

ALLA Conference 2026 – Program



AUSTRALIAN LAW LIBRARIANS' ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

ARCHITECTURE OF INFORMATION

MELBOURNE
19-21 AUGUST 2026



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ALLA Conference 2026 – Melbourne 'Architecture of Information'

Pre-Conference - Wednesday, 19 August 2026

Professional Development Day

Opt in for a professional development experience combining legal research & law librarianship excellence with Melbourne's rich legal and cultural landscape.

This immersive program balances practical legal research skills development with unique access to Melbourne's premier legal libraries and landmarks, offering both professional growth and cultural enrichment in one dynamic day.

Official Tours

10-11am

Parliament Library of Victoria Tour (20 people)

Join a behind the scenes tour of the Victorian Parliamentary Library, one of Australia's oldest continuously operating parliamentary libraries.

The Library was completed in 1861 and still operates as a fully functional library used by members of Parliament and staff.

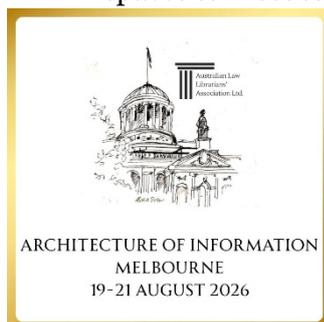
This guided visit offers an opportunity to explore the Library's historic reading rooms, galleries and collections while learning about the evolution of parliamentary research and information services within a working Parliament.

Highlights include the ornate reading rooms, winding staircases, brass fireplaces and striking glass dome crowned by a magnificent Belgian crystal chandelier.

2:30-4pm

Victorian Supreme Court - Law Library Tour (20 people)

Step into history with a tour of Victoria's beautiful Supreme Court Library. We'll be guided by a Court Librarian through the first two floors of this 170+ year-old institution and meet the architect involved in its refurbishment. They'll discuss the architectural significance of the building and the challenges involved in updating its spaces to meet today's needs. The tour will end with a visit to one of the original court rooms dating back to 1884. The building is a working court, library and heritage space, with beautiful architecture, artwork, and historical collections.



Legal research & law librarianship

9am – 2pm

FLO legal research workshop (30 people)

Finding the Law Online (FLO) is an online professional development course designed to develop law librarians' foundational research and legal information skills. In this session, FLO's modules are used as a guide to teach three streams:

- Legal Research with Open Access Resources x1 Hour
- Business Research Fundamentals x1 Hours (The new Business Research Fundamentals and AI insights from the legal publishers will prove to be a 'lightbulb' moment to conference delegates.)
- Legal Publishers x2 Hours (database specific guidance on finding the law online through their resources. As FLO no longer holds information on how to best search the subscription platforms, having the publisher dedicated trainers present is a value add to the FLO course)

These workshops are designed for early career law librarians and those keen for an opportunity to refresh their skills.

- \$50 for members
- \$110 for non-members. This secures access to FLO and recorded session for a whole year – along side an ALLA 1 year membership

3pm-4:30pm

Moys legal classification workshop (15 people)

Join us for a practical, hands-on introduction to the Moys Classification Scheme. This session will launch the new online Moys training platform, highlighting key features and tips for navigating its modules effectively. We will then open the floor to share real life classification challenges and work through solutions with peers.

It's an ideal opportunity to sharpen your skills, troubleshoot tricky cases, and connect with others working with Moys every day.

- \$50 for members
- \$110 for non-members. This secures a years' access to the MOYS online module.

Social

5-7pm

Opening Drinks at 123 Queen St.

The perfect opportunity to network with colleagues and reflect on the day's learning

7 – Late

Party



Day 1 – Thursday, 20 August 2026

Practical Professional Development

[Pre-session option: Chair Yoga with Jamyala]

Acknowledgement of Country

Keynote - TBC

Professional development – Networking intensive

Hosted by Marshall Maverick Mick and Wild Whip Suzy at the Saloon ALLA. Tighten that bandana y'all. This ain't your normal hoe-down. Step into the rowdiest saloon in Melbourne. Together, we will throw one heck of a southern frontier of meet-and-greet.

The Saloon is gathering the loud-talkin', toughest, grittiest law librarians, library and information studies students and legal publishers for an hour of whirlwind howdy-dooty.

