

Surf Coast Shire Council

Setting up a Library of Things (LoT)

A community reference resource

Contents

Executive summary	3
Introduction	4
What is a LoT?	5
Benchmarking	1
Steps to setting up a LoT	1
Resources	4
Appendices.....	5
Appendix 1. 2023 National Library of Things Survey Results by ALoT network	5
Appendix 2: Summary of interviews with other LoTs founders	24
Appendix 3: Summary of interviews with LoTs stakeholders	26
Appendix 4: The Sydney LoT Guide to Start.....	27
Appendix 5: Ballarat Tool Library Membership Agreement (2021).....	30
Appendix 6: Ballarat Tool Library Deed of Release from Liability.....	32
Appendix 7: Budgeting example - Capital and operating costs of a potential LoT at Hurstbridge Nillumbik Shire	33

Executive summary

A Library of Things (LoT) offers a diverse range of items for loan that are occasionally used or expensive to purchase, as well as 'try before you buy' items. Memberships are the usual method for the community to access the loan items, via an annual membership fee. The LoT usually functions with a dedicated group of workers and volunteers, and in a dedicated space. While a LoT can function independently, initial council support is very useful e.g. providing initial project funding, helping secure a suitable space and helping recruit of project volunteers.

This report aims to collate useful resources to assist the community to set up a LoT in Surf Coast Shire. The document draws insights from successful Australian LoTs and engagement with relevant stakeholders. There are various resources developed to guide a LoT set up (see Appendices).

There are also extensive free online resources available from the Australian Library of Things (ALoT) network, as well as a supportive Facebook group willing to provide advice, guidance and offer support e.g. providing procedures and templates.

This document provides essential information and steps for initiating and running a successful LoT aimed at local community champions that will be leading this initiative.

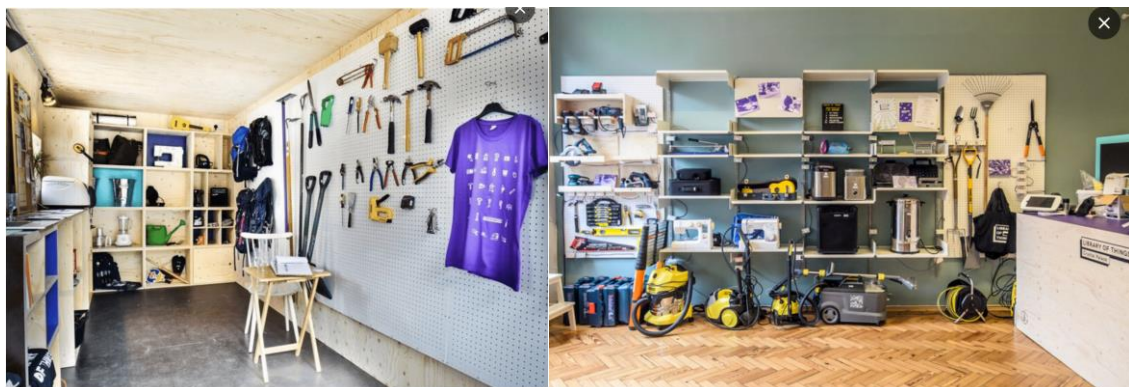
Introduction

The Library of Things (LoT) project is dedicated to enhancing community access to a diverse array of practical and innovative tools and equipment, that are often only used once or used very infrequently. By doing so, it reduces the necessity for individuals to purchase and store these items independently, reducing consumption and waste.

The concept of sharing tools and devices has a longstanding history. In the mid-2010s, the LoT model experienced a global expansion, attracting the adoption of various community-based projects and established organisations. Over the recent years, LoT model has garnered recognition and support from local governments, environmental groups, and sustainability advocates in Australia. An example of two LoT initiatives in Australia include: Ballarat Tool Library and Sydney Library of Things.

A LoT is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. **Reduce waste:** through sharing rather than ownership of items, a LoT plays a vital role in reducing waste produced by households.
2. **Promote sustainability:** actively encourages the use of shared/loaned products and materials, fostering this environmentally friendly practices within the community.
3. **Increase affordability:** provides access to expensive or infrequently used items, empowering individuals and households to save money and alleviate financial burdens.
4. **Foster community sharing:** cultivates a culture of sharing and collaboration, fostering stronger social connections and a heightened sense of community spirit.
5. **Build community resilience:** contributes to the development of community resilience by providing access to essential tools and resources – especially during times of need, emergency or disaster.
6. **Support local businesses:** aids in the promotion and sale of products and services offered by local businesses, thereby contributing to the support of the local economy.
7. **Encourage capacity and skill-building:** provides opportunities for individuals to acquire new skills and knowledge through engaging workshops, classes, and other educational events.



What is a LoT?

A LoT operates as a lending library, offering a diverse range of items beyond conventional books. These are the items that might only be used occasionally or are expensive to buy. Examples of the diversity of items offered include tools, gardening equipment, musical instruments, sports equipment, specialised cooking gear (such as pasta makers, ice cream makers, or waffle makers), sewing and embroidery machines, musical instruments, camping gear, film cameras and entertainment items like board games, old record players, DVD players, microscopes, and telescopes.

There is also a scope for 'try before you buy,' items presenting an opportunity to forge partnerships with local businesses. Such collaborations can involve obtaining products for members to test, fostering a connection that may lead to future purchases.

The LoT typically operates for one to three days a week, including a weekend day. Generally, the weekend session is on a Saturday morning, and weekday sessions often run after hours e.g. 4-7pm. The duration of each session depends on demand and staff/volunteers availability.

A suitable space for a LoT is a secure area for customer service and a storage space, complemented by conveniently accessible parking nearby. Ideally, this space should be situated adjacent to or integrated into a community house, an existing library or a local hub. A permanent setting with shelves, is preferable. However, it is also a viable option to store items in a shed/storage area and roll items in and out on trolleys to a customer service area during opening sessions. Additionally, there is a requirement for a designated space for repair and maintenance activities.

LoTs typically operates on a membership or subscription-based borrowing model, allowing members to check out items for a specified period, commonly two weeks with the option to extend for an additional two weeks, before returning them. Charges may be imposed for late returns or damaged items. Annual membership fees range from \$30 to \$100, with a more affordable option available for concessions/students. Physical membership cards are usually not issued to members as a cost-saving measure.

The model for staffing LoTs varies, but usually includes limited paid staff and mostly volunteers. Volunteers can be recruited via community surveys, information sessions, local market stalls, or social media platforms like Facebook groups. Establishing a sense of ownership and belonging among community members is crucial for sustaining volunteers. Offering discounted or free membership to volunteers is another way to incentivise individuals to contribute as volunteers.

There are two key staffing models to run a LoT:

1. **Volunteer-led approach:** find a dedicated group of individuals within the community to initiate and manage the LoT. Requires a good mix in skill sets – from grant writing and project management through to repairs and maintenance of items.
2. **Staffed approach:** additional funding is required to hire staff, potentially engaging one or two part-time members (e.g. 10 hours a week for the first six months). These paid staff could then subsequently apply for grants and financial support to sustain their roles.

Benchmarking

Five LoTs in Australia are compared in the table below across a range of important factors. Further details can be found in 2023 National Library of Things Survey that was conducted by the ALoT network (See Appendix 1).

Library	Staffing model	Years operating (since 2024)	Initial investment	Number of items	Inventory software	Venue	Insurance	Method of initial recruitment of volunteers
Ballarat Tool Library	Volunteers	3 years	Less than \$5,000	~ 1000	My turn	Rented office + storage	Basic cover offered free by a local insurance company	Founder's social network
The Sydney Library of Things	Volunteers	2 years	\$10,000	185	My turn	Owned office + storage	Public liability Professional indemnity Product insurance	Survey
Mullumbimby Library of Stuff	Volunteers + two paid part time staff	8 years	\$15,000	200	My turn	Council owned building + trailer for storage	Public and Product Liability \$20M. Volunteer Insurance. Vehicle insurance Business Pack Workers' compensation - (for paid staff)	Survey
Gold Coast Tool Library	Volunteers	3 years	\$2,000	65	My turn	Community centre + shipping container for storage	Public and Product Liability Volunteer insurance Professional indemnity	Social media and local markets

Steps to setting up a LoT

These steps outline the order of steps involved in setting up and operating a successful LoT:

1. **Research and planning** – review other LoTs (see Appendix 1), how they function, and explore the feasibility of this project. LoTs site visits are very useful too. Read the feedback and advice given in interviews with various LoTs and potential stakeholders (see Appendices 2 and 3).
2. **Surveys** - conduct surveys to assess community interest and in-demand items, and recruit a dedicated group of volunteers willing to contribute. The survey questions can include:
 - Would you like to become a member and borrow an item from a Library of Things? (give examples of some of the items)
 - What items would you be interested in potentially borrowing?
 - What opening hours would work best for you to borrow/return items?
 - Would you like to volunteer e.g. to help with loans or to help set-up?
 - What are your skillsets e.g. grant writing, finance, social media, website development, tool repair and maintenance?
 - What is your availability (days/hours)?
 - Would you be happy to share your details and be contacted?
3. **Find a suitable space and decide on the model** - whether an addition to an existing community enterprise/service or an independent entity.
4. **Organise the first meeting** - invite all relevant interested volunteers and stakeholders, including those keen to volunteer and those that have expertise with LoT e.g. Elsie L'Huillier (Bendigo Tool Library) to share knowledge and answer questions. Set ongoing meetings schedule in the first meeting.
5. **Engage volunteers** - to support the operational aspect or employ paid staff.
6. **Develop a budget plan** - estimate startup costs, ongoing expenses, and potential revenue streams, insurance and staff cost. Explore fundraising options, grants, and partnerships.
7. **Obtain funding** - A variety of funding and revenue streams can be considered for to set up and run a LoT. These include:
 - **Grants:** offered by state and local government, sustainability groups and philanthropic groups.
 - **Sponsorships:** local businesses or larger corporations may be interested in sponsoring your LoT, if it aligns with their values or customer base. Sponsorships can come in the form of financial support, donations of tools or resources, or marketing assistance.
 - **Fundraising events:** such as tool auctions, repair workshops, or community garage sales. These events can raise funds while also engaging the community and raising awareness about the LoT.
 - **Donations and crowdfunding:** donations from like-minded community groups through your website, fundraising events, or crowdfunding platforms.
 - **Membership and loan fees:** the membership fees and loan fees can also be used to help run the LoT.

