7 challenges for school libraries REVISITED

School libraries share
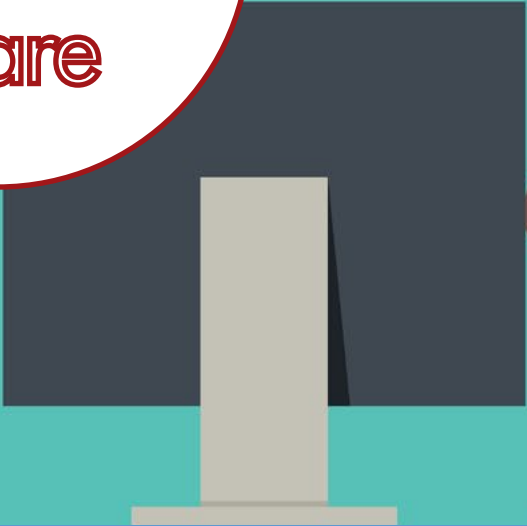
Contents

Softlink is proud to support school libraries through the annual school library surveys conducted in Australia, New Zealand and Asia Pacific, and the United Kingdom and Europe. The surveys provide findings on school library funding, staffing, evolving roles, delivery of digital resources, and visions for the future.

Introduction

In 2014, Softlink published our first 'feature' document, sharing written comments and feedback provided by respondents to that year's Australia and New Zealand School Library Survey. The feature was titled "What are the top 7 challenges for school libraries", and drew from responses to one of the standard optional questions at the end of the survey "What is one thing you would change about your library or role?".

We used word cloud analysis to identify themes and repetition to come up with final 'Top 7 Challenges' list.

Five years on, the original document is still a popular download. Sadly, many school libraries are still experiencing similar challenges and more. We decided to revisit this feature, analysing responses to the same question 'What is one thing you would change about your library or role?' from 2018 respondents, this time from across the globe.

This feature highlights the voice of real school librarians, collated into common themes identified from written responses. Many of the broader challenge 'themes' are the same or very similar to what was identified in the Australia/New Zealand 2014 feature document. The headings or themes are written to broadly describe the range of comments presented.

Softlink is proud to collate the global comments within this feature document. Additional feature documents, with comments drawn from Softlink's global surveys, are available through the **Resources page** on the Softlink web site.

* Softlink has conducted school library surveys in Australia since 2010, and in recent years, extended the scope of the survey to include New Zealand and the United Kingdom. In 2018, the surveys were further extended to include Asia Pacific and Europe.

Initially a response to the 2010 Australian Federal Government request for submissions to the 'Inquiry into school libraries and Teacher Librarians in Australian schools', the survey enabled Softlink to provide data which informed a unique response to the Inquiry.

Since then, Softlink has continued to survey school libraries annually, helping to build a critical reference point for understanding changes, impacts, and trends over time while providing a solid basis for school library advocacy.

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Continued advocacy is important to help to address the challenges school libraries face.

The following two comments, also drawn from the 2018 Softlink School Library Surveys, describe this from the perspective of the school library professional.

'Outside our own library, I'm very aware of school libraries being closed or deprofessionalised and it concerns me greatly. It's long overdue for government to realize the value of libraries staffed by qualified librarians and I hope the #GreatSchoolLibraries campaign will make a big impact.'
Librarian, United Kingdom

'Thank you for this survey. We (Teacher-Librarians) need evidence like this so we can continue to 'fight' for the importance of this position in our schools. A school library is a special and important space and every student should have access to a trained teacher-librarian and a well-resourced collection. I have been a TL for 33 years and I seem to have been part of this fight for at least 30 of those years.'
Teacher Librarian, Australia

How can you have your voice heard?

1. Join the **Students Need School Libraries** (Australia) and **Great School Libraries** (UK) campaigns.
 www.studentsneedschoollibraries.org.au   **www.greatschoollibraries.edublogs.org**

 🐦 **@NeedSchoolLibs**   🐦 **@GreatSchLibs**

2. Print and share the SNSL 7 Signs your child needs help from their school library flyer and poster to promote the importance of school libraries for all students. **https://studentsneedschoollibraries.org.au/resources/toolkits/snsl-flyer/**

3. Watch and share this video **www.softlinkint.com/resource-details/video-great-school-libraries/** to promote the value of school libraries

4. Participate in the annual Softlink School Library Surveys for an opportunity to have your comments shared in papers like this - watch our blog **www.softlinkint.com/blog/** and Twitter page **@SoftlinkEdu** for opening dates

5. Share this paper to help get the message out

1. An inadequate or uninviting physical library space

School libraries don't just house books. They are used for reading spaces, teaching spaces, research, study areas, collaborative spaces, meeting rooms, makerspaces and more.

