

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S

LAUREATE

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

2016–21



The children's book world is full of passionate and dedicated individuals and organisations that have made it their life's work to nurture and promote Australian children's literature. ACLA has given them the opportunity to be part of a united and focussed effort to bring to the wider community a better knowledge and awareness of the richness of Australia's literary culture. As a publisher, the work of ACLA, especially the Australian Children's Laureate program, is not only a vehicle helping to promote our authors and illustrators, but a vital part of the "chain of enthusiasm" that unites us all.

Erica Wagner, Publisher, Books for Children and Young Adults, Allen & Unwin

The future of Australia lies in imagination. To have a creative economy we need curious children and to have curious children we need children who are not only able to read, but children who WANT to read. To build a culture of reading, we need a nation of story-tellers.

Boori Monty Pryor, Australia's Inaugural Laureate

Enriching the lives of young Australians
through the power of story

*Illustrations used throughout this document are from Jackie French's Share a Story Calendar 2015
Calendar concept © Jackie French
Calendar © ACLA
Illustrations by Ann James. Design by Judy Watson*

Something extraordinarily exciting has been happening over the last 3 years: **Australia now has a Children's Laureate — a national ambassador dedicated to promoting reading, writing, creativity and storytelling.**

The Australian Children's Literature Alliance (**ACLA**) was established in 2008 by a group of children's literature enthusiasts. Inspired by the UK Laureate program, they have created a Laureateship with a distinctly Australian flavour.

Australia punches well above its weight in the area of children's books and the world is taking notice. In the last 7 years, two Australians have won the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, the most prestigious global award in children's literature. Australia is also fortunate, as it has a richly supportive community of advocates for literature.

Despite this, there are worrying statistics suggesting that literacy levels in some areas are frighteningly low, and pointing to the need for further national promotion of reading and creativity.

ACLA seeks to champion Australian children's literature and get books into the hands of those kids currently denied them. It recognises the transformational power of reading, story and creativity in the lives of young Australians.

In an age where children are bombarded with online games, apps and television, the Laureate program cements the value and importance of books in the lives of Australian children.

**Rebecca Herrmann,
Co-CEO Bolinda Audio**



HISTORY OF LAUREATES OVERSEAS: BUILDING A NETWORK

The Australian Children's Laureate is part of an international Laureate network. Countries include: UK, USA, The Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, Mexico and Wales.

Every two years the Bologna Children's Book Fair hosts an International Laureate Summit. In 2015 the second is being organised by ACLA together with the Swedish Arts Council.

International 'family of Laureates' include:

Quentin Blake (Roald Dahl collaborator)
Julia Donaldson (The Gruffalo)
Michael Morpurgo (War Horse)
Eoin Colfer (The Artemis Fowl series)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2016–21

In just 3 years the Children's Laureate has become a Cultural Legacy.

ACLA has:

- Become a strong alliance of children's and youth literature creators and literacy experts
- Built a network of over **110** arts, educational, industry and community creative partnerships
- Appointed 3 Laureates who are writers and/or illustrators of children's books across all age levels and many genres
- Awarded each Laureate an Honorarium in recognition of their creative contribution to the program
- Managed the Laureate program in accordance with both ACLA's goals, and the personal creative aims of each Laureate
- Facilitated events at which the Laureate has spoken directly to **40,000 children at 200 events**, inspiring an appetite for reading and story in every State and Territory, including in Indigenous communities and regional areas
- Championed the vibrancy and quality of Australian children's books nationally, ensuring their creators are centre stage at major festivals and in the media and not relegated to nursery hour and backpage reviews
- Built strong connections with the International Laureate Programs forging alliances to benefit the Australian children's book industry and its creators
- Provided for the future of ACLA by appointing a Board of industry experts from across Australia, supported by sub-committee members, providing a pool of potential Board members, thus ensuring strategic succession planning



1: TO PROMOTE THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF READING AND STORY

Young readers are our future thinkers – creative, critical broad-minded thinkers. Reading is essential, and the Laureate program is a proven way to inspire kids, their peers and their families to keep reading, to keep exploring and to remain, above all, curious.