8. **Define roles and responsibilities** - establish an organisational structure defining roles and responsibilities.
9. **Establish policies and procedures** - develop policies, procedures, service agreement and code of conduct. Loan policy is important and should include membership cost, lending periods, renewal, penalties for late or damaged items etc. Ask for templates from other LoTs.
10. **Obtain insurance** – decide on your type and level of insurances required and set this up. Running a LoT typically does require having insurance. There are many levels of insurance coverage that could be considered including:
 - **Public and product liability:** protects against claims of injury or damage caused by the products offered or operations of the LoT.
 - **Volunteer insurance:** protects volunteers in case of accidents or injuries incurred while performing their duties.
 - **Workers’ compensation:** protect employees if they are injured at work or become sick due to their work.
 - **Business pack insurance:** offers coverage for loss or damage to the LoT’s stock due to floods, fires, or other incidents, excluding damages caused by members misusing or losing items.

Many LoTs opt for more cost-effective and basic insurance coverage and waive some of the broader coverages.
11. **Source inventory** – there are many sources for the LoT inventory including: donations; rescued hard waste items; purchasing high quality and in demand items from second-hand shops or online platforms e.g. Facebook Marketplace; obtaining samples from local businesses wanting to promote their product; obtaining returned items from local hardware stores such as Bunnings. It is recommended that that inventory is built up based on community interest (identified through a survey) and to start with a small inventory then build up gradually.
12. **Setup up online resources** – set up a website and an inventory management system. Many libraries use “myTurn” as their inventory system. myTurn is an easy to use, an easy to search platform that allows items to be categorised in group and can be embedded in the library website. The inventory system is important as it helps users search and find items they need, and enables the LoT to track their items.
13. **Decide on operating days and hours-** It is suggested that the library is launched with one or two sessions, adding extra sessions can be discussed with the members after the library is established.
14. **Establish membership cost-** this should be decided based on targeting demographic and the survey’s feedback. More expensive or high-demand items may entail an additional fee or deposit. Committee members, volunteers, and members contributing to the inventory or assisting with repair and maintenance often qualify for a membership discount or even a complimentary membership.

Note on safety and liability: It is recommended that the members of the LoT to be over 18 and fill out a consent form as a part of the membership. Many libraries avoid extremely high-risk equipment such as a chain saw to avoid injuries caused by misuse.

15. **Advertising and social media** – set up a Facebook page and an Instagram account. Then promote via all available communication channels. Could also have flyers or postcards to promote via shops/cafes.
16. **Launch** - host a grand opening event (with food/drinks/music?) to attract attention. Can you invite a local well-known figure to boost attendees e.g. local celebrity, Local Member or Mayor? Invite all potential local stakeholders, potential partners and community members to participate.
17. **Create a long-term sustainability plan** – this will help the LoT sustain itself. This can include:
 - Collect regular feedback from users for services improvement.
 - Host workshops and events to generate revenue.
 - Call for ongoing donations based on demand.
 - Plan maintenance, test and tag and regular stocktake sessions.
 - Explore partnerships with other community organisations, local businesses or government agencies.
 - Continuously apply for grants to support sustainability efforts.
 - Repair and maintenance session should be run regularly. Test and Tag is a mandatory process for electronic appliances. This can be outsourced, or volunteers can participate in an online test and tag course and be competent to do the testing and tagging in-house.

Resources

- Surf Coast Shire – Grants - <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/Community/Grants>
- Feasibility Study for Sharing Shed Melbourne: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Mu7AvdGhX6sDf7_m94NkS2cprxJH5Bfb/view
- Step by Step Guide to Set Up a Tool Library prepared by Southside Tool Library: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P2CjAn2K4rzkuvn7N3D2VGzn_Czz4Epz/view
- ALoT network: <https://www.alotnetwork.org/>
- ALoT Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1103899006461817>
- Questions posted on Facebook group: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-7tD2AUqw1ovh3Ppc98flcOL1J8mgSOv8xmyoh4Bl6M/edit>
- Repair and Share Guide – Zero Waste Scotland (with six UK LoT examples): <https://cdn.zerowastescotland.org.uk/managed-downloads/mf-6jj2njmi-1703072613d>
- Shareable – How to start a Library of Things: <https://www.shareable.net/how-to-start-a-library-of-things/>
- Most commonly used inventory software: <https://myturn.com/how-it-works/>
- Survey for financial breakdown of LoTs: [The ALoT Survey](#)
- 2023 National survey results by the Australian Library of Things Network: Appendix 1
- LoT founders and stakeholders interviews summaries: Appendices 2 and 3.
- The Sydney LoT Guide to Start: Appendix 4.
- Ballarat Tool Library Membership Agreement: Appendix 5.
- Ballarat Tool Library Deed of Release from Liability: Appendix 6.
- Budgeting example - Capital and operating costs of a potential LoT at Hurstbridge Nillumbik Shire - Appendix 7.

Appendices

Appendix 1. 2023 National Library of Things Survey Results by ALoT network

Produced by The Australian Library of Things Network www.alotnetwork.org. Author: Nicole Bray



The 2023 ALoT Network National Survey was run in February 2023 and received 15 eligible responses from an estimated 25 existing libraries. The survey was open to the public and anyone could submit a response. The data provided by the participating libraries was assumed to be correct. This survey provides a general and approximate snapshot of the sector. Anyone with a need for precise data should contact the individual library.

The Tinkering, an operation run on a council site in NSW, responded in full and provided detailed information on how they run their organisation. While a close fit with the values of tool libraries, The Tinkering does not allow members to take tools home and therefore fits the definition of a maker-space rather than a library of things. For this reason, the responses from The Tinkering were excluded from this report.

Since this survey was completed, one library that provided data, Toolo in the Blue Mountains, has closed. The data includes Toolo's responses.

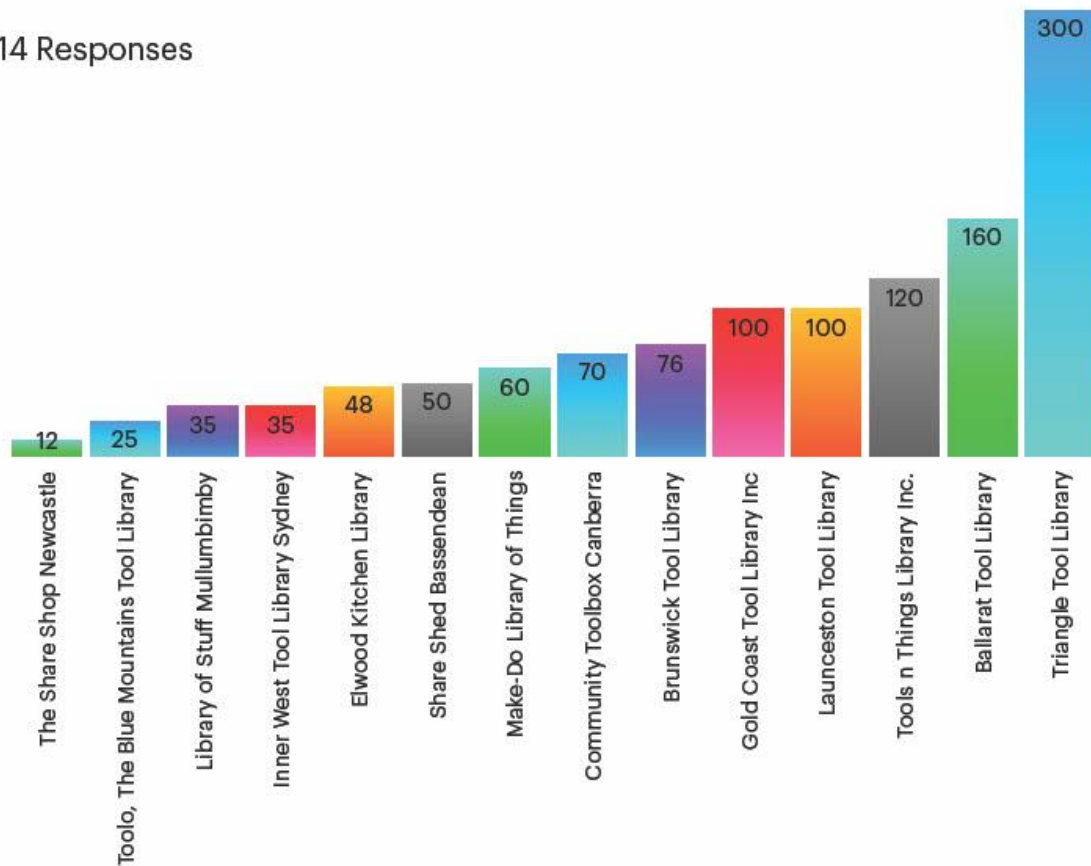
Survey Respondents

	Year Opened	Library name	State
1	2013	Brunswick Tool Library Inc, Melbourne	VIC
2	2015	Toolo, The Blue Mountains Tool Library	NSW
3	2018	The Share Shop Newcastle	NSW
4	2019	Inner West Tool Library Sydney	NSW
5	2019	Library of Stuff, Mullumbimby	NSW
6	2019	Make-Do Library of Things, Wooloongong	NSW
7	2019	Tools n Things Library Inc, Perth	WA
8	2020	Triangle Tool Library, Cobargo	NSW
9	2021	Ballarat Tool Library	VIC
10	2021	Community Toolbox Canberra	ACT
11	2021	Elwood Kitchen Library, Melbourne	VIC
12	2021	Gold Coast Tool Library Inc, Robina	QLD
13	2021	Stonnington Kitchen Library, Melbourne	VIC
14	2022	Launceston Tool Library	TAS
15	2022	Share Shed Bassendean	WA

There are approximately 25 known Libraries of Things in Australia.
This survey captured data from about 60% of the total.

