

Media Release



Record \$36.5M State funding to benefit public libraries

28/6/2019

Public libraries across NSW are set to benefit from a record boost in funding, with the NSW Government delivering \$36.5 million in 2019/20.

NSW State Librarian John Vallance welcomed this significant increase announced as part of the 2019 NSW State Budget, which will see a total of \$60 million in additional Government funding going directly to public libraries over four years.

"The funding will make a huge difference to public libraries right across NSW, helping them to better meet the growing demands from their communities," said Dr Vallance.

"Public libraries offer so much to the people of NSW including quality collections, comfortable and safe public space, high speed internet, as well as events and programs. All this together helps create a literate and informed society."

The Minister for the Arts the Hon Don Harwin MLC said: "The new funding will provide increases to public library per capita subsidies, and a more transparent model for the allocation of other funds to councils based on local need."

"All councils will receive increases to their annual payments, enabling improvements to public library collections, opening hours and services."

"Small councils such as Bourke will see increases to annual subsidies of over \$45,000, while large councils such as Blacktown will receive increases of over \$100,000, with more to come in future years."

The new funding package also includes a capital grants program of \$24 million over four years which will enable improvements to library buildings and IT systems.

The State Library will work closely with councils on library improvement projects as the funding is allocated.

"We are also very pleased that the Government has amended the Library Regulation to lock in the per capita increases, giving certainty for councils about per capita funding in future years," said Dr Vallance.

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In addition to the public library funding increase, the Budget allocates \$500,000 per annum (\$2 million over four years) to the State Library for Vision Australia to enable the provision of expanded services and a greater selection of audio and braille books to the 126,000 people who are blind or have low vision in NSW.

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