Alison Lester, Inaugural Children's Laureate



OBJECTIVE

To promote the value and importance of reading and story

GOAL

Establish biennial Children's Laureateship

ACTIONS/STRATEGIES

1. Coordinate biennial appointment of a prominent Australian children's or young adult author or illustrator as Laureate
2. Establish Laureate as key spokesperson for Australian children's literature
3. Arrange for Laureate to speak at major conferences and events to build strategic awareness of benefits of access to reading, books, and storytelling
4. Launch and promote each Laureate's personal project to build awareness of the benefits of story/reading
5. Participate in the International Laureate Summit, acting as spokesperson for Australian literary culture

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Successfully coordinated of the biennial appointment of Laureates from 2012–2015
- Ensured broad Laureate representation: Alison Lester, Author-Illustrator; Boori Monty Pryor, Author-performer; Jackie French, Author of Picture books, YA and Middle Grade Fiction and Non-fiction
- Increased media interest in the Laureate as a spokesperson for children's literacy, education and the importance of reading. 100 articles/interviews 2014.
- Supported Laureates to shape their own program and goals
- Achieved wide national reach: highly successful regional and remote touring focus 120 events to 9000 children in 40 communities in every State and Territory. Strategic partnership with ABC Rural Radio secured
- Facilitated the Laureate to address the needs of low literacy and ESL groups – such as Loddon Prison, Castlemaine and an unnamed Detention Centre in Darwin to speak to inmates and asylum seekers
- Participated in the Inaugural (2013) and second (2015) International Summits at Bologna Book Fair
- Managed Laureate tours to China and Ireland
- Sourced opportunities for the next Laureate to appear at festivals and conferences in Australia and overseas such as a Laureate panel at Sydney Writers' Festival

'Stories tell us who we are. They teach us empathy so we understand who others are. They give us the power to imagine and create the future.' Jackie French

2. TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF BOOKS IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

It's hard to always read books about lives that feel so remote they are foreign. We need to bring everyone into the circle of the story.

Boori Monty Pryor, Inaugural Children's Laureate (2012–2013)



OBJECTIVE

To raise the profile of books in the lives of children and young adults

GOAL

Build a Reading Culture via the Laureate Program

ACTIONS/STRATEGIES

1. Conduct Laureate Touring Program to address the needs of children, families, schools and libraries in regional and remote areas, and from diverse cultures and backgrounds
2. Form partnerships to deliver Laureate Touring Program
3. Utilise website to promote on Laureate's message and activities and to garner support
4. Ensure that the Laureate has a strong media presence
5. Work with the Laureate's publisher(s) to achieve substantial promotion

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Participated in key city literature festivals such as the Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane Writers' Festivals
- Created accessible resources on the Laureate website to support the projects for use by families, booksellers, schools and libraries. This includes a stunning downloadable *Share a Story* Calendar widely promoted by bloggers, publishers, book-sellers in Australia and overseas
- Supported 70 regional and rural organisations to host Laureate events such as Boori Monty Pryor's round the fireside storytelling at Mount Surprises' Bedrock Caravan Park in far North Queensland
- Facilitated events at which the Laureate has addressed non-arts organisations to engage adults – parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts and teachers – about the importance of reading in their children's lives
- Drawn on networks of local libraries and schools to access local communities
- Conducted repeat Laureate visits to targeted regional areas such as Bruny Island District School, Tasmania, to complete their *This is My Place* book
- Created a vibrant website, bi-monthly newsletters and social media commentary to build a dedicated following for the Laureate project. For example, Jackie's Dyslexia tweet at the National Library ranked 7th most popular Australian Government tweet of the day – local, state and federal

'A goal for every teacher is to have children wanting to pick up a book and read each day. It can be hard to motivate children to do this. A visit by an author such as Jackie French goes a very long way to making this goal achievable.'

Roxanne Steenberg, Windermere Primary School, regional Tasmania



3. RESPOND TO LITERACY NEEDS IN NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

Developing a well-functioning library that's actually going to improve results takes a lot of hard work, and it can't be done by one person only. You read and write in all subjects, so all teachers need to be part of this work.

