

Is the National Library of Australia your next step?



Sue Pedder, assistant director workforce planning, National Library of Australia

At the National Library of Australia we are a dedicated community of about 500 professionals, paraprofessionals and administrators committed to the collection and maintenance of a comprehensive record of Australia and the Australian people. Assisting the public to use and understand the Library's collection is a parallel objective of equal importance. We appoint about 45 people to vacant permanent positions each year, and most of these recruits hold tertiary qualifications. In addition, we have a Graduate Program which takes two or three applicants each year. All appointments and promotions are based on the principle of 'the best person for the job'. It is expected that graduates will have a long career in the Library as they progress through to more senior levels.

There is a wide range of career opportunities in the organisation. An employee might be researching the provenance of an exquisite eighteenth-century First Fleet watercolour, flow-charting steps in a document supply system, arranging for an Australian folk-singer to be recorded, answering reference inquiries from the other side of the world online and in real time, digitising images for a national touring exhibition, acquiring and cataloguing unique books in our extensive Asian Collection, or providing access to one of the hundreds of thousands of maps we hold.

We invest a lot in on-the-job training. Most of this is in specialist areas relevant to our work, such as cataloguing, digital collection management, specialised IT applications, and conference presentations. In addition, we offer training in more general areas such as teamwork, leadership, ethics, governance, and health and

safety. There are also research and study fellowships available for new graduate librarians.

The Library's key challenge over the next decade is to continue to harness the benefits of new technologies to provide the Australian community with quick and easy access to our resources. We are working at the cutting edge in many areas — digitisation, digital preservation and virtual reference. We are looking for people who are comfortable working with IT applications and learning new tasks associated with electronic media, and who have appropriate skills for an automated library environment.

We need staff members who can communicate effectively with a variety of people within a team and who can adapt quickly to alterations in service delivery demands and priorities — people who are happy to pitch in and get the job done while maintaining a positive attitude. We are looking for people who are committed to the objectives and strategic directions of the Library and who want to make a contribution to our work, now and into the future. If you are keen to come and work for us, vacancies are notified on our website <http://www.nla.gov.au/jobs/index.html>. You could also try our online temporary employment register at <http://www.nla.gov.au/jobs/temp.html>. It is increasingly used by business units within the organisation to source staff. If you are applying for a job, do get in touch with the contact officer and find out as much as you can about the position before you apply. Finally, be prepared to be flexible and to demonstrate your willingness to work hard, to take on new challenges, and to understand and engage with the Library's core objectives. ■

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