



STATE LIBRARY

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

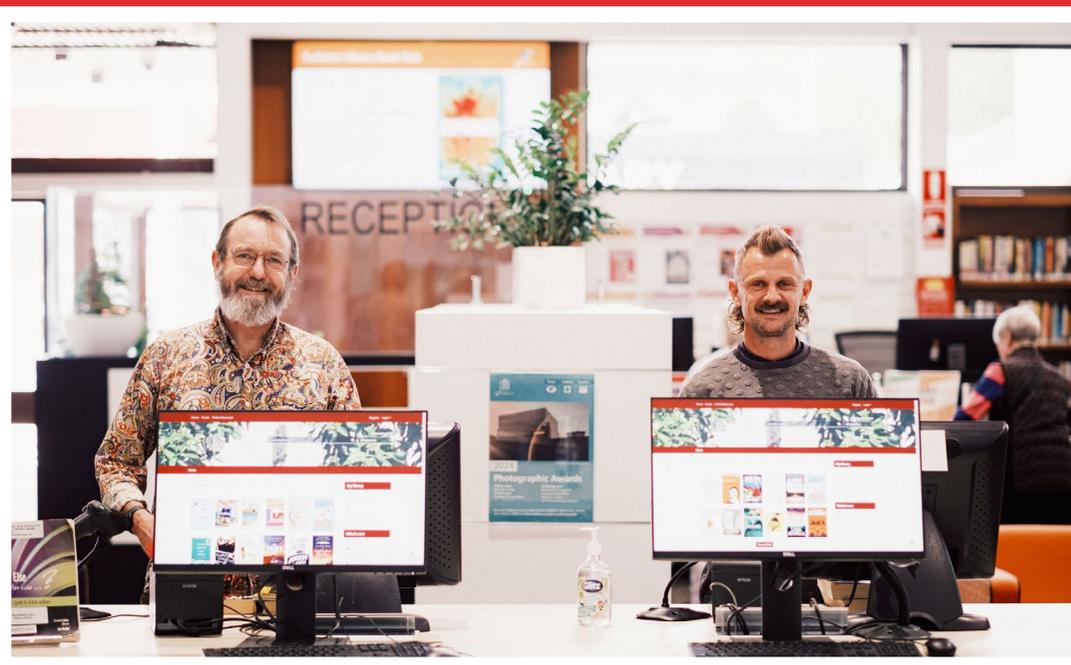


# Kay Poustie Scholarship 2026

FOR LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS IN WA

*Image: OPAC self-serve, Subiaco Public Library, 2024 | Courtesy City of Subiaco*

## Application Guidelines



# The Kay Poustie Scholarship

The Kay Poustie Scholarship supports the development of professional staff working in the Western Australian public library network and aims to enhance library services through evidence-based research and experiential learning experiences that contribute to the achievement of outcomes aligned to the WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022–2026.

The annual scholarship offers \$8,000 to enable library professionals and practitioners to undertake research locally or internationally to experience innovative and best practice library services that have the potential to enhance the Western Australian public library network. Recipients of the scholarship are required to produce a research report and present their findings.

In addition to State Library, Public Libraries WA and ALIAWest, numerous personal donors are financial supporters of the scholarship. To support the Kay Poustie Scholarship and read past research reports please visit our website.



*Receiving the Kay Poustie Scholarship meant a great deal to me, both personally and professionally. It gave me the time and space to explore ideas I care deeply about and to reflect on the broader impact public libraries have on people's lives. I'd genuinely encourage anyone who is considering applying to do so, as it's such a rare opportunity to pause, learn, and contribute something meaningful to the sector.*

*- Vanessa Paun, Winner 2024 Kay Poustie Scholarship*



Find out more  
[slwa.wa.gov.au](http://slwa.wa.gov.au)



Image: Vanessa Paun, 2024 | SoCo Studios



Image: City of Perth Library | Courtesy City of Perth

## About Kay Poustie OAM (1944-2009)



Kay Poustie's long and distinguished career in the library profession displayed her passion for libraries as a library manager, as a leader in the profession, and as a Member and later Chairman of the Library Board of Western Australia. In all these spheres she demonstrated hard work, dedication and a can-do attitude. As a librarian she was held in high regard by colleagues locally, nationally and internationally.

Kay began her career in Victoria before moving to Western Australia in 1978 where she had a 22-year association with the City of Stirling. In 1985 Kay became City Librarian and Manager, Libraries, Arts and Culture, with responsibility for six public libraries, 85 staff, and a \$4.5 million dollar budget, as well as community arts, exhibitions and cultural activities for the City. During this time all

branches were automated, many of the libraries were relocated or renovated and she initiated a number of innovative programs.

