

The logo for the Scottish Library & Information Council (SLiC) features the letters 'SLiC' in a white, sans-serif font. A small circular icon containing a stylized map of Scotland is positioned above the letter 'i'.

**SLiC**

Scottish Library &  
Information Council



**ANNUAL**

**REVIEW**

**2020**

# FOREWORD



Ian Ruthven  
Chair, SLIC Board

**It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Annual Review for the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) for 2019/20. This was another busy year for SLIC which saw the national strategy for school libraries, Vibrant Libraries, Thriving Schools, starting to be implemented and a refresh of Ambition and Opportunity, Scotland's first national strategy for public libraries take place.**

Both these initiatives were supported by the School Library Improvement Fund (£450,000) and the Public Library Improvement Fund (£450,000), which between them saw over 60 projects being supported at a local level. Both the Deputy First Minister, Mr John Swinney, and the Minister for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, Ms Fiona Hyslop, visited projects to learn more about the difference that these funds make to libraries and see the implementation of national strategies first hand.

SLIC was also in the position to open the Innovation and Development Fund (IDF) to members (who do not have access to SLIF or PLIF) and for the very first time introduce a Resource Discovery Fund (RDF) for all members. SLIC remains committed, through its charitable purposes, to financially supporting members where possible.

One new initiative which came to fruition last year was the development of the Scottish Coworking Network. This saw coworking hubs open in libraries in Dundee, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Inverness and Troon. The Scottish Coworking Network was launched in May by the Minister for Public Finance and the Digital Economy, Ms Kate Forbes. Around 100 small businesses have made use of the coworking facilities.

Partnership working remains core to SLIC and initiatives with the BBC, such as The Nine exhibition, virtual reality (VR) projects, the Big Scottish Book Club and Novels which Shaped our World, all highlighting the continued strength in working together. Reading initiatives such as the First Minister's

Reading Challenge, 4-4-2 (with the SPFL) and Book Week Scotland all cement the importance of working with others to achieve the common goal of developing a nation of readers.

Through the Scottish Coworking Network, SLIC has developed relationships with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Business Gateway, as well as closer links with the business offer from the National Library of Scotland. Continuing to champion the role which libraries play in support of STEM, we also saw a new partnership with Girls Who Code get underway.

One important development which took place during 2019/20 was the strategic partnership between SLIC, The ALLIANCE and the NHS, which is articulated in the document, A Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing. This partnership saw SLIC present at the Chief Medical Officer's Realistic Medicine Conference in October; a joint event with The ALLIANCE in February, and research undertaken across the public library network to capture the breadth of work taking place in this area by public libraries. This collaboration is the start of a way of working which will be transformational in self-management for communities across Scotland.

Scotland's first national Mobile Libraries Day took place in November and provided an opportunity to celebrate this valued service. The event involved authors travelling on mobiles, competitions, and the media interviews with mobile library users.



As an organisation, SLIC continues its journey to demonstrate best practice. Cyber Essentials accreditation and certification that SLIC is a Living Wage employer were awarded.

The SLIC Board members have given their time generously, not only attending Board meetings but also to support the Staffing and Remuneration Subcommittee and the Funding Subcommittee, which approves applications to the PLIF, SLIF, IDF and RDF. I would like to thank Board members for their time, diligence and expertise, which have assisted taking SLIC forward.

During 2019/20, SLIC continued to identify new and innovative ways in which to support the library community in Scotland. I would like to thank our Chief Executive and 'Team SLIC' for their commitment and dedication over the year.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We are the independent advisory body to the Scottish Government on library and information services in Scotland.

We are a membership organisation and our role involves providing leadership, focus and support to our member library services, including public, school, and higher and further education, as well as specialist libraries.

## OUR KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Provide leadership to library and information services
- Promote understanding of the value and contribution of library services
- Monitor standards and promote continuous improvement
- Advise Scottish Government on library matters
- Undertake research and provide information, education and advice to our members
- Facilitate joint working with key partners
- Support innovation and development by awarding grants

## OUR FIVE KEY PRIORITIES:



**Advocacy**



**Standards**



**Innovation**



**Partnerships**



**Funding**

During 2019/20, we have implemented a range of creative and innovative programmes and initiatives, in partnership with members and a range of strategic partners, to meet our objectives. This section provides an overview of some of the key projects we have delivered.