Library size in square metres

14 Responses



Total space of all libraries

1,171 sqm

Average space

84 sqm

Median space

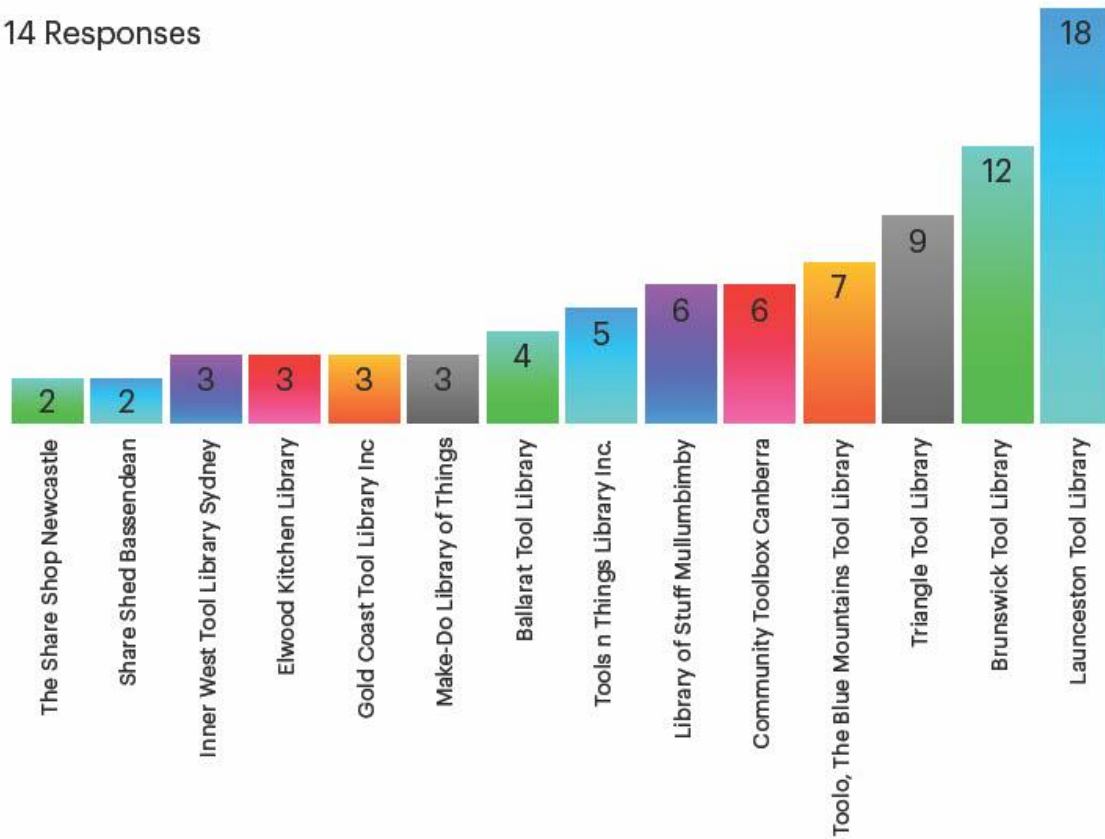
65 sqm

Exclusive use of space

11 yes, 3 no

Library opening hours per week

14 Responses



Total hours for all libraries each week

83 hrs

Average hours open

6 hrs

Median hours open

4.5hrs

Most popular day

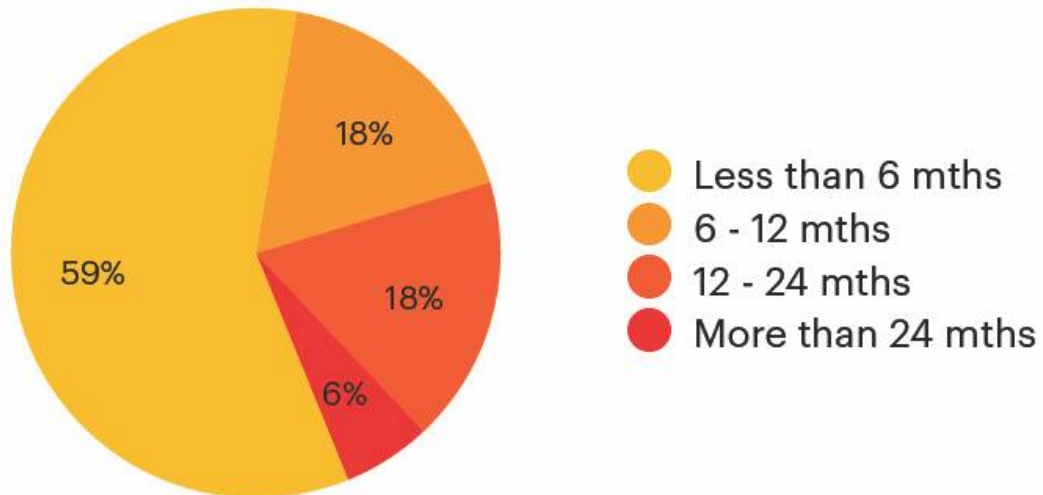
Saturday - 35.3 hrs

Least popular day

Sunday - 0 hrs

Time taken to find current space

15 Responses



Rent

Number of libraries paying no rent	9
Number of libraries paying rent	6
Average Rent	\$1,207 per year
Most	\$7,200
Least	\$650
Total rent per year of all libraries surveyed	\$19,324

Organisation Types

1 x Company Limited by Guarantee

10 x Incorporated Associations

3 x Auspiced

1 x Unincorporated group

Charity Status

3 x Charity with DGR Status

3 x Charity without DGR Status

9 x Not a charity

How are operational decisions made within your Library?

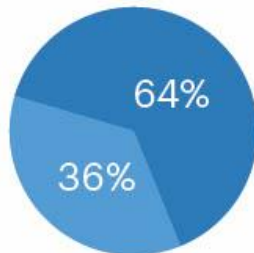
15 Responses

An elected executive team votes on resolutions	7
By consensus - all members have a say	4
We have a CEO/Board relationship	2
By consensus - all volunteers have a say	2

We aim for consensus amongst all active volunteers, and if we can't get it, we default to a committee vote. We use a gathering called a "Huddle" where issues get discussed by volunteers. For minor decisions an impromptu Huddle forms, usually face to face at the desk, and if at least 3 volunteers agree they can take action. We use WhatsApp to communicate minor decisions made, and raise new issues. For bigger issues we Huddle face to face and offsite. There is acceptance that if you don't engage then you are agreeing to the decision made by those that did. **Triangle Tool Library, Cobargo NSW**

10

Do you have long term goals that guide your decision making?
15 responses



- Yes
- Working on it

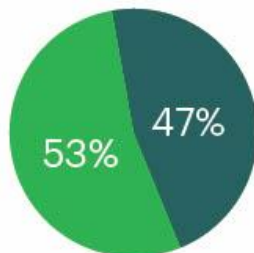
Selected comments:

"We had some but then COVID happened. We're trying to rebuild our volunteer numbers"

"We are a small team and all key positions work full time so often we are flying by the seat of our pants and just doing the minimum to keep the library flowing along."

"Our decisions are guided by what is best for our members. We also have some strategic planning documents generated in the last few years, which help guide long term planning."

Do you have an annual planning day or other kind of strategic planning process? 15 responses



- Yes
- No

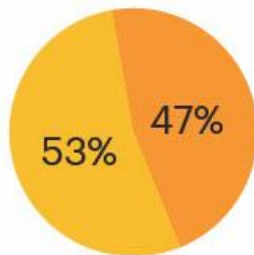
Selected comments:

"We hold an annual review of our two year strategic plan where we review our goals/objectives and actions."

"We have just been trying to maintain afloat and haven't had a chance to do this sort of forward planning."

"Very basic look at future needs and goals for the year ahead. This may be done over a few small sessions at differing times of the year."

Do you have a formal induction process for new team members?
15 responses



- Yes
- Working on it

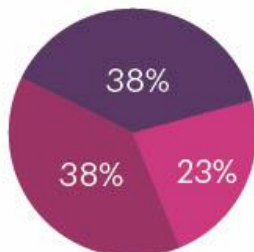
Selected comments:

"Safety briefing and induction to the site."

"We have an induction checklist which guides new volunteers through their first shift, and a large amount of training resources which are available thereafter. They can also ask questions on Slack."

"We do, but we need to ensure that we actually do it for everyone."

Do you conduct regular training sessions with your team?
13 responses



- Yes
- Working on it
- No

Selected comments:

"Not regular, but ad hoc as and when time permits and the available resources are there."

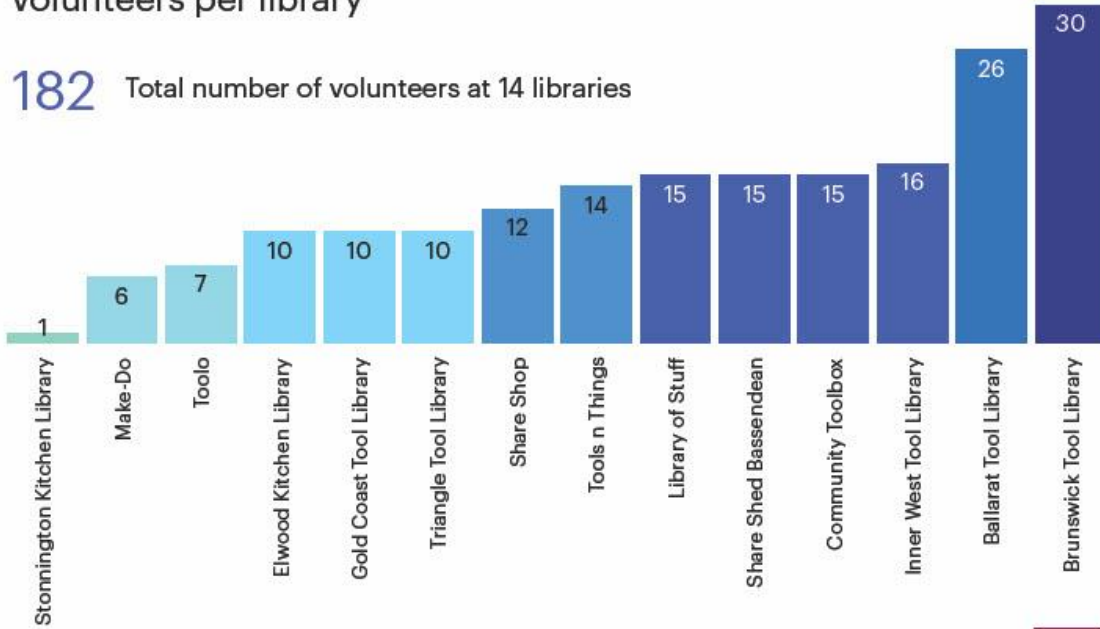
"We've had the odd one here and there however have wanted to do this more regularly. It's hard to get commitment from volunteers to come along."

