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eSMART LIBRARIES EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

**PREPARED FOR
THE ALANNAH & MADELINE FOUNDATION**

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ALANNAH & MADELINE FOUNDATION

The Alannah & Madeline Foundation is a national charity that aims to keep children safe from violence. The Foundation was established in memory of Alannah and Madeline Mikac, aged six and three, who, with their mother and 32 others, were killed at Port Arthur, Tasmania, on 28 April 1996. The Foundation cares for children who experience or witness serious violence and develops programs designed to help prevent violence in the lives of children. Its National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB) is a peak body comprised of experts in the areas of bullying and cyberbullying.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“The process of working towards becoming an accredited eSmart Library is increasing our knowledge and attitudes...” (Library manager, regional library service, Wave One)

This report brings together the two waves of findings of the eSmart Libraries evaluation, undertaken between May 2014 and May 2017 by the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (Young and Well CRC) and Western Sydney University. The evaluation engaged over 1000 library managers, staff, users and industry representatives, across 15 library services in surveys, interviews and focus groups. Findings highlighted the excellent progress the eSmart Libraries initiative is making in supporting library services to enhance the digital literacy and online safety of staff, users and the broader community.

The eSmart Libraries initiative was found to support participating library services to better respond to and develop library users’ digital literacy and cybersafety needs. This was achieved through building management and staff confidence, introducing or improving internet access policy and procedures, delivering training and support to library users, and engaging more broadly in the community.

Some key findings were as follows.

Library management confidence and engagement are essential to the effective implementation of eSmart Libraries. Across the two waves of data collection, an increased number of library managers reported improved knowledge and confidence in being smart, safe and responsible online. In particular, an increased number of library managers self-reported knowledge of how to stay safe online, protect privacy, report/act when coming across something unsafe, and uphold their responsibilities online. Increased library management engagement in eSmart Libraries across the board represents an excellent outcome for the eSmart Libraries framework, because library services’ readiness and capacity to implement eSmart Libraries is deeply influenced by its leadership and their capacity to support staff and engage in the initiative.

The eSmart Libraries initiative was found to support participating library services to better respond to and develop library users’ digital literacy and cybersafety needs.

Library management confidence and engagement are essential to the effective implementation of eSmart Libraries.

The findings suggest that the AMF should continue to identify new strategies to foster local government and library management engagement; through peer support opportunities, presentations at local government and library sector forums, and via the advocacy of the eSmart Reference Group.

Library staff knowledge is essential to supporting library users' capacity for smart, safe and responsible online engagements. Findings highlighted that enhancing staff capacity is critical in order to maximise the benefits to users of their online engagements through library services. Across both waves of data staff consistently emphasised the need for further upskilling in digital literacy and cybersafety.

Library staff knowledge is essential to supporting library users' capacity for smart, safe and responsible online engagements.

Findings suggest there is a strong rationale for AMF's strategy of continuing to work with the library industry; to identify opportunities for library staff to upskill in digital literacy and cybersafety and to collaborate in and cross-promote digital literacy and cybersafety training programs. This could include utilising AMF Connect and eSmart Membership.

Effective implementation of the eSmart framework also depends on an ongoing conversation with libraries, industry and the AMF. There was an increase in the number of libraries implementing the framework and reaching eSmart status over the period of the study. Between the two phases of evaluation, the AMF began to address the challenges to implementation – including limited time and staff resources, lack of management buy-in and navigating complex organisational policy processes – all identified in Wave One. Committed to continuous improvement, the AMF adapted strategies to address these challenges, including increasing face-to-face visits with library services to provide more one-on-one support to eSmart Coordinators; and streamlining libraries' interactions with the framework via the online system tool.

The evaluation indicates that the AMF should continue to seek opportunities to offer support to library services in both the implementation and sustaining phases of the framework. In particular, the AMF could seek further opportunities to develop the eSmart Libraries network of libraries to promote the sharing of practical strategies to foster digital literacy and online safety between libraries. Opportunities identified by this evaluation include:

Effective implementation of the eSmart framework also depends on an ongoing conversation with libraries, industry and the AMF.

- utilising existing library network email lists to establish a community of interest or online blog;
- developing a peer mentoring platform and accompanying resources to encourage knowledge-sharing between library services;
- providing opportunities for library services to share their experience of implementing the framework (e.g., an annual conference or regular workshop series);
- utilising AMF Connect and eSmart Membership options to provide ongoing resources and support.

Taking a targeted approach to engaging library users in eSmart Libraries will likely enhance its impact. Evidence indicated that older Australians and adults with limited digital literacy were benefiting the most from the implementation of eSmart Libraries. However, the work undertaken to implement the framework is largely unseen by library users. As such, opportunities should be sought to raise the profile of the framework with library users.

To complement the offerings of eSmart Schools, the AMF could use eSmart Libraries to support young people transitioning from education to employment, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) young people, and/or young people outside of mainstream education settings.

In addition, the AMF could explore opportunities to maximise exposure of the initiative with its funding and industry partners. Strategies could include:

Taking a targeted approach to engaging library users in eSmart Libraries will likely enhance its impact.

- developing targeted messages and resources for digitally disadvantaged user groups (including those seeking employment, and newly arrived and CALD community members);
- identifying ways to foster and maximise consistent messaging across multiple environments, building on existing programs and products (e.g., eSmart Schools and the eSmart Digital Licence).

Overall, the evaluation found that the eSmart framework enables libraries to take a systematic and comprehensive approach to enhancing digital literacy and cybersafety strategies in Australian libraries.

...the eSmart framework enables libraries to take a systematic and comprehensive approach to enhancing digital literacy and cybersafety strategies in Australian libraries.

Given both the rapidly evolving nature of online and networked technologies and the transforming role of libraries, the evaluation recommends aiming for continual improvement by developing tools and processes to enable refinement. To ensure the framework continues to meet the needs of the library industry and sector partners, evaluation strategies could include a regular pulse-check survey, and monitoring of feedback from libraries via an online eSmart Libraries knowledge-sharing community.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Alannah & Madeline Foundation (AMF) engaged the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (Young and Well CRC) and Western Sydney University to undertake an evaluation of the eSmart Libraries initiative between May 2014 and May 2017. This included two point-in-time data collection waves (Wave One and Wave Two) to assess the initiative's impact.

What is eSmart Libraries?

eSmart Libraries is a social and behaviour change initiative developed by the AMF in partnership with Telstra Foundation. It collaborates with Australia's library network to connect libraries and their users with tools and resources to improve cybersafety and wellbeing, and to facilitate digital inclusion in the community.

