Live at the Library – **Forging geographic gaps and advancing community engagement.**

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Abstract

State Library of Queensland plays a pivotal role in ensuring equitable access to its extensive resources for all Queenslanders, irrespective of their geographic location. This challenge is particularly pronounced in one of Australia's most expansive states, where a significant portion of the population resides outside the Greater Brisbane capital. To address this, State Library has introduced *Live at the Library*, a transformative initiative aimed at extending its reach to remote and regional communities by providing students and teachers with real-time access to collections, resources, and staff expertise. Building upon the success of its *Curriculum Connect* website, *Live at the Library* is designed as a virtual extension of the onsite opportunities afforded to schools, connecting regional students with State Library of Queensland's unique offerings. The program includes interactive workshops for primary and secondary students, facilitating exploration of State Library content from school classrooms while incorporating Queensland stories into their curriculum. Launched in October 2022, the program has garnered interest from over 90 schools, 83% of which are in regional Queensland. More than 6,700 students have participated in over 240 workshops, highlighting the program's success in bridging geographical gaps and increasing engagement with regional schools. *Live at the Library* serves various purposes, including expanding the use of *Curriculum Connect* resources, connecting teachers with curriculum-aligned programs and professional development opportunities, providing information literacy support for schools without qualified librarians, introducing students and educators to digital resources, promoting library membership, and enhancing the utilisation of digital collections in regional Queensland. This paper documents the journey and insights gained during the implementation of *Live at the Library*, offering a valuable template for libraries seeking to develop or enhance their virtual engagement programs to bridge geographical divides, ensure educational equity, and enrich the library experience for the communities they serve irrespective of their location.

Keywords: access, libraries, collections, schools, virtual engagement, regional and remote engagement, *Live at the Library*, *Curriculum Connect*, State Library of Queensland

Paper

State Library of Queensland assumes the crucial responsibility of ensuring all Queenslanders have equitable access to its valuable resources and collections, regardless of their geographic location. Though not the most expansive state geographically, in terms of land occupancy, Queensland is indeed Australia's largest state, with an occupied area greater than that of the whole of Western Australia. It is also the most decentralised state, with most of its population scattered along the eastern coastline over a distance of 2,250 km. As such, State Library uniquely grapples with the challenge of serving a significant portion of its population residing outside the Greater Brisbane capital *(Fitzgerald et al., 2024)*.

Live at the Library (State Library of Queensland, 2023a) stands as a transformative initiative that not only extends State Library's reach to remote and regional communities but also affords students real-time access to the library's extensive collections, resources, and the expertise of its staff. In this endeavour, State Library demonstrates its unwavering commitment to fostering innovation, sustainability, and community engagement through the provision of cutting-edge library services.

Conceived as an extension of the successful *Curriculum Connect* website (*State Library of Queensland*, 2023), a centralised resource platform that offers teacher-reviewed, Queensland-focused, and curriculum-aligned learning materials, the *Live at the Library* program virtually connects regional students with State Library's collections and expert staff in real-time. Through a series of interactive workshops, accommodating both primary and secondary students across all year levels, *Live at the Library* workshops allow exploration of State Library content from the convenience of their own classrooms, while adding Queensland stories and curriculum aligned content to enhance and localise their learning. Advanced technology, including the WolfVision EYE 14 visualiser camera, further enhances the "live" experience by providing access to high-resolution visuals and remote interactivity engagement options, such as zooming in and out on State Library content from their own computer.

As of 29 March 2024, since its launch in October 2022, *Live at the Library* has attracted interest from 91 schools across Queensland (5% of total operational schools), 83% of which are in regional areas as seen in Figure 1., resulting in over 6,700 students participating in more than 200 workshops (see Table 1.).

Figure 1
Year 1 – Live at the Library regional reach

My Google Maps Live at the Library Bookings *(Google, n.d.)*

Table 1.
Program outcomes at 29 March 2024

	2022	2023			2024			
Delivery	**T4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T1**	**TOTAL**	**Comment**
Workshops booked	48	24	76	49	36	34	267	
Workshops delivered	44	23	69	44	33	34	247	93% delivery low cancellation
Students reached	1047	603	1585	1244	1130	1159	6768	
Schools								
Number of unique schools engaged (of 1814 Operational schools in Queensland)							91	5% Qld Schools
New school workshops	22	6	35	10	11	7	91	
Returning school workshops	22	17	34	34	22	27	156	63% rebook rate
Workshops								
Primary workshops	30	3	10	15	7	5	70	
Junior secondary workshops	12	11	18	16	21	7	85	
Senior secondary workshops	2	9	41	13	5	22	92	
Regional reach								
Regional workshops	39	22	56	37	25	27	206	
Metropolitan workshops	5	1	13	7	8	7	41	

With a 63% repeat booking rate, this program model is forging new relationships and extending engagement with regional schools, increasing the utilisation of State Library of Queensland's *Curriculum Connect* resources, connecting teachers with curriculum-aligned programs and professional development opportunities, offering information literacy support for schools lacking qualified school librarians, introducing students and educators to State Library's digital resources, promoting library membership, and increasing the use of digital collections in regional Queensland.