"We go through peaks and troughs on training. There will be a few months where there is something happening every Saturday, then nothing formal for 6 months."

Volunteers and Staff

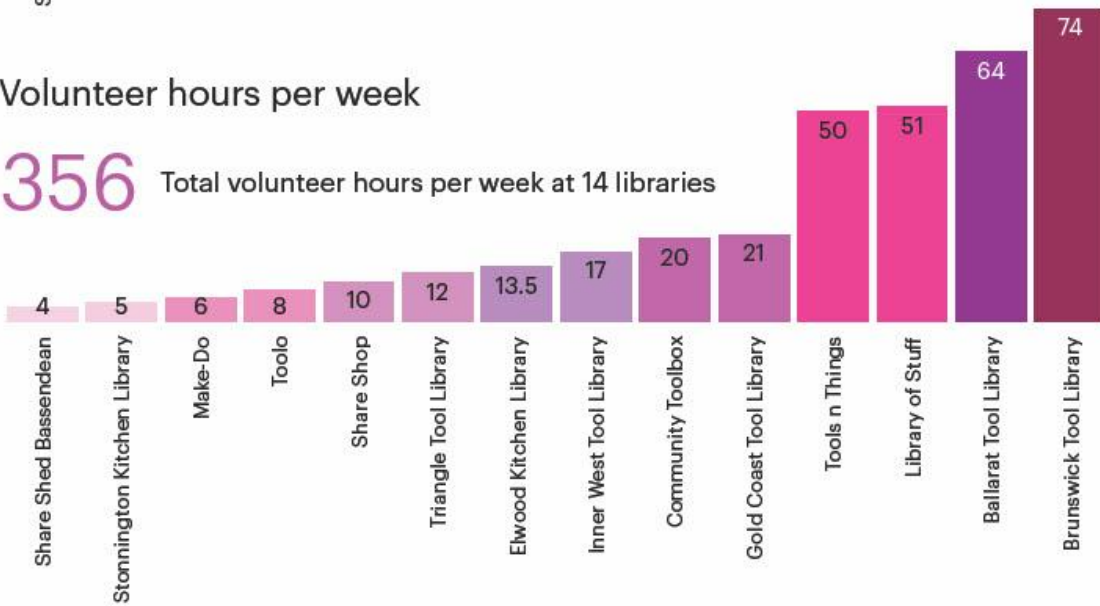
Volunteers per library

182 Total number of volunteers at 14 libraries



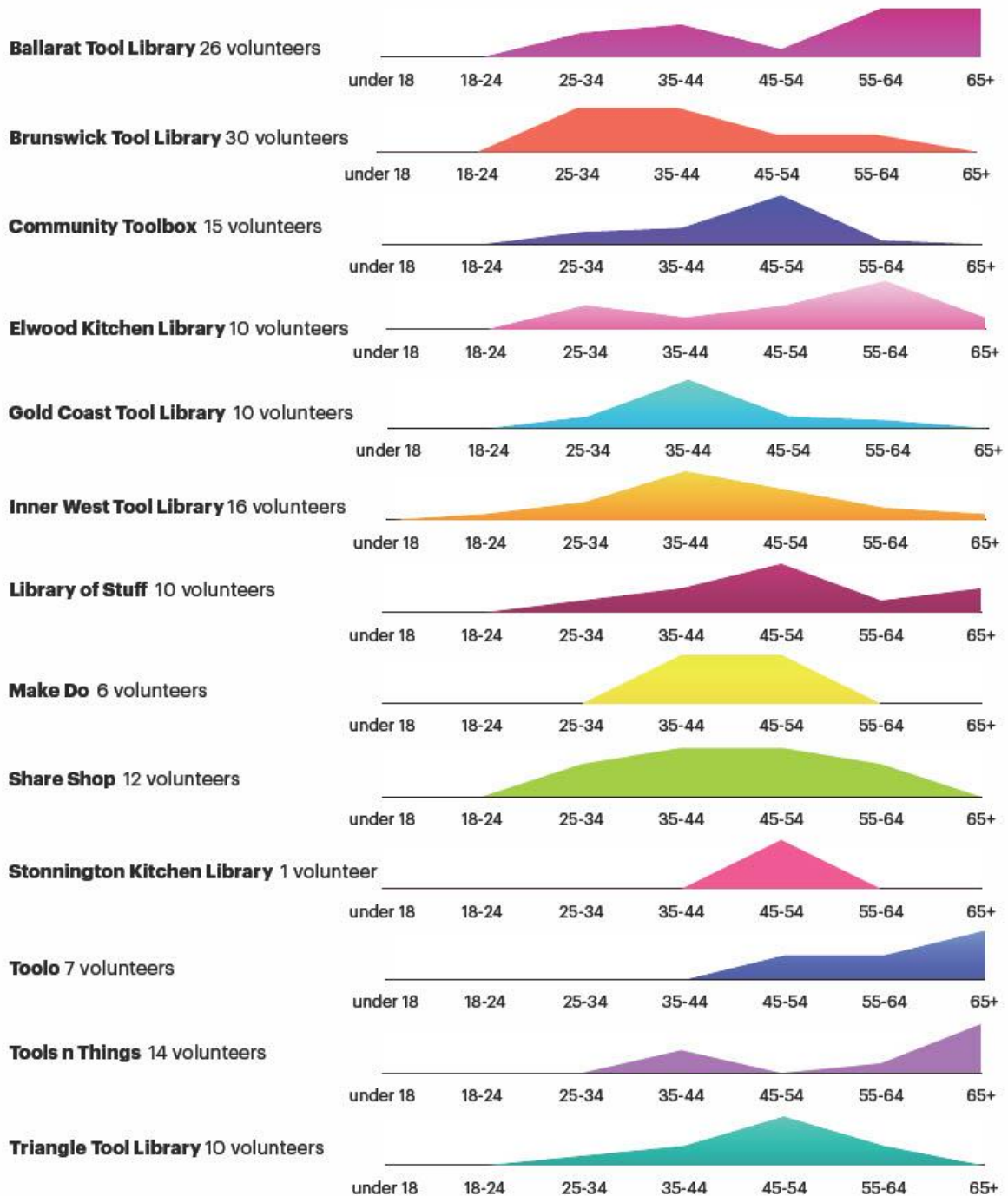
Volunteer hours per week

356 Total volunteer hours per week at 14 libraries



Note: Toolo and Library of Stuff both have 1 paid staff member. The staff member does 8 - 10hrs per week. The paid staff member was not included in these statistics

Volunteer demographics



What challenges are you facing in attracting, retaining and managing volunteers and what would you like help with?

The main difficulty mentioned was attracting volunteers (5) – for the library or the committee, despite advertising. Or there is lack of time to run a proper recruitment campaign. Two (2) organisations were happy with their volunteer management and expressed no difficulties at the moment.

Finding volunteer coordinators/managers on a volunteer basis was also a common concern for four (4) libraries, with people being reluctant to take on leadership roles. The job of managing volunteers and rostering itself is difficult when volunteers are not always committed, reliable, or are busy.

Finding a volunteer for comms and marketing was also mentioned. One organisation found that their website Contact Us form had been more successful than adverts or subscriptions.

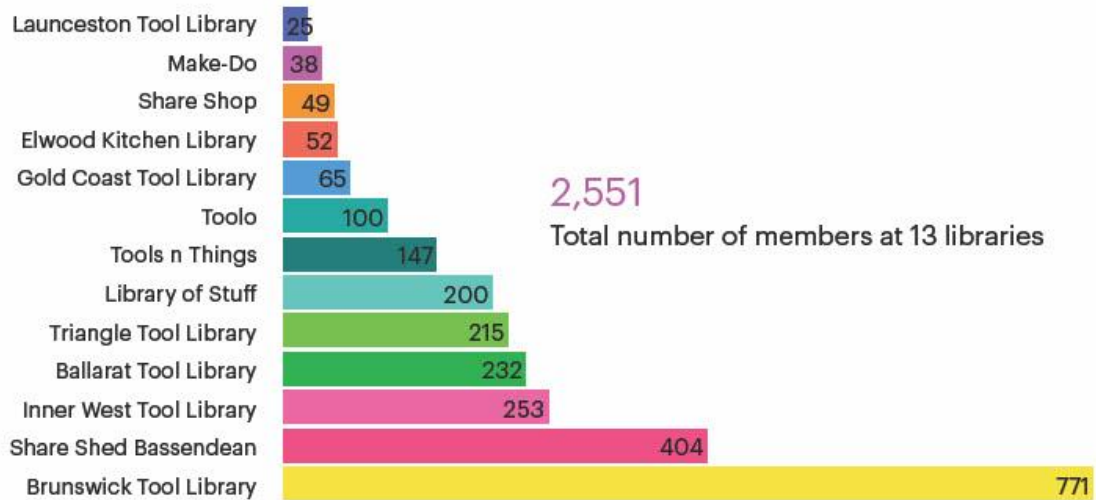
Suggestions included:

- Funding - for paid positions, train the trainer across all tool types, and better software for management, rostering and scheduling
- Sourcing mutual aid obligation (work for the dole) people
- Varying volunteer options to help more people contribute
- Socialisation opportunities for older volunteers once the library is set up and running.