Behaviour change is a research-based approach that addresses knowledge, attitudes and behaviours or practices. It is informed by a combination of theories including social cognitive theory, theory of planned behaviour and – best known – the trans-theoretical or stages-of-change model. As an approach, it has long been used in combination with broader social change strategies to underpin significant health initiatives, such as Quit, SunSmart, and those of the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and WorkSafe Victoria.

eSmart Libraries is grounded in a social and behavioural change communications framework (SBCC). SBCC uses science and data, as well as creative ideas, in order to:

- influence social norms to support long-term, sustainable behaviour change at a population level;
- motivate shifts in behaviour and practice at individual, organisation and community levels;
- encourage community action;
- influence decision-makers regarding provision of services, policy and regulation, or legislative change.

In its design, development and implementation, the eSmart Libraries initiative has also drawn on the learnings from campaigns such as Quit, SunSmart, TAC and WorkSafe Victoria. It was developed in response to concerns that an increasing digital divide is leaving some of our society's most vulnerable members lacking in the skills and knowledge to be smart, safe and responsible users of technology (AMF, 2012).

What does being an eSmart Library mean?

Being an eSmart library means staff and library users know how to guard against security and privacy risks online, download content in a legal and ethical way, research and reference information, and manage reputation and relationships in cyberspace.

How was the eSmart Libraries evaluation structured?

The evaluation of the eSmart Libraries initiative included two waves of data collection:

- Wave One – March to July 2015;
- Wave Two – March to July 2016.

Both waves of data collection aimed to gather evidence in four key areas as defined by the AMF:

- Area 1 – Impact;
- Area 2 – Implementation;
- Area 3 – Partner and Industry Objectives;
- Area 4 – Perceptions.

What does this report cover?

This report summarises the key findings of a comparative analysis across Wave One and Wave Two of data collection, to identify the most and least significant changes and the implications for further strengthening and refinement of the eSmart Libraries framework. Through a series of case studies, the report evidences the ways that the eSmart Libraries framework is supporting capacity building in libraries, fostering libraries' ability to better support the digital needs of the broader community.

The report also situates the findings in the context of political and social changes, both nationally and locally; in order to identify ways to respond to and maximise opportunities to further enhance the positive impacts of the eSmart Libraries framework. It sits alongside the Wave One Preliminary Findings Report (Morecroft, Blanchard, Third et al., 2015), the Wave Two Findings Report (Morecroft, Third, Blanchard et.al., 2017), an independent evaluation of eSmart Schools (2015) and the AMF's own data monitoring through the online system tool and pre- and post-implementation surveys.

The findings in a nutshell

Overall, the evaluation found that eSmart Libraries:

- helps to embed a culture of positive technology use in participating libraries;
- supports libraries to create tailored and effective policies and procedures;
- facilitates libraries' access to quality, evidence-informed resources;
- enables libraries to track their progress in 'becoming eSmart'.

EVALUATION DESIGN

The eSmart Libraries evaluation is grounded in a 'mixed-methods' approach, which incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. This ensures an informative assessment of the framework's key strengths and areas for improvement and/or expansion. It also helps inform the ongoing development of the eSmart Libraries framework over time.

Who took part?

Participating library services were based in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

Across the two waves of data collection, the research team visited 11 library services in total, returning to three of the 11 services in both waves of data collection. In addition to the 11 participating library services, the research team undertook further interviews with four other library services, bringing the total number of participating libraries up to 15.

During Wave Two the research team also undertook an intercept study in the seven participating libraries, in which a research team member visited each library service and, over a four-hour period, invited library users to complete an online survey. Research participants took part in one or more of three activities: an online survey, focus group or individual interview. Wave Two research participants in the online library users survey were able to opt in to a lottery to receive one of ten \$100 book vouchers; and focus group and interview participants were given a \$20 book voucher.

Phases of eSmart Libraries implementation

Library services were in one of three phases of implementation of the eSmart Libraries framework:

- 1. Planning:** focuses on establishing mechanisms within the service to implement the eSmart Libraries framework; reviewing and identifying gaps in policies and procedures; and assessing the knowledge and skills of staff and library users.
- 2. Implementing:** focuses on creating or renewing all relevant policies and procedures; and delivering training and development opportunities for staff, library users and the broader community to learn and engage with cybersafety and digital literacy. At the end of this phase, a library is deemed to be 'eSmart'.
- 3. Sustaining:** focuses on actions to retain eSmart status, namely: evaluating impact; consistently reviewing library practices; and sharing successes with the eSmart community and beyond.

Across both waves of data collection, 11 of the 15 library services were in the sustaining phase. Importantly, all seven libraries in Wave Two were accredited as eSmart Libraries; a significant difference from Wave One, in which only two of seven participating libraries were in the sustaining phase. Overall findings should be interpreted in light of this distinction.

STUDY SAMPLE

The eSmart Libraries evaluation methodology relied on voluntary uptake by library services. Invitations to participate were sent to library services that were registered with eSmart Libraries across Australia. Library services in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia expressed an interest. In Wave Two, further information was provided to library services in Queensland and Western Australia, inviting them to participate in the library manager and eSmart Coordinator interviews only; an additional four library services opted in.

The evaluation team worked with participating library services to promote the online surveys to library staff and users. The survey was promoted and circulated via library services' social media, websites, posters and flyers. Uptake was limited at some library services. Feedback from library services highlighted that the survey was long (taking up to 30 minutes to complete) and required proficiency in English.

In addition, library services assisted the research team to set up focus groups and interviews with library management, staff and users. In some instances the focus groups and interviews were well subscribed to; however, in some instances there was limited engagement, particularly by library users.

When viewing the evaluation findings, it is important to bear in mind that there were limited participant numbers at some library services.

PARTICIPANTS

There were over 1,030 participants across the both waves of data collection.

Of these, 574 library users participated in focus groups, interviews and/or the online survey:

- 14% were 25 years of age or under;
- 40% were aged 26–59 years;
- 35% were aged 60 years or over;
- 11% unknown.

Table 1: Participant groups – Waves One and Two data collection

Participant group	Survey*	Focus group	Interview
Library managers	15		17
Library staff	307	84	
Library eSmart Coordinators	-**		17
Library users: seniors aged 60+	129	62	10
Library users: adults aged 26–59	187	32	8
Library users: young people aged 10–25	49	25	8
Local government representatives			12
AMF eSmart Libraries team			3
Library industry representatives (Wave Two only)			4

* 64 library user survey participants did not provide their age.

** There were 15 eSmart Coordinators surveyed – They are counted under Library Managers and Staff.

Note: Some participants have been captured twice as they participated in a survey and an interview or focus group.

DATA ANALYSIS

Survey data was analysed using SPSS statistical analysis software.

Qualitative data was assessed via a thematic analysis of interview and focus group transcriptions.

The analyses and case studies presented here do not disclose the identities of libraries or evaluation participants who took part in the evaluation. Case study participants have been given pseudonyms.

OUT OF SCOPE

The following components of the eSmart Libraries initiative, undertaken by the AMF, were introduced in mid-2016:

- improved functionality of the system tool;
- more frequent visits to libraries
- offering of individual support sessions to eSmart Coordinators.