Promoting the value  
of library services

## NATIONAL STRATEGIES

At the request of the Scottish Government we have continued to champion national strategies for both public and school libraries.

## AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY: A STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND 2015-2020

Public libraries are Scotland's most popular civic resource. The important role public libraries play in Scotland's cultural landscape cannot be underestimated, with reading identified as the country's most popular cultural activity.

Through delivering the strategy, a number of initiatives have reinvigorated the public library offer in Scotland, repositioned libraries within communities and re-engaged the public with their local libraries. This has led to an increased number of people using libraries to learn, access information and experience emerging technology.

## VIBRANT LIBRARIES, THRIVING SCHOOLS: A STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND 2018-2023

School libraries play a pivotal role in a child's life and can help with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, develop pupil skills for the world of work and encourage learning that will stay with pupils throughout their lives. By recognising the importance of school library services and by seeking to maximise the positive impact they have,

we can ensure sustainable provision in flexible ways that is tailored to each school's individual needs. Through implementing the strategy we hope that every child and young person in Scotland will have access to a dynamic school library service that will benefit them both now and in the future

## MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT

We have worked closely to support ministers to achieve their key policy objectives and have facilitated a series of visits to libraries throughout the year.

Ms Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, visited Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries, Fife in September 2019 to announce the Public Library Improvement Fund (PLIF) awards. Ms Hyslop also visited Rutherglen library, South Lanarkshire to meet staff opening the library on Christmas Day.

Ms Kate Forbes, Minister for Public Finance and the Digital Economy, visited Edinburgh Central Library in May 2019 to officially launch the Scottish Coworking Network, and meet members.

Mr John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, visited The Royal High School, Edinburgh in October 2019 to meet pupils and teachers involved with School Library Improvement Fund (SLIF) project, 'Escape, Connect, Relate'.





Public libraries  
are Scotland's  
most popular  
civic resource

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES **ADVOCACY**

## SERVICE VISITS

We plan a rolling programme of library service visits throughout the year to meet with librarians and library staff to discuss service matters and experience first-hand the excellent and innovative practice being delivered across library and information services.

## PUBLIC LIBRARY VISITS

- Dundee (D)
- Edinburgh (E)
- Inverclyde (I)
- Fife (F)
- Glasgow (G)
- Highland (H)
- North Ayrshire (NA)
- Perth (P)
- South Ayrshire (SA)
- South Lanarkshire (SL)
- Western Isles (WI)



## FURTHER & HIGHER EDUCATION LIBRARY VISITS



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH



## SCHOOL LIBRARY VISITS

We visited over 40 school libraries across Scotland, including primary and secondary schools in North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Edinburgh, Scottish Borders and Highland Council.



## First national Mobile Libraries Day

### NATIONAL MOBILE LIBRARIES DAY

SLIC launched Scotland's first national Mobile Libraries Day in November 2019 to coincide with Book Week Scotland. The date was designed to raise the profile of mobile libraries in Scotland and allowed libraries to showcase staff and services delivered by this vital section of the library network. A full media pack was provided to each public library service in Scotland to support promotion of the day and events were covered by national media. Mobile Libraries Day will now be an annual calendar event.



### LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

We contribute to many leadership forums in Scotland, the UK and beyond to represent our members' interests:

- Public libraries: Association of Public Libraries Scotland (APLS), National Library of Scotland, British Library and Libraries Connected
- School libraries: Association of Heads and Deputies Scotland (AHDS), Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) and the School Library Strategy National Implementation Group (SLSNIG)
- Higher and further education libraries: College Development Network (CDN) and Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL)

### CONFERENCES

We also attend and contribute at several events throughout the year to promote libraries:

- CILIPS Annual Conference
- Edge Conference
- Next Library in Aarhus
- LILAC Conference
- Digital Scotland
- Voluntary Health Scotland Conference
- CILIPS Autumn Gathering
- Holyrood Communications Conferences
- Realistic Medicine Conference

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES STANDARDS

## HOW GOOD IS OUR PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE? (HGIOPLS)

During the year 2019/20, five public library services participated in the HGIOPLS peer review programme. Glasgow Libraries and East Dunbartonshire Libraries took part in their first peer review. The positive experience of both services has led them to express an interest in progressing with the peer review of their second quality indicator. Shetland Libraries have now completed peer reviews for three of the five Quality Indicators.