Johanna Lindbäck, Swedish Children's Laureate



OBJECTIVE

To respond to identified needs and issues in the Children's and Youth literacy national landscape

GOAL

Address literacy needs in partnership with Literacy organisations

ACTIONS/STRATEGIES

1. Support, and promote the work of, and partner with, literacy organisations in Australia
2. Undertake research and gather community feedback to identify areas where Laureate's message will have the greatest impact
3. Offer on-going support for the campaign for teacher librarians in schools
4. Respond to other key issues as they arise

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ACLA has formed a committee with the Children's Book Council of Australia (**CBCA**); School Library Association of Victoria (**SLAV**); Books Illustrated and creator Leigh Hobbs to establish a framework for a joint campaign to address the issue of the importance of (and threat to) the presence of teacher librarians in schools
- Ron Gorman, renowned educator, joined the ACLA board to facilitate and identify literacy issues for ACLA nationally. For example, Gorman, as deputy director of Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (**AISWA**) is hosting Jackie French for a series of events with Curriculum and Reengagement in Education (**CARE**) Schools
- Jackie French's Laureate project has focused on learning and teaching difficulties. She has written key media articles, for example, *Jackie French says Let's Ditch the Word Dyslexia* published in the Canberra Times
- Jackie has been invited to represent the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) at a talk held at Parliament House for internal staff to discuss children's literature and the role that it plays in our society and economy

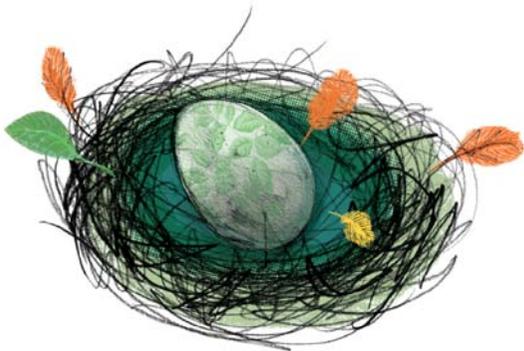
'I'm here to convince kids that there's a magic book for everyone.' Jackie French

4. TO CHAMPION READING IN A CONSULTATIVE, COLLEGIATE WAY

There are many people working in the areas of children's literacy and children's literature, yet traditionally consultation between the two is minimal. It's almost as if the two areas are unrelated.

ACLA sees great sense in facilitating conversations and cooperation between these two groups. Our aim is to encourage a strong reading culture in Australia where children, their families and communities are readers - and readers who love to read.

Ann James, ACLA Founding Board member



OBJECTIVE

To champion the importance of Young Australians' reading in a consultative, collegiate and inclusive way

GOAL

To be the key National alliance championing young Australians' reading

ACTIONS/STRATEGIES

1. Partner with key organisations to use Laureate as spokesperson in national campaigns
2. Consult with librarians, teachers, publishers and other related organisations to promote the Laureate program in their programs and communities
3. Support other organisations with shared interests and goals

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ACLA has appointed a board and supporting sub-committees of advisers which include representatives from across the Children's and Youth Literature national landscape (see diagram page 9)
- Built a network of over **110** arts, educational, industry and community creative partnerships
- Encouraged Laureates to further this network. For example Jackie French's Share a Story Calendar highlights National Simultaneous Storytime, National Bookshop Day and Indigenous Literacy Day. Jackie French supports all such events with media articles and/or appearances
- Met with organisations such as the Children's Book Publishers Committee of the Australian Publishers Association to discuss how the Laureate can support them to promote Australian books
- Created a 'Laureateship sticker' for publishers to license, as a promotional tool for award-winning titles
- Encouraged the Laureates to champion Australian books internationally. For example, Jackie French will be the Guest Speaker at the Australia Party in Bologna Children's Book Fair 2015
- Used media to highlight the substantial market share children's books have in Australian book sales

'I had not realised how much a formal "thank you" would mean to so many, selfless, extraordinary people who give our children—and our future Australia – so much.' Jackie French



5. TO SECURE LONGEVITY AND SECURITY FOR ACLA

The ACLA Board plays an active and vital role in the management and strategic direction of the Laureate program – a program which has become a cultural legacy.