While this document refers to these components, they were not measured as part of this evaluation.

CONTEXT

The eSmart Libraries initiative has entered the market at a time of significant transformation in public libraries. Since its introduction in 2012, the initiative has been working with over 1,000 public libraries across Australia to implement the framework. During this time, a number of policy changes, programs and advocacy platforms have influenced the environment in which eSmart seeks to achieve impact.

Following are some of the key contextual influences:

- **Digital Hubs.** Commencing in 2012, this four-year initiative of the federal government was designed to increase digital literacy skills; help people learn how they might use the National Broadband Network (NBN) and other forms of internet connectivity; and be more aware of online safety (Australian Government Department of Communications 2013). Forty Digital Hubs were established throughout the country, including a number in public libraries. Librarians reported that the NBN will be good for their communities; and, in particular, that the Digital Hub program provided a new way for libraries to connect with communities as a community hub and site of social capital.
- **Telstra's Tech Savvy Seniors.** This program was introduced in New South Wales as part of the NSW state government's Ageing Strategy in 2012, in Victoria in August 2014 and more recently in Queensland. It is delivered primarily through public libraries and offers senior community members the opportunity to undertake training to build their digital literacy and confidence. Telstra provides public libraries with funding and resources to deliver the program which includes library user training that complements the eSmart Libraries offerings (Telstra, 2017).
- **Government funding cuts, restructures and reforms.** Over the past few years, libraries across Australia have been impacted by government funding cuts, organisational restructures and reforms. These have included local government amalgamations and boundary changes in New South Wales, rate capping in Victoria and cost-cutting in Western Australia. Local and state government changes have impacted the way libraries are staffed and the tasks undertaken by staff. Importantly, these changes highlight the time pressures on staff, who are potentially overworked while also meeting new demands such as the need for greater digital literacy skills (Li, 2015).
- **Federal government changes to MyGov.** In 2013 the federal government began to roll out the MyGov platform, replacing the www.australia.gov.au platform. Since this time, government services (e.g., the Australian Tax Office) have been integrated into this online platform and many services can now be accessed by users online. Libraries reported being impacted by an increase in library users seeking support to navigate these online systems.

- **GoDigi.** Launched in October 2014 as a partnership between Infoxchange and Australia Post, this four-year digital literacy program has a focus on ageing community members, regional and remote communities, CALD communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and small business. It has five key components focused on face-to-face and online learning: a network of partner organisations; an online platform; pop-up face-to-face learning events; a mentoring program; and its National Year of Digital Inclusion (GoDigi, 2017).
- **Office of the Children’s eSafety Commissioner.** Established in 2015, the Office focuses on ensuring that young people have safe and positive online experiences. It provides online safety education; a complaints service for young people experiencing serious cyberbullying; and an online content scheme that enables individual to report illegal content. In 2016, Libraries ACT trialled the eSafe Spaces program; a joint initiative between the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and the Office. The program provides training to library staff in order to assist young people in the library to report a serious cyberbullying offence (Australian Government Office of the Children’s eSafety Commissioner, 2017).
- **Digital transformation agenda.** Established in July 2015, the Digital Transformations Office (DTO) was set up to oversee the transition of information and transactional government services to a digital government services delivery model (Hazlehurst, 2015, May 12). The DTO aims to merge all existing government websites into one location under the ‘gov.au’ domain. On 14 October 2016, the Coalition government announced that the DTO would be replaced with the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA), with an expanded portfolio “overseeing the rollout of improved capabilities to users of government services” (McLean, 2016).
- **Smart Cities Plan.** The federal government’s 2016 Smart Cities Plan highlights the potential of digital communications to “revolutionise the way governments engage with communities in the development of metropolitan and local plans and services” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016, p. 27). The Smart Cities Plan recognises the value of public data; and how anonymising and sharing data may assist government, industry and the community to better understand end-user needs and plan in ways that are citizen-focused. Digital inclusion and community engagement are not mentioned in the Smart Cities Plan, however if public libraries can position themselves as digital communication hubs linked to significant community infrastructure and urban renewal, they could potentially benefit from integrated planning activities around infrastructure and smart technologies.
- **ALIA advocacy.** In 2016, ALIA released its report, “The Library and Information Agenda 2016”, an agenda platform for the 2016 federal election. The report highlights the need to better resource public libraries as the federal government rolls out its digital transformation agenda; as

“library and information professionals have the skills to support the drive to e-government” (Australian Library and Information Association, 2016, p. 5). Boosting this capacity is particularly important for those in the community who remain digitally excluded.

These policy and programmatic changes highlight the interest in digital literacy and cybersafety; and the important role public libraries play as digital hubs for local communities, actively contributing to improved digital participation by providing access and education programs. The combination of locality with free access to devices, connectivity and education uniquely positions public libraries as spaces where digital participation can be promoted and supported (Jaeger, Bertot, Thompson, Katz & DeCoster, 2012).

The role of libraries as key brokers for community access and education in a rapidly changing digital environment, particularly regarding digital government services, is now well established (Bertot, Real & Jaeger, 2016). Libraries are recognised as uniquely located community spaces where a diverse range of users might seek assistance to access and learn more about digital resources. Libraries are uniquely positioned to work in partnership with other community organisations and government agencies to strengthen community outreach programs that support digital literacy and inclusion in hard-to-reach community groups (Bertot, 2016; Fitzgerald, Fletcher & Kop, 2016). Simultaneously, governments can benefit from the established relationships public libraries have with their communities; as these existing connections bolster opportunities for community consultation activities and user-centred service design.

Responding to change

Alongside the changes outlined above, the AMF has refined the eSmart Libraries initiative in response to sector feedback, evaluation findings and its own data collection. As a consequence, it has introduced changes to the online system tool and framework in order to streamline its application; and has offered more opportunities for one-on-one support to library services, increasing library visits. The AMF has also implemented key recommendations identified by the Wave One and Wave Two evaluation reports, including:

- online professional development for library staff;
- media campaigns with Telstra regarding the benefits of ‘digital-savvy’ libraries;
- advocating for eSmart Libraries to also be eSafe Spaces;
- integration of eSmart schools, libraries and the Digital Licence under one website;
- development of AMF Connect a fee-based service providing a range of workshops and seminars on cybersafety, bullying and the impacts of violence on children and young people. The workshops run for one hour and can be tailored to a library service. Each workshop can also be tailored to audiences including children, adults, parents, employees and the general community.
- introduction of an eSmart Membership for accredited library services is an annual subscription for accredited eSmart Libraries, offering a range of further resources and benefits to assist continued improvement.

KEY FINDINGS

OVERVIEW

Across both waves of data collection, library management and staff reported that they valued and supported the contribution of the eSmart Libraries framework; which enhanced libraries' capacity to respond positively to their users' digital needs. Management and staff also reported that the framework domains were important in generating library-wide cultural and behaviour change. In particular, library managers reported that the framework was adaptable to their library services' needs, indicating that the AMF has successfully addressed some challenges identified in Wave One regarding the perceived complexity of the framework.