## BEST PRACTICE FOR HEALTH LITERACY

We have launched A Collective Force for Health & Wellbeing, the first collaborative strategic action plan of its kind, led by a partnership between SLIC, The ALLIANCE and the NHS. It sets out a national commitment to working collaboratively across libraries, health & social care and the third sector to help transform Scotland's approach to health and wellbeing.



**A Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing**

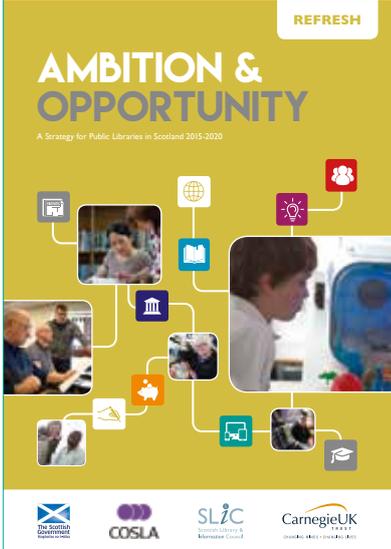
Libraries, Health and Social Care, and The ALLIANCE - Celebrating the Power of Knowledge



## AMBITION AND OPPORTUNITY – REFRESH

Many of the original strategic aims of Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020 had been delivered by the end of 2018.

With two years left of the strategy's lifespan, we produced a refresh to maintain momentum. Eighteen new strategic recommendations were developed with input from libraries and a focus on digital innovation and health and wellbeing.



## EVALUATING THE SCOTTISH COWORKING NETWORK

We have continued to support the operation of the five-hub pilot network beyond the set-up funding phase, and we commissioned research to assess its impact.

Charlotte Wilson Research concluded that coworking spaces in public libraries filled a gap in the market supporting innovation and entrepreneurship.



## Scottish Coworking Network

### RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

During 2019/20, we have commissioned independent research firm, Blake Stevenson to evaluate a number of projects, including projects that received awards from the Public Library Improvement Fund (PLIF) and the School Library Improvement Fund (SLIF). Publication of the evaluation reports has been delayed to 2020/21 due to COVID-19.

Other research projects have also been delayed by COVID-19, including an evaluation of the implementation of the national public library strategy, and a review of the delivery of health-related activity in public libraries in Scotland.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES INNOVATION

Several innovative projects have been implemented in support of the strategic aims of our flagship national strategies for public libraries and school libraries.

## AMBITION & OPPORTUNITY: A STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND 2015-2020

### Digital Champions

The Digital Champions, representing all 32 library services in Scotland, continued their quarterly sessions. During 2019/20, meetings included guest speakers from Girls who Code, the National Library of Scotland, Fun Palaces and member organisations showcasing good practice. The Champions are also working on a new national digital training platform for public libraries.

### Digital training for library staff

SLIC received funding from the Scottish Government Digital Directorate to further develop a national digital training project. The project will update the current workforce development tool to ensure frontline public library staff are trained to deliver digital skills development and facilitate access to emerging technologies.

### Basecamp forums

We have set-up a series of new online forums using Basecamp to help library services connect with one another and share best practice. We have new groups for Health and Wellbeing Champions and an Every Child a Library Member (ECALM) group, as well as Fun Palaces and COVID-19 response forums.

### Virtual Reality

We have introduced VR experiences in public libraries through a unique partnership with the BBC. Ten services are involved in the pilot, which is creating opportunities for communities to engage with new technology.