The program runs on two-year cycles. The development of the UK Laureateship (now in its eighth term), has offered ACLA valuable insights into the future development of the Australian Laureate program.

As the profile of the Laureate grows, so too will the demands on each Laureate’s time. The Laureates have already become the first point of contact for media comment on issues relating to reading, children’s literature and literacy. In the UK, Laureates are also regularly invited to comment on education and arts policy.

‘Once a Laureate, always a Laureate’. Australia now has three extremely experienced and articulate ambassadors to advocate for reading. As the pool of Laureates grows and their expertise broadens, momentum will continue to build.

To support current and anticipated demands, ACLA has established a strong, stable structure, but requires long-term funding support in order to secure its future.

OBJECTIVE

Secure longevity in strategic management and funding for ACLA

GOAL

Secure core funding, establish strong management and implement robust corporate governance

ACTIONS/STRATEGIES

1. Secure a major partner for core funding of the administration of the Laureate Program
2. Build industry support and ownership of the Laureate Program
3. Continue to develop philanthropy and source donations
5. Ensure robust corporate governance
6. Ensure succession planning
7. Conduct Evaluation and Reportage to underpin Strategic planning
8. Secure office space



ACHIEVEMENTS

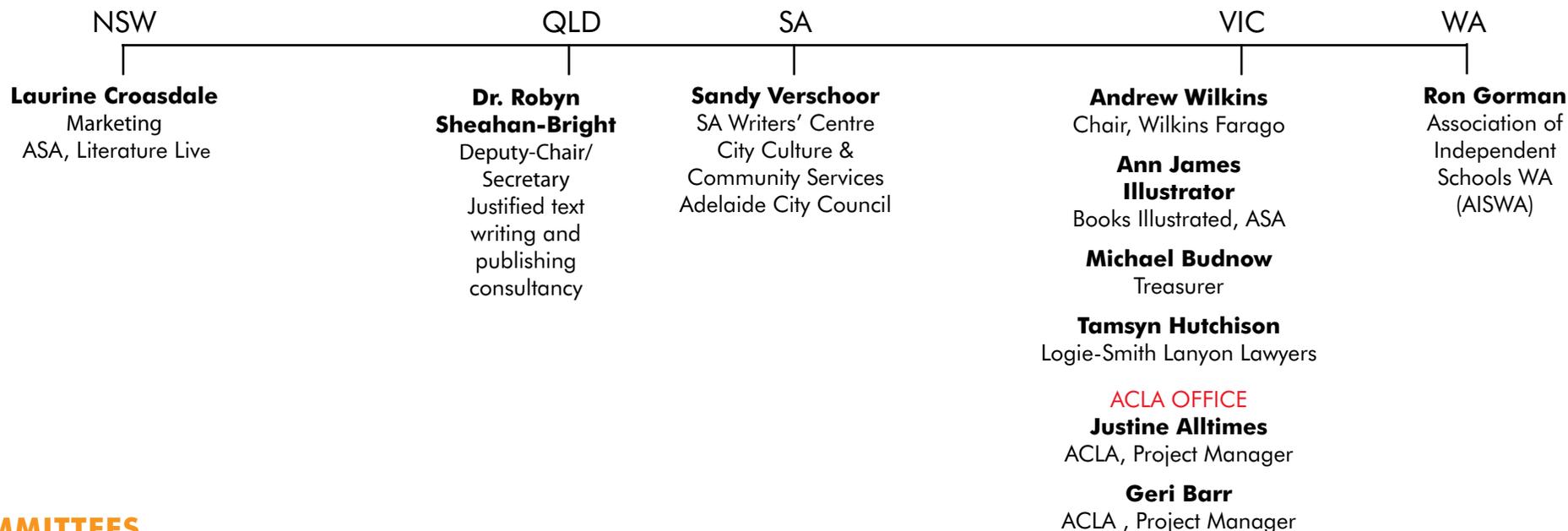
- Engaged board members with expertise from a range of targeted backgrounds including an accountant, a literacy expert and lawyer
- Planned the Laureate two year program one year before the position is announced to maximise the ability of the Laureate and the team to commit to the project
- Sought strategic partners to share resources and reduce costs from many related organisations and institutions over the past 3 years, in particular, Writers’ Festivals, Literary events and school programs
- Obtained DGR status to make donating to ACLA more attractive
- Held fundraisers in two States per year, for example the auction at the Wheeler Centre, Victoria
- Created a ‘Laureateship sticker’ for publishers to license bringing in financial support for ACLA. Already acquired by Allen & Unwin for the Inaugural Laureates’ titles
- Ensured that ACLA operates to the highest standards of corporate governance and is at all times accountable and has in place all necessary processes and procedures to ensure that ACLA is compliant with its legal obligations
- Engaged board members from a broad geographical base
- Utilised State sub-committees to establish a national program, to broaden our reach and to ensure board succession planning