In this section respondents share their challenges and frustrations with their physical library space. Size, outdated fittings and furnishings plus inflexible layouts limit the scope of services these school libraries can provide while position, access and uninviting décor limit their ability to engage students.

> **I would change the library from a 1960's physical environment to a 21C inviting, flexible, innovative teaching and learning space/s. It needs a full redesign and refurbishment.**
> **Australia**

'I would have the library on the ground floor of the school - currently students and staff have to climb 2 flights of stairs to reach us. The front door is a single fire door so law demands that it stays closed which is highly uninviting.

Floor space is restricted - we currently have seating and tables for about 45 students but when a Year 12 study class is 20 students, and is a permanent booking, then many classes cannot book into the library because they won't physically fit.' **Australia**

'I would redesign the library space to be more 21st century learning oriented.' **Thailand**

'The school library has recently been crammed into a 10 metre by 10 metre space. I would increase the space by at least 5 times so we could once again welcome the numbers of students we used to be able to welcome into the library space. This would be particularly welcome in the lunch breaks when the library is popular with students.' **Australia**

'I would like more relaxed seating for reading for pleasure.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like separate spaces for quiet reading or study, and more space for displaying relevant topic books and/or art.' **New Zealand**

'I would love to make the space more flexible to suit collaboration and different learning needs at different times.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like more space to be able to cater for the needs of the school - both larger collaborative spaces and more small meeting rooms for EALD, learning support, and exam support.' **Australia**

'Our physical space is too small to accommodate the number of students in our school. We do the best we can within a small and tatty environment.' **New Zealand**

'Our library is not big enough to accommodate all would-be users.' **United Kingdom**

'I'd revamp the library to make it look more attractive to kids.' **Malta**

'The library was relocated to a smaller classroom space at the end of 2017. Many resources were discarded and purchasing is limited now due to a lack of space.' **Australia**

'We need a bigger area to accommodate flexible learning and making.' **New Zealand**

'I would like a complete upgrade to make our library more modern with furniture and technology spaces... air conditioning would be nice!' **Australia**

'I would change the location of the library. We are at the furthest part of the school and I would like to be more central.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like the library to be a more welcoming space, with bright paint and murals to engage students and promote the joy of reading.' **Australia**

'I would like a more segregated library space for study, to lessen disruptive noise, and a break-out room.' **New Zealand**

'I need a bigger library. Our school population increased by 160 students when Year 7s joined high school in Queensland but the physical space, staffing levels, and budget did not increase.' **Australia**

'The physical library space is not flexible enough to change with the needs of students and staff. It is also too small to cope with rising student numbers.' **United Kingdom**

'I would change the physical room that the library is in. It is an old 1970's design with a low ceiling entry, mezzanine level, and lots of posts. Not user friendly.' **Australia**

'We need a bigger library.' **Germany**

'Our library is grossly undersized for the needs of the school. It is also in very poor physical condition. The combined effect makes the library less usable and safe. It also reduces the ability to implement changes.' **Australia**

'The library is very "tired" and needs a complete revamp to allow for a more vibrant and relevant space.' **United Kingdom**

'Physically our space is old fashioned. A new library with lots of different spaces to use would be wonderful.' **New Zealand**

'I would like a proper library space, rather than an unused classroom.' **Australia**

'We currently do not have a centralised library, I manage books in every classroom. I would love a proper library space, where I could not only store the collection, but have students utilise it as a space to study and research.' **Australia**

'I would like to make it more like a library and less like a corridor.' **United Kingdom**

'Our shelving is old and rusted and while we have done what we can to make it a nice place to be, we don't have the funds for new furniture that would make it a space that meets the needs of the students and the current technology that they use.' **Australia**

'The library needs to be bigger - it is half the size of a classroom for 1,400 students.' **United Kingdom**

I would like more assistance with day-to-day admin to give me more time (and energy) to develop research & inquiry learning at the school and collaborate more with teachers. **Germany**

2. Understaffing and/or lack of qualified staff

Librarians and Teacher Librarians offer specific expertise that supports whole school learning and success. Beyond the reading, research and digital skills programs they are uniquely qualified to deliver, they are also responsible for the management and circulation of one of the schools most valuable assets, it's resource collection.