### Fun Palaces

In November 2019, we recruited a new Fun Palaces ambassador. Jointly funded with Fun Palaces UK, the ambassador will work with us and public libraries for two years to promote cultural leadership and cultural democracy.

### Coworking Hubs

The Scottish Government awarded a grant of £150,700 to SLIC to pilot coworking spaces in public library services. Five hubs, named the Scottish Coworking Network, operated across Scotland as part of the pilot. SLIC has continued to support the operation of the hubs beyond the set-up funding phase.

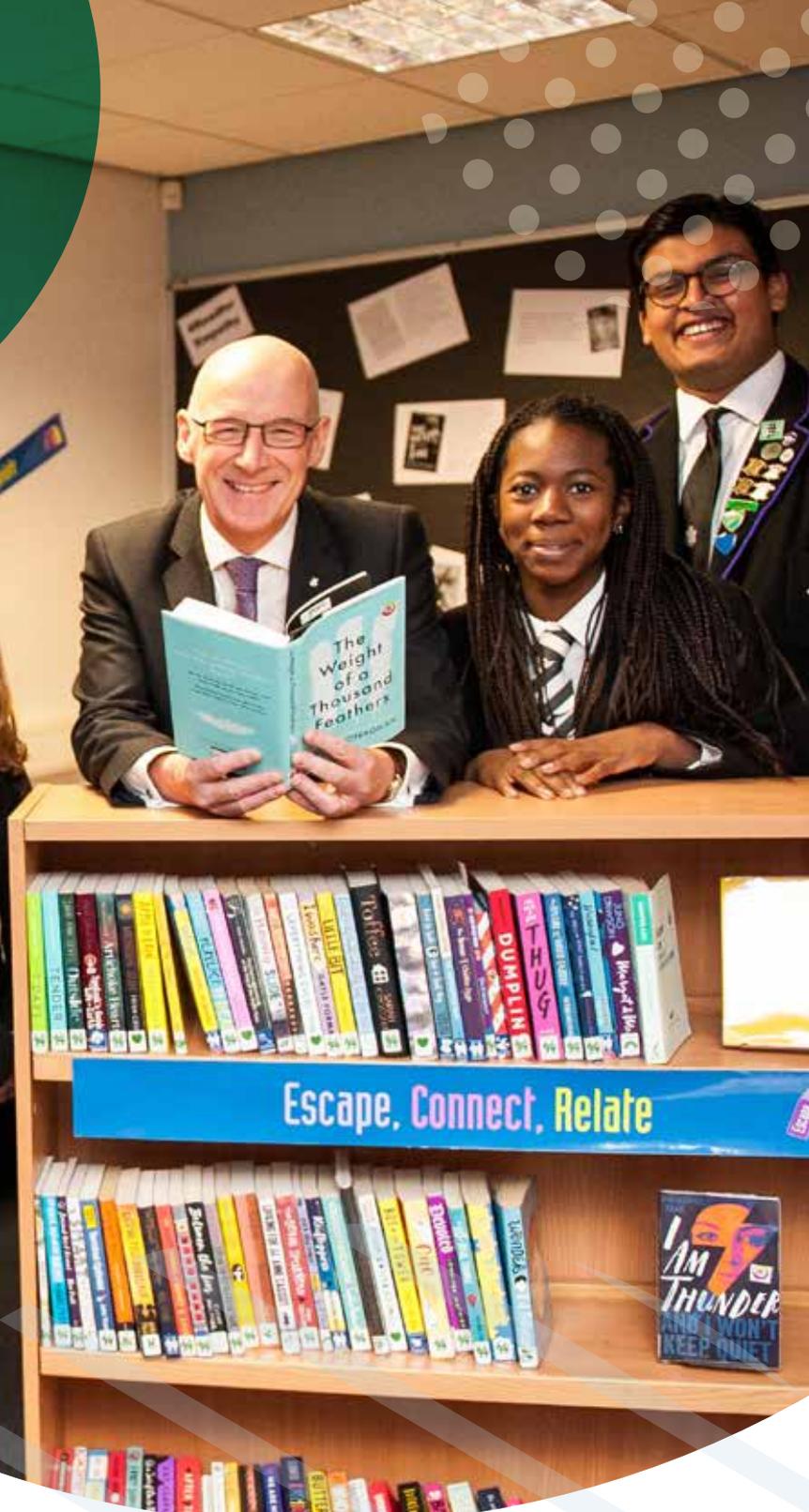
## VIBRANT LIBRARIES, THRIVING SCHOOLS: A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN SCOTLAND 2018-2023

