# Australian public libraries statistical report 2021-22

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

The Australian public libraries statistical report 2021-2022 provides insight into the activities and usage of Australia's 1706 public library service points, and their changed usage during the mandatory closures and restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Key Statistics**



with more than





146 million
instances of collection usage



3.5 million

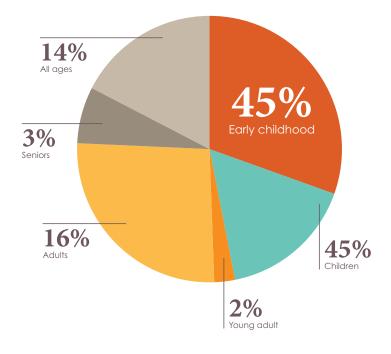
program participants, online and in-person

1,706
library service points

## Libraries are offering more programming for more people

- Overall, there were over 3.5 million participants in 259,000 library programs throughout the year.
- Libraries ran over 100,000 literacy programs, 17,000 workforce development programs, and 10,000 programs dedicated to digital inclusion. There was also a very high number of sessions aimed at an early childhood audience which reflects the important role libraries continue to play in pre-school literacy and learning.
- The diversity of programs on offer show libraries' response to community demand for programming aimed at particular life-stage demographics and needs.

#### Program sessions by target audience









## Collection usage remains steady

 Despite restrictions on in-person browsing and borrowing, total usage of public library collections was over 146 million instances, comprised of almost 103 million loans of physical items and more than 43 million loans, downloads and retrievals from electronic collections.



• Total collections of more than 42 million items (1.6 items per capita) were available for the use of the community, with expenditure of more than \$135.83 million to ensure that these collections remained up to date and relevant.

## Access to services is on the rise

- Access to public library services was provided through 1,706 service points, including 1,405 branches, 74 mobile outlets libraries serving hundreds of separate locations, and 227 other outlets.
- Whilst in-person visits to library facilities were still below pre-COVID more than 56 million physical visits were recorded.
- Library websites and catalogues had over 50,000,000 visits during the year.
- Libraries continued to provide the essential service of internet access, with patrons clocking up 4.8 million hours of wifi use across our branches.
- For the first time, libraries have reported on the number of hours booked in publicly available meeting rooms and spaces.
   Community groups, local organisations, library partners and individuals used these spaces for over half a million hours in 2021-22.



website visits during the year



hours of wifi use across branches



hours used in bookable meeting spaces