Library services in Wave Two were three times more likely to have completed the framework and reached the 'sustaining' phase (Wave One = 30%; Wave Two = 100%). Pointing to the success of the eSmart Libraries framework, the following findings detail how library management and staff increased knowledge and confidence in ensuring their libraries were smart, safe and responsible.

...library management and staff increased knowledge and confidence in ensuring their libraries were smart, safe and responsible.

Across the two waves of data collection, an increased number of library managers valued and were actively engaged in the implementation of eSmart Libraries. This is an excellent outcome: library leadership support is essential in order for libraries to achieve eSmart accreditation and successfully sustain the framework.

...library management valued and were actively engaged in the implementation of eSmart Libraries.

Library management and local government representatives reported that the implementation of the framework has enabled them to demonstrate to their local government their expertise in digital literacy, cybersafety and online risk mitigation. This indicates that the eSmart framework is playing a crucial role in increasing the visibility of coordinated approaches to fostering smart, safe and responsible online engagements via libraries.

Across both waves of data collection, library staff reported that there is increased demand to support individual library users with their digital needs. There is a strong shift in library services away from the traditional transactional relationship; however, demand for one-on-one support to library users with limited digital literacy skills is placing additional pressures on staffing resources. Library staff consistently emphasised the need for further upskilling in digital technology, to enable them to service library users' requests for support and guidance.

Collectively, these findings indicate that the eSmart Libraries framework is playing a critical role in library services' capacity to enhance, support and guide digital literacy and cybersafety education.

AREA 1: IMPACT

Impact on library managers

“[eSmart Libraries has] given us structure and form and it’s given us a focus and it’s given us confidence. ...the confidence to be able to say this is what we do and this is how we do it and this is why we do it and we’re looking after this for the community.” (Library manager, metropolitan library service, Wave Two)

Across Waves One and Two of data collection there was an increase in the number of library managers who reported knowledge and confidence in being smart, safe and responsible online. Findings highlighted the importance of management’s engagement in order for the eSmart Libraries implementation to be successful.

Particular findings were as follows.

- **Digital knowledge.** An increased number of library managers in Wave Two self-reported improved digital safety knowledge as an outcome of the delivery of eSmart Libraries. This included knowledge of: how to stay safe online; how to protect privacy; how to report/act when coming across something unsafe (Wave One = 50%, Wave Two = 83%); and how to uphold responsibilities online (Wave One = 61%, Wave Two = 100%).
- **Online risk management.** Importantly, improved digital knowledge was seen to be translating into library managers’ capacity to manage online risks in their work with users. In Wave Two, library managers self-reported higher confidence in managing cybersafety risks, with 100% stating they were confident/very confident in managing a low-level risk; compared to 71% in Wave One. Further, 86% self-reported being confident/very confident in managing a serious risk, compared to 56% in Wave One. This highlights the positive impact of the eSmart initiative on management practices in libraries that have attained eSmart accreditation.
- **Engagement with eSmart.** Library management demonstrated increasing familiarity and support of the eSmart initiative across the two waves of data collection. Whereas, in Wave One, not all library

managers reported being familiar with all components of the initiative (attributing this to staffing and management changes, and organisation restructures), in Wave Two, library manager interviews highlighted a strong level of engagement and interest in the initiative. In Wave Two, library managers also reported that the framework was enhancing library services' work, guiding them via a systematic approach to internet user-access policies and online procedures; staff and library user training; and outreach in the community.

“[eSmart Libraries is a] great catalyst for change for us, around digital skills and thinking about some of these issues.” (Library Manager, metropolitan library service, Wave Two)

- **Policies and procedures.** In Wave Two there was an increase in the number of library managers who reported that the eSmart Libraries initiative was impacting to improve policies and procedures as well as staff and library user knowledge. (The number of library managers reporting benefits directly related to eSmart increased by 13% overall). In addition, across the two waves of data there was a 26% increase in the number of library managers who believed the framework had changed library practices for the better (Wave One = 57%; Wave Two = 83%).

...the increase in engagement in eSmart by library management across Wave One and Wave Two represents an excellent outcome for the eSmart Libraries framework.

A library service's readiness and capacity to implement eSmart Libraries is deeply influenced by its leadership and their capacity to support staff and engage in the initiative. As such, the increase in engagement in eSmart by library management across Wave One and Wave Two represents an excellent outcome for the eSmart Libraries framework. These results thus bode well for eSmart Libraries' capacity to produce flow-on benefits for library staff and users.

CASE STUDY: SMALL REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE

This rural library service, with a small staff group, supports a population of over 36,000. Approximately 30% of the community are library members. The library manager took the lead as eSmart Coordinator, as the service was small and they did not want to increase the already-busy workload of one of their branch staff members. The library service was an eSmart-accredited library in both waves of data collection.

Initially, the eSmart Coordinator established a working group with members from across the local council and developed an in-house cybersafety training package for all library staff to complete. They also developed an induction pack for the library's team of casual shelving staff.

Staff reported increased confidence after completing the in-house training and were reported as having been proactive in providing tech-based support to library users. The service has embedded eSmart into staff position descriptions, training and information packs for new staff. It has also embedded cybersafety messages in the training and support delivered to library users, the library website, social media, local media and the library outreach service.

Some of the initiatives undertaken include:

- delivering tech activities at secondary-school career days and to young people in the library;
- partnering with local eSmart primary schools on displays in the library;
- offering tech help sessions to build staff confidence in working together;
- delivering Telstra's Tech Savvy Seniors program;

- offering the Broadband for Seniors mentoring program;
- partnering with GoDigi to launch the National Year of Digital Inclusion;
- delivering information sessions with cybersafety experts.

Findings highlighted an increase in staff confidence between the two waves of data collection. Library management and staff also highlighted the importance of continuing to build staff confidence through refresher training and reminders. The library recently managed a cybersafety incident in the library; which demonstrated that staff were able to enact the library service's improved policies. Staff reflected positively on the importance of having a procedure in place and supporting each other in implementing it. The library has demonstrated exceptional leadership, and, through its library manager, continues to be a passionate eSmart advocate, mentoring another rural library service to implement the framework.

Impact on Library staff

“I’m much more rigorous and security-conscious than I was before.” (Staff member, rural library service, Wave One)

The evaluation results show increases in overall staff buy-in to the eSmart Libraries framework. Wave Two library managers reported an increase in staff who had been ‘willing participants’ in the eSmart Library journey (Wave One = 67%; Wave Two = 83%). Across the two waves of data collection, library staff, like library managers, reported increased confidence and knowledge in how to be smart, safe and responsible online.

Findings highlighted the importance of library staff being upskilled in digital literacy and cybersafety in order to continue to support library users’ safe use of technology in the library.