You will rotate through rapid-fire 7 minute conversations to:

- Jaw with folks you've never had the gumption to say 'howdy' before
- Learn what duties they wrangle back at their ranches, their challenges and triumphs
- Hear their personal stories, myths and legends behind the cattle, lasso, the boots and the emails
- Turn these connections into collabs, wisdom-swaps and ride into the sunset.



ALLA AGM & Lunch

Keynote – Caroline Counsel

Reimagining our Profession in the age of AI: A collaborative workshop

On Thursday, you will participate in an interactive, scenario-based workshop focused on key challenges facing the legal information profession.

In the lead-up to the conference participants will be advised directly of a scenario that will be used as part of this workshop, so that you will have had the opportunity to have thought about this in the days prior to arrival.

The room will be divided into groups that will address specific themes that touch on aspects of the profession, through facilitated discussion and debate, with the aim of identifying the relevant risks, opportunities and future considerations based on that theme.

The event will culminate in the groups sharing their ideas with everyone, so that all participants will get an understanding of the ways their peers are approaching these issues and will glean insights that will help shape the future of our profession.

Five themes for this event have been developed, and we hope to spread participants evenly among these themes for the activity. So, to begin to facilitate the event you will be asked to select two possible choices of theme to address. You will be put into one of these two choices for the event.

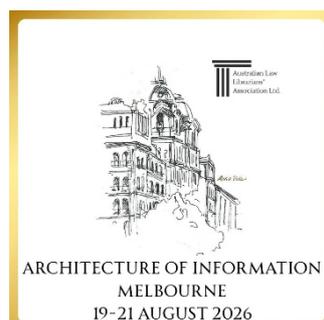
Please select your two choices from the five given:

- Fluency, not fear: Mastering emerging legal technologies
- How can we use influence to reinforce our value?
- Rigour meets LLMs: designing hybrid legal research strategies
- The “Library” as a collaborative space
- Wellbeing and sustainability in a tech driven profession

Gala Dinner at Hotel Windsor: An Evening of Elegance

Step out of the glistening Melbourne winter evening, and be welcomed into the warm, red-carpet embrace of the Hotel Windsor.

Make way through to the ballroom, to reunite with your fellow conference delegates and celebrate excellence in Australian law libraries. Speakers on the night will share their visions for the future of legal information. With the keynote speaker’s inspiring insights into the evolving landscape of legal information architecture. A live band will fill the room with music, transforming the evening into a true gala festivity.



Day 2: Friday, 21 August 2026

Panel Sessions

[Pre-session option: Breathing with Jamyala]

Keynote - Chief Justice Niall, Supreme Court of Victoria

Treaty

On 12 December 2025 a Victoria's Statewide Treaty was signed with First Peoples, commencing at a ceremonial exchange between the government and First Peoples' Assembly in Victoria. As stated in the preamble to the treaty, "one of Victoria's greatest strengths is its courage to face the truth – to listen with open hearts, and to move forward with honesty. Yet the relationship between First Peoples and the State of Victoria has been profoundly shaped by colonisation and its enduring harm."

So where to from here? How will the Treaty affect the lives of Victorians and those outside this state? Will it lead to a more just and equitable future? How can those of us outside the treaty process, working in libraries around Australia, support the aims of the treaty "to be part of a shared future grounded in justice, understanding and unity."

To unpack these questions we are joined by a spokesperson from the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria, a representative from ALIA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Expert Group, and a Canadian law librarian who will share insights from Canada's work on legal pluralism and her own library's outreach to indigenous legal organisations.

Law Reform in the AI Age: A discourse, dialectic or paradox?

Artificial intelligence is reshaping both the process of law reform and the substance of what must be reformed in law. This dynamic and thought-provoking panel explores AI as a double-edged force—simultaneously a powerful tool for improving legal information access and analysis, and a disruptive technology demanding urgent regulatory response.

Panellists will explore the paradox of AI in law reform, looking at how AI can potentially enhance legislation analysis, case law research, public consultation and access to justice, while also considering the complex questions around privacy, bias, accountability, liability, ethics and the protection of fundamental rights. The discussion will draw upon Australian and international legal developments, considering where current legal frameworks may fall short and what effective, future ready law reform may require. Integral to this is the role of law librarians in safeguarding public trust in legal institutions, and the interpretation, tracking, and communication of evolving legal issue. The panel will consider how the paradox of AI tools can impact considerations relevant to fundamental legal research methods, including the potential risks and benefits of the generative AI iteration cycle.



