Digital Culture, Diversity and Public Libraries

Danielle Wyatt
Research Unit in Public Cultures
“Fast broadband to help kids in the bush from falling behind.”

“NBN set to narrow digital divide for 400,000 homes and Businesses.”

(NBNCo Media Release 2015)

“The government is committed to ensuring that by 2020, as the physical build of the NBN will be nearing completion, Australia is one of the world’s leading digital economies.”

(Senator Stephen Conroy, #AU20 National Digital Economic Strategy 2011)
“We were concerned that this view of technology, as an external, autonomous force exerting an influence on society, narrows the possibilities for democratic engagement with technology. It presents a limited set of options: uncritical embracing of technological change, defensive adaptation to it, or simple rejection of it. Against this, STS has its origins in a belief that the content and direction of technological innovation are amenable to sociological analysis and ex- planation.”

Researchers
Scott McQuire (University of Melbourne)
Danny Butt (University of Melbourne)

Partners
Michelle Hughes (State Library of Queensland)
Ross Duncan (State Library of Queensland)

Respondents
Rowena Wilmott (Logan Central Library)
Mick Byrne (The Edge)
Leo Clayton (Helensvale Library)
Warren Cheetham (Aitkenvale Library)
Mavis Bani (Ngulaig Meta)
Brisbane City
State Library Queensland
The Edge
Brisbane Square Library

Gold Coast
Helensvale Library
Upper Coomera Library

Logan
Logan Central Library
Logan Hyperdome Library

Townsville
Aitkenvale Library
Flinders Street Library

Thursday Island
Ngulaig Meta
Libraries in transition to something else…

- **Library as third place** – that place between home and work
- **Library as platform** – a *process* for connecting people, resources, and ideas (David Weinberger)
- **Library as laboratory** – a place for experimentation, creativity, and entrepreneurialism (Ken Worpole)
- **Library as redistributive technology** – redistributes technology but also re-configures the categories and structures through which we understand the public sphere (Wyatt, McQuire & Butt)
- **Library as infrastructure** – an integrated network of architectural, technological, social, epistemological and ethical infrastructures (Shannon Mattern)
Thursday Island
Population: 2610
Broadband at home:
14.5% (25% have dial-up or some other connection)

ABS data based on 2011 census