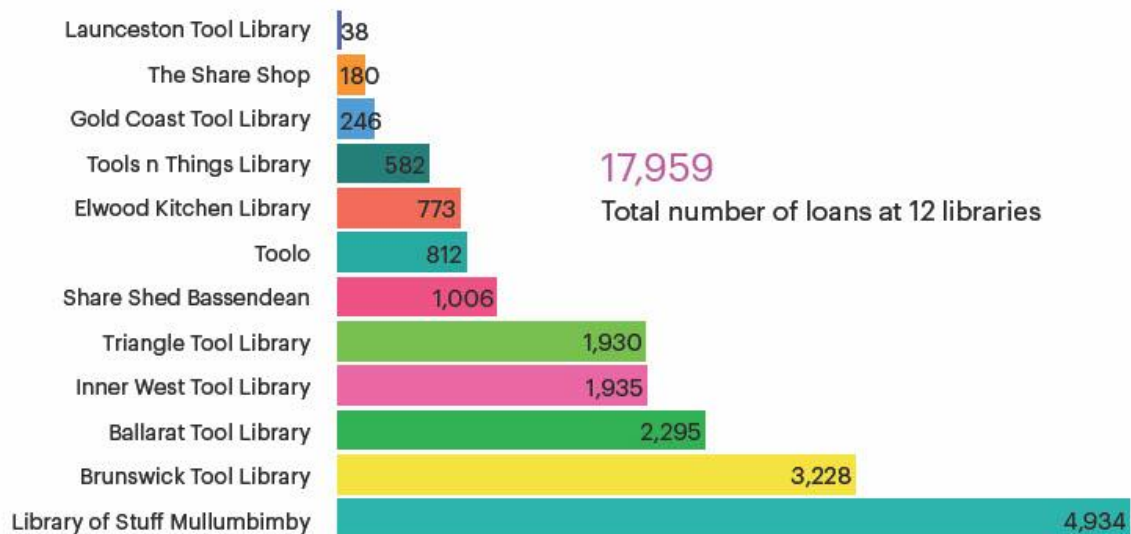


Volunteers at the Inner West Tool Library, Sydney

How many members do you have? 13 Responses



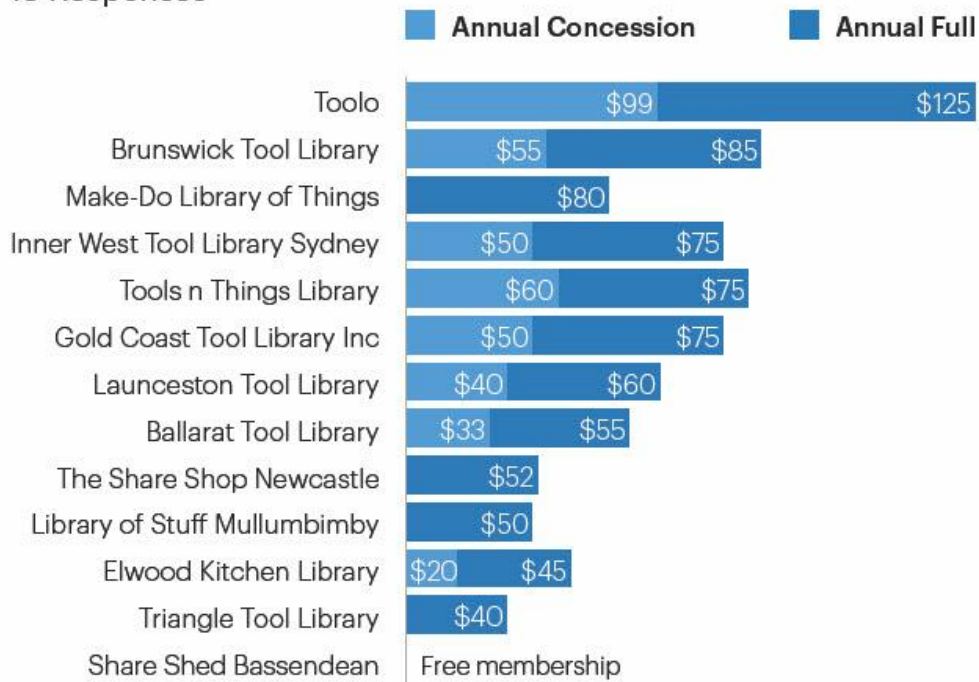
How many member loans in the last 12 months? 11 Responses



*Launceston TL was open about 2 months before the survey, so this represents number of loans per member in 2 months, rather than 12.

Membership Types and Prices

13 Responses



Annual Organisation/Group Membership

Gold Coast TL	Charity & NFP	\$125
Ballarat TL	Family Membership	\$77
Library of Stuff	Charity & NFP	\$80

Volunteer Membership

Make Do	\$22
Triangle	Free

Periodic Membership

Make Do	Quarterly	\$22
Tools n Things	3 month trial	\$30
Share Shop	Quarterly	\$15
Library of Stuff	2 month	\$20

Other Types

Brunswick TL	RRR Membership	\$77
Brunswick TL	EBV Residents	\$50
IWTL	Mission Aus 6 mth	\$25
Tools n Things	Rejoining Member	\$60
Launceston TL	Men's Shed	\$20
Library of Stuff	Flood affected locals	Free
Elwood KL	Lover	\$70

How many items can members borrow and for how long?

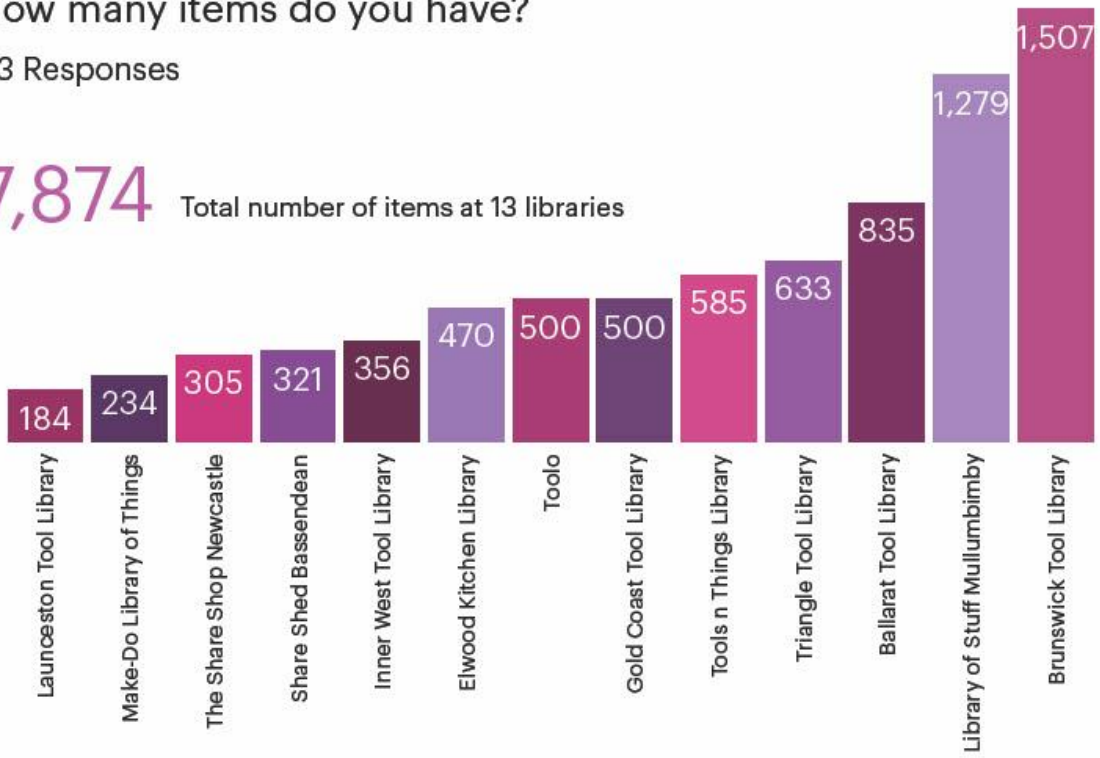
14 Responses

Ballarat Tool Library	4 items per week (7 day loans) however we can be flexible
Brunswick Tool Library	10 items per week per member
Elwood Kitchen Library	Lover up to 7 items . Regular & Concession up to 5 items Loan period for Party Packs is 7 days, everything else 14 days. All items except party packs can be renewed once if not reserved by another member.
Gold Coast Tool Library Inc	5 items per member with most items a standard 2 week loan as default. Option of borrowing more items at a fee of \$5 per item however if the extra item being borrowed is not in high demand we waive the fee as we prefer to have the item on loan
Inner West Tool Library	7 items per member per week
Launceston Tool Library	5 items per week per member
Library of Stuff Mullumbimby	No restrictions
Make-Do Library of Things	5 items but can be overridden
Share Shed Bassendean	unlimited number of items within reason for 7 days, then renewable if not booked.
Stonnington Kitchen Library	Kits are generally borrowed on a weekly basis
The Share Shop	5 items for 2 weeks (some high demand items are only 1 week loans)
Toolo	7 days for up to ten items
Tools n Things Library Inc.	6 items per week per member
Triangle Tool Library	default 1 week for loans

How many items do you have?