### Implementation group

SLIC has formed a new implementation group, involving key partners, to raise the profile of libraries within schools following the publication of the national strategy in 2018. In a hugely significant move, the school library has become a formal part of the school inspection process. To monitor and map progress of the strategy, we have introduced an annual survey, to take place.

In January each year. A baseline has been established and progress can be tracked throughout the lifetime of the strategy.

## Vibrant Libraries, Thriving Schools



### SLIC MEMBERS ANNUAL SHOWCASE

Our Annual Showcase, held in November 2019 at the University of Strathclyde's Technology and Innovation Centre, was Designed around the core theme of innovation and technology. The keynote speaker was the director of Libraries 2030, who presented The Future is Digital. The event was also a platform for services to share examples of innovative work across the library sector.

### MICRO:BITS DONATION

We received a donation of 4,000 micro:bits from the Micro:bit Educational Foundation, which was distributed to public library services across Scotland. The pocket-sized programmable computers have been designed to provide a basic introduction to computer coding and programming, to help inspire children to pursue a career within the (STEM) industries.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES PARTNERSHIPS

We have an extensive partnership network to support our strategic objectives covering several sectors.



Business



Culture



Education



Health

## BUSINESS

Our work on the Scottish Coworking Network (SCN) has introduced us to Scotland's business ecosystem. Business Gateway, the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Chambers of Commerce across the country provide ongoing support to SCN members in the form of workshops, one-to-one advice sessions and networking events. Their prominent positioning in the business sector has helped to raise the profile of the important role libraries play for start-ups.

The network has also benefited from events run by FutureX and the business team at the National Library of Scotland, as well as support from SENS Scot (Social Enterprise Network Scotland), Scottish Institute for Enterprise (SIE), Women's Enterprise Scotland, Young Enterprise Scotland, People Plus and Highland Business Women.

## CULTURE

SLIC is well embedded in the culture sector in Scotland and opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations continued to emerge throughout 2019/20.

### Get Creative

We signed a partnership agreement to become a member of the Get Creative festival steering group in May 2019.

## Publishing and Libraries Day

SLIC, in partnership with Publishing Scotland, jointly hosted an event in February 2020 to bring publishers and librarians together for collaborative learning opportunities.

### 4-4-2 Reading Challenge

This partnership with the Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL) Trust deliver the 4-4-2 Reading Challenge. The Challenge rewarded children who read four books from their local library with free tickets for football matches. Despite the project being unable to run for the whole football season as planned due to COVID-19, it attracted 1,213 participants; 220 children joined as new library members and a total of 3,511 books were borrowed.

### Big Scottish Book Club

SLIC supported the launch of The Big Scottish Book Club in autumn 2019 on BBC Scotland's new flagship channel. We funded the delivery of books being reviewed on the programme to all public library services.

### Novels That Shaped Our World

SLIC formed part of the partners advisory panel of this BBC Arts programme. We promoted the initiative to Scottish libraries, advised on the Scottish context and encouraged wide participation across the 10 themed reading months in 2020.



## Big Scottish Book Club

### The Nine Exhibition

An exhibition of photographs used as part of the title sequence to BBC Scotland's The Nine evening news programme toured libraries across Scotland. The exhibition, which received very positive feedback from library staff and the public, visited libraries from Moray to South Lanarkshire between September 2019 and January 2020.

### EDUCATION

SLIC's visibility has increased significantly within the education sector as the national school library strategy has been implemented.

Close collaboration with Education Scotland has resulted in the development of a professional learning tool on the Education Professional Learning Community online platform for teachers. We have also strengthened partnerships with the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), Association of Head Teachers and Deputies Scotland (AHDS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS) and the National Parent Forum (NPF).