What is *Live at the Library*?

Live at the Library, is State Library of Queensland's virtual schools engagement offer conceived to expand State Library's reach to regional and remote communities and provide regional students the opportunity to engage with collections, resources and expert staff in real-time. Delivered through Microsoft Teams, *Live at the Library* profiles State Library content and staff expertise through the delivery of curriculum-aligned live online workshops for educators and students (primary and secondary years).

Queensland is a state in Australia. It is nearly five times the size of Japan, seven times the size of Great Britain, and two and a half times the size of Texas. As reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, results of the 2021 national census, found that just over half of Queensland's population of over 5 million, lived outside of the capital city area of Greater Brisbane (*Snapshot of Queensland,* n.d.).

With a commitment to serve all Queenslanders, digital technology continues to provide new and exciting opportunities for State Library of Queensland to extend its reach and engagement across such a vast state. Engaging students and teachers with State Library's collections and services, always a priority for State Library, now has a renewed focus, to support regional connections for teachers and their students with State Library's content and a growing offer for schools. This has been developed as a phased approach.

The first phase focused on the development of *Curriculum Connect*, a website to house State Library's learning resources to make finding free, trusted, teacher-reviewed, classroom-ready, curriculum-aligned resources simple. With rich content and learning activities focused on History, Social Sciences, Visual Arts, Design, Science,

English and embedding First Nations perspectives into the classroom, the website's primary audience has been teachers and educators.

Phase two of State Library's schools offer and the objective of *Live at the Library* was to provide engaging virtual opportunities to connect regional students to State Library of Queensland's collections and experienced staff. In its pilot offer, two unique experiences were delivered in Term 4, 2022 (October-November 2022) – targeting upper-primary and lower-secondary students, specifically those in Years 6 to 10. Each workshop ran for 50 minutes and could be scheduled to best align with the lesson times of the school making the booking. Schools chose a morning or afternoon workshop on the date of their choice, nominated a block of time that best suited their class schedule and then selected their preferred workshop experience.

During the pilot offer, the two experiences available for booking were:

> 1. *Live at the Library – Virtual Research experience*
> Designed to build research and information literacy skills of students while introducing them to the extensive online resources available through a free State Library membership. At the time of booking, teachers supplied a focused research topic used throughout the workshop to demonstrate State Library's collections for use in completion of individual assessments. Workshops were further personalised with the inclusion of collection items from State Library's archives, such as yearbooks, maps and photographs., relating to the town/history of the school, as demonstrated in the photos of a workshop delivered to The Gum State School (325kms from State Library) in Figure 2.

> **Figure 2**
> *The Gums State School students looking at local history annuals held at State Library of Queensland.*
> *Note: Images shared with consent by The Gums State School.*

> 2. *Live at the Library – Virtual Collection Curiosities experience*
> Essentially a virtual show and tell experience, this workshop also introduced the online resources offered by State Library coupled with the opportunity to explore and get 'up close' with a curated selection of State Library's rare and curious items, including the world's tiniest book, an Ancient Sumerian tablet and envelope, dated 2028 BCE, and pieces of trench art, demonstrating that State Library holds much more in its collection in addition to books. Figure 3. shows students at St. Mary's School in Warwick (156kms from State Library) participating in a pilot Virtual Collection Curiosities experience.

Figure 3.
Students at St Mary's School in Warwick participating in a Virtual Collection Curiosities experience and interacting with collection items through the WolfEYE 14 visualiser camera.
Note: Images shared with consent by St. Mary's School, Warwick.

As seen in Figure 3. above, and Figure 4. below, these experiences were further enhanced by the incorporation of the WolfVision EYE 14 visualiser camera (GmbH, n.d.). Selected for its high-resolution features, including 1080pFHD resolution, 30 frames per second, 980 lines of resolution, 56x zoom and its ability to be controlled remotely, this technology has opened doors for regional students, by providing them the opportunity to view State Library's rare and original collection items, such as manuscripts, realia and items typically only seen in a curated white gloves experience from their own classroom. In a library setting, a white gloves experience denotes the meticulous care and reverence accorded to precious collections. It involves handling delicate or rare materials with the utmost caution, often necessitating the use of white gloves to prevent damage from oils and dirt, and to preserve the integrity and longevity of items being viewed. In donning white gloves, staff and visitors demonstrate respect for the historical, cultural, or academic significance of the collections they interact with, ensuring their safeguarding for future generations.

Enabling remote camera control and zoom functionality for State Library content introduces a heightened level of interactivity, fostering a sense of being physically present at State Library. This feature offers a truly intimate and immersive experience, allowing users to zoom in and out, revealing intricate details that are often overlooked by the naked eye, increasing access to collections while preserving their integrity.