‘The Australian Laureate has already increased media interest for children’s books and literacy—a topic previously all too absent from the national conversation.’ Andrew Wilkins, ACLA Chair

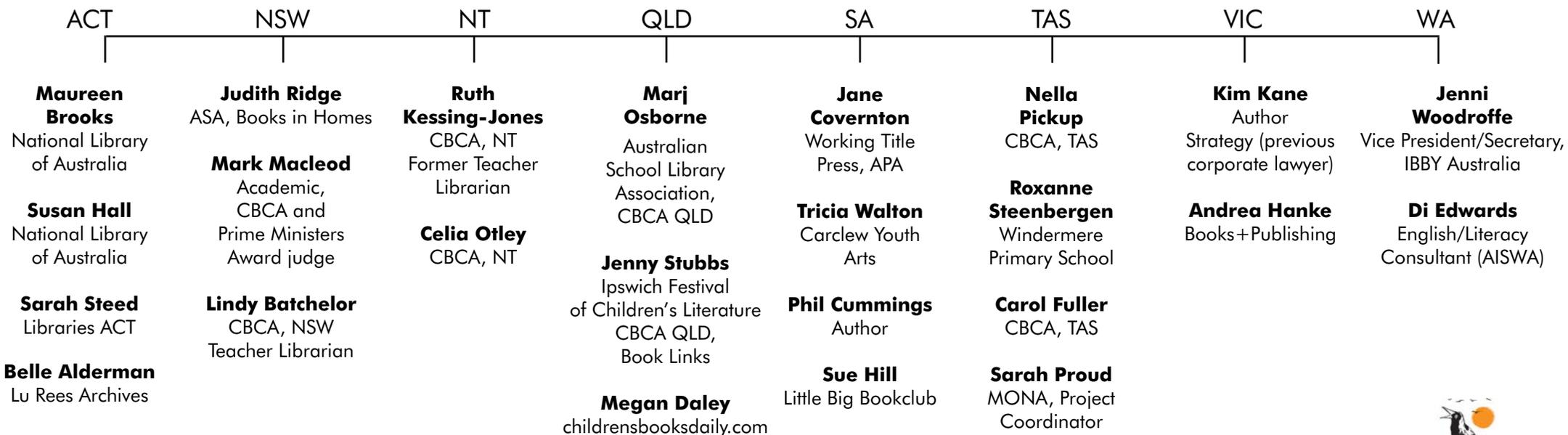


ACLA BOARD AND COMMITTEES STRUCTURE

BOARD



STATE COMMITTEES





AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S LAUREATE – BUILDING ALLIANCES

