

Library Board of Victoria

Application Example: Pierre Gorman Award

Applicant type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Library service <input type="checkbox"/> Individual
Name of applicant or contact person	<i>Please note: this is an example application to provide a guide in completing the application</i>
Library service	<i>This is an example application</i>
Address	<i>This is an example application</i>
Telephone	<i>This is an example application</i>
Email	<i>This is an example application</i>
Have you been an applicant since 2011?	<i>This is an example application</i>

Referees

Please provide the name, position and organisation of two referees. Letters of support from referees should be sent directly to the Award Administrator.

1. For example, provide a letter from a Community Service
2. For example, provide a letter from a Shire or municipality

Letter of support from library service manager/CEO

Remember to attach a letter of support from your library service manager/CEO? (Not required if the library service manager/CEO is providing a reference for an individual applicant.)

Details of proposal

About your proposal	
Title of proposal	<i>This is an example application</i>
Brief description <i>(up to 100 words)</i>	In partnership with Community Living and Respite Services Inc. (CLRS) the Library would like to improve and expand its programming, service delivery and physical environment for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The project will include a sensory audit of all library service points, staff training, gain recognised Communication Access status, development of new resources, provide innovative assistive technology and supportive programs for families.

<p>Detailed description</p>	<p>Shire Access and Inclusion</p> <p>The Shire aims to foster the spirit of inclusiveness. Council is continually seeking to identify and the remove barriers that people with a disability face. It acknowledges that great change can occur by thinking differently about how people with a disability can be included in all aspects of community life. The Shire is aware that the main issues facing people with a disability are very broad and interconnected and often venues and services are outside the control of the Shire. In order for the Shire to show leadership and help remove barriers to access and inclusion in the community, there are often opportunities to work on a collaborative initiative to address them effectively.</p> <p>The opportunity has arisen for the Library, as part of the People division of the Shire, to partner with Community Living and Respite Services Inc to apply for this award to enable it to improve services and the physical environment for people with ASD who regularly use and visit the library service points across the Shire.</p> <p>Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</p> <p>Autism Spectrum Disorder is a developmental disability, a person may have difficulties in some areas of their development, but other skills may develop typically. The areas most likely to be affected including communication, social interaction and difficulty with flexibility of thought and play.</p> <p>People with ASD often have difficulty with language and are likely to have difficulty in expressing their needs, wants, ideas, experiences and opinions. They may not also understand the meaning of body language and have difficulty with the written and spoken word.</p> <p>Social interactions may also be difficult including eye contact, gestures and facial expressions. It can be quite isolating for someone with ASD as they may appear withdrawn, however through further education programs and support and social connection this may be improved.</p> <p>Many people with ASD have difficulty processing everyday sensory information such as sounds, sights and smells. This is usually called having sensory integration difficulties, or sensory sensitivity. It can have a profound effect on a person's life. This may lead them to feel stressed or anxious, and possibly feel physical pain.</p> <p>Other behaviours commonly linked with autism include repetitive and predictable play and generally not being able to cope away from rituals and routine.</p> <p>Current support from the library service</p> <p>The Library has developed a strong working partnership with the SPOCAAS (Supporting Parents of Children with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome), a group auspiced by CLRS. The library currently houses the SPOCAAS collection and it can be viewed as the first port of call for parents who have children or family members with ASD to gain information. The library staff has had a brief training</p>
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session about how they can support families and how to encourage families to access CLRS to ensure they receive additional information and services.

However, much more needs to be done within the region as it has a significantly high number of people with ASD. In Australia autism affects approximately one in 160 individuals, with males being more likely to be diagnosed than females. Based on the most recent statistics in regards to the incidence of ASD in the district community there is a predicted prevalence of 455 people on the Autism Spectrum which brings this figure more likely to be one in 80 individuals in this proximity. This number may even be higher than this as many people will choose to live in the area because of the availability of services.

The opportunity to develop and expand additional services and programs for people with ASD has mainly arisen due to the new library as it now provides improved accessibility and space for people with a range of disabilities. The library averages about 500-600 visitors per day, therefore it is realistic to presume that 6-7 people who enter the library each day are on the Autism Spectrum.

A welcoming, accessible environment is available to all users of the library. However, the SPOCAAS group have identified that our library space, although it is attractive and well designed, may not necessarily cater for people with ASD and in fact may impact on their enjoyment and use of the library, possibly due to sensory sensitivity, as well as lack of staff awareness, limited inclusive programming, communication barriers and minimal assistive technology.