Figure 4.
Ancient Sumerian tablet and envelope, dated 2028 BCE, State Library of Queensland

During the pilot phase, 44 *Live at the Library* workshops were delivered to 22 Queensland schools, over a period of 8 weeks, attaining a programming reach of over 9,552 kms. Eighteen of the pilot schools, (88%), were regionally based (more than 100 km from Brisbane), demonstrating the keen interest of regional schools in the program. Participation numbers of 1,047 exceeded projected targets by 5%. Teachers and students provided consistently positive feedback on the *Live at the Library* workshops. Teachers noted appreciation for the program for a range of reasons including that it engaged students in history with artefacts that their students would never (otherwise) see as they have minimal chances to visit a museum or library due to their remote location, as evidenced in The Gum's State School Teaching Principal, Ros Bougore's statement below:

> Students really enjoyed the workshops; they enjoyed the historical artefacts. The workshop was appropriate to age level. Technology worked well. Presenters were pleasant, friendly, helpful and enthusiastic. Students were engaged, especially when the reference was made to the historical book about our school. 10, 10, 10, 10! Four students who watched workshops gave the following rating out of 10. From my point of view – well-presented, engaging, informative and I would like to see more.

An evolving offer

In response to feedback and uptake of workshops continuing to be evenly split across Primary, Junior Secondary, and Senior Secondary student classrooms the pilot offer has now evolved into a suite of curriculum-linked *Live at the Library* workshops for all year levels , all tailorable to classroom-specific topics, as outlined in Figure 5. below. For each workshop, students receive a customised research guide with direct links to the best online resources available through State Library for completing their assessment linked to the nominated workshop topic.

Figure 5.
Live at the Library workshops 2024

Inquiring Minds **Prep-6**	**Historical Thinking** **Years 7–10**	**Research Strategies** **Years 10–12**
Nine fun and engaging workshops to support students to develop their critical and creative thinking skills and expand their curiosity about the world, through an interactive show and tell. Sessions feature items from State Library's extensive collection, including items that showcase the history of the booking school. **Research Skills** Students learn skills that will help them succeed in their study of HASS as they explore interesting case studies from Queensland's past, present and future. **Collection Curiosities** Students learn about people, places and events that have shaped Queensland and the world, as they discover the stories behind a selection of State Library's rarest, weirdest and most precious collection items. **Speciality workshops** supporting History sub-strands of the Australian Curriculum v9.0: • Prep - Australian Celebrations • Year 1 - Family life in Australia Year 2 - Building Australian Communities • Year 3 - Australian Identity • Year 4 - First Australians and the First Fleet • Year 5 - Colonial Australia • Year 6 - Our Australian Nation	In these interactive, Q&A style workshops, students gain real-world experience in analysing primary and secondary sources from State Library's heritage collection on the topics they are studying in the Australian Curriculum: History Students learn how to think like historians, discover practical strategies for their research, and develop their capability around ACARA's concepts for developing historical understanding: • evidence • continuity and change • cause and effect • significance • perspectives • interpretations and contestability.	Students learn practical skills and research strategies to guide and complete their Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) research-based internal assessments. This interactive workshop takes students on a deep dive into using State Library's One Search catalogue to access an extensive suite of national and international journals, databases, eBooks, encyclopedias, newspaper archives, and engaging collections of thousands of historical images, letters, artworks, diaries and artefacts to interrogate as primary sources. Students can ask questions and gain advice for completing their specific research inquiry, such as: • how to access and navigate our catalogue and databases to find high-quality sources • practical research skills like how to use strategic keywords, filters and tags to discover and access information effectively. • strategies for selecting and critically analysing sources.

The *Live at the Library* technology is also being used for event-style workshops, such as Professional Development webinars for teachers and special event broadcasts including author talks and events on commemorative days, such as Anzac Day,   – increasing capacity for engagement with State Library of Queensland.

Typically, workshops are delivered one to one; one program officer at State Library to one school class. The addition of event style workshops to State Library's *Live at the Library* offer increases potential for reach and engagement by allowing multiple schools, multiple classes and multiple students/teachers to engage with State Library content together.

Each *Live at the Library* experience continues to be underpinned by the following drivers to:

- extend State Library of Queensland's engagement with regional and remote schools.
- increase the use of the *Curriculum Connect* platform and resources by teachers and educators.
- connect teachers to quality programs linked to curriculum that are relevant and engaging for students.
- increase information literacy support for students and teachers at schools that may not have qualified school librarians.
- introduce students and teachers to State Library's digital offer for Queensland residents, available for free with State Library membership.
- encourage and increase membership to State Library.
- increase usage of digital collections by students and teachers in regional Queensland.
- offer engaging experiences that capitalise on the *Live at the Library* format by personalising experiences for individual school groups.

The impact of Live at the Library is its uniqueness.

Following the first anniversary of *Live at the Library*, State Library conducted a review of the program, integrating feedback from teachers and other stakeholders.