These valuable partnerships have allowed us to advocate for the important role school libraries play in the learning journey of pupils from 3-18 years to key decision makers.

### HEALTH

SLIC developed strong partnerships with the health sector during 2019/20 to promote the role libraries can play in improving health and wellbeing.

#### Strategic Health Partnership

We signed a strategic partnership with The Alliance, the national third sector intermediary for a range of health and social care organisations, in autumn 2019.

This partnership formally recognises the increasing role libraries play in supporting health and wellbeing.

#### Self-Management

To support the launch of A Collective Force for Wellbeing, we hosted a health and wellbeing event in partnership with The Alliance and NHS Scotland, bringing together library staff and health and social care staff in October 2019 to share best practice of joint health initiatives and explore new ideas for future programmes.

### SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

During 2019/20, we continued to work in partnership with the Scottish Government to deliver national initiatives.

#### Book Week Scotland

SLIC supported Book Week Scotland by working in partnership with the Scottish Book Trust to enable 126 events to take place in public and further education libraries with 4,155 participants.

#### Read, Write, Count

SLIC continue to promote and disseminate information to the wider public library community in connection with this early education programme.

#### Ziggy

SLIC is a key distribution partner for information surrounding road safety campaign, Ziggy. All public libraries in Scotland received promotional materials.

#### First Minister's Reading Challenge (FMRC)

We are members of the national steering group for the FMRC and we support the initiative by encouraging library services to take part in the reading cultures challenge.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FUNDING

## THE PUBLIC LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT FUND (PLIF)



supports **creative & innovative** public library projects throughout Scotland

£450,000

total fund



**11** projects awarded funding



Administered on **behalf of** the Scottish Government

## SCHOOL LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT FUND (SLIF)



supports **innovation** in school libraries

£1m

total fund over **three** years



**52** projects awarded funding



Administered on **behalf of** the Scottish Government

## INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND



supports **pioneering library projects** at further & higher education institutions

£30,000

total fund



**3** projects awarded funding



encourages **innovative service delivery** and **development**

## RESOURCE DISCOVERY FUND



one-off fund open to all members to make current **resources & collections** more accessible