Wellbeing, Sustainability and Collective Care in Law Librarianship – Emily Knowles

Law librarians are expert navigators, educators, and wellbeing allies within the legal system - strategically guiding lawyers through complex information, supporting professional and organisational wellbeing, and ensuring knowledge flows efficiently to enhance outcomes for clients, teams, and the profession as a whole.

This session explores wellbeing in law librarianship through a dual focus: supporting others and caring for ourselves. Law librarians play a critical role in guiding lawyers to wellbeing resources and education, whether lawyers are seeking support for their own wellbeing, for the wellbeing of their team or organisation, or for supporting their clients' wellbeing. At the same time, librarians face pressures from changing technologies, expanding responsibilities, and the constant need to demonstrate value. This session provides practical strategies for law librarians to support relevant clients effectively while maintaining their own wellbeing. Participants will hear about current evidence-based resources, learn how to direct lawyers and staff to relevant supports, and explore sustainable self-care practices, boundary-setting, and ways to foster a culture of wellbeing within professional communities.

- Explain what wellbeing means in the context of law librarianship and the legal sector.
- Identify key wellbeing resources and guide users and colleagues to appropriate support.
- Use practical self-care strategies that fit the realities of legal information work.
- Recognise signs of stress and burnout in themselves and others and know when to seek help.
- Support healthier professional cultures through connection, shared care, and sustainable work practices.

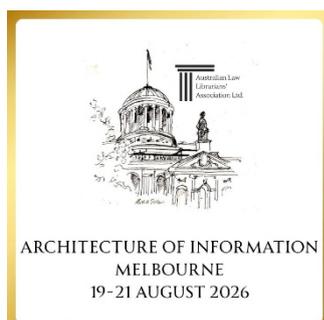
Presented by lawyer-turned-psychologist, for lawyers, and Law Institute Victoria's Wellbeing Manager, Emily Knowles.

Lunch

Artificial Information Literacy & Tools

This panel brings together perspectives from a lawyer, student, graduate and a judge, examining how artificial intelligence is reshaping legal research, practice, education and procedure. They will explore AI's real-world impact across the legal profession to provide insight into how law librarians can be leaders in AI literacy and responsible adoption.

This panel will explore the use of AI in legal practice, the judiciary, and legal practice and education. Panellist will consider the changing nature of legal research tools, and what impacts this has on legal research methodologies, including challenges of evaluation, verification and ethics. Practical insights into current and emerging AI tools will be shared, and the impacts these are having on the work of law libraries.



Librarian Blueprints: From Cuneiform Tablets to Code

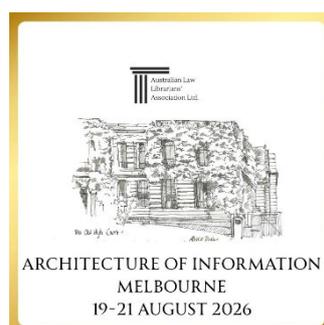
From cuneiform tablets in the Royal Library of Ebla, to digital artefacts and artificial intelligence, librarianship has been essential to making information and knowledge discoverable, accessible and actionable. While the job title may change – be you a librarian, an information specialist, a knowledge manager, a research strategist, or legal technologist – we have moved through shifts in technologies with the dexterity many professions lack. Law Librarians remain integral to legal information, even more so in this era of ever-expanding AI influence.

In this panel, hear from leaders in law libraries and legal information technologies as they discuss actionable ways of pivoting historical experience into emerging legal information technology leadership, demonstrating undeniable value, and positioning yourself as strategically indispensable – not just a cost centre.

Look towards the future of the law library profession, identifying the critical bridge between our work today and the legal information workforce of the future. The panellist will share ways that law librarians and students can work together to participate in hands on training placements that deliver immediate value to your organisation and build capabilities for the future of the profession.

This panel will leave you armed with actionable ways to reframe conversations from cost to value, marshalling impact and value evidence, identifying allies, employ critical judgment in embracing new technologies, and becoming your own champion of your organisation's legal information and knowledge frameworks and their future.

Closing Drinks



Acknowledgements

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