- **Staff competency and confidence.** An increased number of staff reported that they felt more ‘competent and confident online to support library users to use technology in the library’; with a 10% increase from 76% in Wave One to 86% in Wave Two. Staff feedback showed that they had a good grasp of the basic technology skills needed to help library users access technology in the library. This was particularly evident across the three library services visited in Wave One and Wave Two, with increased numbers of staff at all three libraries reporting improved confidence. This result was also validated by 100% of surveyed library management, who reported that that staff were provided with information to read about being smart, safe and responsible online.
...library staff...reported increased confidence and knowledge in how to be smart, safe and responsible online
- **Management confidence in staff competency/confidence.** Library staff’s self-assessments were corroborated by library managers’ assessments of staff capabilities: in Wave Two there were marked increases in the percentage of library managers who thought their library colleagues felt competent/confident online (Wave One = 50%; Wave Two = 83%); and who reported ‘improved staff knowledge and confidence in how to be smart, safe and responsible online’ as a key benefit of implementation (Wave One = 86%; Wave Two = 100%). Only one manager was ‘unsure’ about the impact of eSmart, saying staff had a reasonable amount of knowledge before the framework was implemented.

- **Managing online risks.** Results in Wave Two showed increases in overall confidence levels amongst staff for managing both ‘low-level’ (Wave One: 47%; Wave Two = 59%) and ‘high level’ (Wave One = 35%; Wave Two = 48%) cybersafety risks in the library. Across both rounds of data collection a large number of staff (Wave One: 20%; Wave Two: 30%) reported that they were ‘undecided’ regarding their confidence in managing ‘serious cyber-safety incidents’.

Whilst it might be desirable to see increased staff confidence in managing serious online risks, the latter finding does not necessarily represent a failure of the eSmart Libraries framework. It is possible that, as library staff’s digital literacy has increased, they have simultaneously become more aware of risks and the complexity of handling serious issues. Individual library staff should not be handling serious online risks without the guidance of their library managers. As such, the ambivalence library staff expressed in this regard was appropriate, as long as library staff are aware of the procedures for seeking appropriate support and guidance if they encounter serious risks.

“Previously, if [Manager] had said let’s implement tech time on [a] Monday morning, where anyone can ask anything and anybody would help them, the staff would have had a little panic attack out the back...whereas what I saw when [Manager] said we are going to have tech time it will be at 10:30am ...everyone said oh yeah that’s a great idea...” (Staff member, rural library service, Wave One)

- **Staff training.** eSmart appears to be having an impact on staff training: more library managers and staff reported that staff had participated in training (Managers – Wave One = 80%, Wave Two = 100%; Staff – Wave One = 30%, Wave Two = 50%). Wave Two findings highlighted that staff training was most commonly delivered by a library colleague, rather than an external agency or the AMF. Across both waves of data collection, staff and management consistently reported the need for ongoing and refresher training in cybersafety and new technologies, due to the demand on the library service. Furthermore, they indicated that this should remain a key focus of eSmart Libraries implementation for libraries, whether they are just commencing their eSmart journey or in the sustaining phase. The AMF has developed an eSmart Membership model and AMF Connect (a consultancy service) that libraries may mobilise to assist in upskilling staff.

CASE STUDY: LARGE REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE

This busy regional library service delivers a large range of programs through its nine branches. The service experiences high rates of computer and wi-fi use.

The eSmart Coordinator for the service is a senior staff member. The library service has a large staff group who, in the initial stages of the implementation of eSmart Libraries, reported limited digital literacy skills overall.

When the research team first visited this library service, the service was halfway through the implementation of eSmart Libraries, but had stalled due to both internal restructuring and the challenge of bringing the working group together amid competing priorities and limited time. By the time of the research team's second visit, the library had reached eSmart accreditation. The restructure now allowed the delegation of tasks by the eSmart Coordinator to other staff members, facilitating new momentum.

With a large staff group, ensuring the upskilling of staff has been both a challenge and an opportunity for the library service. Initial approaches to upskilling staff included:

- providing staff with digital devices to explore in staffrooms;
- upskilling staff by 'buddying up' on training;
- awareness-raising sessions in staff meetings;
- recruiting new staff with digital literacy skills.

In the 12 months leading up to Wave Two data collection, the service has had a stronger focus on upskilling staff in digital literacy through the implementation of a new staff training model; in which the Digital Services Team trained a

small but core staff group in cybersafety and digital literacy skills. This staff group was then rostered to visit different library service sites to offer users and staff guidance and advice. At the second evaluation visit, this new approach was still in its infancy and the service was still working through how to further build staff capacity. However, Wave Two findings highlighted a slight increase in staff who reported reading information about being smart, safe and responsible online. The second evaluation visit also highlighted an increase in numbers of staff who felt competent and confident online; were able to support users to use the technology in the library; and reported that their colleagues felt confident online.

The library service had also received NBN Digital Hub funding for one of its branches. With the wrap-up of this funding it integrated its digital hub activities across the service. Digital services offered to library users now include: one-on-one digital literacy support; drop-in tech sessions; how-to sessions on using e-books, tablets and smartphones; cybersafety sessions.

Wave Two findings highlighted a 19% increase in library users who reported feeling supported to manage online risks in the library. The library service will continue to use the eSmart Libraries framework to trigger its ongoing review of approaches, policies and procedures regarding the promotion of cybersafety and digital literacy across the service. The service is keen to mobilise its working group to focus on broader community engagement.

Impact on Library users

“I feel safer online just because of the course I’ve done [through the library].” (Adult library user, rural library service, Wave Two)

Direct impacts on library users are difficult to attribute specifically to eSmart, as the work undertaken through the framework is largely unseen by library users. The evaluation shows that enhancing library staff’s capacity to support users to access technology in smart, safe and responsible ways significantly enables users to maximise the benefits of their online engagements through library services. Strategies for ensuring the best user outcomes include staff training; policy and procedural changes; and targeted digital literacy and cybersafety activities branded as eSmart.

Findings were as follows:

- **In-library cybersafety initiatives.**
Between Waves One and Two, greater numbers of library managers and staff reported an overall increase in cybersafety initiatives being undertaken by libraries, as outlined in Table 2.

...enhancing library staff’s capacity to support users to access technology in smart, safe and responsible ways significantly enables users to maximise the benefits of their online engagements through library services.

Table 2: Cybersafety initiatives undertaken by libraries, as reported by managers

Cybersafety initiatives	% of respondents	
	Wave One (N = 7)	Wave Two (N = 8)
Training for the public (groups and/or individuals)	100	100
Visual advertising (e.g., cybersafety posters/brochures)	43	100
Cybersafety ‘help button’ on all computers	14	43
Guest speakers on responsible internet use and cybersafety	43	43
Library website links to cybersafety awareness information	57	86
Staff training in cybersafety and digital literacy	57	100
Targeting children (e.g., free training, information sessions, parent consent forms)	0	43
Internet Terms and Conditions of use	14	100
Other (e.g., networking)	43	14

- **Visibility of cybersafety initiatives.** In Wave Two, library users reported a slight increase (9%) in the visibility of cybersafety initiatives within libraries; and 17% more library users reported seeing a poster and/or other media about eSmart in the library, demonstrating that libraries in the sustaining phase are gradually raising the profile of eSmart.

