

Information Futures Commission

Submission:

Space and information resources at The University of Melbourne music, visual and performing arts libraries (Louise Hanson Dyer Music Library, Parkville and the Lenton Parr Library, Southbank)

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Executive summary

Recently announced changes to the Faculty of the VCA and Faculty of Music, to commence in April 2009) will require a review of music library services to support the proposed new School of Music.

There are two music collections (Southbank and Parkville) and issues including space and services required for high level library support will need to be examined, dependant on future location and building resources.

1. Present state:

The merger of the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts and the Faculty of Music in April 2009, into one Faculty of the VCA and Music will impact on the libraries that support these faculties.

In addition, the offer of the Melba Conservatorium Library collection to the VCA Library, to support the proposed graduate opera program in 2011 will also impact on the resources and space required for future music collections.

Currently the Lenton Parr/VCA Library (located at Southbank campus) is a multidisciplinary library supporting the Schools of music, art, dance, drama, production, film and television, the Centre for Ideas, and the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts. The Louise Hanson Dyer Music Library supports the Faculty of Music, Parkville campus, and is located on the 3rd floor of the Baillieu Library.

The current VCA Library has space to support VCA teaching and research needs. The library was refurbished prior to integration in 2007, and provides adequate seating and other accommodation for the current cohort of VCA students (approx 1,200 in 2008). The addition of approximately 10,000 titles from the Melba Conservatorium Library collection can be accommodated, but will lessen the current projected growth potential from 10 years to to 5 years.

The current Music Library has been in the Baillieu Library on a temporary basis for over 25 years. It is severely overcrowded. Collections are housed in other areas of the Baillieu Library. Student seating and services are cramped and compromised. New accommodation for collections and students is required as soon as possible.

With the new generation degree structures and the proposed merger, the UoM Library has responded with a restructure, grouping the Music and VCA Libraries under the one management group. Collaborative activity has already started with collection development, collection sharing, cross library staff training and shifts, and information literacy support.

2. The future:

The future of these libraries is dependant on the development of a new School of Music building.

Scenarios

2.1 A new School of Music Building – location Parkville. It is suggested that a new Music Library combining the Music and VCA Libraries music collection be located in this building, allowing easy access and strongly integrated services with the School.

2.2 A new School of Music Building – location Southbank.

Proposal 1. Expand the current VCA Library to include the Music Library collections. This continues the VCA pedagogical approach and support of “an interdisciplinary music, visual and performing arts library, where collections are developed and housed, staff and students work together in a collaborative, non-discipline segregated environment”. This is a philosophy which is carried throughout the college with interdisciplinary activity and support between the schools. All students work together within a core curriculum offered by the Centre for Ideas.

Additional space will be required to house this collection.

Proposal 2. Integrate the VCA Library music collection and the Music Library collections. Locate them in a discrete “music library” located near the School of Music.

If a new building is built, ensure that adequate space is made available.

A review of music library collections and services will be required, once the decision on where the new School of Music is to be located is made.