

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2024





The University of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands within our footprint areas: Awabakal, Darkinjung, Biripai, Worimi, Wonnarua, Gomeroi and Eora Nations. We pay respect to the wisdom of our Elders past and present. We also acknowledge and pay respect to the other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations from which our students, staff and community are drawn.



FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN



In 2024, a central theme for our library has been the idea of 'library as partner'. Throughout the year, our team has innovated and collaborated to deliver spaces that connect and support our students and broader community. We have focused on the digital as an avenue for access and have continued to foster more open and inclusive learning communities.

This year saw months of hard work and cross-team collaboration to prepare for the new Student Hub in Auchmuty Library. Working together with colleagues in AskUON, International Student Support and Program Advice, we have developed a new integrated service model that will deliver more accessible and streamlined support to our students. In locating this service point in Auchmuty Foyer, the Student Hub will embed the library's role as a place of connection and support in the heart of the campus. Alongside this, we commenced renovations in Reading Rooms 1 and 2 to provide more varied and inclusive learning spaces for our current and future students.

In 2024, we continued our Future Library focus through a Digital First Collection Strategy, underpinned by continual system transformation. We implemented an integrated course readings management platform in preparation for 2025 courses and prepared for a new institutional repository. Our team spearheaded work to promote AI literacy and utilised user experience tools to enhance our digital platforms. By expanding our digital capabilities, we are supporting easier access to high-quality learning materials and creating more effective, people-centred learning environments.

Equity, community and access remained core to the library in 2024. We celebrated the publication of our first open education textbook, *Diagnosis: a Medical Education Game*, and over 375 open-access articles under our Read and Publish Agreements. These open publications promote greater visibility for our researchers while removing barriers to access for our students — all with the bonus of delivering a cost savings to the university. Engaging with our local community, our team showcased Newcastle's history through initiatives like the Creative-in-Residence program and Hunter Living Histories Showcase. Our team also championed equity and inclusion in the broader community. Through a team-led book swap event, our library raised over \$1,400 for the Indigenous Literacies Foundation, building awareness and community connection for students and staff.

I am proud to present our achievements for 2024 in the pages that follow. These successes are a genuine collaborative effort, and the result of the dedication and hard work of all our team.

KEY LIBRARY STATISTICS



83.3%
SATISFACTION
with the library by students ^[1]

ENGAGEMENT AND HELP



772,336
VISITS
to the library



1,038,207
VISITS
to the library website



3,537
VIRTUAL
ENQUIRIES



33,884
FACE-TO-FACE
ENQUIRIES



210
BOOKINGS
Special Collections Reading Room



11,832,440
VISITS
to Living Histories

COLLECTIONS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION



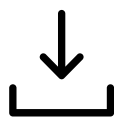
725,001
PHYSICAL ITEMS ^[2]



111,708
ELECTRONIC
JOURNALS



1,095,720
EBOOKS



5,753,062
ERESOURCE
DOWNLOADS ^[3]

NOVA

56,688
INSTITUTIONAL
REPOSITORY
OUTPUTS

SUPPORTING LEARNING AND EMPOWERING RESEARCHERS



8,024
**INFORMATION
LITERACY
ATTENDEES**



586
**ACADEMIC
CONSULTATIONS**
for Teaching and
Research Support



1,009
**RESEARCH
CONSULTATIONS**



1,513,859
**LIBGUIDE
VISITS**



43
**COPYRIGHT/IP
SESSIONS**



1,269
**RESEARCHER
WORKSHOP AND
WEBINAR ATTENDEES**

STUDENTS AS PARTNERS



37
**STUDENTS
EMPLOYED**



8
**PROFESSIONAL
INDUSTRY
PLACEMENTS**



5
**CAREER-READY
PLACEMENTS**



5
INTERNSHIPS

HUNTER LIVING HISTORIES ANNUAL REPORT 2024

The report highlights the important work and many achievements of the Hunter Living Histories initiative. The University of Newcastle Library's Hunter Living Histories (previously known as Coal River Working Party) was initiated in 2003 and takes a multi-disciplinary approach facilitating engagement and research around cultural heritage and history of our regions.

[1] Student feedback on University of Newcastle (SFUN) 2024

[2] Books, journals, other information sources.

[3] From COUNTER compliant vendors.