Table 3: *Cybersafety initiatives in the library, as reported by library users*

Questions regarding cybersafety initiatives	% of respondents	
	Wave One (N = 235)	Wave Two (N = 141)
Have you seen any advertising for cybersafety training in your library?	41	43
Have you seen any posters/media about eSmart in the library?	30	47
Over the past year, have you noticed any changes to how your library provides internet services?	28	35

- **User willingness to approach staff for cybersafety help.** There was a 12% increase in the number of library users who said they would ask staff for assistance if they came across something unsafe online at the library (Wave One = 72%; Wave Two = 84%). The number of library users who said they would not ask for assistance remained consistent across both rounds of data collection; with this cohort reporting, for example, “I am confident enough to deal with the issue myself”.
- **Cybersafety information sources.** As Table 4 indicates, library users reported that they accessed a variety sources for information and education about cybersafety. Users’ reliance on the library as an information source was reasonably consistent across both waves of data.

Table 4: *Library users’ cybersafety information sources*

Cybersafety information sources	% of respondents	
	Wave One (N = 278)	Wave Two (N = 151)
Media	27	16
Work/colleagues	21	17
Friends	12	16
Library	10	12
School	6	19
Home (e.g., parents or other family)	1	7
Other*	12	7

*Other: personal computing experience or IT training, online research, computer magazines, the general community, or a mix of sources.

Note: an increased number of young people responded to the survey in Wave Two of data collection. This likely accounts for the increase in numbers citing school as an information source.

- **Diversity.** Across both waves of data collection, participating library services highlighted the diversity of library users requiring access to technology. In particular, library managers and staff discussed the need to support library users with limited digital literacy skills, including seniors, people seeking employment, and newly arrived and/or CALD community members. Library services are one of only a few community spaces where community members with limited access to technology can gain access to both technology and support. The AMF could consider providing targeted strategies and resources to meet the needs of these groups through the eSmart Libraries framework.

Case studies: Library users' access to technology

LIBRARY USER #1 (ADULT), METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SERVICE

John is a regular computer user at his local metropolitan library service. The library service has a large number of public computer terminals as well as free wi-fi access. It promotes its online safety and digital literacy training programs through an event program and website.

John is new to computers: he has been teaching himself to use them in the library over the past two years. He cannot afford to have a computer at home and has not been able to get his landlord to install an internet landline. Free access in the public library has allowed him to start to learn about the internet and to develop his digital literacy. He has recently purchased a wi-fi dongle and has a tablet, but he still visits the library regularly to access email.

John has not participated in any training programs. He is not aware of any for his age group (26–59 years), although they do exist.

When he needs support, which is often, he calls on the library staff, and, in particular, the IT staff. He writes down the instructions they give him in order to improve his knowledge and to help minimise the number of times he has to ask for assistance.

“The staff are really great here... they have helped me out a lot...”

John tries to be safety-conscious online. He's conscious of having a strong password; thinks a lot about whether emails may be spam; and asks staff if he is unsure. He will continue to use the internet in his public library for the foreseeable future. The library service offers him not only free access, but also staff from whom to seek advice as he navigates the online space.

LIBRARY USER #2 (ADULT), METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SERVICE

Peter moved to Australia with his wife and children a year and a half ago. When they arrived, they had to quickly find a house to move into. The house they rented was a new property in a newly developed area of the city, and didn't have internet or a phone line installed. It took four and a half months to get a phone line, due to issues between the phone company and the landlord. Peter and his family found the local library and started visiting regularly to access books, DVDs and the internet. The library has played a crucial role in their lives. All Peter's job searches and job applications were done online. Being able to get online in the library meant that Peter could find employment.

“It made an enormous difference to our lives... It meant that we could lead a normal life whilst we waited for things to be installed at home, and starting work...”

Peter's local library is an eSmart Library. He has noticed some 'cybersmart' initiatives around the library, such as the Deep Freeze on the public computers, which deletes any previous user's data from the public computer once they have logged out; and a recent cybersafety promotional campaign displayed on banners in the library. Peter's experience of asking for assistance with technology in the library has been positive.

“[E]ach and every employee here [is] always there, you ask them something, they help immediately...”

LIBRARY USER #3 (YOUNG PERSON), METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SERVICE

Sarah is a 19-year-old who has been visiting her local metropolitan library service with her sister since she was in prep. Sarah uses the library service to borrow books and to study. Until a couple of months ago she didn't have the internet at home; and until she started university a year ago she never had a computer. All her primary and secondary school study was undertaken at the library, where she could access the computer and internet free of charge. For example, she would use the computers to work on her chemistry practical assignments and geography reports, and she would print off any slides or reports required by teachers.

The library service also promoted local support services and, through her engagement with the library, Sarah learnt about and engaged with the youth services programs in her area.

“I would not have done half the things if it wasn't for that.”

The library service that Sarah visits has almost 50 public-access computers and delivers a range of digital literacy programs. The service became eSmart in 2016. It promotes its eSmart Libraries status through the website and within the physical library.

It has recently started to run Telstra's Tech Savvy Seniors program in different community languages.

Sarah is one of many students regularly using the library space for study. This library is broadly considered to be a safe place in the community for families to go. Reflecting this, Sarah considers the library to be a safe place; in particular, regarding accessing the internet.

“[A]t home you can hide in the corner and nobody can see what you are doing. But in a public library, people are walking by, there are librarians. It is a really open space.”

She believes the library is a safe place for children.

“I'd pretty much guarantee safety for kids, it's a good environment and the librarians are pretty vigilant about what's happening.”

Sarah values the library, as it has played an important role in her access to technology for education, as well as reading for enjoyment.

“I do not want the library to go away. I need it here forever.”

AREA 2: IMPLEMENTATION

“eSmart underpins all that we do with technology; the message is reinforced through training. Our position descriptions for staff all include an eSmart statement. Our customer charter includes an eSmart statement. We have thought about how best to [promote] the eSmart message through outreach activities and resources.” (eSmart Coordinator, regional library service, Wave One)

The AMF’s rollout of the eSmart Libraries initiative saw an increase of registered library branches from 361 in 2014 to 1,056 as at May 2017, with 313 individual library branches reaching full eSmart accreditation. This represents a significant achievement in scaling the framework and positioning it for maximum impact across the sector. All seven library services that took part in Wave Two data collection had reached eSmart accreditation and were in the sustaining phase of their implementation. As such, in Wave Two there was reduced focus on the challenges to implementation, compared to the Wave One interview and focus group findings.