In this section, respondents share how they would expand and improve library services with additional staffing and how they are dealing with challenges related to staff resourcing.

'I would hire an assistant so that I could work on bigger picture planning for the library and get some thinking time.' **New Zealand**

'The T/L needs to be back in the library to teach library, research and computer skills. Students don't even know how to find a book.' **Australia**

'I would have an assistant librarian to help with the workload and free up time to develop and run programmes, events and activities.' **United Kingdom**

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> **I would like to have at least one more part-time member of staff, so that the library can remain open and accessible at all times. This would also allow the library manager more time to create and run additional services and extra-curricular activities.**
> **United Kingdom**

'Our qualified teacher librarian retired. She was replaced by an unqualified teacher in the library for approximately a year and a half, and this year neither a teacher nor a teacher librarian has been employed to work in the library.' **Australia**

'I need another librarian. The library has great potential - that is thwarted by there only being one member of staff.

If I had a second person that would have an exponential effect because it would, for instance, mean two activities could happen at once. I could develop better partnerships with teachers so that things could happen independently of me or I could do additional fundraising to enrich the collection.

There is a very specific limit on the capacity of the library, and that is my capacity.' **United Kingdom**

'One thing that I would like to see change is to have a teacher librarian to help develop our school library and make it progress further towards digital technology. We have not had a teacher librarian, librarian or library manager for almost 9 years.' **Australia**

'I believe we could use a teacher librarian working across all 3 of our campuses to promote information literacy and help make connections to the curriculum.' **Australia**

'To run a well-equipped library I would like to have a library assistant who can do the shelving and maintenance of the collection (e.g. covering new books etc.).

This would allow me to focus on information literacy programs and having time to collaborate with teachers to find out what resources they need for units/programs.' **Australia**

'I would like a part-time or full-time assistant.' **Ireland**

'I'd love to have a part-time teacher librarian to help me as I can't offer all the literature programs and research and information literacy skills I'd like to - because of the demands on my time and my timetabled English class.' **Australia**

'I would like extra personnel for the Circulation Desk.' **Germany**

'I would like time to be a teacher librarian exclusively and be able to excel at that, rather than having to spread myself too thinly because I have had to take on other roles.

For example, I would like to have time to develop the full capabilities of Oliver to help students learn.' **Australia**

'I would like to have a staff member who has both library and teacher training.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to have a qualified TL in the school running literature and information based programs that support in-class learning (taking some pressure off the teachers to be experts in so many fields).' **Australia**

'I would like more staff hours so that we can open the library as a leisure/study/reading space during break times or for small groups to use during class time." **New Zealand**

'I would like to be full-time in the teacher librarian role. I would be able to do so much more to assist teachers and students.' **Australia**

'At present I have a 42 week contract - a 52 week contract would give me time to plan and prepare rather than the present firefighting.' **United Kingdom**

'The teacher librarian has been placed on class to lower class numbers, staff are expected to take their class to the library and do loans and returns on their own. Our T/L has only one day in the library, just to do admin.' **Australia**

'I would like more time to teach. That would mean having someone else who is reliable and can do all the non-teaching things that need to be done.' **New Zealand**

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'I think a clerical assistant would be nice. That would free me up to better resource the curriculum, start interest clubs, and promote the library more.' **Australia**

'I would like increased staffing to enable the library to do more for our students.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to increase my hours so that the library can be open every day.' **Australia**

'I would like to have more than 1FTE staff.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like to have a library assistant so that I could engage more with the students.' **Australia**

'For me to maintain my current workload and offer new programmes and initiatives, I need a part-time staff member.

We have a roll of 1315, much of my time is spent staying on top of the admin and purchasing.' **New Zealand**

3. Resourcing impact on quality of services

As described in challenge 2, understaffing is an issue for many school libraries. Qualified librarians and teacher librarians struggle to find time for projects requiring their professional expertise. Multiple responsibilities including administration or support teaching compete with their ability to deliver the quality of service they would like to.

In this section, respondents describe how they struggle to juggle their multiple responsibilities, how lack of time creates a major obstacle to success, and what they could do if they had more time.

'I would like to have more time for promoting the library and adding digital resources to our library system.