Review conclusions included:

- *Success is the delivery of a unique offer. Live at the Library* is distinct in offering teachers the opportunity to book a workshop on the topic their students are studying in their class, at the time of their workshop. This has proven highly valuable to students as they come to the workshop with background knowledge on the topic, which helps them engage with the collection items. In addition, they can ask questions and get specific help for the research assessment they are working on.
- *The opportunity to book a free workshop during their normal scheduled lesson time is valued.* This enables teachers and their students to participate in a reputable learning experience without the complexity involved in booking an offsite excursion or an alternate online experience that has t*o* be booked at a fixed time.
- *The research guides make it easy for students to begin using State Library resources.* For each workshop, a student research guide is produced providing students with direct links to the best online content available for research into the topic they are currently studying. These guides are also made available on State Library's website (*State Library of Queensland*, 2024.) for all teachers to download and use individually with their classes.
- *The ability to tailor workshops to address a broad range of Secondary research topics is highly valued.* More than sixty different topics from the Australian Curriculum (*Australian Curriculum and Assessment Authority*, 2024b.) and Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) Senior Syllabuses (*Queensland Government*, n.d.) have been covered in *Live at the Library* workshops, as noted in Figure 6. below.

Figure 6.
Some of the topics explored through *Live at Library*

• 5th Century Athens	• Environmental movements since the 1960s	• Media representations of global issues
• African-American civil rights movement, 1954–1968	• Establishment of a business	• Medieval Europe
• Alexander the Great	• Family Life in Australia	• Negligence
• Ancient Australia	• First Australians and the First Fleet	• Our Australian Nation
• Ancient Rome	• Free Trade Agreements	• Persian Wars
• Australian Celebrations	• Frontier Wars of Australia, 1788-1930s	• Polynesian expansion across the Pacific
• Australian Identity	• Funerary Practices of New Kingdom Egypt	• Radical Islamist terrorism since 1984
• Australian Indigenous rights movement since 1967	• Funerary Practices of Old Kingdom Egypt	• Russian Revolution, 1905-1920s
• Black Death	• Globalisation	• Senior Research Strategies
• Brisbane's live music scene	• History of K'Gari.	• Spanish Conquest of the Americas
• Building Australian Communities	• Housing market trends and the Australian economy	• Spartan Society, 700–371 BCE
• China, 1931-1976	• Independence movement in India, 1857–1947	• Supply chain of chocolate
• Civil War and the breakdown of the Republic	• Indigenous Rights and Freedoms	• The Ancient World
• Cleopatra	• Individual behaviour	• The Industrial Revolution
• Coastal landforms	• Investigating Significantly Historical Individuals	• The influence of others
• Cold War, 1945–1991	• Iranian Revolution, 1977–1979	• Vikings
• Colonial Australia	• Israel, 1948–1993	• Women's movement since 1893
• Crime and sentencing in QLD	• Korean War	• World War 1
	• Making and transforming the Australian Nation	

- *Primary students have continued to enjoy our popular Collection Curiosities and Research Skills workshops.* The addition of a brand-new range of speciality workshops based on the History and Social Sciences (HASS) curriculum for each year level has strengthened the offer for Primary school teachers and their students.
- *The inclusion of Queensland content to lesson planning and learning.* It is the addition of Queensland stories, artefacts and locally held historical items that truly positions *Live at the Library* as invaluable, differentiating these workshops from anything similar in the market, making this offer unique for Queensland schools.

Creating opportunities for equity and inclusion

Driven by the aspiration to provide services to communities that cannot visit the library in person, State Library of Queensland's *Live at the Library* program enhances accessibility by:
- Expanding the reach of State Library to regional and remote communities, bridging the geographic divide that can make it difficult for students in more remote areas to access the same resources and opportunities as those in more urban areas.
- Providing curriculum-aligned live online workshops, ensuring that all students in Queensland, regardless of their location, have access to quality educational resources and experiences.
- Introducing students and teachers to State Library's digital offer for Queensland residents, which is available for free with State Library membership, bridging the divide between urban and remote areas.
- Offering a face-to-face experience tailored to individual school groups, increasing their interest in learning and understanding of the collections and resources held by State Library of Queensland.
- Finally, incorporating advanced technology, such as the WolfVision EYE 14 visualiser camera, to level the playing field for students in remote areas.

A model for inclusion, accessibility and collection engagement

State Library of Queensland's *Live at the Library* program provides an excellent model for other libraries to promote equity, inclusion, accessibility and collection engagement:
- *Virtual engagement:* The virtual engagement format of *Live at the Library* can be easily replicated by other libraries to reach out to students and teachers in remote and regional areas. This would allow libraries to connect with a wider audience, thereby promoting inclusivity. Additionally, as most schools have sufficient streaming bandwidth, participating in these experiences from a school environment also levels the digital divide that can exist across home environments of regional students.
- *Personalisation: Live at the Library* workshops are personalised to the school groups making the bookings, which can be replicated by other libraries to offer similar experiences tailored to the needs and interests of different groups.
- *Collections:* Libraries can use *Live at the Library* set-up to showcase their physical and digital collections and online resources to a wider audience, particularly those who may not have had access to them before due to distance and other barriers. In addition to sharing physically held collections, the ability to demonstrate to students and teachers how to access and use databases and online resources in a way that adheres to licensing provisions further increases the use of a library's digital collections.
- *Information literacy:* By providing online research and information literacy skills to students, libraries can contribute to enhancing the educational opportunities of students, particularly those in regional and remote areas where access to such resources, including school librarians, may be limited.
- *Visual technology:* The use of visual technology such as the WolfVision EYE 14 visualiser camera can be adopted by other libraries to enhance online experiences for students and teachers in remote areas, thereby increasing engagement and improving the quality of the educational support being provided. The zooming capabilities of this technology can also open doors for sight-impaired patrons by increasing one's ability to see the finer details of held collections and resources—providing an experience that enhances or greatly improves what can be seen by the naked eye.