MAJOR CREATIVE PARTNERS OVER ACLA'S FIRST THREE YEARS

Arts Organisations

AustLit: the Australian Literature Resource (QLD)
 Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)
 Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA)
 Australian War Memorial (ACT)
 Big Draw Campaign (NSW)
 Blacktown Arts Centre (NSW)
 Books Illustrated (VIC)
 Carclew Youth Arts Centre (SA)
 Children's Literature Camp (QLD)
 Deakin University (VIC)
 Gladstone Art Gallery (QLD)
 Indigeneous Literacy Foundation (ACT)
 La Trobe University (VIC)
 The Literature Centre (WA)
 M.A.D.E (VIC)
 Museum of Contemporary Art (NSW)
 National Bookshop Day (VIC)
 National Library of Australia (ACT)
 National Simultaneous Storytime (ACT)
 National Year of Reading (National)
 NSW Local Government Aboriginal Network Conference (NSW)
 Open Gardens Australia (ACT)
 Queensland Museum (QLD)
 Royal Children's Hospital (VIC)
 School Libraries Association of SA (SA)
 School of Isolated and Distance Education (WA)
 Taronga Zoo (NSW)
 The Butter Factory (NSW)
 The Light Factory – Gallery (VIC)
 The Wilderness Society (TAS)
 Townsville Museum (QLD)

City Festivals

Adelaide Writers Festival (SA)
 All Saints Storylines Festival (WA)
 Brisbane Writers Festival (QLD)
 Children's Book Festival (VIC)
 Come Out Festival (SA)

Melbourne Writers Festival (VIC)
 Perth Writers Festival (WA)
 Sydney Writers Festivals (NSW)

Regional Festivals

Bankstown Arts Centre (NSW)
 Bendigo Writers Festival (VIC)
 The Big Sky Festival (WA)
 Castlemaine Children's Literature Festival (VIC)
 Communities for Children Festival (TAS)
 From Reef to Rigger Project, Curtis Coast Literary Carnivale (QLD)
 Garma Festival (NT)
 Mantle Conference (NSW)
 Seachange Festival (VIC)
 The Snowy Mountains Readers and Writers Festival (NSW)
 StoryArts Festival, Ipswich (QLD)
 Voices on the Coast (QLD)
 Whitsunday Voices Youth Literature Festival (QLD)

Conferences

AATE and ALEA conference: Anticipating new Territories (NT)
 AATE and ALEA conference: Brave New World (QLD)
 Australasian Children's Literature Association for Research Conference, ACLAR (VIC)
 Blackwords Symposium (NSW)
 CBCA National Conference 2012/2014 (SA/ACT)
 Colin Simpson Memorial Lecture (VIC)
 EYES conference, Perth (WA)
 NSW School Library Association Conference (NSW)
 MANTLE conference (NSW)
 School Library Association Queensland Conference (QLD)

State and City Libraries

Better Beginnings (WA)
 State Library of VIC
 City Library (VIC)
 State Library of NSW
 State Library of SA
 State Library of WA



Regional Libraries

Alice Springs Public Library (NT)
 Croydon Library (QLD)
 Geelong Regional Libraries (VIC)
 Glebe Library (NSW)
 Gosford City Library (NSW)
 Inverloch Library (VIC)
 Kingston Library (TAS)
 Midland Library (WA)
 Mildura Regional Library (VIC)
 Newcastle Region Library (NSW)
 Normanton Library (QLD)
 Northern Territory Library, Parliament House Darwin (NT)
 Woden Library (ACT)
 Woodend Library (VIC)

Remote Schools

Academy of Sport, Health and Education – ASHE (VIC)
 Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (WA)
 Boorooloola (NT)
 Bruny Island District School (TAS)
 Bunbury Senior School (WA)
 Kulkarriya Community School (WA)
 Mooroopna Secondary College (VIC)
 Mornington Island State School (QLD)
 Parkfield Primary School (WA)
 Port Hedland and Newman (WA)
 Rawa School, Pilbara Region (WA)
 St. Therese's Primary (TAS)
 Tjitjiku Inma Project (SA)
 Yakanarra School, Kimberly Region (WA)

International Events and Partners

Beijing Australian Writers' Week (Beijing)
 Bologna Children's Book Fair (Italy)
 Children's Book Ireland, Dublin (Ireland)
 Nami Island (South Korea)
 National Library of Ireland, Dublin (Ireland)
 Storylines Festival, Auckland (New Zealand)
 The Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast (Ireland)
 Verbal Arts Centre, Derry (Ireland)
 WORD Christchurch Writers and Readers Festival (New Zealand)