Kay first joined the Library Board of Western Australia in 1990, serving until 1993 as a representative for the Local Government Association. She returned in 1998 and served for a further eight years as representative of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). Her ability and experience was recognised when she was elected Chairman of the Library Board briefly in 2001, and then between 2002 and 2006.

During this time, Kay oversaw major developments in relations between the State Library of Western Australia and Public Libraries Western Australia, including the signing of the Framework Agreement and the allocation of a further \$10.3 million in state funds for library resources. Other achievements included the launch of the Better Beginnings program and the establishment of the Historical Records Rescue Consortium.

# The Scholarship

In 2026 the scholarship will be offered for a research project to the value of up to \$8,000.

Travel and attendance at professional development events as part of the research may be funded by the Scholarship, provided it identifies as part of the research proposal.

Applications for the 2026 Kay Poustie Scholarship will be aligned to the pillars of the *WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026*:

## ▣ Libraries Strengthening Communities

- Literacy and lifelong learning
- Individual and community wellbeing and resilience
- Stronger and more connected communities

## ▣ Digitally inclusive libraries

- Free and universal access to computers, emerging technologies and the internet
- Building digital skills and confidence
- Efficient access to collections and services

## ▣ Public Libraries as essential community asset

- Impact and value of public library services as the basis for informed decisions on strategic investment in community focused services



Image: Subiaco Public Library, 2024 | Courtesy City of Subiaco



Image: Harmony Week Event, City of South Perth Public Library, 2024 | Louise Coghill

## Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- ▣ be a qualified library practitioner working within the West Australian public library network including State Library;
- ▣ if the application is from a team, then at least one team member must be a qualified library practitioner working with the Western Australian public library network including State Library;
- ▣ teams can include a maximum of 6 people;
- ▣ have at least two years of professional experience in the library sector;
- ▣ have the support of their work organization, prior to submitting an application;
- ▣ be able to demonstrate a commitment to the library profession through continuing professional development; and
- ▣ be over the age of 18.

## Eligible Costs

A maximum of \$8,000 will be awarded to one applicant (an individual or a team) with the proposed use of the funds outlined in the research project application. The funds may be applied to:

- ▣ travel to support the research;
- ▣ attendance at professional development events related to the research topic; and
- ▣ other costs (detailed in the application) associated with the research.

# Conditions of Scholarship

The applicant (or applicant team) will be required to:

- submit an application for the funds detailing how the project will be carried out as per the details below;
- prepare a formal written research report, suitable for presentation to their Council, Public Libraries WA and State Library, outlining the research undertaken, the findings and clear recommendations which could be applied to the Western Australian public library network;
- share the research findings and how they could be utilised to assist the West Australian public library network. This may be through presentations to a meeting/s and / or via an article for a professional journal, but as a minimum will include a presentation to at least one Public Libraries WA meeting and a State Library staff meeting;
- be available for the Library Board Awards night hosted by State Library in July 2026 (date to be advised);
- be available to participate in photos, sound recordings, videos and acknowledge that State Library and Public Libraries WA has the right to use such publicity materials in any medium (including without limitation, the internet) and in any reasonable manner it sees fit to publicise the scholarship; and
- complete and present all research outputs within two years of receipt of the scholarship funds.