By providing a barrier-free, inclusive, and equitable virtual learning experience that is accessible to all students and teachers, regardless of their location or individual needs, *Live at the Library* aligns with Australia's current accessibility standards and sets an example for other libraries to follow in their efforts to promote accessibility and inclusivity.

Looking to go Live at your Library? Set-up, skills, resources, development and upkeep.

At the time of implementation, technologies employed in the delivery of State Library of Queensland's *Live at the Library* workshops drew from expertise across the academic world, interrogating best practice in university environments. Virtual reading rooms were not known to State Library, and Research Libraries UK were yet to release their Virtual Reading Rooms (VRRs) Toolkit (Cheung, 2023).

The technology obtained for *Live at the Library* program delivery was acquired with input from State Library's Audio-Visual technicians. All components were recommended and chosen based on their expertise in online delivery and engagement using Zoom during the COVID-19 pandemic, with plans for implementation on Teams post-COVID-19.

The following technical purchases are provided for the readers consideration:

- *Camera acquisition -* WolfVision EYE 14 visualiser camera

Research initially undertaken to deliver on *Live at the Library* objectives identified the opportunity to leverage the technology of a high-zoom camera to engage students with State Library's collections.

This included an online meeting with Robert MacLean, Assistant Librarian, Archives & Special Collections, University of Glasgow Library. During this meeting, Robert shared the use of the WolfVision EYE 14 visualiser camera and its potential as a virtual research tool due to its ability to zoom in closely, with clarity, to collection material to enable close scrutiny.

Generally used in a lecture theatre, to broadcast finite items to a wider audience, following this meeting it was easy to see how incorporating this camera into our offer would be beneficial to our remote audiences. It should now be noted that similar equipment is recommended by Research Libraries UK if establishing a virtual reading room (Cheung, 2023a).

- *Broadcasting platform*

A review of the preferred platform used by Department of Education Queensland led the team to choose Microsoft Teams as the broadcasting platform to schools.

- *Mobile Broadcasting equipment*

To support the delivery of workshops State Library procured a mobile broadcasting kit enabling presenters to enhance the webinar style of delivery to incorporate multiple cameras/inputs into workshop delivery.

State Library of Queensland's kit includes:

- A presenter camera
- WolfVision EYE 14 camera
- 3 x Laptops
- Mobile TV Screen
- Channel switchboard (4 inputs)
- 3 lights
- Lapel mic and receiver
- Supporting cables

Though the WolfVision EYE 14 camera can be used without the broadcasting kit, the ability to cue content and real-time switch between inputs increases the feeling of live delivery as seen in Figures 7-10.
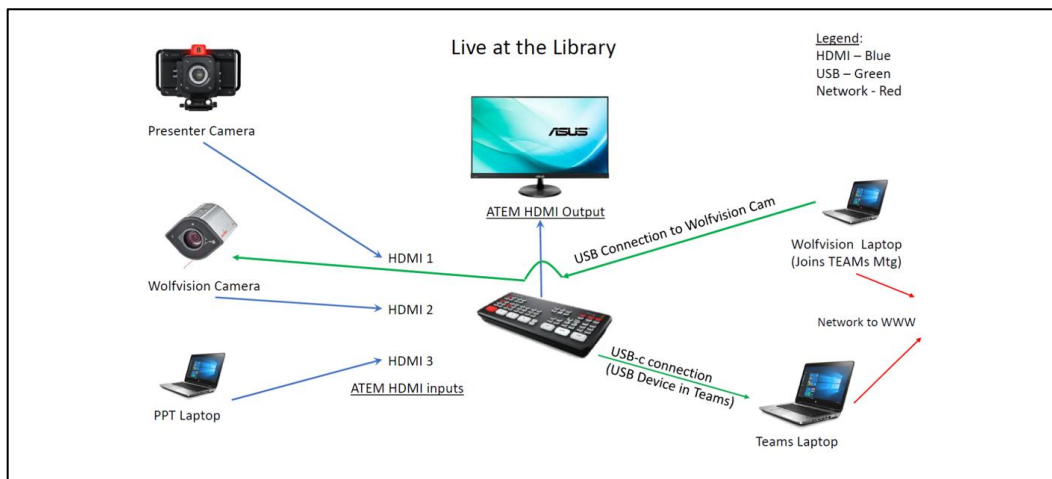
Figure 7.
Mobile broadcasting kit