Specific findings were as follows.

- **Ease of implementation – library managers.** Importantly, as mentioned above, in the Wave Two survey findings, no library managers reported experiencing challenges to implementing eSmart; compared to more than half of respondents in Wave One. Whereas Wave One library managers described the initiative as, for example, “a very involved and challenging process” and rated this as their number-one learning, in Wave Two this issue was rated last and not considered a key learning. This is likely because library managers had, in general, worked through the eSmart Libraries framework and were therefore more familiar and comfortable with it.
- **Ease of implementation – eSmart Coordinators.** Showing a similar trend, survey findings highlighted that reduced numbers of eSmart Coordinators in Wave Two (6%) experienced challenges in implementing the eSmart framework. Challenges that were consistently reported by eSmart Coordinators across both waves of data included lack of time to dedicate to implementation; limited staff resources dedicated to implementation; management challenges such as a lack of buy-in or willingness to allocate time; and complex organisational policy processes.

- **Management engagement.** As mentioned in Area 1, there was an increase in management engagement in the eSmart initiative. In addition to the statistics reported above, in Wave Two library managers also reported increased engagement in eSmart working groups (Wave One = 43%; Wave Two = 67%); and accessing online eSmart resources (Wave One = 50%; Wave Two = 60%). Libraries that had successfully reached eSmart accreditation across both waves of data showed increased management engagement in the initiative.
- **Participation in eSmart.** An increased number of library staff participated in the eSmart Libraries initiative in Wave Two (Wave One = 75%; Wave Two = 88%). Implementation appeared to be translating into greater staff awareness and capacity to support users' digital engagements. Greater numbers of library staff reported that they had accessed online resources (Wave One = 48%; Wave Two = 71%). There was also a slight increase in the number of staff who had read information about being smart, safe and responsible online (Wave One = 62%; Wave Two = 68%) and implemented what they learnt within the library (Wave One = 47%; Wave Two = 53%).
- **Staff training.** A key finding was the importance of upskilling staff to support library users' cybersafety and digital literacy education. Overall, the results show that one third of all library staff had undertaken training as part of their involvement in the eSmart Libraries initiative in Wave One, with this percentage increasing to more than half in Wave Two (51%). This indicates that eSmart is assisting libraries to prioritise staff training, which is an important component for delivering on library users' needs. A majority of staff reported that the training had met their needs (Wave One = 75%; Wave Two = 71%), demonstrating that the eSmart training components were meeting expectations and provided relevant training. Library services, and particularly larger services, face challenges in upskilling large staff groups, due to rapid technological change. Some libraries had been highly successful in engaging their staff in training and related capacity-building activities.
- **Communication with the AMF.** eSmart Coordinators reported strong levels of satisfaction with the AMF's communication processes across both rounds of data collection. In response to the recommendations arising from Wave One of data collection and analysis, and sector and library-services feedback, the AMF increased its engagement with registered library services to support implementation of the framework. The AMF reported that its strategy had been to increase visits to library services; to provide more one-on-one support to eSmart Coordinators; and to streamline the framework via the online system tool.

- **Cross-sector communication.** It is worth noting that AMF reported that they could benefit greatly from hearing stories from libraries that have been successful in implementing eSmart, in order to help scale opportunities across the sector.

Comparative findings across Waves One and Two show that there has been positive progress, with successful implementation of the framework correlating with increased management and staff engagement. This highlights the importance of active engagement in the rollout by library management and staff. Implementation of the framework will continue to be an ongoing challenge for library services, due to competing priorities and requirements. As such, the AMF will need to reflect on its ongoing approach and engagement with library services to support implementation.

AREA 3: PARTNER AND INDUSTRY OBJECTIVES

“[eSmart Libraries is] ...an opportunity for libraries to be part of the conversation about the digital world... [It showcases] that libraries are just as much about digital literacy now as they are about print literacy.”
(Library industry representative, Wave Two)

Digital inclusion

Wave One and Wave Two evaluation findings identified that library services are among only a few community spaces where community members at different stages of life, and with limited access to technology, can gain both access to and support with technology.

An increased number of staff reported that they provided one-on-one support to library users from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds (Wave One = 38%; Wave Two = 68%) indicating that libraries were providing a critical avenue for digital inclusion for this group. Library services across both waves of data reported mixed engagement with young people; this was dependent on library location, access to study space, access to free wi-fi; and/or availability of youth-specific activities. Library services also reported that older Australians and adults with limited digital literacy were benefiting the most from support and access to technology in the library; and discussed many examples of providing assistance to these groups.

By raising the ‘smart, safe and responsible’ bar in libraries, eSmart Libraries is contributing to supporting these groups to build their digital literacy. Findings highlighted that there is more scope to enhance library services’ engagement – and thus to impact disadvantaged and marginalised groups – by working with the library sector to provide targeted messaging and support to those seeking employment, as well as newly-arrived and CALD community members.

By raising the ‘smart, safe and responsible’ bar in libraries, eSmart Libraries is contributing to supporting these groups to build their digital literacy.

“I think a lot of libraries are finding that because people are more mobile, they’re given devices, they’re not sure how to use them. A lot of our time now is spent with people, helping them to navigate their way around the online world...” *(Library manager, rural library service, Wave Two)*

Reaching young people

Libraries were found to be offering messages consistent to those of eSmart Schools regarding online safety; embedding appropriate policy and procedures to ensure safety; and helping to build a community of understanding and good practice around online safety. The majority of surveyed young people reported learning about cybersafety at their school (Wave One = 56%; Wave Two = 74%). Although young people are not the key target group for eSmart, it is important that eSmart messaging in libraries continues to be consistent with that of eSmart Schools.

If the AMF would like eSmart Libraries to reach more young people, it could consider a targeted approach focusing on key messages and support for young people who are, in particular:

- transitioning from education to employment;
- CALD;
- outside of mainstream education settings.

CASE STUDY: LIBRARY USER #4 (YOUNG PERSON), SMALL REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE

Kate is a secondary-school student who shelves at her local library after school and is a regular library user. Her local library service has reached eSmart status. She likes to go to her library to study, use the scanner and photocopier, and use the internet. Kate has been a library user most of her life, and although she says that she would come anyway, she thinks that the library is more appealing to young people because it has wi-fi and internet access. She thinks her library is a safe place because of its community feel.

“I feel like I have the right to be safe here”.

Kate thinks young people need to be well-educated before they go anywhere near the internet. She first learned about the idea of being safe online at school, although she thought that the library had really solidified her learnings.

“[T]he library has helped me more understand it.”

In particular, Kate has learnt more about privacy, ensuring her online profiles have the appropriate privacy settings. She had picked up brochures in the library that talked through privacy settings.

“[They were] a big eye-opener”.

Kate talked about the similarities between what she had learned at school and what she had learned from the library, in particular, about how you can enjoy online technology in a safe way.