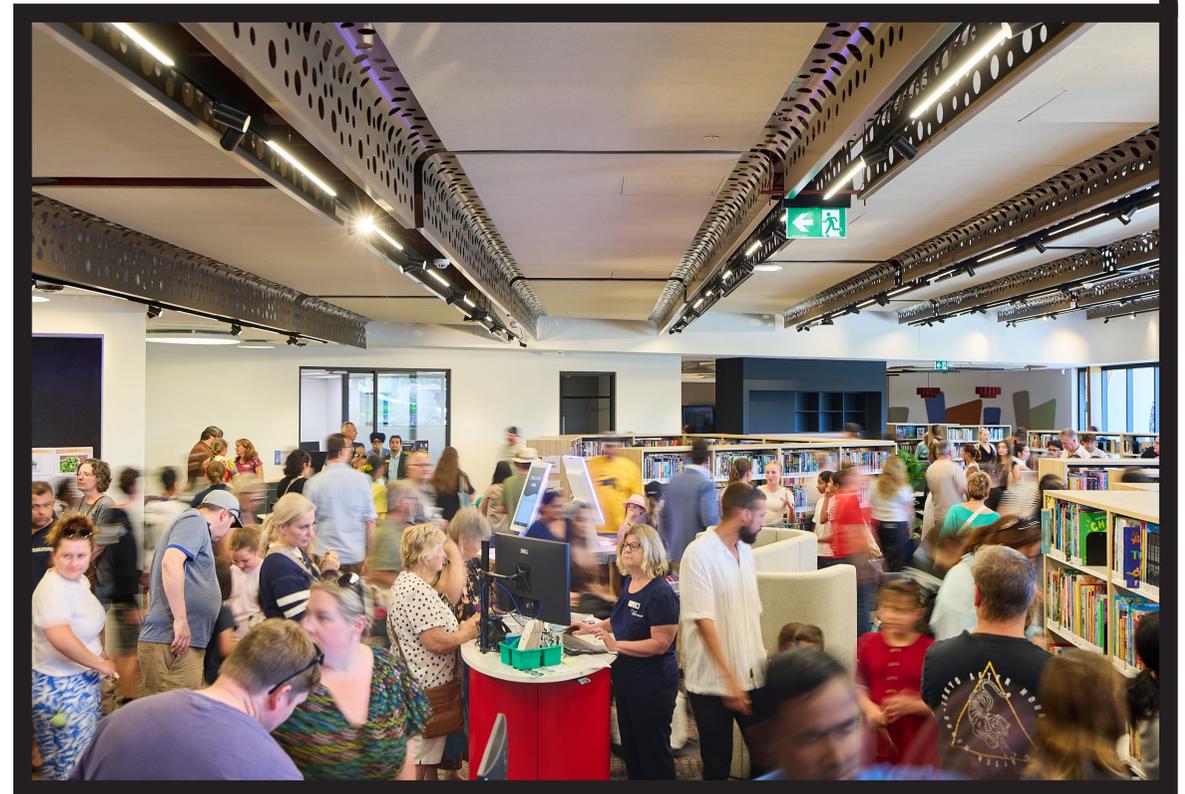


Image: Dordak Kepup Open Day, City of Wanneroo, 2025 | SoCo Studios

Image: City of Belmont Ruth Faulkner Library and Belmont Museum, 2020 | Courtesy City of Belmont

## Application Assessment Criteria

- ▣ Alignment to the outcomes of the *WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026*
- ▣ Benefit provided by the research in demonstrating the value of public libraries and/or enabling the delivery of community outcomes.
- ▣ How the applicant proposes sharing the knowledge gained with the wider profession.

## Merit of the Applicant

- ▣ That the applicant's current qualification (level of achievement, knowledge and expertise) is sufficient for the proposed project.
- ▣ The applicant's written proposal demonstrates clarity, analytical thought and excellent communication skills.

Shortlisted applicants may be required to present their proposal to the selection panel.

No late applications will be accepted and the decision of the Selection Panel is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Both State Library and Public Libraries WA reserve the right not to award a Scholarship.



## The Selection Panel

**Catherine Clark AALIA**, Chief Executive Officer and State Librarian,  
State Library of Western Australia

**Gareth Dixon AALIA (CP)**, Committee Member Public Libraries WA  
(Inc), City of Armadale

**Dr Kerry Smith FALIA, AM**, Retired Associate Professor,  
Curtin University

**Steve McQuade**, Manager Public Libraries and Information Services,  
State Library of Western Australia

## The Application Process

Scholarship applications will open on Monday 23 February 2026. Applications will be open until 5:00pm Friday 27 March 2026.

All applications are to be submitted via the Online Application form and will be acknowledged by State Library. No late applications will be accepted.

## Notification Process

Applications will be shortlisted by the Selection Panel according to the application assessment criteria.

Shortlisted applicants may be required to make a presentation to the Selection Panel. The presentation is to be a maximum of 10 minutes followed by discussion and may be presented online or in person. Regional applicants will be provided with a telephone or online presentation opportunity.

The successful applicant will be confidentially notified as soon as possible after the presentations take place.



Image: Kununurra Public Library, Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley, 2025 | Acorn Photo

## How to submit your application

Applicants should complete and submit the Application Form available online and include:

- ▣ A written proposal addressing the Research Project, including the issue/question, research approach, rationale, benefits and promotion.
- ▣ Names and full contact details of two referees. One referee must be your current employer indicating their support for your involvement in the project. Both referees should relate to your ability to fulfil the requirements of the Scholarship.
- ▣ Resume: your resume should indicate your career path to date including a brief statement of your career objectives and your demonstrated commitment to the library profession.
- ▣ Budget - a breakdown of what you will utilise the Scholarship for.
- ▣ If you are entering as a team - all team members must complete the above personal information.

Applications will be structured as follows and should enable the judging panel to understand the purpose and proposed outcomes as well as how the funds are to be utilised:

1. Title of research topic
2. Key topics of interest (300 words)
3. Benefits: explain how the research will benefit the Western Australian public library system (500 words)
4. The research methods/approach and what will be the end product. (400 words)
5. Promotion of findings: explain how you propose to share your findings with the profession. (300 words)

Discover More

[slwa.wa.gov.au](http://slwa.wa.gov.au)



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[info@slwa.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@slwa.wa.gov.au)

Find out more



More information and application form:

[slwa.wa.gov.au/whats-on/awards-fellowships](http://slwa.wa.gov.au/whats-on/awards-fellowships)

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