Figure 8.
4 inputs, plus sound monitoring.
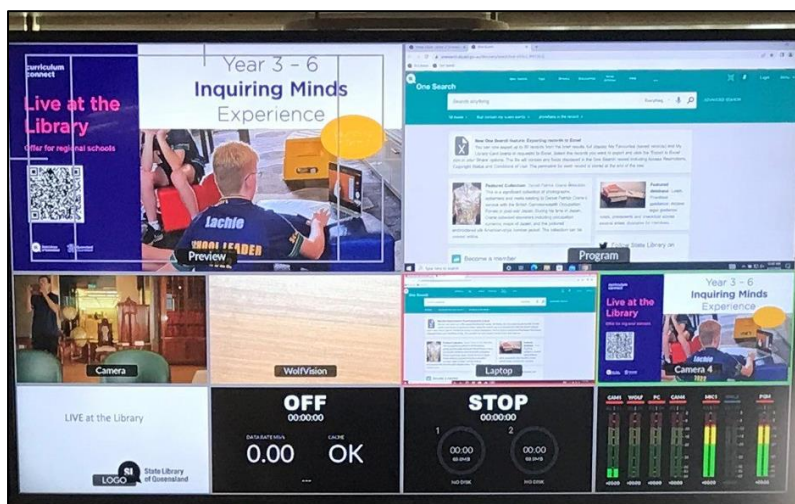*Allows presenters to cue content before switching to live streaming.*

Figure 9.
Birds eye view
Collection items under the WolfVision EYE 14 visualiser

Figure 10.
LIVE interaction with students
Additional monitors allow presenter to see students and watch their reactions to content while cueing content for next stage in presentation.
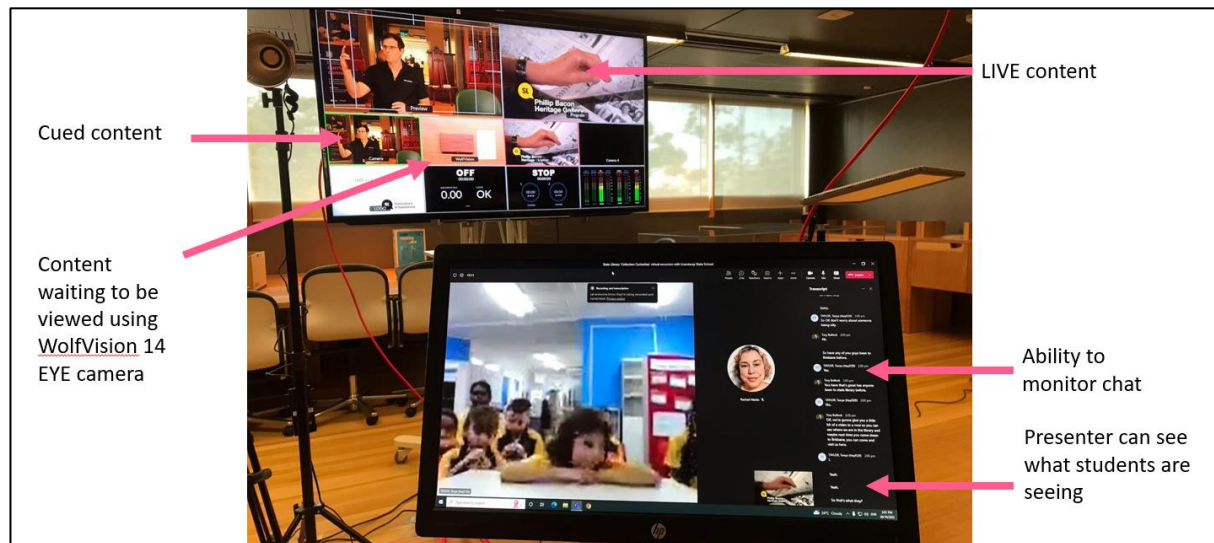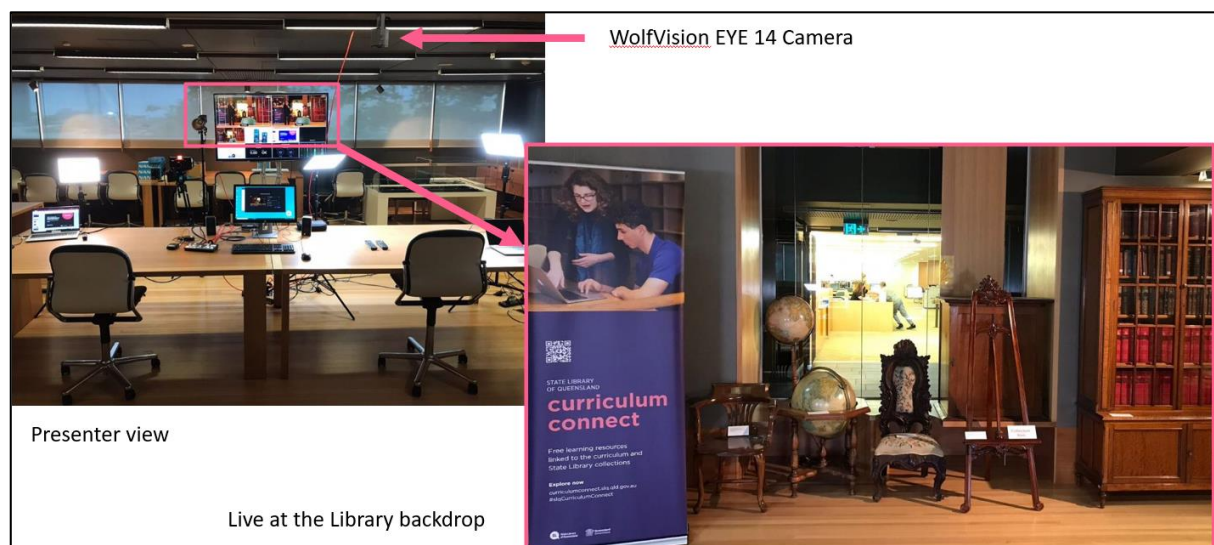