Cybersafety

There was a 7% increase in the number of library staff who reported that eSmart Libraries was making some difference or a significant difference to how they managed cybersafety and cyberbullying in their library (Wave One = 47%; Wave Two = 54%). However, the evaluation was not able to determine the prevalence of cybersafety incidents in the library. Across both waves of data, library staff discussed a number of incidents – such as banking scams, access to pornography and cyberbullying – but these appeared to be exceptions rather than the rule. Staff reported particular concerns about educating library users in how to maintain their privacy online whilst accessing technology in the library.

The AMF's own pre- and post-implementation data seems to suggest there has been a reduction in the number of incidents that negatively affect library staff or users. There may be scope to further investigate this data with libraries, by undertaking a detailed needs assessment at the beginning of each library service's implementation, so that cybersafety incidents can be tracked over time.

AREA 4: PERCEPTIONS

Local government

“We made a decision to commit to [eSmart Libraries] because we feel it is important for us to be a quality service and to support our community.” (Local government representative, metropolitan library service, Wave Two)

Local government staff who oversee library services (directors or group managers) have the capacity to play an important role in the implementation of the eSmart Libraries initiative, as they are often the conduit between the library service and the local government executive and elected councillors. Across both waves of the evaluation, local government representatives affirmed the value of ensuring that libraries are a safe place for library users.

Wave One local government representative discussions focused primarily on the importance of eSmart in assisting library services to demonstrate their risk mitigation strategies in relation to online access in the library. Wave Two highlighted additional outcomes related to reaching eSmart accreditation; such as how the initiative could:

- provide a platform to profile the library’s work to senior council management and elected councillors;
- enhance libraries’ credibility with the community;
- improve staff confidence and capacity.

Wave Two interviews with local government representatives also highlighted the importance of continuing to engage with the AMF in the sustaining phase, and included some questioning of how that may look, moving forward. Opportunities exist for the AMF to capitalise on local government and libraries’ support of the initiative by profiling eSmart-accredited library services on relevant media platforms. The AMF could also seek further opportunities to build and leverage the eSmart Libraries network to promote knowledge-sharing, as well as practical strategies for fostering digital literacy and online safety between libraries. Opportunities identified by this evaluation include:

- utilising existing library network email lists to establish a community of interest or online blog;
- developing a peer mentoring platform and accompanying resources to encourage knowledge-sharing between library services;
- providing opportunities for library services to share knowledge and experience of implementing the framework via an annual conference or regular workshop series;
- utilising AMF Connect and eSmart Membership to provide ongoing resources and support.

CASE STUDY: LEVERAGING ESMART LIBRARIES POLICIES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

This library service was a large metropolitan service in a growth area of a major Australian city. The service reached eSmart status in 2016. Its municipality is implementing a Smart Cities program, which focuses on liveability, sustainability and economic prosperity, with a strong emphasis on technology. In a presentation to a Council meeting, the library demonstrated how the eSmart Libraries framework was supporting digital literacy and ensuring responsible, smart, safe access to technology. This was well received in the context of the Smart Cities program.

***“[We talked to] the Councillors about eSmart and what eSmart means and what we have achieved. That was well received. So I have to say it was a very proud moment for us.”
(Library manager, metropolitan library service)***

The local government manager charged with oversight of the library service suggested that the eSmart library policies could be implemented in other Council services. The library service has met with staff at a Council youth service facility to discuss whether and how the service could apply the library’s eSmart policies. Library service staff are looking to assist the youth service to implement some eSmart policies; as the service is engaging with young people but does not have in place the same level of cybersafety policy and procedures.

Library community

“[I]t was important that we undertook something like [eSmart Libraries] that had a lot of rigour around it [and] was a solid process that we had confidence in; so that we could get together and go, OK, I think we’re doing the best we can in this space...” (Library manager, regional library service, Wave Two)

In Wave Two of data collection, library staff were more likely to recommend eSmart Libraries to another library service (Wave One = 75%; Wave Two = 80%). The majority of library staff reported that there were benefits to implementing eSmart. Across both waves of data, staff reported improved staff knowledge and library-user knowledge of how to be smart, safe and responsible online as the main benefits.

Across the two waves of the evaluation, library services reported greater awareness of the Telstra, AMF and eSmart brands. In Wave Two, an increased number of library users had heard of eSmart Libraries (Wave One = 23%; Wave Two = 32%). Among those library users who recognised the eSmart Libraries brand, there was a 7% increase in the number that were aware of the Telstra Foundation partnership (Wave One = 41%; Wave Two = 48%). In Wave Two, close to two thirds of library staff (60%) were aware that the Telstra Foundation was a partner in the delivery of eSmart Libraries, compared to less than half in Wave One (47%). This suggests that as more libraries enter the sustaining phase, there may be a further positive shift in staff’s and users’ recognition of these brands.

CONCLUSION

This evaluation finds that eSmart is making a significant difference to libraries' capacity to develop a systematic and comprehensive approach to the promotion of digital literacy and online safety in Australian libraries. Comparative findings across the two waves of evaluation show that libraries that have reached eSmart status have more digitally confident management and staff. The evaluation also highlights that encouragement and support from organisational leadership is key to enabling participating libraries to reach eSmart accreditation.

...eSmart is making a significant difference to libraries' capacity to develop a systematic and comprehensive approach to the promotion of digital literacy and online safety...

The evaluation shows that, to maximise the impact of the AMF's suite of eSmart offerings, eSmart Libraries would benefit by targeting and supporting specific library user groups who are regular users of technology in the library. These include older Australians, young people transitioning from education to work, and newly arrived and CALD community members.

Further, to support libraries to maintain the momentum generated by eSmart Libraries, it is important that the AMF identifies opportunities and develops targeted strategies for further strengthening the eSmart community of practice; in ways that deepen knowledge-sharing, peer support, and cross-fertilisation of practical advice, programs and accompanying resources. Ongoing evaluation of the eSmart Libraries offering will be key to the AMF's capacity to deliver on this.

The eSmart framework improves library users' capacity to engage online in smart, safe and responsible ways in the library by upskilling library staff, improving policies and procedures, and providing access to relevant and quality training and resources. However, library users do not necessarily recognise the importance of eSmart in supporting libraries to provide spaces where they can go online with confidence. Cultural change takes time as well as significant background work, and this is not always visible to those who visit library services.

The eSmart framework improves library users' capacity to engage online in smart, safe and responsible ways in the library...

...libraries that have reached eSmart status have more digitally confident management and staff.

Whilst library users' awareness of eSmart could be improved, it is more important for eSmart to continue to nurture a community of practice among libraries in Australia, and to nurture the digital skills, competencies and interests of library staff. As key intermediaries, libraries and their staff are most likely to positively impact library users' online experiences.

Finally, the success of the eSmart Libraries framework to date strongly suggests there is significant scope to further build the eSmart Libraries community in Australia, and to translate the framework internationally.

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