Navigating shifting sands: 
Library redesign in a time of uncertainty

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- Established in 1964
- More than 26,000 students (full-time equivalent)
- 18% are postgraduates
- 23% are international
- Main campus in Melbourne; 4 regional campuses in Victoria
La Trobe’s vision

- One of the top 3 universities in Victoria
- One of the top 12 in Australia
- One of the top 300 internationally
La Trobe’s strategy

- Grow student population to 33,000 students
- Double our research income
- Improve research-based institutional ranking
- Partnerships with schools and vocational education providers
- Effective and efficient use of resources
The challenges

• Government budget cuts
• Competition for student enrolments
• Funding to maintain and refurbish infrastructure and cover increases in non-controllable costs

The response

• ‘Funding Future Ready’: a university-wide project to rethink, restructure and refocus on the key platforms in our strategy to realise the University’s goals by 2017
The Library’s response

- The need for change had already been identified
- Analysis, review and planning was underway
  - Review of services completed in 2013
  - Formal planning exercise involved a wide range of staff
  - Analysis of ‘best case’ and ‘worst case’ scenarios for the library
What stops us achieving our ‘best case’ scenario?

Three key hindrances:

• Funding (or lack of it)
• Continuing to do work that is no longer relevant
• Allowing history to define how we approach the present
Our strategy to respond to these changes in the university:

• Clearly align with university strategies and add discernible value
• Build library services into students’ and researchers’ workflows
• Make services scalable, offer more ‘self-help’ online
• Leverage our expertise to add value across the university:
  – Collecting research outputs for reporting purposes
  – Establishing a single point of contact for student enquiries in the library
Translating strategy into structure

Future Vision

Current State Analysis

Existing Functions & Activities

Design Criteria

Planning
Designing

Purpose

Strategic Direction

Structure

Functions – New Clusters

Operating Model Design
The Library model has been designed with targeted work areas that respond to the needs of our clients.
Developing our structure: considerations

• Acknowledge the ‘shifting sands’: build flexibility into the structure
• Enable collaboration and cross-team skilling
• Avoid ‘single points of failure’ and provide career development opportunities
• Support regional campuses through cross-campus teams
• Identify new roles, and roles that are no longer required
• Review existing staff classification
## Organisational design criteria

### Model
- Aligned to strategy
- Customer centered
- Consistent delivery of services
- No single points of failure

### Culture
- ‘One Library’ focus
- Trust
- Forward-thinking
- Agile
- Resilient
- Transparent

### Roles
- Designed around the work, not the people
- Meaningful titles
- Clear accountabilities and responsibilities
- Capability focus as opposed to task focus
- Career opportunities
- No “dead end” roles

### Staff
- Shared understanding of operating model
- Engaged
- Cooperative
- Collaborative
- Communicative
- Role transition support
Implementing change

- A new structure is not the end of the process, but the beginning
- Managing the process of change is critical to a successful transition
  - Communicate a clear vision
  - Establish a transparent process
  - Remove obstacles
  - Acknowledge the impact of change
  - Continue to build on the change
Turning the organisation on its head
Library redesign in times of uncertainty:

- There is no perfect structure, no perfect design
- Analysis and review are critical to inform design
- Design must align with strategy and encompass a clear, shared vision
- Build in flexibility
- Allocate resources where value can be gained and demonstrated
Thank you