I would like more time to locate resources that complement the new curriculum.' **Australia**

'I would like more hours - 15 hours a week is not enough to do all the things I want to do.' **New Zealand**

'I would like more time with students to teach library skills. I would also like time for reading to classes when they come in for their library time.' **Australia**

'I would dearly love to have more time to spend with the children when they come in for their library time.' **Australia**

'I would like to have more time (and extra staff) to allow me to do more than just police the library at break and lunch.

I would like to have time to develop projects, interact with students and staff, attend meetings etc.' **Wales**

'I would like more time to collaborate with teachers for planning.

I would also like more time to plan for my lessons.' **Australia**

'I would like more time to develop library lessons (research, referencing, and general information literacy skills).' **Netherlands**

'I would like to have more time to think about how to progress the development of the library collection. I would also like more time to meet with the syndicates and collaborate on how to improve our reading stats, which I believe are showing more at-risk kids every year.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to lose the teaching load that takes me away from the library and library services.' **Australia**

**I would love more time in the library to engage students in lifelong reading and learning.
Australia**

'Lack of time is the biggest obstacle to implementing all the wonderful things we would like to do.' **Australia**

'I would like more time to be able to do more research work with students and to be able to keep up with technology such as web access QR codes etc.'
New Zealand

'I currently supervise non-religion classes. Which range from small groups of 6-7 to groups of 28-32. That happens 24 periods a week and we have a 40 period week. This impacts the time I have available to teach.' **Australia**

'I would like to have more time for promoting the library and adding digital resources to our library system. I would like more time to locate resources that complement the new curriculum.'
Australia

'Currently I am at the issue desk full time, supervising students in the LRC, and manage the library simultaneously which can make it hard to think and develop ideas with constant interruptions. Time away from the desk would be helpful.'
United Kingdom

'I have a very heavy teaching load covering all classes RFF for one hour each week. This reduces my admin time.

I would like team-teaching time so that I can work collaboratively with the teachers, and more admin time so that I can develop programs and access more resources for the teachers.' **Australia**

'I would like more time - more teacher librarian time, and more librarian time.

With more time, we could offer more support in a wider range of ways - for both information literacy and for wide reading.' **New Zealand**

'We would like more time to develop and implement library programs, and to collaborate with teachers.' **Australia**

'I would like more time to curate resources.' **New Zealand**

'I would like more hours to help promote literature with the students. I would also like more time to organise displays etc. and to promote topics and events.'
Australia

'I would like to have more time allocated to library management and creating an inviting space for students to use.'
New Zealand

'I would like more time for creating an engaging space and curating the collection for specific purposes.' **Australia**

'I would like more time to plan and teach and assess research or information finding tasks with subject teachers.' **Australia**

4. Receiving proper recognition for the expertise and services they provide

Despite their specific expertise, formal training and evidence relating to the importance of properly resourced school libraries[1], many school library professionals still feel that their skills and services are undervalued.

In this section, respondents describe poor understanding and perception of library services within their school and how at times they feel their skills and qualifications are undervalued, and unrecognised.

1. Substantive research and evidence exists to support the importance of school libraries and qualified library staff on educational outcomes. Visit https://studentsneedschoollibraries.org.au/ (Australia) or http://greatschoollibraries.edublogs.org/ (UK) as a starting point.

'I would like the library to be the focal point of the school's teaching and learning programmes.

I would like the library to be seen as the one single resource which is fundamental to learning and which all students equally should be actively using to enhance their learning in school.

All teachers, in all departments, should be committed to extending reading in their subject areas and should be positively influencing students to develop independent reading and research habits and curiosity which underpin their development.' **United Kingdom**

'I feel that teacher librarians across the board aren't fully utilised for their skill set, knowledge or ideas. Many of us aren't seen as teachers, just librarians.

This comes down to the fact that not every principal, deputy or staff member understands what our role actually is or know what we are capable of doing.

School libraries are a key part of the school community and without them many students would be lost. We offer so much more than books and access to the wifi.' **Australia**

'I would like a better understanding of what the school library can do for students/staff, and what the role of the library staff is.' **Australia**

'I would like the staff to see me as a resource instead of them just Googling everything.' **Australia**

'I would like to have the library seen as a central point for learning and support within the school for both teachers and students.' **Australia**

'I would like staff to realise how important it is to have a librarian and not to be pulled into class to be an LSA.' **United Kingdom**

'The curriculum requires the implementation of IL for every KLA, yet only one faculty uses my skills.