13 Responses

7,874 Total number of items at 13 libraries



Items borrowed between February 2022 and February 2023

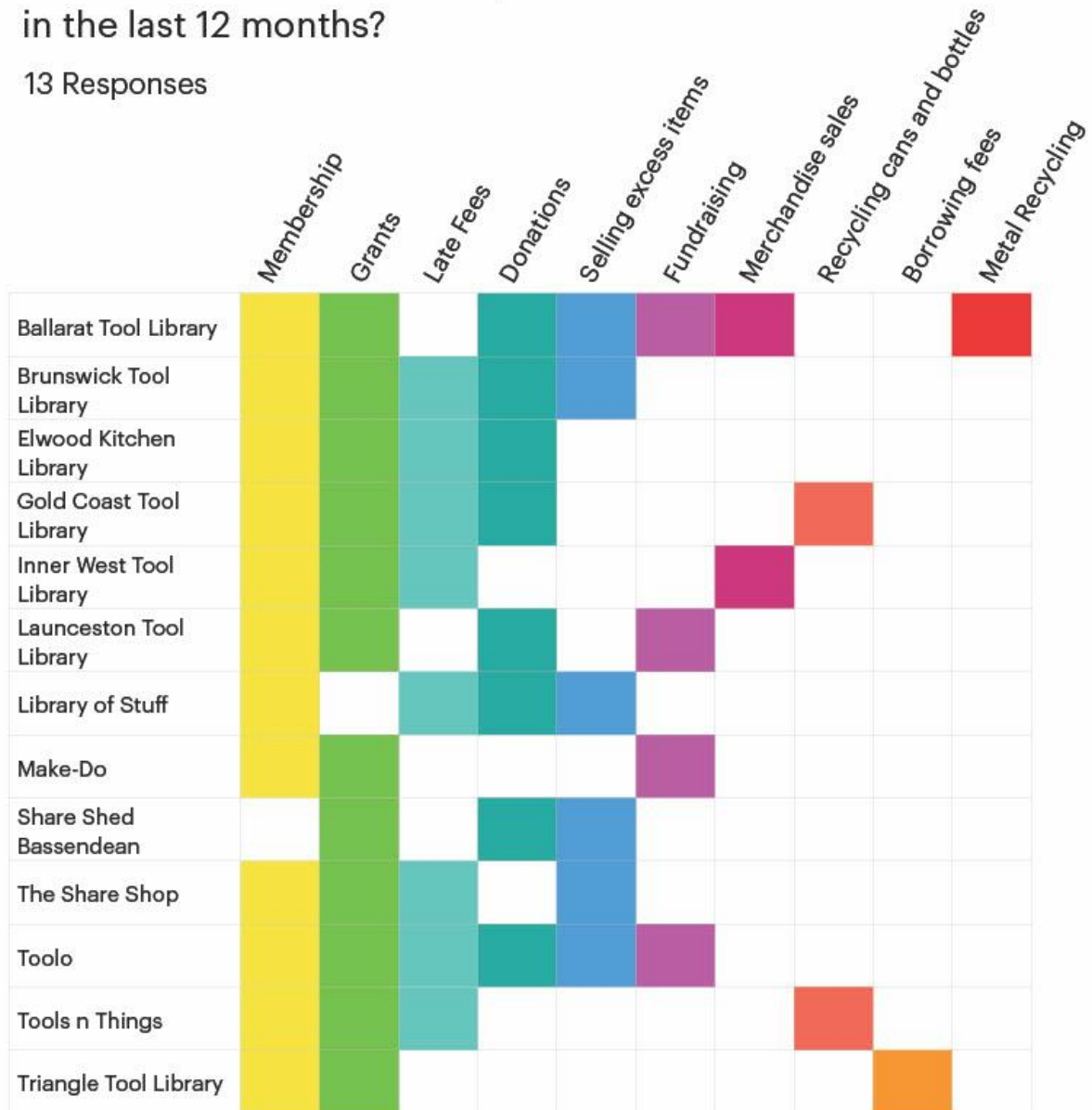
	Number of Items borrowed	Number of member loans	Average open hours per year*
Brunswick Tool Library	8051	3228	576
Library of Stuff Mullumbimby	4614	4934	288
Tools n Things Library Inc.	1847	582	240
Toolo	1011	812	336
Ballarat Tool Library	663	2295	192
Triangle Tool Library	590	1930	432
Gold Coast Tool Library Inc	563	246	144
Stonnington Kitchen Library	514	17	n/a
Inner West Tool Library Sydney	455	1935	144
Share Shed Bassendean	369	1006	96
The Share Shop Newcastle	364	180	96
Elwood Kitchen Library	267	773	144
Make-Do Library of Things	174	n/a	144

* Weekly hours multiplied by 48, assuming the library will have the equivalent of 4 weeks in a year when they are not open.

Launceston Tool Library were only open for 2 months at the time of the survey, so their results have been omitted. They had the highest number of opening hours a week at 18

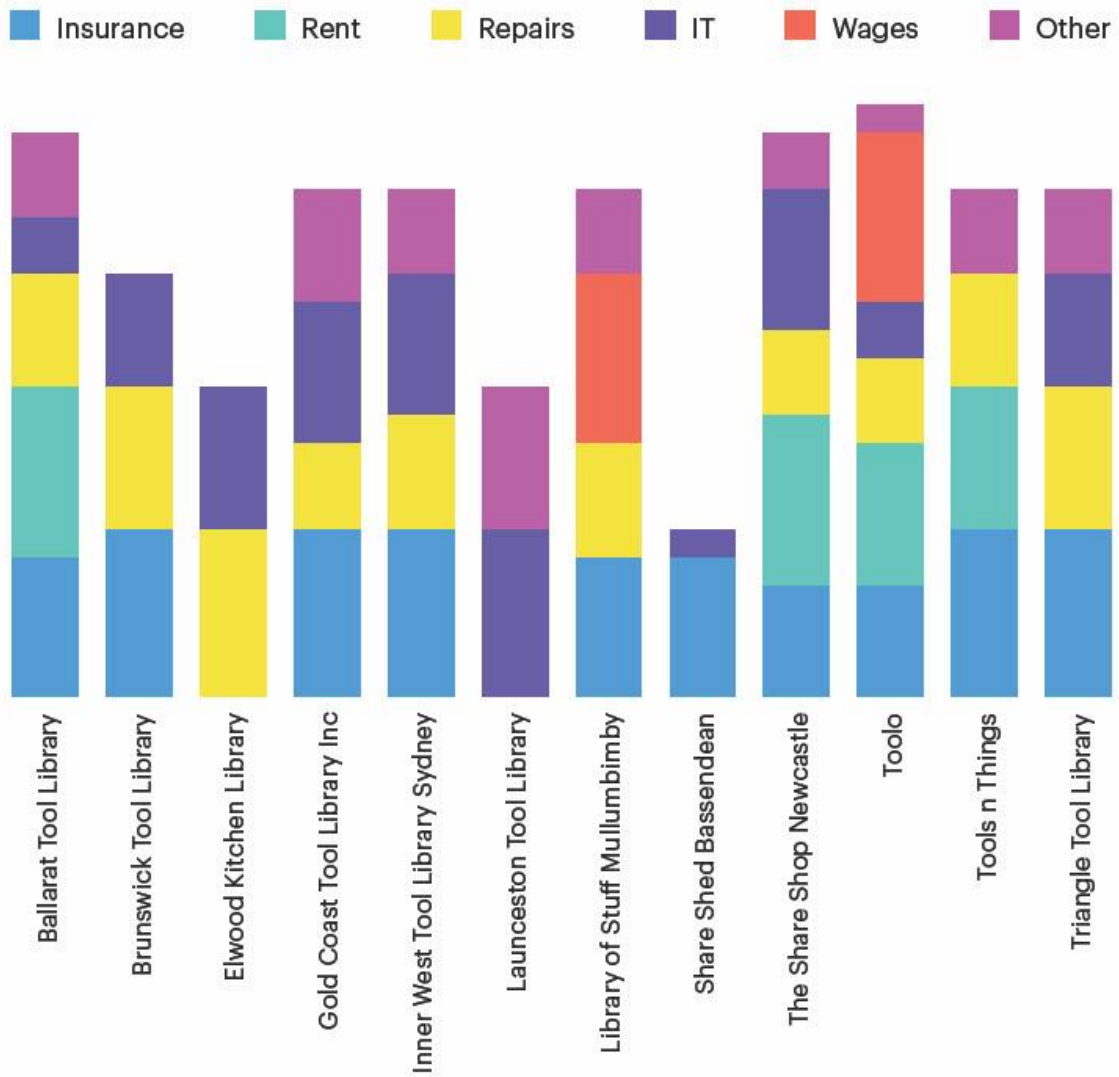
Which of these streams did you receive income from in the last 12 months?

13 Responses

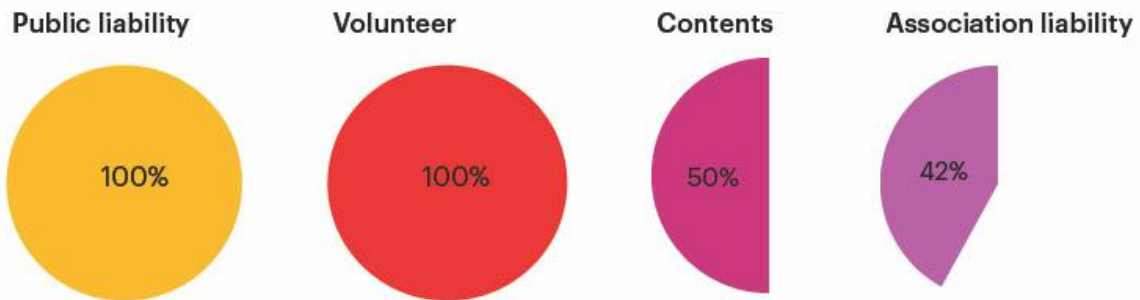


What are your largest costs?

12 Responses



What kind of insurance do you have? 14 Responses



Companies providing insurance 13 Responses

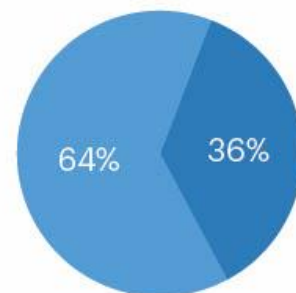
- Community Underwriting (2)
- QBE
- Dual Australia
- ASR Underwriting
- LCIS
- Aon (2)
- VMIA
- Keystone Underwriting
- Vero (AAI) and AHI
- (via Nature Conservation Council)
- Local Community Insurance Services
- Jobs Australia

The Town of Bassendean provides a groups insurance under their policy. We pay a contribution to that instead of taking out a separate policy.