ACHIEVEMENTS

REIMAGINING OUR PLACES AND SPACES

Ongoing refurbishment work continued, aiming to **reimagine our spaces for active learning**. Reading rooms at the Auchmuty Library and study rooms at the Newcastle City Campus Library were updated and reconfigured. These improvements proved popular with students and close to 775,000 people visited our libraries in 2024.

Following 2023's Library Services Platform (LSP) implementation, **supply-side resource sharing** was reactivated on 26 September 2024. Some 579 materials from our collections were supplied to partner libraries in the final months of 2024.

eResources licensing information has been successfully migrated into the Library Services Platform (LSP), making use of system functionality and providing both library staff and end-users with up-to-date information about usage terms and license conditions.

Our commitment to enhancing **user experience (UX)** continued with scheduled research and subsequent improvements across our virtual library platforms. This year, we focused on refining our online publishing platforms, discovery tools, and authentication systems to better serve our users. Some **80 user experience (UX) activities** were facilitated by the library, helping us better understand the needs of our users and tailor our services and systems.

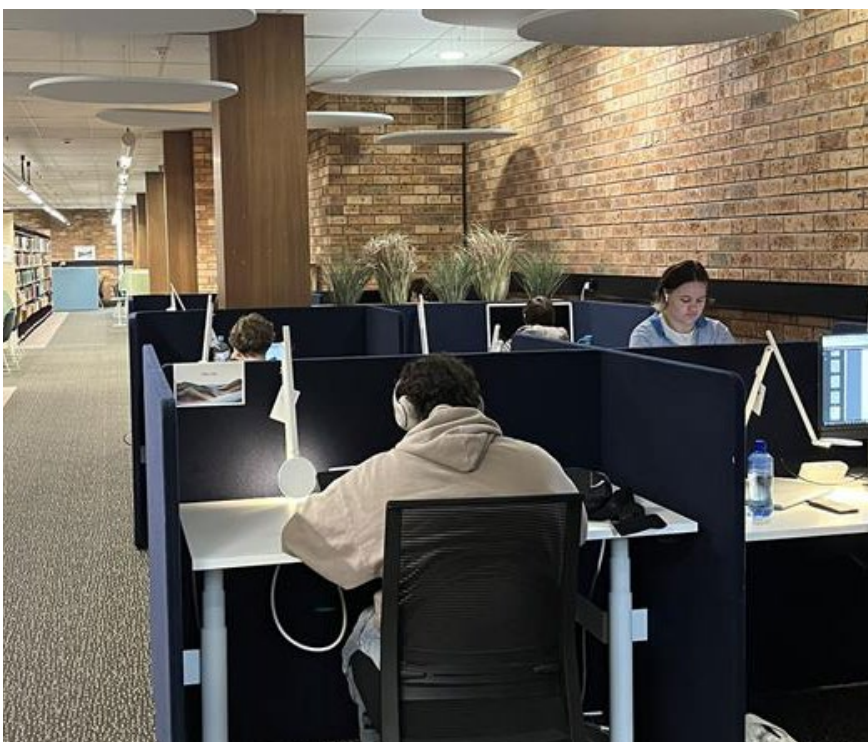
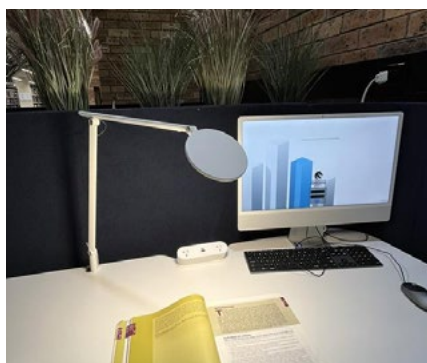
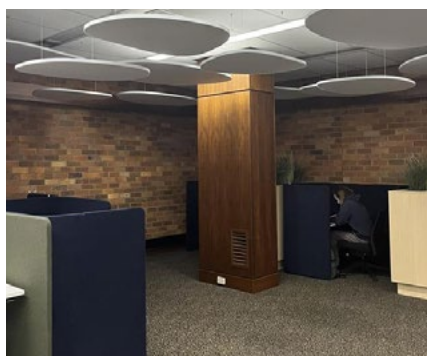
ENABLING DIGITAL CAPABILITIES

In early 2024, the library launched **Generative AI guides** for students, integrating them into the university's Learning Management System across all courses. The library developed both student facing and staff facing guides providing comprehensive information on generative AI tools and their appropriate use within our university. They have become the go-to guides for students and staff, with almost 19,000 visits in 2024 alone.

