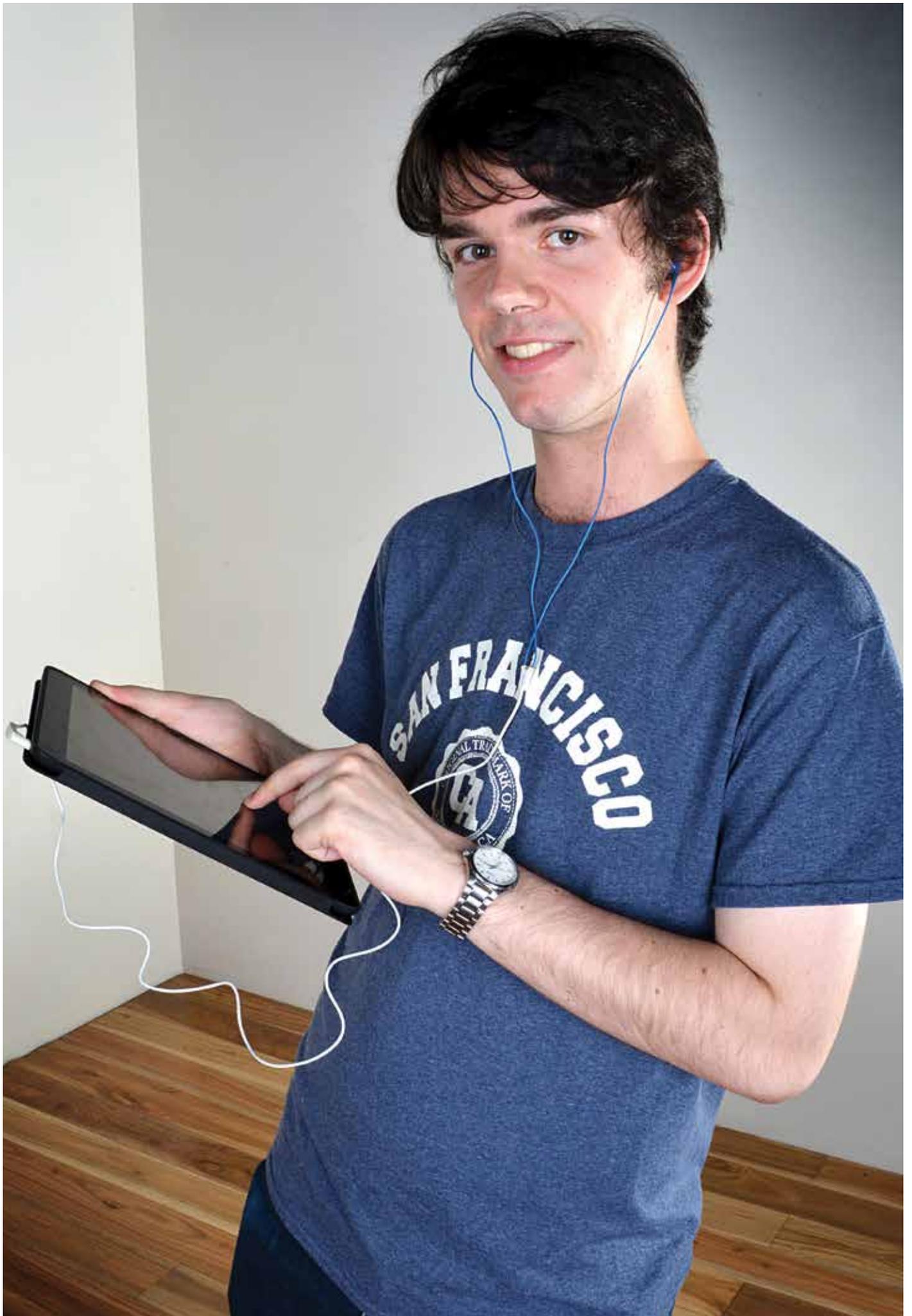
Natasha Savic, Learning Coordinator

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Cory Greenwood, Learning Coordinator

Cherry Byford-Sibbing, Technician - Reading, Learning & Community





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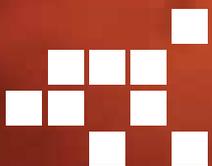
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