£45,000

total fund

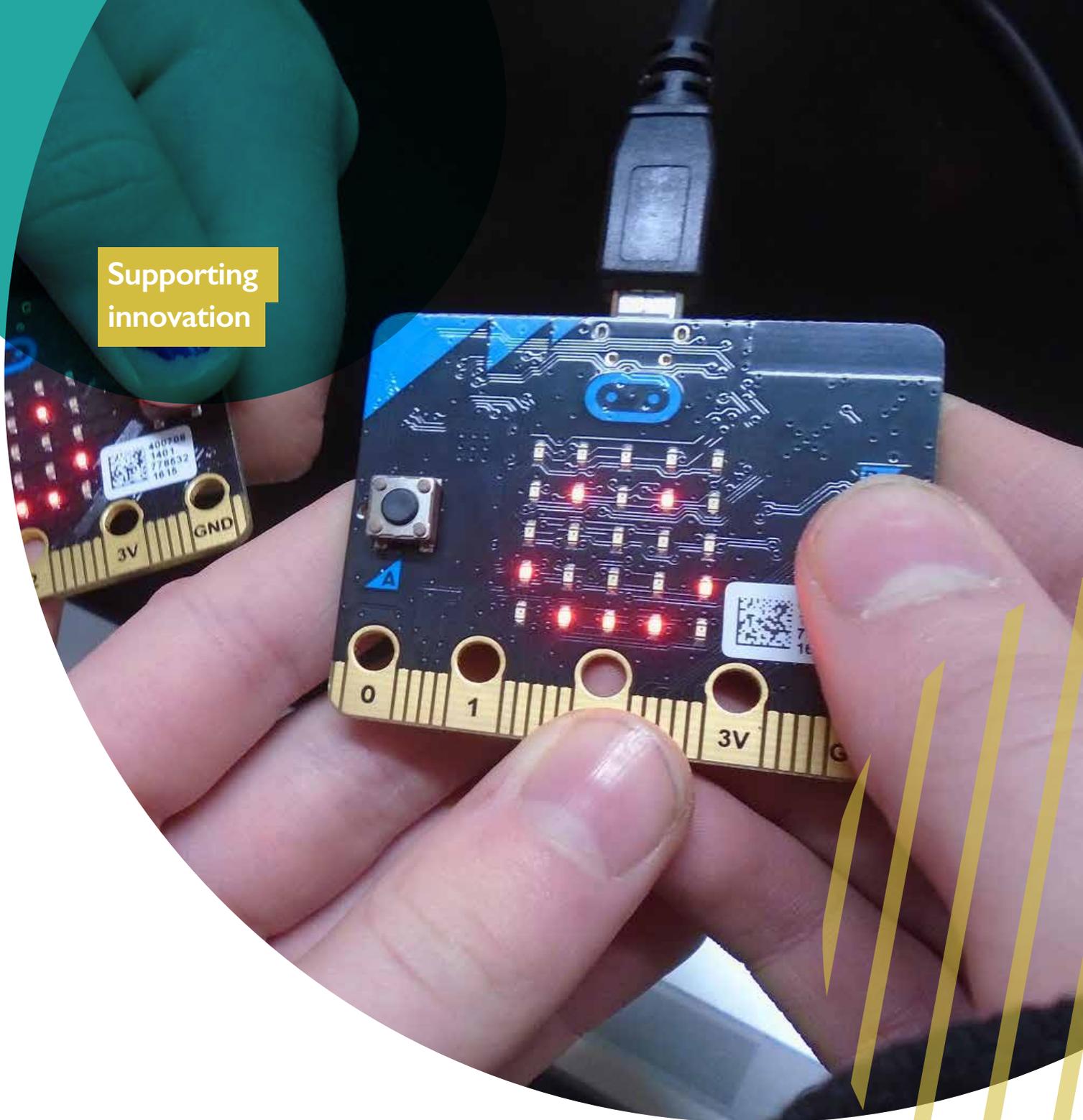


**7** projects awarded funding



focused on any aspect of **catalogue development**

Supporting  
innovation



#### BURSARIES

Funding to support members' employee attendance at events and conferences:



International Internet  
Librarian

#### FUNDING E-NEWSLETTER

The bi-monthly Funding e-Newsletter is exclusively for our members and highlights regular and one-off sources of funding for the sector.

# FINANCIAL REVIEW



8  
Team  
headcount



£466,050  
Income



£999,380  
Restricted income



£205,000  
Core grant



# CORPORATE NEWS

## SLIC STRATEGIC PLAN

We continued to deliver against the guiding principles in our strategic plan 2017-2020. The plan highlights the range of organisations and agencies we work with and demonstrates how integral SLIC is to the wider cultural and strategic landscape.

## INTERNAL STANDARDS

We gained accreditation for our internal procedures during 2019/20, including **Living Wage Employer** and **Cyber Essentials**. Both awards demonstrate a commitment to accredited working practices for employees, members and partner organisations.

# SLIC BOARD

## TRUSTEES

- Ian Ruthven
- Susan Ashworth
- Fiona Clark
- Fiona Dakers
- Kate Ho (resigned 28 June 2019)
- Abi Mawhirt
- Kenneth McKinlay (resigned 10 August 2019)
- Sha Nazir
- Peter Reid
- John Scally
- Alison Stevenson
- Ann Wales
- Penny Robertson (joined 30 May 2019)
- Anna McInnes (joined 8 November 2019)
- Robin Prior (joined 8 November 2019)
- Jonathan Tait (joined 8 November 2019)
- Jamie Fowler (joined 8 November 2019)
- Harry Mulvey (joined 12 December 2019)



**Scottish Library and Information Council**

Suite 5.5, Tumberry House,  
175 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 2LB

✉ [info@scottishlibraries.org](mailto:info@scottishlibraries.org)

🌐 [www.scottishlibraries.org](http://www.scottishlibraries.org)

☎ 0141 202 2999



Registered company number: 129889