We have several teachers teaching their own form of referencing across the school and not doing it correctly.

I would like teachers to recognise my skills and the value I could add to their students.' **Australia**

'Librarians are a resource in and of themselves, yet this is not recognised by a vast majority of senior leaders. Teachers also do not accept the wealth of expertise librarians can offer - because we are not teachers.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like to be more of a resource to classroom teachers and not just seen as an RFF teacher.' **Australia**

'All 4 people working in our library are qualified librarians, but all paid as library technicians. In government schools there is limited recognition of librarians as professionals.

The library does not currently feature in the strategic direction of the school/ pedagogy.' **Australia**

'If I knew how, I would like to raise the profile of the library within the school - and more specifically - the roles, and contributions of library staff.

All too often library staff are seen as purely admin staff and our contribution to academic teaching and pastoral support is not acknowledged.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like to be seen as part of the teaching team.' **Australia**

'I would like to have higher status within our school.

Between the three of us working in the library we have 2 teaching qualifications and a Masters in LIS, but we're still billed as support staff and perceived as child-minders.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like to have the library seen as a central point for learning and support within the school for both teachers and students.' **Australia**

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'I would like to be a librarian and not just someone filling any role that's needed, e.g. teacher aide.' **United Kingdom**

'I have heard of so many schools who either don't have a librarian or are reducing the hours of their library staff. I think it's important that the library and the librarian is recognised as an asset to any school.' **Australia**

'I would like official recognition of the library and my role within the curriculum.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like more use of my expertise by the Senior School - Years 9 to 13 - in resourcing and teaching research skills.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to have school librarians seen as professional educators in themselves rather than having to fight all the time.' **Scotland**

'I would like an increase in other staffs' understanding of my role, both as a teacher **and** a librarian. I would increase their understanding of how much more I could do in relation to helping them teach/resource their curriculum needs.' **Australia**

'Rather than just providing resources and a space for leisure, I would like to see my skills and knowledge valued more by doing cooperative teaching.' **Australia**

'I would change my line manager's awareness of my qualifications and experience (not through lack of trying), so that the library is seen as a default option for certain tasks/lessons/queries/source of help.

So often, someone else is tasked with something that I am trained to do, and would like to do, but I am not given the opportunity.' **United Kingdom**

I would like to see more integration with teachers and for librarians to be seen as teacher librarians/ co-teachers. **Ireland**

5. Opportunities to collaborate or 'getting the library to the table'

The topic of collaboration has featured heavily in respondent comments to the Softlink School Library Survey since its inception in 2010. In the 2017 survey we asked a specific question about collaboration and produced the feature document **'School Libraries Share: Ideas for school-wide collaboration'**. Greater library involvement and collaboration is very valuable for schools but communication, expectation or simply finding a seat at the table can be difficult.

In this section respondents share their challenges with broader school collaboration as well as their desire to be more involved with curriculum resourcing and embedding research, digital and information literacy skills school-wide.

'I would like to be able to take every class/ cohort to teach research skills, explain what resources the library holds (including databases) and to encourage more class use of the library.' **Australia**

'I would like to be more involved in curriculum design.' **Netherlands**

'I would like to be part of a collaborative team to develop research skills, information literacy, and digital citizenship programmes.' **New Zealand**

'I would like more time to attend curriculum meetings.' **Australia**

'I would like more involvement supporting the curriculum (other than just English). We have a lot of good quality non-fiction, magazines and a new library management system that could be used to engage the students more in research. But the teachers just 'Google' everything.' **United Kingdom**

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'I would like to be doing more to develop study/research skills so 6th form could be better prepared for Uni. I would also like more input into fake news/info lit awareness.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like more input into whole-school curriculum development.' **Australia**

'I would like better communication with academic departments so that my resources could better reflect the curriculum.' **United Kingdom**

'I would love to see the library staff more involved in curriculum planning at this school so that we could provide more relevant resources to students and teachers.

It seems quite often that we are asked for something we don't have and if we had prior knowledge then we could be prepared.' **Australia**

'I would like to be able to teach library skills to all classes.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to change my timetable so that I can team-teach and collaborate with teachers to do Guided Inquiry.' **Australia**

'I would like more access to teachers and classes. It's hard to support the curriculum if departments are siloed and self-contained.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to negotiate change from RFF to team-teaching roles around information literacy across the school, and to co-program these teaching units.' **Australia**

'I would like to have more contact with the science department as we could help the students a lot with research.' **New Zealand**

'I would like an allocated time to meet with classroom teachers to assist planning.' **Australia**

'I would like to develop and deliver a library induction which includes study skills and online research and referencing techniques.' **Ireland**

'I would return to having cooperative planning and programming with teachers.