Figure 11.
Live at the Library backdrop
Enclosed space with glass windows provides the perfect LIVE backdrop – like a morning television show, as patrons pass by students can see their workshop is being broadcast LIVE from the library.

In addition to the acquisition of technology, the success of the program is the result of collaborative staffing, curriculum-aligned content, successful live testing, allocation of a broadcasting space, effective marketing, and the integration of technology into the library space. Learnings acquired through implementation of State Library's program are provided below:

- *Staffing*

The Schools Engagement team drew upon the expertise of library staff across the library in the development of the *Live at the Library* offer, providing opportunities for capability, learning and development across many departments at State Library of Queensland.

Recruitment of a program officer to the Schools Engagement team was also undertaken to focus on content development, the model for delivery and project management of *Live in the Library.*

Identification of collection items and establishing processes for accessing them, along with training in safe handling of collection items to ensure their preservation and care was also undertaken, providing additional opportunities for capability building in and across teams.

State Library of Queensland's current *Live at the Library* offer is supported by:

- 1 x full-time A05 Schools Engagement program officer (1.0 FTE) – project manager, administration, marketing and promotion, content and resource development and primary responsibility for workshop delivery
- 2 x A05 Schools Engagement program officers – spending a portion of their time supporting workshop delivery.
- 1 x A03 Schools Engagement Program Assistant – spending a portion of their time supporting marketing and promotion, responding to inquiries about the program and/or bookings.
- Collections Access staff – pulling collection items from State Library's repository for inclusion in workshop delivery.
- 1 x Coordinator, Schools Engagement, A06 – overseeing program delivery and development.

The allocation of Program Officers depends on the nature of the workshop and the amount of collection items involved. Typically, one Program Officer is assigned per workshop, but if there's a significant amount of collection items being utilised, then two Program Officers may be allocated. In this scenario, one Program Officer would manage the technology, broadcast the workshop, and deliver content, while the other would handle collections using the WolfVision EYE 14 Visualiser. Both Program Officers would be equipped with microphones to facilitate engagement with students online. In event-style programs, additional Program Officers may be added to manage the chat stream. This approach ensures efficient delivery and support during workshops, especially when technology and interactive elements are involved.

Libraries considering adopting these technologies to deliver a similar offer to their regional communities need to ascertain staff capacity in the development and delivery of a like program.

It is worth noting that the technology could still be utilised to provide remote access to collections with fewer staff; the staffing model above is what is presently used by State Library to deliver its program.

- *Workshop delivery and a dedicated space*
Prior to regional delivery, live tests of *Live at the Library – Virtual Collection Curiosities experience* were conducted with Woodcrest State College allowing the Schools Engagement team to test the sharing of remote access to the WolfVision EYE 14 camera to interrogate selected collection items. These tests proved successful and spurred on live delivery.

Following pilot delivery, workshops have been made available for booking 5 days a week. This is possible due to the availability of a dedicated broadcasting space in the library.

- *Content and delivery development*
Live at the Library content has been intentionally developed with connections to the Australian Curriculum (*Australian Curriculum and Assessment Authority*, 2024b.) and Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) Senior Syllabuses (*Queensland Government*, n.d.). With the Schools Engagement team comprised of experienced educators familiar with Queensland's Curriculum for schools, a review across all subject areas and key capabilities in both curriculum frameworks led to Digital Literacy (*Australian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2024b*) and Critical and Creative Thinking (*Australian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2024*) with an emphasis on fostering inquiry learning skills as the underpinning focus of each workshop.

Schools Engagement staff select collection items and develop a PowerPoint presentation and student research guide for each workshop, based around the topic or assessment task provided by the teacher when they book their workshop. The information shared about collection items is reviewed by expert research librarians who possess strong familiarity and knowledge of State Library's collections. State Library's preservation team ensure

that any collection items that are fragile, or require additional special handling, are used sparingly or excluded from the program is the potential for damage is too high.

