# LIS sector watch

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**American Library Association's (ALA)**
*Report on Library Funding in the United States*
http://www.ala.org/libraryfunding
In the United States school, public and academic libraries have absorbed more than $50 million in funding cuts over the past year. ALA has found that libraries in at least 41 states report funding cuts of as much as 50 per cent. The report also discusses general trends occurring in libraries as a result of funding cuts.

*The People's Network:*
*moving forward* (UK)
Professor Peter Brophy, http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/id1414rep.pdf
The People's Network is an initiative aimed at making computers and network infrastructure available in public library branches throughout the UK. The initiative is designed to reach disadvantaged members of society and is being used to support both formal and informal learning. *The Peoples' Network: moving forward* reports on the impact of the project's first full year. The study concludes that the Network is a significant public-sector information technology project which is steadily giving real benefits to the ordinary citizens to whom it is directed.

*Overview of data in the museums, libraries and archives sector* (UK)
Simon Matty (ed), http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/ev_stats_overview.doc
A report published by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council presents, for the first time in one place, data about the United Kingdom's museums, libraries and archives sectors. As well as providing key information on the sectors, the report identifies the current best sources of information, offers comments on the data gathered and recent and continuing significant change in the library sector.

*Guiding principles for children's and youth services partnerships* — a new resource for ALIA members
http://alia.org.au/members-only/groups/cysqld/
ALIA's Queensland Children's and Youth Services Group has produced a brochure on six guiding principles for partnerships between librarians aimed at in-school situations but applicable sector-wide.

*Australia's strategic framework for the information economy 2004–2006: opportunities and challenges for the information age*
http://www.dcita.gov.au
The Federal Government has released its vision and policy for Australia's information economy for 2004–2006. The report sets out the priorities and strategies adopted by the government to achieve an information economy where government, business and society are all connected, can participate with confidence, are open to innovation, and can collaborate to maximise the economic and social benefits.

**The Australian Telecommunications Network**
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee, http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/ecita_ctte/tele_network/report/index.htm
The Senate Committee examined the capacity of the Australian telecommunications network in relation to the public switched telephone network, access to broadband services, investment patterns and requirements, regulatory issues and international telecommunications comparisons. The report concludes that Australia's telecommunications network was generally able to deliver adequate basic services to most Australians however significant weakness were found to exist.

**Broadband adoption by agriculture and local government councils**
Wondu Business and Technology Services for the Australian Local Government Association and the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, http://connect.alga.asn.au/
Continued government support is needed to improve broadband access for councils, businesses and individuals in regional areas. A survey of 200 councils found that eighty-nine per cent of urban councils were on broadband, compared to fifty-nine per cent in rural areas. The report recommends that higher speed and lower cost broadband satellite services, or services that can compete with satellite, should be developed as a priority.

*The Framework for collaborative action*
Library Board of Victoria and the Victorian Public Library Network,
http://www.slv.vic.gov.au
*The Framework for colloborative action* defines the way in which the Library Board of Victoria, through the State Library of Victoria, will partner with the public library network to deliver enhanced library services to Victoria's communities over the next five years.

*Creative reading: young people, reading and public libraries*
John Holden (UK), http://www.demos.co.uk
Libraries are the forgotten players in the creativity debate in the United Kingdom, according to a new report produced by Demos and the Reading Agency. The report finds that public libraries already play a vital role in nurturing reading but their potential to help the next generation to develop higher-order skills of creative reading has been greatly under-rated. The report also considers ways that libraries could make themselves more attractive to young people and could work in partnership with schools, youth services and other agencies.

*21st century libraries: changing forms, changing futures*
UK Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications
The report looks at the ways in which public libraries have re-invented themselves in the last decade and describes a number of future visions for public libraries that provide a framework for debate for those involved in the delivery of library services. The scenarios include the new civic landmark, the retail model, the neighbourhood lifelong learning centre, the mobile library or pod and several others. ∎