Library sessions are now used to give teachers assessment time, more like RFF. The library has become a drop-off zone.' **Australia**

'I would like more influence and collaboration with departments on resources for the curriculum.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like more time to collaborate with teachers in integrating technology and information research into programs.' **Australia**

'We live in a digital world. Research and information literacy skills need to be on the curriculum and on the timetable. I would like to be involved in preparing our students for living/working in the digital age.' **Ireland**

'I would love to see more teachers collaborate with the TL and co-teach lessons, with the TL becoming the school expert in information literacy, digital citizenship, and research skills.' **Australia**

'I would like to be included in curriculum meetings and department meetings so that I can have some input into plans for teaching and learning across the whole school.

I'd like to see information skills embedded in all subject teaching.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like to see more collaboration between the library and school staff.' **Australia**

'I would like to have more collaboration time with staff to help build their units. We have so many wonderful resources, but at the time teachers are planning their units, I am looking after their classes.

I would have stage planning held in the library with the TL as a part of the planning team.' **Australia**

I would like the teachers in the school to work with me, or allow me to work with them, to improve student outcomes.
Australia

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'I would like to be able to offer both literacy skills lessons and information literacy skills lessons to students.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like greater collaboration with teaching staff and increased input in the creation and planning of teaching content and assessment tasks.' **Australia**

'I would like more collaboration with 6th form teachers.' **United Kingdom**

'If I could change one thing, my role would be more collaborative with a focus on information skills in the curriculum and providing instruction in the context of student learning within the library space.' **Australia**

'I would like to teach basic IT skills to the juniors.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to be involved with the school's curriculum committee.' **Australia**

'I would like more integration and collaboration with teaching staff.' **New Zealand**

'I would like more time to collaborate with teachers to develop research programs and appropriate resources.' **Australia**

'I would like more interaction with more teachers and their curriculum.' **New Zealand**

> **I would like more funding to keep improving the quality of service and the environment. New Zealand**

6. An inadequate or unknown budget

In the 2018 Australia, New Zealand and Asia Pacific School Library Survey 62% of respondents said they didn't feel their library was adequately resourced. Despite changing technology requirements and even growth in student numbers, library budgets remain stagnant in many schools.

In this section, respondents describe how insufficient budget is a challenge at their school and how they would allocate funds if available to them.

'I would like increased funding for both resources and staffing to support before and after-school programs such as Code Club or Makerspaces." **Australia**

'I would like increased funding for resources and staffing - we don't receive dedicated library funding so we have to prioritise both resourcing for staffing and for upgrading and maintaining our books.' **New Zealand**

'I would like a bigger budget for resources both print and digital.' **New Zealand**

'If we had a bigger budget I would implement things such as audiobooks and eBooks.

Not only that I would be able to create reading nooks and attractive, comfortable places for the students to be able to sit and read.' **United Kingdom**

'I would love to have the money to change our circulation desk area. It isn't very functional at the moment and we have very little space to work side-by-side.

We serve a lot of students and it isn't keeping up with the demands placed on it.

The library was opened in 1985 and I don't think any money has been spent on it since. We need to upgrade the library and bring it into the 21st century.' **Australia**

'I would like more government funding for libraries so they can be staffed adequately which would allow for better promotion of literacy.' **Australia**

'There is no allowance in the budget for makerspaces or other activities.

I resource these with freebies or donations but any shortfall usually comes from my own pocket and is always sourced outside of working hours.' **New Zealand**

'I would love to have increased funding to update the furniture in our library.' **Australia**

'I would like more money in order to be able to purchase relevant resources.' **United Kingdom**

'I currently do not have a library budget, and must wait until the end of the financial year when my line manager gives me any money left over from other department budgets.