The Library, in partnership with Community Living and Respite Services Inc would like to undertake the following if successful in obtaining the Pierre Gorman Award. Through the number of discussions and meetings that the two organisations have had to put this application together a range of possibilities of what could be achieved has been raised.

Sensory Audit

The first part of the project would be to conduct a sensory audit of all library service points. A sensory audit is to help staff to assess and create an environment that enables the participation of people with ASD. Often people with ASD are under-sensitive or over-sensitive to particularly sensory stimuli such as sights, sounds and smells. They may also be overwhelmed as they have problems in separating out sensory information and attending to the most relevant.

The audit would be done by an experienced equal access consultant, most likely with an occupational therapy background. The audit will assess the library environment to examine where necessary modifications could be made to interior treatments, lighting and furniture to improve the facility for people with ASD. It will suggest ideas on ways the library setting might be altered in order to decrease the potential for people to feel anxious or distressed. The audit would address all the senses – visual, noise and sound, smell, touch and feel.

	<p>It will assess the following but not limited to:</p> <p>Illumination – are there flickering lights, is there light coming through blinds and creating distracting patterns. Is there light reflecting on shiny surfaces?</p> <p>Layout – impact of wall displays, areas for activities, workstations without distractions, flooring patterns and treatments</p> <p>Sounds – equipment in the library, are there quiet, calm areas, alarm systems</p> <p>Smell – storytime and craft activities – glues and paints</p> <p>Seating – are they appropriate? Padding, comfortable, spacing</p> <p>Identifying – who can they speak to if they feel something within the environment distressing?</p> <p>A sensory audit checklist will be developed. An audit will be conducted at all five branches of the Library. A report of recommendations will be provided to the Library for consideration.</p> <p>Communication Accessible Assessment and Communication Access Symbol</p> <p>Communication access is about communicating with people who do not use speech or have speech that is difficult to understand. The library service would like to work towards obtaining the Communication Access Symbol which will let people know that the organisation has been assessed and has made improvements that meet being awarded this symbol.</p> <p>According to the Scope organisation 1 in 500 people in Victoria need communication aids and strategies for successful communication. This may include people with disabilities using electronic speech devices, word based or picture communication boards or books, sign and gesture and spelling.</p> <p>The Scope organisation is promoting the concept of Communication Access so that people with disabilities can fully participate in community life and feel that places are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming and friendly • Staff look and talk directly to them • Staff provide time for people to get their message across • Staff listen to what they have to say • Staff are willing to use methods of communicating <p>To display the Communication Access symbol services such as the Library would need to meet specific criteria for communication</p>
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access. When people see this symbol, they will know that the library is communication accessible, as well as the standard physically accessible symbol.

The Communication Access assessment tool was developed in conjunction with people with communication disabilities. People with communication disabilities would use the checklist to assess the libraries to determine if they meet minimum standards in order for it to be awarded the Communication Access symbol.

Within the Scope package there is a wonderful set of tips for communicating with people with ASD which would be highlighted through discussion and training.

A practical outcome coming out of the assessment would be the development of resources to assist with communication between staff and clients, for example the creation of 'this is my library book' which has been used successfully in US libraries to improve the two way communication between staff and people with disabilities. The book has positive messages that reinforce that libraries are for everyone and explains in clear language and pictures how clients can best use the library.

Staff training

As all libraries across the region are frequently visited by clients from Human Services, Specialist Schools, CLRS and other organisations it would be excellent to provide staff training for library staff and volunteers who regularly interact with the clients and other visitors to the library. There would be considerable staff training if the objectives of this award proposal were met and would be inbuilt into any modifications made.

New resources and assistive technology

The Library does not provide any significant or specific assistive technology devices at the moment, apart from a number of smaller mobile devices for people with vision impairment. The mobile devices have been provided with an existing partnership the library service has with the Lions Club as one of their main aims is to improve the lives of people with low vision.

Providing assistive technology such as a TAP-it interactive learning station which provides accessibility to all people and it minimises barriers and maximises flexibility for individuals with special needs. It is recommended for people with fine motor delays, vision impairment, hearing impaired and developmental delays.

People can operate the screen using a finger, assistive device, or reach stick. Larger icons help the user to select the correct choices. The work area (42in) is designed to ensure that the majority of users can reach the entire surface.

The learning station works with any software which can be resized in text and graphics, contrast controls and background colours changed. It is low glare which provides an optimal viewing screen for low-vision users.