The library's **'Digital First' Collection Strategy** was noted by the Teaching and Learning Committee on 14 May 2024. The strategy aims to set forth the library's 'digital first' approach to the acquisition, management, and maintenance of collections, including how we will enable access via digitisation, provision of technology and delivery of digital literacy services.

The library migrated to a new **course readings management platform** with a go-live of January 2025. This platform integrates seamlessly with the Library Services Platform (LSP), ensuring students have consistent and reliable access to scholarly content while offering enhanced analytics to measure student engagement.

As part of our participation in the **CAUL Open Educational Resources (OER) Collective**, the library edited and facilitated the publishing of the **Diagnosis: a Medical Education Game** open textbook in November 2024. These initiatives are part of the library's commitment to supporting open access research and publishing.



ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In support of the university's **Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2025**, the library worked to advance accessibility in both our physical and online spaces, and across our services.

- During Semester 2, 2024, we engaged a **Disability Engagement student intern** to research best practices in accessibility, gather feedback from students with disabilities, and provide recommendations to the Library Executive.
- A **Library Accessibility Checklist** for Events and Programs was created, aiming to help library staff organise accessible and inclusive events, activations, and meetings.

To support the university's Future Students recruitment programs, we developed the **'Wow Factor' library tour/ experience** for school students visiting our campuses. This engaging and fun experience aims to showcase our library spaces and services, while also encouraging prospective students to consider studying at the University of Newcastle. As part of our scheduled review of the **Library Use Policy**, we have updated the access conditions to welcome secondary school students to study in our spaces.

The library achieved an **83.3% overall satisfaction result in the annual Student Feedback on University of Newcastle (SFUN) survey**, with particularly strong satisfaction results for library spaces, digital information resources and library services. The survey measures student satisfaction with all non-academic services at the university.

EMPOWERING RESEARCHERS

The **Library Researcher Needs Survey 2024** was launched in August 2024 to assess satisfaction with current library services and to keep pace with the changing needs of researchers. Responses indicated an increased level of satisfaction with researcher-focussed library services, in particular, copyright advice, strategic publishing, data support and publication impact. Insights into activities across the researcher lifecycle will be used to inform future services.

We also developed an **Industry Engagement support tool** to guide researchers in locating industry engagement support at the university. This interactive tool promotes key contacts within the university and highlights available library resources and support. The tool has been embraced by units throughout the university that support industry engagement.

In 2024, 72.83% of articles and reviews authored by the University of Newcastle were published as open access. This achievement is supported by the library's 15 Read and Publish Agreements and strategic funding for Article Processing Charges, specifically targeting open access publishing in Q1 journals not covered by these agreements. Over the past six years, the university has experienced an **average annual increase of 4% in open access publishing**.

Following the donation of Stan Masterson's 30-year collection of books, audio-visual materials and photographs in 2023, an accession was compiled in 2024 unlocking a new regional archives collection. The **Stan Masterson Collection** highlights early Newcastle activism around Aboriginal rights and is now accessible to researchers.



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The library team focused on making student events and activities inclusive and accessible in 2024. Welcome Week events invited students to explore our services and connect with their peers, and Stress Less activities offered students a calming break from studies, and aimed to promote wellbeing.

The ever-popular MakerSpace facilities at Auchmuty Library and Ourimbah Campus Library hosted students needing a break from study and provided a welcoming space for student clubs and groups.

A stand-out initiative has been the provision of free fresh fruit in the library, with an estimated 22,615+ pieces of fruit distributed to students in 2024 alone. This simple yet impactful gesture has been met with enthusiastic feedback, including comments like “love the library free fruit!!” and “More free fruit in library”, giving students another reason to come to the library.



“ Love the library free fruit!! ”

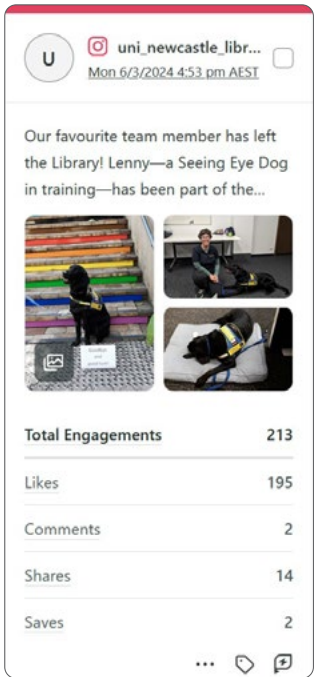
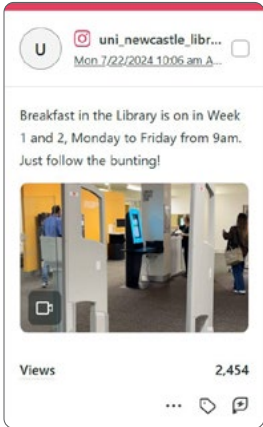
Student feedback



SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

The library's Instagram account achieved 158,000 impressions and 8,119 engagements in 2024.