Share Shed Bassendean

How did you obtain insurance? 11 Responses

11 Responses



- Used a broker
- Direct to insurer

Appendix 2: Summary of interviews with other LoTs founders

<p>Ballarat Tool Library</p> <p>Angie Molloy Founder and Chair angie@ballarattoollibrary.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballarat Tool Library extends beyond tools and offers a diverse inventory. • Term "tool library" was adopted because many community members were unfamiliar with the concept of a LoT. • The library functions on a voluntary-led model and has been operating successfully for three years. • Membership fee is \$55 per year. It has 36 volunteers and runs 3 x two-hours sessions per week. • Prior to launch, the founder called for volunteers; this established a sense of ownership and belonging among community members. • The library initially required members to volunteer, but this practice proved less successful. Currently members are not volunteers. • Sources of revenue include membership fees, donations (items and volunteer time), sale of old tools, copper recycling from discarded tools, tool sharpening, test and tag services for other communities, and running workshops. • The library main expense is rent. It relies on volunteer contributions for website and inventory management, as well as the public liability insurance.
<p>The Sydney Library of Things</p> <p>Carol Skyring President and Co-founder president@thesydneylibraryofthings.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sydney Library of Things has been running successfully for two-year. It has 127 active members and 185 items. • The library started with a passionate group of volunteers investing personal funds for initial costs. The founders later approached their local council for funding. • Their first step was to reach out to the community for volunteers and to evaluate community interest in a LoT. This survey worked as a 'feasibility study'. • Volunteers look after loaning, grant writing, membership management, etc. • They also have a maintenance team who meet up once/month. • The library has a donation process including regular call outs and obtaining returned items from local Bunnings. • Their local council supports them with grants, hosting workshops, PR and marketing. • The founder suggested to allocate an initial setup budget of \$10,000 for insurance and fit-out expenses. • The library operates as an incorporated association, with three levels of insurance: public liability, professional indemnity, and product insurance at an annual cost of around \$3,000. • It was suggested that such organisational chart may not be necessary for all LoTs. • Volunteers are not considered members, but they can get free membership.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library has a comprehensive website with a great lay-out. • For website and inventory management, they use the "myTurn" system, embedded in their website. ('myTurn' is often used in other libraries too. This system is free up to a specific membership number, after which it incurs a cost of \$25/month)
<p>Bendigo Tool Library (Bendigo Share and Repair Shed)</p> <p>Elsie L'Huillier Founder 0419351370</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The founder emphasised that the key to success is to have community members taking ownership of the library, so they are more inclined to volunteer and contribute actively. • It was suggested to call it a 'Tool Library' rather than a Library of Things to enhance community engagement. • The first step should be finding a sustainability network and call for a meeting to identify 2-3 local champions. • Elsie expressed her willingness to offer support and guidance once the Council identifies a local champion willing to lead this initiative.
<p>Mullumbimby Library of Stuff</p> <p>Sasha Mainsbridge Founder & President info@libraryofstuff.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mullumbimby Library of Stuff was founded in 2016 with seven board members. • The library uses a trailer for storage. • They library started with a survey as a feasibility study. • The library Initial investment was \$15,000 for insurance, tools and a trailer. • The library had no paid staff for 3 years, then two paid key members (10 hours a week x \$40) which was funded through grants. • Below is the list insurance for this library: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public and Product Liability \$20M. ○ Volunteer Insurance. ○ Vehicle insurance (library has a trailer for storage). ○ Business Pack - insurance if stock gets damaged in a flood or fire or other incident. ○ Workers' compensation - (only required if you have paid staff)
<p>Gold Coast Tool Library</p> <p>David Paynter 0404 833 741 hello@toollibrary.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Coast Tool Library has been operating for 3 years, on a volunteer led model. • The founder found volunteers through a Face Book group, media coverage and a stall at framers' market. • The library has a 20' shipping container next to a shopping center as a storage with no office. • The initial investment was \$2,000. They initially relied on donations for inventory, then obtained \$10,000 funding to purchase items.

Appendix 3: Summary of interviews with LoTs stakeholders

Stakeholders	Key Findings
<p>Jo Murray</p> <p>Surf Coast Shire Library of Things project applicant - via the Community Project Development Program</p> <p>jomurray8@gmail.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LoTs can be challenging to run long-term. • Financial viability and staffing can be significant issues. • Grant funding should be sought out e.g. via State government, banks e.g. Bendigo Bank, or potential philanthropy sources. • Could reduce the scope of items offered to be more manageable such as just offering one type of items such as home sustainability related items. • Ideal model would be through partnering with Geelong Regional Libraries Corporation, having an online LoT platform, having storage located somewhere affordable, and delivering items using the existing library bus drop off system. • A once-off grant approach would benefit from having a community meeting before to raise awareness and seek interest.
<p>Dan Cowdell</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>Geelong Sustainability</p> <p>dan@geelong sustainability.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking a feasibility study for this project is not Geelong Sustainability's priority. • It was suggested to explore funding opportunities from other local councils, Geelong Region Alliance (G21), and Recycling Victoria. • Geelong Sustainability can potentially assist in recruitment and management of paid staffs should this model of running the library is chosen.
<p>Radmila Sekulic</p> <p>Manager Collection and Information Services</p> <p>Geelong Regional Library Corporations (GRLC)</p> <p>radmila.sekulic@grlc.vic.gov.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRLC's objective is not to run this project but to complement the library's inventory collection. • Currently GRLC are offering limited items for loan within a specific scope, such as Kodak Mobile Film Scanner and thermal imaging camera. GRLC policy is to offer items that improve literacy or enhancing wellbeing only. • GRLC are restricted by storage and funding, and do not have capacity to manage items requiring cleaning or maintenance, such as kitchen appliances or tools.
<p>Erin Krusic-Golub</p> <p>Marketing Coordinator</p> <p>Torquay Community House</p> <p>activities@torquaycommunityhouse.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erin is also the president of the Grovedale Toy Library and suggested that a LoT can be sustainable through having one or more paid staff similar to the Grovedale Toy Library. • If a LoT was to be located in the premises of the Torquay Community House, they could potentially help with recruiting and managing paid staff and the Men's Shed can assist with repairing and maintenance of the library items.

<p>Abby Ellery Coordinator Aged, Youth and Access Surf Coast Shire Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some potential locations were discussed but would need more information and engagement. • Suggestions for community groups to approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parents for Climate ○ Winchelsea Senior Citizens ○ Winchelsea Lions Club
<p>Shannon Fielder Coordinator, Community Health & Development Surf Coast Shire Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some potential locations were discussed but would need more information and engagement. • Suggested steps for a community group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chat to potential venue or partnership groups eg. Community Houses and Men’s Sheds. ○ Identify a location. ○ Develop a proposal and have funding ready. ○ Attend the community panel meeting. ○ Recruit volunteers through Breanna Dixon (there is already a list of people who are willing to volunteer in such initiatives).

Appendix 4: The Sydney LoT Guide to Start



How to set up your own Library of Things

It might seem like a simple idea but setting up and running a Library of Things (LoT) takes a lot of time and effort! Sourcing and maintaining the items, recruiting and training volunteers, finding and fitting out an appropriate space, installing technology, sorting insurance, writing processes and procedures, fundraising... need we go on!

You can set up your LoT yourself just like we did at The Sydney Library of Things (TSLoT), or you can partner with us make it happen. We bring our experience, technology, systems and procedures to save you time and money.

You'll need:

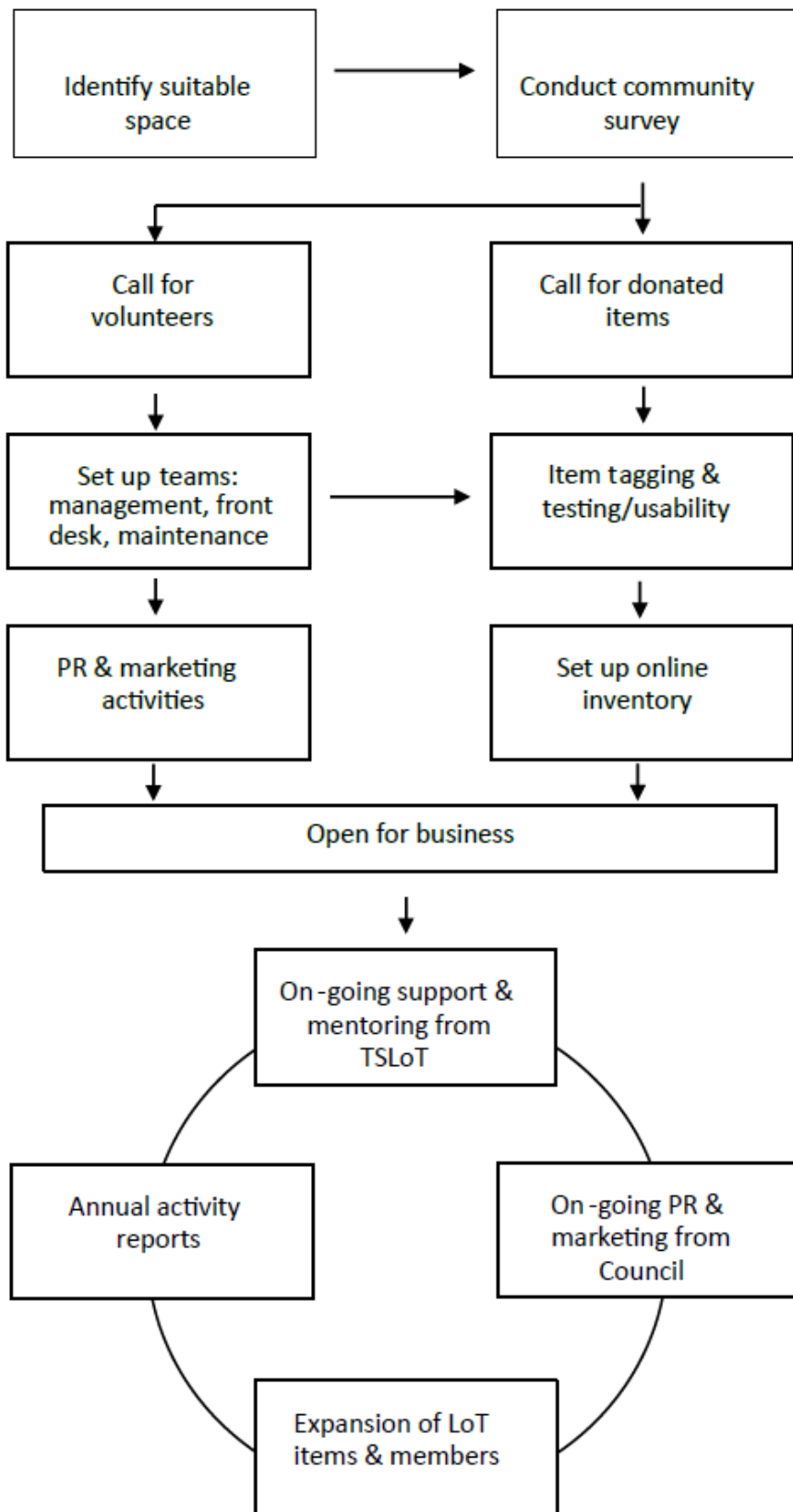
- **Space:** Affordable, secure, suitable space e.g. library, community centre or other council building that has 20sqm+ storage space and has easily accessible parking close by.
- **Budget:** A set-up budget of approximately \$10,000 (\$5000 to TSLoT for management and insurance costs plus up to \$5000 fit out costs).
- **Community:** Evidence of demand and support from your local community.
- **PR & Marketing:** On-going support through council channels.

We can help you with:

- **Support to identify** an appropriate space for a LoT.
- **Our knowledge** of how to set up a successful LoT.
- **Our ability** to recruit and train volunteers.
- **Processes and procedures** for all aspects of the operation.
- **Our experience** of how to educate communities and encourage them to borrow.

