

## *Australia 2020 Submission:*

### *2. The productivity agenda - education, skills, training, science and innovation*

The Australian Digital Alliance is a non-profit coalition of public and private sector interests formed to promote balanced copyright law and provide an effective voice for a public interest perspective in the copyright debate. ADA members include universities, schools, consumer groups, galleries, museums, IT companies, scientific and other research organisations, libraries and individuals. Members are united in their support of copyright law that balances the interests of rights holders with the interests of users of copyright material.

The Australian Digital Alliance believes it is important that Australia utilise the enormous potential of digital developments for education, and we recognise the Government's commitment to this through the 'digital education revolution'. The availability of high speed broadband across Australia has the potential to reduce many problems of resourcing and access to information faced in Australia due to our dispersed population. Students and researchers in remote areas could be provided with equal access to quality resources and texts that students in metropolitan centres have. If every student has access to a computer and high speed broadband, then all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, can have access to knowledge.

However, the ADA is concerned that overly complex and restrictive provisions in the Copyright Act 1968 continue to impede this potential. We set out some brief examples:

- Libraries, archives and cultural institutions across Australia hold vast collections of rare materials that they can digitise for preservation purposes, and can make available on computers on the premises, but are unable to make available more broadly via the internet due to copyright restrictions.
- Where students or researchers obtain access to electronic journals via an institutional subscription, there will often be limitations to its use. This includes terms and conditions of the license that are more restrictive than the Copyright Act 1968, and exclude fair dealing or private copying exceptions which are allowed under the Act. They can also include digital locks (or Technological Protection Measures) which can

prevent use for fair dealing or private copying. An example of this is disabling the ability to print an article, or preventing users from selecting text in the article to copy it (thereby interfering with the ability to copy under fair dealing provisions).

In short, the ADA sees great potential in the digital education revolution, however, without significant copyright reform the ADA believes that students will have access to high speed broadband, but will not have the access to knowledge that should flow from this.

We recommend:

- Amendment of the copyright law to prevent contracting out of the copyright exceptions, and to allow users and institutions to break digital locks (TPMs) where a legal copyright exception applies
- The Australian Government should encourage access to knowledge by making government resources readily available. The material should be available to all users under permissive licenses such as creative commons licenses.