Everyone's favourite post was a farewell to Lenny - a Seeing Eye Dog in training who spent much of the year with the library team.



REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

On 6 November 2024, over 50 people attended a live workshop performance of "The Reformation of Joseph Lycett," a play written by award-winning playwright and 2024 University Library Creative in Residence, Dr. Carl Caulfield. Dr. Caulfield aimed to write a play about the life and work of Newcastle convict artist Joseph Lycett (1774-1828) exploring his relationships with the Newcastle Commandant Captain James Wallis and also with the local Awabakal people.

Dr. Caulfield's research was supported by materials from the University's Special Collections, including rare prints and engravings. The Creative in Residence program was made possible through the philanthropic funding of the Vera Deacon Regional History Fund.

This event highlighted the rich resources available in the University's Special Collections and showcased the impact of philanthropic support on creative and academic endeavours.



The library's Special Collections team curated three exhibitions during 2024, highlighting unique stories from our rare books and archives. These exhibitions were used for student object-based learning opportunities, class visits and lectures, and were well supported by visits from the community.

FROM PEN TO PRESS: WOMEN'S BOOKCRAFT

Visit Virtual Exhibition

Women have consistently engaged in all aspects of the modern book trade from its inception, but their stories have historically been obscured. This exhibition shines a light on women's myriad contributions using Special Collections' holdings to showcase women's work in the Australian book trade from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day.



REWIND: A HUNTER REGION NBN TELEVISION RETROSPECTIVE

Visit Virtual Exhibition

Explore a collection of photographs from the NBN television archive and the fascinating history of 'Channel 3', the iconic broadcaster that brought television to the Hunter Region in 1962.

A captivating nostalgic journey through the region's television landscape, drawing on the incredible NBN (Newcastle Broadcasting New South Wales) archive from 1962 onwards.



UNROLLED: THE HUNTER'S FORGOTTEN MAPS

Visit Virtual Exhibition

Cartography is the beautiful art and science of mapmaking. Throughout human history, the practice of mapmaking has helped us to navigate the world around us and understand our place in it.

This exhibition highlights key maps of the Hunter region from our collections, including surveys from the late 18th century and the mapping of later urban growth.



OUR PEOPLE

OUR INDIGENOUS COMMITMENT

In September, the **Great Book Swap** was held across our libraries, raising over \$1,400 for the **Indigenous Literacy Foundation**. Library staff and the Friends of the Library donated books, which were available in exchange for a donation to the Indigenous Literacy Day fundraiser. The generous contributions from staff and students helped provide books, books in First Languages, and learning resources to children and families in remote communities across Australia.

A **cultural advice notice** was deployed across the library's website in May 2024. This builds on the notice already displayed on the Hunter Living Histories website and advises Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples as well as other First Nations people internationally of the possibility the individual/s may read, hear, or view content which may cause triggering and distress, as well as observing content which is not for public knowledge.



RECOGNITION

The achievements of library staff were recognised at the university's **Celebrating Success** events.

June 2024

- Anthony O'Brien was recognised for his advice and support for the review and update of the University's Intellectual Property (IP) Policy and Procedure. As a result, the university now have a modernised policy and procedure that aligns with the university's strategic plan and emphasises our world-class research capabilities and knowledge creation to industry, government, and community partners.
- Anthony O'Brien and Ruth Cameron were recognised for developing the Generative AI guide which provides direction and assistance, accompanied by relevant examples and guidance, in alignment with the university's position on the use of these tools.

August 2024

- Jenny Shakespeare and Fiona Jones were recognised for their dedicated service to the libraries at Ourimbah and the Gosford Hospital.