- **Appropriate software** to manage inventory, members and borrowing.
- **A business structure** under which your LoT can operate – including appropriate insurances.
- **Annual reporting** of LoT performance.

While we'll manage the process and provide on-going support, it's crucial that we have the commitment of the local community as volunteer workers and/or borrowers. Once you've identified an appropriate space, we'll conduct a survey of the local community to gauge their interest. Once this is established, we'll manage the process of finding and training local volunteers and sourcing items for the LoT. We'll then set up the systems, processes and procedures to establish and grow the LoT. On-going support from council in the form of PR & marketing is crucial. In a nutshell, here's how it works:



Appendix 5: Ballarat Tool Library Membership Agreement (2021)

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 “Borrowers” must be over the age of 18 years to borrow tools from the Ballarat Tool Library (hereafter “BTL”, a program of Ballarat Renewable Energy and Zero Emissions Inc (hereafter “BREAZE” (ABN 35 704 902 844)).

1.2 Borrowers must register with BTL prior to borrowing tools. Registration includes the completion of an application form and verification of the Borrower's identity. Verification is accomplished by presenting current photo ID together with an additional proof of address (issued within the previous 3 months and displaying the same address).

1.3 Borrowers are only entitled to borrow tools from BTL while they maintain a fully paid membership of BTL. Membership fees are set out on the BTL website (ballarattoollibrary.org). Borrowers should review the BTL website prior to renewing their membership for information on possible membership fee changes. Note that payment of BTL membership fees, whilst BTL is part of BREAZE, does not constitute membership of BREAZE and confers none of the rights of BREAZE membership on the BTL member.

1.4 The Borrower may not borrow any tools until they have signed or electronically accepted the “Ballarat Tool Library - Deed of Release from Liability”.

1.5 BTL retains the right to refuse to lend tools to any person for any reason other than contrary to Australian law.

2. BORROWING TOOLS AND RETURN OF TOOLS

2.1 BTL will be open for Borrowers to borrow and return tools at the times set out on the BTL website (ballarattoollibrary.org), however, these opening times are subject to change at BTL’s sole discretion.

2.2 Borrowers may borrow up to four tools (or sets of tools) at one time.

2.3 Tools may only be returned during BTL’s opening hours as set out on our website.

(a) Tools borrowed on a Saturday must be returned by the following Saturday.

(b) Tools borrowed on a Tuesday must be returned by the following Tuesday.

2.4 Renewals may be possible; however, Borrowers must be prepared to return all items by the return times set out in clause 2.3 above (“Return Date”). BTL reserves the right to refuse or limit renewals and may do so at its discretion.

2.5 If any tools are not returned by the Return Date, BTL will issue an overdue notice. If the tools are not returned promptly, appropriate steps will be taken to retrieve them, including the use of a collection agency and/or legal action.

2.6 Borrowers must pay the following late fines for each item kept past the Return Date:

(a) \$1.00 / day / tool for hand tools; and

(b) \$5.00 / day / tool for power tools.

For the purpose of calculating late fees, a “day” is a day on which the BTL is open for lending (currently Tuesday and Saturday, so 2 days in a week).

2.7 At its discretion, BTL may refuse to allow any further borrowing until fines are paid.

2.8 Immediately upon request from BTL the Borrower must pay:

- (a) the price charged to BTL for any tool which, for whatever reason, is not returned to BTL;
- (b) all costs incurred in cleaning any tools which are returned in an unclean state;
- (c) the full cost of repairing any damage to any tool;
- (d) any fines payable pursuant to clause 2.6; and
- (e) all costs incurred by BTL in recovering possession of any tools (including legal costs).

3. USE OF TOOLS

3.1 Only the Borrower is authorised to use BTL tools. The Borrower must not permit any BTL tools to be used by any other person unless with the express written permission of BTL. The Borrower must not part with possession of any BTL tools they have borrowed.

3.2 The Borrower agrees that if any borrowed tool becomes unsafe or in a state of disrepair, they will immediately discontinue use of the tool and notify BTL of the issue on return, if not earlier. The Borrower must not attempt to repair or tamper with any BTL tool.

3.3 The Borrower agrees:

- (a) to satisfy themselves prior to borrowing the tools that they are suitable for the Borrower's intended purpose;
- (b) to operate the tools safely, strictly in accordance with Australian law, only for its intended use, and in accordance with any manufacturer's instructions provided with or on the tools (if available);
- (c) to operate the tools with an adequate power source (if applicable);
- (d) to conduct a thorough hazard and risk assessment before using the tools; and
- (e) to return the tools in a clean state and in good repair.

4. CHANGE OF RULES

4.1 The Borrower should check the BTL Website prior to borrowing any BTL tools for any changes to these Borrowing Rules. You may also be asked to agree to any changes in the future before borrowing. However, BTL agrees that changes to these Borrowing Rules will not apply with respect to a loan period commenced prior to the date the rule change took place.

Appendix 6: Ballarat Tool Library Deed of Release from Liability

1. I acknowledge that I am over 18 years of age, I am capable and experienced in using the tools I am borrowing from the Ballarat Tool Library (hereafter “BTL”, which is itself a part of Ballarat Renewable Energy and Zero Emissions Inc (hereafter “BREAZE”, ABN 35 704 902 844)), and that I will use the tools I am borrowing in a proper manner.

2. I acknowledge and agree that use of tools borrowed by me may be dangerous and could result in accidents happening. I acknowledge and agree that there is a possibility of an accident causing injury, death or property damage or loss and my use of any BTL tools is at my own risk. I hereby assume, to the extent permitted by law, all risks of loss, damage or injury (including death) which may be sustained by me which is in any way connected with my use or loan of any BTL tools.

3. I acknowledge that neither BTL nor BREAZE nor their officers, committee members, employees, agents, contractors, successors and assignees (“BTL/BREAZE Representatives”) will be liable for any present or future claim, loss, liability, damage, cost or expense (whether arising under statute, from negligence (but excluding gross negligence), personal injury, death, property damage or infringement of third party rights or otherwise) that arises as a result of any act, matter or thing done, permitted or omitted to be done which is in any way connected with my use or loan of any BTL tools. I acknowledge and agree that the BTL/BREAZE and the BTL/BREAZE Representatives do not make any warranty that the tools provided will be fit for the purposes for which they are supplied. I acknowledge that, to the extent that any warranty is implied it is excluded to the full extent permitted by law.

4. I agree to indemnify and keep indemnified the BTL/BREAZE and the BTL/BREAZE Representatives against any present or future claim, loss, liability, damage, cost or expense which may be incurred by the BTL/BREAZE or any or all of the BTL/BREAZE Representatives as a result of any act, matter or thing done, permitted or omitted to be done by me or which is in any way connected with my use or possession of any BTL tools.

5. I acknowledge and agree that a term (or part or parts thereof) of this release and indemnity will not apply where the term contravenes the law of the relevant jurisdiction under which any legal action is legitimately taken, however such terms (or part or parts thereof) are severable and do not invalidate the remaining terms.

6. I affirm that the above information is current, true and correct; that I have also read and fully understand and agree to the Borrowing Rules of the BTL; and I understand that failure to comply with any of these rules may result in revocation of my borrowing privileges.

Appendix 7: Budgeting example - Capital and operating costs of a potential LoT at Hurstbridge Nillumbik Shire

As an example, the capital and operating costs of a potential LoT at Hurstbridge Nillumbik Shire is represented here. The capital costs break-down based on the assumption that the LoT will be co-located within an existing community focused premises in Nillumbik Shire is calculated to be \$19,800.

Table 1. Capital Costs for a LoT at Hurstbridge, Nillumbik Shire.

Item	Cost
Fit-out	10,000
IT- laptop, phone, printer	1,800
Library Things (new)	8,000
Total	19,800

The annual operating costs were calculated to be \$12,610, \$33,660 to \$72,560 for three scenarios of operating completely voluntary, employing a 0.2 FTE start-up coordinator and employing a 0.6 FTE start-up coordinator, respectively. The breakdown of the first model is shown here:

Scenario 3: Co-location local community premises + Volunteers only + Lean operating expenses		Notes
Employment costs (+on-costs)	-	
Lease	200.00	Based on standard community rental fee Nillumbik Council
Operational costs/utilities	0	Based on co-location subsidy
Office supplies	300.00	
Printing, postage & stationery	500.00	
Advertising/Marketing	500.00	
Equipment/Furniture purchase<500	-	
Maintenance of 'things'	5,000.00	Blades, bits, parts, oils, fuel, chains etc.
Test & Tag	1,000.00	Covers all donated items
Accountancy	-	Based on using current SHIFT accountancy
Legal fees	500.00	Contingency in case of disputed liability claim
Telephone/Mobile	360.00	
Internet/IT	1,150.00	
Computer software	-	Based on using MyTurn
Website design/upkeep	-	No separate website- page only on SHIFT website
Insurances	3,000.00	Estimate based on current LoT costs in Australia
Business Registration/Licence fees	-	Assumes nil if operated from a Nillumbik council site
Bank Charges	-	Assumes nil for a NFP Association
Expenses - travel	100.00	Allows for some reimbursement of any delivery costs
Total	12,610.00	

A simple snapshot of the project budget for the Point Cook LoT provided by the library founder is presented in here. This is a part of a \$15,000 grant application.

Income		Expenditure	
Amount requested from Grant	\$ 15000	Shelving Purchase (2 units)	\$500
Fundraising and Donations / Sponsorships	3000	Establishment Fees (Venue setup, security camera, locks)	6000
Revenue from Subscription (40 * 50 AUD)	2000	Insurance (Public/Volunteer)	2500
Electrician/Handymen volunteering contribution (In Kind Contribution) (25 hrs * 40 AUD)	1000	Administration Costs	1000
Volunteer contribution (50 hrs * 40 AUD)	2000	Salaries & Wages	
		Electrician/Handymen subsidised charges 60 hrs *40 AUD (5 hrs * 12 months)	2400
		Caretaker volunteer courtesy fee (400 AUD * 12 months)	4800
		Marketing	1000
		Maintenance fee (Spares etc.)	2800
		Software fee/ Hosting charges	1500
		Miscellaneous charges	500
Total Income	\$23,000	Total Expenditure	\$23,000