	<p>For people with ASD it provides physical interaction and visual stimulus in such a way that it helps process information.</p> <p>The TAP-it has an unrestricted platform from which to work and can be used in any setting with any person. It responds to a variety of stylis including pointers, mouth sticks, head pointers, switches, balls and on screen keyboards. Can be used with existing library software and all programs can become touch accessible. It has motorised adjustments to accommodate for any person and it totally mobile so can be used in various parts of the library.</p> <p>Inclusive programming</p> <p>In partnership with the various organisations that support people with disabilities the library staff could expand on its vibrant and busy calendar of events to include more specific programs for children and teens with ASD. The introduction of a weekly book club based on the Next Chapter Club which is run in over 100 libraries in the US that provides a safe and welcoming environment for young people with disabilities to read and learn together. Another idea would be to include an accessible summer reading record to encourage children with disabilities to participate in this popular activity which usually attracts over 500 children over summer.</p> <p>It would certainly be beneficial to investigate what other successful programs have been run in other libraries that focus on connecting people with ASD and helping them feel more confident and welcome in the library environment.</p>
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Benefits and outcomes	
<p>Objectives How will your proposal benefit people with a disability?</p>	<p>The library will gain a much greater understanding of its physical spaces and how they impact on people with disabilities with the main aim of improving interiors to minimise any negative effects.</p> <p>Providing staff training will give the library staff more confidence and information in supporting people with disabilities so they feel more welcome and understood within the library setting.</p> <p>Having a shared role in developing resources such as 'my library book' and a mobile assistive device such as the TAP-IT table will improve the relationships between local organisations, families and library staff and assist the person with a disability to get the most out of the library service.</p> <p>If the library was successful in obtaining funding to purchase more assistive technology that enhances the customer experience it would be wonderful. The Lions Club has provided funding for our library service to purchase equipment for people with vision impairment including magnifiers, open book software and camera, tactile games and eReaders.</p> <p>A more inclusive and wider variety of programs would encourage people with disabilities to attend and participate in fun events and regular activities.</p>
<p>Sustainability How will your proposal continue after completion of the award period?</p>	<p>The library will continue to work closely with CLRS and the SPOCAAS group to maintain the resources available, provide staff training and to continue to develop other ideas on how best to support with ASD.</p>
<p>Contribution to library and information service practice in Victoria</p>	<p>The library would provide information through the PLVN network about the project through emails, website information, and presentation to PLVN general meetings, PLVN website, and/or special interest subcommittees.</p> <p>It is also understood through the preparation of this report that State Library Victoria is also interested in undertaking a similar audit as it is one of the objectives within its own Disability Access Plan. The Library could certainly share its own experience and feedback about the audit and forward that information to State Library staff.</p>

	<p>Additional Communication opportunities:</p> <p>ALIA INCITE article</p> <p>The announcement of the Award will be published through the ALIA Weekly postings</p> <p>The announcement of the Award and relevant information will be placed on the PLVN website</p> <p>Local Media within the Shire will promoted the Award announcement</p> <p>Updates about the project will be given on the library's regular community radio show 'library bytes'</p> <p>Community Living Respite Services have formally acknowledged the Award through their advertising channels including their website, facebook page and SPOCAAS newsletter</p> <p>The Christie Centre published an article in its regular newsletter which reaches families in the Area</p> <p>Australian Library Journal have advised that they would be keen to publish an article about the outcome of the Award</p> <p>DiVine website will be featuring the Award in the coming months</p> <p>Regular updates and information will be forwarded to Maria Moren at AMAZE and Mary Stephenson from SCOPE</p> <p>Nicole Caldwell, founder of Positively Autism, US is also keen to follow the project and will publish an article on the outcome in her regular newsletter in the States</p> <p>Ongoing information will be forwarded to the organisations listed above that have already taken an interest in the project</p>
<p>Partnerships</p>	<p>Community Living and Respite Services</p>
<p>Alignment with the goals of the Framework for collaborative action (2014 revision)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved access options - Enhanced staff skills - Increased community and government understanding of and engagement with libraries - Greater efficiency and effective of library services through collaboration and sharing