December 2024

- Library UX Mini Conference Team (Andy Silcock, Ruth Cameron, Kerry Regan and Evelyn Stagg) were recognised for their successful conference that upskilled and inspired library staff in UX research. Their efforts have empowered staff to make impactful, customer-centric service improvements, supporting the university's focus on continuous improvement.
- Researcher Profile Speed Sessions 2024 (Debbie Booth, Gemma Milton, Dr Zoë Shacklock, Jennie Skulander and Nicole Faull-Brown) were recognised for their delivery of the 2024 Research Profile Speed Sessions. This cross-collaborative team of staff from Research Advantage, Research Liaison Librarians and College Research supported over 190 researchers across nine hands-on sessions, updating their profiles with expert guidance. These optimised profiles now enhance researchers' visibility, increasing opportunities for grants, collaborations, and student engagement.

Anthony O'Brien received an **Academic Division Award for Collaboration Excellence** nomination for his expertise and collaboration in navigating the complex landscape of copyright and intellectual property rights.

The Library Standards of Behaviour Team was nominated for the **Academic Division Award for Health and Safety Excellence** award for their work on critical health, safety and wellbeing projects including the creation of a team-informed Standards of Behaviour guideline and resource hub as well as ongoing work around psychological safety in the workplace.

The Library User Experience (UX) Research Development Group received an **Academic Division Award for Student Engagement** nomination for their work embedded UX practice within the library to understand and improve the student experience.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Library staff participated in varied externally-facilitated training programs in 2024, including Kanban workflow management training, Introduction to Auslan, PROSCI Change Management workshops, and leadership and management courses.

Additionally, library staff participated as both **mentors and mentees** in the CAVAL, Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and University of Newcastle mentoring programs and attended 'Live, Learn, Lead' and 'Women in Leadership' University of Newcastle programs. Morgan Burgess attended the **Aurora Foundation Virtual Leadership Program** from May-June 2024. David Coupe attended the **CAUDIT Leadership Institute (CLI)** in August 2024.

On October 16, 2024, over 50 library staff attended the **UX mini-conference**, which aimed to enhance UX skills across the team. Library staff learned about User Experience (UX) theory and practice from their library colleagues at Callaghan campus. The afternoon session was held virtually and included engaging presentations on UX research methods by university colleagues and staff from the University of New South Wales, the University of Sydney, and La Trobe University.

The library's **Job Shadowing Program** was expanded in 2024 to include external placements. Dr Kathirine Sentas spent a week with Sydney University's Chau Chak Wing Museum team exploring their collections, approach to class tours and object-based learning and community engagement.

As part of our commitment to engage with the GLAM sector:

- Annie Croft, Dan Brazier and Yali Windle attended the **ALIA National Conference: Truth or Dare** in Adelaide from the 6 – 9 May 2024. ALIA's National 2024 Conference invited First Nations Truth Telling and focused on the sub themes of 'From Inclusion to Belonging', 'Raising Voices', 'Daring Greatly, Striving Valiantly' and 'Forging Future Libraries'. The library thanks ALIA for the financial support extended to two of our Indigenous staff to attend the conference.
- In addition to attending GLAM conferences and events, **library staff presented at**:
 - 2024 International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) Conference: Dr Ann Hardy, Unlocking an audio-visual television news archive, 23-26 September 2024
 - OEGlobal Conference 2024: Ruth Cameron, Lightning talk Play to your strengths: how the library can lead the creation of open textbooks, 13-15 November 2024

Library staff published:

- Wynne, K., Mwangi, F., Onifade, O., Abimbola, O., Jones, F., Burrows, J., Lynagh, M., Majeed, T., Sharma, D., Bembridge, E., Stubbs, M., Sunner, C., Bergmann, J., Bagade, T., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2024) What I love about being a health librarian [presentation]. ALIA Health Libraries Australia, May 23. <https://hla.alia.org.au/hla-lunchtime-session-what-i-love-about-being-a-health-librarian-thu-23-may-24/>
- Wynne, K., Mwangi, F., Onifade, O., Abimbola, O., Jones, F., Burrows, J., Lynagh, M., Majeed, T., Sharma, D., Bembridge, E., Stubbs, M., Sunner, C., Bergmann, J., Bagade, T., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2024) Readiness for professional practice among health professions education graduates: a systematic review. *Frontiers in Medicine*, 11, 1472834. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmed.2024.1472834>
- Hardy, A. (2024). 'The Store' Oral History Project. *History of Retailing and Consumption*, 10(3), 209–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2373518X.2024.2386791>

“

To the fantastic Library User Experience Research Advisory Group (LUXRAG) members for organising and delivering such a phenomenal conference! You all presented so well, the external presenters were great, it was really informative and I want more! Thanks all, loved it

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UX mini-conference participant feedback





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