In the first year of delivery 338 collection items from State Library were explored and analysed by students as a part of *Live at the Library* workshops: reflecting a total of 813 internal loan requests by Schools Engagement program officers. Table 2. lists the top twelve items shared with schools over the first year of delivery.

Table 2.
Top 12 collection items shared with schools

MOST VIEWED COLLECTION ITEMS	WORKSHOPS
Christison Family papers and Lammermoor Station records (Christison family, 1857)	23
Lambert McBride Collection 1963-1997 (McBride, 1963)	18
Elaine Sinnamon Collection ca. 1969 (Sinnamon, 1965)	16
A correct globe with the new discoveries (Jones, 1774)	15
Sumerian tablet and envelope (*Sumerian*, n.d.)	14
Mummy bandage (*Mummy*, n.d.)	12
Koran (*Koran*, 1199)	11
John Watts Necklace ca. 1866-69 (Qwist, 1870)	11
Ceremonial Sword of Sir George Ferguson Bowen (Bowen & George Ferguson, n.d.)	10
The Book of the Dead (*Faulkner*, 1985)	10
Het Once Vader (The Smallest Book in the World) (*Het Onze Vader*, 1900).	9
Ned Kelly Walking Stick (*Kelly,* 1875)	9

- *Marketing and promotion*

A combination of State Library marketing and direct marketing by Schools Engagement team to its known audiences through e-newsletters, email, and posting to social media channels was utilised to market the *Live at the Library* offer to schools.

In addition, promotion at networking events and groups, conferences and through State Library's bi-annual Teacher and Teacher Librarian Symposium contributed to extending the reach of *Live at the Library* to unknown audiences.

Considerations for implementation

Adapting State Library of Queensland's *Live at the Library* program would depend on a variety of factors such as the resources and technologies already available at other libraries, the size and scope of a library's collections, and their target audiences. Notwithstanding these considerations the *Live at the Library* program provides a useful template and framework that could be adapted by other libraries looking to develop their own virtual engagement programs.

Other libraries could consider the following when implementing or adapting the *Live at the Library* program:

- Develop a clear objective and strategy for the virtual engagement program, including identifying the target audience and the key resources and expertise that will be showcased.
- Identify the appropriate technology and tools that will be used for delivering the virtual workshops.
- Provide training for staff on delivering live virtual workshops, handling collection items virtually, and using technology for remote delivery.
- Establish partnerships with schools and educators to promote the virtual engagement program and identify opportunities for collaboration.
- Develop a plan for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the virtual engagement program on the target audience.

Additionally the costs associated with acquiring the technology used by State Library to deliver its *Live at the Library* workshops need to be considered. While a suggested budget of $15,000 AUD to acquire a similar technology set-up for *Live at the Library* delivery provides a good starting point, libraries may also need to consider these additional considerations when looking to implement or adopt the project:

- *Staffing and training:* Libraries would need to consider staffing and training requirements for *Live at the Library*, such as hiring staff with the necessary skills to manage and deliver the virtual workshops, and training existing staff to use the technology and tools required for delivery. Wages are not included in the suggested $15,000 budget and would need to be factored as additional costings, pending on number of workshops being developed and delivered.
- *Curriculum and content development*: Libraries would need to develop and curate curriculum-aligned content and resources for their *Live at the Library* workshops, which may require a significant investment of time and resources.
- *Outreach and marketing:* Libraries would need to consider how they will reach out to schools and educators and other identified audiences to promote their *Live at the Library* experiences, and how they will market the program to their target audiences.
- *Technical support:* Libraries would need to provide technical support for schools and educators and any additional audiences identified, who may encounter technical difficulties during delivery of *Live at the Library* workshops.
- *Accessibility:* Libraries would need to ensure that their *Live at the Library* workshops are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities or special needs, by providing closed captioning, audio description, or other accommodations as needed.
- *Budgeting and funding:* In addition to costs noted above, libraries would need to secure funding for the ongoing maintenance and operation of *Live at the Library*, as well as any additional costs that may arise from expanding or enhancing the program.
- *Space and handling:* Is there place for a dedicated space in one's library to create a broadcasting centre, eliminating the need for a mobile tech broadcasting kit or will libraries need to consider a set-up/pack-down model for delivery? Other considerations for the space include environmental constraints for handling collection items to ensure best practice when integrating collections into workshops.

Though an easy model to potentially replicate, implementing or adopting State Library of Queensland's *Live at the Library* program initially presents a significant investment of time, resources, and staff expertise, however, the potential benefits in terms of expanding library services and reaching underserved communities may make it a worthwhile endeavour.

State Library is enthusiastic about sharing the journey and insights gained from the implementation of the *Live at the Library* program and envision that their success will empower libraries to dare to harness technology's transformative potential, to bridge geographical divides, ensure educational equity, and enrich the library experience for all, irrespective of their location, thereby creating value for the communities they serve.

State Library is willing to share its knowledge and learnings gained through the start-up and development of the *Live at the Library* offer to interested libraries and hopes that the model created provides a good starting point and example of how other libraries can use technology and virtual engagement to promote equity, inclusion and accessibility, and enhance access to their collections and resources.

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