Capacity to deliver	
<p>Innovation How does your proposal offer an innovative approach to access or service delivery?</p>	<p>A sensory audit with a specific focus on the needs of those ASD has not been previously undertaken to our knowledge in Victoria. This is an innovative and inclusive approach which plans to improve access and engagement with the library services.</p> <p>A number of exciting initiatives have been achieved in the US, particularly led by Scotch Plains Public Library and Fanwood Memorial Library which have created a valuable collection of resources and information through its Libraries and Autism: We're Connected project. A number of ideas such as staff training, workshops as well as bringing ideas together from other libraries providing inclusive programming is available on their website www.librariesandautism.org/</p> <p>These two libraries have led the way in the US and have produced two excellent videos for staff training which are available online to be utilised within our own staff meetings and discussion.</p> <p>Highlighting this valuable information and utilising it as a tool for this project, as well as undertaking the sensory audit and the other objectives will lead the way for Australian libraries to establish similar partnerships to achieve things together.</p>
<p>Key performance indicators How will you measure whether you have achieved your objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The completion of the sensory audit and presentation of recommendations to the Shire - Creation of 'this is my library book' - Development and delivery of inclusive programs and attendance figures - Bookings and usage of TAP-IT table - Evaluation from staff on the increase to their skills and awareness - And most importantly an increased number of people with a disability engaging with the library
<p>Timelines</p>	<p>April: World Autism Awareness Day Special Storytime, presentation of resources. Official launch of the Pierre Gorman Award.</p> <p>April: Meet with partner organisation and refine timeline for the delivery of the award.</p> <p>April: Prepare brief, quotation EOI to engage an appropriate consultant to undertake the Sensory Audit of all five Library Branches. Quote will be provided.</p> <p>May: Library staff team meeting and introductory training provided by CLRS.</p>

June: Selection of consultant. Planning and discussion to take place with selected consultant.

July/August: Sensory audit is undertaken at all five branches of the Library. A written report and recommendations is provided to Library for consideration. A communication report is provided to Council on the audit. Any budgetary considerations will be moved through to the capital works process.

July: Library staff team meeting and additional offsite training session in July TBC provided by CLRS.

August: Purchase of TAP-it table or similar product depending on cost. Revised quote has been received.

September: Library staff team meeting to include TAP-it training. Discuss result of sensory audit.

November: Participation in 'One and All Inclusive Family Day' and Kidzcapers. Utilisation and promotion of TAP-it table.

February – April: Staff customised training with external organisation eg SCOPE to be provided.

May – September: Working group comprising of library and CLRS staff to work on two tasks – development of 'this is my library book' and inclusive programming ideas for Christmas, Summer Reading Club and holiday activities.

October: Launch of 'this is my library book' and finalisation of summer holiday program and other inclusive activities.

November: Involvement in One and All Inclusion Day and Kidzcapers promoting 'this is my library book' and holiday program.

November: Communication Access Assessment completed.

December /January: Delivery of Christmas, Summer Reading Club and holiday activities.

January: Evaluation and ongoing planning to provide regular inclusive programs.

February: Completion of project and report back to ACPL and PLVN in regards to overall delivered outcomes.

<p>Ability to implement proposal How will you and your library service support the delivery of your proposal?</p>	<p>The Library sees this partnership with CRLS as a very positive, practical and on-going one. The two organisations will continue to work together to identify best case practices and models of service delivery to improve library services to the community.</p> <p>It will obtain the services of appropriately trained assessors for the sensory audit and access the expertise from the SCOPE (or the AAA Network which has support divisions in each state) to undertake the Communication Access Assessment.</p> <p>Staff training will be delivered by CLRS and hopefully by SCOPE as part of regular meetings and on-going refresher training.</p> <p>The Children's Services team from the library service will work with staff and members of SPOCAAS to create 'this is my library book' and develop a range of programming ideas.</p>
<p>Promotion to potential users or beneficiaries How will you raise awareness of the program or services supported by the award?</p>	<p>There are a significant number of ways to raise the awareness of the program and services.</p> <p>It will definitely be an opportunity to engage more closely with members of the SPOCAAS group through meetings as well as placing information via the CLRS newsletter and website, and their Facebook page.</p> <p>Through community talks and meetings information can be disseminated throughout other organisations.</p> <p>The library service will access the services of the Shire PR and Communications team to provide press releases, upload posts on SOC Facebook page.</p> <p>The library service also has a number of promotional outlets including its website, blogspot, monthly radio show, TV and radio interviews, flyers, brochures, emails.</p> <p>The library service will also meet with the Rural Access Network, One and All Inclusive Project Coordinator and participate in the One and All community fun day and other appropriate public events.</p>
<p>Budget breakdown</p>	<p>\$13,180 Sensory Audit of all library service points</p> <p>\$ 300 Communication Access Assessment</p> <p>\$10,000 Purchase of TAP-IT table or similar product</p> <p>\$ 1,000 'this is my library' publication</p> <p>\$ in kind Staff Training delivered by CLRS and SCOPE</p> <p>\$ 24,480</p>