

Information Futures Commission - 2008

Submission: The Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library

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Introduction

The Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library has a close working relationship with the Faculty of Music. Indeed, an undergraduate student cannot pass in the BMus without extensive use of music library resources. There will continue to be a music research and teaching presence on the Parkville campus for at least 10 years, regardless of the creation of the new music school in 2009. (Recently reported by the Dean of the Faculty of Music)

Music is a language which requires specialist staff, a multiplicity of resources and various formats across new and aging technologies. As material becomes available electronically, the uptake both outside and within the Music Library has been significant. Despite the increase in electronic resources, student numbers working within the space of the Music Library have increased while they work collaboratively and use multiple resources concurrently, such as music scores, cds and texts. (Fig.1)

The physical collections – particularly music scores and recordings – are as relevant today as last century and must grow in order to meet the needs of current teaching, research and performance. Music score and sound recording cataloguing backlogs are significant. The music rare collections attract local and international research interest and are in need of cataloguing and conservation. (See submission by the Cultural Collections Group)

Music Library collections are dispersed across several locations while on-site collections are at 100% shelf capacity.

Recommendations

- Provide sufficient seating space for all patrons
- Provide sufficient shelf space for growing and existing collections; music scores **must** be browsable to ascertain suitability, and sound recordings must be close to the music scores and texts to maximise effective use. (Recordings, scores and analyses are typically consulted together)
- Ensure adequate equipment - both IT and audiovisual playback
- Maintenance support for aging technologies such as turntables
- Upgrade or replace the unstable, inhouse Sound Recording Database which indexes approx. 20,000 sound recordings (see <http://buffy.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cgi-bin/music-search>)
- Equitable access for all
- Ensure specialist trained music staff are always available to provide backfill when necessary
- Provide funds to catalogue music score backlog, approx. 13,000 titles and lp recordings listed on the Sound Recording Database, approx. 4,000 (These figures do not include the rare collections backlog)
- Provide adequate funding for binding of music scores, which are not sturdy enough to be shelved without binding

- Note the paucity of electronic books and journals in the area of music which differs from other disciplines for which there are considerable digital titles. There is still a dependence on print textual material.

Fig.1

