



Australian summer  
Noosa, Australia, 2023  
80x120  
Oil, canvas

## HOW TO LIBRARY

### Libraries open new life chapter for Maria

Moving from Russia to Noosa is a daunting prospect, especially when language is a barrier.

But for Maria Vasilenko, it was a softer than expected landing thanks to Noosa Libraries.

“After arriving in Australia in 2023, I realised that my English wasn’t sufficient to understand and speak. One of my Russian friends told me about free literacy programs at Noosa Libraries, so I joined the spelling and speaking course where I was able to work with an amazing teacher Kate and tutors Kim, Gail and Clare to gain the confidence to communicate with local people and learn about Australian traditions,” Maria said.

“I’m a professional painter and Noosa Libraries also gave me the opportunity to exhibit my artworks for five weeks, which was my first exhibition in Australia.”

Maria’s story is being shared as part of the Queensland Government’s state-wide ‘How do you Library?’ campaign, which launched at Cooroy Library on 14 February, encouraging more people to book a date with their local library.

Visit the Noosa Libraries website to see all the great things happening at your local library.

Maria Vasilenko and her Noosa inspired artworks

## EXPANDING SPORTING OPPORTUNITIES IN COOROY

### Game-changing upgrades to gymnastics facility and sports field lights will benefit hinterland athletes

Council is investing in local sport with the Cooroy Gymnastics facility expansion and new field lighting at Sel Bonnel Oval.

The gymnasium will gain 600sqm of space, including a multi-purpose indoor training area, benefiting over 500 athletes and clearing waitlists. It will also support recreational programs for all ages.

“This expansion is a game-changer, providing a wet-weather training option for various sports,” Noosa Council Community Services Director Kerri Contini said.

Sel Bonnel Oval will gain new field lighting, replacing outdated infrastructure for twilight training.

“These upgrades will enhance community sports

participation,” Ms Contini said.

Detailed designs for the gymnastics expansion are expected by March, with construction to follow.

The Cooroy Gymnastics facility expansion was developed with the support of the Queensland Government’s SEQ Liveability Fund in association with the Australian Cricket Infrastructure Fund.

Cooroy sports field lighting is proudly funded by the Queensland Government’s SEQ Community Stimulus Program in association with Noosa Council and the Australian Cricket Infrastructure Fund.

Stay up to date with all our infrastructure projects at [www.noosa.qld.gov.au/wip](http://www.noosa.qld.gov.au/wip).

## THE TREE-MENDOUS BENEFITS OF JOINING LAND FOR WILDLIFE



Cooran resident Dawn Couchman and Council's Partnerships and Offsets Office Paul Sprecher.

Going out on a limb for environmental excellence has grown into something great for Cooran resident Dawn Couchman.

Dawn and her late husband registered their 20-acre property in 2004 with Land For Wildlife – a free, voluntary program which supports landholders who wish to manage their property as habitat for native plants and animals.

“It was one of the best decisions we’ve made,” Dawn said.

“It enabled us to work with

Noosa Council’s Conservation Partnerships team to identify and remove weeds from our property, as well managing feral animals like foxes which are a huge threat to our native animals.

“This has helped our property become an important corridor to koalas, marbled frogmouth, tusked frogs, echidnas and greater gliders.

“We’ve also had access to free land management advice specific to our property, discounts on our rates and regular on-the-ground support from Council.

“Joining Land for Wildlife has given us the peace of mind to know that we’re leaving our property in better shape than when we bought it. We’re creating an environmental legacy which will remain in the title deed of our property forever.”

Conservation Partnerships and Offsets Officer Paul Sprecher said Dawn is one of 453 Land for Wildlife property owners in Noosa Shire, allowing an additional 2893 hectares of land to remain protected.

“The State and Federal Governments protect certain areas but when private landowners like Dawn and her neighbours join Land for Wildlife it allows protected areas to be connected which is so much more effective in preserving habitat,” he said.

To see if your property is eligible for Land for Wildlife, contact [environment@noosa.qld.gov.au](mailto:environment@noosa.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 5329 6500.

## HELPING YOU LIVE WELL IN 2025

### A year for mind, body, and spirit with Living Well Noosa



Yoga Qigong participants at Cooran Hall.

2025 marks a new beginning for those seeking balance and connection, thanks to Noosa Council’s Living Well Program.

As the year unfolds, locals will have the opportunity to embark on a journey of self-discovery with workshops designed to nurture the body, mind, and spirit.

Whether it’s the calming practice of yoga, the grounding

effects of breathwork, or the mindful exploration of meditation, there’s something for everyone.

Community Programs Officer Jasmine Bashford said this year’s program was crafted with participants’ input.

“Feedback showed a strong desire for art-based programs and mindfulness workshops, which we’ve made sure to

include,” she said.

“A large portion of our community has moved to Noosa in recent years, and many expressed a need for deeper social connections. We’re responding to that in 2025.”

Whether looking to make new friends, reconnect with self, or explore creative outlets, these workshops offer a perfect way to start the year feeling great.

Yoga Qigong participant Katarina Keating said the classes had been good for both her body and mind, and the class is suitable for all ages.

“It’s great to see Noosa Council support the health and wellbeing of the Noosa Community,” she said.

For more information and to register, visit [noosa.qld.gov.au](http://noosa.qld.gov.au)

## IN BRIEF

### Key works in Pomona completed



New surface at Station Street, Pomona.

Our crews have completed works projects in Pomona.

Council has widened Mountain Street to cater for two-way traffic, and resolved water ponding on the road to improve drainage at the location.

Crews have resurfaced Station Street outside the school to repair potholes, giving students a much safer crossing to school.

With the wet season here, a culvert at Station Street near the Pomona Primary School has been cleared of debris to greatly improve flow of water, during heavy rainfall.

### Artist-led public art

The hunt is on for two artists to create a unique, special piece of public art for Noosa.

Those interested have until 2 March to express their interest.

It’s being funded under the SEQ City Deal involving the Federal and State Governments and SEQ Council of Mayors.

Noosa Regional Gallery’s Michael Brennan said the initiative aims to celebrate the creatives in Noosa.

“We are looking to empower our creative community to deliver something that adds to identity and character to what makes it a special place,” he said.

Six successful applicants will be paid to further develop their ideas. Final presentations are scheduled for late April this year.

Details at [noosa.qld.gov.au](http://noosa.qld.gov.au)