This makes it extremely difficult to keep resources fresh and up-to-date, especially as I don't know how much money I will receive at the end of the year.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like more money for curriculum-centric resources to support teachers.' **Australia**

'I would like more money to increase online resources.' **New Zealand**

'I would like more money for resources and maybe to upgrade the area.' **Wales**

'I would like the budget to purchase more books and resources - it's an issue here in a 3 decile school.' **New Zealand**

'Our library is very well used but not enough funds make resourcing it difficult for a school of over 2000 students.' **Australia**

'The fact that we have no book budget is so very frustrating. We have a new principal this year and I am going to try once more to make a case for a budget for books rather than just relying on Book Fairs.' **New Zealand**

'Our library budget is not allocated in our overall school budget, and is reliant on parent contributions.' **Australia**

> It's really disheartening when you cannot provide for students and staff what they are asking for, wanting, and needing.
> **Australia**

7. Outdated resources and technology

Technology is providing some amazing opportunities for educators and, more than ever, the students they service expect a digital experience. With rapid advancements in technology it can be a challenge for schools to keep up and school libraries share this challenge.

In this section, respondents share how outdated technology and inability to invest in digital resources presents a challenge to them and their capacity to provide a 21C library experience.

'I would like more access to online periodicals and journals to promote higher academic reading and research.' **Australia**

'I would really like to have another 15 laptops available for students to use – which will give us enough to cater for a whole class.' **New Zealand**

'I would like to have more eResources available for teaching staff.' **Australia**

'I would like an interactive whiteboard.' **United Kingdom**

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I would like access to better technologies to assist in student and community learning in the library. **Australia**

'Our library needs to be updated with access to eBooks & other technological resources.' **Australia**

'I would like to provide more 6th form resources.' **United Kingdom**

'I would improve the technology we have available, e.g. a better smart board, iPads, flip tables etc, to develop in accordance with 21st century learning and to be able to incorporate digital literacies into the learning programs.' **Australia**

'I would like more access to digital and audio books.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like access to better technologies to assist in student and community learning in the library.' **Australia**

'I want to change our computers to laptops.' **Australia**

'I would like to be able to provide eResources to the school community - teachers and students.'
Papua New Guinea

'I would like to update the library system we use to engage more students.' **Australia**

'We need to modernise the computer system.' **United Kingdom**

'I would like to migrate to a library management software that would allow:

1. Access from anywhere to the library catalogue and

2. Access to online curated information to assist with student learning.' **Australia**

'I would like a greater physical book collection.' **New Zealand**

'I would like better access to technologies and quality online information for students and staff.' **Australia**

'I would like to resource the library with material that is more relevant to kids' needs and likes.' **Malta**

'Technology facilities are not upgraded very regularly and fall way behind classroom upgrades.

We have very limited computer access per student - in class groups of 30 4 students share 1 computer.

Our connected classroom/Smart Board technology is 11 years old and has no budget for an upgrade.' **Australia**

'I would like more money for digital subscriptions.' **United Kingdom**

'The lack of computers is an issue (only 15 desktops and 9 netbooks).' **Australia**

'I would like more computers in the library so students can use the search facilities on Oliver.' **Australia**

'I would like better IT facilities.'
United Kingdom

'The library needs a revamp to cope with BYO devices.

We also need to explore eBooks.'
Australia

Softl**i**nk

softlinkint.com/edu

Softlink solutions

Softlink has been providing school library software for over 30 years, offering solutions to meet the ongoing needs of schools globally.

Users of Oliver v5 benefit from regular new feature updates, which are developed in direct response to feedback and insights gained from our active user community.

LearnPath users can create, publish, and share rich learning guides and content. They also have access to over 300 (and growing) ready-made guides produced by teacher librarians.

Contact us

Would you like to find out more about how Softlink and Oliver v5 can support your school library? Visit our website softlinkint.com/edu or contact us via email communications@softlinkint.com.

8. Other available Softlink resources

We have a number of reports and whitepapers available on our website (softlinkint.com/edu/resources) including:

The 2018 Softlink Australia, NZ, and Asia Pacific School Library Survey

The 2018 Softlink UK and Europe School Library Survey

School Libraries Share: Ideas for promoting the library

School Libraries Share: Our wish list for the future

School Libraries Share: Innovative ideas

How can the right school library software deliver educational outcomes for your school?

The Ongoing Importance of School Libraries

True Federated Search: Helping School librarians rise to the information literacy challenge

What's Trending #SchoolLibraries

5 Most Important Opportunities For School Libraries

School Libraries Share: Ideas for school-wide collaboration

7 Challenges for School Libraries

For even more ideas and resources visit our blog (softlinkint.com/blog).

Sources

* 2018 Softlink Australia, New Zealand, and Asia Pacific School Library Survey * 2018 Softlink UK and Europe School Library Survey

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