



National Year of Reading 2012

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Why a National Year of Reading?

Nearly half the population struggles without the literacy skills to meet the most basic demands of everyday life and work. There are 46% of Australians who can't read newspapers; follow a recipe; make sense of timetables, or understand the instructions on a medicine bottle.

Australian libraries and library associations are behind a campaign to turn 2012 into the National Year of Reading, linking together all the great things that are already happening around books, reading and literacy, and giving them an extra boost, with fun programs and activities taking place across the country.

We'll be partnering with government, writers, schools, publishers, booksellers, employers, child care providers, health professionals and a whole host of other organisations that share our passion for reading – and while there will be plenty happening at a national level, we'd love you to run your own local events.

William McInnes says "yes"

So we have our patron for the National Year of Reading. We wanted someone with mass appeal, who would strike the right chord with all Australians, whether or not they are keen readers, and who could be our advocate among the great and the good. Actor and writer William McInnes is just perfect for the job and it's an added bonus that his wife is talented film maker and children's book author/illustrator Sarah Watt.



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Are We There Yet?

Everyone we've spoken to has applauded the decision to use Alison Lester's book about a family camper van trip around Australia as one of the main themes of the National Year of Reading. It's a fabulous story and a great title. Sadly, we're not there yet in terms of all Australians being able to read with confidence.



The 12-month countdown begins

We thought we were pretty busy last year, but suddenly we've all realised just how much there is to get ready over the next 12 months. Founder partners, partners, advisors, ambassadors, project teams – we're all alive to the fact that the 365 countdown starts today.

Everything you need to know

We've published a first Guide to the National Year of Reading on the home page of our wiki – www.love2read2012.wikispaces.com. Hopefully it will answer any questions but we will be adding to it, so please let us know if there are any gaps.

A new place to go for resources

We have been pointing everyone in the direction of [our website](#) but now there's another place you can go for all the behind-the-scenes information, advice, ideas, collateral and practical support you might need. Go to [our wiki](#) and you will find lots of useful stuff including a calendar of events, a list of projects looking for a home, links to authors and illustrators, and the latest international research into literacy and reading.

Mugs, T-shirts, book bags...

National Year of Reading - Book Bag And many other National Year of Reading branded items are available from Café Press. Just go to the [Café Press website](#) and place your order. We should warn you that the goods have to come from the US, so allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. If you can't wait, or you can't see exactly what you're looking for on the site, why not download our logo from [the website](#) and make your own?



Looking for funding?

If you are planning a National Year of Reading initiative and seeking funding for it, you might like to look at our [grant application template](#).

Partners and supporters

In 2010 we began some great conversations with potential partners and supporters and we're looking forward to turning the ideas and enthusiasm on both sides into practical projects for 2012. You can see just a few of the [organisations](#) we'll be working with listed on our [website](#).

Founder partners

Of course none of this would be happening if it weren't for the vision and drive of the founder partners - Australian Library and Information Association, ACT Library and Information Service, Northern Territory Library, Public Libraries Australia, Public Libraries New South Wales (Country), Public Libraries New South Wales (Metropolitan), Public Libraries South Australia, Public Libraries Victoria Network, Public Libraries Western Australia, State Library of New South Wales, State Library of Queensland, State Library of South Australia, State Library of Tasmania, State Library of Victoria, State Library of Western Australia.

We'd love to hear from you

If we began a conversation last year, we'll be coming back to you over the next couple of months to see how we can take things forward. If we haven't spoken yet, we'd love to hear from you.

National Year of Reading project team, working on behalf of the founder partners: **Donna McDowell** – donna@thelibraryagency.org.au 0406 575 321 – and **Sue McKerracher** – sue@thelibraryagency.org.au 0404 456 749.

If you have any questions please drop us a line or call us. The next newsletter will be out at the end of March, so let us know if there's a story you would like us to include.